

What's Up DOC – February 2019



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



A saxy start to the kākāpō breeding season

Breeding is in full swing for kākāpō with an abundance of rimu berries, the revolutionary 'Smart Egg' and a joint campaign with Meridian to help set the mood. This summer is bound to be the "saxiest" one yet.

The hunt for a saxy saxophonist has been successful with Piers Dashfield taking the winning spot. Piers hit the studio to record this season's number one kākāpō love song, appropriately released today on Valentine's Day.

**Our saxy kākāpō
season**

Have you heard our new podcast?

Marine species expert Hannah Hendriks talks whale strandings, post-mortems, and crucial data with podcast host Nic Toki - our Threatened Species Ambassador.

[Listen to Sounds of Science: Episode #1](#)



Image: Sabine Bernert ©

Update from Lou

Lou Sanson shares some of our stories, talks top priorities for 2019, thanks staff for their hard work over the holiday break and celebrates the environmental and conservation recipients from the 2019 New Year's Honours list.

- [Read Lou's latest update](#)
- [Sign up to Lou's mailing list](#)



Get involved

What kind of explorer are you?

Take our fun personality quiz to find out what kind of explorer you are:

[Take the quiz](#)

What should we do when we see litter bugs?

It's hard to know what to do when someone forgets to value protecting our wildlife and being a tidy kiwi.

Here are some of our top tips for next time you get [bugged by a litter bug](#).

Volunteer

Volunteers play a vital part in conservation throughout New Zealand.

Have a browse of our [latest volunteering opportunities](#) in your region.

Nature

Archaeological site exposed near Geraldine

Erosion damage at a Māori Rock Art site has given us the chance to help with a rare archaeological dig. The team have uncovered some interesting finds, [hinting at life once lived there](#).

Royal update from Pukekura/ Taiaroa Head

Mum and the Royal Cam star are both doing well. The chick is growing rapidly, and the season is well under way. [Join in the discussion](#) and catch up on the latest news:

- [highlight videos from Royal Cam](#)
- [announcement of the Royal Cam star's arrival](#)



Image: Marisa Galitz ©



Image: [Sustainable Coastlines](#) | [Creative Commons](#)



Image: Tracy Miles ©



World Wetlands Day 2019

In celebration of World Wetlands Day on 2 February we took a [look at the matuku/Australasian bittern](#).

The birds are a potential indicator of wetland health as they're dependent on high quality and ecologically diverse habitats and rich food supplies.



Image: Emma Williams

Our work

Women in science blog

On International Day of Women and Girls in Science we caught up with one of our awesome female scientists Dr Monique Ladds.

"...science needs people from all kinds of backgrounds, and especially needs people who think differently." [Read more on Monique's blog post.](#)

Fiordland kiwi diaries update

Community ranger Crystal Brindle went to help Tim and his team who are studying the population of kiwi at Shy Lake.

Crystal shares her adventure of [tracking and monitoring kiwi chicks](#).



Image: Crystal Brindle

Cruise ships and seabirds don't mix

Bright lights on cruise ships are a risk to seabirds flying to and from their breeding colonies at night. The birds can become dazed by the lights resulting in many injured birds.

We're working with the international cruise industry to [help keep these birds safe](#).



Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#) | [Creative Commons](#)

Recreation

Acheron Road closed

[The Acheron Road through Molesworth Station](#) is closed to the public due to extreme fire risk.

No activity or hunting permits will be issued while the fire risk remains high and all existing permits are rescinded until further notice.



Paul Mahoney: [DOC](#)

Photo of the month

Weighing a healthy 28 g the first kākāpō chick is from Waikawa's first nest of the season.

Kākāpō literally means 'parrot of the night' in Māori. The birds are exceptionally slow breeders, living at least 60 years, and don't breed every year. [Source: [Te Ara](#)]

This year's high number of chicks will be the [biggest boost to the critically endangered population on record](#).



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- [Maungauika/North Head Historic Reserve management transfer](#)
- [Seeking help on the shooting of endangered gulls](#)
- [Food for thought - don't feed the fish at Te Whanganui-A-Hei Marine Reserve](#)
- [Battle for our Birds - latest kiwi monitoring results](#)

More news and
events

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