

MIRO



2014 Annual Report

Message from the Chair

One of MIRO's strengths is that each year we grow, building upon our achievements of the previous year. This year was no exception. Our trapping network was enhanced with the addition of stoat traps to a number of lines and our volunteers continued their good work servicing the existing network of possum traps and rat bait stations. Our planting work around the Parangarahu Lakes continued and several expeditions of hardy volunteers were made throughout the year, both to maintain existing plots and establish new ones. The fruits of their labour are really beginning to show now, particularly in the older plots where small forests are becoming apparent. We intend to ramp up our efforts at the lakes this year by increasing the number of pest traps serviced by volunteers. Supporting our planting is our nursery at Gracefield. The small group of volunteers who work there have not only kept MIRO supplied with as many eco-sourced trees as we need, they have also become a valuable regional resource supplying several thousand trees to other planting projects.

Also essential is our monitoring work, without which we would have no yardstick to assess the effectiveness of our activities nor the information required to fine-tune them. Our rodent and mustelid monitors played a vital role in helping us understand the effect of the recent mast year on pest numbers and enabled us to take appropriate action where possible. Our annual bird count also provides us with an important measure of success. An increased number and variety of native birds is as good a validation as we can get that our efforts in the park are being rewarded. And last but not least I would like to thank the small group of people who made repeated trips into the bush throughout the year to search for and monitor our North Island Robin population.

Further to our formal monitoring efforts, anecdotal evidence from many people who use the park or live nearby suggest that an increase in biodiversity is evident. For example, it is not uncommon now for people to see rifleman near their houses or low down by the streams and seedlings of certain trees like nikau and kohekohe are now proliferating in pockets of the bush.

As you will have gathered from the above, all of MIRO's diverse activities are performed by volunteers. We would not exist without them. We are continually looking for new people to join us, both to replace people who are unable to continue their work and to enable us to expand. Please recommend us to any people you might know of who might enjoy being a MIRO volunteer. We are also looking for people to join, or work with, the MIRO Committee. We particularly need people with the time, energy and drive to help make future projects a reality.

Lastly, I'd like to say thank you. To our many volunteers, to the great people from the Regional Council who support us, and to the many others too numerous to name who support us in so many different ways. Included in this last group are GNS, who let us use their land for our Gracefield nursery, our auditor, George Tuffin, and Spiral Web Design who provide and sponsor all our web services.



Doug Mercer

July 2014

MIRO Committee

The MIRO Committee met approximately at 6 week intervals throughout the year and continued to function in an effective and constructive manner. The members were Doug Mercer (Chair), Mike Rumble (Treasurer), Parker Jones (Secretary), Gail Abel, Jill Bagnall, George Gibbs, Jan Heine, Keith Levy, Colin Ross, and Owen Spearpoint. The broad mix of skills on the Committee enables good governance and has a direct impact on our ability to make sound decisions.

Membership

It is difficult to quantify MIRO membership numbers. We prefer to think of all our volunteers as members so, using this measurement, we have a fluid membership that possibly involved at least 100 individuals throughout the year. As an Incorporated Society, we also have to treat membership more formally on occasions, particularly regarding eligibility to vote for Committee members and other constitutional matters. For these purposes, membership is determined by the payment of an annual subscription (\$10 or \$15 per family) and numbers usually fluctuate between 20 and 30.

Monitoring

The quarterly rodent monitoring and six-monthly mustelid monitoring teams continued their good work throughout the year. Monitoring has always been an important part of MIRO's work but it is increasing in importance to us. We are endeavouring to better manage the fluctuations in pest numbers due to the periodic masting of various plant species, a natural phenomenon that we must learn to cope with. Rodent numbers in particular are affected by the availability of the fruits they eat and their numbers have a flow on effect on the numbers of other pest species.

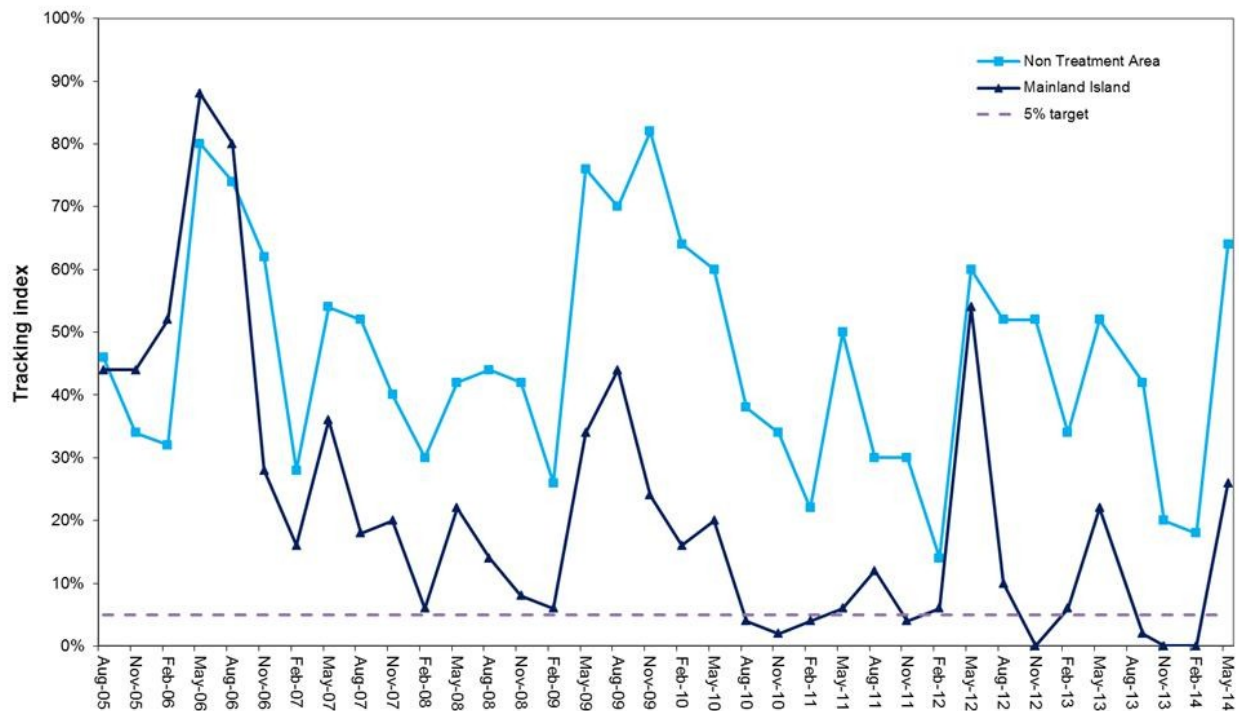
Pest Control

Our pest control efforts continued as in the past and were subjected to continuous improvement throughout the year. We need to be vigilant and keep performing our work according to the high standards we have set. We continue to look for opportunities to expand our network in vulnerable areas and will be looking closely at the eastern boundary over the coming months.

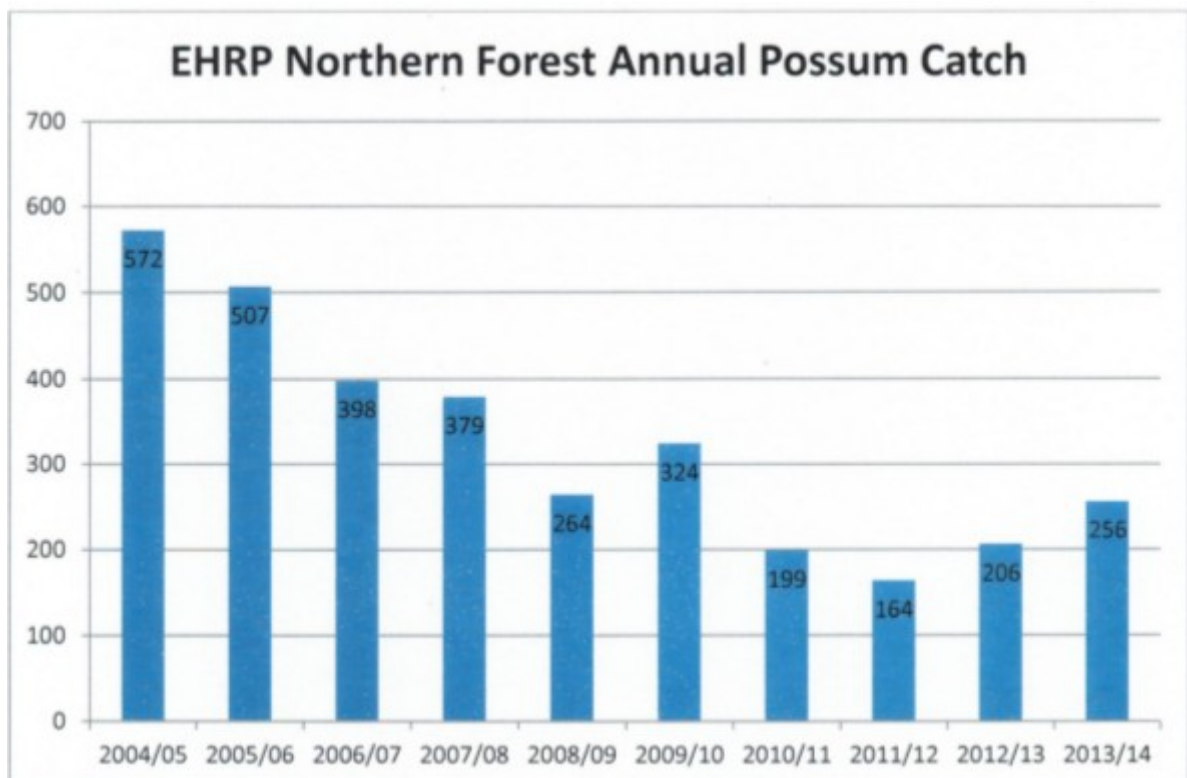
Rodents

Last year we became aware that several tree species were masting and we expected rodent numbers to increase this autumn. Unfortunately this increase occurred and we currently have a rat plague in the northern forest block. The rat tracking rates in February were 0% for the Mainland Island and 18% outside the Mainland Island. The Mainland Island had been tracking at 0% since November and these were the lowest rates recorded since records began in 2005. This May the Mainland Island was tracking at 26% and tracking outside the Mainland Island was at 64%.

Of note, and not a good sign, is that all the monitoring lines in the Mainland Island had rat tracking and at a similar rate. The lines with the highest tracking were those closest to the centre of the Mainland Island, suggesting the rats are building numbers from a residual population existing within the Mainland Island. We have increased our pest control efforts to respond to this and are hoping that numbers will fall away again like they did after a similar mast season in 2012.



Possoms

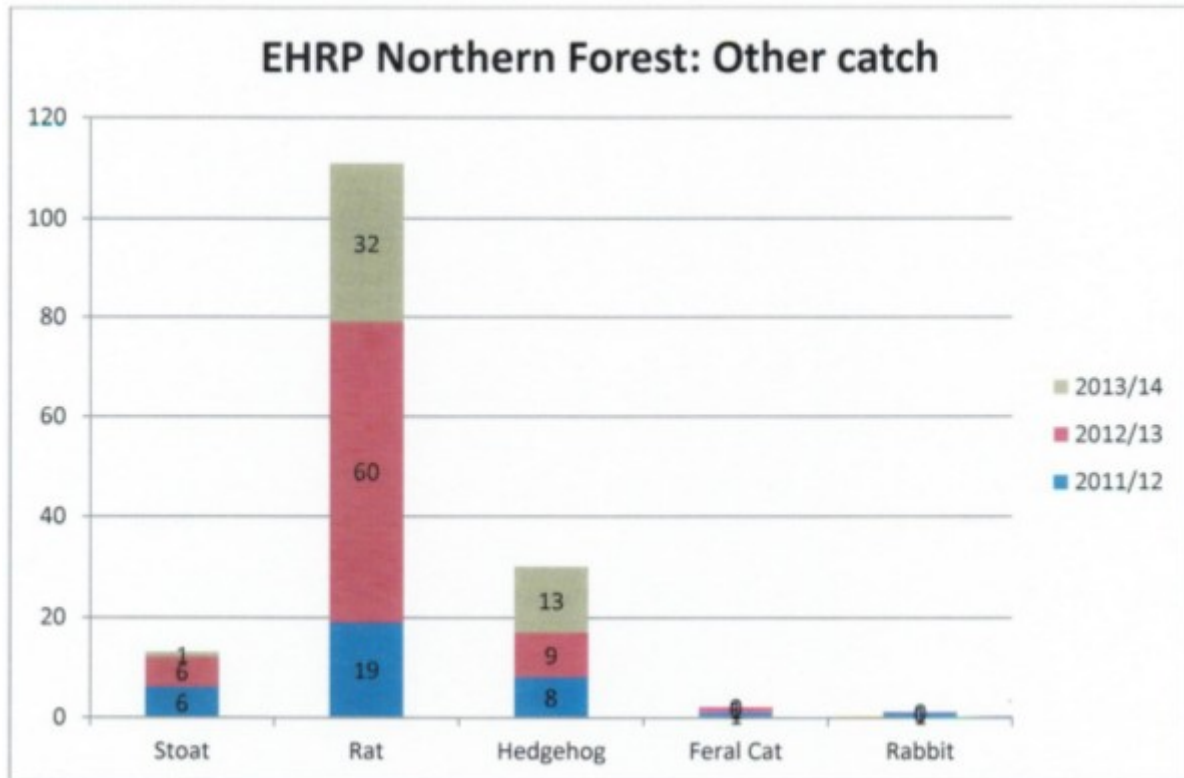


Another good haul of possums was removed from the park this year with the total number caught rising from 206 to 256. The Regional Council's RTC (Rate of Trap Catch) in May of last year recorded a level of 2.0%. This is a low number and well below the 5% target, confirming that all the hard work put in by our team of trappers throughout the year is paying dividends.

Mustelids

Stoat trapping has been increased to 66 traps in and around the Mainland Island. We look forward to making more catches and we should gain a clearer idea of stoat numbers as statistics are collected from the new traps over the coming year.

Other



Nursery

The MIRO nursery at GNS continued its good work, thanks largely to a small core of dedicated volunteers. They continue to keep us well supplied with a huge variety of healthy, eco-sourced plants. MIRO is always looking for additional people who can help us in this essential area.

In addition to supplying our plantings at the Lakes Block, this year 1200 trees were supplied to Baring Head and another 1000 to other local groups including Friends of Waiwhetu Stream, Forest and Bird Pauatahanui, the Forest and Bird Plant Sale, Eastbourne Dunes Group, and the Greater Wellington Plant Swap. We also planted an area at Korohiwa near the entrance to the Park.

We are very grateful for the continued support of GNS, who host our nursery on their land, and the Hutt Mana Energy Trust, who continue to fund the soil and compost we require.

Robins

Our robin re-introduction programme has been going now for over six years. There have been three translocations with a total of 103 birds released. We took the opportunity this year to review the success of the programme and to consider where we might go from here. After much discussion and consultation with a variety of experts outside of MIRO we came to the conclusion that several more

top-ups are required before we can be confident that we have a sustainable population. In conjunction with this we also decided that we need to significantly increase our monitoring capacity. This means a significant increase in resources and effort is required and we are currently trying to identify people with the time and energy to help us move forward. It is probably a good time to summarise what we have achieved to date.

In 2008, 23 birds caught near Whanganui were released into an area near Butterfly Creek. 12 of these were seen post-release and the last of these was a pair at the upper Gollans Forks last seen in August 2012. There were 38 known sightings up to April 2011, mainly in the area of the upper Gollans forks and mainly the pair resident there.

In 2012, 40 birds were caught on Kapiti Island and successfully released. Of these, 13 were re-sighted. Over the following year there were 12 sightings of unbanded birds, 5 of which were made on our organised search day. There were 28 reported sightings in total between April 2011 and April 2012 .

In 2013 another 40 birds were caught on Kapiti and released in the park. December 2012 was the last sighting of a Whanganui bird, the male from a pair at the upper Gollans forks. This bird was at least 5 years old and the pair survived and bred successfully for 4 years outside the Mainland Island. There were 37 reported sightings between April 2012 and April 2013 .

Since April 2013 there have been 15 reported sightings, many of which were unbanded. We believe a pair of unbanded birds is currently located in Gollans valley and we plan to band this pair in the near future.

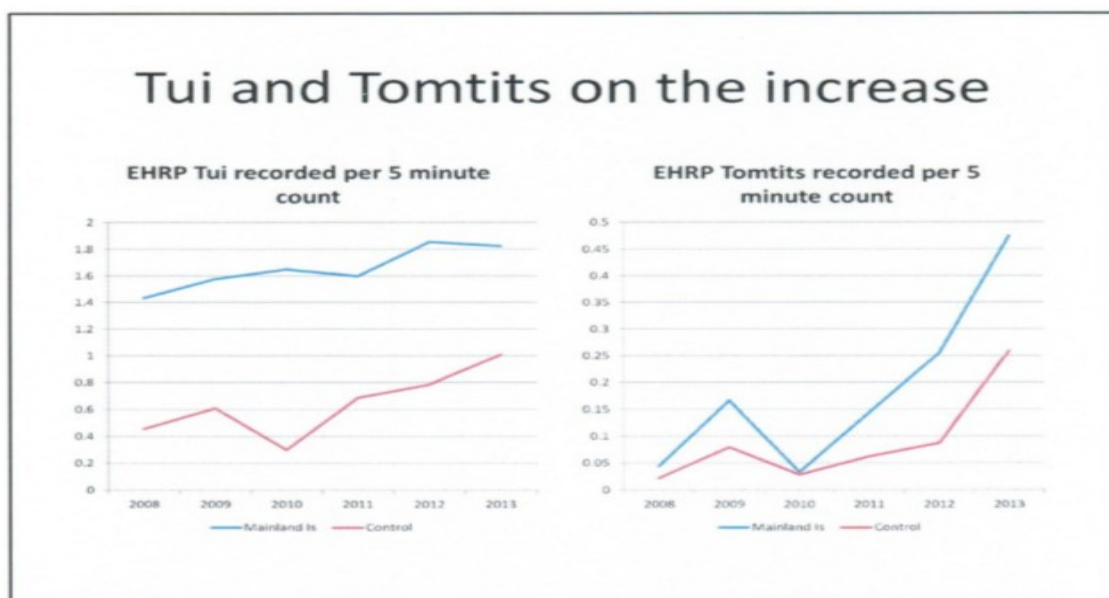
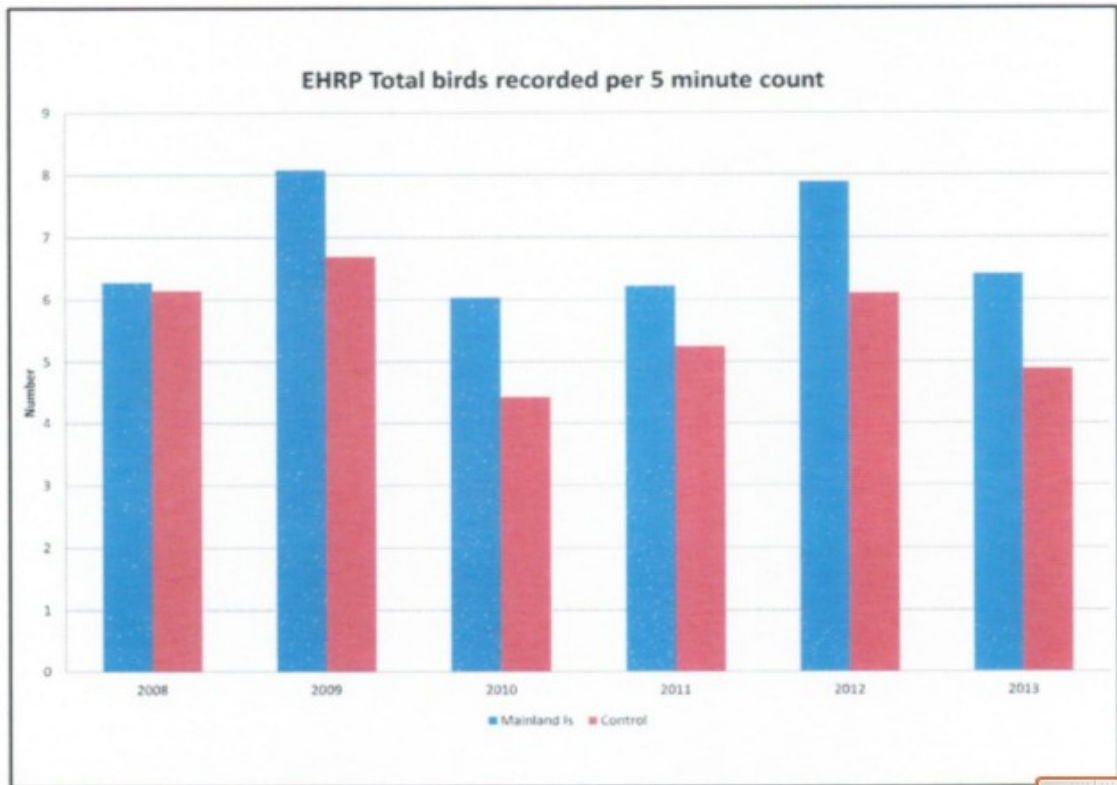
North Island Robins have an average life expectancy of 3 years, however the oldest bird known is in Pueora forest and is 17 years old. The oldest known MIRO translocated robin was at least 5 years old. It is reasonable to assume the 23 released in 2008 are now probably all dead. It is also reasonable to assume that of the 40 robins released in April 2011, most will be at least 3 years old and probably older. Therefore only half of those robins will still be alive. This will be around 20 if they all remained in the release area. Research has shown that generally half of robins released will stay in the release forest so this reduces the probable total to 10 birds. Of the 40 robins translocated in 2012 it is again reasonable to expect 20 might have stayed in the release forest. These robins are now at least 2 years old. With an average life expectancy of 3 years the portion of these 20 birds that could be expected to be in the northern forest block will be between 10 and 15 robins.

A rough estimate of the possible number of banded robins from the 3 translocations is about 15 to 25 birds. All of these birds will be 2 to 3 years old so this number can be expected to drop quickly over the next two years. There has been observed fledgling recruitment since 2010 and there might be as many as 10 unbanded birds in the park but this is difficult to quantify. Therefore the total number of North Island Robin in the northern forest block of East Harbour Regional Park may be around 25 to 35 birds. We currently know where 2 of these birds are.

Bird Monitoring

MIRO uses 5 minute bird counts to monitor birds in the Forest Block. These are conducted in October each year at 40 stations, 20 within the Mainland Island and 20 outside it, in comparable territory/vegetation. Four counts are made at each station by four different counters giving a robust 10-plus hours of data each year.

The counts confirm that a wide diversity of species are present including a number that are regionally rare. In general, the birds recorded seem to be holding their own with tuis and tomtits showing some positive response to the rat control in the Mainland Island. Long-tailed cuckoos have not been recorded in the park for two years, perhaps stemming from issues in their migratory homelands in the Pacific Islands. Much anecdotal comment has been received over the past year about the large number of birds chorusing in the park in the Butterfly Creek and Gollans catchments, another positive sign supplementing our formal bird counts.



Parangarahu Lakes

This was our seventh year of planting and a new plot was planted out in hardy pioneers as an extension to Plot 4 on the shores of Kohangatera. Infilling also took place in the previous 6 plots, some 2000 trees in total.



Strictly speaking, Arbour Day this year does not fall within the financial year period covered by this annual report but it is timely to note our activities on that day. MIRO joined with members of the Taranaki Whanui and Regional Council staff to infill an existing plot at Lake Kohangatera. It was a first visit for all but one of the Taranaki Whanui group. Cecilia Tuiomanufili said she didn't realise how vast the lakes were or how dramatic the coast was. Mother and son duo Anne and Vince Robertson said they were thrilled with the chance to see the area and connect to it, finding that opportunity moving and really special. Terese McLeod was struck by how sheltered and warm it was. She said she felt like the surrounding hills were hugging and protecting her spiritually and physically. Her parents had met along the Pencarrow Coastline during the Wahine ship disaster. The day was a great opportunity for MIRO to connect with local iwi with whom we have a shared love of that very special area.



MAINLAND ISLAND RESTORATION OPERATION (MIRO) INC.
Statement of Financial Performance
For the year ended 31 March 2014

INCOME	2014		2013	
<u>GRANTS</u>	\$		\$	
GW Regional Council			3,720	
PLUS Previous Year Unexpended Grants	565		8,611	
TOTAL GRANTS	565		12,331	
LESS Unexpended Grants		565	565	11,766
 <u>GWRC INCOME</u>				
Sale of trees (Honda Tree Fund)			4,475	
AGM Reimbursement	157	157	215	4,690
 <u>OTHER INCOME</u>				
Subscriptions	175		475	
Donations	620		720	
Bank Interest	205	1,000	125	1,320
 TOTAL INCOME		1,722		17,776
 EXPENDITURE				
 <u>GRANTS</u>				
Pub Charity (Grant balance returned)			298	298
 <u>OPERATIONS</u>				
Nursery	1,708		1,409	
Trapping				
Robin Transfers		1,708	6,948	8,357
 <u>MISCELLANEOUS</u>				
AGM and Meeting Costs	602		778	
Men's Shed			147	
Grey Power Stall			25	
High Viz Vests			230	
Post Box	170		170	
Sundry	51	823	123	1,473
 TOTAL EXPENDITURE		2,531		10,128
 NET INCOME (LOSS)		-809		7,648

MAINLAND ISLAND RESTORATION OPERATION (MIRO) INC.**Statement of Financial Position****As at 31 March 2014**

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS		
ANZ Bank	-	13,442
Kiwibank-Call Account	7,276	-
Kiwibank-Front Runner Account	4,792	-
LESS unexpended grants	-	<u>565</u>
Net Assets	12,068	12,877
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MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Balance 1 April	12,877	5,229
Surplus (Loss) for year	(809)	<u>7,648</u>
BALANCE 31 MARCH	12,068	12,877
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MAINLAND ISLAND RESTORATION OPERATION (MIRO) INC.
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2014

Incorporation

The Mainland Island Restoration Operation (MIRO) was constituted by a resolution dated 5 June 2009 and was incorporated under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908 on 18 June 2009.

MIRO was previously part of the East Harbour Environmental Association (EHEA).

The purpose of MIRO is to provide benefit to the community through restoration of the natural ecosystems in the East Harbour Regional Park located in Lower Hutt.

Accounting Policies

Reporting Entity:

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice.

Measurement Base:

The measurement base adopted is that of historical cost.

Goods and Services

Tax:

These accounts have been prepared on a GST inclusive basis.

Audit Report to the members of the

MAINLAND ISLAND RESTORATION OPERATION (MIRO) INC.

I have audited the Statement of Financial Performance and Statement of Financial Position attached. The statements provide information about the past financial performance of MIRO for the year ended 31 March 2014 and its financial position as at 31 March 2014.

The Committee's Responsibilities

The Committee is responsible for the preparation of the statements, which present fairly the financial position of the MIRO as at 31 March 2014, and its financial performance for the year ended on that date.

Auditor's Responsibilities

I am responsible for expressing an independent opinion on the statements presented by the Trustees and reporting my opinion to you.

Basis of Opinion

I have conducted my audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in New Zealand. I planned and performed the audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the statements are free from material misstatements, whether caused by fraud or error. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the statements.

Qualified Opinion

I am unable to verify all income.

In my opinion, the statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of MIRO as at 31 March 2014 and the results of its operations for the year ended on that date.

My audit was completed on 30 June 2014 and my qualified opinion is expressed as at that date.



George Tuffin
Accountant
Eastbourne