

#32
FEBRUARY 2026

TīTī Times

KOTAHITANGA ISSUE



Tikanga starts early

Kā tangi te tītī.
Kā tangi te kākā.
Kā tangi hoki ahau.
Tihei mauriora.

The tītī is calling.
The kākā is calling,
And I wish to call.
Behold for there is life.

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Production team: Tina Nixon, Cat White, Blondini Gang Design

Cover image: Kayson Jones aged 4, shows muttonbirding runs easy in his blood on his first season on Wharepauaitaha (Breaksea) with his mum Laurice. He spots the birds for her and she kills them, then Kayson is happy to grab them and carry them. Laurice says if they are close to home, he always takes the Tītī back to his nanny Karina Hawkless.

Foreword image: Oronui Jackbird Yellow-White Blue-Metal. Credit Taylor Davies-Colley.

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Kupu Whakataki/Foreword

Chair's kōrero

2026 is shaping up to be a year of contrasts, with our much respected couple Russel and Teresa Trow gaining a New Years Honour and also being listed as semi-finalists for New Zealander Of The Year in the Sustainability Category. Stewart Bull and Gail Thompson have also received awards, with Stewart being named as a semi-finalist in the Kiwi Bank Awards. Gail was honoured for her work in conservation with a New Year Honour.

We also lost a great New Zealander and birder – international journalist, Peter Arnett – who always said his early years that birding on Poutama stood him in great stead as a foreign correspondent in many war zones.

On a cautionary note – we have two fact sheets in this edition – one on chainsaw safety and the other about Avian Flu and what to do if you see mass die-offs in any species on your manu.

The chainsaw safety feature is due to the large number of trees blown over in the Big Storm. This is because dealing with storm damage presents different challenges than chopping a tree already standing.

We also have a great pictorial essay of our tamariki doing the tītī mahi. It's amazing to see how connected, proud and happy they all are – and not a cellphone in sight!

We have something special for our tamariki as well, with part two of the weka research overview tailored just for them. It's a fantastic resource that parents can work through with their kids.

And just like Peter Arnett, because of the time spent with their whānau on our motu learning about our unique way of life, may our kids go on to do amazing things.

*Jane Kitson,
Chair, Rakiura Tītī Islands Administering Body*

Four Tītī Birders Recognised for their Contributions to Conservation

Celebrating our New Years Honours Recipients

Four Kāi Tahu conservationists – Russel and Teresa Trow, Stewart Bull and Gail Thompson – have each been recognised for their outstanding contributions to the protection and restoration of Aotearoa's natural heritage in the recent 2026 New Years Honours awards. Their collective achievements span marine guardianship, predator eradication, innovative species recovery, and fostering collaborative partnerships guided by mātauranga Māori.

Russell and Teresa Trow



Russel and Tee (Teresa) Trow were honoured with the prestigious King's Service Medal for services to wildlife conservation and recognition as Tower Local Hero medallists in the 2026 Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year

Awards, which honour those making a lasting difference for the environment and future generations.

Among their achievements, Russel and Tee led the removal of invasive weka from Kundy Island, paving the way for a flourishing sanctuary. Their innovative bird transfer work has helped repopulate endangered species across the Tītī Islands, including tīke (saddleback), matata, and meaweka. They have mentored many in conservation, sharing expertise in bird-catching and record-keeping to ensure successful monitoring.

The Trows' have built strong partnerships among iwi, government agencies, birders, and communities, guided by mātauranga Māori and a shared stewardship ethos. Their influence also contributed to the return of former Crown Tītī Islands to iwi management, supporting sustainable, community-led restoration.

Te Runanga O Kāi Tahu were among the first to celebrate their wins, acknowledging the Trows' 'extraordinary, decades-long commitment to restoring and protecting native biodiversity across the Tītī Islands near Rakiura.'

Island Restoration Specialist Pete McClelland, who has worked with the Trows for 40 years, recalled that 'Teresa

has always been a natural at taking birds out of the mist nets, while Russel built a highly effective drop door trap, inspiring friendly competition over who could catch the most! Besides their practical skills, Teresa and Russel have been wonderful hosts to catching teams. It's great to see their work recognised nationally.'

Stewart Bull



Stewart Bull (Kāi Tahu, Kati Mamoe, Waitaha) is a 2026 Ryman Healthcare Senior New Zealander of the Year (Te Mātāpuputu o te Tau) Semi-Finalist, recognised for his extensive work in environmental conservation, guardianship (kaitiakitanga), and community leadership. Stewart has been actively involved in the management of the Tītī Islands as a member of the Rakiura Tītī Island Administering Body for many years and is also a long-standing advocate for kaitiakitanga (stewardship), heavily involved in the Fiordland Marine Guardians and Southland conservation efforts.

Gail Thompson



Kāi Tahu leader and director of Te Ohu Kaimoana, Gail Thompson was appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the New Year Honours List 2026 for her outstanding services to Māori and conservation.

Among a long list of conservation efforts, Gail has played a pivotal role in the Predator Free Rakiura project, providing leadership that contributed significantly to its success. Through Predator Free Rakiura, she demonstrated a commitment to protecting biodiversity and fostering partnerships that support long-term environmental outcomes for the region. Gail's efforts have also helped establish collaborative approaches to marine conservation, which have become recognised at a national level.

Maui's Memories

Early life on Breaksea

Maui Fife, now in his 70s, was seven or eight when he was first taken to Breaksea Te Whare o Puaitaha Island by his dad, George, and George's mum, Janet. Janet visited the island until she was 80.

Originally there were two other families – the Paikis and the O'Connors on Breaksea. But their houses were derelict by the time Maui started going to the island.

Maui remembers his first trip vividly. His dad took the whānau down in the vessel Manuhuia which had been built in 1954. 'There were no helicopters in those days - everything went ashore in a clinker dinghy' he says. 'Dad or his mate would be on the paddles and backed the dinghy into the rocks and they would wait for the swell to come up and then yell, 'Righto! Jump!'

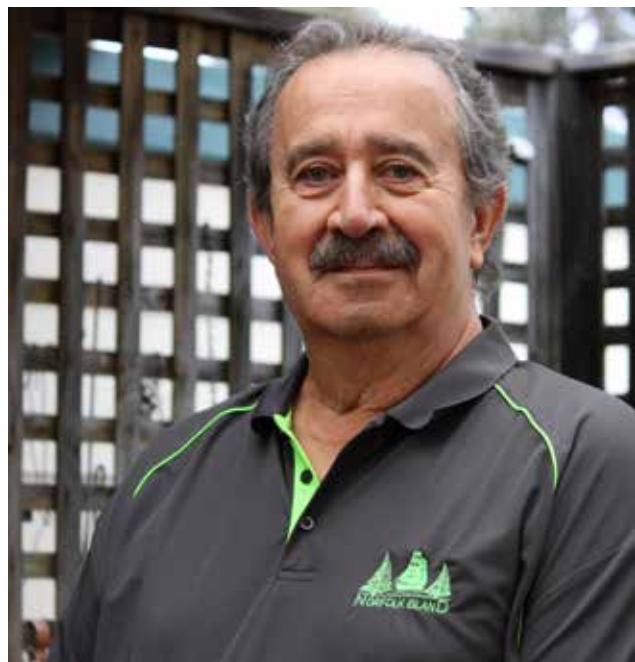
'And you did,' says Maui. 'Sometimes if you weren't fast enough you ended up in the water and yes that did happen to me. But you just grabbed a piece of bull kelp and scrambled up the rocks.'

Preparations for the season started months before the birding season itself, with Christmas marking the harvest of bull kelp to make the pohas used to store the birds. The kelp is hollowed out and goes through a lengthy process to make it supple enough to store the birds in. The Fifes lived on Rakiura and the best kelp spots were Lee Bay and Ringa Ringa. Maui says his grandmother wove the kete baskets but it was years later when he learned to make them himself, while he was working in New Plymouth.

Maui says the family always stored their home birds in poha. The whānau also collected the feathers which were packed tight into a wheat bag and used as a bumper on the stern of the dinghy. 'This would protect the birds when they were thrown from the shore onto the dinghy,' says Maui.

Working the birds

Maui learned a lot of tītī tikanga from his grandmother and he still has the adze today that he used to nanao all those years ago. The adzes were a much treasured tool. 'I remember them being greased up with kato and wrapped in sugar bags to stop the rust.'



Maui Fife

They would use a stick to fossick in the hole and if they heard or could see the tītī or retrieved feathers on the stick they would work out where it was and dig a hole with an adze to get the bird out. The holes were then carefully repaired so the next year they could just remove a plug of earth and take the chicks out. 'We were taught very early how to make a plug properly so that it was waterproof,' says Maui.

Maui says their workhouse was sturdy, being made of tupari logs clad in corrugated iron, and was the centre of tītī processing which included water cleaning, hanging, gutting, salting and packing. They used clean kerosene tins to cart the sea water up from the rocks to the workhouse to water-clean the birds. 'If you had any cuts you soon knew all about it as the seawater always got into them.'

Maui learnt to water-clean from one of his uncles but he has fond memories of birds from one of the legendary water-cleaning experts. He says Tui Bragg was one of the best water-cleaners and fondly remembers dropping into Horomamae one day when Tui gave him five birds. 'Oh my God, they were so clean and creamy! I wished I could have held onto them forever!'

Birds were also put in barrels as part of the pickling process. 'We would put a layer of punui down in the

bottom of the barrel, a layer of salted birds and then stop when it was half full. Then after four days you would pack them in kelp,' says Maui.

Delicious tītī

Maui says he still loves a good feed of roast muttonbird with apple and mixed herb stuffing – his favourite. He also remembers his grandmother's donuts, often called 'buggers to float', cooked in rendered down muttonbird kato which loses all of its smell once processed. 'I remember them so well; we had them with butter and golden syrup – they were so good!'

Maui says one of the many innovations in the tītī harvest was the use of what were known as kerosene tins which have a coating of shellac inside and a lid like a golden syrup tin. Wooden boxes were built around the tins to protect them. Kids carried the little half tins and the adults the larger ones. If you got 15 birds in a half tin it was a bad season.

Living close

While for many birders tītī were sold as extra income, the Fifes kept them for their own use and gave them away. Maui said that his biggest catch was 14 tins of birds. 'And I would give away eight or nine of them.'

He says living on Rakiura and running a fishing boat meant that they didn't have the big cost of accessing the islands like birders in islands further away as it only took them two hours to get to Breaksea. Once there, it wasn't really that far from the landing to the houses. 'But it seemed like a long way when you had a sugar bag of stuff on your back containing things like cabbages and other veges.'

Maui also has a vivid memory of an accident he had when the family was cutting wood for the open fire they cooked on and boiling the water to clean the birds. 'We used to use a cross cut saw to cut up fallen logs and I got sent back to the house to get the saw. As I was returning I slipped on a pūnui and the saw blade buried itself in my arm. Dad told me it needed stitching. My aunty had a needle out ready to go and she was going to stitch it with wool as they didn't have any cotton! Anyway I read the riot act so they just pinched it together and bound it and that's why I have an ugly scar today.'

Houses were built in sheltered spots close to the landings. The Fife's landing was also where Maui fished from – with a line attached to a sinker made out of bull kelp. 'If you

lost it, it wasn't a big deal unlike losing a lead sinker – and the fishing was plentiful with blue cod and trumpeter being very easy to catch,' he remembers. Paua were also plentiful but when commercial paua diving started the stocks dwindled – 'but as kids there were heaps and we would only need five to feed us.'

Pests

Maui says one of the interesting things about Breaksea was there was not a lot of small bird life and he puts that down to a population of cats on the island. He said they did breed and he actually bought a kitten home from the island one season. The fantails though, somehow remained prolific despite the cats which eventually died out.

But there were always rats and their populations rose and fell in cycles. 'Sometimes you would go there and there would be no rats and the next year there would be lots of them. It was dependent on the tucker. I remember they were really bad when I took my wife Shona down for her first season to fix up the old man's house.'

'One year they were so bad I took five rabbit traps down and I could never get them all set because they would go off before I could reset the last one. And there was a constant noise around the house which was surrounded by flax where the rats loved to nest,' says Maui.

When they were birding the rats were a constant threat. 'You would put your birds in a pile,' says Maui, 'and start to hui the birds and you would look up and there were a bunch of eyes all looking at you in a circle. It was eerie.'

The Freezer house

Maui has fond memories of his dad's house on the island which had quite a history. 'The house had two rooms; one was the workhouse, the other the sleeping room,' remembers Maui. 'The house I took over was built from The Freezer at Pegasus. Dad wanted a house and I think it was him and Shorty Topi who went down to Pegasus and made a raft of all this timber, and they put the windows on the boat and towed the raft up to Breaksea. They hove too in Tikakotahi and waited for the swell to go down so they could load the timber ashore.'

Working life

Maui was a keen young birder most years, but as soon as he went to boarding school as a 13 year old, he didn't go back till he was in his 20s.

Maui's first job after leaving school was taking tickets on the ferry *Wairua*. Maui said he really wanted to go fishing but his dad wouldn't let him. 'All my mates had cars and I had nothing – I had a push bike and that wasn't a chick magnet!' He said his father wasn't happy with him working on the *Wairua* and when he found out he told Captain Williams he had to sack him. 'I was so disappointed, I think I howled all the way up the wharf,' says Maui.

But life's next opportunity arrived when he caught up with a mate who was an electrician at the Alliance freezing works. He told Maui he was off to join the navy. So Maui decided to apply to be an electrician at the freezing works and was accepted. During this time he remained very keen to go fishing. His father, however, had decided not to buy a boat so Maui stayed on at the freezing works for a few more years.

Finally the urge grew too strong and Maui decided to move to Bluff and go fishing, which also was about the time he went back to Breaksea. Incidentally, it was the same year Tony Williamson was planning to go down and build a house so the two families went together.

Making a home of his own on the island

The Fife home was still standing but was essentially stuffed. Maui really enjoyed being back on the island during the time they spent with the Williamsons so he soon decided to build his own house there.

For four years the family enjoyed their yearly trips to the island with Maui's last year birding being 1999. This was also the first time Maui got to fly in a helicopter. He and Shona also had the privilege of being flown to the island with aviation legend Bill Black, which was a memorable trip for more than that reason. 'When we landed, it was blowing a gale and we landed teetering on the cliff with the front of the skids over the edge!' Bill told Maui, who was in the front seat, to stay where he was to keep some weight on the front while he got the passengers in the back out of the aircraft. 'What do I do if something happens?!" asked an anxious Maui. 'Jump,' said Bill.

Tītī Committee

Maui's contribution to the Tītī Islands was made off the islands as well. He served on the Rakiura Tītī Committee under the chairmanships of both Jim Bull and Doug Frew in the early 70s.

The meetings were held in the then Federated Farmers Building in Invercargill. Maui was in his 20s when he served on the committee which in those days served both Beneficial and Crown Island birders.

The tie remains

Of course Maui's connection to the islands remains strong today, despite the huge distance from his new home in Perth. His family remain regular visitors to Rakiura.

'It never goes away, that tie. It's a strong pull that always takes you back.'



Maui's parents, George and Noeline with pōhā strung on the clothesline.

Seabird Discovery Reinforces Link Between Islands

Dec 9, 2025

An unexpected discovery on Whenua Hou/Codfish Island has revealed some interesting and unexpected behaviours of tītī (also known as sooty shearwaters or muttonbirds).

In October, Te Arawhetu Waipoua (Kāi Tahu, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngā Rauru) was assisting the Bioeconomy Science Institute: Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research Group by checking for tītī on Whenua Hou that had been tagged with tracking devices during the 2023 and 2024 breeding seasons.

'I was checking the burrows for certain birds with trackers at night-time and there were a bunch of birds on the surface,' Te Arawhetu says.

Te Arawhetu picked up one of the banded birds and says that, on checking the ID on the band, she was surprised to discover that it was a Chatham Island bird.

'I was under the impression that they have a strong homing instinct so this discovery was unexpected,' she says.

Whenua Hou Komiti Chair Tāne Davis says that the find is a significant one which adds to the collective mātauranga (knowledge) about tītī.

'We didn't realise that the manu (birds) interacted between islands of such distance,' Tāne says.

'This discovery highlights the separate but related work that Chatham Islands whānau and Kāi Tahu whānau have been doing on our respective islands and reflects the connection between our peoples,' he says.

The Chatham Islands tītī was banded as a chick in 2021, when birds were translocated from the Nature Reserve Island Rangatira/Hokorereoro to the Point Gap Sanctuary in a project led by the Chatham Islands Taiko Trust. The aim was to repopulate the edges of the cliff in this predator-fenced sanctuary.

Mike Bell, ornithologist and current Trustee on the Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust, was one of those involved with hand-rearing the tītī chicks until they fledged.

'The thinking was these chicks would return as adults to the Gap and then breed themselves, so it's fascinating a bird has been found all the way down at Whenua Hou!' he says.



Mike Bell and Dave Bell feeding translocated tītī chick. Image by Kathryn Richards.

'Our knowledge about seabirds is growing all the time, and supports our understanding of the important role that they play in creating a nutrient cycle between islands and the marine environments that surround them.'

The Chathams tītī is about five years old and when found on Whenua Hou, it had apparently paired up with a much older local tītī, which had been banded on Whenua Hou in 2001 as an adult, so is estimated to be at least 28 years old.

Liz Tuanui, Chair of the Chatham Islands Taiko Trust, says this is fantastic news.

'A bird showing up down there reminds us of the Southern Pacific seabird ecosystem our islands are part of.'

'It also shows that although sometimes birds you translocate may not return to the site, you've still fostered a bird that's fledged successfully and gone on to breed elsewhere. In our current seabird environment, every chick that fledges is a success.'

The Chatham Islands, Rakiura/Stewart Island and Maukahuka/Auckland Island have been described as a 'seabird triangle'. Earlier in 2025, the three islands became part of the Island-Ocean Connection Challenge (IOCC), a global conservation initiative which aims to restore and rewild 40 globally significant island-ocean ecosystems by 2030.



The South Island Saddleback's Return Journey to Te Wai Pounamu

Tīeke update from Oronui Ecosanctuary

Oronui Ecosanctuary Te Korowai o Mihiwaka is celebrating after observing the successful hatching and fledging of multiple tīeke (South Island saddleback) chicks in late 2025 and early 2026. This marks a significant moment in New Zealand's conservation history, representing a critical step in the species' reestablishment on the South Island mainland, where their song has been silent for generations.

The breeding season, which starts in spring, has been marked by careful monitoring of tīeke nests scattered across the sanctuary's predator-proof expanse. Staff and volunteers watched with anticipation as sets of chicks emerged from their eggs growing stronger each day until they finally took their first flight into the forest. Among these, an especially heartening development unfolded: "jackbirds"—first-year tīeke who typically refrain from nesting—defied expectations and produced chicks of their own.



Juvenile jackbird on the nest in December 2025. Credit Taylor Davies-Colley.

Restoring Tīeke to the Mainland

The return and successful breeding of these charismatic birds is the culmination of more than fifty years of intensive conservation work. It is a testament to the enduring partnership between the Rakiura Tītī Islands Administering Body, Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki (mana whenua of the Oronui valley), and the dedicated staff at Oronui Ecosanctuary—Te Korowai o Mihiwaka. [CW1] Their combined efforts have reversed ecological losses once thought irreparable and brought the tīeke back to their ancestral forest.

In February 2025, a bold translocation saw 104 tīeke moved from Putauhinu and Kani (Kundy) Islands to Oronui. This operation required precision and care; some birds were temporarily housed in an aviary and had their wings gently clipped, both measures designed to encourage them to settle within the sanctuary's safe boundaries. As expected, a number of tīeke ventured beyond the sanctuary fenceline but those that remained became the only South Island saddlebacks breeding on the mainland of Te Wai Pounamu.



Tīeke. Credit Taylor Davies-Colley.

2025/26 Breeding Season: Signs of Hope

This year, five breeding pairs have been identified within Oronui, including two "jackbird" pairings. In total, six nesting attempts have been recorded; three nests have fledged five chicks—all banded for ongoing monitoring. Two adult pairs have fledged two chicks each, while a juvenile pair produced one chick, despite one infertile egg. Three active nests remain. Two adult pairs are renesting, with one nest containing two chicks and the second containing two eggs. A second juvenile pair has hatched three chicks, now all banded.

Oronui's Conservation Manager Elton Smith says 'Anytime birds nest, let alone renest, you know the habitat is good. We're very encouraged by the results so far.'

A Tale of Resilience: The Lone Male

One breeding story stands out among the rest: an adult pair tragically lost its male—believed to be the result of old age, his call had taken on a 'rattling' quality in recent weeks.

Undeterred, the bereaved female continued to feed and nurture her two fledglings alone for a fortnight. Then, in a twist of fortune, the only single adult male in the sanctuary—originally from Kani (Kundy) Island—joined her. Only weeks before, this male had been seen engaged in a fierce territorial dispute with another pair's male, resulting in his relocation across the sanctuary. In January, sanctuary staff discovered him paired with the bereaved female, courtship-feeding her as their two fledglings looked on. Just recently, the pair were seen with a new nest of their own. Such stories highlight not only the adaptability of the tīke but also the dynamic interplay of life in Oronou's safe haven.

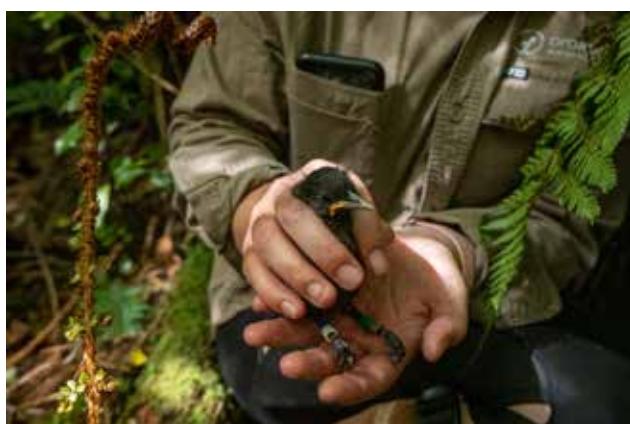
Ongoing Conservation and Community Engagement

Since the major translocation, Oronou staff and volunteers have invested over 800 hours in surveying the sanctuary, conducting both wide-ranging population checks and targeted nesting inspections. In December, specialised stoat and rat dog audits surveyed the valley, searching

for any sign of introduced predators. No evidence was found, a strong endorsement of the sanctuary's ongoing biosecurity vigilance and a reassurance for the future of the tīke.

The sanctuary has become a living classroom for many, with school students and visitors alike enjoying the rare opportunity to see and hear tīke in their natural habitat. These encounters spark conversation and learning about the birds' whakapapa, the significance of the Tītī Islands, and the decades-long efforts that have made their return possible. The tīke have not only reawakened the forest of Oronou, but they have also rekindled the spirit of collaboration and guardianship that defines Aotearoa's conservation communities.

As Oronou Ecosanctuary looks to the future, the tīke population offers hope—an indication of what can be achieved when people and nature work in partnership. Every fledgling, every song echoing in the bush, is a reminder that with perseverance, restoration is possible.



Newly-banded fledgling in December 2025. Credit Taylor Davies-Colley.

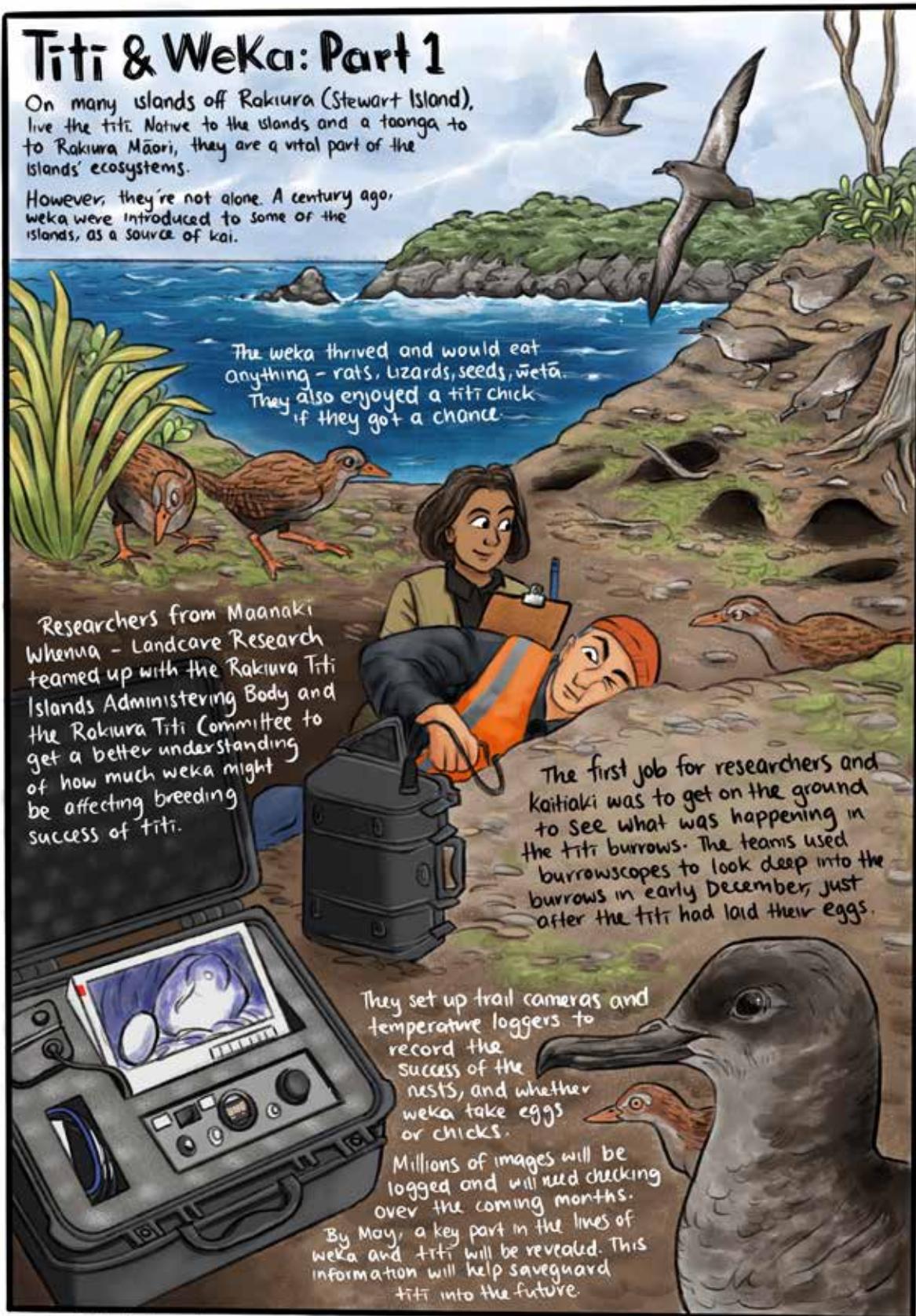


Tīke release in February 2025. Credit Taylor Davies-Colley.



Three newly hatched tīke chicks on the nest. Credit Taylor Davies-Colley.

Titi And Weka – An Education Resource for Parents and Kids



Research led by Jo Carpenter, carpenterj@landcareresearch.co.nz Illustrations by Emily Boswell, boswell.emily3@gmail.com

Titi & Weka: Part 2

We wanted to see how titi breeding success (the proportion of eggs that produce fledged chicks) differed between islands with and without weka. If weka had a strong impact, breeding success should be lower where weka are present.

We monitored 126 titi nests using burrowscopes and trail cameras. Here's what we found.

126 Titi Nests



Titi breeding success varied widely across sites. Islands with weka did not consistently have lower success – two weka sites had over 80% breeding success, higher than one non-weka site. One weka site, however, had the lowest success at 39%.



Statistically, this variation meant weka did not have a consistent negative effect, though the model showed high uncertainty...

Our results suggest that at some sites eradicating weka could help titi; at others, not much.

Some birders see weka as pests, while others value them for feathers, food, and oil. A managed weka harvest could reduce weka numbers without eradicating them, supporting both titi and the cultural and ecological values tied to weka.

FIN.

Stay Safe People

While most of your whare seemed to weather the big storm last year, there are reports of significant damage to the bush with many trees uprooted. While chopping down a tree has its own challenges, chopping up fallen trees presents a whole set of other challenges as they can 'spring' bank, due to tension in the trunk still attached to the root ball. Root balls can do all sort of weird things as well. There is some good advice here at Husqvarna We know one of our tītī whānau was injured recently while chopping a fallen tree and there have been fatalities in NZ.



Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua



DEALING WITH TREES DAMAGED BY STORMS

When storms and high wind cause damage to trees, it is called "windthrow". Windthrow can cause broken or uprooted trees which may fall and become lodged on other trees. Windthrown trees are very dangerous to work with, as they can be unstable, unpredictable and under considerable tension.

Effective planning is essential when conducting the tree felling or harvesting of windthrown trees. The use of machine assistance should be considered as the first choice.

Windthrown trees should only be felled by suitably trained competent persons. If you're not sure about this, contact a forestry or arboriculture professional.

Hazards can include:

- » unstable root plates (a root plate is the root system and soil that is lifted above the ground with the tree when it is blown over);
- » suspended stems under high tension and compression;
- » stems wedged between standing trees;
- » stems leaning into standing trees/hang-ups (a hang-up is created when windthrown trees are hooked onto other trees);
- » uprooted trees;
- » spars (large poles used in tree harvesting, which could also fall in high winds);
- » shattered tops of trees, which create hazards on the ground;
- » suspended hazards, such as tree branches;
- » heavy trees leaning against other trees;
- » unstable trees.

Wherever possible, standing trees in amongst windthrown trees should be felled by machine, rather than manually.

Where mechanised tree felling is not possible machine-assisted tree felling and butting off (cutting off the root plate) should be used. Tree fellers must ensure that they assess all possible movements of a standing tree – or windthrown stem – once tension or compression is released, and that they plan the cuts they're going to make before commencing.

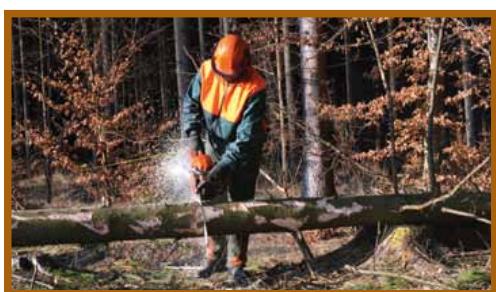
Where manual felling is necessary the tree feller must ensure that hazards have been identified and effective controls are

implemented. Tree fellers must take particular care that unstable trees near the tree being felled are not up-rooted as a result of tree felling or butting off. Tree fellers must ensure that hazards associated with tree felling or butting off are identified and controlled before beginning. Other safety tips are:

- » Keep children away from any windfall, particularly when cutting begins.
- » Remember safety at all times—safety equipment such as footwear, leg protection, a helmet, eye protection and earmuffs are mandatory.
- » Make sure you have stable footing.
- » Have sufficient clear space to work.
- » Ensure you have an escape path cleared.
- » Ensure a clear communication system is in place for emergencies.
- » Do not work directly under wind-wrenched trees.
- » Do not put yourself in a position where a root ball (a rounded root plate) can roll towards you when released.
- » Root plates must be cut at sufficient length so the root plate has stability once cut.

For further information, see the following publications:

- » **The Approved Code of Practice for Safety and Health in Forest Operations**
- » **A Guide to Safety with Chainsaws**
- » COMPETENZ Best Practice Guidelines for Tree felling
www.competenz.org.nz



October 2013

How to Report Suspected Bird Flu

Bird flu is a highly contagious viral disease spreading overseas. It's important to stay vigilant for the health of all mammals, all birds and ourselves.

How to report suspected bird flu



Avian influenza – also known as bird flu – is a contagious viral disease that can affect both domestic and wild birds. High pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) causes severe clinical signs and high mortality rates in birds.

New Zealand has never had a case of the H5N1 strain of HPAI that has caused high numbers of deaths in birds and mammals overseas. If the H5N1 strain of bird flu arrived here, it could severely impact a variety of bird species, including our native birds.

Clinical signs

The most obvious sign of HPAI is rapid mortality among a group of birds. Other signs vary, depending on the affected bird species:

In wild birds:

- lethargy or a reluctance to move, droopy head, inability to fly or lack of co-ordination
- coughing, panting and nasal secretions
- severe diarrhoea.

In poultry:

- lethargy/reluctance to move
- eating less than normal
- droopy head
- darkened and/or swollen comb/wattle
- coughing, panting and nasal secretions
- swelling around the head and neck
- laying fewer eggs than normal
- watery or green diarrhoea
- bruises on body and legs
- a silent hen house.

Protect yourself and prevent spread – do not touch birds with suspected HPAI



Photo: DOC, photographer Rod Morris

Practice good biosecurity

To help prevent the spread of disease, always practice good biosecurity and hygiene when dealing with birds in your everyday work.

- Keep sick and healthy birds separate.
- Wear disposable gloves and wash your hands after handling wild birds or poultry.
- Clean footwear and change clothes after contact with wild birds or poultry.



Report it

If you see 3 or more sick or dead wild birds in a group, report it immediately to the exotic pest and disease hotline on 0800 80 99 66 so we can investigate the cause. Do not handle or move the birds.

Provide as much detail as you can, including:

- a GPS reading or other precise location information
- photographs and videos of sick and dead birds
- species name and estimate of the numbers affected
- how many are sick or freshly dead, and the total number of birds present.

We will note the details and one of our specialist biosecurity investigators will assess the information and contact you.



December 2024

For more information visit
www.mpi.govt.nz/HPAI



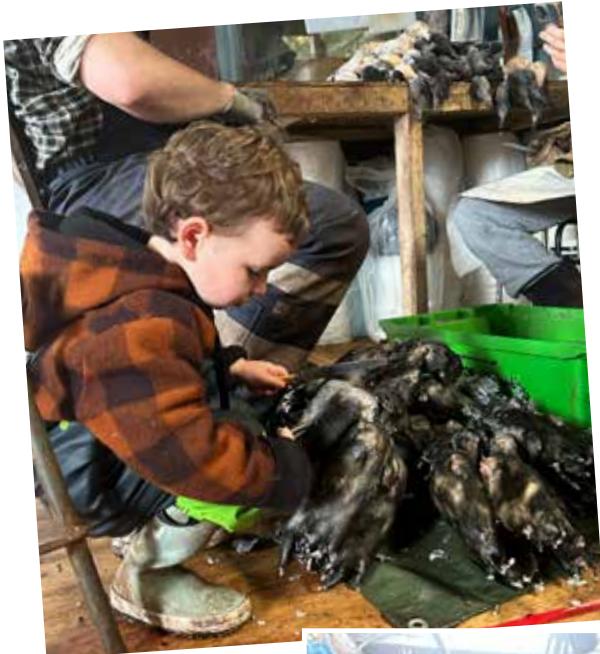
Do The Mahi Get The Treats

Our tītī birding kids are exposed to so many things over and above a normal childhood on the mainland. They learn bushcraft, how to work as part of a team, science, mātauranga Māori and all about tītī tikanga.

We asked you for some pics on the island and you delivered. Kids are involved, active, responsible, proud and happy and not a digital device in sight!

Our award for starting them young goes to Renata Davis and his son Archer Tūhawaiki Davis learning to chip off wax as a two year old on Putauhinu.

Some top parenting on show – well done!



This page, left:

Archer Tūhawaiki Davis, son of Kate and Renata Davis, learns how to chip the wax of the tītī. He was two when he first started to learn some skills on Putauhinu.

Middle: Storm and Aurora being taught how to cut up birds by their dad, Aaron Metzger.

Right: Slade Leask gutting and waxing.

Opposite page, clockwise from top left:

Bosun Metzger gets among it with his nānāo hook.

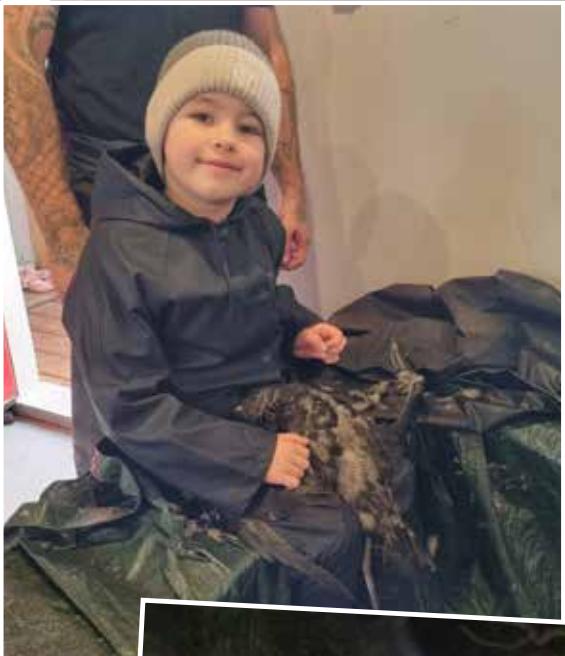
Hunter Leask holds a waxed bird.

Arlo, 6 years old, gets stuck into the plucking on Horomamae.

Olli, Nico and Arlo have a lot of pluck!

Nico, 11 years old, is getting really good at gutting.

Kaci-May Thomson in the plucker on Wharepuaitaha.



A Legacy Rooted in Tītī Islands

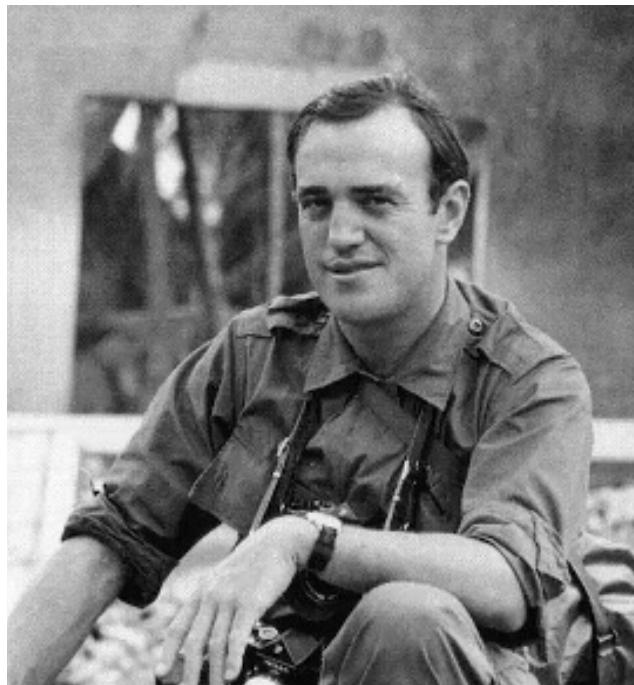
Remembering Peter Arnett (1934–2025) Muttonbirding

Peter Arnett, celebrated New Zealand journalist and proud Kāi Tahu descendant, passed away in 2025 at the age of 91. Raised in Southland, Arnett's lifelong bond with the Tītī Islands (Muttonbird Islands) reflected his deep pride in his iwi and his whakapapa. The islands, renowned for the customary harvesting of tītī, hold special meaning for Kāi Tahu and Rakiura Māori, and Arnett's connection to them was unwavering throughout his remarkable career.



Peter Arnett at home in Fountain Valley, California.

Peter Arnett was a renowned internationally-acclaimed journalist who was widely respected for his coverage of international events such as the Vietnam War and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Even as he gained international recognition for his fearless reporting, Arnett remained grounded in the traditions and culture of his Southland upbringing. He often spoke of his roots with affection, honouring the significance of muttonbirding as both a spiritual and familial practice. Te Rūnanga o Kāi Tahu acknowledged his passing, recognising his enduring contribution to the preservation of island heritage and the cultural legacy of muttonbirding. Peter Arnett will be remembered not only for his journalistic excellence but for his steadfast pride in the Tītī Islands and the traditions they uphold.



Peter Arnett in Kien Hoa province, Vietnam, in 1964. Arnett when he was a reporter for Associated Press in Vietnam. Photo_HANDOUT_AFP.



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