

Chatham Islands Conservation Board
Te Pou Atawhai O Rekohu Wharekauri



Annual Report
to the New Zealand Conservation Authority

1 July 2017 - 30 June 2018

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Photographer: Sourced from DOC website

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Chatham Islands Conservation Board (the Board) is one of 15 statutory Conservation Boards appointed by the Minister under Section 6P of the Conservation Act 1987. The functions and powers of the Board are outlined in Sections 6M and 6N respectively. Each Conservation Board covers a geographically-defined area and comprises up to 12 members. The Chatham Islands Conservation Board consists of 7 members encompassing various sectors of the community.

The Board receive support from the local DOC office with Dave Carlton in the role of Operations Manager and Jilleen Chandler providing secretarial services and administration support.

Dinee Fleming chaired the Board for four years until standing down in November 2017 and Amanda Seymour was elected to replace her. The Board elected Judy Kamo as vice-Chair. Due to other commitments, Dinee stood down from the Board altogether in February. Her input and presence was missed by fellow members.

Meetings of the Chatham Islands Conservation Board are open to the public, and members of other representative groups are often invited to attend. This, with the addition of DOC staff, ensured varied attendance at the meetings.

Over the 2017/18 year, six meetings were held at the following venues:

- DOC Office, Te One
- Owenga Club, Owenga
- Rangers House, Pitt Island
- Kaingaroa Club, Kaingaroa
- Norman Kirk Lounge, Waitangi

2 MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD

The Board membership and meeting attendance during 2017 - 2018 was as follows:

Diane (Dinee) Fleming of Owenga, Chatham Islands *1 July 2014 to 30 June 2020*
(resigned February 2018)

Dinee is a farmer and a landowner, active in wetland restoration. This is Dinee's fourth year as Chairperson. With her wide understanding of the history, culture and economy of the Chathams Dinee brings strong balanced local knowledge to her Chairperson's role. She is of Moriori and Ngati Mutunga o Wharekauri descent.

Diane (Di) Gregory-Hunt, Pitt Island *1 May 2014 to 30 June 2019*

Di is involved in farming. She is a member of the Pitt Island Reserves Committee and has been a member of the Pitt Island Reserves and Conservation Purposes Trust. Di has been active in many of the conservation projects on Pitt, including monitoring of nesting albatross and Chatham Island snipe. Di and her family have land protected under conservation covenants and are active in habitat restoration projects.

Mana Cracknell, of Kaingaroa, Chatham Islands *1 July 2014 to 30 June 2020*

Mana is a retired university academic - teaching and learning, culture and language, leadership, management. He has been involved in many environmental research projects in the Chatham Islands looking at biodiversity. His outdoor recreation interests are gardening, fishing, beekeeping and tree planting. Mana is of Rongomaiwahine, Ngati Kahungunu, Rangitane and Rongomaiwhenua-Moriori descent.

Susan Thorpe, of Owenga, Chatham Islands *1 May 2014 to 30 June 2019*

Susan is a director of a heritage consultancy company. She has research experience in archaeology, cultural heritage, and the environment, and enjoys being involved in ecological restoration projects. Her outdoor recreation interests are water sports, sailing, fishing, tree planting and gardening.

Amanda Seymour of Chatham Islands *1 July 2015 to 30 June 2018*

Amanda is a Chatham Island born farmer raising her young family on the Chathams. She has been active in many conservation projects, including the covenanting of forest areas on her farm, tree planting on Mangere Island, plant nursery work and supporting the local school tree planting projects in local reserves.

Judy Kamo of Chatham Islands 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2018

Judy is of Ngati Mutunga and Ngai Tahu descent, is a member of Hokotehi Moriori Trust, a Maori Warden and 6th generation Pitt Islander. A mother of four, she has a farm with her husband John on the Chatham Islands, and works as a Senior Health Worker for Ha O Te Ora O Wharekauri. She has a strong interest in conservation and regeneration of our Island's ngahere. Whanau, rongoa, farming and gardening are important in her life.

Pauline Mackay of Chatham Islands 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2018

Pauline has lived her whole life on the Chatham Islands, raising her family here and participating in and contributing to a wide range of community activities. She has just finished a 25-year term on the Norman Kirk Memorial Reserve committee. Her understanding of Chatham's whanau, people and heritage and their connection with conservation are important.

Board Member	Meetings attended
Dinee Fleming (Chairperson Jul-Nov, Retired Feb 2018)	1/5
Mana Cracknell	5/5
Di Gregory-Hunt, Pitt Island	5/5
Susan Thorpe	4/5
Pauline McKay	4/5
Amanda Seymour (Chairperson Nov-Jul)	5/5
Judy Kamo	4/5



Photo: Board Members at Glory Hut, Pitt Island
Photographer: Jilleen Chandler

3 THE BOARD'S DISTRICT

The Chatham Islands lie 860 km east of Christchurch, at 44° south in the path of the Roaring Forties and consist of eight islands of appreciable size. The total land area is 97,000 hectares of which main Chatham Island (90,000 ha) and Pitt Island (6,190 ha) are the largest. The Chathams straddle the international dateline: local time is 45 minutes ahead of the rest of New Zealand.

The Chatham Islands are an amazing collection of islands consisting of contrasts and extremes: beautiful still sunny days with magical blue skies through to raging 45 knot storms that in their own way are awe-inspiring. For much of the year the climate is temperate – temperatures in the low twenties in midsummer but can drop close to 0 degrees in the winter with scattered hail and sleet and occasional snow.

Generally main Chatham Island is low-lying and comprises flat to rolling topography. The highest point on the island is only 299m. There are many swampy valley floors and extensive peatlands. The catchments are generally small and shallow but there are a few incised streams in the south. Here the land is at a higher altitude forming a tableland of deep peat covering basalt with a fertile coastal clay region which ends abruptly at impressive basalt bluffs. In the north there are scattered volcanic peaks and long stretches of sandy beach while the island has a large central lagoon of 20,000 ha and there are many moderate sized lakes.

Both the natural vegetation and fauna are highly modified and are reduced to remnants as a result of human occupation. Low forest once covered most of the islands. Approximately 10% of the forest cover remains – most in the south of the main island.

Five main forest types are present featuring broad-leaved species and tarahinau (*Dracophyllum arboreum*). Much of the area has converted to bracken and shrubland and to a lesser extent pasture. There are extensive areas of restiad, sedge and heath wetlands.

The Chathams have the highest level of endemism of any New Zealand biogeographic region. Forty-one of the Chatham Islands 465 native plants, 18 of the 73 native birds and 8.5% of New Zealand's threatened freshwater fish are found nowhere else. About 20% of the 800 insect species and one reptile are also endemic to these islands. The New Zealand Geo-Preservation Inventory lists 31 sites of nationally important geological interest. 700 archaeological sites are recorded and many more unrecorded.

The Department of Conservation has an Office at Te One on main Chatham with 12 permanent staff, with one staff member largely based on Pitt Island. Volunteers, staff and researchers are present on Rangitira (South East Island) and Mangere Island for periods during the year, undertaking species monitoring work during the breeding season of endangered bird species, and continuing with the habitat restoration programme.

There is a small amount of protected land (Crown and private covenants) in the Chathams - about 8% of Chatham, 30% of Pitt and three nature reserves - (Mangere (113ha) and South-East/Rangitira (208ha) Islands and the Tuku NR (1238ha). A significant number of important habitats have been protected and a significant amount

of land has been protected through the covenanting of private land. A key focus of the Department's work in the Chathams is threatened flora and fauna programmes. The vast expanse of ocean surrounding these islands is rich in marine life and supports internationally significant populations of sea birds and nationally significant populations of whales, dolphins, seals and sharks.

The Chatham Islands Conservation Board represents a total island population of approximately 600 people (Chatham and Pitt Island) and has particularly close contact with the community. Chatham Islanders have very strong ties to their land and resources, reflected by their livelihoods of fishing, farming, and tourism.

The Board also consults and works with the Imi/Iwi on the Chatham Islands along with the other conservation groups such as Taiko Trust, as well as the Chatham Islands Council, Chatham Islands Enterprise Trust and the Chatham Islands Visitor Industry group.

4 BOARD MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPS

Five formal Board Meetings were held during the reporting period.

Date	Meeting venue
August 31 st , 2017	DOC Office, Te One
November 30 th , 2017	Owenga Club, Owenga
February 16 th , 2018	Rangers House, Pitt Island
March 15 th , 2018	Kaingaroa Club, Kaingaroa
May 10 th , 2018	Norman Kirk Lounge, Waitangi

The Board welcomed a number of visitors to Board meetings including Warren Parker the NZCA Chairperson, members of the East Coast Hawkes Bay Conservation Board, Pitt Islands community members and Pitt island school student representatives. Michele Andersen joined us for part of a number of our meetings throughout the year. Mike Bell from the Taiko Trust gave regular updates to the Board through written reports.

The first Board meeting of the year was held at the DOC office in Te One, where the Board were joined by Reg Kemper (Director Operations, Lower North Island), who provided information around CMS timelines and the importance of Predator Free 2050 as a strategic plank. This meeting included discussion around a recent Black Robin Habitat Report which highlighted the difficulties faced in trying to establish new

populations of Black Robin with their identified habitat preferences. The Department reported on Fire and Research from the CMS and the Board discussed the new FENZ make-up and the Departments role supporting them.

The November meeting at Owenga club began with Dinee Fleming stepping down as Board Chairperson. Following nominations Amanda Seymour accepted the position, with Judy Kamo accepting nomination as vice-chair. The Board were pleased to read the progress the Taiko Trust have made as highlighted in their 2016-2017 End of Season Report. Of particular interest was the continued increase of breeding pairs of taiko. Following this meeting, Board members took the opportunity to visit Manukau farm kawenata to observe coastal restoration.

The much anticipated overnight to Pitt was held in February. During this meeting, the Board accepted the resignation of Dinee Fleming as a Board member. Holding an annual meeting on Pitt gives the local community a chance to attend and personally contribute their views on conservation on their island. The Board were also joined by children from the local school. The oystercatcher programme delivered by DOC on the Wharekauri station/Maunganui beaches and the recent discovery of a breeding pair of Leach's storm Petrel on Rangitira Island were also discussed at this meeting. Before flying back to Chathams the following day, the Board took a trip to Waipaua and Glory Bay and took the opportunity to view a petrel in the burrows at Caravan Bush. This gave the Board the opportunity to observe some of the difficulties in maintaining a cat proof fence around Caravan Bush, which led into great discussion around feral cat trapping and control on Pitt Island.

March saw the opportunity to reciprocate hospitality, when members of the East Coast Hawkes Bay Conservation Board visited the island following an invitation extended when CICB visited them in 2017. This visit gave all members the chance to share and compare notes on local visions and challenges stemming from regional differences in the conservation estates, and to discuss particular approaches and strategies while essentially working toward the same national conservation goals and outcomes. The Boards visited the Albatross colony at Point Gap and the predator fenced Sweetwater covenant.

During an evening of taonga puoro music at Kopinga Marae, Amanda Seymour presented the Annual Conservation Award to Pitt Island School for their ability to research, learn and understand what makes bush settings healthy and for their practical efforts to create a nature wellness environment in their adopted school bush, "Ngahere te kura".

The following day, both Boards travelled to Kaingaroa for the meeting, followed by a visit to Hapupu National Historic Reserve and Rotorua. Collaborating with their neighbouring board was a valuable experience and brought another perspective to the meeting.

Having Warren Parker (NZCA Chair) attend the May meeting at the Norman Kirk lounge in Waitangi gave an insightful perspective into national conservation issues particularly Predator Free 2050. Also discussing the recent discovery of myrtle rust in mainland New Zealand prompted the Board to discuss the wider effects this may have on the island. Even though there are no endemic myrtle species, the full extent of this fungus in this environment is unknown. The board also acknowledged all individuals, organisations and schools involved in the upward trend of endemic plantings on the island.



Photo: Pitt Island school students with the Conservation Award
Photographer: Wendy Bishell

5 STATUTORY FUNCTIONS UNDER THE CONSERVATION ACT

6M(1)(c) To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General on the implementation of conservation management strategies and conservation management plans for areas within the jurisdiction of the Board

Conservation Management Strategies (CMS)

The Board were updated on the current timeline for CMS revision however there is no clarity on when the Chatham Islands CMS might be reviewed and the commencement date is still to be confirmed.

As part of the Boards process of monitoring DOC delivery of CMS objectives, the Board reported on nine CMS topics this year. They are as below:

1. Visitor Services
2. Customary Use
3. Fire
4. Research
5. Mangere and Rangitira

6. Freshwater Ecosystems
7. Sustainable Resource Management
8. Survey, Monitoring and Information Management
9. Compliance and Law Enforcement

For each of these topics the Department prepared a report on progress of CMS objectives for the Board to consider. The board led a response report which provided valuable advice for DOC not just for future management but also to support changes to any new CMS that could strengthen the outcomes of DOC's priority work. Following a request last year, two reports were prepared for each meeting. The timeline of the report delivery is as below:

CMS Topic	Board member responsible	Meeting location & date
Visitor Services	Judy Kamo	DOC Office, Te One, August 31 st , 2017
Customary Use	Susan Thorpe	DOC Office, Te One, August 31 st , 2017
Fire	Pauline Mackay	Owenga Club, Owenga, November 30 th , 2017
Research	Mana Cracknell	Owenga Club, Owenga, November 30 th , 2017
Mangere and Rangitira	Di Gregory-Hunt	Pitt Ranger House, Pitt Island, February 16 th , 2018
Freshwater Ecosystems	Susan Thorpe	Pitt Ranger House, Pitt Island, February 16 th , 2018
Sustainable Resource Management	Susan Thorpe	Kaingaroa Club, Kaingaroa, March 15 th , 2018
Survey, Monitoring and Information Management	Judy Kamo	Kaingaroa Club, Kaingaroa, March 15 th , 2018
Compliance and Law Enforcement	Mana Cracknell	Norman Kirk Lounge, Waitangi, May 10 th , 2018

6M(1) (d) (ii) To advise the Department on any other conservation matter relating to any area within the jurisdiction of the Board

1. During the year the CICB considered and advised the Department on the following:

- a) A number of research permit applications for completing various forms of research across the Chatham Islands, including Pitt and the outer islands Rangatira and Mangere
- b) The vesting of Taia Historic Reserve in Moriori, a process in the making for some 15 years
- c) The outcome and future use of the White House (historic commissioner's cottage) on Tiki Tiki Hill.
- d) Management and research priorities for species on Rangatira and Mangere Islands, what is DOC achieving in its work aside from several lengthy reports.

6 LIAISON

6.1 Department

All Board meetings were attended by Dave Carlton as Operations Manager for the Chatham Islands. Reg Kemper (Director Operations, Lower North Island) attended the August meeting and provided information on departmental structure, visions and CMS timelines.

The Board supported the attendance of local office staff and enjoy the engagement of hearing from team members on the ground and with differing areas of expertise. It is understood that this attendance is not always possible due to work programme conflicts. The Board were kept informed of staff changes through the Departmental report presented at every meeting.

6.2 Community

Taiko Trust

The Taiko Trust continues to build on their conservation achievements, with a fifth successful season of albatross chick transfer and rearing at Point Gap. This year also saw 33 pairs of Taiko breed, with 27 chicks fledging, the best year on record.

Chatham Islands Conservation Award

The Chatham Islands Conservation Award, started in 2004, was this year awarded to Pitt Island School in recognition of their ability to research, learn and understand what

makes bush settings healthy and by their practical efforts to create a nature wellness environment in their adopted school bush.

Environment Canterbury

The Board continues to encourage an active working relationship with Environment Canterbury (ECAN) and attendance is invited at meetings during the year to update the range of biosecurity, weed and animal pest control work being undertaken by ECAN on Chatham and Pitt Islands.

Te One, Kaingaroa, Pitt Island schools

The Board continue to engage with all three local schools. Student representatives from Pitt Island school joined the meeting on Pitt Island and prepared a report for their school with insights from the meeting.

This year with remaining surplus budget saw the Board grant money to each of the three schools to assist in conservation projects at their sites.

6.3 Pitt Island

Having a Pitt Island based Board member was deemed valuable as Di Gregory-Hunt has continued to be a strong advocate for all Pitt Island conservation issues on the board, working with the community to ensure opportunity for all of community to provide feedback on conservation outcomes and priorities.

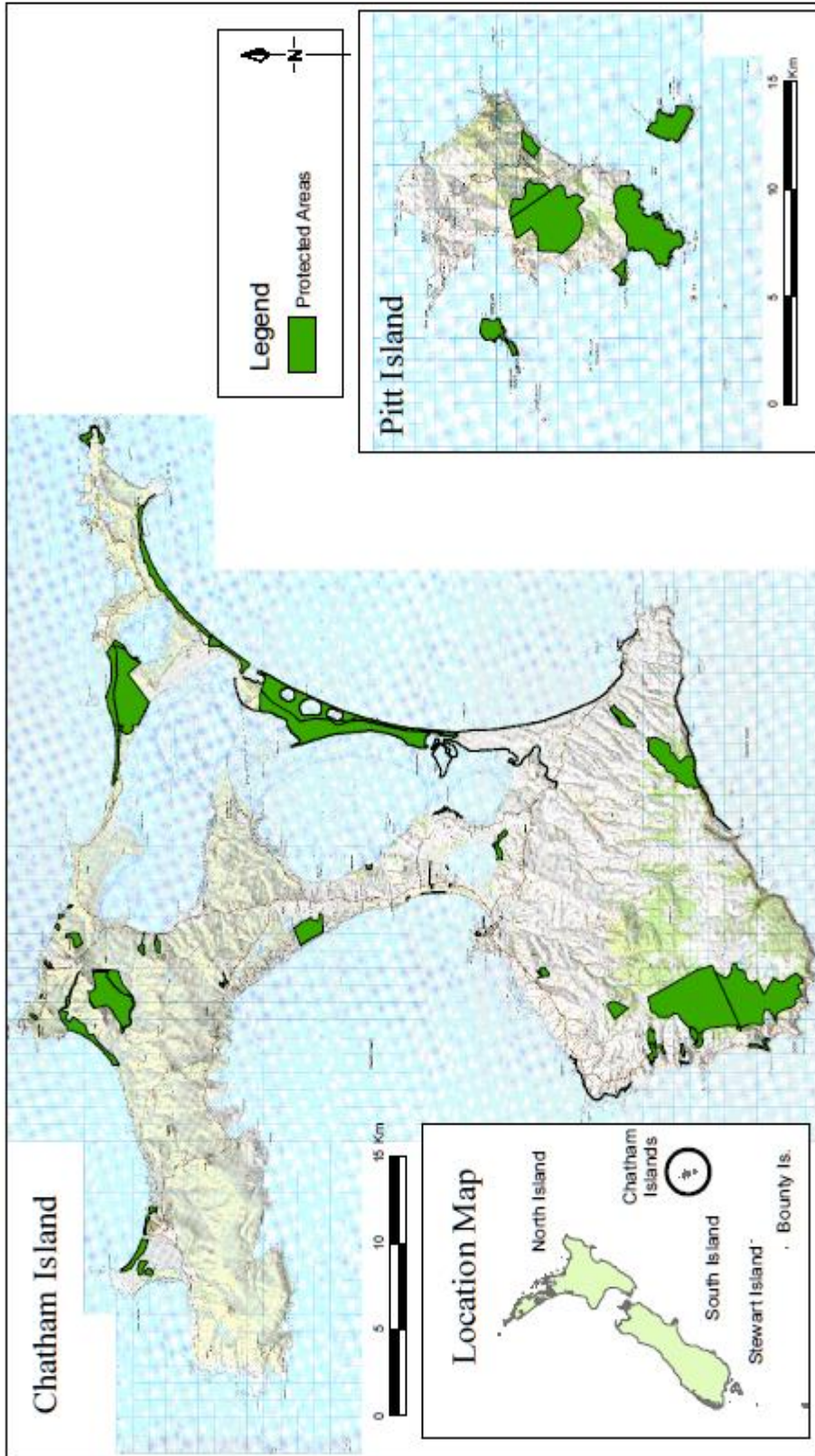
The Department has some work to do in relation to strategic planning and review of its work and priorities with the Pitt Island community over the next year.

7 FINANCIAL YEAR 2017/2018

The Board annual budget of \$22,000 saw the Board able to partake in their annual meeting on Pitt Island which had been previously deferred due to budget constraints. Largely due to weather conditions the budgeted visit to the offshore Nature Reserves (Mangere and Rangitira) was not undertaken, resulting in a budget surplus, some of which the Board granted to the three local schools to assist with large-scale conservation efforts in which they are participating.

Chatham and Pitt Islands

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Te Papa Atawhai