

# ISLAND VISITS

SUPPLEMENT TO *HAUTURU*,  
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LITTLE  
BARRIER ISLAND SUPPORTERS TRUST

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## APRIL 2009 WORKING WEEKEND REPORT

From the moment we met at Warkworth and were ushered into a quarantine room and the door closed behind us, I knew we were in for a special weekend. Here we were, a group of people mostly new to one another but clearly with the same interests, meeting for the first time, and about to spend a weekend together.

The quarantine routine was strict – all clothes checked, sleeping bags turned inside out, socks and shoes receiving the closest scrutiny. A home-grown apple – beautiful to the eye – revealed a wriggly ‘something’ inside. Nothing was left to chance.

Off to Sandspit and a picturesque boat ride to our destination. The sea was rolling, and as we approached Hauturu excitement mounted. We were the ‘chosen people’ – going where few get to go, we were here!

Up the ramp in the runabout expertly skippered by Shane. Within minutes of arriving at the DOC accommodation we were blessed with the sight of a kokako feeding on the lawn, and undaunted by us all clambering to get photos. I had spent a weekend at Tiritiri looking for kokako, being rewarded with glimpses only, and here was one within a metre of us in full view.

The rest of the day was work. This turned out to be a very social occasion. We had the job of clearing out the tuatara’s habitat, a large netted enclosure with several different rooms. The undergrowth had to be cut back, weeded and generally given a make-over. Working in an enclosed space, the talking was non-stop as we shared experiences. A huge wetapunga took our attention for some time. I kept glancing at the rooms where baby tuatara were living, hoping to see just one. However we all knew our work was complete when we were rewarded with an up-close encounter with a very large tuatara – lots of photos, some gentle stroking and a feeling of ‘wow’.

The rest of the weekend flew by: walks, social meal times, talking, kiwi-spotting, exchanging stories, and of course marvelling at the bird and plant life. Tui, saddlebacks, kokako, robins, whiteheads, hihi, kakariki and kaka. A walk on Sunday with Lyn, our group leader, revealed many plant species very special to the island.

It was the kereru who enchanted me. Growing up on a farm in the Waikato, there was always joy in hearing the flight of

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The April team. From left to right:  
James Reed, Kent Xie, Lyn Wade (leader).  
Standing: Michael Coote, Duncan  
Sutherland, Bonita Sutherland, Liz Barry,  
Peter Phillips, Ann Laurence, Dick Veitch.

LYN WADE

## ACCESS TO HAUTURU

Access to Hauturu/Little Barrier Island is limited, and necessarily so. The island is a natural treasure house, a nature reserve of exceptional conservation value. It is extremely rugged and relatively remote, but it is vulnerable to human impact. Visitor numbers and movements are therefore strictly regulated. Landing on Hauturu is by pre-arranged Department of Conservation permit only. Overnight visits are permitted for conservation management and scientific purposes.

The Trust’s working weekends offer Hauturu Supporters (10 per group) a rare opportunity to work and stay overnight on the island.

Day visits are permitted for groups of up to 20. If you are keen to arrange a visit, contact DOC’s Warkworth Area Office for information about permit conditions and applications. Email: Michelle Jenkinson mjenkinson@doc.govt.nz, ph: (09) 425-7812.

a native pigeon soaring overhead. But here on Hauturu they were everywhere. I loved the way they landed on the long seed heads of the flaxes, causing them to dip and rise like acrobats on high ropes. The areas of long grass were feeding grounds. A loud noise would suddenly reveal dozens of kereru popping up and flying off, only to return again to continue their meal.

I am left wondering how it is that Hauturu, or Little Barrier as we all know it, manages to keep such a low profile. We all know it is there, but how many of us know the conservation work that happens here, and has been happening over many, many years? Some kiwi were being transferred from the island the morning we arrived, and over the weekend we heard stories of other successful translocations allowing precious species to be introduced or re-established elsewhere. Off to enrich another part of New Zealand, often to protected parks where the public can see, enjoy and learn. And yet Hauturu remains out of the limelight, perhaps content in the knowledge that it is so close to pristine and natural Aotearoa, and quietly knowing it sets a standard for all of us to work towards.

We can all be very grateful for the sterling work that has been done here over many years and continues to be done, so that we,



Kiwi travel in style during their transfer! Shane McInnes watching.

LIZ BARRY

the public, can visit places such as Tiritiri Matangi, Maungatautari or Mount Bruce and enjoy a glimpse of our natural heritage.

Thank you to Lyn, Liz, Bonita and Duncan, Dick, James, Peter, Michael and Kent for sharing this special weekend. And to Shane and Liz, the Hauturu rangers, who gave so much of themselves to all of us, and inspired me with feelings of 'life is about giving' and 'let's all do our bit to leave this planet better than when we found it'. Thank you to the Trust for the privilege of visiting this protected piece of our planet.

*Ann Laurence*

## CALLING ALL OFF-ISLAND VOLUNTEERS!

From time to time DOC has put out a call to members of the Little Barrier Island (Hauturu) Supporters Trust for volunteers to help with monitoring trips on Little Barrier Island. This time we are wondering if there is anyone out there who would be interested in helping with administration tasks at the Warkworth Area Office. These tasks may include filing, data entry, photo rationalisation and other small jobs as they become evident, or dependent on the volunteer's skills. Occasionally there are also jobs requiring attention in our yard, such as the cleaning of fishbins or traps associated with the island programmes.

These are mostly tasks that require one or two days of a person's time, but some can be ongoing. If these opportunities are of interest please contact: Sue Cameron, Volunteer Coordinator, on (09) 425-7812 or at [aucklandvolunteer@doc.govt.nz](mailto:aucklandvolunteer@doc.govt.nz)

### DATES FOR WORKING WEEKENDS 2009

There are two more weekends booked for this year. All participants need to be reasonably fit and agile and to be prepared to cope, if necessary, with a difficult wet landing over large slippery boulders, and with a variety of tasks. There will be time for walking, bird-watching and botanising.

#### Target dates (weather dependent)

Sat/Sun 10 & 11 October      Back-up date: 17 & 18 October

Sat/Sun 31 October          Back-up date: 7 & 8 November  
& 1 November

For further details re travel and costs and to register your interest in either of these weekends, please see our website, and then ring Judy Hanbury (09) 817-7604 or email her on [jhanbury@actrix.co.nz](mailto:jhanbury@actrix.co.nz), indicating your preference for dates and giving your full name, address and phone numbers.

**Closing date for enquiries: 27 August 2009.**

### About the Little Barrier Supporters Trust

The Trust was established in 1997 to help support conservation and research activities on Hauturu Little Barrier island. Membership of the Trust is by subscription and donations are also welcome. All donations and subscriptions are directed towards activities of benefit to Hauturu.

Your subscription ensures that you receive *Hauturu*, the Trust newsletter, twice a year, bringing you up-to-date news about the island. Copies of past issues are available on request.

If you wish to become a supporter, make a donation or offer help in some other way, please contact the Trust secretary Denise le Noel, [info@littlebarrierisland.org.nz](mailto:info@littlebarrierisland.org.nz)

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### THE TRUST

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