

PROJECT TŪTURUATU:

Raising Conservation Awareness for the
New Zealand Shore Plover

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Submitted to:

Laurence Barea, Dave Houston, and Brian McDonald

New Zealand Department of Conservation

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Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



WPI

PROJECT TŪTURUATU:
Raising Conservation Awareness for the
New Zealand Shore Plover

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Report Submitted to:

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New Zealand Department of Conservation
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This report represents the work of one or more WPI undergraduate students submitted to the faculty as evidence of completion of a degree requirement. WPI routinely publishes these reports on the web without editorial or peer review.

ABSTRACT

The tūturuatu, shore plover, is an endangered species with fewer than 250 individuals remaining in the wild. Working with the New Zealand Department of Conservation, our team developed a campaign to increase public awareness regarding the fragile status of the tūturuatu. After gauging public awareness and conducting expert interviews, our team developed educational activities, as well as a social marketing manual to aid in the creation of content for a social media presence for the tūturuatu.

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We would like to thank the people at the New Zealand Department of Conservation for welcoming us and helping us develop this project during our time here in Wellington. We would specifically like to thank Brian McDonald, Dave Houston, and Laurence Barea, our partners, for this project opportunity. We are all appreciative of all their help and the DOC (Department of Conservation) staff.

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AUTHORSHIP

All project team members equally contributed to the conceptualization, research methods, analysis of data, writing, and complete review of material, and therefore a collective completion of this project.

DISCLAIMER: This work is original to the project authors and study participants and was not generated or assisted using ChatGPT or any other AI tools.

MEET THE TEAM

Eric DePiero: Hello, my name is Eric DePiero and I am from Beverly, Massachusetts. I am a third-year student at WPI (Worcester Polytechnic Institute) pursuing a degree in Management Engineering with a concentration in Civil Engineering. At WPI I am on the men's varsity baseball team as well as a member of the Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity. Although my time in New Zealand was full of unforgettable experiences, I will never forget the hospitality of the people of Wellington. The community welcomed us with open arms and sincere gestures throughout this trip. I am forever grateful for these memories.



Lily Jones: Hi! My name is Lily Jones, I am from Bothell, Washington, and I am a third year double major in Mechanical Engineering and Robotics Engineering. At WPI I am a part of Phi Sigma Sigma Women's Fraternity, Student Government, Student Alumni Society, and a Student Philanthropy Ambassador. I have really enjoyed getting to experience the culture here in New Zealand. I have loved the opportunity to work with DOC, and in more of a real-life setting. I have enjoyed traveling around the country. I really appreciate my time here and will never forget the memories I have made!

MEET THE TEAM

Noah Scott: Hi, my name is Noah Scott and I'm from Prospect, Connecticut. I am a third year Biomedical Engineering Major. At WPI I am a member of the scuba, outing, and photography clubs. As well I belong to the Tau Kappa Epsilon Fraternity and Mental Health Committee on campus. I enjoy hiking, learning about marine life, and cooking. My time here in Wellington has been so special to me. It was the experience of a lifetime, whose memories I will hold onto and continue to learn from for the rest of my time.



Sona Hanslia: Hi! My name is Sona Hanslia and I'm from Chelmsford, Massachusetts. I am a third-year physics major. At WPI, I'm involved in the Women and Gender Minorities in Physics club and the Society of Physics Students. I also do research with the Quantum Sensing Group and am a Peer Learning Assistant for the Physics Department. I have really enjoyed my time in Wellington, and I've discovered a new love for birds! I've seen some incredible views here and made some incredible memories. I'm so grateful to have spent my term here and I will never forget this experience.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction:

In Aotearoa, New Zealand, public concern for conservation has grown since the creation of the Department of Conservation in 1987. The island nation is home to many rare and endemic species, such as the tūturuatu, a small bird known for its distinct black and white feathering around its head and bright orange ring around its eye. Its population comprises fewer than 250 individuals and is classified nationally critical by the New Zealand Threat Classification System. Predation by introduced predators such as rats, stoats, and possums is the primary threat to their population. DOC's mission has been to ensure the survival of natural flora and fauna, including the tūturuatu, through monitoring, intervention, and public outreach. Despite DOC's efforts to preserve the bird, necessary community support is low due to a lack of public knowledge of the bird. Therefore, this project aims to develop a campaign to increase public awareness regarding the fragile status of the tūturuatu. This was completed by gauging the public's awareness of the tūturuatu and their willingness to lend support, identifying best practices in science communication strategies and public outreach regarding conservation campaigns, and finally developing a campaign technique based on our findings.

Background:



Figure 1- A male tūturuatu trying to eat something (Houston, 2018).

Preliminary research shows four types of successful public awareness campaigns. Social media is a great tool used to reach broader audiences. Educational programs create an opportunity to connect deeply with a species, and that connection will not go away with age. Citizen Science allows regular people to contribute to the scientific community, but the research subject must be readily accessible. Live feed cameras give a window of connection between the species and the viewers.

Other research includes three case studies that highlight the importance of social engagement, media, and social media

dynamics and the influence of species charisma. These studies give insight into patterns necessary to understand the development of an awareness campaign for an endangered species.

Methodology:

To achieve objective one, an online survey, found in Appendix A, was constructed as a flyer with a QR code. The team distributed the survey through face-to-face interactions on the street, at Victoria University, other popular public spaces, and online platforms like Reddit and Facebook. The survey collected demographic information, respondents’ self-assessed awareness of the tūturua, their knowledge of specific characteristics, willingness to support conservation efforts, and the types of support they would be willing to engage in.

To achieve objective two, open-ended interviews, found in Appendix B, were conducted with experts with experience in species conservation, marketing, and media production. Interviewees were asked to share the experiences and recommendations about increasing conservation awareness and media output. Interviews were then transcribed, found in Appendix F, and patterns were pulled out and compared with other interviews to determine overarching themes.

Results and Discussion:

Have you heard of the tūturua?
(n = 237)

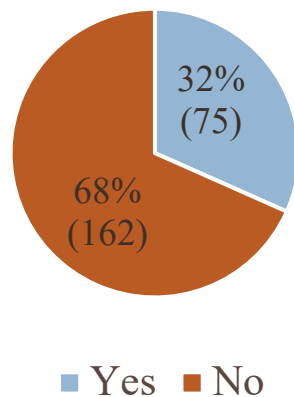


Figure 2- Graph showing awareness of the tūturua.

This survey received 237 responses from New Zealand residents. Of those, 32% claimed awareness of the tūturua. Knowledge, defined as knowing specific characteristics of the bird, was also assessed. Of the New Zealand residents who claimed awareness, 23% displayed complete knowledge by answering each question correctly. This represents 7% of all New Zealand residents surveyed.

members of conservation groups showed higher awareness of the tūturua, 56%, as opposed to non-conservation group members, who showed 25% Conservation group members

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also showed higher knowledge, 18%, compared to non-conservation group members who surveyed at 4%.

Additionally, participants were asked about the types of campaigns they would support. These results are shown in Figure 3.

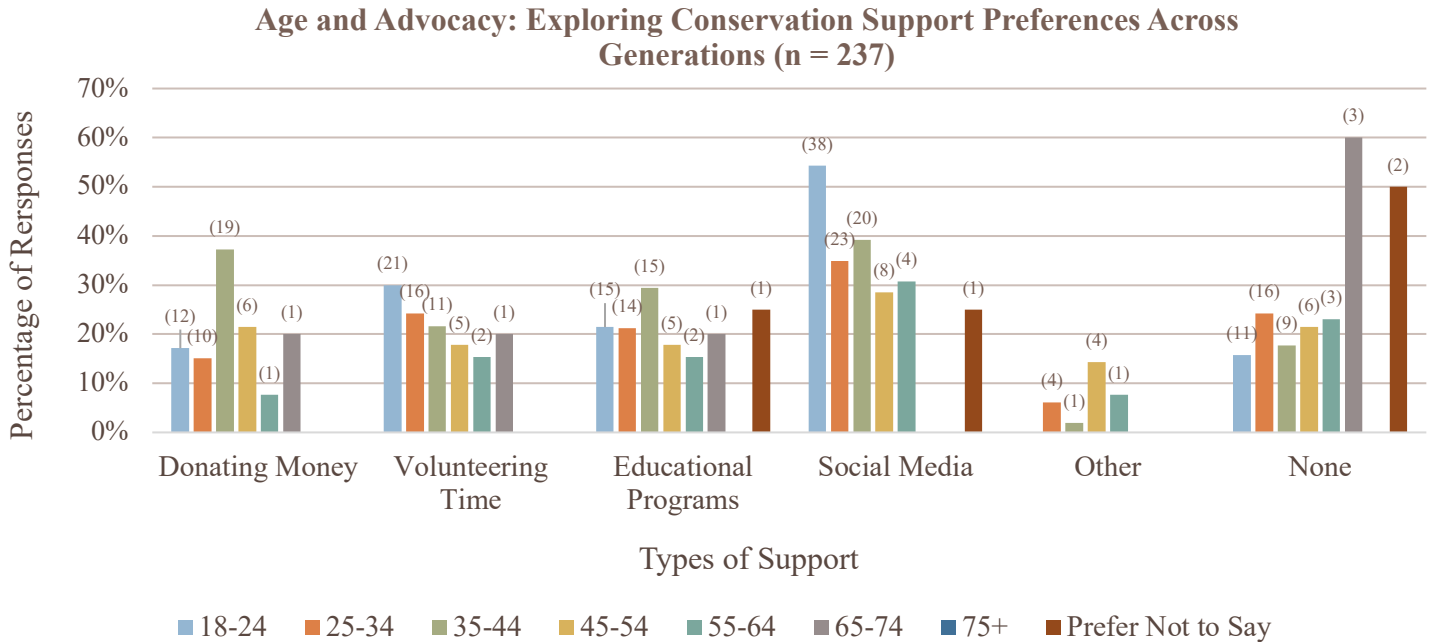


Figure 3 – A bar graph depicting types of support broken up by age groups.

Social media was the most popular form of support, with volunteering time as the next most popular. Younger generations made up the larger percentage of support for social media and volunteering time, whereas educational programs showed an even level of support from all generations. From our results, we decided to pursue a social media campaign and the third most popular choice, an educational program. Because the bird lives on remote predator free islands, the public has limited access to the tūturuatu: for this reason, we focused on educational programs over volunteering time.

We conducted four open-ended interviews. Through thematic analysis, key themes were found, including tailoring messages toward the correct audience and being culturally respectful. Social marketing principles, such as the concept of a marketing funnel and content pillars, were discussed to understand how different types of content can cause a person to go from viewing media to supporting a cause. Additionally, three pieces of messaging advice stood out: the

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importance of hooking the audience within three seconds, utilizing positive messaging, and involving the greater community and stakeholders in creating and distributing content.

The survey results and common themes found in our interviews were used to develop and create our recommendations.

Recommendations:

Our team developed multiple recommendations to increase public awareness of the tūturuatu. We recommend integrating fun educational activities into existing New Zealand school curricula. We created a color-by-number sheet which incorporates critical reading to match questions to answers to find the color. This concept can be adapted to multiple school levels and subjects. Additionally, we recommend creating and sustaining a social media presence for the tūturuatu, using content created following the guidelines we have outlined in our Social Marketing Manual. Collaboration between DOC and the rangers working directly with the tūturuatu and other conservation agencies will boost this social media presence by introducing behind-the-scenes conservation stories and increasing outreach. We also recommend implementing live feed cameras in aviaries to foster interaction between the public and the tūturuatu population. Lastly, DOC should begin an “Adopt a Tūturuatu Program,” which serves as a long-term recommendation and should be implemented after greater public awareness of the bird is established.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

In Aotearoa, New Zealand, public concerns for conservation action have grown since the creation of the Department of Conservation in 1987 (Towns et al., 2019). The island nation is home to many rare and endemic species that were once abundant but are now vulnerable or endangered due to habitat loss, damage from invasive species, and human interference. Offsetting these threats requires a clear and coordinated effort between governmental conservation agencies and the public.

The New Zealand Department of Conservation (DOC) is an agency, “charged with conserving New Zealand’s natural and historic heritage” (New Zealand Department of Conservation, n.d.). Their mission is to ensure the survival of New Zealand’s natural flora and fauna through monitoring, intervention, and public outreach.

The tūturuatu, commonly known as the shore plover, has been the subject of DOC’s conservation efforts. The tūturuatu is a small bird known for its distinct black and white feathering around its head and bright orange ring around its eye. They are highly territorial and found foraging for small invertebrates and fish along the coast.

However, their population has decreased significantly due to predation from non-native mammals such as feral or domestic cats, stoats, and rats. Fewer than 250 tūturuatu exist in the wild (IUCN, 2023) therefore, the population is currently classified as *nationally critical* by the New Zealand Threat Classification System (NZTCS), the last category before extinction. While DOC has been pushing hard to restore this species to healthy numbers by introducing the tūturuatu onto predator-free islands, the tūturuatu campaign could benefit from improved public awareness education, as has been seen successfully with vulnerable bird species such as the kiwi or the kākāpō.

This project aims to develop a campaign to increase public awareness regarding the fragile status of the tūturuatu. To meet this goal, we identified three objectives:

1. Gauge the public’s knowledge of the tūturuatu and their willingness to lend support.
2. Identify best practices in science communication strategies and public outreach regarding conservation campaigns.

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3. Develop a campaign technique based on our findings.

We seek to ensure a better future for the tūturuatū through pilot tests of our recommendations to the campaign and hope to motivate others to support our essential work in preserving Aotearoa, New Zealand's distinctive biodiversity.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW



Figure 1- A male tūturuatu perched on a rock (Thomas, 2018).

“What sports a cap, bobs like no-one’s watching, is equal parts feisty to friendly, and number around 285 across their wild and captive populations?” (Tūturuatu Telegraph, 2021). The tūturuatu, pictured above in Figure 1, has unique features and certain habits that catch the human eye. “We particularly like geneticist Ilina Cubrinovska’s hilarious description of shore plovers as ‘feisty potatoes,’ thanks to their personality, size and shape” (Tūturuatu Telegraph, 2021). The reference to the shore plover as “feisty potatoes” is humorous, yet it makes the public curious about its appearance. In turn, its uniqueness can be used to raise public awareness.

Recent years have seen a remarkable rebound in conservation efforts in New Zealand, a country famed for its magnificent landscapes and diverse natural heritage. The dedicated work being done to protect endangered species like the tūturuatu, or shore plover, is the direct result of public awareness generated by the New Zealand Department of Conservation (DOC). The agency is committed to rebalancing New Zealand’s fragile ecosystem by boosting endangered species’ well-being and removing non-native predators. This chapter details the status of the tūturuatu, the reasons it requires conservation efforts, some of the barriers that DOC faces regarding tūturuatu conservation, and the effectiveness of different public outreach campaigns and ways to design them. Furthermore, we discuss literature that describes the creation of an effective outreach campaign. To that end, we feature three case studies on awareness campaigns focused on motivating the public to support a species.

2.1 Saving the tūturuatu from extinction

The tūturuatu has been brought dangerously close to extinction by predation

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from non-native species, including cats, stoats, and rats, and they are also sensitive to avian predators, like the black-backed gulls (NZ Birds Online, n.d.; Dowding et al., 2003). It is believed that the population has been extinct from mainland New Zealand since 1870 and is now confined to remote islands (Dowding & O'Connor, 2013). According to the NZTCS, its population is considered nationally critical. This designation falls within the umbrella category of threatened species, but nationally critical is the subcategory at highest risk of

extinction, shown visually in Figure 2 (Department of Conservation, n.d.). The International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species is a global classification system that determines the conservation status of species to assess the overall health of the world's biodiversity (IUCN, 2023). They classify the tūturua as endangered, meaning their wild population consists of fewer than 250 individuals and thus are in dire need of conservation efforts

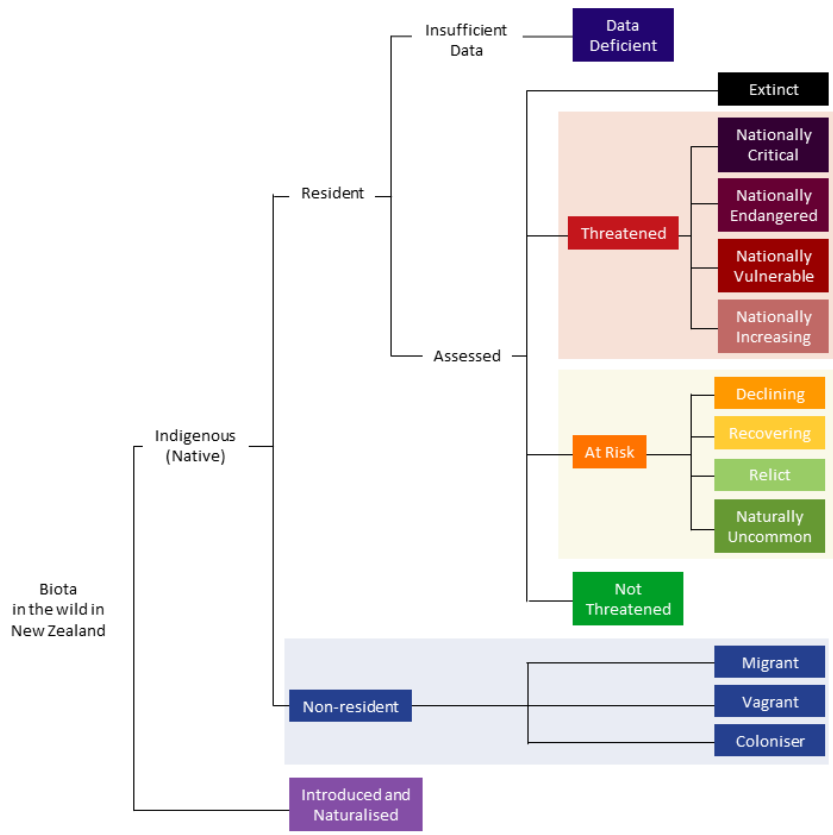


Figure 2- NZTCS category hierarchy (Michel, 2021).

At the time of its creation, DOC was an unprecedented organization and still leads the world in conservation. The organization was created to unite the country's many smaller environmental and conservation groups into one. DOC was formed from the Department of Lands and Survey, the NZ Forest Service, and the Wildlife Service (Towns et al., 2019). From the start, DOC is now the primary agency for anything related to conservation and wildlife in the country. Their mission is "Papatūānuku Thrives," meaning Mother Earth thrives in te reo Māori (Taonga, n.d.). In reference to the island nation's co-governance strategy, their mission includes the saying "Toitū te marae a Tāne-Mahuta, toitū te marae a Tangaroa, toitū te tangata," which translates to: "If the land is well and the sea is well, the people will thrive" (Our Purpose and Outcomes, n.d.). As an agency, they aim to ensure the survival of New Zealand's natural flora and fauna.

Without broad public support, DOC would not be as successful in its mission. The agency is said to manage, "about 30% of NZ's land area (8 million ha), all Marine Protected Areas, as well as all its biodiversity on both land and in water, which is estimated at ~80,000 species" (Hare et al., 2019). This is a huge responsibility that requires funding

and resources. In the past 30 years, the organization has moved away from finding sponsors for its campaigns to focus on a strategy of philanthropic means for getting money. Their outreach goals have become more oriented toward creating new technology, developing educational platforms, and encouraging social engagement opportunities as part of conserving native wildlife (Towns et al., 2019).

2.2 Partners and collaborations in conservation

Among the most significant priorities for DOC right now is the Predator Free 2050 Program. Their goal is to eradicate rats, mustelids, and brushtail possums (see Figure 3), which are all introduced predators to the country and pose a serious threat to endangered birds (Murphy et al., 2019). Multiple islands have exterminated all predators, but it is important to note, "increasing the area over which eradication can succeed will be a non-linear effort" (Peltzer et al., 2019). To achieve the same success for the whole country, as was found on smaller islands, will be a much more complex process. DOC cannot rely on a simple process of extermination across the nation. Other than the invasive mammals

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being targeted, about half of the flora and fauna in New Zealand are also non-native (Peltzer et al., 2019). Furthermore, because of the lack of research on these species and their effects on the ecosystem, there is some hesitation on complete invasive species eradication plans (Bellingham et al., 2010). This project's bottom line is that eradicating invasive species will likely allow native species, like the tūturūatu, to increase in numbers.



Figure 3- An invasive brushtail possum (From Vecteezy.com Imogen Warren).

DOC created the Shore Plover Recovery Group dedicated to the tūturūatu conservation effort. The group comprises “[a] representative from each of the 2

captive-breeding institutions, DOC staff involved with management and monitoring at each release site, external contractors with expertise in husbandry and release techniques, an external science advisor with first-hand research experience with the species, and a group leader from DOC” (Dowding & O’Connor, 2013, p.71). The team created and published a recovery plan for the Shore Plover in 2001 and determined that the biggest threats facing the tūturūatu are the introduction of predators, cattle grazing, burning of the environment, and the spread of disease from rodents (Shore Plover Recovery Plan, n.d.).

To boost population numbers, the group began captive-bred releases of the tūturūatu onto predator-free remote islands in 1991 (Shore Plover Recovery Plan, n.d.). DOC has also carried out color banding to determine the size and trends of wild tūturūatu populations (Shore Plover Recovery Plan, n.d.). DOC’s goal by 2011 was to “maintain and/or establish wild NZ shore plover at a total of five or more locations with a combined population of 250 or more birds” (Shore Plover Recovery Plan, n.d.). Their ultimate goal was to change the IUCN Red List status of the tūturūatu from endangered to vulnerable. Unfortunately, as of 2022, the tūturūatu is still categorized as

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an endangered species, consisting of less than 250 mature birds (IUCN, 2023).

In accordance with the recovery plan, DOC has attempted to re-establish populations on Mangere Island, Moturoa, Waikawa/Portland Island, Mana Island, and Motutapu Island with mixed success (BirdLife, 2022). The largest population of wild tūturuatu resides southeast of Pitt Island, also referred to as the Rangatira/South East Island of the Chatham Islands. A small translocated population was successfully established and stabilized on Mangere by 2013 and Waikawa/Portland Island by 2021. However, captive-bred releases on Moturoa, Mana, and Motutapu were unsuccessful due to rat/stoat incursions and other avian predation (BirdLife, 2022). The population introduced on Moturoa, specifically, disappeared almost immediately after introduction without identified knowledge of why (Dowding et al., 2003). These islands, in detail and in relation to the mainland, are shown in Figures 4 and 5. The blue markers indicate locations on and around the Chatham Islands, while yellow indicates locations off of the North Island.

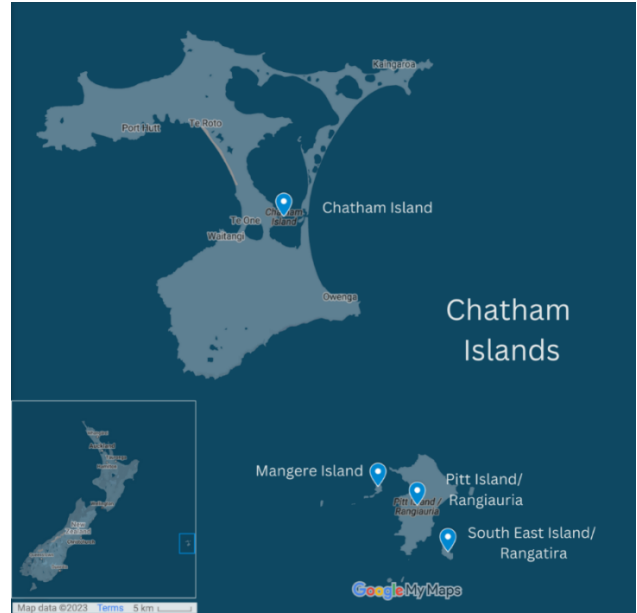


Figure 4- Locations of remote resettlement sites on the Chatham Islands.

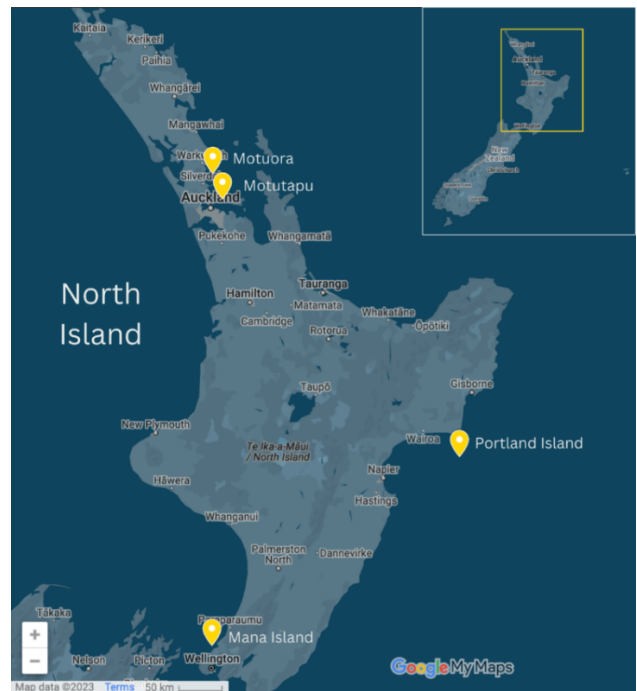


Figure 5- Locations of remote resettlement sites off mainland New Zealand.

Of these populations, the IUCN considers the populations located on the

South East Island and on Waikawa/Portland Island to be “relatively secure and self-sustaining in the long term” (BirdLife, 2022). Meanwhile, DOC’s Shore Plover Recovery Group is continuing this process of introducing the captive-bred tūturuatu to predator-free zones, and a new recovery plan is underway (BirdLife, 2022). Continuing the conservation of the species will continue to be confined to smaller islands free of predators or possibly limited to mainland sanctuaries (Dowding & O’Connor, 2013).

2.3 Designing a public outreach campaign

DOC requires public awareness and engagement to gain funding and support for other initiatives that protect the tūturuatu. Public awareness and recognition of the tūturuatu is low, and raising awareness of this species is essential given the ecological importance of native species within the ecosystems of New Zealand (Pérez-Ruzafa et al., 2011).

Ever since the indigenous Māori, also known as Tangata whenua, migrated from Eastern Polynesia around 1000 years ago, their culture, history, and ways of life have been passed down from generation to generation (Department of Conservation Te

Papa Atawhai, n.d.-b; Liu et al., 1999). Māori acquire knowledge using a traditional learning framework known as mātauranga Māori, whereby people gain understanding by closely observing their environments (Barriball, 2014). Mātauranga Māori is an intricate and culturally ingrained educational framework that fosters a profound connection between Māori people and their surroundings (Barriball, 2014). Integrating mātauranga Māori principles into conservation initiatives has resulted in significant environmental advancements, prompting scientists to recognize the significance of incorporating Māori perspectives on the environment (Taiepa et al., 1997). Utilizing the ways of mātauranga Māori to teach and create deeper connections to native species such as the tūturuatu is important for raising awareness of conservation efforts for species with dwindling populations.

Social marketing as a tool for species conservation is a new and effective way to reach a broad audience. Campaigns that focus on changing behavior are most effective for challenging and widespread conservation problems. (Green et al., 2019). These types of campaigns help shift social norms, which often results in increased population for the species, and compliance with environmental laws (Salazar et al., 2019).

According to Qirko's 2017 study, *Kinship appeals and conservation social marketing*, kinship is one of the social marketing methods that effectively targets human behavior. Giving animals human features like a name increases the effectiveness of a campaign (Qirko, 2017). Children having direct contact with non-human species can increase kinship. For example, stuffed animals from zoos, pets, and interactive documentaries can all reinforce the connection with the species (Qirko, 2017).

When creating an awareness campaign, considerable thought must be given to how the public pays attention. A successful campaign raises funds, awareness, and even incites behavioral changes in how the public interacts with the environment. Gaining public interest and maintaining it takes a lot of work. As explained, "Attention decay following a focusing event is often very rapid, with the attention half-life often spanning a few days or weeks" (Jarić et al., 2023, p. 335). After an event, attention towards the subject decreases significantly. The research points to a strategy to combat diminished attention. The first explains methods for, "...increasing the strength of attention peaks, their recurrence and frequency, or slowing down the attention

decay process" (Jarić et al., 2023, p. 337). The second option "maximize efficiency of conservation interventions and advocacy during those brief peaks of public interest" (Jarić et al., 2023). Engaging with the public through images, news, photos, platforms, and other media after an event is the best way to keep attention high.

2.3.1 Social media campaigning

Social media has been one of the best ways to reach the broadest audience and to keep attention on the subject. In an article explaining how utility companies can use social media, messages had to be dynamic over time. For example, a water company may have started a campaign with "Use what you need," but when drought conditions worsened, switched to, "Use even less" (Butcher, 2014). When creating a campaign, there must be flexibility in the messaging released to the public to continue to have traction.

Similarly, a study on how the public reacted to the positive emotions of a 'wandering elephant in Yunnan' found that the most searched keyword, elephant, was the story's subject. This insight is essential to keep in mind when posting online. Using the "correct" keywords will allow the public to find the post more easily. Moreover, the more

traffic it gets, the broader the audience it will reach. The study also found that, “scientific and technological means, such as real-time monitoring, are appropriate for documenting the dynamic activities of wild animals and have also proved adaptable to the timeliness and richness of social media presentation” (Xue & Wen, 2023). Using actual footage of the elephants enhanced the audience’s empathy towards the elephant.

To effectively use social media in a campaign, there must be a clear and dynamic message. For animal conservation specifically, actual footage of the animal caused the audience to feel more connected to the animal. This message can be translated to any media post; if the audience can attach an emotion to the post, they will care about it more.

2.3.2 Educational curriculum campaign

A valuable space for conservation knowledge is through education. The Predator Free New Zealand Trust website provides lesson plans and activities that can be included in the curriculum. Through this curriculum, students are encouraged to learn about the unique avian biodiversity of New Zealand and the vital role that they can play

in protecting these iconic species for future generations (Predator Free NZ Trust, 2023). This pre-made curriculum is a great resource to get information into the classroom, especially because teachers report that they struggle to find the time to develop content for the school curriculum (Palmer, A & Birdsall, S, 2023). Although resources are provided, there is no consistent implementation in schools. A study focused on the use of citizen science inside the classroom found that it was most effective to go to teachers directly to implement the program rather than a whole school (Schuttler et al., 2018).

Education programs that incorporate learning outside of the classroom more effectively connect children to the subject. Taking a field trip to nearby national parks will increase students’ knowledge of biodiversity, and even more so with a lesson before visiting (Burnett et al., 2015). Similarly, science activities that involve self-exploration, such as observation of a species, allow students to be active stewards of the environment (Ruck & Mannion, 2021).

2.3.3 Citizen science campaigns

Citizen science campaigns are a way for the public to contribute to scientific knowledge. There is no exact definition, but

it involves professional scientists overseeing a program where non-scientists can collect and analyze data (MacPhail & Colla, 2020). A long-term and successful citizen science campaign is the South African Bird Atlas Project (SABAP). The introduction of an easy-to-use app mobilized leisurely bird watchers, as well as those involved in the ecotourism industry and increased data collection by 155% (Lee & Nel, 2020). Data was analyzed by a grid system, including how many birds were seen, and of which species were in that grid within a specific time frame. This program shows how citizen science campaigns can increase public awareness and knowledge of a cause due to their participation in the research.

There is still a question of what types of people contribute to citizen science. In the UK, it was found that more than 60% of respondents were women, and a greater proportion of older, well-educated individuals contributed to a certain campaign (Maund et al., 2020). It can also be challenging to recruit and maintain a diverse group of participants for citizen science campaigns (MacPhail & Colla, 2020). They are a great way to involve non-professional scientists to contribute to findings. However, one has to be aware of who is collecting data

and any bias that could follow when analyzing and making sense of the data.

2.3.4 Live feed camera

In 2016, DOC set up a 24-hour live stream of a northern royal albatross nest in New Zealand called the RoyalCam. In 2019, DOC partnered with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Bird Cams Project to increase the viewership of their RoyalCam. This partnership resulted in 2.3 million people worldwide watching as a nesting pair, shown in Figure 6, raised their chick (Roy, 2019). This intimate experience of watching a chick hatch from an egg and grow up made people feel connected to and invested in the endangered albatross population. This also created a community surrounding the population as DOC set up community discussions, competitions to name the chick, and records of the royal albatross family history for viewers to read (RoyalCam, n.d.). These features, along with the live feed camera, allowed people to gain exposure and truly bond with the species and, therefore, have a greater investment in conservation efforts made towards them. The Cornell Lab Bird Cams Project has set up several live feed cameras for different species worldwide that viewers say are life-changing experiences (The Cornell Lab, n.d.). This method of

firsthand experience with the species by direct observation is key in forming a connection between the viewer and the species.



Figure 6- Live feed image of the northern royal albatross cam family (Walters, 2020).

2.4 Case studies in effective public awareness strategies, amplification of media, and the effects of species charisma

This section presents three case studies that offer insights into awareness campaigns. Strategies include focusing on endangered species, using media to intensify the significance of specific topics in the eyes of the public, and the consideration of a species' charisma as a factor in its levels of public support.

2.4.1 Case 1. The saiga antelope

A 2012 case study analyzed a media campaign to raise awareness for “the Critically Endangered saiga antelope saiga tatarica in the Pre-Caspian region of Russia” (Howe et al., 2012). They accomplished this by interviewing households that had received different forms of campaign media. Some include targeted media such as local and regional newspapers and television (Howe et al., 2012). Others were exposed to additional ‘social engagement,’ and some were only exposed to the actions of the conservation campaigns (Howe et al., 2012). From the interviews, the study found that a large proportion, 83%, exposed to only media campaigns could recall public awareness initiatives regarding the antelope (Howe et al., 2012). Additionally, an even greater proportion, 93%, of those who had additional social engagement alongside the media campaign could recall the public awareness initiative. As for the type of media used, they found that those who had received conservation details from television could recall better than those who had received physical campaign material (Howe et al., 2012). Ultimately, those exposed to the endangered antelope had the highest recorded conservation knowledge and public awareness (Howe et al., 2012).

Although dated, the findings from the case study lend helpful insight into public awareness strategies. It can be concluded that raising awareness for endangered species such as the saiga antelope and tūturuatu most likely would benefit from social engagement within the public on top of any media provided, as well as more visually based media such as short films or photographs. Increasing the visual sightings of the endangered species, as stated, would increase public awareness and conservation knowledge. However, in terms of the tūturuatu, which is confined to only a handful of locations, visual representation may have to be accomplished in other ways.

2.4.2 Case 2. Amplification through media

A second study from 2018 highlights the phenomenon of ‘media hype,’ an exaggeration of publicity in mass media. Chung’s paper (2018), *Dynamics of media hype: Interactivity of the media and the public*, underlines the influence of mass media in shaping the public's awareness and knowledge of issues. One author noted, “The role of the media is increasingly influential in the public agenda setting process because most of our understanding and knowledge about social issues or public problems comes

not from direct personal experience, but from diverse online and traditional media” (Chung, 2018, p. 213). However, those with direct contact or experience with the issue are much more immune to the media's influence than those unaware of the issues (Chung, 2018). In the case of the tūturuatu, that fact becomes an advantage as we attempt to increase public awareness in communities where many are unaware of the small birds' existence.

Furthermore, the study calls attention to the internet and its opportunities for “information sharing and public participation” (Chung, 2018). Allowing the public to share information and issues with others from different demographics and allowing discussion between those people heightens public awareness and involvement, leading to better support for conservation efforts such as the tūturuatu. Mass media allows people to create and spread their own stories regarding topics, which can shape the perceived reality of an issue (Chung, 2018). Overall, this study exemplifies the importance of appealing to the dynamics of mass media and utilizing the vast opportunities for dialogue on the Internet to amplify the coverage and importance of a campaign or cause.

2.4.3 Case 3. The effects of species charisma

A third case study, *The role of species charisma in biological invasions*, from 2020, describes the influence of charisma on public acceptance and knowledge of species, specifically invasive ones. Charisma “is used in the literature to refer to the ‘attractiveness,’ ‘appeal,’ or ‘beauty’ of a species” (Jarić et al., 2020). Although this study focuses specifically on the effects of charisma in

relation to invasive alien species, it still holds significant relevance to our project because charisma can have the ability to affect the public’s acceptance of a species greatly and therefore the support and resources provided to ensure its safety (Jarić et al., 2020). Specific traits of a species may contribute to the level of charisma it has in the eyes of the public, with specific traits being more desirable than others. Some examples of this phenomenon are shown in Figure 7.

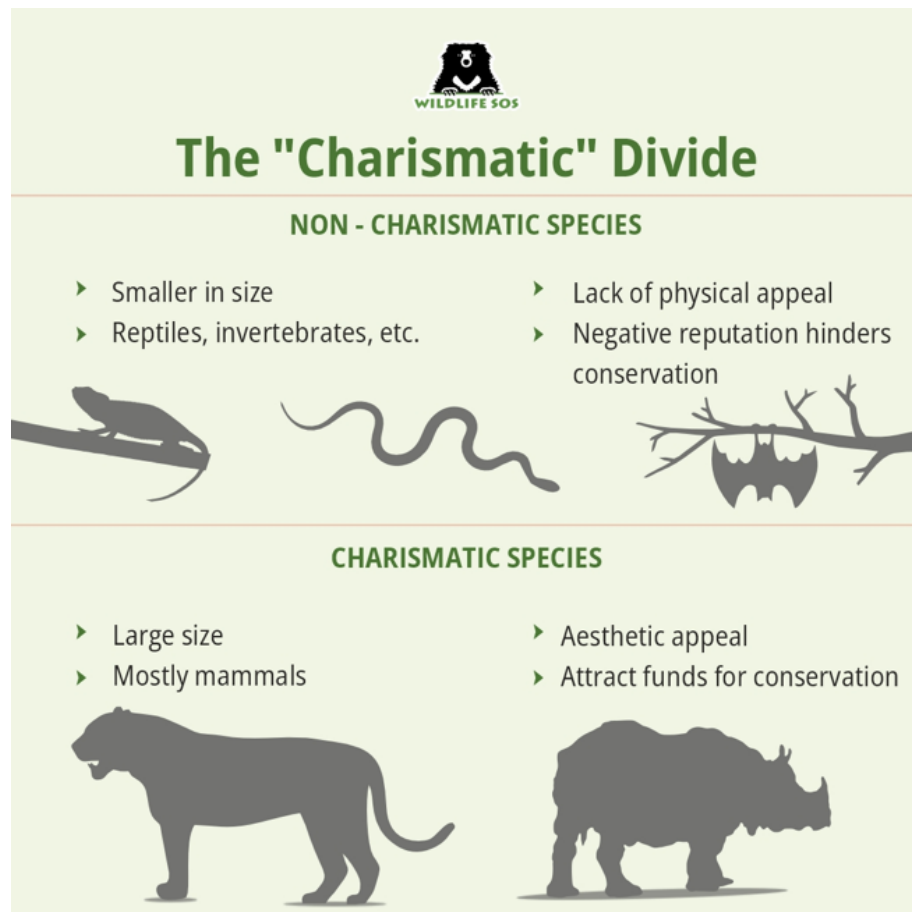


Figure 7- Species Charisma Infographic (Kewal Nawariya, 2023).

Although the appearance and behaviors of a species play heavily into its charisma, the influence of media is also apparent. It was found that with enough media coverage pushing a “specific point of view,” the perceived charisma can be shifted in either a positive or negative direction. (Jarić et al., 2020, as cited in, Veitch & Clout 2001; Crowley et al. 2017, as cited in, Shackleton et al. 2019).

An example that they described included the creation of a gray squirrel cartoon, where the squirrels were depicted as charming characters, which in turn flipped public perception of the invasive species from one that wanted to exterminate them to one that wanted to ensure their continued existence (Jarić et al., 2020, as cited in, Genovesi and Bertolino 2001). Furthermore, it is also stated that charisma can be impacted by a species’ perceived cultural connections, which can be established by positive experiences with the species and media influence (Jarić et al., 2020, as cited in, Crowley et al., 2017, 2018).

Another key factor the study brings to attention is shifting baseline syndrome, “a gradual change in accepted norms due to a lack of experience, memory, or knowledge” (Jarić et al., 2020, p. 348). In other words, people forget and confuse what is natural

because they have little to no experience with how the environment around them used to be. This applies to the capacity of individuals to identify a species as foreign, which diminishes with time after its arrival (Jarić et al., 2020, as cited in, Garcia Llorente et al., 2008). This holds true as well for diminished populations of native species such as the tūturuatu.

Using this case study, we can consider charisma as a factor in the public awareness of tūturuatu, possibly due to its lack of popularity. It may also be attributable to baseline syndrome, where the community has simply lost contact with its memory of the tūturuatu. Furthermore, we can now begin to think about utilizing media to increase charisma and subsequent awareness and support for the shorebird, while also attempting to integrate it into important cultural representation.

2.5 Research summary

A review of the current literature reveals valuable information to help accomplish our goal of creating a campaign to raise awareness of the tūturuatu. It has become clear that a primary contributor to success in raising awareness for species conservation is to have broad public knowledge of the campaign (Nelson et al.,

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2019). Based on case studies (Jarić et al., 2020; Chung, 2018; Howe et al., 2012), we also discovered that establishing a charismatic trait and having real-life interactions with the species can boost media attention. Social media allows a species to gain attention from people outside those already interested in them. It broadens the scope of awareness to a new audience. (Forster et al., 2023). Finally, consistent messaging and new content will ensure a place in the minds and hearts of the public.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

In this section, we revisit our goal and objectives and describe our approaches to data collection and analysis in greater detail. This project aimed to develop a campaign to increase public awareness regarding the fragile status of the tūturuatu. The three main objectives we identified are as follows:

1. Gauge the public’s knowledge of the tūturuatu and their willingness to lend support.
2. Identify best practices in science communication strategies and public outreach regarding conservation campaigns.
3. Develop a campaign technique based on our findings.

These objectives each require a range of data collection and research strategies. We used a combination of surveys, interviews, and statistical research.

3.1 Objective 1: Assess public awareness and interest

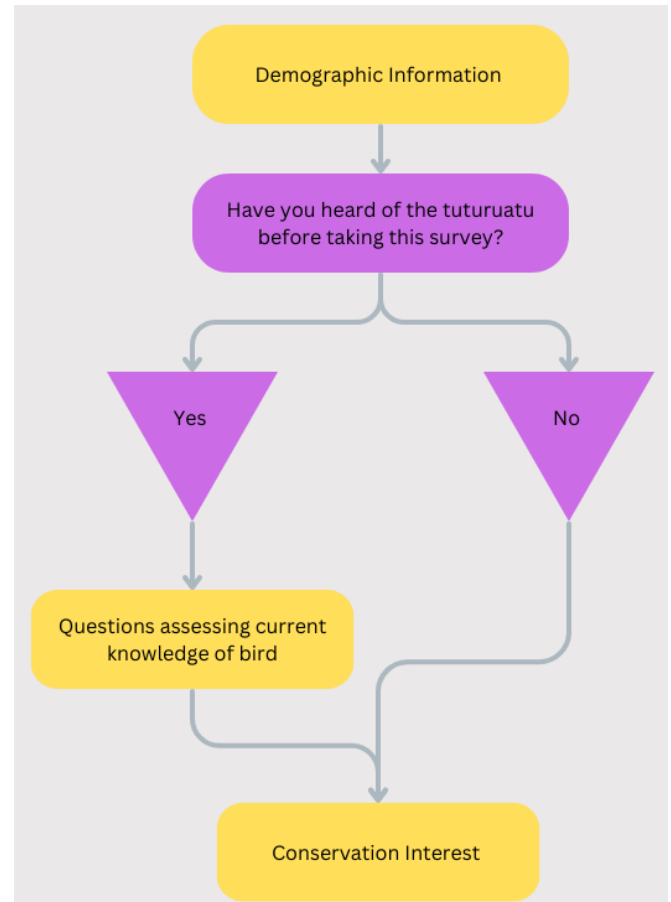


Figure 8- Survey flow based on responses.

We deployed a survey asking participants to identify their awareness of the tūturuatu. Figure 8 visually represents the structure of our survey. Please refer to Appendix A for our survey questions. Our survey was designed to understand if participants had any previous experiences with the tūturuatu and, if so, to assess how and where these experiences originated. At

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the midsection of our survey, we offered a brief overview of the tūturuatu in the form of

an easily digestible infographic, shown below in Figure 9.



Figure 9- The infographic included in our survey.

Once participants were informed about the tūturuatu, we gauged their interest in lending support. We surveyed over the first four to five weeks of our research phase. We

used a sample of convenience of public spaces in Wellington. Such places included cafes, Victoria University, public greens, weekly farmers markets, and the Museum of

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New Zealand Te Papa. We also surveyed at Zealandia Ecosanctuary knowing that people there are likely to have inherent biases towards the environment and bird life. We did this to gather data from those who have a higher probability of previously being aware of the bird and accounted for it in our survey. We leveraged local Facebook and Reddit groups, like Vic-Deals and r/wellington, to reach more participants and broaden our demographic pool.

We also posted QR codes, shown in Figure 10, which linked to our Qualtrics survey in areas we observed to have a lot of foot traffic. In addition, we prompted willing participants by approaching them in public and gauging their willingness to participate in our survey. To build trust, we introduced ourselves as university students partnering with the New Zealand Department of Conservation and explained our involvement in a research project.



Figure 10- The survey flyer with the QR code we handed out to participants.

3.2 Objective 2: Identify best practices in conservation campaigns

We conducted open-ended interviews with experts in the field to determine best practices in campaign strategies and learn from previous efforts. Our interviews focused on the types of media that would best reach the New Zealand public. These include social media platforms, news, public events, and other outreach opportunities. The goal was to compile science communication strategies that have been successful (or unsuccessful) before, specifically regarding conservation efforts.

Through our associates at DOC, we contacted an expert in marketing. We also interviewed five experts from Zealandia Ecosanctuary, who provided additional insight into the ecological and marketing aspects of conservation. These experts offered valuable information about effective strategies in outreach and conservation. Our approach used semi-standardized interviews with predetermined questions and themes but encouraged interviewees to take the lead in answering and elaborating (Berg & Lune, 2017). This interview style works best for determining the most advantageous and fruitful campaign strategies because it allows

the generation of innovative ideas without limiting the responses.

We also analyzed materials and visual images from DOC and other agencies' previous conservation campaigns to determine how these choices led to a successful campaign. Through these efforts, we identified specific components of successful campaigns that utilize public outreach and clear messaging.

3.3 Objective 3: Design campaign approaches

Based on the results gathered from objectives 1 and 2, we designed an awareness campaign for the tūturuatu. This exercise included creating ideas for campaign materials such as infographics, slogans, posters, videos, or postings for social media. Please look at the results section to see the campaign we developed.

CHAPTER 4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Objective 1: An assessment of public awareness and interest

The points discussed in this chapter are based on the analysis of survey responses outlined in section 3.1 and Appendix A. The survey received 258 responses, 237 of which were from New Zealand residents. The scope of this project was limited to New Zealand residents.

4.1.1 Demographic information

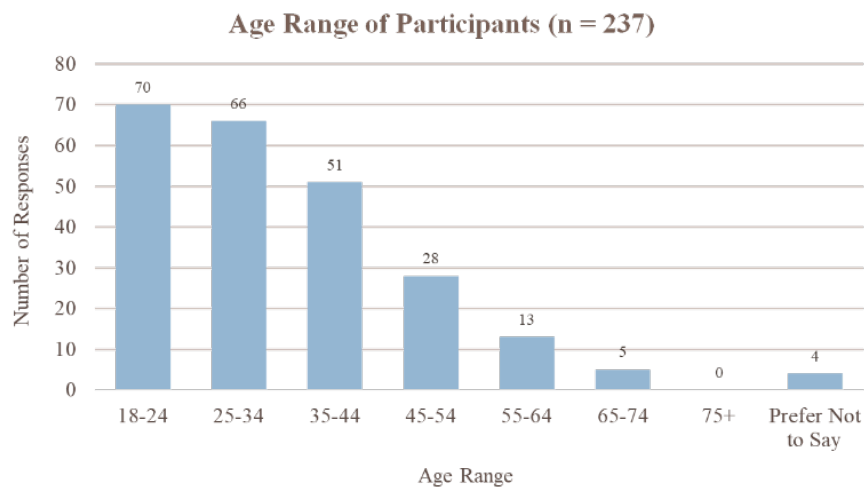


Figure 11- Age distribution of participants.

Most respondents were between the ages of 18-34, as seen in Figure 11. Other demographic data collected included where participants accessed the survey, if they are a part of a conservation group, and where they live. These data points were collected to acknowledge bias in our collection methodology.

4.1.2 Tūturua awareness and knowledge

Have you heard of the tūturua?
(n = 237)

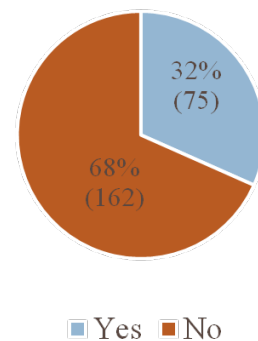


Figure 12- Percentage breakdown of NZ residents who have heard of the tūturua.

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For this survey, “awareness” refers to the state of respondents who answered “Yes” to question 7: “Have you ever heard of the tūturuatu shore plover before taking this survey?” “Knowledge” refers to responding correctly to questions 11, 12, and 13, which ask questions about the species type, characteristics, and location of the tūturuatu. These survey questions are found in Appendix A.

Most respondents had not heard of the tūturuatu, as seen in Figure 12. Of the 237 responses analyzed, 32% of respondents

responded “yes” to having heard of the tūturuatu before taking the survey. With 68% of respondents not aware of the tūturuatu, it points to a lack of exposure to information regarding the tūturuatu. A limitation of this result is the targeted audience that occurred when spreading the survey. The survey was given to a general audience, and conservation-specific groups. Due to the responses from those conservation-specific groups, this number may not accurately represent the general population.

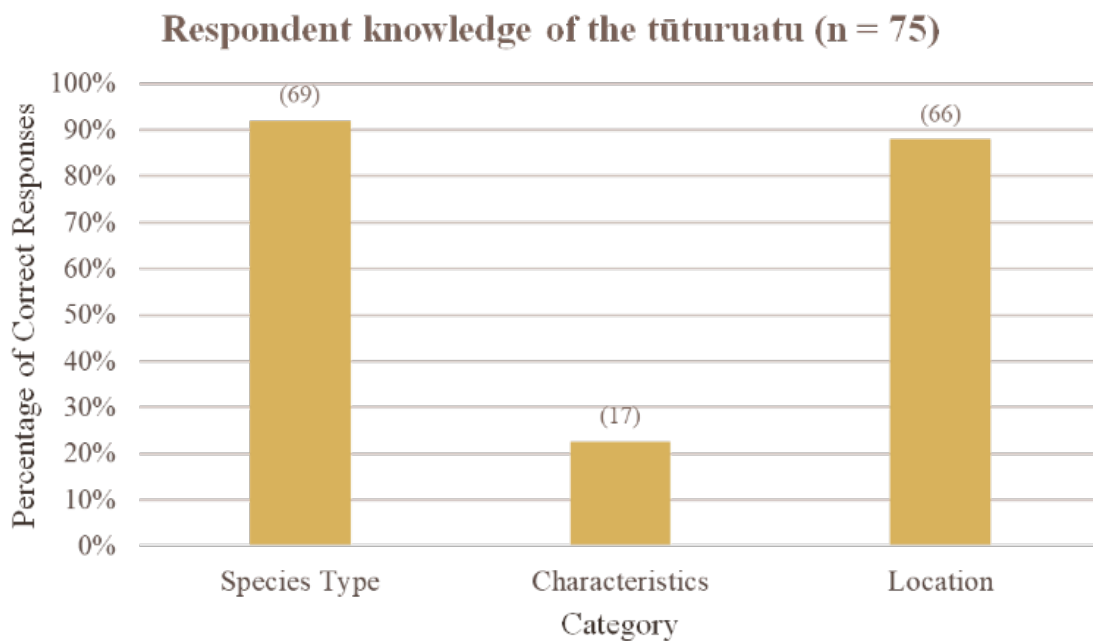


Figure 13- The percentage of correct responses to questions assessing knowledge of respondents who were aware of the tūturuatu.

Of the 75 respondents who expressed awareness of the tūturuatu, 69 correctly identified the tūturuatu as a bird, 17 correctly identified characteristics, and 66 identified

New Zealand as the location of the tūturuatu (see Figure 13). Of these 75, 17 (22.67%) correctly answered all the questions pertaining to the categories above. The

question regarding characteristics was answered incorrectly the most. It required participants to know about the bright orange ring around the tūturuatu eye. Of the three questions, it was the one that was hypothesized to be the hardest to get correctly. Only people with actual knowledge of the tūturuatu could have identified this characteristic correctly without seeing a picture.

Of all New Zealand residents surveyed, 7.17% of respondents expressed complete knowledge of the bird by correctly answering all the knowledge questions in the categories above, therefore verifying their complete knowledge of the tūturuatu. Overall, this shows that the tūturuatu is well-known by relatively few New Zealand residents.

4.1.3 Conservation groups

Have members of conservation groups heard of the tūturuatu?
(n = 50)

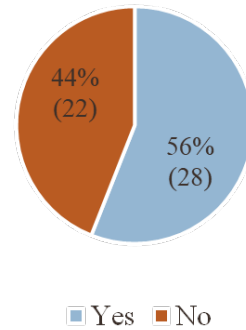


Figure 14- Percentage of NZ conservation members who are aware of the tūturuatu.

We hypothesized that members of conservation groups would have a stronger interest in conservation and, therefore, might have a higher chance of knowing the tūturuatu. Of the respondents who claimed they were part of a conservation group (n=50), 56% said they were aware of the tūturuatu, as seen in Figure 14. This is a higher percentage than the general NZ population. Of those associated with conservation groups, 18% were able to verify complete knowledge of the bird. Only 4.28% of those not belonging to conservation groups could verify their complete knowledge of the bird. These two statistics support our hypothesis that those who belong to conservation groups are more likely to have knowledge of the tūturuatu. Data also shows

that many of those involved in conservation have not heard of the tūturuatu.

4.1.4 Conservation support interest

How interested are you in supporting the tūturuatu?
(n = 237)

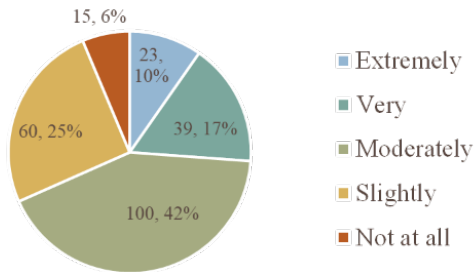


Figure 15- Percentage breakdown of interest levels of supporting the tūturuatu.

The final section of the survey, completed by all respondents, aimed to assess their interest in supporting the tūturuatu. Following a brief review of an infographic and a text blurb (provided in Appendix A), participants were asked the question, "How

interested are you in supporting the tūturuatu?"

A large proportion of respondents indicated they would be at least ‘moderately’ interested in supporting tūturuatu conservation, with 31% indicating they would be ‘slightly’ or ‘not interested at all’, as seen in Figure 15. This level of interest is a positive sign, suggesting that most participants expressed some willingness to support the tūturuatu. The interest in the conservation of native species appears to align with a broader trend in New Zealand, as evidenced by the popularity of kiwi and kākāpō after their respective conservation campaigns. In a study done with 300 New Zealand residents, 44% named the kiwi as the first endangered species they could think of, and 7%, which was the next highest response, named the kākāpō (Seabrook-Davidson & Brunton, 2014).

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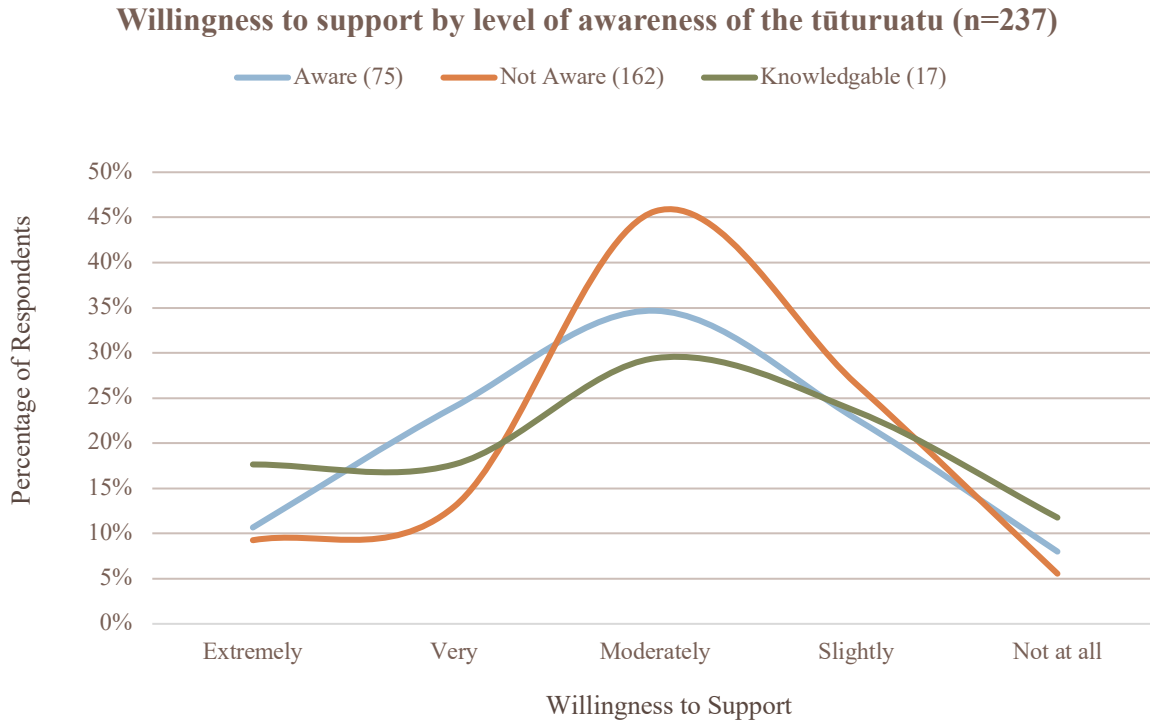


Figure 16- Levels of support interest based on resident awareness of the tūturuatu.

Respondents' willingness to support was compared to their response to whether they were aware of the tūturuatu. It was hypothesized that those who were previously aware of the bird, as well as those who had complete 'knowledge' of the bird before taking the survey would be more inclined to lend support in its conservation than those who had only learned about the tūturuatu through the survey. We see in Figure 16 that those who claimed to be aware of the bird follow a normal distribution of interest in supporting conservation efforts, with the mean level of interest falling in the 'Moderately interested' category. Those who were not aware of tūturuatu before the survey

followed a right skewed distribution of interest, with the mean level of interest falling in the 'Slightly interested' category. These distributions support our hypothesis that those previously aware of the bird before taking the survey would be more inclined to lend support in its conservation than those who had only learned about the tūturuatu through the survey. A possible explanation for this could be that those who were previously aware have had more time and opportunity to establish a mental and emotional connection with the tūturuatu, increasing the willingness to lend support. In contrast, those who just learned about the tūturuatu have not had the chance to build

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that relationship, so they do not yet care enough to be interested in supporting conservation efforts. Interestingly, those who had complete knowledge of the bird showed signs of a right skewed distribution towards less interest, like those who had no awareness. However, they still had the

highest percentage of people who were extremely willing to support it. This could be a topic for future research.

Furthermore, participants were asked about the type of campaign they would engage in.

What types of support are you willing to engage in? (n = 237)

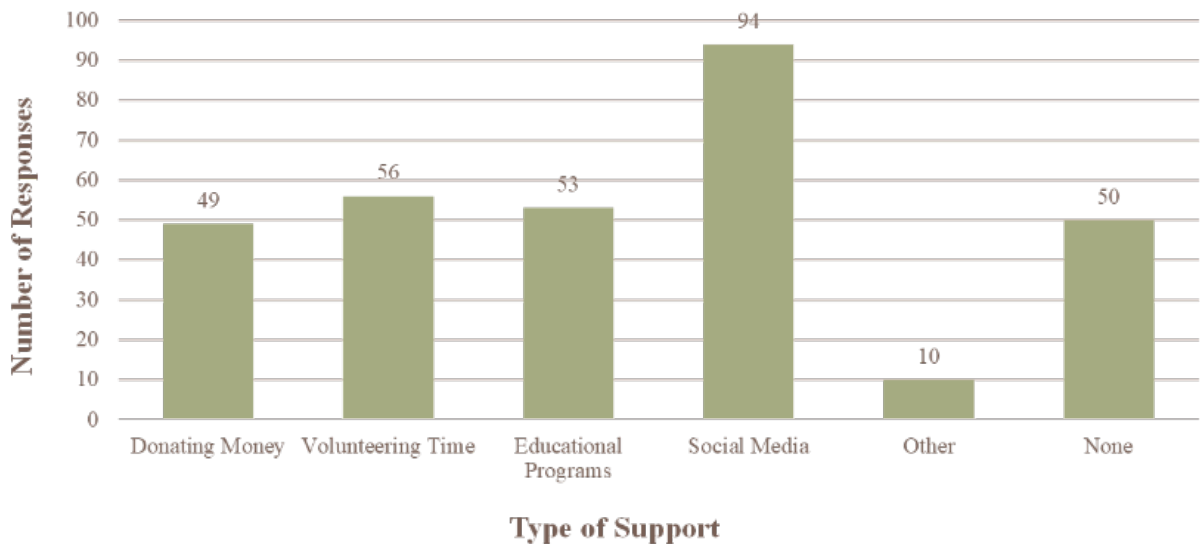


Figure 17- Types of support respondents would be willing to engage in.

Respondents could select more than one option of support to engage in, resulting in 312 responses. Most respondents expressed a preference for engaging in a social media campaign, as seen in Figure 17. The next most popular response was volunteering time and education programs. In the "Other" category, participants specified that they would "tell their friends"

or "conduct their own research" to support the conservation of the tūturuatu. This information was used as a guide to develop the campaign for the tūturuatu. Social media emerged as the most popular mode of engagement. Social media engagement means following, liking, commenting, and sharing posts.

4.1.5 Age

Age and Advocacy: Exploring Conservation Support Preferences Across Generations (n = 237)

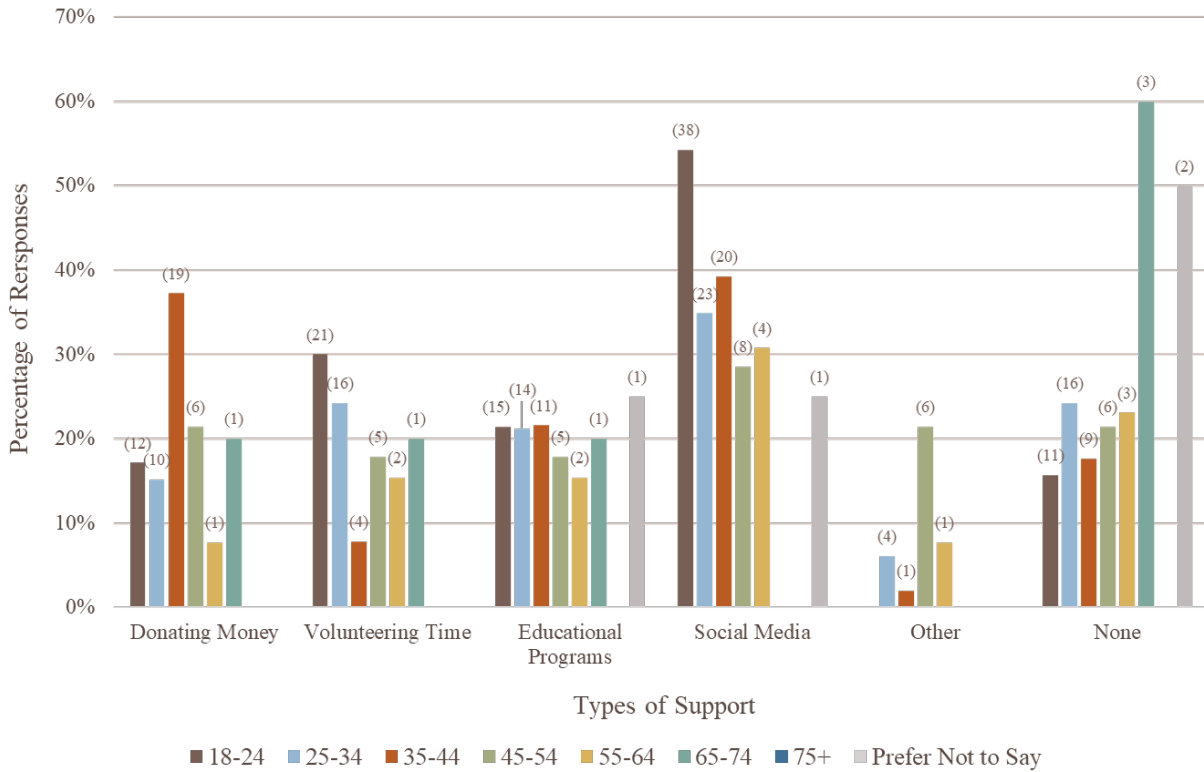


Figure 18- Age breakdown of different conservation support types.

Building upon the data from Figure 18, the popularity of social media as a campaign channel is evident among the younger generations, specifically individuals aged 44 and below, but there is still interest from the older generations as well. A similar pattern is observed in the willingness to volunteer time. In contrast, older respondents are more inclined to donate money or express a desire for no involvement. While volunteering time had a larger number of individuals that would support the initiative,

educational programs have more broad support across all age groups. However, it is important to note a limitation in this data: the disproportionate number of responses from younger individuals.

4.1.6 Ethnicity

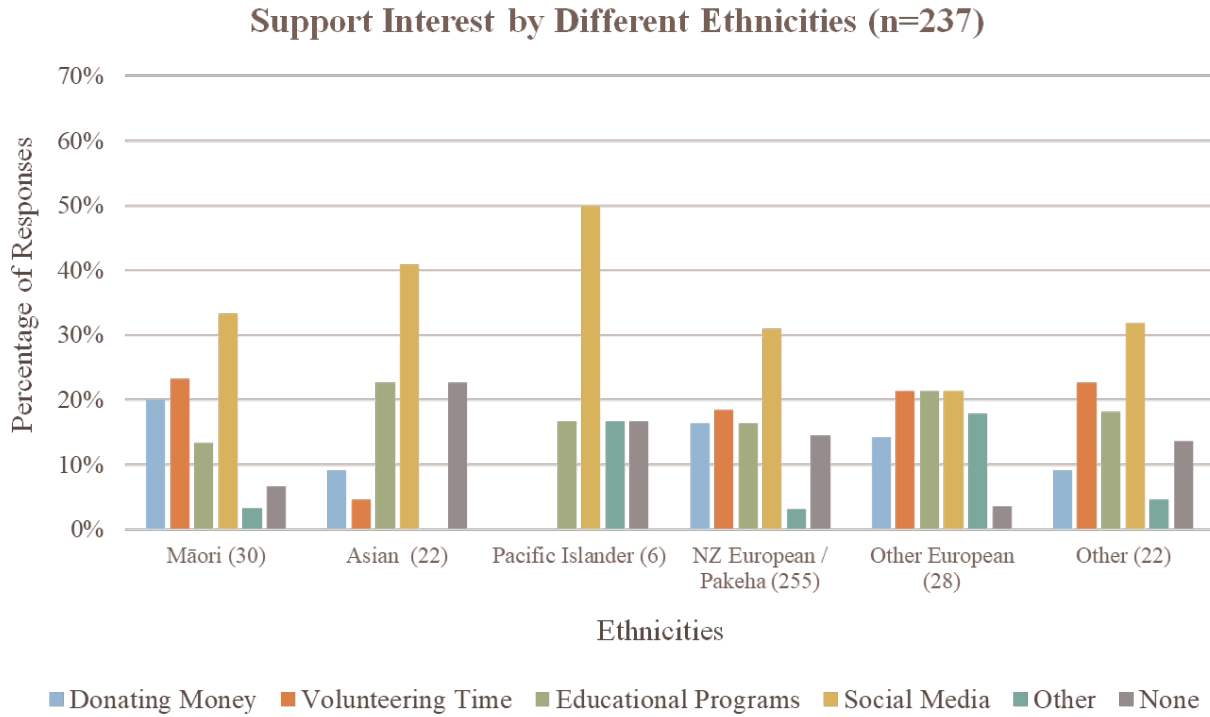


Figure 19- Ethnic breakdown of different conservation support types.

To further explore the people and their preference for campaign support, the types of support for each campaign were broken down by ethnicity. As seen in Figure 19, there is no apparent relationship between ethnicity and a particular type of campaign. The same trend of social media being the favorite and educational programs being widely supported among ethnicities emerges from this graph. While some ethnicities express more interest in volunteering time, all at least indicated an interest in educational programs.

4.2 Objective 2: Best practices in conservation campaigns

Four open-ended interviews with various experts from different backgrounds were conducted to create a well-developed understanding of the best science communication techniques regarding conservation campaigns.

Jo Ledington, the General Manager of Conservation and Restoration at Zealandia Ecosanctuary, and Ellen Irwin, Lead Ranger of Conservation at Zealandia Ecosanctuary

offered us insight into the ecological aspect of conservation, whereas Terese McLeod, a Bicultural Ranger at Zealandia, Gini Letham, the Senior Communications Advisor at Zealandia, Anna Fensom, the Digital Marketing Advisor at Zealandia and Rose Scully, the Senior Brand and Marketing Advisor at DOC aided in our understanding of social marketing and science communication strategies.

4.2.1 Social marketing

During our interviews, we learned fundamental social marketing strategies to reach an audience successfully. Specifically, we learned that key messages need to be outlined before creating and publishing content. While discussing how to determine a key message, Jo Ledington explained how important it is to, "...take a step back and think who is your audience?" Knowing the audience allows one to tailor messages towards their interests. When asked a similar question, Rose Scully recommended asking oneself, "What do we need to achieve? [What do] we need to achieve awareness with a certain group?". Creating information is a strategic process. Considering the audience and the type of action you want them to take will dictate what content should be produced.

Terese McLeod provided insight into how Zealandia processes and releases some of their information to the public. As a Bicultural Ranger, she ensures the Māori perspective is appropriately portrayed. She states, "So tourism, the operation here of tourism they always want more and more and more and more Māori stories. I won't give them more and more and more, because it would be irresponsible of me to." This is an important reflection to keep in mind when deciding what content to post, especially if it has intrinsic ties to a certain culture, such as Māori culture. This is where media filtering becomes necessary to protect cultural heritage and prevent misinterpretation and appropriation.

4.2.2 The marketing funnel

Rose Scully discussed the marketing funnel, visualized below in Figure 20, that encapsulates how people go from viewing media to becoming engaged with the subject.

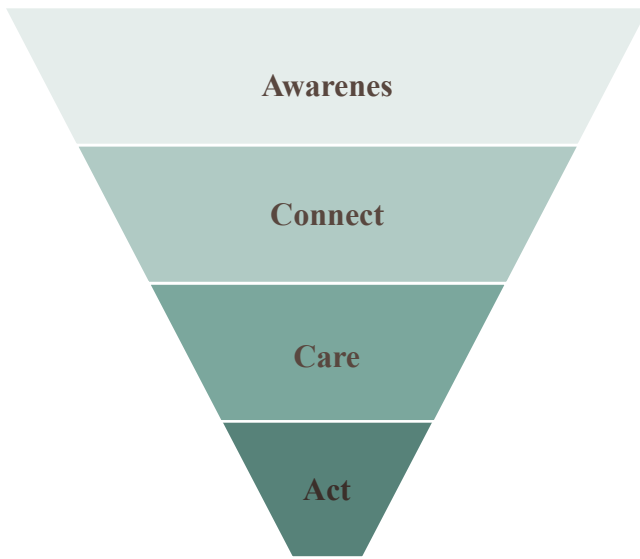


Figure 20- A visualization of the social marketing funnel

The top of the funnel represents awareness, the stage in which people first interact with media and become aware. The next stage, connection, represents the succeeding level that the audience may fall into or out of after first becoming aware, where they develop a surface-level emotional connection to the contents of the media. Media being produced can become more focused and elicit a deeper emotional response from the audience to move one more step down to care. Finally, we see a portion of the audience who are convinced enough to care and are moved to action, where they go out of their way to interact with media and make behavioral changes in response to posted media. As Rose Scully said, “Once you care about it, you can act on it. So, you kinda have to bring them on that journey.” She continues this thought by

explaining, “If you don't fill that funnel with 100 people, then you won't get 10 people out of the bottom. It's a numbers game... at a very basic level.” Content must have a wide enough range to make people aware, if one hopes to get increased levels of action from the audience. The question remains: how can we design our content to reach the greatest number of people while also evoking commitment to the cause?

4.2.3 Content pillars

“

Variety is key to keeping your audience interested and engaged
-Anna Fensom

”

Another key concept discussed during our interviews was content pillars, visualized in Figure 21. These are defined as the overarching thematic categories under which any social media content will fall. Rose Scully mentioned utilizing them developing a marketing kit for the takahē recovery campaign. Anna Fensom, the Digital Marketing Advisor at Zealandia, also uses content pillars and elaborates on her process for creating content for Zealandia's various social media platforms. Those pillars include entertainment, education, inspiration, and promotion, as depicted in the Figure below.



Figure 21- The four content pillars illustrated

She stated, “I try to make our social media content, at least one of these pillars.” This concept of content pillars goes hand in hand with the marketing funnel Rose Scully explained to us. The first content pillar is entertainment. This type of content focuses on producing “quick and punchy” content that intrigues the audience and is mainly meant to get views and lead to more overall awareness, corresponding to the first level of the funnel. Content involving the education pillar should “spark curiosity [and] help the viewer gain knowledge,” because it encourages them to care about the species. This type of content would move people into the connection stage of the funnel as they get to know the species more. Content that falls within the inspiration pillar is meant to “inspire someone enough to want to change their behavior or perspective in some way, they’re likely to share that with others as well.” The goal of inspirational content

would be to move viewers to a state of wanting to act, analogous to the care stage of the funnel. The last pillar is promotion, which includes content that depicts methods of acting, such as making donations or, specifically this year, voting for Bird of the Century. Anna Fensom claimed promotion content is, “being clear about your call to action.” This type of content is meant to target viewers who have moved through the funnel and have reached the final stage: action. Following these content pillars ensures that the content is focused and engaging to the viewer and can aid in bringing them to action, as Rose Scully stated earlier.

4.2.4 “Hooking” the audience

When creating content, many interviewees emphasized the importance of “hooking” your viewer within the first three seconds. This concept mostly pertains to video content and utilizes tools like text, speech, or visual imagery to grab the audience's attention and convince them to view the rest of the content. A hook could be anything from a vivid description, interesting quote, anecdote, statistical fact, or thought-provoking question such as, “What if the key to happiness isn't where everyone else is

looking?” If it gets the audience invested in what is to come, then it is a successful hook.

Rose Scully, a Senior Brand and Marketing Advisor at DOC explained, “You have to have the most interesting things right up front.” If people are not interested in the first three seconds, they will not engage with the content. Anna Fensom explained how one video she posted started with her saying, “I’m being followed...” She then paused and continued “...by the cutest little bird.” Her hook made people worry, “oh, she’s being followed. She’s a woman. She’s alone. In the bush. Oh, It’s just a bird. We’re OK. She’s not gonna die.” Her story engaged the audience. Therefore, more people stayed to finish the video to see if she was okay. Using the strategy of hooks increases the interaction between content and the audience and, therefore, offers a greater chance of care and action.

4.2.5 Positive messaging

Regarding the posted content, a theme found in every interview was the idea of positive messaging. It can be easy to focus on the negatives when discussing species conservation, especially in New Zealand, where many species are endangered. Often, the message becomes “don’t do this”, but as Ranger Ellen Irwin explained, “If you tell

people not to do something then they’re gonna remember that thing, but not that it’s bad.” Instead, try to find a different way to angle the information.

The idea of “restorative hope” was brought up by Gini Letham. It includes the use of “wins” to get a message across. She gave an example about how Wellington residents can now see markings made from kākā on trees, which is inspirational because they used to be almost extinct. Rose Scully provided a similar example with the takahē. The takahē were once considered extinct, but just placed tenth in the Bird of the Century contest. A small, good sign or “win” is much more encouraging than focusing on the fact that the bird is still endangered, which can get lost in the multitude of negativity out in the world. Positive messaging will be received better and more effective than negative statements.

4.2.6 Building a community

Another major theme is community. For a single campaign, there are many different stakeholders. There are the conservationists, but there are also the community members and stakeholders surrounding them and the species that are being conserved.

During a recent campaign for Zealandia, they had to get the toitoi, the common bully fish, ready for translocation and ensure the stream they were being placed in would remain a suitable habitat. A pollution problem in the stream was recognized. Jo Ledington explained, "Most of this waste originates from businesses, flowing down into the stream unchecked. When we escorted those individuals down there, [employees of the business] were taken aback. They were shocked to realize that the trash they were seeing belonged to them. It prompted an immediate reaction - suddenly, they felt the urgent need to prevent their waste from polluting this area. It's about that connection, that moment of realization when they understood how they impact their environment." By involving everyone in the effort, greater, more substantial impacts can be had and spread. This discussion resulted in the most powerful quotes uttered in the interviews.

When creating content for campaigns, all stakeholders should be recognized for their work. Involving everyone in that decision and its implementation will produce a more consistent and uniform message.

4.2.7 The use of passion and engagement

All interviewees mentioned the importance of passion when creating content. Ellen mentioned, "you genuinely can get people kind of amped up and engaged about almost anything, as long as you've got someone really passionate kind of driving that." She explained that although fun facts are good, sometimes you need to dig deeper with the type of content you produce to create

“

**You can't save species in New Zealand
alone**

-Jo Ledington

”

a stronger bond between your audience and the species you are trying to save. Gini also mentions that people tend to connect with other people more than with the species itself. She said, "...rather than it just being like, here's 10 facts about this bird. It's like, oh, here's this guy. He's been working with this bird for this many years, and this is why he cares. Like those kind of stories really get people interested." There will be subsets of people with an interest in conservation who want to know more about the work being done to restore the species population.

Rose Scully has worked with the Fiordland Kiwi Diaries, a series DOC

produced that followed rangers working with the tokoeka kiwi. They utilized different types of content for different audiences. For example, some of their content focused more on cute and funny aspects of the kiwi, whereas some focused more on the rangers themselves and their thoughts and conservation efforts in the field. Rose explained, “You've got an audience that are much more engaged with conservation and have a greater interest in exactly how that work is done. So then you've got some Voxpop or Talking Head type stuff where you're actually interviewing the rangers about the work that they do,” and “the considerations that they have to take into account.”

Rangers can offer a special type of insight into species. They devote a large amount of their lives to species conservation and often find themselves forming intimate relationships with them.

“
We've definitely noticed that people love
the behind-the-scenes kind of
conservation stories
-Ellen Irwin
”

Terese McLeod met the tūturuatu at Cape Sanctuary, in Hawke's Bay, and said, “the way that [the rangers] talk about them because they're caring intimately with them,

and they have a relationship. I got to learn a lot from the Māori advisors at the Cape Sanctuary about the shore plover.” She explains that rangers form a unique relationship through observation, which is very powerful. Through this intimacy, rangers get to know the bird in its entirety, knowing its quirks and personality. They can offer insight into the behaviors and characteristics that most people won't be able to find or see through an online research article. These are the “things that might kind of draw the public in. Things that make it unique or special,” says Ellen Irwin.

They understand the facets and characteristics of the bird that make it unique, which is what sparks interest. That is what causes people to stop and watch a video or look at a post, those mannerisms, and personalities that the public would not usually be able to see, understand, and connect with without the storytelling of those who work closely with birds.

4.3 Objective 3: Development of the tūturuatu campaign

Our recommended campaign for the tūturuatu is provided below in our Recommendations and Conclusions section.

CHAPTER 5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter thoroughly reviews our recommendations for increasing public awareness of the tūturuatū and our concluding thoughts. Our recommendations are intended to engage the public through educational materials and social media.

5.1 Educational program

We recommend that DOC implements educational activities designed for youth of all ages to incorporate them into existing New Zealand school curricula. Education empowers individuals by giving them the knowledge, resources, and confidence to engage in the world and make meaningful impacts through their actions. Based on our survey results, a campaign in education is the third most popular type of support, and all age groups widely support it. Although the campaign with the second most support is volunteering time, the tūturuatū is currently only found on remote predator-free islands and captive breeding centers, meaning there is little to no opportunity for the public to volunteer directly with the birds. This also makes implementing a citizen science campaign

impractical. Therefore, education is the second-best campaign option for the tūturuatū due to its support and applicability.

By introducing younger students to the species, schools can instill a lasting sense of curiosity and investment in the conservation of the tūturuatū. A study in Japan found that exposing primary school aged students to education about the environment led to a continued connection as they grew up (Sakurai & Uehara, 2020). Likewise, Rose Scully explained that “[Conservation] kind of moves with you through life stages, but the earlier you're introduced to it, the earlier you're made to care about it.” She also stated that interest in conservation is a one-way path, “you never really move away from caring about conservation.” This same pattern could apply to the tūturuatū. Starting education of the species during primary school (ages 6-12) may grow into an ongoing interest as they age.

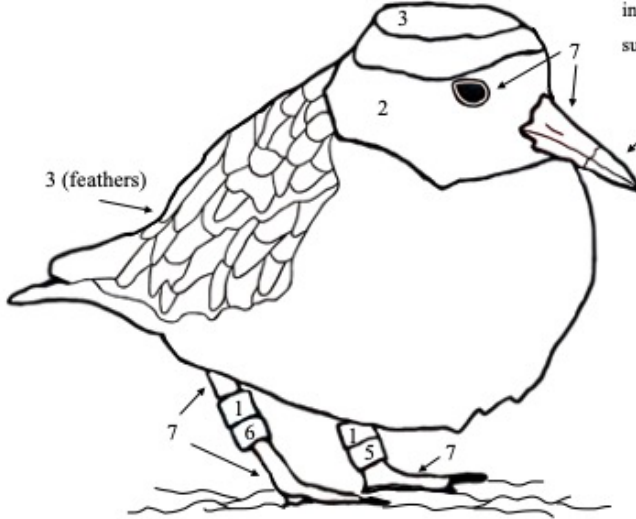
However, there are a few limitations to implementing an educational program. Teachers spend a lot of time carefully

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creating their lesson plans ensuring they reach their government-mandated requirements. Creating an entire lesson plan centered around the tūturuatu is not feasible as it focuses on a specific species and would likely take away from existing lesson plans. Rose Scully, whose mother is a teacher in New Zealand, states, “If you go in with something that is not already tied to the curriculum, it will not get through because [teachers] don't have time. You have to make it really easy for them.” For this reason, we have suggested creating activities that can easily blend into existing curricula that spotlight the tūturuatu.

We suggest using coloring page activities to introduce the species to younger children. Specifically, we suggest DOC use or base their ideas on the example provided, found in Appendix D. The example we have provided includes a “Color-by-Number” sheet. Our example, shown in Figure 22, focuses on reading comprehension by providing a short paragraph on the tūturuatu and follow-up questions and answers based on the paragraph. Matching these questions and answers will result in a traditional color-by-numbers sheet

Help the Tūturuatu Find Its Colors



Kia ora, I'm Terry the tūturuatu shore plover. I am an endangered bird about the size of your hand. I live on the predator free islands of Aotearoa. I am very vulnerable to rodent predators like rats, stoats, and possums. I like to hide my nest on the shoreline in the bushes, driftwood, and boulders. I have a bright orange ring around my eyes and a little cap of feathers on my head. I like to bob my head to intimidate others. I also like to fly around and explore; I am very curious about my surroundings. One day I'll find a mate and we'll be together forever!

Match to find Terry's colors!

1. Where does Terry live?	• Lizard - (Pink)
2. Who is Terry scared of?	• False - (Orange)
3. What type of animal is Terry?	• Shoreline (Bushes, driftwood, etc.) - (Purple)
4. Where is Terry's nest?	• True (Blue)
5. How does Terry intimidate others?	• Bird - (Brown)
6. How big is Terry?	• Bobbing his head - (Grey)
7. True or false: Terry hates exploring.	• Size of your hand - (Green)
	• Forest - (Yellow)
	• Predator free islands - (Red)
	• Predators (Rats, stoats, possums, etc.) - (Black)

Figure 22- The tūturuatu coloring activity our team developed.

These fun activities can be implemented in various classrooms to increase awareness of the tūturuatu. Additionally, there is the possibility that children may return home to share their coloring pages with their parents and family. We hope that seeing the children's art will spark curiosity about the tūturuatu, creating a larger community of individuals who are knowledgeable about the bird and concerned for its future.

This sheet can be altered to fit different subjects, such as math, where worded questions and answers can be switched out for math problems and numerical answers. Once students get into secondary education, classes are more variable and focused than content during primary. These problems can be scaled up to fit the different grade levels; for example, simple addition could be used for year three, multiplication can be used for year seven (Learning Media Limited, 2010). The concept of the sheet can vary from color-by-number, to drawing, or challenging students to use online graphing programs such as Desmos to create their best rendition of the tūturuatu. This would allow for greater critical thinking that coincides escalating

course difficulties while exposing students to the species.

Additionally, there is the possibility that children may return home to share their coloring pages with their parents and family. We hope that seeing the children's art will spark curiosity about the tūturuatu, creating a larger community of individuals who are knowledgeable about the bird and concerned for its future. Teens and adults have access to more of the world and can be better targeted on social media. A long-term goal could be to develop conservation education materials for secondary education.

5.2 Social media

A social media presence should be created and sustained for the tūturuatu. Social media has become a powerful tool in species conservation. It allows people from all over the world to connect with species they may never see on their own.

We recommend that DOC follow/consider the social marketing plan we have created for the tūturuatu. The full plan can be found in Appendix E. **This plan lays out key messages to** ensure that released content meets the outlined goal and tells the story that DOC wants to convey. Social media will be comprised of easily digestible

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and engaging posts for all ages. Posts can include a mix of infographics, clips of the bird, and media that will evoke emotional responses such as humor, empathy, affection, and hope. Following cultural and popular trends is essential to keep up interest. Posts should also follow the set content pillars to ensure variety and relevance.

All information should relate to the developed messages in some way. Content should be positive, relating to an identified species niche and engaging to all viewers. This is the same information already identified in the literature review in 2.4.3, the case study of species charisma. In aligning with interview findings and established literature, it is evident that crafting deliberate, positive, and engaging key messages tied to a species-specific niche remains pivotal for

effective public communication and resonance. As Rose Scully said in her interview, “the sooner you become a conservation advocate, the better.” If we can get people to start caring about the little bird, there is a better chance for a brighter future, where the tūturuatu prospers.

A page specific to the tūturuatu should be created on Instagram and possibly TikTok, and the current Facebook page should be utilized more often. We suggest that content already be created for the Tūturuatu Telegraph, the bi-monthly newsletter about the tūturuatu, for posting information. **The information should be edited to be more platform friendly, in accordance with our developed Social Marketing Manual.**

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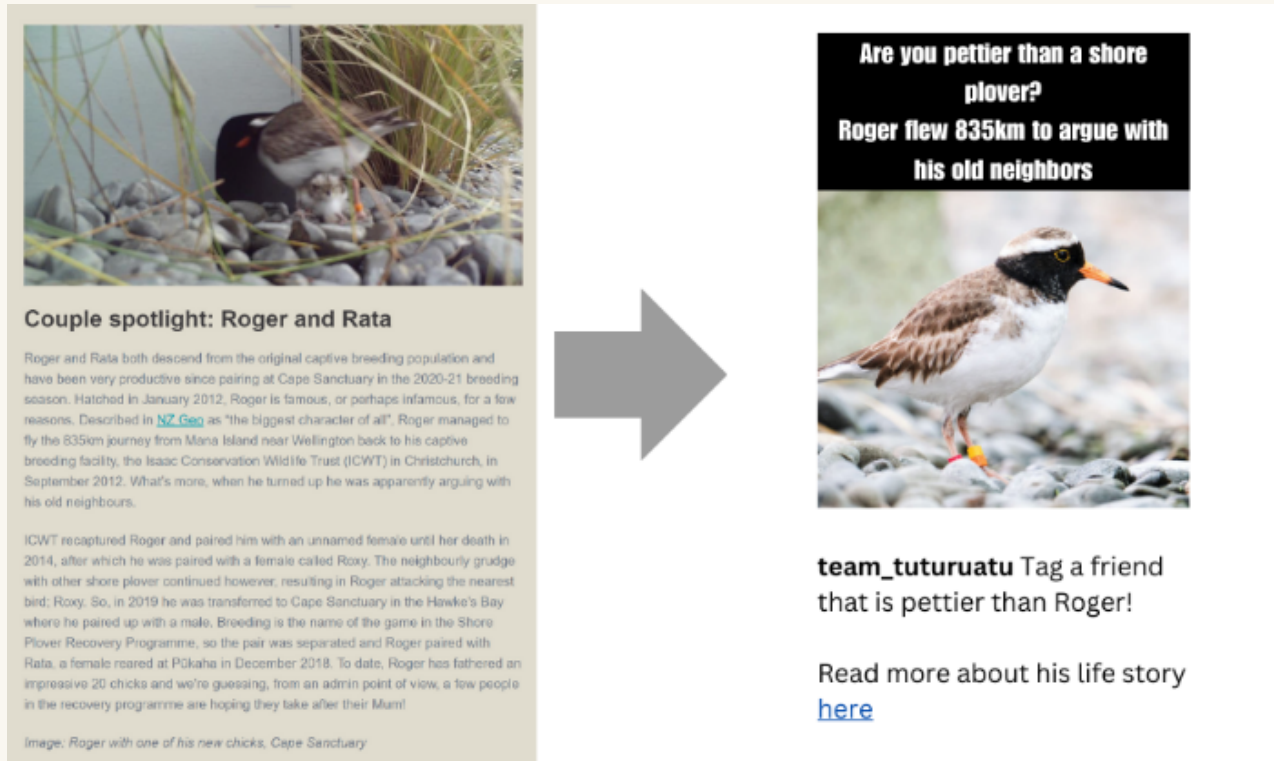


Figure 23- An example of the blog post edited to be an Instagram post.

Figure 23 is an example of how an existing newsletter section can be edited to be a post on social media. The telegraph pictured above, on the left, includes a short story about Roger, the tūturuatu who embarked on a journey and instigated many relationship problems, such as attacking his mate. This story does a great job of humanizing the tūturuatu. Although Roger's actions are not respectable, it is still an incredibly interesting read. This type of content would fall within the entertainment and education pillars as it is fun to read but teaches you about some tūturuatu behaviors. This could be adapted to be an Instagram

post, shown on the right side of Figure 23, by highlighting the entertaining parts of the story, as shown above. A punchy, witty hook was used to caption the post, with the option to read the full story on the telegraph at the end. This type of media captures attention with a hook and offers an outlet to educational content but can also provide entertainment to those scrolling past. The outcome of this example will be a promotion of the Tūturuatu Telegraph and may lead to an increase in web traffic and potential subscribers for the newsletter.



Figure 24- A meme of a sad tūturūatu being relatable with a current event.

This meme of the tūturūatu looking dejected (Figure 24) is paired with the text describing a current event where people feel the way the bird looks. This is another example of humanizing the tūturūatu, allowing people to connect to the bird. This type of content falls in the entertainment pillar and is primarily meant to introduce the tūturūatu to the audience.

Creating a consistent stream of information will allow viewers to remain engaged and develop knowledge of the tūturūatu without overwhelming them with a lot of information upfront. This will encourage more people to care enough to start acting towards conserving the species.

5.3 Collaboration

We suggest featuring rangers working directly with the tūturūatu on social media posts and stories. No one is more passionate about a species than someone who consistently works with them. People also tend to enjoy conservation stories and connect with the people behind them. Spotlighting rangers working with the tūturūatu will allow for these stories to shine. Their unique observational relationship with the bird may provide a new perspective into the personality of tūturūatu, creating deeper, more interesting content. It will also allow rangers to connect with the community and share their conservation efforts.

Additionally, there can be collaborations with other organizations with a stake in conservation, such as Forest and Bird, Predator Free NZ, and other wildlife sanctuaries. Posts made with other accounts broaden the audience and reach more people. More people can be reached if posts are made together with another account.

5.4 Additional recommendations

5.4.1 Live feed cameras and donations

The Department of Conservation (DOC) should consider implementing live feed cameras in the nesting areas and habitats of the tūturuatu. This is a goal that should be achieved within the next five years. A live feed camera would enable viewers to create a sense of community around the tūturuatu population, as they are unlikely to be seen in the wild. An essential step in this initiative would involve placing a camera in the captive breeding habitat, offering viewers a behind-the-scenes look into the life of these birds, including the hatching and rearing of chicks. During our interview with Jo Ledington, the General Manager of Conservation and Restoration at Zealandia Ecosanctuary, she mentioned some things to be cautious of while implementing live cameras. Installing the camera while being mindful of the potential disruption or destruction to their nesting area is crucial. Logistics for installation, upkeep, and contingency plans should be thoroughly discussed before implementation. Based on her warnings, we suggest installing cameras in the habitat with a delayed feed for public monitoring. This would empower the

stream's owners to detect and address any disturbing footage or events they might prefer not to show publicly.

We advocate for a partnership with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, renowned for its robust bird cam program, with which DOC has previously collaborated for the northern royal albatross. Their valuable insights could aid in managing the live feed cameras effectively.

In our literature review (section 2.3.4), live cameras foster interactions for those who typically do not encounter these birds in the wild and cultivate an emotional connection through these interactions (The Cornell Lab, n.d.; Roy, 2019.). We aim to empower the tūturuatu to raise awareness even when direct encounters are not possible passively. Implementing the live cam can create the opportunity to engage in a citizen science campaign, thus giving another option for the public to interact with the species and continue to spread awareness.

5.4.2 Adopt a species program

Begin an ‘Adopt a Tūturuatu’ program. This long-term recommendation can be implemented once there is broader public knowledge of the bird. The program would be like the existing ‘Adopt a Kākāpō’ program. It will allow people who donate to

get a physical or digital adoption certificate of a tūturuatu they supported with the donation. This program can include different tiers when donating to allow for flexibility in amount. Adopt-a-species programs are highly effective in creating a bond between the species and the ‘adopter.’ While lead Ranger Ellen Irwin explained that the rangers do not tend to name individuals in a species to maintain a degree of emotional detachment, “it is a really effective method to get people to care. If there's a particular mom that's trying to breed and there are people following them, then it's easier for people to get engaged and attached if they've got an individual to focus on rather than the species as a whole.”

Being able to “adopt” a bird will allow them to take ownership and give more humanistic traits to it, like a name, and increase the likelihood that they will follow the bird’s progress. People want to feel connected to a species, especially one they care about. This program also holds the potential for additional donations once people are invested in the species.

5.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this project was to develop a campaign to increase public awareness regarding the fragile status of the

tūturuatu. The campaign model that we developed can be used for any of the thousands of endangered species in New Zealand. This campaign hopefully added valuable insight into how the idea of public awareness can be used to reach broader audiences and further to encourage the conservation of native species like the tūturuatu. Hopefully, it will play a role in the increased public awareness of the tūturuatu.

This work supports goal number 15 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals: Life on Land. Raising awareness regarding the fragile status and conservation efforts for the tūturuatu achieves this goal by helping to halt biodiversity loss.



Figure 25- [UN Sustainable Development Goal 15: Life on Land](#). (United Nations, 2023)

The tūturuatu is important because of its place within New Zealand's native,

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historical, and sacred ecosystem as a native species. Ultimately, engagement is critical to awareness. Information needs to be made more easily accessible and engaging to the public. The efforts already put forward to protect this species represent Aotearoa, New Zealand's dedication to conservation. It demonstrates the nation's commitment to protecting its distinctive bio heritage and is an example for other areas dealing with comparable problems.

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APPENDIX A: Awareness survey questions

Survey guide sample questions to assess public awareness of the tūturuatu and participants' willingness to support. This aids us in completion of objective 1: Gauge the public's knowledge of the tūturuatu and their willingness to lend support.

Demographic information

1. Are you a resident of New Zealand?

- Yes
- No

If No, please skip to question 3.

2. What type of community in New Zealand do you reside in?

- City
- Suburb
- Rural
- Prefer not to say

3. What age range do you fall into?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75+
- Prefer not to say

APPENDIX A: AWARENESS SURVEY QUESTIONS

4. What ethnicity do you belong to:

- Māori
- Moriori
- Asian
- Pacific Islander
- New Zealand European
- Other European
- Middle Eastern
- Latin American
- African
- Other (Specify) _____

5. Do you belong to, work for, or subscribe to any conservation organizations?

- Yes
(Specify) _____
- No

6. Where did you gain access to this survey?

Questions for assessing public awareness:

7. Have you ever heard of the tūturuatu shore plover before taking this survey?

- Yes
- No

If No, please skip to question 10.

APPENDIX A: AWARENESS SURVEY QUESTIONS

8. Where have you heard about the tūturuatu? (Select all that apply):

- Newspaper/Newsletter
- Social Media
- Educational Program
- Department of Conservation
- Word of mouth
- Other (specify): _____
- I haven't

9. On what form of social media did you hear about the tūturuatu? (Select all that apply):

- Twitter (now called X)
- Newsletter/email
- Facebook
- Instagram
- TikTok
- Snapchat
- Other (specify): _____
- I haven't

10. How familiar are you with the tūturuatu? (Choose one):

- Very familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Not very familiar
- Not at all familiar

11. What type of animal is the tūturuatu?

- Bird
- Mammal
- Reptile
- Amphibian
- I don't know

APPENDIX A: AWARENESS SURVEY QUESTIONS

12. Where is the tūturuatu primarily found in the wild?

- Australia
- Africa
- New Zealand
- South America
- I don't know

13. How would you describe the physical appearance of the tūturuatu? (Select all that apply)

- Greenish brown with a crest of spines
- Covered in fur
- Has wings
- Four-legged
- I don't know

14. Which of the following statements about the tūturuatu is true? (Select all that apply)

- The tūturuatu is a type of lizard.
- Tūturuatu are found mostly on remote, predator free islands.
- Tūturuatu are known for their slow growth and longevity.
- Tūturuatu can reproduce both sexually and asexually.
- I don't know

15. Have you ever seen the tūturuatu in person? (If yes, please describe the context, e.g., in a zoo, in the wild)

16. Where do you think tūturuatu live?

17. Do you think the tūturuatu is a threatened or endangered species?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know



The tūturuatu, also known as the shore plover, is a small bird species native to the coasts of New Zealand. The bird is classified as nationally critical due to a combination of factors, including habitat loss, human disturbance, but primarily from predation by introduced species like rats, cats, and stoats. Due to this it is mostly found on remote, predator-free islands.

Questions for assessing participant support for the tūturuatu:

18. How important do you think it is to conserve and protect the tūturuatu and its habitat?

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Not at all important

APPENDIX A: AWARENESS SURVEY QUESTIONS

19. Would you be interested in learning more about the tūturuatu and its conservation efforts?

- Yes

- No

20. Please provide your email if you would like to learn more about the tūturuatu and conservation efforts being made towards their population (OPTIONAL).

21. How interested are you in supporting the tūturuatu after hearing about it? (Choose one):

- Very interested

- Somewhat interested

- Not very interested

- Not at all interested

22. If interested, what type of support are you most likely to engage in (Select all that apply):

- Donating money

- Volunteering time

- Educational programs

- Spreading awareness on social media

- Other (specify): _____

- None

**For further information about the study feel free to contact the team. You can reach us at:
gr-nz-23-doc@wpi.edu**

**If you would like to see the final project, feel free to reach out for that as well at the email
above or you can find it by searching keywords “Wellington, tūturuatu, IQP” at:**

<https://digitalcommons.wpi.edu/iqp/>

APPENDIX B: Expert interview questions

Sample interview questions that can be used to assess expert opinion of best practices in science communication strategies and public outreach when it comes to conservation campaigns. These questions aid in completing objective 2.

1. What past or current affiliations or organizations do you have and/or work for?

2. Which media platform, in your opinion, is the most effective for promoting the tūturuatu (endangered species) and its conservation efforts?

Examples for discussion:

- a) Social media sites
- b) TV and radio shows
- c) Local gatherings and workshops
- d) Publications and journals with a conservation focus

3. Which kind of information is most effective at drawing people's attention to endangered species, in your opinion?

Examples for discussion:

- a) Inspiring success tales
- b) Informative documentaries
- c) Interactive games and quizzes online
- d) Interviews with conservationists
- e) Live streaming of tūturuatu environments

APPENDIX B: EXPERT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

4. In your opinion, what has been the most successful strategy for enlisting public support and participation in species conservation projects?

Examples for discussion:

- a) Volunteering programs and citizen scientific projects
- b) Fundraising efforts and donations
- c) Advocacy for legislation and changes to policy
- d) Sponsorships and agreements with businesses
- e) Public awareness and education efforts

5. How can professionals like you best support our tūturuatu conservation project?

Examples for discussion:

- a) Providing scientific data and research
- b) Aiding in public outreach and awareness campaigns
- c) Supplying conservation teams with training and direction
- d) Arguing for funding and policy changes
- e) Other (please explain)

6. Is there anyone who you could connect us with, that could provide further insight for us?

APPENDIX C: Consent Forms

Consent forms that can be used during surveys, and in-person or online interviews.

Consent Form for Survey

Who are we: We are a group of university students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the USA. We are partnering with the New Zealand Department of Conservation to increase public awareness of the tūturuatu.

Purpose of Survey: The answers provided will help us assess current public awareness and support efforts of the tūturuatu. Answers are non-identifying.

Procedure: The following survey will ask you about your knowledge about the tūturuatu and willingness to support. Please answer all questions honestly. There are no right answers. Choosing to answer these questions is voluntary.

Confidentiality: All responses will be kept strictly confidential and no identifiable information will be shared or used in any publication or reports that come from this data.

By proceeding you acknowledge that you have been informed about the study and consent to participation.

In-person interview

We are a group of university students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the USA. We are partnering with the New Zealand Department of Conservation to increase public awareness of the tūturuatū. If you wish to participate in the following interview, please fill out the form below.

Do we have your permission to record a video of this interview?

Yes | No

Do we have your permission to record audio of this interview?

Yes | No

Will you allow us to include your name and other identifying information (such as a photo)?

Yes | No

Will you allow us to use your words for use in our final report?

Yes | No

I understand that these interviews may be published at WPI for educational purposes and made available to the public.

Signature:

Print:

Date:

Online interview consent script

**Without recording, we will ask if we have permission to record.
If the participant answers “yes”, then:**

[tell the participant the following with the camera/recorder rolling]:

“This project is recording interviews as part of an educational project. By appearing on camera/audio, you are consenting to the use of your image/voice for the purpose of our project which will be published on the WPI website.”

“Please say your name and your title (if applicable).”

[person states name, etc. Then we say]

“We are here on [say the date] to talk about” And continue with the interview as scheduled.

At the end of the interview, we can send the recorded interview to them if they want it and ask them if they want to withdraw consent for us to use the video recording.

APPENDIX D: Tūturuatu color by number activity

Help the Tūturuatu Find Its Colors



Kia ora, I'm Terry the tūturuatu shore plover. I am an endangered bird about the size of your hand. I live on the predator free islands of Aotearoa. I am very vulnerable to rodent predators like rats, stoats, and possums. I like to hide my nest on the shoreline in the bushes, driftwood, and boulders. I have a bright orange ring around my eyes and a little cap of feathers on my head. I like to bob my head to intimidate others. I also like to fly around and explore; I am very curious about my surroundings. One day I'll find a mate and we'll be together forever!

Match to find Terry's colors!

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where does Terry live? 2. Who is Terry scared of? 3. What type of animal is Terry? 4. Where is Terry's nest? 5. How does Terry intimidate others? 6. How big is Terry? 7. True or false: Terry hates exploring. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lizard - (Pink) • False - (Orange) • Shoreline (Bushes, driftwood, etc.) - (Purple) • True (Blue) • Bird - (Brown) • Bobbing his head - (Grey) • Size of your hand - (Green) • Forest - (Yellow) • Predator free islands - (Red) • Predators (Rats, stoats, possums, etc.) - (Black) |
|--|---|

APPENDIX E: A social marketing manual for the tūturuatu

A SOCIAL MARKETING MANUAL FOR THE TŪTURUATU.



This guide aims to lay the groundwork for how social media should be used to increase the public's level of awareness and compassion for the tūturuatu shore plover. We would like to acknowledge the hard work already being done to release the bi-monthly newsletter and encourage the same content to be altered to be posted on social media as well.

THE TŪTURUATU IS AN ENDEMIC SPECIES WHICH SHOULD BE CELEBRATED FOR ITS UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS.

This message should guide the creation of content. Below you will find quotes from conservation and marketing professionals, those who have interacted with the birds, as well as example posts which should spark ideas for further content:

TYPES OF CONTENT

All content produced should fall into at least one of the 4 content pillars listed below:

- Education
- Entertainment
- Inspiration
- Promotion

Creating content that resonates with the idea of these four pillars requires a thoughtful blend of purpose and creativity. Inform and empower your audience by offering educational value through sharing knowledge, insights, or tutorials. Infusing content with elements such as storytelling, humor, or compelling narratives captivate and engage your audience. Sharing stories, anecdotes, or examples that touch their emotions and stir aspirations motivates your audience. Being transparent and conducting good ethical practices promotes products, services, or causes without overshadowing the primary content.

UTILIZE POSITIVE MESSAGING RATHER THAN NEGATIVE

It can be very easy to fall into the trap of talking about how close a species is to extinction or guilt tripping your audience or community into a state of temporary concerns for the species. But in the new world of social media scrolling and ten second information bits, people tend to ignore negative media all together.

“When you're looking at something on social, there's so much content, that if you're seeing something that makes you feel a bit stink, you're just going to be like I don't wanna engage with that.”

Gini Letham, Senior Communications Advisor, Zealandia Ecosanctuary

“Especially in New Zealand, it can verge very much on the doom and gloom like you know, all these species are in perilous danger. We're losing species all the time; we need more people to care. We need more people to act. It can start to just wash over people because it's always so negative.”

Rose Scully, Senior Brand and Marketing Advisor, Department of Conservation

Instead, whenever possible, share information and content in a positive light.

Positive messaging points out the potential for good change through:

- Conservation success stories
- Rehabilitation and translocation efforts
- Individual actions

Bring about **restorative hope** rather than making people feel hopeless for not supporting your cause.

"I guess restorative hope messaging. Yeah, you're making a difference by doing these things."

Gini Letham

"But really focusing on that positive messaging, because if you tell people not to do something then they're gonna remember that thing, but not that its bad."

Ellen Irwin, Lead Ranger - Conservation at Zealandia Ecosanctuary

EXAMPLE POSTS:



Image description: Newly hatched tūuruatu chick surrounded by linen, inside a container.

Social media caption: Chicks incoming...

Did you know, to encourage more chicks to be hatched every year one set of eggs is taken and incubated by rangers to encourage the mated pair to lay another set of eggs.

Recovery after natural disasters

Story: Celebrate the birds that survived after natural disasters destroyed captive breeding habitat. Tell their story of surviving and being relocated to elsewhere from the bird's point of view

CREATE A CONNECTION

To connect the tūturuatu with the public here are 2 tips to bridge the gap

1. Use rangers, and people who are close to the birds to create the content.

due to their deep connection with the species. They spend years working with these birds and observing them, truly understanding how they behave. Because of this, they also form a passion for the bird that is unmatched and captivating.

“...you genuinely can get people kind of amped up and engaged about almost anything, as long as you've got someone really passionate kind of driving that.”

Ellen Irwin, Lead Ranger, Conservation at Zealandia Ecosanctuary

2. Personify feature and actions the tūturuatu can be seen doing
-

“When we put out, like, inspiring content, we like to acknowledge like other groups that are doing stuff as well. Like, we don't just be good at Zealandia here because even though we are the ones bringing the birds back, if the community didn't get behind it, we wouldn't be seeing the impact. Yeah. So yeah, very much. Yeah. Giving kudos to other people that are getting involved as well as a big part.”

Gini Letham, Senior Communications Advisor, Zealandia Ecosanctuary

EXAMPLE POSTS:

Story Idea: **“Day in the life of a ranger”** or **“Day in the life of a tūturuatu”**

Description: Have a ranger at a captive breeding facility take short videos of various tasks having to do with taking care of the bird throughout the day. Alternatively, take short videos of a bird throughout the day, showcasing the actions they take. Having someone talk through the videos explaining will be engaging and fun for the viewer.



Image description: Tūturuatu standing alone with its head down on the shore.

Words on image description: Me when the All Blacks lose the world cup.

Social media caption: Even if the tūturuatu is feeling dejected after the world cup loss, we'll come back stronger!

GAINING ATTENTION

It is important to use the facets and characteristics of the bird that make it unique, which are what spark interest. That is what causes people to stop and watch a video or look at a post, those mannerisms, and personalities that the public wouldn't normally be able to see, understand, and connect with.

To engage the audience, utilize a hook. This could include text, speech or visual imagery that grabs the audience's attention.

"You have to have the most interesting things right up front."

Rose Scully, Senior Brand and Marketing Advisor - Department of Conservation

Another method of creating a hook utilizes facets and characteristics of the bird that make it unique.

"feisty potatoes"

Iliina Cubrinovska (quoted from Tūturuatu Telegraph, Dec. 2021)

EXAMPLE POSTS:



Image description: A tūturuatu, named Roger, standing on the rocks.

Words on image: Are you pettier than a shore plover? Roger flew 835km to argue with his old neighbors.

Social media caption: Tag a friend that is as petty as Roger!!

If you want to learn more about Roger (and his mate Rata) read this blog post!

APPENDIX F: Expert interview transcripts

Interview 1: Jo Ledington, Zealandia General Manager of Conservation and Restoration

We began the interview by asking about Jo's background in conservation.

Jo:

She's being more kind of like ecological rather than, like campaign and marketing. So yeah, I think Terese's suggestion of talking to Anna would be really, really good, because obviously that's a new well, not it's not even new anymore, but it's a really key way of reaching audiences is that digital space. So years and years ago, I was involved in kākāpō recovery and social media hadn't really been used as a tool in that way before, and we I don't know if you've seen last chance to see, but it was a British documentary based on the book Last Chance to See, and Stephen Frey and Mark covered in travelled around all of the species that had been in the. To capture them on film as sort of and see how the progress of their recovery was going, and so when they went around the world. I think two of the was about 12 species. Two of the 12 had gone extinct. And so they went and covered that story as well. But yeah it. Started so there was a clip that was taken during the filming of that documentary with Sirocco on top of Stephen Fry's head. Most. I don't know if you guys have seen it, but it went viral and BBC released there without sort of the OK of the recovery team. And it was really really interesting because the recovery team very much would it properly, I guess. Like in New Zealand, we were handed utility or wet hanging in. So especially for species like kakapo, they hold a lot of Manor, their town there. And so that was always forefront in the way in which we manage those birds of you know how we handled them and just paying respect to. For these birds, and so that clip. It wouldn't it. We wouldn't have approved it because it was kind of and especially the way they used it. It was quite funny. But we're totally wrong. We're so nervous when that started blowing up and now if you talk to anyone in New Zealand, they will probably know their club. Mm-hmm and. And and it suddenly put kākāpō on the international stage and people knew about them and they knew about Scirocco, the bird that had done it and and at around the same time, a staff member on the team at an island Ranger had set up just for fun. kākāpō Facebook page, and that

was just done on the island and we'd get photos of Sirocco and put them up and write funny stories. And stuff and. And that was just one Ranger. He'd just done it for fun. That wasn't part of the program management. Kind of didn't even. Really know about. It for a start and then it was like, oh, this is, you know, as soon as that clip went live, that his Facebook page. Started blowing up. And then it kind of like the ownership of that went to our manager. And then Doc, nationally, we're like, OK, this is really big. We need like we need. A log in there. So yeah, for me that that. It's really interesting seeing that progression and now like people, don't even think about it like every species has got a Facebook page and it's a, you know, it's just routine. But that was really like that first move and and it was really, really scary. But what it showed us was that. That where you can't save species in New Zealand alone, like, especially for our migratory species, that is another a part of the world that really needs secure as well. And that people? If people can relate to things and have some kind of interaction, or whether that's digital or in real life, then they may care more about it and want to take action. So it's about building their their connection. Yeah, and and. And it just blows my mind now, like watching people like Anna. Work. And with this gone, and where they've taken there, yeah.

Lily

Yeah, yeah. Do you know like an approximate like year or like couple of years at this time because you said? It was a while.

Jo

Yeah, I think it was. Was it 2000 and? Eight.

Eric

OK. Yeah. So yeah, really at the beginning of, yeah, yeah. Facebook around then?

Jo

It makes me seem really older. Yeah, I can send you the link because. And then. It it's pretty funny. Yeah. Do you want to watch it?

Lily

Or if you have it up.

(Watched Video Together)

Jo

2009 that went up on YouTube. So yeah, you know 2008. So yeah.

Lily

Yeah, it's crazy how all the birds here and all the animals just like seem so unbothered by humans.

Jo

Yeah. So he so Sirocco is pretty special. He was hand raised. So he got a really bad respiratory illness when he was a chick and he got hand raised. Right and he Was one of the first. Well, he was handraised by himself. So he's one of the first male chicks to be handraised and he became fully imprinted on humans. And so that's why no other couple. They'll do that. That's a that's a. Unique thing? Yeah

Noah

So what does hungry? If you don't mind. Mean. Sorry, Henry.

Jo

Ohh hand-raised. Sorry. So yeah.

Noah

Or what? I'm sorry.

Jo

Yeah. Yeah. So yeah, we, yeah, checks are taken out and read by humans. Yeah. Yeah. So they. Yeah. Some of the males in particular get imprinted, but they now would never take it.

Noah

Yeah. OK.

Jo

Check out and rear it by itself it it always be multiple checks to. Stop it from hitting so yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So, like for me in that that like I think the reason why I brought that up is that sometimes we don't know what the next phase is and my and that you need to kind of be brave and innovative and. Which is really, really hard and sometimes I mean, like we didn't purposely do that, but I guess one of the options could have been just have been like not that needs pulled immediately and you know, it'd be really interesting to see what the views of that. Now, because it was just, it's millions and millions of people around the world. Have seen it. That yeah, I don't know that the maybe like you guys have seen it. Like maybe you just thought it was a funny video of a parrot and you didn't need to it. I was like, ohh cuff. Poor. Really rear. They're really endangered. They need help. Like, no. Does that mean? Did they see that video make you like, want to kick into action or just like haha, that's funny.

Noah

Yeah, yeah. It's like if I were to like. If I were to just see that I would be, that's kind of that's kind of just funny. But then like if I. I think if I was given some. More information so some more information that like kind of. Just like to the side of that, maybe like if. There was like a. A link or more description of like what it was like underneath like caption or something. Then I think I would probably get. More into it.

Eric

Also, like familiar, lies yourself with it too. If you see it again. Ohh I know I've seen that before and it's just kind of like keep that like visual clip inside your. Head that type of thing.

Noah + Lily

Yeah, yeah. You must feel like connected, I guess. Yeah, yeah. Like even though like. You're not actually connected, but like that. Enjoying like some level of humor or emotion, just watching the bird and then like if someone were to ask you to, like support it or like you'd see some type of campaign, I think it would probably be like I'd be more willing. Especially if, like funny little clips like that would continue to be posted. Like, Oh yeah, they need. Money up. Here's. 20 bucks like, yeah. Like, well, that's how much I have, but. Like I'm sure there's sure. Yeah.

Jo

Yeah, yeah, yeah. So it's about building that connection, right? It's like, yeah, yeah. Yeah. And that's where social media people are way more than me. Present in the background that like you might provide some. Of those user effects or things. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, and I think. Yeah, and it's. So like I spent my 20s out working on islands and stuff offshore islands, and one of the key drivers for me to come and work here was that connection because like, we put in New Zealand, we put our special plants and species out on nature reserves and islands that the majority of people. Will never get to go and see they've closed access and it's such a loss. Like how do you how do you preserve and or conserve and care for something that you never get to interact with? And so that's why I think this place here is so special because. And we've still got limited basis. We've got a big fence there. So we still, we're still figuring out and doing a lot of work. Of how? We can reduce that barrier and get people in, but you know, just having people come in and have their experience of a car, car flying straight over their head. And people that have you know, grown up in lower heart and upper heart and. Just like what was there. Like I've got no idea what it was and. Yeah, being able to. That story of you know that Sirocco and there's almost an embarrassment from a lot of people that they don't know what it is. And well, why would you know, how would you know what it is like you've never seen it. You've never had an opportunity to interact with it to. Yeah. So yeah. So again, that's sort of like, I think campaigns like this. Have to you can't always have someone interacting with your problem, but how do you how do you be a bring mental awareness and yeah.

Lily

Yeah. Is there a big question?

Sona

So we jumped. We have like a list of. Questions that we jumped around. OK. A little bit. So in terms of like your work and see landing what like sort of work do you do?

Jo

So me personally or the team like the organization? And so my role here. I'm the general manager for the conservation and restoration. So I look after sort of three teams, our conservation team who looks after all of the species within the fence. And so that's everything from, you know, supplementary feeding our higher. Population banding our birds that we are

particularly interested in monitoring. Hmm. We've got, we've still got mice in the sanctuary, so we do mouse control annually. We're constantly on bio security alert, so doing pest audits and if we do. Get an incursion. And managing that and then we've got the infrastructure team who looks after the fence and. All of our tracks and sort of facilities and. Valley and then also got a Ranger who leads a project called Sanctuary to Sea and that is a community collaboration project. Outside of the things. So we're looking at catchment that. The land areas. The head waters off and then it goes all the way down to the ferry terminal out in the harbor. And so just how do we pull everyone that's in that catchment, whether they live, work or play in the catchment? How do we get them all like working together to improve water quality, the? And provide safe corridors for the species flying out of the sanctuary. And yeah. And then, yeah, so that keeps my team pretty busy. Yeah, like. And I guess, yeah, one of our big pieces of work at the moment, we're looking at our next translocations. And so we've been focusing on freshwater. Recently, and that's quite a cool. Yeah, that's been quite cool because it's really easy to make people. It's really easy to make people care about birds. We've been trying to make people care about fish. They're about this book and freshwater mussels, and we've just went into it and just being like. These are really cool and just be super enthusiastic about it and we've, like, I think we've converted people if we haven't converted them to love them, we've definitely made them aware and I guess. Engage them on the importance of caring so the toitoi and the kākahi so toitoi is a little common bully fish. the kākahi is a freshwater mussel. Yeah. And? And they their life cycle is quite entwined so. We initially bought kākahi into the sanctuary, but they need. Freshwater fish to complete their life cycle, so they'll spit out blocker the air, the block of the air attached to the fish, and then they mature into a small kākahi here and once they mature, they drop off into new habitat in the lake. Yeah, yeah. And so like so.

Eric

Pretty cool. Very cool.

Jo

Like. Yeah, just leaning into that and being like this is really cool, like. And people don't know that stuff. And so the comms team has worked with some really cool design designers who have like. Done. Beautiful sketches of the fish and the kākahi and kind of that life cycle as well. Cause none of that exists. So like.

Lily

Yeah. The first thing that came to my mind was like, I'd love to see like some sort of like the animation of. That happening, yeah.

Jo

Yeah. So we've just got like a little infographic that sort of shows that cycle and we've just used that everywhere like that. That will be on our website if you want. And we also had an opportunity. So we had the fish as part of the translocation, we took, quarantine them. And so normally we would just do that in a back office or, you know, back room somewhere. And we're like, well, actually they've gotten be in quarantine for six weeks. And so once we had them settled in and kind of. Understood. Because no one's done this before. So like figuring it all out and they're like, OK, they're not super stressed like they've, they've, they've settled in really well. And they seem really comfortable with people around. So we opened up the quarantine room every day for a few hours and would have we got volunteers that were bully buddies and. Put them heats about toy and their life cycle and then yeah, we had like, hundreds of people coming in and seeing them and yeah.

Noah

Yeah. It's like many young aquarium, like people for people to check out.

Jo

Yeah, of like our native ecosystem. What's happening under the water? And I knew we were successful when I had a visitor come in and say because we were the same week we that we brought to a toy here. The zoo bought snow leopards. Wellington and someone came in and was like I went and saw the snow leopards. Last week and these guys are cooler. Yes. So like you just have to find those like those quirks and people love like a bit of weirdness and a bit of change or something that they can relate to. And so if you can find that in your species that you're working with and yeah, kind of showcase that. I think as a. Yeah, I'm just going to turn this. Yeah. And so I guess and that kind of sums up what this organization is about, it's about education. It's about connection. It's about. Yeah, it's fishy in an urban environment like our current strategy is actually called living with nature, and that's what we're about. We're about trying to, I think in

New Zealand, we're very much being very proud of our natural heritage. When it's over there and they're like, oh, that's a beautiful landscape. That's. Mm-hmm. And the change that had to happen when suddenly our Kaka were in our backyards and destroying our fruit trees was really, really different. And so yeah, like, really teaching people and showing that their species and humans can live together. And we came up with nature and it can be better. Yeah, it it's a really, really good thing. So, yeah.

Noah

Yeah, but I think like giving people the opportunity to like, be part of something that like they normally aren't, I guess like in that sense like you like giving them that like. Almost like special access to see them like it's something new to them and like you know normally they wouldn't be able to. So like I think it's really it really catches people's eye. Get them interested.

Jo

Yeah. Yeah. And like, and it was just being able to see their natural behavior like, because, you know, they would go and hide. And we made little hides and stuff for them. And then just and seeing that it would feed them and seeing them feeding and like, you just never get to see that for a fish. So. Yeah. Yeah. And I think, like, when people will then. Equate that to birds. There and goes, oh, let's do miss cams. Let's do and. I would just say be great operationally. There are a lot of work really, really difficult for, you know, changing batteries in the field and that sort of thing. And also you need to have, if you do go that route, you need to have a game plan. And of what to do when things go wrong So if a chick dies, how do you turn your feed off? Or do you want to turn your feed off? Do you want to show everything? Do you want to show predation event? Do you have all? If you do want to turn it off, do you have a way that you can turn it off remotely? Or does someone have to go to the mist? And you know, so is he. Gonna be a lag. Time of everyone viewing the 12 hours and stuff. So yeah, I just. That's it.

Lily

We thought about doing it. We like brought up the idea and we're like, oh, what if, like, is it possible to do a live feed camera like on one of the? one of like the captive... Yeah, one of. The captive breeding. Sites and pretty much they're like they've already started their breeding season.

It would be really disruptive, but yeah, never thought about like. Like what goes wrong? Stuff that is, yeah.

Jo

Yeah. So I. Mean and it. And I'm not saying don't do it, but just have a plan. Yeah. Like, think through all the scenarios and have a plan of what to do and kind of have agreement from all of your partners before you start filming. Yeah. Yeah.

Noah

You were talking about. Talking to people down South near the end of like Wellington, like towards the harbor and like making them care about like I guess was it the like the birds like migrating or just in general like the whole catchment and catchment like. How do you reach out to them like?

Jo

Yeah. So. So that project is really. Cool. So it's it was going in the City Council were running it in another kind of iteration, and then it sort of just fitted. It flitted out. So we packed that up back in 2017 and. We're just aiming to build a network and collaboration, so there's already amazing work going on there. So tonight we actually have a community who are for there and we just have like there's about 30 community groups that are doing revisitation work and trapping. And so we just invite them all to come together. And we all we give an update on what we've been doing here in the catchment and we provide an opportunity for them to give updates as well. But it's about connection and networking and knowing that you're not out there alone and that you might have a problem. But the group you know just down the street. Probably got the same problem and how can we help each other? So that's one way. We also have some strategic partners. So center port is they own the port and run all of the port down at Wellington Harbour. So they're a strategic partner with us and they sit on the strategy. Group for century to see, and so that's pretty cool like that. You know the company that runs our port and our. National in a capital city as invested in doing better and connecting with their community and the place that they are based. Yeah. Yeah. And we so on that strategy group, we also have City Council, Regional Council dock.

Lily

It's great to. See you.

Jo

We've got a couple of ecological engineering companies as well, and. We've got Taraki family. So Therese, that's on there as well. Thanks, everyone. And then we've also got another project that we're just ramping up now called, we've called it every business restoring nature. And so there has been a. We're figuring out a way that we can connect with businesses to take nature positive actions within their business that are place based. So a lot of like a lot of. In them. Business projects and stuff are just about sustainability in general, and we want to really focus people on the place where their businesses or where their home is or where their and we want them to care about this catchment and take actions that make this catchment better. And so it's. That's a slightly different take on it, but it's really cool. So we ran a pilot earlier this year, we had just six businesses that we worked with and again just really. Like collaborative, we don't rocking and be like right? This is what you've got to do. This is how you do it. It's like, where are you going on your journey? What? What do you want to achieve? Do you know about the kitchen and. And you know, this first one business we just ran lunchtime walks for the staff and we took them, you know, it was a 5 minute. Pulled down into the stream from their business, none of their staff have been down. There, they didn't know. It was there and then when they got down there, they were like one of the biggest complaints that. We've had from our community. This is all this rubbish comes from this business and it just comes down into the stream and they are picking it up. We took that. Those people down there and they were. Just like whoa. That's horrible. That's. How is this rubbish plate? And suddenly they were like, we need to stop our rubbish lying down here like this is really and it is that connection. Like they suddenly felt that they could see how they connected with their environment. And so you know they've put tops on all of their rubbish and they're. Way more careful now on a windy day that they don't just let stuff blow away. And they're looking at their, you know, they could see the impact that their stormwater overflow was having. And so they've, you know, putting in place stuff like that. Yeah. Whereas another business put in places, just a sustainability action plan. And, you know, they've reduced the size of their rubbish bins and, you know, have they've got. Over something that just had to resign and that sounds like basic stuff, but they hadn't taken it. I guess it's

providing the time and opportunity for people to see that there's stuff they can do. Hopefully. Yeah. But again, it comes down to that connection. We're connected to them like their power and their valley. And they can see and they're way more aware of how their actions impact that specific string, yeah.

Lily + Noah + Eric

Fairly interesting. Yeah, it's really like you don't not like. You don't know until you until you. Yeah, yeah. Until you actually physically see it. Know like know like. Like, yeah, even if you're like in the sense in the wrong like. You don't know. Like you don't. You can't understand that you get if someone's telling you until, like you're like, wow. Like, I really. And you see the actions or the consequences of your actions or no action at all. Like, yeah, yeah. So it's cool to, like hear that, yeah.

Jo

And yeah, it's really cool to go into those spaces with a really open and kind mind of no ones purposely wildness. They just don't. They don't know. Yeah, yeah. And just how when you? I think when you go in with that attitude. People feel really safe and so they're just. Like, oh, OK, right. You know and yeah. So it's about meeting people wherever they are on those journeys, you know, we've got another business who is a mechanic and he has built a new workshop and he's got amazing. So you know, he's making sure that. In he he's got sumps so that when it rains any oil that's dropped from cars is going into a collection point rather than going into the storm water. And he's, you know. And so he's like he's way, way he been so generous that to his knowledge. And he's like, OK, what can I do? Next, like what should I? Do next and so he's. Now got. Gardens all around this world. He's building winter motels with the local school and he's just like, you know, and getting his composting and make sure that all of his staff put their leftover lunch into the compost there rather than going into the banner. Just. Yeah, really just. Yeah. So it's just supporting those people to. To better wherever they are. Yeah, yeah.

Sona

So this one. We just have a couple.

Jo

More. Yeah, sorry, I get really. Excited about all this?

Noah + Sona

Everything you're saying is perfect. So how does? Selandia go about like creating information for the public and like making sure you mentioned earlier with like the release of that clip, there was a lot of fear that like you were. Disrespecting the kakapo. So like, how does he land the balance like respect with like maybe some? More humorous than like marketing the species without disrespecting it.

Jo

Yeah, that's a really, really good question. So we have a really good relationship with our, you know, our partners and family in that tour. And we've learned a lot in this space. And I think the cool thing about slander is that like, we will still look back at stuff we did six months ago. Six months ago and say we could, we could probably do better, like maybe we wouldn't do it like that. Next time, let's do better next time. And that's a really again that. That's a really. Safe place to work in and so I think we. Like, yeah, I guess you gain experience and you kind of have those little those little triggers that you like. Ohh doesn't feel quite right, but again, it's that finding that balance of when to push through there. Yeah. So I think relationships really good relationships, really good communication, especially with treating partners and with that with all stakeholders. So being really clear, who will stay? Holders are and who needs to be involved in those conversations is really, really key. And who needs to see, you know, sign off or see something we do Commons plans here and we think of our key messages and yeah. And that gets reviewed. Way quite a few staff depending on the. Depending on the audience and kind of how big we think it's going to be or have its internal messaging and that might just be signed off by our lead Rangers and managers. If it's starting to get more and more external or really the thing that might go all the way up to our CEO, get approval of their. But yeah, we just create a packet of. Their messages and then we have identified spokespeople for their sort of media get in touch or anything. Then we've all got we're kind of singing from the same song sheet. Yeah. What we did with the choice we we're trying to work across our organization and kind of get our work programs much more aligned. So in our conservation work, we wanted to bring the toy in. And so we said, OK, how can we involve our volunteers in this. So we had the bully buddies. How can we engage our visitors in this and so? So how do we and then how can we build our

marketing around this? How can we? And build our education programs and get the learning team to use this information. And so that was a, a, a big piece of work between our comms team and our conservation team to pull together as much information and then kind of haven't agreed this is our packet of information and then the tours. And pulled stuff out of that for their tours. The education team have been pulling stuff out of their for their education stuff and we tried like, there can be a lot of work on people for those each. To those Holly that both meetings that we had, we'd get someone, we'd get everyone we go around the room and be like, OK, everyone bring a fun fact about toy every minute. You loved it. Yeah. And. And it was really cool because, like, just random stuff would come out from what people have been reading. And so we just had a document. That every, every meeting like we just had and it was. Like an agenda item. On our meeting like Toitoi. Fun fact. And it built this really cool report. The tree of interesting information. Yeah. And also it was really good cause quite often some of the people will be like, oh, I read this thing and then you can't remember where you read it. We're just like, you know, credit it. And then it was. There for anyone. To go back to, you know, really quite well, yeah.

Lily

Just like making sure that the. People who are like releasing the media are like also talking to the conservation like you have. To work as a team. Yeah, like.

Jo

Yeah. Yeah. In 19. Yeah. I think that key of identifying your state. There's if there's e-mail partners, if there's, you know, different agencies. Just. Yeah. Making. Like, even if it's going and saying, hey, we're going to do this. Do you want to be informed? What is your expectation of that level of involvement you.

Noah

Yeah. Make sure everyone's like comfortable with it being released or just like being talked about, I guess.

Jo

Know be really good. Yeah, yeah.

Sona

The next couple of questions pertain more to like creating an awareness campaign. Well, what kind of like information do you think is most effective at drawing people's attention to endangered species Yeah, yeah.

Jo

It's hard because from an ecologist point of view, I, my mindset is that people should just love these things because they're awesome and they're really interesting and you know, we have an innate, innate. Need to preserve and that doesn't fly, and I think that's where, especially in the digital space comes as conservation comes, has gotten really good because we've had people coming in with communication experience that like wildlife. Yeah, like when it was. Ecologists trying to do cons it didn't. Work. So yeah, I don't know that I'm the best person to answer that, but I think like to me it comes back down to that connection. Like just finding those connections in those little points of interest that people can relate to and. In the interested buy and that kind of and I guess it's a journey is that you don't just bombard people with like, you know, a massive pamphlet and a massive amount of information, you know, on a. Sparking the interest and then like slowly introducing those. Yeah. And so then again, that's where it's like having those key messages as like what are you actually like, what do you want people to take away? And starting from that and then how do you best give that key message? Yeah.

Noah + Sona

That's like, that's a that's a good action. Thank you. Like you're. Like all of your answers are like even as like an ecologist, we want to like here like. Right. And then like over the course of. Like your career, what have you seen to be like most effective? Because I know like before. Like maybe Facebook with the kakapo wasn't super big until like the clip aired. What's like more effective now versus like back then?

Jo

I mean, I mean, it's social media cause it didn't even exist. But like when I started, first got my job with carpool, I would say, oh, what, what do you do for it and say, oh, I work for carpal. You know those big Fat green. Parrots that can't fly, and that was like how I explain what I did for about the first two or. Three years that I. Did their job. And then I think with that expansion of social media and. People. Yeah. Having more access to it, I got to a point where I'd be like, oh, I

work with. Kakapo you know those? Yeah, yeah, you know. I know, I know. Yeah. Yeah. And they and they would say something. That they've seen online. You know, I know that I've seen them. So that was like I it's can still remember that happening in quite a short space of time, which was just. Yeah, it was kind of like, well, what's changed? Like, why do people suddenly know what this thing is? And, you know, they've been like, they've only been 40. Odd have been left for decades, and when I started working with them, there was he was 58 and then like now there's over 200. So it wasn't a rareness thing. Like the ecology hadn't changed. I think it was. That yet people were talking about and there was more and, you know, they're still living on islands. People still can't go and see them. Yeah. So. But they suddenly had access to them via their computers. Yeah. And in a very general way. Like, it wasn't like you had to read a, A, A, a general article. Were, you know, a Natural History book?

Lily + Eric

Yeah, something easy to digest. Yeah, yeah. I mean, we kind of experienced that walking in here just talking to the people who are in here and we're like, yeah, we're working. With the teachers and they're like, Oh yeah, you. Know it was like compared to like everybody. Yeah, yeah. We've been like, out in the city surveying and. It's been like. We ran into like 2 biologists and they were. And they were, like, so interested. They were like, oh, I never heard that. But have you heard of that bird? They're. Yeah, alright. Like no, I never heard that. Word and they're like, oh, what's the scientific? Name. Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's so nice, though, when people like. Oh, yeah, I know. That was like a breath of. Fresh air as we. All finally you know.

Jo

Well, I think just look at. My recent weeks with John Oliver and. Like, who knew what was he think he? Was, you know, a month ago.

Sona

Give me the list him to do a little segment on the 2. Yeah, I think everyone.

Jo

In New Zealand, why John? Yeah, yeah.

Sona

This kind of has to do with the question before, but what do you think is like the best way to introduce a species to the public, like in our case, you know, no one really knows about this bird. Like it's just starting to talk about it going to be enough or like they're going to. Like do we need something else that will really? Get people to. Yeah, grass ponds. The idea of it. Yeah, yeah.

Jo

Honey, I wonder if you go. Back and you think? You take step back and think who is your audience? Because if you try and connect like is it New Zealand is it? Every single new Zealander is it people that go into their habitat? They're like, might you know, going down onto beaches and stuff like what? And then I think once you know your audience, then you can define a little bit more what their introduction and that key that you might be to them that makes sense.

Lily + Noah

Yeah. No, it's something we already kind of talked about, especially when doing like Figure out our survey because we were just kind of told to do this and we're like, OK, so who like when we're doing our survey like who are we surveying like, is it all? And so we kind of like, at least for the survey, since we're in the Wellington area, we've kind of just stopped that. Yeah, but it's only a good conversation. Yeah. Like other than that, we've been trying to reach out online to like other places around. But you know, it's just there's only so much reach you can get. But. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, we're just trying to hit. As many people as possible.

Jo

I guess kids are always good because kids, if you do it kids, then they take miss at home, yeah.

Lily + Eric

That's one of our ideas that we had for. You can, as an educational kid like I saw it, was predator for New Zealand predator free. It was on the website and they had like for each grade things like that kids and then lessons planned and stuff like that. So maybe like a prototype of a delivery thing like that. As a delivery, like as a deliverable for us.

Jo

Yeah. And our sanctuary City team, they've got a game. So one of the big issues in an urban stream is fish migration. There's so many. Like storm water pipes and stuff that create barriers for our migratory species to come up. Yeah. And so they've created a game where the kids are illis or tuna and have to get over the barriers to get up to where their homers. And so, you know, they've got them going through hoops. Like it's the kids love it. Because, yeah, and then they feel really connected to and they can see it. I guess it makes them understand the issues that fish are facing in the stream more than. Just talking about. Them. Yeah. Like you're acting then? Yeah.

Lily + Eric

No, that makes sense. I live back in the states my where I live is one of the biggest regions for salmon. Yeah. To like, go in and, like, do their stuff. So. I remember like we had a whole field trip to like a dam that they had just torn down. So that way the salmon could, like, get up the stream. But I would, yeah, definitely like the big things like that where you like, actually get to see, definitely make more of an. Impact. I like the idea of bringing it home to because we had we thought like worst case it was like, OK, this only reaches. Kids. But now that brings up the point because you bringing home now reaches adults as well.

Jo

Yeah, yeah. And it's probably more receptive to a message from them than from someone dying. You shouldn't be like throwing that out or, you know, like, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sona

Yeah. Eric mentioned a little bit. So like our based on our survey like we asked for like what types of support would you be willing like interested in and all age groups that we surveyed were interested in seeing some type of educational program. So we were thinking of like implementing some like. Creating an outline. For an educational program and maybe linking that with social media a little bit like create a platform and just kind of support each other. Do you have any recommendations based on our like current plan? Yeah, just yeah.

Jo

One thing that flags in my mind is just some a mum and just the link with the educational and social media and just like. Get reassurance that that it's safe for kids to go on and use. There's a

big flag for me. But yeah, otherwise I think. It sounds like a really good idea. Like good way and I think like it sounds like it can kind of hit multiple audiences and also maybe direct people into the resources from multiple places. So like if you're on social media, you might find that you've got education resources. You know, and kind of like help people along on that journey without you guys actively having to, like, be like this is where this is, yeah.

Eric

Yeah, it's more so passive that way. They can go at their own time and will. So yeah. Yeah. Kind of explore. Yeah.

Jo

For those apps, yeah.

Eric

As far as like social media posting as well, I've you found like success in infographics because we've talked about that more. So like just quick easy digestible reading instead of like actually more like confusing and listening and stuff like that. Yeah.

Jo

That would be a good. Question for Anna because I don't see any of those. Gets behind our stuff, but just from. Like the outside, I feel like our social media has gone from kind of pictures and quick, quick things to longer stories, and they're doing really, really well. Yeah. So I think we've under. Estimated people's interest and that they do want to go a little bit deeper even on social media platforms. Yeah, yeah.

Sona + Lily

I have one. Yeah, related to the interview, but the. The little fish that you were talking about what? Were they called the?

Jo

So it's common bully or the Today our name is toy. So TOITOI yeah.

Sona + Lily

OK. You mentioned that they're like in an aquarium types, yeah. Are they still here?

Jo

Love it? No. So. They were being quarantined and they got released into. The upper lake back in. May I think. Yeah, but we if you're here in March, we will be collecting another couple of 100 and quarantining. Them again and then. Releasing them. So March to May next year that would be visible. Yeah. Yeah. But we do have photos and stuff on lights you can jump on.

Lily

Yes, you have to come back. OK. Yeah. And yeah, didn't we see? I'm a little fish swimming around. Would they still be in the loop so?

Jo

You probably was it in the lower leg the ohh.

Noah

It was in the stream. Yeah, yeah.

Jo

Probably banded cockapoo, which so we did a lake restoration here about 2020 and the lake was full of our Eurasian perch, which. Introduced and so we got like about I think it was like 3000 tons of perch out. So if I wasn't here when they did that, that massive operation. Lowered the lake by about 6 meters, got from the blue with her. Yeah. Yeah. Had to, like, move to her down. So to help them migrate. And because of that, like, so they were top predators, they were eating.

Lily

That's a lot of fish.

Jo

All the zooplankton and the. Like and so we're having like Friday paint and algae blooms every summer. Without the we've just seen the native fish just numbers skyrocket. And so yeah, we're seeing them all through the. So I think they were getting eaten as well. Yeah. Yeah. So that's. Yeah, probably what you saw. Yeah, that's pretty cool. Yeah. Yeah. So we've, yeah, been doing

the releases of introduced fish or translocated fish into our top lake with kind of from that catchment restoration idea of if we do right up in the headwaters over time, they'll literally filter down the stream and yeah. Most all the whole stream, hopefully, yeah.

Noah + Eric

Thank you for answering all. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for your time. Yeah. Absolutely a lot. Of insight things I haven't thought about so.

Jo

Cool. Yeah. Awesome. Oh, it's lovely to chat to such engaged people and. I really look forward to. Seeing what you come up with. So you want to keep us?

Eric

Informed. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jo

Yeah. Would you be keen to chat to Anna if she's got availability? Yeah. Yeah. OK.

Lily + Eric

Yeah, yeah. And I know it was mentioned that she's working from home today, but if you could, like, connect us over. E-mail or like? Yeah. Or if you have any other contacts similar to the. Effort. Yeah. Pass it along as. Well, thank you so much.

Jo

Yeah. Yeah, awesome. OK, cool. Awesome. Well, good luck with that one, yeah.

Interview 2: Terese McLeod, Lead Ranger/Bicultural Engagement and Ellen Irwin, Lead Ranger of Conservation at Zealandia Ecosanctuary

Before the beginning of the transcription, the interviewees Terese and Ellen were asked for permission to record. A recently famous TikTok, published by Zealandia, about their predator free fence was then brought up in discussion.

Terese

He's bringing it alive with his personality, which is just very wise. Have you heard of it?

Lily

I think we'll have to look it up, but the fence that you're talking about, this is? The Predator free fence?

Terese

Yeah, he's introducing the audience to fence.

Eric

I think I saw that video and he's explaining how it was about four feet under, so they don't burrow into it, the rats. I think I actually saw the video.

Terese

And he's kind of bringing that alive in his own natural style. And then Anna did a few tricks that introduced the video about, like, the Roman Empire fence or something. So those have got the engagement, but anyway it dominates.

Sona

Yes, OK. So what sort of work do you both do with Zealandia?

Terese

My history with Zealandia and a kind of sense, began when I was at Victoria University to head in Malacca as a student and we were a student group and we were given part of the sanctuary to look after, essentially. And so that was my beginning of kind of a working relationship with the space. Then I went away and had illicit love affairs with offshore New Zealand islands, but Mātū Somes Island being one of them. And it was really the island that was my greatest love story. And that's how I got to learn apprenticeship styles. I had to do different things to run islands in New Zealand. And then I had torrid love affairs with other islands around the country. Five years ago I came back here as a volunteer for a year and the current role I'm in, which is called a Bicultural Ranger. That doesn't mean a lot to people. They go 'What's a bicultural Ranger.' Well, it's kind of a terminology based on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, our founding document, where there were two cultures to an agreement of this country and people say, oh, shouldn't it be multicultural ranger. Well, it is because if you're not Māori or indigenous, you come under the auspices of Tangata Tiriti. So the the other signatory to the Treaty, whether you've migrated in here from different countries since then, you'll come under that so it's still bicultural, but people get confused by the semantics of the words and stuff like that. So essentially I think broadly speaking, my brief is to bring Māori world views to this organization, to this space, in whatever way that is. That's interesting in this space because it's mostly a non Māori staffed space and membership space and how to navigate that and normalize it for a different culture, through colonization layers over many generations have been excluded from these kind of structures. So it's kind of like looking at those structures and dismantling them gently and meeting people where they're at, whether they're staff, internal/external visitors. Trying to gently meet people where they are at in those particular journeys of cultures and reestablishing a Māori footprint. These traditionally non Māori spaces right, they've been constructed in Western ways, with those kind of values. So it's about bringing in a Māori value place. In this organization, whether it's a sign that you see that might be in Māori and English or how we pronounce those words within the sanctuary, different groups and different demographics that aren't normal to the sanctuary they're bringing them in and targeting them to come into these spaces. So it's all that kind of stuff. Lots of project work too as well.

Ellen

I'm the lead Ranger for the conservation team here. So basically that means I look after both the flora and fauna of the valley, but also the people. So looking after the people of the conservation team. My role varies so much from season to season and depending on what projects we've got on. So there's no kind of real typical day it can involve everything from doing a rescue of Kaka chicks, occasionally talking to school groups or various community groups and sort of running translocations. So it really just it depends on what we've got on basically. I've been involved with Zealandia for almost nine years at this point. I moved here from the states, from New Hampshire, did my masters at Vic, and was tracking kakariki red crowned parakeets from Zealandia, and seeing where they went in the Wellington suburbs, and if they were surviving. I was also volunteering quite a bit during that period as well. Then after I finished my masters, I got a role on the Weeds team as a summer Ranger and then got a role as a Ranger and then became a lead Ranger. So yeah, I've just sort of been involved with Zealandia in one capacity or another for quite a while.

Lily

In a Māori perspective, how does Zealandia go about creating that information that goes out to the public?

Sona

Like, how do you balance respect for species and flora and fauna with marketing the species?

Terese

Hang on, reframe your question.

Lily

Obviously, there's a lot of signs throughout Zealandia, you have your social media, we're interested in how you go about creating all that information. What is the thought process behind what gets put out to the public and what doesn't?

Terese

Yes, well, that goes through a process of consideration and quite a lengthy process and quite a thought through process of what we release either in an English kind of western science information perspective and what we will release from the Māori science. So there is some control that goes around that we have to think about audiences, and abilities with that information. Some information I'll safe guard and firewall. So we you won't get everything. So tourism, the operation here of tourism they always want more and more and more and more Māori stories. I won't give them more and more and more, because it would be irresponsible of me to. So I'll give enough. Mostly generic national information about a species, for instance. I control what I release in terms of the information around certain things. I would be very, very bad teaching of me to give people everything when they can't handle it. It's like when people want to learn Māori language and they wanna have a PhD in it before they've even a 101. So part of being a teacher and a guide is that I help them learn that you need to walk before you run, but everyone wants to run before they walk. So that makes me kind of look like the bad cop, but I'm just safeguarding you because you're always going to have to go back to the beginning because you can't get here without that beginning base. Any growth thing is like that. Yeah, that's just how growth happens. But we have a lot of overachievers in this space. I have to manage them constantly. Manage overachieving because you have to overachieve to be working in these spaces. You know, it's very hard to get paid employment in these kind of spaces. So you are super overachiever to even get in the door. That type of personality, right, hungers for more all the time and wants stronger stimulation, but I have to control that in that sense. So whether the information that goes out about different species, that's one of the reasons why I control that information. The other is commercial appropriation and appropriation in general of indigenous talent and knowledge and skill. Everyone wants to appropriate. You know, I see hakas in pubs in London and you see Māori Tamoko, facial tattooing, on models, on runways in Milan and stuff. We want to share, but you have to be careful what you share and when because people take it and run with it in the wrong way. So everything goes through a filtered process and then I'll get the final say on stuff. Certainly from a cultural perspective. It's a difficult balancing act, cause you do want to share and you do want to enlighten others about our culture, but you do have to be a little bit considerate around doing that. If there's standard stuff, they don't have to ask me about every single thing. Anything that's pretty generic and obvious. But anything kind of above

there, everything will be filtered through me and sometimes I'll raise it and filter it through my more senior iwi members. If it's something quite serious and it needs their sign off. So there's processes and layers to that. Yeah, I need guidance too.

Sona

Our next set of questions pertains more to like our campaign, creating our campaign. What kind of information have you guys seen to be more effective at drawing people's attention to endangered species and making them invested in them.

Terese

Well, it's a bloody good question.

Ellen

We've definitely noticed that people love the behind the scenes kind of conservation stories. I think that gets people really kind of engaged and and amped up. Anna did a video of a toutouwai, North Island Robin, the other day, which to kind of us working here are birds that we see all the time and we've done videos and photos and stuff of them before. But the way she did it with just kind of explaining to the kind of a lay person who might not know much about them, it made it incredibly engaging. And I think the video got heaps of views. So yeah, I think just explaining things like kind of are really enthusiastic, but but kind of easy to understand way. Because for the kakahee, we did a freshwater mussel translocation in 2018 and 2022. That got a lot of press, and I mean these muscles, the kakahee are amazing, but I wouldn't say they're as charismatic kākā or kākāpō. I think it's just about people kind of speaking enthusiastically about why they love this species and why they're so cool, and it gets people really engaged. I think you genuinely can get people kind of amped up and engaged about almost anything, as long as you've got someone really passionate kind of driving that.

Lily

Jo was saying something about that to us, where when they would do that, at the beginning of every meeting. They'd come in with a fun fact.

Terese

By doing that, there's a point to it, one, it was fun and stimulating for the meeting, but we began from that information to build a relationship with that particular, very humble looking muscle, cause like on the surface it's just a humble looking muscle. But whenever I brought the facts to the meeting, we started building an awareness of the the value of that muscle and what it did and what it can so that's really useful. I just had a thought. I'm a spokesperson for the little Penguin. It's called the kororā, that lives in and around Wellington harbour. I'm the spokesperson. And so at the moment I'm working with a campaign team, we've hired through the City Council to raise the profile of their kororā because it's sort of a species that not many people get to engage with, unless you go to the zoo, all locked in and saw them. So my my idea is that that penguin goes into an iconic Wellington status. Next conservation week. That's next year. And the mayor will promote that species as being the iconic Wellington species. So we have a campaign team that are designing ways to get the Community aware and engage with the species and forming more of a relationship with it through understanding its characteristics. It's the smallest in the world. The smallest penguin in the whole world, that lives in and around Wellington harbour. The problem with this is there is a lot of development. There's a lot of dog walking and there's a lot of driving. So those things are the key threats for this species, which is really struggling in a contested harbour space. They've got major billion dollar developments going on around there. Now what does that do? It displaces them. What does displacement mean? Disorientation. Disorientation, the driving, and the dogs. Death. So I'm raising its public consciousness through this campaign, so it might not be a silly idea if I share with you kind of ideas that this team are brought together to raise the community understanding of kororā and its profiling. I'd be happy to get our head campaign person Celeste to talk to you, about ways that she's thinking about how to bring this humble little Penguin, that most people don't get to see, to a consciousness within Wellington community so people can adjust behaviours, their driving and they're walking with dogs and things like that. Anna and Gini have all the skills and all the amazingness that gets millions of bloody hits on these things, so that's their domain. I don't know what works other than engaging people who do know how to do this. But, I think something about the relationship that moves people emotionally. So with our kororā we interviewed 10 different people from all walks of life. Dog walkers to whoever that had something to do with kororā. They're called empathy interviews and so they use those empathy interviews to form the campaign strategy.

Ellen

Did you guys follow the bird of the century? Yeah, I mean, John Oliver is a class in his own because he's got lots of viewers and stuff. But some of the campaign managers in New Zealand, I think did an amazing job with just promoting their species and making it kind of fun and silly, but also informative.

Lily

Yeah, we actually DMed the one who was in charge of the tūturuatu one. And then when we went around surveying, we actually ran into her flatmate when we were handing out surveys to people. And she was said 'oh my God, this is too funny. My flatmates, the one who runs the online campaign for bird of the year.'

Lily

As for our campaign we're trying to do some sort of education, if that means trying to get some little education activity or game into schools to try to raise awareness and then obviously, we're also thinking about the social media route. Do you have any input on that?

Ellen

I mean, I probably take your lead from the kākāpō team because up until recently they were on islands where no one interacted with them aside from Rangers. Just explaining why they're such a cool species. If there's a way for the people doing work with them on the ground to be able to get some content as they're doing the work, or even talk about specific individuals. As conservationists we don't tend to follow specific individuals because we're looking at a population view. Aside from here with the takahē, because we only have four of them, we don't tend to name birds or anything like that because it gets a bit tricky with when individuals die and people get upset. But in saying that it is a really effective method to get people to care. If there's a particular, Mom that's trying to breed and there are people following them, then its easier for people to get engaged and attached if they've got an individual to focus on rather than the species as a whole. If there are ways to get content around that from the Rangers, that would work.

Terese

I got introduced to them at the Cape sanctuary and the way that they talk about them because they're caring intimately with them and they have a relationship. I got to learn a lot from the Māori advisors at the Cape Sanctuary about the shore plover.

Lily

One of biggest things that we found, when we did research from September up until we came here in the middle of October, was there's really nothing publicized. There's a couple of papers from the 90s. There's one or two papers that Doc has released since then, but there's really no online public information about the bird. So when it comes to figuring out characteristic to make people care about them, we really are struggling because you can't find any information on it.

Ellen

Are you going and interviewing the people who are working with them at all?

Lily

I think it's about finding the right contact. We haven't found that yet.

Terese

That'll be Pūkaha, Mount Bruce, and Cape Sanctuary, as far as I know, in this part of the country. They will have other leads themselves around, things like that. Just looking at them because I haven't had anything to do with the shore plover, other than going out to the Cape Sanctuary and having a brief introduction to them. Just looking at a picture of them like very elegant looking bird. Very elegant because I asked the Cape Sanctuary staff. I said 'what's this bird' They said 'it's incredibly elegant' and they had a lot of conversation around the observational work with them. The sort of characteristic stuff that builds up through observation. Which is how we got here, observation. Observation of different birds and stars navigated us here. There's a lot of information to be taken from their observational relationship that they have with the shore plover.

Ellen

I would recommend calling them up and say, 'hey, we're doing this project. We hear you've got the species.' or see if you can schedule a zoom interview. I'm sure people are generally quite happy to talk about species they love.

Sona

What do you think is the best way to introduce a species to the public? To get people to start to know about them. Is talking about it enough or something more required?

Terese

The answer would be different for different times and different species and different opportunities. I often look if I'm sort of working with one species and wanting to raise profile, I'll often look at synergising it with kind of a human thing going on in the country. We used to associate. What's that men's thing? Prostate cancer. With the takahē or something? Trying to find synergies with whats happening in this society, that might align with you're doing with your species. You're blowing out the publicity. Sometimes I look at associating things, such as anniversaries with these birds like Conservation Week or whatever week it is. If you find the synergy of something that works like with what happened with the kākāpō, like you don't get to see kākāpō everyday, but then I think about it a lot because there was a superstar that went on national tour called Sirocco. Sirocco was a punk and he'd go up and down the country with his own entourage. You'd pay 80 bucks or 100 bucks just to see him because he was a personality that represented kākāpō. He was a bit of a rock star. He was Mick Jagger. So that raised the profile of his whole brethren. So if you've got a superstar, but that I don't know if it will work for the shore plover, you know, because they roll differently. They're a different species.

Ellen

If it were me, thinking of a species here at Zealandia, I'd be getting as much information about the specific species as possible. It's characteristics and things that might kind of draw the public in. Things that make it unique or special. Then thinking about what you want to get out of the campaign. For you it sounds like just raising awareness. But are there things that people can do, cause often, once people care about it, they think, 'well, what can we do to help support the

species?' Giving them positive things to do rather than don't do's. This probably won't be that relevant for these guys if they're interacting with people, but for example, we just did a big campaign around not feeding kākā because people feed the birds and it causes a whole host of diseases and other problems. But rather than saying don't feed them and that's it, it was sort of more 'the best way to support them is to plant natives in your garden, to trap' and then also giving information about why feeding is not great. But really focusing on that positive messaging, because if you tell people not to do something then they're gonna remember that thing, but not that its bad. Framing your messaging is important. If it was me I probably would end up making goofy videos of the species and try and get people to care using that funny and engaging content.

Interview 3: Rose Scully, Senior Brand and Marketing Advisor at DOC.

Noah

What is the work that you do for or with DOC, what does your position entail?

Rose

...I am a senior brand and marketing advisor and I sit within the digital brand and marketing team. Within that, there are some detailing people like myself, there is the social media team, there is our content team. There's a website team and it's really kind of like the hub for communications for DOC and overall our role is to communicate to the public of New Zealand the work that DOC is doing. The purpose for communicating that to them is to build trust and confidence that you know the work that we're doing is important, that we know what we're doing. We've got the expertise to do it and we communicated enough about what we're working on that we get those people to kind of care about what's happening.

When we're communicating with the public, we work on a model of moving people through a funnel...So when you are talking about communicating to large groups of people, there's often a funnel you move people through, so dropping people into the top- that's where we've got the most and you're talking about just generating awareness, and then you kind of move them through and you want them to do different things. So for us, we look at making people aware of the work we do. We want to kind of give enough information and inspire some connection. We want people to feel connected to that and connected to nature, connected to the environment, because once they're connected, they can care about it. Once you care about it, you can act on it. So you kinda have to bring them on that journey. You can't just sort of go out there and be like umm, hey, the tūturuatu, you didn't know anything about it, but now we need you to do something about it. That's that's gonna fall very flat. There are so many barriers to why someone is not going to engage with that message, so it's about kind of, you know, gradually bringing them along and getting them to that place where they can act and then advocate for others to do that as well.

So some of the work that I'm looking at at the moment is redeveloping our brand strategy and so that's trying to work out for our organizational strategy and the objectives that we need to achieve right up at the top level. How do we use our brand and our marketing as a vehicle to deliver that and reviewing that and then working out how we're gonna roll that out across the organization? Brand is kind of just an external reflection of who you are internally. So if you think about an organization's culture, that's kind of the internal expression of your brand. So it's also trying to land that with our own people and then kind of rolling that out externally. Part of that is developing a key audience strategy, and that's starting to get down into that level where perhaps you guys are kind of connected where we're looking at who are the kind of key segments that we are talking to, who should we be putting the most effort into reaching and about what and what are the best channels to kind of do that through.

So for example, if we are trying to talk to a youth audience, we want to raise awareness with them. We know that that audience might be hanging out on Instagram and TikTok. They might also be consuming content from XY or Z channel. That's where we go to meet them and you have to kind of pitch your content at them at the right way. Like I said, you're asking them to kind of be aware of something or consume some content about something, but you're not directly asking them to kind of care about or act on something that they previously didn't know about. So you're kind of looking at, yeah, who you're talking to and what could you reasonably expect them to do? And if for example we are talking to people about taking an action, we might be looking at a slightly older segment. We might be looking at people who are already actively involved in conservation. They might already volunteer for a local trapping group or something like that. Then, we can expect a certain level of knowledge from them and we can talk to them in a very different way in different channels. If we've got a group of volunteers who are 65 plus, they sit in that retirement age group, more than likely they're not hanging out on Instagram and TikTok. So where can we talk to them? Where are some different places? That's not everybody. My grandmother uses Instagram and has asked me how to use TikTok, but that's definitely not like the the general!

Then, I also work on like a cross, whatever the initiatives are that are happening at the time. So for example, at the moment I am scoping out a campaign to raise awareness about the damage that red-eared slider turtles do. So, they are allowed to be a pet in New Zealand. They're

obviously not endemic to here, but you can have them as pets. If they escape or if they are released into the wild, they can do huge amounts of damage and they can damage the ecosystem for, you know, native species that try to live there. So, it's kind of scoping out what the business needs to achieve or the organization, sorry. What do we need to achieve? We need to achieve awareness with a certain group. We need to try and get people to stop dumping turtles and we need people to report sightings of them. So working out what those objectives are, then going, taking that and working with the other members across my team around what kind of content might suit that. Are we talking about creating some video content, is it static imagery etc. Talking to the social media team about the best way to target for that.

If you're in the back end of media and you're trying to work out how to target someone who might have the propensity to own a turtle, might live in a certain area, that's some very granular targeting. It can be really difficult to find that group, so it's working with them about what we do know about certain audiences to try and extrapolate the correct audience out of that. Working out the correct timing, you know. Is there a certain time of year where more people are buying turtles or more people are getting rid of turtles? Like is Christmas a big time? Do people gift turtles? I don't know. Trying to work out that, using all the connections within DOC, most species will have like a working group that might include members of DOC, members of local councils, members of various trusts, or charities that work on those and things like that. And so it's trying to pull those threads together to kind of get the best. And then I actually manage the the campaign. So it's, you know, creating the content, loading the content and you know managing it. I think that kind of is a very broad, like that's what I do for a job.

Noah

Have you worked closely with any of the recovery groups here at DOC? Are there any specific ones that have been successful in their attempts at public engagement?

Rose Scully: So I, as part of my role I also look after the marketing for the partnership we have with Meridian Energy. Meridian Energy partnered with the kākāpō recovery team. And then I'm also helping out on some work at the moment with the takahē recovery program. We recently launched a Facebook and an Instagram account. The takahē recovery program and the kākāpō program has its own accounts and has done well for quite some time. You might be aware of Sirocco, which is quite a famous kākāpō. So kind of off the back of that, they wrote out some

platforms. Umm, you know, like, you know, capitalizing on that and kind of using his fame to raise awareness of the plight of the kākāpō, and their recovery program has their platform to talk about the work that the program is doing, not just about the kākāpō themselves. So it's getting their engagement and awareness. We didn't have that for takahē. It's an incredibly valuable thing to have. If you've got a corporate partnership that you're, you know, trying to get someone to agree to, having an asset like a bespoke dedicated social media channel that you can talk to people through and that they can help leverage their brand through is a really valuable asset. So we've just launched that for takahē. We had to kind of prepare a business case for that about, you know, why we wanted it, what we were going to use it for, what the key messages were that we would be putting through there, looking at what content pillars, so you know some awareness and education and some celebration.

Takahē, at least at the moment, one of the kind of conservation celebration stories. There's lots of really good stuff that's happening, and the population, after lots of really hard work by not only the recovery program, but local iwi, lots of charities, lots of volunteer groups, are really enjoying some steady population growth. They're growing by about 5% per year. They are one of the species that nest every year, so that helps. But yeah, through lots of pest eradication and careful population management, they've just hit 500 birds, which doesn't sound like a lot, but that's been really, really long to get there. So lots to celebrate! We're also celebrating the fact that they were rediscovered 75 years ago. For over 50 years, they thought they'd been extinct. And then someone was kind of convinced that they weren't and went out hunting for them, found them and sort of kickstarted that as a conservation program. So 75 years of really hard work and we have 500 birds, but that's it's kind of a, it's a case study for showing what you can achieve when you get good engagement. You have good collaboration and some really solid conservation strategies. And so having a dedicated platform on social media that we can talk about that, umm, is really great, not only just for the takahē, but also when it's something like conservation.

Especially in New Zealand, it can verge very much on the doom and gloom like you know, all these species are in perilous danger. We're losing species all the time, we need more people to care. We need more people to act. It can start to just wash over people because it's always so negative. So takahē has a is a real opportunity to talk about the positive stuff, like, you

know, we've made some massive strides. We're using lots of science and what not to inform how we run the breeding programs and things. So it's the good news stories, and not every species gets those. So, and that's pretty cool. We've been running for about two and a half weeks, so that's quite recent, and it's a real collaboration. I'm kind of guiding the marketing work on that, but I don't own it. There are advocacy rangers who are kind of dedicated to communicating about their species, so I work with them and they are sort of primarily running those channels. And I kind of guide them from marketing, you know, like a marketing perspective and sort of help them craft that content. We have nearly 500 followers already. The fact that it was bird of the century helped we really capitalized on that and used that as a vehicle to talk about the channels and kind of promote them. We set ourselves quite a conservative target. I think of about 600 followers in the first six months and it's really gratifying that we're nearly there in two and a half weeks, so we'll probably have to move that and create a new stretch target. But yeah, working really closely with them on what is it that they're trying to achieve? What are the key objectives that you know they need some help with? And then applying the benefit of kind of my knowledge about marketing to help them achieve that in a small way.

Noah

From a campaign perspective, what kind of information do you think is most effective at drawing people's attention towards these endangered species?

Rose Scully: That's a really good question, and it depends entirely on who you're talking to. Umm, I don't know if you've seen it, but there was a series we created, and if you haven't you should go and watch it cause it's really cool, it's really interesting and its called Fiordland Kiwi Diaries. It follows some rangers who work specifically on the tokoeka kiwi in Fiordland, and sort of helping eradicate pests and things in there. How you talk to people about those species depends on who that audience is and what they're interested in. With that particular project, we knew who we were going to try to talk to. We had sort of a tranche that was just for raising awareness. We had another audience, which was kind of: they're conservation aware, but we wanted to deepen their engagement with it and deepen their knowledge about the work that DOC does. So talking to those two different audiences requires quite different content.

You've got one audience that know very, very little and you've got one audience that probably know quite a bit and are interested in different things. So you then design your content bespoke for those audiences, same campaign, same messaging, but different content for different groups. For the awareness group, we wanted to use lots of really engaging footage and pictures of just cute, fluffy kiwis. The tokoeka kiwi are really, really cute and they have these really fuzzy kind of feathers that you know, they don't really look real, they look ridiculous, but they make for amazing photos. There was some kind of like humorous angles when you've got rangers like with their butts sticking out of the bank because they're kind of literally digging under tree roots to try and find where these kiwi are nesting. So there's that kind of like, you know, funny angle. There was a clip where I think a kiwi sprints past someone as they're sitting there writing notes in the- so this gets kind of like less heavy, more snackable, so can consume that content in like 6 seconds.

You've got an audience that are much more engaged with conservation and have a greater interest in exactly how that work is done. So then you've got some voxpop or talking head type stuff where you're actually interviewing the rangers about the work that they do, the considerations that they have to take into account, you know, like the weather, the fact that it's an incredibly remote location. So when they go out to do that work, they're out there for, you know, weeks at a time. So you're still talking about the conservation efforts, but you are doing it using very different content. Then you get down to if you're doing that on social media, you've got media, I can tell you, you know, the certain groups, people that like to look at pictures and there are certain groups, people who like to look at videos. So then you actually need both for both audiences, so it starts to become just a big matrix of these things for these audiences.

Sona

How do you go about deciding what the key message you want people to take away is going to be?

Rose

Usually it will be guided by, so if you're doing some species work, it might be guided by the team that you're working with. So if we're talking about the slider turtles campaign, it's working

with that freshwater team on exactly what it is that they want to achieve. They want to achieve awareness among people who might buy a turtle about the fact that they live for 50 years, they need a heated terrarium and you can't just take them to any old vet, you need to be able to access a reptile vet. And that the healthcare and things and the fact that they're quite a big commitment.

So you then work with them, we have like a template that we pass them to fill out, which is around the type of work they're trying to do. What do they want to achieve? And the budget that they have to spend, umm and any kind of information that they've got about, you know, slider turtles for example. From there I take that and I fill out like a campaign proposal which is kind of like a reverse brief. It's like, yes, OK, I've got your information. I've understood it and this is how I've interpreted it in a campaign way and in there I would try and kind of take that information about what they're trying to achieve and turn them into one sentence statements and they become your key messages. You might have several key messages and you might rank them in terms of primary- the thing you're primarily trying to achieve and then a couple of extra key messages that you can throw in when the content allows or when possible.

One of the key messages for slider turtles is they live for 50 years. So I'm nearly 40, if I buy a slider turtle now, that turtle is going to outlive me, unless I'm lucky enough to live to over ninety, do I want to commit to a pet until I'm 90? No, no, I do not. Give me a cat or a dog like, you know, a life span there that I can manage. I don't wanna be leaving a turtle to my children to take care of, so one of the key messages is yeah, a turtle lives for a very long time, and are you prepared for that? One of the secondary key messages we have is: if you see a slider turtle in the wild, we'd like you to report that on inaturalist so that we can gather some data around, you know, where are they? Where are the problem areas etc? So that's sort of where are they? It's kind of like a secondary piece, and so if the audience is really engaged, awesome, then we can hit them with that one. But primarily it's that. Another primary message might be if you release a turtle into the wild, they will prevent native birds from nesting. Things like that. So, yeah, it's a collaboration between the group that you're working with and what they need to achieve and how you can interpret that in a communications way.

Noah

What do you think is the best way to introduce a new species? Something that really isn't out there at all. Is talking about it on social media or in general enough, or is there specific ways that you think has worked best?

Rose

Some of it might be a matter of opinion and you know there's multiple ways to skin a cat. I think you kind of have to come back to that, that funnel of like, awareness, connection, action. So you've gotta think about the fact that, OK, maybe not a lot of people know about the tūturuatu, so we have to actually just raise awareness and almost like introduce it before we can ask people to care about it. I think there is a quote, I think it's David Attenborough, where he sort of says people can't care about what they don't know about. So you'd literally just have to come and introduce it.

If I was to try and introduce the plover, I'd be looking at what are some interesting characteristics of it and what can I talk about that people will find interesting and different from other shorebirds. If we take the takahē for an example, they look a lot like a pūkeko, but they are very different. They are kind of distantly related in that kind of morehead family, or the rail family, but there they look more similar than they actually genetically are. So it was kind of a tongue in cheek post about, you know, a takahē has not just a fat pūkeko, here are the differences and you kind of have like a cute little bird and then you have some funny little markers with mock scientific explanations about how the the beaks and the face plates are different and how they're bigger and stockier. They live in different environments, things like that. So yeah, it's truly just kind of introducing it, making people aware of it, telling them interesting facts, where they live, what they eat.

If there's kind of interesting things, if those things are really boring and really similar to a lot of other birds, try and find the angle or the hook that is interesting. Umm, all my background is in financial marketing. So, if I look at an endangered bird like a banking product- so say I have a new bank account that I want people to to, you know, sign up for, I wouldn't bother telling them that they can put their money in there and they can use a debit card to access it, because every bank account does that. So you need to look at the stuff that's different. The interest rate is different. You know, there's some cool stuff you can do on the banking app or whatever. So think about what the most interesting parts out of that species that might hook people and tell

them about it when you're creating content about them. You have to have that most interesting thing like right up front. Don't treat it like a news story where you kind of like lead them in and you bury the lead somewhere in the back. People who are consuming content on TikTok, Instagram, news stories, anything, you've got about 3 seconds to hook them. So show that interesting thing right up front and then talk about why it's interesting. If they've got 7 wings and three feet show that first and then talk about why that is a thing, you know, talk about how that happened evolutionarily or whatever. Find the hook.

Noah

We're planning on using social media as it's a big asset for getting information out there, and we're also looking at creating an educational program, like some type of lesson plan or a kit for a school or some recommendations on how to integrate endangered species into education. **Do you have any recommendations for developing our plan?**

Rose

I really like that idea and it's something that, like, I wish we were able to do more of and data shows us that over time people will become more concerned about conservation. It kind of moves with you through life stages, but the earlier you're introduced to it in the earlier you're made to care about it. So that awareness and connection, the sooner you become a conservation advocate- it's also kind of like a one way diagram, you never really move away from caring about conservation. You know, the more aware of it I am, I'm never gonna not care about it. So yeah, I think that reaching kids is a really important aspect.

There did actually used to be a learning team at DOC once, which was made up of teachers, but with budget cuts and things, they were absorbed into a different team. So we don't really have access to, you know, going in, having a talk to a teacher about how you might structure something.

So I think one of the difficulties there is working out what age group are you trying to connect with and then making sure it bolts onto the curriculum really well. Teachers are busy. My mum is a teacher and I've seen kind of how much effort and work it takes to, you know, to work out what your lesson plans and things are gonna be. And they have certain things that they have to achieve with their kids. You know it's about literacy. It's about mathematics. It's those

sorts of things. So you kind of can't come in with like, a whole lesson plan that is just about your specific species, if it does not also support the learning of one of those other areas. So first and foremost, my recommendation would be find some teachers who are willing to talk to you and who who have really good experience in teaching that age group that you're looking at. If it is a high school science class, then go and find a high school science teacher and have a chat to them about how they might find it easiest to get that content and work it into what they have to teach. If it's five year olds, go and find a new entrant teacher and have a chat to them about how they structure messaging for kids. It's obviously like a really different, different audience. And then secondly, secondly, try and tie that to an existing part of the curriculum they have to deliver. If you can tie it to a science, a piece of science curriculum that they're already doing, if you can tie it to mathematics using statistics about collecting information about birds, you know, if it's going out and bird spotting and then reporting that data and graphing it or whatever, however it ties into the things that they already have to work on. If you go in with something that is not already tied to the curriculum, it will not get cut through because they don't have time. You have to make it really easy for them.

The previous banking job we worked with a product like a not for profit, which was called banker, which is about delivering a financial literacy program for kids at different age levels. It's a massive failing, but financial literacy is actually not part of the New Zealand curriculum for kids, so they can't just whilst them with like ohh hey, here's a massive program that you have to deliver to your children all about financial literacy. So instead they go in and they say right here is how you deliver this and it's tied to your literacy program. It's tied to your mathematics program. It's tied to your science program. It's tied to social sciences, so that it's easy for them to deliver. So I think those are probably my top tips and that's not necessarily experience from DOC.

Yeah, I think that's the key though. It's integration. It's making sure that it's not like a whole new thing that they've got to understand. It integrates with something that they are already trying to deliver, and this might make it easier or more interesting, yeah.

Noah

Yeah, maybe even something small. It doesn't have to be a crazy in depth plan, but just even mentions names or just the idea of conservation.

Rose

That's so true. I mean, especially if you're looking at primary school aged children, you know, conservation week in September, they did a coloring competition, no information on there, just some beautiful illustrated pictures of the whio duck and Archey's frog, two species that lots of kiwi kids might not actually see in their own backyard, and, you know, made that available for schools. I printed out a whole bunch and delivered them to my kids' school and all it did was, you know, a fun colouring activity. No onus on the teacher to learn anything and they just mentioned this is a whio duck and this is an archey's frog there too, New Zealand endangered species. Go and color them, cool. Hey, we've introduced the idea. Great. Super light touch, yeah.

[The funnel] is kind of one of the key foundations of any type of communication. So we'll be talking about science communication. You're talking about sales. Think of it as an inverted pyramid. So at the top you need to drop in the most, so you have to really fill that funnel at the top, because every step you want them to take, you are gonna lose a percentage of people. So you might get 90% of people to care about tūturuatu, and then you might get 75% of them to feel connected to the species, and then you might only get 10% of them to take an action. So if you don't fill that funnel with 100 people, then you won't get 10 people out of the bottom. It's a numbers game, so yeah, at a very basic level, if you think about it like that, that could be quite helpful.

Interview 4: Gini Letham, Senior Communications Advisor at Zealandia and Anna Fensom, Digital Marketing Advisor at Zealandia.

Lily

OK, so we so I just wanted to like figure out like what exactly kind of work do you do if you could start off by like stating your title and then just like what you do?

Gini

So I'm Gini. I'm the Senior Communications Advisor. So my role kind of encompasses all of our storytelling, so I work with the conservation team to kind of figure out what they're doing and then figure out ways to tell stories. So I work with my little marketing and comms team, which is where Anna comes into it. She makes it wonderful content. Yeah. So I work in terms of if there's a big project coming up, I figure out how we tell that story and what we wanna get across. I work with media like pitching stories and also writing media releases. And I do so many things. I also do, like all of our interrupts, the signage and stuff within the sanctuary and work with our team to kind of focus on visitor experience in terms of signage and experience in the sanctuary.

My background is in science communication, so I have a masters in that from Otago and then studied zoology and psychology down there as well. So yeah, kind of have that science background and then have come here to yeah, do all things comms. Yeah.

Anna

And she proofreads a lot of my stuff

Gini

Lot of them.

Anna

I'm Anna and I'm the digital marketing advisor here at Zealandia, where I come from. So I've got since uni and believed in what 2017 was my last year and I've been doing social media and web solutions for government and mostly the New Zealand Defense forces, Navy, Army, Air Force. And then I came to Zealandia about two months ago. And here in my role includes managing

their social media channels, the ones I've been putting more of a focus on at the moment have been TikTok, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn, but we also have a YouTube and a Twitter.

And so I look to make content that connects people with nature. But how I find ideas for my content as I take what Zealandia cares about, like what our purpose is, what we want people to care about, what we want people to do, take action on. And then I also look on the other flip side of the coin, what which is like? What do our audience want to see? What do they care about? What are they on that platform for? And I find a bridge in between. And then make content.

And and then I also make my part like in the newsletter that goes out each month, make updates on our website and then analyze the performance of our online channels, usually monthly.

Gini

Well, yeah. And then we've got two others on our team as well. So we've got Sam, who's the manager of our team, so she mostly focuses on marketing, but also supports all of the stuff that we do. And then there's Rebecca, and her role is public programming and visitor experience, so she's more like on the ground, like doing events and that kind of stuff. So we kind of all work together to come up with content and the stories we want to tell, and then we each have our kind of channels of how we do that, yeah.

Lily

I mean, you kind of touched on it a little bit, but we'd love a more in depth about like how Zealandia goes about like creating that information for the public?

Anna

I can give like a social media take on it. Yeah, more like the science communication, like conservation story, stuff like.

Gini

Yeah, I guess like, yeah, for the big stuff, like we have quite often have like a big translocation or a big project. Each year there's kind of. And because I've been here nearly four years, so each

year there seems to be like one big thing and lots of little things. So in terms of like the big projects we've we kind of do cross team working. So we all come together and kind of share knowledge and then I'll go away and write a plan like a communications plan which basically has all of like our key messages what we want to get across and make a whole bunch of information about the project. So like if there's a translocation... kind of figure out what message we want to tell about that translocation. And then like facts about the species and what we're doing and how it's different or kind of coming up with that angle of Difference. And then, yeah, we kind of create core content and then from that, we kind of distill it down and share it across our different channels.

Anna

And then we're not doing like when I'm creating content where it's not like about a specific project like a translocation for example, or like on the Bird of The Year or something that's like more BAU content to keep our social media channels ticking over because that's equally important to keep people engaged, what I do is I have different content pillars for our content. If you want me to dig into that.

So I've talked about before... I look at like what Zealandia cares about, what we want people to do, what we want them to care about, and then what our audience wants to see. And then they make content to find in the middle where there's a bridge. I made these like content pillars, and there's four of them, which is education, entertainment, inspiration and promotion. so there are four different pillars because variety is key to keeping your audience interested and engaged. So different post types can achieve different goals. So we plan content according to those pillars. And so digging into each pillar... educational content should spark curiosity help viewers gain knowledge. If it's surprising or unique, chances are people wanna share it with others and sharing is really important in social media because the more shares you get, the more people you reach, so things like did you know, fun facts, tips, how tos. And so here I can show you some examples of education content. So I try to make with our social media content, at least one of these pillars. So it has to be either educating in some way, entertaining in some way, and inspiring or promotion or it can be a mix of those pillars. So this is like one very simple video that was very effective.

played TikTok about tūi calls

So it was a very like simple video like my partner actually filmed there. We were walking around Zealandia here one day and he got a really good video of the tūī. And so I was like I could just put out this video of the tūī or we could educate people about it and want something surprising about them. And my test was, I was reading up about the tūī in my office and it was like tūī can produce sounds that humans can't even hear and I was like whoa, guess what, guys you know this? And they didn't know. And then umm... Gini knows a lot and I was like alright if she doesn't know chances are that other people don't, too. And it's just such like a cool fact because they have such beautiful voices, but some we can't even hear their call, So yeah. So I thought to layer the text on the video would be quite a simple and easy way we would have consumed the video and learn about the tūī. And it did well, like it wasn't like a viral video or anything but on Instagram reels it got like a small piece of content. Posted a bit since then like 88,000 viewers, 1000 shares which is pretty good, almost 6000 likes. So that was really good.

Another one was... So we have the sanctuary its surrounded by a fence, right? And wouldnt really have the sanctuary without a fence. And then so we were like, ohh, we should make a a video about the fence and get people to care about it. And she [Gini] linked me up with one of our infrastructure team his name is Gary and he took me around the fence and we made a video about it.

Another TikTok video shown as example

And I think there are a few different things that made that video engaging, like tapping into that Roman Empire trend like we all know what that is. Now, most people are on TikTok doom scroll like me and then also with video doing lots of like quick cuts as well to keep people engaged having photos pop up instead of just having someone speak the entire time, like just them and themselves. And then yeah, other ones are like entertain. So I guess people have different reasons for using social media, but like a common one. Why someone scrolls on TikTok or on Instagram is to be entertained. So we, whether its like a funny cat video or to see what Taylor Swift doing and Rio. That's what I use TikTok for. That's what they're online for on TikTok, so content should be intriguing to our audience as well as quick and punchy entertaining doesn't necessarily mean to be funny, although humor is a great technique if done well, so things like trending videos, mentioning them means behind the scenes and interesting stories. Mm-hmm. And then I have other examples as well, we don't have to go into them.

And and then inspiring content so you can inspire people in many ways by showing them how to fix a problem, how to improve their healthful life or add something to the wish list. If you can inspire someone enough to want to change their behaviour or perspective, or like in some way, they're likely to share that with others as well, so things like... People, stories, community involvement, making change for the better and we put out a video last week. It's not on this presentation, but I made it with my CEO because kākā were bird species, here were extinct and Wellington pre 2000s and she did a speech recently where kākā now can just be found throughout the Wellington region and they're breeding here like if you're walking through the city like you are likely to see one or hear one. And there's a tree in parliament or across the road from Parliament anyway, where it's got kākā markings on it, which is pretty amazing because you know they were extinct and now they're in the city and it's pretty much thanks to Zealandia and then also communities surrounding it like putting up traps and things like that, and so we made that video to inspire people that. Was it restorative change or something like that? Like, she often says that, you know, overseas theres like a decline of species and are in in different parts of New Zealand as well, with the kākā. That's a good example that we can restore these species. If we look after them and gives our nature space. They can thrive. So that was a really, like, good message and that's that taken off, especially like on Instagram and tiktok as well, but more so on Instagram. And then has got like 72,000 views and like over 500 shares and 4000 likes, so it did really well in its an example of inspiring content.

Gini

Yeah, all the time. When we put out, like, inspiring content, we like to acknowledge like other groups that are doing stuff as well. Like, we don't just be good at Zealandia here because even though we are the ones bringing the birds back, if the community didn't get behind it, we wouldn't be seeing the impact. Yeah. So yeah, very much. Yeah. Giving kudos to other people that are getting involved as well as a big part.

Anna

Yeah, yeah, like those pest trapping organisations. And then the last pillar is promote. So promotional content is about encouraging your audience to take this next step. So basically being

clear about your call to action. So things like donate to Zealandia, or vote takahē for Bird Of The Year, be a responsible pet owner and then I just found entertaining ways to promote Bird Of The Year using like a Taylor Swift Eras tour poster recreating that with takahē or doing like a bird of the year steal their look.

Lily

Yeah, I just have a question. What determines if a video or post does well, like is there something that you're specifically looking for? Like obviously if it has 100 million views I'm guessing, there's like, there's obviously viral but for those middle posts like what is doing well?

Anna

Ohh yeah, that's a good question. Yeah, I tend when I'm like looking at the performance of our content over the month, I tend to look more likes and shares because it's actually people like especially shares because those are that's people advocating for your content. And both likes and shares people are actually taking an action with your content. They're not just watching it. They're like, whoa, I like this. I want to see more content like this because that's what it tells the algorithm, right? Or I'm gonna share this with my friend and family because it was funny or it was inspiring or I learned something? They should learn something too. I don't have any golden numbers. Viral is over 100,000 views. A Facebook post, like if it got like over 500 likes, I'd be stoked. TikTok I'm still learning what our what our average is. Yeah, yeah.

Gini

Look what you're saying too, about like consistency is really key. Yes, like. And Anna is really good at like picking up on trends and posting stuff even if it doesn't necessarily do really well, it's still getting our message out there. Yeah. And then more and more people can't come to your page and see it.

Anna

That's yeah. Really, really key. Yeah, 100%. It gets like the profile visits up and also like it might be a video that only got 100 likes, but I've seen two people follow us because of that video.

Yeah, and those are two extra people who follow us and see our content. So I don't actually have a clear answer.

Lily

That's OK.

Gini

Yeah. And for social media, it changes so quickly too, like I think a big part of it is being adaptable and yet being aware of what your audience wants rather than being like this is how we do things. And we just put this out because that's what we think is best. It's just like, yeah, one thing I really like about Anna's this content is she just tries stuff out. And it might not work. Yeah, but when it does. It's like very, very satisfying.

Anna

That's what I love. If I had to say I have a favorite platform, it would be TikTok because you can take risks and you can try things and it's not- I just feel like it's more of a big deal with Facebook and Instagram. If something doesn't go as well. If it flops, it's more visible but on TikTok it's not. So you can kind of just try trends and see what sticks.

Sona

Is your TikTok account newer than your Instagram?

Anna

Yeah, I guess, yeah. I think we've had it for about a year, yeah.

Gini

Sam started it and she started in 2021 so... Yeah, but I think it was a while until she started it. Yeah, maybe about a year and a half ago, I'd say.

Sona

Would you say it took a while to build a following?

Gini

Yeah. So Anna has come on board in the last two months and the role before her wasn't just digital focus and she was doing... the last person was doing a lot more. Whereas we changed the scope of the role so that Anna could just focus on digital stuff more. And I think that consistency and having someone that has an understanding of like what content works and how different channels works has made a real big difference. Yeah, especially in terms of growing up following. Like smashing it!

Anna

Yeah. Yeah. So I think it was over the last... well before I started, they had 2500 followers. And now we're like 80 followers off 10,000. So just over the last two months.

Eric

So it's like success and more so like the trial and error, just keep on posting and posting along those lines.

Gini

Yeah. OK. Yeah. I think as long as you know, like what messages you want to be getting at and the kind of I guess what you want your organization to be looked at as like that's kind of key like, yeah. And Anna's got a strategy of this stuff she wants to post she's not just being like Ohh yeah, we'll see if that works. Like, yes, we'll see if that works with this kind of thinking behind it. Yeah. Yeah, I think that's really important. Yeah.

Noah

When you are determining the type of stuff to post, what do you think is the most successful strategy for getting people to participate with, maybe a conservation effort, or like something that you guys are trying to get people to attend or like interact with.

Gini

Like are you thinking like come to an event or like donate or?

Noah Scott: Yeah. Like, like, anything, honestly, anything that enlists participation rather than just like watching.

Gini

Do you have any thoughts?

Anna

I think so with my experiences Zealandia. So far, my promotional content where it's like take action has been mostly around Bird of the year and we came 10th so... We helped drive people to vote takahē. I can't quantify that. But I think there needs to be like value for like people in some way like. Is it gonna make them feel good if they participate? Is it gonna make their life easier? Are they gonna make money from it? Probably not but like yeah. What value was that gonna add to their life?

Gini

Thinking too, like in terms of because we've been doing some more kind of communications around actions people can take it home and we've kind of been targeting it at like the Wellington community. So we've done a big drive around not feeding kākā because it's really bad for them. Yeah. And focusing that messaging more on like a positive one. So instead of being like, don't feed them, it's a care for them. So, like encourages people to kind of engage with the content more rather than feeling like they're getting told off and you're more focusing on: these are the cool things we're seeing in Wellington as a Wellingtonian and these are the things you can do to help build that up and get it. I guess that restorative hope messaging. Yeah, of you're making a difference by doing these things. Yeah, which come back to value, yeah.

Noah

So you say like the positive messaging is more effective than anything.

Gini

Yeah, definitely. Yeah, I think, yeah, you wanna instill like hope in people, which I think is something we're really lucky. With at Zealandia here. Is that because of the stuff that's happened in the past, we've got really cool messages and stories to share of like this thing's really worked to look at all the kākā or this stuff. And so if we're trying new things, we can kind of have that background. So like if we bring in new species, it's like, oh, we've done all these cool things for the birds. Now we're starting to think about fresh water. And so it kind of builds people up because they're like oh, this actually means something as opposed to? Yeah. Being like, hey,

there's not many of these birds and the people go oh. When you're like, looking at something on social, there's so much content, like if you're seeing something that makes you feel a bit stink, you're just going to be like I don't wanna engage with that. Yeah, yeah. So kind of having that hopeful message of like things that can work well or things that are going right and and yeah, things that people can do themselves to help.

Noah

I guess our initiative... we're only working with like one species. What would your recommendation for us because like you guys are like variety is like a key part to it. How do we like enlist the same level of interaction and like what would you suggest for something like that?

Anna

Could you use the DOC channels?

Lily

We have spoken about that and it's kind of a No right now. That's kind of where we're trying to like figure out what is our best next step. Because at this point, the bird is so unknown and it's really only on those remote predator free islands and there's like, I think there's three captive breeding sanctuaries where they're located. The closest one being Pūkaha, and so we've reached out to them, but like we're kind of starting from ground zero.

Gini

It is tricky. Yeah, cause, yeah, I guess we have our existing channels and stuff in our existing audiences. So when we do have stuff to put out, we've kind of got those people there. So yeah.

Anna

Yeah, that makes it easier. Although if I could pick an app to start ground zero, it would be TikTok like people can take off overnight with like not posting at all. Like there is that potential compared to places like Facebook where you kind of need to pay to compete, yeah. Compete for that space, cause it's just so saturated. Umm. And then and then with Instagram, Instagram Reels get more reach. Than Instagram posts or that's with our account anyway. And I worked at

defense. That was the same thing. And I know like people say that Reels is there like 3 months behind TikTok and stuff, but I think they are like working more on reels and I'm finding that with some of our reels, they're like outperforming some of our TikToks. I'm actually quite confused at the moment. Like what performs better on TikTok or Reels, because, like my mind changes each week because something will actually perform way better than it does on reels. And I'm like, oh, I thought this would be more of a TikTok video. So I'm still working then out that that. So I think that is what I would do is for you, to start from ground zero and yeah or utilizing other organizations.

Gini

Yeah, I'd say like collabing as much as you can with organizations that might want to share that messaging. And there's also traditional media too, like going through news channels cause then you reach a different audience. So I guess it depends, yeah. Like sitting down, actually. Being like who, who do we want to target and what do we want them to do and that we kind of determine what channels you might want to use. Yeah. But yeah, like, there's, you know, magazines. You could pitch articles to or podcasts or the all those kind of things that just reach people in different ways. And like, some people might not be on social media. They might not want to read a certain thing like yeah. So I guess if you're wanting to have lots of people like lots of different types of media would be good, yeah. But that is tricky, like trying to build something from the ground up, especially if you have, like, yeah, one species.

But yeah, my kind of when I approach like a translocation or something, I like try and figure out what angles make that story interesting because we've done quite a few like species in the last three years where at species you might not necessarily be able to see. So we did like a fish translocation. We did a freshwater mussel translocation and then we did a plant translocation that's only found under the ground. Yeah, that was my first big project and I just really focused on like the relationships that the plant had. Umm, so it had this really cool relationship with short tailed bats or long tail bats. One of the bats is because they're the only mammals and use terrestrial mammals in New Zealand. And so it has this pollination story there and so that that was really cool. But also like sharing the stories of the people working with the plant. I think people really connect with people and stories rather than it just being like, here's 10 facts about this bird. It's like, oh, here's this guy. And he's been working with this bird for this many years.

And this is why he cares like those kind of stories, really get people interested. Yeah, OK. Yeah. And yeah, not just telling people that they should care, like giving them reasons. Why I guess with your storytelling. Yeah, I think it's very easy to be like ohh people don't know about this bird. And if we tell them about it, they'll care. But like, I think that's a big trap. You can fall into with any kind of storytelling and comms.

Anna

Yeah, I 100% agree on that. An angle wise like I made a video about the toutouwai and like a cool fact about it is that it likes to follow animals like trail behind animals. So then because animals will disturb the soil and then the bird will come up and then eat the insects in the ground. Just stir soil and then so I read that on like a Facebook post had been written. And then, so I went out in the Bush and I went round where I knew toutouwai kind of hung out. And then I disturbed a bit of the soil with my foot and I filmed it. And then the toutouwai, and then another one actually popped up right in front of my video and then ate like a little bug as well. Like, it was perfect. And so instead of me being like oh this is a toutouwai. This is why you should care about it and this is how many there are left because I think they were extinct from Wellington as well. I was just like I didn't even tell people were more showed people a fun fact about the bird. That one went viral. People, all the comments started getting like so obsessed with this bird

Gini

Yeah, the other thing. And it does really well is she puts herself in the video. So instead of it being like, here's a static image of a bird here's some facts about it. Yeah. Like she's saying she'll talk to camera and be like, oh, there's this really cool thing, like, let me show you. And it's a lot more engaging again. If you think of yourself on social media and how you just scroll like what will get you to stop, I think it, yeah, it's very easy. Sometimes when you're in a job to be like ohh, I'm just gonna put this out. But like actually when you think about the environment people are looking at it and how much information they're taking in at their time, like how do you make it snappy?

Anna

Yeah. So with my talking videos, I always try to find a hook within the first three seconds to give people a reason to keep watching. So with that toutouwai video I was walking through the bush

and I was like I'm being followed... by the cutest little bird at Zealandia. And so people were like oh, she's being followed. She's a woman. She's alone. In the bush. It's just a bird. We're OK. She's not gonna die. Yeah. Or I'll be like, just walking along. Be like, do you wanna see something cool today? And then I cut to something about the takahē is doing or. Yeah. Yeah. So just something that can hook people.

Gini

And the other thing that you do really well as well as like looking at the comments and what people say and getting ideas from that. So like with the toutouwai video, people were like, why are they wearing those little anklets. And then we could use that as an opportunity to teach people about banding and why we band birds and all that kind of stuff. Yeah. Yeah, but even someone was like, ohh, listening to the birds sound makes me really homesick. So and went out and made a video that was purely about the bird song. Yeah, and it did really well. But because people had kind of alluded to the fact that that's the content that they were wanting. Yeah. Yeah. So very good.

Anna

That's very helpful.

Gini

At like. Yeah, being reactive and responsive to what people are saying on your videos and stuff, yeah, I think is important, yeah.

Anna

And try to respond to like most comments, as well, because that can really help. To say so, I post a TikTok people, start commenting on it. I wanna reply to them because TikTok will be like ohh people are having conversations in this video. This is kind of popular. I'll keep showing that's on the for you page and then we'll reach more people. Yeah, it's also important.