



Dawn Chorus

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Photograph © Simon Fordham

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Information

Getting to Tiritiri Matangi

360 Discovery™, which is operated by Kawau Kat Cruises, operates a regular ferry service.

**BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL!
AND AVAILABLE ONLY FROM:**

360 Discovery Bookings
on **0800 888 006** or
www.360discovery.co.nz

Departs: Every day **Wednesday to Sunday** from Pier Three, Quay Street, Downtown Auckland City at 9:00 am and from Pier Z, Gulf Harbour at 9:50 am, arriving at Tiritiri at 10.15am.

Returns: From Tiritiri at 3.30pm, arriving Gulf Harbour at 4:00 pm and Pier Three at 4:50 pm.

Includes: Return ferry to Tiritiri Matangi plus approximately 5 hrs on the island.

Weather Cancellations: Please call 0800 FANTAIL (0800 326 8245) after 7am on the morning of sailing to confirm if the vessel is sailing.

Prices:

Ex Akl: Adult \$66.00 Child \$29.00
Senior/ Student/ Backpacker \$59.00
Ex GH: Adult \$39.00 Child \$19.50
Senior/ Student/ Backpacker \$34.00
NB. There is an extra \$3pp fuel surcharge on all bookings

Guided Walks:

Adult \$5.00: Child \$2.50

Discounts available to the Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi (SoTM) on special supporter weekends

School Visits

Schools wishing to visit Tiritiri should first visit our website:

**www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz/
SchoolVisits.htm**

where you can download the school guidelines. Then contact Mary-Ann either by telephone 09 476 0010 or e-mail: manager@tiritirimatangi.org.nz.
Advance bookings are essential.

Overnight Visits

Overnight bookings can now be made on line. To find out more and/or make a booking go to www.doc.govt.nz/tiritiribunkhouse

Those who are "internet averse" can still make a booking by phone by contacting the Warkworth Area Office 09 425 7812 (a small booking fee will apply).

Supporters doing official volunteer work like guiding or working in the shop, should book their accommodation through the guiding coordinator to obtain free accommodation.

This volunteer work has to be at the request of the guiding co-ordinator or the Supporters' committee.



Upcoming Events 2008/9

August 23rd – 24th
Families Weekend

August 24th
Kowhai Trip

September 15th
Social Night

September 20th – 21st
Non-Working Weekend

October 25th – 27th
Working Weekend
(Labour Weekend)

2009

January 24 – 26
Working Weekend (Anniversary)

February 6 – 8
Non-Working Weekend
(Waitangi)

April 10 – 13
Working Weekend (Easter)

If you wish to attend one of these exciting days or weekends they can be booked **ONLY** by contacting Mary-Ann at the shop on Tiritiri Matangi, telephone 09 476 0010 or e-mail manager@tiritirimatangi.org.nz

Prices:

Ex Akl: Adult \$38.00 Child \$20.00
Ex. Gulf Harbour \$22.00 \$14.00
For non event days please contact 360 Discovery Bookings.

Contact Details

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SoTM Guiding & Shop Manager: Mary-Ann Rowland 09 476 0010, e-mail: manager@tiritirimatangi.org.nz

The opinions of contributors expressed in Dawn Chorus do not necessarily reflect the views of the Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi Inc.

From the Chair

Peter Lee

Mamma Mia!

One could construct an entire history of SoTM from the titles of Abba songs.

It starts, of course, with an "SOS". Funding problems back in 1988? No worries – Jim Battersby and his initial band answered the island's call. This was followed by many a "Ring, Ring" in the '90s, for everything from a tractor to a farm bike to a boardwalk. And the answer to DoC's questions increasingly became "I Do, I Do, I Do".

But our ambitions – and scope – became greater early this century, with two massive projects – the implements' centre and the visitors' centre. Definitely a time for "Money, Money, Money".

But it hasn't always been about

money. Over the years, DoC has realised our value, and decided to "Take a Chance On Me" when we developed our Memorandum of Understanding.

And will the future be "The Winner Takes It All?" Only time will tell... time, and increasingly, the vision and determination of our organisation.

For now, we have a grand opportunity to take the Supporters to the next level. What could this island project be? What is the Supporters' role in it all? What must we treasure and protect along the way?

In the past two months we've had several meetings, involving guides, the committee and DoC, with more to come. While it's early days yet, what has come out has been both humbling and exciting:

humbling, because of the passion and commitment of so many people over the years, and exciting because of the shared ideas and vision that so many people have.

We have learned that we must always remember just why we were founded as we develop our future. We have also been delighted by the shared commitment so many people have to the idea of Tiritiri: not simply just another community conservation project, but truly "first among equals", a project and a concept that was, is, and must remain, a beacon and an inspiration.

As always, the committee welcomes your thoughts, ideas and contributions.

The Tiri Gift Shop

Greetings from the Tiritiri Matangi Island Shop

With a simple phone call or a quick email you can buy a birthday gift for a friend, a Christmas present for a loved one overseas or just a treat for yourself.

We have **kina card holders** for only \$6 each.

Ceramic brooches by Jeanette Shearer, pohutukawa leaf, fantail or feather, \$28. Beautiful ceramic life-size **feathers** also by Jeanette, perfect for a hall table or can be hung on the wall from \$20-\$30.

Hand-made **copper wetas**. Tiny \$8, small \$15 and large \$18. The large one can also be purchased with spikes (welded on) for \$40.

Christmas decorations designed by Caroline Mitchell for only \$12 (elsewhere these are \$15-\$18). We have most of our native birds plus pohutukawa and kowhai designs.

The **pohutukawa earrings** by Sue Bancroft are also available as a **pendant** for only \$20. The earrings are \$40 a pair.

Our beautiful **hand-painted T shirts** now come in a fitted women's style with either takahe or saddleback design for \$45.



And lastly our **three-quarter sleeved women's fitted black top with the punga design**. It is a very flattering style which has been bought by everyone who has tried one on. We have sizes 8 to 18 and they are \$30 each.

To order you can either phone the island Wednesday to Sunday, weather permitting, on 09 476 0010, or email manager@tiritirimatangi.org.nz

We look forward to hearing from you.



Stitchbird in Suburbia

by Yvonne Vaneveld

As long time Tiri supporters and lovers of nature, we made a conscious decision to move "out west" in 2003 as we very much enjoyed tramping in the Waitakere Ranges and were interested in the Ark in the Park concept just beginning in the Cascades Kauri Park area. For those of you who don't

know, this is a partnership project (Auckland Regional Council and Waitakere Forest and Bird) using community volunteers to significantly reduce pests in magnificent regenerating forest. So far, the project is actively trapping & baiting on 1000 hectares but there are plans to move outwards & control pests on 2000 hectares. There

is a long term aim to steadily reintroduce native birds and plants. So far, the following birds have been welcomed to the Waitakere Ranges: North Island robins, whiteheads and stitchbirds (thank you Tiri!). And there are plans for kokako, bellbirds, kaka, etc, in years to come.

We managed to buy a bush section within a couple of kilometres of the Cascades and set about building a little bush eyrie. We have a magnificent bush clad valley in front of the house and prior to even beginning the building, we were exploring down the ridges. We were rewarded early on with an amazing number of tomtits and good numbers of pigeons, tuis, fantails, silver eyes, etc. We were determined that our 20 year plan would be having birds naturally arriving from the Cascades area as they managed to increase their populations, and most importantly had the range of food and habitat & protection needed for them to safely stay. To achieve this goal, we have planted large numbers of trees (puriri, kohekohe, titoki, kowhai, five finger, and heaps of the small stuff, e.g. coprosma, flax, etc). We also started baiting for possums and rats down all the ridges and tracks we could get to, with the support of our neighbours whose properties we crossed over in to.

So far, all good, and not much different to what a lot of other Tiri supporters are doing in their own back yards and neighbouring reserves. The aim

of this story is to give you encouragement to keep up the good work, for you may be rewarded sooner than you thought!

Stitchbirds were released into the Cascades in 2007, then again in May this year as a "top up". It's this second release that has brought to us such wonder and joy. Within one month of this release, the stitchbirds were testing their unlimited range and there were exciting sightings of them, not only in the Park, but up at the Bethells Road/Falls Road junction.

However we thought we were dreaming when we heard the distinctive high pitched call of a male just off the deck at our house one day. Sure enough over the coming weeks he was calling heaps, and we caught glimpses of him

whizzing around; he is particularly adept at buzzing the sparrows. Knowing that our resident tui wasn't likely to let him in for a feed at the sugar water he proclaims as his own, we put out another feeder on the opposite side of the house. Finally, he found it and is drinking at his own private feeder. He has now been around for just over a month and so far he is alive in a street full of cats and a valley full of moreporks. We feel very privileged to have such a rare wee bird in our backyard. We can't help but worry about him but accept that he focuses our minds on the challenge of returning the birds to all of NZ, not just the protected islands and sanctuaries.

If you're passing, feel free to drop in. You may just see or hear a Tiri stitchbird a long way from home.



Farewell to Jen

By Simon Fordham

August 20 will see another significant change to the island personnel - Jennifer Haslam will be leaving us after 3 years as Assistant Ranger.

I first met Jen during a tree planting trip on nearby Motuora about the time she applied for the position, although she had been a Tiri guide for over a year prior to that. It was immediately clear that Jen held a passion for conservation and the various projects.

One of my initial impressions was of a person who pays much attention to detail, as demonstrated by her extensive use of the whiteboard during her interview for the position. It was also here that we learnt of the life of a Jillaroo (the female equivalent of a Jackaroo) in outback Australia. It was apparent that many of the skills



that Jen had learnt were directly relevant to an island situation.

Right from when Jen assumed her role on the island, she has not only demonstrated competence in the numerous skills required but, most importantly, has gained the respect and friendship of so many volunteers, colleagues, researchers and other visitors to the island.

Over the last 3 years, there have been a number of changes on Tiri and Jen has very much been one constant that has helped the project continue to move forward.

We will miss you Jen! Thank you for everything you have done to make Tiri a better place. Best of luck in whatever you choose to do next and we trust that you will continue your involvement with the Supporters.

DOC-Sourced Volunteers

As many of you are no doubt aware, the Department of Conservation, through the Auckland Volunteer Coordinator, sources volunteers to assist the rangers with various tasks.

Enquiries for the volunteer placements tend to slow down a little in winter and Mary-Ann has been very helpful in sending out SOS emails to the supporters when we have volunteer placements to be filled. I thought I would take this opportunity to explain the programme in more depth and see if more Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi would like to take up a placement on this great programme.

The volunteer programme sees two volunteers travel to Tiritiri Matangi on the Sunday morning ferry and depart on the following Saturday afternoon ferry. Travel to the island is subsidised and currently costs only \$18.00 return. We are very grateful to 360 Discovery for their continued support in this area. The volunteers provide their own food while

on the island but the accommodation in the bunkhouse is free.

Volunteers are given an induction in the afternoon of arrival, after they have settled into the bunkhouse, and then have the rest of Sunday to explore and enjoy the island.

The volunteer's first task whilst on the island is to give the Ray and Barbara Walter Visitor Centre a clean then on following days they can work at their own pace from a list of tasks given to them by the rangers during their induction. These tasks may include beach clean-ups, track clearing, painting, weeding and mixing the sugar water for the hihi feeding stations. The usual volunteer day is six hours of work and the rest is free time.

I know that many Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi spend many voluntary hours assisting with guiding, the visitor centre, maintaining weed plots and assisting with other

species work and we do not wish to compete with that wonderful work. I would however like to explain that the two volunteer opportunities are not mutually exclusive. We would welcome any of the supporters who would like to spend the week on Tiritiri Matangi assisting the rangers in their duties on the island.

It is a wonderful opportunity to experience the nightlife of the island; hearing the kiwi call, seeing a tuatara slinking through the undergrowth, calling to the seabirds from the petrel station and watching the lights of Auckland from afar. It is also an opportunity to learn a little about the work of the Department and its rangers.

If you would like further information or would like to take up a placement on the programme please contact Sue Cameron, Volunteer Coordinator, at aucklandvolunteer@doc.govt.nz or on 09 425 7812.

The Postman 1938 Christmas Annual

When Anne Rimmer gives her talk about Tiri to various community groups she often picks up snippets about Tiri's history. At a U3A meeting in St Heliers recently, an elderly lady, Irene Erica Cowan, supplied the following information:

Her great-grandmother arrived in NZ on the immigrant sailing ship, the "Constantinople" which struck a rock off Tiri. The ship managed to refloat itself, and safely made Auckland on 17 May 1850.

The Tiri book (pages 31-32) gives the following account of the incident:

On the night of 16 May 1850, the barque *Constantinople*, arriving after a five-month voyage from England, struck Shearer Rock off Tiritiri Matangi.

While the ship did not sink, the incident further fuelled the calls for a lighthouse: 'Not one light is there to point the beknighted Mariner his path,' trumpeted the Southern Cross newspaper. 'No pilot is placed at a station where his services are of value.' A report on the incident recommended that 'a light should be placed on the west point of Tiri Tiri Matanghi [sic].' Although other locations were also being considered, Tiri was strongly favoured by Auckland harbour master Captain Burgess and Tiri was included in the Coastal Light Plan of 1861.

It was this maritime incident plus another involving the "Constant" which persuaded the authorities to build the lighthouse on Tiri.

Erica Cowan had been a Correspondence School pupil. She produced her copy of the 1938 Christmas Annual and read out a piece about Tiri, which had been written by Bunty Davies. Bunty was the younger daughter of Auckland Harbour Board Signalmen William Childs Davies. The family lived on Tiritiri Matangi before the Second World War, from 1928-39. Here's Bunty's published piece:

BIG WHEEL

Have you watched a big wheel of an engine working? I have and, although I keep well away, I know when the wheel is working because I help Dad to start it. This wheel has another little wheel attached to it, which has a round leather belt. When the big wheel is started, it makes the little wheel work. Faster, and faster it goes, until all you can see is a silver streak. Thrum-m-m thrum-m-m goes the big wheel, and sh-h-h echoes the little one. It makes the building shake and shiver with its power. You see, while this big

Diaphonic foghorn c.1935 Auck Star



wheel is working we know that it helps to send a warning to fog-bound ships.

So may the big wheel keep on turning while there is danger near.

Bunty Davies, S. 3, Tiri Tiri Signal Station. Auckland.

The last sentence, probably inserted by the editor, is a clever play on a popular song: "Let the great big world keep turning, Never mind if I've got you ..."



Diaphonic foghorn drum arrives c.1935
Tiri slide C21

This photo from the Tiri slide collection shows the drum for the diaphonic foghorn arriving on Tiri. The two girls are almost certainly Nancy and Bunty Davies.

QUIET THUNDER

One morning as I was standing by a corner in Christchurch, I heard the toot-toot of a car that swung round the corner and nearly smashed into another car. Then a tram came along with its clattering noise, and stopped for the people to get out, and the motor-cars behind pulled up with a squeak of brakes. The tram went on again, and a van came along with a horse pulling it. The horse went clip-clop, and the wheels rolled over like quiet thunder.

RETE RELPH, S. 3,
Parnassus, Canterbury.



Marie Dornauf and "Pat."

CATTLE DRAFTING

Dogs barking, men shouting, whips crackling, horses galloping, cows bellowing, calves mooing. There is always plenty of noise when we are drafting cattle, especially when we are trying to separate the calves from their mothers. As soon as Rough Jim and Sharp were loose they started to yap. Daddy and I caught up two whips and hurried after Selwyn who had gone to catch the horses. We caught up to him at the shed where he had stopped to let us reach the paddock where we were going to draft the cattle. Selwyn tied the yapping Ring up under a tree. We had just got a few calves drafted off with a lot of bellowing and squealing and barking when Naughty, one of the cows, rushed bellowing towards the gate. Selwyn galloped after her, and cracked a whip in her face, and she tore back to the mob, with four dogs barking close behind her, kicking and mooing louder than ever. From the next paddock Molly and Dolly were neighing at Pat as she tore up and down. At the top of the hill Hippo, the bull, was adding his bellows to the hubbub of noise. But I like noise.

MARIE DORNAUF, S. 3,
Taumarunui.

BIG WHEEL

Have you watched a big wheel of an engine working? I have and, although I keep well away, I know when the wheel is working because I help Dad to start it. This wheel has another little wheel attached to it, which has a round leather belt. When the big wheel is started, it makes the little wheel work. Faster, and faster it goes, until all you can see is a silver streak. Thrum-m-m thrum-m-m goes the big wheel, and sh-h-h echoes the little one. It makes the building shake and shiver with its power. You see, while this big wheel is working we know that it helps to send a warning to fog-bound ships. So may the big wheel keep on turning while there is danger near.

BUNTY DAVIES, S. 3,
Tiri Tiri Signal Station, Auckland.



Bunty Davies.

A New Aviary for Tiri

Many visitors to Tiri will be unaware that we have an aviary on the island, particularly since the surrounding vegetation has gone some way to conceal this. Although usually vacant, it has on occasion housed injured birds (remember Snell the pigeon?) and, on one occasion, inadvertently trapped a kiwi when it tested the 30cm drop through an open door and, surprise surprise, was unable to fly out. Its escape was aided the following evening when it was discovered by a group of nocturnal birdwatchers.

However, the main use of the aviary is for holding captured birds for translocation to other conservation projects. Whilst this facility has been adequate for some translocations, temporary additional aviaries have had to be employed to reduce stress



on captive birds. A small room at the end of the current structure is used for “processing” birds but this room is barely adequate.

With the increased number of transfers from the island expected to continue, the time has come to consider a new purpose-built aviary. The key considerations will be for a slightly larger facility divided into three or four separate partitions. A processing room will be designed for a clean, comfortable work flow as well as providing water, lighting and electricity.

The island will benefit from a more functional aviary as it will be used as part of our “kokako swapping” and similar programmes designed to improve genetic diversity. However, it is recognised that the greatest benefit will be to those many groups that wish to use Tiri as a source for establishing populations in their own block of bush. For this reason, it is not intended that SoTM be asked to fund this directly. Instead, external funding will be sought, in the name of SoTM with support from a number of other interested organizations.

The fact that we are able to “export” some of our birds is testament to the success of the Tiri project. In a relatively small, predator-free environment, limited by coastal boundaries, some species have quickly reached large numbers, possibly even saturation levels. It is well recognised that, as populations reach saturation, many individuals do not survive due to competition for food and territory.

An improved facility will not lead to a greater number of translocations as proposals will still need to go through the usual scrutiny, particularly with regard to the effect of removing birds from Tiri. However, it will provide a better temporary environment, not just for the birds but those specialists involved in the pre-translocation processing.



Flight of Memories

By Ray Walter

When Barbara and I retired in 2006 we were given by Rolien Elliot, DoC Area Manager Warkworth, and Tony Monk of Helitranz, a certificate for a flight by helicopter to visit the three lighthouses in the Hauraki Gulf. They were Cuvier Island off the Coromandel Peninsula, Moko Hinau north of Little Barrier half way between the top of Great Barrier and Whangarei Heads, and of course Tiritiri Matangi.

I was stationed on Moko Hinau for seven and a half years before moving to Tiritiri Matangi in March 1980. Although I was never stationed on Cuvier I had made a number of trips there during my time in the Gulf. We wanted to make the trip during settled weather and the opportunity arrived on Wednesday 5th March. Barbara and I were accompanied by my daughter Lynda, who grew up on Moko Hinau, her partner Dave and our granddaughter Emma aged 6.

We arrived at the Hellitranz heliport in Albany at 8.30 am and were greeted by Tony and Julie Monk. After a cup of coffee we were introduced to our pilot Jude and cameraman Tom, who was to film our trip back in time. After instruction in safety we donned life jackets and boarded our machine a Squirrel A S 350. Tony was to follow us to Cuvier in a second machine, a Eurocopter 120 with a camera fitted under the fuselage. Tony's son Blair was to film the first part of the journey from

the air.

When we lifted off we passed over the North Shore making for the Coromandel Peninsula passing the Noises to our right and Tiritiri to the left. Ahead lay Moehau. We skirted the southern flanks with great views of the extensive nikau stands and steep bush clad slopes. Cuvier, now in front of us, rose out of a beautiful blue sea. The island is one of the most distant of New Zealand's lighthouses from a main centre. It was enjoyed by some keepers but others found it very hard to live on as the houses faced the ocean with no sight of land. Circling the tower as we arrived gave some good views of the steep headland that the lighthouse stands on. Jude, our pilot, landed in front of the lighthouse on the edge of the 104 metre cliff. The cast iron tower was made in Thames, is 15.2 metres high and was first lit in 1889. In 1899 because of the difficulty of servicing, carrier pigeons were used to take messages to the mainland but this proved unsuccessful and was soon abandoned.

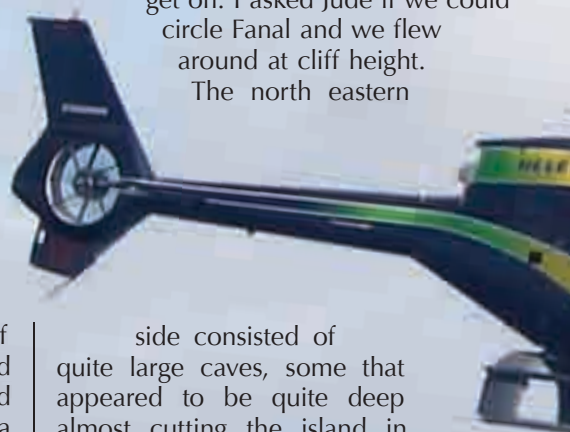
After a pleasant half hour looking around the tower (Tony had been able to get a master key to all the lighthouses we were to visit) we walked down to the site of the settlement and were met by Neville Ritchie from DoC Hamilton who was in charge of restoring the buildings. When Cuvier was automated the buildings were left intact but suffered considerable damage due to vandalism. DoC is now returning the station to its former state and hopes to make it available for public use as it has with Cape Brett in the Bay of Islands. We had

a good look around at the work being done and had a cup of tea on the front steps of the previous Principal Keeper's house. We looked out on to the South Pacific Ocean, in the distance to South America many thousand miles away. While we were having a look around, the helicopter had been flown down from the lighthouse to the settlement to take us on the next part of our journey.

The next part of the trip took us over Great Barrier on the way to Moko Hinau. We flew up the eastern coast with its white sandy beaches and rugged cliffs crossing the island. About halfway up we could see the Moko Hinau group way in the distance.

The Moko Hinau group is made up of a number of islands varying from small rock stacks to larger islands like Burgess Island and Fanal Island which is to the east of the main group. I had always been interested in Fanal Island as it is very hard to land on. There are no beaches. Landing is made onto an exposed south facing rock shelf and visitors to the island have been known to be stranded there for days before they could get off. I asked Jude if we could circle Fanal and we flew around at cliff height.

The north eastern



side consisted of quite large caves, some that appeared to be quite deep almost cutting the island in half. Most interesting was the main valley in the centre, only about two or three hundred metres long it consisted mostly of kohekohe trees and looked very similar to The Kawerau track on Tiritiri.

As we approached the Moko Hinaus the lighthouse on Burgess stood out. You could see the reason why the light was placed on this site; it could be seen for many miles. This light is the most distant from the main land of any light in New Zealand. There was a lot of discussion before its establishment in 1883. The apparatus actually arrived in 1876 but some shipping companies wanted it placed on the Hen and Chickens or Bream Head at the entrance to Whangarei Harbour. The lower section of the light tower is made of concrete and the top section is of masonry blocks. The light is 14 metres high and stands on a sheer cliff



107.9 metres high. After circling the light we landed on a concrete pad that was the foundation of the generator engine room and radio room, demolished when the station was automated.

Lynda and I had arrived home! Our family arrived on Moko Hinau in November 1972. We were on transfer from Castle Point lighthouse on the Wairarapa coast east of Masterton. The transfer was intended to be for about three to four years but ended up being seven and a half years due to the automation of the lighthouse service. So Lynda, only seven years old, had spent most of her childhood years on this isolated station. When we arrived, the station was manned by three keepers as we worked on a semi shift system carrying out eight weather reports a day, one every three hours. The station was in a fair state but required a lot of work to bring it up to a good standard. One of the things that was typical of most island stations was the state of the milking cows. The cows were so inbred that we were milking four or five cows for a bucket of milk between three families. There were twenty-eight cattle on the Island. We hired a scow, sold the lot and bought three cows and a bull. Lynda was taught to milk by her sister Nina and when we



moved to
Tiritiri Lynda took her cows with her.

The first thing to do was to visit the light. Emma was first through the door, followed closely by me. The interior brought back memories of the hours spent in it cleaning and polishing the lens. The spiral stairs have very decorative cast iron brackets supporting them. Climbing the two flights of stairs took us to the lens room where the turning mechanism to revolve the lens used to be. All this has now been removed and the room appeared quite bare. On the wall was a plaque with the names of the MoW men who worked on the automation of the light; this included my name as being the last light keeper. The next floor up is, or was, the lens platform, now housing the

small automatic light, the same type as is fitted to Tiritiri. The panes and dome are larger than Tiritiri as it housed a first order lens, a big beast that took three keepers, doing a good job, about three hours to clean and polish. We all went out onto the balcony - the view was magnificent. To the north we could see the Poor Knights, and to the south Little Barrier and Takatu Peninsula.

Time for lunch, which we had sitting on the concrete wall alongside the A frame building that used to be the singlemen's quarters but now is used for the maintenance crews when servicing the light. It was a lovely fine warm spot with the gulf spread out below. We could see the sites below where the three light house keepers' dwellings used to be. The houses on Moko Hinau were burnt down when the station was automated as the department was concerned that they might be used by squatters or vandalised as was Cuvier later on when it was automated.

Lunch over; it was time to go visiting our old house or at least the spot where it once stood. It was quite a scramble through the long grass down the zigzag track and some of the trees planted in the 1960's had overgrown in places. The first thing we came upon was the little walled garden at our house site where to our surprise we found some boysenberries on plants we put there over thirty years ago. They were quickly devoured. Lynda searched around the house site and stood on the spot where her bedroom used to be, now occupied by a pohutukawa tree about four metres tall. It was an emotional time for Lynda. 28 years had passed since she had left the island. Before we made our way down to the old wharf one more place had to be visited; that was the old cow shed. It had stood on the edge of the cliff about 80metres above the sea. Stormy seas from the north would at times deposit seaweed in the paddock along side it.

On the way to the landing we passed the blow holes. These two holes are connected to a deep narrow gutter that is open to north westerly swells. When conditions are right they give out a loud deep grunt. We noticed that the gutter wall had been eroded away since we had left. This had caused the seas to wash away a lot of the soil around the rushes that covered the ground and had exposed the roots of some of the pohutukawa causing two or three to fall over. I suppose this is quite natural on islands that are exposed at times to severe weather conditions. The causeway out to the concrete wharf had gone and in

its place was a huge pile of large stones. This had happened once while I was stationed on the island. The beach, like the one on Little Barrier, has very large grains of sand, round boulders 200mm to 300mm across. Conditions to move such a mound of stones would have been worth seeing!

Time to leave on the last leg of our trip. We wanted to get to Tiritiri and have a look at the light and have a cup of tea with Dave. Life jackets on, all aboard and off to Tiritiri, Little Barrier to the left and Kawau to the right as we travelled south. Tiritiri soon appeared with the light clearly visible on the left of the island as we approached. Jude took us around the western end of the island over North East Bay and as we crossed over the ferry was just leaving the wharf for Gulf Harbour. Flying along the southern side gave us good views of the plantings. It is getting harder to tell the newly planted areas from the old and existing bush. We turned around and landed to the east of the tower by the rain gauge. As Dave had not returned from seeing the ferry depart we went up the lighthouse first. I have been up the tower many times but it was a new experience for Emma and some time since Lynda had been to the top. Young Emma's interest and enjoyment made me realize that the lighthouses that we had visited are amazing structures. Most lighthouses in New Zealand are not accessible to the public yet in Australia lighthouses on conservation land are open to the public. A small charge is made for a guided tour that goes to the maintenance and upkeep. On the first floor of Tiritiri's are two of the lamps and lens systems that have been used in the tower in recent times. A call came from Barbara, who had gone on to the visitors centre and made a drink for us all. Dave had arrived back from the wharf and we chatted about how things were going on the island. After signing the visitors' book we boarded the helicopter for our return to the Helitranz base at Albany. What a day! We had left at 8.30 in the morning and returned at 4.30 in the afternoon having seen three lighthouses and many of the beautiful islands of the gulf. Thank you to Jude our pilot and Tony Monk of Helitranz, also to the Department of Conservation, who made this "Flight of Memories" possible.

Ray, Barbara, Lynda, Dave and Emma

Flora Notes

by Warren Brewer

Visitors to Tiri during June have been treated to a spectacular display from the kohekohe (*Dysoxylum spectabile*). The first flower buds began appearing at the end of March and by mid-May the first flowers were open. The trees were festooned with blossoms which developed from the trunks, limbs and main branches. This is described as cauliflory (stem - flower) and emphasises kohekohe's tropical affiliation.

In tropical rainforests there is a strong presence of cauliflorous trees and shrubs. In a distinct zone below the forest canopy they offer their stem flowers to a wide variety of pollinators (birds, bats, climbing vertebrates and insects). This ease of access to flowers and seed-bearing fruits below the entanglement of the canopy benefits both the trees and the pollinators.

Our next floral treat will be in early spring with the arrival of the first blossoms from kowhai and clematis.



Kohekohe blossoms



Ipomoea cairica

The scramblers and ramblers on Tiritiri Matangi belong to two plant families, the bindweeds (convolvulaceae) and the dock family (polygonaceae).

The bindweeds are represented by two genera, *Ipomoea* and *Calystegia*.

Genus *Ipomoea* (ips a worm; homoios resembling). -ips was a name given by *Linnaeus* to bindweeds to describe their wormlike growth. It contains about 450 species which are twining, climbing plants found in tropical and subtropical regions. On Tiri we have Powhiwhi, *Ipomoea cairica* (of Cairo, Egypt) which also grows widely in the tropics. It occurs in N.Z from the Kermadec Islands to Northland and then as far south as Tiritiri Matangi. Its flower is trumpet-shaped, light purple and appears abundantly in summer. It can be found on the hillside track leading down to Fisherman's Bay.

Two species of *Ipomoea* are important food crops; They are:

Sweet potato (kumara) *Ipomoea batatas*, originally from South America.

Note - batata is from the Taino dialect (pre-Columbian people of Central America) and became patata in Spanish and subsequently potato in English.

Water spinach (ong choy) *Ipomoea aquatica* which is grown as a leaf vegetable and is widely used in Malay and Chinese cuisine.

Genus *Calystegia* (covered calyx, a covering at the base of the flower) which contains 25 species, all twining climbers mostly of the temperate regions. Two species are widely present on Tiri. They are:

Shore bindweed *Calystegia soldanella* (a shilling - leaves coin shaped)

Its trumpet-shaped flowers are pink with white stripes and it has a strong presence along the shoreline of Little Hobbs beach.

N.Z. bindweed *Calystegia sepium* (of hedges) whose flowers are pink and leaves are thin and heart shaped. It can be seen on the Wattle Track in the swampy crakeless spot.

Scramblers and Ramblers

by Warren Brewer

Plants in the dock family belong to the genus *Muehlenbeckia* (after H.G. Muehlenbeck, a French physician). This genus contains shrubs and climbing plants and N.Z. has 6 species. Fifteen other species occur in New Guinea, Australia and South America.

Two species are present on Tiri. Pohuehue, *Muehlenbeckia complexa*, a variable scrambling climber forming tight clumps with its thin interlacing branches. The plants are dioecious (separate male and female) with small white flowers. It is best seen on the short cut to the Wattle Track. Pohuehue is currently being used at the Auckland Botanic Gardens to form its eastern boundary (supported on a wire frame).

Muehlenbeckia australis, our second species, has heart-shaped adult leaves. It is also dioecious with male flowers in open sparse panicles (loose branching cluster of flowers). The small green female flowers are in large panicles. A fine example is at the entrance to the Wattle Track over the road from the short cut.

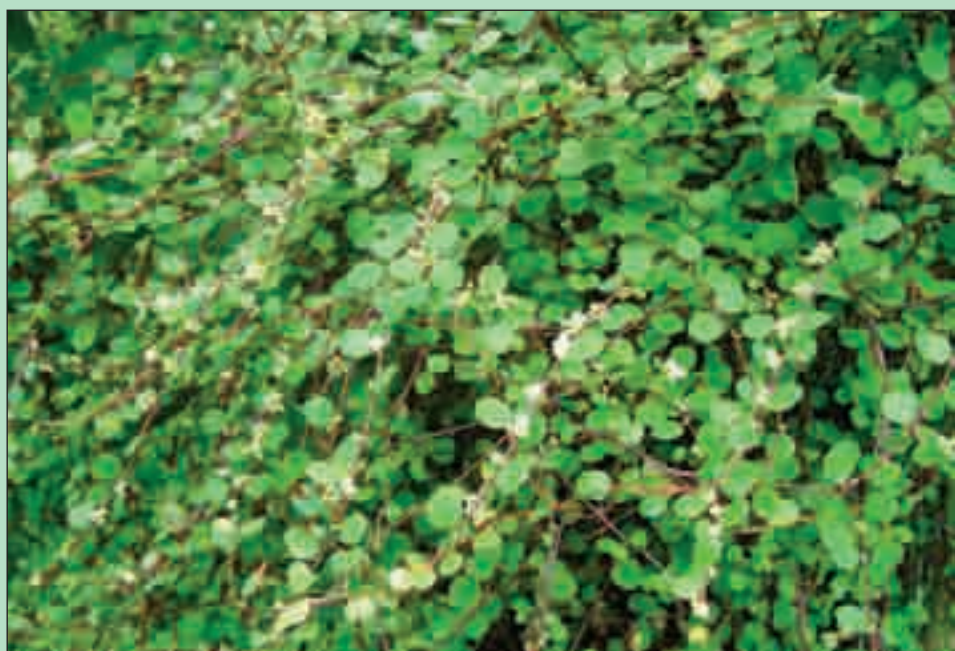
Although *Muehlenbeckia* vines are considered to be weeds in some areas

of N.Z., on Tiritiri Matangi they play a valuable role. They provide shelter and nesting sites for several of our birds. They are an important habitat for many insect species (their leaves are eaten by caterpillars of the common copper butterfly). Ripe *Muehlenbeckia* fruit is sought after by both birds and lizards.



Calystegia sepium

Muehlenbeckia complexa



Calystegia soldanella



Muehlenbeckia australis

Fauna Notes

Compiled by **Morag Fordham**

Takahe

Montague and Ahikaea can usually be found along the Ridge Road. All the other birds are still around the Visitor Centre. Greg continues to stalk unsuspecting visitors displaying their lunches.

Sadly Whakama was found dead towards the end of May. Barbara Walter has provided the following information about Whakama. He was about thirteen and a half years old and was hatched here on Tiri. His actual parents, Greg and Pounamu, were transferred to Tiri from Burwood Bush in May 1994 and their first clutch produced two chicks, Maia and Whakama. He was transferred just after hatching to Irene and Bubbles who had infertile eggs and were nesting at the main Fisherman's Bay dam. Whakama means shy and he lived up to his name! Life was not easy for him as at the age of eleven months Irene and Bubbles left him to fend for himself and he became quite a recluse, often not being seen for some days. (Irene actually took over Iti's nest and eggs after beating Iti up!)

In December 1999 Whakama paired up with his mother Pounamu who had left Greg and they produced a chick that disappeared at seven days old. Six months later Pounamu went back to Greg and from then on Whakama

lived by himself around the Eastern Track/Wetlands area

On the morning bird round he was often in hiding and not seen. His body was found on the way to the southern end of the island. It is not strange for these birds to leave their territories before dying. JJ, before she died, went from the southern end of the island to the northern end.

Stitchbird/Hihi

During May the target number of sixty juvenile birds was caught for translocation to the Ark in the Park site in the Waitakere Ranges, West Auckland. A further five juvenile females were caught at the same time and were sent down to the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary in Wellington.

Kokako

Recently in the mornings, six Kokako (Fern and Punga, Te Koha Waiata's and Cloudlsey Shovell's offspring, Te Karanga and Keisha, Moby and Pukaha) have all been seen together bounding between the fire break and the implement shed. Naughty, naughty Pukaha and Te Karanga were feeding each other while Moby looked on in disgust. To show her displeasure, Keisha went off with Fern and Punga for a "girls' day out". All is forgiven and now Pukaha is back with Moby and Te Karanga is back with Keisha.

Naki (Chatters' and Te Rae's offspring) has recently been seen around the Kawerau track following Te Hari and his new mate Piper.

Brown Teal/Pateke

The dams are all filling up after all the heavy rain.

Rose is on the Lower Wetlands dam and is at least fourteen years old which makes her our oldest duck.

Ruan is still on Fisherman's Bay dam and Blue Bonnet is on the Emergency Landing dam. Finn the Philanderer sometimes visits her there otherwise he can be found with Solita on the Bunkhouse dam. Their two ducklings are quite large now and one is a male so he is being chased away but the female is still there. At one stage the ducklings tried to chase Solita away. Sometimes Aggie also pops in but again she is chased away.

Ossie and Bella are still at the Wharf dam.

Whitehead

On 20 April this year 91 birds were caught and transferred to the Ark in the Park (51 birds) and Motuora Island (40 birds).

Fernbird

A fernbird was seen out in the open having a five minute bath in the Wharf dam.



Photograph © Simon Fordham

STOP PRESS KOKAKO RELEASE

At this stage we are hoping to release on Tiri Poutama (the last Taranaki bird left in captivity) on

Saturday 30 August (weather permitting).

This will be a public release and anyone wanting to see a kokako up close can book through MaryAnn Rowland (tel: 09 476 0010).

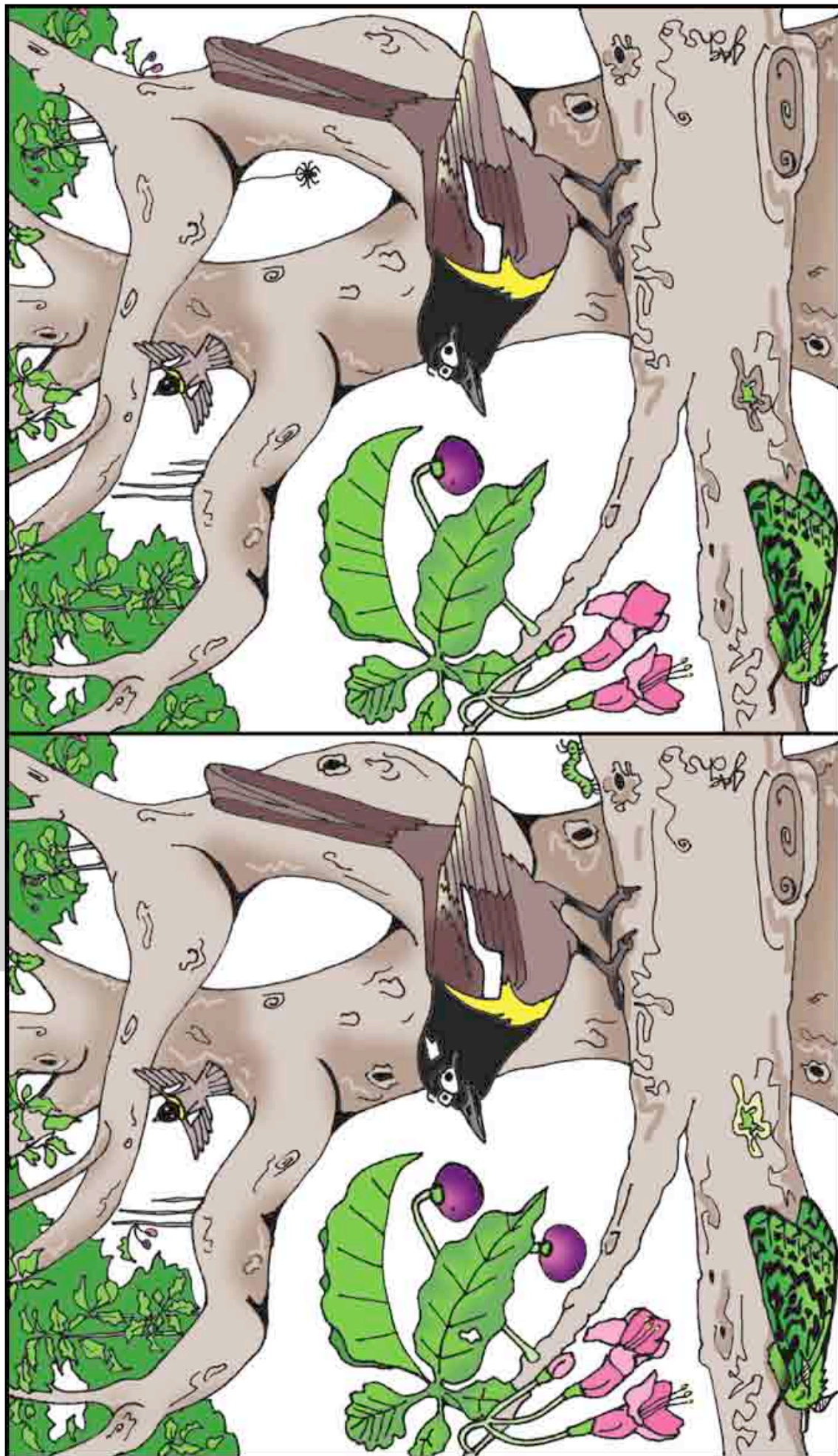
STOP PRESS

Hi everyone!

In this issue we have an awesome puriri **spot the difference**. The puriri is one of the best food sources of nectar for native forest birds, flowering throughout the year. There are 15 differences to spot - good luck!

Jo and Tess

Hand this to your kids or pass it on to someone else! Kids can enjoy a range of activities about Tiritiri Matangi Island.



Answers (no peeking!) - flower stamens, big fruit, moth pattern, leaf hole, fruit/leaves on shoots, extra shoot, patch of canopy, puriri moth hole on main trunk, puriri moth hole on right branch, fruit/leaves off right branch, small branch off right branch, spider, caterpillar, primary wing feather on big hihi, lichen colour.

A link with Tiri's past

by Anne Rimmer

When Anne Rimmer was in England in June she visited Slimbridge Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and gave her "Tiri Talk" to about 20 of the staff.

Slimbridge is on the Severn River near Bristol. It is the headquarters of the World Wildlife Fund, whose first chairman was the noted British artist and naturalist Sir Peter Scott (the son of Scott of the Antarctic). Sir Peter died some years ago but his widow, Lady Philippa Scott, still lives in a house in the grounds of Slimbridge and takes

an active part in many of the activities there.

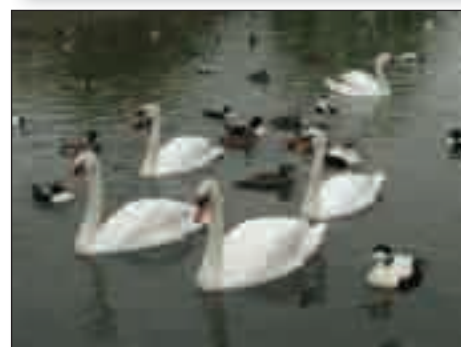
Back in 1982, as the Tiri project was getting started, Sir Peter and Lady Scott were taken to see the island. Sir Peter, approving, recorded in his diary that it had been 'a memorable day, and WWF became the first major sponsor of Tiritiri Matangi. WWF NZ raised \$40,000 which the government of the day matched two for one. This substantial 'seed fund' enabled the nursery to be built and financed the first few years of the planting programme.

Anne's lunchtime talk at Slimbridge was well-attended, perhaps because one of their staff had volunteered on Tiri for a week and had thus "talked Tiri up" beforehand.

And in the audience was Lady Philippa Scott, who is now 94 years old, but still fit and well. For Anne, this was a delightful link with Tiri's past. Lady Philippa remembered coming to Tiri in 1982, and spoke of her memories of NZ at that time.

Founded in 1946, Slimbridge is home to an astounding array of wildlife including the world's largest collection of swans, geese and ducks. When Anne visited it was raining, so the boundaries between land and water were somewhat blurred. Her walk around the grounds was enhanced by eager flocks of birds tagging along in hopes of a feed, prompting memories of Greg, Daphne, and brown teal on Tiri.

<http://www.wwt.org.uk/centre/122/slimbridge.html>



<http://www.wwt.org.uk/centre/122/slimbridge.html>

Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi Inc. PO Box 90814, Auckland Mail Service Centre, Auckland 1142



Dawn Chorus