



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 Akl: 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).

Upcoming Events 2007-8

August 25th – 26th
Families Weekend.

August 26th
Kowhai Trip.

September 22nd – 23rd
Adults Non-working Weekend

October 20th – 22nd
Labour Day Adults Working Weekend

2008
January 26th – 28th
Anniversary Working Weekend

February 2nd – 3rd
Adults Non working weekend

February 6th
Waitangi Day Picnic

March 21st – 24th
Easter Working Weekend

April 12th – 13th
Families Weekend

April 20th
Tiri Kids Day

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

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)**

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.

A full list of the schools that visited during February, March and April.

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.

Please see page 6 of this issue for an update on booking your overnight trip.



From the Chair

Who says that winter is the quiet time on Tiri? Whilst the visitor numbers may be down in the cooler months, there is still plenty happening.

In May, a team of dedicated “kokako catchers” removed 11 of our birds for reasons previously described. In return, 3 half-Taranaki birds were subsequently introduced to the island to help diversify the gene pool. Both of these events attracted plenty of publicity and thus furthered awareness of the plight of our endangered birds. Another 4 birds, this time from Waipapa in the Pureora Forest, are expected to supplement the population in September and, as before, this is intended to be a public release.

In recognition of the vulnerability of the new and genetically rare kokako to the island, careful consideration was given to supporting a proposal to remove harriers from the island until such time as the population again reaches a level where the occasional harrier predation can be tolerated. Although we recognised that there were strong arguments both for and against such controls, the committee consider it of paramount importance

to protect the newcomers and thus voted to support this proposal.

Recent visitors to the island will have noticed a significant amount of storm damage. Wind speeds of up to 97 knots (178 km/h) were recorded. Not only has this resulted in noticeable wind damage to the vegetation but many trees, from the shoreline to the lighthouse area, are showing signs of salt spray damage. Whilst this destruction is not very pretty, it is part of the natural succession of the forest and has created light wells that will result in faster growth for the many seedlings that wait patiently on the forest floor.

Last month, the 5-yearly kiwi census was carried out on the island. Birds are caught by various means, the most common being to net kiwi as they come to investigate taped calls. Trained dogs are also used to detect the presence of birds. Once caught, birds are weighed, measured, banded and temporary transmitters are placed on a leg. During the day, these birds are radio-tracked to their burrow and, on many occasions, their partner is found alongside and also “processed”. Participants also

recorded the distance and direction of calls from strategic locations for 1-2 hours each evening.

During the week, 27 birds were caught including 7 from the original translocations. This compares with 12 caught in the 2002 survey. The estimated total population is now between 60 and 80, up from around 30 five years ago. Although the heaviest birds were slightly lighter than last time, the weights were still above any recorded on Kapiti Island.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to Ian Price. Ian has chosen to leave Tiri after 14 months as Island Ranger. During this time, and also his 3 years as Assistant Ranger, Ian has made a significant contribution to the project. Amongst other things, he has made major gains in weed control, has secured valuable sponsorship for the island and, most recently, has led us through the transition period following Ray and Barbara's retirement. Good luck in whatever you choose to do next, Ian.

Simon Fordham
Chairperson

The Schools that Visited

MAY 2007

Gladstone Primary
Tamaki College
Auckland University
Homai College
Lynfield College
Freeman's Bay School x 2
Kristin School x 3
Sunnyhills Primary
Northcote College
Bruce Mc Claren Intermediate

June 2007

Gulf Harbour Primary School
Saint Heliers School
Albany Junior High School
St Heliers primary
Sunny Hills Primary
Glenfield College
Panama Road School

www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz

When the Chips Are Too Far Down By Jennifer Haslam

A routine morning bird round took an interesting turn a few weeks ago when, at the edge of my peripheral vision, I noticed a dark shape shuffling around behind a large piece of driftwood by the wharf meeting area.

Puzzled, I jumped off the quad bike and saw the back end of a pukeko sitting very still with its

head wedged firmly between the concrete and the piece of driftwood, completely

unable to free itself. If ever a bird could have said “Uh Oh...” then this was it. I carefully pushed the log aside

and the pukeko galloped off all the while iterating its raucous indignation at the whole proceeding.

Wondering what on earth had caused the lodged head in the first place, I looked down under

the log to find two potato chips on the ground. They were obviously just out

reach - although not through lack of trying.

Photograph © Paul Colgrave

Bring on the “Naki” Birds

Well, it has finally happened! On Saturday June 30, the release of two female and one male kokako, of Taranaki origin, was witnessed by a number of Supporters, DOC representatives, general visitors and two television crews.

The birds, Pukaha, Te Rae & Parininihi, were driven overnight from the Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre (in the Wairarapa) and the Otorohanga Kiwi House before being taken to Tiri on an early ferry. After being removed from their transportation containers, they were shown to an excited crowd of well-wishers before being liberated.

It is 10 years since kokako were first released on Tiri. The intention had always been to complement the initial release with the introduction of offspring from “Taranaki” birds. Unfortunately, Taranaki kokako are probably extinct in the wild so the only remaining birds were in captivity at Mount Bruce. For various reasons, the expected breeding did not take place for

some years but, now that the sole surviving male has bred, the time arrived for his offspring to start a new life on Tiri.

Prior to this introduction, approximately half (11) of our existing birds were removed to significantly reduce

the ongoing problem of inbreeding and to free up territories that the new birds will require. To further diversify the kokako genetics on Tiri, four birds from Waipapa (Pureora Forest) are expected to be introduced to the island in September.

Longer term, the intention is for the Taranaki birds and their offspring to be relocated back to an area of Taranaki bush w h e r e

the habitat has been restored, primarily through predator control. As Tiri is not large enough to accommodate a self-sustaining, genetically healthy kokako population on its own, it will form part of a “meta-population” where birds will be moved around,

between Tiri and other similar projects. These kokako will be treated as a single population from a management perspective.

Main photograph
© Kathryn Jones



Photograph © Maria Galbraith



Photograph © Maria Galbraith



Photograph © Maria Galbraith



Photograph © Maria Galbraith



Photograph © Ian Smith

Bunkhouse Bookings Go On-Line

By Liz Maire

Technology is catching up with Tiritiri Matangi Island with the advent of an online booking service for the island bunkhouse. We see some big advantages for the island staff and for the users.

- It is hoped that allowing people to make their own bookings will greatly reduce the amount of admin time the rangers currently spend on accommodation enquiries.
- Visitors will also be able to check availability of the bunkhouse for specific dates and make their own bookings online at any time, without the difficulties of contacting island staff.

Priority however, needs to continue to be given to those that are directly contributing to the Tiri project. This includes Supporters working on the island.

So, what will this mean for a Tiri Supporter who wants to book in? Hopefully the following will answer your questions and reassure you that much will remain the same:

When is the system being introduced?

For the research students using the research room it will be up and running by August. For everyone else it is likely to be available by the end of the year.

How far in advance can I now book?

- The public will be able to book on line up to a maximum of 6 months in advance.
- Supporters staying to guide or do other volunteer work for each day of their stay, will be able to book well in advance of the public. This is also the case for research students, DOC staff and translocation teams, i.e. anyone assisting with the management of the island.
- Supporters who are staying over and not guiding or involved in pre-agreed tasks associated with the management of the island, will not be able to book in advance of this maximum six month period. You will be able to book online just as the general public do

In this way preferential bookings are given only to those who are directly involved in the Tiri project

What will the fees be and when will I have to pay?

Supporters who are guiding, working in the shop or doing other volunteer work will still have free overnight accommodation.

The fees are summarised as:

Guides / Shop staff / Volunteers	no charge
Adults (inc non working Supporters)	\$20
Children	\$15 (0-15)
Selected researchers when using the research room	\$5

Payments if applicable need to be made when you book, ie in advance by credit card.

How do I book if I'm doing volunteer work as a Supporter, as the online service doesn't accommodate a waiver of fees?

Supporters staying on the island overnight to work will need to book the bunkhouse with the Warkworth office (8am – 4.30pm, 09 425 7812, email will also be possible). The staff there have the ability to override the online system and access dates more than six months out and can waive the fees. However, before you make a booking as a working Supporter through Warkworth, you will need to check the availability of bunkhouse space on line. This will make the process much smoother for all concerned.

Advance bookings beyond the six months for other groups like tramping clubs, concessionaires, Forest and Bird etc will be at the discretion of

the islands programme manager in the Warkworth office, but it is hoped that for most the six month period of advance booking will be sufficient.

What happens if I cancel?

Full refunds are given if the ferry is cancelled due to bad weather.

Cancellation fees will now be charged. Refunds vary from 100% of the fee if you cancel within 48 hrs of making the booking, to no refund if you cancel within 2 days of your stay. We believe this will be of benefit as it will discourage people from making bookings that do not get used, and will mean the facility will be able to be better utilised.

What about the Supporters official weekends and the Christmas period?

Bookings for these special times will be handled by the Supporters and can be booked in advance of the general public.

What about my overseas visitors or NZ friends in my party who want to book, but are not members of the SOTM?

All public will be able to conveniently book and pay for bunkhouse accommodation on line. However you cannot book visitors in your party on when you make your own reservations as a working Supporter, ie the rest of your group are not entitled to book in advance as you are. They will have to wait until general bookings open and will use the online system.

Can I transfer my booking?

Yes, this is possible if you do so up to 2 days before your booking. Some penalty fees may apply.

So in summary, as long as you as a Supporter are staying on the island doing guiding or other work to manage the island you will still be able to book in advance of the public and stay free. We also hope that this new system will free up the island staff to get on with their other valuable core work, something they have been stretched to do on occasions.

If anyone would like further information please contact Rory Renwick in the Warkworth office 09 425 7832

History of Wattle Valley

By Ray and Barbara Walter

There seems to be varying commentary on the history of Wattle Valley. So that all guides are giving the correct information to our visitors, here is the account of this famous walkway.

Wattle Valley formed part of the Lighthouse Keepers cow paddock and was fenced off from the main farming block until the 1970's. It was not grazed from approx. the 1950's and so it naturally regenerated in mostly, Manuka, Cabbage trees and flax. Big Wattle Valley was mostly Cabbage trees and Wattles.

The Wattles are from a Lighthouse Keepers garden shelter belt. The 1940 aerial photograph shows 6-8 Wattles and 2 Fig Trees in the bottom of the valley. From these few Wattles, Big Wattle Valley was soon populated with further Wattles. When the planting programme began they were left as they gave a rich source of nectar for Bellbirds and Tui. This was one of the major sites for students studying Bellbirds.

As the bush has regenerated the Wattles, being light loving plants, have reduced and also the Australian Quail scratch the germinating seedlings.

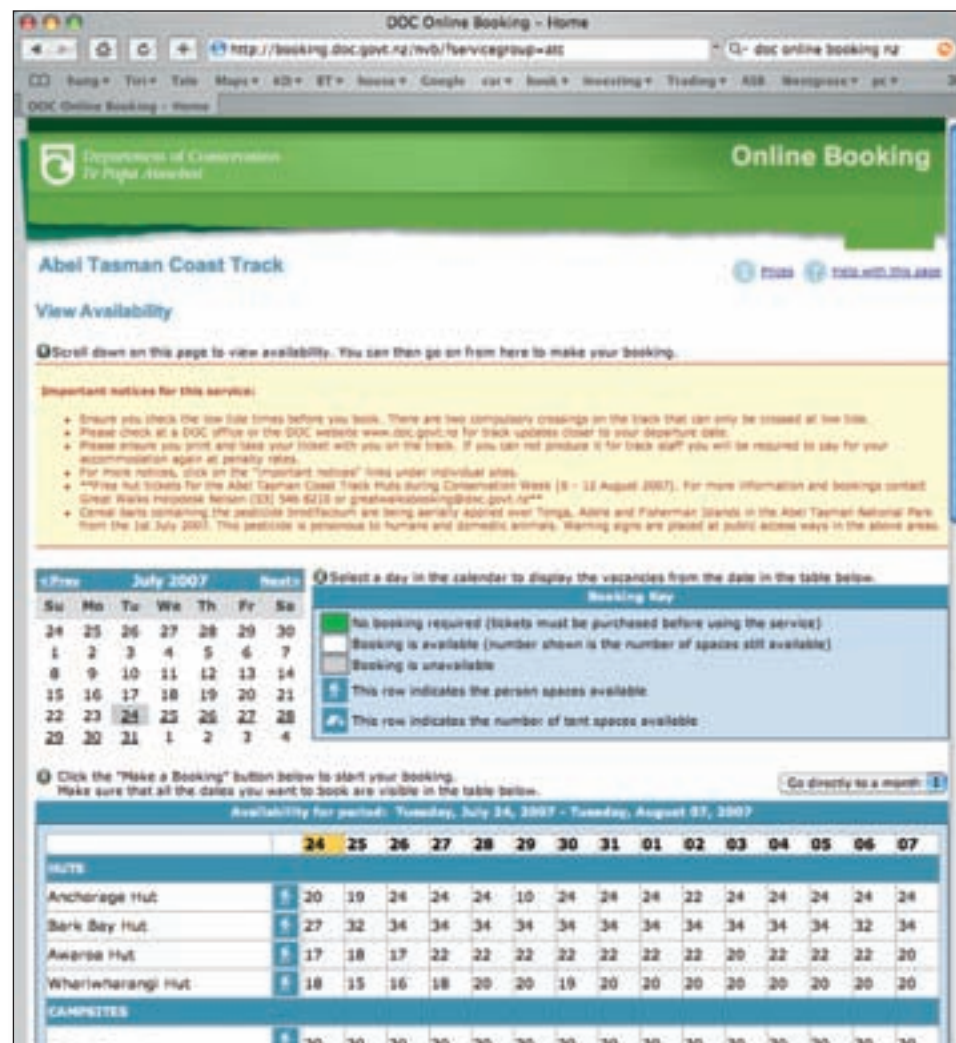
Some plantings were made in Big Wattle Valley to increase the plant diversity which consisted of a small number of Karaka, Puriri, Kawakawa, Broom, Pittosporum Umbellatum, Rhabdothermus and Kowhai. In the swampy area a few Nikaus and Kahikatea were planted and further Puriri were planted at the seaward end of the valley. Two specimens of Elingamita Johnsonii were also planted.

The ridge between Big Wattle and Little Wattle which was covered in large stands of Japanese Honeysuckle, once the Honeysuckle was reduced was planted with Puriri and Rewarewa. The seaward end of the ridge was the largest last planting in the ten year plan on the Island in 1994 and consisted of Karo, Manuka, Five-Finger and Kowhai. Total number of plants planted in both valleys was no more than 400.

In Little Wattle Valley only a few trees were planted consisting of Puriri Rewarewa, Pigeon wood and in the valley bottom Kahikatea. The lower seaward end of the valley was not planted because it contained one of the last remnants of the native Buttercup.

When Saddleback were first released in 1984 these valleys soon contained the densest population of Saddleback. When Phil Cassey did his research on Saddleback density he colour banded over one hundred birds. The original female in Big Wattle from Cuvier Island lived to the age of 21 years having had 3 mates! As the planted bush established, birds from this area moved into these new areas.

The Supporters Bellbird trip at Queens Birthday Weekend was instigated because of the flowering of the Wattles at that time and the magnificent Bellbird song.



A sample screen shot of a booking page, accessed from DOC's web home page. Tiritiri will be available later this year. <http://www.doc.govt.nz/>

Tiri Takahe Take Flight

By Jennifer Haslam

Several Tiri takahe have found themselves flying great distances as part of a strategy to reduce the inbreeding of birds on the island while at the same time injecting new genes into other Takahe populations around the country.

Siblings 'Hauraki' and 'Tango' are currently acclimatising at Te Anau's Burwood Bush takahe rearing unit for their October/November release into Fiordland's Murchison Mountains – several degrees of latitude and centigrade lower than Tiri's comparatively tropical climes. It was in the Murchison Mountain's remote and rugged habitat that the takahe were first rediscovered by Dr Geoffrey Orbell in 1948 after being thought to be extinct. Once these birds have shown that they are able to adapt to life in the tussock and snow, they will be released into the mountains. This is the first time that island takahe will be released back into

the Murchison Mountains and not only will it reduce the possibility of inbreeding on Tiri, but the birds will also provide new genetic material for the Murchison Mountains population. Takahe genetics here on Tiri here will dictate that for the foreseeable future at least, most young birds will be sent to Burwood Bush and then onto the Murchison Mountains as there are no suitable birds on the island for them to breed with. By taking the birds

away at 6 months of age, they are far more 'plastic' – i.e. not so set in their ways, and therefore able to adapt to life in the mountains more readily than older birds. Something along the lines of "You can't teach an old bird new tricks". For that reason, 'Tiri', a rising four year old female named after the island will settle at Raratoka Island in the South Island where there are plenty of males from which she can pick to share her good Tiri genes with. Before the birds could be moved they were

quarantined for three weeks in a large penned area where they were monitored twice a day and given supplementary food to make sure they did not lose weight. All three birds gained weight in their time in the pen and were in peak condition ready for their transfer. Val and Ian escorted them off the island by chopper to Auckland airport and flown down to Queenstown.

Also on the move this year was 'Poncho', who was recently transferred to Maud Island in the Marlborough Sounds and will be used as part of their managed breeding programme. This is fantastic news for this bird as he was very close to being euthanased when a messy battle with some fishing tackle saw him spending a couple of months undergoing intensive rehabilitation at Auckland Zoo's veterinary clinic.

Poncho was a popular figure around the visitor

centre on Tiri and was originally scheduled to head with the two other juvenile males down to the South Island for eventual release into the Murchison Mountains. Unfortunately he had to have two toes removed and as such would not be able to cope with life up in the harsh tussock environs of the Murchison Mountains, but Maud Island will be a suitable home for him and he will also have the opportunity to share more of those good Tiri genes around. We would like to thank John Potter and his wonderful team at Auckland Zoo for their expertise and patience with Poncho as well as Remuera Vets for the hyperbaric oxygen treatment provided free of charge to assist in Poncho's recovery.



Photograph © Linda Kilduff

Photograph of Murchison Mountains © Jennifer Haslam



Photograph © Jennifer Haslam



Photograph © Jennifer Haslam



Photograph © Val Smytheman



Photograph © Linda Kilduff

The People behind Tiritiri

Continuing our series on the people behind the success of Tiritiri Matangi is a profile of Liz Maire and Jennifer Haslam.



Liz Maire has been the Community Relations Programme Manager for the last two and a half years, based at DOC's Warkworth office. A very demanding position, she works with community conservation groups, such as Island Supporters groups, local Forest and Bird, Landcare groups etc. She is also responsible for communicating with media, volunteers; publications; Operation Nest Egg kiwi transfers to Motuora Island; concessions; education and events in the area roughly equivalent to Rodney.

With a BSC Hons in Physics from Bristol University in England, she trained as an accountant and has been self employed all her life, running a womens outdoor pursuits group and a safety training business.

The biggest challenge of her role are is always having the necessary resources to support every community project.

Tiri is a place Liz has been involved with for around 20 years and is still passionate about. She visits as much as possible. Volunteers as a guide and books a stay on the island every summer to do birdwork.

Being a Tiri supporter and DOC employee presents a challenge, "I have to know which hat I am wearing at any time (DOC or supporters) and stay professionally neutral on occasions".

Other challenges are ensuring good communication between SoTM and DOC to avoid something becoming an issue.

Liz is very aware that Tiri' presents unique problems. "This amazing project has been community driven and been held up as a model to inspire others. The challenge now, with it's success, is to manage the island and all its visitors without the place being loved to death".

The plans for Tiri' in the future involve; completion of the interpretation material for the visitors centre; looking at the wider lighthouse area interpretation; more species translocations; and addressing the accommodation on the island, so there's lots to keep us all busy!

Liz was keen to voice the importance of the SoTM to Tiri' and to DOC. "The SoTM are integral to the future of the island; the guiding, management of the shop and other support they offer is vital to keeping this island a special place for the wildlife and the visitors. DOC couldn't do without the huge input, hard work and passion of the Supporters".

Jennifer Haslam, DOC Ranger *What did you do before joining DOC?*

Before DOC I worked in sales and marketing in the packaging industry and also traveled as much as I could. Tiri was a complete change of career for me. In 2003 I worked in NW Queensland for a mustering season as a jillaroo and thought that if I could do that and survive, I could pretty much give anything a go! I attended the University of Auckland and Massey University gaining a BCom, Finance and International Business.

What's your history with Tiri?

I have been a ranger here since mid 2005 and this is my first position with DOC, so just over two years now. Prior to that I was a guide for 18 months. My first memory of Tiri was in 1985 - I was 9 years old and my family had just moved from the Bay



of Plenty up to Browns Bay. While I don't recall there being a sea view out of my bedroom window, it can't have been too far away as the Tiri lighthouse had an uncluttered path with which to cast its then permeating beacon into my room. Every 11 seconds or so my whole room would fill with a swiveling light. I didn't mind as I loved to read and could continue to do so long after my bedroom light had been turned off - I did a lot of sporadic reading in those days - devouring a sentence in the two seconds of light, then digesting it for the next 9 or 10 seconds before the light came back around and I could read the next sentence. Tiri was a far away island that was brown in summer and green in winter, then I began noticing that it was not so brown in summer anymore. Despite my father's penchant for sailing, the P Class wasn't quite going to cut it so my first visit to the island was by ferry when I was about 13, when people could still go up the lighthouse. I came over and stayed a few times in the following years and would always go home feeling very excited about the "stitchbacks, takakos and saddlebirds" I had seen.

What does being a DOC Ranger on Tiri involve?

A sizeable portion of my day is filled

up with emails/phone calls/paperwork and meeting the boat, but there is also a fair amount of bird species work, plant/machinery maintenance and repairs, management of all the different sorts of volunteers, running the bunkhouse, dealing with emergencies, track work, and keeping the grass under control (a.k.a creating the illusion of order)

What do you like most in your role?

The people. The birds. The bush. Bunkhouse dinners. Variety. Isabel's jam. Being outside. Using my brain. Ian. Seeing other people enjoy themselves. Being busy. Freshly steamed mussels. Raw snapper with wasabi and soy sauce. The wharf. My 10 day trip to the Murchison Mountains last November. The time working with Ray and Barbara.

What are the biggest challenges in your role?

Juggling priorities - my own and everyone else's ! People think that being on an island would be a very isolated role but being on Tiri is anything but isolated.

What are the biggest challenges of the Tiri' project?

There are lots of different stakeholders involved to varying degrees in the project and everyone has their own perspective on things. As island ranger, I am often at the centre of where all these perspectives come together, all the while trying to work through my own job list. At the same time, everyone's enthusiasm for the island is the best part of my job.

Do you have any hobbies/sporting interests?

I find my bliss tramping in the bush surrounded by moss with just my wee bivvy tent. I like to read and don't have a T.V. out on the island. That said, I certainly enjoy being festive from time to time. Most days I go for a quick run, that way I can more fully enjoy two of my other main hobbies - eating and sleeping. I also enjoy swimming in summer and going to Motuora Island to do tree planting if I'm not out and about elsewhere for my days off.

Fauna Notes

Compiled by **Morag Fordham**

Takahe

Having already lost one toe, poor Poncho (Kristina's & Rossie's son from last season) had to have another toe amputated from his right foot. To promote more rapid healing he was taken from Auckland Zoo once a week to have Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy treatment at a clinic in Remuera. Poncho featured on TV1 News on Friday 8 June and in the NZ Herald on Saturday 9 June undergoing a treatment. He is now well and has been transferred from Auckland Zoo to his new home on Maud Island. Mungo has lost his mate Tiri, who with Hauraki and Tango (Ahikaea's and Montague's sons from the past two seasons) were transferred to Burwood Bush on 31 May. Ahikaea and Montague can often be seen near the Dupont sign on Ridge Road. Blackwatch and Mahuika, along with Mungo, Blake, Rossie, Greg and Cheesecake all frequent the lighthouse, bunkhouse area. Rossie has been seen chasing Cheesecake in an over friendly manner, with both Mungo and Blake sneeringly watching. Greg continues to treat most of the island as his domain. He stole the show when he supervised the release of the new Taranaki Kokoko. He also seems to be looking for a new job as a shop assistant and continues to knock on the glass doors to be let into the

Visitors Centre.

Whakama is still on his own down along the East Coast track and Wetlands area.

We currently have ten Takahe.

Stitchbird/Hihi

Just after Queen's Birthday weekend Sandra Jack and her team returned to successfully capture thirty more birds (25 mixed juveniles and 5 adult males) which were subsequently released into the Ark in the Park (Waitakere Ranges). As a result of the nasty stormy weather which has damaged a lot of their natural food sources, the Stitchbirds (and Bellbirds) have been consuming double the usual amount of sugar water.

Kokako

From 16 - 26 May a major operation was undertaken to catch and translocate some of our birds to help reduce the incidence of inbreeding and to free up territories. The following pairs were caught. Kahurangi and Bel Canto, Ruby and Russell, Eunice and Oscar, Wairua and Storm and the male pair Quaver and Hammond. Piper's unbanded mate Tiri was also caught. The four girls have been released into the Hunua Ranges where it is hoped they will find new mates and help boost the population there. Both TV1 and TV3 showed Kahurangi and Ruby being released on Saturday 2 June.



Photograph © Paul Colgrave

The seven boys were released onto Mokoia Island, Lake Rotorua in the Bay of Plenty. All eleven birds were caught in seven days which is a record as kokako are notoriously difficult to catch.

The three Taranaki birds, Parininihi (2½ year old male) who has been living at the Otorohanga Kiwi House, Te Rae (18 month old female) and Pukaha (6 month old female) both from Mount Bruce were all released together. To date only Te Rae has been seen. She has only moved about 50 metres from the release site along Ridge Road. With the disappearance of Zephyr, Chinook has left the Visitors Centre area and paired up with Piper. They have taken over the territory that Kahurangi and Bel Canto used, having kicked out Tsindi who moved in there the day after Kahurangi and Bel Canto were caught.

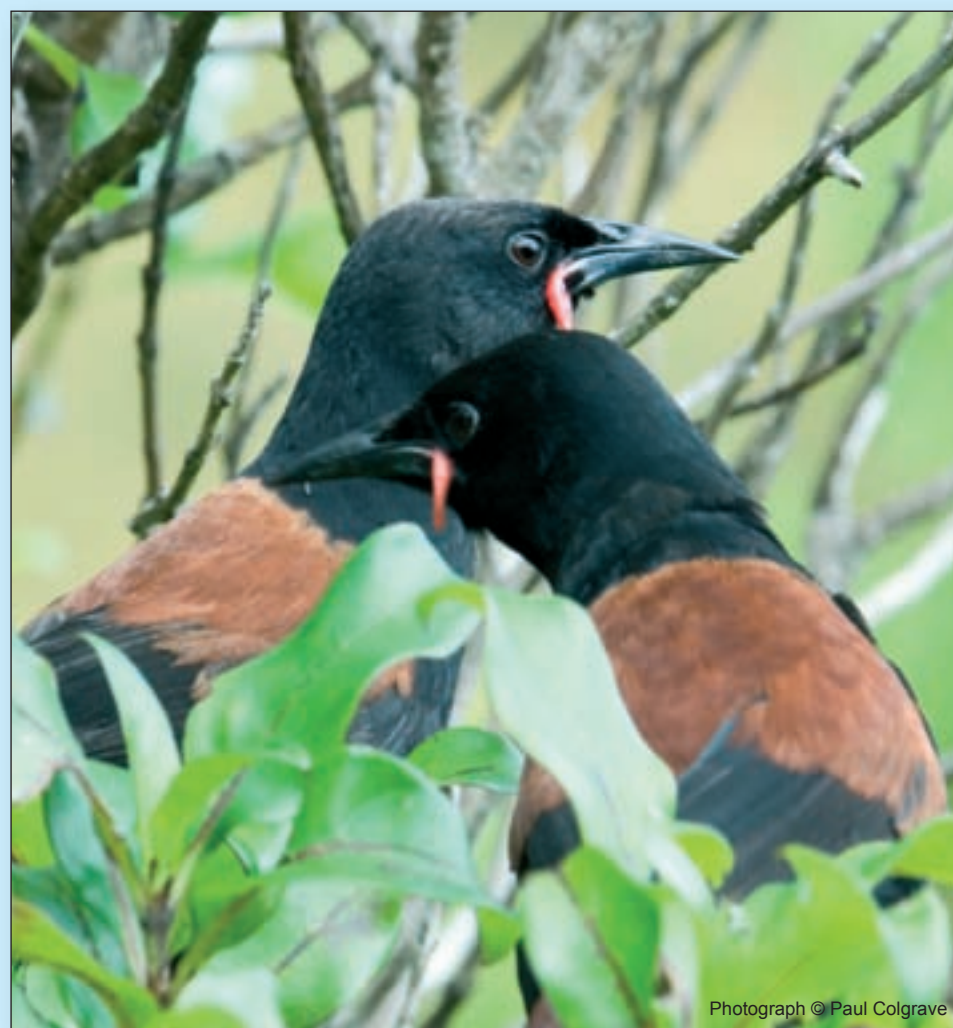
BrownTeal/Pateke

On the 12 May between the hours of 7.30am and 10.00am, poor Jemima was found floating on the Wharf dam having been predated by an Australasian harrier. Ray and Barbara Walter buried her under the cabbage tree by the dam. The now single Ossie continues to greet the visitors.

Daisy has not been seen for several weeks on either the Fisherman's Bay dam or the stagnant dam.

Finn the Philanderer is in his element as he now has three females on the Bunkhouse dam.

Rose and Connie are both seen from time to time around the NE Bay Wetlands area.



Photograph © Paul Colgrave

Other Birds

Many Saddlebacks have been seen feeding on the seaweed at Hobbs Beach.

Lots of Whiteheads and Fantails have been feeding on the ground, especially on the lawns and at the back of the Visitors Centre.

The Blue Penguins are starting to nest.

A pair of Paradise Shelduck arrived back on the island at the beginning of May. They are often seen around the lighthouse area and near the Pumphouse dam.

Many visitors are getting great views of New Zealand Pigeons (Kereru) both in flight and feeding, often on Puriri berries.

Tuatara

Four Tuatara were seen one night in mid May, three were seen one night in early June and two were seen at the beginning of July. They are not as active over the winter months so there are fewer sightings at this time of the year.

Marine

Eagle rays were seen at the Wharf in early May.

At the beginning of May dolphins were seen playing at Fisherman's Bay and at the beginning of July dolphins were seen at the Wharf.

Large schools of parore have been seen under the Wharf.



Photograph © Paul Colgrave

Flora Notes

and photographs by **Warren Brewer** who takes over from Jan Velvin.
We thank Jan on the back page.

During the mid winter spell some of the best floral displays came from a couple of our exotic trees. They were the coral tree at the back of the visitor centre and the wattles along their eponymous track.

Coral tree

Erythrina X sykesii

This tree is a sterile hybrid, propagated from cuttings. *Erythrina* sp. are native to warm temperate and tropical areas of Africa, Central America, Australia, S. Asia and Hawaii. One species is the floral symbol of Los Angeles. The trees are deciduous and their wood is light and brittle. The brilliant red/scarlet flowers of our coral tree are very attractive to the tui.

Belongs to the FABACEAE (Lat. Faba - a bean) the pea or legume family.

Brush wattle

Paraserianthes iophantha
Silky anthers having crested flowers

Originally from W. Australia. Its greenish-yellow flowers with their bottlebrush like heads are a great mid-winter treat for our honeyeaters. Family FABACEAE.

The floral response from our natives comes firstly from kohekohe *Dysoxylum spectabile* with sprays of greenish-white waxy flowers springing from thick branches and trunk. Others are the ever reliable manuka *Leptospermum scoparium* whose delicate white flowers have brightened the margins of the upper wattle track, *puriri* *Vitex lucens* which just keeps giving us flowers and fruit almost year round (a fine example being at the top of the wattle track). Finally *koromiko* *Hebe stricta* with its racemes (bottlebrush like) of white flowers up near the visitor centre.

The coming weeks will see our iconic kowhai, kaka beak and clematis displaying their floral glories announcing spring's arrival for another year.

Edible Natives on the Beach

While awaiting spring's arrival it could be rewarding to seek out some of the shoreline treasures we have growing on our two beaches. We will look at 4 species which are all natives, edible and have interesting backgrounds.

Firstly, on reaching little Hobbs there is a low rock shelf just below high tide mark which supports a small colony of glasswort *Sarcocornia quinqueflora* (fleshy horn 5 flowers). This plant forms creeping mats, the fleshy stems are edible, taste salty and rather astringent.



glasswort *Sarcocornia quinqueflora*

The waxy nature of the succulent water storing stems allows salt spray to run off quickly. The leaves are tiny and scale-like (slows evaporation) and the flowers and fruit can only be seen with a hand lens. High concentrations of salt within the plant protects it from water loss when drenched by salt spray. The name glasswort comes from its European cousin *Salicornia* sp. which was burnt to form soda ash for use in glassmaking. It is also edible and is called samphire or herbe de St Pierre and is eaten raw, pickled or lightly cooked. Belongs to AMARANTHACEAE (unfading) Amaranth family.

Next we can look for our second plant, native celery *Apium prostratum*. This is found on both beaches growing in clumps along the shore line. This



native celery
Apium prostratum

proved to be a very important plant for Captain Cook and has the honour of being the first plant to be used as food by Europeans. There are 8 entries in Cook's journals of his first voyage, describing the gathering of celery.

e.g. Sat 28th Oct 1769 Tolaga Bay;
"in the morning some hands were employed picking of sellery [sic] to take to sea with us. This is found here in great plenty and I have caused it to be boiled with portable soup (solid blocks of extract of meat) and oatmeal every morning for the people's breakfast I look upon it to be very wholesome and a great antiscorbutick"

and to get an idea of the volumes they collected;

Mon 13 Oct 1769 Mercury Bay.
".....loaded both boats with sellery [sic] which we found in great plenty near the sea beach." APIACEAE (carrot family).

The large rock at the far end of little Hobbs harbours our third species, a rare example of our native ice plant.

Disphyma australe (double swellings - seed capsule - southern)



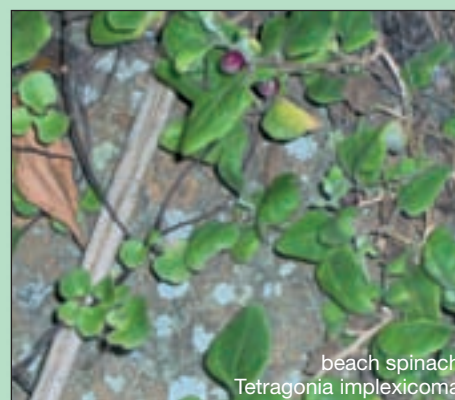
native ice plant
Disphyma australe

It shares this spot with several stunted Coprosmas. It has succulent 3 angled leaves and whitish flowers. The mildly salty leaves were sometimes pickled by early Europeans. Maori used the juice from leaves to treat boils. Sadly

our ice plant has been supplanted by an introduced S.African species *Carpobrotus edulis* now widespread around much of the Auckland coastline. Its leaves are bigger and fatter than our native species and its pale yellow to pinkish-orange flowers are also larger. AIZOACEAE (everlasting) iceplant family.

Finally as we continue the coastal track to Hobbs beach look out for our beach spinach *Tetragonia implexicoma*

(4 angles -shape of fruit - entwining, tangled) growing on the dry bank on the right hand side on the final bend just before reaching the shoreline. Its dark red fleshy fruit appears in autumn and it has small yellow flowers in springtime. Its close cousin is the N.Z. spinach *Teragonia tetragonoides* which also occur widely in Australia, the Pacific area and S.America. AIZOACEAE (everlasting) iceplant family.



DIVARICATING THEORIES by Warren Brewer.

The puzzle of our small-leaved shrubs, moa and the ice ages.

Visitors sometimes comment on the marked presence of small-leaved, twiggy shrubs in our forest.

Our flora contains a high proportion of these small woody shrubs which have a tight interlocking branching pattern. They are called "divaricating shrubs". They have small leaves and tough wiry stems with a dense meshwork of branches with multiple growing points inside the shrub. They often have a brownish colour, giving an almost dead-looking appearance. Some of our trees also pass through a divaricating juvenile stage, changing to a less tangled normal growth above 3m height. These plants all lack sharp spines. Collectively they are a special New Zealand feature.

Our flora contains over 50 species of these divaricates (about 10% of all our woody plants). How has this growth pattern come about?

Two theories have been postulated:

1. Browsing Moa:

This huge two legged bird came to occupy the role of a four legged grazing mammal in New Zealand. It would have spent many hours picking leaves and twigs off low trees and shrubs. Moa favoured fertile river flats, forest edges and wetlands rather than deep forest. Highly palatable and nutritious shrubs growing in this habitat would have suffered extensive damage from these birds. They therefore had to evolve a mechanism to survive - hence their divaricating nature. Small leaves and a brownish colour would have made them look less attractive and



2. Climate Change:

The last ice age (Pleistocene) circa 2 million years ago caused world climates to go through a series of fluctuations with long cold glacial spells interrupted by warmer

interglacial. It was a highly significant time for the final moulding of New Zealand's present flora. Our vegetation lost the last traces of its Australian look (known that eucalypts, proteas etc once grew here from evidence of fossil pollen deposits).

The small-leaved divaricating form would be well designed to adapt to the cold, windy arid climate prevailing. This theory suggests that the growth form would act as a defence against wind abrasion and frost damage as the whole plant may have acted as a heat trap keeping delicate growing points within a protective shield.

Small leaf size would have led to less moisture loss through evaporation thus counteracting the arid conditions.

Botanists continue to argue these two theories. Perhaps they both contain merit and actually reinforce each other as the need to grow this way would have been even greater if it helped plants to survive both adverse climate change and excessive moa browsing.



Coprosma rhamnoides - (This little divaricate is widely dispersed on all of our walking tracks.)
© Photograph by Neil Davies

TIRI KIDS

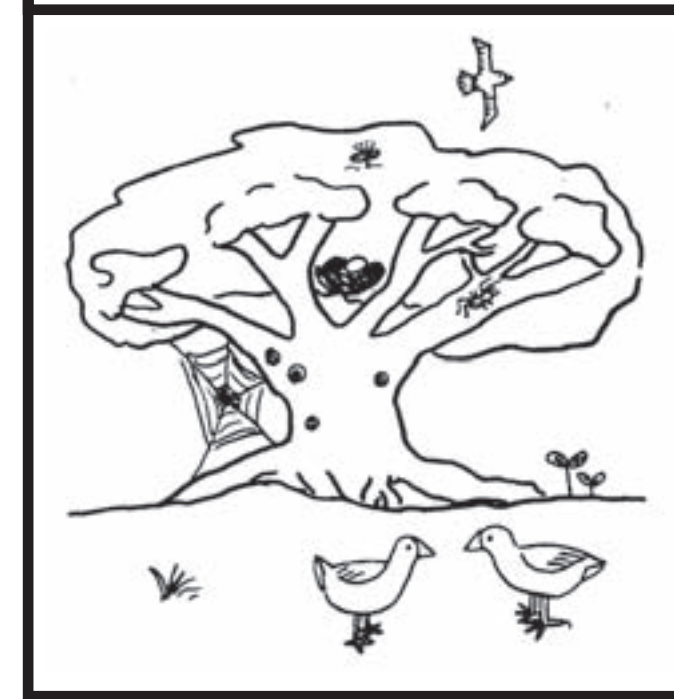
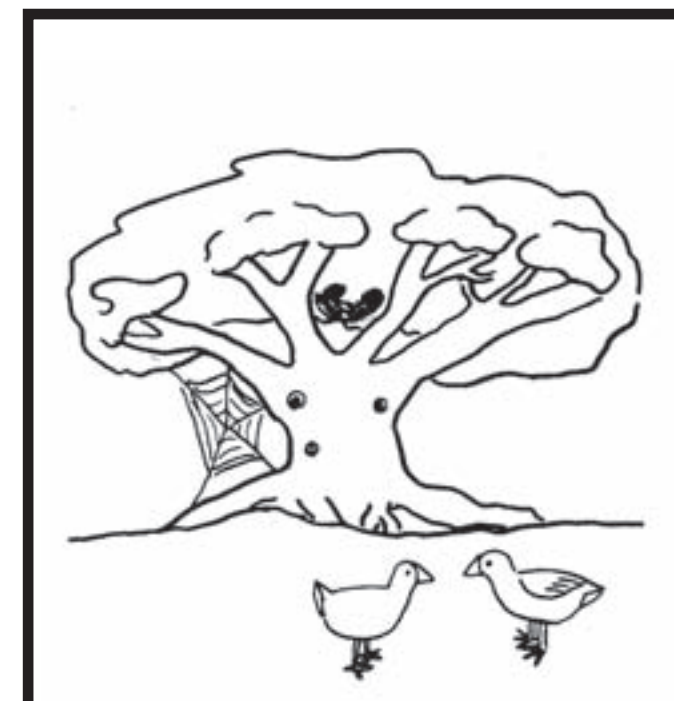
Hand this to your kids - or pass it on to someone else's kids - to enjoy a range of activities about Tiritiri Matangi Island.

Hi everyone!

Jo is overseas at the moment, so here a few puzzles I've dug up for you to do. The island has had some strong winds lately - just as well spring is on the way to help repair the damage with lots of new growth. Are you looking forward to summer on Tiri like me?

Be good! Tess

Spot the differences (10 to find) !

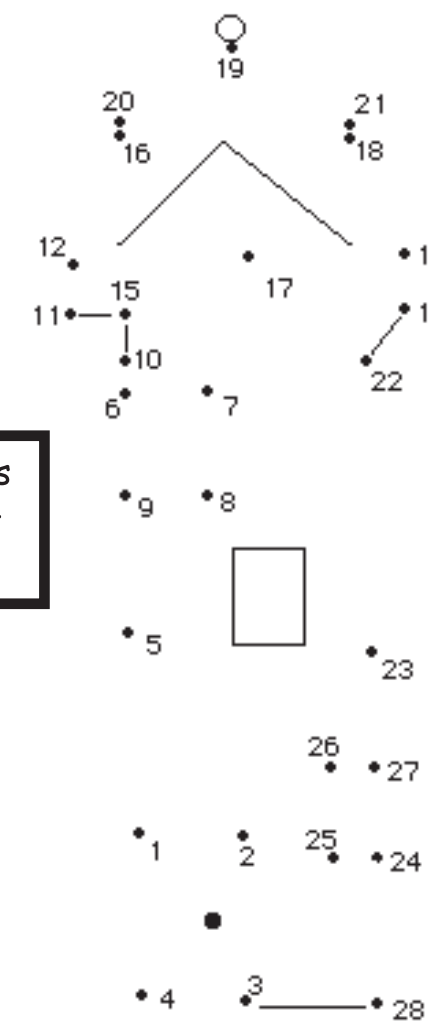


Look for this on your next visit!



How many different words can you make from the word **ISLAND**?

If you can find 10 words- great; 20 words - you're a wonder; 30 words - you must be a walking dictionary!



Compiled by Jo and Tess, Tiri Kids, PO Box 90-814, Auckland Mail Service Centre, Auckland 1142

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150kph Winds Hit Tiri

By Ian Price

You will be aware of the storm that hit the Auckland, Northland region second week of July and Tiri was included.

The major impact of the storm occurred between 6.30 and 8pm on the evening of Tuesday 10th. I was constantly listening to the coast guard weather forecast which gives a continued wind speed update for the island and it was during this time that wind speed remained at a constant 80/85knots @148/150kph with gusts reaching 97knots which is close to 178 kph.

Fortunately the old light house keeper's houses were well built for they withstood the buffeting with out any major consequences however the island came off a bit battered and bruised. The two aspects of the storm for me was the noise of the wind at its peak and venturing out in the morning and the overriding smell of decomposing foliage. The island was fortunate that we experienced minimal infrastructural damage, the macrocarpa by the main house dropped three branches doing some damage to the picket fence and the solar panel tank on the roof suffered

some damage, other than that nothing else. However the trees on the island took a battering there were numerous wind falls and the foliage on many of the trees was shredded, or suffered significant sea salt burn. The tracks were smothered in wind fall matter and around the visitor centre leaf litter was around 2/300mm deep.

So the island track net work required a major clean up, but fortunately a couple of boat days were cancelled due to the weather and most importantly the island had a small band of people who put in amazing hours to have all the tracks and visitor centre clean for when the next ferry arrived on the Friday. I would like to pay special mention to supporters Paul and Joe Carter and daughters, two SOTM guides Don Minchin and Andy Warnford, student Dylan Van Winkel and our two amazing volleys for the week Juanita Popple and Stephanie Benucci these people did a fantastic job and I wish to pay special thanks for their efforts.



The birds I'm sure would have suffered and will continue to suffer for some time supported by the significant spike in sugar water consumption the following day. I spoke with Ray and he felt that such wind speeds had never been achieved before, even when Cyclone Bola struck many years ago, it was an amazing experience but something the island will hopefully not see for some time and be given the chance to heal.

Thanks to Jan Velvin

After 3 years of producing Flora Notes for *Dawn Chorus* the demands of her company 'Get Growing New Zealand Ltd' have meant handing over the reins to Warren Brewer.

From all at SoTM we thank you for your excellent work and wish your business continued success.

Dawn Chorus November Deadline

31st Oct 2007

If you have anything you would like to contribute or any ideas of what you would like to see in *Dawn Chorus*, Please contact me on 09 575 4515 or email: editor@tiritirimatangi.org.nz

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



Dawn Chorus