



# GuideLines

Number 353 – Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

## Tēnā koutou katoa

(Greetings, hello to you all)



Dear guides,

After three months in the role now I'm starting to understand more the complexity of the role and to build relationships with those guides we are privileged to see regularly on the island. I look forward to my continued growth and learning as new opportunities are presented to me.

### **New guides**

Congratulations to **Tom Mulvey** who recently fledged as a guide. Also, my apologies to **Rebecca Connor**, who I misnamed as Rachel Connor in the last GuideLines. We currently have eight new people who have expressed interest in volunteering either in guiding, working in the shop, or helping with projects. I'm looking forward to bringing those people into our team and helping them find their way on the island. And we have six people on the guide training track. We will soon be able to welcome them as fully fledged guides, adding to our team of experienced people.

### **Content of bum bags – do you need those small books?**

We are considering taking the small books on birds and plants out of the bum bags, as we understand that most guides have their own resources. We could make the books available to those who want them by storing them in a separate container in the bum bag area of the trailer. Let Gail know your thoughts on that please.

### **Health & safety – bum bags**

A reminder that carrying the bum bags with you is mandatory for all guides. They not only contain first aid and supporting materials for your guiding, but important information on emergency contact numbers, including a map of the island. I was

thinking this through after a recent event and realised that the information is not only to support you in your guiding, but in the unlikely event that something happened to you, your visitors need to have access to information about who to contact, and how to get help.

With that in mind I would like all guides to make reference to the bum bag and its contents at the start (or close to) of your walk. You should tell the group that should anything happen to you that they are to access the bum bag to get contact information and a map of the island. Let's try it out and see how you can make it work, because we need to keep the safety of our visitors always front of mind.

### **Health & safety – Calling 111**

In consultation with and advice from DOC, we have the following message about emergency situations and calling 111.

*The ranger does **not** need to be the person to call 111 in an emergency scenario. It may be more appropriate to make the call and then let the ranger know after 111 has been called.*

### **New sign on Hobbs Beach**

For the benefit of visitors arriving by boat at Hobbs Beach a new sign has been placed that includes a direction to stay on the tracks. I'm letting you know this after a rather unpleasant interaction one of our guides had with a 'boatie' who was off track and was politely requested to return to the track.

### **Guide bookings**

Please, when booking your dates **remember** a couple of things:

- Use [booktguide@tiritirimatangi.org.nz](mailto:booktguide@tiritirimatangi.org.nz) email address
- Advise whether you embark at Auckland or Gulf Harbour

Dates we **desperately need** guides – please help if you can:

- Friday 9 Feb
- Thursday 15 Feb
- Thursday 22 Feb
- Friday 23 Feb
- Sunday 25 Feb
- Thursday 29 Feb

Dates we are not so desperate, but still need three or four more:

- Saturday 10 Feb
- Saturday 24 Feb
- Wednesday 28 Feb
- Friday 1 March
- Saturday 2 March
- Sunday 3 March

Thank you very much for doing what you can to help.

**Gail Reichert**

Guide & Volunteer Manager  
027 222 7318

**Guide Development Review**

Gail and I have been discussing the need for a review of our guide skills development to inform and review our training opportunities and needs.

We have decided to begin our review by accompanying guides over the next three months. We will be looking at consistency of messaging, knowledge of flora and fauna, relationships built with groups and responsiveness to their needs. We are happy to discuss this issue and receive any input from guides.

We are also looking at introducing a way to make guides more visible, and identifiable, particularly on the wharf.

We look forward to all your ideas and comments around this review.

Ngā mihi nui

**Debbie Marshall**

Operations Manager  
021 029 01520

**Concert for the Birds – Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March**

Once again, SoTM and Explore are presenting the wonderful island experience of a concert for – and with – the birds.

Tickets are \$120 per adult and \$50 for children 5 – 15 years.

They include:

- The return ferry trip
- Two hours of concert from 5:30pm with performance by [HOOP](#) (and on Facebook [here](#))
- Plenty of time for a walk with the birds before the concert



Pack a picnic and a blanket, put on your (grass friendly) dancing shoes and come for a great evening out.

**Concert ferry times:**

Departs Auckland : 2:00pm | Gulf Harbour: 2:55pm | Arrives Tiritiri Matangi : 3:20pm

Concert: 5:30pm to 7:30pm

Departs Tiritiri Matangi: 8:00pm | Gulf Harbour: 8:25pm | Returns Auckland 9:20pm



## Flora News

**By Warren Brewer**

**Houpara** (*Pseudopanax lessonii*), also known as coastal fivefinger, is one of the two endemic *pseudopanax* on Tiritiri Matangi. It has tiny flowers arranged in umbels. It is naturally restricted to coastal forest and offshore islands in the upper two thirds of North Island. Mostly dioecious, with male and female flowers on separate trees, houpara has compound leaves with three to five leaflets. A distinguishing feature is that each leaflet is sessile (no stalk) sitting directly on the main leaf stalk. Houpara fruit ripens in early winter, providing food for the birds



Houpara female flowers with fruit forming

Houpara male  
flowers



**Elingamita** (*Elingamita johnsonii*). The two trees on Wattle Track flower in summer producing brilliant red fruits. Elingamita is endemic to the Three Kings Group, present on West Island, where the steamer Elingamite was wrecked in 1902, and on two nearby rocky islets, the Princes. It was discovered there by Magnus Earle Johnson, a highly decorated soldier who took up plant collecting on retirement.



Elingamita  
flowering

## Fauna News

### Kokako update

Morag Fordham reports "As of 2.02.2024 we have eleven fledglings and two chicks still to fledge (one of Jenny and Slingshot's two chicks has disappeared and Te Rae and Chatters also have one chick).

Oran's new nest has now failed. Many of the pairs are starting to moult indicating that the breeding season is over.



**John Stewart's update:**

**Kakariki nesting**

Kakariki nest a bit later in the season than most other forest birds. This year we have 11 nests in the boxes we provide. Most of the eggs were laid in November and December though our largest clutch of nine was laid in January.

Eight of the pairs have managed to hatch some chicks with the January nest still to hatch. The biggest clutch of chicks we found was six chicks but mostly the first time we check after hatching we find three or four chicks. There have been some losses this season and the latest check at the beginning of February found one nest with two chicks, four with three chicks and one with four chicks. One of our boxes had been predated but there was still one live chick inside. Their success rate varies quite a bit from season to season. This year may be a little worse than average. Thanks to John Sibley and Gerhard Wette for their help with the checking.



## Tiritiri Matangi Island Talk - The Seagrass Meadows of Tiritiri Matangi by John Sibley

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

When: Apr 29, 2024 07:30 PM Auckland, Wellington



Would you like to add a whole new dimension to your knowledge pool for sharing with our visitors? Are you a regular swimmer at Tiritiri Matangi?

John's presentation will cover:

### **When and how did the seagrass get here?**

It wasn't always there! It had been nationally declining - Climate change has a part to play in its current boom time!

### **What is its most important function?**

It's a marine biodiversity hotspot like no other!

### **What good does it actually do?**

It's a fish nursery / erosion preventer / atmospheric CO2 remover / food source for seabirds / refuge for >100+ other species!

### **What threatens it?**

More frequent extreme storms may uproot it, bacteria, algae blooms and sediment smother it and block out light, human feet and boats damage it, and a slime mould (yuk!) called *Labyrinthula* eats it alive!

John will also look at the recent sewage spill disaster that befell the Gulf, and its effect on our bathing water quality.

Fascinating and important:

***Put it in your diary and register in advance for this webinar:***

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_2ykOrmYwRfytV3v6h3cYbw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2ykOrmYwRfytV3v6h3cYbw)

## Ask the Experts:

Two bird-focused questions arrived in the GuideLines inbox this week.

### Q.1 - Kereru:

"The whoosh-whoosh of kereru in flight is a familiar and endearing sound for all of us. I've been wondering whether this is an adaptive feature of their flight (perhaps to help avoid collisions between these heavy birds – like a reversing beep of a truck!) or is it simply a feature of flight that they "get-away" with. I would have thought the noise would attract their natural aerial predators – whoever they are – and natural selection would have silenced it."

**John Stewart replied:** "Actually almost all birds make a noise audible to humans when they fly. The noise from tiny birds is usually too quiet for us to hear - but maybe not for some of their predators (ruru, cats, etc.). The bigger a bird is and the faster it flies the more noise they make when flying - think black swans and Canada geese.

One group known to have specially quiet flight is the owls which hunt their prey at night and rely to some extent on hearing to locate prey. Their wing feathers are specially modified with comb-like feathers on the leading edge, a fringe on the trailing edge and a velvety texture which combine to reduce the noise of air passing over the wing.

Some birds deliberately make noise when they fly. Bellbirds/korimako and tui are examples where they have a modified wing feather with a deep 'bottle-opener' shaped profile which they can hold in such a way as to make more or less noise as they fly. They seem to use noisy flight as a threat when approaching other birds.

Kereru flight noise is very obvious and characteristic, but so are some others. With careful listening it is sometimes possible to distinguish the flight noise of kokako, tieke and tui."

### Q.2 - Takahe

"I've heard more than one variation on the amount of poo that Takahe are famous - or notorious - for. Could you give me the correct stats?"

**John Stewart replied:** "Takahe poo up to nine metres per day (quote from DOC takahe website)."

**Simon Fordham** found this study:

[https://www.birdsnz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Notornis\\_21\\_4.pdf](https://www.birdsnz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Notornis_21_4.pdf)

from which he took:

- takahē pass an average of 1.42m of normal grass droppings. However, this is not their only poo.
- The last paragraph suggests that the total is 5.2m (1.41m divided by 0.27).

The section of interest is from page 304 to 311.

Send your most vexing questions to [guidelines@tiritirimatangi.org.nz](mailto:guidelines@tiritirimatangi.org.nz) and we'll ask the experts for an answer.

**Don't forget we love to get your favourite newsy photos for sharing.**



## Up and coming

Tiritiri Matangi Talks 2024

Monday 29th April

Monday 10th June

Concert

Saturday 9th March

Supporters' Weekends

Saturday 11th May

Saturday 13th July

Saturday 7th September

Saturday 5th October

Working Weekends

Auckland Anniversary Weekend - 27th January

Easter Weekend - 29th March

King's Birthday Weekend - 1st June

### Focus on Te Reo Māori

*This is a major part in the New Zealand Curriculum across all levels in schools.*

1. **Helpful Guidelines for all SoTM members for upskilling in Te Reo Māori.**  
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/maori-language-week/114961703/power-te-reo-maori-video-lesson-pronounce-words-with-confidence>
2. The following link has been provided by the 2022 Year 11 te reo Māori students at Rangitoto College. It is excellent for learning about vowel and consonant sounds, and the use of macrons, in te reo Māori. It includes some key words specific to Tiritiri Matangi.  
[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/190hdBjzxyx\\_2Cpe8DC8aMI4mly\\_ZUShyqjW62rN-6hvY/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/190hdBjzxyx_2Cpe8DC8aMI4mly_ZUShyqjW62rN-6hvY/edit?usp=sharing)
3. Note the **Māori Bird Lore - An Introduction by Murdoch Riley** is available in the office for guides/ SoTM members to pick up and dip into during lunch breaks.
4. **Kupu Māori / words.** Ideal to constantly check the aural: Te Aka Māori Dictionary <http://maoridictionary.co.nz/> The sound in Māori is often quite different from the way many of us have traditionally pronounced kupu / words.

## Cybersleuth

- [Rethinking monarchs: Does the beloved butterfly need our help?](#)
- [Fisherman and international rugby player Matt Jurlina sentenced for hurting endangered birds](#)
- [Popular Auckland walking track reopens after six years](#)
- [Five climate lessons from Māori communities that are guaranteed not to depress you\)](#)
- [Tell tails about our endemic lizards](#)
- [Sediment runoff from the land is killing NZ's seas – it's time to take action](#)
- [First penguins die in Antarctic of deadly H5N1 bird flu strain](#)
- [Global coral reef heat stress monitor forced to add new alerts as temperatures rise](#)
- [Nearly 1,000 fur seals found dead in Kaikoura in five months](#)
- [Bumper breeding season for NZ's rarest bird after disastrous season last year](#)
- [50 years of the Morning Report bird call – memories of John Kendrick](#)
- [Intensive care for hoiho](#)

## SoTM website links and blogs

- [Tiritiri Matangi blog](#)
- [Guides section](#)



**Ngā mihi maioha  
(with thanks and appreciation)**

**Photographs:**

Header:

Neil Davies

Concert

Neil Davies

Flora

Warren Brewer

Kokako nesting

John Sibley

Kakariki

Jonathan Mower

Seagrass Meadows

John Sibley

Footer

Martin Sanders



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