

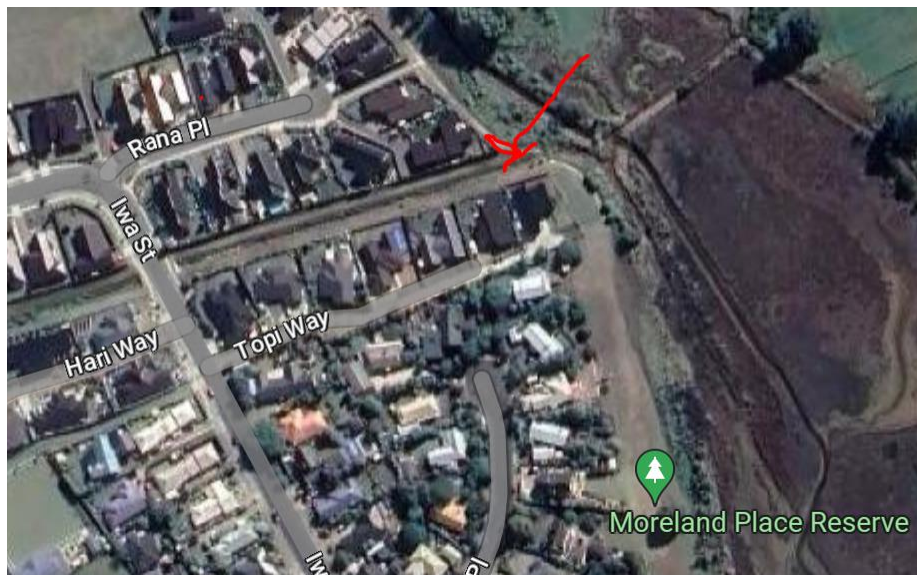
# Wildlife Corridors in Māpua and Tasman Need Your Protection

## What is a wildlife corridor?

Anyone who has witnessed orca whales chasing rays into the Māpua Inlet knows the power and vitality of a wildlife corridor. Wild animals use their own paths to access food, safety, shelter, each other and everything else in their lives much the same as we humans have roads and footpaths, powerlines, etc. The Wildlife Corridors group gathers for an hour or more of outdoor observation of native species and the health of their ecosystem.

## Next meeting for the Wildlife Corridors Group

Would you like to find out how to locate and identify Inanga (Whitebait) eggs? Come along this November 20 at 9:30 am to find out about Inanga habitat and survival in the Māpua Estuary with the Tasman Bay Guardians. Gather at the Moreland Place Reserve footpath between the end of Rana Place and Topi Way as shown on the map below.



## Local News

In the recent publication of the [Waimea Inlet Threatened and at Risk Species](#), scientists David Melville, Laura Parks and Ivan Rogers listed 45 species of plants and animals that are currently threatened, at risk, recovering or naturally uncommon in the Waimea Inlet. Many of the birds on this list can be seen in the Māpua Inlet next to the Leisure Park: White Herons, Caspian Terns, Spotted Shags, Banded Dotterels, Red-Billed Gulls, Bar-Tailed Godwits, White-fronted Terns, Variable Oystercatchers, Pied Shags, Little Black Shags and Royal Spoonbills. The full list for Waimea Inlet can be found on the Waimea Inlet Forum webpage, <https://waimeainlet.wordpress.com/resource-documents/>.

More information on monitoring the population of local native bird species can be found [online in a brilliant report](#) written by local scientists McArthur, Melville, Schuckard, Thomas, Toy and Toy in 2022\*.

## Citizen Science

We need more people to look out for our wildlife this summer. Keep dogs on a leash at the beach during breeding season (November to February) and keep pet cats indoors at night.

Do you have binoculars? You might be able to identify the numbers and letters on a leg tag of an Oystercatcher. Below is a photo of an example leg tag. Simply write down the tag ID, the time and the place and report it to local ornithologist David Melville at [david.melville@xtra.co.nz](mailto:david.melville@xtra.co.nz).

### *Variable [Black] Oystercatcher*

Tasman Bay is the most important site on the planet for Variable Oystercatchers, according to resident ornithologist David Melville. They breed along our coast and use our beaches as a "nursery" for young birds from at least as far away as Kaikoura. In a local research project, oystercatchers are marked with WHITE plastic leg flags engraved with 2 or 3 characters (letters/numbers) - characters may be green or black, as seen in this photo below. Some tags may be different colours if the birds have come from farther away.



You might also see the black and white oystercatchers, or the *South Island Pied Oystercatcher*. Tasman Bay supports a large population in late summer when the birds arrive here from their breeding grounds - they stay for a couple of months and moult. Birds New Zealand are working with DOC and others to better understand their movements around the country. YELLOW tags are birds marked in Tasman/Golden Bays.

### **Be a trapper of unwanted pests**

Whitebait eggs are laid in the riparian zones between wetland and upland in our waterways. The survival of these eggs depends on not being eaten by non-native predators such as rats and mice.

Local trapping volunteers are always looking for new recruits, so if you think you might be keen to give it a go, contact

- Tasman Environmental Trust at [Volunteer to support community conservation in Nelson Tasman \(tet.org.nz\)](http://Volunteer%20to%20support%20community%20conservation%20in%20Nelson%20Tasman.tet.org.nz) or Tracey Murray at [pukeko92@gmail.com](mailto:pukeko92@gmail.com) 027 286 5866

- Māpua Dawn Chorus on facebook or Adam at [mapuadawnchorus@gmail.com](mailto:mapuadawnchorus@gmail.com)
- Ian Price at [ian.price@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ian.price@xtra.co.nz) 0272879203 runs an ecological restoration on the Waimea Inlet where over 30,000 native trees have been planted on a property covered by a QE 2 Covenant.

Ian's comprehensive trap management training is highly recommended for your long-term skills as a pest trapper. They are looking for someone to be on the roster every 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month. It takes around 2.5 to 3 hours to complete the trapline check.

*Article written by Lou Gallagher on behalf of the Wildlife Corridors Group, Māpua District Community Association*

\*McArthur, N.; Melville, D.S.; Schuckard, R.; Thomas, D.; Toy, R. and Toy, S. 2022. A baseline survey of the indigenous bird values of the Tasman District coastline. Client report prepared for Tasman District Council, Richmond