

News

Antoinette Padgett

WHAT'S NEW ON RAPA NUI

CONAF project to preserve diversity of the Rano Kau crater

(As reported by diario.latercera.com, published online 27 January 2013). According to CONAF, the crater of Rano Kau, containing 46 endemic species (including 12 varieties of ferns and some medicinal plants) is the last reservoir of native plants on Rapa Nui; one of its goals for 2013 is conservation of this unique habitat. Enrique Tucki Montero, head of CONAF on Rapa Nui, noted that “el Rano Kau es cuna de la huella arqueológica, biológica y cultural de los rapanui” (Rano Kau is the cradle of the archaeological, biological and cultural footprint of the Rapanui). He explained that both the Rapanui people and tourists see Rano Kau as the wetland that has the greatest biodiversity of the island, still containing the majority of endemic and native plants, as documented by various studies. Climate change, grazing, fire, and invasive plants threaten the existence of the native species on the island. On International Wetlands Day in January 2013, a team from CONAF and the Easter Island guides association trekked from Vai Atare to the Rano Kau mirador to view and discuss the cultural, natural, and biological resources of the wetland. Interpretive panels to provide information will be installed on the crater rim along with an observation gazebo.

Project to prevent the extinction of the *pure* sea snail

(As reported by diario.latercera.com, published online 26 December 2012). Rapa Nui contains a large number of endemic marine resources. Some of these, including the *pure* snail, are constantly threatened by indiscriminate removal. The Centro de Investigación Marina (Marine Research Center) of the Universidad Andrés Bello is working with fishermen from the island to prevent the loss of the snails by preventing their removal before they reach adult size. According to the Project Manager, Diego Ramirez, the removal of the snail has been increasing at an alarming rate in recent decades, due to the rapid development of tourism, the main economic activity Rapa Nui. Ramirez wants to permanently strengthen sustainable collection practices and management, introduce new technologies, and balance a natural resource with a

natural resource and a powerful cultural tradition. The problem of removal of *pure* was first reported in the 1990s, as part of a study conducted by artisan Nancy Rivera, who analyzed information provided by the collectors themselves. The snail was at one time part of the diet of the Rapanui, although the amount of meat that can be extracted is small. It was also used as a tool in the making of handicrafts to smooth and polish different pieces. Currently, *pure* shells are used exclusively as a raw material for making necklaces and clothing adornments. Sara Roe, a collector and artisan, stated that one traditional Rapanui costume and accessories for the Tapati festival could use up to 600 *pure* snails. Collecting the shells is not an easy task and is usually undertaken by adult women who pass their knowledge on to the younger generations by showing them the most abundant places to collect the shells. In addition to their use in traditional costumes, the making and selling of shell necklaces on the island plays an important economic role for many islanders.

CONAF unveils *Taiko* bulletin

The CONAF Provincial Office for the natural resources of Rapa Nui has recently published the first issue of the new quarterly bulletin, *Taiko*. This newsletter has a technical approach that seeks to inform and educate in the fields of protection, conservation, and sustainable use of natural resources of Rapa Nui. It also aims to provide a reliable source of information on the island and in a national context, with first-hand information generated and edited locally. Along with describing the work of the CONAF Nursery at Mataverí Otai, the idea of the newsletter is to provide a venue for sharing natural resource issues of Rapa Nui. There are many local initiatives, various programs, success stories, and experiences; all of these together can help to advance the environmental management of the island. Although *Taiko* is published quarterly, there is also a frequently updated blog designed to facilitate the development of content and to get feedback from readers. Visit the blog at: boletintaiko.blogspot.com

Now online – *El Correo del Moai*

For the latest news from Rapa Nui, visit *El Correo del Moai* online at: www.elcorreodelmoai.com; this independent publication began in Rapa Nui in 2009 with the objective of informing and generating discussion about all things Rapanui.

Sports Illustrated on Rapa Nui

Sports Illustrated visited all seven continents for their annual swimsuit issue for Winter 2013; Rapa Nui and Antarctica were two of the more isolated locales for shooting the issue. The issue includes 13 pages from the shoot on Rapa Nui. The models had to brave shooting in the surf, getting scraped on lava, riding Rapanui horses, and getting bowled over by friendly island dogs. A short video on SI's website talks about the filming and the models are interviewed. While both the models and photographers were obviously aware of the cultural importance of the *moai* and the landscape, one wonders how they were given permission to film on the edge of the crater at 'Orongo (due to both potential damage and danger). In the video, they state that they were allowed to film at Rano Raraku, but were followed closely by rangers to ensure that they did not get closer than 200m to any *moai*. Some of the other locales where SI filmed (China and Namibia) were criticized on ABC News for being culturally insensitive, with the use of local people in the background of the some of the videos on their website. Images and several videos taken on Rapa Nui can be viewed on SI's website: sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2013_swimsuit/onlocation/chile.html

What's new at the MAPSE

As always, the MAPSE is offering a wide variety of lectures, workshops and expositions for the Rapanui community and visitors. In December 2012, Mara Mulrooney presented her doctoral thesis to the museum and gave a public presentation outlining the results of her research in Hanga Ho'onu. In January, the Exposición William Mulloy opened, and Brigid Mulloy was on hand for the celebrations. Also in January, Jose Miguel Ramírez gave a public lecture about Polynesians in Southern Chile. Isabel Pakarati Tepano continues to give classes on *kai kai* and presented her seventh workshop, *Mana'u Tupuna* at the Museo in January. We salute Isabel for keeping this important cultural tradition alive by continuing to teach *kai kai* to Rapanui youth. Another traditional workshop was held in the museum gardens for children and adults called *Tingi Tingi Mahute*, led by Clara Alarcon Pakarati. Clara also gave an evening presentation on the origins, processes and applications of *mahute* traditional art. In February, the Museo held a *Día de la Ciencia* (Day of Science) with Astronomer Carmen Gloria Jiménez and students from the Universidad de Concepción. The program included workshops on basic astronomy and on basic concepts of physics related to the universal law of gravity, where children learned through the construction and launch of rockets. Gloria gave an all-ages presentation in the evening about the search

for life on Mars. Also in February, Colin Richards from University of Manchester and Sue Hamilton from University College London gave a presentation about new discoveries from excavations in Puna Pau. Pictures from some of these events can be viewed on the "fotogalerias" page of the MAPSE's website at: www.museorapanui.cl

WHAT'S NEW IN OCEANIA

Dame Anne Salmond named New Zealander of the year

Distinguished Professor of Māori Studies and Anthropology, University of Auckland, and renowned New Zealand author Dame Anne Salmond has been named New Zealander of the Year. This award is given to honor the achievements and contributions of an inspirational New Zealander who has offered outstanding service to the country, and provided inspiration to others through their achievements. Anne received the title for her services in Māori and Pacific Studies, with the award presented at a gala dinner held at Auckland's Langham Hotel in February. She is author of seven award-winning books and numerous articles on Māori life as well as cross-cultural encounters in New Zealand and the Pacific. She has many honors and titles, has served as the chair of the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, and is a former Pro Vice-Chancellor at the University of Auckland. She is Project Sponsor for the Starpath Partnership for Excellence, which aims to ensure that Māori, Pacific and low income students achieve their potential through education. We congratulate Dame Salmond on receiving this award.

Hōkūle'a prepares to travel the world with her sister canoe, *Hikianalia*

The Polynesian Voyaging Society is working toward the world-wide voyage launching of *Hōkūle'a* in June 2013. On this voyage, *Hōkūle'a* will sail with her new sister voyaging canoe, *Hikianalia*. *Hikianalia*, named after the star Spica (*Hōkūle'a* is named after the star Arcturus), is a high-tech, eco-friendly double-hulled canoe constructed by master boat builders in Auckland, New Zealand. *Hikianalia* will be the first *wa'a*, or traditional double-hulled canoe, to accompany *Hōkūle'a* as an escort vessel. *Hikianalia* was made from the same mold as the seven *waka moana* of the Pacific Voyagers who sailed to Hawai'i in 2011. She is 72 feet long, 23 feet wide, and has a carrying capacity of 30,000 gross tonnage. Each of *Hikianalia's* hulls contains an electric motor powered