

Natural areas of Maungataniwha Ecological District

Reconnaissance Survey Report for the
Protected Natural Areas Programme

NEW ZEALAND PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS PROGRAMME

Linda Conning

Published by
Department of Conservation
Northland Conservancy
P.O. Box 842
Whangarei, New Zealand

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Cover photograph: Emergent northern rata, a prominent feature of the Maungataniwha Range.

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ISSN: 0112-9252
ISBN: 0-478-22200-9

Cataloguing-in-Publication data

Conning, Linda

Natural Areas of Maungataniwha Ecological District :
reconnaissance survey
report for the Protected Natural Areas Programme / Linda Conning.
Whangarei, N.Z. : Dept. of Conservation, 2002.

1 v. ; 30 cm. (New Zealand Protected Natural Areas Programme
(Series), 0112-9252)

ISBN: 0-478-22200-9

1. Ecological surveys--New Zealand--Maungataniwha Ecological
District. 2. Maungataniwha Ecological District (N.Z.). 3. New Zealand
Protected Natural Areas Programme. I. Title. II. New Zealand. Dept. of
Conservation. Northland Conservancy. III. Series.

Foreword

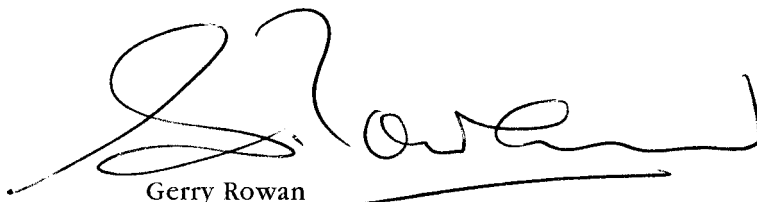
The Maungataniwha Range curves across the lower part of this large sprawling Ecological District like a lateral backbone. Radiating from this is a host of habitats, which are very fragmented in the north and east, but with actual or partial linkages in the west and south of the District. It is typical of the Far North hinterland, a complex of dissected hill country, narrow gullies and windy ridges, much of which is reverting to native forest following extensive clearance.

Regenerating manuka-kanuka with pockets of remnant broadleaf-podocarp forest is the most common vegetation pattern outside of the main Maungataniwha Range. Unlike several of the Ecological Districts adjoining it (Ahipara, Whangaroa, Puketi, and Hokianga), kauri forest is not a distinctive feature here. Wetlands, streams, and the small area of coastal habitats are often severely degraded.

Parts of this District are a stronghold for the North Island brown kiwi, and the special efforts being made to maintain this status through a partnership with the community need ongoing support. Depleted NZ pigeon (kukupa) populations also need rebuilding to reinstate the ecological process of large seed dispersal provided by this species.

This report is a snapshot in time. Since the field surveying began, several areas have been reduced in size, or in some cases, disappeared altogether, and ongoing developments, particularly from exotic forestry, threaten to further reduce many of the areas.

Maungataniwha poses a great challenge, not only to maintain its biological diversity, but to enhance it, through restoration of degraded areas, protecting threatened species populations, and strengthening the linkages between the habitats.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerry Rowan', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

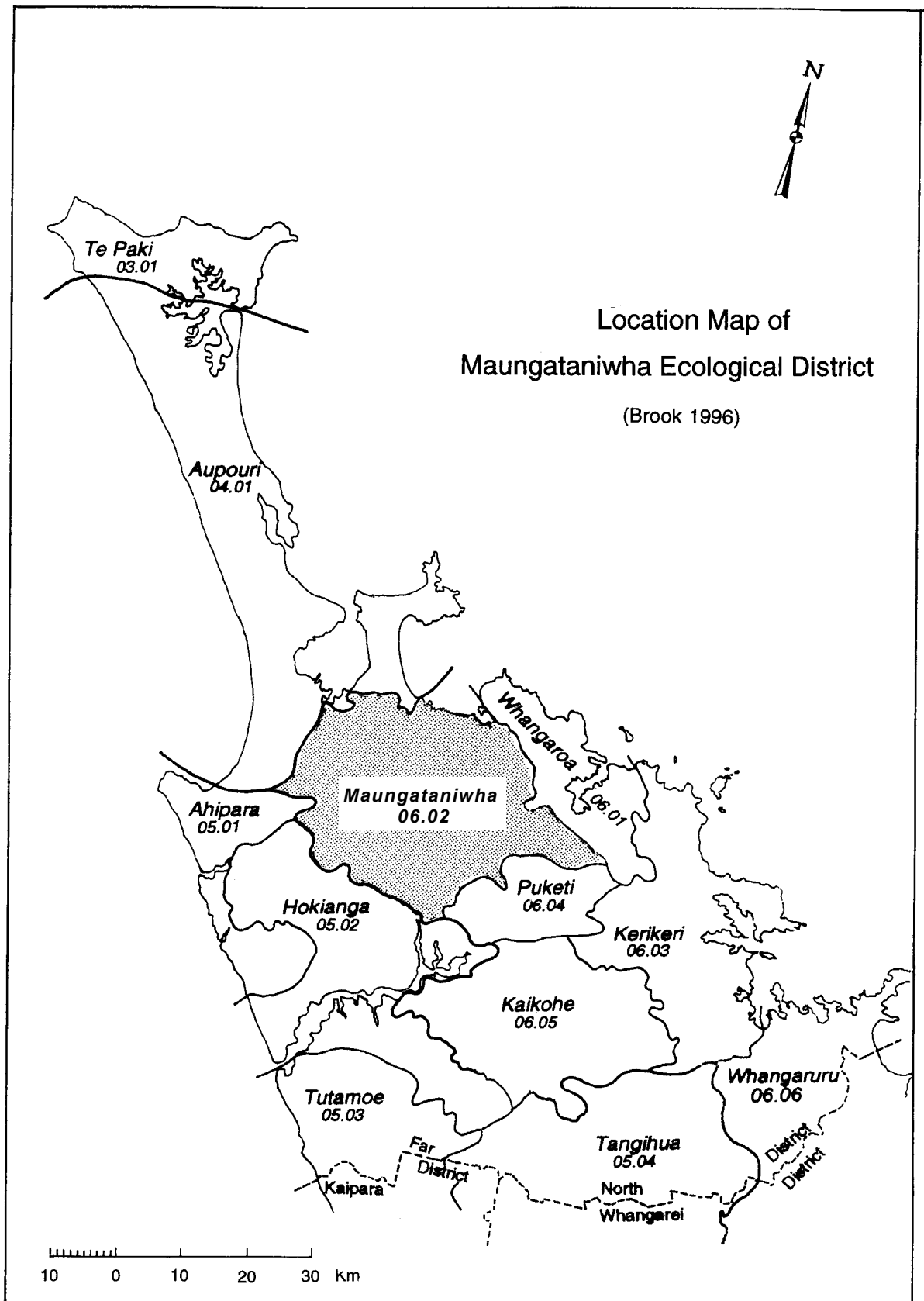
Gerry Rowan

Northland Conservator

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Map 1. Location map of Maungataniwha Ecological District.