



A new blue duck from Peacock Springs

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She's a native New Zealander, she's very rare, she's beautiful, she's from the wild and she's quite a catch for Staglands Wildlife Reserve.

Unlike most of her breed that you see in captivity, Daisy is a Blue Duck with a difference, and was recently welcomed to Staglands all the way from Peacock Springs near Christchurch.

"It might sound odd but this female is actually very special" says Park Manager Rodney Owen. "She is genetically more diverse than any other Blue Duck we have had before. She's from the wild, which is quite rare for breeding in captivity, so we're very fortunate that Peacock Springs sent her to us to look after."

Daisy came from a clutch of 4 wild eggs and staff at Peacock Springs were hoping they would all hatch to be females, as New Zealand's blue duck breeding program needs more wild females for genetic diversity. Unfortunately only one egg was female and that was Daisy.

"Because of her unique bloodline it's important that we keep a good eye on her, so eventually her young can be released into the wild to help increase numbers" says Rodney.

"She arrived here with her male partner Donald, and they both seem to have taken to their new home like a duck to water, which is always a relief."

As she is only about 10 months old so she's probably too young to breed this year but hopefully they will produce a clutch next season.

The Blue duck (Whio) is listed as an endangered species, with populations on the decline.



Staglands is one of New Zealand's most successful breeders of the Blue Duck. Since starting their breeding program in 1993 they have successfully produced over 30 ducks and are working with DOC to try to increase numbers of these rare and beautiful ducks in the wild.

"The enclosure that we have them in has been built to replicate their natural habitat with a special Whio waterfall and pond," says Rodney. "It's also been built in such a way that visitors can easily see these beautiful birds, as not many people will ever get the opportunity to see a Blue duck in their lifetime."