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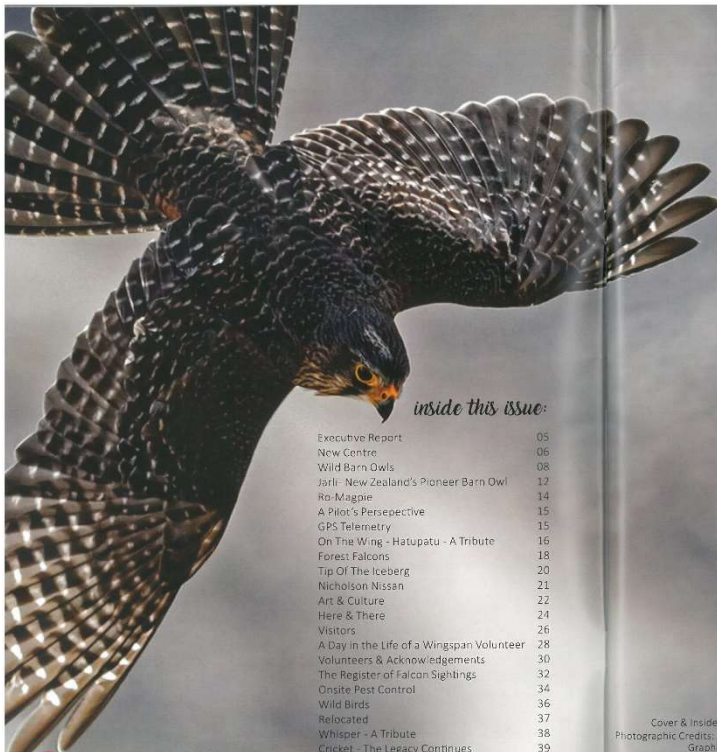
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WINGSPAN NATIONAL BIRD OF PREY CENTRE
REGISTERED CHARITABLE TRUST 1992

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

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Tēnei tātau e mihi ana ki ngā tātau tūpuna. E mihi hoki ana ki ngā whānau me ngā kaitiātoke e tauwhiri nei i ngā mahi takai i ngā manu o Aotearoa.

Ko to mātau wāhi huihuiinga kāi runga i te maunga o Ngongotahā, i runga i te whenua tūpuna o Ngāti Whakauae. Ko ngā kōrero tuku iho o te takiwā nei, e arahina i a mātau.

Tuia ki te rangi, tuia ki te whenua. Titia ki ngā wāi, whiaa ki ngā hau.

Mauri Ora ki ngā Kārearea, Mauri Ora ki ngā Kāhu, Mauri Ora ki ngā Ruru, Mauri Ora ki a tōtau kaitiātoke.

Ko Wingspan mātau.

We acknowledge our ancestors of the past, the connectors of families and friends supporting the work for the birds of New Zealand for the next generations.

Our home is on the mountain of Ngongotahā, our meeting place is the ancestral land of Ngāti Whakauae, Te Arawa

We identify together with history and culture, and we honour the land, the sky, the water, and the wind.

Good health to the falcons, good health to the hawks, good health to the owls, good health to all.

Our home is Wingspan



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New Centre

It's been a while since we last published a Wingspan Journal, so unless you've visited us at the new site you may well wonder just what we've been up to. While we continue to fundraise and face various obstacles and setbacks, we're proud to say we've also taken enormous strides in the development.

The new site, on the ancestral lands of Ngāti Whakauae, is beautiful and perfect for Wingspan's new home. There are stunning views of Lake Rotoma and surrounding farmlands, as we sit nestled on the slopes of Mt Ngongotahā. The spectacular sight of our birds carving up the skies makes up for the chilly wind blowing up the mountainside.

The driveway and car park were the first stages of the development and arguably the most important ones – the site was literally just a paddock before! At the same time, earthworks were underway for the new centre site. It was a huge job that was made even bigger when we experienced a one-in-one-hundred-year weather event that washed a decent chunk of it away.

Hours and hours have been spent planting, weeding, mulching, mowing, and weed-eating, and a lot of this back-breaking work has been done by volunteers. We have hosted two "Get Dirty" days with volunteers turning out in the masses to plant thousands of natives. Purchase of the plants was funded by TRENT through Trees That Count and Project Crimson and delivery was complimentary by TreeLine Native Nursery. We are humbled by the support shown to Wingspan and are so grateful. You wouldn't know it was a paddock in a past life by looking at it now; the plants have really flourished, and the birdlife is returning in droves (think fantails, pūkeko, bellbirds, kererū, paradise ducks and more!).

While we may not have the centre itself, we have in place the necessary shelters we need to conduct business as usual. We had a team of fit and strong gym bunnies volunteer to construct our temporary aviaries and they did a wonderful job! Our office is where all the behind-the-scenes magic happens and is the perfect hub where all staff come together for meetings. The "Falconer's Shed" (or garage, if you're being pedantic) serves as

the reception, shop, and museum, and plays host to all of Wingspan's visitors. The cottage is where Wingspan Manager, Heidi, lives, and she doubles as on-site security.

Not only do we have top-notch security in our manager Heidi, but we also have a fancy security system in place thanks to sponsorship from Aon New Zealand. Multiple floodlights and cameras should deter anyone who's up to no good!

More recently, Wingspan has been on a roll! We're now sporting some flash new seating, so our visitors can enjoy Flight of the Falcon in comfort and style. Mill Contractors did a fabulous job, and generously donated the macuocarpa wood for the seating too – thanks guys! We also have a fancy new Falconer's Shed, with gip fitted by volunteers and long-time members, Greg and Maribeth Harvey, and Steve Lawrence. It won't be long now before we'll have our wastewater connection installed, and we'll have the luxury of flushing toilets! Yay!

All these developments are big steps forward on the path to our new centre. Thanks to the talents and hard work of architect Aaron Bailey of Advanced Housing and project manager Joanne McCracken of API Property Group, we have a wonderful, fit-for-purpose new centre to look forward to, and we are excited for what the future brings.



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Executive Report

Obbie Stewart, MNZM, Executive Director

I am delighted to present the Executive Report for this Wingspan Journal, and celebrate the past, present and future. By all accounts birds of prey mean business, and Wingspan does too!

Within our apex branches, the Wingspan Board represents a diverse range of skills for governance, from Patron Dr Ruud Kleinstege, through to Board Chair Jonathan Rudge, alongside long serving Trustees Noel Hyde, Dr Richard Seaton, and scientific advisor Dr Nick Fox.

Last year, retiring from the board were Christopher Gay and Steve Lawrence, both of whom have been long time contributors towards horticulture, donated equipment and goods, captive management and research field work. Both of them continue to support Wingspan through their volunteer work, and we acknowledge their many years of contribution to our collective successes.

Two additions to the board bring valuable experience to complement the governance leading into the future. They are Tame Malcolm, and Daniel Feutz, both well recognised for skills as diverse as cultural liaison, pest control, corporate experience, and business acumen.

I would like to acknowledge the staff who have worked tirelessly over the last year. Through the "business as usual" and the day-to-day operations, our small team have remained inspired and motivated to keep working through the uncertainty of the pandemic with enthusiasm and determination.

Despite the challenges faced, our end of year financial and operational reports are positive and encouraging. Through difficult times we remain grateful for your sponsor support and member donations that kept us afloat. We also acknowledge and recognise first time government financial support through the Department of Conservation, with the Wildlife Injured Relief Fund (WIRF) for \$53,000, and the Ministry of Social Development Covid-19 Wage Subsidies of more than \$35,000 through Level 4 lockdowns.

Further recovery was marked through the summer holiday season with the "Flight of the Falcon" training displays proving very popular, helping offset trading income. Alongside generous private donations and sponsorships, we experienced high visitor volumes with the return of domestic travellers actively supporting local, seeking new wildlife adventures, and supporting conservation efforts.

This has given us more confidence moving forwards, and Wingspan now builds on a reputation of success, longevity, and sometimes more intangible outputs. We are excited for resurgence with the development of the new Wingspan centre on the ancestral lands of Ngāti Whakauae, to manage the further growth of Wingspan in sustainable ways. It's not just about saving our unique birds of prey, they are a unique conduit for promoting

cultural, education, and research objectives that benefit the wider community.

The new education/research centre is a significant project. To back this up, and with the support of a \$5000 Lotteries Environment and Heritage Grant, a feasibility study was commissioned, and completed in March by Tom Lynch, Foris Ltd. The results of this report were outstanding and, alongside end of year financial reports, with independent audits, very encouraging and give confidence we're on track.

In total, it's a \$5 million project. Despite a transitional period followed by Covid challenges, and the increases in costs (product and processes) and reductions of interest rates for small investment incomes, to date, with the support of sponsors and members, more than 30% has been raised for the project. This includes Wingspan's accumulated funds; support from International Wildlife Consultants; key contributions from the forestry sector including Timberlands Ltd and the New Zealand Forest Owners Association; support from the tourism sector with the Tourism Infrastructure Fund (TIF); contributions for the education programme of \$40,000 through the Rotoma Lakes Council fund; and a \$100,000 boost from Rotoma Trust. Further funding partnerships are being invited, and an application has been lodged to the Lotteries Commission to secure the remaining funds needed.

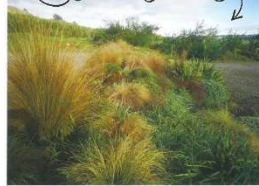
All going well, construction and further development are scheduled for next year, which is so very timely! 2022 marks the 30th anniversary of Wingspan being formally registered as a charitable trust, and a recognised national conservation program.

Together we've notched many significant milestones, more than 100 falcons bred and released, almost 1000 raptors through the centre, hundreds of thousands of visitors, and millions of smiles. Thank you for being part of our first 30 years, and now with anticipation for the next 30 years.

The sky is the limit.



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Then & Now



Then & Now

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Wild Barn Owls

by Noel Myers

New Zealand's newest native bird of prey, the barn owl

Wherever you're outside on a calm, still night after dark, especially during autumn, have a listen for the 'shh'neeeeeeet, SHH'heeeeeeet, SHH'heeeeeeet call of the barn owl. You may very likely have them living nearby and don't even realise it.

A stunningly beautiful white owl with a heart-shaped face, and a silent, ghostly-white, butterfly-like flight, these birds now call New Zealand home. They're spreading fast from Northland and down across the rest of the country. They're preferring open, rough, Mikoyu grass pasture farmland, with drains and patches of old growth trees, especially pod and grey pine, and that provides hollows for roosting and nesting — the long grass and drains providing perfect habitat for their favourite prey, rats, and mice.

First recorded in New Zealand in 1947 and sighted 12 times up until 2008 — when they were first reported breeding in Kaitiaki — they've been officially listed as a coloniser, and because they're now breeding here, are considered a native. Since 2008, I have researched in depth their biology, ecology, and presence in New Zealand, both captive and wild, and it's all very interesting.

Barn owls have a habit of following humans just as they have across the Islands of the South Pacific, because everywhere humans go, their favourite food, rats, and mice, go with them. It seems it was only a matter of time before a pair found each other in the winterless north, finding the climate and bountiful food to their liking, and started breeding.

However, it appears they've got here by several means, presumably down across the Tasman on the prevailing westerly winds, hitchhiked here on ships, hidden in themselves in the

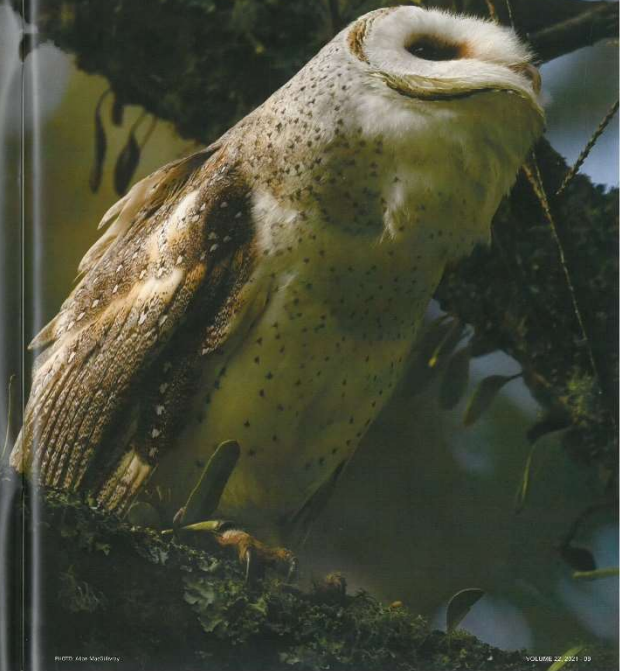
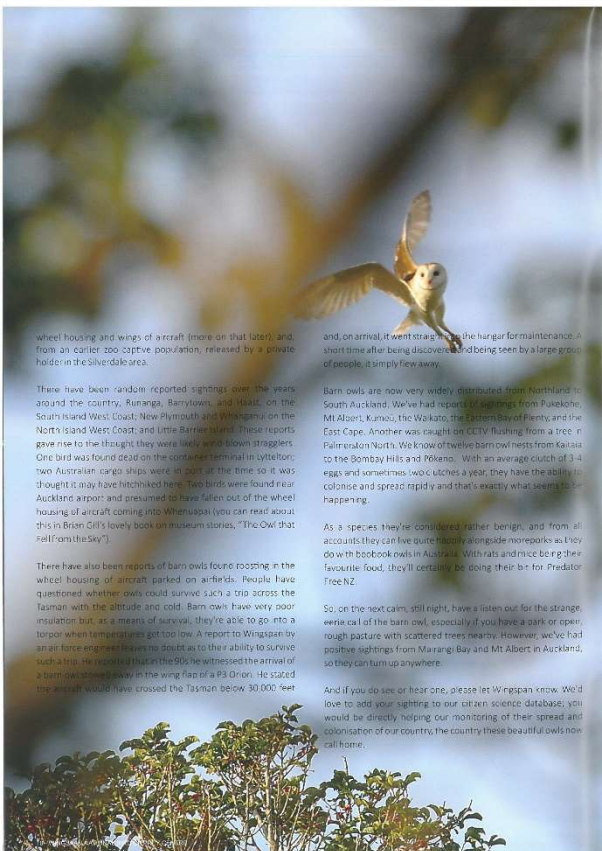


PHOTO: Alan McElhinney



wheel housing and wings of a aircraft (more on that later), and from an earlier zoo captive population, released by a private holder in the Silverdale area.

There have been random reported sightings over the years, around the country, Rotorua, Bay of Plenty, and down on the South Island West Coast, New Plymouth and Whangarei on the North Island West Coast, and Little Barrier Island. These reports gave me the thought they were likely wind-blown stragglers. One bird was found dead on the container terminal in Lyttelton; two Australian cargo ships were in port at the time so it was thought it may have hitchhiked here. Two birds were found near Auckland airport and presumed to have fallen out of the wheel housing of aircraft coming into Whenuapai (you can read about this in Brian Gill's lovely book on museum stories, "The Owl that Fell from the Sky").

There have also been reports of barn owls found roosting in the wheel housing of aircraft parked on airfields. People have questioned whether owls could survive such a trip across the Tasman with the altitude and cold. Barn owls have very poor insulation but, as a means of survival, they're able to go into a torpor when temperatures get too low. A report to Wingspan by an air force engineer leaves no doubt as to their ability to survive such a trip. He reports that in the 90s he witnessed the arrival of a barn owl flying in the wing fairing of a B737. He stated the nearest viable route crossed the Tasman below 30,000 feet

and, on arrival, it went straight to the hangar for maintenance. A short time after being discovered and being seen by a large group of people, it simply flew away.

Barn owls are now very widely distributed from Northland to South Auckland. We've had reports of sightings from Pukekohe, Mt Albert, Kumeu, the Waikato, the Eastern Bay of Plenty, and the East Cape. Another was caught on CCTV flushing from a tree in Palmerston North. We know of twelve barn owl nests from Kaitiaki to the Bombay Hills and Pokeno. With an average clutch of 3-4 eggs and sometimes two clutches a year, they have the ability to colonise and spread rapidly and that's exactly what seems to be happening.

As a species they've considered rather benign, and from all accounts they can live quite happily alongside more parks as they do with boobook owls in Australia. With rats and mice being their favourite food, they'll certainly be doing their bit for Predator Free NZ.

So, on the next calm, still night, have a listen out for the strange, eerie call of the barn owl, especially if you have a park or open, rough pasture with scattered trees nearby. However, we've had positive sightings from Marang Bay and Mt Albert in Auckland, so they can turn up anywhere.

And if you do see or hear one, please let Wingspan know. We'd love to add your sighting to our citizen science database; you would be directly helping our monitoring of their spread and colonisation of our country, the country these beautiful owls now call home.



PHOTOS: Alan McElhinney





Jarli. The very first captive bred, hand raised and trained for "in-training" (depending on her mood on any given day) barn owl in New Zealand, ever!



Fairlie! What an honour, what a privilege. If my 45-year-old self had paid my primary school version of self a visit back in the 80s, and told me I would be the one, the first one, to hand raise and train a barn owl in New Zealand, man... I swear, I would never have had a bad day for the rest of my life knowing this was going to happen. She is an absolute gem. A heartwarming, stress-killing, emotionally comforting absolute gem.

Admittedly, when I first held Jarli in my hands, I thought holmely, this isn't a barn owl. This can't be... it's so... I want to say ugly here, but just can't bring myself to *different*. At 8 days old, she was far from a peach. Actually, perhaps she resembled a peach. But in no time at all, that exquisite plumage started to unfurl and she was nothing short of stunning.



I had heard working with owls is quite different than any other bird of prey and I'm here to confirm that fact. Owls are unique. They are stubborn and often miss their own schedule, no matter how much you convince them that that juicy mouse is definitely worth a flight to the glove. Sometimes, it is simply just not. She has a very well trained. Indeed.

A special mention of 'thanks' and big barn owl hugs go out to Bobbie Hancock. She initially sponsored Jarli and helped with her naming. Jarli in one of the Aboriginal dialects literally translates to 'barn owl'.

If you haven't had a chance to visit Wingspan in the last wee while and meet this angel of an owl, do it! Book in, visit, you will have no regrets. And if all the planets and stars are aligning on the day, the wind is just right and all has no other controlling external dialogue going on, you might... just might catch her in flight!

PHOTO: TERRY SHAW

PHOTO: SUPRIYAN

Kira - A Fragile Less



Following the success with Jarli, a second barn owl chick was picked up for training. It is named Kira, and she was sponsored by Paul and Katarina Richardson, long-time supporters of Wingspan. Kira was a real character and he melted the hearts of all who met him, so the team were devastated when he suddenly passed away. An autopsy determined that he suffered from secondary brodifacoum poisoning, likely through donated trapped sparrows, and something that Wingspan has not seen before. This incident has us worrying, and Wingspan no longer accepts urban trapped birds.

PHOTO: NATIONAL BIRD OF PREY CENTRE

Jarli - New Zealand's Pioneer Barn Owl

By Heidi Stook



PHOTO: SHARON HINGSTON

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Ro-Magpie

by Heidi Stook

The windsock on the hill tells us we have a gentle and steady headwind, conditions are perfect!

Ribbon focuses intently on the large black and white polystyrene bird held aloft by Heidi standing 50 metres away, she bows her head once or twice and leaves my glove with deadly intent. Thrusting her arm forward, Heidi quickly launches the ro-magpie into the air and, wings pumping hard, Ribbon is in hot pursuit. Heidi takes it aloft to about 70 metres, and with Ribbon closing in fast, she has little time to think, she wrestles the controls to avoid Ribbon's attacks.

After a minute or two of dodging and diving in front of, around, and above their heads, the audience all turn, stand, and point to follow the action. Ribbon anticipates the ro-magpie's next turn and stoops down snatching straight into it, sinking her talons into the head and with wings outstretched rides to the ground.



PHOTO: NATIONAL BIRD OF PREY CENTRE

PHOTO: SHARON WISS

A Pilot's Perspective

by Heidi Stook

I will always remember the very first time I hand lured a falcon. I'm sure it was a stitch up. Mojo - at the time Wingspan's fastest falcon - flying towards me full steam ahead while I wrestled with the lure, wrapping the string around my legs, my arms, slapping the lure against my head (or butt!), a steaming hot mess of uncoordinated spaghetti.

This - this is nothing compared to the feeling of Ribbon, a female eastern falcon, in lush new almage, screaming towards a block of polystyrene that is inadvertently you. As you are desperately trying to keep not only aloft, but out away from the treacherous falcon's talons (not on your tail... That, my friend, is a whole new world of pain!)

From falling miserably those first flights under the tutelage of the infamous Dr Nick (or which in itself is frightening enough), to the wings of the ro-magpie tearing off in flight, resulting in a bombers run to the ground (and the ro-magpie in shattered pieces), if that block of polystyrene could bleed, I swear it would be... by the bucket load (ok maybe my internal knee or thigh whilst trying to stay in control). If that magpie could tell a story, it would involve many rolls of duct tape and six bottles of super glue!

The ro-magpie has been a journey. A voyage of sorts. And just when I finally thought I had won the battle, just as I was at that stage of being able to out-run, out-fly and out-smart Ribbon - BOOM! she moulted into a swanky new set of feathers that gave her a never seen before edge. Like the flick of a switch, she is a ro-magpie destroying machine! Every flight, punching the polystyrene - punching me - right out of the sky. Back to the beginning, once again I have nowhere to run, nowhere to hide.



PHOTO: SHARON WISS



PHOTO: SHARON WISS



PHOTO: SHARON WISS

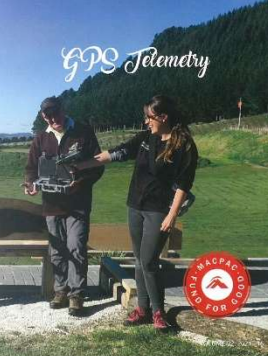
The team at Wingspan are slated to have brand-spanking-new telemetry for tracking our birds. But wait, there's more - it has GPS! So, it's fancy brand-spanking new telemetry!

We're so excited to try it out. The transmitters are attached to the birds and send a signal to a receiver on the ground, which then sends the signal to an app on our phone. We'll be able to keep a much closer eye on what our birds are up to. In fact, we'll be able to track their movements on a map in real time. Not only that, but the app will also record altitude and speed!

The benefits of this technology are huge. It can help us learn more about the speed of a NZ falcon, so the significance of this to our knowledge of the species is fantastic.

We're also looking forward to what this means for our public displays. A huge part of Wingspan's ethos is educational and wildlife engagement, and it's technology offers a fantastic opportunity for visitors to become more involved in our work.

A huge thank you to the Macrae Fund for funding the project. Wingspan the funds for this project.





Hatupatu A Tribute

Hatupatu, Kārearea NZ Falcon.
The Hunter, the Warrior, the Father.

Wingspan Birds of Prey Trust are celebrating the life of the falcon 'Hatupatu', a Rotorua icon and one of the longest living male falcons known, who sadly died in May after being hit by a car.

Hatupatu was a local treasure, and his passing is mourned not only by Wingspan staff, past and present, but by his legions of followers and the army of volunteers who have been a huge part of his upbringing and his journey. Today we remember Hatu and the legacy he has left us.

Hatupatu hatched in November 2013, captive bred from permanently injured falcons at Wingspan, and was named after the famous Te Arawa warrior of local history. He was one of seven falcon chicks transferred from Wingspan to the Rotorua Museum between 2013 and 2015, for a project that would make conservation history. The 'On the Wing' project marked the first ever city release of a threatened species in New Zealand.

Transferring the chicks to their new home was always a special day. Hatupatu and his two siblings were checked over, banded for identification, and were blessed by

kaumātua Anaru Rangihueua, alongside Mayor Steve Chadwick. They were released by a process called 'hacking', which involves placing the chicks in an artificial nest box where they are protected from the elements, provided supplementary food and where they can imprint on their surroundings.

Releasing falcons from the roof of the museum was about trialling an urban falcon release, increasing public awareness and, at the heart of the program, about wildlife engagement for people with nature. In Hatupatu's first year he was seen by hundreds of thousands of people, there were also tens of thousands of volunteer hours logged from those keeping an eye on him. He chased all the sparrows from around the museum café, he discouraged the black backed gulls from roosting on the roof of the historic building, he even distracted the bowlers and croquet players with his antics. He was seen by people in their cars at traffic light intersections, he's been on the TV and in a book, there were even visitors who travelled from New York to see him, and every spring he chased hundreds of mountain bikers when they got too close to his nest.

Hatupatu became the foster parent (and sometimes partner) of subsequent releases. While the Government Gardeners in Rotorua was his central home, he nested every

year in the Timberlands pine plantations within Whakarewarewa, behind the Redwood Forest, and brought together conservation, culture, research, forestry, and recreational user support. In his seven years he fathered 13 chicks of his own.

We have been so very proud of Hatupatu and being able to share his eventful life since he first hatched. He has made conservation history and put the Kārearea falcons of Rotorua on the map. Go well, Hatu, haere ā.



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Forest Falcons

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Research is a huge part of Wingspan's conservation programme. Every year come breeding season, Wingspan staff can be seen searching high and low the rugged landscape of Rangiora Forest, on a mission to track down the ever elusive falcon nest. They can be so hard to find. In fact, those we often call upon the parents to give us a clue, and they are only too happy to help. They tell us, "warmer, warmer, HOT! HOT! HOT!" by whacking us about the heads and keeking loudly in our ears.

Kārearea NZ falcons are fiercely protective parents, and rightly so. Successfully raising a brood of chicks takes a month of effort and there is a 25% mortality rate in their first year, so they need all the help they can get. Wingspan established forestry management protocols outlining setbacks in which all operators should cease, and these have been adopted nationwide. This allows falcon parents to focus all their energy on raising their young rather than defending their nests.

To limit disturbance as much as possible, Wingspan staff always ensure the process of banding birds is quick and efficient too. This past season alone, Wingspan can report the following from our pine forest field trips:

- 24 forestry compartments checked for nesting falcons.
- 13 falcons banded and added to our wild bird register.

That's a lot of birds and a lot of ground covered! We've had help to reach these numbers of course, a special thanks to summer raptor intern Paul Cleary and Reid Sanson, and to our long time volunteer, Megan Scholer. Timberlands also supports Wingspan's work by reporting all nesting activity and providing an annual grant to contribute towards research expenses.

In 1992 Debbie Stewart and Noel Hyde published the first paper identifying nesting falcons in pine forests, and now, following one of the longest ever annual monitoring surveys in the country, we can confirm the highest density of NZ falcons now live within pine forests. As apex predators, the presence of falcons is a testament to a healthy ecosystem and a successful management of these forests.

Given this connection, Wingspan works hard to grow and maintain relationships within the forestry industry. We acknowledge the national support of companies like Timberlands, Aratu Forest, Te Unga and Huarua Forest Farms, and we look forward to relationships with the NZ Forest Owner's Association. It is in the interests of the falcons to promote sustainable forestry practices, and those in forestry recognise this and work hard to ensure they meet their Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) obligations. Indeed, Wingspan has contributed to FSC audits in the past and readily provides consultancy and resources to support the industry.

He waka eke noa
A canoe which we are all in with no exceptions
We are all in this together.



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TIP OF THE ICEBERG

by Shannon Campbell

There seems to be a widespread notion that working with wildlife is all fun and games. Aside from all the repetitive, dirty, and back-breaking jobs that come with the territory, there is actually a long list of equally important tasks to complete, hiding just below the surface. In fact, what Wingspan visitors see, is only the tip of the iceberg.

Although we work with animals, I can confidently say that the larger portion of our jobs involves dealing with people. Each day, people will call, email or message Wingspan—some have simple enquiries, others might have come across an injured bird and need advice on what to do. We're also active on social media. We are very lucky to have nothing short of an army of supporters and, when they can't visit Wingspan, they like to be kept updated with what the staff (and the birds!) are up to.

Other ways we keep everyone up to date are through our journals, news letters, and calendars. We are a small team here at Wingspan, so the scale of these projects demands a lot from us. We write and edit stories; we gather and compile data; we finalise the layout, decide we hate it, and start all over again. We all come from different backgrounds and have different skills to offer, but ultimately, we are just a group of passionate individuals working hard to tell Wingspan's story.

But it's not just about saving raptors; it's about saving the receipts! Although we're a charitable trust, we operate pretty much like any other business. The paperwork is endless. We're lucky in that we receive a huge amount of support from our members and sponsors, and revenue from on-site trading. However, hours upon hours have been spent writing applications for grants, sharing Wingspan's history and vision, and inviting people to join us on the next part of our journey. As anyone working in fundraising will tell you, submitting applications can be a long, tedious and, often heart-breaking, task.

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But it's all worth it. Although people might not always see the work that goes into it, they do get to see the result. Nothing quite compares to seeing an injured harrier recovered and released back into the wild or seeing the smile on a child's face when they meet a ruru for the first time. There's nothing like the feeling you get watching a young barn owl practising her pounce or witnessing the speeds at which a New Zealand falcon carves the sky on a blustery afternoon.

So, what do YOU do all day?



Nicholson Nissan Driven by Wingspan

A massive part of Wingspan's success can be accredited to the many wonderful sponsors that have supported us over the years. Not too long ago, Nicholson Nissan joined us on our journey. They are a family owned business and huge community supporter and we couldn't do it without them.

Every 6 months, Nicholson Nissan supplies Wingspan with a new vehicle. This is invaluable in getting us from A to B; a big part of our work involves travel. Whether we're road-tripping up north to monitor wild barn owls, trapping about Kaingaroa Forest banding falcon chicks, or simply shooting into town to visit the Post Office, we certainly cover some distance.

But the ute's don't just serve a practical purpose, they also help spread the word about Wingspan. Each vehicle has been sign-written by Speedy Signs, and each vehicle has had a unique design. We've had a variety of colours, all featuring our logo, information, and testimonials, and we've had some awesome photos too! Check out our design coloured by Rotorua school children!

As a charitable trust, we have a non-existent advertising budget, so the ute is perfect—it's basically a moving billboard. Wingspan thanks Nicholson Nissan for their support.



Art & Culture



We have been deeply humbled by artists both local and international who have generously donated their skills to help the Wingspan cause.

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An amazing UK falconer and artist, David Ransley created two kōreara masterpieces and offered Wingspan the use of the images to help fundraise. A Facebook poll determined the most popular painting (seen on opposite page) and we then printed the canvases with the image. They sold like hot cakes! Thanks for the support David!

Upon hearing the sad news of Hatauputu's passing, Wingspan volunteer Stacy Rogge's Scott was inspired to create a piece of art in his honour. Stacy touched our hearts by presenting his original hand-stencilled artwork of Hata and requesting that it be used to raise funds for Wingspan. A silent auction was held, and the response was amazing. In the end, the winning bid was made by Rotorua local Brent for \$1000.

New Zealand artist Hannah Skand had been working on her 'Whisper' artwork when she learned of her passing. Hannah was moved by Whisper's legacy and inspired to donate a percentage of proceeds to Wingspan in her honour. She raised just under \$2000 for the conservation programme, and we are so touched and grateful.

Last year, Ray White Rotorua hosted a charity garage sale to fundraise for Wingspan, and they raised over \$2500 for the cause! What's more, they then enlisted the help of celebrated artist and conservationist Phillip Waddington to create an artwork for auction to raise even more!

Phillip painted none other than our very own 'Ruby', a Wingspan ambassador, she lived to 18 years, the oldest known NZ falcon, cover girl for the NZ Geographic and featured on the NZ Post souvenir collector's coin. Phillip himself is highly regarded in conservation circles for his pest control work and notably inventing the DOC 200 traps.

The painting was stunning, and we weren't the only ones who thought so! The original artwork went for \$6500. But fear not—there are a limited number of A2 and A3 prints available, so get in quick!



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Here & There

The Rangihakahaka School welcomed a visit from museum taxidermist Noel Hyde, who showed them the ins and outs of performing an autopsy on a bird and how to preserve the skin and feathers for korowai and weaving.

As a charitable trust, Wingspan is always on the lookout for creative ways we can fundraise for our conservation programme. Auctions had proven effective in the past, so we set about planning a big event through TradeMe.

Over the years, we have had some awesome items donated for sale by Wingspan members and supporters, so that made things easy. There were pieces of art, books, DVDs and more. All leading up to the main event: our "knight in shining armour" standing guard at Wingspan for over 15 years.

It was a hectic few weeks, uploading photos, responding to enquiries, those tense moments counting down to the auction's close. However, we couldn't breathe a sigh of relief just yet. We then spent hours packaging awkwardly shaped parcels and heading them down to the post office. But it was a success!

Thanks to our loyal supporters, we managed to raise almost \$4000 from that auction. Big hugs to everyone who donated, bid on items, and shared the auction with their family and friends!

Haki and ruru "Cricket" visited St Mary's Catholic School to teach the students all about moepores and the threats they face in the wild. Ruru sometimes nest on the ground, where they are at risk from ground dwelling predators, such as cats and stoats.

Wingspan designed a special nest box that encourages the owls to nest off the ground, and the students of St Mary's pitched in by building some. They then sold them at their school gala and donated the proceeds to Wingspan! To meiwai guys!



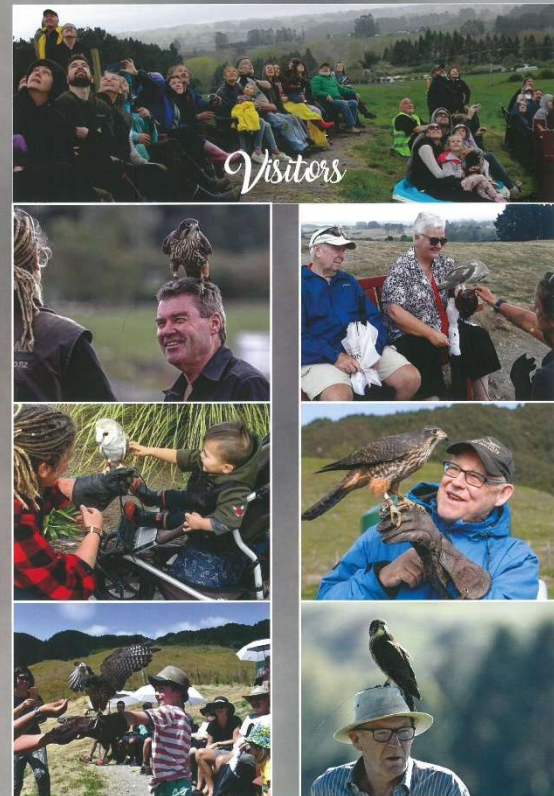
The 2021 calendar was one of our best yet! We invited our visitors to submit photos and there were some stunning images. We also asked our visitors to share a few words about their experiences at Wingspan and what our birds mean to them - there wasn't a dry eye in the house! Thanks to support from Kestrel Group and Redwoods Treework, we were able to print some beautiful calendars and raise even more funds for the conservation programme. Keep an eye out for our 2022 calendar; it won't be far away.

Noel Hyde joined a very exclusive club in late 2017 - he was made a member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for his services to wildlife conservation and research taxidermy. He was thrilled by the honour, but also humbled, given he was being recognised for something he had always loved. Congratulations Noel!

Falconer, Executive Director, and now, author! Debbie Stewart wrote the first ever book on New Zealand's birds of prey when *The Hunters* was published in May 2018. It's not just an educational tool, it features stunning photography and stories of Wingspan's founding and journey through the years. It was a long process - 30 years in the making, really! There are about 200 soft cover copies left in bookstores nationwide, and approximately 100 limited edition, signed, hard cover copies left at Wingspan. Get in quick!

Wingspan sponsors Redwoods Treework have given our wee ruru a helping hand by installing nest boxes in the trees nearby. In the absence of suitable tree hollows and crevices, ruru often nest on the ground. The nest boxes will offer a safer alternative and provide a haven from pest predators. They also installed new signage with some information about our birds of prey and the work Wingspan is doing. Thanks for your help team.

Wingspan was so excited to be invited on the AM Show for an opportunity to talk about our birds and our plans for the new centre. I think Debbie and Fran might have just made Mark Richardson's day!



Visitors

"They do such wonderful work rehabilitating injured raptors, and raising new birds - couldn't recommend this experience any more to anyone!" *Louis Khoo*

"Amazing efforts from amazing people who are not only very knowledgeable but are very articulate and good at conveying their information!" *Tim Elliot*

"I have no words for my experience in getting to hold Siren!" *Laura Kiteley*

"Great interactions from start to finish, would highly recommend. The staff are very welcoming and engaging, and the birds are beautiful!" *Tania Oliver*

"Totally awesome & a privilege to experience!" *Heather Howell*

"One of the top 5 best days of my life!" *Sam - age 7*

"You will not get another experience like this anywhere! Was both informative and exciting. Gave me chills so glad I went, and was in my eyes very cheap for the experience and its for a great cause!" *Rickie Bobby*

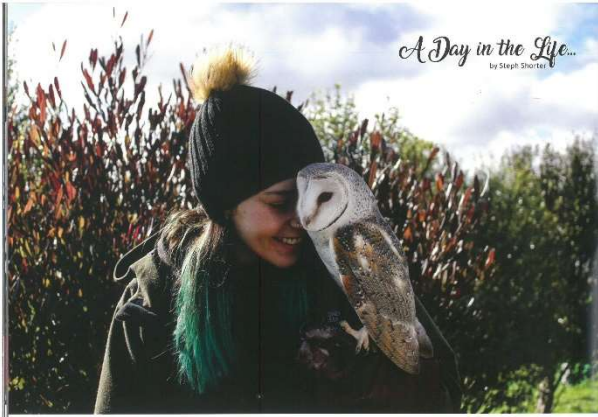
"Left me wanting to know more and would love to become a member! Loved every minute!" *Donnivi James MacPhee*

"Must do" for all visitors to Rotorua" *Jacqui Duthie*

"Looking forward to watching Wingspan grow into it's new premises. If it's this good only half constructed in the pouring rain it will be beyond belief when fully operational. You guys rock!" *Jacque Arnot*

"What a beautiful view with magnificent birds and marvellous people looking after them. We need more people like you in this world!" *Nicole Joy*





A Day in the Life...
by Steph Sharner

Hi, my name is Steph, I'm 26 years old and came over to Aotearoa from England when I was almost 11. I instantly fell in love with the Kiwi way of doing things. The laid back "she'll be right mate" attitude fits me well, but what really fell in love with is just how beautiful this country is. From its breathtaking mountains and forests to its amazingly unique and incredible birds.

Two things I've always been passionate about are animals and nature. Ever since I can remember, I know that I wanted to work with animals—especially wild life rehabilitation—and that I wanted to help save the environment.

I've always been captivated by birds, so to me, getting the opportunity to volunteer for Wingspan is an absolute honour. Putting my passion together with my purpose is a feeling that is indescribable. Seeing what the team here does and to see them all have a genuine love and passion for the birds is amazing. They have high standards and are always looking for ways to achieve beyond that. I find everyone extremely knowledgeable and inspiring. I have a personal connection to barn owls and ruru which makes volunteering at Wingspan that much more special.

Our birds need us, they need "yes people" who are willing to give up their time and get their hands dirty doing the jobs that need to be done. I am proud to be one of those people.

"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." - The Lorax



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of a Wingspan Volunteer
by Stacy Rogers/Scott

Stacy is 16 years old. She is a Year 11 student at Stoney Creek High School. She is a member of the school's Wildlife Society and is a volunteer at Wingspan.

Stacy has been volunteering at Wingspan since she was 14. She has been involved in many projects, including bird banding and nest monitoring.

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It is not only monetary donations that make a difference at Wingspan. It is also the hundreds of people who have donated their time or items of value to support the work that we do and "make the birds go faster". Whether the donation is large or small, it all counts.

There's those who donate supplementary food for the birds, food that provides the nutritional variety they need, ducks, rabbits, mice, and more. There's those who donate equipment we're in need of, allowing us to focus more funds on our conservation goals. Then there's those who donate their time and volunteer both on-site and in the field, often doing those dirty and repetitive jobs that are essential, nonetheless.

Each and every one of you is making a difference and we are so grateful for your support.

Our acknowledgments of support go out, in no particular order, to:

- Nick Fox (supply of Ro-crow equipment with an abundance of encouragement and laughter thrown in to boot)
- Fish & Game (use of aviaries office)
- Edward & Wendy Goodwin (an amazingly awesome speaker system for displays - not sure how we got by without it!)
- David Rampling (artwork for fundraising)
- Chris Ellery & Oranga Tamaki - Ministry for Children, Te Maunga o Pukekuraungahou - Justice Residence (nest boxes and the most awesome hack box)
- Corban Hirawani (popped out Graphics computer - the very one that created this stunning journal)
- Steph Sharner & Alice Rogers Scott (countless volkie hours, awesome doc 200 traps, artwork for auction, Ball X drag lure housing and so much more)
- Frances Ellery & Diane McGowan (stanking great woodstater which nailed the onsite thistle labyrinth)
- Alex Griffin & Grandad (nest boxes)
- Sebastian Rollinson (nest boxes)
- Jack Lilly (aka Jack of all trades volkie)
- Kate Bonman (fundraising)
- Hannah Shand (artwork fundraising)
- Riba Greatly (awesome 'can do' attitude when it comes to... well, everything!)
- James Cooper & Stefan Keegan (birdbook students)
- Thomas Dennett & Mike Bauer (to-honour! work experience)
- Danielle Stanley (Massy Uhi work experience)



- Michah Scholer (research assistant)
- Liam Mowbray (gardening)
- Amy Stewart Budge (social media services)
- Greg & Maribeth Harvey and Ultra Interiors Auckland (garage lining work)
- Bruce and Hazel Painter (plastic chairs)
- Chris and Helen Dermott (freezer and office chair)
- Rotorua Lakes High School (muffs and bake day fundraiser)
- Kawaha Point School (fundraising)
- Thomson Lawmowers and Chainsaws (20% discount on mower)
- Rotorua Lakes Council (pavers)
- Raylor Love (lawn)
- Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust (funded Strategic Grants subscription)
- Treescape & The Specialist (free mulch)
- Nongontah Four Square (support local and community advertising)
- Portico and McLeod Booksellers (calendar sales)
- TRENZ, TreeLine Nursery and GI Gardner (plants)
- Steve & Yvette Lawrence (gardening... hours and hours and hours of time gardening and so much more)
- The gang from Day 1 and Day 2 of 'get dirty at Wingspan' planting day
- Chris Gay (some sassy looking plants x)
- MIL Contractors (macoropa for seating)
- Ross Bailey (transmitter toggles & kites)
- Nutritional donors:
- Christy Campion & Sara Carey (rats n mice)
- Shelly McGowan (chicken & roosters)
- The boys from Fish & Game (Ducks game and the odd pulkie or two! Thanks guys - you are all awesome!)
- Tim Ellery (Ducks & Pheasant)
- Lorraine Turner (mice)
- Waikato Cavy Club

Also a big shout out of thanks to all those wonderful people who have taken the time to bring in injured birds - you too have made a difference and to you all we give our heart-felt gratitude.



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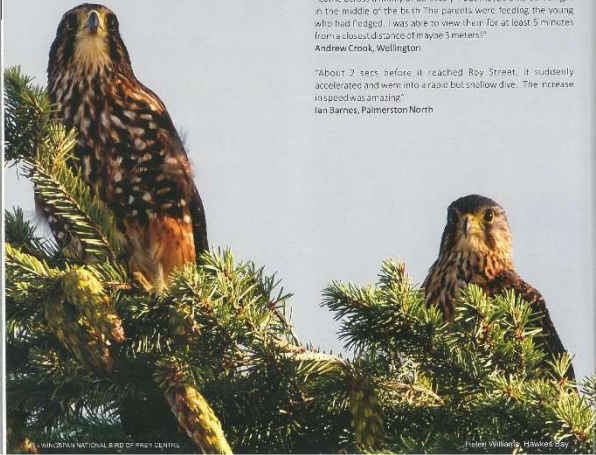
The Register of Falcon Sightings

Each year Witiapipi receives amazing stories from people thrilled to have witnessed a wild New Zealand falcon first hand and for that we express a hearty thank you for taking the time to help us record your events. With only around 10,000 falcons in the wild we rely heavily on members of the public and their observations of this endemic species. It is with your help we are able to keep a close watch on falcon numbers, locations and conditions.

"Just happened to glance upward and saw a Falcon fly above our driveway, about 20ft, looking everywhere and shadowing three terns in pairs. He flew in a circle around our house, flapping two more pigeons as he did so, they went to hang around here a bit."
Kate Howie, Taupo

"I am not working, this beautiful bird sat a small pigeon in the botanical gardens in Gisborne. It is my first viewing and I am in awe!"
Phil Yeo, Gisborne

"The falcon flew over the house chasing a tern up the valley, a few hundred metres later it broke off the attack and looked as though it was returning to where it came from. I have made camp out all of a sudden the bird became very vocal again and dove into a



WINDSTRA NATIONAL BIRD OF PREY CENTRE

Heidi Williams, Hawkes Bay

clearing, flushing out two more terns (I assume they were feeding on something). The falcon then took on both birds and caught them on the way."
Dave Sleigh, Wakamania

"The female was feeding on a cockbird and the male did all sorts of silly things, eg. one-knocking gets trapped up a pile of wood of some dry leaves, almost landed on the female once, swooshed past my legs less than a meter away vocalising."
Anja Kohler, Te Anau

"We noticed the falcon as it dropped its prey under a tree and flew onto a low branch. We sat a distance away and soon the falcon flew down, picked up the bird and flew to another tree nearby to eat it's Kai. We walked and stood close by the tree watching it eat for quite a while. The falcon wasn't concerned we were close with dogs. Beautiful bird."
Linda Ojala, Hawkes Bay

"We also saw what I presume was a female and chick at Gable Hill (just from Christchurch) on the 28th of October. Observed one passing something to the other midair, and then one looked like it was 'baggie' from the other one while they were sitting on a rock."
Sarah Jones, Taupo

"Came across a family of 4 but maybe 5 Kaneana right in the middle of the bush. The parents were feeding the young who had fledged. I was able to view them for at least 5 minutes from a close distance of maybe 3 metres."
Andrew Crook, Wellington

"About 2 years before it reached Roy Street, it suddenly accelerated and went into a rapid but shallow dive. The increase in speed was amazing."
Ian Barnes, Palmerston North



John Brimicom, Manurewa



Mark Gifford, Gisborne



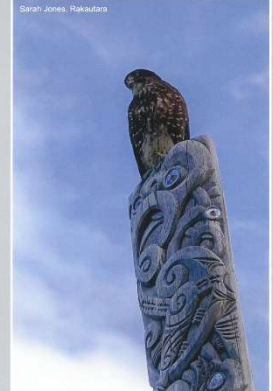
Tonia Down, Wellington



Murray Henderson, Johnsonville



Kylie Bolen, Lower Hutt



Sarah Jones, Rakautaro

If you or anyone you know has seen these magnificent birds we would love to hear from you. To log a sighting simply use the contact us tab on our website or email wingspin.nz@gmail.com

Details of your sighting that would be helpful for our records:
Date and Location observed
Number of birds seen
Description of activity observed

Drop us a line, we'd love to hear from you and if you are lucky enough to capture a photo, send it through, we can usually identify males, females, juveniles and adults. Also it could very well feature in our next Wingspin Journal.



Onsite Pest Control

A fundamental of captive management of any species is pest control, and we take that quite seriously both on and off-site at Witiapipi. Nearly a third of native bird species breeding in pre-human times in New Zealand became locally or globally extinct after human arrival. Knowing this it sure fuels the fires when it comes to tracking, trapping and eradicating pests whenever and wherever possible.

There have been sad casualties along the way, even in our short time at our new location at the foot of Mt Ngongotaha. Most notably Hizen, the rose bush falcon who was much loved during public displays at the old centre. He suffered a heart attack (determined after a post-mortem examination) believed to be from a possum scare. The night he died a possum had climbed up on the roof of the aviaries leaving scats and scratch marks to notify us of his nocturnal presence. He was trapped and dispatched two nights later and possum traps are now a constant staple around our aviaries, but the effects of his loss are still felt.

Last spring two welcome swallows decided to nest inside a shelter onsite near the Wingspan cottage. They laid three perfect eggs, which were there one day, and gone the very next. Suspects from that particular incident were the weasel (pictured above) or a rat, both of which were trapped and dispatched a later date.

Trapping is a constant. This includes monitoring and re-setting trap lines; keeping a keen eye out, noting scats, tracks, and signs indicative of a pest's presence, and adjusting trap locations accordingly. And of course, dispatching and disposal.

Just like a bird of prey needs good equipment - good feathers to do the thing they do - trapping also requires good equipment. We have had success on site from various methods. Currently we are using a range of traps which include: MK6 and MK6 Fern Traps with cover tunnels; live cage traps; Good Nature A24; a range of snap traps - both mouse and rat - most successfully the Victor Professional Rat Trap, DOCK200 and DOCK250; and the Trapmaster possum kill trap. As trapping can also result in unwanted casualties we always use a lure, never a toxic bait, and cover traps where appropriate to prevent unintended captures.

With the flora on the new site growing with every passing day, the bird life is becoming a regular delight around what was originally a very large thicket paddock and bare farmland. We have already seen an increase in native birds frequently visiting or breeding in the area including plovers, kererū, kingfishers, piwakawaka and paradise ducks. This, combined with the forest development a little closer to our fence line, will no doubt bring a continual stream of pesky pests but we look at that as an opportunity to refine our practice.

Hopefully you too are suitably inspired - get out there, even if it's just a few snap traps in your own back yard. Every single one counts! We'd love to hear your stories of success - keep up the great work #Pest Free Aotearoa!



A quick tally of pests trapped on-site during our relocation and new build to date

Weasels +1	Ferrets +1
Stoats +1	Hedgehogs +13
Mice +98	Possums +9
Rats +28	Feral Cats +3

Total: 134 fewer pests breeding today equals a huge reduction in pests tomorrow!



Wild Birds



TE RANGAIWA - PHOTO LEE COOPER

In springtime last year, we received a strange call from Rotorua local Bernie Kerr. A NZ falcon had taken an interest in his Muscovy ducklings, and he was a tad concerned. Now that narrative in itself is not that unusual, but these phone calls tend to go in a different direction. In this case, Bernie was more concerned about the falcon...

You see, this adult male kakanara was exhibiting some strange behaviour. Twice a day, morning and evening, he would bring food in and present it to the ducklings. The ducklings, of course, had zero interest in taking the food, but the falcon persisted for some time. It wasn't until the ducklings got bigger that the

falcon's paternal instincts waned, and he stopped visiting.

While there have been records around the world of interspecific adoption, this is the first we've heard of it happening with a wild NZ falcon. It has drawn the attention of the ornithological community and has since featured in a paper written by Noel Hyde, published in *Notornis*.

Bernie affectionately named the falcon Te Rangaiwa, meaning "the Chief" in Māori.

Wild Bird Sponsors

- Eastern Falcon - Dor & Teresa McConchie
- Eastern Falcon - Mike McConchie
- Chayor, Hunter and Orin - Julie Lovelidge
- Charlie - Manawatu Golf Club
- Mihara - Chris Ricketts
- Saylor - Deryck Pilkington
- Tingou - Mary Sewell
- Rabson - Michael Noble
- Hine Ahari - Rangitaho Mahuta
- Phoenix - Susannah Solo
- Te Rangaiwa - Bernie Kerr
- Hokuputa and Kawa - Brian Hollins
- Female Harrier - Cherie Camu
- Jennifer - Jeff Aclam
- Fidget - David Wilkinson
- Whiroaki - Stephen White
- Female Falcon - Brian Hedge
- Wild Bird - Jim Duncan
- Wild Bird - Michael and Pauline Lellman
- Wild Bird - Dayaram Gauda



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Relocated

Penati (adult male falcon - photo right)
With help from Teapui Bird Rescue for first care and DoC for delivery, Penati came to Wingspan following a nasty magpie attack. He wasn't in the best way and needed a couple of months of R&R before he was ready to go back home to Lake Whakamau. He was named by Don Grant of Penati Crackers - because he was a cracker of a falcon!

The Three Musketeers (3 harrier chicks - photo right)
These three young ones were found in the rick of dima, right before they were started in a field in Te Araroa. After initial care at Waihi Vets, they came to Wingspan. Being so young, they needed four hourly feeds and checks. About a month later, the chicks were "hacked" released at Mameku, a process in which juveniles are placed in an artificial nest. This allows them to be weaned back into the wild in as natural a fashion as possible.

Phoenix (juvenile male falcon - x-ray image right)
Not too long ago, a juvenile male falcon arrived at Wingspan with a big headache - he had struck the window of a house in Kinloch while chasing his prey. An x-ray showed he had also broken his wing. Luckily, it was only the ulna that was broken, so the other bone, the radius, acted as a natural splint.

Following weeks of rest and recuperation at Wingspan, we released him. A huge thank you to the Bercial family for bringing him in and to his sponsor Stephanie Sole.

Lucky aka "Grillam" (adult male ruru - photo below)
This wee ruru was lucky indeed - he flew into a car and got stuck in the grill. Amazingly, with some help from his friends at DoC and Wingspan, he recovered from his traumatic experience and was successfully released only a few weeks later.



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Whisper 2007 - 2020



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PHOTO ANDREW THOMAS

Whisper came to Wingspan as a rescued egg from a nest on the ground under the 'skirts' of an old ponga tree fern. Her egg ambitiously incubated, we were all delighted when she hatched on display in front of the public, and she became part of the Wingspan team!

Hand reared, we celebrated her life from the beginning. She was the model for the first ever ruru growth poster chart, she taught us lots about calls, raising chicks, intimate behaviours never seen before that would not normally be seen in the wild.

She laid eggs every spring, and she fostered abandoned eggs from the wild; swapped eggs from other mothers, hatching chicks like Moon, Frodo, Twilight, Oak, Don and Doug, and most recently dear Cricket.

Whisper didn't know she was a ruru, one just thought she was one of the staff. She epitomised the whole Wingspan programme like no other in the sense of captive management, research, advocacy and education.

She touched the lives of so many, indeed thousands! The Kaumtua, English Lords, Ladies, government ministers, patrons, staff, members, famous comedians, corporates, school children, our families and our friends.

The most famous ruru morepork in New Zealand ever, and dear to so many. We celebrated her 13 years, her advocacy for her species, and not least providing opportunities for first time encounters for so many.

An ambassador for her kind, a mother like no other. She was just awesome and we're going to miss her dearly.

Cricket - the Legacy Continues...

Cricket came to Wingspan in the most familiar circumstances. Like Whisper before her, she arrived on our doorstep as an egg discovered in an abandoned nest in Kaingaroa Forest. She, alongside her sibling, was placed under Whisper (who was incubating her own eggs at the time) and successfully hatched. Whisper continued to rear the sibling (who was later released down the valley with another wild ruru) while Cricket was picked up by Heidi for hand raising at eight days old.

Cricket was one of the last eggs ever hatched under Whisper. She has since laid six eggs (over two consecutive seasons) herself and hopes one can continue Whisper's good work, and one day raise orphaned chicks of her own.

Upon completion of the new Wingspan Centre, Cricket will have a display aviary built just for her called 'The Whispany' which is an aviary sponsored by the incredibly generous Edward and Wendy Goodwin. With this she will be able to host behind-the-scenes and raptor experiences much like Whisper before her. The Goodwins were Absolute Sponsors of Whisper and are the current Absolute Sponsors of Cricket.



WHISPER & CRICKET - PHOTO NIKE/BEAN



CRICKET - PHOTO SHELLY MCGOWAN

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Retail
 Visit www.wingspan.co.nz or email wingspan.nz@gmail.com
 for any enquiries or purchases



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Flight of the Falcon



BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL

Experience first hand a unique Flight show like no other in New Zealand. Feel the thrill as the country's fastest birds take to the skies and see a range of ever-evolving fitness and training techniques in practice.

During Wingspan's transition stage all bookings are essential as our flying days may vary around site development progress so please get in touch to avoid disappointment. Phone 07 357 4469 or email wingspan.nz@gmail.com to book.

MEMBERSHIP
 Become a Wingspan member! Family membership \$120 per year (for couples and families residing at the same address). Individual membership \$75 per year. Wingspan membership includes the annual journal, a special Wingspan members pin upon joining, plus year round complimentary admission to the centre. Or become a life member, this includes a lifetime subscription to the annual journal and a very special life members Wingspan pin and lifetime admission for \$1,000.

SPONSORSHIP
 Sponsor a raptor. We have different tiers of sponsorship available which can include naming the bird (Absolute sponsorship only), a sponsorship folder with a photo and information about your bird and free admission to Wingspan for a year. Subject to availability. Birds available for sponsorship include our display birds and our breeding birds. Absolute sponsor \$1000 per year. Gold sponsor \$500 per year. Silver sponsor \$300 per year and Bronze sponsor \$200 per year.

96-adopted wild birds for release and wild birds located during research trips are also available for sponsorship. Wild bird sponsor \$200.

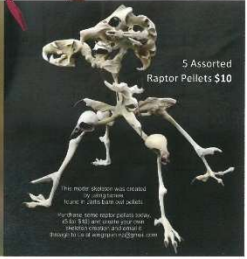
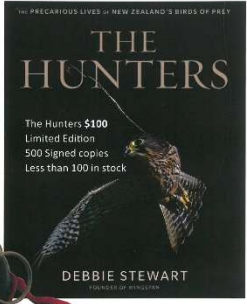


Sponsor an aviary or corporate sponsorship. Sponsorship is welcomed for specific raptor research projects, rescued birds or breeding pairs.

LEAVE A LEGACY
 Requests and special memorials by arrangement. Please call Wingspan for more information or to make a booking for Flight of the Falcon.

GIFT VOUCHERS
 Head to www.wingspan.co.nz for a Wingspan gift voucher. We offer gift vouchers for adult, senior and child admission tickets, individual or family memberships or a gift voucher for a donation towards the New Centre.

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Phone 07 357 4469 or email wingspan.nz@gmail.com to book your visit today



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