

Okotopa 2018



TE IPUKAREA SOCIETY

*Caring for our Environment
Taporoporo i to tatou Ao Rangi*

Ridge To Reef Team Lands On Palmerston

Alanna Smith from Te Ipukarea Society has teamed up with staff from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Marine Resources, and the National Environment Service for a Ridge to Reef project expedition to Palmerston. Alanna's main role is to assist the Marae Moana Office to collect information from the Palmerston community that would assist in developing the first marine spatial plan for Palmerston.

The marine spatial plan's main feature is a map of the island, used to highlight how different zones of the lagoon and the area beyond the reef are to be used. It shows where fishing activities are prohibited or allowed, and whether there are areas where only particular fishing methods can be used. The most important thing about a marine spatial plan is that it is developed by the community, and the activities that are decided upon are what the community want and all agree to.

As well as coordinating the gathering of information for Palmerston's marine spatial plan, Alanna has also been able to assist the NES team with their coconut crab (unga/kaveu) and vegetation survey that is being carried out on all the islets. The survey involves

running transects across each of the motus and for each transect an opened coconut would be placed at 20m interval. All coconut crabs found whilst constructing the transect were caught, recorded, labelled with "white out" or "twink" then released. Vegetation surveys were also conducted every 30 m counting all plants within a 5 m radius. After laying out the baited coconut during the day, the team would then return back to the Island after sun set to catch, record and label all coconut crabs found including those that were previously caught and recorded. This is a form of "tag and recapture" surveying that allows a reasonable estimate of the unga population to be made.



Above: Palmerston Islet, which holds Palmerston's population.
Below: Madeenia Marsters assisted her dad captain Bob Marsters and the bird surveying team. Photos: John Beasley.



Bird surveys have also just recently been completed by Alanna and Teariki Rongo on each of the islets on Palmerston. Interesting finds have included noting the Rupe or Pacific Pigeon being found on most of the motus. It is believed that the Rupe is feeding on the berries of the 'Ano and Nga'u vegetation. Red tailed tropic birds, Red footed boobies and Brown boobies were also found nesting on a number of the motus during this time. Whilst conducting the bird surveys around the perimeter

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of each of the islets, fresh Green turtle nests were also found, marking the white sands of Cooks and Tom's island.

Checking in with the Ministry of Marine Recourses, Alanna was able to assist the MMR team in setting up a pa'ua surveying site on the south west side of home island. The new research site has six 40 m long transects which will now be used to track the life progress of the paua within this zone. Palmerston's executive officer Arthur Neil is now in discussion with the island council to having the research site as a no harvesting zone, to not disturb the students new study site.

The team arrived back in Rarotonga on the 8th November.



Above: Nesting Tavake (red-tailed tropicbird) with chick, on Bird Island. Below: Nauma Marsters measures an unga (coconut crab) caught on North Island. Photos: John Beasley.



New Plastic Battler Walks The Talk

Tumuora Crossfit Gym have recently come on board with the Plastic Battle campaign. Geoff and the Tumuora team encourage all members to bring in reusable water bottles for work out sessions and to make the most of the water dispensers provided by the gym. Geoff has also

been active on Keep up the great work Geoff and Tumuora!



Geoff Halston has had enough of throwaway plastic bottles at his gym.

TIS Supports Kids Holiday Camp

Our project officer Liam was approached by NGO Korero o te 'Orau in their culture-based holiday programme for Cook Islands youth. Specifically, a field trip up the Takuvaive Valley, an area which Liam is closely affiliated with.

The youth were taught about the important environmental and cultural aspects of the valley, which has been labelled the "foodbowl" of Rarotonga. Liam presented on topics such as the importance of the ancient stone-lined taro pondfields, the important food crops growing in the valley, and how to weed and plant taro. The group of students left a legacy in the valley when they planted some 'ūtū (mountain banana) trees in the valley to serve as a future food source for people who utilise the area. Congratulations to Kōrero o te

‘Ōrau, Manava Ora, and Ruatonga Māpū on a successful culture-based holiday programme!



Above: learning to weed taro pondfields. Below: Planting delicious ‘ūtū!



Te Ipukarea Society Attends Birdlife Family Reunion

This article is based on a longer article by Patricia Zurita, CEO of BirdLife.

Between September 26th-28th, over 200 members of the BirdLife family flocked to Wallonia, Belgium for the 2018 BirdLife General Partnership Meeting. Held every four or five years, these landmark meetings are where partners gather to elect a new Governing Council and review the conservation strategy for the years to come.

Representatives from over 117 partners attended the Global Partnership Meeting. This was the first time Te Ipukarea Society has attended as a full member of BirdLife, complete with voting rights.

As a new decade draws near, our planet finds itself at a critical crossroads. Nature is collapsing under the pressure of human-made factors such as habitat loss, climate change and deforestation, and we need to act now if we’re to reverse the damage we’ve done.

“If we wait until 2030, then I’m afraid it will be too late – we will have blown it”, said Mike Clarke, Chief Executive of the RSPB (BirdLife in the UK) last week in a presentation delivered to the BirdLife Partnership regarding our role in shaping the discourse of the silent crisis threatening our planet – the collapse of biodiversity.

The talk was one of numerous topics discussed last week in Wallonia, Belgium, as over 200 representatives representing 107 partners of the BirdLife family congregated in Belgium to attend the 2018 BirdLife General Partnership Meeting.



BirdLife partners from the Pacific Region at the Global BirdLife meeting in Belgium included Australia, New Zealand, Palau, French Polynesia, Fiji, and the Cook Islands. Staff from the BirdLife regional office in Suva also attended.

Highlights of a packed 2018 GPM calendar included a review of our common progress towards the 2013-2022 Strategy, a discussion of how to move forward with our key biodiversity area (KBA) work, and how to secure stronger financial sustainability and strengthen the Partnership and its capacity – particularly in mega-biodiverse countries. Below are the main outcomes:

In addition to looking at our common work, our successes and our future plans, the BirdLife Partnership elected our Government, both at the regional and Global

levels. We are delighted to announce that the BirdLife Partnership selected Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, from Brazil. Braulio brings vast expertise and experience to the role, having previously served as Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) from February 2012 to February 2017.

"I am honoured by the support I have received from the BirdLife Partners to take on the position of Chair of the Global Council. The unique approach BirdLife has with 117 Partners around the world with boots on the ground, demonstrating that when we work together we can have meaningful impact at the regional and Global levels, is an asset that I highly value" said Braulio following his election.

"I look forward to helping the BirdLife Partners continue to grow, making the Partnership as strong as ever, particularly in light of the changes that the Global Conservation Agenda will have with the new deal for nature to be approved in 2020 in Beijing,"

The Partnership also re-elected Paul Sullivan from BirdLife Australia, representing the Pacific, along with newly elected Kevin Hague from Forest and Bird in New Zealand. Kevin takes over from Philippe Raust from Manu in French Polynesia, who has represented the Pacific for the past 8 years. Ana Tiraa, from Te Ipukarea Society, has previously represented the Pacific on Council, even though TIS was only an affiliate member at that time. Other BirdLife partners in the Pacific include Nature Fiji, and Palau Conservation Society, making six full partners from the Oceania region.

Te Ipukarea Society is grateful for the support we have received through BirdLife over the past 15 years. This has included the recent work on eradicating invasive species (rats), to protect the seabirds on Suvarrow, with additional financial support from GEF Small Grants Programme. We very much look forward to continuing our work with biodiversity conservation, now as a full member of BirdLife

Society Invited to Seabed Minerals Update Meeting

Te Ipukarea Society was invited to a special Seabed Minerals Sector consultation meeting in October. The meeting was to review the content to be presented at the national Seabed Minerals Sector Update

consultations which are planned to happen around the Cook Islands over the next couple of months.



Some of the participants in the SBM Sector Update Meeting.

Te Ipukarea Society staff were present at all three vaka meetings on Rarotonga, which occurred in November. It was promising to see a number of Cook Island people there to have a say in how this mineral resource should be managed.

Save Your Jars: Support Local and Reduce our Waste Output

June Hosking of Mauke started her Mauke Moments business earlier this year, the venture aims to create preserves such as chutneys and jams which not only taste amazing but ensure that some of the beautiful seasonal produce grown on Mauke does not go to waste. She also runs the business with as little environmental impact as possible, in fact her operation is reducing a considerable amount of glass jars from entering Mauke and Rarotonga's landfill.

One of the challenges is that June requires more jars, and she would love secondhand jars as it is well known that many perfectly fine glass jars are being thrown into Rarotonga's landfill, taking up unnecessary space. She currently tries to collect all the used jars on Mauke and she does ship some secondhand jars in from Rarotonga, but she is currently not getting near enough jars to meet the demand. Rarotongan readers - this is where we can assist June and do something good for the environment at the same time:

Te Ipukarea Society has offered to be the drop off point for glass jars, so please store up your jars

and bring them to our office in Maraerenga, Tupapa. Lids are not required as she has to use new lids on the old jars to ensure they meet hygiene standards. June especially needs jars which hold about 250ml of water, but ones which take 350ml are also fine. They do not have to be clean as she sterilises them herself.

In fact, a number of local businesses including Jude Isaia's Taste of Atiu, and Hugh Baker's business on Rarotonga also need glass jars, so we would love to help provide them with jars as well. If they are not able to source secondhand jars the only alternative is to import brand new, empty jars from New Zealand, which is just not logical nor good for our environment.

June's extensive variety of products include: Lime Marmalade, Hot Chilli Sauce, Chutneys (pawpaw, lemon, spiced fruit, pawpaw & lime, green tomato, and Jams (Guava, pawpaw & ginger, guava & starfruit, pawpaw & passion, pawpaw & cinnamon). All main ingredients are grown organically on Mauke.

In a similar arrangement, Te Ipukarea collects egg cartons for the McCleod Family Egg Farm on Manihiki, and rubbish for Sabine Janneck's weaved purses. For Sabine, the rubbish must be clean and have a silver lining (such as chip and biscuit packets or pre-mixed coffee sachets).

Let's make an easy but positive move for our environment and reduce our carbon footprint. Instead of putting these used items into the bin which will be taken to the landfill, drop off your used glass jars, egg cartons, and silver lined rubbish to Te Ipukarea Society, and we will make sure they are given to our local and outer island businesses who need them. Support local and support our environment!

Creative Re-Use of Plastic on Pāmati

Check out this creative hot plate masterpiece made out of plastic bottle caps and wiring. This neat piece is being used by the Bill Marsters household on Palmerston Island, Cook Islands.



Janah Marsters shows off the creatively designed hot plate.



***Meitaki ma'ata for reading our newsletter, and for
your continued support for our Cook Islands
Environment.***

Kia Manuia,

- The TIS Team