

Stay safe during magpie swooping season

It's magpie nesting time and reports of the birds dive bombing walkers and cyclists in Marlborough have prompted a timely reminder.

Council's Multi Modal Transport Advisor Charlotte Campbell-Lamerton said during the nesting season magpies become highly protective of their young. "We've received several reports of swooping birds," she said.

Here are some tips to help keep you safe:

Pay attention to nesting areas

If you see magpie nesting activity

in trees, consider avoiding the area and plotting a new walking or cycling route.

Stay calm

If you find yourself in magpie territory and it's too late to back out, stay calm. Walk quickly through the area but do not run. Ask children to stay calm too.

Be on the lookout and make eye contact

If you maintain eye contact with a magpie for as long as possible, it will be less likely to swoop. Keep your arms up if you are worried. Magpies often swoop from behind

but are much less likely to swoop if they are being watched directly.

Get off your bike

If you are on a bike, dismount. Bikes irritate magpies and getting swooped on while riding can cause accidents. Your helmet will protect you. Walk the bike quickly out of the magpie's territory.

Be understanding and considerate

Magpies are highly intelligent and are just trying to protect their young. You only need to be patient for a few weeks during the nesting season.



Watch out - magpie swooping season is here

Estuary health changing

Seagrass beds in Motuweka/Havelock Estuary are declining, indicating the stress the ecosystem is under.

Council's Principal Coastal Scientist Oliver Wade told the Environment and Planning Committee recently that estuaries were biodiversity hotspots, providing habitat, nursery grounds and numerous ecosystem services.

"We are losing important habitat," he said. "Estuaries are the interface between the land and sea and the first place to see the effects of what is happening on land," he said. Motuweka's seagrass levels had reduced 95 per cent from 21 hectares in 2014 to one hectare this year.

Healthy seagrass should be "like your lawn" – long, lush and green, Mr Wade said. Instead it was brown and dying.

Motuweka Estuary is a large, 800 hectare estuary surrounded by indigenous forest with the lower catchment mainly exotic forestry and pasture. There are two main freshwater inputs – the Te Hoiere/Pelorus and Kaituna rivers.

At the head of both Te Hoiere and Kaituna are extensive salt marshes with a condition rating of very good, although mud elevated sediments were high throughout.

Meanwhile Nydia Bay's estuary has been found to be in good to very good condition with the main threat to seagrass being vehicle use.

Council began state of the environment monitoring in the estuary in 2014 and contracted Salt Ecology this year to undertake broadscale mapping of Marlborough estuaries.

For more information go to:

www.lawa.org.nz/explore-data/estuaries

Get on board the Saturday bus

A Council promotion in partnership with Marlborough Roads to encourage the community to 'get on board' the new Saturday bus service between Blenheim and Picton is underway.

With school holidays here, the timing is perfect to encourage more usage of the service between the two towns to have a 'picnic in Picton or brunch in Blenheim'.

It's also a fantastic opportunity to support local businesses at the same time particularly hospitality in the Picton and Blenheim CBDs.

The bus is just \$8 return for adults; \$4 return for school children and under-fives and SuperGold card holders are free. It's fun, affordable and a great day out. Why not get on board and leave the car at home?



Travellers can leave Blenheim at 10am and be at the Picton isite by 10.45am – return time is 1.13pm which provides time for a 'picnic in Picton' experience and a visit to the shops.

Alternatively, people can depart from Waikawa Bay at 9am with pickups in Picton to arrive in Blenheim at Seymour Street at 9.45am. Departure from Blenheim is 2pm which gives ample time for 'brunch in Blenheim' or a visit to Stadium 2000 and Te Kahu o Waipuna.

For more details on the Blenheim-Picton Saturday bus route and timetable go to:

www.links.marlborough.govt.nz/BusRoute3




FANCY A

Picnic in Picton or Brunch in Blenheim

SATURDAYS - RETURN

UNDER 5 Free	5-18 YRS \$4	ADULT \$8
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Free



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