

## Trust makes final



For the second year in a row the Trust has been named a finalist in the West Coast Leading Light Business Excellence Awards. The Trust was nominated in the Solid Energy Charity / Community Organisation category and the winners will be announced on May 18th.

## Penguin proof fence erected

Protecting blue penguins along the Coast Road took a step forward last month with a penguin proof fence being erected just south of the Punakaiki River.

Trust Ranger Reuben Lane built the 80 metre fence over two days with the help of a group of conservation volunteers and the support of Opus and the NZ Transport Agency.

The fence will stop the blue penguins from crossing SH6 but still allow them access to their burrows. Detailed monitoring by the Trust has found vehicles are the single biggest cause of death in the local blue penguin population.

“Over the past five years 10 penguins have been killed at that point. The area will now be monitored and if proved successful we hope in time we can fence roughly four km’s between Punakaiki and Charleston where most of the penguin deaths occur. This fence will demonstrate to residents in other areas that the visual intrusion is minimal,” says Reuben.

*(Continued on page 5)*

## New Patron



The Trust is delighted to welcome acclaimed photographer and conservationist Craig Potton as its new patron.

Mr Potton is New Zealand’s pre-eminent landscape photographer, a passionate conservationist and presenter of television series Wild Coasts and Rivers.

He says he adores the West Coast and is delighted to support the excellent work the Trust is undertaking to protect blue penguins in the area.

*Continued page 3*



*The team - left to right Ellyn Williams (USA), Tanja Schaefermolte (Germany), Bruce Eade (team leader), Reuben Lane, Borim Kim (Korea)*

## Cape Foulwind project ahead of schedule

The Cape Foulwind project, which will ultimately see the public able to view blue penguins and sooty shearwaters returning to their nests at dusk, is ahead of schedule.

The sound-system has been erected and since December has been broadcasting sooty shearwater calls across the colony.

It seems to be working with a recent inspection showing more sign of shearwater activity at the colony and almost every burrow having been visited since an inspection in February.

“There was only one chick which was a little disappointing, but given we couldn’t establish the predator trapline until after egg laying, this is perhaps the best we could expect this season. We know at least two eggs were taken by predators before the traps were in place,” says Trust chair Kerry-Jayne Wilson.

“The sound system is designed to attract more birds to the colonies. We are well set up for the next shearwater season and ready for the blue



*Reuben with the new soundsystem*

penguins. One of the new nest boxes has already been visited by a penguin and we will start broadcasting penguin calls in July when the penguins come ashore to breed,” she says.

Thanks to Solid Energy for coming on board with sponsorship, and the work put in from Kerry-Jayne, ranger Reuben Lane, Helene Roehl, Valda Kirkwood and DOC’s Penny MacIntosh. It is thought it will take about four years for a nucleus of both species to establish.

## Comings and goings

Inger Perkins has taken over from Robyn Janes as Trust co-ordinator. Inger works at DOC in Hokitika and has been a long-time supporter of the Trust.

She grew up in Kent, the garden of England, and has a joint honours degree in Geography and Geology from Bristol University and a Leisure Management Diploma. She managed a 220 acre estate and golf club in the UK, but wanted to travel and lost her heart to New Zealand when she visited in 2002.

Until she moved to New Zealand, Inger always thought penguins only lived in Antarctica. Now she lives on Hokitika Beach and it still amazes her that they live at her back door.

Robyn will continue working as media co-ordinator. Inger can be contacted on [info@bluepenguin.org.nz](mailto:info@bluepenguin.org.nz) and Robyn on [robyn@mediafix.co.nz](mailto:robyn@mediafix.co.nz)

The Trust is also sad to farewell supporter and minute taker extraordinaire, Valda Kirkwood. Valda has been involved in many conservation initiatives in the Buller region and has been an enthusiastic member of the Trust, acting as secretary for many years. Her passion for conservation and hands on support of the Trust will be missed. We wish her well in the Wairarapa.



*Inger Perkins*



*Valda Kirkwood*

# Acclaimed photographer new patron

*Continued from front page*

"I defy people not to love penguins and I am happy to be associated with an organisation trying to protect them. Penguins are universally loved and New Zealand is central to the breeding of many species," says Craig.

"As a kid I remember hearing blue penguins under the bach at Golden Bay, the sad thing is you don't hear them any more."

Trust chairwoman Kerry-Jayne Wilson says the Trust was looking for a patron with a high profile whose values and approaches to conservation matched the Trust's.

"Craig was perfect, through his publishing company he produces books that are scientifically robust yet accessible to the layperson, through his photography and television work he helps the wider public to appreciate and enjoy the beauty and uniqueness of New Zealand's landscapes, flora and fauna," she says.



*Craig Potton at work*

## In brief.....

### Radio NZ doco

In January the West Coast Blue Penguin Trust's work was featured in a Radio New Zealand documentary. It focused on the Trust's research which has found the greatest threat to penguin mortality on the West Coast is cars and dogs rather than stoats. To listen to the documentary [click here](#)

### Forest & Bird funding

Thanks to Forest & Bird which has donated \$2,600 towards the Hokitika Beach restoration project. It is hoped more planting will get underway shortly.

### Thanks Holcim

Cheers to Holcim which has reconfirmed its sponsorship to the Trust. Holcim is a long time sponsor and we appreciate its support

### Next Meeting

The next meeting of the supporters group is 10am Friday 15 June at the Grey District Council. All are welcome.

### Nature Space website

A new website has been launched for groups undertaking ecological restoration in NZ. The Nature Space website has information about community restoration groups and resources you can use to help your cause. Check out [www.naturespace.org.nz](http://www.naturespace.org.nz)

### 2012 Census

This years census is planned for the 1st to 5th of August. If you want to help out contact Inger on [info@bluepenguin.org.nz](mailto:info@bluepenguin.org.nz)

# Penguinville a hit with the kids

Children flocked to Penguinville at the Driftwood and Sand beach sculpture festival in Hokitika during the last week of January. Over 50 groups of children built fantastic penguin houses with prizes given out for the best construction, most natural and most creative. Thanks to the National Kiwi Centre and Take Note Hokitika for donating prizes.

We couldn't run Penguinville without the help of volunteers – cheers to Jock Edmondson, Verity Forbes, Geoff Button and Robyn Janes for setting up, and Karen Mayhew, Jill Cotton, Reuben Lane, Winona Dowell and Sue Davis for their time during the week. Take a look at the Driftwood and Sand video on <http://vimeo.com/35784260>



*Jill gives Fern Davies her prize*



*Mathew Bolter's penguin house*



*Geoff and Jock setting up*

## Penguin t-shirts for sale

The new penguin t-shirts were running hot at February's Fox River Market with lots sold. We still have most sizes if you would like to buy one – they are \$25 and can be purchased through [info@bluepenguin.org.nz](mailto:info@bluepenguin.org.nz). Thanks to Valda Kirkwood, Jess Reedy (modelling the t-shirt, right) and Kerry-Jayne Wilson who looked after the stall and passed on lots of information about penguins to visitors.



## Penguin proof fence

*(continued from front page)*

While the Trust and Conservation Volunteers provided the labour, NZTA paid for the fencing.

“Not only does this initiative have the potential to protect the penguins there is also a road safety issue. By stopping the penguins from crossing the road it removes a driving hazard and reduces the possibility of erratic driving behaviour,” says NZTA Senior Assets Manager Mark Pinner.

The fence was constructed using black plastic mesh which is highly corrosion resistant and UV stable.

A similar fence erected by the Friends of Lillico Penguins in Tasmania along a major highway has been very successful in bringing down the numbers of penguins killed on the road and increasing the penguin population.

## Trust in Karamea

In March trustees and staff travelled to Karamea for its supporters meeting and ran talks and workshops for locals.

Trust Chair, Kerry-Jayne Wilson, and Trust Ranger, Reuben Lane presented illustrated talks about west coast seabirds and the work of the Trust. A Supporters' Meeting was held to discuss the work of the Trust and relevant local issues and then Reuben presented a trapping workshop, sharing his extensive skills in predator control.

While in Karamea, Reuben also made presentations to local primary school children (pictured) who were fascinated by his predator skins and skulls, and his vast knowledge of the birds and their habits.



## A day in the life ..... back to sea

At last some “me time” with nobody to feed or look after. For now it’s just me, the other half, and the ocean. It’s great to get out of that burrow – you feel so vulnerable when you’re stuck moulting, especially when those scary dogs keep sniffing around. For the next couple of months I’ll be flying through the ocean chasing fish and squid ..... it’s the place I love to be.



Thanks to sponsors below and ANZ, Kea Tours, Hokitika’s Shining Star, Birds Ferry Lodge, Rimu Lodge, Beachfront Hotel, The National Kiwi Centre and Breakers for their support.

This newsletter is distributed four times a year

