

Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika has today asked that interested community please take a step back from intervening with kororā (little blue penguins) at Shelly Bay Taikuru.

*“Wellingtonians can be assured that we, as Mana Whenua, as kaitiaki, are actively working with both experts and key stakeholders on all aspects of the protection of our native wildlife at Shelly Bay Taikuru”, says Kara Puketapu-Dentice, Chair of Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika. “Last year we invited likeminded people and experts within the field to co-develop a kororā management plan, which seeks to ensure the protection of these taonga. These experts are at the forefront of wildlife management and protection and include specialist penguin ecologists from Boffa Miskell, The Department of Conservation, Forest & Bird Places for Penguins Wellington, and Wellington Zoo”.*

These birds are very susceptible to disturbance by people, particularly at this time of year, and detailed plans are in place to keep this taonga safe.

*“We have worked closely with The Wellington Company to ensure the safety of both public and wildlife in context of the site, and expert advice on how to manage and mitigate issues that we may encounter continues to be followed. Kororā are known to nest underneath buildings in the coastal area. With the demolition and relocation of buildings at Shelly Bay Taikuru, Kororā are protected by preventing them from entering the construction site while this work is happening”.*

*“Whilst construction is happening, a temporary nesting area with nesting boxes has been provided as part of the ongoing Kororā Management Plan. Where burrow signs have been detected, there is an action plan to ensure that the penguins will be safe and have direct access to the ocean”.*

*“A Taranaki Whānui kaitiaki on the ground at Shelly Bay responded immediately to suspected kororā sightings over the weekend and did the right thing by bringing in the experts to conduct a penguin survey with trained detection dogs. These checks are both regular and ongoing: the protection of kororā at Shelly Bay Taikuru is an aspiration shared by the entire project team”.*

*“This work complements what we have also implemented for the protection of mokomoko (lizards), kaka and falcons prior to any work commencing: including the clearing of non-native vegetation such as pine trees which were deemed a high-level health & safety risk and tagged for removal to enable early works to progress safely. Further, we are currently planning a piece of work which will see the escarpment re-planted with a native habitat that takes into consideration the wildlife that frequent this area”.*

Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika ask that the public respect the detailed action plans in place at Shelly Bay Taikuru.

Wildlife like kororā are taonga, and are protected under the Wildlife Act 1953. Offences under this Act can incur serious penalties including fines and imprisonment for offences. DOC aims to follow up on reports wherever possible. If you have concerns about kororā or other wildlife, please contact your local DOC office or call 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468).

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