



LAKE ROTOITI COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.



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NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2011

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

RESOURCE CONSENT RENEWALS FOR THE OKERE GATES AND OHAU CHANNEL WEIR

Following my report in the December 2010 newsletter, the anticipated "Tasman case" – which may have influenced legal precedents – was withdrawn at the last moment; the Commissioners were therefore able to proceed with their Report on the Hearing for the renewal of the Resource Consents for the Okere Gates and the Ohau Channel Weir which was held in the first week of December 2010. This report was extremely detailed and clearly indicated the enormous amount of work that the Commissioners had put into the Hearing and their comprehensive understanding of the issues.

Unfortunately, the Commissioners decision has had an appeal lodged with the Environment Court by the Ngati Pikiao Environmental Society Incorporated. For several months the Applicant (Bay of Plenty Regional Council) has been attempting to reach a compromise with that Society to avoid this matter incurring significant expense through the Environment Court. To date this has not proved possible; further, mediation set down for 30th June 2011 was cancelled at short notice because the appellant was unavailable. A new mediation date has been set by the Environment Court for the 16th of August 2011.

It is most disappointing that this matter is still not resolved because the regime recommended by the Commissioners was very balanced and fairly took into account the well-being of the lake, its flora and fauna and its very diverse uses.

LAKE WEED

Brentleigh Bond, Chair of the Community Board, has been working very hard to ensure that BOPRC's weed management programme and budget includes weed control as a safety and amenity value, in addition to the current policy of focussing on containment control of noxious aquatic weeds such as Hornwort for environmental reasons.

BOPRC have commissioned consultants APR to conduct a survey and to get input from interested stakeholders. From this they hope to establish a "grading" of weed areas to rank from the most critical to that least affected. Following this "grading" an allocation of budget can be appropriated.

The current budget available from LINZ – the body that inherited the

Government's responsibility for lake bed maintenance following the Treaty Settlement that deeded the lake beds to Te Arawa – is totally inadequate, and with current Government cost-cutting measures it could be 3-5 years before increased funding is available.

LRCA has offered assistance with respect to the APR survey, and to assist BOPRC with their resource application to apply a new-generation aquatic weed herbicide for the Rotorua Lakes area.

In February BOPRC arranged for the application to Okawa Bay of a 'zeolite' derivative designed to bind nutrient phosphorus in the water and sediments of the Bay. The intent of this was to deprive algae of the nutrients necessary for growth and thereby avert an impending bloom.

This application was completed under the emergency provisions of the Resource Management Act. If a similar situation recurs at some future date and the community would like the procedure to be repeated, the Council cannot continually invoke the emergency provisions of the Act and will need a resource consent to take the necessary action. The reality is that an application for a targeted resource consent in future will take too long to be of any practical use.

Therefore, the Council wishes to apply for a dosing consent so that repeat application can be undertaken at any time in the future should this be deemed necessary. In this regard residents of Okawa Bay, Te Akau Bay and the Okere Arm attended a public meeting on 25th May 2011 and showed their support for this initiative.

SEWERAGE RETICULATION

Work is continuing in the Whangamarino, Okere Falls and Otaramarae areas and this Newsletter contains a short report on the current progress.

However problems have arisen for the proposed Gisborne Point to Rotoma scheme and I would draw your attention to a letter in this Newsletter from a Tamatea Street resident which clearly sets out the community's concerns and problems. As the proposed scheme stands at the current time it is well beyond the financial reach of the majority of residents in that area and a more equitable and fair compromise must be reached.

HILARY PRIOR (CHAIRPERSON)

COVER PICTURE FROM A COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY TOM LYNCH.

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ROTORUA LAKES COMMUNITY BOARD

BRENTLEIGH BOND

ROTORUA LAKES COMMUNITY BOARD

EMAIL: GRAHAMB@CLEAR.NET.NZ

ROTORUA LAKES COMMUNITY BOARD PROPOSED 2011 MEETING DATES

11 August	Tarawera Buried Village	7.00 pm
22 September	RDC CR1	1.30 pm
3 November	Lake Okareka Community Hall	7.00 pm
15 December	RDC CR1	1.30 pm

OPEN LETTER FROM HINEHOPU RESIDENT RE: GISBORNE POINT – ROTOMA SEWERAGE RETICULATION

The Gisborne Point – Rotoma sewerage scheme has had several developments this year. The scheme will have its own treatment plant, and RDC has bought land for this on the Manawahae Rd behind Lake Rotoma. The design for the plant was submitted by RDC for a Resource Consent prior to Easter.

There has been considerable disquiet amongst Rotoma and Rotoiti residents about the proposed treatment plant based on RDC's admission that there would be nutrient leaching back into Lake Rotoma from the plant. Although the nutrients re-entering that lake are less than those that will be removed by reticulating sewerage around the lake, community feeling from the whole scheme catchment is overwhelmingly of the opinion that NO nutrients should be re-entering Rotoma from the plant.

Disquiet was not alleviated at a pre-consent hearing meeting organised by BOPRC between submitters and RDC. Rather than having taken on board the community's concerns RDC presented an unchanged plan, and many at the meeting felt that RDC was reluctant to listen to what the community was saying.

However subsequently the Consent Hearing has been delayed until the end of August; hopefully this is a sign that RDC has indeed taken on board concerns and is working on changes to the treatment plant that will meet the requirements of the community.

A second development regarding the overall sewerage reticulation scheme is that part of the Rotoehu community has asked to withdraw from scheme. This was allowed by RDC although subsequently this decision will be put again to Council. Outside of the merits for the particular areas affected by withdrawing the ability to withdraw raises issues for all sewerage schemes around the lake.

Another major concern with the overall scheme is the predicted cost. There is a complex funding model with Rotoma receiving a subsidy from Ministry of Health whilst Rotoiti is funded by Ministry of the Environment at a lower level. This means that the part of our lake that can least afford a sewerage scheme is being asked to pay by far the most of any of the schemes around our lakes, in fact double the cost of some of the other schemes. In simple terms,

the scheme is simply not affordable for many households around Rotoiti.

RDC blandly saying that this is the cost is not an answer to this problem. It is not possible to force money from people where the money doesn't exist, and neither should people be forced off their land because they can't pay. There needs to be a concerted effort by RDC, BOPRC and all affected government and Iwi authorities to work with the community to find a solution that will reduce costs to an affordable level.

It is worth noting that there is considerable buy-in to the concept of sewerage reticulation around all our lakes and within the catchment of this scheme. The efforts to save and preserve our lakes were driven by local community action rather than starting with Councils, and sewerage schemes were embraced as one tool to improve lake water quality. What RDC might see as opposition isn't necessarily a rejection of the idea, it is a questioning of the detail.

PHILL THOMASS

HINEHOPU RESIDENT



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In times of uncertainty call the Lakes Team for good advice and local knowledge.

FISH & GAME NEWS

Lake Rotoiti closed to boat fishing at the end of June and will reopen when the new season kicks off on October 1st. Some shoreline based angling remains open from Ruato Bay around to Hinehopu. There was a plentiful supply of smelt in the lake over the summer and autumn period and trout remain in excellent condition.

Fish & Game staff will be out conducting shoreline surveys and checking licenses throughout the winter. We have recently completed our autumn liberations. A total of 14,000 LPAD (left pelvic and adipose fin clip) along with 500 '11R' tags have been released at sites from Ruato Bay through to 'The Pipe' at Hinehopu. A reminder to anglers to please carry licenses with you when fishing.

The "no boat fishing" zone within Ruato Bay will again come into force from 1st April to 30th September. This is a Fish and Game Council trial to see if the winter shoreline angling catch rates can be improved by restricting boat fishing within this area compared with the rest of the shoreline fishery.

Looking ahead to the season opening (1st October) we can expect the 2 year old spring released fish to be slightly larger than last year at 520mm and the autumn released fish to reach 550mm. Have a safe next few months and we will see you out on the water in the new season.

MATT OSBORNE,

FISH & GAME NZ. EASTERN REGION

TWO HEARTY WARMING ECONOMICAL WINTER SOUPS

WHANGAMARINO WATERCRESS SOUP

Ingredients:

1 large onion peeled, roughly chopped
25g butter
250g potatoes washed and diced
600mls chicken stock (powdered is fine)
180gms watercress, wild or cultivated - roughly chopped
Salt and black pepper to your taste

Method: In a large pot/casserole dish, cook onion in butter till soft, but not browned. Add, stock, potatoes and cook until soft. Add the watercress, puree/blend, Cook for no more than 5 mins, stirring so the soup doesn't stick. (if using wild watercress ensure there are no large pieces of stalk in the soup.) serve. Note: If the soup is too thick or you need to extend it, simply add some milk.

MURIHIKU SWEDE SOUP

If you are serving this to English friends call it 'Vegetable chowder'

Ingredients:

500g peeled & cubed swede
3/4-1 teaspoon curry powder
1 1/2 cups water
3 cups milk
2 cloves garlic (garlic paste is fine)
75g butter
2 tsp powdered chicken stock
Salt and black pepper to your taste

Method: Place garlic, curry powder and butter in pot, melt, but don't brown. Add water and swede, cover and cook until tender. Remove from heat, cool, add chicken stock, puree, add milk and reheat without boiling.

Great kai!



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WEST ROTOITI CARE GROUP

The Group has had no organized work related days as such, but many individuals are working on areas specific to their own location, some areas are well cared for thanks to these residents.

Work was done on plantings adjacent to the main road beside the control gates. Trees and shrubs were cut back to allow vision around the road bend. This was becoming a blind spot for pedestrians and motorists alike. Maintenance continues on Whangamarino plantings. Wooden Boats members sprayed the gorse at the beach at Whangamama Drive

When new plantings are undertaken great care needs to be taken with regard to plant selection, and order of planting. We have situations at Okere where radical pruning has been undertaken to improve vision for road users. Views of the Lake have been lost to motorists and residents alike. Flaxes planted on front margins impede the work of mowing contractors. Rather than contact the Care Group some residents have cut out trees from the original plantings. I would ask that contact be made with me or EBOP so the best resolution can be found.

JAN WILKINS 07 362 4976

THE TRADING POST RESTAURANT.

There is good news in Paengaroa with the re opening of The Trading Post restaurant.

The once very successful eatery has had new life injected from seasoned restaurateurs Paul Cogman & Suzy Coleman who owned Soho in Tauranga for 10 years.

After a few minor alterations the quaint 1910 cottage has been transformed into a country bistro and pizzeria. The menu, which can be viewed by visiting www.thetradingpostbistro.co.nz, is designed to provide generous unfussy simple food, influenced by the Bistros of France and Trattorias of Italy.

Suzy runs the kitchen and is fast getting the respect of the locals for her food, comments like "that was the best steak I've ever eaten" and "we are definitely coming back" are common. The thin base pizzas are made from her own dough recipe and the desserts reflect the fact she was the pastry chef at Logan Brown for a stint.

The vision for The Trading Post is to provide the local communities with a venue that offers consistently good food with professional service. Having had an incredible start to their new venture and positive word of mouth advertising it is recommended to book a table to avoid disappointment.

OKERE FALLS ROAD SAFETY CONCERNS

On May 10 last I met with Fraser Wilson, Brentleigh Bond and RDC State Highways Manager Kevin Thompson at the Okere Falls Store on the matter of road safety at the northern end of the 70kph speed zone on SH33.

Following the Community Board bus trip to the site we knew the problems, so we were there to discuss possible solutions.

Lowering the speed limit is not an option the NZTA would permit, but pre-warning signs of the approaching 70kmh zone, and islands with 'pedestrian refuges' in the centre of the road to create a more 'closed-in' feel to the zone and thereby encourage lower speeds were discussed.

The issue was also on the agenda of the Road Safety Action Planning Committee, which I chaired on May 25, and NZTA's Traffic & Safety Engineer Steve James is looking into the issue with Kevin Thompson.

We look forward to early work to improve safety on this notorious bend.

DAVE DONALDSON

COUNCILLOR AND MEMBER ROTORUA LAKES COMMUNITY BOARD

KIA ORA

I took Karen Hunt's place on the Rotorua Lakes Community Board when she moved to the Lakes Water Quality committee. I work public holidays so cannot attend most AGMs. Today is Queen's Birthday Monday and I am at work. I really should be at Rotoma discussing the options of sewerage connections in the area. But I can assure you I take a keen interest and am kept up to date by those that can attend.

The Lakes Community Board started when I was first elected to Council and I was taken aback by the almost hostile attitude some Councillors had towards it. Only the new Councillors would even consider being Council representatives on the Board. I am pleased to say, especially through the efforts of Brentleigh Bond, the Board has earned great respect at Council both local and regional.

I am honoured to serve with such a well informed and dedicated group of people.

CR. MAGGIE BENTLEY | PHONE 07 3624998 MOBILE 0272858 475
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UPDATE FROM TODD MCCLAY MP FOR ROTORUA

Budget 2011 saw the announcement of the Government's Fresh Water Package, as an initial response to the Land and Water Forum's report on fresh water management. It includes a National Policy Statement on fresh water management, significant investment for irrigation projects, and a contestable \$15 million Clean-up Fund to help to clean up New Zealand's waterways.

The improvement in water quality in Lake Rotoiti continues, with projects like the diversion wall and the sewerage scheme really kicking in. The community should be rightly proud to have the largest improvement in water quality of the whole of New Zealand in 2010.

The recent announcement on lake levels in Rotoiti by BoPRC is a reasonable and fair decision. I applaud the community's approach to work with the Regional Council and the pro active attendance at meetings regarding the lake levels. I will watch the results with interest.



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Smoked Salmon Terrine with Pickled Cucumber, Sauce Verte and Melba Toast

Warm Crispy Skin Duck Breast Salad with Beetroot Orange Macadamia and Pear.

MAINS

Braised Lamb Shanks, Creamed Pea and Leeks, Green Beans, Potato Truffle Puree, Kumara Crisps and Mint Jus

Beef Eye Fillet, Potato Gratin, Roast Baby Veg and Yorkshire Pudding with Red Wine Caramelized Onion.

Corn fed Chicken Breast wrapped in a Pancetta and stuffed with Pine Nut, Sun Dried Tomatoes and Feta. Butternut and Courgette Bok Choy.

Fish of the day, Lemon Risotto, warm Cherry Tomato Salsa, Bok Choy and Dill Butter.

Fettuccine, Garlic Sage and Lemon infused grilled Vegetables with Red Pepper Roulle and crispy Shallots.

DESSERT

Warm Apple Pie, Cinnamon Anglaise, Rum and Raisin Ice-Cream, Berry Compote and Apple Crisp

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Cheese selection with dried fruit chutney and crackers



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ROTORUA HARBOURMASTER: **UPDATE**

SUMMER COVERAGE

The summer patrol coverage commenced on 26 December 2010, consisting of one Patrol Vessel and two Jet Skis (unmarked). Patrols were conducted daily at random times between the hours of 0600 -2000 hrs. Lakes that were deemed high usage such as Rotoma, Rotoiti, Tarawera, Tikitapu and Okareka were patrolled more regularly e.g. twice daily. The remaining lakes were patrolled also; although less frequently.

Daily patrols were conducted up until Waitangi weekend and are now conducted weekends only.

BYLAWS

Although there has been a general acceptance of the recent changes to the Navigational Safety Bylaws, acceptance has not been forthcoming to the changes made on Lake Rotoma, specifically Matutu Arm (5 knot zone). As a consequence full time coverage was conducted on Lake Rotoma during the summer coverage. The changes on Lake Tikitapu received positive comments. Only one concern was raised; which was, "changing the direction of the ski lane would lead to potential accidents through sun strike or people unfamiliar with the change"

LAKE WARDENS

At the beginning of the summer season there were 27 warranted wardens or in the process of being warranted. Although many wardens were not able to carry out duties due to work commitments or other reasons, those wardens that were able, had a positive effect on the behaviour of lake users. Being able to carry out their duties allowed the Maritime Unit to conduct their patrols on water, without having to worry about what was happening on land.

Recently, the issue has been raised regarding the possibility of lake wardens taking on Rotorua District Council duties. Although there are pros and cons to this, there are still a few issues that need to be discussed with the Council.

LAKE ISSUES

Overall the behaviour on all lakes has been relatively good. Educating users, rather than infringing, has been the main focus for the summer period. However, due to the seriousness of some offences, numerous verbal warnings were given; 33 Infringement Offence Warning Notices and 15 Infringement Notices were issued. Common offences included; exceeding 5 knots within 200 metres of the shore or inside the 5 knot buoy, towing without an observer and

failing to carry a life jacket or personal flotation device or the correct number on their vessel.

The biggest problem to date has been jet skis and accompanying lack of understanding that the regulations governing personal watercraft are the same regulations that govern any power driven vessel.



(SUMMER REPORT 2010-2011)

Therefore; despite the intense patrol programme, increased warden coverage and extra patrol vessels, there was still a fatality. This may have been prevented had the victim been wearing a life jacket or personal flotation device.

LIFE JACKETS

It is not compulsory to wear a life jacket or personal flotation device unless a person is being towed e.g. Biscuit, Ski, Tube.

However it is law that all recreational crafts including jet Skis, Kayaks, Canoes, Waka, etc must carry at the time of use and in a readily accessible location, sufficient personal flotation devices of appropriate size for each person on board.

As part of the summer patrol programme the Bay of Plenty Regional Council has actively been promoting the wearing of life jackets or personal flotation devices on kayaks, canoes, jet skis, etc, through local radio, newspapers and face to face. However, because the wearing of life jackets /personal flotation devices is not law we are limited in what we can enforce so our only course of action is to offer advice and highlight potential risks

"In April 2010 Ministry of Transport in conjunction with Maritime NZ submitted a rule change to the Minister of Transport, Steven Joyce under Maritime Rule Part 91, it read,

"All persons on recreational vessels less than 6 metres must wear a life jackets/personal flotation device unless the skipper deemed it unnecessary"

The rule change went through the first reading however was thrown out due to insufficient research, information and public support.

The intention is re-submit the rule change this year; therefore supporters of the rule change have been urged to lobby the local MP

OHAU CHANNEL

Users of the channel will notice that there has been new signage erected along the channel. Hopefully this will make people aware of the speed limit on the channel as well as warn them of the swimmers in the channel.

PERERIKA MAKIHA

HARBOURMASTER - ROTORUA LAKES



BETWEEN WATERWAYS

AQUATIC PEST ISSUES

HORNWORT HARVESTING LAKE ROTOEHU

Hornwort harvesting for nutrient management at Lake Rotoehu has been completed for the 2011 year.

Harvesting this year took place over 10 weeks and removed a total of around 3500 tonnes of weed; this will equal approximately 7-9 tonnes of catchment equivalent Nitrogen. Despite some rough weather over the harvesting, the operation went smoothly. Weed harvested through the last five weeks was transported to a vermicomposting operation (that's a wormfarm).

WEED CORDON UPDATE

A weed cordon has been installed at Otautu Bay Lake Rotoehu. The cordon is similar in design to those currently located at Lakes Rotoma and Okataina. The cordon is designed to prevent the spread of Hornwort weed onto the Otutau Bay boat-ramp, users of this ramp will be well aware of the issues that Hornwort can cause. The amount of weed that blows in is a considerable nuisance and can be very difficult to remove, from trailers and gear, which presents a risk of this weed spreading into un-infested lakes. A spraying programme will be carried out in conjunction with the cordon to keep the Otautu ramp clear.



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A New Zealand wide campaign by Kiri Danielle to increase the awareness of littering and actively clean up before the Rugby World Cup

and the

KEEP ROTORUA BEAUTIFUL CLEANUP WEEK (20-27 AUGUST)

A local initiative led by Christine Findon as part of Keep NZ Beautiful

Kia ora everyone,

My name is Kiri Danielle, and I am so pleased to be involved in organising the biggest working-bee our country has ever seen, "Clean up for the Cup!", in preparation for the arrival of our international guests for the Rugby World Cup 2011.

It is my pleasure and honour to work alongside groups such as Lake Rotoiti Community Association to make our country all the more beautiful, whilst bringing much needed attention to all the hard work it takes to clean up rubbish that some thoughtlessly leave in our most beautiful places.

I would love to work alongside those of you who would consider donating your time to focus in on a spot in your area that has been ruined by rubbish.

Please, if you would like to pitch in, and have an area in mind, I can be contacted by email, at kiridanielle@gmail.com and would love to hear from you.

I am also working alongside Christine Findon of "Keep Rotorua Beautiful" and will be focussing intensely on Rotorua during "Clean up Week" from the 20th - 27th of August. It would be wonderful to have a group from your community available to help during that week.

Please do get in touch!

KIRI DANIELLE

**clean up
for the cup!**

OKERE FALLS/ OTARAMARAE/ WHANGAMARINO **SEWERAGE SCHEME** - PROGRESS REPORT

The construction of the scheme is progressing well in advance of programme. The Whangamarino segment of the scheme is now operational with the majority of properties now connected. The Okere segment of the scheme is also operational with 50% of the properties connected. The construction of the Otaramarae segment of the scheme is well underway with connection work of individual properties commencing next month.

The connection of the inlet pipe of existing septic tanks to the constructed pumping unit within each individual property requires a Building Consent. The Building Consent Form which was sent to every property owner needs to be signed and returned to the Contractor as soon as possible so as not to unduly delay the work.

The whole scheme is expected to be completed before December 2011. This is well in advance of programmed completion date of February 2012.

If you require further information regarding the scheme, please contact Greg Manzano at the Rotorua District Council or at email greg.manzano@hydrus.co.nz

PIKIAO FISHING CLUB

Well another fishing season has come and gone with the three big lakes now closed for spawning. We now eagerly await the opening again on the 1st October.

This season was one of mixed results with a definite trend of poorer quality fish coming off Lake Rotorua with size and condition well down and the jury still debating as to why but the records kept by us and Fish and Game during the course of our Tangaroa Competition held in January/February this year confirms this to be a fact.

Rotoiti and the Channel had the usual excellent opening day catch with some exceptional condition fish and the normal mayhem on Tarawera for some.

We would like to once again extend a warm welcome to anyone who would like to join our fishing club which has several competitions during the year, a wealth of local knowledge and great company. We are in Takinga Street, at the Píkiao Rugby League Club, Mourea. Contact our secretary, Hiriti Maaka on 362 4181 or call in and see Bob at the Happy Angler Store and he will be happy to give further information.

Look forward to seeing you this coming season.

Tight lines. **PAUL KEOGH** | VICE PRESIDENT, PIKIAO FISHING CLUB



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CLASSIC & WOODEN BOAT ASSOCIATION NEWS

The AGM was held on 4th of June with a good attendance of members and the good discussion of various subjects was very helpful to the incoming committee.

There were two retirees, Bill Fowler and Grant Cossey, both of whom have made a large contribution to the Association over the years – thanks Bill and Grant. Fortunately they will both be there to help the Committee when needed.

The AGM also saw the stepping down of Chris Laird as Commodore. Chris, who lives in Auckland, would often drive to Lake Rotoiti to chair a meeting, returning the same day. Thank you to Chris for your chairmanship and your commitment to the role.

Marcus Wilkins was installed as the new Commodore, and two new committee members, Guy Nelson and Keith Waddell, welcomed.

Our new committee will have their first meeting on 23 July and a full agenda has been prepared to gain member's ideas for the coming term.

Major topics for the coming year include weed control on the lake and the possibility of a permanent jetty or floating dock.

We look forward to a great year on Lake Rotoiti

MARCUS WILKINS | COMMODORE



LAKE ROTOITI FISHING REPORT

"Explosive" but short periods of action best describes the season for Lake Rotoiti. Most structures "fired" to a degree but for relatively less time. The normal rotation from the west bank to the north eastern "hot spots" continued but dissipated early.

Most anglers found themselves back –fishing structures with mixed results. Jigging was the favoured method for much of the summer but many anglers returned to deep trolling by mid April with some good results. The Ruato to Hinehopu runs producing numbers and top condition fish.

For several weeks prior to the International Fishing Competition in November consistent numbers were achieved. However, the tournament itself saw anglers spending many hours, particularly in the Vercoe's area for little result. Despite this the winning fish was

eventually taken on this structure.

The Australian "E.T. Fishing Escapes" TV team targeted Lakes Rotorua, Rotoiti and the Ohau Channel for Opening Day. Spectacular results from harling on Lake Rotorua, but unlike the previous Ohau Channel Opening, fishing in general was relatively slow. Lake Rotoiti produced some great action jigging over the next few days and the E.T. team headed back to Australia with some great footage and memories of this top trout fishery.

With winter upon us take advantage of some top shore-line fly fishing as the colder south-westerlies lower the lake temperature and provoke some big spawning runs.

For professional advice and charter or guiding services contact Glen Skinner, The Trout Connection, 0273232336



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GARDENING NOTES: THE COOL SUBTROPICS

This article is based around a garden in the inland Bay of Plenty, at an altitude of 300 metres (our house lies on the thousand foot contour), where the climate is distinctly cool, but not excessively cold – Okere Falls, at Lake Rotoiti, but these remarks apply to all of the Lake Rotoiti settlements, plus Lakes Rotoehu and Rotoma. For the last twenty nine years my wife Elizabeth and myself have lived at Lake Rotoiti, near Rotorua.

When I first viewed the property one thing which caught my eye was an old tamarillo tree. Tamarillos are very frost-sensitive! As a result, before I had even seen inside the house, I had decided that this was the place for me. Fortunately Elizabeth concurred with this decision! We have a favourable microclimate, in which frosts are rare and very light. We nicknamed our climate 'the cool subtropics'. And of course, the volcanic ash soils make for easy gardening.

It took us quite a while before we really started to take advantage of this fact – cottage gardening was all the rage, as were old roses, magnolias, rhododendrons and camellias. Eventually we realised that the possums were deriving more benefit from most of the roses than we were, and about 15 years ago we commenced a slow garden makeover, based on experiences with a few subtropicals which had been scattered here and there in our early years at the place.

Early immigrants were a few vireyas (tropical rhododendrons), which were all planted under trees, with the exception of *Rhododendron tuba* (see photo), which was placed in an open, sheltered, sunny spot. This thrived and gave us much pleasure every autumn. Our plant interests include (not exclusively) orchids, aroids, ferns, bromeliads, gesneriads, vireyas plus a multitude of 'other groups', so there is plenty of room for experiment – but alas, not sufficient garden room.

However, a few of the plants which we have found grow very well here include:

Brugmansia (*Datura candicans*), a small tree with large white scented trumpets for much of the year – even in July, and which will grow from large (2 metres or more) cuttings just stuck in the ground for instant shade; the babino and babaco (*Carica* hybrids) which are close relatives of the pawpaw and have tasty fruit; *Radermachera sinensis* (Canton Lace), a plant from southern China, generally sold in the house plant section of garden centres – which rapidly grows to be a handsome small tree with fern-like foliage – there is a tree on SH 33 near the Okere Falls Store which has produced scented white flowers for the last couple of summers.

A few more: *Meryta denhamii* from New Caledonia, a close relative of our native Puka, has grown slowly but steadily over the last few years, with very handsome large glossy leaves; the tree fern *Cyathea robusta* from Norfolk Island lived up to its name and had to be shifted. It has very lush fronds with pale brown scales underneath, like an albino mamaku (*C. medullaris*) on steroids. *Luculias*, such as *Luculia gratissima*, with lovely scented pink flowers through the winter, are highly recommended for this district.



RHODODENDRON TUBA (VIREYA) AT OKERE FALLS



Department of Conservation *Te Papa Atawhai*

Dear friend,

As you may be aware from a previous mail-drop, we have a very special endemic bird living on our Rotorua lakes: the New Zealand dabchick, or *weweia*. There are only an estimated 1500 dabchicks remaining, with approximately one-third of the national population found in the Rotorua area. Currently, dabchicks around the Rotorua lakes are only monitored once every five years, when a survey of all the water birds on most of the Rotorua lakes is completed. The first of these five-yearly surveys was in 1985, and our most recent survey was in January of 2011. DOC is currently compiling the report on the January 2011 survey.

The good news is that these five-yearly surveys have shown a general increase in the dabchick population since 1985, from 364 to 572 adults (see Figure 1). However, there is limited knowledge about dabchicks, particularly with regard to their seasonal use of the Rotorua lakes, their responses to different kinds of human disturbance (e.g., boats vs. people on foot on the shoreline), breeding success, etc.

Given the national rarity of dabchicks, combined with likely ongoing changes in water quality and habitat, the Department of Conservation Rotorua Lakes Area Office would like to start working towards overcoming this lack of knowledge. As a first step, we would like to instigate more frequent monitoring of the population, particularly at key lakes and areas: Rotoiti, Tarawera, Okareka, Rotoehu, and Sulphur Bay at Lake Rotorua.

The monitoring programme will have some key requirements, for example standardised methodology, specified survey times, and locations, some of which may require a boat or kayak. The methodology will be presented at a later date after we assess people's interest in participating.

So, the next step: if you are interested in assisting with a dabchick monitoring programme, please register your interest by emailing Thalia Sachtleben at tsachtleben@doc.govt.nz by the 31st of August, including which lake (or part of a lake) you would prefer to survey.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your positive response.

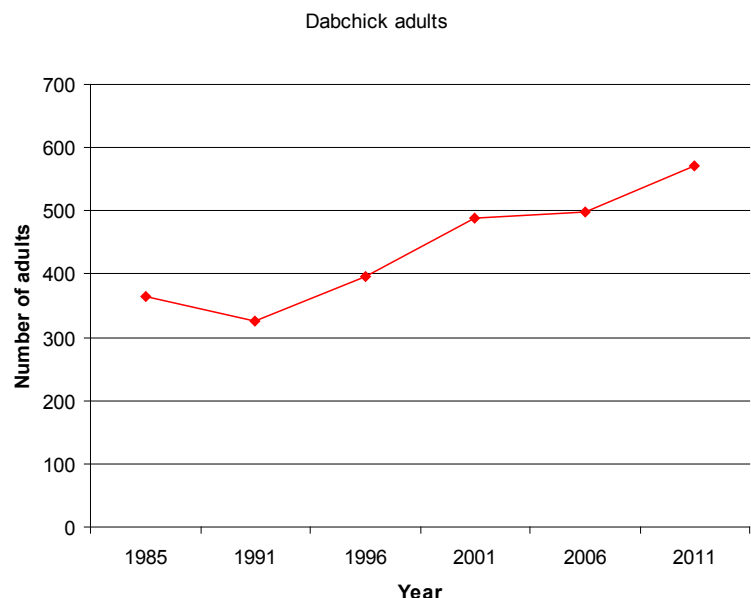


FIGURE 1: NUMBER OF ADULT DABCHICKS COUNTED ON 18 ROTORUA LAKES DURING FIVE-YEARLY WATERBIRD SURVEYS FROM 1985 TO 2011.

LAKESWATER QUALITY SOCIETY

Earlier in the year LWQS once again took on the huge challenge of running another symposium. It was with some hesitation but once we get the ideas assembled the LWQS team are very efficient at preparing, organising and running a symposium, and feel a great sense of satisfaction at the end.

This year we thought we would expand our horizon to include the economic potential of the Rotorua region. Our theme was "Fix a Lake and Grow a City". This was our seventh symposium and from all accounts it was well supported by the wider community and the speakers provided excellent material as 'food for thought' on the future of the Rotorua district.

We were lucky to find a city in Sweden which was similar in size to Rotorua and had faced over the last twenty five years similar issues which Rotorua is now facing, namely, slow economic growth, low employment growth and polluted lakes. The city of Växjö is now proud to call itself the "greenest city in Europe". The Mayor, Bo Frank, kindly

flew to Rotorua and gave us a presentation on the achievements and progress this city has made. With the foundations of forestry, lakes and cheap energy and capital they were able to take advantage of biofuel technologies to grow their city in a unique and positive way. There is no question that the focus on developing the local natural resources is the basis for achieving economic growth and prosperity for the region.

The symposium was blessed with a whole range of speakers with experience and ideas enough to demonstrate that the Rotorua region is not doing enough to capitalise on its natural resources and there is huge potential to do so.

We have captured the full symposium in a Proceedings document which is available upon request from our secretary, Ann Green, email: jandagreen5@xtra.co.nz, phone: 07 3624204, at a cost of \$60.

We encourage you to read this information to see what wonderful opportunities exist for our region.

JOHN GREEN. CHAIRMAN

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Fire, Police, Ambulance, Search & Rescue 111

Accident/Medical Centre 348-1000

Urgent Pharmacy 348-4385

Rotorua Hospital 348-1199

St John Ambulance 0800-426-285

National Poisons Centre 0800-764-766

Rotorua Police Station 348-0099

Neighbourhood Support 349-9470

TrustPower Emergency 0800-878-787

Energy Online Faults 0800-083-285

Environment Pollution Hotline 0800-738-393

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Harbour Master (7 day)
or 07-921-03375
0800-368-267

Lake Wardens: Mark Farrant 0274-599-006
Max Hughes 0274-966-759
Keith Waddell 021-059-5162
Fraser Wilson 0274-965-070

Coastguard 348-9022

Marine Radio 348-7429

Dept. of Conservation 349-7400

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Fish & Game Eastern 357-5501

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Environment Bay of Plenty 0800-368-267

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Rotorua Lakes Community Board 362-4700

Lakes Maintenance 362-4814

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Only RDC Official Bags will be collected
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Lake Rotoiti Collection day is each MONDAY
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Rotorua Marine Radio conducts three
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1245-1300 hrs

1745-1800 hrs

Channel 64 is a calling frequency

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services.

Rotorua Lakes Coastguard use channel
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We are always pleased to receive
relevant items for inclusion in this
newsletter. If you have an article
or contribution please contact
lrca@xtra.co.nz

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