

FITZROY FOOT PRINTS

Welcome to another edition of FitzRoy Footprints. Ten years ago, after restoring FitzRoy House, a programme to reforest

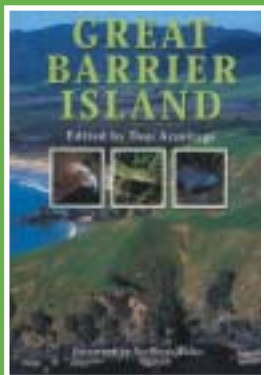
the regenerating manuka/kanuka with a wide selection of native trees was commenced on the property. This began with building a shade house and two nurseries for raising plants from seed and seedlings collected on the island. Over 9,000 native trees have been planted. At the same time a duck pond was constructed for brown teal (pateke). With the only sustainable population in New Zealand now on Great Barrier Island this friendly little duck is circling the plughole of extinction.

Despite early setbacks the threats of hawks, rats, cats, pukekos and eels have gradually been eliminated to the extent of



raising an average of 5 ducklings a year to fledge.

The pest control and planting programme led to building tracks, both for walking and quad access. In 1998 part of the network was developed into a botanical walkway to identify the various flora species growing on the island. Early in the process a swing bridge and viewing platform were built into the crown of a 600-year-old kauri tree.



GREAT BARRIER ISLAND - THE BOOK

The Great Barrier Community Board in conjunction with Auckland City and the Lotteries Board financed the production of a book on the island as a Centennial celebration in 2000. Edited by Don Armitage and now in its 2nd edition it is a must for anyone interested in visiting the island and

readily available from major booksellers.



Glenfer

BLACK PETREL

In 1999 a black petrel burrow was discovered under the roots of an old puriri tree close to the track, down Glenfern Valley. We have been privileged to monitor this pair every year since and have banded three chicks that have successfully fledged. Once safely fledged the chick will head off for South America to live off the sea for the next four to five years and then will return to the very same area where it was born and look for a mate.



pen to
come

RAT CONTROL

In May 2001 with the help of the Auckland City Heritage Fund a 100m x 50m grid of rat bait stations was installed throughout Glenfern Sanctuary with the objective of providing the birds with a rat free breeding season. These were maintained on a monthly cycle and by mid summer tracking tunnel results showed a decrease of 90% in the rat population.

Unfortunately re-invasion was occurring from 3 sides of the Sanctuary and so the following year, another grid was installed throughout Orama on the northern side of the peninsula. This was followed in 2004 with further grid established through the Kotuku Scenic Reserve on the western end of the peninsula. In total there are now 543 bait station that are monitored on a monthly cycle for 9 months of the year and sometimes more frequently when rat numbers build up in a dry summer.

KAKA

In January 2003 a kaka chick was rescued from Old Lady Walk where it had fallen out of its nest in strong winds, long before fledging. After feeding it for a week D.O.C took it for rehabilitation to a qualified bird rescue centre in Tryphena. Unfortunately it



ern Sanctuar

became a problem wanting to associate with humans rather than its own kind and it was removed to Little Barrier Island. We had named it 'Squawker' because it kicked up such a racket.

Two T-shirts have been created one in black with the kaka on the back and the other in sand with the kaka on the front. The North Island kaka is so common on the Barrier it is often taken for granted, not realising that it is a threatened species seldom seen on the mainland.



CHEVRON SKINK

In April 2002 we discovered and caught our first chevron skink just off the driveway to FitzRoy House. The largest skink in New Zealand it is now only found on Great Barrier Island. Both rats and cats predate it. After 4 years of the pest control programme the

sightings of skinks and geckos have become more regular as they emerge from hiding.

A dark green t-shirt illustrating the chevron skink on the back has been created to heighten awareness of this critically endangered lizard.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

In 2001 Glenfern Sanctuary received the Environmental Initiatives Award from Auckland Regional Council. "The amount of work that has gone into the project absolutely justifies their application to the E Awards. The activities have been well planned and they display vision and commitment in their holistic approach to the wider environment" commented the judges.



ry

CONSERVATION ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

In August 2005 Tony and Mal Bouzaid were presented with the Conservation Achievement Award in Biodiversity Protection and Restoration by the Minister of Conservation, the Hon Chris Carter: "for a decade of work to restore 60 hectares of native bush near Port FitzRoy, including replanting, pest control and re-introducing the North Island robin."



BIRD COUNTS



Since installing the bait station grid bird counts have been conducted professionally which have shown dramatic increases in bird species. The first year was the smaller birds, fantails, grey warblers, waxeye and kingfishers. The 2nd year kaka was the most prominent and the 3rd year it was the tuis turn.

KAIKOURA ISLAND

This island that forms the western side of the Port FitzRoy harbour has been purchased by the Government as a Scenic Reserve and will become an environmental education and outdoor activity centre for the youth of New Zealand.

THE PREDATOR FENCE

In 2004 Glenfern Sanctuary gained Charitable Trust status and a QEII Open Space Covenant now protects most of the land in perpetuity. Both were important ingredients in working towards obtaining funding to build a predator proof fence across the peninsula. Rat re-invasion in a long, dry summer is hard to control, even baiting twice a month, which increases the labour cost dramatically. A Pest proof fence is still a daunting task at a cost of over \$400,000. Once erected the remaining pests within the peninsula will be eradicated and other endangered flora and fauna can be introduced. If the night cry of the kiwi and the voice of other endangered birds are to be heard on the Barrier a fence is the only solution.



2005 YEAR OF THE ROBIN



dont have
these 2 photos



Early in April a team of Great Barrier Island residents sailed to Tiritiri Matangi to capture North Island robins (toutouwai) for release on the Kotuku Peninsula in Port FitzRoy. A smaller team of specialists from Auckland Regional Council ferried from Auckland and Gulf Harbour together with the cook and food supplies. The logistics of the operation were greatly assisted by Cliff Vernon making his 55 ft launch "Sieda" skippered by his son Andrew available to transport the Barrier team from Port FitzRoy direct to Tiritiri and then return us to FitzRoy House. Fullers supplied free transport of people, equipment and supplies from Auckland and Gulf Harbour to

Tiritiri on the Sunday and Great Barrier Airlines provided airfares to fly those people returning back to Auckland after the release. Once on the island all the gear and supplies were stowed in the bunkhouse Four teams of three were organised with an experienced team leader and sent off to the various pre-designated bush areas on the island to capture adult robins. Once one or two birds were captured one of the team was despatched to deliver the birds to the aviary.

Anne Kernohan and Kevin Parker checked the bands, measured and sexed the robins before feeding and placing them in their transportation boxes. pairs wherever possible. By midday on day two 27 robins had been successfully captured,

On arrival back at FitzRoy House the robins were fed and watered in their boxes. At 10 O'clock residents and visitors arrived together with the children from Okiwi School who welcomed the

robins with a waiata. This was followed by a whakatau conducted by Rodney Ngawaka. After another waiata and a prayer everyone walked up Glenfern Walk where the children released the robins. Everyone then walked back to FitzRoy House for tea and cakes.

By the end of June 23 of the original 27 birds released had been located. Seven pairs were identified, three in Kotuku Scenic Reserve, two in Orama and a pair in Glenfern Sanctuary.

In September the robins were tracked back to their nests so the new chicks could be banded.



dont have this
photo



Glenfern Sanctuary and Barrier Walks

A Secret Worth Sharing

In 2001 our four day (noon to noon) tramp sail package for up to ten people was featured in a small publication called "Secrets Worth Sharing" describing the private walking tracks of New Zealand. A new version called "Hidden Trails" was published in 2003 with its 3rd edition due for release in January 2006.

DAY ONE - GLENFERN SANCTUARY GUIDED WALK.

After arrival and settling in to Seaview Cottage the first part of the adventure starts with a Unimog ride to Sunset rock. Extensive views of Port FitzRoy, Port Abercrombie and beyond as well as most of the Kotuku Peninsula Mainland Island can be seen. The guided walk follows an old bridle trail along the ridge and then branches off through a botanical walkway to a suspension bridge into the top of a 600-year-old kauri tree. It continues through mature coastal broadleaf forest over boardwalks and steps to the valley floor. It then criss-crosses the stream along a Quad track back to FitzRoy House.

After this warm up a short walk down the drive takes the group to the start of Old Lady Walk. This follows a stream through regenerating forest to a wonderful grove of old nikau palms. On the return the loop track takes in Lookout Rock with more views of Port FitzRoy. In the evening a briefing is held to discuss what to look out for and experience the following day.



DAY TWO - WINDY CANYON, MT HOBSON AND KAURI DAMS

The second day begins with a trip to the start of Palmers Track where at an altitude of 300m the group is dropped off for the walk, which winds through Windy Canyon with its sharp pinnacles, nikau grove and rata covered cliffs. Here you can see two

plants endemic to Great Barrier Island the Great Barrier daisy *Oleria allomii* and prostrate kanuka *Kunzeo sinclairii*. A well-defined track oscillates each side of the ridgeline till it reaches a plateau with a clear view of Mt Hobson ahead. A short steep climb through original forest contains many species quite rare on the island. Arriving at the top of Hiramata (Mt Hobson) provides excellent 360-degree views of Great Barrier Island. The track descends over a remarkable series of 960 steps and boardwalks to the remains of the most elevated kauri dam built on the island. Thence the track drops steeply over rocky terrain and stretches of petrified wood to a suspension bridge



before arriving at one of the largest remaining kauri dams in New Zealand. From here the descent is more gradual to the Kaiaraara stream which flattens out nearing the bay. A short walk around the edge of the bay arrives at Bush's Beach where the yacht is waiting with refreshments before the trip back to the FitzRoy House wharf.

DAY THREE - KAITOKE HOT SPRINGS, KIWIRIKI AND BARRIER GOLD

After another briefing the previous night it is an early start on the third day with a 5-6 hour tramp beginning with a ride past the East Coast beaches to the Hot Springs track on the Whangaparapara road. After crossing a bridge and boardwalks over the Kaitoke swamp the gravelled walkway extends all the way to the Hot Springs. After a stop to soak in the stream the track continues across a ridge and forks left to the old Forest Road. It follows the road to the junction with the Kiwiriki track and a side-track to Mt Maungapiko. After a magnificent view down the west coast and back into the interior of Hog's Back the track descends through regenerating kauri forest to Kiwiriki Bay where the yacht is waiting with afternoon tea. If time allows the group is taken to see the inimitable Sven Stellin who makes a range of 'Barrier Gold' kanuka oil products on the shore of Wairahi Bay, thence back to FitzRoy House.

DAY FOUR - WATERFALL TRACK

The fourth day the group is dropped off at the Waterfall Loop track behind the Department of Conservation office which returns to the Port FitzRoy store before heading off for the airport and the return to the busy world. Thus ends a Great Barrier experience unless extra days are booked to ease any sore muscles, play croquet, go sea kayaking or just read a book. A visit to the Boat Club for dinner should feature in the itinerary as another experience not to be missed.

There are many other interesting walks on the island that can be chosen as alternatives to the ones selected particularly if coming for a return visit. Two T-shirts have been produced illustrating a map of the island showing all the walking tracks, one in navy and the other in mustard. A great reminder of the Great Barrier experience.

For bookings contact: tony@fitzroyhouse.co.nz
FitzRoy House, Glenfern Road, Port FitzRoy,
Great Barrier Island.

Tel: 09 429 0091. Fax: 09 429 0492.

e: tony@glenfern.org.nz

www.glenfern.org.nz

www.fitzroyhouse.co.nz





FITZROY FOOT PRINTS

FitzRoy House,

Glenfern Road,

Port FitzRoy,

Great Barrier Island.

Tel: 09 429 0091.

Fax: 09 429 0492.

www.fitzroyhouse.co.nz



FITZROY HOUSE

For bookings contact:
tony@fitzroyhouse.co.nz