



Media Release

20 September 2013

Birds on a Plane From Construction to Conservation

An endangered native bird, the mōhua, has been given a new safe home on a Marlborough Sounds island thanks to a South Island company playing a key role in the Christchurch rebuild.

Blacks Fasteners is working with the Department of Conservation by supporting the relocation (by small plane) of the endangered New Zealand native bird species mōhua / yellowhead, onto the unique predator-free sanctuary of Blumine Island in the Marlborough Sounds. The transfer is hoped to take place on September 24th, weather permitting, and is part of ongoing efforts to save the species from extinction.

The move will enable people for the first time to see the small songbird on a Marlborough Sounds island reserve. It also brings the mōhua close to where it was first painted by Captain Cook's naturalist George Forster in 1774 at Wharehunga Bay which is just a five-minute boat trip away.

The small insect eating bird, which lives only in the forests of New Zealand's South Island and Stewart Island, was one of the most abundant and conspicuous of our forest birds in the 1800s, but now it is the most threatened of its genus, Mōhoua.

A maximum of 40 mōhua will be caught in the Blue Mountains in Otago sometime in the morning of **(DATE TBC – around 23rd September)**, by six "catching teams", with the birds then being transported by helicopter to Gore Airfield at around 11am, transferred to a small plane and then flying to Picton (approximately 2 - 2.5 hours depending on weather) where a boat will be waiting to take the birds directly to Blumine Island in the Marlborough Sounds, a 40-minute drive.

The birds will be accompanied on their flight by Rewi Anglem from the Hokonui Iwi who will be handing over the care of the mōhua to members of Te Atiawa Iwi from Waikawa.

Blacks Managing Director Roger Black says it is incredibly important to him to support and conserve New Zealand's beautiful environment.

"I'm an outdoors man, always have been. To be in a position to be able to give something back to that great outdoors is fantastic," he says.

Roger adds that it is very appropriate that a South Island-wide company like Blacks Fasteners is supporting the transfer of such a vulnerable bird like the mōhua, from the bottom of the South Island to the top.

DOC Services Manager, Roy Grose thanked Blacks Fasteners for its very valuable support in moving mōhua to the Blumine Island sanctuary where it was hoped the birds would establish and thrive as a new population for the species.

“The move is important for the endangered mōhua species but we are also pleased it will enable people to enjoy seeing this eye-catching yellow-headed and breasted bird in the Marlborough Sounds. We hope that as in years past, mōhua will be spotted flocking and feeding with tīeke/saddleback, orange-fronted kākāriki and rifleman also on Blumine. We are extremely grateful to Blacks Fasteners for not only supporting mōhua but also for supporting the development of a 2.4 km walking track on Blumine which provides for easy exploration of its lush forest and historic remains of a World War Two military base, with stunning views and an enchanting chorus of birdsong along the way.”

Mike Aviss of DOC’s Marlborough District Office, who has been organising the transfer of the mōhua, says on transfer day much depends on the weather.

“With air and sea travel, we are very much at the mercy of Mother Nature, but all going well there should be no problems,” he says.

Mike Aviss says the mōhua keep gentlemen’s hours and are normally not very active until “they’ve had a bit of a feed first thing, but then hopefully”, he says “it’ll be all on!”

“We will put a good supply of live mealworms in each box to encourage the birds to eat (and stay hydrated) throughout their journey.”

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For more information re: **Blacks Fasteners**, please contact Ali Jones 027 2473112. For **DOC related information related to transport and the transfer going ahead, please contact Roy Grose**, Conservation Services Manager, Department of Conservation—*Te Papa Atawhai* phone: 0274 360 274 or Johnny Joseph phone: 021 331 537. Note, coverage can be patchy in the Sounds.

A Bit about Blacks:

Blacks Fasteners began trading in New Zealand in 1989 with the aim of supplying a comprehensive range of top quality fasteners at competitive prices to customers throughout New Zealand and beyond.

With a top team of trained professionals offering unmatched customer service, Blacks has grown to now located in five easily accessible locations around New Zealand - Nelson, Blenheim, Dunedin, Invercargill and two stores in Christchurch.

The huge range of fasteners in Black's inventory is fully computerised, enabling on-the-spot answers to enquiries, fast quotation turnaround and efficient sales and dispatch to meet customers requirements.

With unmatched knowledge, experience and professionalism, combined with superior products and service, Blacks Fasteners is now at the forefront of the fastener industry.

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