

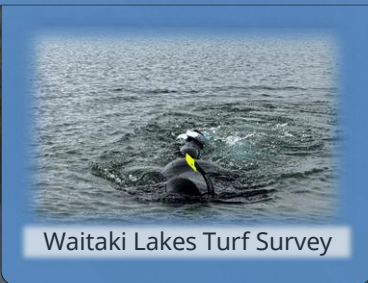


Welcome to the December 2023 edition of the Wildlands Christchurch News

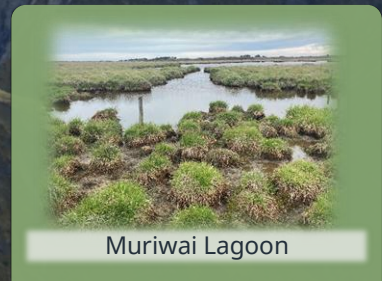
Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter. We take pride in introducing our team of 11 Canterbury-based ecologists, each with a distinctive set of skills and experience. Our team's proficiencies span a spectrum of disciplines, encompassing UAV technology, marine biology, avifauna, herpetology, vegetation and flora, fauna habitats and ecology, freshwater ecology, and invertebrate research. This newsletter outlines a selection of our recent projects, highlighting the range of expertise, complemented by the wider company team.

WAITAKI LAKES TURF SURVEY

Wildlands vegetation ecologists spent the winter snorkelling in the Waitaki Basin lakes. This was undertaken to survey turf communities from the shoreline to two metres depth to examine the impacts of lake level fluctuations on turf communities. Several At Risk species were identified, including kākahi, which is a taonga species.



Waitaki Lakes Turf Survey



Muriwai Lagoon

WILDLANDS DRONES

Wildlands has in-house drone/UAV capabilities, and is able to provide a range of drone/UAV-based solutions in conjunction with our GIS team. Our operators have extensive experience in planning and undertaking drone/UAV operations to capture and provide high quality ecological data.



Wildlands staff operating a UAV

Muriwai Wetland Ecological Enhancement

Wildlands ecologists have developed a comprehensive long-term enhancement plan. Muriwai o Whata is an area of cultural and ecological significance with special value for mahinga kai and is an important basis of the mana of Te Taumutu Runanga. The plan provides a programme for the restoration and enhancement of the ecological integrity of the wetland system, to ensure its longevity.

Dr Des SMITH – South Island Regional Manager, Principal Ecologist (PhD Zoology) Des.Smith@wildlands.co.nz
Des has 27 years of experience in conservation and wildlife management, providing pest management advice, strategic advice and planning for sanctuaries seeking to eradicate pests, advice on exclusion fencing, modelling of forest bird counts, data analysis, development of monitoring methods for detecting stoats and other mammalian pests, and assisting his staff with a wide range of assessments of effects and ecological management plans.

Roland PAYNE – Senior Ecologist Roland.Payne@wildlands.co.nz

Roland is a botanist and terrestrial ecologist with extensive knowledge of Aotearoa New Zealand's flora and fauna. Roland has undertaken carbon and biodiversity monitoring throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

Dr Vikki SMITH – Senior Ecologist/Entomologist Vikki.Smith@wildlands.co.nz

Vikki has a PhD in Ecology from Lincoln University on Canterbury trapdoor spiders. In addition to her background in arachnology, Vikki is skilled in general invertebrate identification and ecology.

Samantha KING - Senior Herpetologist Samantha.King@wildlands.co.nz

Sam specialises in surveying lizards, and has expertise in green gecko ecology and genetics and is skilled in best practice lizard management, including the preparation of lizard management plans and Wildlife Act applications.

Jess Randall – Herpetologist Jess.Randall@wildlands.co.nz

Jess specialises in herpetology, and has experience working with the Department of Conservation on the West Coast. She is skilled in surveying lizards, and best practice lizard management.

Dr Justyna GIEJSZTOWT – Ecology Team Lead (PhD Ecology & Biodiversity)

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Justyna is an experienced terrestrial ecologist with a background in climate change, plant invasions, biodiversity and ecosystem function, field experiments and spatial statistical models.

Dr Morgan TRACY- Vegetation Ecologist (PhD Ecology)

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Morgan specialises in terrestrial vegetation, particularly in the Mackenzie Basin. Morgan has undertaken vegetation surveys, habitat mapping, and monitoring throughout Canterbury.

Dr Della BENNET - Senior Avifauna Ecologist (PhD Biology)

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Della is experienced in all aspects of ornithology, and is an expert in bird ecology and management plans, and the assessment of risks to birds. Her experience includes a wide range of species utilising riverbeds, forests, marine systems, airports, ports, and urban sites.



New Zealand jasmine (*Parsonsia capsularis*)

Dr David JOHNSTON- UAV Operator/Marine Ecologist (PhD Marine Biology)

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David has a high level of knowledge and expertise in field methods, including boat- and aerial-based photographic identification, environmental sampling, baited underwater video (BRUV) and unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) surveying, as well as aerial photogrammetry. He is also a marine expert.

Stella MCQUEEN - Senior Freshwater Ecologist

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Stella is an expert in freshwater fish identification and fish management plans, fish salvage and translocation, and working with rare fish species. Stella also has expertise in fish barriers and habitat remediation.

Jade CHRISTIANSEN - Herpetologist

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Jade is experienced in the capture, handling and translocation of lizards and has experience using a range of monitoring tools including artificial cover objects, pitfall traps, Gee minnow traps, hand searching and spotlighting.