



**OUR WORLD**  
with **Gerry Brackenbury**  
(31 May 2011)



*Northland Hospitality*

LAST weekend I attended an archives course at the National Archives in Wellington. I learnt a great deal but one of the highlights of my visit was Zealandia the Korori Sanctuary. High predator-proof fences surround the **forest** and lake. Visitors are able to walk through bush full of native species, including tuatara, long gone from the forests we know. I could not resist the large takahe that happily roamed around my feet although I found them difficult to photograph. They expressed no fear at all and just as the other takahe I have seen on Tiritiri Matangi Island, they seemed to enjoy human company. Their close cousins, the pukeko, we have aplenty and can enjoy their delinquent behaviour around the Heritage Park. But otherwise our world here is sadly different.

Our very successful education programme LEOTC focused this week on the kiwi. Manuiti and Kura, in the kiwi enclosure, demonstrated, to the delighted children, just how kiwi investigate and explore their surroundings. **Gerry Brackenbury** took groups of children into the bush to look and listen for birds and explained to them how we use traps to capture as many predators as possible. Up in the **Pukenui forest**, behind the Heritage Park, we have a very few kiwi. The **Pukenui Forest** Trust is currently working on a programme to increase kiwi numbers. Sadly the Trust and Kiwi North do not have the luxury of predator-proof fencing which could cost millions of dollars. They have to rely on the volunteers and helpers to trap the predators and the public to be vigilant in the control of their pets. **Gerry** and the children witnessed a chilling sight. A large black labrador was running free in the **forest** barking aggressively at the wildlife. The authorities were duly informed.

As I listened to the bird call at Zealandia and saw the varieties of wild life, including the aforementioned takahe, able to roam in a safe environment, I wished we too could have such facilities here in Whangarei.