

WAIHEKE REPORTING AREA

Waiheke Local Board

STATE OF AUCKLAND TERRESTRIAL REPORT CARD



Image credit: Gino Demeer

QUICK FACTS

THE REPORTING AREA IS APPROXIMATELY

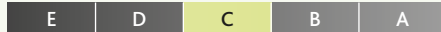
15,500
HECTARES IN SIZE

ALL WETLAND TERRESTRIAL BIODIVERSITY MONITORING SITES IN WAIHEKE HAVE BEEN SAMPLED TWICE SINCE THE PROGRAMME'S INCEPTION IN 2009

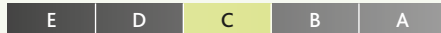
FOREST - LANDCOVER



FOREST - NATIVE PLANTS



FOREST - NATIVE BIRDS



FOREST - PEST ANIMALS



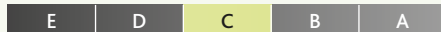
FOREST - WEEDS



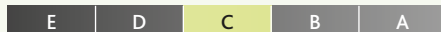
WETLANDS - CONDITION



WETLANDS - NATIVE PLANTS



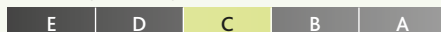
WETLANDS - NATIVE BIRDS



WETLANDS - PEST ANIMALS



WETLANDS - WEEDS

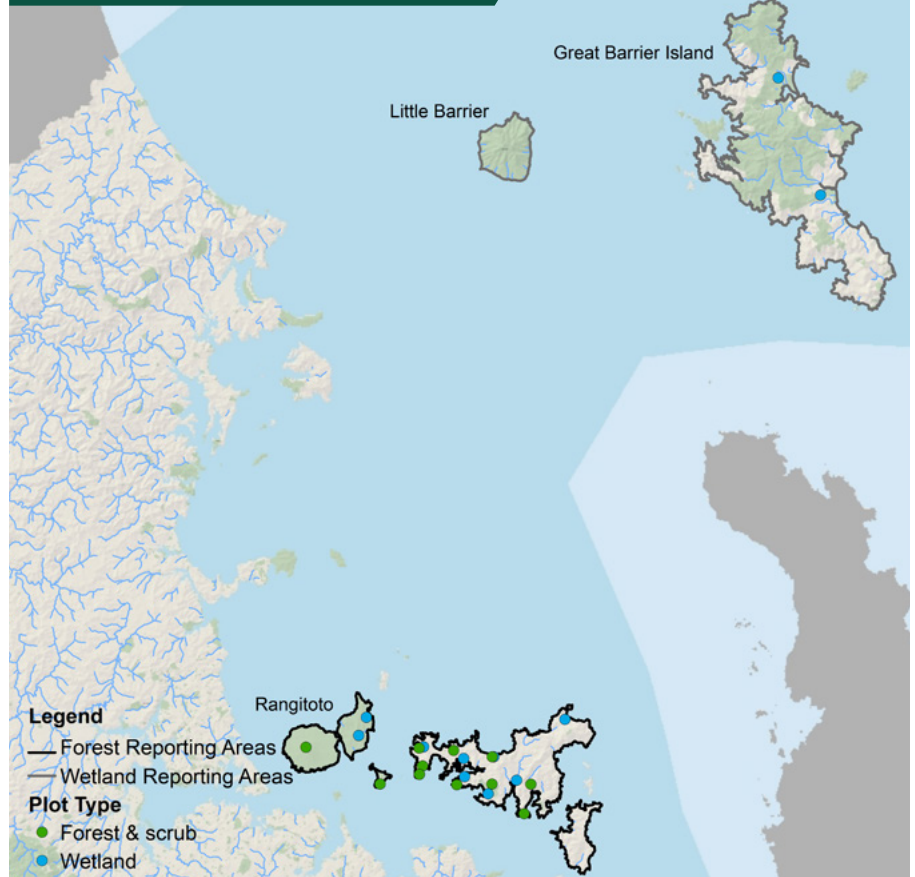


WHAT MAKES UP THIS GRADE?

Indicator grades were calculated using data collected from forest and wetland terrestrial biodiversity monitoring plots. As the full set of remeasures were only available for the wetland indicators, only the wetland grades have been updated and thus the forest grades are the same as the last 2016 report card.

WAIHEKE AND ITS NEIGHBOURING ISLANDS CONTAIN SIGNIFICANT SEABIRD BREEDING AREAS INCLUDING THE 'AT RISK' KORORĀ/LITTLE PENGUIN, ŌI/GREY-FACED PETREL AND THE VERY RARE PAREKAREKA/SPOTTED SHAG

MONITORING SITES - WAIHEKE REPORTING AREA



CURRENT ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT

The Waiheke reporting area includes most of the Inner Gulf Islands, including Waiheke, Ponui, Rangitoto, Motutapu, and Browns islands. With the exception of Rangitoto, all the islands within this area have been highly modified by human occupation and farming activities, many having been almost cleared of native vegetation.

Introduced vegetation covers almost half of the area, which is dominated by productive pasture and lesser amounts of vineyards. Estuarine systems are naturally uncommon while freshwater wetlands greater than about 0.1 ha in size are

restricted to Waiheke and Motutapu islands. Only a relatively small proportion of the area (less than 5 per cent) is covered in dense urban growth and parkland.

The reporting area makes a significant contribution to conservation in the Auckland region with its collection of pest-free islands, and islands without a full complement of pests (e.g. possums are absent from Waiheke Island). Ponui Island, while not yet pest-free, supports an estimated 1500 North Island brown kiwi. Given brown kiwi are endangered and in decline, this makes the Ponui kiwi population one of national importance.

HIGHLIGHTS

New Zealand is famous for being the 'seabird capital of the world' with a quarter of all seabirds breeding here. Auckland is also well known for its seabirds with the majority of its ocean areas classified as 'Important Bird Areas'. The Hauraki Gulf is recognised as a seabird hotspot, with 26 species breeding in the wider area, however the majority of these species are 'at risk' or 'threatened', and confined to breeding on pest-free islands in the Hauraki Gulf.

Waiheke Island contains a variety of unique biodiversity, including a number of seabirds. Recent seabird survey work using a highly trained seabird detection dog has identified the presence of the 'at risk' kororā/little penguin and ōi/grey-faced petrel at a number of locations on the island. Waiheke and the neighbouring Tarahiki Island are also home to one of Auckland's rarer seabirds, the parekareka/spotted shag, which are monitored by Auckland Council. Just out on the water you'll likely to find a number of other seabirds in the area, such as the 'at risk' pakahā/fluttering shearwater and little shearwater.

Seabirds are under pressure from a variety of threats: at sea these include pollution, such as from contaminants and plastics, as well as from fisheries, both commercial and recreational when the birds get caught and killed from fishing equipment; on land the major issue is from introduced mammalian predators such as stoats, rats and mice. Waiheke is taking leadership in reducing the effects of predators on its precious wildlife with the development of the 'Pest Free Waiheke' programme, which aims to make Waiheke the first predator-free urban island. This \$11 million programme will begin by targeting rats and stoats, which will likely have many positive effects on the seabirds and other indigenous biodiversity on the island.



Spotted Shag, Edin Whitehead

FIND OUT MORE

This report card is part of a series prepared by the Auckland Council's Research and Evaluation Unit, which undertakes monitoring and research to provide information and evidence to inform the council's activities and reporting. More report cards can be found at: aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/environment. The report card series includes reporting on freshwater, terrestrial, marine, air, soil, capacity for growth, demographics and quality of life.

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

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