

Waikanae Estuary Newsletter
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Waikanae Estuary bird tours 9051001



Waimanu lagoon Waikanae beach Photograph Laurie Petterick

Barry

My retired friend Barry was a physical training instructor, so he likes to run the beach every morning. The red-billed gulls have taken a distinct dislike to having him disturb their habitat so they sneak up behind him and dive-bomb him, before he even knows they are there. They are like little fighter planes coming out of the sun. Barry gets quite upset and will grab a stick to defend himself. However, the gulls are too quick for him and get out of the way before he can do them any harm. He is quite sure that that they lie in wait for him, as the other people on the beach seem to be left alone. It's funny as not only the gulls have it in for him. My dog Meg who loves everyone, also knows that Barry isn't a dog lover and will bark every time she sees him. He has never done her any harm. When he bikes down the beach he is attacked not only by the gulls it's as if he attracts every stray dog as he peddles along. He has to go along with his feet up as he kicks out to defend himself. It's funny how some people affect animals and birds in different ways. On the other hand my friend Eileen is the opposite. Birds and animals radiate around her, even the wild birds find her a friend. She talks to the animals and is certain they can understand her. Maybe it's her love that is coming through.



Watch out Barry, here I come!

Stop press—The swans are letting Thomas the goose help raise their latest brood of three cygnets. This is the first time he has been allowed near any of the swan babies, since Henry the swan died and the eternal triangle was no more. It's the pen who is allowing Tom near the youngsters but the cob is still chasing him away. Thomas is very persistent and I am sure he will prevail in the end.

Chris and the penguin

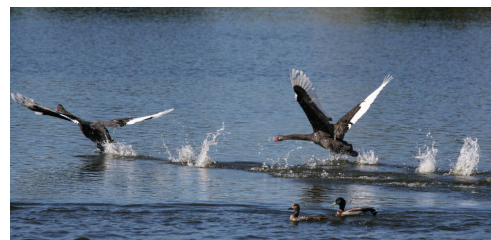
Chris was strolling the beach, when he happened across a little blue penguin, also on the beach. It was a friendly little bird not at all afraid of him.

Along came a dog on the loose trailing its lead. The dog was very pleased to see the penguin and rushed towards it. Chris put his not so small body between the dog and the bird, protecting it, then grabbed the dog and restrained it. Its owner arrived and took control of it. Chris continued to stroll beside the penguin to the water's edge, where the bird turned eyeballed him, then dived into the sea and was gone. Chris is quite sure the penguin was thanking him when it turned its head and looked into his eyes before swimming away. It was a touching moment for the big man.



The true story of Henry the wild black swan and Thomas the white goose documenting their thirty year sojourn on the Waimanu Lagoon at Waikanae New Zealand Part eight

More trouble came when Henry and Henrietta, with their latest brood of five, made the trek from the northern lagoon - where they had raised them - across the roadway to the bottom lagoon to show them off. Well, the recently-arrived southern family, having previously chased off the other two swans sitting on a nest, weren't having a bar of this and the two new parents confronted our love birds. With his injured wing and advanced age, Henry couldn't handle these younger ferocious swans, so he and Henrietta were chased up the bank and back on to the roadway, leaving their five new young cygnets defenceless on the southern lagoon. The two attacking parents were then joined by their quite mature offspring and all were intent on beating up our innocent babies. To the rescue came gallant goose, Thomas! He rushed into the lagoon, confronted the swans, beat up one and then shepherded the five youngsters out of the lagoon, up the bank and across the roadway, back to the top lagoon, saving them. What a hero! And what a wonderful extended family was established over the long years that Henry the male swan with the injured wing was on our lagoons. He had many gay years with Thomas the goose and then six years in an eternal triangle with Henrietta.



Photograph Jim Harris

This saga is featured as a serial over the next few months

Hits last month – Eleven thousand six hundred & forty four.

Mik Peryer the Birdman of Waikanae

*More wild birds visit Waikanae Estuary Scientific Reserve than any other area in the Wellington province
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