



**50 DOWN:** More than 50 steel rods have been drilled six-metres into the Mangaotaki Bluffs above SH3 as the \$2.5 million safety project continues. The stretch of highway has been down to one lane with a temporary barrier to contain rocks following a rock fall in March, killing a Taranaki woman who was a passenger in a vehicle heading north. (Waitomo News, March 28) Another 450 anchors (white spots on the rockface) will be inserted into the rock face just south of Piopio enabling a 1600sq m steel net to prevent further danger to drivers in time for Christmas traffic.

# Seal pup gives up shore visits

THE New Zealand fur seal pup that had been approaching people on Kawhia wharf and even flopping into boats in search of food has not been seen for nearly two weeks.

Kawhia resident Julie Rewi says she returned the young animal who had been hanging around Kawhia wharf to Te Maika (where seals are often spotted) three times in 10 days, but he always come back to town the next day.

“The determined little brat swam back within 10 or 12 hours,” says Miss Rewi.

“But this time it has hopefully learned to fish for itself and decided life is okay being a seal.”

### CHASING BOATS

The seal first turned up three weeks ago, but initially stayed on the pipi bank across the harbour from the wharf.

“People out fishing must have fed him because he started chasing the boats looking for food,” she says.

“He even jumped in the Oparau whaleboat, which scared the daylights out of the rowers practicing for the January regattas.”

### DON'T FEED IT

She says she can understand people feeding the baby seal because it was hungry, but it's not a good idea because they end up becoming a nuisance and



**GONE FISHING:** The New Zealand fur seal pup who had been hanging round Kawhia wharf for 10 days looking for food has hopefully decided its better off catching its own fish and living with other seals.

put themselves at risk (Waitomo News, October 30).

If it returns she hopes people won't touch it or feed it, leaving the pup to do its own thing and go home on its own.

Miss Rewi has been on unofficial Kawhia 'seal watch' for many years.

“I keep an eye out for them because I work right on the shore in the fish and chip shop and I've got the time to do it,” she says.

She liaises with the Department of Conservation about what's in the best interests of the seals when they turn up near the town.



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