



# The Inlet

Newsletter for the Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet

APRIL

2013

*The Inlet* is a newsletter that brings together local and regional news affecting the Pauatahanui Inlet and its environs.

*The Inlet* comes out three times a year and current or back issues can be downloaded from our website.

The newsletter includes items of concern that affect the area as well as general interest topics for everyone.

Please contact us if you would like to contribute to *The Inlet*.

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## FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

I admit to being frustrated!

In the first place I was hoping by this time that we would know the contents of the Harbour Estuary Restoration Plan and that, in this issue of *The Inlet*, we would be able to discuss what it entails for restoration of the Inlet environment and how GOPI members could become involved.

Unfortunately this has not happened, although I do believe it is 'just around the corner'.

Secondly I have to tell you that, reluctantly, we have terminated our Stream Monitoring Programme. The initial purpose when begun in 2001 was to use volunteer labour to increase the coverage of the council's regional database on stream health with some relatively simple data on our local streams. With the passage of time, however, and the increase in awareness of the complexities of protecting stream health, such simple data are no longer sufficient. Furthermore the techniques now necessary for a high quality monitoring programme require specialist training.

It is possible that some monitoring of stream conditions could be done by volunteers as part of the implementation of the Catchment Re-vegetation Plan but we won't know that for some time yet.

Finally our submission on the application for resource consent for a new cleanfill on Haywards Hill turns out to be too mild (see page 4). While this is frustrating, it is also good news as it means that the regional council is vigorously and rigorously applying and monitoring compliance with its standards – a practice we applaud.

*John Wells*

## 2013 PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

As usual at this time of year our annual Photo Competition is well underway and it is expected that all entries will have been submitted by early April. There is a lot of support this year from our sponsors, both new and established, with some enticing prizes to be won. We wish all photographers who have worked hard to produce images for the competition all the very best of luck.

There are some changes to the competition dates as noted in December's newsletter. The revised dates to remember are:

Close of entries	Monday 8 April
Prize giving ceremony	Sunday 28 April 2:00pm (Helen Smith Room, Pataka)
Display dates	
Porirua Library	28 April — 07 May
Palmers	08 May — 22 May
Whitby Mall	23 May — 06 June
Lighthouse	07 June — 21 June

Please come along to the prize giving ceremony even if you haven't taken part in the competition. Many of the entrants' work will be on display at the Helen Smith Room for all to see and you will be most welcome to come and view them. We'll be serving refreshments afterwards, if you've got room.

## THEN AND NOW

This photo is called 'Coach and Passengers'. It is said to have been taken somewhere in the local Pauatahanui/Porirua area, but where exactly was the location?

This is one of a number of wonderful images that are in the 'Pauatahanui History Book' soon to be on sale. It has been provided by the Pauatahanui History Group which has been compiling the long awaited complete account of this area and its people from the earliest times.

Below are three recent photos taken along Grays Road that show similar locations, not however believed to be correct. If you can identify where the image was taken, or want to know more about the book, please visit [www.pauatahanuihistorybook.co.nz](http://www.pauatahanuihistorybook.co.nz) and get in touch with Christine Stanley.



*Coach and Passengers*



*Kakaho Stream mouth*



*Motukaraka Point*



*Horokiri Stream mouth*

## WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

We want to tell you about a website that we think you'll be interested in. It is called '*Where the wild things are*' and you can find it on the Wellington Regional Strategy website:

[www.wrs.govt.nz/where-the-wild-things-are](http://www.wrs.govt.nz/where-the-wild-things-are)

'*Where the wild things are*' is a regional biodiversity portal containing 50 sites from across the Wellington region which have high biodiversity values and are relatively easy to access. Pauatahanui Inlet is just one of the locations included in the portal and an overview of the importance and environmental concerns of the Inlet is given there.

The site displays a map of the region with flags for each location covered in the portal, plus a number of sub-pages on individual areas within the Wellington region. You can click on any of the flags for information on each site, or you can download a pdf called 'biodiversity portal index' containing a list of all 50 sites.

'*Where the wild things are*' can be your guide to planning an exploration of the Wellington region and the wide range of ecosystems that can be found here. However, even just sitting in your living room, this portal is very informative and a good way to learn interesting facts about our region's native plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms while discovering sites you may not be aware of across the region, both well known and hidden. Happy hunting!

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## ARTICLES FOR ECOlink

**G**uardians of Pauatahanui Inlet is a member of ECO, New Zealand's umbrella organisation for all Environmental and Conservation Organisations of Aotearoa.

Each quarter ECO produces ECOlink, a publication for its members and friends with articles of interest submitted by many of them. The December issue, for instance, had articles contributed by Bay of Islands Coastal Watchdog and Sustainable Whanganui Trust, together with news and events from Civic Trust Auckland and the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust.

Each quarter ECO makes a regular call for contributions to the magazine and we are passing on that request to you. If you have an issue or event of local or national interest that could be of significance to conservation generally you are invited to submit this for consideration in the next issue which is due out in June.

You can find more information about the content and size of articles, on the website: [www.eco.org.nz](http://www.eco.org.nz).

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## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**D**o you have questions about the future of Pauatahanui Inlet when Transmission Gully Motorway is built?

Perhaps you would like to know more about the Harbour Management Plan?

This year's AGM will give you the opportunity to have these questions answered by our special guest speaker, Stephen Fuller.

Stephen is a plant ecologist and the ecological consultant to NZTA on TGM. He's a mine of

information and looking forward to answering people's questions about Transmission Gully and perhaps Duck Creek.

This year's AGM will be held in June and we really want you to come along, meet your committee and learn more about our future.

Time: Tuesday 25th June; 7:30pm

Venue: Mana Cruising Club

## WINSTONE APPLIES FOR CLEANFILL ON HAYWARDS HILL

You may have heard that Winstone Aggregates Limited has applied for resource consent to establish a clean landfill on Haywards Hill. Due partly to time constraints, and a minimal opportunity to consult, we lodged a joint submission with the Pauatahanui Inlet Community Trust.

(see [www.gopi.org.nz/winstone-aggregates-ltd-cleanfill/](http://www.gopi.org.nz/winstone-aggregates-ltd-cleanfill/)).

Our specific concerns relate to Winstone's application for permits to discharge sediment into the Pauatahanui Stream both during construction and on an ongoing basis, and discharges to the tip of materials that may not always comply with the definition of 'cleanfill'. As with all such developments sediment will get into the stream, but we inferred from the conditions proposed by Winstone that this would be only in very limited quantities. However, the nature of non-complying materials that might be dumped is not dealt with beyond prohibiting organic material and treated timber.

Winstone's proposed conditions are what we now expect to see in all resource consent applications but, as always, their effectiveness is dependent on the quality of the monitoring process. Also, in this case, as the proposals are for a long-term, 35 year consent, and we are very concerned that the application fails to consider the possible effects of climate change on the frequency and severity of heavy rain events in the future.

These points have been stressed in our submission and we are very pleased to learn that the regional council has queried many points in the application concerning Winstone's proposals for erosion and sediment control. Winstone is required to provide much more detailed information. Meanwhile the application has been placed on hold.

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## HELP! VOLUNTEERS WANTED

The Forest and Bird Pauatahanui Committee has managed the Pauatahanui Wildlife Wetland Reserve since the mid 1980s. Since that time Forest and Bird volunteers have transformed this area (situated between Pauatahanui village and the Inlet) creating saltwater and freshwater ponds, fringing bush, public walking tracks, bird observation hides and a picnic area.

There is, however, still plenty to do. Collecting seeds and on-growing seedlings; planting; weed control; maintaining tracks; tree release; water controls. There are jobs that require physical effort, with less physical roles in the plant nursery; plus everything in between. Prior experience of any of these activities is not necessary with on-the-job coaching from experienced volunteers.

The normal schedule is the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of each month, but once accustomed to specific activities, volunteers do choose other times that meet their individual needs.

If you feel you would like to get involved or would like further information please contact either of the following:

Robin Chesterfield      233 8314 ([Chesterfield@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Chesterfield@xtra.co.nz))

Wanda Tate                233 1760

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## ON THE HORIZON

**C**ockle Survey: Our regular three-yearly cockle survey is due this year and is scheduled for 1st December.



## FEATURE ARTICLE

### The Oystercatcher – Does it really...?

With its black or pied plumage, pink legs and long bright orange-red bill, the oystercatcher is one of the most easily recognisable birds of our Inlet. Oystercatchers as a group however are found worldwide with about twelve relatively similar species all belonging to just one genus, *Haemotopus*. Only the Polar Regions lack any representatives.

There are two mainland species in New Zealand and both are seen on Pauatahanui Inlet. The Variable Oystercatcher *Toreapango* (*H. unicolor*), is endemic. As its name suggests the plumage does vary, ranging from completely black (more common further south) to a pied phase with a white belly and white tinged wings. These colour variations are genetically determined and the frequency of the various phases varies widely between breeding colonies.

The South Island Pied Oystercatcher *Torea*, (*H. finschi*) is thought to be a sub-species of the Pied Oystercatcher found in Australia. The New Zealand variant is often abbreviated to SIPO. It can be distinguished from the pied phase of *H. unicolor* by a broad white bar on its wing and with the clearly defined white belly extending up to the lower neck region.



Pied Oystercatcher

Photo: Helen Westerbeke



Variable Oystercatcher

Photo: Helen Westerbeke

So, why the name 'oyster-catcher'? Does it really catch oysters? Well - yes, possibly. The name was in fact originally coined for the North American species in 1731 where oysters are a common food source for that local bird, and then became the default for all species. Previously they were strangely known as Sea Pie.

It is possible that our New Zealand species will eat oysters when opportunity permits, but not in the Pauatahanui Inlet as we have none readily available. Oystercatchers are in fact carnivorous in the broad sense and feed

on a variety of bivalve molluscs, crabs, worms. Bivalves are prised open using the long bill, or if that doesn't work, hammered open to extract the animal inside.

Both species are monogamous; after pairing they remain together all year long so you seldom see an oystercatcher completely alone on the shore. Their nests are shallow scrapings in sand or shingle but Pied Oystercatchers breed only in the South Island and records of the Variable Oystercatcher breeding in the Inlet are rare, though they do breed on Mana Island.

## FAMILY CORNER

### WORD-FINDER

Have you encountered a 'word-finder' before? It's a grid of letters in which there are a number of hidden words that you are asked to find and place a ring around. To help find the words a set of clues is provided, similar to that of a crossword puzzle.

Below is a word-finder that contains names we associate with Pauatahanui Inlet and its wildlife. We challenge you to find all ten of the words but, remember, the words may be found running left, right, up, down and diagonally too. The answers are displayed at the bottom.

**Good Luck!**

A	E	J	O	T	Y	D	I	N	C
X	R	H	M	H	A	C	X	S	O
C	H	M	E	D	R	W	B	D	C
R	I	G	A	R	G	G	R	L	K
P	N	N	U	Z	O	A	A	E	L
J	A	O	T	Y	L	N	D	H	E
C	N	E	E	L	G	R	A	S	S
I	G	S	A	L	T	N	S	X	C
H	A	M	M	R	W	B	G	L	Q
V	A	F	M	U	D	C	R	A	B

#### CLUES

- A grey bird with long neck
- A male duck with colourful plumage
- This invertebrate makes holes in the mud
- A shark that breeds in the Inlet
- The shells of this animal litter the foreshore
- Important food for the black swan
- What type of marsh will you find at Pauatahanui?
- Another name for whitebait
- These geese are becoming more common here
- There are four types of this bird in the Inlet

#### ANSWERS

HERON; MALLARD; MUDCRAB; RIG; COCKLE; EELGRASS; SALT; INANGA; CANADA; SHAG

## PLEASE SIGN UP A FRIEND OR NEIGHBOUR

Sign up a neighbour, friend, or another family member. Just explain to them that membership numbers really count in giving us a strong voice to argue for what we all value about the Inlet. Membership forms can be downloaded from our website [www.gopi.org/nz/membership-form](http://www.gopi.org/nz/membership-form) or copied from the one at the back of this newsletter. The cost is tiny but the significance of the added voice could be substantial.

**Every new member will receive a free Living Waters DVD.**

#### EMERGENCY NUMBERS FOR THE PAUATAHANUI INLET

**Pollution:** Discharges of contaminants to air, land, storm-water drains, streams, rivers or sea and for after hours consent enquiries: Greater Wellington 0800 496 734 (24 hours)

**Boating infringements:** Greater Wellington 384 5708 (24 hours)

**Illegal Fishing Activity:** Ministry for Primary Industries 0800 476 224 (24 hours)

**Pauatahanui Wildlife Reserve:** Department of Conservation 0800 362 468

Let us know what you have reported so we can keep an accurate record and follow up if necessary.

**233 2557 (Secretary, GOPI) or [pauainlet@gmail.com](mailto:pauainlet@gmail.com).**



# Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet

[www.gopi.org.nz](http://www.gopi.org.nz)

[pauainlet@gmail.com](mailto:pauainlet@gmail.com)

## Membership Form: new members

To join the Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet you can pay your subscription either online or by post.

Online payment	Postal payment
1. Pay your sub via e-banking into our Westpac account 03-1533-0009387-00. In the 'Particulars' or 'Reference' columns, write your surname and initials. 2. Then fill in this form and either email it to us at <a href="mailto:pauainlet@gmail.com">pauainlet@gmail.com</a> or post it (see next column for our postal address)	1. Write a cheque made payable to 'Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet'. 2. Then fill in this form and send it, along with your cheque, to: Membership Secretary, Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet, Box 57034, Mana, Porirua 5247.

Please fill in your details for our records. If you are filling in this form electronically, **click** at the beginning of a dotted line and then type.

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

E-mail: ..... Phone: .....

Please put  next to the subscription you are paying (electronic completion – **highlight** the box and type lower case x.) We are also very grateful for donations. (We are a registered charity for tax purposes: registration number CC47523.)

One-year individual (\$12.00)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Five-year individual (\$50.00)	<input type="checkbox"/>
One-year family (\$15.00)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Five-year family (\$60.00)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donation: \$ .....	Do you require a receipt for your sub? <input type="checkbox"/> or your donation? <input type="checkbox"/>		
Date subs paid: .....	Reference appears as: .....		(e-banking only)
We'd like to send you newsletters and notices via email. May we do this? <input type="checkbox"/>			

Please tell us which of our activities you would like to be part of:

Annual Clean-up day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:
Three-yearly cockle survey	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Submissions to local bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Our educational programmes for schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Website and video clips	<input type="checkbox"/>	

How else do you think we can care for the Inlet? Please use a separate sheet or just email us.