

Falklands Conservation Annual Review July 2020–June 2021

Governance

Roger Spink (FC Chairman); Henry Robinson (UK Chair); Dr Paul Brewin (FI Vice Chair); Nicola Granger (Hon Treasurer); Keith Biles (FI Hon Treasurer); Thomas Blake; Ross James; Sally Blake (who resigned in October 2020); Tim Carr; Jan Cheek; Dr Colin Clubbe; Prof John Croxall (who resigned in February 2021); David Crwys-Williams; Phyl Rendell; Sally-Ann Wilson; Ian Moncrieff; and Matthew Bassford (UK Vice Chair).

People

The members of staff who continued in their posts during the year were as follows: Dr Esther Bertram (Chief Executive Officer), Dr Andrew Stanworth (Conservation Manager), Sarah Crofts (Conservation Officer), Dr Katherine Ross (Habitats Officer), Dr Caroline Weir (Cetaceans Project Officer), Pamela Quilodrán Jelbes (Technical Administrative Officer), Mike Ford (Community Outreach Officer), and Michelle Winnard as (Communications and Marketing Officer). Emma Harte replaced Peter Wessels as (Marine Conservation Officer) in December 2020. Shaani Stashinsky (Administrative Officer) was replaced by Sorrel Pompert Robertson in March 2021. In October 2020, we developed three new roles. Grant Munro, former FC CEO, re-joined us as our Sites Officer, Jennifer Sol joined us as Business and Logistics Officer for New Island and David Higgins as Peatland Biodiversity Project Manager. In the UK, Alicia Boyer continued as the UK Administrative Officer. Helen Marsh very kindly continued to provide voluntary support as the Herbarium Curator. With this group of people, together with the assistance of many dedicated volunteers both locally and overseas, we have had a successful year. We thank each and every one of them.

Premises

Our main office is at Jubilee Villas in Stanley, with a complementary office for our UK Administrative Officer, Alicia Boyer, at The Gatehouse in Sandy, Bedfordshire. We continued working towards our vision of a purpose-built headquarters in Stanley with a dedicated space for Watch Group activities.



ABOVE Tussac planting with British Forces South Atlantic Island's support. DEBBIE THORNTON; BELOW LEFT Watch Group tussac planting at Hookers Point. FALKLANDS CONSERVATION; BELOW RIGHT Falkland Islands Seabird Monitoring Programme annual work continues. TOM PIPKIN



THE YEAR'S ACHIEVEMENTS 2020–21

Our work reflects our mission to work in partnership with the local and international Falkland Islands community to conserve nature. We are a partner of BirdLife International. This was achieved during the year through the work described below.

Education and outreach – the Watch Group

With support from Standard Chartered Bank, we maintained our programme of activities to build appreciation and understanding of wildlife for our Watch Group (our junior members). Their activities were recorded in the quarterly Rocky's News newsletter, widely distributed to all members and supporters. Of particular note was the member's commitment to influencing others through presenting their goals at our AGM, monitoring camera traps to understand how cats impact native birds and taking MLAs to the outskirts of the dump to clear wind-blown plastics.

Supporting environmental education within Falkland Island schools

We continued to provide information and staff support to environmental education lessons, field trips and assemblies within schools and to support work experience students.

Influencing, advising and engagement

We continued to provide environmental advice to government, industry and other stakeholders in the Falklands and abroad through the Seabird Bycatch Committee, the Environment Committee, and the Forum for the Conservation of the Patagonian Sea.

We continued to run the Falkland Islands oiled seabird rehabilitation facility (refurbished with support from Detroit Zoological Society). We also contributed information and advice as part of the Wildlife Disease Working Group that includes a number of organisations, individuals and Falkland Island Government departments.

Springcreek Conservation's Ecological

New Island settlement. MICHELLE WINNARD

Restoration Grants continued to provide financial support to local community conservation initiatives. We continued to support community events including Stanley clean up, and provided opportunities for volunteers to carry out practical conservation activities. The volunteer Curator continued to work with us to ensure the National Herbarium is available to all on request.

Strengthening biosecurity policy and practice

We worked closely with the Environment Officer, Biosecurity Officers, Island Landcare, and the MoD to support and learn from their biosecurity work and to promote their biosecurity messages through social media and practical events.

Ensuring leading practice in onshore and offshore development

We informed the public and FIG on their salmon farming fact finding for the benefit of the environment.

Land management, habitat restoration and outreach

Springcreek Conservation support has allowed us to retain a role focussed on habitat restoration, of which much of this work is to support and encourage landowners in their own restoration projects and to share learning. In addition we ensure we are good custodians for our own landholdings, including restoration work and invasive species management. With the merger with the New Island Conservation Trust, we have taken on additional responsibility for the management and operation of New Island. With support from RSPB we were able to increase our management abilities of all our land holdings through a new Sites Officer role. With support

from Georgia Seafoods and Springcreek Conservation we achieved significant tussac planting on Middle Island. With Darwin funding we were able to support a new role to better understand the benefits of good native habitats and work with landowners to assess the benefits of different management methods.

Marine management

Our main activities on marine management this year were: a) the successful conclusion of our Darwin Plus funded project, which saw the Falklands announced as the first Key Biodiversity Area for sei whales anywhere in the world – a real boost for the Falklands; b) continued employment (supported by the RSPB) of a Marine Conservation Officer, to take forward findings on Key Biodiversity Areas, and inform the broader Marine Spatial Planning process in the islands c) continuation of the Falklands-wide Seabird Monitoring Programme, now in its 32nd consecutive year.

New Island

The merger of Falklands Conservation and The New Island Conservation Trust was completed in July 2020. We are most grateful to all involved in this successful merger. We had a positive first year of operations, despite the significant financial shortfall caused by the absence of cruise tourism. This shortfall was reduced by the government's subsidy of local tourism (called the TRIP scheme). We successfully completed much needed rehabilitation work on the runway to improve access by air.

Impact of Covid-19

We worked to a drastically revised budget for 2020/21 to allow for delays in funding and travel uncertainty.



Plans for the Future

Trustees have adopted a new Falklands Conservation Strategy.

It is an evolution of our previous Strategy but allows us to better face the challenges of the next five years. The 2021-2026 Strategy has four main themes:

1. Falklands Conservation as a Force for Nature

In order to have an effective organisation we need to invest in the people, systems and infrastructure that make up the organisation. Over the next five years we will refresh the organisational structure to accommodate new team members and will allow us to grow where possible and sustainable. We will work to increase our financial stability by working with partners, supporters and donors, tackling the significant difficulties that COVID-19 has caused. We will continue to put our work with the community at the heart of our strategy.

2. Restore Nature

We will champion the restoration of nature as a key way of tackling the major challenges that we face. This will focus on our responsibility to restore our own islands alongside offering support to other landowners and businesses where possible.

3. Space for Nature

Falkland's land and seascapes are globally important for nature. While much good work has been done, there is still much to do to ensure appropriate conservation of our marine and terrestrial natural heritage. We will work alongside other members of the community to find positive solutions.

4. Using Nature

Onshore and offshore industries have the potential to alter the natural character of the islands forever. We will work alongside other members of the community to encourage sustainable solutions to these challenges.



Work on the New island airstrip was completed. FALKLANDS CONSERVATION



New Island. MICHELLE WINNARD



Watch Group seed pot planting. FALKLANDS CONSERVATION

We are all part of the solution for achieving a bright future for Falklands' nature, and we look forward to continuing to work together.

Middle Island Tussac planting. GRANT MUNRO



Thanks & Acknowledgements

We could not have achieved so much without everyone listed below.

The New Island Conservation Trust, Forum for the Conservation of the Patagonian Sea, the Royal Botanic Gardens KEW and the Millennium Seed Bank, Wildlife Conservation Society, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Detroit Zoological Society, the British Antarctic Survey, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, Oxford University, the International Network for Seed-based Restoration, IUCN Peatland Program, One Ocean, Quark, Aiuká, the South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute, Island LandCare, the Elephant Seal Research Group, the Falkland Islands Development Corporation, the Rural Business Association, the Department of Agriculture, Shallow Marine Surveys Group, the UK Ministry of Defence, Air Tanker, the NAAFI, Trant Construction, Stanley Nurseries, and Cape Dolphin Farm.

We would like to highlight our corporate supporters: Sea Lion Island (Wild Falklands Ltd), the Pale Maiden B&B, Bleaker Island, International Tours & Travel, JD Robertson, Pebble Island Lodge, Morrison's Falklands Ltd, The Malvina House Hotel, Falkland Island Holidays, Darwin Lodge, Falkland Islands Tours & Travel, and Colonial Equipment. We are very grateful for your collaboration.

Major supporters of our project work (in terms of funds, help or advice – often all three) in the past year were; the Falkland Islands Government, UK's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, including their Darwin Plus programmes, the RSPB, Standard Chartered Bank, the Falkland Islands Development Corporation, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Wild Planet Trust and the SeaLife Centre.

Major supporters of our core activities were The Falkland Islands Government, Detroit Zoological Society, Birdlife International, Dingle Oceanworld Aquarium, Thrigby Hall Wildlife Gardens, Drusillas Park, Cotswold Wildlife Park and Gardens, the John Ellerman Foundation, Springcreek Conservation and Steve Spring. For substantial donations in kind, we thank Stanley Services Ltd.

Charity Ball Online Auction 2020. Sponsors: Consolidated Fisheries Ltd, Fortuna, FIDC, SAAS, Auction Donors: Samantha Chapman, Vicky Chater, Alice Clarke, Sarah Crofts, Eileen Davies, Julie Halliday, Pamela Jelbes, Matt Jenkins, Roxanne King-Clark, Steve Massam, Simon Verrechia, Stuart Walker, Neil Wildman-Witten, and Government House. Raffle Donors: Belle Salon, bfbs, BFSAI, Black Shanty (Helen and Leon Marsh), Bleaker Island (Nick Rendell and family), Debbie Thornton, Falklands Beerworks, Falklands Outdoors, FI Distillers, FIGAS, FITB, Hairy Daisy, Johnsons Harbour,

Kelper Stores, Lafone House, Malvina House Hotel, Marinella's Italian food, mjwinnard photography, FI Museum and National Trust, Joyce Allan, Pale Maiden B&B, Pebble Lodge, Port Edgar Farm, Richard James International, Saunders Island, Sea Lion Lodge (Wild Falklands Ltd), Seafish Chandlery, Stanley Leisure Centre, Sullivan Shipping, the Narrows Bar and Grill, Waterfront Boutique Hotel, Workboat Services, Tom and Larissa Blake and Elephant Beach Farm Limited for significant donations.

For substantial donations to the Building for the Future fundraising campaign to date, we would like to thank Standard Chartered Bank, Falkland Islands Government, Premier Oil, Noble Energy, JK Marine, Caribbean Alliance, John & Tracey Hellowell, Henry Kenner (Arrowgrass), Cotswold Wildlife Park and Gardens, Morrison's Construction, and Frits W Olivier. We would also like to thank the H.B. Allen Charitable Trust - long-term supporters of our core activities, who have now completed their funding to us with a generous donation to our proposed new headquarters. We are very grateful.

Of course, none of our work would be possible without our members, penguin adopters, volunteers and sponsors. We wish to thank you all.

The Falklands has the first Key Biodiversity Area for sei whales anywhere in the world. DR CAROLINE WEIR

