



THE  
**Hutton's Shearwater**  
 CHARITABLE TRUST

**NEWSLETTER**

September 2012, Issue 9, ISSN 1179-5646.

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*Photo left to right are volunteers Fabienne Fages (France), Jill West (South Canterbury), Maria Stoker-Farrell (South Canterbury), Sarah Rousseaux (Belgium) & project manager, Rex Williams. The crew had just finished a delicious & well deserved lunch of fish & chips donated by Hines*



Hutton's Shearwater Translocation March—April 2012  
 Extracts from Rex Williams Project Manager's Report

In 2011 a decision was made by the trust to translocate 100 chicks in 2012 and a further 100 in 2013. In part, this decision was to ensure that at least 30 birds were returning to the peninsula colony as per the Licence to Occupy that the trust has with Kaikoura Charitable Trust (the owners of the land). It was also important to boost the number of returning birds so as to create a self-sustaining colony as soon as possible.

With the appropriate permits in place, 102 chicks were transferred from the Kowhai colony to the man-made peninsula colony in early March. At the peninsula colony site, the chicks were checked to ensure no problems had been encountered during travel. Brett Cowan from DOC then performed a karakia to welcome the birds to the site and each chick was given 10ml of cooled boiled water to compensate for any dehydration during transfer.

The chicks were put into their artificial burrows (one chick per burrow) and the band number and corresponding burrow number was recorded. A wooden block was placed firmly inside the entrance to each burrow to prevent the chicks from leaving prematurely. The blocks were kept in place for the next five nights for chicks with wings over 220mm long; the remaining chicks had their blocks removed after seven nights. This was to keep the birds in the burrows until they were sufficiently developed to start emerging.

During the first two weeks of feeding, there were seven volunteers on site each day, consisting of two feeding teams of three and a scribe. Chicks were weighed prior to feeding and again after feeding; the difference in weight being the amount of food each chick had eaten. The net weight and the amount each chick was fed were recorded daily and wing lengths were measured every third day.

The final weights of the transferred chicks before they fledged ranged from 330 to 515 grams (median weight at fledging was 430 grams). By comparison, the weights of the Kowhai Stream site chicks which crash-landed in Kaikoura ranged from 300 to 400 grams (median weight was 355 grams). This means the hand-reared chicks were fledging 19% heavier than the crash-landing chicks from Kowhai Stream.

Overall the project was very successful, with 101 chicks out of the 102 chicks presumed to have fledged, all with good weights. This is important for chicks to survive their first year at sea. In addition, 95% of the fledging chicks stayed eight days or longer at the new colony site. This gave most chicks a reasonable amount of time to imprint on the new site, which is necessary for the chicks to return to breed at the new colony on the Kaikoura Peninsula.

As always, to be a success a project such as this relies on the dedication of many people and organisations. A large thank you goes to the follow people, organisations and businesses:

The many volunteers from Kaikoura and elsewhere for their help in feeding the chicks over five weeks — Brett Cowan, Irena Zammit-Ross, Jody Weir, Lindsay Rowe, Nicky McArthur, Teri Sonal, Elspeth Wingham, Delph Gomez, Fabienne Fages, Marianne Williams, Frances Schmechel, Kelvin Joyce, Kate Morgan, Sarah Rousseaux, Peter Howden, Bev Elliot, Charlene

*Continued on next page.....*

The Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust is a Charities Commission registered entity CC37979.  
 Donations to the Trust attract tax credits.

## Continued....

Locke, Barry Dunnett, Nils Fleischeuer, Maria Stoker-Farrell, Skylar Lincoln, Fiona Wong, Ida Johansson, Nils Danne-mann, Niels Richter, Ailsa Howard, Lynette Hartley, Jill West, Holly Wheatley-Hammond, Sue Jarvie, Jean Desmais and the staff and students from CCSP In Kaikoura: Alicia Landis, John Geating, Caleb King, Samantha Miller, Jessica Miller, Courtney Wilson, Tammy Lang, Karina Scavo, Nicole Mayberry and Allie Steele.

The chick collection team — Phil Bradfield, Mike Bell, Dave Barker, Deidre Mussen and David Hallett.

Kaikoura Helicopters for flying the personnel and chicks in and out of the mountains.

Mike Morrissey of DOC Kaikoura for all his work at the colony site getting it ready in the lead up to the feeding.

Dave Barker and 'Jack' for their help during the season in locating awol birds.

Lindsay Rowe for all his support in getting the logistics of the project organised.

Jodie Denton for organising the volunteers and the roster, and for the morning teas (especially the baking) on every second day. Nicky McArthur for providing me with accommodation. Mike Bell for the use of his vehicle during the project.

Whale Watch, Te Runanga o Kaikoura and Ngai Tahu for continuing to lend their support to the project; as does Simon Mackle, who farms the land adjacent to the site.

David and Kathy Sweeney from Kaikoura Bakery, the Thomas family of the Reserve Hut Cafe and Arlene and Algie from Hine's Takeaways for supporting the project with food donations.

The Kaikoura Star, along with the Christchurch Press, for their good coverage of the project.

Brett Cowan of Te Runanga o Kaikoura and DOC for providing a karakia to welcome the birds to the site.

There were a number of groups who visited the site this year to observe the feeding and to view the project. The majority were school groups organised by Nicky McArthur and Jody Weir. We welcomed Nayland College; Kaikoura Primary School; Kaikoura Suburban School; Lynton Downs School; Barnardos Preschool; Hapuku School; St. Joseph's School, Woodbank School; Kaikoura High School; Canterbury University ecology students and the Creation Care Study Programme of Kaikoura. Other groups that came to watch the feeding were the Seaward Lions and an ecology group that was staying at the marae at the time.

The Trust will be looking for volunteers for feeding chicks early 2013. For more info please see the article on page 3.

## Another Breeding Season

We finished another annual breeding success/burrow scoping study for both Hutton's colonies back in March this year. We carried out the burrow scoping in Shearwater Stream on 29<sup>th</sup> Feb and 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> March for the Kowhai. The latter trip was conducted in tandem with the transfer of 100 chicks from the Kowhai to the Kaikoura Peninsula.

The breeding success data is as follows:

Shearwater Stream colony: 70% (n=91)

Kowhai River colony : 66% (n=115)

As in previous years there was a little variability between sub-colonies at both sites and the figures above are averages for two sub colonies at each site. The percentage difference between the two sites is probably not significant (I haven't done the Statistical test yet).

This result is now the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row where breeding success has been high. These 3 good breeding years follows 3 poor years of breeding success in both colonies at the start of the breeding success study. These 3 really good years of breeding success in both sites should bode really well for the recruitment of these young birds back in to their colonies in 3-6 years time (this is assuming that their survival at sea over the next 3 years is relatively high).

What was very interesting this year was that many of the chicks were very well developed for this time of year and in the case of the Kowhai, where we were collecting chicks to transfer, many of the chicks were too mature to transfer. Mike Bell and I estimated that some of these chicks would have left their burrows with 3-4 days from the days we were there.

I would particularly like to thank landowner Nicky McArthur for her ongoing support of this long term study at Shearwater Stream and Mike Bell for his help with the burrow scoping at both sites.

Phil Bradfield, Trustee



*Trustee Mike Bell collecting chicks in the Kowhai colony for translocation to Te Rae o Atiu.*

*Photo courtesy of Dave Hallet, The Press*

## Hutton's Shearwater Research

The Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust is embarking on an ambitious science and research programme to continue to unravel the secret lives of Hutton's shearwater. This research is aimed at understanding the ecology of the Hutton's which will help ensure we can meet the conservation needs of the species long term.

As reported previously, during the past two years we have been following the movements of Hutton's shearwater during their winter migration. Tiny geolocators are attached to the birds' leg, which give a daily fix on the birds' position. This has shown that birds are migrating to the Timor Sea north of Darwin to spend each the winter.

Future research projects in the pipeline include a long term study on longevity and mortality rates; this study will ensure we collect data which can be used to in population models – an important tool in assessing possible population threats. A 'mark re-sighting' project will be undertaken next year – during this project thousands of shearwaters will be marked with paint in the Kowhai colony. Comparisons at sea of painted to un-marked birds enables a population estimate to be made. This will repeat a similar project carried out 10 years ago and will provide up to date information on the population trend. This is an important project which will require volunteer help, so follow our newsletters and website to see how you can become involved.

This research will help the Trust ensure that Hutton's shearwater continue to flourish in a changing world, and help assess potential impacts such as fracking, changes in fishing methods and global climate change.

Mike Bell, Trustee

## Hutton's Translocation 2013

Following a successful transfer this year of 100 chicks, the Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust is embarking on an additional transfer of a further 100 chicks in February/March 2013. One of the main success factors of this year's transfer was the amazing volunteers who tirelessly fed the Hutton's chicks for about 6 weeks (in all weather conditions I might add). They all went away saying what an amazing experience it was for them, which of course it is – where else in the world would you get such an opportunity; a very special bird that only breeds in Kaikoura, stunning scenery, great project managers & volunteers, tasty donated smoko's and of course to be part of this special journey for the Hutton's.

So with that in mind, if you are interested in volunteering for the 2013 feeding programme or would like to know more, please get in touch with Jodie Denton. [landservices@xtra.co.nz](mailto:landservices@xtra.co.nz)

## A New Name For The Peninsula Colony

Te Runanga o Kaikoura & the Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust are pleased to bless the Peninsula Colony with the name, "Te Rae o Atiu".

Te Rae o Atiu is the Māori name for the southern headland of the Kaikōura Peninsula, which is commonly known as Atia Point. W. J. Elvy in "Kaikōura Coast: Māori History, Traditions and Placenames" records that Atiu is the name of one of the Cook Islands and that this is a very old name, which commemorates localities in the old Māori home lands.

Gina Solomon, Trustee

## Wedding Bells!

It is with great pleasure that our Trust sends our congratulations to Dr Richard Cuthbert and Erica Sommer on the occasion of their wedding at Derbyshire, England on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

Richard, with Erica as his scientific assistant spent three seasons at the Kowhai Hutton's Shearwater hut, completing his thesis on the birds. This changed how the Department of Conservation now manages this endangered species. Richard and Erica always make themselves available to our Trust and DOC when we need expert advice. We are always very grateful of that.

The Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust would like to wish them both a long and very happy married life together.

Geoff Harrow, Trustee.

## Proposed Working Bee

The Hutton's are due to come home from their warm Australian holiday during September, and will be ready for breeding. We need to make sure the site is in tip top shape and set for their arrival.

Working bee details - Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> September at 9.15am – 12pm, Te Rae o Atiu, Hutton's Shearwater Colony, Kaikoura Peninsula.

Please meet at the end of Ward & Scarborough Streets at 9.15am. Volunteers will be transferred to the site by 4wd and returned to your vehicle at 12pm. If volunteers have 4wd, you may follow the supervisor out to the site if you wish. Please bring good sturdy footwear (the site is hilly & could be wet), warm gear/wet weather gear incase of change of weather, sun hat, camera, water bottle.

What will be provided: A project brief, task briefs, first aid kit, tools & equipment, sunscreen, and cold drinks/cake etc for smoko.

Tasks involved: Burrow maintenance and clearing burrow entrances, back filling of new steps with gravel, releasing tussocks, grubbing thistles, re numbering existing burrows & numbering new burrows.

If the weather is unsuitable: If the weather is no good the working bee will have to be cancelled. A trust member will be at the set meeting point noted above; to inform those who still arrive, or alternatively you can call in advance to 027 610 7574 (Trust secretary Jodie Denton).

What else is on that weekend? The Trust is running its annual 'Welcome Home Hutton's' street party for the community in the West End of Kaikoura township at 4pm Saturday afternoon. We would love for you to join in the celebrations and receive your well earned free 'Hutton's hamburger'!

## Hutton's Welcome Home Event

See [www.huttonsshearwater.org.nz](http://www.huttonsshearwater.org.nz) for more information

**HUTTONS  
SHEARWATER**  
Welcome Home

**TITĪ**

Āau mai hoki mai ki te Rāinga!

**SAT 22ND SEPT 2012**  
**AFTERNOON STREET FAIR**  
**WEST END - KAIKOURA**

Hutton's Shearwater (IF WET - MEMORIAL HALL)

## Become A Friend Of

We are always looking for new friends to join us in the journey of these amazing wee birds. If you are not already, it would be great to have you on board. We have structured the membership so as to make it feasible for everyone. You could join as an individual (\$20), a family (\$30), as a school (\$30), a corporate (\$125) or for life (\$300). Your contribution will assist in the conservation of this endangered species, both at the newly established colony on the Kaikoura Peninsula and at the only other two remaining colonies (in the world) in the Seaward Kaikoura mountains. You can find a membership form on our website or contact the secretary on 03 319 7344 or treasurer on 03 319 7211 or [admin@huttonsshearwater.org.nz](mailto:admin@huttonsshearwater.org.nz)

## Hutton's Shearwater Education

How fantastic it was that we were able to undertake the recent translocation of Hutton's Shearwaters into the peninsula colony – Te Rae o Atiu.

Fantastic for many reasons, not only for the long term survival of this unique bird, but in particular it provided such an amazing opportunity for our local schools and community to see this science actually taking place, thus providing a wonderful platform for learning to all ages.

One of our main objectives is education into the community, both local and further afield and I was absolutely delighted that all the schools took up the opportunity of coming to have a look and see what is involved in a Bird Translocation and all the complexities that make up the whole. We are incredibly privileged to have science like this happening right on our doorstep and so readily accessible and available to the all. So often in these instances they take place in remote and inaccessible areas and are closed to the public. This is one of the reason our peninsular colony project is so unique.

I would like to particularly thank Jodie Weir who co-ordinated the visits on our behalf and supported the vision to have our students visit the colony. She was outstanding at engaging the pupils and shared her knowledge in such an inspiring way. We had many adults who joined the school groups and it was excellent to also see members of Forest and Bird and Seaward Lions take up the opportunity.

Additionally thanks must go to the schools and their principals who embraced this opportunity and made provision and time for their students to come onsite and learn about Hutton's Shearwaters and bird translocations. Thank you. It was fantastic to be able to share this with you all.

Term 3 will again see Year 6 and Year 9 have Hutton's Shearwater Education in their Curriculum and Encounter Kaikoura has once more generously offered an hour out on the water in September to show these students our Hutton's Shearwater in their sea environment.

Nicky McArthur, Trustee

*Left—Jody Weir conducting a school group tour at the peninsula colony during the feeding programme.*

*Middle—Volunteer Frances Schmechel feeding.*

*End—Feeding programme Manager Rex Williams conducting a talk with Kaikoura High School students.*

*Photo's courtesy of Trustee Nicky McArthur*



# Hutton's Housekeeping

**Merchandise** - we have our great (and very popular) T-shirts for sale in a range of colours (army green, white, navy & hot pink) and we have added a pink polo shirt to the range. Due to popular demand we now also have a small number of kids t-shirts in hot pink and navy for 2,4 & 6 year olds. If you are interested contact our treasurer on 03 319 7211 or on [admin@huttonsshearwater.org.nz](mailto:admin@huttonsshearwater.org.nz)



**Social media** - 'keep up with the play on our revamped website [www.huttonsshearwater.org.nz](http://www.huttonsshearwater.org.nz) and 'like' us on Facebook. Thanks to Trustee Andrew Spencer for a stunning job on both of these means of reaching our audience.'

**Vote for our bird** - Forest & Bird are again running its annual national competition to see which of our feathered friends is New Zealand's favourite bird. We of course think the Hutton's Shearwater are the best bird by far and hope you do too!

Please vote for our bird and help raise awareness of our humble Hutton's. [www.birdoftheyear.org.nz](http://www.birdoftheyear.org.nz)



*One of our fluffy friends following delivery to Te Rae o Atiu colony earlier this year, to its new man made home.*

*Photo courtesy of Dave Hallett, The Press*

## Project Partners And Sponsors

NZ Lottery Grants Board, Pacific Development & Conservation Trust, Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund and.....

This newsletter is kindly put together and printed by Jess Bailey at Whale Watch Kaikoura on recycled paper. Please share this newsletter by email where possible to reduce paper use.

### Trust contact details

Phone: 03 319 7211 (Treasurer)  
 Phone: 03 319 7344 or 0276107574 (Secretary)  
 E-mail: [admin@huttonsshearwater.org.nz](mailto:admin@huttonsshearwater.org.nz)  
 PO Box 58  
 Kaikoura 7300

The Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust  
 established 2008: *Aim, Encourage and promote the preservation, conservation, research, public education, and sustainable management of the Hutton's shearwater.*

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