



Titirangi Facts Teacher Resource

Here's some information to help inspire questions and discussion about the features of Titirangi Reserve

Why is the maunga (mountain) called Titirangi?

Titirangi was named by the commanders of the ancestral Takitimu waka when they first arrived from Hawaiki. As they looked up at the mountain it reminded them of a place from their home in Hawaiki, also called Titirangi. *See article 1 for more information.*



QUICK FACT

There is another Titirangi in Tairāwhiti. *Do you know where?*

Why is this a special place? It is special to our community for many reasons...

- Titirangi is the ancestral maunga for Ngati Oneone. Their marae is Te Poho o Rawiri located at the base of the hill. For many Maori who can whakapapa to Titirangi, it is the first line in the pepeha and forms a special part of many people's identity. *See article 1 for more information.*
- It is the most visited reserve in our district. It is popular for walking, running, and views of the city, landscape and coastline.
- Geological evidence shows Titirangi was once at the bottom of the ocean floor. Millions of years ago it was thrust up to its current height of 130m above sea level.
- People had lived on Titirangi almost continuously since the first waka arrived up until about 100 years ago. Whare Kōrero was one of the largest pa (fortifications) on Titirangi where many important Maori ancestors once lived.

The maunga provided great views to see people coming, as well as sheltered areas and good soil for gardens. Residents had easy access to spring water and the Turanganui River below where seafood was abundant.

Find out more at the Tairāwhiti Museum.



How do we know people used to live here?

You may still be able to see:

- midden: evidence of pre-European rubbish tips containing shells, bone, stone and charcoal.
- terraces: man made levelled areas which are evidence of cultivation and/or occupation.
- and pits: circular or rectangular depressions most often used for crop storage.

Who are some of the famous tipuna (ancestors) who used to live here?

- A pa that once stood on Titirangi was Whare Korero. Many important ancestors once lived there. Hamo te Rangi was an important ancestor who once lived there. She married brothers, the first being Porourangi who is the eminent tipuna of the iwi Ngati Porou and his younger brother Tahu Potiki who is the tipuna of South Island iwi Ngai Tahu.
- Rakaiatane was chief at the time of the arrival of Captain James Cook in 1769. Many streets in Kaiti are named after his descendants such as Rawiri-te-eke-tū-o-te-rangi, Hirini, Heta and Rutene Te Eke.



What is a weed?

A plant 'weed' is simply a plant that is growing in a place where it doesn't belong. It usually means that it's also doing some harm, either by smothering, strangling or out-competing plants that are wanted like native fauna. There are currently many weeds on Titirangi that we are removing and trying to prevent re-growth. One of the weeds is the Blackberry. In the right environment this is cultivated for its berries however on Titirangi it is out of control. The vines form a dense thorny bush that smothers areas and easily overtakes our young natives.



Can you spot a Blackberry bush!



Can you spot a Whau tree!



What did Maori use the Whau tree for?

The Whau tree is a native plant and there are many Whau trees on Titirangi (see if you can find one). Hundreds of year ago this wood was used by Maori as fishing floats, due to the wood's high buoyancy. It may also have been used for building rafts



Can you spot a Kākā!

What birds may you see or hear on Titirangi?

▪ **Kākā**

The New Zealand kākā is a medium-sized parrot, measuring 45cm in length and weighing from 390 to 560g. It is closely related to the kea, but has darker feathers. The forehead and crown are greyish white and the back of the neck is greyish brown. The neck and abdomen are more reddish, while the wings are more brownish. New Zealand kākā make their nests in hollow trees, laying clutches of 2 to 4 eggs in late winter. They eat fruits, berries, seeds, flowers, buds, nectar, sap, plants and invertebrates. It uses its strong beak to shred the cones of the kauri tree to obtain the seeds. It has a brush tongue with which it feeds on nectar, and it uses its strong beak to dig out the grubs of the huhu beetle and to remove bark to feed on sap from trees. They are known to behave like monkeys, using their bills or feet to climb or swing through the branches.

▪ **NZ native centipede**

Centipedes are part of the Myriapoda family. Myriapoda family is made up of centipedes and millipedes, they can have 10 legs or over 750 legs. Centipedes are fast, predatory and venomous. They do their hunting mostly at night. Millipedes, on the other hand, are not venomous and feed on leaf litter and detritus. Most millipedes are also slower than centipedes. One of the best ways to tell the difference between the two is to look at how many pairs of legs they have per segment. The giant centipede, can grow to 25 centimetres, this is an example of gigantism – a feature of many NZ native species. In the absence of mammals, large flightless invertebrates (such as wētā and centipedes) occupied the niche which in other land masses small mammals (such as mice and rats) exploited.



Can you spot a NZ native centipede!

What plants are we planting on Titirangi and Why?

- Many years ago Titirangi would have once been covered in low-lying coastal forest, including plants such as ngaio, titoki, pohutukawa, manuka, kanuka, five finger, harakeke. Follow links to plant species below.
- We're planting these to re-establish the area with the same native plants and bush which originally covered the reserve, helping to improve the biodiversity and natural environment. These plants provide a wide range of habitats for native wildlife including insects, frogs, reptiles and birds.

Additional Information

Article 1

Titirangi (Kaiti Hill)

*Ko Titirangi te maunga
Titirangi (Kaiti) is the mountain*

*Ko Tūrangānui te awa
Tūrangānui is the river*

*Ko Ngāti Oneone te hapū
The people of Ngāti Oneone are the guardians*

*Ko Rāwiri Te Eke-tū-o-te-rangi te tangata
Rāwiri Te Eke-tū-o-te-rangi is the chief*

*Tihe mauri ora!
Atas the breath of life!*

MORE commonly known as Kaiti Hill, Titirangi stands tall as a guardian to this place we call home, Tūrangā/Gisborne. From the aeons of time, to the arrival of our ancestors, on to the first meeting of Māori and Pākehā, to the conflicts between inhabitants and settlers, to the impact of growth and development, to the birth of a city, Titirangi has been witness to all the pages of our voluminous history. From its summit we look as far as the eye can see. To the south rises the headland of Te Māhia, across the bay stands Te Kuri-a-Paoa (Young Nicks Head), inland to Whakapūnake, to Maungahaumi, to Arowhana, then to Herchereuma, forward to Popoia, and sweeping back to the north-east the magnificence of Hikurangi. All these iconic landmarks touched by the first rays of sunlight each day, which then spread across the rich fertile lands

upon which we reside.

The name Titirangi was said to have been given by the commanders of the Takitimu waka where, upon approaching the mouth of the river, they commented how much it resembled the hill in their homeland on which their waka was made. From this journey and that of the Horouta and Te Ikaroa-a-Rauru waka, Titirangi became home to many generations of new arrivals. Its steep escarpments were a natural buffer to repelling invaders, while its lower reaches were ideal for the growing of kumara to feed its many residents.

The pā that stood on Titirangi was called Whare-kōrero. One of its early residents was Hamo-te-rangi (circa 1475), who had considerable mana in the district. She married Porourangi, from whom the tribe of Ngāti Porou descends, and shifted to live with her husband in Whāngārā. Upon the death of Porourangi, Hamo was taken as wife by Tahu-pōtiki, Porourangi's younger brother, and settled in Te Waipounamu (the South Island). From that union was born the tribe known as Ngāti Tahu (or Kai Tahu).

The famous ancestor Kahungunu (circa 1550) was a visitor to Titirangi and from its summit he observed the rising smoke from burning fires on the flats. This was to lead him to Popoia (near Waituhi), the pā of Ruapani, paramount chief of the Tūrangā area, and marriage to his daughter, Ruarauhanga. Kahungunu eventually settled in Māhia but his influence in the Tūrangā area was to continue through his progeny, the most notable being his grandson, Māhaki-a-Tauheikuri, the founding ancestor of the tribe Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki.

Other ancestors of the Tūrangā and Tairāwhiti area were to

make Titirangi home, including Māteroa (circa 1625), who with her second husband, Tāma-te-rongo — a great-great-grandson of Kahungunu and Rongowhakaata — had nine children. Most of the tribes of Tūrangā also trace descent from Māteroa and Tāma-te-rongo, while from Māteroa's first marriage a son, Tamaihu, was born and from him Te Aitanga-a-Mate tribe of the East Coast descend.

At the time of the arrival of Captain James Cook on the HM Bark Endeavour in October 1769, Titirangi was still thriving. As botanist Joseph Banks observed, "On a small peninsula at the NE head we could plainly see a regular paling, pretty high, enclosing the top of a hill." From these "palings", tangata whenua witnessed events that were to change the landscape of Tūrangā and Aotearoa forever.

Today Titirangi stands as the symbol of past and present. It has been established as a reserve for all the community to enjoy and every day locals follow in the footsteps of its former residents, trudging the road and pathways to its summit and down again for peace of mind and body, pausing for a moment to swallow the breathtaking views from its look-out points. So next time you're up there on Kaiti Hill, imagine yourself back in the day and the events that moulded our history, for you too would have seen it all from the hallowed ridges of Titirangi.

*Titirangi, he maunga teitei, he maunga ahuru, he maunga tā sonu
— Titirangi, a lofty mountain, the sentinel mountain that keeps guard over us, her people of Tūrangā; a mountain that stands forever.*

Web links

Midden

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/en/newseventsculture/heritage/documents/ac-0498middensfactsheet.pdf>

Weeds

<http://www.weedbusters.org.nz/weed-information/what-are-weeds/>

Blackberry

<http://www.weedbusters.org.nz/weed-information/rubus-fruticosus-agg/59/>

Whau

<http://www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz/whau>

Kaka

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/birds/birds-a-z/kaka/>

Centipede

<http://soilbugs.massey.ac.nz/chilopoda.php>

Native plants

<http://www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz/ngaio> <http://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-plants/manuka-kahikatoa-and-kanuka/> <http://www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz/whau>