



Media release

31th July 2014

Sparrows elude North Island Robin catching team

Perfect weather conditions didn't help efforts to catch a few local sparrows last Saturday morning. The plan was to help the North Island Robin catching team hone their bird handling skills, prior to their trip to Mokoia Island, in Lake Rotorua, next week.

The sparrows were either too well fed or too clever for the team, who ended up sitting in the sun and eating homemade baking instead.

In spite of their lack of success with flighty sparrows, the team is confident they will catch the 40 North Island robins required next week for the translocation to Ohope Scenic Reserve.

The robins will arrive in Whakatane on Friday and spend the night at The Ohope Top Ten Holiday Park.

"We have been joking about the robins staying in the Honeymoon Suite" said DOC Partnerships Ranger, Bridget Palmer, "Hopefully this will kick start spring fever and the robins will think about breeding before considering dispersing away from the release sites".

A karakia will take place at 7.30am on Saturday morning beside the waharoa (entrance) to Ohope Scenic Reserve. Following the blessing the birds will be taken into the reserve by their 'adoptive parents', dignitaries and volunteers.

The community is welcome to attend the celebration on Saturday morning. There is also still time to buy an 'adoption package' and have the opportunity to open the box containing your robin.

To learn more on how to take up the Robin Adoption Challenge contact the Whakatane Kiwi Trust. www.whakatanekiwi.org.nz or email: admin@whakatanekiwi.org.nz

The translocation is part of the Whakatane Kiwi Trust's vision to restore and enhance the biodiversity in the Whakatane – Ohope Reserves. It will boost the

population of robins already present in the Whakatane Kiwi Project area. This is a very small remnant population and the introduction of additional birds from Mokoia Island will ensure the species successfully recovers.

Robins need consistently low numbers of rodents to survive and a translocation of this kind would not have been considered prior to establishment of the Whakatane Kiwi Project.

–Ends–

Contacts

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Background information

Whakatane Kiwi Project website: www.whakatanekiwi.org.nz

Photos attached:

The robin catching team try their skills on a less elusive target.

Greg Moorcroft, Michelle Howard, Jordyn Rhodes, Sue Laurent, Emmerson Rhodes, Peter Green, Bridget Palmer, Ken Laurent, Marlin Undin, John Black.

