



# Mana Island Scientific Reserve

The steep-sided and seemingly flat-topped Mana Island is a distinctive feature of Wellington's west coast. The 217 hectare island lies only 2.5 km from the mainland at its closes point. Mana Island's name is an abbreviation of "Te Mana o Kupe ki Aotearoa", which acknowledges the achievements of Kupe, the legendary 12th century Polynesian navigator, who discovered this land—Aotearoa.

## How to Get There

Visitors are welcome to Mana Island between 8.00am and 5.00pm. Access may be made only in the bay between the old woolshed and the wharf. Boats must remain offshore after visitors have landed. Two moorings, marked by red buoys, are available in the bay for daytime use. They are not available for overnight mooring. Dinghies may be pulled up the beach after transporting passengers from their boat.

To book transport to Mana Island, contact:  
Les Flower  
Ph: (04) 237 4728  
Mobile: 025 418 803

Many people volunteer to participate in the planting programme on Mana organised by the Friends of Mana Island. Planting occurs every weekend from May to July. For more information contact Sue Chesterfield, ph: (04) 233 8314; e-mail: chesterfield@zfree.co.nz

## Attractions and Facilities



Walking tracks lead to spectacular views, an historic lighthouse site, and a concrete gannet colony (see overleaf).



Displays featuring the history and natural features of Mana Island are housed in the old woolshed.

## Please Remember

Everything on Mana Island is protected and nothing may be removed. Fires and smoking are not permitted. Dogs and other pets may not be taken onto the island. Overnight camping is not permitted.

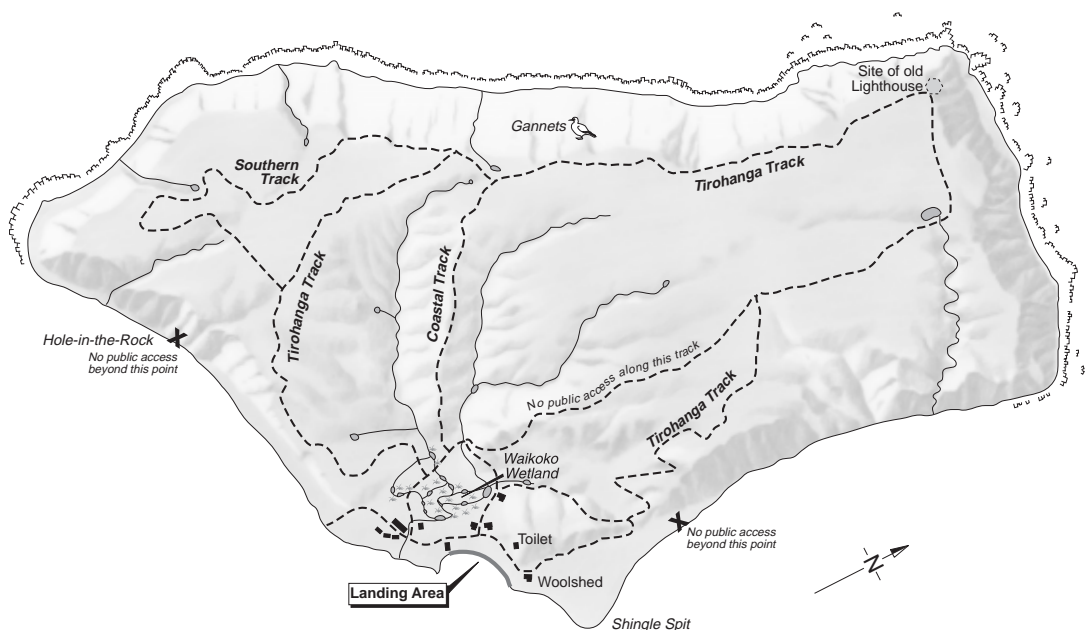


## More Information

### Department of Conservation

Kapiti Area Office  
P.O. Box 141  
Waikanae  
Ph (04) 296 1112

Wellington Conservancy  
P.O. Box 5086  
Wellington  
Ph (04) 472 5821



Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*



## History

Artefacts, such as fish hooks, spears, and animal remains found in middens provide evidence of human occupation of Mana back to the 14th century. The island is within view of pa sites at Whitireia Park and Plimmerton that belonged to the Porirua tribes Ngati Tara and Ngati Ira.

In the early 1820s, Ngati Toa people from Waikato and Ngati Awa from Taranaki swept into the region. The Ngati Toa leader, Te Rauparaha and his nephew, Te Rangihaeata, both built whare (houses) and developed kumara gardens on Mana.

European occupation of the island began in the 1830s when a whaling station was established and most of the vegetation was cleared to create one of New Zealand's earliest pastoral farms. Wool from Mana Island sheep is reputed to be among the earliest exported from New Zealand. The woolshed from this era still stands at Shingle Point. It now houses displays explaining the history and features of the island.

A lighthouse was built at the northern end in 1863, and the island passed into Crown ownership in 1865. Grazing continued until 1986 when the last cattle were removed. Sheep had been removed earlier after a suspected outbreak disease.

The Department of Conservation took over management of the island in 1987 and began to restore Mana to its natural state.

## Conservation

With the support of community groups, such as Forest & Bird, the island's forest canopy is being restored by a massive replanting programme. The only places where regeneration of native shrubs and trees is not actively encouraged are the many historic sites on Mana. These are being maintained as grassland to preserve the significant features.

Mana Island's potential for threatened species conservation was greatly enhanced in 1990 by the eradication of mice which had been present in plague proportions. Fortunately, rats and other introduced mammalian predators had never established on the island.

Mana is a significant location for Cook Strait giant weta, McGregor's skink and goldstripe gecko. Takahe, North Island robin and three lizard species have been introduced. Other threatened species may be introduced to Mana as suitable habitats develop.

As well as revegetation, many other initiatives have been taken to enhance Mana's ecological value. In 1997, a "concrete gannet colony" was installed above the western cliffs with the aim of attracting gannets to breed there, and in 1998, the Waikoko wetland was developed. This will eventually provide habitat suitable for North Island fernbird, brown mudfish and a range of threatened wetland plants from the Cook Strait and Wellington Ecological Districts.

## Protect plants and animals.

Treat New Zealand's forests and birds with care and respect. They are unique and often rare.

## Remove rubbish.

Litter is unattractive, harmful to wildlife and can increase vermin and disease. Plan your visits to reduce rubbish, and carry out what you carry in.

## Keep streams and lakes clean.

When cleaning and washing, take the water and wash well away from the water source. Because soaps and detergents are harmful to water-life, drain used water into the soil to allow it to be filtered.

If you suspect the water may be contaminated, either boil it for at least 3 minutes, or filter it, or chemically treat it.

## Keep to the track.

By keeping to the track, where one exists, you lessen the chance of damaging fragile plants.

## Consider others.

People visit the back country and rural areas for many reasons. Be considerate of other visitors who also have a right to enjoy the natural environment.

## Respect our cultural heritage.

Many places in New Zealand have a spiritual and historical significance. Treat these places with consideration and respect.

## Enjoy your visit.

Enjoy your outdoor experience. Take a last look before leaving an area; will the next visitor know that you have been there?

Protect the environment for your own sake, for the sake of those who come after you, and for the environment itself.

*Toitu te whenua (Leave the land undisturbed)*