

Chatham Islands Conservation Board Te Pou Atawhai O Rekohu/Wharekauri

Annual Report 2023-2024



Chatham Island Warbler (*Greygone albofronta*) - recently fledged juvenile. Lake Te Rangatapu, Southern Tablelands, Rekohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island.

Image: Saryu Mae

Chatham Islands Conservation Board Te Pou Atawhai O Rekohu/Wharekauri

Annual Report 2023 – 2024

Presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority pursuant to Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act 1987

This report is presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority as required by the Conservation Act 1987 and distributed to interested parties. Members of the public are welcome to attend conservation board meetings.

If you would like more information on the Chatham Islands Conservation Board please see the website www.conservationboards.org.nz or contact the board support officer, at the Department of Conservation in Chatham Islands, phone (03) 305 0098 or e-mail: chathamislandsconservationboard@doc.govt.nz.

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Chairperson's report

Kioranga kotoa,

The 2023 / 2024 year for the Chatham Islands Conservation Board was a busy year made so much easier by the appointment of new board support officer Holly Murphy who attended her first board meeting in December 2023. This much needed and very welcome addition to our board huna / whanau has made life much easier for the Chair who was doing that job as well as their own for a large part of 2023. Holly comes from a Chatham Island lineage with ties to the Department through her late mother 'Murph' who ran much of the Te One Area Office with much appreciated military precision tempered with excellent humour. We are thrilled to have Holly.

In September 2023, the board was introduced to the new Director for the Lower North Island and Chathams Alice Heather. Alice comes from outside the Department of Conservation with experience in running plant nurseries, parks and reserves and also working as a consultant. Alice took up the position in trying times, in an election year with indications of a new Government, with an anticipated new environmental direction, projected budget cuts as well as the looming loss of key staff on the island, notably botanist Tom Hitchon who was keen to move back to Aotearoa / New Zealand to pursue other interests.

On that point the board is appreciative of the efforts made by the Chatham Islands Department of Conservation staff, especially Tiriana Smith, Gemma Green and Tom Hitchon for helping with board issues, their responsiveness and doing excellent work in their respective fields. I would like to signal out Tiriana who has worked tirelessly to uplift, enhance and educate department staff and the board on a range of cultural issues, notably reminding us all that we are treaty partners. In particular she has focussed on a long running issue over the allocation of tohoro (whale) bones to imi and iwi; especially how to deal with rautini, a 60 tonne male sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*) who stranded near Hapupu Bush in 2004 and who has been buried by the Department of Conservation staff quarters in Te One ever since. In July 2024 rautini will be uplifted with the full blessing of Moriori and Ngāti Mutunga ki Wharekauri and his remains removed to a nearby location for cleaning following the appropriate protocols. The board also acknowledges the wise tutelage of Racheal Mora based in Wellington, who has helped us steer our way through the labyrinthine joys of legislation and other statutory requirements. Rachael has an excellent sense of humour that certainly helps in such matters.

The 2023 / 2024 year has also seen most of the boards terms up for renewal. At the time of writing the board has accepted with reluctance that Lois Croon and Alfred Johanson have not sought a second term. We wish them the best for their future endeavours wherever life takes them. We know that Lois will be another guardian of the threatened *Lepidium rekohuense* in her teams ongoing restoration of Pana / Blind Jims. Currently we await the Minister's announcements of new board appointments whilst these are pending. I wish to thank my other Chatham Island board colleagues Denny Prendeville (term ends July 2025) and Levi Lanauze (seeking re-appointment) who greatly assisted me with board matters and plain common sense. The board also welcomes new member Rob Chappell (from Coromandel, Aotearoa / New Zealand) (term 2023-2026), who resided on the islands in the 1980s as the Lands & Survey Ranger and then in the early days of the Department of Conservation. Rob brings a wealth of knowledge to the board and has already made his presence felt in the community with welcome donations of historical documents and items (under his care) to the Chatham Islands Museum. The board also wishes to thank Hamish Tuanui-Chisholm (Predator Free 2050, Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust) for his unstinting support and advice to the board.

Board Field trips included members helping a post graduate student's research on the ability of Chatham peat bogs to sequester carbon (December 2023), and a much-anticipated visit to the Taiko Trust with talks from the trust and research scientists on their management of tch aik / taiko (*Pterodroma magentae*) and Chatham Island Petrel (*P. axillaris*) (March 2024). The final board field trip for the year (May 2024) was to Kaingaroa Point where the chair excited members over the plight of *Lepidium rekohuense* (at what is now its sole-known natural site), *Leptinella featherstonii* and an undescribed species of *Enterographa* lichen that was so spectacular that the board left the chair alone to admire it.

On a more serious note, while the Chatham Islands is free from a range of common conservation issues found throughout the main islands of Aotearoa / New Zealand, the islands have their own conservation problems. Currently the key conservation problem remains an out-of-hand wild pig (*Sus scorfa*) problem. Wild herds in excess of 100 animals are wreaking havoc across the islands. The problem has been identified to the board by concerned islanders and the board has been working with the Chatham Island Council, Department of Conservation, Predator Free, Chatham Islands Landscape & Restoration Trust and Environment Canterbury to try and find solutions that will be palatable to the islanders as a whole. This is still a work in progress.

Also, there is the much larger issue of wide sweeping changes to the Department's management presence on the islands. At the time of writing (June 2024) there will be a significant loss of permanent staff from the island (a reduction from 11 to 7, of which 3 will be residents), with management of the islands shifting to the Wairarapa. Aside from the human cost to the islands in terms of resident expertise let alone the benefit to the economy of having New Zealand staff there, the impact this will have on threatened species and ecosystem management is of major concern. I sincerely hope the new board will not be writing an obituary for a range of threatened species, notably plants (so often overlooked) as a consequence of these decisions.

Me rongō

Peter J. de Lange

Chair, Chatham Islands Conservation Board

Introduction

This is the 34th Conservation Board Annual Report. Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act requires conservation boards to provide the New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority) with an annual report as soon as practical after 30 June each year. In recognition of this requirement the Chatham Islands Conservation Board submits this annual report.

Conservation boards are appointed by the Minister of Conservation under section 6(P) of the Conservation Act 1987. Board functions are outlined in section 6(M) and the powers, which enable the conservation boards to carry out those functions, are under 6(N) of the Act.

Conservation boards are independent advisory bodies, established by statute. They represent the community and offer interaction between communities and the Department of Conservation (the Department), within their area of jurisdiction.

Conservation boards have several statutory roles under various Acts including:

- The recommendation of the Chatham Islands Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) to the Authority for approval.
- Advising the Department and the Authority on how conservation management strategies and plans will be put into practice.
- Reporting on the implementation of the CMS.
- The approval of conservation management plans (CMP).
- The recommendation of national park management plans to the Authority for approval.
- Advising the Department and Authority on conservation matters, and proposed changes to status of land of national and international significance.
- Liaising with the regional Fish and Game Council on conservation matters; and
- Carrying out other powers delegated by the Minister of Conservation, the Conservation Act, or any other Act.

Conservation boards also have several functions under section 30 of the National Parks Act 1980. These functions include recommending the review or amendment of national park management plans and recommending approval of these plans by the Authority.

Conservation Board Region

Chatham Islands Conservation Board

The Chatham Islands Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction covers the area in the map below (Figure 1). The area also extends out to the 12-nautical mile limit with respect to coastal and marine issues, and out to the 200-nautical mile limit with respect to protected species.

The Chatham Islands archipelago 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 Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island (90,000 ha) and Rangihau / Rangiauria / Pitt Island (6,190 ha) are the largest. The Chatham's local time is 45 minutes ahead of the rest of New Zealand.

The Chatham Islands archipelago is 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, Rēkohu / Wharekauri / 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, karst topography, schist outcrops and long stretches of sandy beach, while the island has a large central lagoon of 20,000 ha and there are many moderate sized dune and peat lakes.

As a result of extensive land clearance and the depredations of introduced pest animals the Rēkohu/ Wharekauri/ Chatham landscape is highly modified and indigenous vegetation is now reduced to remnants. Approximately 10% of the forest cover remains – most in the south of the main island.

Five main forest associations 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 bog, sedge and heath wetlands.

The Chatham islands archipelago have the highest level of endemism of any New Zealand biogeographic region. At least fifty of the Chatham Islands 465 native plants, one moss, two lichens (*Lecanora kohu*, *Lithothelium australe*), 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, two of which are based seasonally on Pitt Island. Volunteers, staff and researchers are present on Hokoreoro / Rangitira / South East Island and Maung'Re / 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.

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 700 people that live on the two main islands. Chatham Islanders have very strong ties to their land and resources, reflected by their livelihoods of fishing, farming, and ecotourism

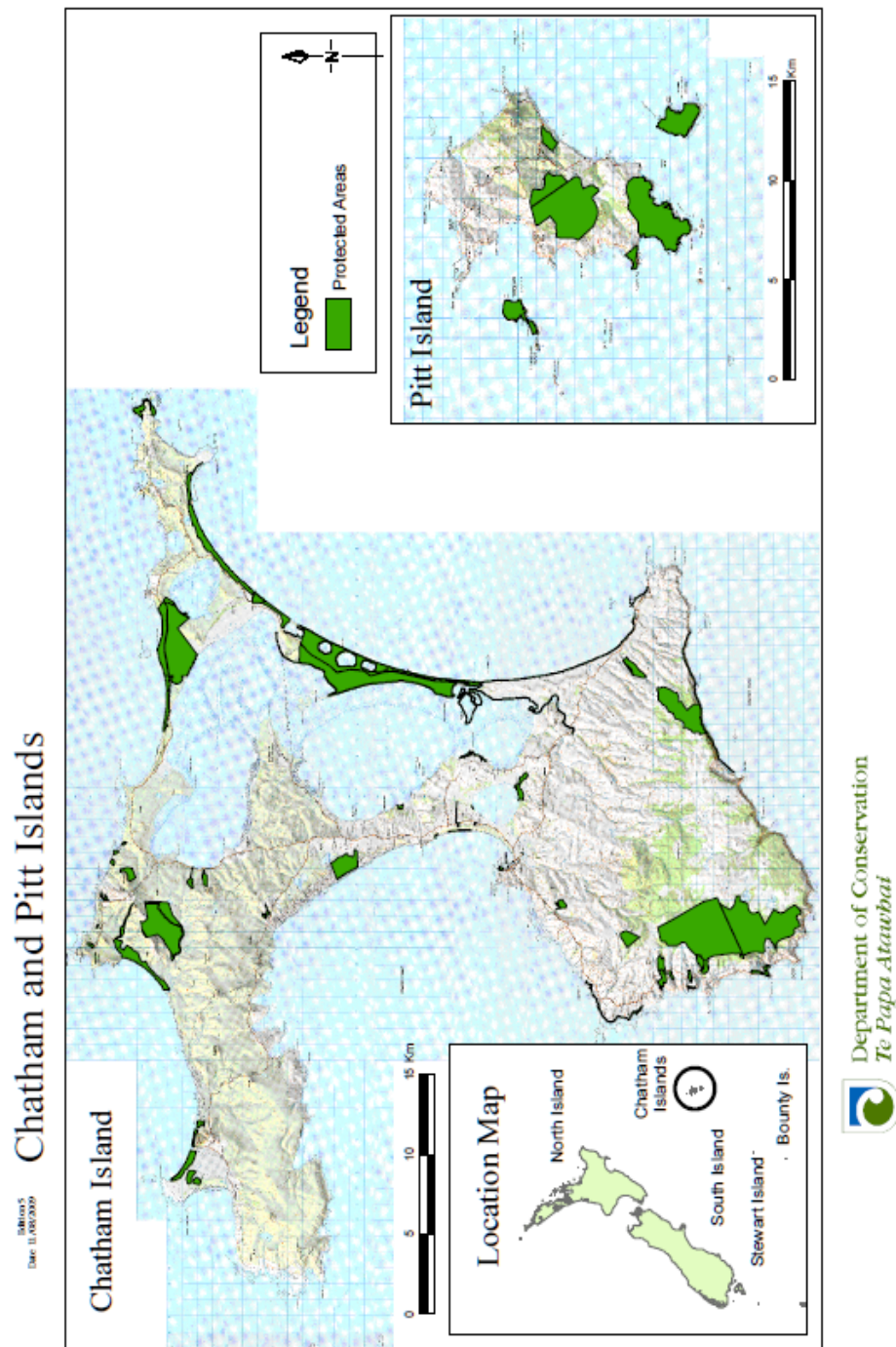


Figure 1: Chatham Islands Conservation Board Jurisdiction

For simplicity and for consistency this report will use the English names and/or official Nature Reserve names. However, the DOC District Office has adopted the practice of using Moriori, Māori and English names for the islands out of respect for the two island Treaty partners and as a way of helping our community understand the importance of placenames. These include: Rēkohu/Wharekauri/Chatham Island and Pitt Island/Rangihau/Rangiauria. Most of the smaller islands and reefs will also have dual names confirmed or recognised through relationship redress in the Settlement legislation

Table 1: Chatham Islands Conservation Feature Names

Official name – post Moriori Deed of Settlement	Unofficial original Moriori name	Other names
Waikokopu (Canister Cove) Scenic Reserve		
JM Barker (Hapūpū) Historic Reserve		
Manaua (Ocean Mail) Scenic Reserve		
Waipāua Scenic Reserve		
Waimihi/Point Alison		
Tamarau Point		Napper Point
Whenuahau Point		Red Bluff
Tapuika		Taupeka
Pana (Blind Jim's Creek)		
Maung'Re / Mangere Island		
Hokoreore / Rangatira / South East Island		
Little Mangere	Tapuaenuku	The Fort
Rangiwheoa (The Castle)		
Star Keys	Motchu Hopo	Motuhope
The Sisters (Rangitatahi)	Rakitchu	
Motuhara	Motchu hara	The Forty Fours or Bertier Rock
The Pyramid (Tarakoikoia)	Tcharako or Tcharok'	Terekoekoe
Waitangi	Waiteki	
Cape Pattison	Tapuaki-o-Hiti	

The large number of issues which are of interest to the Board include:

- Island Biosecurity
- Threatened Species Viability
- Landscape Restoration
- Landscape Regeneration
- Biodiversity Protection
- Freshwater and Coastal Lagoon Ecology

Conservation features of the area

The main features of Public Conservation Land and Waters within the Board's boundaries are shown in the table below:

Table 2: Chatham Islands Conservation features

Frequency	Section	Recorded Area (Hectares)
2	Administration Purpose - s.60 Conservation Act 1987	3
24	Conservation Covenant - s.77 Reserves Act 1977	2182
3	Conservation Covenants entered into under both the Conservation and Reserves Act	80
15	Fixed Marginal Strip - s.24(3) Conservation Act 1987	206
1	Government Purpose Reserve - s.22 Reserves Act 1977	1
3	Historic Reserve - s.18 Reserves Act 1977	1303
1	National Reserve - s.13 Reserves Act 1977	30
3	Nature Reserve - s.20 Reserves Act 1977	1579
9	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	2926
9	Stewardship Area - s.25 Conservation Act 1987	2053
11	Nga Whenua Rahui kawenata	691

Board functioning.

Board functions under section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987

The functions of the Board are:

- 1) To recommend the approval by the Authority of conservation management strategies, and the review and amendment of such strategies, under the relevant enactments.
- 2) To approve conservation management plans, and the review and amendment of such plans, under the relevant enactments.
- 3) To advise the Authority and the Director-General on the implementation of conservation management strategies and conservation management plans for the area within the jurisdiction of the Board.
- 4) To advise the Authority or the Director-General:
 - a. on any proposed change of status or classification of any area of national or international importance; and
 - b. on any other conservation matter relating to any area with the jurisdiction of the Board.
- 5) To liaise with any Fish and Game Council on matter within the jurisdiction of the Board.
- 6) To exercise such powers and functions as may be delegated to it by the Minister under this Act or any other Act.

Powers of the Board under section 6N of the Conservation Act 1987

- 1) Every Board shall have all such powers as are reasonably necessary or expedient to enable it to carry out its functions.
- 2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), each conservation board may:
 - a) advocate its interests at any public forum or in any statutory planning process; and
 - b) appoint committees of members and other suitable persons, and delegate to them functions and powers.
- 3) The power conferred by subsection (2)(a) shall include the right to appear before courts and tribunals in New Zealand and be heard on matters affecting or relating to the Board's functions.

Functions of the Board under section 30 the National Parks Act 1980

- 1) To recommend management plans, and the review or amendment of such plans, for parks within the jurisdiction of the Board in accordance with sections 45 to 47.
- 2) To consider and determine priorities for the implementation of management plans for national parks.
- 3) To make recommendations to the Minister for the appointment of honorary rangers under section 40.
- 4) To review and report to the Director-General or the Authority, as appropriate, on the effectiveness of the administration of the general policies for national parks within the jurisdiction of the Board.
- 5) To give advice to the Director-General or the Authority:
 - a) on the interpretation of any management plan for a park; and
 - b) on any proposal for the addition of land to any national park or the establishment of a new national park; and
 - c) on any other matter relating to any national park, — within the jurisdiction of the Board.

Board membership.

There were 6 Board members for the reporting year appointed by the Minister of Conservation. Peter De Lange was elected Chairperson in June 2021 – as the board is small there is no Deputy Chairperson.

The following table lists the membership of the Board between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2024 and their term of office.

Table: 3 Board membership (2023/ 2024)

Board member	Area	Term start	Term end
Peter de Lange	Auckland	01/07/2018	30/06/2024
Alfred Johanson	Chatham Island	01/07/2021	30/06/2024
Denis Predeville	Chatham Island	01/07/2022	30/06/2025
Levi Lanauze	Chatham Island	01/07/2021	30/06/2024
Lois Croon	Chatham Island	01/07/2021	30/06/2024
Rob Chappell	Coromandel	01/07/2023	30/06/2026

Member profiles

Peter J. de Lange, of Owairaka (Mt Albert), Tamaki Makarau (Auckland), New Zealand *1 July 2018 to 30 June 2024 (two terms)*. Peter is a Professor in the School of Environmental & Animal Sciences, Unitec Institute of Technology - teaching biosystematics, ecology, environmental sciences, and learning from his students daily. A Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, Peter holds degrees from the University of Waikato (B.Sc., M.Sc. (Hons)) and PhD from the University of Auckland. Peter first visited the Chatham Islands in 1996 and has continued to do so regularly ever since. Peter has written many papers on the Chatham Islands Flora and together with other researchers has described a number of new endemic species including Chatham Island scurvy grass (*Lepidium rekohuense*) and the lichen *Lecanora kohu*. Born at Kirikiriroa (Hamilton) in 1966 Peter is of Dutch descent (his whanau hail from the province of Zeeland, Netherlands) with his parents emigrating to Aotearoa / New Zealand in 1960.

Alfred Johanson of Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island *(1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024 (one term))* is of mixed Māori and Finnish descent. Alfred is a long-term resident of the Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island where he lives in Te One. He has worked a variety of jobs on the island including fishing, truck and school bus driving. He has a keen interest in the islands history and is currently writing a book about his families history on the island.

Denis Predeville (Denny) of Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island *(1 July 2022 to 30 June 2025)* is a sixth-generation Islander of mixed Māori, Moriori descent who has a long history of involvement with the conservation of the Chatham Islands environment. He has a detailed knowledge of the past uses of the islands flora and fauna for food, medicine and timber. This knowledge and his connections to the people of the islands helps provide a strong terrestrial and marine focus to the boards activities.

Levi Lanauze of Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island *(1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024)*, a Pitt Island land owner, is of Moriori and Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri descent. He is a member of the Hokotehi Moriori Trust (HMT), and the Land Advisory Committee, chairman of the Chatham Island Farmers Group, Pest free 2050 trustee, and Tcheki Farm and Forest for HMT

Lois Croon of Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Islands (1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024) is the chairperson of the Chatham Island arts restoration trust, Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Kaumatua, and a registered member of Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri, She is the business owner of Admiral Garden

Rob Chappell of Coromandel, (1 July 2023- 30 June 2026) Rob has a long history of involvement with Doc and with the Chatham Islands first coming over in 1985 as the first permanent wildlife reserves ranger, and then moved onto being field centre manager for the area. He was then transferred to the Coromandel Peninsular as a field centre manager there but did return to the islands as a temporary area manager for periods of up to 6 months. Rob is now Retired.

Board meetings.

The Board held 4 meetings during the reporting period. Venues for the meetings vary each year to ensure a wide coverage and enable members of the public in the district to attend meetings and access the Board.

Table: 4 Board meeting dates and location

Board meeting date	Meeting location and venue
28 th September 2023	Council Office and Whareweka
4 th December 2023	Henga Lodge
23 rd March 2024	Tuku Taiko camp
7 th May 2024	Kaingaroa Station

Attendance

The table below summarises the number of Board meetings attended by members out of the total number of meetings held during the year.

Members attended other meetings and events in their role as Board members, including subcommittee meetings and representative roles.

Table: 5 Board meeting attendance

Board member	Board meetings
Peter de Lange	4/4
Alfred Johanson	2/4
Levi Lanauze	4/4
Lois Croon	3/4
Denis Prendeville	3/4
Rob Chappell	3/4

Field trips and site inspections

Field trips are an excellent opportunity for Board members to become more aware of conservation issues within their region.

Table 6: Field trips and site inspections

Field trip date	Field trip destination and purpose
28 th September 2023	Tuku visit with Predator Free.
4 th December 2023	Henga Nursery
23 rd March 2024	Sweet water, bush walk in Tuku
7 th May 2024	Planters Kaingaroa Station

Board Committees

The Chatham Island Conservation Board has to date seen no need for subcommittees – the board is small and the issues the board usually covers are best dealt with by the whole board. However, from time-to-time board members may be delegated to deal with particular issues, for example, the wild pig problem is being handled by Denis Prendeville and Lois Croon. Who report back to the board at each meeting.?

Training for members

The Chatham Islands Conservation Board members were provided with a refresher course on the implications of the Moriori Treaty Settlement Act (14 February 2020) by Matt Russell, Treaty Settlement Office, Department of Conservation.

At all board meetings the Department of Conservation Operations Manager Tiriana Smith has attended at the request of the board. In addition, the board heard reports from Erin Patterson (Department of Conservation Biodiversity Supervisor) on the black robin / karure (*Petroica traversi*) translocation to Maung'Re and that species management, and from Tom Hitchon (Flora Officer) on threatened plant issues. Tom also provided a presentation of the Departments Biodiversity work (July 2023) preparatory to a conference paper he was giving at the August 2023 Chathams Science Festival.

Department involvement in Board meetings

DOC Staff who regularly attending our meetings include:

- Regional Director, LNI and provided Director updates.
- Statutory Manager, LNI
- Operations Manager
- Administrative Support was provided to the Board by the Board Support Officer

Annual work plan

Please refer to Appendix 1 for the full Board Annual Work Programme and progress commentary.

Statutory activity

2023-2024 Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)

The Chatham Islands Conservation Management Strategy (1999) is significantly out of date. The board has helped the Department update sections of a draft Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) three times since 2018. However, the board and the Department cannot proceed further without input from a Department of Conservation Planner. The board has requested a planner to complete the process and is still waiting for one to be provided. The considerable delays have meant that the work done by the board on the CMS is again out of date.

Advice and advocacy

All Board members have responsibility for liaising with other groups when opportunities arise, and some members have specific roles in liaison. The Board appointed various members to liaise with other groups and agencies.

Table 7: Board liaisons and representatives

Board member	Group/agency/organisation
Levi Lanauze	Land Advisory Committee, Hokotehi Trust
Peter de Lange	Chatham Islands Restoration Trust, Chatham Islands Predator Free 2050, Taiko Trust, Moriori Imi Settlement Trust
Lois Croon	Chatham Islands Art Restoration Trust

Other Conservation Boards liaison

The board has connections to Tairāwhiti / East Cape through liaison officer Jordan Tibble who was kept informed of board activities by email.

Authority liaison

The New Zealand Conservation Authority Chair Edward Ellison is the Chatham Islands Conservation Boards Liaison officer. The board heard from Edward via a ZOOM link in November 2022 and Edward and the Chair have regular phone conversations about board functions and issues.

Department advice

The Board provided advice to the Department on the following issues:

- Management of Chatham Island Threatened Plants, especially *Lepidium panniforme* and *L. rekohuense*.
- Seed collection and propagation requirements of assorted Chatham Islands endemic plants
- Advice on causes of leaf drop and death in kopi (*Corynocarpus laevigatus*) and mataira (*Myrsine chathamica*)
- Advice on myrtle rust disease caused by the exotic rust (*Austropuccinia psidii*).
- Identification of the cause of red 'blooms' on Lake Huro (January 2023) and the impact of *Azolla rubra* on the wetlands of the islands (de Lange & Hitchon 2023, *Perspectives in Biodiversity*, <https://dx.doi.org/10.34074/pibdiv.001104>)

Community advocacy and involvement

The Board believes that working with conservation organisations and members of the public is very important. Meetings were held in different parts of the Islands and opportunities for the public to attend Board meetings were advertised via Chatham Islands social media and websites. Participation from resident Environment Canterbury Biosecurity Officers, Chatham Island Council representatives and Chatham Islands Predator Free 2050, Taiko Trust is encouraged for all meetings.

Public forum issues raised were:

- Wild pig control concerns
- Concerns over the Moriori Treaty Settlement right to harvest hakoko / titi (*Ardenna grisea*) from Maung'Re / Mangere Island or Hokoreoreo / Rangatira / South East Island Nature Reserves

The Board has a practice of inviting representatives from community organisations to present at each meeting. Speakers this year have represented:

- Predator Free 2050 – who outlined their proposal for a predator free exclusion zone along the coast of Te Whanga from Te Matare north to Big Bush
- Thomas Emmett, Department of Conservation, who provided a department draft response to the wild pig problem

These were predominantly voluntary groups carrying out huge amounts of conservation work within the community. The Board recognises and appreciates volunteers and thanks them for the work done in this area.

Community visibility

Regular updates of the board's activities were posted on the Chatham Islands website (<https://chathams.co.nz/>) run by David Houston (Department of Conservation). These were then shared with the Chatham islanders Worldwide Facebook page. This system provided maximum coverage to islanders, New Zealanders, and the international community. Unfortunately, the Chatham Islands website was irrevocably damaged by hacking three times in 2023 to the point that all information was lost. In December 2023 David Houston confirmed he was not prepared to restore the website. At the time of writing (March 2024) the board is seeking to have its meetings and activities posted on the Chatham Islands Restoration Trust website – who is very keen for content.

District and regional council advocacy and advice

The Board appreciates the opportunities to meet with representatives of the Chatham Islands council, Chatham Islands Restoration Trust, Predator Free 2050, Biosecurity Officers, Hokotehi Trust Board, Moriori Imi Settlement Trust, Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri, Taiko Trust and Chatham Islands Museum Councils and other interested parties. Regular participation in the boards meetings has come from the Chatham Islands Restoration Trust and Predator Free 2050.

During the year the board received detailed reports from the Taiko Trust about the management of tchiak / taiko (*Pterodroma magentae*), and progress toward attaining the goals of Predator Free 2050 on the islands..

Iwi liaison and advocacy

The board through its composition routinely liaises with iwi and imi. The Chair uses visits to the islands to engage in personal visits to HMT and MIST especially to ensure that the

responsibilities of the Department of Conservation and the Chatham Islands Conservation Board under the Moriori Treaty Settlement Act are being upheld.

Acknowledgements

The board would like to thank the numerous Chatham Islanders who have accommodated and given us their hospitality. In particular we wish to thank Hamish Tuanui-Chisholm, Bruce & Liz Tuanui, Dave Boyle, John & Judy Kamo, and Alfred Preece for their freely given expertise, access across their lands or help with meeting field trips.

Appendix I –Annual Work Plan

Chatham Islands Rēkohu/Wharekauri Conservation Board

Work Programme 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

Work Programme overview.

This Work Programme responds to the Letter of Expectation from the Minister of Conservation received 19 July 2022. The intention is that this document will be reviewed and updated at Board meetings during the year, as a living document.

It comprises three parts, some of which contain overlapping objectives:

Part A: Planned Board activities aimed at meeting the Board’s strategic priorities and its core statutory functions:




1. Support feral cat and pest control on the outer islands.
2. Support predator free Chatham Islands initiatives.
3. Support completion of the CMS.
4. Better integrate the Chatham Islands Conservation Board and other parties on the Island concerned with conservation.
5. Ensure threatened species management of all threatened biota on Chatham Islands is maintained.

Part B: The Minister’s fundamental priorities as set out in the Letter of Expectation:

6. Support the Implementation of Te Mana o te Taiao – The Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy
7. Contribute to any reviews of National Park Management Plans and Conservation Management Strategies and support their progress effectively to promote strong conservation outcomes.
8. Embed the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in accordance with the obligations of Section 4 of the Act in all aspects of work.
9. Support the transition to a lower carbon conservation delivery model, having regard to the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019

Part C: General expectations contained in the Minister’s Letter:

10. Work closely with the Department of Conservation to achieve strategic outcomes.
11. Working with adjoining conservation boards, the New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority, NZCA) and other conservation boards.
12. Inform the Minister of any material or significant events relating to the Board, whether positive or negative.
13. Understand the Board’s legal obligations covered in section 5 of the Conservation Board Manual.
14. Monitor and self-review.

Key:	Means...
	Action under way and on track, ongoing or completed.
	Potential for concern, early flag.
	Risks identified, delay or concern.

PART A: REGIONAL WORK PROGRAMME

- 1 Review / development of statutory management plans including conservation management strategies (CMS)

Board objective The board will obtain from the Department of Conservation the necessary CMS Planner to enable the CMS to proceed.

Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2023
A	Board Approached the Department for a CMS Planner	In Active	Despite written letters, verbal communication with relevant staff in the Ponake / Southern North Island, Director (Jack Mace, Alice Heather), the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) and Conservation Board Support Staff – no planner has been forthcoming. As such all the work done on the CMS is now out of date and will need review. The board has at this stage, elected to await a decision from the Department about resourcing the CMS and providing a planner.

- 2 The board will work with and enhance relationships with treaty partners to ensure biodiversity management goals are appropriate and in accord with settlement agreements.

Board objective The board will work with iwi / imi representatives and through its membership ensure that any treaty issues raised by iwi / imi are brought to the board's attention. Further, the board will ensure that the Department acts as a good treaty partner.

Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2022
A	Board to be updated on the Department and Boards Obligations under the Moriori Treaty Settlement Act of 14 February 2020	Completed	The board met with the Department's Treaty Settlement Office and the board and the Department obligations with imi reviewed. The board is now conversant with the relevant parts of the treaty settlement as they affect the Department and the Board.
B	Board will seek to meet with and work alongside imi partners	Ongoing	The board visited Kaingaroa Farm Station and saw the imi-lead initiatives to restore the forest over large swathes of that area. Board members have acted as advisors to imi nursery staff on the cultivation of indigenous Chatham Islands plants and weed issues

C	Board will be informed of the Departments relationship with imi / iwi	Ongoing	The Operations Report has been used as a vehicle to outline progress on such issues as providing feathers from dead birds stored in the Departments Freezer for use in cultural works, and on resolution of tohoroa remains, notably Rautini.
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3 Other statutory functions

Board objective	The Board will form relationships with and liaise with other conservation agencies, NGO's and councils on the island to enhance collaboration and achieve better conservation outcomes
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Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2022
A	Generic invite to Board meetings sent to Chatham Islands Council, Predator Free 2050, Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust, Taiko Trust, Environment Canterbury and landowners	Ongoing	Chatham Islands Council attended one meeting – and has put in apologies for others. Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust, Predator Free and Taiko Trust provided reports of attended meetings. Some landowners attended meetings. A better response from Environment Canterbury is sought – they have not attended any meetings for over a year.

Board objective	Maintain strong working relationships with hunau / whānau, kapū / hapū, imi / iwi and tchakat henu / mana whenua on the Chatham Islands
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	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2022
A	Board will invite imi / iwi to board meetings	Ongoing	Most board members whakapapa to imi / iwi on the island report back as relevant to imi / iwi. Furthermore some board members are representatives of the relevant branches of Moriori (Hokotehi Trust / Moriori Imi Settlement Trust (MIST) and / or Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri – so carry out the same function. The Chair of the board frequently liaises with Hokotehi Trust and MIST.

4 Advocacy

Board objective

Through the appropriate media available on the Chatham Islands the board will announce its meetings, advocate and report on conservation activities

Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2022
A	Provide regular reports to Chatham Islanders via the Chatham Islands website and Chatham Islanders Worldwide facebook group	Ongoing	Reports on the boards meetings and activities and that of the Department of Conservation and researchers were regularly provided via the Chatham Islands website (and from there shared with Chatham Islanders Worldwide Facebook group) – this continued until late December 2023 when it was discovered that the Chatham Islands website had been irrevocably hacked and all content (some 18 years’ worth) destroyed. The board is now looking to report its activities via the newly set up Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust website (see https://www.chathamrestorationtrust.org.nz/)
B	Encourage the Department of publish its findings in popular and peer-reviewed literature	Ongoing	In 2023 one staff member published a paper on the occurrence of <i>Azolla rubra</i> on Rēkohu/Wharekauri/ Chatham Islands in <i>Perspectives in Biodiversity</i> – see https://doi.org/10.34074/pibdiv.001104 More literature stemming from Department of Conservation staff activities is anticipated for 2024 / 2025.
C	The board will be represented (when possible) at Chatham Islands community gatherings, festivals and other such activities	Ongoing	The board chair gave a paper about Chatham Islands flora and the history of botanical exploration at the Chatham Islands Science Festival (August 2023).

PART B: General Expectations 2023-2024

5 Working with the Department

Board objective Board members will maintain good working relationships and open dialogue with directors, managers and board support officers in order to engage strategically in conservation for the region

Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2022
A	The Department and its representatives are invited to all board meetings	Ongoing	Excellent – see main body of report
B	The chair will regularly update the Department and its representatives of board issues (no surprises)	Ongoing	Excellent – see main body of report

6 Taking account of Ministerial priorities for the Department

Board objective The board will within the working place that is the Chatham Islands support the implementation of Te Mana o te Taiao – the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy

Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2022
A	Ensure that biodiversity milestones set by the Department Te One Office are met	Ongoing	Operations Report used to track progress. Board provides feedback / comments, specialist advice when needed (or solicits advice from other experts).
B	Pig Control Plan	Ongoing	Draft plan circulated to the board and discussed with feedback given as appropriate
C	Threatened Biota management	Ongoing	Reports to the board, advice solicited from the board. Advice and specialist skills provided as required. Board members often working outside the islands to obtain help as needed.
D	Support feral cat and pest control on the outer islands	Ongoing	Regular updates from Operations Report. Regular meetings with Chatham Islands Predator Free 2050 staff / Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration trust and Taiko Trust

Board objective The board will work with the **Operations Manager, Department of Conservation, Te One**, to ensure that staff well-being is met.

Planned Board Activities success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2023
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A	Operations manager to develop plan on staff well-being within six months of starting position	Completed	Tiriana Smith (who has considerable expertise in this area) developed a plan, implemented it and reported back on results. These were positive. The board spoke with Department Staff – all of whom demonstrated a left in morale and such commitment to work.
B	Operations manager to provide regular updates on staff well-being through the year	Completed	Operations Report outlined staff well-being and raised issues (if any) which the board then discussed with the Department to see what could be done to assist. It was noted that one staff member who had injured themselves was assigned a range of tasks to allow them to feel a part of the work place whilst they recuperated
C	The board will recognise staff achievements with verbal and written assessments	Ongoing	Staff performance was praised (when necessary). A staff member who resigned was sent a letter outlining their achievements and wishing them success in their future endeavours

9 Working with adjoining conservation Boards and the Authority

Board objective	The board will work with Tairawhiti / East Coast Conservation Board Liaison Office and the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) Liaison Officer as well as attend NZCA hosted Chair meeting as required
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Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2022
A	Contact made with Tairawhiti / East Coast Conservation Board Liaison Office Jordan Tibble	Completed	Jordan discussed how the Chatham Islands Conservation Board functions and contrasted this with how the Tairawhiti / East Coast Conservation Board – there really is not overlap with issues and activities. As such it was agreed to keep in contact when necessary,
B	Contact with NZCA liaison officer Edward Ellison	Ongoing	The board chair and Edward hold two monthly phone calls (as required) and, again, as required Edward has attended Chatham Islands Conservation Board meetings online to discuss issues when needed. Edward has also worked with the Chair to provide advice on new board appointments.
C	Attend NZCA hosted Chair meeting	Completed	A board member attended a NZCA hosted Conservation Board Chair meeting in Wellington in September 2023

10	Understand the boards contribution to giving effect to the principals of the Treaty of Waitangi	
	Board objective	The board will receive a refresher course on the implications of the Moriori Treaty Settlement of 14 February 2020 from the Department of Conservation Treaty Settlements Office (Matt Russell).

Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2022
A	Matt Russell to speak to the board in July 2022	Completed	Matt provided, for those familiar with the act, a refresher and, for those not, an induction. The implications of the act were made clear. The board is now fully aware of its role and responsibilities in relation to the act
B	The board will support the Departments development of and ongoing partnership with imi	Ongoing	The board has supported the Department in implementing treaty-based issues such as hakoko / titi (<i>Ardenna grisea</i>) harvest and island visits by imi, repatriation of bird feathers to local weaving groups, and ongoing efforts to resolve the handling of tohoroa remains like rautini.
C	When the Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Treaty Settlement is resolved the board will act in the same way as it has for the Moriori Treaty Settlement – i.e. in good faith in open partnership	Ongoing	The Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Treaty Settlement has yet to be reached with the crown. When it has the board will seek to be briefed and will act as directed thereafter.

11	Engaging with the community, including raising the profile of the Board	
	Board objective	Board members will liaise regularly with other conservation entities, such as district and regional councils, NGOs and community groups, in order to enhance the profile of the Board and pursue good working relationships on issues of mutual interest and concern]

Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2022
A	Invite Chatham Islands Council, Environment Canterbury (when on island) and their resident biosecurity officers, NGOs . community groups, iwi and imi to board meetings	Ongoing	See annual report above for evidence of engagement and activities. For 2023 / 2024 it is intended to seek better engagement with the Biosecurity Officers.
B	Board members to liaise with those organisations listed in ‘A’ above	Ongoing	See annual report above for evidence of engagement and activities.

C	The board will seek meetings with new agencies. NGO's etc as they arise	Ongoing	As and when opportunities arise the board will take the initiative.
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Part C: Risks and Opportunities 2022-2023

12 Risks form the Boards perspective

A	Loss of capability, expertise from the board
B	Loss of continuity to board turn over

13 Opportunities for conservation growth

A	Invest in young researchers visiting the islands
B	Encourage a presence at the Chatham Islands science festival, and iwi and imi hui
C	Stay abreast of new developments and initiatives on the islands that relate to conservation activities

This report is presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority as required by the Conservation Act 1987 and distributed to interested parties. Members of the public are welcome to attend conservation board meetings. If you would like more information on the Rekohu/Wharekauri/ Chatham Islands Conservation Board please see the website www.conservationboards.org.nz or contact the board support officer, at the Department of Conservation in (03) 3050098 or e-mail homurphy@doc.govt.nz.