

### PROJECT TITLE

#### ***Lost gold; ornithology of the subantarctic Auckland Islands***

*Notornis* 67(1) March 2020 (special issue) Edited by Colin Miskelly & Craig Symes

I am extremely grateful to Birds New Zealand council for their support for this project. The allocation made from the Projects Assistance Fund in December 2019 was essential in ensuring that publication and delivery of this special issue could proceed, and complemented the funds donated by other agencies and individuals.

As explained below, there have been additional (delivery) costs incurred as a result of COVID-19 impacts on distribution (including international postage). These have been covered by an additional allocation from the 2020 T-Gear donation.

#### **Progress**

All New Zealand-based members should have received their copy by mid-June

Mail-out of copies to overseas members commenced in the week starting 22 June

#### **Explanation of the 2-3 month delay in delivery to members**

COVID-19 lockdowns impacted on distribution and delivery of *Lost Gold* in numerous ways. The books were printed in southern China (well away from Wuhan), but printing was still affected by the initial lockdown, and the ripples from the virus continue:

- The initial lockdown over the Chinese New Year prevented workers returning to the factory, delaying completion of printing by a fortnight
- This resulted in the books reaching New Zealand (via sea freight) later than expected
- 2 cargo pallets of books reached the Te Papa dockway on 20 March, the date that Te Papa shut its doors due to concerns over visits by *Ruby Princess* cruise ship passengers on 14 March (this was 4 days before the national lockdown on 24 March)
- Copies of the special issue were to be distributed to Wellington branch members at their monthly meeting on 6 April (to save postage costs). The meeting was cancelled due to COVID concerns (and would have been cancelled anyway under Level 4 restrictions).
- Further copies of the special issue were expected to be handed out (both to local members and those visiting from further afield) at the book launch (to be hosted by DOC Director-General Lou Sanson) on 7 April. This was also cancelled (though we were able to arrange a virtual book launch on 18 May)
- Attempts to get the books out of the waterfront Te Papa building were declined throughout the Level 4 lockdown
- During Level 3 of the lockdown, a Te Papa Press staff member was able to move the books to her garage in Ngaio, but social distancing requirements meant that only two people were able to package the books and attach address labels and postage.

- Ongoing closure of postal retail outlets meant that a Te Papa Press staff member had to purchase all 1100 postage stickers individually, and print them one at a time. This took many days, spread over several weeks.
- NZ Post was overwhelmed with parcels of goods purchased online during the lockdown, and refused to accept bulk deliveries of parcels. Our work-around was to post smaller quantities of parcels into road-side postboxes throughout the Wellington region. This was undertaken by local members (Ian & Gwyneth Armitage, Geoff de Lisle & Dallas Bishop, and myself – assisted by my son Liam) plus two staff from Te Papa Press.
- The almost complete cessation of international flights meant that international postage rates for copies to be sent to our c.100 overseas members had a substantial surcharge added over the prices that we had budgeted for. When combined with the extra postage required for copies that we had expected to be delivered by hand to local members (and other members attending the book launch), the total postage bill was calculated to be \$2.8K more than anticipated.

It was a great relief when copies of the special issue finally reached members via NZ Post from 25 May onwards.

Thank you again for your support for this project.

Ngā mihi  
Colin Miskelly  
(co-editor, *Lost Gold*)