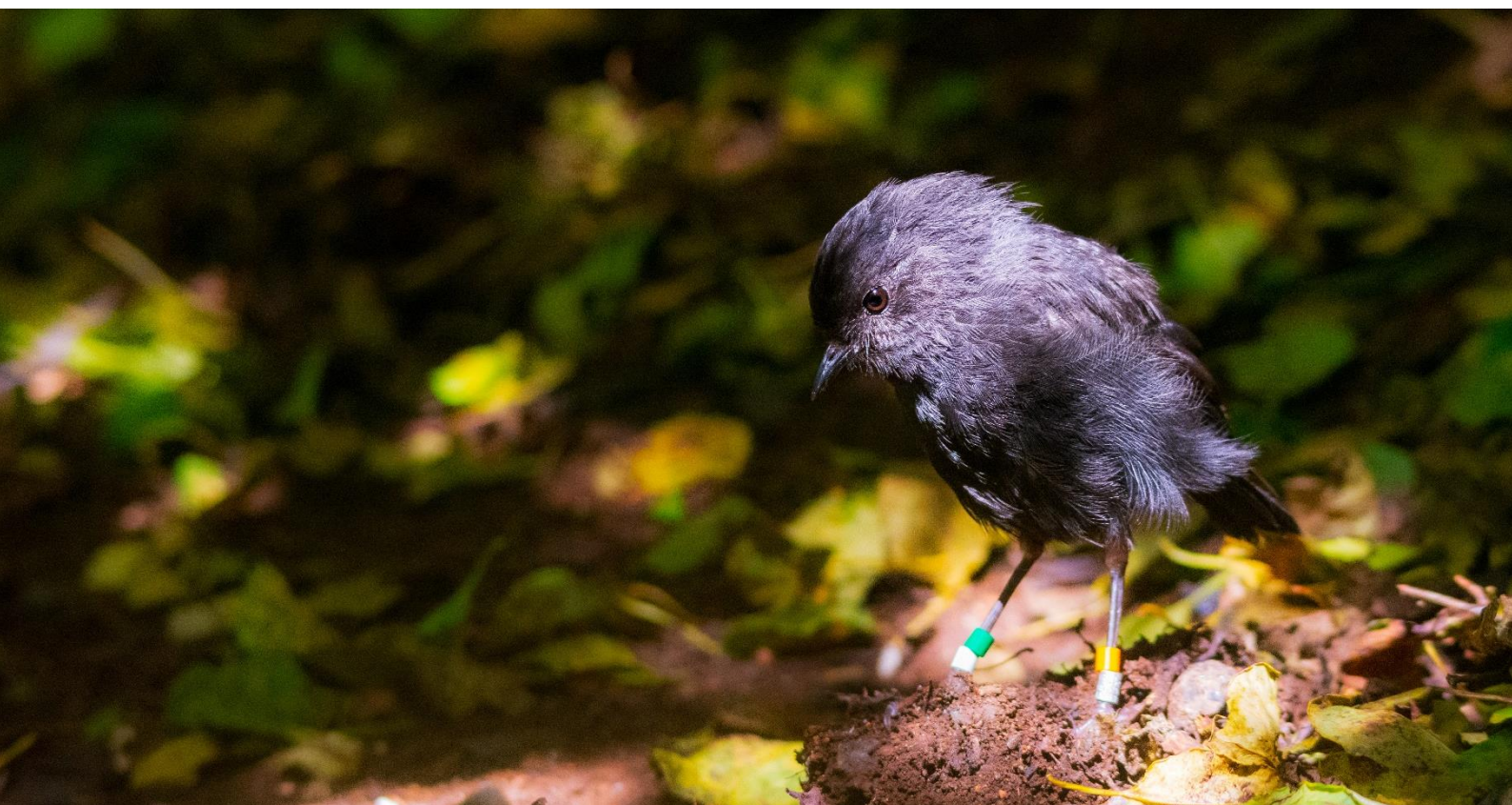


# Restoring Our Nature's Gifts

## Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust Strategy



November 2023



Chatham Islands  
Landscape Restoration Trust  
Restoring nature's gifts.



# Contents



Our vision .....	4
An introduction .....	5
Why restoring our islands is important.....	5
The Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust.....	5
Support from others.....	6
Our strategy.....	6
The outcomes.....	6
Our islands' biodiversity is thriving. ....	6
Our society has nature at its heart. ....	6
Our approach .....	7
The pathway to success.....	8
Measuring Success .....	10
Our goals .....	10
How the Trust works.....	11
Background to the Trust .....	11
How we implement the Strategy .....	11

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Cover image: Black robin on Mangere Island, credit Enzo M. R. Reyes



# Our vision

A land apart for people, plants and birds:  
restoring nature's gifts.



Restoration planting, credit Levi Lanauze

# An introduction

The Chatham Islands are a land apart.

Surrounded by productive seas and situated 800kms from mainland Aotearoa New Zealand, isolation and a wild climate have led to the evolution of some exceptional plants and wildlife. Around 326 of our unique species are threatened or at risk- and some of those species are only found here. There is no geographical area that holds greater conservation or biodiversity value than the islands we call home.

But these ecosystems, evolved over millions of years to fit perfectly together and sustain life, have been damaged. Habitat loss and introduced pests have led to the degradation, and in some cases loss, of the islands' natural gifts. Introduced predators have an especially significant impact, as Chatham species simply haven't evolved to cope with them.

We've lost some pieces of our ecosystems and we can't afford to lose more. Right now, we have an opportunity to restore and improve the health of our islands. After all, they are our home and we all depend on them – people, plants, and wildlife alike.

## Why restoring our islands is important

Restoring our landscape will make a huge difference to the health of the islands, safeguarding the future of so many unique species. Our ecosystems and the connection between land and ocean can thrive again. Regenerated bush and plants will help provide shelter and mitigate the effects of climate change. Landscape restoration will also help safeguard the future of people on the island, supporting cultural aspirations and helping create and grow economic opportunities.

## The Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust

The Trust is a group of islanders working collaboratively to bring to life conservation and ecosystem restoration projects for our islands.

We take a big-picture approach towards environmental restoration. This means long-term thinking, considering now and the future. Our focus is on landscape scale conservation projects that will restore our environment and sustain biodiversity, enabling community development and resilience.

We want our Trust to represent the Chatham Islands community. The Trust includes representatives of Hokotehi Moriori Trust, Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri, the Chatham Islands Council, and the wider community. A Predator Free Chathams Coordinator is also employed by the Chatham Islands Council to work under the Trust's direction.

More on the members, purpose and structure of the Trust can be found in the Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust Terms of Reference.

## Support from others

We can't restore our islands without the help of others. The Trust has been established and has ongoing support from three key agencies.

- The Chatham Islands Council's focus primarily relates to community services, support and development. They provide the Trust with some financial and administrative support.
- Predator Free 2050 Ltd's focus is to help deliver the government goal of eradicating possums, stoats and rats by 2050. They have provided financial and technical support, particularly regarding the Predator Free Chathams Coordinator position.
- The Department of Conservation works with the Trust, providing technical advice and operational support, access to tools, assets and records, logistical support for Trust meetings, and some financial support.

## Our strategy

This Strategy sets out the Trust's direction and focus as we work towards our vision.

We use the Strategy as a guide for planning the work we do and support, identifying the resources we need, and developing goals and measuring progress. It also helps our community, partners and stakeholders, and anyone interested in conservation and the Chatham Islands, to understand our work.

## The outcomes

We are working towards the following outcomes:

*Our islands' biodiversity is thriving.*

1. The korowai is restored across the islands.
2. The seabird-driven ecosystem is flourishing.
3. Our unique species and natural ecosystems are prospering.

*Our society has nature at its heart.*

1. We have robust conservation capability and capacity that carries through to future generations.
2. The islands are more resilient to climate change.
3. We share knowledge and have strong, collaborative relationships.
4. Our social ecosystem is aligned with our natural ecosystem.
5. The abundance of species allows for harvesting and for the continuing revival of cultural practices.

## Our approach

Restoring nature's gifts to the Chathams will take time, resources, and dedication. It requires big-picture thinking, and finding ways to benefit both our unique species and the people who live here.

There is an innate degree of crossover between our desired outcomes and the actions we will take to realise them. However, we have broken the actions into four broad categories:

1. **Pest control and predator eradication.** We'll focus on managing introduced species that damage habitats and compete with or kill native species. Getting rid of some key introduced predators is an action that could make a huge difference for the health of the islands.
2. **Restoring and protecting habitats and ecosystems.** This includes restoration planting, putting in infrastructure like fences where it's needed, and pest and predator control.
3. **Bringing conservation and nature into all facets of our islands' community.** We help make it easy for nature and sustainability to be an important part of decisions and policies, education, culture, and the economy. We also empower islanders and imi and iwi to get involved in conservation.
4. **Collaborating with and empowering others.** We work towards shared goals with the islands' community, our partners, stakeholders, and others. We share knowledge and collaborate to develop and deliver work, creating opportunities for people to get involved.



Chatham Islands albatross, credit Dave Boyle

# The pathway to success

Outcome	Actions to get us there	What success looks like
Our islands' biodiversity is thriving.		
The korowai is restored across our islands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate people about conservation and sustainability</li> <li>• Restoration planting</li> <li>• Control feral cattle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thick patches of native bush are seen all over the island.</li> <li>• Ecosystems across the islands are healthy and filled with life.</li> <li>• Natural vegetation has been restored in every area landowners want.</li> </ul>
The seabird-driven ecosystem is flourishing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fencing areas to protect birds and habitat</li> <li>• Translocating species to help colonies establish</li> <li>• Predator control to protect colonies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seabird colonies thrive, returning to places they were previously.</li> <li>• Species reliant on the marine-terrestrial ecosystem are abundant.</li> </ul>
Our unique species and natural ecosystems are prospering.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widespread pest control that involves the community</li> <li>• Island-wise pest eradication</li> <li>• Robust biosecurity to avoid reinvasion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None of the endemic Chathams species are endangered or on the Threatened Species list any more.</li> <li>• There are no possums, feral cats or rats on the Chatham Islands.</li> <li>• The Chathams are considered the gold standard of inhabited island eradication.</li> </ul>
Our society has nature at its heart.		
We have robust conservation capability and capacity that carries through to future generations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include conservation in education and school holiday programmes</li> <li>• Create work exchange programmes between projects</li> <li>• Offer work experience opportunities, scholarships, and on-island traineeships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our local community has the opportunity for careers in conservation.</li> <li>• The island has access to the tools and knowledge to support sustainable living and conservation on the Chathams.</li> <li>• Islanders, including the next generation, celebrate the uniqueness of the islands and value the opportunities conservation brings.</li> </ul>



<p>The islands are more resilient to climate change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate sustainable thinking and climate crisis mitigations into future Trust planning</li> <li>• Plant to help create wind shelters that mitigate storm damage and erosion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chathams are self-sustaining, with on-island food systems like fruit and vegetables.</li> <li>• The entire shoreline is planted, mitigating storm damage.</li> </ul>
<p>We share our knowledge and have strong, collaborative relationships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build strong relationships with similar projects and share knowledge and experiences</li> <li>• Develop work or volunteer exchanges between the Trust and groups with similar goals</li> <li>• Communicate transparently and share knowledge openly and honestly</li> <li>• Empower iwi and imi</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Island stakeholders have a shared vision for restoring the islands and support each other to achieve it.</li> <li>• We share our knowledge and experiences with others starting on conservation projects.</li> <li>• People look to the Chathams for advice or support in planning inhabited island predator control and eradication.</li> </ul>
<p>Our social ecosystem is aligned with our natural ecosystem.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve all generations in projects and opportunities</li> <li>• Restoration planting in places people can see every day</li> <li>• Bring conservation values and nature-oriented thinking to discussions about the community and islands' future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature drives each community decision.</li> <li>• The island has an education-, culture- and values-based economy where nature is at the heart.</li> <li>• People feel connected to our unique islands and the other species that live here.</li> </ul>
<p>The abundance of species allows for harvesting and for the continuing revival of cultural practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out actions to help biodiversity thrive, especially restoring our seabird-driven ecosystem</li> <li>• Empower iwi and imi to carry out their cultural practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased food resource for the community and the ability to correct species imbalances.</li> <li>• The Chathams are a role model for harvesting in NZ and beyond.</li> <li>• Cultural harvest is controlled to ensure a sustainable balance.</li> </ul>

# Measuring Success

To make sure we're on track, we will monitor our progress towards the outcomes regularly. We'll release updates on how we're doing (and how we're doing it).

## Our goals

We're currently in the early phases of implementing our strategy. We're developing concrete goals and indicators that will help us measure and assess our progress.

A progress review will take place biannually. This will be followed by a review of the Strategy and the development of a 5-yearly implementation plan.



Chatham Islands button daisy, credit Dave Boyle

# How the Trust works

## Background to the Trust

Considerable work was undertaken in 2019 and 2020 to scope opportunities for landscape scale conservation on the Chatham Islands. This led to the establishment of the Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Group (CILRG) in 2019, and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Chatham Islands Council, Predator Free 2050 Ltd and the Department of Conservation to support the CILRG.

The Trust was established in June 2023 to help further the vision of the CILRG. It has adopted the CILRG vision and priorities and is seeking charitable status, with the intention of better directing work and acting as a funding body.

The members of the Trust are selected with the aim of representing the range of people across the island. Members are committed to working together to put the Strategy into action. Each member retains autonomy and authority while working collaboratively towards our shared outcomes. Members provide effective governance linking new projects with existing programmes. New members may be invited to join the Trust. To become a member, individuals must commit to the Terms of Reference, the Trust Vision, and to implementing the Strategy.

More information about the purpose of the Trust and how it works can be found in the Terms of Reference and the Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Deed.

## How we implement the Strategy

The Trust implements the Strategy in three ways:

### **1. Our skills and work are aligned with the Strategy.**

All Trust members work to their strengths and build on their capacity and skills. Members also work to align with the Strategy within the other organisations or entities in their spheres of influence. This may include using the Strategy as a high-level document to guide future organisational processes such as statutory plans, policies, and business planning.

### **2. We collaborate on the Trust's projects and programmes.**

We work collectively and collaborate, both within the Trust and with the community and other groups. This includes planning projects and developing programmes of work. Community engagement and input is essential for long-term success.

### **3. We endorse and support others whose work aligns with ours.**

Restoring the islands can't be done without the work of others. Many people on the island are already carrying out their own conservation work. If the Trust is approached by community groups that have projects which support and align with the Strategy, the Trust will support or endorse these projects.