

Kapiti – a changing resource

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to explain why peoples views have changed over time concerning Kapiti Island, hunting whales, rats and possums and marine reserves.

Links can be made to:

Social Studies: Resources and Economic Activity

Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

L4: How and why people view and use resources differently and the consequence of this

Place and environment

Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

L3: How different groups view and use places and the environment

Place and environment

Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

L4: How places reflect past interactions of people with the environment

English

Links can be made to Oral language: Listening and Speaking functions and Written Language: reading and writing functions.

Pre-visit: Learning about the environment

Teachers will need:

Chalkboard or whiteboard

Chronology of Kapiti Island and Kapiti Marine Reserve (in ringbinder: Appendix)

Coloured chalks or whiteboard pens

Date cards (in ringbinder at the end of this section)

Photographs (in yellow folder)

- Te Rauparaha (1839) Heaphy A
- Looking up Waiorua stream (1972)
- Jilletts Whaling station (1844) Bowring
- Whaling (1900s)
- Wharekohou Chris Edkins
- Waiorua Valley (1921)
- Group of hunters (1890)
- Two dogs and seven men with guns (1890s)

Students can:

Create a timeline using your own knowledge about Kapiti Island. Brainstorm what you know about Kapiti Island. Write these down on pieces of paper and create a timeline where they think they might belong. Use the date cards to establish the timeline.

Study one of the photographs recording Kapiti Island's past. In small groups discuss the following questions:

- What is happening in the picture?
- What do you think was happening on Kapiti at this time?

- Why do you think this was?
- When do you think this was happening?
- Would this happen now?

Share the photographs with the class and add the photographs to the timeline that you have already created.

Analyse changes in peoples' behaviour towards resource use and conservation over time. Discuss the effect of peoples' changing attitudes on Kapiti's environment, plants and animals. For example, goats were brought to Kapiti as domesticated animals. They were also valued because their browsing reduced the amount of undergrowth in the forest and reduced the spread of fires. However, they destroyed the forest and became pests and were later eradicated.

Working in pairs illustrate a major change in the history of Kapiti Island. Use these illustrations to create a mural showing the history of conservation on Kapiti Island and Kapiti Island Marine Reserve.

On-site: Learning in/about the environment

Teachers will need:

Chronology of Kapiti Island and Kapiti Marine Reserve (in ringbinder: Appendix)

Date cards (in ringbinder at the end of this section)

Worksheet

- Exploring the past on Kapiti Island

Photographs (in yellow folder)

- Goats on the flat (1860–1920)
- House at Rangatira (1969)
- Kaikoura (1910)
- Whalebones (1910)
- G S *Hinemoa* whaling expedition (1908)
- Launch on Kapiti Island 1908
- Unidentified people (1910)
- Two dogs and seven men with guns (1890s)

Students can:

Listen to the introductory talk taking note of the history on Kapiti Island.

Create a timeline. From the talk think of an event in Kapiti's past. Stand in a line, where you think your event should come in the timeline. Discuss with the students standing next to you and reshuffle until you have formed a timeline. Pass the photographs one at a time down the timeline and discuss when they might have been taken, and what might have been going on at the time.

Compare the photographs with the environment on Kapiti Island now. In groups choose a photograph and go to where the photo was taken (or an associated place—noted on the back of the photograph). Study the photographs, in your groups. Discuss what might have been happening when the photograph was taken, and what changes might have taken place to reach the present. Record this on the worksheet **Exploring the past on Kapiti Island**.

Write a sensory poem about the past on Kapiti Island or changes that have taken place. Find a space on your own and think about the time that the photograph was taken and the changes that have happened since. Use the questions on the worksheet as a prompt if you need to.

Meet back at the visitor shelter and make a tour of the sites. As a class share your groups' photographs, quotes and thoughts with the rest of the class. Leave at least an hour to walk around each of the 7 sites in alphabetical order.

Post-visit: Taking action for the environment

Teachers will need:

Timeline drawn from previous activity as reference material

A3 paper

Coloured pencils/ pens

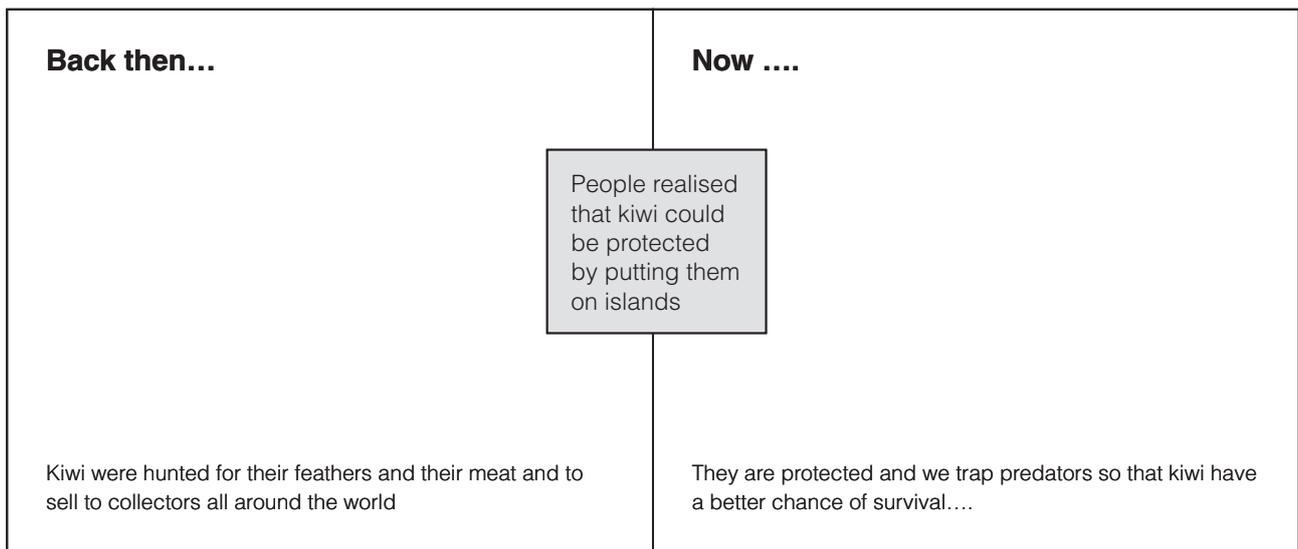
Students can:

Brainstorm why Kapiti Island is such an important place, what was it used for in the past and what peoples attitudes are towards it are today.

Investigate how peoples' attitudes have changed towards the use of a resource. Make a list of ways in which Kapiti island or the plants and animals that live there have been used. In pairs choose a resource from the list you have created and answer the following questions:

- How was it used and what were peoples attitudes to this in the past?
- How is it used now?
- Have attitudes or behaviours changed and if so why?

Design a poster that illustrates the changes in the way Kapiti Island and its plants and animals have been used and valued. An example could be to fold a piece of A3 paper in half, one side representing the past and the other the present, link the two with a box explaining why this change occurred.



Assessment

Students can list three different ways in which Kapiti Island has been used over time.

Students can describe why these uses have changed using the above examples.

Students can describe differences in attitudes towards New Zealand plants and animal using a specific example in the past and now.

Additional information to support the activities above

Resources in kit (yellow dot)

Maps

- Kapiti showing historic sites (including whaling stations Long point, Waiorua, te Kahuoterangi, and Wharekohu)
- Rangatira showing best sites to discuss photographs

Dates for Timeline (2)

Books

- *Kapiti* Chris Maclean

Species photo cards

- Tui
- Little spotted kiwi
- Possum
- Hihi
- Short-tailed bat

Chronology of Kapiti Island and Kapiti Marine Reserve

Video

- Wild South “Sanctuary keepers”

Photographs

- Te Rauparaha (1839) Heaphy A
- Looking up Waiorua stream (1972)
- Jillets Whaling station (1844) Bowring
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Other resources

- Kapiti Island Nature Reserve (pamphlet)

Date cards

1897

Kapiti Island Nature Reserve
created

1992

Kapiti Marine Reserve created

Geology of Kapiti Island



Kapiti Island is the summit of a submerged mountain range created by earthquakes 200 million years ago. At one time, moa and kakapo wandered the valley that lay between the mountains and the rest of the mainland. Several million years ago, most of this range was inundated by rising sea level. It was, for a time, part of a land bridge that extended across what is now Cook Strait. What remains is an island about 10km long and 2km wide with wind-blasted hillsides to the west and lush temperate rain forests to the sheltered east.



Kapiti Island viewed from Kapakapanui, inland from Paraparaumu. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.



Motu rongonui



Kapiti Island was also known as “motu rongonui” or “famous island” to pre-European Māori. Legend tells that Maui and his brothers caught a great fish (the North Island—Te Ika A Maui) while out fishing in their canoe (the South Island—Te Waka A Maui). Another legend tells of Kupe, the great explorer Kupe, who arrived in New Zealand from eastern Polynesia about 1000 years ago. Kupe is important in the history of all Māori in Aotearoa and has connections to many of the present tribes. After being surprised by the giant wheke (octopus) of Maturangi, in Te Awaiti (Tory Channel), Kupe managed to distract and kill the wheke. After sailing into Te Whanganui a Tara (Wellington harbour), he travelled up the west coast, passing between the islands of Kapiti and Mana. Tribal tradition says that Kupe created these islands by severing them off from the mainland with one blow from his paddle.

The waters around Kapiti and the island itself have a long association with Māori including Ngāti Kahungunu, Rangitane, Muaupoko and Ngāti Tara and later Ngāti Toarangatira, Te Ati Awa and Ngāti Raukawa. Kapiti was known as Te Warwae Kapiti o Tararua Ko Rangitane, a name which signified the boundary line between the Rangitane tribe and the Ngāti Tara tribe. The island was first settled in the 11th century after the explorers Toi and Whatonga discovered Kupe's island. In these early days people used waka (canoe) to travel to places because the vegetation was too dense to get around easily on foot. Kapiti was used as a base for fishing and hunting birds such as kiwi, tui, and kereru. Local elders call the waters around Kapiti ‘he puna kai’ (the spring well of food) or ‘he kapata kai’ (the food basket).

Ngāti Toa, led by Te Rauparaha, captured the island in 1823. Te Rauparaha and his allies used Kapiti as a strategic base. Kapiti's location offered an accessible port for trading flax fibre, which was harvested on the Kapiti Coast, for muskets. Kapiti was also an important fortress—it was well situated to command the surrounding seas from the South Island to Taranaki and from which to base attacks on the South Island and its valuable pounamu (greenstone). After the Treaty of Waitangi was signed and government was established, tribal conflict was reduced and Kapiti became less important as a strategic base.

Rangatira was used as a pa site and later a trading post. There are archaeological remains of house

terraces to the north of Rangatira and pits and middens to the south, however the evidence is limited due to native forest regeneration.

Other resources

- Book: *Kapiti* Chris Maclean
- Marathon swimmers
- Te Rauparaha www.tki.org.nz>r/maori/te-rauparaha/index_e.php and www.ngatitooa.iwi.nz/te-rauparaha



European history



Captain Cook named Kapiti Island, "Entry Island" in 1770, on his first visit to New Zealand.

By the mid 1820s Kapiti Island was well known as a trading post for flax fibre. At that time the mainland Kapiti coast was a series of interconnected wetlands, providing seemingly endless supplies of flax. The flax fibre was manufactured into rope, canvas and cloth in Europe. A number of traders managed to negotiate land purchases on Kapiti Island and settled there.

Shore-based whaling occurred on Kapiti Island from 1839 to 1847. In the height of whaling there were seven stations on Kapiti and neighbouring islands. Like many industries of the time the whaling industry was based on the assumption that the resource was there to be plundered. It wasn't until it became uneconomic to hunt, because there were so few whales, that the stations closed down and whaling stopped. There are whaling tryptots outside the visitor shelter at Rangaitira. These have been transferred here from another site, probably Waiorua.

As the whales grew scarce some families began farming to support themselves. Waiorua became a farming settlement made up of traders and whalers who had married Maori women. In 1840 over half the land on Kapiti was cleared for farming. A number of forest fires swept over the island at this time.

However farming proved uneconomic and by 1860 there were only two families farming on Kapiti, one based at Wharekohu and one at Waiorua. It soon became uneconomic to farm due to the lack of arable land and the cost of transporting livestock off the island and by the 1890s most farm areas were closed. Changes in vegetation patterns on the island can be seen in early photographs taken on the island. The Whare is the oldest building on the island. It was built as a farming cottage and dates from the 1860s.

Other resources

- *NZ Geographic* #60 November–December 2002 'Thar' she blows—Whaling in New Zealand (Secondary kit only)

Right: A whalers' tryptot at Rangaitira.

Photo: Dave Wrightson.

Below: An impression of the whaling station at Te Kahuoterangi on Kapiti Island.

Illustration by Chris Edkins.



History of conservation on Kapiti Island



Kapiti Island is one of New Zealand's longest restoration projects. It has provided inspiration for conservation projects both offshore and on mainland New Zealand as well as overseas.

During the late 1800s people were aware that a number of bird species were heading for extinction but most people believed this was inevitable. In other parts of New Zealand rare birds were collected by museums, accelerating their decline. In 1870, Kapiti was identified by naturalists as a possible site for a bird sanctuary. In 1893, possums and fallow deer were released by the Wellington Acclimatisation Society on Kapiti, joining the wild goats, sheep, pigs, cows, and feral cats that were already having an impact on the understory of the regenerating bush and any wildlife that had survived.

Kapiti Island Nature Reserve was established in 1897, however, much of the habitat on the island had by this time had been cut down, browsed or burnt. Many of the island's native species did not survive. Early introductions of species to Kapiti included kiwi, kakapo, saddleback, takehe and tuatara. Of these only kiwi and weka survived these initial introductions.

Much of the early work on using islands as bird reserves was pioneered by the visionary naturalist, Richard Henry, who arrived as a caretaker on Kapiti in 1908. The DOC whare near Rangatira was at one time his home.

In the 1920s Kapiti was a popular destination for trampers and Waiarua Bay became a well known resort for recreation and fishing. Smaller groups also visited the sanctuary and based themselves at Rangatira. It was difficult to regulate and monitor the impacts of groups of visitors and a permitting system was introduced in 1949. Kapiti Island is still a popular visitor destination, in 2004 8000 people visited the nature reserve.

The waters around Kapiti were well known for its abundance of fish. Divers became aware that the fishery was becoming depleted in the early seventies. After extensive consultation and debate the Kapiti Island Marine Reserve was established in 1992.

Other resources

- *Kapiti* Chris Maclean (book)
- *NZ Geographic* #42 April–June 1999 Flax the enduring fibre (Secondary kit only)



The whare in the early 20th century. Today it is surrounded by forest. Photo: Alexander Turnbull Library.



Changes in conservation management



Over the years there have been some major changes in conservation management in New Zealand as peoples' attitudes changed and new techniques were developed. Kapiti Island Nature Reserve is unique in that it has a nature reserve status but is still accessible to the general public.

Native animals were hunted for food and feathers until some were protected under the Native Animal Act in 1921, and others by the Wildlife Act in 1953. Rare species were often hunted by collectors and sold overseas for private museums, or for fashion garments (the feathers of hīhi and the beak of huia were valuable fashion commodities for ladies in the Victorian era).

Early introductions of species to Kapiti included kiwi and weka. Although they survived, both of them subsequently cross bred. The weka is a cross between North Island, Stewart Island and western strains. The North Island brown kiwi has cross bred with the Fiordland tokoeka. These mixed lineage populations are not preferred for use in transfers back to the mainland. As with plants, species managers prefer to eco-source their birds. There are also 23 species of plants that are not native to the island, including karo and pohutakawa, which are currently being managed as weeds at some sites on the island where they are threatening native plant communities. Puriri was planted because it provided a good source of food for birds. Today plantings are made of local species that are eco-sourced

(seeds are collected from local naturally occurring populations).

Some possible transfers to the island have been questioned because of the presence of weka. Weka are efficient predators of ground nesting and dwelling animals including some birds, tuatara, skinks, and seabirds. The introduction of these species in the presence of weka will be a difficult challenge. Investigations are already being made on how we may introduce species vulnerable to weka predation, but as with rat eradication, there is hope that techniques will one day be developed further progressing the restoration of Kapiti Island.

Kapiti Island was the first large offshore island to eradicate possums and rats. In the early 1980s many scientists believed it was impossible to eradicate rats from islands. The first rat eradication occurred on Breaksea Island. Kapiti's rat eradication (which began in 1996) was the largest ever attempted and gave conservation managers the confidence to successfully eradicate rats on 10000ha Campbell Island in 1999.

Twenty-five years ago it was thought that species could only be protected on offshore islands, however pest control operations (many led by community groups) have meant that a number of birds have been transferred from Kapiti Island back onto the mainland, such as little spotted kiwi.



Workers carry roost boxes which were installed to help newly transferred saddlebacks settle on the island. Photo courtesy Tim Lovegrove.

