

--- WINTER 2014 ---

# Subantarctic Scribe ...

*Conservation in New Zealand's subantarctic islands*



## Welcome to our first edition of Subantarctic Scribe!

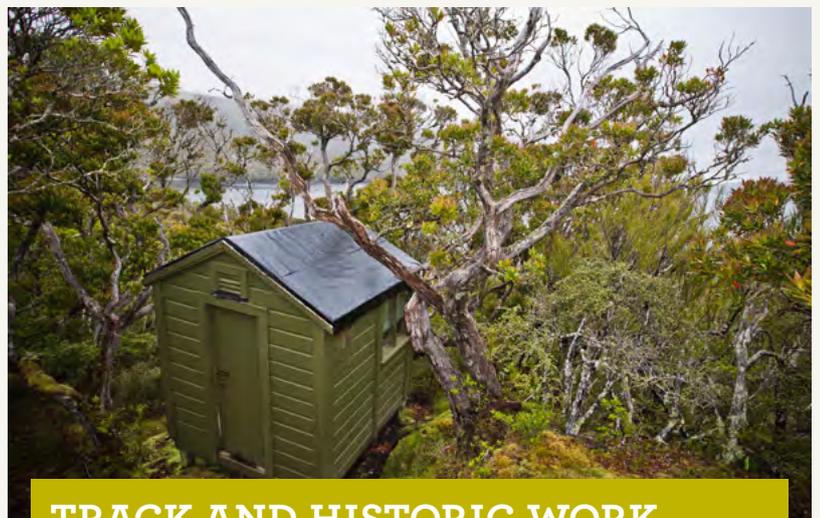
Our quarterly newsletter aims to keep you all abreast of the fantastic work being done on the subantarctics, New Zealand's outstanding National Nature Reserves and World Heritage sites. This includes scientific research, species monitoring, heritage restoration, track maintenance and education.

This is a snapshot of the work being undertaken by DOC and a raft of dedicated and passionate individuals and associated organisations. Many people travel to the islands on various projects over the course of a year, and these newsletters are to let you know who they are and what they have been up to.

The management of the New Zealand's subantarctic islands rests with a small team based in Invercargill. **Brent Beaven** is the Conservation Services Manager of Southern Islands and he leads the team to ensure that the islands are protected to maintain their high conservation status. In the team are:

- ▶ **Jo Hiscock**, a senior ranger with many years experience working in the subantarctics
- ▶ **Sharon Trainor**, the logistics and quarantine queen for travel to the subs
- ▶ **Doug Veint**, the stalwart for entry permits for all islands, and
- ▶ **Stephen Horn**, who joined the team in January fresh from Macquarie Island and is the project manager for the mouse eradication on Antipodes Island planned for winter 2015.

All ably supported by **Katherine Pemberton**, **Janice Kevern** and myself, **Di Morris**.



## TRACK AND HISTORIC WORK

A combined team of Stewart Island/Rakiura DOC staff and volunteers undertook the most recent trip to the subantarctics this season. Their mission was mixed and varied as they raced the weather to complete tasks at Deas Head Hut, replacing the roof, painting the hut and doing general maintenance and clearing on the access track.

At Enderby Island they have re-routed a piece of track and extended the boardwalk. It now starts as you enter the bush and joins the existing boardwalk to the cliffs. The deck on the first bridge has also been widened and track trimming completed. Photo points were replicated at various sites for visitor impact monitoring at South West Cape and Enderby Island.

The Coastwatchers lookouts at Ranui and Tagua, in response to an earlier Navy trip assessment, have both had some initial work with replacement of boards, painting, roof work, wood preservatives applied and access tracks trimmed.

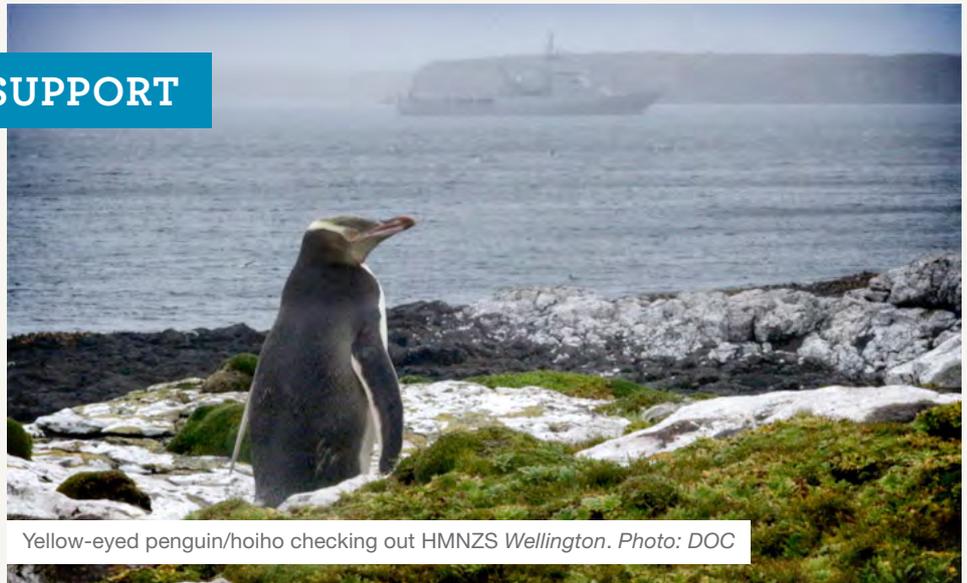
Phew - lots of tasks, all successfully completed before another harsh southern winter takes its toll. ■

Top: Perseverance Harbour.

Below: Tagua Coastwatchers lookout hut.  
Photo: G. Bowker, New Zealand Herald

## NEW ZEALAND NAVY SUPPORT

The Navy's offshore patrol vessel HMNZS *Wellington* was up for the challenge of Operation Endurance over the 2013/14 summer and had a number of assignments working with the Department. We are most grateful for the fantastic support that the Navy continues to offer DOC in support of conservation work in the subantarctics.



Yellow-eyed penguin/hoiho checking out HMNZS *Wellington*. Photo: DOC

Their first trip in February was taking a team from the Sir Peter Blake Trust – and the 12 selected teenagers – as part of a Young Blake Expedition programme. This was an outstanding opportunity for these young leaders to have a once in a lifetime adventure. Their aim was to ‘inspire and to further understand the global significance of the Southern Ocean and New Zealand’s subantarctic islands and the role they play in understanding and monitoring the effects of climate change’.

For a more detailed look at what they were up to, visit their website [www.sirpeterblaketrust.org/young-blake-expeditions/sub-antarctic-expedition](http://www.sirpeterblaketrust.org/young-blake-expeditions/sub-antarctic-expedition).



Weeding at Hardwicke gravesite. Photo: Michael Fox, Fairfax Media

The second trip to the islands with the Navy was action packed with a spot of much-publicised dramatic weather on the way south. It was during the second trip that Minister of Conservation, Dr Nick Smith, made an inspection of the proposed site of the ‘Blake Station’ at Smiths Harbour on the east coast of the Auckland Islands. There is a proposal underway for a research station to be sited in the harbour to increase the understanding of the role of Antarctica and the southern ocean in determining our climate and future environment.

While the ship, HMNZS *Wellington* was in Port Ross, historic work was carried out at several sites on Enderby and Hardwicke. This included track and boardwalk maintenance and structural inspections.

South at Carnley Harbour more historic sites were visited. The Tagua Coastwatchers base is beyond help and will be left to the elements. However, the Tagua and Ranui Coastwatchers lookouts and Ranui Coastwatchers hut will be restored.

Travelling further south with the Navy, Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku saw another flurry of activity – hut maintenance, track inspections and historic site preservation. While the Conservation Minister, Dr Nick Smith, was on Campbell Island, he announced three new marine



Conservation Minister Dr Nick Smith on Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku. Photo: G. Bowker, New Zealand Herald

reserves at Antipodes Island, Bounty Island and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku, covering an area of 435,000 hectares. These reserves will protect an abundant and diverse range of marine species and ensure enduring marine protection for these outstanding islands. For more information about each of the marine reserves go to [www.doc.govt.nz/subantarctics](http://www.doc.govt.nz/subantarctics).

The Meteorological Service staff on board the ship were also working hard with maintenance work on equipment and sites at Enderby and Campbell Islands. ■

We look forward to hearing from you with comments and suggestions for anything you would like to see or read about.

*Southern Islands team*

Department of Conservation  
Murihiku/ Invercargill Office  
PO Box 743, Invercargill 9840  
PHONE: +64 3 2112400  
EMAIL: [Invercargill@doc.govt.nz](mailto:Invercargill@doc.govt.nz)