



Katikati Bird Gardens general walk guide 2021

This document is intended to guide visitors around the gardens with high level information and a route with respect to a broad selection of predominately native flora and fauna. The guide is divided into 9 zones or areas.

Area 1

Walk from café along the right hand side of the pond below the café.

Look up above the bench near the fountain and you will see a White Faced Heron nest. There are a number of nesting spots around the gardens which are populated every year by the same birds over spring/summer.

As you leave the pathway look out to the right (near the Dovecote) and you will see a small stand of native trees.

1. **Kauri** (juvenile trees approximately 20 years old)

Leaves alternating to almost opposite, mostly 2-4cm long. Female cones large and round. Male cones finger shaped. Some were believed to have been over 2000 years old.

Grow to 30+ metres

2. **Rimu**

Tiny, scale like leaves, over laping , stiff and spiky to touch

Previously an important building timber

Recycled Rimu is a popular for flooring and furniture

Grow to 15+ metres

Area 2

Leave the gravel path and head north across the lawn following the hedge line. You will enter the wetlands walk through a wooden arch.

Wetlands (Inner Tauranga Harbour) salt water harbour side and fresh water gardens side look out for;

3. **Manuka/Tea Tree** on your right.

Leaves about 1cm. Flowers usually white – sometimes pink

Captain Cook and his crew made Tea and Beer from Tea Tree.

Tea tree has important antiseptic properties Honey made from it is very popular abroad

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4. In the willows look out for the **White faced Heron**

The white-faced heron also known as the white-fronted heron is a common bird throughout most of Australasia. It is a relatively small heron, pale, slightly bluish-grey, with yellow legs and white facial markings. It can be found almost anywhere near shallow water, fresh or



salt, and although it is prompt to depart the scene on long, slow-beating wings if disturbed, it will boldly raid fish ponds and they remove our gold fish.

5. **Little Black Shag**

The Little Black Cormorant is a member of the cormorant family of seabirds. It is common in smaller rivers and lakes throughout most areas of Australia and northern New Zealand, where it is known as the Little Black Shag. It is around sixty centimetres long, and is all black with blue-green eyes. A good eel fisherman in our ponds.

6. Look out for **Pukeko** in the reeds and in grassy areas.

Pukeko is the common name, derived from the Māori language, for the purple swamphen. It is also found elsewhere in Australasia, including Australia.

7. The wetlands grasses are predominately **Carex**

Carex is a vast genus of over 2000 species of grassy plants in the family of sedges. The study of Carex is known as caricology.

Area 3

When exiting the wetland walk look out for the tree hut. Next to it is a small jetty.

Here you may see **Black Swans** (Australian)

The black swan is a large waterbird, a species of swan, which breeds mainly in the southeast and southwest regions of Australia. The species was hunted to extinction in New Zealand, but later reintroduced. Within Australia they are nomadic, with erratic migration patterns dependent upon climatic conditions. Black swans are large birds with mostly black plumage and red bills. They are monogamous breeders that share incubation duties and cygnet rearing between the sexes.

Area 4

Walk out to the Moa statue

8. **Moa**

The moa were nine species of flightless birds endemic to New Zealand. The two largest species, reached about 3.6 m (12 ft) in height with neck outstretched, and weighed about 230 kg (510 lb).

They were the dominant herbivores in New Zealand's forest, shrubland and subalpine ecosystems for thousands of years, and until the arrival of the Māori. It is generally considered that most, if not all, species of moa died out by 1400 CE due to overhunting by the Māori and habitat decline.

Head back to the the arch at the end of the wetlands walk and follow the path to the right. Here you will find the Bantam Aviaries. Mix of Silkie, Pekin, Game and Frizzel.

The large trees with a fine green leaf (summer) Red/orange winter are Swamp Cypress (non native) They thrive in wet areas and their root system surfaces with nodes for breathing..



The other trees here are mostly Oak.

Area 5

Head up the incline to the right and follow the path past the Norfolk Pine. Not a native but were often planted around ports at the turn of last century to help maritime navigation.

At the top of the incline , on the left can be found the Puriri Tree (Native) and further along a cluster of Kawa Kawa .

9. Puriri;

Hand shaped leaves with 3 to 5 fingers , no teeth glossy, leaf stalks square angled. Pinkish red flowers throughout the year but mainly in the winter.Round red fruit 2cm across look like cherries. The fruit and flowers attract many birds.

10. **Kawakawa** opposite leaves , heart shaped , spicy smell when crushed, usually full of holes. Leaves are chewed to alleviate toothache.

Double back to the pathway and head on to the aviaries.

Area 6

11. Indian Ringneck Parrot

The Ring-necked Parakeet, is a gregarious tropical Afro-Asian parakeet species that has an extremely large range. The Parakeets are popular as pets. This non-migrating species is one of few parrot species that have successfully adapted to living in 'disturbed habitats', and in that way withstood the onslaught of urbanisation and deforestation. In the wild, this is a noisy species with an unmistakable squawking call.

12. Kereru (Native Wood Pigeon) –This one is a Rescue Bird.

The New Zealand pigeon is a bird endemic to New Zealand. Māori call it kererū in most of the country but kūkupa and kūkū in some parts of the North Island, particularly in Northland. They are distinct from the wood pigeon of the Northern Hemisphere, which is a member of a different genus.

13. Pheasants

Silver , native of China.



Area 7

Leaving this area as you head down the incline past the gazebo you will see some very young Kauri (native young trees planted approximately 8 years old)

14. **Tree Ferns** (Native)

Commonly called *whekī* or rough tree fern, is a common tree fern endemic to New Zealand. It has a slender black trunk that is usually surrounded by many dead brown fronds. This species has a fast growth rate of up to 10–80 cm (4–31 in) a year, growing to about 6 m (20 ft) tall. It produces few fronds, all of which sprout in almost horizontal fashion. The fronds reach 1.5–3 m (4 ft 11 in–9 ft 10 in) in length and are quite crisp to touch. They form a small "umbrella" on top of the trunk. They are sometimes found sprouting from apparently dead pieces of trunk. The trunks are often used for fencing or edging and fronds will sometimes sprout from the side if the top is dead. A feature of the *whekī* is the spreading underground rhizomes which can create dense groves, making it one of the most common tree ferns in New Zealand forests.

Take the path to the left look out for the following then double back down the incline.

15. The small hedge here is **Totara** (Native)

Stiff spiky leaves in two rows . A soft wood used for carving and the stringy bark was used as a splint for broken limbs.

Area 8

Back on the pathway just past the tree ferns and water feature, on the left is a mature Camphor Laurel tree not native here but native to Japan ☺ (and elsewhere). If you pick up a few leaves and rub them together you will recognise the familiar smell.

16. **Rengarenga (rock lily)** lines the walkway and this native with green foliage has a splendid display of tiny white flowers on stalks over the spring and summer.

It is a species of herbaceous perennial plant, endemic to New Zealand, where it may once have been farmed. It is used for medicine as well as food, and has symbolic importance in traditional Māori culture.

17. **Cabbage Tree** (Native)

Leaves 50cm long – 1m long, narrow , grass like growing in ball-like tufts. White sweet scented flowers , tiny but in large showy bunches. The heart of the tree has been cooked as cabbage.

Follow the path past the rose garden and follow it round to the right and you will head back up toward the entrance.



18. On your right above you is a large **Pohutakawa** tree. This native is also known as the Christmas tree with large red flowers in spiky balls seen in early summer. These gnarled trees are often noticed along northern cliffs.

Area 9

Look out for in and around the café.

19. **Fantail** (Native)

Fantails are small insectivorous birds of Australasia, Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent. Most of the species are about 15 to 18 cm long, specialist aerial feeders, and named as "fantails", but the Australian Willie Wagtail, is a little larger, and though still an expert hunter of insects on the wing, concentrates equally on terrestrial prey.

The large tree on the lawn in front of Café is an Australian Jacaranda

20. **Cockatoo** (Australian) ,
21. **King Parrot** (Australian)
22. **Alexanderine Parrot**
23. **Diamond dove**

Other birds (native and Exotic) you may see around the gardens.

Cape Barron Goose (Native Australian) grey goose with a green bill and distinctive croak sound.
Sebastipol Goose – Unkempt flightless goose and will be amongst the Pilgram geese. The Males are coloured white and the female Grey.

Various Ducks – Pekin (White) Kuga (Black) Kaki Campbell (Brown) Mallard (Brown)

Note in the duck world drakes have a little curl at the end of their tails.

Kingfisher around the rose archway. You will hear their distinctive call before you see them.