

Waikanae Estuary Newsletter

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www.kapitibirdtours.co.nz partners to Nature Coast Bird Trail www.naturecoastbirdtrail.co.nz

Waikanae Estuary bird tours 9051001.



The wind whipping up the sea between Waikanae and Kapiti Island

The great sea-bird rescue

Recently, the Kapiti Coast has been subject to prolonged storms, one after the other, with hurricane force winds whipping up the sea and uprooting trees on land. This has caused a lot of disruption on land, but for some birds it has been a major disaster.

Broad-billed prions live their lives out to sea, mainly in the off-shore oceans of New Zealand particularly around the Chatham Islands and the Southern Seas where they



Helping hands photo Rob Jackson

breed in their millions. They are rarely seen on the mainland of New Zealand in any numbers. Having been blown inshore, it is estimated that perhaps two hundred and fifty thousand of these birds have perished across the North Island. There has been a great rescue effort here on the coast. People from all walks of life have been collecting the birds that were still alive. Some were completely exhausted and had to be euthanized. The local SPCA and all the wild life establishments in the Wellington district that have available resources, have rallied

around. About fifteen hundred of these prions, have been picked up from reserves, football fields, gardens, even traffic has been stopped on our roads to rescue these exhausted birds.

They have been taken to the local SPCA where every available space has been filled with cardboard boxes of prions. The local courier firms have transported hundreds of these birds to Wellington Zoo Hospital and HUHA Animal Rescue Centre has sent their vehicle to pick up birds and transport them to their facility. Craig Sheppard's Bird Rehabilitation Trust took hundreds. Nga Manu Nature Reserve along with our local Veterinary clinics, were very much involved.



Kapiti has responded well to this unprecedented natural disaster, hundreds of people have stopped what they were doing to rescue these birds.

The birds were kept for a couple of days, fed and watered with saline water. When the weather cleared the Coastguard transported the birds off shore and released them, with the help of many volunteers. In the photographs, boxes and boxes of birds are being loaded onto the boat.



www.jackpenmanphotography.com

The community uniting to save the broad-billed prions.

Photographs by Jack Penman and Jo Moore

Hits last Month Thirteen Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy Seven



Mik Peryer the Birdman of Waikanae
Sponsored by Chris Lee Sharebroking