

April 2011

[www.etet.org.nz](http://www.etet.org.nz)

What a lot can happen in a couple of months. Here in Taranaki we have had a great spell of weather, over summer yet elsewhere the natural disasters have been horrific. Our thoughts go out to those affected by the Christchurch earthquake. Terry, one of our contractors has had a visitor from Christchurch who headed up this way for a break. He has been out in the field with Terry.

### Social network

ETET is now on Facebook! To keep up to date with all our latest activity, photos and videos, search for 'ETET' from your Facebook homepage to "like" our page. If you don't have an existing Facebook account, visit [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and follow the step by step instructions to get set up.

We will soon have a button on our web site to take you directly to our facebook.

### Huts

We have been very busy organising huts to support our field team. The week prior to Easter was frantic with planning then the shift of the first hut. Bob commented it was two days of intense concentration, stress, nail biting and then relief as the hut arrived safely on site. The team of Roger Leake, Mark Hale, Murray Leake, Russel Hale, Sam Leake, Steven Hale, Graeme Flay and Bob (with me taking hundreds of photos), were all smiles at the end of the journey. Go onto our newly set up facebook page and our web site to view more photos taken over the two days.



*Resorting to digger power to get around the corner.*

### Kiwi Project

In the last newsletter we were saddened to report on the dead kiwi. This time we are able to report that there is a regular sighting of a kiwi on the Matau saddle. Please be careful when traveling at night. We are regularly hearing of increasing kiwi calls being heard.

We had planned to start the kiwi call survey the week after Easter but unfavorable weather conditions have delayed this. We will be conducting our bi-annual kiwi call survey during May. This is one of the key indicators of how successful the project is. Unlike sheep we can't run them through a set of yards to count them. We will use the same methodology as in previous surveys – listening for a two hour period for three nights at each listening site. We have a team of people who will be heading out to listen. This includes support from DOC and TRC who will have people coming out and listening. It is also great to welcome some of the staff from the Brooklands Zoo who will be involved.

### Whio

The weather conditions this year have seen a very successful breeding season. Over the summer DOC rangers have been in the field keeping a close eye on the breeding pairs. They confirmed at least 16 ducklings which is the best breeding season to date.

March was national whio month and a public education / field day was held over at Turangi. Jean and Murray Cash went over to check it out. Genesis Energy gave an interesting power point talk about the success of the whio project within the Tongariri catchments. The population nationally is still less than 3,000 birds. Within the Tongariri catchments the population has grown from 85 to 250 over the last 10 years. Over 50 birds have been translocated through operation nest egg, and translocation of juveniles to Taranaki. Their project confirmed the importance of predator control to protect females while on a nest.

## Research on pests

There has been quite a bit recently in the media over the research being done into new traps and toxins. It is encouraging to see the increasing momentum in this area. There are a number of projects on self setting traps plus several projects developing better use of toxins and new toxins.

Good Nature, the company who developed the first self setting traps are continuing to refine their first generation of traps. The modified traps will be available in the later part of the year.

They have also been working on a automated self setting possum trap. They are currently doing a national road show giving demonstrations.



*Resetting possum trap by Good Nature*

The Department of Conservation have been allocated funds to continue to trial self setting traps. This is separate to the above project.

National funding has also been allocated to a consortium including Lincoln University and Connovations. Over the next five years they will be developing a suite of self setting traps, new toxins and traps involving a combination of the two.

All in all this is all very promising and will over the next five years result in major breakthrough in how we can achieve the goal of dealing to the pests.... possum, stoats, ferrets, feral cats and rats.

## Trap catch data

The changing weather pattern this year resulted in a delay of the normal dispersment of stoats. This normally happens during Decemebr and January,

but our trap catch showed a very quiet December, and the peak in February.

For the kiwi project this still only resulted in a relative small number, which is why we still have the kiwi in East Taranaki.

The results for the last few months for stoats is: Nov 7; Dec 2; Jan 12; Feb 21.

For the whio trap lines it is a different story. It has been quiet over the summer period. We are now noticing a big increase in hedgehogs. They are on the prowl for eggs. Have any of you noticed an increase in eggs being taken from chook runs?

We have noticed an increase on the sides of the roads between Inglewood and Purangi of juvenile cats. A real worry as they will be feasting on the native birds. We have since July killed 6 feral cats within the kiwi project area.

Our trap data for this year can be viewed on our web site.

## Become a supporter of the Trust and its work for Taranaki native fauna.

As well as membership opportunities we now have a Wall of Acknowledgement at Purangi, and on our web site.

Plaques which include company logos and names are made for display on the wall and on our web site for donations that occur on an ongoing yearly basis.( minimum five years)

This is our way of publicly acknowledging the individuals and companies as well as bequests that support the projects. Receive a framed photo for you to display to acknowledge your support of the project.

**The kiwi project is one of two priority sites for the survival of the Western Brown kiwi.**

**Your support is crucial for the success of these projects in Taranaki.**

### Support levels.

**Platinum Sponsor:** Donations above \$5,000

**Gold Sponsor :** Donations of \$1,000 or more.

**Silver Sponsor:** Donations of \$500.

**Bronze Sponsor:** Donations \$250.

The Trust is a registered charitable Trust, and has IRD donee status making donations tax deductible.

Please contact Karen for more details.

***Cheers Karen & Bob Schumacher***