

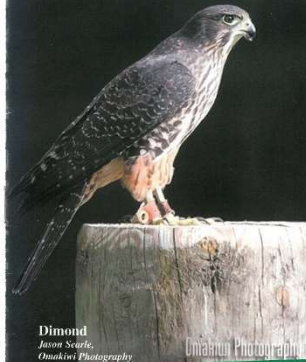
WINGSPAN

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2005 VOLUME 9



Ruby
Gary Stone,
Kaimai Kid 2005



Dimond
Jason Searle,
Omakiwi Photography



Ozzy
Jason Searle, Omakiwi Photography

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Established for the research, captive management, rehabilitation, and public awareness of New Zealand birds of prey.

Registered Charitable Trust 1992

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NEW ZEALAND

We're thrilled to present this special colour issue for 2005, marking quite an eventful, indeed historic year, for the development of Wingspan Birds of Prey Trust.

In the first instance we warmly welcome to the Board of Trustees Chris Gay of Waimiomata. Chris has been following falcons for a number of years, his other passion includes native freshwater fish, but also, he's a bit of a buff on NZ native plants - the results of which you will physically see in the new aviary. Chris arrived in his little Honda Accord three weeks before the opening, not just with Callum his son, overnight gear, fishing equipment, and delivering 'Morecombe the Morepork' - but he also managed to pack more than 70 individual potted plants for the visitor display area. Plants in the front seat, back seat, and boot - he could have entered as a 'forest float' in the local parade! On each subsequent visit to the Centre he has arrived with more propagated plants from his home, mountain rock daisies to Poor Knights Island lilies, creating quite a unique planting of native flora.

One of our other Trustees, Noel Hyde, has 'translocated' from Wellington, after some 28 years at the Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa, as Bird Collection Manager. Noel joins the volunteer team onsite at Wingspan, and aside from a dedicated raptor background of 20 plus years, visitors can view some of his outstanding taxidermy work. In particular, the unique skeleton mounts of falcon, hawk and morepork. Complete with intact flight feathers they have generated a lot of interest in the static display area.

You will read in this issue about the key events during the year - perhaps best marked by the formal blessing by local Te Arawa Reverend Rau Green. His blessing and prayers for the project and the raptors was a real gift, extending his blessings for the people of Wingspan and all visitors to the site.

The visitors book in place since the opening is an excellent example describing the passion of this conservation project. It has provided real positive feedback, brimming with encouraging comments from all over New Zealand, and many countries around the world.

Comments range from numerous entries reading "awesome", "magic", "an asset for New Zealand", through to the kids writing of their close-up encounters with "Ozzy smells funny" and "Ozzy IS funny!". Entries are often personal reflections on discovering raptors and the Wingspan programme for the first time...

"Tino wairua matou"
"Ka mau te wehi Wingspan"

NEW ZEALANDS FIRST (AND ONLY!) BIRD OF PREY CENTRE

After two and half years developing the site, thousands of hours of volunteer time, sponsor support and donations - the new Wingspan center was ready for the transfer of the raptors in October 2004.

Prior to the birds being moved, volunteers and contractors who were part of the project, were invited with their families for the formal blessing held in September, led by Te Arawa Reverend Rau Green.



Water feature by Thermal Art



Internal view of the aviary - just planted!

Each of the ten aviaries were constructed specifically for raptors, providing for adequate shelter, safe haven, security, and, with solid walls. But it's a place not just for raptors, it's a people place too.

Visitors to the center are able to view the display aviaries by entering the undercover walkway - an all-weather facility. The design concept of the landscaping leads visitors on a 'stone' pathway, representing blended raptor habitats. These include a forest atmosphere on entering the aviary - a shaded area of ferns, through to a dry riverbed incorporating a display water feature, and finally a 'high country' planting of grasses, mountain rock daisies back dropped with a view of Mount Ngongotaha.

Signage, information panels, and static displays compliment the experience, incorporating signature tukoteko posts to greet guests as unofficial guardians and reflecting a local Rotorua theme.

The vision is to offer an educational experience within a stimulating learning and display environment. It is anticipated to provide a unique high impact close-encounter that will encourage learning and awareness about New Zealand raptors, and, an appreciation of their natural environment.

The project has been, and will continue to be, a direct reflection of community involvement and ownership of conservation. It's a 'people' project - only possible by the valued input of Wingspan Board of Trustees, members, supporters and volunteers, key sponsors and contributors, and something that we can all be proud of.



Wingspan Board of Trustees -
From left: Debbie, Noel, Chris, Gloria, Mac.

FORMAL OPENING OF THE WINGSPAN BIRD OF PREY CENTRE 22 OCTOBER, 2005

Guest Speakers:
Dr Don Stafford, Historian, and Master of Ceremony,
Henry Weston, Conservator Bay of Plenty, Department of Conservation,
Geoff Moon O.B.E. Patron Wingspan, author and photographer,
Dr Nick and Babro Fox, from Wales.

More than 150 Wingspan members, key supporters and sponsors, and families, attended the opening event of the new bird of prey centre. The following is a transcript of the address by Dr Nick Fox.

"I would like to build on something that Geoff Moon has just said, and that is enthusiasm. You've got to have that, you've got to have that fire inside to make it happen. It doesn't matter if it is raptors, or some other subject, its great if you're a person that can have enthusiasm."

There was a reporter here today that asked me what is the point of falcons? To me, a question like that is like trying to explain colour to the blind. We must be enthusiastic, and this is something to be enthusiastic about - so well done to the Trustees and members of Wingspan to get this project underway."

I first came to New Zealand in 1974 to do a PhD on New Zealand falcons, down at Canterbury, and there were no scientists in this country working on birds of prey. The Wildlife Service (as it was then) thought that there were about six pairs of New Zealand falcons left and they told me that I must work on harriers and get myself insured, and you're on your own mate!

So we went from there basically. But as I got working on New Zealand falcons in the South Island I began to contact other people in New Zealand who were interested in birds of prey, either as falconers, rehabilitators, or maybe had done some surveys, or seen a pair in their area, and we got together a group called the Raptor Association of New Zealand. We had our first meeting in the Waitohu Valley, Benhopai Station, in 1975.

From there, things have gone on. People came from as far away Auckland and Whangarei, down to the South, and up from Timaru, and the whole idea of the Raptor Association was to bring together people from different aspects of interest in birds of prey. Falconers, rehabilitators, and hopefully encourage some scientific work and interest from DOC. Because the New Zealand falcon is one of those in-between

species, its an indigenous bird, but it is not rare enough to be stuck on Codfish Island, but rare enough to be quite threatened.

The Raptor Association flourished and we had meetings, printed newsletters, and once I left it had some good years and bad years, but I'm pleased to say it has kept going and most of the members of the Executive are here with us today. Tomorrow we're to have a workshop here on raptor issues in New Zealand, some of which will be down memory lane but I hope that we'll be able to define some priorities for the future, and not just talk about the past.

When I left New Zealand in 1978 I just didn't walk away. I was lucky enough to get some permits to bring with me some falcons to the UK. And with the help of some Raptor Association members, and Otorohanga Zoological Society, I had six birds and we formed a breeding colony of New Zealand falcons, which exists to this day. We're still able to breed them! We've had some inbreeding problems, but the study has been very interesting, a Noah's Ark study if you like, of how one looks after a species. I know how DOC have struggled with small populations of kakapo and robins, and when you get to these small numbers,

conserving them and breeding them, and trying to claw your way back up into a healthy population is a big struggle. We have done in Britain, one PhD study and one MSc study on this breeding programme. And I'm told now that it is the best-documented study on a small breeding population, in the world for birds of prey, and is still ongoing. I would like to thank the people of this country who have made this possible and its been great to see visitors like Geoff, and Noel, and so on, in the UK. You're all very welcome to come and see us.

The reality of course is that you don't actually save a species. You just cant say "oh, we've saved a species" and then sit down, have a relax, job done. Life isn't like that. Actually what we are doing is passing on a baton for the next generation. There is no room for complacency. We can do our bit, but we have to pass on a healthy baton for the next generation.

When we talk of conservation, we all have different ideas, scientists think of data sets, publishing papers. Bureaucrats think of action plans for species - but the reality of conservation is that it's about people. It's about people.

Before Man came to New Zealand the wildlife here was doing perfectly well, and we came. We brought pigs, we brought possums, and we brought rats. We brought farming, we brought forestry, and we brought the worst pest of all, that is Mankind. And we wanted food, we wanted energy, we wanted timber, and we wanted mineral resources. We took habitat away from the wildlife for our own needs. So when we talk about conserving wildlife, we're really more talking about adapting our human behaviour to leave room for wildlife.

I'm also a farmer. I farmed in North Canterbury, and I farm in Britain, and as a land manager I know what the words "return on investment" means. I know what its like to have a parcel of land which has cost so much. How do we get a return in financial terms from that land? It's often a conflict of interest with conservation. You're constantly juggling your priorities. On our farm in Wales we have taken 22% of the land out of agriculture, and put it into conservation. Its very exciting, but its loss making. Because sadly,

conservation is a luxury. This is why the Wingspan Trust has had to beg, borrow, try to get sponsorship, try and get grants. Conservation is a luxury and it's something we have to have - but we can't afford not to have it. We don't have a system really for bringing money into conservation.

So it's about people, and it's about the decisions we make on natural resources. The exciting thing about Wingspan is that it's a group of people who have come together. They're trying to promote understanding for our children, for all of us, on natural issues, and these children will one day be the people who have to make the decisions after we've gone. That's what Wingspan is all about.

I was never content just to be a scientist. Research after all is just the first step. The acid test is management. To go and find out things about birds. But can you really breed them? They will then tell you if your data was right - if you really understood what was going on. So if you can manage, the next step then is to pass on what we've learned, to the next generation. This is education and information. This is what Wingspan is about. Learning, applying, and, passing it on.

We visited Richard Seaton's project in Kaingaroa the other day. He has a very exciting programme on New Zealand falcons in cutover managed forests here, and he mentioned to me a subject I hear very commonly, that PhD students have to study a very narrow subject these days. That's very sad. I was lucky - when I came to New Zealand I could study all aspects of the New Zealand falcon. Its morphology, its behaviour, its hunting, its breeding, so on, to give me a rounded view of the species. But sadly, students now have a very narrow view. And it's this narrow view that leads to conflict, because people like to wear hats. They like to say, I'm a forester, I'm a farmer, I'm from DOC! I'm a protectionist, and I'm a water resources officer. We all like to have our little hats, and then from our hat, we have our perspective of the situation, but our perspective is often different from somebody else.

If I ruled the world I would make everybody change hats every month, and try and be an officer working in DOC and face the problems they face, or try and be a farmer and see some of the problems that they

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face, and that way a lot of the conflicts we have in conservation would disappear into the mist. Wildlife in all of these decisions is the piggy in the middle.

So, this is what Wingspan is all about, bringing people together, from different perspectives, getting people to understand wildlife issues. It's been a major team effort for everybody setting up this programme.

I do want to congratulate you all. I hope that it will not just be a tourist attraction. I hope that it will be a real learning resource for local people and schools. People who make decisions about New Zealand for the future. I hope it will also be a center of excellence for New Zealand and a place where people can come to learn skills.

Well done to Wingspan and the whole team...its been a lovely day, a lovely occasion, and congratulations to you all...

....I'd like to declare the Centre open!



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CELEBRATION DINNER 22 October, 2004

More than 65 guests attended the special dinner to celebrate the opening of the new Wingspan Bird of Prey Centre.



Guests arrived at Skyline Skyrides in Rotorua to board the gondolas for a 'birds eye' view from the top of Mount Ngongotaha. This was immediately followed by a luge ride - the scenic route - to the dinner venue nestled amongst the redwoods.

The forest-themed restaurant included large central fireplaces, through to lanterns on tables, adding real atmosphere to the occasion. Toasts, a few informal speeches by guests, and a delightful item by Amy Stewart-Badger, was followed by delicious fare and entertainment by the 'Taste of Irish'. All agreed it to be a most memorable evening and celebration event.



Special acknowledgement is paid to Lake Chalice Wines of Marlborough, and Peregrine Wines of Otago, for contributing their fine wines to this event.



RAPTOR WORKSHOP 23 October, 2004

Considered a key event of the year, the workshop attracted a variety of interest groups, including Wingspan members, representatives from Massey University, the Raptor Association of New Zealand, Otorohanga Zoo, ornithologists, and, those independently passionate about New Zealand birds of prey.

Chaired by Wingspan Trustee Noel Hyde, the scheduled programme included the following guest presentations-

- Geoff Moon O.B.E.** - The trails and tribulations of raptor photography.
- Trevor Worthy** - An overview of extinct New Zealand birds of prey (including Harpagornis and Laughing Owl).
- Richard Seaton** - The New Zealand falcons of Kaingaroa forest.
- Dr John Holland** - Satellite telemetry study of New Zealand falcon from 2002.
- Dr Nick Fox** - The New Zealand falcon, past, present and future.

The workshop was followed by a discussion on raptor issues facing New Zealand, as well as investigating the formation of a national raptor advisory group that could represent collective interests.

Highlighted was also a real need to safely house and catalogue archives, research material and data pertaining to New Zealand raptors. It was discussed by participants that national repositories could provide invaluable resources, - accessible for students, schools, artists, and specific interest groups.

Special thank-you's are extended to Matt McDougall of Fish and Game New Zealand as audio technician for the day, Star 100% Appliances store of Rotorua, for contributing the equipment needed for the presentations, and the tasty food deliveries from 'The Catering Company'.

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KAINGAROA FOREST UPDATE

Since 1994 Wingspan has monitored wild falcons in the pine plantations of the Central Plateau - Kaingaroa Forest - the largest man-made forest in the southern hemisphere comprising of more than 140,000 hectares.

The information collected from this time has clearly shown the karearea to be benefiting from forestry management practices by utilising the clearings and cutovers from harvesting operations. These open areas provide a suitable nesting environment, a variety of prey species, and create optimal hunting conditions for the falcon.

Research continues within the forest and since 2003 Richard Seaton has been completing a PhD project on the New Zealand falcon within Kaingaroa.

Kaingaroa Timberlands Management Ltd are acknowledged for their active interest towards the conservation and monitoring of the New Zealand falcon, this protected and threatened species now featured in the company logo and branding.



Kaingaroa Timberlands are also sponsors of one of the breeding aviaries at the Wingspan Centre. A themed display based on the cutovers of the Kaingaroa forest featuring young planted pine trees, stumps, cones and ferns.

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ANOTHER AMAZING SEASON IN KAINGAROA.

Richard Seaton

Autumn is very fast approaching and it signals the end of my second season within the Kaingaroa pine plantation, and also the end of the breeding season for the bush falcon. As usual, that means a big sigh of relief that I made it - but also a big old grin at the things that have just passed.



This breeding season we surveyed Kaingaroa, Lake Taupo, Waikato and Tarawera pine forests finding: 33 nests produced by 30 breeding pairs, 3 non breeding pairs, 45 single falcons, radio tracked 5 breeding pairs, banded 80 birds, collected habitat and prey abundance data and began tracking the dispersal of 11 juveniles, including 1 fostered into the wild from captivity (a first for New Zealand!).

All of this simply would not have been possible without the amazing help of Shane McPherson and Matt Clement who worked beyond the call of duty, and to whom I am eternally grateful. Kaingaroa Timberlands once again have been amazing not only aiding with falcon sightings but providing Matt and Shane with a vehicle. New Zealand Forest Managers are also now sponsoring my work and Carter Holt Harvey continues to support me also. Forest and Bird, Waikato provided the funding for radio transmitters for the juveniles and a grant from the Lotteries commission enabled us to purchase transmitters for the adults. DoCo once again provided us with a roof over our heads, and Debbie Stewart, Noel Hyde, Steve Lawrence and Dave Bell helped immeasurably in the field providing safety and often hot meals on occasion - and you cannot ask for more than that!

Thank you all, it has once again been a season that has surpassed all expectations and would not have been possible without your support.

ED'S NOTE

A special message needs to acknowledge the survival of a second season for Richard Seaton's car! You could say that Kaingaroa has provided some challenges for this offroad vehicle.



A VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Shane McPherson

I'm Shane McPherson, and for the last three months I have been working as a volunteer for Richard Seaton, observing wild New Zealand falcon during the breeding season in Kaingaroa Forest.

I am currently basking in the morning sun in a small block of felled land in Kaingaroa. At this moment I have my eyes on two of the three young falcons fledged from this nest five weeks ago. These young spitties have been flying about all morning, playing with one another and improving their hunting techniques. They seem to be enjoying the morning sun as much as I am, letting the hours pass while waiting for their next meal. Mum and Dad falcon are out, doing the hard work. It's a full time job trying to keep three hungry mouths well fed.

Luckily there's no guesswork for me. With radio transmitters attached, I know from the comfort of this deck chair that both adults are about 500 metres away in a stand of 30-year-old pines. Most likely sitting high on a tree waiting for the perfect moment to stoop on an unsuspecting finch.

Essentially, my 'job' here is to sit and observe, and record, wild falcon behaviour. What could be more demanding than to watch adults feeding fluffy chicks at the nest? Then, follow them week by week as they

take their awkward flights, improving their skills until they are able to take a mid air food pass from their parents. Or even to see that, as I write, a lazy magpie decides to take a shortcut across the clearing, stupidly unaware that the juveniles are now practicing hunting for themselves. Although the young male is smaller, he seems to know he has the upper hand of speed and weapons. Within a minute, he is above the magpie, with a quick tuck and turn he begins to stoop. The magpie left its dodge a bit too late and one hit is all it can stand and belts across to the nearest refuge. Squawking with shock as it dives for cover in thick ferns.

So, how did I come to be here? A 'volunteers wanted' ad caught my eye as I walked through the Ecology building at Massey university in Palmerston North, and I decided to pop in and talk to Richard 'birdman' Seaton. Within a fortnight of our meeting I found myself at the DOC volunteer house in Murupara, with Richard and fellow volunteer Matthew Clement. Of the three, I am grossly inexperienced. Richard has worked with many raptors over the world of which Mauritius is mentioned frequently. Matt has worked a few seasons with bats in the USA and Canada, gaining field experience as well as radio tracking experience. I felt a little out of my depth when I arrived, but none-the-less full of excitement and enthusiasm. It wasn't long before I was brought up to speed, made far easier by Rich's patience and ability to pass on a little of his knowledge.

For the first six weeks we were to find as many nests as possible. Kaingaroa is the second largest plantation forest in the Southern Hemisphere. It is divided into compartments of differing ages with approximately 1400 compartments, of 100 hectares each, - a total of 140,000 Ha. About 300-400 of these compartments are potential falcon nesting sites, they only nest in areas of clear-cut or young trees up to three years old. So for the next month and a half we surveyed, walking a maze of broken branches, bracken, blackberry, in the sweltering November sun. The falcons would make themselves known, kecking and dive-bombing at whatever came too close.

Knowing a nest was near was easy. Finding them proved far more interesting! It was a matter of keeping the head down, watching every step to make sure the well camouflaged nest wasn't stood on, and with two people searching, the person being attacked the most, was probably closer.

Every nest found resulted in a lot of whooping and raving, and the 30th nest was as celebrated as the first. But with 30 nests this season, we've had plenty of opportunities to band birds. This was the most up close, personal, and rewarding part of the work. The falcons weren't too impressed with us temporarily removing the chicks to band, and they didn't let them go without a fight.

Going into the nest sites usually filled me with excitement, but "Blood Gully", as it is affectionately known, filled me with fear. This female has a reputation for drawing blood, and Debbie Stewart from Wingspan, Richard Seaton, and myself, have all been victims of her fury. Imagine the scene, Richard standing at a safe distance down the road, yelling to Matt and I with ever so helpful directions leading us closer and closer to the nest. Scrambling uphill through bracken, doing our best to keep an eye on the female. But with the advantage of downhill assault, eyes fixed on my scalp; half a kilo of claws comes barreling down from above. A last second duck saved me from injury...this time.

Matt spotted the nest tucked under a large log - with three chicks sitting quietly in the scrape. They were quickly whisked into canvas bags while I did my best to occupy the female. Ducking worked, twice, and then the falcon anticipated it. Every pass thereafter found contact, my canvas bag doing little to stop the pain, or the bleeding. Once the chicks were in the bag, and Matt on his way to the road, I decided against dignity and ran as fast as I could to avoid another strike. Meanwhile, Rich and Matt were rolling with laughter.

The chicks were then banded, weighed and measured. Once all was done, Rich was generous enough to let us return them. Thanks!

By mid-December, five nests were chosen for home range studies, and radio transmitters were attached to the adults at those nests. Matt and I have been following those nests since, spending a day at each nest every week.

So, I sit here for half the day watching juveniles while Matt is driving about the forest tracking the adults as they hunt. At lunchtime we swap, and I radio track for the afternoon. There's not much to say about the first few weeks, except terrible weather, wet tents, and a cheap Warehouse sun umbrella. How ironic.

But as the chicks grow and we get to see what's left of summer, I am dreading the coming March. The season will be at an end, and the juveniles hunting independently.

Now with newfound motivation I will be returning to Massey to complete a postgraduate diploma, this time with a focus on falcons and raptors. I intend to be back here next summer helping Rich with his final season. From there I hope to be continually involved with falcon conservation efforts.

Having spent many days at Wingspan, I hope to be welcomed into the art of falconry, and there have already been suggestions for further fields of study that could be addressed in a Masters project. I couldn't have hoped for a better summer, and am privileged to be involved in this research.

What could perhaps be described as 'Pinus envy' - it would appear that attention is now focusing on other exotic forests within New Zealand.

From November 2004 through to January 2005 Massey student and Wingspan member Nicola Addison, completed some falcon fieldwork in the Pan Pae forests of the East Coast. Encouraging in particular, were the numbers of falcon within the Mohaka, in what has been described as a 'falcon hotspot'.

Further reports have filtered through of falcons in pine forests in Nelson/Marlborough, Otago, and West Coast.

TRANSLOCATION - A NZ FIRST!

Special attention and efforts were made during the season for fostering a young captive bred falcon to a wild pair nesting in Kaingaroa.

The 8th of January 2005 marked the hatch of a falcon chick at Otorohanga Zoo, - the only surviving chick from their pairs late-season clutch.

Generally, captive bred chicks can be released by the 'hack' method - utilising an artificial nest platform and feeding table. This method has been trialed for a number of years at the Wingspan site in Rotorua however, in this instance it was not a release option. Two or more birds of the same age are essential for success, and this falcon chick, as a single bird, presented a very different approach.

Meanwhile, Richard Seaton was monitoring the last nest of the season in Kaingaroa Forest - coincidentally the nest included three chicks (one male and two females) of the same age and development as the eyass at Otorohanga.

A unique opportunity was considered for the translocation of the captive bred bird to be fostered to the wild pair. Most critical however, was the translocation to be completed before the chick had fledged, - this would allow suitable imprinting on the site, new parents and siblings, before decamping from the nest.

In what can only be described as a real team effort between Wingspan, Otorohanga Zoo, Richard Seaton, and the prompt support of the Department of Conservation (Bay of Plenty and Waikato Regions) - the falcon chick was delivered on February 4th 2005 for a physical examination, blood samples and faecal smears, before being banded, fitted with a specially fitted backpack transmitter, and placed into its new forest home.

This was the first time this fostering method has been attempted within New Zealand, and we're pleased to report the translocation has been without incident. The follow-up monitoring of the juvenile and extended family has since found them all to be thriving, and now all on the wing.

We'll keep you posted!

Short Notes

A short note in the Ornithological Society of New Zealand's Notornis (Vol.51 Part 2 2004) was published by Debbie Stewart and Noel Hyde reporting New Zealand falcon nesting in exotic pine plantations. (www.onzn.org.nz).

Other short notes are anticipated in 2005 by Noel Hyde and Richard Seaton detailing prey items found at nest sites within Kaingaroa, in addition to juvenile female successfully breeding within her first season, at less than one year of age.

AT HACK

'Skyhawk', was delivered originally as an eyass at the start of 2003, subsequently reared, and then trained for fitness by Wingspan Trustee Gloria Stafford.

Sky was subsequently released at the Wingspan site on the 2nd June 2003, and after two years still remains as a daily visitor. While she is an active hunter, and is obviously independent, she prefers to take the 'free' offerings of prey items left daily on a feeding table.

Sky is a daily caller who has delighted many visitors, soaring overhead, and then dropping down to the feeding table close to the aviary. She has been through two moults and already has very pale plumage.



In November 2004 we witnessed her trailing nest material in her talons skywards up the slopes of Mount Ngongotaha, courtship flying and 'skydancing' at the summit.

By the end of December, we delighted in seeing her with two female juveniles on the wing. Often soaring the ridge that backdrops the main aviary. Calling, whining, and food passing through the summer months.

Red - the story (still) continues...

Our last newsletter included the story of "Red" the resident tiercel - a juvenile male NZ falcon, captive bred by Wingspan and released as a juvenile at fledging. He was banded with a metal tag along with a red colour band for easier identification, and was subsequently known as "Red".

[For those readers new to 'hack' release method, - it is essentially the removal as a juvenile (prior to fledging), from parents, and then placement into an artificial nest platform with siblings. A hands-off approach to releasing two or more juveniles, with supplementary feeding through to 'natural' independence].

To recap - Red hatched on January 7 2003 and was then released on February 9 2003. After some weeks remaining onsite, Red left the Wingspan airspace, but then returned to set up nesting territory in March 2004, soliciting the attention of "Diamond" one of our resident female NZ falcons during her daily free flight training sessions. Coincidentally, the 2004 hack release in March included two female juveniles who Red soon adopted as his own. Red actively hunted prey for the juveniles and constantly defended the territory. One of the females, "Green" left the release after a few weeks on the wing but the remaining juvenile "Orange" was constantly paid attention by Red.

Red and Orange remained together through the winter months, and while Orange was a juvenile (in her first year), by September they were obviously a pair, with breeding behaviour and copulation attempts observed.

Their behaviour was typical of any breeding pair of NZ falcon - notably the pairs aggression and defence of their territory at the Wingspan site. New Zealand falcons are known internationally for their strong

defensive behaviour, and onsite at Wingspan made no difference at all. So much so, from October through to December 2004 we were effectively grounded from free flying display birds at the risk of resident birds being killed.

The formal opening of Wingspan's new centre in October was also notable for a different reason. A New Zealand first for hatched falcons to return to their 'natal' area to breed, and also an unprecedented breeding age of the female. Orange, at just seven months old, laid a clutch of three eggs, immediately behind the hatched box in a small stand of *Pinus radiata*.

The anticipated hatch of the eggs, if fertile, was marked for November 27 2004. Unfortunately, when checked prior to the hatch, there were no eggs remaining, indicating predation.

Orange no longer remains onsite, last seen at the end of December, however Red continues to make occasional appearances.

IN THE MEWS

It has been a disappointing breeding season for our main pair of falcon this last season, but not an isolated experience with failed clutches reported from other holders within New Zealand. The unseasonable weather during November and December is being held partially accountable.

Coincidentally, it was interesting to note that this year we didn't receive any injured juvenile harrier eyasses, usually delivered when found by haymaking contractors. Again, perhaps the weather played a part, with the birds likely to have fledged prior to the late hay cuts by farmers.

One of the highlights this season, has been the rearing of a small NZ falcon tiercel! The only surviving chick from a hatch of three in Upper Hutt, and real concerns by Steve Lawrence of the Raptor Association of New Zealand were held for the bird to survive. A rush trip to Wellington and back by Noel Hyde equipped with towels, thermostats and hot water bottles, the falcon

chick arrived on the 22nd November at only 10 days old. Weighing just 84 grams, he was immediately placed in a heated brooder unit.

He has been named 'Ozzy' - after Ozzy Osborne. On arrival, a lovable character, and a bit unsteady on his feet. As he has grown and matured, he is still a lovable character but now, just like his namesake, has a bit of attitude!



Ozzy has been adopted by sponsor parents Wolfgang and Nicole Keller, visitors to the Centre from Herbruck, Germany.

Danke!

Free flying since January 2005, Ozzy has since been learning some flying skills, and gaining fitness daily. His flying tuition has not been without drama however. Ozzy has had two experiences of being AWOL - on the 11th February, and then again the 1st March he was chased and duly escorted from the property by the free adult tiercel 'Red'. A hard way to learn the ropes to being a falcon, not least it brings a whole new meaning to the expression for Debbie to be 'outstanding in her field' - albeit looking strange to onlookers standing in the middle of local paddocks holding pieces of chicken in the air and blowing a whistle!

Ozzy has since interacted with hundreds of visitors to the Centre, not least made a guest appearance on national television appearing on TV1's 'Close Up in March 2005.

'PIRUA', another falcon, was found as a distressed, hungry and orphaned juvenile by Murray Rowe of the NZ Deerstalkers Association in the Kaimanawa Forest, south of Taupo.

(cont Pg 13)

Murray is a keen hunter, photographer, and experienced bushman, and spent some hours at the nest site waiting for the parent birds to return, before trekking some 2.5 hours to the nearest DoC office.

Nicola Etheridge of the Tongararo/Taupo Conservancy delivered the cyass female directly to Wingspan on November 1 2004. We estimated the age of the falcon based on weight, and feather development, to be 28 days old.

By December she commenced some training and free flight for the first time, however after the seasonal timing was further considered, along with her lack of maturity, the decision was made to avoid the winter months for a release and reevaluate her training programme commencing in Spring 2005.

Sponsored birds within the aviaries are courtesy of Bryan and Margaret Burch, of Tauranga, and Wolfgang and Nicole Keller, from Germany. Please contact Wingspan directly if you would like to sponsor an individual bird.

CACHE

It seems that not just those researching falcons in the field are the only ones hearing the 'honourable' scars from NZ falcons. In the news in January 2005, the following item appeared in national newspapers...

Coast-to-Coast athletes have a new obstacle to contend with on the tortuous mountain run over Goat Pass near Otrira - the "Deception falcon".

In the lower part of Deception Valley, runners are coming under attack by a New Zealand falcon, or Karearea, taken to ambushing runners, as silently and unseen as a stealth bomber. "It came out of nowhere. I had no warning whatsoever," said Coast-to-Coast contender Neil Williams. "I heard a bird calling in nearby bush. Then something sharp hit me from behind."

Williams saw the falcon retreat to its bush hideout and thought that would be the end of it, but the bird returned. "I picked up a stick, waved it in the air and

yelled, but it came at me another three times," he said.

Several weeks later, when Williams ran through the strike zone again, his running mate was the prime target. "He was attacked three or four times before it came after me," said Williams.

Endurance athlete Gareth Holebrook caught a glimpse of the falcon perched up a tree, before the aerial assaults began. "It made a few attacks on us. It hit one of my colleagues on the head and gave her a nasty headache. She wasn't too impressed," he said.

Department of Conservation officer at Arthur's Pass, Wayne Costello, knows all about this regal-looking bird that features on the S20 note. "Birds like that are very territorial when it comes to protecting their nest. They are a very striking bird and amazing predators".

Coast-to-Coast race director Robin Judkins was 'over the moon' that the falcon was living in the valley. He expected it would produce faster run times in the February 4 and 5 event. "That will give them a hurry up and it will certainly promote the idea of record times!" he said.

Courtesy NZPA Jan 22 05

AWARDS

The Board of Trustees were pleased to represent Wingspan when nominated for the Inaugural Bay of Plenty Conservation Awards in August 2004.

A delightful evening hosted by Waimangu Thermal Reserve and the Bay of Plenty Department of Conservation, with the announcement that Wingspan won the coveted group award for contributions to conservation.

"Bay of Plenty Conservation Award, Department of Conservation - presented to Wingspan Birds of Prey Trust for outstanding contributions to conservation by a group".



CATALOGUE



New Zealand falcon by Janet Marshall. 45cm X 35mm.

Gouche on ragboard, conservation mounted with recycled rimu frame.

SOLD Original \$3,000.

Purchased during the Wingspan Opening Weekend by Henare and Kath Mohi, of Rotorua. We're thrilled that such a special painting has found a wonderful home.

Life size New Zealand Falcon, by Mike Norris. 47cm x 16cm X 22 cm.

Solid bronze sculpture on granite base, with dark brown patina.

Limited Edition #2 of 9. \$6,500

Commissions also welcomed. mike@cheyne.co.nz. (04) 236 8091



NEW



Bird in the Hand A book by Janet Hunt \$29.95

RECOMMENDED

Limited Edition prints from Pauline Morse, Janet Marshall, Jeanette Blackburn, available at the Wingspan Centre. Visit the 'Barn' for any enquiries, or visit e-shop for online purchases.



COMING SOON

New Zealand Post, on behalf of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, has an annual tradition to issue a coin set (\$5 legal tender) that features an endangered species. Last year's issue was the Fiordland Crested Penguin, while this year's issue is to be the New Zealand falcon. Orders can be placed through Wingspan or NZ Post. \$5.00 uncirculated falcon coin \$29.00 \$5.00 silver proof falcon coin \$79.00 Coin sets also available.

Tasmanian author Marles Bugman, has written a children's novel featuring a NZ falcon experience. Distribution anticipated August 2005.



Visit the Barn at the Wingspan Centre. An informal gallery - raptor themed, with products available for purchase, selected gifts, artwork and ThermalArt souvenir products. Enquiries as a meeting venue and specific events welcomed.

SPONSOR AND MEMBERS DIRECTORY

KAINGAROA TIMBERLANDS



DESIGNERWEBBS

Home of Hardy, Rotorua. Canon, Rotorua. Daniel Margot 2005. Forman Insulation, Rotorua. Golden Coast, New Plymouth. Gus & Gerdie Knoppers, Te Puke. ThermalArt, Rotorua. Treeline Nursery, Kaharoa. Ngongotaha Nursery, Rotorua. Kevin Philpott 2004.

2005 FINANCIAL MEMBERS (with year of joining)

Warkworth: Warwick & Donna Binnie 2003. Derek and Helen Binnie 2003.

Auckland: Grant and Sarah Abbott 2001. Ashleigh Anderson 2003. Courtney Anderson 2003. Russell Balmforth 1996. David Baker 1998. Peter Bayliss 2001. Robin Bush 2005. Ann Collins 2004. Michael Coutanche 2004. Martin Dixon 2001. Eleanor Duff 1996. Robert Dyball 2003. Phil and Margaret Fry 1997. Adrienne Furness 2004. Brian Gannon 2003. Peter Glamuzina 2005. Mike and Sharon Graham 2002. Jeremy Green 2004. Betty Griffiths 2005. Mike Sharon Graham and Alister Harlow 2001. Kate Henderson 2003. Victor Hopwood 2004. Penny Hunt 2002. Brita Jacobson 2002. Andrew James 2001.

Bay of Islands: Te Aroha Henare 2004. Michael Tane 2004.

Blenheim: Grace and Davy Binnie 2001. Chris and Lynne Boyce 2002. Don Cronarty 2001. Ian Lyall 1996. Redwood Pass Vineyards Ltd 2001. Jim Shield 2002.

Cambridge: Jenni Steadman 2002.

Christchurch: Rob Illingworth 2003. S.A. Ingrej 2003.

Penamandel: John Veysey 1996.

David Lawrie 2000. Allan McGillivray 2002. Daniel Margot 2005. Jill Marchant 2004. Stephanie Martin 2004. Mathew & Jonathan Mason 2005. Geoff and Lynette Moon 1992. Nigel Naushbaum 2004. Patricia Nazari 2004. Murray Pedersen 2002. John & Adrienne Powell 2004. Jean Prins 2005. Karen Richards 2004. Carol Ryan 2003. John Sanders 2004. Pat Seyb 2001. Tom and Hannah Smith 2003. Ian and Hilary Stollery 2003. Josephine Thomson 2001. Ashley Thomson 2001. Royda Twentymen 2001. Linda Waters 2003. Ann Whisman 2003.

Darfield
Rob Lawrence 2005

Dunedin
David Laing 2004
Lisa McArthur 2002

Felding
Sheila Coombs 1996
Heseline Trust 1996
Peter and Dorothy Hurran

Gisborne
Doug Bell 1996
Mike Crosslaw 2004
Derek and Gwen Kirkham 2002
Kate McDonald 1996

Gore
Bonnie Smith 2004

Hamilton
Hugh and Zoe Clifford 2001
Ian Logan 2005
John and Rona Lomas 1996
Waikato Branch Royal Forest & Bird Protection Soc. Inc 2002
Waikato Ornithological Society of New Zealand 2003
Angela Wickham 2004

Kaitiaki
Robyn Skelton 1997
Wendy Stewart 1997
Ali White 2001

Kaukapakapa
Suzi Phillips 2001

Kawerau
Carter Holt Harvey 2003
Kawerau Stroke Club 1999
John and Margaret Brierley 1997

Levin
Bev & John Craig 2004
Christine Moyle 2005

Lower Hutt
Murray Horlor 2001
David Kincaid 2001
John & Lynette Robinson 2005

Manapouri
Pauline Nicholson 2004

Matamata
Pam Gore 2002
Brian Jones 2004

Morrinsville
G & M Thomas 2005

Mt Maunganui
David McKay 2004

Napier
Karen Kenrick 2004

Nelson
Howard and Shelly Kalmer 2001
Janet Marshall 2002
Debbie Oliver 2004
Sally and Murray Win 1996

New Plymouth
Nicola Addison 2004
Dave Bell 1997
David & Terri Gould 2004

Ohakune
Mike Craig 2004
Davina Mott 2004

Ohape
Malcolm Hutton 1996

Opononi
Harold and Jenny Barlow 2005
Fraser Barlow 2005

Owhango
Robert Peeters 2003

Palmerston North
Ross Bailey 2002
Robyn Galloway 2002
Diana Monaghan 2003
Richard Scaton 2003
Faye Templeton 2004

Paraparumu
Pan Oliver 2004

Putaruru
Chris & Anne Gilbert 2005

Raglan
Loretta Dixon 2004

Reporoa
Kathy Somerville 1996

Rotorua
Dave Abernethy 2003
John Anderson 2004
ANZ Bank 2003
Marygold Argent
Christine Ashe 2005

Don and Diane Atkinson 2005
Sheryl & David Baker 2004
Roger & Lorraine Barker 2004
Joan Bell 1996
Miss I Benbow 2004
Jeanette Blackburn 1996
Canmap Hawley 2001

Anne-Marie Caudwell 2003
Wendy Christiansen 2003
Suzi Clemens 2002
Sandy Corbett 2005
Ron & Joan Couchman 2003
Jenny Coudrey 2005
Jon Craig 2003

Kevin and Jill Crowe 2005
Peter and Jill du Chateau 1997
David Edwards 2004
Elers Family
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Joe Fleet 1999
Murray Forster 1996
Fuller Family 2003
Todd Harris 2005
Norman Gannier Family 2005
Ham Gifford 2005
Haggie 2005
Sue Hahn 2005
Ron Hall 2005

Brent and Shirley Hardy 2002
Todd Harris 2005
Barugh & Heather Heather 2004
Kath Henderson 1996
Warwick Hesketh 2003
Brian Hodgson 2004
Ryan Holmes 2004
Wayne & Wendy Holmes 2004
Noel Johnson 2003
Des & Janet Johnson 2004
Noel & Alison Lambertson 1996
Rod Lochhead 2004
Kaharoa School 2003
Diane McKay 2004
Peter & Ann McKellar 2005
Doog McLellan 2003
D.M. McMillan 2002
Christel McNeely 2005
Henare & Kath Mohi 2004
Walter Moodie 1998
Nancy Naylor 2004

Rev Alan Newman 2003
Irene Oliver 1997
Paradise Valley Springs 1997
Sue Potter 2003
Rotorua Central Probuc Club 2003
George & Lucy Racozy 1997
Leo Rika 2005
Wayne Roberts 2004
Ian Rogerson 2004
Roto Whenua Kiwanis 2002
Rotorua Pleasure Boating and Fishing Club 2000
Natalie Snowball 1997
D'Arcy Shuttleworth 2004
Soropitist International of Rotorua 2001
Mary Staal-Adams 2004
Jack & Edie Stafford 2003
Don Stafford 2003
Mt Tarawera New Zealand Ltd 2002
Dr Margrietha Theron 2004
Tony Todd 2004
Phil Tunstall 2004
Dennis & Robyn Ward 2004
Stephan White 1998
Wildland Consultants 2001
Lou & Robyn Woolliams 1996
The Young Family 2001

Taupo
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A J Parkin 2005
Pat Smith 2005

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Stan & Carol Merriman 1999
Gary Stone 2005
Tom Ray 2004
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Laurie & Jan Hoverd 2003
Colin Jenkins 2004
Murray Rowe 2005

Te Puke
Gus and Gerdie Knoppers 2001
Lindisfarne Ltd 2003
Shane McPherson 2004
Te Puke Branch, Royal Forest and Bird Protection Soc. 1997

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Waikato
Janet Hunt 2003
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Pam Oliver 2002

Waikanae
Shane Caley 1996

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Mr and Mrs R. Anderson 2003
John Vlaanderen 2004

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Jeffrey Arthur 2003
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Mike Norris 2004
Nick Peetz 2005
G.Schipper 2004

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T. Fitzmaurice 2002
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Andre Hamman 2003

Neville Harris & E Greig 2003
Phil Hope 2002
Finn Kamphorst 2002

Whangaparaoa
Jason Stead 2005

Whangarei
E Long 2004

Whitianga
George & Nina Calder 1996

INTERNATIONAL

Australia
Jacob Jones-Henderson 2003
Shane Riley 2004
Murray & Barbara Stafford 2003

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Wolfgang & Nicole Keller 2004

United Kingdom
S Binns 2005
Alan Horton 2005
Tony & Jennifer Orstein 2005

USA
Henry Bowles 2004
Hunter (the Bear) Bolling 2004
Charles & Karen Geerz 2004
Paul Johnson 2004
Bart and Marlene Miller 2004
Tim & Marlene Peddicord 2003
Lee and Adrienne Peterson 2002
Mr & Mrs C Schoettlin 2004
Will Trimble 2004

We would like to offer sincere condolences to the families and friends of Nelson member, Gavin Cederman of Takaka. Gavin died in a climbing accident on Mount Aspiring April 2004. Also the sad loss of Rotorua member, Brian Canning, in February 2004

At the World Centre for birds of prey in Boise, Idaho USA, tribute has been paid to the life of Morley Nelson, an American falconer and biologist who died in February 2003. His legacy and memory will endure, every time a lure is swung, every time a raptor is cast over a cliff, every time a utility pole is retrofitted to protect raptors, and every time NAFPA's Honorary Members list is read.

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Waitara
Ross Jury 2004

Warkworth
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John Vlaanderen 2004

Wellington
Jeffrey Arthur 2003
D.J. Binmie 2001
Graeme Brown & Debbie Clare 2003
Mathews Henderson 2001
Brad Henderson 2003
Michael Kilpatrick 2003
Shirley Naim 2003
Mike Norris 2004
Nick Peetz 2005
G.Schipper 2004

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Emma & Blake Barlow 2005
T. Fitzmaurice 2002
Derek & Kerry Gosling 2002
Andre Hamman 2003

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Phil Hope 2002
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The Wingspan Board of Trustees would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support of Wingspan Birds of Prey Trust over the past year.

As a volunteer organisation and charitable trust, your contributions are welcomed and important for the ongoing life of the Trust.

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