

GREAT BARRIER REPORTING AREA

Great Barrier Local Board

STATE OF AUCKLAND TERRESTRIAL REPORT CARD

JULY 2014

AREA GRADE

B

QUICK FACTS

THE REPORTING AREA IS APPROXIMATELY

32,000
HECTARES IN SIZE

THE AREA HAS

92%

INDIGENOUS VEGETATION – THE LARGEST OF ALL REPORTING AREAS

THE REPORTING AREA IS

HOME TO THREE PLANT SPECIES

THAT ARE FOUND NOWHERE ELSE ON EARTH (SINCLAIR'S KANUKA, GREAT BARRIER TREE DAISY AND GREAT BARRIER KOROMIKO)

GREAT BARRIER ISLAND IS HOME TO NEARLY

A QUARTER OF NEW ZEALAND'S VASCULAR PLANT SPECIES

OVERALL GRADE



LAND COVER



NATIVE PLANTS



BIRDS



PESTS



WEEDS



WHAT MAKES UP THIS GRADE?

The overall grade is made up of five indicators:

Land cover: Based on different ecosystems mapped in NZ Land Cover Database 3 (2008).

Native plants: Average of four sub-indicators which reflect the diversity and biomass of native plants, and the regeneration of native saplings and seedlings.

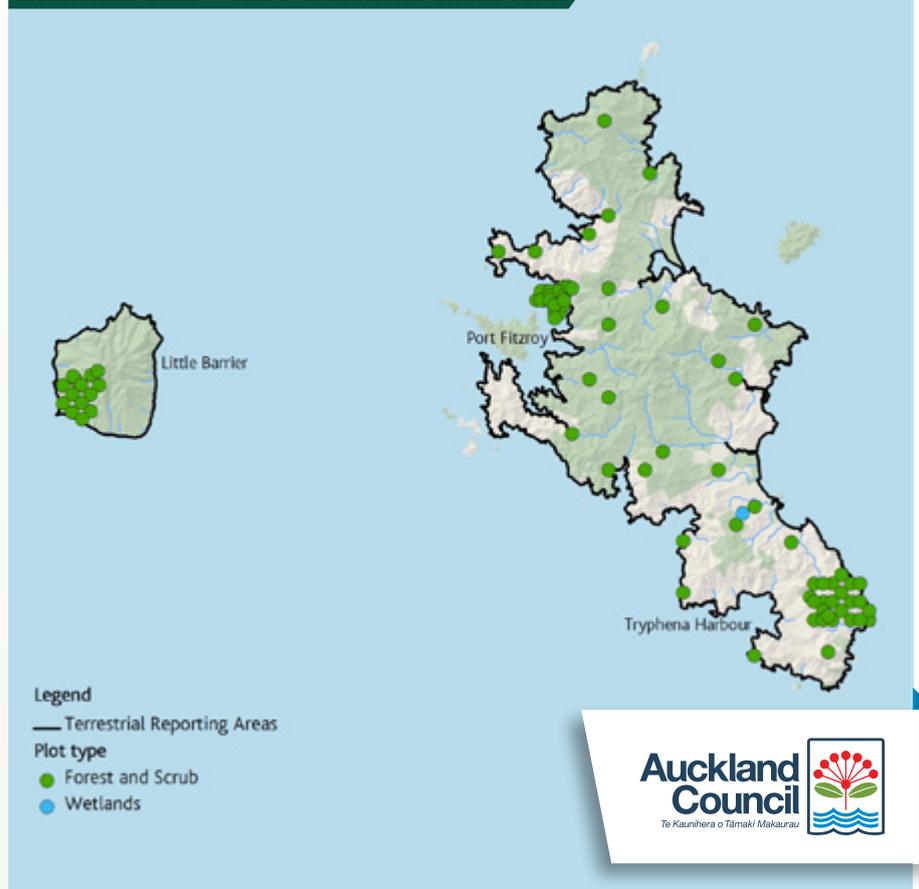
Birds: Average of three sub-indicators which reflect the average diversity and conspicuousness of native birds, and the total number of bird species found within the reporting area.

Weeds: Average of three sub-indicators which reflect the abundance and relative dominance of weedy and exotic trees, saplings and seedlings.

Pests: Average of four sub-indicators which indicate the number of pest-free sites, and presence of rats, mice and possums in the landscape.

Note: Includes forest data only. From 2015 wetland data will also be reported.

MONITORING SITES – GREAT BARRIER REPORTING AREA



CURRENT ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT

The Great Barrier reporting area includes Great Barrier Island (Aotea), Little Barrier Island (Hauturu) and the Mokohinau Islands. The vegetation predominantly comprises native re-growth following logging; kanuka forest and/or manuka scrub and forest are the most common components. Not surprisingly, this local board has the lowest percentage of urban cover (approx 0.3%). Most of the remaining land cover is characterised by pasture, mainly on low-lying, flat land surrounding the lower reaches of the major rivers.

Most of Hauturu and some of the Mokohinau Islands have remained unmodified by human activity associated with farming

and resource extraction by European settlers. However, much of Great Barrier Island has been significantly affected from burning and logging of forests, mining, gum digging, and draining of wetlands to create farmland.

Despite this, Great Barrier Island still supports a high diversity of native flora and fauna. The island also retains extensive freshwater wetlands, saltmarsh and dunelands, all of which are nationally uncommon habitat types. Approximately 55 per cent of the remaining native vegetation remnants on Great Barrier Island are in protected areas.

KEY BIODIVERSITY SITE

GREAT BARRIER ISLAND (AOTEA)

Great Barrier Island (Aotea) is of national and international significance for conservation of New Zealand's unique biodiversity due to its high biological diversity and abundance of relatively unmodified native ecosystems. The island supports at least 560 native vascular plant species, which represents nearly a quarter of the New Zealand flora, and these include at least 75 threatened and uncommon plant species, and three plants endemic to Aotea. Around 5000 species of land and freshwater invertebrates are thought to inhabit the island. Great Barrier also supports one frog species as well as a wide range of indigenous reptiles including eight skink species, five geckos, and possibly additional (as yet undiscovered) species. Among offshore islands only Little Barrier and the Mercury Islands support a comparable diversity of reptiles.

Great Barrier's avifauna includes at least eighty-two different bird species, although some of these are seabirds that may only be occasional visitors to the island. This total is almost a quarter of all the bird species recorded in the New Zealand region. The bird fauna includes large healthy populations of threatened species such as kaka, brown teal, kereru, NZ dotterel, wrybill, fernbird, and marsh crake.



Harataonga Bay, Great Barrier Island (Aotea)

FIND OUT MORE

This report card is part of a series prepared by the Auckland Council's Research, Investigations and Monitoring Unit, which undertakes monitoring and research to provide information and evidence to inform the council's activities and reporting. Auckland's environment must be healthy and resilient in order

to support life and lifestyle. More report cards can be found at: aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/stateofauckland. The report card series includes reporting on freshwater, terrestrial, marine, air, soil, capacity for growth, demographics and quality of life.

GET INVOLVED

Auckland Council provides more than 20 environmental programmes across the region for you to get involved with and improve your local environment.

► For more information: e-mail monitoring@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or call us on 09 301 0101.