



Tennyson Inlet Islands Trust

Supporters Newsletter - December 2020

Welcome to our newsletter for 2020. It has certainly been a year to remember and one in which our native species around the globe will surely have been grateful for some quiet time during the human lockdowns!

We always welcome new volunteers so please contact us if you are keen to help.

Chairman's Report

What a year 2020 has turned out to be. Who would have guessed this time last year that we were about to experience what the world has been through? The scary bit is COVID-19 is only just hitting its straps, so 2021 is likely to be a roller coaster as well.

Thank goodness our trustees have kept extending the network of Good Nature A24 traps across the islands, because the 6 monthly service intervals meant that even during lockdown these traps kept up the good work in eliminating rats. We have had enough funds to purchase another years' supply of lures and gas for these traps, so we are set for 2021.

We have been in touch with Good Nature and will be trialling some different lure flavours as rats need to "find" different food occasionally to keep them inquisitive. The only rat lure Good Nature currently sell is chocolate flavoured but we now have a rabbit brew and a hazelnut brew to test so we'll soon see what attracts them!

TIIT has also purchased 12 cheap Victory rat traps so we can set up some tracking tunnels to better monitor where on the island we have higher concentrations of rats.

Extreme thanks go to our "Friend of TIIT" who contribute an annual membership subscription. The form is at the back of this newsletter so please complete and fill in (\$30 for individual membership or \$50 for a family membership).

These funds allow TIIT to continue the good work.

Chairman's Report continued...

Ongoing R&D by other trapping entities around NZ has shown that the optimal number of A24s is likely to be somewhere around 25 metres apart. This is an incredibly intense regime that, in a rugged island setting such as we are dealing with, may not be fully achievable. However, we believe that we should slowly increase the number of A24s to move closer towards this target. We are taking it one step at a time and trialling a higher concentration of traps in an isolated area so that we can see if the numbers of strikes reduce.

We again wrote to the TIIT corporate sponsors who very generously made a donation a couple of years ago. All have re-donated so we would like to thank Sanfords, Kono, McDonalds Richmond and Talley's for their much appreciated donation.



Have a safe and Happy Christmas!

Work Bee 2021—MARK YOUR DIARY

With more A24s to install, servicing of the existing traps plus the new tracking tunnels we are aiming to hold another open day / working bee on February 20th 2021. Please put this date in your diaries as the working bee we held earlier this year was highly successful with many jobs ticked off our never-ending list. Please email expressions of interest to attend the 2021 work bee and we will let you know more details closer to the time, complete the form at the back of the newsletter or email tennysoninletislandstrust@gmail.com

Thanks to our local company supporters



RICHMOND



We extend heartfelt thanks to the following sponsors who have supported us again in 2020:

Kono, Sanford, Talley's, McDonald's Richmond

And our thanks go to the **Field Family in Elaine Bay** who are contributing a proportion of each bach holiday rental towards our work.

Trapping Update

On the islands we have a network of Goodnature A24 automatic rat traps and a number of DOC200 traps. Every 6 months the A24 traps require replacement of the Automatic Lure Pump or ALP, and a replacement gas canister, while the DOC200's are checked as often as possible. It takes 2 people about 5 hours to cover the traps on Tawhitinui, plus more time to check and reset the DOC200's, carry out basic track maintenance and note things of interest, like penguins in the nesting boxes and a new burrow near trap 22.

August 2020

On August 10th, four volunteers headed out to Tawhitinui island to check the counter strikes and replace the gas and lure for the 31 x A24 automatic traps positioned over the island, they also checked and replaced the lure where needed in the 17 x DoC 200 traps. All of these traps are logged onto a GPS so a map is created enabling them to print a map of the trap positions.

All but two of the A24s were operating properly. Two appeared to have prematurely run out of gas. Those trap numbers are recorded, the traps are then reset and checked again later to make sure that they are operating properly.

Total strike numbers recorded:

- Tawhitinui A24s = 146 and DoC 200s = 4.
- Awaiti A24s = 13

This combined total of 163 strikes was a significant reduction on the February total of 234.



A rat on its way to take a drink from the water source
Captured on the OzTRail camera March 2020

Penguin boxes across the island were also checked; one box contained an egg, while another had a pair of adult Little Blue penguins in it, which later in October was housing two young healthy penguins - delightful to see. Our OzTrail camera's captured some interesting footage of the interaction between adult Little Blues, and adults and young Little Blues.

And at long last we have got footage of a weka picking up a dead rat from underneath an A24 trap. During our checks on the A24 traps we have never seen a dead rat because we know the weka's collect them on their daily rounds.

Additional trapping is being planned for early in the new year.

Check out our website: www.TIIT.co.nz.



Homes for Penguins....

Inspired by the success our first Penguin boxes, one of our members built and donated another seven. These were aptly named to encourage 'first home buyers', *Room with a View*, *Penguin Paradise*, *Eco Friendly*, *Home Sweet Home*, *Blues Bungalow* ... you get the idea!! Warm homes for the penguins doesn't just mean a cosy place to bring babies into the world, it also gives them a protected place when they come ashore to shed their feathers and grow a new waterproof coat. The moult period lasts about two weeks and can happen any time between November and March; penguins are especially vulnerable at this time as they cannot swim.

Adult birds come ashore between May and June to prepare nests for breeding so as soon as our COVID-19 Alert Levels went down, an enthusiastic team of volunteers loaded up two boats and set off to install new homes on the islands for the returning penguins.

Penguins may waddle up to 1.5 km from the sea, and climb 300 metres in order to find the perfect nest site, so installation of the boxes was quite challenging—especially when one has a 6kg box strapped to their back and the only way up is by hauling on a rope!

The volunteers efforts were well rewarded however when a camera placed on Trap A24 -7 and on the penguin nesting box *Whare* were seen to have a penguin sitting on an egg. In *Eco Friendly*, two adult penguins were seen, and since then on 23rd October two young penguins of adolescent size were seen.

More homes are needed if anyone would like to build and donate to the trust they would be very welcome, no Resource Consents required. Please contact any of the our committee members if you are keen to assist.



OZTrail camera screengrab of little blue penguin activity on Tawhitinui



Little penguin/kororā

Image courtesy of DoC

Bird Cam!

TAWHITINUI ISLAND BIRD SPOTTING

Following the work our volunteers did last year opening up the creek and water source, we have spotted several native bird species on our camera footage.

They seem pretty happy to be able to drink freshwater on Tawhitinui ensuring a suitable environment for breeding and further growth of the resident populations. This year we captured footage of the fantail (piwakaka), bellbird (kopere), silver eye (kanohi hiriwa) and weka (hoatu).

Rattus rattus also made an appearance!



OZTrail camera screengrab of bird activity on Tawhitinui in 2020



Tennyson Inlet Islands Trust

MEMBERSHIP & DONATION FORM 2020/21

It is estimated that rats and stoats kill 25 million birds in NZ each year. The purpose of this Charitable Trust is to eradicate the pests from the three islands (Tarakaipa, Tawhitinui & Awaiti) that make up the Tennyson Inlet Island group within the Pelorus Sound.

We need your help... While we have purchased most of the traps we require these still need servicing with gas & bait and we have ongoing development of habitat for penguins, weta and lizards.

By becoming a Friend of TIIT or by making a donation your contribution will greatly assist us in achieving our goal.

Yearly “Friend of TIIT” Individual Membership	\$ 30
Family Membership	\$ 50
Donation—you choose the amount	\$??
Volunteer to assist with field work (monitoring & servicing of traps etc.)	

We are going to BRING BACK THE BIRDS to the Tennyson Inlet Islands.

If you have ticked any of the options above please fill out your details below. With any bank deposit made you will receive a receipt that specifies our charitable status.

NAME ADDRESS PHONE EMAIL	Forms can be posted / emailed to our Trust Treasurer: Tennyson Inlet Island Trust, P.O. Box 2422, Stoke, 7041 Contacts: Secretary: Lesley Davies — davies@kinect.co.nz Chairman: Jeremy Cooper – cooper@xtra.co.nz Charitable Status registration # CC52790 Bank account details 03 1355 0865294 00
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Check out our website: www.TIIT.co.nz.