



## Te Kawa Waiora Celebration

On Friday 17th of June, Te Kawa Waiora research report was launched at an event at the Hihiaua Cultural Centre in Whangārei.

The event was the celebration of the culmination of the research report that ran throughout 2020 and 2021 with the goal of exploring the tangata whenua view of the river, the view of the change in the river since the 19th century and the way to go forward in improving the river and its tributaries.

The hui was well attended, with speakers from Waimā, Waitai, Waiora partnership, Reconnecting Northland, the Research Committee, local iwi, hapū, whānau, and marae involved in the project, outlining the importance of a collective approach to address the decline of the river.

Keynote speaker – lead researcher Dr. Charles Royal, spoke of the critical state of the river, the link between the health of the river and health of the community, and the importance of allowing tangata whenua to foster a new 'kawa' or way of being in relation to the awa based on mātauranga Māori, to restore the river and the communities that live alongside it.

Thanks and appreciation was given to all who gave their time and energy to the project. Te Kawa Waiora 2022 report can be found at:

[www.reconnectingnorthland.org.nz/the-mahi/te-kawa-waiora](http://www.reconnectingnorthland.org.nz/the-mahi/te-kawa-waiora)



Dr. Charles Royal – Lead Researcher

**"It was an honour and privilege to lead this project and to spend time amongst tangata whenua communities of Te Tai Tokerau."**

**- Dr. Charles Royal**



"I feel hopeful that standing generations are now positioned to bring together positive iwi-crown relationships which our tūpuna had always hoped for when signing Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Manaaki whenua, manaaki tangata, haere whakamua. If we care for the land, and care for the people, we go forward."

– Jeanaven Hotere,  
Otaua Plan Co-ordinator



Freshwater invertebrate survey  
Mangatawa stream, Otaua

Freshwater monitoring training, Mangatawa Stream, Otaua



## Otaua Residents Rally to Restore their Valley!

The people of Otaua Valley are celebrating the completion of a collaborative community-led plan to restore their valley's environment alongside local whānau, hapū, and landowners. Their plan centres around the key issues important to the area; roading, waterways, rubbish and recycling, plant and animal pest management, as well as improving engagement outcomes with government agencies.

Otaua's ambitious 5-year plan reflects the urgent call to action in the valley driven by resident whānau who have observed the degradation of their natural environment over several decades. Serious issues are worsening each year such as PM10 toxic dust from the roads polluting the valley drinking water and covering garden kai beds; pest plants growing along waterways; and native birds and habitats suffering from animal pest invasion.

Looking for positive long-term solutions, local residents led by a locally based co-ordinator have rallied to implement their five-year plan with support from organisations such as Reconnecting Northland, DOC, NRC, Whitebait Connection, Hokianga Harbour Care and Kiwi Coast. Through these relationships, access to additional resources have been made available and relationships connecting community, agencies and other organisations are strengthening.

Reconnecting Northland's Outreach Manager, Andrea Booth, describes early success in the project being due to a dedicated local coordinator who was able to bring the community together to develop a long-term plan for the restoration of their valley. For Reconnecting Northland, being able to resource this role was critical in gaining traction on the ground.



## Winners All Round

Our gratitude goes to Northland Regional Council for hosting another fabulous Whakamānawa ā Taiao – Environmental Awards. These awards are so important in recognising the people and organisations that are working to make a difference to Northland's environment.

This year our team were thrilled to be have been short-listed in the Environmental Leadership category for our, "landscape-scale, connected approach to conservation, helping communities establish a collective vision and supporting them to achieve it".

It was a real privilege to spend the evening celebrating alongside such dedicated, passionate and humble individuals. To loosely quote our on point MC for the night "I host many awards evenings and my experience is they are seen as a chance to speak to your own success. Environmental awards are always a little different in that you all seem to only want to thank each other".



RN Attendees from left:  
Liz Oliver, Andrea Booth and Sian Leith

Pettania Hohaia, Taiao Plan Co-ordinator



The Ōi colony at  
Ārai te Uru is  
most likely the  
largest on the  
Northland  
mainland.

These dark  
oceanic seabirds,  
also known as  
grey faced petrels  
or northern  
mutton-birds, are  
a species of great  
significance to  
Māori.

## Ōi Colony @ Ārai te Uru (South Hokianga Head)

Reconnecting Northland's Taiao Plan Co-ordinator for Waimamaku, Pettania Hohaia, recently organised a local visit during May to the Ōi colony at Ārai te Uru (South Hokianga Head). The event was held in the evening, with a DOC bird handler to ensure local hapū and community attendees had a good chance of seeing these birds, and to assess the current health of the population here.

It is likely that the population of Ōi at this site has been decreasing, evidenced by just a few spotted flying overhead and only a single bird landing on the ground.

Ōi are vulnerable to predation by cats, rats, stoats and dogs, as they spend a lot of time on the ground, although with no monitoring of the colony there is no way to know for certain what is happening there.

Future decisions on the colony will be made by local hapū, with resourcing and management support options explored with Reconnecting Northland and DOC. Through collaborative efforts, it is hoped that these graceful birds will one day have a thriving population again at Ārai te Uru.



# Waimā, Waitai, Waiora Partnership Event

On the 25th May 2022, we were honored to attend a day of celebration of the achievement and partnership with Waimā, Waitai, Waiora partnership and the Edwards at their ancestral home, Huruiki maunga near Helena Bay, Northland.

The long-term vision to return much of the 350ha of contoured landscape back to its former, natural glory, is underway with over 33,000 native saplings planted along a tributary that flows westward off the land.

Walking down from the summit of Huruiki maunga



The summit of Huruiki maunga

The success of the day was due in part to the guest speakers Dr Charles Royal, Rereata Makiha, and Ihirangi Heke imparting their deep knowledge of ancient natural systems, inspiring and motivating all present.

This ancient maunga is one of the furthest and highest locations of the Waiora catchment so it was timely that this day coincided with the announcement of the celebration of the culmination of Te Kawa Waiora research project overseen by Reconnecting Northland.

The project was conducted in 2020 and 2021, bringing together people of the the awa through hui wānanga; forging a new pathway of ecological management with a foundation in mātauranga Māori.

## Matiriki Celebrations



To celebrate our first official Matiriki holiday, the RN team got together for a two day event in Waitangi/Paihia/Haruru Falls to give effect to the principles of Matairiki; a time to remember, a time to celebrate the present, a time to look to the future.



Day 1. We reconnected with mother nature on a guided walk from Haruru Falls to Waitangi, complete with fascinating oral history of the area from local resident & team member Te Maapi Simich-Pene (far left). After a spectacular kai at the end of the track, we spent the afternoon reflecting on the year that has been; visiting the challenges, noting the lessons, and exploring the growth of understanding in our programme's kaupapa.



Day 2: We got down to the business with a full day workshop held in Paihia. Purpose of the day was threefold. To 1. revisit our strategy, 2. set priority intentions for the year ahead, and 3. to deliver a considered workplan for the implementation of our Te Kete Hononga trial. Te Kete Hononga is our core service-based offering which has been in development over the past 12 months. The trial of Te Kete Hononga will begin in the coming months with our partners at DOC and community groups we are already working with. To find out more about Te Kete Hononga, please visit our user scenario infographic at:  
<http://rnimpact.org.nz/uploads/TeKeteHonongaInfographic.pdf>

Looking out from Huruiki maunga

