Recent publications in the school


In the spotlight

How an engineer and a biologist could help with kauri dieback and myrtle rust

Novel techniques being developed by an engineer and biologist might protect New Zealand from kauri dieback and myrtle rust infection. Will Harvie reports.

The organisms responsible for kauri dieback and myrtle rust have at least one trait in common.

Senior Lecturer Volker Nock and Associate Professor Ashley Garrill are working on this research along with Dr Ayelen Tayagui (Conferred 2018). Read the full article at Stuff.

Funding success

Sarah Kessans has been awarded $200K from the INNOVATE seed fund of the Science for Technological Innovation (SfTI) National Science Challenge. You can read more about the project and fund here, but Sarah’s project is called, “Bringing biochemistry to new heights: development of protein crystallisation nanosatellites”, and involves: Developing a satellite-based space biology laboratory for crystallising proteins in low Earth orbit that are difficult to grow in Earth gravity. The proteins have uses from fundamental research to pharmaceutical development. This project aims to develop a lab payload that would be suitable for nanosatellites.

Mega-consent for Christchurch's stormwater sets lower limits for contaminants

Ambitious new toxicity limits are coming for Christchurch’s stormwater, but there are already doubts it can be done.

It is also not clear what punishments there may be if the city fails to meet the new targets.
The Christchurch City Council's new 25-year stormwater consent with Environment Canterbury (ECan) targets zinc and copper in a bid to improve the water quality of the city's rivers.

University of Canterbury School of Biological Sciences Professor Jack Heinemann said reducing levels of toxic metals in stormwater would provide several benefits to rivers, lakes and the sea.

Read the full article at Stuff.

Postgraduate news

M.Sc. student/field assistants wanted
Searching for students/field assistants for next field season in New Caledonia (Oct-Dec 2019). Ideally, for 2/3 students interested in conducting research for their M.Sc. projects on birds behavioural ecology, but under and post graduate students keen to actively take part in the field work are also welcome.

Going to work on:
- arms race between Shining Bronze-cuckoo and Fan-tailed Gerygone
- spatial ecology of the Fan-tailed Gerygone
- breeding ecology of small passerines in New Caledonia

Contact: Dr. Alfredo Attisano

Vacancies

Fixed-term position with the kākī/black stilt recovery team (B band)
The kākī/black stilt recovery programme are looking for a team member to work with the captive management team over our busy breeding season.

The position is based in Twizel at the kākī/black stilt captive management centre, and will run from the 25th October 2019 until the 14th January 2020 (12 weeks). The captive management centre operates 365 days per year, this position will be on a Friday-Tuesday roster and will also be required to work public holidays. Accommodation may be available on site by negotiation.

The main duties of this position will be:
1. Preparing captive diet and ensuring birds are fed according to best practice
2. Daily husbandry of hand-reared chicks (weighing, monitoring, cleaning and feeding)
3. Assisting with egg incubation under the supervision of senior staff
4. Aviary and facility maintenance (weeding, raking gravel, cleaning ponds, netting repairs)
5. Assisting with medical procedures for kākī under the supervision of senior staff
6. Assisting with banding juvenile kākī under the supervision of senior staff

The following qualities or qualifications would be desirable for this position:
1. A full NZ drivers license (essential)
2. A current 1st aid certificate
3. A current growersafe qualification
4. 4WD competency
5. Banding qualification or experience, particularly with waders
6. Previous experience working with birds, particularly in captivity
7. A high level of attention to detail
8. Ability to work well in a small team, and at times unsupervised
9. Self motivation, particularly with repetitive and sometimes mundane tasks

Applications should include a CV, cover letter and details for at least 2 referees.
To apply, or for further information please contact Liz Brown (lbrown@doc.govt.nz)

Ecology Technician position
Permanent senior ecology technician role going at the University of Auckland, in the School of Biological Sciences.

Check it out

What movie is that?
Oh, please don’t worry. I’m not going into that cavity. That nerve’s already dying. A live, freshly-cut nerve is infinitely more sensitive. So I’ll just drill into a healthy tooth until I reach the pulp... unless of course you can tell me that it’s safe.

446: Uh, well, sir, I ain’t a f’real cowboy. But I am one helluva stud!

Answer: Midnight Cowboy (1969). Joe Buck (Jon Voight) tells it how it is.
Guessed by: Nobody

Classified

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Virginia Gray, BSc. (Canterbury), Dip.Edit.
Pennell.edit@gmail.com
027 419 1046

Local honey for sale
Harry’s 2018 honey is finally here! New orders can be placed in July.
1 kg $10, 500 g $5. 2017 season, multi-floral Ilam garden honey in plastic pottles. Soft granulated. I will deliver to the School of Biological Sciences or arrange pickup/delivery elsewhere. Harry Taylor, email:
harry.taylor@canterbury.ac.nz; ph/txt: 021 292 5319

Proofreading and Editing Services
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and now for something completely different...

Temperatures in offices

Cricket World Cup 2019: England thrash Afghanistan as sixes records broken

Thought for the week

It is the life of the crystal,  
the architect of the flake,  
the fire of the frost,  
the soul of the sunbeam.  
This crisp winter air is full of it.  
~ John Burroughs

Contact details

If you have items of news or interest that you would like included in this newsletter, contact the admin office before noon on Friday at BIOLAdminSharedMailbox or phone ext 95200.