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UPDATE FROM TRUST CHAIR, CHRIS HAWKES

As of June 1st, the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary has taken over the management and leasehold rights of the Brook Motor Camp from the Nelson City Council. This decision was not made hastily; it was debated, scrutinized, and negotiated for over two years before being unanimously voted on by the Board of trustees.

The board and senior executive had to assess and evaluate several factors to determine the proposal's short and long-term viability. These factors were weighed against the Sanctuary's purpose and long-term objectives within the Trust Deed. The holiday park serves as our 'front door', and managing the area for the Sanctuary's future prosperity was considered essential.

Recent trends, such as the sell-out of our fungi tours, the increasing interest in glowworm tours, and continual growth in visitor numbers, indicate the broad appeal and diversity of support for the Sanctuary activities.

The protection and re-establishment of endangered species are evident, as demonstrated by the presence of multiple families of kākāriki karaka. If you want to see a video of some baby kākāriki, click [here](#).

The trustees and management also value educational initiatives, especially those for younger individuals, through school groups and with the introduction of new features, such as new walking trails in the Sanctuary.

Securing funding from government sources, institutions, private individuals, and companies is extremely difficult. Given the challenging financial climate, we hope to ease the situation in due course. Thus, it is clear that we need to focus on generating more funds from our own resources. The holiday camp offers an additional opportunity to help us achieve this long-term goal.

Management is working on recruiting suitable key staff to meet the holiday park's operational requirements. Furthermore, efforts are underway to increase marketing activities for the park as an attraction. Work is also being done to determine a possible new name, and we are establishing new digital platforms to promote the facilities.

Although the camp facility was handed over in a compliant state, we aim to implement some improvements. However, capital spending in the first two or three years will be very limited unless absolutely necessary for the park's operation. It is crucial that the campground business complements the Sanctuary and is financially viable. The campground's alignment with the Sanctuary and protection of our image and branding are paramount.

The road ahead certainly poses challenges, but, as the saying goes, nothing worth striving for is ever straightforward or easy. When compared to the initial establishment of a successful wildlife Sanctuary, the obstacles encountered in managing the holiday park may seem less daunting.

Chris Hawkes, Trust Chair

KĀKĀRIKI KARAKA POPULATION GROWING



Photo Credit: Sean McGrath

Did you know that nearly one in three parrot species are threatened in the wild due to habitat loss, pet trade trapping, and other human-generated threats? In Aotearoa, the kākāriki karaka, also known as the orange-fronted parakeet, is endemic but is in serious trouble due to introduced predators, especially ship rats and stoats.

We recently completed our annual density survey for this critically endangered species. Over two survey days, we surveyed 12 monitoring lines with nine Department of Conservation staff and 11 Brook volunteers/staff. We completed 138 playback stations on both days and tracked sightings between stations at various locations to get an accurate population count.

After only 2½ years since its initial release, the Sanctuary now has the largest population of kākāriki karaka in New Zealand and the world. The estimated minimum size is 231 birds, but the population is likely considerably bigger (300+). With an estimated wild population of about 500, we now have half the population here.

We first re-introduced 104 birds into the Sanctuary between November 2021 to 2023. The population has grown from 125 to 231 in 2½ years, which is a remarkable result. They have dispersed widely throughout the Sanctuary, now present in almost every block. This highlights the significance of maintaining predator-free areas. By creating a safe space with suitable food and nesting habitats and a dedicated team overseeing them, wild species can thrive the way they were meant to before humans. As a result, there has been a notable increase in the population, evidenced by the majority of the population being untagged. This means that most of the birds were born in the Sanctuary.

BIRDS NZ CONFERENCE FIELD TRIP

Five and a half hours later, two flocks of birders returned beaming after a guided birdwatching tour in the Sanctuary over the long weekend. A visit to the Sanctuary was essential during the Birds New Zealand annual conference held in Nelson with over 230+



attendees this year. Our dedicated volunteers presented a stunning paper illustrating the challenging task of measuring changes in forest bird abundance. In just six years, though, the Sanctuary's bird populations have increased, with most of the data collected by our well-disciplined team of non-professional volunteers - truly something to celebrate. After some staff introductions and ecology discussions, the groups set off on their hikes, covering a considerable distance as they explored and photographed various bird species along the Tuatara to Kākāriki Spur lines in the upper canopy.

Recalling the experience, one group leader beamed, "A few kākāriki's spent quite some time checking the groups out, for about the same length of time we spent checking them out. We all got distracted by a miromiro on the way and a toutouwai, but once in the bird zone, we moved at a bird-watching pace. Overall, the field trip was such a success."

BIRD OF THE YEAR IS BACK



We're campaigning for the kākāriki karaka again this year through Forest and Bird's annual Bird of the Year competition, where New Zealanders vote for their favorite bird.

Enthusiastic and internet-savvy New Zealanders (that's you!) act as volunteer 'campaign managers' for their favourite birds, with many going to great lengths to get their birds ahead in the polls.

Bird of the Year gets Kiwis excited about native birds. Folks might even learn a bit about the many threats facing our native species, and how many of our birds are in trouble.

Bird of the Year Te Manu Rongonui o te Tau 2024

Voting opens: 9am Monday 2 September
Voting closes: 5pm Sunday 15 September
Winner announced: Monday 16 September

ECOLOGICAL REPORT & RESTORATION PLAN

Exclusion and eradication of mammalian pests from the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary have created considerable biodiversity benefits for Aotearoa, New Zealand's vulnerable indigenous plants and fauna. However, the incursion and re-establishment of mice are a setback and a challenge for the Sanctuary's ongoing ecological restoration.

The ecological restoration plan outlines management actions that will guide the next steps for restoring the ecological integrity of the Sanctuary and maintaining the progress that has already been achieved. These steps include:

- Revision of the existing biosecurity plan to consider:
 - Further surveillance outside of the fence.
 - More comprehensive management of mice.
 - Awareness of the risks posed by plague skink.
 - Wasp control and monitoring.
 - Pest fish.
 - Aquatic diatoms (large groups comprising several genera of algae, specifically microalgae)
 - Management of ecological weeds.
- Translocation of a wider range of taxonomic groups, including vascular plants, avifauna, herpetofauna, invertebrates, and fish.
- Invertebrate conservation.
- Enhancement of connectivity and maintenance of freshwater ecology.

The plan for each taxonomic group outlines methods for monitoring progress towards achieving ecological restoration objectives, as well as for monitoring ecosystem function and selecting appropriate monitoring metrics.

The BWS ecosystem will be affected by climate change, but maintaining the absence of most introduced mammals and increasing biodiversity within the Sanctuary will ensure that the ecosystem is more resilient to its effects.

BWS is surrounded by a contiguous forest that extends into Kā Tiritiri o te Moana/the Southern Alps, with important implications for landscape-scale connectivity and ecological restoration. Efforts to establish connectivity should start in the Sanctuary's immediate surroundings and build out from there.

These efforts will require close coordination, shared vision, and goals with adjacent landowners and authorities. Community engagement and outreach are essential components of the plan, as they bring together diverse stakeholders, including volunteers, iwi, researchers, funding bodies, local government, and the broader community.

By fostering collaboration and support, the BWST can bolster conservation efforts in the surrounding landscape and enhance BWS's ecological and educational values, which will benefit everyone.

VOLUNTEERS + EDUCATION

The BWS relies on volunteer assistance for all working groups. The median age for conservation volunteers in New Zealand is 60. The Nelson region supports a disproportionately aging population (Stats NZ1), which provides the BWS with a larger pool of volunteers.



New species of mistletoe found in the Sanctuary
Source: Henry Hart

The BWS offers visitors the opportunity to engage in positive conservation outcomes and hopefully inspires them to take active roles in protecting the environment of their own "backyard."

Individual visitors will engage with conservation messages differently, and some may just visit for a break in nature. This helps support the key pillars of compelling visitor experience and enhanced relationships. In order to engage with conservation and nature, BWS currently works with the Te Tau Ihu/Top of the South Tamariki in schools and training providers to be actively involved in conservation. An outdoor classroom, the Beech Glade (provided by Ngati Kuia), is where students come to listen and watch birds. This classroom is used to teach students conservation tools such as:

- 5-minute bird counts.
- Plant identification.
- Bird identification.

Public outreach for undervalued biodiversity is particularly useful, for example, charismatic invertebrate species, including giant wētā and land snails. This includes the use of wētā motels, enabling the public to find wētā. The BWST already incorporates education into glowworm tours at night. Further opportunities to learn about ecosystem restoration at BWS could include:

- Spotlighting for fish.
- Looking for frogs (once translocated).
- Undertaking invertebrate counts.

PATHWAY FROM THE MOUNTAIN TO THE SEA

The Brook Stream provides a physical connection between Nelson City and the Sanctuary. This can potentially create a pathway connecting the city community with the Sanctuary in both the literal and figurative sense.

The BWST will continue to collaborate with iwi, the Cawthron Institute, and Nelson City Council to create a streamside pathway that can encourage community engagement through signage that describes, for example, the species present, fish migration, how the stream would have looked historically, or information about fish passage and what this achieves.

This pathway could be linked to the pakohe/argillite trail historically used by Māori. Enhancing existing pathways alongside the stream can further increase a community connection, making The Brook desirable for recreation.

CAMPGROUND MANAGEMENT CHANGES

At the start of June, the BWST took over the Brook Valley Campground and Holiday Park management after a series of discussions and contracts with NCC, following their interest in the campground since 2009.

Trustees and management considered four basic tests:

- Does the opportunity fall within the scope of the purpose of the BWST 2004 Deed?
- Will the campground activity complement the activities of the Sanctuary?
- Will the BWST/Sanctuary brand be damaged?
- Will the campground activity be financially viable?

Both the lease agreement and management contracts are for 5 years. We will lease a 4.2 ha area within the campground.

Education, training, positive visitor experience opportunities, and other activities will continue. BWST and NCC will have to work very closely together.

We aim to recruit campground manager(s), establish suitable pest control, weed control, and maintenance plans. We will strengthen administration and back office support for the next month, including the online booking system administration. In July, marketing and promotions will begin. Service contracts will be finalized in August. Then, in October, all those initial improvements will be made. The campground should be ready for the summer season starting in December!

This will be a big ongoing project, and volunteer support is welcome!



The campground has always been linked to the Sanctuary, but now the two are inexplicably connected. We've always wondered what happens when the birds leave the Sanctuary. There's nothing stopping them from flying outside the gates, and most of the time, they do. Unfortunately, most of these spaces they will end up are not predator-free. Backyard trapping and other initiatives have proved to be very helpful with this, and now that we can manage the campground, we can continue providing that safe space for wildlife to live.

Recently, South Island robins have been seen at the Visitor Center and within the campground, so this initiative has come at the perfect time.

We have also started a series of educational programs and groups that are planned to stay in the Camp, seeing firsthand the significance of protecting these delicate ecosystems. Through guided tours, interactive workshops, and informative displays, we aim to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation for the wildlife that call this place home.

Moreover, our efforts have not gone unnoticed. Conservationists and wildlife enthusiasts from around the region have praised the initiative, and we have seen an increase in volunteer participation, which has been instrumental in maintaining and expanding our conservation efforts.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to adapting and evolving our strategies to ensure a harmonious coexistence between humans and wildlife.

VOLUNTEER PROFILES: THE ASSETS TEAM



'Assets' is the volunteer team tasked with constructing tracks, maintaining building projects, all new construction, and other assets. Volunteers with past experience as welders, drain layers, plumbers, or electricians bring together a lifetime of experience to design and build key items integral to the Sanctuary's success. If you're interested in joining the assets team, you must love the job, have enthusiasm, and have a general fitness level.

They work closely with other teams to ensure that every project is completed to the highest standards. Their hands-on approach means that every day is different, with new challenges and opportunities to learn and grow.



KAKA AVIARY

The assets team has been hard at work finishing the kākā aviary. The project has seen tremendous dedication and effort, transforming the initial plans into a near-complete facility. The attention to detail in the construction reflects the team's commitment to providing a safe and enriching environment for birds that will be temporarily housed there.

Once the trusses are installed, the next phase will involve adding the final touches, such as perches, feeding stations, and enrichment activities.

TUATARA WALKING TRACK

Carefully designed to minimize environmental impact, this enclosure has extra protection to ensure a mouse-free area. So far, the track has maintained a mouse-free status, ensuring the safety of native geckos, tuatara, and other small creatures soon to be reintroduced. The trail will allow visitors to explore a private part of the Sanctuary, encouraging participation in guided walks while monitoring biosecurity risks.

As visitors meander along this secluded track, they may encounter various native wildlife thriving in this protected haven. The journey is not just a walk but a chance to reconnect with the natural world and appreciate the Sanctuary's dedication to preserving these precious habitats.

The assets team and other volunteers have been hard at work assisting Kūmānu in laying the groundwork for the new track. From raking gravel to building path edges, the new improvements will not only allow you to see smaller wildlife up close, but it also has a little piece of history at the end of the track, with some artifacts and remnants from an old coal mine.

In addition to the walking track, information boards will be installed along the route, educating visitors about the unique flora and fauna of the area and the critical role of biodiversity conservation initiatives. The project reflects a shared commitment to preserving natural habitats and species for future generations.

Whether you're a seasoned nature enthusiast or a curious newcomer, the track promises an unforgettable adventure, inviting you to discover the wonders of the Sanctuary, so be on the lookout to book your private guided walk soon!



Kūmānu, the environmental wing of Nelmac, primarily built the track. Nelmac Kūmānu believes "it's our responsibility to do all we can to protect, renew and enhance our environment - not just for our collective benefit now, but to meet our shared moral obligation to improve our environmental legacy for future generations." They constructed the new path with help from the Assets Team, but their contracted team was an integral part of the success of the project, especially with regard to their diggers and other important machinery provided. Kūmānu's support has been instrumental, providing financial backing, expertise, and other resources. This collaboration highlights the importance of community involvement in environmental conservation efforts.

THINGS TO DO AT THE SANCTUARY

Just because the weather is cooling down doesn't mean there's less to see and do in the Sanctuary! With guided tours every Sunday, you can watch all the birds while learning about our native flora and fauna. We will lead guided glowworm and fungi tours outside our weekly tours over the next few months. We are still working on getting guides set for these experiences, but we will post updates on Facebook and Instagram when tickets go on sale, so please follow our pages so you don't miss out!

GLOWWORM TOURS

Our much-anticipated glowworm tours will be starting soon, so gather your friends and family for an after-dark experience. See these creatures shine bright up close along our accessible river walkway within the Predator Fence amongst native bush, birds, and other flora and fauna.

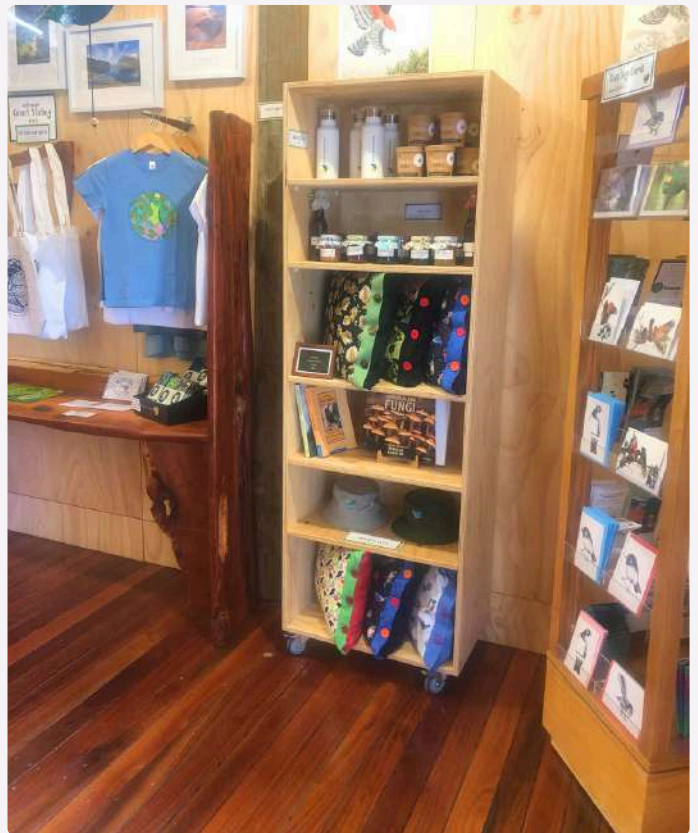


VISITING HOURS

Opening Times - Thursday to Sunday 10 AM to 4 PM for the winter months



Photo Credit: Rebecca Bowater



Check out our new merchandise for sale at the visitor center. 100% of the proceeds are donated to the Sanctuary.

FUNGI TOURS

Our guided fungi tour with professional photographer and fungi expert Rebecca Bowater, whose photos can be seen below taken inside the Sanctuary, sold out in less than two hours. We will try to get her in for another one soon, but fungi season only has a few more weeks left, so the best way to see these unique species is to download the iNaturalist app and track the pinpoints of where these professionals found the fungi in the Sanctuary - a self-guided fungi tour if you will!



Photo Credit: Rebecca Bowater

RECENTLY SNAPPED IN THE SANCTUARY

If you have some great photos taken in the Sanctuary that you'd like to share, please send them to info@brooksanctuary.org.nz. or tag @brooksanctuary on Instagram and Facebook



Ngirungiru | Tomtit
Petroica macrocephala macrocephala
Photo credit: Sean Mcgrath



Suteria ide | Air Breathing Land Snail
Photo credit: Steffi Kuenstle



Feather from a kererū | NZ Pigeon
Photo credit: Steffi Kuenstle



Easter orchid
Erina autumnalis
Photo credit: Steffi Kuenstle



Kākāriki karaka | orange-fronted parakeet
Photo credit: Sean Mcgrath



Bonnet fungi
Genus *Mycena*
Photo credit: Rebecca Bowater



Toutouwai | North Island Robin
Photo credit: Sean Mcgrath



Squeaking Longhorn
Hexatricha pulverulenta
Photo credit: Rick Field



Black Tunnel Web Spider
Porrhothele antipodiana
Photo credit: Steffi Kuenstle

EVENTS ROUND UP



OPEN DAY: A HUGE SUCCESS

With a turnout of over 1,700 visitors this year, we are delighted with the success of the April event. The April 2024 Open Day theme was 'The Halo Effect', focusing on eco-system restoration and fostering community engagement in conservation at a local level. The event featured various educational activities, including:

- A macro-invertebrate and bird monitoring zone at picnic area two, organized by Rick & Tasman Bay Guardians.
- Two informative talks at the Beech Glade Venue: one by Nick Sparks from Kumanu on community trapping 101 and another by Natureland on the Kaka breeding program and how to coexist with species like kaka if the halo effect unfolds as planned.
- A plant identification card game drop-in workshop facilitated by Shani, made possible through funding from the creative community's scheme.
- Native plant-themed coloring activities for all participants to enjoy.

PREDATOR FREE HUI

The Top of the South Predator Free Hui held in Richmond was well-attended, with around 200 participants daily. The event, hosted by Predator Free New Zealand Trust and Tasman Environmental Trust with support from various organizations, featured trapping and AI technology presentations. The focus was on pest control and reintroductions, with active engagement from delegates showing enthusiasm for the projects presented. The Sanctuary had a table where we presented our monitoring systems and ongoing projects.



VOLUNTEER NELSON CELEBRATION

For International Volunteer Week, Nelson Mayor Nick Smith came to thank the Sanctuary volunteers for their hard work and achievements in creating such a great resource for Nelson. Staff from Volunteer Nelson kindly organized the catering for the event. Around 60 Sanctuary volunteers turned up for tea and cake, which was followed by a walk to the mouse enclosure – an area of the Sanctuary where tuatara are planned to be released in the spring.



UPCOMING EVENTS: YOUR INVITED



PUB QUIZ NIGHT

Join us for our first-ever Pub Quiz Night on 18 July at the Free House! Prepare for a fun-filled evening of conservation-themed trivia questions and friendly competition to raise money for the Sanctuary.

Test your knowledge on various topics while enjoying great company, drinks, and good food. Bring your friends and family, and connect with fellow supporters to form a team or join one on the spot. Either way, it's bound to be a blast! Don't miss out on this exciting event - mark your calendars now!



SPONSORS + PRIZES

We have over 30+ amazing sponsors who have graciously donated some local, sustainable, and exciting prizes towards the raffle we will be running that night. Raffle tickets will be \$5 for 3 and \$2 for 1, so remember to bring some cash and buy as many as you like!



Date: Thursday, 18 July

Time: The quiz starts at 7 pm. Come early to secure your table (we'll be there starting at 6 PM to sell tickets)

Venue: The Free House Pub, 95 Collingwood Street, Nelson 7010

Koha: \$5 per person to participate in the quiz

Prizes: Free House Vouchers (1st Place Team - \$60, 2nd - \$40, 3rd - \$20) and raffle items!



TO CONFIRM YOUR ATTENDANCE

Please RSVP to Tess:

events@brooksanctuary.org.nz

There is only room for about 70 people inside the pub so please get back to us as soon as possible to secure your spot.

BUSINESS CLUB PROFILES



UPSHIFT

UpShift has been a Business Club member since 2022. UpShift focuses on developing technology that supports the health of the planet and people for local, national, and international clients. UpShift has partnered with New Zealand Geographic and Ekos to raise awareness of measuring, reducing, and offsetting carbon emissions with permanent forests. To fix the climate problem, New Zealand must remove the equivalent of 43.5 megatonnes of carbon dioxide between 2026 and 2030. It will require reducing emissions and offsetting the balance with permanent forests, according to Ekos founder Sean Weaver. This [article in NZ Geographic](#) talks about more of Ekos and UpShift's work in this space.

WIN A \$2,800 CARBON FOOTPRINT ANALYSIS

UpShift would like to invite Brook Waimārama Sanctuary supporters to [enter this competition](#) to win a free Carbon Footprint Analysis.

Ekos works with businesses, landowners, iwi, local and central government, and people across Aotearoa and the Pacific to fight the causes of the climate crisis. Finding out your carbon emissions is a fundamental first step. Ekos will be your guide.

The Ekos team will use the winner's data to accurately and efficiently measure their total carbon emissions over a 12-month period. This data includes everything from the number of computers used in the office to the number of staff who drive to work.

paperplus

Locally owned. Friendly people. Great advice.

Paper Plus Nelson is locally owned and operated, proudly serving the Nelson community for over 35 years. It specializes in books, stationery, and gifts and provides essential New Zealand post services.

With a dedicated team that values excellent customer service, Paper Plus Nelson has become a beloved cornerstone of the community. Whether you're searching for the latest bestseller, the perfect gift for a loved one, or reliable stationery for your home office, you can always count on the friendly staff to assist you with a smile. They also host regular events and book signings, fostering a love for reading and learning in the area. Supporting local schools and organizations is a key part of their mission, ensuring community spirit thrives. In an ever-changing world,



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A PEST BREAKS THROUGH?

Written by Steffi Kuenstle, Biosecurity Ranger

Even though mammalian pest-free Sanctuaries are a safe refuge for our native species, every now and then, the peace and quiet is put at risk by pest fence breaches, such as trees ripping holes in the fence or swale gates stuck open after a heavy rain event. But what happens if a critter enters the Sanctuary through such a breach?

That's why lines of defence on the inside are required: the perimeter lines. The one directly on the inside of the fence is called the X line, and Z runs parallel to it 25m below. If there is a weakness in the fence, anything that enters the sacred Sanctuary grounds will soon encounter a variety of activated tracking tunnels, DOC200s, rat traps, and cat tunnels.

Another risky area is the entrance gate, where up to 200 visitors per day are channeled in and out of the Sanctuary. This is why the two tracking tunnels and trap lines following the visitor tracks close to the Visitor Centre, V and W line, are also under constant surveillance. Especially during the autumn months, the resistance of the fence is tested.

As soon as temperatures start to cool down and food gets scarcer, rodents try their best to explore new territory in search of food and shelter. Especially during this time, the pest fence is under great pressure, and sometimes one of the critters makes it through our stronghold into the Sanctuary. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers and staff, their presence does not go unnoticed.



Fence breach from fallen trees after storm

After tracking down the location of unwelcome visitors using tracking tunnels, we know exactly how to proceed: a response grid!

The bespoke grid consists of additional devices that provide a tight net of tracking tunnels and rat traps around the detection point. They are set up within a certain radius, which describes the standard home range of a rat.

As there is a chance our four-legged suspect is on the run outside of this range, we also put detection cards into adjacent tracking tunnels along monitoring lines in the vicinity. We offer a special service for trap and tunnel-shy individuals: A trail camera is installed at the detection point to capture a mugshot of the intruder. This also provides us with additional knowledge, such as the individual's behaviour.

So far, these strategies have kept our birds, lizards, and other taonga inside the Sanctuary safe. One of our most recent rat detections is a good example of our efficiency. Rat prints were found on a card at V line, close to the Visitor Centre.

In no time, a response grid was set up, and cards were put out on all adjacent lines. Within a week, a healthy rat specimen was caught in the rat trap, which we placed right next to the tracking tunnel where we first detected the prints.

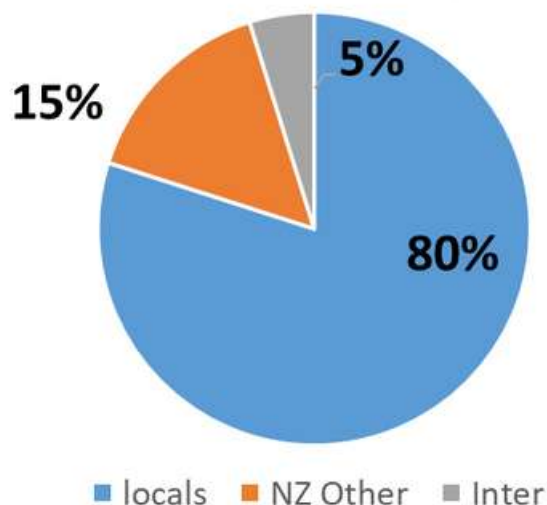
We monitored the grid and adjacent lines as usual for 8 more weeks, but no signs that our rat had any friends with it emerged.

A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped with responses, the very hardworking perimeter volunteers, and the Sanctuary-wide Survey monitors. Without regular checks of our 690ha of paradise, it would be impossible to maintain our pest-free status.

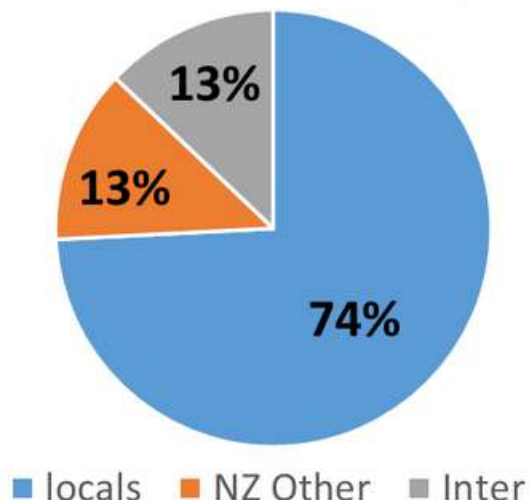


GOOD NEWS GRAPHS

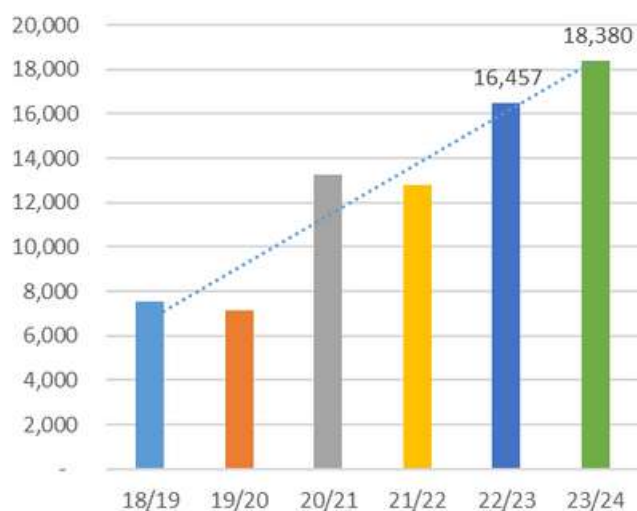
June 2024 Visitor Origins



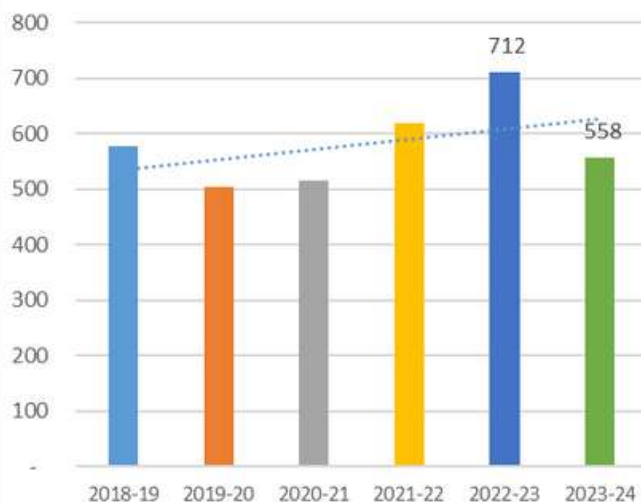
1 Jul23 - 30 Jun24 - Visitor Origins



Visitor numbers Jul - Jun



Visitors in June



STAFF NOTICES

- A campground manager/team was assigned to commence duties in July.
- With prior experience at the camp over the last 12-18 months, Matt Greenwell has been appointed as a part-time support coordinator to aid with increased administrative and back-office tasks for the BWST office and campground operations.
- Tess Cimino has recently joined as the new part-time Events and Promotions Coordinator at the Sanctuary and part-time Marketing Coordinator for the campground.
- The BWST expresses gratitude to Nelmac, the campground contractor, for their assistance during the transition period of managing the campground from May to July. Thank you so much for your support!

SPONSOR PROFILE: NELSON CITY COUNCIL



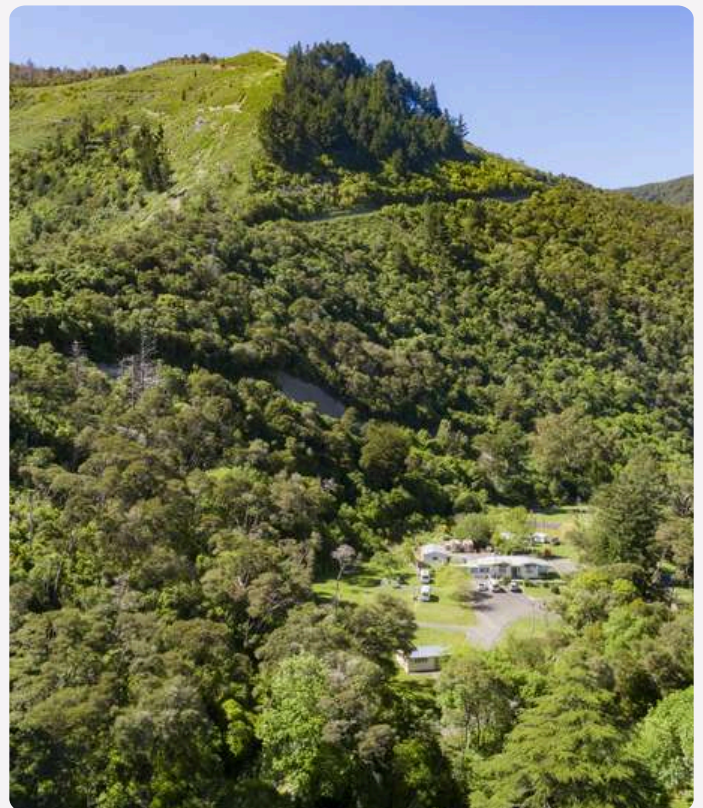
Te Kaunihera o Whakatū

An agreement signed in April between Nelson City Council and the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary Trust for BWST to manage the Brook Valley Holiday Park continues a strong partnership between the two parties.

The Sanctuary is an amazing conservation asset for Nelson as the largest predator-free haven in the South Island for NZ's unique wildlife. It synergizes with the Council's Nelson Nature biodiversity project and provides opportunities for collaboration to protect and enhance the natural environment.

The council is the landowner of the Sanctuary site and has provided more than \$1 million towards constructing the predator-proof fence. NCC also provides an inflation-adjusted annual grant to the Trust for its operations, which was \$168,000 this year.

There is a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and BWST, with both parties focused on a working partnership to maintain, enhance, and promote the Sanctuary.



WAYS TO DONATE

The Sanctuary constantly seeks funding to support our operations, whether for daily activities or special initiatives. Just like many charitable organisations in New Zealand, we find it challenging to secure funds, especially for covering overhead costs such as wages, electricity, insurance, IT support, and more.

If you wish to contribute, whether with a small or large donation, every bit helps us in our mission to preserve the ecosystem and protect New Zealand's endangered species.

To donate online, click [here](#), or see us in person at the Visitor Centre or our town office in Morrison Square next to Aki Sushi.

Or you can donate directly into the Sanctuary's NBS bank account: 03-1354-0561993-00

Please ensure you include a reference that enables us to identify who the donation is from, alternatively contact Nick Tilly, nick.tilly@brooksanctuary.org.nz

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT GIVING

Can you help us with these projects? We hope to continue reintroducing new species to the Sanctuary, and we need specific donations for this project, as well as for preparing a mouse-free enclosure and strengthening our pest fence overall.

If you are thinking about donating to these projects or want to learn more, please contact info@brooksanctuary.org.nz

ANNUAL SUPPORTER SUBSCRIPTIONS AND ADMISSION FEES

Currently, we have close to 2,000 paid-up supporters. Annual supporter subscriptions entitle supporters to complimentary access to the Sanctuary during public opening days/hours.

If you haven't become a paid supporter yet, we encourage you to join-up before June 30 as subscription charges will be increasing from 1 July.

Faced with increasing budget pressures, the Board of Trustees has approved increases to both supporter subscription charges and Sanctuary admission fees from 1 July. The Board has decided to maintain the admission fees pricing differential which sees Nelson/Tasman residents pay reduced fees compared with out-of-town and international visitors, and a differential will be introduced to supporter subscription fees with locals paying a lower fee than out-of-town supporter subscribers.



FOUNDATION TRUST

You can invest money into the BWST knowing that the funds, no matter how big or small, can achieve a greater impact than what is possible through personal giving.

The foundation illustrates clearly to our key partners and supporters the BWST's intention to build capital reserves, build contingency, and become more self-sustainable over the longer term. For more information, visit [here](#).

VOLUNTEER

Giving your time is often just as great a resource as donating a monetary value.

We're always looking for new people to join the Brook Waimarama Sanctuary volunteer community and be part of conservation in action!

We currently have a variety of volunteer roles available, including track cutting and maintenance, wildlife monitoring, fence line monitoring, weed control, events and fundraising, visitor centre hosts, tour guiding, and more!

If you are interested in being part of a dynamic team, please email

volunteerconnector@brooksanctuary.org.nz

ENDEMIC SPECIES COLUMN: THE NORTHERN GRASS SKINK

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Did you know that around 76 species of skinks are only found in New Zealand? That diversity is staggering for temperate islands like ours.

Our skinks are also diverse in niches, some being large-bodied, nocturnal, swimming, or tree-dwelling. Most skinks, however, inhabit open and sunny areas where they hunt small invertebrates.

If you've seen a skink in Nelson, it's most likely been the northern grass skink. They're often seen scurrying away from their basking spot into dense vegetation.

Grass skinks are the least threatened of our native lizards as they have probably gained habitat since human occupation.

They are best identified by their brownish color and darker lateral bands. Skinks can be distinguished from geckos by their sleek, snake-like bodies, scaly skin, and long, thin toes.

All endemic lizards (excluding a single skink species) do not lay eggs. This is a rare feature among the world's lizards.



Source: duncanmc42 on INaturalist

SKINKS IN THE SANCTUARY

Northern grass skinks are likely threatened by the large mouse population in the sanctuary. They are most commonly spotted in sunny or edge habitats like the western fenceline. The new mouse enclosure will allow many lizard species to recover. However, the breeding rate in native lizards is slow, and some species may be rare or no longer present in the sanctuary.

EVOLUTION

New Zealand skinks belong to a single genus called *Oligosoma*. *Oligosoma* skinks likely island-hopped their way to the Zealandia continent around 20 million years ago. The genus quickly diversified during times of population isolation, like submergence and tectonic uplift. One species in *Oligosoma* lives on Lord Howe Island and is the most genetically distant species in the genus.



Source: obblue on INaturalist