

# Chatham Islands Conservation Board

*Te Pou Atawhai O Wharekauri Rekohu*



## Annual Report

to the New Zealand Conservation Authority

1 July 2007 - 30 June 2008

**Chatham Islands Conservation Board**  
*Te Pou Atawhai O Wharekauri Rekohu*

**Annual Report**  
**1 July 2007 - 30 June 2008**

Presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority  
Pursuant to section 6(0) of the Conservation Act 1987

Serviced by the Department of Conservation  
Chatham Island Area Office  
PO Box 114, Waitangi, Chatham Islands  
&  
Wellington Conservancy  
PO Box 5086, Wellington

**Front Cover Photos**

Taken North West main Chatham during the Board field trip

**Top:** Board members walking towards the Waihi Creek mouth

**Bottom:** Crest of eroding dune at Maunganui; The Sisters Island group on the horizon

**Photographer:** Peter Johnson

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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **Chairperson's Comments**

By the end of this reporting year The Chatham Islands Conservation Board had chalked up a total of 62 meetings since its inception, which represents a great deal of sustained effort and input from Board members over the years. By contrast with mainland New Zealand Conservation Boards, the CICB serves a relatively small land area, yet helps to deal with a multitude of conservation issues, including those environments unique to the Chathams, and their large number of rare and threatened plants and animals. Probably more than any other Conservation Board, the CICB has a particularly close relationship with the community, and it is a credit to that community, having a total population of a little over 600, that it includes many people who wear many hats as they contribute to councils, companies, trusts, and boards, and at the same time demonstrate a commitment to conservation by being members – often long-term ones – of the Conservation Board.

As the one mainland NZ member of the Board, and as Chair for the last 18 months (a position I have felt honoured to be elected to) I am now at the end of my nine-year term on the Board. Accordingly this might be an appropriate time to record those fellow members who have been on the Board during this period: Phil Seymour, George Day, Ann Hough, Ken Lanauze, Geordie Murman, Denis Solomon, Alison Turner, James Moffett, Joe Tapara, Toni Gregory-Hunt, Donna Gregory-Hunt, Teresa McDonald, Deborah Goomes, Jo Tuanui, Judy Lanauze, Eileen Cameron, Shirley King, Celine Gregory-Hunt, and Lois Croon.

At the Conservation Chairpersons' Conference in Wellington in February 2008, it was apparent that some issues affecting mainland Conservation Boards are not of any moment on the Chathams. One such issue is control of aircraft overflights, for on Chathams the daily arrival of the big plane represents incoming cargo, while the sound of the little plane may well mean that the two Pitt Island members of the Board have been able to make it across for our meeting. Only seldom have we not had a quorum.

As I see it, conservation is alive and well on the Chathams, with topics ranging from transfer of live birds to procedures for dead whales. At Board meetings, conservation matters have, as always, been things for members to learn about, and also to argue about. Spreading the message and educating others has always been part of our Board's business, whether by word of mouth, encouragement via the likes of the annual conservation award, or inputs to submissions. This year several Board members have contributed information to the revision, by Colin Miskelly, of the book *The Chatham Islands: Heritage and Conservation*, first published in 1996 on the initiative of the Conservation Board.

Over the last year the Board has continued to have a good relationship with, and excellent support from Wellington Conservancy, Conservator Alan McKenzie, DOC Area office staff, Area Manager Ken Hunt, and especially our Secretary Alex McKillop.

## **2 MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD**

In 2007 the Board returned to its complement of 9 members, compared with having had 10 the previous year.

During this year two Board members, Lois Croon and Jo Tuanui were reappointed for a three year term. Toni Day retired from the Board after seven years service.

Peter Johnson has held the role of Chairperson since February 2007 and Shirley King has served as Deputy chair during that time.

The Board membership and meeting attendance during the report period was as follows.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Meetings attended</b>	<b>Field Inspection</b>
Peter Johnson, Dunedin (Chairperson)	3	2
Shirley King (Deputy Chairperson)	3	
Eileen Cameron, Chatham Island	4	2
Lois Croon, Chatham Island	4	2
Deborah Goomes, Chatham Island	2	
Celine Gregory-Hunt, Pitt Island	3	2
Judith (Judy) Lanauze, Pitt Island	3	2
Joe Tapara, Chatham Island	3	
Joanne (Jo) Tuanui, Chatham Island	3	2

Peter Johnson remains our sole mainland Board member and has travelled from his home in Dunedin for the past nine years. He has had many years of botanical and scientific experience and continues to contribute his extensive knowledge in this area. Peter was elected Chairperson in February 2007.

Shirley King was appointed Deputy Chair in February 2007 after beginning her term on the Board in September 2006. She has a strong affiliation with Moriori and is current Chairperson of the Hokotehi Moriori Trust. Shirley has a sound grounding for the social and indigenous culture of the Chatham Islands.

Eileen Cameron was appointed to the Board in 2006. She is a fifth generation Chatham Islander whose family have had a strong and positive liaison with DOC over many years. Eileen owns both farming and conservation land and therefore offers credibility to historical and conservation values.

Lois Croon was also appointed to the Board in 2006 and is a Chatham Island resident of 36 years. Lois brings extensive knowledge of the history of the Chathams and is passionate about the regeneration of the island habitats. She is a successful and innovative tourist accommodation provider.

Deborah Goomes has served five years on the Board. She has a long family history with the Chatham Islands, works with local Government as finance manager for the Chatham Islands Council and brings valuable resource management and planning skills to the Board.

Celine Gregory-Hunt is one of the two Pitt Island Board members. She is secretary for the Pitt Island Conservation Purposes Charitable Trust; a member of the Pitt Island Reserves Committee and offers a dedicated interest in the understanding of conservation tourism issues on Pitt Island.

Judy Lanauze is also one of the Pitt Island representatives on the Board, appointed in 2005. Judy has lived on Pitt Island for 24 years and for most of that time was the district nurse for the community. Her family's long history in the conservation of Pitt Island is a contribution of huge merit.

Joe Tapara has been a member of the Board for eight years and brings knowledge and understanding of a wide range of cultural issues on the Island. Joe is a local farmer, has iwi affiliation to Taranaki and is a member of Ha O Te Ora O Wharekauri Trust.

Jo Tuanui was appointed to the Board in 2004. For many years Jo has been a strong advocate for conservation activities and programmes, an interest in historical issues and owns both farm and conservation land.

### **3 THE BOARD'S DISTRICT**

The Chatham Island area is one of the four areas that are part of the Wellington Conservancy. The Chatham Islands lie 860 km east of Christchurch, at 44° south in the path of the Roaring Forties and consist of eight islands of appreciable size. The total land area is 97,000 hectares of which main Chatham Island (90,000 ha) and Pitt Island (6,190 ha) are the largest. The Chathams straddle the international dateline: local time is 45 minutes ahead of New Zealand time.

The Chatham Islands are an amazing collection of islands consisting of contrasts and extremes: Beautiful still sunny days with magical blue skies through to raging 45 knot storms that in their own way are awe-inspiring. For much of the year the climate is temperate – temperatures in the low twenties in midsummer which can drop close to 0 degrees in the winter, scattered hail and sleet with occasional rare snow.

Generally main Chatham Island is low-lying and comprises flat to rolling topography. The highest point on the island is 294m. There are many swampy valley floors and extensive peatlands. The catchments are generally small and shallow though there are a few incised streams in the south. Here the land is at a higher altitude forming a tableland of deep peat covering basalt and a fertile coastal clay region ending abruptly at impressive basalt bluffs. In the north there are scattered low volcanic peaks and long stretches of sandy beach while the island has a large central lagoon of 20,000 ha and there are many moderate sized lakes.

Both the natural vegetation and fauna are highly modified and are reduced to remnants as a result of human occupation. Low forest once covered most of the islands. Approximately 10 % of the forest cover remains – most in the south of the main island. Five main forest types are present featuring broad-leaved species and tarahinau (*Dracophyllum arboreum*). Much of the area has been converted to bracken and shrubland and to a lesser extent pasture. There are extensive areas of restiad, sedge and heath wetlands.

The Chathams have the highest level of endemism of the New Zealand biogeographic region. Twenty nine of the Chatham Island's 392 native plants, 18 of the 73 native birds, 8.5% of New Zealand's threatened freshwater fish and about 20% of the 800 insect species are endemic to the Chathams. One reptile is also endemic to these islands. The New Zealand Geo-preservation Inventory lists 31 sites of nationally important geological interest, 700 archaeological sites are recorded and many more unrecorded.

The Department of Conservation has an Area Office at Te One on main Chatham with 17 staff and a permanent staff member on Pitt Island. Volunteers and staff are present on Rangatira (South East Island) and Mangere Island for short periods during the year, undertaking species protection work during the breeding season of endangered bird species.

There is a small amount of Crown Land in the Chathams - about 6% of Chatham, 40% of Pitt and all of three nature reserves - (Mangere (113ha) and South-East (208ha) Islands and Tuku NR (1238ha). A significant amount of further land has been protected through the covenanting of private land. A key focus of the Department's work in the Chathams is threatened flora and fauna programmes. The vast expanse of ocean surrounding these islands is rich in marine life and supports internationally significant populations of sea birds and nationally significant populations of whales, dolphins and seals.

The Chatham Islands Conservation Board represents a total island population of approximately 610 people and has particularly close contact with the community. Chatham Islanders have very strong ties to their land and resources, reflected by their livelihoods of fishing, farming, and tourism. The Board enjoys good working relationships with these people. The Board also consults and works with

iwi on the Chatham Islands along with the Chatham Islands Council, Enterprise Trust, Federated Farmers and the Chatham Islands Visitor Industry group.

## **4 BOARD MEETINGS AND INSPECTIONS**

Four full day Board Meetings were held during the reporting period.

29 August 2007, Whakamaharatanga Marae  
7 November 2007, Te Kopinga Marae  
26 February 2008, Whakamaharatanga Marae  
28 May 2008, Whakamaharatanga Marae

All Board meetings are normally attended by the Wellington Conservator, Alan McKenzie. Jeff Flavell (Conservation Support Manager) and Anaru Luke (Pou Kura Taio) represented Conservancy on two occasions when Alan was unable to attend meetings.

This year several other Conservancy staff have attended the Board meetings whilst on the Chathams, often for other purposes. The Board values the opportunity to be able to talk through issues with TSO staff.

Dave Houston (TSO Chatham Islands), Colin Miskelly (Conservation Analyst Conservancy), Tania Wrightson (Statutory Land Management Conservancy) and James Hardy (Conservancy Solicitor).

Barbara Browne (General Manager Operations North Island) attended the meeting in November whilst she was visiting the island. The Board was fortunate to have Chatham NZCA liaison, John Nankervis able to attend the meeting in February, along with Alan White (Biodiversity Condition and Advice Funds Manager) and Dr Geoff Rogers (RD&I, Dunedin).

In August three staff from Nga Whenua Rahui, Karanema Bartlett, George Delamere and Ranui Toatoa came to discuss land protection with the Board and the wider community, they were joined by Anaru Luke who also attended the meeting in May.

Board meetings are also attended by the Chathams Area Manager, Ken Hunt. Several other Area staff came to meet the Board to discuss various issues, Dale Williams (Programme Manager Fauna), Brian Thomson (Ranger), Ben Horne (Programme Manager Biodiversity Assets Threats), Amanda Baird (Programme Manager Flora) and Eric Stone (Ranger Trainee).

Other guests welcomed to the meeting in May were Bill Carter a local part-time resident and former member of Wellington Conservation Board, and Veronique Cornille (member of the Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board) joined the Board for lunch whilst she was on the Chathams for personal business.

### **Field Inspections**

These enable Board members to familiarise themselves with the areas of their jurisdiction. They also enable Board members to look at work completed and in progress by Departmental staff.

The Board conducted one full day field trip in February this year, and a short inspection following the November meeting which finished in good time.

#### 7 November 2007 – Lake Huro outlet

Our Board meeting of 7 November, at Te Kopinga Marae, finished early enough for seven of us to make a brief visit into a patch of forest swamp alongside Mangape Creek, the outlet stream from Lake Huro. This forest sits on a swampy flat of peaty alluvium, and is a vegetation type and habitat which has been mostly converted to farmland elsewhere on the Chathams. Here, relatively close to Waitangi, and readily visible from the road is forest of mainly akeake, karamu, and cabbage trees.

Our field visit was an opportunity to see also the forest understory of ferns, treeferns, sedges, and Chathams astelia.

### 27 February 2008 – Waihi and Waitangi West

Planning a Chathams field trip always needs either a contingency plan or high hopes for the weather, but on 27 February the gods were kind and we had a good turnout for a visit to the Waihi area, far north-west Chatham, hosted by Board Member Jo Tuanui. Our party included Board members Eileen Cameron, Lois Croon, Celine Gregory-Hunt, Judy Lanauze, and Peter Johnson; DOC staff Ken Hunt; and visitors Colin Miskelly, Jeff Flavell (both DOC Wellington Conservancy), John Nankervis (NZ Conservation Authority and liaison member for the Chathams Board), and Geoff Rogers (DOC botanist from Dunedin).

At Waihi a long grassy ‘driveway’ undulates over dunes to the house of Jo and Pat Tuanui, sheltered among trees and by forest that is regenerating and thickening up in their covenant that extends over the dunes to the coast. Respite from grazing is allowing dune shrubs and trees to re-establish, and the damp dune hollows are now home to recently planted Chathams toetoe. To the north we walked down the turfy banks of the tidal, ‘mini-lagoon’ section of Waihi Creek, to paddle across its mouth, and visit the Harold Pierce Scenic Reserve where much taller toetoes, from earlier plantings, are one of the successes in the clearings within recovering coastal forest. On the kopi trees the oily fruits were just starting to ripen: for an early season tasting. Chatham oystercatchers were present near the coast, and ornithologist Colin kept us informed about these and other birds of the area. Geoff enthused us about coastal turf vegetation and we shared his pleasures at seeing rare coastal plants. Judy and Celine were delighted to see a part of the Chathams far from their homes on Pitt, and we were all enjoyed Jo’s lunch spread that included fresh bread, crayfish, and homegrown hogget. After lunch (and a sunbathe on the lawn!) Jo led us to the stone missionary cottage, shared plans for its next stage of restoration, and on the adjacent coast she explained just how far the process of coastal erosion – natural but fence-destroying – has eaten into the dune forest.

To fully use our field day we called in also to the basalt columns, then visited the Admiral Farm garden of Lois. A great day of looking, sharing, and talking: all those in favour — Aye!



Toetoe in Harold Pierce Scenic Reserve: Board members; Lois, Judy, Jo, Celine, Eileen.



In the Waihi Covenant of Jo and Pat Tuanui: Board members; Jo, Lois, Judy and Celine; and Conservation Support Manager, Jeff Flavell

### Rangatira (South-east) Island

For some years the Board has had hopes of a field trip to Rangatira, special home for so many birds and other creatures, but we have been variously stymied by logistics, cost, and other factors. However in April 2008, Board members Celine Gregory-Hunt and Peter Johnson were among the fortunate helpers (along with Dianne Gregory-Hunt, Bernie and Brent Mallinson) to assist Colin Miskelly, Dave Houston, and Kate McAlpine with the capture of 20 Chatham snipe, their transfer to Pitt Island, and their historic release into the predator-fenced Ellen Elizabeth Preece Conservation Covenant.

## **STATUTORY FUNCTIONS UNDER THE CONSERVATION ACT**

*6M(1)(c) To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General on the implementation of conservation management strategies and conservation management plants for areas within the jurisdiction of the Board*

### **Conservation Management Strategies**

The Chathams Islands Conservation Management Strategy is now in the ninth year of its ten year life. In past years the Board has selected 12 implementation topics from this document for the Department to report on. With the pending review of the current CMS, the Department has this year provided the Board with information on the process for the revision and revised structure of the document. Monitoring was carried out on only three CMS items at the meeting held in May 2008.

A brief account of the CMS discussions held during the year follows:

#### **August 2007**

A map illustrating the spatial distribution of wetlands on the Chathams was provided to give the Board an indication of how the new CMS will focus on territories of significance and main geographical areas rather than broader Department objectives.

#### **November 2007**

Conservancy provided the Board with a copy of the Bay of Plenty's Conservation Management Strategy revised draft, as an example of how the new CMS's will be structured, as well as the CMS Framework as a guide for the drafting of the new CMS. They commented that the Bay of Plenty draft document seemed to be much more user-friendly than the current CMS structure.



The Board was informed that the revision of the CMS had officially been extended until 12 August 2010.

## **February**

### **a) Conservation Management Strategy Framework**

The Board decided at the February meeting to reintroduce the process of selecting items from the existing CMS for the Department to report on. The Board felt that by failing to continue monitoring of the current CMS, in order to discuss and prepare for its revision, they were disregarding their responsibility to review the Department's progress under the current CMS.

## **May 2008**

The Department was asked to report on the progress on the following three implementation items; Landowner Liaison: 6.2.2, Fire: 6.2.10, items 1-5 and Recreational Opportunities: 6.3, item 1. The Board was happy with how the Department had managed all these areas.

*6M (1) (d) (ii) To advise the Department on any other conservation matter relating to any area within the jurisdiction of the Board*

## **Concessions**

Until now, the Department has not enforced the legal requirement to obtain a concession for people carrying out commercial activities on DOC managed lands on the Chathams.

Recently this had become an issue with applications being received from two parties on the mainland.

Two Conservancy staff visited the island this year to provide information to the Board about the concession process, legal issues that arise from concession applications, and the Board's involvement in the concession process.

The Board endorsed a list of situations that would indicate the need for the Department to seek the Board's advice. It was agreed that several Board members could have a conflict of interest in some applications and therefore limitations in the membership of a sub-committee dealing with an application, would need to be decided on a case by case scenario.

*Board were consulted or gave advice to the Department on the following species translocations and research proposals:*

## **Species translocation proposals**

### **Taiko Chick Translocation**

The Board had given approval in 06/07 for the first translocation of taiko chicks from the Tuku Nature Reserve to the Sweetwater Conservation Covenant. This year the Department sought support for a second transfer of taiko chicks to Sweetwater CC. The Board was concerned about the implications on the existing taiko population and decided to provide support for the translocation of next years' taiko chicks, providing a favourable report was received on mate and burrow retention for the 07/08 breeding season.

### **Chatham Island Petrel Chick Translocation**

The Board was consulted on the Department's proposal to transfer Chatham Island petrel chicks from Rangatira to Sweetwater Conservation Covenant for three consecutive years, in an effort to establish a third population in a predator-free area on main Chatham. The Board raised concerns about supporting the second and third year without knowing the outcomes of the first translocation, and were reassured by the Department that further transfers would not be undertaken if the first was deemed unsuccessful.

### **Snipe Chick Translocation**

In February the Board considered a proposal to translocate Chatham Island snipe from Rangatira to Ellen Elizabeth Preece Conservation Covenant on Pitt Island. Prior to this proposal the Board had

been provided with an assessment on the suitability of habitat of the covenant for Chatham Island snipe and supported the development of a translocation proposal. They stressed however, the importance of undertaking further consultation with the Pitt Island Reserves Committee and Pitt Island Conservation Purposes Charitable Trust. At the meeting in February the Board supported the reintroduction of snipe to Pitt Island.

### **Research Proposals**

Four external research proposals were considered by the Board during this reporting period.

In all cases where the Board has considered proposals, iwi and community perspectives have been carefully considered and reference made to the document '*Procedure for Community and Iwi Involvement in Managing Biota, Taonga & Cultural Materials*'. On all occasions the Board has requested reports on research findings.

Following is a brief account on the Board's consideration and decision on the proposals.

#### **Rangatira Island Research Proposal - Canterbury University**

The Board was briefed on a two-year, high-impact research and collection proposal from Canterbury University who were applying to visit the Nature Reserve to study populations of birds that had neared extinction. After quite some discussion of the 'high-impact' application the Board was happy to agree with the Conservancy's recommendations to support the study.

#### **Request to research the history of restoration of Taiko and Chatham Island Petrel**

The Department had received a request from an independent researcher in the USA to study the restoration work undertaken by the Department on the taiko and CI petrel. The Board supported the project and encouraged the Department to assist with the research where possible.

#### **Mangere Research Proposal – GNS Science**

The Board was consulted on a request from GNS Science to follow up on a three-year study already undertaken by the Chatham Islands Emergent Ark Research Survey (CHeARS). Although the application rated as high-impact it merely involved the collection of a small amount of surface rock from Mangere Island. The Board fully supported the ongoing geological research and looked forward to receiving reports of research findings.

#### **Request for parea specimens - Massey University**

A request for dead parea specimens for research and teaching purposes was received from Massey University. Parea are caught occasionally as a by-catch from cat-trapping.

The Board supported the Department sending a maximum of six parea to Massey but requested that the right of ownership lies with Chatham Islands.

## **POWERS OF CONSERVATION BOARDS**

*6N (2)(a) The Board may advocate its interest at any public forum or in any statutory planning process.*

### **Chatham Islands Regional Pest Management Strategy Review**

As reported in the 06/07 Annual Report, the Board made a submission to the Pest Management Strategy stating their concerns surrounding the issues of pests and biosecurity threats to the Chathams. At the time of writing that Annual Report, the hearings had yet to be scheduled. Although the Board did not speak to its submission at the hearings in September 2007, it agreed with the Department's submission to the Strategy, and Board member Lois Croon attended in support of the Department.

### **Domestic Trade in Whale Bone from Whales Stranded in New Zealand and a Framework for the Role of Maori in the Management of Whale Strandings**

The Board considered that a revision of the existing system would assist the Department with the current protocols they follow in managing strandings and whale bone.

The following is a brief account of our submission to the review.

- Improvement to the proposed regime; The Board suggested that an annual review of how the legislation is functioning and succeeding as intended. Provision needs to be made to be able to revisit legislation so that improvements can be made if needed.
- Robust Regime; Suggestion of an unobtrusive identification stamp detailing holder's name would help reinforce source and identity.
- Framework for Maori role in managing strandings; Best practice for the Chathams would involve a whole island approach with a trained team made up of representative iwi, DOC staff and interested locals.

## **LIAISON**

### **A Department**

#### **Return of mounted shore plover, 'Westie' to the Chatham Islands**

In February this year the Board was delighted to be presented with 'Westie', the iconic Chatham Island shore plover who, after breeding successfully at Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre, had sadly died. There had been much debate around where 'Westie' should reside following interest from Te Papa to retain the specimen as a study skin. The Board was extremely passionate about having the shore plover specimen mounted, and returned to the Chathams by Colin Miskelly.



'Westie' the shore plover. He had always had the knob on the top of his bill, so the taxidermist was instructed to leave it there. Photo: Peter Johnson

#### **Visit from NZCA liaison member John Nankervis**

The Board was fortunate to have John Nankervis attend our Board meeting in February this year. John had scheduled a trip to the Chathams to coincide with a Board field trip to gain a better understanding of the unique areas within the Board's jurisdiction. This was a good opportunity for the Board to hear first hand the NZCA's relationship with the Department and what their role is with Conservation Boards.

#### **Te Papa Tongarewa**

Following past unresolved issues in the management of Chatham taonga between the Department, Conservation Board and Te Papa, the Board decided to invite the Museum's Chief Executive Officer, Seddon Bennington to a meeting of the Board to discuss and clarify issues of mutual concern.

It is unfortunate that to date, Mr Bennington has been unable to co-ordinate a time that suits both parties, however the Board remain positive and look forward to seeking clarification and agreement for future management and ownership of island taonga.

### **Director General visit to the Chatham Islands**

The Director General, Al Morrison visited the Chatham Islands in early December last year. Although the visit was not at the time of a Board meeting, Board members had the opportunity to have an evening meal with him and informally discuss conservation issues on the Chatham Islands. During his visit, Al had the opportunity to travel to Pitt Island, Taiko Camp, and the predator-proofed Sweetwater Conservation Covenant,.

The Loder Cup was presented by Al to Amanda Baird, and although the Board had not been the nominators for her receiving the Award in 2007, they had written a letter of support for her nomination.

### **Bird Recovery Group Meetings**

The annual threatened bird recovery group meetings were held on Pitt Island this year and resident Board member Celine Gregory-Hunt not only attended all the meetings, but also provided accommodation and logistical assistance for the meetings. Due to the isolated location of the meeting, the opportunity for other Board members to attend was very limited, however the Board is provided with minutes and outcomes of the meetings on request.

## **B Community**

### **Protection at Blind Jim's, Te Whanga**

This past year the Board continued in their endeavours to protect the 8km strip of Unoccupied Crown Land (UCL) along the western margin of the lagoon, known as Blind Jim's.

Following community meetings initiated and facilitated by the Board in 06/07, the Board invited on behalf of the community, Nga Whenua Rahui to discuss and possibly assist with funding the protection of Blind Jim's. A site inspection of Blind Jim's on 30 August 2007 with NWR staff, DOC staff and Board members was undertaken, and a very successful community meeting held that evening. In order to pursue funding from NWR, the Board sought written agreement from iwi to support the preservation of Blind Jim's.

Soon after this development in the process, the Board was informed of Land Information New Zealand intentions to transfer the area to the Department of Conservation. The transfer of land was put on hold until discussions between iwi and the Crown find resolution; in light of this the Board agreed to put this matter on hold until outcomes of the discussions are known.

### **Chatham Islands Conservation Trust**

The Department sought the Board's thoughts on the development of a Chatham Island Conservation Trust. The Board thought the project was an excellent initiative for raising the profile of conservation and environmental issues, however success would be dependant on considerable support from the wider community.

The Board promoted the initiative in the local monthly paper outlining the aim and objectives of a Trust and provided contact personal details for further information and registrations of interest. The Board will be calling and helping facilitate a public meeting in August this year.

### **Email Newsletter**

The Board initiated the idea of a local 'Conservation News' by means of email to informally update on conservation activities of interest on the Chatham Islands. This has proved very successful with several registrations of interest joining the initial email database. *[To register email: amckillop@doc.govt.nz]*

### **Chatham Islands' Conservation Award**

The Board initiated and funded an Annual Conservation Award in 2004 to recognise the voluntary efforts of anyone in the community who has demonstrated commitment to conservation on the Chatham Islands.

Judy Wright and George Day were the joint recipients of the 2007 Award, they both had contributed significantly to the preservation of conservation values on the Chatham Islands by controlling, and in many cases eradicating conservation weeds from their private property.

As with every year, the crafted trophy is presented at the prize giving for the annual pig hunting competition, an opportunity where a very large portion of the community gathers for the event.

## **C   Pitt Island**

The Pitt Island Reserves Committee (PIRC) meet four times a year prior to the Conservation Board meeting. The Board Secretary now attends and provides support for each meeting.

The Conservation Board has a standard agenda item where the minutes from the PIRC are tabled and the Board has the opportunity to raise and discuss issues with the Conservation Board members from Pitt Island.

## **D   General**

### **Pukenga Atawhai Wananga**

In September 2007 two Board members were provided the opportunity to attend a Pukenga Atawhai Wananga at Papawai Marae in Greytown. Celine Gregory-Hunt and Judy Lanauze were very grateful for the experience and encouraged other Board members to participate if more opportunities arose in the future.

Board minutes and agendas have continued to be distributed to key organisations on the Chatham Islands. This is an important way of communicating with people and organisations that have a shared interest in conservation values.

## **FINANCIAL YEAR 2007/2008**

The Chatham Board budget was reduced by \$1K this financial year, however functioned adequately with a total budget of \$17K. Various reasons prevented some Board members attending all meetings and therefore savings were made.

Chairperson  
Peter Johnson