

STEWART ISLAND NEWS

CELEBRATING RAKIURA

DECEMBER 2007—JANUARY 2008

\$2



Next month: see what Starfish got up to in 2007.

An old Irish saying goes something like: *the measure of a man is not how much he parties, but how much work he can accomplish the next morning.*

During the Southern Seafood Christmas party, some revellers could detect the rumble of boats chugging home: early the next morning the fish-shed employees were hit with heaps of work unloading bins and endless paua shucking.



Sign on the whisky cabinet at the Southern Seafoods holiday do.

Celebrations have continued throughout the Bay including Bill Hamilton's Birthday bash and the Schofield wedding. The Senior Citizens luncheon was a

great success with 50 folks in attendance including 14 from the Rowena Jackson Retirement Village in Invercargill. Thanks to all who helped.

A bunch of you have been *elfed*. If you want a laugh go on-line to see Vicki's mischief (p.12). You might see yourself...

Some classic old *SINs* from the 80s written by Sam Samson showed up at the Recycle Centre and when the staff are finished poring over them they will end up in the *SIN* archives at the Library.

Behave yourself over the Holidays: we'll have a cop on-Island who means business. Let's all make it safely through to 2008.



HMB School students perform a kapa haka before their awards ceremony. Afterwards grateful acknowledgement were made to school staff and helpers, and then they all enjoyed a hangi. See p.2

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

Swimming by Kari Beaven

HMB School have been entrenched in learn-to-swim classes over the last two weeks. Groups of 3-5 kids spent sessions of half-an-hour each afternoon building their water confidence, refining swimming techniques

and learning about safe rescues.

There are some pretty natural swimmers amongst the groups. Senior students focussed first on refining their techniques for the 'Olympic games' strokes of freestyle and backstroke, before learning life-preserving, energy

and body-warmth saving strokes like side-stroke, survival backstroke and their own HEAT positions. They also problem solved how and why to help someone who is struggling in the water without getting in yourself, using ropes, poles and floats. For any questions on what any of these strokes are, or how to

safely rescue someone from the side of a pool or boat, just ask our senior students!

The new crew were the stand-out improvers, with most overcoming their fear of covering their heads with water for the first time. With this out of the way, nothing

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Left: Trumpeter patch. If you behave nicely, the photographer just might give you the marks for Christmas. (Yeah right!)

Right: And they're off! The start of the pigeon race. For more information on these remarkable birds see page 8.



PHOTO: BEV COMIE

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And much more!!

HALFMOON BAY SCHOOL KAPA HAKA



Congratulations to the kids of HMB School who put on a wonderful performance for a delighted audience of proud parents, siblings, and community members. The set, songs, and costumes were outstanding and brought smiles to our faces.



STEWART ISLAND COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS PARTY!



Sunday 23rd December 4pm
at the Community Centre



EVERYONE WELCOME!

Locals and loopies! Baby and grandma!



**Pot Luck Dinner:
Bring a plate and a tippie!
Tea and coffee provided.**



**Come join in the festive spirit with
your neighbours!**

**Any queries or suggestions on how we can
make this the best Christmas ever,
please ring Vicki on 498.**



Phillippa has shared these happy moments from Bill Hamilton's Birthday Party. More on page 10.

Department of Conservation **DOC**
Te Papa Atawhai **Spot**

Sub-Antarctic Season Underway

The Sub-Antarctic season is now well underway with the NIWA research team that has been working on the white-capped mollymawk at the Auckland Island's back after a month away. The sealion research team headed to the Auckland's last week for an 11-week season to continue the ongoing programme related to the by-catch in the squid fishery. The third tourist trip has already left - with four different vessels running a total of 13 trips this season, most of which carry on down to Antarctica. Shortly after Christmas a team will head to Campbell Island to continue the research on the Royal Albatross and to check out the sealion population down there, other teams will head to the Antipodes for year two of a five-year project looking at White-chinned and Grey petrels, and to Adams Island to continue the Gibson's Albatross research which has now been going for over 10 years (that's the problem with species that don't breed until they are five to seven years old, it takes a very long time to find out how they are

doing!) There is an interesting article in the latest National Geographic on albatross that includes work being done on Campbell and there is another article coming up on the whales at the Auckland Islands - watch out for it!

Planning Team says thanks

The review of the Stewart Island / Rakiura Conservation Management Strategy and preparation of the Rakiura National Park Management Plan continues to progress, with public workshops discussing Ulva Island, Mason Bay, Port Pegasus and hunting / hunter huts having been held. These workshops were all well attended by members of the island community, and the Rakiura Planning Team would like to thank those who attended for their valuable contribution. The Department of Conservation has compiled a document summarising the discussions had at these workshops. This document is available online at <http://www.doc.govt.nz/templates/page.aspx?id=43703>. Checking out this document should provide an good overview of direction received from the public workshops. Or for an update at any stage on progress of the Stewart Island / Rakiura planning process and how

you can be involved, please contact either Peter Wilson, Anke de Jong or Sharon Pasco at the DOC office.

All tracks open for summer

The visitor assets team are still tackling issues caused by storms over the late winter early spring period. All DOC tracks are currently open to the public but ongoing repairs will continue over the summer months. Hut wardens will be based at Mason Bay and the Great Walk Huts over the summer. Opening hours for Rakiura National Park Visitor Centre are 8.30am to 5pm weekdays and 9am to 4pm at weekends, right up until Christmas Day (which is the only day we're actually closed). From Boxing Day the visitor centre is open from 8am to 5pm daily, so don't forget to have your guests call in to check the track and weather updates before venturing out to enjoy some awesome day walks or more challenging tracks in the National Park and remember to remind them to complete an intentions form so we know where to start looking if things go awry!

*Have a safe and happy festive season
- from everyone down at DOC!*



ban **G**lobetrotter off-Island Adventures.

Last year Stu and I went to Costa Rica for our luna de miel. Some of my friends and family had already explored the Central American paradise and returned with rave reviews, so it sounded good to us. I organized the whole trip from my desk here with the good old Internet. So begins a cautionary tale about booking stuff on the on-line, and believing everything you read and see on the World Wide Web.

I typed *Costa Rica accommodation* into my Google search engine and the tantalizing-sounding place Tamarindo appeared on my screen. White sand beaches, surfing, jungle, charming town.... great. As the Costa Rican motto goes "Pura Vida." I booked a few nights at a hotel there and looked forward to our trip. So begins this cautionary tale about booking stuff on the on-line, and believing everything you read and see on the Internet.

I don't care how fancy your computer technology is, there are some things the Internet photos don't convey, such as:

Odor. The description of Tamarindo as a cruisy charming town may have fit the bill sometime in the 1980s, but by now it has been discovered by entrepreneurial big-money tigers from the US and Europe, and building projects proceed ruthlessly at pace with apparently no regulation whatsoever, and no infrastructure to support the dozens of building projects and sites spreading throughout the area. The

result is streams of filthy mustard-coloured water running down the streets during the heavy rains, which turns to a dirty choking dust during the intense heat. The roads are riddled with deep craters, making a stroll an ankle-dodgy adventure and driving a hair-raising joke. The town often smelled uncharmingly of sewerage.

Bacteria. I'm not a microbiologist so all I can say is God only knows what made me and my husband so ill. We did our best to



Snack Bar at the beach.

avoid tap water and other baddies, but if you order items with lettuce or drinks with ice or sushi from a malevolent-looking wait staff, it's hard to control the intake. Also, a local told me that he personally wouldn't ever swim at the town beach, because where did I think all the dirty water went? Our bouts of extreme nausea came at different times, so total time we were down for the count was five days. I mean unable to leave the hotel. I spent two days just sitting in our wee swing chair, watching the fireflies, bats, and distant forks of lightening. The nausea passed but the dried sewage dust blew into my contact lenses and left me with a nasty eye infection long after I returned to home.

General dodginess. Not the Threat Level of say



Wolf Creek Australian out-back psycho nightmare, but a feeling of general unease nonetheless prevailed at times during our stay in Tamarindo. At the beach I watched a girl go for a dip in the sea and within seconds a group of guys descended on her beach blanket where she'd left her camera and bag. (I don't want to scare anyone with the fierce brave tactics I employed to discourage them) (OK, I made a squeaky noise and pretended to photograph them and they ran down the beach where they zoomed in on other unattended belongings.)

Random weirdness. My bikini top went missing from our hotel room.

Two days later, while having breakfast, I noticed a familiar scrap of fabric hanging from one of the decorative cacti in the centre of the hotel restaurant. My bikini top! At the same hotel, the girls staying two doors down from us started



Surf break at Playa Negra.

the guy next door to us came back from the bar and tried to get into their room. He drunkenly explained to them, security, and his unimpressed newlywed wife that it was a case of mistaken hotel door identity, and then the whole lot of them checked out the next day.

Temperature. You can read numbers on a website and the words "extremely hot" but you don't quite get it until you're in it. One morning I went for a walk through the town at dawn, all of the building sites were buzzing with business, as by 7 am it's too



These guys used a giant screwdriver to make holes in the sand for lazy tourists' beach umbrellas.

hot to work effectively. I went for a run once in the heat of the day and it was like doggy-paddling in hot gelatinous soup, my vision went flickery and I almost passed out. Not the smartest choice I've made.



Crab tracks in the sand.

Creepy-crawlies. The Internet photos of accommodation don't show the scorpions who reside in the door jamb, the shower, and the base of the toilet.

Creepy perviness. At the end of our trip, as we were flying out of the capital San Jose we spoke to a local

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Here's a great gift idea!

Dear [your friend's name]

You now have a 12-month subscription to the Stewart Island News, compliments of

[your name], your South Seas Santa.

Enjoy these tidings from beautiful Rakiura.



Happy Holidays!

Give the gift that keeps on giving (for 12 months) Buy your friends and family a subscription to the Stewart Island News. The first issue will come enclosed with a wee "beak-written" card. Just fill out the form below and send it to Box 156 along with a cheque (\$24 for Island; \$30 for NZ; \$54 for overseas)

YES, I would like to give my friend a great holiday gift. Please sign the following name(s) to the holiday card:

Please send a subscription to

Recipient's Name and address:

(Continued from page 1)

could hold them back! Key learning included floating assisted on their backs, heads floating in the water with the assistance removed as kids were ready; floating and gliding forwards on the front for those who were game; long-leg kicks

to travel up the pool; and the beginnings of over-arm strokes using the kick-board. We also talked about why air makes things float and how to choose buoyant objects to help someone in need.

The big difference came in the form of a hot weekend, with every man and his dog in the 27°C pool! Parents and older swimmers spent time encouraging the kids to stretch themselves and many came back floating in self-confidence. Please keep up the practice and encouragement, it really makes a difference!

On our final afternoon, the school went to Thule Wharf and practised different water entries, with the youngest kids getting vital practice in deep water. Older students practised rope throws, throwing life-jackets to swimmers, putting them on while already in the water, and for the more skilled swimmers, a scenario of removing excess clothing layers to prepare for a longer swim. This group has an obvious focus of encouraging each other to do well, which comes naturally to each one. They're a neat group to be around.

Thanks to Nick our 'rent-a-cop' for this month, who has taken time out to help with classes and beach safety,

while still managing the police calls and responses. Nick is a surf life-saver and swims at the Masters Games, so was well placed to help with a pointer or two. It's been great to have Nick here; he's off at the end of the week and we wish him well.

Thank you also to Bruce, Kath and all the other people who worked hard to get the community pool up-and-running again. Your determination has paid off for so many people, and made the difference between fear and enjoyment for many of the kids. Ideas have now been raised about up-grading the solar heating system.

The improvements would allow temperatures the pool reached in December to be achieved in around October, making for a much longer swimming season and greater gains for the kids, not to mention those of us who also like a splash-around! Thank you to everyone who has given advice, labour or fundraising for this next step.

—K. Beaven

Ward Report

After a very busy few weeks discovering some of the complexities of being a Ward Member on SDC, I am now more able to report on some of the Stewart Island topics.

In recent months, there has been much consultation on the Stewart Island wharves and jetties, which had been owned by Southport. They have now been re-consented in SDC's Stewart Island title. This will enable the local User Group to tend to the many day-to-day repairs that had been lacking under the previous owner. Public ownership covers Little Glory, Ulva, Fred's Camp, Miller's Beach and Port William jetties. Little Glory Wharf suffered a recent major calamity and "floated away"! This is a very important facility for

kiwi-spotting. Urgent work has already been initiated to add a floating pontoon structure to enable the safe continuation of Phillip's operation, and, of course, for other visitors. The Wharf User Group receives funding from all the boat operators – as did Southport – and a contribution from Environment Southland for the "public good" aspect. It is the intention of the Group to have a practical and hands-on approach to maintenance needs, with minimal bureaucratic influence. SDC accounting systems will be utilised as the "paperwork agency".

Also of great interest to all Paterson Inlet "boaties", Environment Southland have contractors working on the Paterson Inlet "rock marking" project. This has taken approx. three years of planning, consultation and

innumerable man-hours, so I am pleased to report that it is all finally underway.

Energy projects continue to have a high-profile on my desk. The most recent development is the involvement of Meridian/Right House, and we will see their staff here early in January to further their investigations on sustainable – and hopefully, cheaper – energy.

There are several other on-going projects too, and I'll report on them (and up-date you on the above) as time - and space in SIN - allows. In the meantime, don't hesitate to stay in touch with me on your community concerns. And from Sue and me, a very Merry Christmas – enjoy a safe and happy holiday season.

—Cr. Bruce Ford

COMMUNITY PROJECT

WORKING TOGETHER WITH TE WHAKA A TE WERA MATAITAI COMMITTEE
AND TE TIAKI MAHINGA KAI

New faces in town? Wondering who they are? We are a group researching fishing from Te Tiaki Mahinga Kai working with Te Whaka a Te Wera Mataitai committee. Phillip Smith, committee chairman expresses his view that “It’s important that we know the activity within the Mataitai, so we can preserve the stocks for future generations”

The aim is to survey fishers to estimate the number of fish coming off the mataitai. Repeated surveys can tell us whether or not your mataitai is working as well as it can. We plan on doing this by meeting and surveying people coming in from fishing trips whether they have been commercial, recreational or customary fishing.

There will be two main people (Hireke Zygadlo-Phillips and Mikayla Dyer) collecting information during the summer months



Hireke Zygadlo-Phillips and Mikayla Dyers

on Rakiura, while the rest of us stay on the main land receiving their data. Don’t be frightened of these two, they are both there doing this for the people (you guys), and are very excited about working in the unique community of Stewart Island for their summer job. They could do with all the help you can offer.

Hireke and Mikayla are currently in their second year of Marine Biology at the University of Canterbury and they are very fortunate to grab this opportunity on Stewart Island. From time to time you will see Rakoa Bull and Emma Kallqvist who will be coming over to relieve Mikayla and Hireke, so they can return to the mainland. Emma is currently doing the same survey on the Akaroa Taiapure, for her masters in Environmental Science.

“We must stress the fact that we ARE NOT THE FISH POLICE, in fact far from it. We are not here to find out who is catching the most fish or to do the Ministry of Fisheries job. We are simply trying to gather enough information on fishing to help the community of Stewart Island keep healthy numbers of fish for future days” said Hireke.

All local information given to Hireke and Mikayla will be 100% anonymous. However if you give them your phone number you will go into a draw to win a \$50 prize on 10th January. A second draw will take place on 10th March.

The fishing survey is funded mainly by Ngai Tahu, with additional assistance from University of Otago, University of Canterbury and Stewart Island Experience. Tangata Tiaki, and Mataitai committee member, Richard Squires emphasizes that

“We need everyone’s help to make this survey a success. The information will help us protect the fishing for everyone.”

For any more information and Enquiries please contact the Tangata Tiaki:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------|
| Phillip Smith | 2191144 |
| Richard Squires | 2191141 |
| Maureen Jones | 2191242 |
| Peter Goomes | 2191057 |

You can read about the Te Tiaki Mahinga Kai Project at www.mahingakai.org.nz



Go to www.youtube.com and search for “talking tui.” I heard a little bird (John Foley) talking about a video clip of a tui named Woof Woof in Whangerai who talks. Not sure if it’s real, it looks real...see what you think. This place is gossipy enough—imagine if tuis around here started repeating stuff they overheard us say?

Some websites to waste time to over the Christmas holidays:
www.onehundreddollarscash.co.nz Win \$100 plus movie tickets, scratchys etc by refreshing the page
www.mintshot.co.nz Earn Mint dollars by watching ads then spend on online auctions
www.reachme.co.nz Free packs for mums to be and families with toddlers
www.cleo.co.nz Free daily giveaway for da ladies
Shared with us by Vicki Coats

The Island community extends its condolences to the family of Hugh Broughton.

(GLOBETROTTER *Continued from page 4*)

who expressed shock and dismay that we had spent our Costa Rican vacation in Tamarindo. According to him it's a known mecca for rich European paedophiles.

Now for the good stuff! Well that's a lot of negative stuff, so to be fair I should add that we had some great moments, particularly in the window of time between illnesses when we rented a car and left Tamarindo for Avellanas down the road.

We stayed at this really cool place in the jungle called Cabinas Las Olas, we had our own bungalow which had huge lizards crawling all over it. Howler monkeys moved through the branches all around us and made an incredible sound that travelled for miles, almost like a lion roar. They were especially vocal at dusk and dawn. I am not exaggerating when I say we watched them for hours-- they were truly enthralling. But careful:

they throw nuts, and if it seems like they're aiming their frequent poos near your upturned face, it's not your imagination according to the local proprietor.

Stu went surfing while I watched pelicans and crabs. The walk out to the beach was via a long boardwalk through a mangrove swamp, it was beautiful. Down the way an establishment sold drinks and excellent nachos and things right on the beach. There was a big-boy surf break nearby and we watched the gurus

drop into monster waves. Every morning we partook of the excellent coffee and good simple food: black beans and rice and eggs.

Each night we sat at the bar and prac-

ticed our Spanish. *Dos mas cervezas por favor.* Our beer of choice was Imperial, which had a picture of a black eagle on the label, and we were told the cool slangy term for it was "pollo negro." So we ordered it this way willy nilly thinking we were pretty cool, and pleased with the raised eyebrows from various Costa Rican publicans. (Upon our return we proudly told Susana, my brother-in-law's Spanish fiancée, and she explained that we were actually requesting something quite rude.)



We did some touristy activities including a backcountry trip on ATVs to a remote surf beach, and zipping down flying foxes through the forest canopy. We have some happy memories from Tamarindo too—one day in a downpour, we splashed across the road to Wok and Roll, a restaurant with a roof and no walls and had hearty bowls of noodle soup over backgammon. Nearby

(Continued on page 9)



Stewart Island Weka Returned to Halfmoon Bay, March 2005

Inspired painting translated into gift cards

Christmas Packs available:
5 cards (\$15)
10 cards (\$27.50)

Available from the Stewart Island Visitor Information Centre, DOC Visitor Centre, Stewart Island Flights and Margaret Fairhall's Art Studio; or contact: info@sircet.org.nz

All proceeds support the Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project



Primeval Paradise: *the story of Ulva Island*

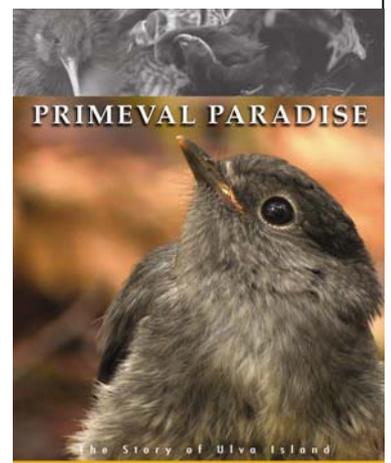
Great Christmas present idea, available from DOC or the Stewart Isl. Visitor Information Centre. To preview or order online, go to www.elwin.co.nz/ulva.html

As seen through the eyes of a young robin, this 60 minute portal takes the viewer back in time to a land free of introduced predators and browsers, showing the intricate details that affect life in the forest. "Primeval Paradise" gives the viewer insight into a world few have ever seen.

Photographer, Scott Mouat has a unique talent for capturing the atmosphere and intimate moments of life on the Island. Nesting birds are completely at ease as his concealed camera captures privileged images of their movements. Included in the DVD is a motion-picture guide to the birds, showing a minute's footage of each species of birdlife on Ulva Island, as well as motion picture "memories" of the wharf, the tracks and key beaches for visitors to take with them.

' "Primeval Paradise" is a DVD which will promote Stewart Island, Ulva Island and the protection of New Zealand's natural heritage. For those who love islands and wildlife, this DVD is a "must have".' This film release celebrates ten years since Ulva Island, after an historic undertaking, was declared to be once again, rat-free.

This DVD is a joint project between the Ulva Island Trust, Natural History New Zealand and Elwin Productions. Proceeds raised go toward the further restoration of Ulva Island.



Third Year and Running

by Kari Beaven

It's Sunday afternoon, bright blue skies stretch overhead and not a breath of wind ripples the water – what a perfect day for lying around watching TV... that is, lying around the titi burrows at Ackers Point and watching the TV monitor of the camera we use to view this year's nests!

Yes it's that time of year again (already?!). Titi have made their migration from the west coast of Canada and North America back to their breeding home. We are keeping a watch over the breeding colony at Ackers Point again this year, making this our third consecutive season of monitoring in the protected area.



Roughly, only 40 pairs of titi bred in the colony at Ackers Point last season, according to the 2006 nest monitoring results combined with a 'total burrow-count'. Of these, about 30 hatched a chick from their single egg, and about 20 of these chicks survived through to fledging age. Our aim is to reduce any land-based reasons for why this number stays

low. Rat and possum trapping protects the vulnerable chicks from being eaten before they can defend themselves, and wild cat control has made an enormous change in the death toll of adult birds showing up over the years. While changes in sooty-shearwater populations are generally slow to happen, our goal is to see an increase in the numbers of birds breeding at the Point.

Thanks to everyone who has helped to protect this area from rats, possums and wild cats over the year, through the community trapping project which covers the 210 hectares from Halfmoon Bay out to the point, and to the titi research team who helped us with the set-up, ongoing advice and loan of equipment for monitoring titi in the protected area.

So far the 2007 monitoring has looked at three of the four 'plots' (8m circles used for annual monitoring), and it seems we are just slightly above last year's total of 15

birds still incubating eggs at this stage. We'll keep in touch over the season with how this year is looking.



More burrowscoping will be done throughout the year to see how many of these eggs successfully hatch, and how many hatchlings survive to fledging age. If you would like to be a part of this or to come

out just for interest's sake, get in touch and we'll let you know when the next date is coming up.

If you are interested in going out to watch the titi come in, this time of year is magnificent! The sleek, sooty birds call and display to each other at their burrow entrances just before dark each night. Little Blue Penguins are also sitting on eggs or feeding chicks, and can be seen crossing the track after dark. As always, we are in their patch out there, so be sure to keep a respectful distance, keep tabs on how they respond to your presence and change what you do accordingly, and be careful with how you use your torch light.

Merry Christmas everyone!

To get in touch, contact Kari Beaven on 2191 533 or write to kari@sircet.org.nz

The *Stewart Island News* would not be possible without all of you, the **readers**.

Thanks to everyone who drops the \$2 coin at the shop, and to the many people locally and world-wide who subscribe. Thanks to the business people who buy ad space. All of your support keeps this wee paper going.

Thank you to the good people at **Stewart Island Flights** and Maurice at **Executive Car Services** for see-

ing the issues across the Strait each month.

Thanks to Jill and Richard and the rest of the **Ship to Shore** staff who make sure people are "paying for their SINS" and thanks to Lesley and Susan at the **Visitor Centre** for doing the same.

Thanks to **Kari Beaven** for being such a great editor while I'm away.

Thanks to **Margaret**

Hopkins who handles the financial paperwork side of things.

Thanks to the ink-tank team at **McDowall Print** in Invercargill for doing such an excellent job printing this.

Thanks to **everyone** who contributes articles, photographs, and ideas.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!
Sincerely, Jess (editor)

The RACING PIGEONS arrived via Ferry, and were transported to the Grays' garage where they had a day to "get their land legs back" before their dawn race-start the following day where they would find their way to their respective abodes on the North Island. There is only one other pigeon race in the world which entails two open ocean crossings (Europe: the English Channel and Irish Sea). Scientists have studied these birds to figure out how they find their way home from any given place on Earth. It seems they have a built in map and compass in their head, and somehow can detect the Earth's magnetic field. They also use visual aids. On race day, one bird remained in her cage while the 90 others flapped North (their release sounded like a big card shuffle). The stay-behind apparently preferred, when asked the old Island question *fly-or-ferry*, to take the ferry back.



Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust news.

Monitoring of yellow-eyed penguins along the Anglem coast and on the Bravo islands began in November. We started with fewer nests than we've had in any of the past four years of field work, but Joanna & I managed to find three more during our first three-week monitoring trip, and Phred Dobbins found one extra on the Bravo islands. Even so the total number of nests we are monitoring on the Anglem coast is still just 16, down from 20 in 2006. In the first year of this project (2003) there were 27 nests along the same stretch of coast and we have seen the number decline steadily each year. There are several possible reasons for this, of which one is that this is the inevitable consequence of the low numbers of chicks being produced each year, and the ensuing lack of recruitment into an aging population of breeding adults. Another possibility is the premature loss of breeding adults: we found one nest which appeared to have only one adult present, its egg doomed to fail when left exposed to the elements when the single adult was forced to leave it and go to sea to feed itself.

Hatching began in early November, although the majority of chicks hatched a little later, nearer the middle or later half of the month. Some still hadn't hatched by the end of the month

and it is possible that they won't hatch at all. When we finished our first stint in the bush we had 13 live chicks, some still only about a week old and thus not out of the crucial 3-week period, when most of the chick deaths seem to occur. Several chicks had died and we have managed to retrieve most of them for autopsy and collection of tissue samples to be sent to pathologists at Massey University. None of the dead chicks displayed any outward sign of disease, but it won't be until lab results are available that we will have an idea of why they died.

We were joined for a few days by three veterinarians from DOC and MAF who were keen to examine sick and dead chicks, and an entomologist (bug scientist) who collected anything with more than four legs that crawled or flew around the penguin sites. Sandflies were of particular interest as similar biting blackflies have been linked to the spread of blood parasites similar to the one that killed several of our chicks last season, including our longest lived "Big Fluffy" who

alone survived until February '07. Rachael the bug lady had a busy time with her sandfly catcher, a small device rather like a battery operated hand held vacuum cleaner, which she used to Hoover up sandflies from any willing (& grateful!) human bait. It takes rather a lot of collecting to fill one small vial with sandflies!



Rachael sucks up sandflies from human bait Kate

We hope that the outcome of the vets' and Rachael's visit will be a better understanding of the diseases and how they are spread from penguin to penguin, and how disease relates to

other causes of chick death such as starvation. Monitoring will continue in December; some slightly later hatching means that the crucial 3-week period won't be over until about mid-December so it is still anybody's guess as to how the chicks will fare this season.

Sandy King
Sandy King
Projects Officer Southern Islands
Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust
 Dunedin office Ph: 03 479 0011
 Ph: 03 219 1102
 Email: yeptrust@gmail.com
 Email: sdk@callsouth.net.nz
www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz

(GLOBETROTTER Continued from page 7)

Playa Langosta was beautiful warm swimming, and Witches Rock Surf Camp cafe lived up to its sign: *Nachos as big as your a- - .*"

We liked talking to various people: surfers living the Pura Vida; and local Costa Ricans who are adjusting to

the influx of tourism and development forever changing the sleepy farming communities of their childhoods. On our way out of the country we stayed a night on the outskirts of the bustling capital city San Jose which was an interesting



visiting a local locals corner bar and then a restaurant down the road. If we ever return to Costa

evening spent in a totally non-touristy area,

Rica we will research things a bit better, and explore further south. I reckon Tamarindo would be a good destination for singles in their 20s; and jumping off point for surfers. Anyway, coming back home to Stewart Island I reckon we have heaps of Pura Vida going on right here. —J. Kany



Bill Hamilton's Birthday Bash

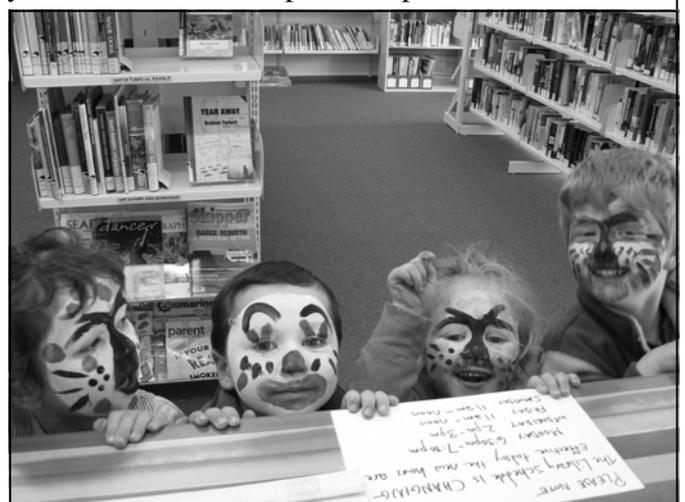


We have the new Diana Gabaldon, Barbara Erskine, Bryce Courtenay, Deborah Challinor, John Grisham, Lesley Pearse, Martina Cole, Robin Hobb, and dozens more new popular fiction.

If you're interested in reading some serious contemporary fiction check out the novels of Philip Roth. The Nathan Zuckerman books (Nathan is sort of the author's alter-ego)—*I Married a Communist*, *The Human Stain* and *American Pastoral* are addictive if you can get into them. This is not light reading, Roth's subjects are race, sex, politics, religion, aging, Vietnam War, McCarthyism, terrorism, and the general human condition. *The Human Stain* is a fascinating story about a scandal in a small community. Roth examines political correctness, hypocrisy, and the so-called "morality police"; the backdrop the Monica Lewinsky debacle. The events and setting seem far away but you might find yourself thinking at times of good old Halfmoon Bay.

Hey kids: we have eight new *Captain Underpants* books, they are on the children's shelf under PILKEY.

This time last year I put on my stern librarian police hat and made a statement regarding repeat offenders, and here it goes again: the books at the library belong to the entire community, and it is *not on* to take those books and keep them at your house for months on end. Return the books, pay your overdue fines. This is a reasonable request. I have worked in other libraries where fines accrued for years, and any unpaid fine over 10 dollars was automatically submitted to a collection agency, and your credit was wrecked, your library privileges frozen, and some people ended up owing hundreds of dollars. In other Libraries in the Southland District, if you fail to return your books you will be slapped with a bill for the cost of the books. And in some tougher parts of the world you will simply be slapped upside the head. So consider yourself lucky that here you just receive a note from me asking for the books to be returned, and your fines are a dollar per book per week and max out at six weeks.



Our hours are
 Mon 6:30pm-7:30pm
 Wed 2-3pm
 Fri 11am-noon
 Sat 11am-noon

We will be closed on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Thanks to Lin, Margaret R, Jamie Adams, Vanessa T., Helen C., Loraine H., and all of the other generous donors of books and DVDs. And a big thank you to the ladies of Team Library who give their time and energy to keep the place running.

Happy Holidays and Happy Reading from Jess, Jenny, Kerry, Megan and Margaret!

Carolyn Squires has shared this poem with us which was written by Laura Francis:

and the Kitten said "HOW WAS I TO KNOW!"

Would you believe it, they've planted a tree
 There in the hallway, especially for me!

They've hung it with playthings That sparkle
 and shine, Can such a present really be mine?

But who else in this house would want such a
 thing ? Who else plays with Bells and ribbons
 and string ?

No, it must be for me — I'll give it a try. There's
 a star on the top, I wonder why ?

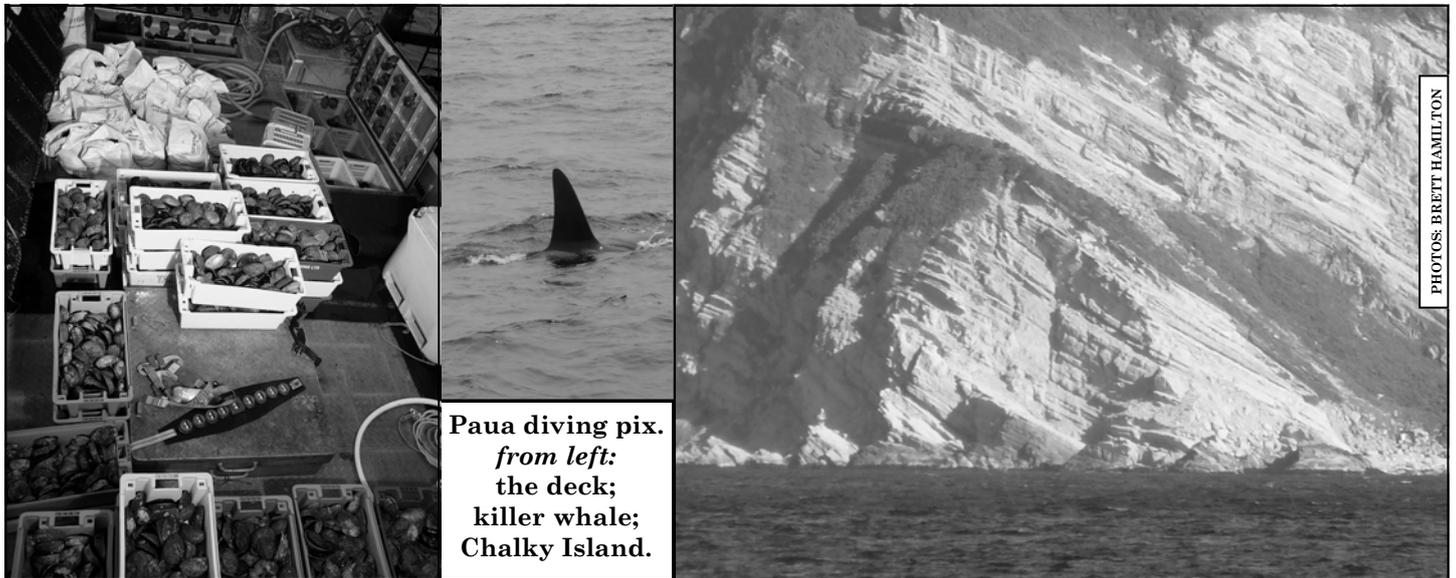
Those hanging toys, what enormous fun, I'll
 paw them off, every single one.

Now there just remains the trunk to climb. I'll
 get to the top — it will take me no time.

Crash ! Bang! Oh dear, dismay. Everyone's
 running, what did they say?

How was I to know it wasn't for me?
 How was I to know it was a
 Christmas Tree!!





Paua diving pix.
from left:
 the deck;
 killer whale;
 Chalky Island.

BOOK REVIEW: "Aphrodite" by Russell Andrews

by Sue Ford

This thriller may start off a bit slow and muddled – with the first nasty murder as early as the Prologue, but stick with a few chapters, and you'll be drawn in – it's what the critics call 'a page-turner'. Justin Westwood, in his late thirties, is an over-weight, out-of-shape, small-town USA cop, often drunk or hung-over. Most of days, he handles routine traffic offences. However, there's a reason for the way Justin is as he is, and slowly, we piece together the tragedy of his history. You don't find out the whole story until half-way through the book, as he tells it to Deena – and it is even worse than you will have imagined up to this point.

Justin's story is only to join the dots as to why the plight of Deena and her little girl, Kendall, should so absorb him. The apparent accidental death of Susanna Morgan – which Justin suspects is not accidental at all – is thrown wide open when Justin comes across Deena, who witnessed much of what went on. Keeping Deena and Kendall safe then becomes Justin's primary concern – for a while. Soon, he is faced with keeping himself safe too. The story has all the elements of a good yarn: a 'hero'

with an unusual background, pharmaceutical companies with billions of dollars at stake, Government officials who have taken 'the big picture' into the realms of conspiracy, FBI agents – some of whom may not be squeaky clean, and seedy politicians. Throw in a couple of homicidal maniacs and a few innocents (who end up very dead), and you have the basis of a good old-fashioned thriller. Then, as the secret of Aphrodite begins to unfold, you think that you have it all in the bag. But the action moves to England for a few days. Your smug acceptance of the story is likely to dissipate in a cloud of goosebumps of – well, perhaps even of horror.

As this fast-paced thriller progresses, you also have the feeling that a happy ending may not happen. You need to read to the end of the book to find out. For those who survive with the knowledge of Aphrodite, you think that their lives will never be the same again, but Russell Andrews and his hero, Justin Westwood, know it's not quite that black and white.

I'd recommend this book as holiday reading, but if you've read "Icarus" by the same author, you'll already have guessed that it isn't going to see you through more than a few days!

And now for something completely different! – to borrow a phrase. For the more serious-minded, for those with an interest in maths and/or science, or in the matter and make-up of the universe, try Brian Greene's "The Fabric of the Cosmos – Space, Time, & the Texture of Reality", in CD talking book form in our library. I have to be honest, 95% of it was waaaaay over my head. The only bits I really began to come to grips with were where the author drew analogies, for example, with the shapes of Pringles chips, or the perception of the world from the inside of a soup can! I won't surprise anyone by admitting that I "listened" to some of the discs several times over, using the talking book as a soporific on nights of insomnia.

My only saving grace is that my curiosity was sufficiently piqued that I did want to hear each disc enough to replay it whilst I was awake! And I have to admit that my non-existent knowledge of Quantum Mechanics, The Theory of Relativity, and The String Theory – to name but a few – has had a dent made in it. It's just enough of a dent that I can now understand why students of, and scientists in, Quantum Physics might view 'the universe' as a complex but very elegant piece of work! Go on! Try something different these holidays!

The Fernery – Gallery & Gift Shop

29 Golden Bay Road
Ph 2191 453

Hours 10.30am - 6pm
7 Days.

(Closed Christmas Day and New Years Day)

The Craftee Cod



Congratulations to Dawn who won the competition guessing the number of shells in the bottle; there were 275 and Dawn guessed 279! Enjoy your bottle and your shirt!

We have many gifts for Xmas, from funky dancing crayfish fridge magnets to cool t-shirts to handmade cards!



**Open Mon-Fri 10am-4pm
Sat 11am-3pm**

Located between Island Transport & Stewart Island backpackers

Shirts can be ordered by email for our non-resident readers of the SIN from stewartisland@xtra.co.nz. They cost \$20 each plus P&P



SHIP TO SHORE

Remember your Xmas orders!

We are currently taking orders for fruit, veges, bread, croissants, berries, cream, etc. We will make your order up and have it ready for you to pick up on the afternoon of 24th December. *Orders as soon as possible please.*

We wish to prompt people who have accounts with us that unless by prior arrangement only the people whose names are on an account with us will be entitled to use it.

We would like to thank Jess for the great work she does in editing and producing the *SIN*. I'm sure all of us look forward to it. Jess have a great Xmas.

Richard and I along with our much appreciated staff would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very merry and safe Christmas.

You've been elfed. If you want a real laugh go to these sites set up by Vicki:

<http://www.elfyourself.com/?id=1272366632>

<http://www.elfyourself.com/?id=1233745528>

RRR Holiday schedule: Residential Rubbish collections will be conducted on Wed 26 Dec and Wed 2 Jan.

Stewart Island News is published on a monthly basis as material permits. **Please send articles and enquiries to Jess Kany at Box 156, or to editor@stewart-island-news.com** The deadline for the next issue is 15th January.

If you wish to have Stewart Island News posted to you or a friend, please fill out this form and forward it with a cheque made payable to "Stewart Island News" to P.O. Box 156, Stewart Island. The cost is as follows:

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