

**Monthly Newsletter**  
**March 1<sup>st</sup> 2007 No 1**  
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### Our Wonderful Wild Guests

*As seasons change so does our wild birdlife. One day we have young chicks, the next we find we have some new visitors or birds taking off in flight. To keep you informed we have decided to send out a short but interesting newsletter. At this stage we hope to send this to you on a monthly basis. It's our attempt to keep you informed and hopefully exciting about the changing faces around here. It also means that you can tell your visitors and friends of the wonderful bird life on this coast.*

Mik and Moira

### **The Oystercatchers**

We have a pair of variable oystercatchers nesting on the sand spit right where everyone and his dog walks—adjacent to a very large log that has been on the beach for a year or two---right out in the open, it's the only part of the sand spit that isn't covered with a high tide.

It's a very brave bird and sits very still on its nest ---however being black with a large bright orange bill it is very conspicuous --its mate just stands nearby keeping an eye on things and goes really crook if you get too close---puts his head down and runs around in circles crying out loud. -- The only thing in its favour is that the egg is very hard to see as it blends into the surrounding sand. If the dogs and kids leave it alone it may hatch ---The young can run quite fast really early and blend into the background so if the egg hatches it may survive.



**Oystercatchers**

## Our little Egret



Little egret

The egret is still on the estuary, he has been active on the river and the backwash by the weir –a lot of people think he is a white heron—however he is a little egret and is also not to be mistaken for a royal spoonbill—the egret has the lazy flight of the heron with his head pulled in and the royal spoonbill flies with a purpose with his neck extended.

## Pied Shags

Whilst taking some American Tourists around the lagoon a pied shag flew past with some twigs in it's beak—it flew into the large macrocarpa tree on the eastern side of the northern Waimanu lagoon and offered it to its mate who was sitting in the tree—they are making a nest—in fact I think there are two shags-nests being formed –this is pretty exciting stuff as pied shags have only been in our estuary in any numbers for about three or four years. They have never nested in our estuary before.



Pied Shags

## Canada Geese



Canada goose

The Canada geese are on the move again with 40 to 50 of these birds zooming over our house right on dusk and swooping down to the river making one heck-of a racket with their honking--- they spend the night on our river hooting and squabbling and at first light form into squadrons and off they go in about four mobs, and if you didn't live overlooking the river you wouldn't know they had been here.

## The Love Birds

The six cygnets of Henrietta and Henry the two black swans and Thomas the goose are growing by the day looking very swish –Thomas the goose is their minder and I am quite sure they think he is their father-- In four and a half years they, the three of them have had 58 babies—not bad going considering that Henry the cob is 28 years old –equivalent to a 70 year old human



**The three love birds and babies**

Six of the fifty eight



## Waikanae Estuary

### Estuary Restoration

Our estuary restoration care group have purchased another shade house where we propagate seedlings –the care of these are in the hands of one or two people and if there are people out there who love plants and could spend a little time now and then in the shade house to help pinch out and tend these plants they would be very welcome. The shade houses are within Kotuku Park at the northern end of Manly Street.

Hope you have enjoyed your  
copy of our Estuary Newsletter  
Regards Moira & Mik