

# Mana Island Scientific Reserve



COOK STRAIT

The steep-sided and seemingly flat-topped Mana Island is a distinctive feature of Wellington's west coast. The 217-ha island lies only 2.5km 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

Mana Island is open to visitors 8.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. 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.

Contact the DOC Wellington Visitor Centre for information about transport to Mana Island:  
e-mail: [wellingtontvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:wellingtontvc@doc.govt.nz)  
phone: 04-384 7770

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.

E-mail Friends of Mana Island for more information:  
[contactus@manaisland.org.nz](mailto:contactus@manaisland.org.nz)

or visit:  
[www.manaisland.org.nz](http://www.manaisland.org.nz).

## Attractions and Facilities



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



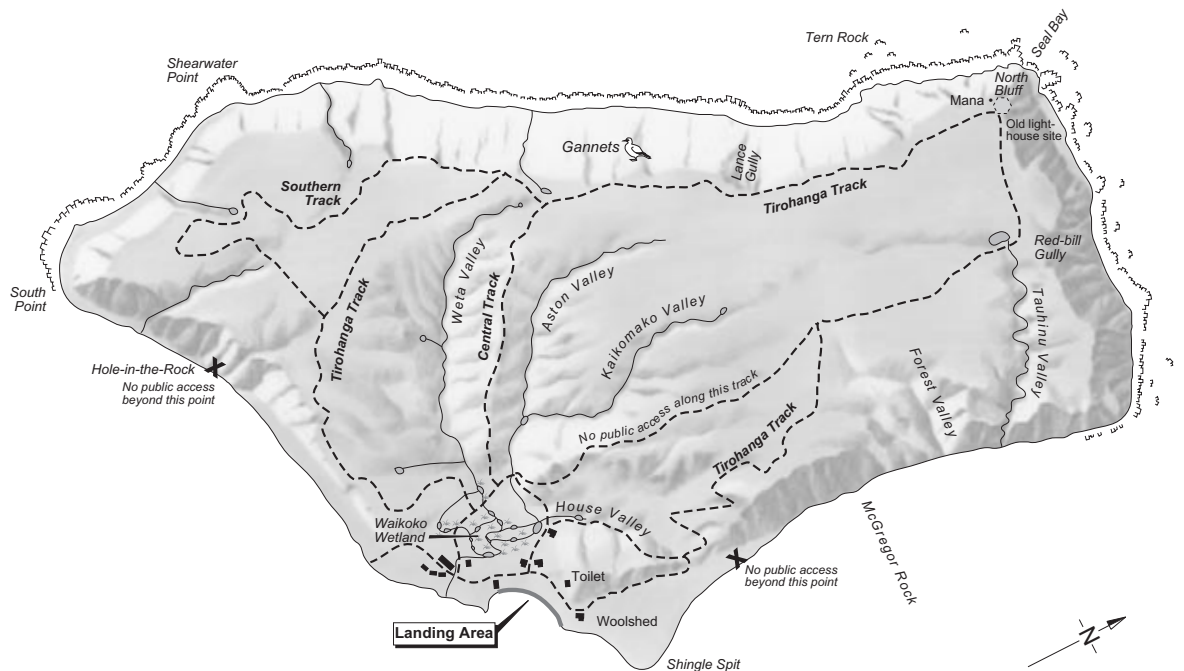
Displays featuring the history and natural features of Mana Island are housed in the old woolshed.

## Please Remember

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



**DOC HOTline**  
**0800 362 468**  
Report any safety hazards or  
conservation emergencies  
For fire and search and rescue call 111



## History

Artefacts, such as fish hooks, spears, and animal remains found in middens provide evidence of human occupation of Mana back to the 14 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 light house 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.



## NEW ZEALAND environmental CARE CODE

### 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)*

## More Information

- *DOC Kapiti Area Office*  
P.O. Box 141, Waikanae 5250  
Ph (04) 296 1112
- *DOC Wellington Visitor Centre*  
Conservation House, 18-32 Manners St,  
P.O. Box 10-420, Wellington 6143  
Ph: (04) 384 7770 Fax: (04) 384 7773  
E-mail: [wellingtonvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:wellingtonvc@doc.govt.nz)
- Website: [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)