

SUPPORTERS of



TIRITIRI MATANGI
incorporated

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Dawn Chorus



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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 AKI: Adult \$59.00 Child \$28.00
Senior/ Student/ Backpacker \$53.00
Family \$145.00
Ex GH: Adult \$35.00 Child \$17.00
Senior/ Student/ Backpacker \$30.00
Family \$85.00

Guided Walks:

Adult \$5.00: Child \$2.50

Sorry no discounts for Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi (SoTM).

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 Megan either by telephone 4760010 or e-mail: manager@tiritirimatangi.org.nz.

Advance bookings are essential.

All the staff welcomed the first group of 2007; the University of California with 80 students on Saturday 3rd February.

Overnight Visits

Overnight bookings are handled by the DOC Rangers, Ian and Jennifer. Please telephone them on:

(09) 476 0920 or e-mail:
tiritirimatangifb@doc.govt.nz

Demand on the bunkhouse is very heavy. There is a long waiting list and the policy is first in first served. But the wait is well worth while! Tiri becomes a magical place once the ferry leaves and an overnight stay will become an experience to be treasured. Don't miss out by not turning up or spoil it for others who could have had your booking.



Upcoming Events 2007

March 10th – 11th

Adults Non-working Weekend.

April 6th – 9th

Easter Working Weekend.

April 14th – 15th

Families Weekend.

April 22nd

Tiri Kids Day.

May 26th – 27th

Families Weekend.

June 2nd – 4th

Queens Birthday Adults Working Weekend.

August 25th – 26th

Families Weekend.

August 26th

Kowhai Trip.

September 22nd – 23rd

Adults Non-working Weekend

October 20th – 22nd

Labour Day Adults Working Weekend

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

Prices:

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

From the Chair

Well that was 2006! Where did it go? So much has happened in the last year. At least we still have summer to look forward towe hope!

As we head for another AGM, there are 3 retiring committee members who should be acknowledged.

Suzi Phillips joined the committee when she took on the role of newsletter editor in September 2005. The newsletter is the most important communications medium we have with our members and Suzi has done a wonderful job with the Dawn Chorus. Thank you Suzi! Incidentally, SoTM is now the legal holder of the trademark "Dawn Chorus" for newsletters.

Kay McLeod joined the committee 3 years ago when husband John retired after 5 years. Despite moving to Opotiki during this time, Kay still managed to regularly attend committee meeting. We are very appreciative of your input and dedication Kay. Thank you!

Our third retiree is Julie Cotterill. Julie joined the committee in 2002 and, for the last 4 years, has been the Secretary. This is one of the most time consuming roles on any committee and Julie has set such a high standard that no one has yet volunteered to replace her. Julie brought to the meetings humour, patience and a balanced perspective when sometimes the meetings were heading off on a tangent. On many occasions, we were asked to "back up the truck" as the discussions sometimes got too far ahead of the minute taking. Thanks for all of your efforts Julie.

The 2007 AGM is on 12th March and you are all invited to attend. You can find a profile of the Committee nominees on page 11 and full detail of the meeting on the back cover.

Simon Fordham
Chairperson

2007 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thank you to all members from throughout New Zealand and from overseas who have renewed their subscriptions for 2007. Thank you, too, for your affirming comments, good wishes, and Christmas/New Year greetings. We appreciate your continued support. We also gratefully acknowledge all those of you who generously sent a donation along with your subscription.

To those whose 2007 subscription is now overdue (you will have a

pink reminder notice with this mailout), we would be grateful if you would continue to support our wonderful island by forwarding your subscription at your earliest convenience, as our subscription year is the calendar year and subscriptions expired at the end of 2006. Please note that, unfortunately, we will be unable to continue sending the Dawn Chorus to non-financial members.

Any subscription queries, please contact the membership secretary, Val Smytheman.

Ask the Experts

Who is the oldest visitor to Tiritiri?

Zella Roberts, aged 102, visited Tiri on January 27th 2007. She is probably our oldest visitor ever. Mrs Roberts had a marvellous day with her family, and everyone who spoke with her was amazed at her energy and vitality. Jen treated her to a personal tour around Tiri in the mule, and Mrs Roberts is seen in the vehicle with Jen and Sylvia Arcus.



Thanks to Anne Rimmer

If you have any questions you would like to have answered, I'll find the expert and print the fascinating facts here. Just e-mail me at editor@tiritirimatangi.org.nz or drop me a line to: Ask the experts, The Editor, SoTM Inc, PO Box 90814, Auckland Mail Service Centre, Auckland 1142.

The Tiri Gift Shop

The Gift Shop inside the fabulous 'Ray and Barbara Walter Visitor Centre' has a stunning selection of gifts and books.

Now managed by Megan, who intends to stock as many local products as possible, the shop has lots of new items to treat your family and friends. Is there a Birthday or special occasion coming soon?

Featured here are Pohutukawa and Kowhai soap, which are 'must-haves' for any clean living conservationist. There are also matching decorations.

If you're after a book there's a great selection and don't forget the polar fleece and T-shirts.

All available by visiting or calling Megan on (09) 476 0010. Hand or mail delivery available on phone orders.



Happy Feet! (a non-official update)

By Monique van Rensburg

Well the penguins have certainly kicked up a storm this year with their little chicks!

The breeding season commenced in September and is still well on the way. Some of you may have been lucky enough to meet "Jup-Jup" – our infamous chick in the rock nestbox by the Wharf toilets. Little Jup-Jup has been steadily increasing in weight over the last few weeks, and in about 4-5 weeks time he/she will be ready to hit the water in search of his/her first meal. Sadly, its parents had one failed clutch of eggs earlier this season, but thankfully they laid a second with Jup-Jup emerging as the only winner. The other egg didn't hatch.

Little Blues usually have 2 eggs per clutch, and if a clutch fails, they will often try again later in the season. Nest failure can be because of poor body condition, which causes the adults to abandon the eggs. Alternatively, one parent may die out at sea, and the other parent is forced to abandon the eggs. This is a common occurrence for little blue penguins, and abandonment of eggs is very high. However, the chicks that have hatched and survived this past season have been in prime condition. Most are real fighters, and they have certainly objected to their weekly measurements.

I have been monitoring over 50 nests this season, and all are currently at different stages. Some nests have already fledged chicks, while others have only hatched this past week (such as the last rock nest box on Hobbs Beach)! So the breeding season has been really staggered, which is not uncommon. I've had over 30 chicks to monitor this summer, and have seen just over 20 abandoned nests.

Most of the nests I monitor are scattered around the coast, including the Northern part of the island and the East Coast. Many of the nests are very deep burrows/rock crevices,

and it is difficult to see what the penguins are up to. However, the nests which are accessible prove very useful for monitoring the health of the chicks and adults during the breeding season. I plan to present a summary of my results in the May edition, as the season is not over yet and the statistics change daily.

Some of the non-breeding birds have recently started the moult, which lasts for 16-18 days. During this time they cannot leave the burrow to feed as they are not waterproof. For this reason they double their weight prior to the moult as they lose about 50%

of their body weight during it. It is a time of extreme stress for the birds as it takes a great amount of energy to replace the feathers. Breeding birds go into the moult after their chicks have fledged and they have built up reserves for moulting.

My study focuses on parasitism in little blue penguins, and how it correlates with survival and nest success. I have been taking samples of the nest material to look at the numbers of ectoparasites (such as fleas, lice and ticks) in the nest, and I have also been removing ticks from the birds to determine the

extent of infestation. Some nests are ridden with parasites, while others are reasonably "clean". The chicks do get infested as well, with ticks commonly occurring on the feet. The parasites do survive water, making it perfect living conditions for these bloodsucking critters!

Massey University is also looking at the feeding behaviour of the little blues in the waters surrounding Tiri by use of GPS transmitters and depth recorders. This research should give

us an idea as to where parents go to feed in the Hauraki Gulf, and also how deep they dive. This is useful information when it comes to making decisions about fishing quotas and water use in and around the Gulf.

I'll be on Tiri carrying out my research till the end of the moulting season, which is in March/April, so if you see me around, don't hesitate to ask questions!

Research is critical to the survival of Tiritiri Matangi and so are the researchers! So we're going to run a little profile of each researcher as with their published work [Ed]

Monique van Rensburg is currently a Masters of Science Student, Conservation Biology (March 2006 – March 2007) at the Ecology & Conservation Group, Massey University in Auckland.

She currently has: BSc (Genetics & Zoology), PGDipSci (Conservation Biology)

Originally from South Africa, Monique has been in New Zealand for 10 years. Her previous work experience includes working as a volunteer for: Auckland Zoo (Natives, Elephant/Sealion/Carnivore Section); Mt Bruce; Massey Wildlife Clinic; SPCA; and Marakele National Park in South Africa, working on endangered African Wild Dogs.

Inset photographs Monique van Rensburg
Large background photograph © Simon Fordham



A Visit from the US Government

On a sunny Monday in January, the Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, Claudia McMurray, arrived in Auckland. Within the first few hours, Claudia paid a visit to Tiri, accompanied by various government representatives including the Minister of Conservation, Hon Chris Carter and Al Morrison, the recently

appointed Director General of Conservation (this was Al's first visit to the Island). SoTM was represented by Chairperson Simon Fordham.

Upon arrival, Claudia was welcomed and given an overview of the island by ranger Jennifer Haslam before participating in a brief forum on the success of the project. Emphasis was placed on the value of partnerships between

volunteer organizations and the Department of Conservation. After lunch, the party headed up Coronary Hill where Auckland Regional Conservator, Sean Goddard put the Hauraki Gulf and various other projects in perspective. Next stop was Wattle Valley where the elusive kokako was heard but not seen. A photo opportunity with stitchbird chicks was well received.

Claudia was, of course, impressed by her visit and stated that she had never seen any other project like Tiri. She purchased a couple of souvenirs from the shop and SoTM presented her with a copy of Anne Rimmer's wonderful book, "Tiritiri Matangi: A Model of Conservation" and a membership application form.

Simon Fordham



Photographs c/o Samuel Lawrence



Solar Power takes over on Tiritiri Matangi Island

Mid December, history was made on Tiritiri Matangi when the new solar array came on line, and for the first time the island was no longer fully dependent on fossil fuels.

This \$210,000 upgrade of the power supply took two months to complete with the installation by Reid Technology of the 40 solar panels, a new battery bank and an automated control system. The panels have been installed on a discrete site close to the old generator shed out of the general view of visitors, with just a few macrocarpa trees needing to be cleared to accommodate them. People are still welcome to wander amongst the panels to get a closer look.

The system, amongst the largest solar arrays in NZ, will not only drastically reduce diesel consumption but will also require

much less maintenance. The new panels only require occasional cleaning and tilt adjustments four times per year to match the seasonal angle of the sun. The generator is being retained to provide back up power during the rare periods of limited sun.

The DOC staff also comment they are thrilled with the upgrade. Rangers Ian and Jennifer are grateful to not have to turn the generator on and off manually several times a day and appreciate being able to hear the birds instead of a motor.

This is the first of several power supply upgrades in the Hauraki Gulf; a solar installation is planned for Hauturu /Little Barrier Island for later in the year.

Liz Maire
DOC Warkworth



The People behind Tiritiri

Starting our series on the people behind the success of Tiritiri Matangi are profiles of Ian Price and Megan Wilson. The next issue will profile Jennifer Haslam and other key DOC people.

Ian Price

As one of the new faces responsible for the running of Tiri, Ian took over from Ray Walter on 20th June 2006. Despite his heavy workload and responsibilities, his 10 days on/4 days off rota ensures you'll see a lot of him around the island.



Ian's main responsibility on the island is to ensure that Tiritiri Matangi is a model of conservation, stepping up the battle against weeds and ensuring the island remains predator free - a huge task by any standards. When Jennifer is not on duty, he also runs the bunkhouse, organises the volunteers' work schedule and occasionally meets the boat.

With a background in farming, Ian is familiar with long hours on the land and hard work. The family farm was sold in 1987 and he turned his management skills to property renovation and development. His spare time was dedicated to volunteer work for DOC mostly on Motutapu and Raoul Islands.

In 1995 Ian was 'blown away' by the amazing bird life on Tiri when he first visited. The start of a long relationship!

Joining DOC full-time four and a half years ago, he spent his first three years on Tiri working with Ray Walter. He then spent 6 months on Kapiti Island managing the Stitchbird programme, before returning to Tiri. In 2006, when Ray retired, he was successfully appointed to continue his good work. One thing is certain, Tiri is in very capable hands.

So what does the future bring? To a large degree 'more of the same'. He will be continuing to address the unique bio-security problems that, as an open sanctuary, Tiri faces, as well as continuing to build on the excellent relationship established between DOC and SoTM.

Megan Wilson

How long have you been involved with Tiri?

I've been involved with Tiri for 4 years, as a volunteer guide.

When did you start your new role as Tiritiri Matangi Shop Manager and

Guiding Co-ordinator?

I started the role in September 2006 as a full time SoTM employee.

Where did you work previously?

I worked at Milford and Birkenhead Shopping Centres – Assistant Centre Manager

Which University did you attend?

AUT Auckland – Bachelor of Business

What do you do in your current position?

I organise all the volunteers (including 188 volunteer guides) and manage our daily visitors and school groups. I also run the fabulous Tiri shop. Which involves many tasks including sourcing new products, negotiating orders and stock control.

What are the biggest challenges in your role?

getting everything done in a 40 hour working week?

What plans do you have for your role in the future?

working on the branding of the Tiri shop, bringing in new products, making a profit for the Island, enhancing the visitor experience.

What do you like to do in your time off?

swimming squad training, catching up with my family.



Two New Lizards for Tiri

By Simon Fordham

On Tuesday 19 December, the number of reptile species on Tiri increased to six with the arrival of nineteen Duvaucel's gecko and thirty shore skink. This was part of a programme initiated by Massey University and included a simultaneous release on nearby Motuora Island as well as establishing a captive breeding population at the Albany Campus.

Duvaucel's gecko *Hoplodactylus duvauceli* is the largest gecko in New Zealand and even by world standards they are large, growing up to 320mm in overall length. As is so often the case, they

were once found on the mainland but their large size and somewhat sluggish habits made them extremely prone to predation.

They are now found

only on offshore islands of the North Island and Cook Strait. Our population came from Stanley Island, one of the Mercury Islands. These nocturnal insectivores often forage on the ground at night, further reason why visitors must stay on the tracks at all times.

The shore skink *Oligosoma smithi* is a medium sized skink reaching up to 155mm. As the name suggests, they are a coastal species and feed on a range of invertebrates around

rocks, driftwood and seaweed. They are diurnal and can often be seen basking in their preferred habitat. Shore skinks are still found on the mainland, our source being Tawharanui Regional Park, where predator control has resulted in a significant increase in the population of many species, including shore skinks.

Shore skinks exhibit a significant range of colour variation as a result of having evolved to suit their specific habitat. On Little Barrier Island, near black specimens can be seen basking on the boulders, retreating

to their immediate refuge when threatened. At Tawharanui, they are a medium to light brown around the rocky flax-lined shores yet, in the dunes near the park boundary, they are fawn coloured.

Even on Tiri, reptiles such as these are not immune to predation, likely culprits being the morepork, kingfisher and pukeko.

Both species are the subject of ongoing research. The skinks are being monitored through pitfall traps so as to get an idea of population trends, particularly when compared to the other skinks found on the island. Ten of the geckos have been fitted with transmitters so that their dispersion can be monitored for the first three or four months.

Reptiles on Tiri

Tuatara – *Sphenodon punctatus*

Common Gecko – *Hoplodactylus maculatus*

Duvaucel's Gecko – *Hoplodactylus duvauceli*

Moko Skink – *Oligosoma moco*

Copper Skink – *Cyclodina aenea*

Shore Skink – *Oligosoma smithi*

There is anecdotal evidence of green tree gecko *Naultinus elegans* on Tiri in recent years. However, these diurnal geckos are very cryptic and, if they do exist, are probably in very low numbers so any sightings would be most welcome.

All photographs ©Simon Fordham



Further Information
www.reptiles.org.nz/geckoduv.htm

Which Skink is That?

With three species of skink on Tiri now, two of them abundant, identification is a little more tricky than it used to be. All are diurnal and can grow to around the same size (155 to 165mm).

The **moko skink** is the most common of these and the easiest to identify. It is the only one of Tiri's skinks that has pale stripes that run the length of the body. The moko skink is rare on the mainland although a population has recently been discovered at nearby Shakespear Regional Park.

The **copper skink** is also common and, as the name suggests, is a distinct coppery colour. It is also common on the mainland. Both the moko and copper skinks can be found throughout the island, in a range of habitats, although the copper skink tends to avoid the rocky foreshore.

The **shore skinks** on Tiri are a lighter brown than the copper skink and have less contrast in the colouring between the top and sides. They are found only on the rocky foreshore, at this stage only at Fisherman's Bay.

SoTM Committee Nominees

Simon Fordham (Chairman)

My wife, Morag, and I first visited Tiri 14 years ago and soon became actively involved in SoTM. We are both dedicated conservationists, with Tiri being our main project. I joined the committee in 1996 and edited the Dawn Chorus for 3 years. I have been the Chairperson for the last 3 years. I very much enjoy working with the many people involved in the project, so much so that I wish to offer my services as Chairperson for one more year.

Bill Mancer (Treasurer)

I am a chartered accountant in public practice, with a passion for the environment. I enjoy participating with the Supporters as an officer of the society, and am keen to serve again as treasurer and committee member. SoTM is a very special organisation, and deserves to have committed and capable people within its leadership.

The Supporters is in a transition phase, becoming more education and less development focused.

Through the Supporters we will be able to further environmental awareness, sharing the knowledge that is gained while protecting native species entrusted to the care of Tiritiri Matangi. I will ensure that the Supporters vision is one that will continue to inspire support and commitment from people that seek a better environment.

Cathy Catto

I have been a member of the Supporters for over 15 years. My current role on the committee has been with education, interpretation and displays for the Visitor Centre. While on the committee, I have also gained a depth of knowledge for process and requirements of the Society. My qualifications in Management and Education have assisted me with my tasks and I look forward to being involved with Tiritiri for many more years.

Margaret Chappell

I became involved in the Tiri re-planting project in the mid 1980's and this led to countless visits on planting trips over subsequent years.

I have a strong interest in sport and bring to the committee a background of many years of sport administration experience. I have enjoyed applying this background to the SoTM Committee,

and in particular, working with Cathy on the Communication and Education sub-committee, currently very busy on the Visitor Centre interpretation project.

Through guiding I thoroughly enjoy sharing my Tiri experience.

Maria Galbraith

By day I'm a primary teacher in West Auckland, and at 25 have had a long association with Tiri, as I started accompanying my family on planting trips when I was 3 years old. We have volunteered and holidayed on Tiri every year since. Memorable moments of my volunteering include: tree planting, boardwalk-sweeping, weeding of Ray & Barbara's old tomato plants aided by Mr. Blue, helping in the construction of the new visitors centre, writing of the Tiri Kids page for Dawn Chorus, and guiding. This has been a major influence in my life, making me into a real conservationist! Being a member of the Supporters committee would be another way for me to contribute to a project that is important to me.

Melinda Habgood

I would like to become a committee member to help give something back to the island that has given me so much, and be part of the team that helps guide the island to a successful, sustainable future.

My involvement with Tiritiri (and membership of the Supporters of Tiritiri) spans seven years, therefore I am able to bring my extensive knowledge and familiarity with the island and its every day working life to the Supporters Committee. My work on Tiritiri has ranged from conducting my Masters thesis research on copper and moko skinks (2002/2003), to joining the weed team during the summer of 2003/2004 and volunteer guiding since 2003. I currently work as an ecologist at Te Ngahere, where I work in the field of ecological restoration. I feel my scientific and research background when combined with my restoration experience in a commercial environment will be of great assistance to the committee.

Paul Colgrave (Current Editor of *Dawn Chorus*). Having initially trained as an illustrator, my career to date has been spent in the advertising industry.

I'm a member of the pest control programme at the Tahuna Torea

Reserve and have been a regular visitor to Tiri for over 5 years.

With more than 20 years' experience in producing high profile communication material, and a passion for bird photography and conservation, I am keen to contribute to the critical role *Dawn Chorus* plays in raising supporters' awareness and numbers.

Val Smytheman

My involvement with Tiritiri Matangi (since 1992) has enriched my life beyond measure. I have taken part in many working weekends, am a guide, and have often helped out on the island when the regular island staff have been on leave. I have been on the committee since 2000, am a member of the Bio-diversity sub-committee, and have been Membership Secretary since 2002. My roles are supported by a strong sense of commitment, a love of the island and a desire to contribute to its current success and future development.

Mark Seabrook-Davison

I have been on the SOTM committee for two years and have seen significant developments on Tiritiri Matangi such as the building of the visitors centre. Another significant milestone has been the development of the Memorandum of Understanding between SOTM and DOC which has allowed input from Supporters into conservation issues such as bird transfers.

I am currently a PhD student at Massey University studying species recovery of New Zealand's threatened species. Prior to returning to university, I operated my own landscape design and environmental consultancy business.

Hester Cooper

I have a science background and I'm passionate about wildlife. My association with Tiritiri began in 1991 as a visitor and I have returned many times, and helped out as a guide for the past four years. In recent years I've also been able to contribute as a research advisor for Tiri. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to serve on the Committee, particularly with advice on research programmes and the commissioning of research.

Ray Walter and Barbara Walter who need no introduction.

Fauna Notes

Compiled by **Morag Fordham**

The unusual weather pattern over the past three months appears to have affected the breeding success of most species being monitored on Tiri. Most started off well but some failed and have had to renest. A good example of this has been the Kokako who are only now producing chicks.

Takahe

Ahikaea and Montague produced one chick just before Christmas. The family including last year's chick, Hauraki can often be seen on the Ridge Road near the Dupont sign. Mahuika and Blackwatch also had a chick at the end of November but sadly the chick disappeared after a bout of bad weather.



Kristina's and Rossie's nest failed. They can be seen with their son Poncho, their chick from last season, around the Visitor Centre.

Greg paired up with Cheesecake who was very secretive about her nest. Unfortunately it obviously failed as they reappeared without a chick and Greg is now back to his old habit of visiting the wharf and Hobbs Beach looking for food handouts.

Tiri and Mungo also failed to produce a chick.

Lou, who was limping after fighting with his father Blackwatch, has disappeared.

Whakama is seen only occasionally. Glencoe and Calico have also gone, presumed dead, so we now have fourteen adult birds and one chick.

Stitchbird/Hihi

This breeding season was an interesting one. Sixty nine females attempted to breed, three of which were polygynous – shared their mate with another female. One nest was found with ten eggs – double the normal amount (two females laid in the same nest)! However, actual production of babies was very low with only 143 fledglings produced so far. Nevertheless, there are still plenty of birds flying around ready for transfer to Ark in the Park in the Waitakere Ranges in February. Good luck to them!!

Brown Teal/Pateke

Jemima's and Ossie's (Wharf Dam) remaining duckling died in mid November.

When Finn the Philanderer deserted Blue Bonnet (Emergency Landing Dam) she ended up as a solo Mum

with two surviving ducklings, named Oscar and Tammy. Finnthen paired with Solita on the Bunkhouse Dam and they produced three ducklings but two had died by Christmas time. He has now gone back to Blue Bonnet and chased Oscar away but has allowed his daughter to stay!

At the end of October Daisy and Ruan (Stagnant Dam) appeared with four ducklings. By the end of November they still had two but unfortunately these disappeared shortly after this. At NE Bay Connie reappeared without ducklings and Rose quickly exited the scene. Connie has since disappeared and is hopefully renesting.

Kokako

Cloudsley Shovell (the mother of the Kokako nation on Tiri) and Te Koha Waiata, have finally produced two chicks.

Eunice (with Oscar) was sitting on two eggs but at this stage we do not know if she produced any chicks.

Ruby and Russell, Shazbot and Te Hari and Kahurangi and Bel Canto all have one chick each.

It is thought that Keisha's (with Te Karanga) nest failed.



Wairua and Storm might be nesting. We are unsure if Tsindi and Piper are still together.

Chinook and Zephyr are still entertaining everyone around the Visitor Centre.

Tiritiri Waiata, the female Kokako that was transferred from Tiri to Auckland Zoo has produced two chicks.



North Island Robin

This year there were twenty eight breeding pairs on the island. They have done a really good job fledging sixty two chicks. Most chicks have fledged from Bush 22, where five pairs raised nineteen chicks. Three pairs stayed unmonitored because they were nesting at the cliff side near North East Bay. A couple of chicks are still unbanded so it will be a challenge to catch them with a hand net. The breeding season is pretty much over now and most birds are moulting. Renske Kwikkel will stay on the island until the translocation at the beginning of March when about twenty birds will be transferred to Tawharanui Regional Park.

Saddleback

Around sixty chicks have hatched but this does not include natural nests. One nest produced three chicks but we do not know how many of these fledged. We also had one bird who insisted on using an old roosting box so we had to build her a roof to keep her two chicks dry!

Fernbird

Kevin Parker recently completed a survey and there are at least sixty birds on the island and some people have been lucky enough to see a chick.

Tomtit

There have been a couple of reports of a banded male seen once on the Kawerau Track and on 25 January near the Dupont sign. An unbanded female was definitely seen on 29 January quite close to the Stitchbird feeder on the left just before entering the Kawerau Track. She was busy looking for insects and stayed around for quite a few minutes.

Other birds

As usual the Kingfishers had chicks near the wharf shed at the beginning of December.

At the beginning of December two Spotless Crake chicks were seen at the wharf dam but later on that month only one was being seen.

The Blue Penguins are nesting and the middle and end nesting boxes near the wharf have been used. (See page 4-5)

Brown Quail chicks started to appear at the beginning of December.

The juvenile Bellbirds are now hanging around the feeders at the visitor centre.

Twelve Canada Geese flew over Tiri in early January.

Tuatara

In mid November two Tuatara were seen during the day on the Kawerau track. Up to six are often being seen on night walks.

Geckos and Skinks

See article on the centre page spread (Page 8,9 &10).

Marine Mammals

Towards the end of November an Orca was seen chasing and throwing Eagle Rays out of the sea near the wharf.

Flora Notes

Compiled by **Jan Velvin.**

January, February, March are "Banquet Time" for the fruit eaters.

Everywhere you look at the moment the bright colours of ripening fruits are appearing...

- reds, oranges of the Coprosma
- purples of the Mahoe *Melicactus ramiflorus*
- Puahou *Pseudopanax arboreus*
- Ngaio *Myoporum laetum*.
- white of the Ti kouka Cordyline australis
- pinks and reds of the Puriri *Vitex lucens*
- orange of the *Macropiper excelsum*
- greens of the Karaka *Corynocarpus laevigatus*

A lot of flowers are still to come on many plants. Tauhinu *Cassinia retorta*, a tiny gray-leaved plant, found on Wharf Road. and Ridge Track, is still forming buds.

Speaking of gray leaved plants the white flowering Akapero *Olearia furfuraceae* (tree daisy) is also beginning to flower.

Adding to the grays are the large round seed capsules of the Karo *Pittosporum crassifolium*. Good examples of this seed set can be seen on Grahams Road.

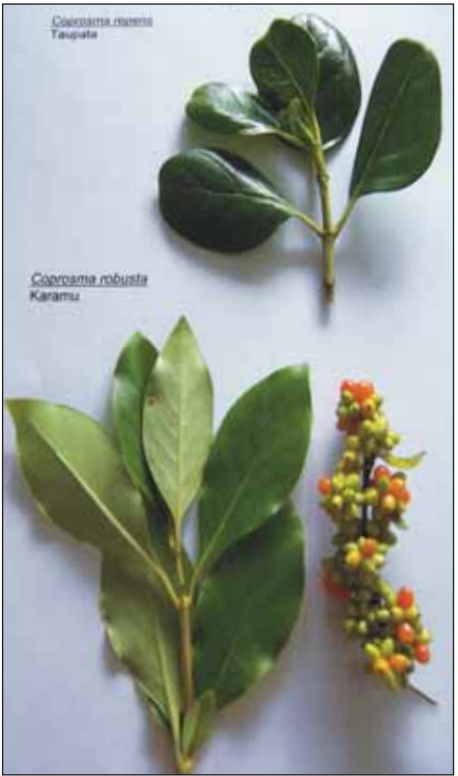
Also on the corner of Wharf Road and Grahams Road are a group of Houpara *Pseudopanax lessonii*. The seed on these are just forming. Have a look at the tips of new growth, they are covered with a clear sticky gel to protect the growing tips.

The Kowhai *Sophora microphylla* have lots of seed pods. They are still carrying some pods from last year (brown) as well as this year (green).

Sadly the Pohutukawa *Metrosideros excelsa* have almost finished flowering for the year, but some flowers can still be seen. I think we have been treated to an exceptional flowering season this spring and summer. May it long continue!

COPROSMA Family: Rubiaceae.

Welcome to the "Tiri Café".
Yes, the link may be tenuous but for two reasons I think of COPROSMA as being the "food stop" of the summer on Tiri.
The first being that COPROSMA is in the Coffee Family and, as a food source, the berries are just everywhere at the moment.



In New Zealand there are about 50 species of Coprosma, which grow over a wide selection of habitats from the coast to the mountains.
Their leaves vary greatly, adapting to the extremes, sun, wind, cold, salt-spray etc, so very tiny or thickened leaves are common characteristics.
The flowers of the Coprosma are small and pale coloured green/yellow. These are wind pollinated and the male and female flowers are found on separate plants.
The plants carrying the berries are female.
For this exercise we are going to divide the species on Tiri in two and concentrate on 3 of the large leaved Coprosmas.

Coprosma aff. macrocarpa
C.repens
C.robusta
There are also 2 small leaved species.
C.propinqua
C.rhamnoides

We receive a lot of questions as to which is, which so the following are some characteristics we can compare:
• Plant size
• Leaves-size & colour
• Stipules-pointed growth on the stem at the base of the leaf.
• Berries-colour, & size.



Coprosma aff. macrocarpa:
This is a shrub or small tree growing to 5m.
Larger green leaves than the others 9-13cm long and 4-8cm wide.
The leaves have a "softer" appearance than the other two and are more sparsely placed on the branches.
The stipules become dry and papery.
The berries, which ripen orange red, are large... macrocarpa ("large seeded")
• (aff.= 'affinities with.' The true *C.macrocarpa* is endemic to the Three Kings Islands.

Coprosma repens
TAUPATA
Mirror Plant.

Shrub or small tree to 8m.
Leaves are very shiny both sides and thickened.

Stipules have a row of blackish glands.
Fruit to 1cm and are orange.
A great coastal "colonising plant"

Coprosma robusta
Karamu
Shrub or small tree to 6m.
Leaves are a 'flat' green, thickened but not as much as C repens, 6-12cm long and 3-4cm wide.
The underside of the leaf is a lot paler than the top surface.
Stipules have a shiny black gland on their tip.
Fruit are 8-9mm and orange.

The name Coprosma relates to the unpleasant smell given off by some species, especially C foetidissima. *Copros* means dung.

A final quote for the Café.....
A member of the Wellington Philosophical Society once provided his fellow members with "coffee" made from coprosma. This drink was reported to possess a splendid aroma, but the experiment does not seem to have been repeated.

Think I will stay with *Coffea arabica*.



TIRI KIDS

Hand this to your kids - or pass it on to someone else's kids - to enjoy a range of activities about Tiritiri Matangi Island.

Hi everyone!
Hope you are making the most of the hot weather. The new additions to Tiri are loving it! Two reptile species - **Duvaucel's gecko** and the **shore skink** - have been released on the island recently. This Tiri Kids page will help you learn about them - don't forget to colour in the picture (the gecko is up the tree).
Enjoy! Jo and Tess

See if you can find the answers to these **true or false** questions to learn some interesting facts about our new lizards:

Duvaucel's Geckos...

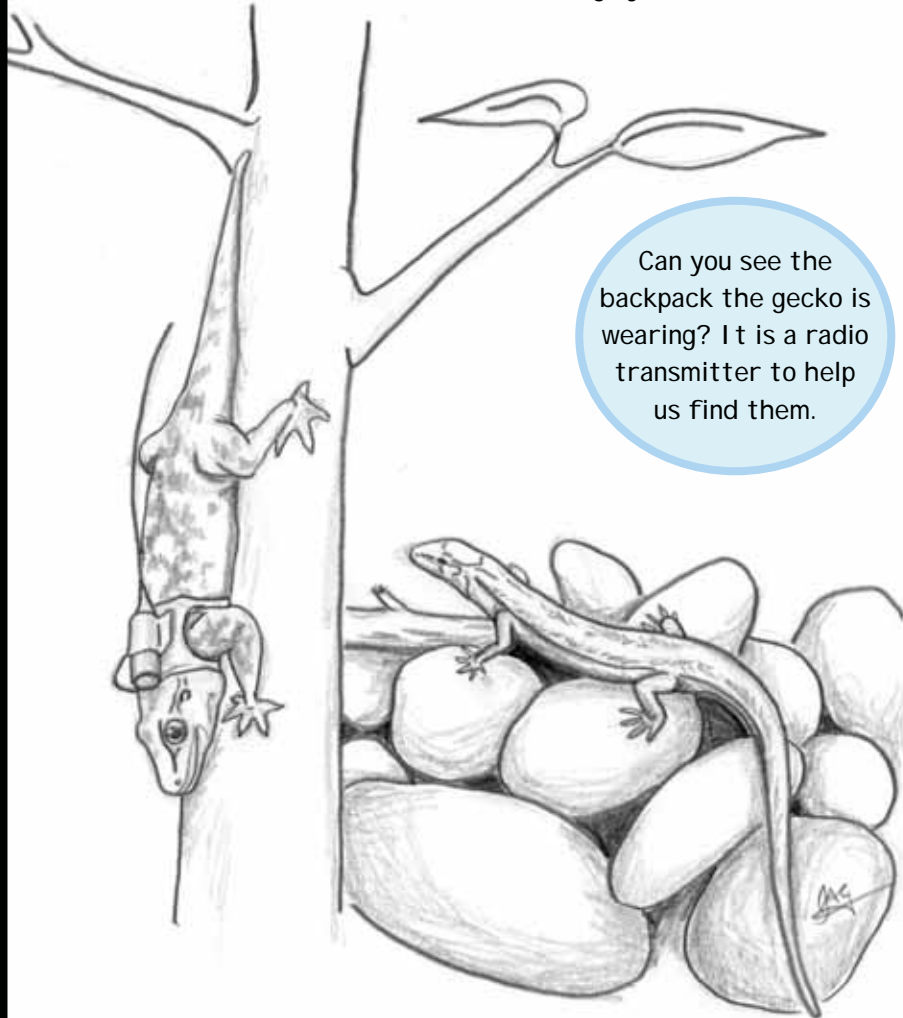
1. Have eyelids that move.
T/F
2. Are nocturnal (come out at night).
T/F
3. Were named after the explorer Alfred Duvaucel.
T/F
4. Can live for 36 years or more.
T/F
5. Can jump up to 10 metres.
T/F

Shore Skinks...

6. Have eyelids that move.
T/F
7. Are green in colour.
T/F
8. Live very close to the shoreline and come out during the daytime.
T/F
9. Eat oysters and shrimps.
T/F
10. Give birth to live young.
T/F

Answers (no peeking):

1.F, 2.T, 3.T, 4.T, 5.F, 6.T, 7.F, 8.T, 9.F, 10.T



How many words can you make using this word:

Reptile

0-10 Great start
11-20 Fantastic
21 + You're a word genius!!!

Writers' Corner

Don't forget to send in your short stories and poems about Tiri to us to be published. There will be prizes for the best ones!!!

Compiled by Jo and Tess
Tiri Kids, PO Box 90-814,
Auckland Mail Service Centre,
Auckland 1030

Tiri Kids day on the Island 22nd April 2007,
RSVP essential Ph. Megan 09 4760010 by 14th April.,
Cost ex Gulf Harbour: Adult \$22 Child \$14.
Bring: Lunch, raincoat, pencil and an Adult.

Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi Inc. Notice of Annual General Meeting

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

**7.30pm Monday 12th March 2007
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, the following items will be included:

Welcome - Simon Fordham

Apologies

Minutes of Previous AGM - Julie Cotterill

Matters Arising

Financial Report - Bill Mancer

Election of Officers - In accordance with the revised constitution (2005) nominations closed 31 January.

List of Nominees; (Brief introduction to each candidate, page 10-11 Dawn Chorus.)

Treasurer – Bill Mancer

Nominated: Simon Fordham Seconded Julie Cotterill

Committee – Ray Walter

Barbara Walter

Val Smytheman

Cathy Catto

Hester Cooper

Mark Seabrook-Davison

Margaret Chappell

Nominated: Simon Fordham Seconded Julie Cotterill

Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi Inc. PO Box 90814, Auckland Mail Service Centre, Auckland 1030



Dawn Chorus