

Teaming with wildlife
***Guardians of the Bay of
Islands Inc. Annual Report***
Ngā Kaiawhi o Ngā Kaitiaki o Ipipiri
For the year ended 30 June 2021



2050 Whāinga 2050 Goal

The ancient dawn chorus is restored

To Māori, 'hihi' was a term used for the healing rays of sunlight. Their call is a distinct "stitch" hence their English name, stitchbird. Hihi have a number of other calls, all absent from the dawn chorus of Ipipiri for over a century. We have invited the Hihi Recovery Group to assess the islands' suitability for hihi reintroduction.

Mihi

Te Maunga ko Rākaumangamanga
o te whare tapu o Ngāpuhi

*The sacred mountain is Rākaumangamanga
of the sacred house of Ngāpuhi*

Te Moana ko Ipipiri o Tokerau

The ocean is Ipipiri o Tokerau

Te Hapū ko Ngāti Kuta me Patukeha

The sub tribes are Ngāti Kuta and Patukeha

Te Iwi ko Ngāpuhi

The tribe is Ngāpuhi

Te marae ko Te Rāwhiti

The marae is Te Rāwhiti

Tō mātou Moemoeā Our vision

The islands of Ipipiri are an archipelago of sanctuaries, alive with the dawn chorus, where both people and New Zealand's unique wildlife prosper in harmony.

What we do:



Biosecurity

Protecting the wildlife safe haven by stopping non-native predators and weeds from getting to the pest-free islands.



Revegetation

Restoring native habitat so that the islands flourish.



Weeding

Removing non-native plants.



Native species reintroductions

Returning vulnerable native wildlife.



Education

Providing future generations of kiwis with inspiring learning.



Wildlife tours

Experience New Zealand's unique wildlife, wild as nature intended.

Pānui mai i ngā Heamana

Message from the Co-Chairs

Tēnā koutou katoa,

As we adjust to our new normal, dealing with the impacts of Covid-19 and climate disruption, we are pleased that the Guardians' 2020/2021 financial year was such a productive one. This was partly due to us being able to complete projects delayed from the previous year's lockdown, but also because our programmes are well planned, resourced and implemented.

Reflecting on our time in lockdown gave many of us an enhanced appreciation of the natural environment surrounding us. What has increasingly come to light is the impact being in nature has on our mental health. Many of our activities provide opportunities for this type of interaction with the natural world, whether it is weedbusting on the islands, taking part in a Floating Classroom, or counting kākāriki. We will continue to build upon these opportunities, in our day-to-day work, to enhance the natural environment of Ipipiri for the wellbeing of both present and future generations.

The traditional funding model that has served us well over the years has further shifted with the fallout from Covid-19. We had already identified a need to diversify and are working on this through our Sustainable Future Strategy. The Covid-19 Jobs for Nature programme provided an opportunity not seen before in community conservation. We presented a strong application to the funders that would have secured vital employment for our kaimahi, so we were very disappointed to miss out on this funding. We acknowledge the groups that were successful and what Jobs for Nature will present for Te Tai Tokerau over the coming years. We are trying to find other funding streams for this important mahi.

We remain future focused and will be reviewing our strategy to ensure the longevity and evolution of the organisation and the work we do. As a partnership we have well-established foundations and a long-term commitment to the islands of Ipipiri. To fulfil our future commitments in education, species reintroductions and predator control we must increase our funding via a range of means.

Throughout what has been a challenging and busy year we'd like to acknowledge the committee members, hapu and project team. With everyone committed to adapting and navigating through the challenges of a pandemic there has been minimal impact on the work completed.

We are equally appreciative of the ongoing trust and support received from our volunteers, members, donors and funders, as well as our agency partners Department of Conservation and Northland Regional Council.

It has been a unique year. Thank you for your ongoing support. It is our privilege to share the Guardians 2020/2021 Annual Report with you.

Noho ora mai,

Fleur Corbett and Barb Elboz

Co-Chairs, Guardians of the Bay of Islands Inc.

“What has increasingly come to light is the impact being in nature has on our mental health.”



Volunteers planting native trees on Moturua, May 2021.

Tō mātou tau ki muri

Our year in review

Tēnā koutou katoa,

Whilst it's safe to say it has been a very challenging year, I'm incredibly proud that it has also been an extremely productive and successful 12 months. Operationally our vital pest management, ecological restoration, volunteer, and education programmes have all been effectively delivered. As always, the species translocations were particularly rewarding.

Prehistoric giants have been brought back to Te Tai Tokerau with our first invertebrate species translocation. As one of the world's heaviest insects, wētāpunga have returned after at least a 180 year absence. In this first year of an exciting three year collaboration with Auckland Zoo, over 200 adult wētāpunga have been released onto Motuarohia, Moturua, and Urupukapuka.

We are so pleased to have completed our second kākāriki translocation to the islands, after being postponed in 2020 due to Covid-19. Without a doubt this was our hardest translocation to date due to terrible weather experienced during the catching phase. The dedication of the translocation team, who worked incredibly hard on Te Hauturu-o-Toi/Little Barrier Island, made this reintroduction possible.

Critical to both reintroductions was the kaitiakitanga of all mana whenua, in particular Ngāti Manuhiri, Ngātiwai, and Ngāti Rehua of Te Hauturu-o-Toi, kaitiaki of the source populations, and Ngāti Kuta and Patukeha, who received the taonga and to whom their care is now entrusted. We also recognise the dedication of the Little Barrier Island Supporters Trust.

Project Island Song is playing an increasingly valued role nationally in providing a safe haven for endangered wildlife. To enable future reintroductions, we have been planning, consulting, and researching. We now need funds for the next stage of this work on Northland green geckos, tītipounamu/rifleman and potentially hihi/stitchbird.

Hihi is one of New Zealand's rarest bird species. The pest-free islands of Ipipiri could play a role in their recovery but their reintroduction to the islands cannot be taken lightly. These endangered birds would require specialised long-term management to support their survival here in Ipipiri. Our financial and operational capacity would need to increase to meet the needs of this reintroduction.

The enduring success, strength and expertise of Project Island Song has been widely recognised. Whilst continuing to deliver and achieve more, we have had to adapt to diminished support from the Department of Conservation. Working together with Ngā Hapū o Te Rāwhiti, we have continued to deliver our priority ecological restoration and protection, education and advocacy programmes. We have experienced increased challenges and costs related to our island work – including boat transport, pest-incursion and biosecurity management, species reintroductions and drought resilience. In response, concerted effort has been implemented to strengthen contestable grant funding and engage in-kind support. A newly developed fundraising strategy is key to our continued success, and increasing donor support has been identified as a critical part of this.

In a year of immense uncertainty, we have emerged stronger. Whilst dealing with and adapting to Covid-19 the power and resilience in our communities and their ability to drive community-led solutions in the face of the pandemic has resounded.

Ngā mihi nui to all our contractors, mana whenua, Guardians committee, volunteers, landowners, partners, members, funders, donors and to everyone we have engaged with, and worked alongside, through this unique and tough year.

Richard Robbins,

General Manager, Project Island Song



22

Floating
Classrooms

49

weeding days

310

volunteers

7802

volunteer
hours gifted

12

species monitoring
field trips

3

species
translocations

125

generous donors

11

years pest-free

We're now fundraising to help with the reintroduction of the tītipounamu/rifleman, New Zealand's smallest bird.



Return of one of the world's largest insects after 180 year absence

Wētāpunga were once widespread throughout Northland, Auckland and Great Barrier. These cryptic critters were last recorded in the Bay of Islands by William Colenso in 1839.



Ā tātou pūtea

Our finances

The Guardians achieved 134% of our FY20/21 fundraising goal. Grant support for our operational and educational programme delivery was maintained from Foundation North and Joyce Fisher Charitable Trust. Investment in our kaimahi empowerment, volunteer operation, and weed and pest control programmes was funded by the final year of a Department of Conservation Community Fund grant and supplemented by increased grant support from the NZ Lottery Grants Board.

We received \$337,183 in FY20/21 and spent a total of \$293,573 for our ongoing planting, education, weed and pest programmes in addition to delivering Covid-19 deferred translocation and education programmes from FY19/20. We have grants of \$253,764 to carry over into FY21/22 to spend on the educational programme, species translocations and the volunteer and mainland pest control programmes.

The current year deficit of \$9,840 is the result of bringing to account accumulated prior year spending which had previously been offset against an annual grant. This correction now aligns the annual grant with current year spending.

The year's successful fundraising and programme delivery supports the Guardian's decision to strengthen the operational team, leading to increased visibility of the Guardian's work as demonstrated by the significant contributions from in-kind donations received and volunteer activity. Raising our profile is expected to expand through investigating new opportunities within the education programme and investment in volunteer and membership management tools.

The Guardians will continue to support Te Tangi o Te Ata ecological sanctuary on the mainland, which is set to benefit from significant Government funding towards achieving Predator Free 2050, as this supports our achievements and aspirations for Ipipiri.

As a result of the uncertainty and impact of Covid-19 our goal for the coming year is to support the core activities of weeding, planting, pest control, and species translocations. Our goal is to raise \$300,000 in FY 21/22 to fund our operational and capital budgets. A review of the Guardian's Strategic Goals is planned, and this will inform our financial requirements for the next three to five years.

Deficit **\$9,840**

Assets **\$376,579**

Bank accounts and cash \$234,883

Other current assets \$119,078

Property, plant & equipment \$13,488

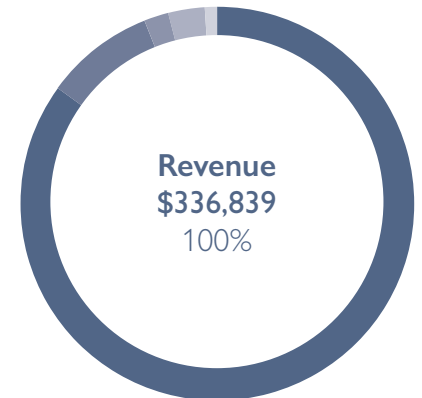
Other non-current assets \$9,131

Liabilities **\$306,486**

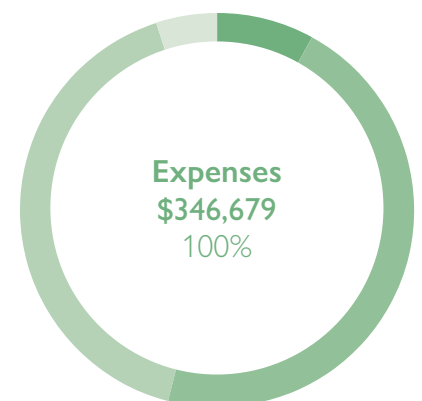
Unused tagged grants and donations \$253,764

Other liabilities \$52,722

Net Assets **\$70,093**



Grants	\$293,573	87%
Other donations and fundraising	\$28,459	8.4%
Fees and subscriptions from members	\$4,891	1.5%
From providing goods and services	\$8,649	2.6%
Interest income	\$1,266	0.5%



Related to public fundraising	\$25,990	7.5%
Volunteer and employee/mission delivery costs	\$160,074	46%
Costs of providing goods & services	\$145,226	42%
Other expenses	\$15,389	4.5%

Tō tātou ekenga ki mua hāi

Our future

Over the coming year our priority is to continue to implement our four core strategic focus areas.

Excellence in wildlife conservation

Providing best practice for pest-free islands and translocations across New Zealand.

Destination Project Island Song

Extending our education programme to inspire and enthral future generations and looking at eco-tourism activities and opportunities.

Resilient partnerships Ensuring our partnerships and relationships with all our stakeholders are sustaining and unified.

Viable enterprise Delivering operational excellence, good business practices and accountability whilst also increasing and diversifying our funding options to guarantee the continued restoration of the islands.

Our financial requirements going forward

Need for Kaitiaki Rangers

With resourcing to the Department of Conservation declining nationally, and their vital support of Project Island Song diminishing, critical to our ongoing success is maintaining the pest-free status of the islands of Ipipiri. As a bare minimum, the engagement of a Kaitiaki Ranger will help us monitor and respond to pest incursions on the islands. The Kaitiaki Ranger role will both enable existing and support additional conservation outcomes. It is also important to acknowledge this operational role will support employment, capability building, cultural empowerment, knowledge transfer, and skills enhancement within the Bay of Islands.

Future reintroductions

The species reintroductions we are so proud to report would not have been possible without the generous support we received, both financially and in-kind. As we work to progress the next planned translocations of Northland green gecko and tītipounamu/rifleman, we'd welcome any support to help make them a reality.



Kaitiaki in the field

Our need is to employ two Kaitiaki Rangers for Ipipiri, with responsibilities including species monitoring, pest incursions and education.





Kākāriki release on Urupukapuka

Since the release in June our work has not stopped. After the release there is a risk the kākāriki might disperse from the safety of the pest-free islands. Although there is adequate food on the island, to encourage the kākāriki to settle we put up nesting boxes and initially provide supplementary food.

Ngā mihi ki ngā Kaitautoko

Thank you to our people

Volunteers

Our volunteers' commitment, support and enthusiasm is outstanding. We would not have been able to accomplish the work across the islands without them. They are key to our ongoing success.

"Volunteering for Project Island Song doesn't just get me out of the house, it gets me out of my everyday life and out to the beautiful islands of Ipipiri. Whether planting little aspiring native trees or monitoring the various reintroduced bird species, I get totally immersed in their world. I can't help but learn more about the plants and animals, and the ecology of the islands. And I come home feeling I've made a contribution to those plants and animals and to my community. It's sooooo gratifying."

Peggy Volunteer

"Project Island Song is the best volunteer work in the world particularly for people who love nature and the outdoors. The work you can do is very varied and time-flexible so you can easily work around other commitments. You get to go out on the water and see beautiful scenery and marine life. You get to visit beautiful islands only accessible by boat and enjoy the flora and fauna there. You learn a lot about NZ's beautiful and unique flora and fauna, and you meet other like-minded and interesting people from all walks of life."

Jeanette Volunteer

Members & corporate members

In what has been a difficult year financially for many, we would like to acknowledge the support from our members and corporate members. Their commitment to the work and sustainability of the project has been incredibly valuable.

"We are proud to have contributed to this great project. It has been very rewarding to see some of the birds that we were privileged enough to help translocate settle into their new home. We also appreciate the friendships we have made on this journey and hope that we will continue to be involved sharing and learning for many more years to come."

Morag & Simon Members

"We are proud supporters of Project Island Song and the dedicated work they do to restore the natural ecosystems throughout the Bay Of Islands. This complements our own business vision, our educational offerings, community support and values of kaitiakitanga."

Along with their partners, and many volunteers, Project Island Song are influencing NZ environmental history – from the reintroduction of various species to their amazing educational experiences. They not only support their community, they are educating and inspiring individuals and groups throughout New Zealand."

We are excited and look forward to working with and advocating for Project Island Song long into the future."

Tori Corporate member, Orongo Bay Holiday Park

Project team

The Guardians hugely value our team who help make the project a success. We continue to be committed to building capability and capacity and to provide sustainable employment for local people.

Donors, funders and in-kind supporters

Without the generous support of donors, funders and in-kind supporters we would not be able to continue the work we do.





Help save this hidden Northland gem

Please donate now

Once plentiful in our forests, the stunning but inconspicuous Northland green gecko is now on a quiet track to oblivion. As this taonga species declines out of sight, the pest-free islands of Ipipiri offer a unique safe haven to help protect their future. We are now fundraising to reintroduce the Northland green geckos to the islands.

Make a donation today by visiting our website
projectislandsong.co.nz
or email us at info@projectislandsong.co.nz

If you've seen a pest on the islands please call
0800 362 468 immediately, and also email us at
pest@projectislandsong.co.nz

Have a question or just looking for information?
info@projectislandsong.co.nz

Interested in volunteering?
volunteer@projectislandsong.co.nz

Project Island Song is a unique partnership between community group the Guardians of the Bay of Islands and Te Rāwhiti hapū (Ngāti Kuta and Patukeha).

P.O. Box 142, Russell 0242, New Zealand

projectislandsong.co.nz

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