

NGĀ MANU TRUST - ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Our purpose is to develop and manage Ngā Manu so that the fauna and flora of Aotearoa New Zealand can flourish, and to connect people with nature by providing them with opportunities to discover and learn, and to work and volunteer.

During the year 18,792 (20,033 in 2020-21) mainly local visitors took advantage of the tranquillity and safety of the Reserve. This included over 1,800 school children which was an increase of 200 over the previous year. The number of Friends of Ngā Manu also increased from 299 to 366 representing a 22% increase.

While restrictions to stop the spread of the Coronavirus affected our financial position, we concluded the year on budget due in part to Government's COVID-19 support including a contribution from the Department of Conservation's (DOC) Wildlife Institutions Relief (WIR) fund which directly supported our conservation work.

Financial Performance

We are reporting a breakeven financial result which is better than the budgeted deficit of \$51,518 approved by the Board to support a planned increase in personnel costs. This is compared to an operating surplus of \$30,544 in 2020-21. Funding from the WIR offset shortfalls in admission and fundraising revenue. Revenue from retail and venue hire improved, and dividend revenue also increased.

Our overall financial position is healthy and will enable us to continue to underwrite plans to increase trading and fundraising revenues.

Conservation

Our conservation programme successes kept Ngā Manu alive in the minds of many of our supporters and visitors. Our first *Dactylanthus*, or wood rose, was discovered in flower four years ago and since then have been hand pollinating to produce seed and grow the population. This year the first male *Dactylanthus* flowers were produced on site, and one has been provided to Ōtari-Wilton's Bush for pollen storage studies.

Our programme to re-establish native mistletoe enjoyed further success with the propagation of our first red and scarlet mistletoe plants and more white mistletoe was established within the Reserve.

The re-planting of ferns on Fern Island, a popular destination for visitors, was completed.

Ngā Manu is accredited to the Zoo and Aquarium Association Accreditation (ZAA) Programme in recognition of our commitment to providing positive animal welfare opportunities for the animals under our care. Our activities include breed-for-release programmes including Pāteke Brown teal which produced two chicks and the Moko kākārīki Wellington Barking gecko which produced eight young this year. We also hold a small colony of the endangered Whitaker's skink which this year produced four juveniles.

Our Kiwi Night Encounter continued to enchant visitors with the opportunity for an intimate insight into the behaviour of kiwi. Approximately 300 people took advantage of this during the year.

Volunteer led projects included

The redevelopment of Fern Island which was led by Bruce De Cleene. This involved sourcing seedlings for the nursery, re-landscaping the Island and re-planting ferns. The project is ongoing to ensure that the ferns thrive and that there is a supply of seedlings.

Alder grove removal is an ongoing project led by Jean Fleming assisted by the Monday weed team to remove a grove of invasive alder trees in the reserve wetlands.

The Pest Control team is led by Brian Karl. The team's work includes setting and checking traps twice a week; ongoing monitoring of pest indexes through tracking stations; and the planning and execution of other pest programmes as required. The effort involved in protecting the native fauna and flora of the Reserve required our volunteer pest team to complete 20,954 trap checks during the year.

We would like to celebrate and thank our volunteers for their support and ongoing efforts. A special thanks to the following volunteers who have supported Ngā Manu for over ten years: Pam Manning, Judy Childs, Frank and Marg Brooker, Tony Ward, Eric Spicer and John Lewin. Ngā Manu could not do the work we do without Andrea Wilson who has been our voluntary vet for over 20 years.

Education and Community

We welcomed the return of the Mahara Art Gallery and Ngā Manu Nature Reserve children's Art and Environment Project which this year was focused on the world of Tane. Students from Ōtaki primary Whakatupuranga Rua Mano spent time at Ngā Manu with our Ranger team observing and learning about the ecosystems within the Reserve. Later, with the guidance of artists Michelle Walton and Harriet Bright they created beautiful ephemeral art and clay creations onsite at Ngā Manu.

Planning for the first practical conservation skills course was completed. The first group of students from Paraparaumu College will spend 4 days at Ngā Manu Nature Reserve. The hands-on experience will include seven modules delivered by leading practitioners in their fields alongside Ngā Manu staff and volunteers. The programme has been developed by Ngā Manu with the assistance of Brian Ireland of Startled Gecko Ltd and has generous support from Waikanae Rotary. Depending on the success of the programme it is hoped that it will become a regular offering.

Creative partnerships provided new ways for our communities to enjoy Ngā Manu. We started the year with the premier of [*Hiko Marupō Walking As One*](#) over four nights in late April 2021 with magical performance of music, dance and storytelling using our ancient forest as stage. This work was directed by Sara Brodie collaborating with professional artists and drawing on the talent of mana whenua.

Later in the year we opened *Dwellbeings* which is a permanent installation of eight tiny sculptural works in the form of dwellings that invite visitors to consider the implications of home and habitat. The sculptures were created by salvage material artists, Kemi and Niko.

The fourth series of the Ngā Manu Winter Lectures started on 6 May 2021 with a presentation on the challenges in conserving swamp maire and the race against Myrtle Rust by Ōtari-Wilton's Bush Conservation and Science Adviser, Karin van Walt. Five further lectures followed, ending in July with a presentation from Kath Dickinson, Professor of Botany at Otago University on how plants, vertebrates and invertebrates interact with one another, and their associated habitats, and the interactions of humans with nature.

Our focus during school holidays and public holidays is children and families with programming aligned with the season or festival. In all cases our intention is to enhance their connection with nature and

to provide a memorable experience such as the Golden Kiwi Egg Hunt during October to mark Save Kiwi Month.

Supporters and Funders

We are grateful to our supporters who have stood by us through an extraordinary year of many competing needs and helped us to fulfil our commitment to our work.

The Philipp Family Foundation continued its support of the annual collaboration between Ngā Manu and the Mahara Art Gallery for the benefit of the schoolchildren of the Kāpiti district.

Dwellbeings was made possible through the generosity of the Philipp Family Foundation, Tennent Brown Architects and donors to our BOOSTED campaign through The Arts Foundation Te Tumu Toi.

The Waikanae Community Board supported our application for funding to replace furniture and flooring in Robin's Nest an important asset for our education programmes and an increasingly popular venue for meetings and social occasions.

Hīkoi Marupō Walking As One received funding from Creative New Zealand Toi Aotearoa and was supported by Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai, Kristie Parata, Food Folk group at Olde Beach Bakery and Longbeach Tavern.

The Kāpiti Coast District Council confirmed its support for two Ngā Manu projects in its 2021 Long-term Plan by providing \$264,307 over three years for improvements to the Visitor Centre and to undertake a feasibility study of a Forest Canopy Walkway.

The Royal Society of New Zealand, Te Apārangi continued to support the Ngā Manu Winter Lectures.

The Nikau Foundation supported us with \$1,500 towards our ongoing operations.

Tony Ward former Trustee and Chair of the Board made a gift of \$30,000 to the Ngā Manu Endowment operated by the Nikau Foundation. Donations were also received from Ruth McKenzie, Mary & Andrew McEwen and D.L. Mathison.

Harbour City Funeral Homes contributed \$5,000. This is part of a commitment to sponsor our conservation efforts through to 2029. So far Ngā Manu has received in excess of \$50,000 under this arrangement.

Ngā Manu continues to enjoy support-in-kind from a range of individuals and businesses who regularly offer their services on a pro bono or subsidised basis. We would like to especially thank the Raumati Vet Centre, Entire Electrical, Space Architecture Studio, Goodman Contractors Limited, Bohanna Motors and Rib West for their support and assistance over the last year.

In Memorium

During the year former Trustee Maurice Andrews passed away. Maurice retired from the Board in 2011 serving most of his time as Trustee with Peter McKenzie.

Staff and Volunteers

As planned, we increased staffing with the establishment of new positions in Business, Fundraising and Administration. The benefits of the expanded team were immediately obvious with an increase in trading revenues in both retail and venue hire, significantly improved operating systems and better use of technology.

The wider team includes over 60 volunteers who worked 1,184 days this year (68 days less than last year owing to the impacts of Covid 19) mainly in the Reserve and contributing to key functions including pest control and animal welfare as well as enclosure maintenance and the care and development of habitats.

Trustees

We thank our Trustees for their service during the year. Trustees bring skills and experience to the Board and contribute to the success of Ngā Manu through their leadership and commitment to community service.

This year we farewelled Trustee Jean Fleming who joined the Board in 2015 having had a long association with Ngā Manu going back over many years. As a Trustee she brought her science knowledge, communication skills and commitment to conservation to Board deliberations and the work of the Reserve. Jean was instrumental in establishing the annual series Ngā Manu Winter Lectures which has brought speakers to Ngā Manu covering many topics relevant to our work and adding considerable value to Ngā Manu's standing in science communication. We also welcomed four new Trustees Carol Allan, Clare Stringer, Regan Savage and Kevin Stokes who have added considerable depth of skill and knowledge to the Board.

During the year we completed a thorough review of the Ngā Manu Trust Deed bringing the document up to date in terms of the Charities Act 2005 and other legal requirements whilst retaining the original purpose and objectives of the Trust Deed executed on 8 February 1974 by Peter McKenzie, Roy McKenzie, Sir Robert Falla, John Salmon and David Mudge.

We also farewelled Reserve Manager Matu Booth after 6 years of service. Matu brought a caring approach to the Reserve, and he operated in a very understated and inclusive way garnering support and respect from our growing volunteer group, staff and the wider community. Matu's wealth of experience with bird handling and monitoring helped Ngā Manu in various breed-for-release programmes including the yellow crowned kākāriki. He set up the Kiwi Night Encounter having sat in the enclosure after late feeding, thinking what a wonderful experience it was. He was right, and the KNE has become a popular experience for visitors to Ngā Manu.

Looking Ahead

Our new General Manager, Anna McKenzie Hawea started work in early April. We are working on a new strategic plan which emphasises our commitment to people (visitors, volunteers and staff) and to providing access to nature. We see wellbeing, learning, and engagement as fundamental to our purpose. Conservation and the restoration of habitats continues to be at the heart of our operation and why people want to volunteer and visit. We continue to aspire to improve the Visitor Centre and to add to the experiences that visitors have in the Reserve. The recently opened *Dwellbeings* art installations is one such project and we expect to complete a feasibility study on a forest canopy walkway.

Our tourism focus is on widening our reach within the Wellington Region and continuing to build our reputation as an accessible destination for nature lovers wherever they are from.

Pat Stuart
Chair, Ngā Manu Trust

Anna McKenzie Hawea
General Manager, Ngā Manu Nature Reserve