

Friends of Galapagos New Zealand

Chair Report - April 2015 - March 2016.

Overview

Following the success and flurry of activity surrounding the White-vented Storm Petrel Project, the 12 months to April were a period of consolidation and working out where to go in the future.

White-vented Storm Petrel Project

The initial report on this project has now been published and has been circulated to all members. While not locating the breeding sites of the species, the work has given good indications of how to proceed with the next stage. We are currently discussing with our partners the various options, once we have an agreed programme, then we can start looking for the funds needed to implement.

Galapagos National Park Service

There have been a number of changes here in the last year with two new Directors. This has not made it easy to develop our relationship with them. Our Patron, Tui De Roy is developing contact with the new members of the management team and I am currently working on an MOU with the Park. Together we anticipate this will enable us to work with them on future projects.

Membership

This has held steady at around 160 in spite of our not being able to resolve the issue of visitor names. The changes at the Park have made this difficult and I have been in touch with the Galapagos Conservation Trust in UK to see if they can help. They too have new leadership, so it has taken longer than anticipated.

We are currently looking at new ways to contact people and build membership through social media, this is a complex area which needs a degree of expertise to decide on the most appropriate way forward. It can also require significant expenditure. Niki Wilson is leading this discussion.

New Projects

We have not made any progress with the two projects that we have previously seen as good opportunities for our support; land snails and snakes. The former because the US scientist who would help develop the project is too busy, and the latter as it has not progressed as rapidly as Luis had anticipated.

More recently we have agreed to investigate our possible involvement in a project looking at problems with the Vermillion Flycatcher. This most colourful of Galapagos residents has recently been declared to be endemic, but is also suffering significant population loss and we need to know the causes before we can do anything about it. Tui is currently in touch with the Charles Darwin Research Station scientists to discuss our possible involvement. It will be good to work with the CDRS who are the other major player in Galapagos conservation.

Modus Operandi

FOGNZ is unlikely to ever be a major donor to Galapagos causes, and the committee has agreed to continue our existing policy of seeking to magnify our financial muscle by using the professional expertise and skill of NZ scientists to leverage our money. This way we can play a significant role while still being a fairly small operation.

The Dining Card

FOGNZ has signed up to the Dining Card: <https://www.thediningcard.co.nz> You can purchase this card on a monthly or annual basis for a modest price and receive a significant discount at a number of restaurants and cafes in Auckland. When you purchase a card, FOGNZ gets a portion of the fee. If you live in Auckland or visit it regularly, then you can benefit FOGNZ while cutting the cost of dining out!

Thank Yous

Many thanks to our regular supporters and specifically to
Our two corporate members, Latin Link and Southern Exposure Tours.
Sue Shand who continues with looking after mail and banking.
Niki Wilson for looking after FOGNZ Facebook page and for leading the discussion
on the use of social media.
Margie for keeping the whole show on the Road
Colin for making sure we are onside with the powers that be!

Julian Fitter
Maketu
25th September 2016