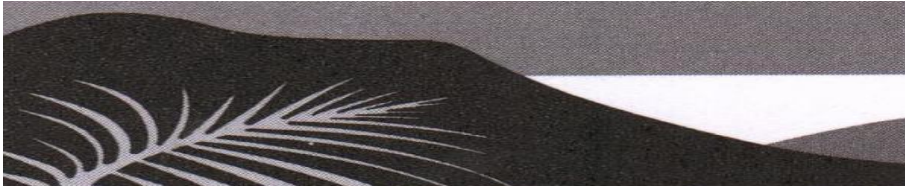


WINDY HILL ROSALIE BAY CATCHMENT TRUST



Newsletter # 15 June 2009

Kiaora

Since our last newsletter in December we have been fully engaged in the challenge of culling an island wide 'grey tide' of rats that has been rising steadily since mid 2008, completing over 18 kilometers of tracks in the new Rosalie Bay Pest Management area, preparing and helicoptering in all the equipment for same, and maintaining our comprehensive programme over 450 hectares with a reduced field team. In March, we successfully translocated 50 North Island robins from Mokoia Island in Lake Rotorua – 25 for Windy Hill and 25 for Glenfern Sanctuary. At the time of writing, we had five pair formed up within our sanctuary area and we wait now with fingers crossed until the breeding season.

With the current financial worldwide constraints and some uncertainty about how we are going to afford to hold our conservation gains, we are absolutely delighted to have had our application to the **Biodiversity Condition Fund** approved. This \$70,000 will support our restoration work well into next year, with a further two years funding to be confirmed.

As we complete our first decade of ecological restoration at Windy Hill and Rosalie Bay it is timely to acknowledge the great organisations that have contributed funds towards the success of our pest management projects and the biodiversity that is subsequently sustained.

The **Auckland Regional Council Environmental Initiatives Fund** has supported our Trust grant applications every year since 2001. It is this sort of consistency that has meant we have been able to evolve in efficacy and complexity, and to develop and expand our sanctuary area. From the time the project began in 1999 the **Auckland Regional Council Biosecurity team** has also been an invaluable source of technical information and personal support. It was with their solid backing that we were able to maintain the project in its fledgling years as I learnt the ropes of pest management and project monitoring. That support continues to this day with special appreciation to Jack Crow.

The **Biodiversity Condition Fund** was established soon after the launch of the NZ Biodiversity Strategy in 2000. It was set up to assist willing and motivated private landowners join DoC in halting the waning of the country's biodiversity. The fund has been a significant contributor to the Trust since

2003 and is one of the few that allows applications to cover 1-3 years as well as granting sufficiently large amounts to meet the annual costs of employing the field team. Alan White, the manager of this fund, has been a stalwart of support for conservation projects on Great Barrier and we are highly appreciative of his organisation's ongoing funding and encouragement.

The NZ Lotteries Commission **Heritage and Environment Fund** has given generous and ongoing support to the new aspects of the project as they have developed. Beginning in 2002, their annual grant has allowed the significant expansion of the sanctuary area including the current Rosalie Bay pest project area bringing the total sanctuary area to around 700 hectares! This is another fund that approves sufficiently large sums to enable the employment of people and the masses of equipment required.

Funding from the **Auckland City Heritage Fund** began in 2002 and has been consistent every year since then. The unique gift from this fund is that it will cover the costs of the vital administrative requirements that are the engine room of the Trust's audit and accounting systems.

In earlier times, grants were also received from WWF, the Pacific Conservation and Development Trust, the JSWatson Trust, QEII National Trust, and Landcare Transpower.

Alongside this funding is the contribution made by landowners towards the restoration of their properties – this is vital as a show of their commitment to the greater goal of sustaining and enhancing NZ's biodiversity.

To have survived a decade with such support is awesome.

T H A N K Y O U

Catch Up with the Field Team

At the end of June, we farewell Dean Medland who is returning to work on the family farm. Dean has worked on the project fairly consistently since 1999 and has been the designer and creator of our tracking system, building over 80km of tracks. He is a master of this art and the Trust is highly appreciative of his input over such a long time. Kevin Parsons remains as Field Manager, ably supported by Rachel Wakefield. Dave Harland, who was part of the team until last December, has returned as a volunteer one day a week and manages part of the Benthorn Farm project area. We really appreciate having an experienced person as a volunteer as it assists the team hugely.

We welcome two new members to the field team – Mick Butterworth and Mallory Thompson – who will be employed on Task Force Green for six months specifically to establish all the equipment in the Rosalie Bay project area and commence the initial knockdown of pests.

Thank you to the following for their support over the last six months - Kelvin Floyd (fantastic project maps), Sealink Ltd (freight subsidy), KMPG (audit of accounts) and Great Barrier Airlines (flew our robins from Rotorua to GB).

And to the Great Barrier Landowners who make up the Sanctuary area: Little Windy Hill Co Ltd, Helga and Peter Speck (Benthorn Farm), Bruce and Cynthia Macnee, Nick Wilkinson, Somerville & Nicolson Families, Blaiklock Family, Robin and Judith Henderson, Martina and Pedro Tschirky, Wells Family, Rachel Wakefield, Harland Family, DoC, and Rosalie Bay Farms.

I look forward to reporting on our progress in December.

Kind regards

Judy Gilbert
Trust Manager