

# Newsletter of the South West New Zealand Endangered Species Trust



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www.tepukahereka.org.nz

## Our Mission

“To fund and establish a world class sanctuary on Te Puka-Hereka for rare and endangered native species of flora and fauna that will be jointly developed by private philanthropists and government participants.”

## In this edition....

- **Preservation Solitude**  
Fundraiser launched
- **Richard Henry**  
A legacy of conservation
- **Red Deer**  
Further work to remove red deer



*Right: Preservation Lodge  
Photo: Rex Pratt*

## The Solitude of Preservation Inlet Puysegur Holdings Launch Fundraiser

Trust supporters and owners of Preservation Lodge, Puysegur Holdings have launched a fundraising venture to support the work of the Trust on Coal Island. While they already make the Lodge available to volunteers working on the island, the Lodge is now being made available to those looking for a remote experience in the solitude of Preservation Inlet.

Located in Kisbee Bay just 4km east of Coal Island the Lodge is now the only dwelling on the site of the historic gold mining town of Cromarty. In its heyday in the mid 1890's Cromarty boasted a hotel, boarding houses, stores, a post office and school to support the population of miners who have flocked to the inlet in search of gold. A number of relics and historical sites are to be found within walking distance from the Lodge.

While the Lodge was originally built as a commercial venture, these days it is privately owned and used as an exclusive retreat by the owners – it is not normally open to the public. Resident caretakers manage the day-to-day running of the Lodge.

Able to comfortably accommodate around 20 guests—the Lodge has 7— 2 bedroom units with ensuites, a large kitchen, lounge and dining room. However some of the trappings of the modern world are noticeably absent—there are no telephone, internet or television. The only communication with the outside world is via a call to Bluff Fisherman's Radio each evening.

At \$5,000 per night per couple, the owners hope to attract those with a genuine interest in the work of the Trust and appreciation of the solitude of a special part of New Zealand. The nightly rate includes helicopter transport from Tuatapere, meals and a unique experience.

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## The Legacy of Richard Henry

A century ago, at a time when our country was still a "developing colony" the conservation movement that has become part of modern New Zealand was still in its infancy. Although European settlement had only been underway for around 80 years, the damage had already begun.

In the late 1830's rabbits were introduced for sport and to remind settlers of home. By the early 1840's they were established in Southland. To start with they were slow to adapt to their new homeland but by the 1870's numbers had exploded to the point that farmers were demanding action.

In their natural environment, rabbits were preyed upon by mustelids—ferrets, stoats and weasels so the introduction of these were seen as the obvious solution to the rabbit problem. The first stoats were introduced in 1879. Some farmers raised their own mustelids for release. On Castelrock Station, 583 ferrets were raised and released between September 1885 and February 1886. From there, the rest of the story is as the say is "history"....

Amongst the first to raise concerns about the possible impact of stoats on native birds was Richard Henry. Arriving in New Zealand from Australia in the 1870's, Richard Henry became well known for his interest in the natural world. Henry, along with a few other concerned citizens started to lobby the government for action to be taken, in particular the establishment of a reserve on Resolution Island in Fiordland. The creation of the reserve finally occurred on 3 August 1891.

The creation of the reserve on Resolution Island was only the first step. Richard Henry and others had already determined that the only long term chance of survival for birds such as the kakapo would be on an island sanctuary free of predators.

In 1894, Richard Henry and an assistant took up residence on Pigeon Island in Dusky Sound and commenced relocating kakapo and kiwi from the mainland to Resolution Island. Over the next few years hundreds of birds were captured and relocated but the clock was already ticking—although many people thought it would not occur, stoats crossed the main divide and spread into western Fiordland.

In 1900 Richard Henry saw a weasel on Resolution Island. Despite his efforts, he was unable to capture the pest.

Richard Henry eventually left Dusky Sound in 1908—he was 63 years old and had spent 14 years trying to save the birds. While the project on Resolution Island was not successful, Richard Henry and his colleagues made a huge contribution to the establishment of the conservation movement. Today's work on Coal Island and in other similar areas around the country is their legacy.

*Further reading: Richard Henry of Resolution Island, Susanne and John Hill, John McIndoe Ltd, 1987*

## Red Deer Work Continues

Thanks to support from the Pratt Family Trust, the Trust has been able to undertake further work to remove red deer from Coal Island.

During August professional cullers spent time on the island to follow up on work started in February this year. A further 21 red deer were culled. With the 24 culled in February and those known to have been shot by recreational hunters, around 70 red deer have been removed from the island since January. It is estimated that around 20 deer remain on the island.

There will be more on the results of this latest work in our next newsletter.



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