



Shooting kukupa

"Pigeon Patrol" (November) made me sad, angry and bewildered.

I am sad that the population of kereru (kukupa) continues to decline. Obviously loss of habitat, and predation of nests are among the main causes.

I am angry that criminals are hastening the decline by shooting these great forest birds, despite the vital role pigeons play in maintaining forest ecosystems, despite the fact that they are totally protected and despite the efforts of DoC staff and voluntary rangers.

I am bewildered to read that a learned academic, Dr Margaret Mutu, a member of the New Zealand Conservation Authority, has encouraged iwi to exercise their right to harvest native wildlife. No one has the right to kill totally protected native species. No one, anywhere, at any time.

Did Dr Mutu list her opinions on the right of individuals to breach the Wildlife Act in the CV she presented to the Minister of Conservation when she was nominated for appointment to the NZCA? If she did not, is she guilty of deception of the minister, the government, Parliament and the people of New Zealand?

The final blow in the article is the astounding revelation that legislation protecting Northland's native wildlife is enforced by two part-time DoC rangers and some volunteer rangers, while in Tongariro/Taupo trout fishery, three full-time DoC rangers and eleven warrant-holding DoC staff enforce the legislation protecting alien species which devas-

tate indigenous aquatic ecosystems!

Clearly our priorities for funding the enforcement of legislation protecting native and alien species need reversing urgently.

*J. Chris Horne
Wellington*

Wilderness and noise

Thanks for the "Comment" by Gottlieb Braun-Elwert (November). Our family had the unpleasant experience of a tramp to a small lake in the Franz Josef area, ruined by the buzzing and circling of a helicopter. Noise pollution can ruin a trip into the bush. I do not think we should sacrifice the opportunity for New Zealanders to enjoy our wilderness, in order to cater for what Gottlieb describes as "fast-food tourism". Let's keep our wilderness areas clean and quiet and not worry about tourists who cannot accept us as we are. They can go to Las Vegas. If we turn New Zealand into a theme park, we ruin it for our own people.

*Lois Griffiths
Christchurch*



Gottlieb Braun-Elwert shows us one important aspect of high-yield, high-expenditure tourism rather clearly. I'm sure there are lots of people out there who have been sickened by the drone of an aircraft engine or outboard motor while attempting to have a "wilderness experience". Please – let's do something about this form of pollution and ban the use of combustion engines in and above national parks and marine reserves.

And do it before the tourism lobby is strong enough to run the country as a huge amusement park.

*H.P. Dietz
Dunedin*

Stranded whales

We read with great interest Iris Goodfellow's article, and Kevin Smith's attached column, on the pilot whale strandings in Golden Bay (November).

I was interested in Mr Smith's thought-provoking comments on the question of whether human intervention is warranted in these natural emergencies.

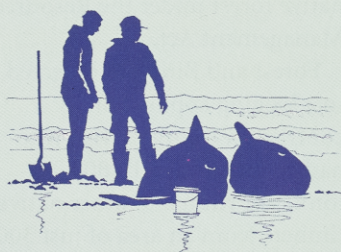
Firstly, from an ethical point of view, why should we wait until a species is on the brink of extinction before we are compelled to lend a helping hand? Are the inroads that humankind makes daily into all whale populations, not least

of which is the pilot whale carnage in the North Atlantic, not reason enough to be countered with some help to save the victim of a natural accident?

Secondly, and far more important, is the enormous public relations component of the volunteer side of whale rescue operations. I was extremely impressed to note the deep emotional impact that first-hand involvement produced in people who may never have cared for nature before. In a world where so many have lost touch with nature this situation produces a priceless opportunity for fostering public awareness and turning it into action.

We very much appreciate the no-nonsense (even though sometimes depressing) treatment of critical topics in *Forest & Bird*. Keep up the good work.

*Tui De Roy
Takaka*



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