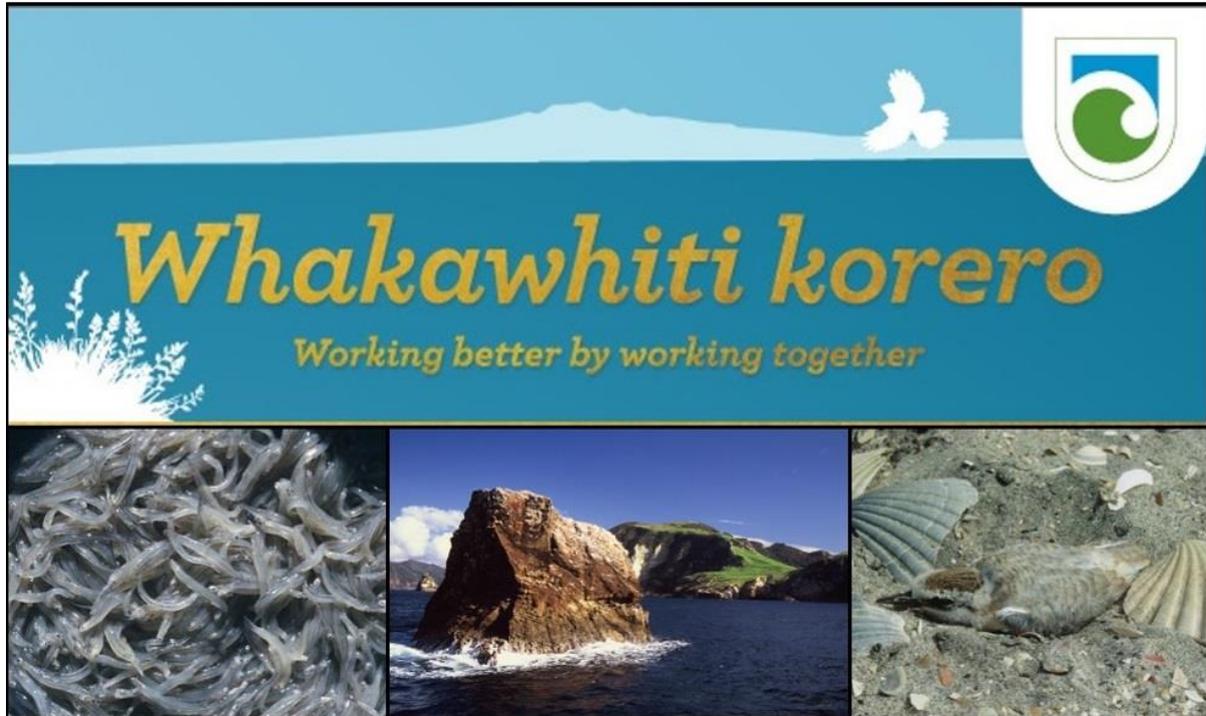


**Spring 2018**

Partnership news from the Department of  
Conservation

[View this newsletter in your  
browser](#)



## Spring 2018

Kia ora tatou

To usher in Spring we are celebrating Conservation Week from 15 – 23 September. This year DOC is aiming to raise awareness of the biodiversity crisis that New Zealand faces, its causes and what we can do to address it.

With more than 4,000 of our species threatened or at risk, we need to rally together and get involved in conservation activities. Getting rid of predators is an important first step, and Conservation Week is a great time to join your [local predator free network](#). Other actions like cleaning up our waterways, protecting marine habitats, getting rid of weeds and replanting with natives all help protect our biodiversity. Achieving these actions is also

incredibly satisfying, especially when done with others. There are plenty of opportunities in Auckland this Conservation Week - simply visit [conservationweek.org.nz](http://conservationweek.org.nz) or take a look at our events section below.

In other news, the critically endangered New Zealand fairy tern/tara-iti has received a big helping hand from the New Zealand Defence Force in the form of a Unimog and driver to move 12 tonnes of crushed oyster shell and sand.

DOC has started a review of whitebait management at the request of the Minister of Conservation. The review will first develop advice for the Minister on how "to ensure healthy and restored whitebait populations and provide for a sustainable fishery".

An operation to remove rats from Rakitū Island off the east coast of Aotea/Great Barrier Island has begun in partnership with the Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea Trust Board.

We also share some funny but exciting news about a matuku sighting in West Auckland, and a poignant moment as kauri seedlings grown from trees connected to the great Colin McCahon are planted on Rotoroa Island.

Please feel free to send your conservation story in to us so we can share your success, provide us with [feedback](#) or send this on to others so they can [subscribe](#).

Ngā mihi  
Pieter Tuinder



### **New Zealand fairy tern receives much needed defence**

Critically endangered New Zealand fairy terns/tara-iti nest at just four breeding sites in New Zealand, one of which is the Royal New Zealand Air Force weapons range at Papakanui Spit, in the Kaipara Harbour. With a total population of around 40 birds, and only 11 to 12 breeding pairs, the New Zealand Defence Force site is serendipitous.

DOC ranger Alex Wilson explains, “as a Defence Force site, Papakanui is a no-go area for the public. The Air Force provides further protection by avoiding weapon testing and staying well away from the spit during the New Zealand fairy tern nesting season.”

Now the Defence Force is doing tara-iti another favour by providing a Unimog and driver to move 12 tonnes of crushed oyster shell and sand for DOC staff to create two large mounds at Papakanui. “These raised areas will hopefully help protect New Zealand fairy tern nests from big high tides and storms that flood the nests, and provide protection from high winds, which cover the eggs with sand,” says Wilson. [Read more](#)

*Image: New Zealand fairy tern chick in nest,  
Parrish, G. R*

---



## Whitebait management review

DOC has started a review of whitebait management at the request of the Minister of Conservation. The review will first develop advice for the Minister on how "to ensure healthy and restored whitebait populations and provide for a sustainable fishery".

A cross-functional team has been formed to initiate work towards an issues and options paper advising what people think can be done to fulfil this request. A workshop with treaty partners in July kicked off the project, producing a draft concept for how to engage with iwi 'at place', and with other interested parties.

Whitebait face a range of threats and pressures, including habitat degradation, poor water quality, impeded fish passage within river systems, and fishing. As a result, 4 of the 6 species of freshwater fish that are legally classified as whitebait are threatened or at risk.

While whitebait are sold commercially, they are not in the quota management system. The fishery is currently managed as a recreational one by DOC.

A recent [NZ Geographic story](#) delves into the complexities of the topic.

For those interested in freshwater conservation, there are two volunteer events taking place during Conservation Week (see Events Section below).

*Image: Philippe Gerbeaux*

---



## DOC clearing rats from Rakitū

DOC, in partnership with the Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea Trust Board, has begun an operation to remove rats from Rakitū Island off the east coast of Aotea/Great Barrier Island.

Rakitū once had thriving breeding colonies of native birds, particularly seabirds such as ōi/ grey-faced petrel, before rats were introduced. “Removing rats would enable us to bring these birds back to the island,” says DOC Aotea/Great Barrier Island Operations Manager George Taylor. “It would also mean we can replant native plants these birds and other native wildlife need for food, shelter and to breed.”

Removing rats could also enable Rakitū to be part of a native seabird highway spanning a chain of pest free islands from the Poor Knights Islands, north of Whangarei, to the Mercury Islands, south of Great Barrier Island. Seabird islands create nutrients in the seas around them, making them more productive, leading to more fish and other marine life. [Read more](#)

*Image: Rakitū, Dr Kim Westerskov ©*



## Rare bird poses as log in West Auckland wetland

One of New Zealand's rarest and most endangered birds, the matuku, has been [filmed](#) in the

Orangihina Wetlands in Te Atatū. An infrared camera set up for two days this August by [Community Waitakere](#) captured the footage. On reviewing the footage, Ecologist Dion Pou assumed something had gone wrong with the motion sensitive camera. "At first I couldn't understand why this log had somehow gotten into the middle of the frame," says Pou.

Matuku are a potential indicator of wetland health because they are dependent on the presence of high quality and ecologically diverse habitats and rich food supplies. There are fewer than 1000 matuku left in New Zealand and a similar number in Australia along with around 50 in New Caledonia. Matuku face threats from off-leash dogs, cats, stoats and rats interested in its eggs. They are secretive birds and are almost never seen near cities, making this a remarkable find. You can help by reporting all sightings or booming calls of matuku to your nearest DOC office. [Read more](#)

*Image: video still, Community Waitakere*

---



## Iwi proposes KDB programme for Waipoua forest

Te Roroa, the iwi with the greatest number, biggest and most famous kauri trees in Waipoua Forest, went public recently with its proposed kauri dieback response plan. This comes as Aotearoa's most famous kauri, Tāne Mahuta, is now under greater threat from the pathogen which has infected kauri 60 metres from the tree.

The proposed protection and management plan includes surveying and managing waterflows and soil movement, having a GSP map of every tree and its condition, monitoring, closing public tracks at night, security, inviting international scientific research and rigour, practising rongoa, and considering rahui for certain areas. The plan requires financial support from other agencies as well as Treaty of Waitangi partners.

Te Roroa and DOC currently manage the spread of dieback and control thousands of visitors who use two tracks to get near notable, still healthy kauri, as well as the greater 9000-hectare forest. [Read more](#)

*Image: Tane Mahuta, Nir Ketraru*

---



## McCahon's kauri given a new chance at life on Rotoroa

One hundred kauri seedlings, grown from kauri at the iconic Colin McCahon House in Titirangi, have been planted on Rotoroa Island in the Hauraki Gulf. Kauri trees frequented McCahon's paintings, a tree that he had never seen till he moved to Auckland from the South Island. Sadly, 23 of the 25 trees that surround his Titirangi home have kauri dieback disease. The seedlings have been grown from the cones of this kauri under close quarantine. Volunteers from The Kauri 2000 Trust, the Colin McCahon House Trust, and the Bank of New Zealand, who bought the seedlings, took them to the planting site. [Read more](#)

If you want to learn more about what make kauri so unique, join the Arataki education team on Monday 17 September, to uncover the secrets of kauri. [Read more](#)

*Image: Kauri Tree Landscape, 1955, Colin McCahon, [Christchurch Art Gallery](#)*



## Rothesay Bay 'Bird Lady' retires

North Shore's 'Bird Lady', Sylvia Durrant, is retiring after 35 years caring for birds brought to her by members of the community. At 85 years old and with a diagnosis of high blood pressure, she decided it was time to pass the mantle on to the next generation. Over the years she thinks she may have fostered and nurtured as many as 140,000 birds; a whopping 4,000 per year! With no mainstream funding, she has relied on donations to keep her service going.

Previously a nurse, Durrant started looking after birds while caring full-time for her disabled husband. "I didn't want to be sitting around all day watching TV."

Her most important piece of advice to the public is simple: "Control your cat."

DOC took Durrant's last kererū/wood pigeons, while her last two kororā/little penguins went to Auckland Zoo.

National MP for East Coast Bays, Erica Stanford, is running a campaign to nominate Durrant for New Zealander of the Year. To support her nomination, [click here](#).

If you find an injured bird you can take it to your local vet, the [NZ Bird Rescue & Charitable Trust](#) in Green Bay, [Native Bird Rescue](#) on Waiheke Island, or call DOC on 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468).

*Image: Jason Dorday, [Stuff](#)*

---



## **Pestival Auckland 2018**

To kick off Conservation Week in Auckland, conservation community groups will be converging on Aotea Centre for Pestival 2018. There will be a mix of presentations from leading conservationists from community groups, mana whenua and academia. Presentations will showcase community-led conservation activity, introduce new innovations and best practice methods, and introduce Auckland Council's proposals for an expanded work programme funded by the Natural Environment targeted rate. Registrations have closed, but presentations will be available on the Auckland Council website afterwards. [Read more](#)

**Saturday 15 September, Aotea Centre**

---

### ***In brief***

The Paparoa Track will be New Zealand's 10th Great Walk, and the first Great Walk designed to be used by both mountain bikers and walkers. At 55 kilometres long, it traverses the Paparoa Range between Blackball and Punakaiki on the West Coast of the South Island, and will connect to the new Pike29 Memorial Track. [Read more](#)

## **DOC office moves to Auckland Council Building**

DOC staff who have been based in Parnell, have moved into their new home at Auckland Council's Te Wharau o Horotiu – Bledisloe House. The move will benefit both agencies who already meet regularly as part of the conservation work they do together. DOC and Auckland Council signed a memorandum of understanding in 2011, an agreement to work together to manage Auckland's open spaces, natural heritage and wild places.

## **Collaboration results in beautiful te Reo Māori booklet**

Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Maori (The Māori Language Commission) and DOC have come together to produce a beautiful new learning resource 'Kia Kaha te Reo Taiao' in celebration of Te Wiki o te Reo Māori 2018. Included in these booklets is information about pronunciation, everyday phrases and species names in te reo Māori. You can get your free booklet at any one of the parades being run during Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori, your local DOC visitor centre, or simply [download one](#).

## **61st kiwi on pest-free Motutapu**

Pest-free Motutapu has received its 61st kiwi, a one month old Coromandel brown kiwi. Once they have reached 1000 grams - the weight at which they are generally safe from predation from stoats and cats - some kiwi are returned to the mainland to boost mainland populations. Haere mai little one, and ka pai team!

## **Have your say on single-use plastic shopping bags**

The Government is proposing a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags in New Zealand, and want to hear what you think about single-use plastics and waste more generally. You can fill out a quick questionnaire, or make a more detailed submission online or by post. Submissions close on 14 September. [Read more](#)

## **Pūkorokoro Miranda Naturalists' Trust work in North**

If you didn't catch it, make sure you watch the recent [TVNZ Sunday programme](#) on Pūkorokoro Miranda Naturalists' Trust work in North Korea. The programme attracted one of their biggest audiences of the year, with 440,000 New Zealanders tuning in.

## Calling creatives who love the Hauraki Gulf

The Faculty of Creative Arts & Industries at the University of Auckland is running a project to garner ideas from Aucklanders who love the Hauraki Gulf. They're running a series of creative workshops to identify powerful concepts to implement in the project's second phase. The aim is to shift the public psyche from a complaints and ignorance state about the health and wellbeing of the Hauraki Gulf to one of collective creative action. Contact [Kylie Sealy](#)

## DOC looking sharp in new uniforms

DOC's new field uniform was launched on World Ranger Day. The 'fit-for-purpose' uniform has a distinctive brown, green and fluorescent orange colour scheme, and incorporates an outdoor wear layering system and UV protection and insulation, heavy-duty workwear and high-visibility for safety.

## Pest Free Hibiscus and Bays job opportunity

The Hibiscus and Bays Restoration Network are looking for someone to help realise their vision for a Pest Free Hibiscus and Bays by 2045. Experience in volunteer management and the ability to work with a range of groups and agencies including tangata whenua, schools and the volunteer community is essential. Contact [Sally Cargill](#). Applications close **17 September**.

## Events

Conservation Week 15 - 22 September

---

For a full list of Conservation Week events in Auckland, visit

## Kahotea Stream Clean-up

---

Join Conservation Volunteers New Zealand (CVNZ) for a day of freshwater conservation in Onepoto Park, removing rubbish and tackling invasive weeds growing on the banks. Freshwater conservation helps thirty species of native freshwater fish that reside or spend a significant part of their life cycle in New Zealand's rivers and streams. Fifteen of those have a marine phase in their life cycle, so access to and from the sea is crucial if they are to survive. These species rely on streamside cover to provide cool, sheltered habitat. [Read more](#)

**9:30am – 12pm, Saturday 15 September, Onepoto Domain, Northcote**

## Matuku Link Volunteer Day, Bethells Beach

---

To celebrate Conservation Week, this volunteer day will include a walk after the working bee to show you some of their amazing wetland restoration and predator control activities. Along the way you will hopefully spot eels and their two resident pateke. [Read more](#)

**10am – 1pm, Sunday 16 September, Matuku Link Reserve, 111 Bethells Rd, Bethells Beach**

## Keep Kauri Standing

---

Join the Arataki education team to uncover the secrets of kauri. You will explore the forest and learn about these taonga and their important role in the ecosystem. Kauri is an ancient tree that has graced Aotearoa for millions of years and as the largest tree in our forest, supports a diverse range of unique plants and animals. Find out what makes the kauri so unique and why we are working so hard to protect them. [Read more](#)

**9:30am – 11am; 12:30pm – 2pm, Monday 17 September, Arataki Visitor Centre, 300 Scenic Drive, Titirangi**

---

Join the Manukau Beautification Trust and DOC this Conservation Week to learn about inanga (whitebait), plant 200 trees, and pick up rubbish along the Puhinui Stream.

Leighton Simmons from Auckland Council's Biodiversity Team will talk about the biodiversity values of this site and the inanga survey work they have done. You will learn about G-minnow traps, and discuss how the planting will benefit the inanga especially in the spawning season. To wrap up the day we will have a BBQ for all helpers and celebrate the hard work. [Read more](#)

**10am – 2pm, Wednesday 19 September, Harbour Ridge Drive, Wiri**

**Our mailing address is:**  
Department of Conservation  
12-16 Nicholls Lane  
Parnell  
Auckland, Auckland 1145  
New Zealand