



# Dawn Chorus

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# Information

## Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi

Dawn Chorus is the quarterly newsletter of the Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi (SoTM). We are a volunteer incorporated society working closely with the Department of Conservation to make the most of the wonderful conservation restoration project that is Tiritiri Matangi. Every year volunteers put in thousands of hours into the project and raise funds through membership, guiding and also through our island based gift shop.

For further information, visit  
[www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz](http://www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz)

## Getting to Tiritiri Matangi

360 Discovery operates daily services every Wednesday through Sunday from Downtown Auckland and Gulf Harbour Marina.

### BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL!

Phone 0800 360 347  
 or visit  
[www.360discovery.co.nz](http://www.360discovery.co.nz)

Weather Cancellations: Please call 0800 FANTAIL (0800 326 824) after 7.00 AM on the day to confirm if vessel is running.

## School Visits

Schools wishing to visit Tiritiri should first visit our website:

[www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz/schoolvisits.htm](http://www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz/schoolvisits.htm)

**Advance bookings are essential**

## Overnight Visits

Although camping is not permitted on the island, there is limited bunkhouse accommodation available.

For information on booking overnight visits, go to:

[www.doc.govt.nz/tiritiribunkhouse](http://www.doc.govt.nz/tiritiribunkhouse)

Bookings can also be made by phoning the Warkworth Area Office on 09 425 7812, although an additional booking fee will apply.

Volunteers who are undertaking official SoTM work can obtain accommodation at no charge but this must be booked through the Guiding & Shop Manager (contact details below).

SoTM members who wish to visit in a private capacity can get a discounted rate by booking through the Warkworth Area Office 09 425 7812.

## Upcoming Events 2009

September 12<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>  
 The Stars of Tiritiri  
*(details page 13)*

September 14<sup>th</sup>  
 EGM/Social  
*(details back cover)*

October 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>  
 Adults' Non-working Weekend

October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>  
 Families' weekend

October 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>  
 Labour Working Weekend

November 8<sup>th</sup>  
 Tiri Kids Day  
*(details page 11)*

December 26<sup>th</sup> to January 17<sup>th</sup>  
 Christmas / New Year Holidays  
*Bunkhouse accommodation during this period is reserved for volunteers to assist with managing the many visitors over this period.*

Bookings for island events can only be made with the Guiding & Shop Manager (contact details below).

360 Discovery kindly offers a discount to SoTM members for special weekends and events.

Contacts		Phone	Email
Chairman	Peter Lee	418 1332	chairperson@tiritirimatangi.org.nz
Secretary	Helen Cain	634 3375	secretary@tiritirimatangi.org.nz
Treasurer	Kevin Vaughan	817 9262	treasurer@tiritirimatangi.org.nz
Committee	Murray Anderson	(09) 236 0520	teama@xtra.co.nz
	Hester Cooper	473 5695	hester@cybernet.co.nz
	Maria Galbraith	820 7342	mariag@summerland.school.nz
	Melinda Habgood	521 9504	m_habgood@hotmail.com
	Carl Hayson	479 4217	cgpartners@clear.net.nz
	Graham Ussher	355 6046 (bus)	gusser@tonkin.co.nz
	Ray & Barbara Walter	535 6941	rayandbarbarawalter@xtra.co.nz
Guiding & Shop	Mary-Ann Rowland	476 0010	manager@tiritirimatangi.org.nz
Membership	Mindy Anne	480 4415	membership@tiritirimatangi.org.nz
Bookkeeper	David Meldrum	446 1361	davidmeldrum@xtra.co.nz
Dawn Chorus Editor	Simon Fordham	274 1828	editor@tiritirimatangi.org.nz
Island Rangers	Dave Jenkins / James Laing	476 0920	tiritirimatangifb@doc.govt.nz

This year marks our 21st anniversary, a real milestone for us. In that time we've grown from a small band of volunteers into one of the largest conservation groups in the country. Directly or indirectly we've raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Tiritiri project, provided many thousands of hours of volunteer time and energy, and become a true partner with the Department of Conservation. It's appropriate that we celebrate that milestone, and we hope to see many of you at our celebratory dinner. And who better to grace that dinner than David Bellamy, past visitor and after whom a takahe chick was named.

Nothing stands still for long, even

constitutions. Every one changes to reflect new circumstances. The American one has had a number of amendments over its two centuries. While probably not so important, our own has had its changes, too.

The time has come for us to change our financial year. When we started, a January to December year made sense, but the impact of an explosive growth in memberships, and a better understanding of member needs, means the time is right to switch to a July to June year. As a result, we'll be holding an Extraordinary General Meeting, at the same time as the September social, to gain approval for the proposed changes. These are

mentioned in more detail on page 5.

In June our ever-efficient and enthusiastic Guiding & Shop Manager, Mary-Ann Rowland, visited a number of conservation projects in the UK. Her mandate was to see what we could learn about volunteer and project management. She has come back just bursting with ideas – five pages of bullet-pointed items alone! Like Mary-Ann, we're excited about the many ideas, so look forward to new and exciting developments over the coming months. And do remember to keep checking the shop as Mary-Ann is always introducing new and wonderful items!

## Change of Financial Year

The committee has decided that the time is right for us to change our financial year to a July to June year. Currently it runs from January to December.

Why are we recommending this change?

- It makes more sense for members. Currently, membership renewals are sent out in November, coinciding with the most expensive time of year – Christmas. This is also a time that members have less time to attend to renewals.
- It will make the job of the guiding & shop people easier. At the end of each financial year we have to do a stocktake. Right now, this is 31 December, which is not only our busiest time but also when we have the most stock in-house. A 30 June date would be much more simple.
- It will ease the burden on our membership secretary, again because summer is traditionally the time we gain the most new members.
- It would also coincide with DoC's financial year.

How would it work?

In conjunction with our honorary solicitor, we have determined that there would be an 18-month transition period. The current financial year runs to 31 December 2009 with the AGM and elections in March, April or May 2010. The next period would run from January 2010 to June 2011, with the AGM in September or October 2011.

What about memberships?

The membership renewals (to be sent out in November) would be for 18 months, not 12. Despite this, we will set the fees at the same level as they are now, ie \$20 for a family. We will, however, encourage members to make a voluntary donation for the extra six months.

What happens next?

These changes have to be approved at an Extraordinary General Meeting, which we have scheduled for the same time as the September social.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any of the Committee.

**Just before 6pm I scribbled our names, destination (Hobbs Beach and the Petrel Station) and estimated return time (8pm) on the board in the bunk house. Besides the volunteers, there were only Peter, myself and a family of four staying the Friday night.**

The family had been to the island for day trips both with school and as a family, but had never stayed the night before. The girls were keen to see the penguins coming ashore as was I as I had never managed to do so on my previous overnight visits. One of the volunteers, who had rushed into the bunkhouse a few minutes earlier, told us that the penguins were calling, but she was unsure if they were ashore or still on the water. Although the sun had set half an hour earlier, we hardly needed the torches covered in red cellophane (so as not to scare the wildlife) as we headed off down the Wharf Road.

The wind was cold as we turned the corner of the road and headed down to the beach in front of the wharf shelter. The evening was fairly quiet with only the occasional call but at that point we could not see any penguins. So we started along the track past the penguin boxes, stopping every few metres to scan the rocks with our torches. Soon we were rewarded with our first penguin. As the red glow outlined the bird it froze – very different behaviour from the penguins you see during the day out on the water. On the water during the day they seem totally unconcerned by humans, only diving if the boat comes too near.

We carried on along the track and then spotted a group of 6 penguins on the rocks at the south end of Hobbs Beach. Down on the beach we got really good views as the penguins stood still as the light fell on them – they looked like slightly stooped men in business suits as they shuffled up the rocks. A couple moved behind rocks away from the light, but most just froze until we moved off. Turning back along the beach, we came upon 2 penguins coming up the sand, seeming to play “grandmother’s footsteps”. The 2 birds froze as our torches picked them out and then moved quickly up the beach when the lights moved away. Thus we crossed each other’s path without mishap (no squashed penguins). The wind had now dropped and the evening was still and quite mild, and everybody was excited about what we had seen.

Then it was up the Kawerau Track, towards the Petrel Station, hoping to see a grey-faced petrel. Mary-Ann had told me that the petrels had started to return 2 weeks previously (about the beginning of May) and she had seen them circling against the night sky. We stood for what

seemed an age before we saw and heard our first petrel. A few birds were outlined against the sky and then we heard one land on the slope below us. By this time the noise of petrels and penguins was loud and we waited hoping that the one below us would come out of the vegetation. As we waited, Peter heard a noise up to our right – and a rather surprised penguin lowered itself down into the grass in response to light from Peter’s torch.

Should we wait any longer? The consensus was yes and this was the right decision as, shortly after, we picked out a shape on the path and the torch light gave us a beautiful close-up view of a grey-faced petrel. Once everybody had admired the bird it was time to head onwards in the hope of seeing a kiwi.

We turned off up towards the pa site, as I thought we might have a better chance of seeing kiwi along the Ridge Road. Just as we left the board walk my torch outlined a shape that moved and as I called people’s attention to it, the tuatara set off at high speed (with that strange rapid movement like a crocodile). Luckily for us, the tuatara had been quite a way from cover on the grassy slope, and so we all managed to get a reasonable view before it vanished into the bush.

The rest of the walk along Ridge Road & Cable Track was quiet and the stars were bright. The constellation Scorpio was slung like a hammock low in the sky between the trees that marked the track edge. The evening sky was light, even though the moon was not due to rise for another couple of hours, and was that the Southern Cross overhead buried in the Milky Way? Peter and I were not sure but thought we would be able to tell once we got up to the top of Coronary Hill. As we climbed the hill, we could hear kiwi calling over towards Fisherman’s Bay but they were a long distance away. By the time we had reached the top of the hill, a thin cloud cover had formed to the south, blocking out the stars, so we could not see the Southern Cross. However, as we turned back to our route, the lighthouse light was sweeping round illuminating our way back to the bunkhouse. No more kiwi calls and we were back in the bunkhouse just after 8pm. Another magical walk on Tiritiri Matangi.

## ARTICLES FOR DAWN CHORUS

In the true democratic sense, Dawn Chorus is the magazine “of the members, by the members and for the members”. Contributions are always welcome - both articles and photos. Articles should normally be up to 1200 words (1 page excluding photos) but longer articles will be considered. Small snippets are also useful. Photos should be submitted in jpg format and each image should be less than 1 Mb in the first instance. Higher resolution versions may be requested if required. We are always looking for high quality images, in portrait format, for the front cover. Please send photos and other material to:

[editor@tiritirimatangi.org.nz](mailto:editor@tiritirimatangi.org.nz)

**Deadline  
November Issue  
20 October 2008**

# Motion to be Presented at Extraordinary General Meeting

September 14 2009

To consider and, if thought fit, to pass the following resolution:

That the Rules of the Society be amended in the following manner:

1 That Rule 6(h) is negated and replaced by the following:

- (h)
- (i) The current financial year of the Society shall end on 31 December 2009.
  - (ii) There shall then be a transitional financial period of 18 months from 1 January 2010 to 30 June 2011.
  - (iii) From and after 1 July 2011, the financial year of the Society shall commence on 1 July in each year and terminate on 30 June in the following year.

2 That Rule 7(a) is negated and replaced by the following:

- (a)
- (i) The next Annual General Meeting of the Members of the Society shall be held on such date in March, April or May 2010 as the Committee determines.
  - (ii) Thereafter, the Annual General Meeting of Members shall be held on such date in September or October in each year as the Committee determines, commencing with a meeting in September or October 2011.

3 That the following Rule is inserted after Rule 14:

15 Transitional

The subscription for the transitional financial period from 1 January 2010 to 30 June 2011 shall be set at the Annual General Meeting held in March, April or May 2010.

4 That the following is added at the end of Rule 6(c):

However, from and after 2011, nominations must be received by no later than 31 July prior to the Annual General Meeting.

## FERNBIRDS & THE PUKEKO BRIDGE Anne Rimmer

**With the opening of the Northern Toll Road between Orewa and Puhoi, drivers can now appreciate this marvel of engineering, especially the massive earthworks that were required.**

This area was known to have a small population of fernbirds so, as construction of the motorway started in 2001, Kevin Parker and a team of helpers moved in, just ahead of the bulldozers, to capture as many birds as possible from the motorway footprint.

Over a three month period in 2001, 13 birds were caught in mist nets and taken to Tiri, with another 12 birds translocated in 2002. Eight years later fernbirds are well-established on Tiri, with an estimated population of more than 70 birds.

The birds are commonly found in bracken and Muehlenbeckia (pohuehue) with the lower stretches of the Wharf Rd being an especially good place to hear, and maybe see, this secretive bird.

Fernbirds have several calls, but the 'u-tick' call is particularly easy to recognise. It is used by a pair to keep in contact in dense vegetation, with one bird calling "u-" and the mate responding with "-tick". The space between the "u-" and the "-tick" can vary from about 5 seconds to being almost in unison, when it sounds like a single bird is calling. The loud call has a sharp, metallic quality, and there's a

characteristically long pause between calls.

One morning I was at the Wharf Dam with a guided group. Turning to our right to face uphill, we could hear a pair in stereo: the "u-" bird, calling from our left, was immediately answered with a "-tick" to our right, and this second bird was fully visible, perched on the base of a flax flower stem.

But, back to the Toll Road - we can now see how urgently those fernbirds needed our help. Just as Tuvalu's people must relocate before their island disappears beneath the sea, so the fernbirds needed relocating because their former home has literally vanished into thin air!

However, as Kevin Parker reports, you can still see the spot: the toll road is crossed by the elegant Pukeko Bridge, charmingly named for its long red legs. As you approach the deep cut spanned by this bridge, look up, and mentally re-draw the former contours of the land. In the centre of the bridge, but many metres up in the air above it, was the former home of the first pair of fernbirds lucky enough to be translocated to Tiritiri Matangi.

# THE BIG PICTURE

One of the most exciting things in conservation today is the sheer number of emerging volunteer

projects, both local and nationwide, many having been inspired by what has happened on Tiri. Each serves as a reminder that, whilst our project is a leader in many ways, we are but one piece of the jigsaw that forms the Big Picture of conservation in New Zealand.

In the first of a series of articles that highlights some of these other projects, we visit the Ark in the Park, a mainland island with which we share a number of active volunteers.

## ARK IN THE PARK

John Sumich

**The AITP project has had a lot of influence from the Tiri project, from conception onward, so I'm delighted to contribute an article to "Dawn Chorus" as the first of a new series.**

In "Dawn Chorus" 59, nearly 5 years ago, I wrote how in the mid 90s I had walked back to the jetty one afternoon, meeting up with Carl Hayson where the Wattle Track first meets the road. In those days the regenerating pohutukawa were a lot younger and a lot shorter so we could look across the sparkling Waitemata to the Waitakeres on the western skyline and I chatted with him how one day there should be something like Tiri in that magnificent naturally regenerated forest. [Incidentally can you believe that I, and I'm sure many others at the time, went to Tiri especially hoping to chance upon a saddleback!]

Around this time, as island sanctuaries were gaining momentum and more islands were being made predator free, another development was being reported, lifting some of the doom and gloom from the seemingly irreversible downward slide to extinction of our native fauna and flora. Six mainland forests intensively managed by DOC against multiple predators were starting to arrest the decline of some species and these six projects, that started after successful experimentation at Mapara to safeguard its kokako population, were named "mainland islands" - islands of sanctuary protected not by surrounding seas but by perimeters and grids of traps and baits.

Why not meld the DOC mainland island concept with a

volunteer workforce as in the Tiri experience and achieve the dream of a sanctuary in the Waitakeres?

In short order, the Waitakere branch of F&B adopted the Ark in the Park concept, a working party was set up, and a scientific meeting convened in 1999. Here representatives from DoC, ARC, Bot Soc, OSNZ, Karori, and many others gave much positive input. A commissioned study of 12 potentially suitable sites came up with the Cascades Kauri Park as having the size, the infrastructure in terms of access and amenities and the best biological diversity. Of course the biodiversity of the Waitakeres always was far greater than Tiri, as befits a large mainland site with areas of old growth forest and vigorous regrowth, but the majority of the biodiversity is in its varied flora, its invertebrates, its fungi etc. Vertebrates were represented with 3-4 reptiles, Hochstetter's frog and long-tailed bats [all uncommon] but the most obvious missing element, as in the majority of mainland New Zealand, was the bird life.

Some years of speaking to potential allies and supporters followed. Tramping clubs, as for Tiri in the tree planting years, were a receptive audience and from them came some of our early dedicated volunteers. Auckland Zoo became an important supporter as we became their local biodiversity restoration project to complement their wonderful overseas



projects, for example, with cheetah, orang-utans, and Vietnamese tortoises. Official approval from the ARC was granted in 2002 to proceed in a pilot area of 250 hectares and the volunteers started navigating bait lines and performing rodent, invertebrate and bird counts. Nine months later we started laying the first bait, with the next rodent monitoring showing a great knockdown in rat numbers that continues to this day even though there are now nearly 1200 hectares managed.

Karen Colgan took up the challenge of volunteer coordinator; a challenge indeed, as at volunteer days it was always uncertain who would turn up, novice or tyro, fit or unfit, and the safe matching of volunteers with tasks to be



done was often an amusing event as late arrivals meant new combinations might have to be made. Maintaining enthusiasm is an important part of a successful project and regular feedback to the volunteers via newsletters and at evening functions where volunteers could socialise was an early feature. Because of the large area we cover, volunteers could easily work at the same time yet not meet up for the after workday sausage sizzle, so these other social events are great for integration.

By the time of our first transfer in 2004 we already had several Tiri guides among our volunteers. Our initial part-time manager, Sandra Jack, was well known to Tiri as a guide and research assistant and ably organised our crew who came for that initial transfer, whiteheads that had been absent from the Waitakere forest for over 120 years. Subsequently we have enjoyed the experience and attitudes of many other Tiri folk who not only are content to volunteer for one thriving well established project, but also to assist a junior sibling. Yvonne Vaneveld and Mike Siddens are prime examples of having a foot in both camps, encouraged doubtless by having hihi and robins coming to their back door! This family attitude I'm sure has made for an easy relationship when it has come to translocations, of which there have been four to date from Tiri to the Ark. [Whiteheads 2004,2008; hihi 2007,2008] So far we haven't been able to return the favour although there's more than one person wearing dual hats who thinks aloud of transferring some of our numerous tomtits. However, we have been able to donate many of our smart hihi nest boxes, erected as a requisite before the first transfer in 2007 and completely ignored since, as the birds chose magnificent natural nest holes in old kauri.

Soon, in September, we hope to welcome our first kokako and, in time, other appropriate species as in our Restoration Plan. Soon we hope also that an accommodation base for the many overseas students who come and volunteer at the Ark, for local post-grads and for contractors monitoring species, will be erected. We invite you to keep up with our progress at:

[www.arkinthepark.org.nz](http://www.arkinthepark.org.nz)

## Kids Say a Big "Thank You!"

Thanks to a generous donation from Royal Forest & Bird (Central Branch) and complimentary guiding by SoTM members, a group of 120 Year 5 and Year 6 pupils from Beach Haven Primary School were recently able to enjoy a day on Tiri.

The pupils, some who had never been on a ferry, were fascinated by the array of wildlife and were particularly fond of the takahe.

As a way of saying "thank you", the grateful children made a quilt and presented this to Mary-Ann and a number of their guides. They also made papier mache models of the birds they saw on the island. The quilt is now on display in the Visitor Centre.

*Quinn Astrella, Ryan Fisher & Natasha Silby with the donated quilt*



Photo: Peter Evans

As part of their ongoing training programme, 122 guides & specialists took advantage of two on-site training days in May. After participating in interactive group guided tours, and a pot-luck lunch, a question and answer session was conducted in the Visitor Centre. This was so successful it will, no doubt, be repeated annually. Thank you to Mary-Ann for organizing two wonderful days and to 360 Discovery for ferrying the participants free of charge.

# GUIDES'



Photo: Roger Bray



Photo: Roger Bray



Photo: Roger Bray

# DAY OUT



Photo: Diana Dombroski



Photo: Roger Bray



Photo: Roger Bray

Background Photo: Roger Bray

## Despite the cooler weather, there has been much happening in the avian world of Tiritiri Matangi Island.

### Takahe

Blackwatch and Mahuika, Greg and Cheesecake are all back around the Visitor Centre. Greg continues to entertain everyone. He has a new trick up his wing, as recently he was seen jumping onto a chair and then onto a table to retrieve a tasty morsel!

Unfortunately Rossie (hatched in 2000) has been missing for two months and is now presumed dead.

Sadly Blake (hatched in 2001) was found dead on 7 August after spending two days at Auckland Zoo. On 4 August he was found lying down on the ground outside the lighthouse. He was sent to Auckland Zoo that day and kept in for observation. It was hoped that he could return to Tiri the next day but his condition deteriorated overnight. Blake was in a very emaciated condition and the cause of his death is not yet known.

Mungo (partnered with Edge) is doing daily sprints down the middle of the island, perhaps getting fit for the breeding season.

Montague and Ahikaea can usually be seen further along the island on Ridge Road.

There are now eight takahe on the island.

Linda Kilduff has sent through the following update on national Takahe numbers.

*The overall figure is 230 and then there are 22 chicks from this year that have survived so far to add to that. The season went quite well considering. We had a low number of eggs come out of the Murchison Mountains to be incubated at Burwood – but Burwood had a great year, with its resident birds producing 14 chicks! The 6 island chick transfers down will add to those, resulting in up to 20 being released into the mountains (a couple may be*

*held back as future breeders or to head backup to the islands). 2 chicks remain on islands – they were too young to move/be compatible with other chicks for fostering.*



Photo: Roger Bray

### Kokako

Moby took leave (father's time out?) and left Pukaha for quite a few weeks before returning to her at the end of July.

Towards the end of May Poutama, Mawhero, Piper, Skippy and Chatters were all seen feeding together on the kokekohe towards the top of the Kawerau Track.

Paraninihi appears to have abandoned his mate Fern in favour of her sister Punga.



Photo: Roger Bray

### Rifleman

Recent surveys have shown that at least 7 pairs have formed and established territories. 40+ nesting boxes have been erected in anticipation of their first breeding season.

Two pairs are particularly visible, one in Bush One along the Kawerau Track and the other in the vicinity of the Dupont Sign. Sightings have also

been recorded on the Eastern Track, immediately to the north of the Bush 22 Bridge.

### Brown Teal / Pateke

Ossie and Bella still have one juvenile down at the Wharf dam.

Although Finn is still sharing his favours he is spending more time with Blue Bonnet (Emergency dam) rather than with Solita and their one juvenile (Bunkhouse dam).

Rose, who was with Ralph on the Lower Wetlands dam, disappeared a while ago. She was very elderly and is presumed dead.

Connie, Ralph's original mate, reappeared after a two year absence and took up residence with him. However Ralph too has recently disappeared.

### Other

Twelve paradise shelduck were seen flying over Coronary Hill on three occasions.

The tui and bellbirds are loving the new artistic feeder holder outside the Visitor Centre - it gives photographers a much better chance to get "natural" photos.

A 15cm giant centipede has been coming and going from the large weta condominium in Wattle Valley. There are only a few weta legs left!

### Marine

There have been lots of dolphin sightings on recent ferry trips, including four pods being seen on one trip.

On 25 July, Andrew, the ferry skipper, watched as a lone dolphin came into the bay, swam slowly around near the wharf, gave birth, flipped the baby out of the water to get a breath of air and then slowly swam off.

# Kokako Volunteers Needed

(Two shifts Sun – Wed or Wed/Thurs – Fri/Sat)

Help is needed to monitor our Kokako over the breeding season October – March

We need to follow the birds around until we locate their nests and then monitor these on a regular basis. "Early birds" are required as we often have to be out in the field before dawn.

You will also have to be fit enough to work off-track as we are chasing fast moving birds. Patience is necessary as it can take days to find the nests and once found the nests are usually checked weekly. This may involve sitting still for 1 -3 hours at a time, constantly looking at the nest for activity then recording what happens at the nest.

Contact Morag either by email [tieke@clear.net.nz](mailto:tieke@clear.net.nz) or phone 274 1828

## Tiri Kids Day Out

**Where:** On the Island

**When:** 8 November 2009

This year we have arranged for a Lighthouse Open Day. The Lighthouse is managed by Maritime New Zealand and we appreciate their support in opening it for us to view.

Due to health and safety requirements, access is restricted. You will be able to climb the lighthouse to where the light is situated but there will be no access allowed outside onto the walkway at the top of the lighthouse.

The following restrictions apply:

- Maximum four members per family
- At least one adult per family
- Must be SoTM members
- A medium level of fitness is required
- A minimum height of 1.2m and age 8 and over

The schedule ferry sailing will take us to and from the island and the Supporters pricing will apply:

Ex Auckland:	Adult \$38	Child \$20
Ex Gulf Harbour	Adult \$22	Child \$14

Bookings must be made with Mary-Ann  
[manager@tiritirimatangi.org.nz](mailto:manager@tiritirimatangi.org.nz)  
Ph 476 0010 (Wed-Sun)

Photo: Mary-Ann Rowland

## 10 Years Ago

**10 years may not seem that long ago but some of the happenings back then seem a lifetime ago.**

As Team New Zealand prepared for their successful defence of the Americas Cup, SoTM and DOC were assessing risks to the Island from a potential influx of additional visitors. Telecom were preparing to build a temporary cellphone tower on the island.

The Te Aroha, a regular visitor to Tiri, paid her last visit prior to being sold and moved to her new home on the Kaipara Harbour.

SoTM's membership stood at around 850, approximately half of what it is today.

Having been granted a concession, SoTM held its first meeting for guides.

Conservation Minister, Nick Smith, declared rainbow lorikeets an "unwanted species", paving the way for eradication before they become a major pest problem.

## Tiri Gift Shop!

Dear Supporters

As it's almost time to think about posting off Christmas presents overseas, we have included some "flat" options to beat the new postal increases.

Unique handpainted leather passport covers by Caroline Claus, \$36. Many different native bird designs are available.



Photo: Mary-Ann Rowland

3D wooden ply cards, weta, tui, fantail, tuatara and kiwi available for \$14 each.



Photo: Mary-Ann Rowland

Silver and titanium jewellery by one of New Zealand's top designers, Ruth Baird. The earrings are \$165 a pair, pendants on cord \$125 and on sterling silver \$225. We have many different native flora designs, including brooches, and it is easy to email you a photo of the rest of our range.



Photo: Mary-Ann Rowland

## Flora Notes

Warren Brewer

**During our winter there has been flowering from kohekohe, fivefinger, puriri and manuka. This has been an important source of nectar for the birds.**

Four exotic plants on Tiritiri Matangi have also earned their keep by providing nectar or berries throughout the winter weeks.

The coral tree (*Erythrina x sykesii*) at the rear of the Visitor Centre and all of the brush wattle (*Paraserianthes lophantha*) have produced nectar from their flowers. Also the following two "tolerated weeds" have realised an abundance of ripe berries.



Black nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*) with its ripe black berries originates from Eurasia. Two very familiar plants belong in the same genus, the potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) and tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum*).



Inkweed (*Phytolacca octandra*) has dark purple berries. Originally from South America, it has a close relative, the impressive ombu tree (*Phytolacca dioica*), growing in Auckland's Albert Park. This is also from South America and is distinguished by its massive buttressed base which contains water storage tissue.



Don't forget Caroline Mitchell's native bird Christmas decorations. At the moment they are still \$12 but new stock will be \$16, so be in quick.



Photo: Mary-Ann Rowland

One of our guides has produced a beautiful A5 calendar. All the photos were taken on Tiri and include our native flora and fauna - \$9 including an envelope.

For orders please either ring the shop:

**09 476 0010**

Wed - Sun (weather permitting)

or:

**Email**

manager@tiritirimatangi.org.nz

With best wishes from your shop crew.

**Orchids are very special flowering plants, possessing a beauty of stylish elegance, matched by few other plant family members.**

New Zealand has over 100 species of native orchids, found growing on exposed banks, in scrubland, damp places and even perched on trees. No group of New Zealand native plants has the same range of flower colours as the orchids, from green to white, yellow, red, violet, blue and black.

Tiritiri Matangi has 3 orchid species, all summer flowering.

1. Tutukiwi / greenhood (*Pterostylis banksii*)



Tutukiwi has a single large green flower with the upper sepal forming a green hood. The petal at the bottom of the flower is modified and called the lip. The fertile parts of the flower form a structure called the column. The flower has a trigger-like mechanism which can be activated by an insect landing on the lip, causing it to be catapulted into the flower up to the column. As it crawls out over the stigma and anthers, pollination may occur. If pollination is unsuccessful the flower soon resets itself.

Thomas Cheeseman (1846 – 1923), curator and botanist at the Auckland Museum, studied *Pterostylis* and corresponded with Charles Darwin. His findings were published in the 2nd edition of Darwin's book "On The Various Contrivances By Which Orchids Are Fertilised By Insects" (1877).

Tutukiwi means "standing kiwi", describing the shape of its flower head.

This genus of orchids occurs mostly in Australia and New Zealand, with some species common to both countries.

*Pterostylis* = winged style

2. White sun orchid (*Thelymitra longifolia*)



Sun orchids grow in well lit places and many species will not open their flowers unless the sun is out. They have relatively large tubers at the base of each plant. The white sun orchid is up to 50 cm tall when in flower and often grows in clumps. Its leaves are single and on mature plants they are broad ribbed and strap like, lying

flat on the ground. There are up to 20 mainly white flowers on the flower stalk. There are about 12 species in N.Z. and the genus is mainly found in Australia and N.Z.

*Thelymitra* = lady's head-dress, describing a small extension of the column of the flower.

3. Onion leaved orchid (*Microtis unifolia*)



*Microtis* genus contains about 18 species of terrestrial orchids. They have a small round tuber at the base of each plant. They are mostly Australian but extend to NZ, the Pacific Islands, China and Japan. Onion leaved orchid is native to NZ but is also widespread elsewhere. The flower stem is densely packed with tiny yellow-green flowers which are self fertilising. It is summer flowering on Tiritiri Matangi, occurring early November to late January amongst other vegetation on verges and claybanks of tracks.

*Microtis* = tiny ear (refers to short column in flower).

## The Stars of Tiritiri

**On Saturday the 12th and 19th of September, there will be special night visits to the island to celebrate Conservation Week**

The boat will depart downtown at 5:30pm and Gulf Harbour at 6:15pm, returning from Tiri at 10pm.

There will be volunteers from the Astronomical Society with telescopes on Coronary Hill as an added treat (weather permitting).

Each trip is limited to 60 participants and two SoTM guides will accompany each group of 10.

To book, contact 360 Discovery (details on page 2)

**The Auckland Harbour Bridge is 50 years old. Since it was opened in 1959 it has been possible to see the familiar silhouette of Tiritiri Matangi Island from the bridge's summit.**

Until recently, if you were driving north and travelling at 80km/hr the lighthouse stayed in view for over 15 seconds. This guaranteed that you would see the flash of the Tiri light every trip - provided you knew where to look in the dark.

It pays to practise in the daytime. The best view is from the centre lanes. As you come over the rise the lighthouse is almost dead ahead, just to the right of the three tallest buildings in Takapuna. But there is construction going on in Takapuna, and by July the top of the lighthouse was in view for only 10 seconds. Soon, sadly, it may be totally obscured, so do take this opportunity for your last chance to see...

Any reference to the Harbour Bridge in relation to the lighthouse brings to mind one of Ray Walter's marvellous stories. This one is from soon after the Tiritiri light was automated, an event which ended Ray's career as a lighthouse keeper.

Here's an excerpt from Tiritiri Matangi: A Model of Conservation, (p. 86).

By 1986 Ray was a fulltime employee of Lands and Survey, and had become the sole guardian of the Tiri

project .... despite continuing bitterness at the closure of the lighthouses, Ray was glad to be able to remain on Tiri ....

For Ray, a bittersweet incident occurred shortly after the lighthouse was automated in 1984:

*There was an irate telephone call in the middle of the night – one, two o'clock in the morning, and this joker said, 'Are you the lighthouse keeper on Tiri?' I said 'No.' [quietly]. He said 'But ... this is the Tiri lighthouse telephone?' I said, 'The light is automatic. I'm no longer a lighthouse keeper!' and he said, 'I don't care who you are! This is the Harbour Bridge Control here. Will you do something about your bloody lighthouse, because it's stopped, and it's shining light down the centre of the Auckland Harbour Bridge!'*

*The chances of it happening – of it stopping in that right place – are about a million to one ... this bloody huge 11 million candlepower light is shining right down the centre of the bridge! He was not very happy. It had been stopped for an hour or so ... I went up the top, gave the thing a little push, and away it went again. But I thought, Here's your automatic light! Bugger youse!'*

## Chelsea Presents SoTM with Sugar Stick Holder

On the 24th of May Samantha Buckley, Marketing Assistant, from Chelsea Sugar visited the island (on the Guides' training day) and presented the Supporters with a beautiful sugar holder in the shape of a tree with bird nests to hold a variety of sugars. Lisa Levy-Wales from Chelsea Sugar organised the holder to be designed and built to go on the coffee/tea bench in the Visitor Centre. Chelsea Sugar continues to sponsor the Supporters by supplying industrial raw sugar for the bird feeders and sugar sticks for our visitors to the island.

Samantha and her partner enjoyed their day on the island and are looking forward to returning, inspired by the antics of Greg.

Gaye Hayson



Photo: Roger Bray

Samantha Buckley & Mary-Ann



Photo: Roger Bray

Hey everyone!

It’s tall and bright, and an important part of the island’s history. Give it up for the lighthouse!!! To celebrate how cool the lighthouse is I’ve got a crossword puzzle for you this time. Some of the clues are a little tricky, so get an adult to help you, or do a bit of research by looking up the lighthouse page on the Tiri website – [www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz/Lighthouse.htm](http://www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz/Lighthouse.htm) – or checking out the information board next time you are out there. Good luck! Jo

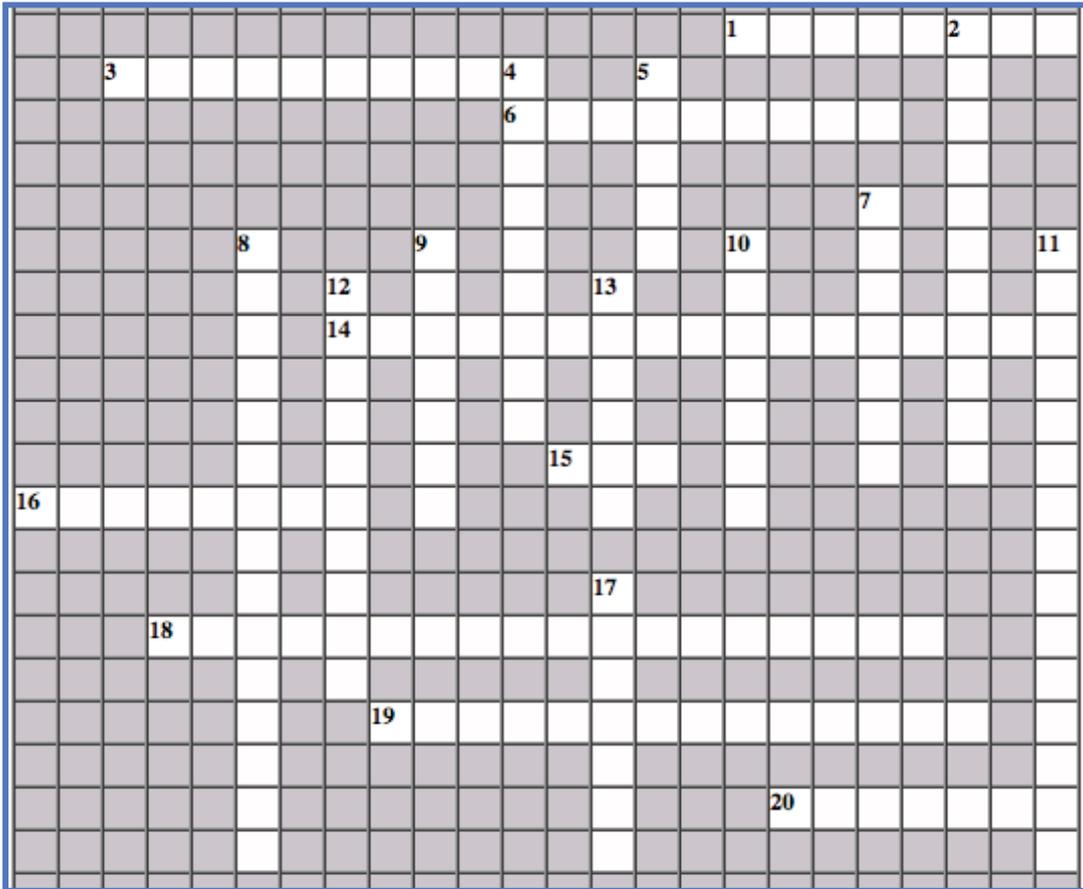


Photo: Josie Galbraith

**Across**

1. The type of animals used to drag the parts of the lighthouse to the top of Tiri (8)
3. The type of energy now used to run the Tiri lighthouse (5,5)
6. All of NZ’s lighthouses are now un-manned or \_\_\_\_ (9)
14. The year the Tiri lighthouse was built (8,5,4)
15. The colour the Tiri lighthouse was originally painted (3)
16. The metal the Tiri lighthouse is made out of (4,4)
18. The \_\_\_\_ was the world’s oldest known lighthouse, built in the 3rd Century BC (6,2,10)
19. The name of the ship that carried the Tiri lighthouse to NZ (5,2,3,4)
20. At 36m high, the lighthouse on Dog Island is the \_\_\_\_ lighthouse in NZ (7)

**Down**

2. The strength of NZ’s most powerful lighthouse was 11 million \_\_\_\_ with a range of 107 km (6,5)
4. The last Tiri lighthouse keeper (3,6)
5. The first lighthouse keeper in NZ was a \_\_\_\_ (5)
7. The Statue of Liberty, originally built as a lighthouse, stands in the harbour of which city? (3,4)
8. The most powerful lighthouse ever in NZ (8,7)
9. The Tiri lighthouse was built in Pimlico in \_\_\_\_ (7)
10. Lighthouses were built to warn \_\_\_\_ of treacherous rocks and dangerous coastlines (7)
11. The name of the first NZ lighthouse keeper (4,4,7)
12. The oldest lighthouse in NZ is located on Pencarrow Head, near our capital city \_\_\_\_ (10)
13. A lighthouse \_\_\_\_ looks after a lighthouse (6)
17. The Tiri Lighthouse is 21 metres tall and flashes every 15 \_\_\_\_ (7)

# Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi Inc. Notice of Extraordinary General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that an Extraordinary General Meeting of the  
Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi will be held as follows:

**7.30pm Monday 14th September 2009  
at Kohia Teachers' Centre, 74 Epsom Ave,  
Epsom**

(Enter Gate 2 on Epsom Ave, down slope and right, into middle level of parking building. Kohia is on the far side of the carpark accessed via covered walkway. Ample safe parking.)

At this meeting, a motion will be proposed to alter the financial year of SoTM. Details of this motion can be found on Page 5

Following the formalities, the guest speakers will be:

**Simon Fordham**

*How to Catch a Rifleman*

*(The Translocation of 31 Riflemen to Tiritiri Matangi)*



**Sarah Withers**

*Rifleman Research on Tiritiri Matangi*

Following the meeting, there will be time to socialize with other members over a cup of tea / coffee / fruit juice

Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi Inc. PO Box 90 814, Victoria Street West, Auckland 1142



## Dawn Chorus