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April 23, 2006

Henk Haazen
Awaawaroa Bay Eco Village
Waiheke Island
Auckland, New Zealand

Dear Henk:

Now that things have settled down a bit upon my return to the States, I wanted to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to you for a very successful expedition, funded by a grant from the National Geographic Society, to the Auckland Islands. Although detailed studies of the specimens of slime molds, fungi and beetles that were collected during the course of the expedition won't be completed for probably several years, I am exceedingly pleased with the amount and variety of material obtained for these three groups of organisms from a region of the world for which data on their distribution and occurrence are rather limited. From the time the members of our group (myself, Gary Laursen from the University of Alaska, Peter Johnston from Landcare Research in Auckland, Rich Leschen from Landcare Research in Auckland, and Eric Edwards from the Department of Conservation in Invercargill) met you in Bluff (on March 20) until we returned to Bluff two weeks later (on April 2), you and your crewman Rob Morton did everything possible to provide the logistical support required for the success of our expedition. As a research vessel, the *Tiama* proved to be an excellent choice, both for the voyage to and from the Auckland Islands as well as for the numerous landings we made on the islands themselves. The accommodations on the vessel were quite satisfactory, the meals provided were surprisingly good, and sufficient space was available to allow us to work up our specimens after returning from field collecting on the islands. Your knowledge of the Auckland Islands was a major plus in allowing us to accomplish the scientific goals of our expedition, and your obvious competence and complete reliability were unquestionably important factors in making the total expedition a wonderful experience for all of us. I would recommend you and the *Tiama* to anyone who might be considering a trip to the Subantarctic, and I would welcome the opportunity to work with you again on some forthcoming expedition.

Sincerely yours,

Steven L. Stephenson
Research Professor