



Lake Ōkareka

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Newsletter Winter 2020

INSIDE NEWSLETTER

Fire Station Rebuild
Rat & Bait Stations
Boyes Beach Toilet Block
Nature Word Find
The History of Ōkareka

The Newsletter of the Lake Ōkareka Community Association (Inc.) (LŌCA)

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Disclaimer Statement:

The views & opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the LŌCA Committee.

ATTENTION CHILDREN!

A rare sighting of a giant humpback whale in Lake Ōkareka! Can this be true?

Get out on the water and tell me if you see it? It must make a huge splash! See page 23 for answer.



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Chair's Report

Welcome to our Winter Edition of the Lake Ōkareka Community Association Newsletter – coming to you post the Covid-19 event of 2020. Thank goodness we are all safe and able to move about our business. It is nice to again share with friend and family this special part of NZ. During this unprecedented time, it was quite delightful to see the lake at its absolute best on the calm days, against that backdrop of untouched native bush. For many of us this was a time for reflection and calm contemplation, which we hope you have made the most of. I also hope that you noticed the bird song, and the fish activity during that time, it was quite special.



Photo Credit: Michelle Herrick



Photo Credit: Michelle Herrick

We have a great new team on board this year – who bring many skills and ideas to the table monthly. Your local committee members are listed on the front cover of this newsletter and are here to help and support your community. Please feel free to share your thoughts and ideas with us – we are all working as teams to keep up with the various tasks required of us and for the future – your feedback is important to us.

Our strategy is due for review in 2021. However given the changes we have had this year, we are beginning to review it now. It has provided for us a platform to build on and set our objectives to. We are not anticipating much change to the document – some minor things, but ultimately our goals remain to focus on – Water quality, plant and animal pests, enhancing our environment and creating a safe and friendly place to live and enjoy.

We are working on an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPMP) – as a community group we need a plan that can have a long term view, and include our key partners - Tuhourangi, Te Arawa Lakes Trust, Department of Conservation and the Bay of Plenty and Rotorua Lakes Councils. Our discussions have begun, and we are starting with a series of workshops to bring together our goals and the desires of our partners – to have one plan that we all work with. We need better collaboration to align our objectives. Once this comes together we hope to deliver more information on each of these goals, so that you can be more involved in helping us achieve them. It will be your support that will help us get there. Should you have any thoughts or input you wish to share, please feel free to contact any one of the Committee.



Photo Credit: Rich Lang



Photo Credit: Michelle Herrick

The new LōCA committee have managed to continue our monthly meetings, via Zoom over the last two months to keep up with the ongoing voluntary work necessary to keep on top of our objectives. With a few new faces we are building up a robust team of keen and spirited members who have much to achieve this year. Covid-19 has slowed down some of our progress, but has not affected the enthusiasm or continued support for our work. As you can imagine both the DoC and the Boyes Beach camps have seen a dramatic decline in income over this time, requiring further attention to our outgoings. NZ tourists will be our focus, this last three weeks has seen quite a few campers at the DOC camp coming from as far as the South Island. The Boyes Beach camp remains closed until the Council decides to open it, which should not be far away.

At Alert level 2, Rotorua Lakes Council held a small opening ceremony for the new Boyes Beach building – which looks rather smart, and modern. The two representatives for LōCA at that event were the immediate past Chairs – Martyn Norrie and Mike Vincent. Thanks to the previous LōCA committees for their hard work in putting together this deal with the RLC, it has been a long time in the doing, but I think you will agree worthwhile. The old building is to be removed in the next few weeks as it has become unsafe and an extra building to maintain. For our part, we are looking to continue managing this camp site, using our collectors as we have in the past. It is hoped that we can generate more income from this with a fee review in the coming months. RLC is also hoping to

Chair's Report - cont...

have a much larger opening ceremony with the community – details will be shared once we know more about this.

Now we have Ultra Fast Broadband, we are now able to proceed with the CCTV camera system for the community. This has taken again some time to pull together, but is now engaged and work will begin shortly. It has been well supported by the Police, DoC and RLC, and we are fortunate to be able to have a system available that will help make our community a safer place.



Photo Credit: Rich Lang



Photo Credit: Rich Lang

We are continuing the work on the village area speed limits with the focus on reducing this to 40km/hr. This is not as easy as it may sound, with road engineering and risk scoring. We have again sought a further meeting with Council to follow up on this.. We hope to be able to update you soon on this matter – Covid-19 again seems to have slowed down responses to our requests so we hope that will change in the coming weeks.

The proposed walkway project to complete the track around the lake is still in development stages and we are working through the steps needed to get such a large project underway. As agreed, this will be presented to the community before it is committed to, given the large financial investment required. Mitch leads a team working hard on this, with the hope that as many of the steps can be overcome in the near future.

We have supported Landcare Ōkareka further this year with the work they are doing on the Millar Road wetland, and it is pleasing to see the mulching done and the plants in the ground. May it now rain! Thanks to the ongoing work this team does to continue the removal of unwanted species and rekindling with new native plants. The bird life has already changed, and it will only continue to improve. Colin from our committee continues to be the bastion of our Water level and quality control, keeping us in touch with the measures and accountabilities that are required of all parties in relation to this work. We have supported the Pre-school with providing large capet pieces made for the Hall, which has made life a bit nicer for the kids this winter. It is hoped we will also have certified wasp

eradicators by the summer, to attempt to keep on top of that pest problem. This will require some training, and we hope to get this done for those interested over the winter.

Thanks to our new Editor Michelle Herrick – who has kindly picked up the role of Editor and Chief of this newsletter – it has had many enhancements and looks rather smart. It continues to be an important form of communication for our community and we encourage you all to use it and support our advertisers, without them we would not be able to publish such a stunning document. Tim Bell is to begin a series in this newsletter, looking at historical and family stories, from our community. If you are interested in contributing please contact Tim, or our secretary Mitch. This newsletter can be found on many Lake Ōkareka coffee tables and make for interesting family discussions as the years go by. Mitch and his team are also working with improving the website, and are actively working on the Facebook page, which will continue to be used for local events and important community announcements. This newsletter will be published on our website www.LakeŌkareka.org.



Photo Credit: Michelle Herrick



Photo Credit: Michelle Herrick

We encourage you to come forward with your thoughts and ideas – and keep connected with our Facebook page and website information. Your contribution is welcome and if you wish to add your support to our strategy, to the newsletter, or to our Pest and Plant work, feel free to contact myself or anyone of the 2020 LÖCA team.

Kim Lorigan

Kim Lorigan - LÖCA Chair



Phil Muldoon
Chief Fire Officer
pmh.ltd@xtra.co.nz

Lake Ōkareka Volunteer Rural Fire

Well, this year has certainly thrown us a huge curve-ball! Who would have thought at the beginning of the year that New Zealand would close its borders, go into a nationwide lockdown, and experience such crippling effects on businesses, communities and families, let alone the widespread impact of COVID-19 across the world?

Operations for Lake Ōkareka Rural Fire have been significantly scaled back with no training taking place since we first went into Level 2. Minimum crew numbers and strict physical distancing, personal protection and decontamination protocols have been followed for call-outs since the lockdown.

Despite this, we were still kept reasonably busy delivering water to homes on tank water within the district that had almost run out. This was deemed an essential service to ensure safe and sanitary conditions for households.



Photo Credit: Simon Watson



Photo Credit: Simon Watson

On the plus-side of the lockdown, it was great to see so many families out walking and cycling around the Lake Ōkareka village every day. Also, a special thank you to Marion Forbes and others for co-ordinating a list of our more senior and vulnerable Lake Ōkareka residents, ensuring these people were okay during the lockdown, and providing assistance to those who needed support with shopping and other requirements.



As most of you will have seen, work on the new fire station build got underway as soon as we shifted to Level 3, with some 650 plus poles being driven into the site area. This is a requirement for a Level 4 building designed to withstand earthquakes. As this area is now a construction site, please do not enter the fenced area.

Lake Ōkareka Rural Fire is looking forward to being able to resume our normal operations in the not too distant future. Unfortunately, the annual Sky Tower Firefighter Stair Climb due to take place in May has been deferred but this may be able to take place later in the year.

In the meantime, we wish the families within the Lake Ōkareka and wider Rotorua community all the best as we move out of lockdown and start rebuilding our local economy. Supporting local business has never been more important.

If you have been thinking about joining and would like to see what we are about, please come down to the fire station at 7:30pm on a Wednesday night when we do training or phone me on 3628874. You can also go to our website: www.Ōkarekaruralfire.com.

We wish the community all the best for a safe winter.

Phil Muldoon

Phil Muldoon -Chief Fire Officer

Lake Events And Closures

Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC) manages all lake reserve booking for events, working closely with the BOP Regional Council (BOPRC) who manage activity on the lakes. For information on what events are coming up in the area, go to <http://www.rotorualakes.co.nz/lake-events-and-closures> or visit <http://www.rotoruanz.com/visit/whats-on>.

Both RLC and BOPRC appreciate the impact

events can have on the Location they are held, both positive and negative. If you have feedback that you would like to offer or you wish to discuss events happening in your area, please email the RLC community events team at Community.Events@rotorualc.nz or BOPRC at Jo.Kapua@boprc.govt.nz

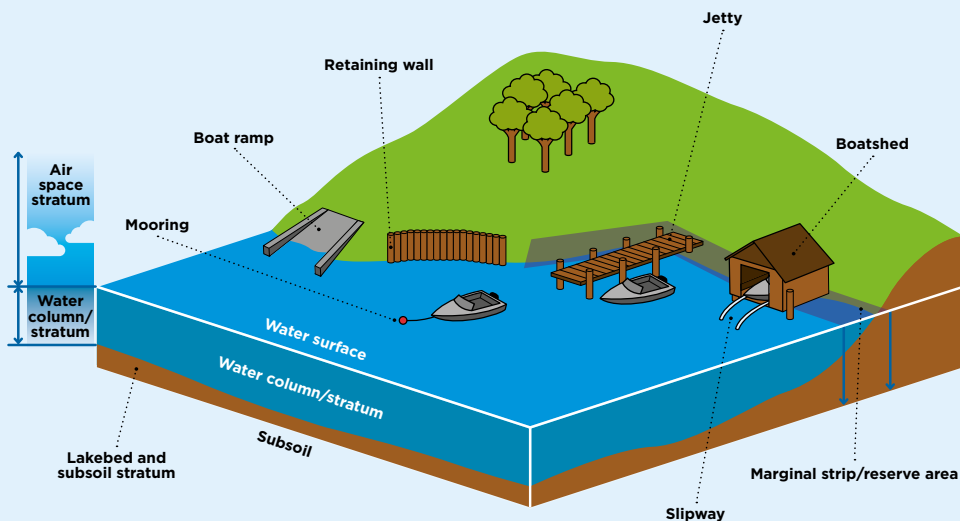
Martin Croft Events Manager Events & Venues
Rotorua D: 07 351 8654 M: 027 249 8670

All you need to know

about jetties, boatsheds and other structures in the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes.



Any temporary or permanent structure where some part sits in, on, under or over a lake is considered a lake structure. Examples include jetties, boat ramps, boatsheds, moorings and retaining walls.



Lake structures need consent

The purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. Resource consents are issued under this act to help manage activities that affect the environment.

To minimise the impact of lake structures to their environment, the construction and maintenance of lake structures requires a resource consent from the Bay of Plenty Regional Council.

This also helps ensure that structures are appropriately maintained and safe, are not eyesores and do not interfere with important cultural aspects of the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes.

For structures on Te Arawa owned lakes that were installed pre settlement (24 October 2006), while it is not currently a legal requirement for lake structure owners to apply for a lease with Te Arawa Lakes Trust (TALT) it does form part of their internal policy. **More information can be found here.**

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Michelle Herrick
MARKETING SPECIALIST
021 77 33 21
runningmichelle77@gmail.com



Tikitapu Pest Control Project

Now the country is on Covid -19 Level 1, the Rotorua Branch of Forest and Bird are to continue with the planned Tikitapu Pest Control Programme for 2020. Our next working bee is on July 5th-6th 2020 so please join us.

This year we will again be using Diphacinone bait to control rats, and Feratox® to control possums and wallabies. Diphacinone will be placed in Philproof bait stations which are fitted with baffles preventing possums getting access to the bait. Last year Romark bait stations with the Feratox® placed inside were trialled over alternate lines and compared with the Feratox® bait bags nailed to trees, on the other lines. Rats are unable to open the lids of the Romarks and consequently considerably less Feratox® was required compared to previous years. Rats are so clever that if they can get the Feratox® they will eat lure on the outside but not touch the actual Feratox® in the middle. This year Romarks are in position on all lines and we hope even less bait will be required.

During the past months several volunteers have been busy, when Covid-19 restrictions allowed, and put the extra Romarks in place, and did some trimming and clearing of windfalls. Also the Goodnature traps around the perimeter have all been replaced with DOC 200 traps for rats and mustelids and Sentinel traps for possums. The traps are divided into 3 sections and volunteers are monitoring their section monthly. So far the traps are doing well. Volunteers, on a monthly roster, have checked and maintained the Mistletoe Track and the Nature Walk. The application for the permit from the Ministry of Health to use the VTA (Feratox®) has been completed and the application for the permit from DOC is underway. These projects are dependent on volunteers and I wish to thank all those who have been involved over the past months and last year.

It is always good to have some new people involved in the project and new volunteers are most welcome. Working bees start at 9am and normally finish by 12 noon at the latest. I would love to hear from you if you are interested in becoming involved with this project, or would like more information.

Frances Blakely
Frances Blakely



CONTRIBUTOR
Frances Blakely
Forest & Bird
jandfblakely@gmail.com



Photo Credit: www.doc.govt.nz

Tikitapu Working Bee Programme 2020



Photo Credit: www.doc.govt.nz



Photo Credit: www.doc.govt.nz

Trimming lines, checking stations etc.

Sunday 6th July

School Holidays
4th - 19th July

Bait laying – Diphacinone and Ferafeed out

Sunday - Monday
2nd - 3rd August

Remove any Ferafeed left, put out Feratox® and check r emaining Diphacinone*

Sunday - Monday
9th - 10th August

Top up Diphacinone and Feratox as required*

Sunday - Monday
30th - 31st August

Clear stations of remaining Diphacinone and Feratox®*

Sunday & Monday
6th - 7th September

*volunteers with CSL (controlled substance
licence) required, plus others to assist.



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Lake Ōkareka Preschool News

The children were excited to return to Preschool after being in Lockdown. We returned with only three children for two days for our essential working parents. It has been a long break away and we acknowledge the effort we all have all made to stay home and keep ourselves safe. The children are enjoying meeting up with their new friends and exploring their Preschool again.

Farewell to the children who graduated to Lynmore school at the beginning of the Lockdown, Ryan Bray, Jamie Herrick and Jack Renton. Happy school days to these children who started their first weeks of school online.



Photo Credit: Lake Ōkareka Preschool



Photo Credit: Lake Ōkareka Preschool

We enjoyed discovering the new little plants that had come from our picking seed heads and returning them to our garden as we are very good at learning about nature at Preschool. We then carefully replanted some of these for our special gifts for Mother's Day with our very small group during those first days back. The cards were created with love and care from the flower petals we have growing in our garden too.

CONTRIBUTORS



Debbie, Davina, Leslie
Preschool Teachers
Phone 07-362 8606

The Preschool AGM will be held on Monday 15th June this year and we will be able to have a face to face meeting rather than the zoom meetings we have had the last two Board meetings.



A BIG thank you to Annette Stock who donated many of her teaching resources to the Preschool, we are very grateful that Annette thought of us and to receive such quality teaching resources for learning around literacy and numeracy.

All inquiries please contact Debbie 07 362 8606. Like us on facebook and see our website www.lakeOkarekapreschool.co.nz

Debbie, Davina, Leslie

The Teaching team and Board of Lake Ōkareka Preschool
Like us on Facebook and view our website for further information.



Photo Credit: Michelle Herrick



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B	E	L	L	B	I	R	D	R	L	B	T	D	V	I	R	K
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Bellbird
Blue Penguin
Dabchick
Fantail
Kaka
Kakapo

Kakariki
Karearea
Kea
Kereru
Kiwi
Kokako

Miromiro
Morepork
Okareka
Popkotea
Pukeko
Rifleman

Robin
Saddleback
Stitchbird
Tarawera
Tikitapu
Tomtit

Toutouwai
Tui
Weka
Weweia
Whitehead



Tim Bell
Historian
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LOCA Historical Records Project

The little settlement we call Lake Ōkareka is full of history, starting with the lease of the land by Herbert Benn in the 1890's, after the eruption of Mount Tarawera, right up to present day.

Here at the LOCA committee we are on the search for any old photos, documents, stories and other interesting things that might shed light on this village and its people over the last 120+ years.



The "Great Flood" of 1963

Our goal is to create a database of historical information so that it can be accessed by locals both in the present day and for future generations to come.

We have a physical space to keep items as part of LOCA or we can scan and digitise photos and documents to be kept online so you can hold onto the originals.

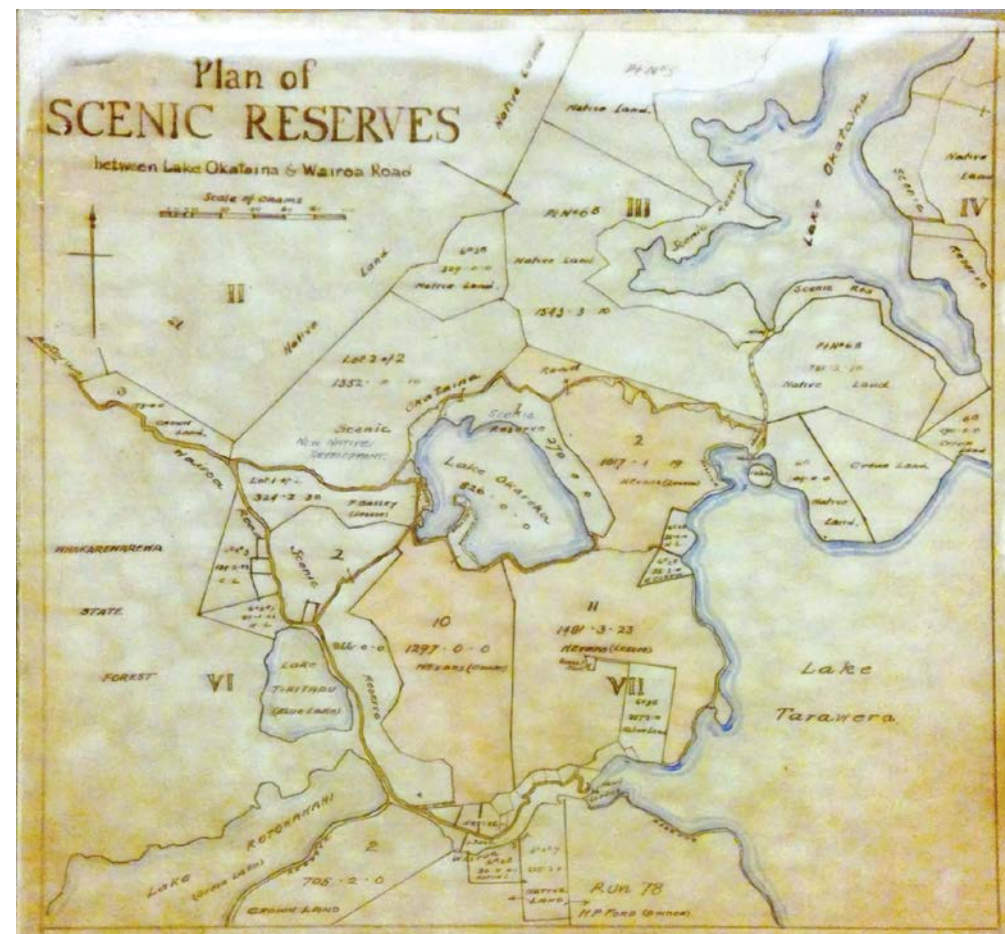
While photos are a great snapshot of the past it's the stories that surround them that really bring the community to life. We would love to hear from anyone that has been in the Ōkareka area for a while that could share with us their memories of days gone by. With the idea that we could run a story in each future newsletter sharing some of these memories.

Anyone that is interested in contributing to this project please get in touch with Tim Bell (tsbell.nz@gmail.com, 02102636141, 5 Branch Road).

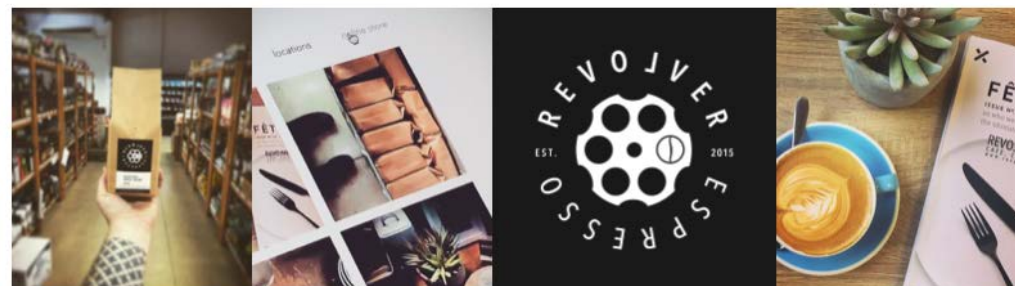
Here are some images of documents kindly supplied by Fenella Playne to get the historical juices flowing!

Jim Bell

Tim Bell, Lake Ōkareka



1920's Council Document showing Evans Family blocks of land (later purchased by Somerset Playne in 1937 to become Playne's Farm, Tarawera Village and Crater Lake Farm)



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Michelle Herrick

LōCA Editor

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Letter from the Editor

First of all, thank you for all the wonderful positive feedback about the first publication of the new look newsletter published in February. We really do have a special community not just with the people but also with the flora and fauna and natural beauty. Please feel free to contact me anytime to contribute and add into this newsletter.

I know for many lockdown was hard others loved it, however living where we do has made it so much easier. Being able to get out on the bikes, walking and being in nature during Autumn has been wonderful for the kids. Watching the trees turn has been stunning, the cool clear days are amazing. I can't wait to see a sprinkle of snow on Mount Tarawera for the first time. I hope you are all well and keeping warm at night in these cooler months. We captured the moon rising over Tarawera with the moonlight on Lake Ōkareka, What a great start to winter that was.



Photo Credit: Michelle Herrick



Photo Credit: Richard Lang



Photo Credit: Richard Lang

There is so much going on with the Boyes beach toilet block now finished, the car park re-sealing + line painting and the fire station build. Lots of change for our little community. I'm thinking of holding a trolley race in August if any of the kids are interested please get in touch and I'll make it work. Proceeds this time will go to the Lake Ōkareka Pre-school.

Michelle Herrick

Michelle Herrick

Answer to Page 2 Whales: There are no whales in Lake Ōkareka. These photos are from Alaska

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Enjoy your boat next summer – don't have it stuck in the shop getting repaired!

Western Okataina Walkway

If you are looking for a walk, run or ride that's just a little bit more challenging you can't go past the Western Okataina Walkway.

The Western Okataina Walkway (WOW) It is a part of The Department of Conservation (DOC) initiative to provide more recreational opportunities, increasing the amount of users on existing trails and working with the wider community in growing the region.

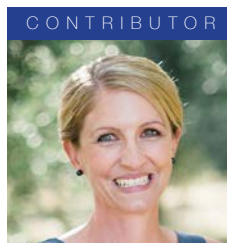
The Western Okataina Walkway is an old logging road that dates back to earlier last century when the area was logged for rimu, totara, rata & kahikatea. It is generally wide and well formed.

From Millar Road it is mostly an undulating 11.5 km, with a solid climb towards the Whakapoungakau junction. From the junction it is a short detour of 1.4 km up to the trig where views of the surrounding area, Lakes Rotorua & Rotoiti abound. The next 4.8 km are mainly downhill to the Outdoor Education Centre or to Waipungapunga car park.

This track differs considerably to the majority of the trails in the Whaka Forest. It isn't in pine forest, the trail hasn't been carefully constructed and maintenance doesn't include a fined toothed comb. However, if you are up for adventure, enjoy a challenge and the satisfaction that comes with 'knocking the bastard off' (quote thanks to Ed Hillary) then this track is for you.

Some information in this article is from the DOC website however I have done this trail many times and it's one of my favourites! Enjoy

Michelle Herrick
Michelle Herrick



Michelle Herrick
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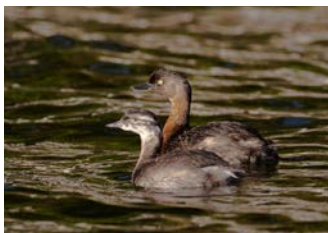
Photo Credit: Ray Cook

The New Zealand Dabchick

The New Zealand Dabchick, *Weweaia* are an under threat endemic grebe that has its strong hold in the central North Island. Since 2013 we have participated in the program of annual autumn counts of Dabchicks on the Rotorua lakes by systematically counting the birds at Lake Ōkareka.



North Island Tomtit - Branch Road
Photo Credit: Mike Vincent



Adult and youngster seen during this year's count. Photo Credit: Mike Vincent



North Island Robin Tikitapu Scenic Reserve. Photo Credit: Mike Vincent

This year like many things it was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. But all was not lost and after a few post lockdown beers Dave Scott and I decided to conduct an impromptu count as the level 3 restrictions allowed us to use boats. Early on the 17th May the two of us plus a Labrador had a slow two and a half hour cruise around the lake and counted 73 Dabchicks three of which were juveniles. The total number was not a surprise as we have had counts of 70 odd birds in the past but the three juvenile birds was a real bonus as we were counting a over month later than usual.

Lake Ōkareka Autumn Dabchick counts

2013-**49**, 2014-**66**, 2015-**71**, 2016-**70**, 2017-**52**, 2018-**70**, 2019-**56**, 2020-**73**.

From a birding view point the month long lockdown was interesting as it meant any birding excursions had to be done locally, the highlights being North Island Robin, Toutouwai; North Island Tomtit, Miromiro; and Whitehead, Popkotea in the Tikitapu Scenic reserve. The best of all was a pair of Miromiro becoming regular visitors to our garden in Branch Rd. The birdlife at Ōkareka is a tribute to the various predator control and planting programs around the lake.

Mike Vincent

Mike Vincent



Mike Vincent
LōCA - Birdman
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