



“Tourism Catlins, Working with the Community for Sustainable Tourism Development”

Tourism Catlins Newsletter **Issue Fifteen January 2010**

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Kia ora,

Happy New Year from the team at Tourism Catlins!

We look forward to working with the community in 2010. We are currently in the process of considering projects of importance for the year and will update you on our aims soon.

It is the season for events with the Niagara Bluegrass Festival, Papatowai Challenge and Catlins Woodstock Festival. It is important as residents we support these events. All the best to the organisers.

Plans are well underway for the Catlins Great Escape. Please find attached the entry form and poster. If you would like copies of these documents please contact Kim Dodds.

Kim recently hosted Mark Sainsbury. Mark was down in the Catlins on a family holiday. Mark decided to share some holiday snaps on

Closeup. If you missed it please refer to the following link
<http://tvnz.co.nz/close-up/video>

All the best for 2010.

Heather

Heather Buckingham
Chairperson
Tourism Catlins

Website Advertising - please email Rona Cowie at webmaster@catlins.org.nz if you are interested in advertising or contributing material for the website.



EVENT ITINERARY/DESCRIPTION

You have come to a faraway place and it is the centre of our world – enjoy it and talk to us as we are happy to share our stories with you.....

15th May 2010 – Haere Mai – Welcome to the Catlins.

You register for the event and fuel up for your day's ride with a traditional morning tea at Tokanui Tavern. You begin your journey from Tokanui to Curio Bay taking you through the magical Haldane Reserve. Curio Bay is of international significance for its fossilized forest dating back to the Jurassic Period. The tree fossils you see are 160 million years old and the forest was alive when NZ was part of Gondwanadland. Back on your bike for a 7km ride that will take you past Porpoise Bay and you will arrive at the small attractive settlement of Waikawa. Here you must take time to visit the Waikawa Museum. Now for some lunch. Another 4km down the road you will stop for a leisurely lunch at the Niagara Café. After lunch your journey will take you through the Catlins Coastal

Rainforest, home to ancient podocarps that emerge over a canopy of broadleaved plants that create a rich understory and a forest that still supports a good number of rare native bush birds. Heading towards our stayover location you can stop for a hot drink before completing your journey to Tautuku Lodge. Time to rest at Tautuku Lodge or partake in one of our organized sightseeing tours hosted by the Bottom Bus before enjoying true Catlins hospitality with local celebrity chefs from the Owaka Lions Club and entertainment by the world famous in the Catlins – POSSUM PICKERS. Now dance away!

Fall asleep to the roaring of the sea. Awaken to the birdsong of the forest.

16th May 2010

After a hearty breakfast served by our Celebrity Chefs you will commence your Catlins journey. You will start with a climb to the picture postcard view of Florence Hill which will take you on a freewheeling descent to Papatowai. Papatowai – where the forest meets the sea! A detour to explore Papatowai is possible before exploring some historic Catlins' communities. The detour will take you through the isolated communities of Puketiro and Tawanui. Enjoy a traditional luncheon hosted by the Owaka Playcentre before you head towards Owaka. Owaka – "Place of the Canoe."

Time to freshen up before drinks, nibbles and prize-giving at the Catlins Inn.

Please refer to www.catlins.org.nz for more information.



Successful Season for Mohua

By Rebecca Fox on Mon, 18 Jan 2010 ODT

Mohua's breeding season in the Catlins has been successful due to an aerial 1080 drop that stopped a rat plague, but they are not out of danger yet, Department of Conservation ranger Graham Loh says.

"We're nervous about what will happen in the next few months."

The Catlins is home to one of the most significant remaining populations of mohua, or yellowhead, but rats, their main predator, had increased in number as they fed on the huge amounts of seed falling in the beech forest last year.

Rats and stoats had been shown to be responsible for major population declines in mohua.

In recent years, mohua numbers were recovering in the Catlins thanks to government-funded Operation Ark programmes and Animal Health Board aerial 1080 poisoning, which had shown it was safe for mohua and effective at reducing rat numbers so mohua could breed successfully.

So, last winter, Doc applied 1080 to 10ha of the forest, this time at a lower level of bait.

Two Doc staff have spent the summer searching for mohua nests in an effort to assess the success of the operation.

Doc ranger Graham Loh said mohua nests were difficult to find because the birds nested in holes, but staff discovered 17, out of the hundreds in the forest, and from those 13 chicks fledged.

"That is a fairly ordinary number for a year where there are no predators." If the rats had not been eliminated, most of the females birds would have been lost and there would have been few successful fledglings, he said.

Doc staff now planned to band about 30 adult birds to track their survival through winter.

However, there were still concerns about predator control in the forests as the lower level of 1080 bait had not seemed to suppress rat numbers as successfully as the higher level used previously and there were many mice and stoats around, he said.

Rat numbers would be assessed next month, but stoats were the major concern and Doc staff were monitoring the network of traps in the forest to assess their numbers, Mr Loh said.

Freedom Camping

We would appreciate your feedback on the freedom camping issue for the region for the season. If you are aware of any areas that tend to attract freedom campers then please contact Kim Dodds. Also take time to have view www.camping.org.nz

Niagara Falls Bluegrass Festival

Date: Saturday, 30 January, 2010 - Sunday, 31 January, 2010

Start Time: 1pm

Venue: **NIAGARA FALLS CAFE The Catlins.**

Head for Curio Bay, Just past turn off to Chaslands Scenic route

Contact: **Steven Hayes**

Phone: **032175608**

The NIAGARA FALLS BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL will be held at the NIAGARA FALLS CAFE in the Catlins on the 30th & 31st JANUARY starts at 1.pm each day. Free Entry and bring your own chairs or pull up a bit of grass relax and enjoy the very talented musicians that have come from all over to enjoy a great weekend. This is the third year of the Festival and is increasing in size with each year.



Catlins Woodstock Festival

New Date - Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th March 2010

Saturday 13th from noon - Country Music Day

Sunday 14th from 11:00am till late - Bands for all ages and entertainment

Thanks to everyone for your support, understanding, and encouragement recently, we welcome you to join in the festivities!

For more information please contact (03) 415 8583

woodstocklodge@ihug.co.nz

2010 PAPTOWAI CHALLENGE

The event will be held on Saturday 20 February 2010. The Papatowai Challenge is the winner of the Sport and Leisure TrustPower Community Award.

It is a great pre-season fun run and walk from a holiday home in the Catlins. It is signposted at the south end of Tahakopa River Bridge, Papatowai. Runners must be 13 years & over. Papatowai is located approximately two hours from Dunedin and twenty-five minutes south of Owaka. The Southern Scenic Route is now fully sealed.

For more information please contact Wayne Allen 03 4544863



Trademe in the Catlins

A new FREE-TO-USE Buy/Sell/Swap/Give-away/Request-an-item site has been established specially for Catlins and South Otago residents. I As well as providing a useful "Trademe-like" service to local people, we hope it will help reduce the amount of material that would otherwise end up in landfill and recycling.

So, now's the time to sell that no-longer-wanted skateboard and the exercycle you haven't got room for OR to find the wool-press, set of bunks, or mountain bike you've always wanted!

To reach the new site, simply Google:

Catlins Carpool

OR

Golden Bay Buy-Sell-Swap

(Either of these sites will lead you to the new CATLINS SOUTH OTAGO BUY-SELL-SWAP site.)

Happy Trading!

Diana Noonan

Checkout the new tourism website www.tourismnewzealand.com

Curio Bay Heritage Centre

How can we protect this International Treasure for current and future generations to enjoy?

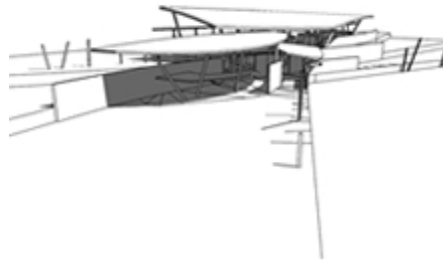
Already 100,000 people visit Curio Bay each year and numbers continue to rise. Left unmanaged the site and its wildlife are hugely at risk.

THE COMMUNITY'S VISION is to see this special place accessible to visitors but well managed and protected. To achieve this The South Catlins Development and Environmental Charitable Trust has been formed to develop a Natural Heritage Centre. This centre will provide an ongoing business that will enhance visitors' experience, whilst better supervising the site and protecting its wildlife.

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT has to be 'just right'! In true adherence to the principles of eco-tourism, all buildings within the Reserve will be established with sustainability in mind, including water and energy saving initiatives. All operations on site will be environmentally responsible, including waste minimisation and recycling. The main building will include a shop, a cafe/restaurant, an information centre and an educational interpretation area. Its design must be of world class standard, meeting visitors' needs whilst protecting the fossil forest, the beach and the wildlife.

It is an ambitious project that will cost around \$5 million and much progress has already been made in terms of funding and groundwork. Business case studies are being assessed, architectural and layout designs prepared and Cultural Impact and Archaeological Reports completed.

The Trust would like to thank the Community Trust of Southland, Matura Licensing Trust, Community Employment Group, New Zealand National Parks,



Conservation Funding and Environment Southland for their grant funding to date. We acknowledge the partnership support of Department of Conservation, Southland District Council; from whom the land is leased, and Venture Southland. We are Working with the Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust to restore penguin habitat and the campsite has also seen some improvement. The community has set a fundraising target of \$500,000 towards the goal and the trust are now looking for business partners and other funding opportunities.

So whether you're drawn to Curio Bay for a taste of history or heritage, to experience the enormous stillness in its native midst, or to immerse yourself in the pre-historic forest, please keep in mind the community's vision and help us realise our dream . . . by becoming a 'Guardian of Curio Bay'.

Visit www.curiobay.org for more information



Cycle Tourism Becoming Increasingly Dangerous

New Zealand has some of the most scenic roads in the world but cycle tourism operators say some are becoming increasingly dangerous.

Road cycle tourism was at risk because the roads were not designed for cyclists and increasing traffic volumes, operators said.

This is despite efforts to educate both drivers and cyclists to improve road safety.

Cycle Tourism Operators New Zealand chairman Tim De Jong said it was harder for operators to cater for tourists wanting to do road tours because of the increase in volume of traffic on roads that were not designed for cyclists and vehicles.

The Catlins highway was one area where problems could develop, with more motorists and cyclists visiting the area, Mr De Jong said.

"The more cars you get on there the more potential you have for conflict, unfortunately. In the end, as cycle tour operators, we have to look for other options and other routes, which is a shame."

Other popular southern routes such as State Highway 94 to Milford Sound and State Highway 6 along the West Coast were becoming increasingly dangerous, he said.

"That's the premier cycling route but in the end the choice is either clients being put in unsafe situations or having unpleasant experiences, or looking at other options," he said.

The concerns echoed those raised by Southland Highway Patrol supervisor Sergeant Geoff Sutherland who also this week cautioned motorists on roads to stop speeding, particularly between Invercargill, Queenstown, Te Anau and Milford. Active New Zealand tour guide Michael Searchfield said the company no longer took cyclists into Milford Sound and only travelled parts of the road because it was unsafe.

"There's just not enough room for everyone on the roads," Mr Searchfield said.

Mr De Jong said Cycle Tourism Operators New Zealand had been working with Cycle Advocates Network, the New Zealand Transport Agency, the National Incident database, Bus and Coach Association, the Rental Vehicle Association and the NZ Road Transport Forum to improve safety for cyclists and motorists.

This had resulted in share the road protocols with some road user groups and road signs. But Cycle Tourism Operators New Zealand was still lobbying for signage on the Milford road.

Improving road experiences needed a mutual effort. Cyclists needed to be considerate towards motorists by riding in single file and moving over if they were holding up traffic, he said.

Ad Feedback

High visibility was important. That included cyclists wearing bright clothing, and having lights and reflectors.

In an emailed response, New Zealand Transport Agency communications manager Andy Knackstedt said state highway widths and levels of service were regularly reviewed.

Factors considered include the volumes of traffic and the types of road user.

"Where appropriate, NZTA will look to provide extra road width to improve safety, but this must be balanced against a variety of factors including the practicality of providing extra width in a particular location, providing it consistently, and targeting the portions of the state highway network where the safety benefits are greatest."

On Tuesday, a German tourist was killed as she cycled along State Highway 3 between Bulls and Turakina. Police said Mia Susanne Pusch, 19, was cycling towards Wanganui when she was struck by a truck and trailer heading in the same direction.

Events in the Catlins

February 2010

20 Feb - Papatowai Challenge

March 2010

26 Feb - 7 Mar: Edge of the World Mixed Media Art Exhibition - Waikawa Hall

20 - 21 Mar: The Catlins Canter - Owaka

13-15 Mar: Tokanui Big Rock Cougars - Progress Valley

May 2010

15 - 16 May: The Catlins Great Escape

June 2010

TBC June: Southland Districts Arts Trust Poetry Day - Tokanui Tavern

August 2010

Aug: The Catlins Coast Rally - An exciting car rally tackling many country roads.

**Tourism Catlins would like to thank New Zealand
Lotteries Grants Board and Community
Organisation Grants (COGS) for their continued
support**

