

Owhango



Owhango Village Newsletter

Autumn 2019

Welcome from ORRIS

WANTED

Market Day helpers and Working Bee volunteers

The Market in Owhango Hall held on the first Sunday of the month is run by volunteers. If you would like to help on the BBQ or in the kitchen we would love to hear from you. Working Bees are held several times a year for maintenance work and beautification projects in the Village.

If you can spare a few hours occasionally let us know your details and availability.

Phone Toni Grass 07 8954436

What's on in Owhango

Indoor Bowls-Owhango Hall every Sunday 2pm from 31 March.\$2

Owhango Playgroup meets every Tuesday from 10am to 12 noon. Ph. Trudie Wheeler 8966864

Owhango Market Day- The first Sunday of every month except January at 9am-1pm

For a stall booking contact Sally Lashmar or Mark Fredericks 07 8954443

Hall Bookings Phone Laurie Bryan 07 8954870

F Y I -Ruapehu Neighbourhood Support

Email Lou Dixon at taumarunuinsg@xtra.co.nz to receive the newsletter, emailed monthly.

Fire Brigade Pot Luck BBQ -on Sunday the 7th of April –see more details in the Fire brigade News.

Recycling and rubbish disposal Owhango Transfer Station -State Highway 4:

Open Mon 1-5pm Wed, Sat & Sun 8-12noon.

The Owhango Beekeepers Club meets roughly monthly and non-members or people just interested in beekeeping are very welcome. Just let Tim Leahy know and he'll keep you up to date.

Tim's contact is by txt to 0276334523 or through the club's website.

Community messages for Autumn 2019

Owhango Alive Report – February 2019

OBITUARY

Barry Boston - 6/1/1931 to 23/1/ 2019

It is with sadness that I inform you that Owhango Alive volunteer, Barry Boston, passed away on the 23rd January, after a staunch battle with illness. As his wife Colleen says, "It was his toughest marathon" - Barry completed over 50 marathons. Barry, along with his wife Colleen, became part of the Owhango Alive team back in 2013, after a chance meeting at the Whakapapa Bridge with Peter Lacy, an OA trap checker at the time.

Barry soon became an integral member of OA, with his commitment to weekly trap checking, weed busting (under the watchful eye of Colleen) and native tree planting along the Boat Hole Line and around the Whakapapa Bridge area. We were always kept on our toes by Barry, and if we hadn't spotted an invading thistle, privet or blackberry, he would let us know, or just get on with "fixing" the pesky weeds. Barry was always up for a laugh, with jokes, stories and banter ; it was Barry who coined our OA logo phrase "Protecting Our Own Back Yard" (POOBY!) and he took it very seriously – all in all, he was very dedicated to the Ohinetonga Scenic Reserve, Kakahi and Owhango Alive.

He will be sorely missed by all who he came in contact with.

As it is said about some special Kiwi blokes, "He Was a Good Keen Man"

Another steady few months in the Ohinetonga Scenic Reserve, with predator control, weed busting and working bees.

Trap data for the months of December, January and February are as follows.

: Mice	27
: Stoats	1
: Feral Cats	4
: Rats	97
: Hedgehogs	29
: Possums	3
: Ferrets	12

Ferrets.

We have had a huge influx of ferrets in the farmland around Owhango and within the Ohinetonga Scenic Reserve, since the middle of January 2019. Local residents Bill and Carol O'Donnell spotted one crossing their driveway one evening in January. As a result of this sighting, extra live capture traps and DOC 250 traps were lent to OA by DOC and we placed them on the farmland that bounders the Ohinetonga Scenic Reserve. To date we have caught 12 ferrets and other locals have caught 3. Given that since 2013 we have only caught 5 locally, to catch 11 ferrets in 6 weeks seems significant.

Trap Library

Owhango Alive, in conjunction with DOC/Predator Free 2050, have a variety of traps available for loan of up to 3 months – if you are keen to help protect your own backyard with a trap, give me a call on 0275 734 359. Alternatively, we will be at the Owhango Market with our OA stall with a range of the traps for loan, as stocks last.

Owhango Alive has a Facebook page, check it out.

That's it from me – if any of you feel like getting involved, just email us at owhangoalive@yahoo.com. We'd love to have you on board.

Warm regards Mark Fredericks and the OWHANGO ALIVE team.

Owhango School News

Our school year has got off to a good start, with the children making the most the hot weather. We have had some great swimming lessons on the go and are so happy to have our new pool cover to keep the water temperatures up. We have also been getting into our vegetable garden; having a clear out of the weeds that grew during the summer break and harvesting vegetables that are ready. We have had a good crop of silver beet, kale, lettuce, broccoli, potatoes, tomatoes, beans and courgettes. We also had our first big crop of plums on our tree and our apples are almost ready to eat. We are looking at adding a few more fruit trees. At Owhango School we have a kaupapa (philosophy) of learning how to grow food.

Thanks
Ewan Starkey
Principal
Owhango School

Owhango Volunteer Fire Brigade Newsletter - February 2019

Hi All,

Well quite a busy start for our brigade this year. We have attended a few car accidents and vegetation fires already. Hopefully not too many more!

Luckily we have had a bit of rain which, fingers crossed, will green everything up a bit and reduce the risk of vegetation fires. If you have anything to burn please check the website 'checkitsalright' and this will tell you if we are in a restricted fire season or having a total ban. At the moment it is a restricted season so most fires will need a permit which you can apply for on the website.

We are still training most Wednesday nights and welcome anyone who may be interested in joining, to come along and see a bit of what we do.

On Sunday the 7th of April we would like to invite the Owhango community to a pot luck BBQ at the fire station, starting around 5pm. We will provide sausages and bread and if families could bring a salad or dessert to share. If you would like any other type of meat to cook on the BBQ please bring your own. Just so we can get an idea of numbers can you please email Cara at: cara.odonnell@fireandemergency.nz

Stay safe out there.

Regards

The Team at Owhango Volunteer Fire Brigade

Owhango Folklore

Reproduced with permission from a letter to Bill and Carol O'Donnell in 2009 from Ray Tocker.

The Supernatural

Local gossip had it that the body of an infant Maori child had been found, bound in the ancient traditional way and placed in the branches of a Totara tree to the hidebound horror of the Pakeha puritans. We children had greater sympathy, for we knew the power of makutu. Just past Onematua Street, the northernmost transverse street of the town, was a triangle of bush, bounded to the east by the main road and to the West, by the railway line. At almost the centre of gravity of this uncanny relic of primeval forest lay the Tohunga Pit. Approach the bush, from whatever angle, and the usual cacophony of Cicada and bird song provided the usual summer background music. Enter the woods and you entered another, most disconcerting world. The closer you approached the pit, the cooler, quieter, and more sinister the atmosphere became until, in the unnatural gloom, you saw the archaic timbers of the rails surrounding the source of this phenomenon, a six foot square, fern filled, depression in the forest floor. I swear to you that absolute silence prevailed, awed by the residual power of this extremely potent individual of long ago. I have passed this place on many occasions as an adult but have never taken the opportunity to relive this eerie experience. Perhaps I fear disappointment. You may form your own conclusions.

OUR NATVE BIRDS

The native Morepork is known for its haunting, melancholic call. This sound gives it the Māori name 'ruru'.

New Zealand status: Native

Conservation status: Not Threatened

Found in: Forests throughout mainland New Zealand and offshore islands

Threats: Predation, loss of habitat



Facts

Often heard in the forest at dusk and throughout the night, the morepork is known for its haunting, melancholic call. Its Māori name, ruru, reflects this call.

Distribution

Morepork are commonly found in forests throughout mainland New Zealand and on offshore islands. They are less common within the drier open regions of Canterbury and Otago. They are classified as not threatened.

Features

Morepork are speckled brown with yellow eyes set in a dark facial mask. They have a short tail. The females are bigger than the males. Head to tail they measure around 29 cm and the average weight is about 175 g. They have acute hearing and are sensitive to light. They can turn their head through 270 degrees.

Nocturnal birds of prey

Morepork are nocturnal, hunting at night for large invertebrates including beetles, weta, moths and spiders. They will also take small birds, rats and mice. They fly silently as they have soft fringes on the edge of the wing feathers. They catch prey using large sharp talons or beak. By day they roost in the cavities of trees or in thick vegetation. If they are visible during the day they can get mobbed by other birds and are forced to move.

Nesting and breeding

Morepork nest in tree cavities, in clumps of epiphytes or among rocks and roots.

The female can lay up to three eggs but generally two, usually between September and November.

The female alone incubates the eggs for about 20 to 30 days during which time the male brings in food for her.

Once the chicks hatch, the female stays mainly on the nest until the owlets are fully feathered.

They fledge around 37-42 days.

Depending on food supply often only one chick survives and the other may be eaten.