

Co-management Update 2023

Whakamārama whānui

Oruaiti Reserve is owned by Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika and is co-managed as a recreation reserve with Wellington City Council (WCC). In 2011, the Oruaiti Reserve Management Plan was developed to provide a clear framework for decision making and managing the reserve. This plan outlines protocols for co-management between WCC and Taranaki Whānui, including the development of an annual report. This two-page report provides Taranaki Whānui an update on the management of Oruaiti Reserve, in accordance with this protocol.

Our person on the ground

Our Coastal Ranger Tom is one of the key players in looking after and managing the reserve. Every fortnight, he walks the reserve to check for any issues; every other week, he has a check from the reserve entranceways. Ranger Tom communicates what he finds back to the wider council team, and they work together to fix any issues that arise. Key work that our Coastal Ranger is working on includes:

- **Working with the local schools** – Seatoun School, Worsler Bay School and Te Kura Kaupapa Māori O Nga Mokopuna in their ongoing effort to plant pingao and spinifex to stabilise the dunes.
- **Getting dogs on-leash** – A big problem in Oruaiti is getting owners to keep their dogs on leash. Our Coastal Ranger educates people while undertaking work in the reserve. Sadly, in 2023 a breeding pair of kororā were found dead with dog bites on them. After this event, Tom increased his presence in the park and the issue was flagged with Animal Services. Patrols have increased since.

- **Dealing with encroachments** – A couple of adjacent properties have, in bad faith, cut down vegetation on the reserve to protect their viewshafts. Tom is working to hold these people to account by engaging with them in constructive conversation.
- **Granting permits on use of the reserve** – Landowner approvals and event permits come through to the Park Services Team who then assess and delegate out as necessary. A couple of permits have been granted for filming on the reserve in the last couple of years
- **A fire damage** – 400m² of vegetation during Guy Fawkes 2022. Council is monitoring the site for weeds and the ranger team has resumed Guy Fawkes patrols to prevent future incidents.
- **An annual collection** – of coastal species including māhoe, *Melicytus crassifolius* (declining), blue wheat grass *Anthosachne solandri* (population improving) and others to grow at the council nursery and propagate in other areas.

Te Taioa

The Council's ecology team and Tom the ranger have been working with community initiatives such as Predator Free Wellington, Places for Penguins, schools and Te Motu Kairangi Ecological Restoration groups to trap pests, remove weeds and plant 21,000 natives to boost the mauri of the ecosystem at Oruaiti and the wider peninsula.

Ngāi kīrehe

The coastal plant communities and rock stacks are home to native wildlife such as herons, gulls and lizards. Site surveys in 2023 found 23 bird species,

including 6 endemic, 11 native and 7 introduced. The coast is also a breeding ground for kororā. A 2021 survey found two specific kororā sites.

There are now 0% rats, stoats and weasels in Oruaiti, thanks to the dedicated network of predator traps organised by Predator Free Wellington. While rabbits are still present, there is no known flare-up currently. Off-leash dogs continue to be common, especially on the beach despite being prohibited.

Ngāi Rākau

Hardy coastal plants, particularly Harakeke, Wharariki, Mingimingi and others that thrive in the harsh climate. Highlights of a threatened species survey in 2023 found:

- *Melampsora lini*, an endemic rust species was found attacking *Linum monogynum var. monogynum*.
- A hybrid between local puha species, *Senecio lautus* and *Senecio sterquilinus* was discovered.
- The shrubby *Melicytus crassifolius*, cousin to the more well know māhoe is present and common nearby.

Ongoing ecosystem weed control management is happening in the reserve. This includes focusing on invasive succulents like the Tree of Love above Breaker Bay beach. Additionally, progress is being made on patches of Cape Ivy, although it is still widely present, and Marram has been reduced in the dune on the northern side of the reserve. However, there is currently no plan to tackle the Marram in the southern spur.



Figure 1: Ranger Tom promoting Welly Walks at Oruaiti Reserve – an annual programme encouraging people to explore Wellington.



Figure 2: Coastal southern side dune built by Pingao and Spinifex.



Figure 3: Suspected hybrid species between Puha species.



Co-management Update 2023 (continued)

Landscape development 2012

In 2012 a major upgrade of the reserve was completed. This included landscaping, maps and signs at four entrances to the reserve, significant track improvements, heritage information panels and the 17-metre long waka-like landscape feature marking the site of the former Oruaiti Pā. This feature is symbolic as the protector of the entrance to the harbour and the historic position that the pā once was. This interpretation won awards, including Oruaiti receiving 2013-2014 Green Flag and a 2013 NZ Institute of Landscape Architect's Distinction Award.

Access and track network

In 2022 our council tracks specialist worked to repair and renew the track network in Oruaiti, ten years after the original plan. This work included repairing parts of the track, steps and railing, where they were boggy, damaged or unsafe. In addition, a decking ramp was added to the northern side of the reserve to support wheelchair access. A couple of stolen and damaged signs were replaced in 2018.

What's next?

We are reviewing our approach to reserve management on the coast. This review will see the development of a holistic Coastal Reserve Management Plan for coastal areas between Ōmarukaikuru and Te Kopahou. There is an opportunity for Oruaiti to be included in this wider coastal management plan review - if this inclusion was supported by Taranaki Whānui.

Progress on key actions in the Management Plan

Actions	Comment
Acknowledge entrance points to the reserve and consider sense of arrival, signage (interpretive/directional), seating and planting.	Completed in 2012 as part of the landscape plan.
Accessibility: Review all tracks for ease of access, drainage, main track vs minor track routes and locations. Consideration will be given to using steps or realigning tracks for better gradients and closing minor, informal or short-cut tracks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review arrival points, track merging, track crossings for interpretive and directional signage. Review areas along all tracks for public safety particularly above cliffs, giving consideration to using natural or artificial barriers in certain areas. 	Completed in 2012 as part of the landscape plan.
Develop interpretive signage for key historic features, possibly as a heritage trail and at key points around the coastal edge	Completed in 2012 as part of the landscape plan.
Review areas and prepare proposals for ecological planting and maintenance of the Point area.	Completed in 2012 as part of the landscape plan.
Lookouts/ stopping points: Review arrival, path layouts, plantings, potentials for 'natural coastal' style of seating or signage for people using the Point.	Completed in 2012 as part of the landscape plan.
Acknowledge Tauranga Waka Sites (Waka landing) with interpretive signage at key points.	Completed in 2012 as part of the landscape plan.
Co-management: Meet annually to review the performance of the management year and proposed work programme for the upcoming year.	Not completed annually but we are committed to completing this going forward.
An Annual report will be available to Wellington City Council and Taranaki Whānui	Not completed annually but we are committed to completing this going forward.



Figure 4: Opening ceremony of the landscape project in 2012.

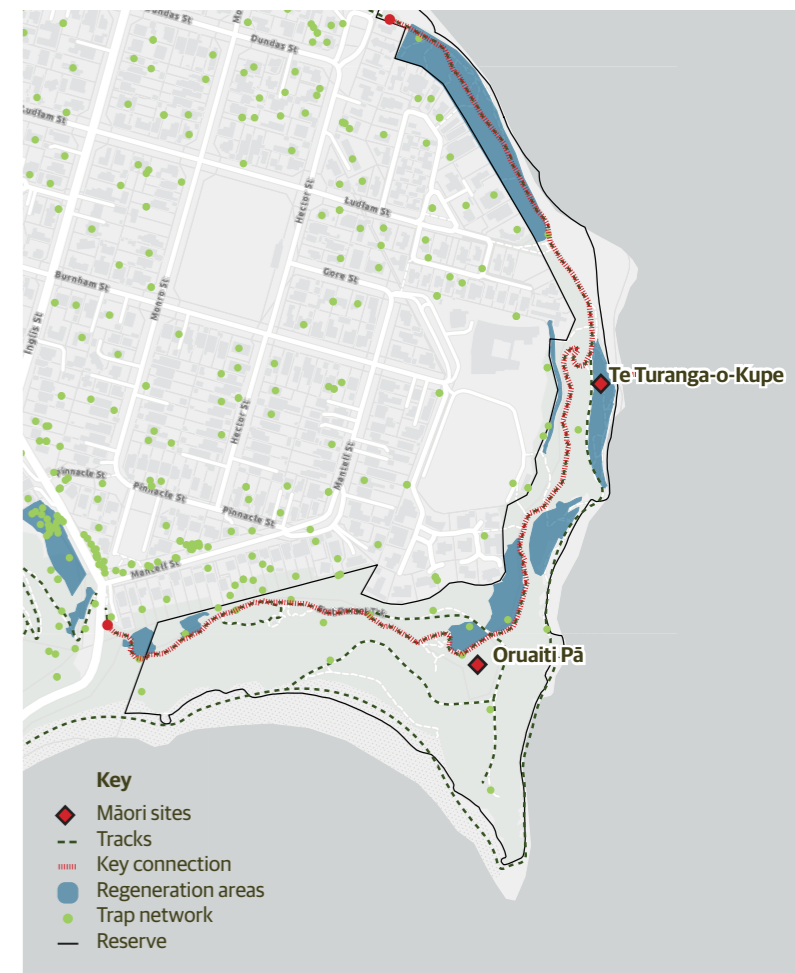


Figure 5: Map of the Oruaiti Reserve track network.