

# TE MANU KŌRIHI

Pānui a Ngā Kaitiaki o Te Tuawhenua

Issue 1904 Apr 2019

## Tuawhenua in Thailand

In January this year, the Tuawhenua Trust represented by Brenda Tahi and Atamira Tumarae visited Thailand for a conference on pollinators along with other indigenous peoples from across the world. The conference was a follow-up on contribution made some years ago by James Doherty and Kirituia Tumarae in Panama City to an assessment of pollination and pollinators being undertaken by IPBES, an international organisation reporting to governments from across the globe. That work showed that pollinators such as bees, birds, bats and butterflies are in decline globally, which threatens biodiversity and food production all over the world.

The programme involved workshops introducing participants from indigenous peoples and research institutes from across the world; homestay and walking workshops in Hin Lad Nai, a traditional village of the Karen tribe of northern Thailand, and a conference at Chiang Mai University.

Brenda explains that "it was the experiences in Hin Lad Nai that impacted most on us. We were astounded at how the people there had been able to maintain a traditional way of life, living deep in their mountain forests, yet had made a range of useful adaptations to modern life. We noted that their way of life has been maintained through strong and structured leadership of their village based on traditional principles; giving active roles to their young people in development planning and activities so that they do not 'drift' away from their traditions; identifying the body of knowledge, customs and values that underpin the integrity of their culture, and actively implementing the transfer of knowledge and practices across generations."

## In This Issue

- Tuawhenua in Thailand
- Honey for All in Ruatahuna
- Staff Updates
- Te Manawa-o-te-Ika Available
- Key Dates: Te Whare o Rehua
- Te Weu o Te Kaitiaki



*Atamira presents the Tuawhenua Worldview in our first day of conference held in Chiang Mai City. This workshop was for introducing participants from indigenous peoples and research institutes from across the world. Among many, we heard presentations from representatives of the peoples of Guatemala, Philippines, India, Myanmar (Burma), the Caribbean, Kenya, Panama, and Brazil. We also heard from a number of researchers from across the globe.*



"We noted the way in which these people are effective in gaining recognition for their cultural rights and ancestral territories by the government of Thailand by using its growing fame in international circles for its traditional methods of farming and forest management. This programme was also useful for us to observe and contribute to processes for bringing science into policy

formulation in global or intergovernmental processes. We saw that other indigenous peoples have been quite effective in taking their causes to the United Nations to resolve issues of indigenous people's rights and wondered why this pathway has not been taken for more of the claims made by Maori for grievances experienced in here in Aotearoa."



*In conference, open-air style in the village of Hin Lad Nai, in Chiang Rai Province, high up in the mountain forests of Northern Thailand. Here we studied the methods of the Karen people for forest management and regeneration, rotational farming, agroforestry and multiple land use in their isolated mountain homeland—land use that they have practiced in this way for centuries.*



*We learnt about the way of life of the Karen people of Hin Lad Nai through 'walking' workshops. This workshop took us along trails used for the sustainable harvest of honey, coffee and tea from hives and plantations set out under the forest canopy. Here's one of the beehives set to catch a swarm when the season is right – it's a natural way of beekeeping that depends on deep understanding of and spiritual connection to the wild bees of this forest. We were taught by Karen elders that we should heed the Karen saying that "we should walk like the bees". They say: "When the bees fly, they fly better together and look after each other and the interest of the whole community of bees. They live in harmony together, and increase the biodiversity in the forest with their actions, like we do."*





Left: The people of Hin Lad Nai maintain their tradition of trapping and eating their bush kiore, as our ancestors once did in Ruatahuna. Each day, after their schooling has finished, the children of this village enjoy taking the bamboo traps into the forest for catching kiore. Excitement surrounds them when they return the next day with their catch, as this is not a game—they are seriously contributing to the well-being of the village. Here, a young woman does the cooking and enjoys her fire-grilled snack!

Below: The current chief of Hin Lad Nai village is Chaiprasert Phokha at left. The leadership of Hin Lad Nai is determined by a council of leaders and can change depending on the needs of the village. Chaiprasert is also an expert in the wild bees of their forest and wild honey gathering. Here, with the assistance of two translators at right, Chaiprasert explains that the wild bees of their forest are not just a source of food but they are central to their culture and give his people philosophical and spiritual inspiration.







*Top left: Tropical mountain forest in Thailand where many trees start as epiphytes like the vine on this great tree. In time the two trees live together in harmony then later the epiphytic tree takes over—just like raataa on rimu in our forest.*

*Top right: Hin Lad Nai village, deep in the forest, settled hundreds of years ago by the Karen tribe who live across the mountains in North Thailand, and across the borders in Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia. Such mountain tribes in this extensive region (from Vietnam to the Himalayas and from Thailand to Southern China) have been described as expert in the ‘art of not being governed’ as they maintain their own mana no matter in what country they may happen to reside. Such is the nature of their mana motuhake—their unbroken authority.*

*Below right: The wild honey of Hin Lad Nai, gathered from the forests, extracted in simple traditional ways and sold for the highest of prices in Bangkok, the main city of Thailand in the south. Hin Lad Nai produces a range of honeys depending on the flowering times of different trees in their forest. These honeys are liquid, like most honeys from tropical ecosystems, and are presented in classy glass bottles as photographed here.*

*Bottom left: It’s story-telling time at night by the fire in Hin Lad Nai. We thought we would hear just yarns, but instead we heard stories of resistance and struggle that the different indigenous peoples had faced in their countries. Some of these struggles had been won using international courts or the United Nations rather than through the courts or with governments of their own countries. Other struggles were ongoing with some of these peoples living in militarized zones where their lives could be at risk on a daily basis.*





## Honey for All in Ruatāhuna

One of the reasons why we set up the Manawa Honey business in Ruatāhuna is because we know that honey is a super-food – magic for the health of our people. In past times, our ancestors gathered honey from wild hives in the forests of this region, so always had honey in their diet. We want to put honey back into the homes of our whanau, and with December being a time for giving, we gifted honey for Christmas 2018 to all whanau in Ruatahuna and for staff as well.

Pictured here is Ngawhata Heemi and sister Ataahua who have just finished decorating honey gifts ready for them to deliver to the whanau of Ruatāhuna.



## Ruatāhuna: Te Manawa-o-te-Ika Available

This is a comprehensive 2 volume set on the history of Ruatāhuna from origins through to 1990. These books were produced for the Treaty of Waitangi claims of the Tuawhenua by the Tuawhenua Research Team.

Part 1: A History of the Mana of Ruatahuna from Early Origins to Contact and Conflict with the Crown  
Part 2: A History of the Mana of Ruatahuna from the Urewera District Native Reserve Act 1896 to the 1980's

These books are now available at \$90.00 per set. If you are interested, please make your order through the TTT office.



## Staff Updates

Ngawhata Heemi has finished with us and is moving on to progress her studies. We would like to thank her for her 14 months service and we're proud to have contributed to her learnings during this time. We have so enjoyed working with Ngawhata and will miss her fun and spirited attitude. All the very best of luck Ngawhata!

We would also like to welcome on-board new staff members. Mel Parker and Craig Pearson of Ngaputahi join us as Project Co-ordinator & Sales and Beekeeper and Extraction Assistant respectively. Marama Edwards of Papueru and Te Waiohine have also joined us, both part-time in positions of Assistant Administrator.

## Te Whare o Rehua: Dates

Te Mauri o Te Ngahere: 25-28 April 2019 with Puke Timoti and others.

Te Oranga o Te Ngahere: Two weekends in the month of April 2019 for the 'roar' with Taawi Te Kurapa and others.

Te Whare o Rehua Academy aims to connect our young people with the ngahere, by imparting Te Maturanga o Te Tuawhenua—traditional knowledge collected over time here in Ruatahuna.

**CONTACT US:** Tūhoe Tuawhenua Trust, 363a Mataatua Road, Ruatahuna || P: +64 7 3663 166 ||  
E: [office@tuawhenua.biz](mailto:office@tuawhenua.biz) || W: [www.tuawhenua.biz](http://www.tuawhenua.biz) || FB: <https://www.facebook.com/Tuhoe-Tuawhenua-Trust>



## Te Weu o Te Kaitiaki (The Roots of the Guardian)

Manaaki Whenua has been working with the Tūhoe Tuawhenua Trust and the Ruatāhuna community to develop and test a forest monitoring package using both mātauranga Māori and scientific approaches. Our goal was to represent a Tuawhenua world view that would reflect how people understand, relate to, and interact with their forests, as well as developing a monitoring system that would measure changes in the forests that mattered to the Tuawhenua people. A cross-cultural monitoring system provides understanding of forest state that both managers and communities can use for decision-making. It provides an opportunity for indigenous peoples and local communities to apply their traditional ways of knowing, and interprets and acts on information they understand as crucial

components of cross-cultural environmental management regimes. Historical baselines of forest state provide ecological targets for restoration initiatives, and also identify where on the restoration continuum current forest indicators lie. The future challenge for the Tuawhenua people, and Māori, is to ensure their world views, values, and methods for understanding the environment influence current conservation and environmental management systems. Our study supports the use of te ao Māori that not only enrich, but also help maintain our cultural heritage and enhance cultural diversity and protect the well-being of Māori. [This article was published in the Annual Report 2018 of Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research, who funds and runs this research with the Tuawhenua Trust]



*Maioha Timoti and Te Aotarewa Timoti pluck possums off a trapline in Ruatahuna, Te Urewera*