



Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust Annual Report

It is with pleasure that I present this sixth annual report of the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust for the year ending 31st July 2015.

The last year has seen continued progress with the project as we continue with strong community support towards the long term vision of a "Pest Free Peninsula". This has been due in no small way to the magnificent efforts of our current Trustees and the many volunteers involved with the project in its various forms. There are over 3,000 pest control/ ecological community projects ongoing throughout NZ and we are a small part of a much larger national effort and it is important to recognise this as we focus on our own small patch of kiwi paradise.

It has been pleasing to meet with a number of these groups over the past year, including SIRCET from Stewart Island, ZIP, Janszoon, Upper Clutha community groups as well as continuing to be involved with local Conservation groups.

Highlights over the last 12 months have been:

- 1) Successfully completing our third mop up operation on sectors 1, 2, 3. Bringing Possum numbers down to very low levels in these sectors. This work was completed with contractors OPSL, DM Holdings and ORC
- 2) Undertaking the first mop up operation through sector 4. This has allowed us to work in areas we have not been before including the Tomahawk residential area. This work was undertaken by OPSL and Bruce Kyle and is still on going at this stage.
- 3) Taking our first steps looking into the future direction of OPBG, holding a successful workshop in May with a number of New Zealand wide experts in pest control attending.
- 4) Setting up a pilot programme for schools, in partnership with LCT and EnviroSchools looking at Backyard Biodiversity. This will run through the second half of 2015.

As many of you will know, there is a significant amount of effort being undertaken by volunteers behind the scenes . This work is of considerable value, and increasingly more so as the project progresses. Tasks undertaken by dedicated volunteers have included monitoring, recording sightings/kills of possums/mustelids and community

trapping. I would like to thank you all for your support and time given to the project, especially the co-coordinators of these projects.

The monitoring undertaken during the early stages of the project has been added to this year (more tracking tunnels?)

With the support of Food Stuffs we have been able to set up ten new lizard and invertebrate monitoring lines to complement the 22 one km Bird Monitoring transects; 14 Vegetation Monitoring sites; and 10 Rodent Monitoring lines.

I would again like to acknowledge the support we have received from Peninsula land owners. It appreciated to be allowed access onto some new properties this year. Our project would not exist without their willingness to provide this continued access. On behalf of Trustees, I thank you for your assistance and confidence in our work.

I would like to acknowledge those who have provided funds during the past year. These include:

- Department of Conservation(Bio Funds) for their support of our Project Manager;
- Department of Conservation (CCPF Fund) for our Sector 4 operation
- A number of donations from the community
- The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Economics Curious Minds fund
- Food Stuffs for Lizard monitoring lines
- Pub Charity

This year has also seen some changes in the makeup of our Board of Trustees. We are pleased to welcome David Chalmers, Beverly Dickson and Laurie White to the Group.

I would like to thank Robert Morris, Ian Turnbull and Moana Wesley for their time as a trustees, Robert and Ian will be retiring by rotation. Ian has been a valuable member making a number of submissions to councils for the group.

I would especially like to thank the Trustees for the commitment and time you give to progressing the aims of the Trust. With special thanks to Laurie White for accepting the task of Treasurer, Moira Parker who has been secretary and archivist and to David Chalmers has done some fantastic work developing the trusts health and Safety policies and procedures. To all Trustees thank you for the time you give and the support you have given me, but mostly for the energy you put in to progressing our vision of bringing about a "Pest Free Peninsula".

Finally I would like to acknowledge the hard work and vision of our Project Manager Cathy Rufaut. It is a difficult job managing a dynamic, ground breaking project in your own community. Thank You Cathy.

Brendon Cross

Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust Chairperson