

Waikanae Estuary Newsletter

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Waikanae Estuary bird tours 9051001



Waikanae River, entering the estuary. The birds are blackbacked gulls.

The whitebaiting season has started

When the Waikanae Estuary and river was designated a Scientific Reserve in 1987, the powers that be forgot about the whitebaiters. You are not allowed to fish in a scientific reserve—dogs are not allowed in a scientific reserve, however, as the whitebaiters have been fishing the river forever they certainly weren't going to stop because the designation of the river had changed. A hastily arranged bylaw was passed to allow whitebaiting to continue on our newly designated scientific reserve. Now along with a lot of other people, I set the odd net to catch the plentiful flounders that inhabit our river—you can't differentiate between whitebait and a flounder as they are both fish, so again the powers that be intervened-- you must have a permit---that didn't work, as the Department of Conservation isn't open on the weekends, and you couldn't get a permit--- so in the end everyone was allowed to fish provided they obeyed the fishing regulations.

The river bank is a wonderful place to walk your dog---and everyone does--- they love to swim in the river---it is not possible in an urban situation to stop this, so because this Scientific reserve is in a built-up area a blind eye is turned to quite a lot of things. The birds are not affected to any large degree as they get used to dogs and people; in fact it is this interplay between the dogs, birds and people that makes the area so unique.

Pied Shags

The pied shags are very serious as can be seen in the photograph with one sitting on the nest. As the nests, and there are three of them, are quite high up in the tree we can't see if there are any babies. We will have to wait until we see the adults feeding the young or can hear the babies sounds coming from the nests.



Nature coast bird trail

We have an exciting new product about to be launched on our coast.

Six operators have combined to promote our new “**Bird Trail**”

Manawatu Estuary Trust with its wetlands of international importance---**Owlcatraz** with its owls and wildlife park ---**The Parrot Ranch** with over 300 exotic and rare birds---**Nga Manu Nature Reserve** with its range of native birds---**Waikanae Estuary Bird Tours** with more species of coastal and aquatic birds visiting than any other site in Wellington.---**Kapiti Island Alive** with overnight Kiwi spotting.

We are having a grand gala opening with an open day at **Nga Manu Reserve** on the 15th September at 12.30 pm. All welcome –a fun day at no cost.

Welcome to an amazing journey. You will be enhanced by the variety of both native and exotic birds and wildlife and by the characters you meet on the way.

*Start your journey today and enjoy the experience of **Nature Coast Bird Trail**.*

Don't leave home without seeing the country

At a recent charity auction for cancer kids, Raumati South couple Kylee and Graham won a weekend for two at the Shepreth Homestay in Waikanae. As part of the package they also received a complimentary Waikanae Estuary Bird Tour with Mik Peryer.

“The weekend was great and the highlight was definitely Mik’s tour.

We have lived on the Kapiti Coast for a while now but have never realized how beautiful the Waikanae estuary and lagoons are. The area is a real hidden treasure and Mik was a fascinating and knowledgeable guide. We saw 28 different breeds of bird and learned a lot about the birds and other wildlife in the area. The baby swans and pet eels were our favourites.

But that was not all—we were also driven around in Mik’s vintage car and experienced the best scones ever made [thanks Moira].

This was the closest weekend away we have ever had [15 minutes drive/] but it was also one of the best. Sometimes you never know what is right in your own backyard.

Mik and Moira along with the owners of Shepreth, Lorraine and Warren Birch generously donated their tour and accommodation for the benefit of children with cancer. Thank you Mik, Moira, Lorraine and Warren.”



**What do you
have in your
beach garden?
This is what
Trish has**



Photograph Ralph Bolton

The feet belong to Trish-- The large guard dog with the pink ribbon is Missy and the duck is riding his luck—in fact one of the eels grabbed a duck by the foot –it was dragged along the ground and over the creek by the duck for quite a long way before it let go.



Waikanae estuary scientific reserve

Photograph copyright Ralph Bolton

Hope you have enjoyed your copy of our estuary newsletter

Moira & Mik Peryer

Kapiti Bird Tours
Delivering
Nature Coast
KAPITI HOROWHENUA *experience*

