

September 2010

Welcome to Whenua Hou Nature Reserve

Whenua Hou Nature Reserve, location and description

We hope you will have an enjoyable stay on the island. To ensure that you are well prepared for your trip, as soon as you receive this document please read it carefully and follow all instructions. [This is an instruction document and a source of information.](#)

The two quarantine forms (attached below) are compulsory, as they are essential to protect the islands flora and fauna.

Whenua Hou Nature Reserve (Codfish Island) is located 3km off the northwest coast of Stewart Island. The island is 1396 ha and 348 metres high and is relatively unmodified. Much of the island's coastline comprises rugged cliffs and boulder beaches. The vegetation is mixed rimu, totara, miro, rata forest, coastal Hebe /Olearia associations with pakihī shrubland on the upper plateau.

Whenua Hou is important to both marine and land species supporting breeding colonies of a variety of species including Cooks petrel, mottled petrel, South Georgian diving petrel, Fiordland crested penguin, yellow-eyed penguin, kaka, kakariki, and an endemic fernbird. Whenua Hou is a stronghold of the short-tailed bat. Kakapo have been introduced, and they are actively managed on the island. Possum, weka and kiore have been eradicated. There is an ongoing weed control programme on the island.

The island is administered by the Outlying Islands Team (OLI) of the Southern Islands Area (SIA) of the Department of Conservation, under advice from the Whenua Hou Committee. This Committee was set up to advise the Conservation Board and Minister on the management of the island. The island is used extensively by the SIA's Kakapo Team, who has a full-time presence on the island, usually comprised of two KRs (Kakapo Rangers).

There is a good network of tracks around the island: these are on peat soil, which can become very wet and boggy during rain. To minimize damage there are tight restrictions on where people can go when they are on the island. Good boots are required; rubber boots are better for keeping dry. There will be up to an hours climb to get from the valley to the upper plateau where the kakapo live, and then the walking is relatively gentle. Be prepared for cold, wet, windy and changeable weather, but there is also a reasonable chance that the weather will be settled and mild to warm during your time on the island. The temperature is generally warmer than Southland.

Travel planning

Travel arrangements to Whenua Hou will be either a fixed-wing or helicopter flight across Foveaux Strait, from the Invercargill Airport. Transport arrangements to and from the island will be organised by the kakapo rangers.

Do not book transport to the island yourself.

Flight times are dictated by the suitability of the beach for landing at low tide. The plane can't wait so don't be late.

You need to report to 65 Eye Street (DOC Quarantine store) one hour before the scheduled departure time unless told otherwise.

For KAKAPO related trips, please contact kakapo staff at least 5 days prior to your flight, to confirm flight and quarantine arrangements, and notify any dietary requirements (ph: 03 211 2400 – Jo Ledington, e-mail: jledington@doc.govt.nz).

For **NON KAKAPO** related trips, please contact your trip leader at least 5 days prior to your flight, to confirm flight and quarantine arrangements, and notify any dietary requirements.

Servicing of the islands is on a fortnightly or monthly basis. Adverse weather may delay transport to or from the island. Keep this in mind when booking return flights from Invercargill to your base and either book a flexible return flight or delay your return flight by two days.

Facilities

Sealers Bay Hut is situated behind sand dunes and can sleep up to 14 people. This is a large hut with a few extra facilities; including cold and hot (wetback heated) water, shower, bunks (two bunk rooms), all kitchen equipment, gas cooking, heating and power. Note waste water disposal is an issue so showers may be restricted. All food is provided on the island.

Volunteers/visitors are expected to have the following prerequisite skills/attributes:

- Bush skills – you may be walking alone in the bush.
- Sound judgment
- Physically able: Depending on your visits purpose, you will require moderate to high fitness, agile (for walking on steep bush tracks) and able to carry a moderately heavy pack (10-20kg) between 4 to 8 hours a day

All visitors/volunteers are expected to provide:

- Socks
- waterproof parka
- polyprop/thermals
- walking shorts
- t-shirts
- underwear
- warm jersey
- towel/soap/toothbrush etc*
- warm sleeping bag and liner
- pillow case
- single sheet (if you wish to cover mattress)
- book
- head torch and batteries
- sturdy boots suitable for rugged tramping and wet tracks (staff prefer the use of lace up rubber boots as they are easier to disinfect).
- another pair of footwear for around the hut
- trousers, polyprop good for around hut

- personal medication, and supplies spare contacts/glasses, contact fluid
- cell phone if you want, or calling card. Telecom 027 reception only.

Depending on your visits purpose, you may also need to provide:

- Waterproof overtrousers

Tracks will be muddy and you will probably get wet feet

* The island has a grey water system which is sensitive to lots of shampoos/soaps/detergents etc. We strongly urge you to bring plant-based soaps/shampoos, as these will help keep the grey water system functioning properly. Such products can be purchased from Eco Store - www.ecostore.co.nz Kakapo staff find these products fantastic and affordable.

Southern Islands Area will provide:

- gaiters for your use - we keep these on the island to minimise import of weed seeds
- large duffle bags for transporting all of your gear from quarantine to the island. Your personal bag will be kept at the store for your return.
- day packs for use whilst on the island
- food and accommodation on the island (charges will depend on trip purpose and will be outlined by the trip organiser if applicable)
- deep end learning!

The Quarantine Process

All visits to the island pose a threat to the biodiversity values as they could (unwittingly) introduce disease or unwanted pests such as rodents, invertebrates or weed species. This occurs via dirty clothes and gear, and poorly packed bags. The island is rodent-free and has a minimal number of introduced weeds and invertebrates - we want it to stay that way.

The quarantine process has 4 steps:

- 1) before you leave home
- 2) at the quarantine store
- 3) transport from the quarantine store to the airport
- 4) upon arrival on the island

Before you leave home

Begin this 2-3 days in advance

- **Before** departure from home your clothes for the island need to be laundered, and all gear cleaned of dirt, insects, soil, seeds and plant material. Pay particular attention to boot soles and inners; pockets; and Velcro. Raincoats and overtrousers should be thoroughly sponged down. No dirty gear is to be taken to the island. Note that the requirement for laundering clothes may affect your choice of garments taken to the island, e.g. you may not want to take 'down jackets'.
- Make sure that you empty out your pack/suitcase/bag entirely before packing it - *vacuum it out* including any side pockets. The bottoms of packs are notorious for collecting seeds and insects, and this can transfer to your clean gear. Pack your bag after laundering clothes using a clean pack liner if possible. (you do not need to take a pack or day pack to the island, they will be supplied. The gear you bring will be transferred into a 'quarantine bag' at the quarantine store).
- Please pack raincoat/jacket, footwear, leggings and socks on top so they can be checked easily by staff.
- Once your gear is cleaned and checked, please keep it sealed in rodent and insect proof plastic bags or containers, and away from sources of contamination, e.g. birds, pets, seeds.
- **Complete Form B (attached), and bring it and Form A with you to**

quarantine.

- Field trips or excursions, or staying with friends where you will be in close contact with captive or farmed birds enroute to Invercargill are discouraged unless you have TrigenTM (a biocide which will kill all bacteria, viruses etc) with you, and have facilities to launder your clothes on arrival in Invercargill before the day of departure to the island.
- If you are getting to Invercargill in your private car, make arrangements for vehicle storage, and ensure the vehicle is stored **before** you arrive at Eye Street quarantine store. There is not enough time during the quarantine process to deal with vehicle parking and storage; and once you have passed through quarantine, you will be taken to meet the aircraft in a DOC vehicle, so that quarantine is not compromised. You may have to take a taxi from where your car is stored to Eye Street. One option for vehicle storage is Pro-storage Invercargill, phone 03 214 0920.

STOP, THINK – DO YOU OWN OR WORK WITH BIRDS?

Recently diseases have arrived in New Zealand that could devastate the kakapo population if they get on the islands. e.g. parrot pox and Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (PBFD).

- 1) Do you work with wild, pet or captive birds?
- 2) Do you own pet birds?
- 3) Do you have any birds at home? e.g. chickens/aviary birds (not wild birds)
- 4) Have you had close contact with birds in the last 18 months? e.g. friend's pet birds, previous work with birds, behind the scenes visit to an aviary. If you are unsure - please clarify with Jo Ledington or other kakapo staff on 03 211 2400.
- 5) Has any of your equipment had close contact with birds in the last 18 months? Remember to consider items such as raincoats, hats, gaiters, boots, backpack, gloves, jackets, pocket knives, head torches, notebooks etc

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the above, you pose a higher risk of transporting disease. This does not prevent you going to the island but means you must undergo additional precautions. In this situation you need to ensure you have a hot shower and wash hair; and your clothes, boots and equipment need to be cleaned with TrigenTM **after your last contact with birds, and before traveling to the island**. Let kakapo staff know in advance that you have had contact with birds in the last 18 months (phone Jo Ledington on 03 211 2400 as soon as possible who will send you trigen). You also need to have your sleeping bag dry-cleaned before traveling to the island - you must bring the receipt with you as proof.

If you do not dry clean your bag you will be issued with a bag once on the island and yours will stay behind. If you have difficulty with these instructions, please contact Jo Ledington or other kakapo staff on 03 211 2400.

At the Quarantine store

The Quarantine Store - 65 Eye Street, Invercargill.

- You are expected at the Quarantine Store one hour before flight departure to the island. At the store:
 - Your gear will be inspected for seeds, dirt etc. If it's not up to standard it, and possibly you, won't be going to the island.
 - You will transfer all the contents of your pack into "quarantine bags".
 - Form B will be checked, and Form A talked through with you, and the declaration signed.

On arrival on Codfish Island/ Whenua Hou

- You will be transported to the aircraft hangar in a DOC vehicle
- Be prepared:
 - If you discover dirt/plant material on your gear at the airport/Quarantine Store, please dispose of it in small containers in the quarantine area, or in rubbish bins provided, so it does not get picked up again in boot soles etc.
 - Transfer all your gear into a 70 litre “Quarantine bag” supplied at the Store. These bags have been designed specially for ease of cleaning, and transporting in the small aircraft. When your gear is transferred, your own pack will be stored at Eye Street during your trip – please ensure your pack is labeled clearly with your name. There are other day packs on the island for your use.
- 1. You will be escorted to the hut where all bags will be opened and checked. If you need access to camera, parka etc on arrival at the island you must have them out of the bag before departure from the Quarantine Store.
- 2. All visitors will be briefed on hazards and risks, and hazard ID sheets provided and visitors are required to sign off on the Hazard Plan
- 3. All visitors to be briefed on reserve rules, hut rules, and activities that are not permitted
- 4. All visitors to be briefed on procedures and equipment

If you find any seeds, soil etc on your gear (you shouldn't but it may happen) please dispose of in the rubbish container (which is taken back to the mainland for dumping) or in the fireplace when the fire is on. Do not throw it away outside the hut.

General rules

Most people have no difficulty living within the guidelines below, but please think carefully about them – failure to comply will result in a self-funded flight off the island. If you have any questions while on the island please feel free to discuss with DOC staff.

- Smoking - is only permitted on the hut decks, nowhere else on the island. Butts are to be disposed of in the fireplace.
- Recreation - non-work activities are confined to the hut, Sealers Bay beach (not the sand dunes) and the valley track to the Eric/Sophie junction.
- Some areas on the island have restricted access; you will be made aware of these on your arrival. For example: the sand dune area in Sealers Bay is out of bounds. It is used by diving petrels for nest burrows, and the area is an urupa (Maori burial site).
- Wildlife have the right of way and should not be disturbed or handled. Maintain at least 5m from all wildlife – camera ownership is not an exemption.
- Keep at least 20m away from fur seals and yellow-eyed penguins on the beach – these animals are easily disturbed. If at any time the animals show any signs of disturbance you must move further away. YEP will not come ashore if they can see you. Access along the beach in late afternoons is restricted to allow the penguins to come ashore. Penguin viewing is restricted to the wooden seat near the windsock.
- Security - be careful who you talk to about the Kakapo programme – detailed information could directly jeopardise Kakapo security. Do not speak to the media without first clearing it with the Programme Manager – Kakapo, in the Southern Islands Area Office, Invercargill.
- Plants, rocks, feathers, dead things etc – please leave them where they are. Codfish is a Nature Reserve and removal of anything without a permit is an offence. Feel free to bring beach rubbish back to the hut for disposal off the

island.

All rubbish, including biodegradable matter, is removed from the island - please ensure that you bring all rubbish back to the hut and wash and sort any recyclables as directed.

Safety

You need to take responsibility for your own safety on the island. We require you to comply with these safety rules:

- Planes and helicopters - do not approach unless instructed by the pilot. Never walk around the back of a helicopter (tail rotor and exhaust jet zone) or the front of a plane (propeller).
- Fire - contain or extinguish small fires if you can do so safely. Otherwise raise the alarm and assemble all people at the helipad. You will be shown the emergency procedures when you arrive at the island, please ensure you are familiar with them, and the location and operation of fire extinguishers.
- Out of bounds - gas bottles, chainsaw, power tools, generator shed, micro-hydro, battery bank and battery charging facilities. DOC staff will look after these.
- Steel capped boots to be worn when cutting firewood.
- Compulsory equipment, to be carried at all times while away from the hut area: raincoat, warm clothes (wool/fleece) hat, gloves, leggings, spare food. Head torches must be carried, as well as another source of light for changing bulbs, batteries etc, if it is possible you will be out after dark. First aid kit and locatable transmitter will be issued to you and must be carried when away from the vicinity of the hut.
- Intentions: you must keep to the tracks marked on your map. You must write the route you intend to take, including all track names and your expected time of return, on the intentions board before leaving the hut. Depending on your role on the island you must be back at the hut by 7pm in summer, 5pm in winter. A search will be instigated if you are 1 ½ hrs overdue.

House-keeping

- Telephone: the telephone on the island is for Kakapo work use only - calling cards can be used for essential calls or you may wish to bring a cell phone (027 only).
- Living is communally based; everyone is expected to take their turn cooking, cleaning etc. Please tidy up after yourself.
- There are always jobs to do around the hut (dishes, sweeping, cleaning) - your initiative in helping with this is appreciated.

Remember

- Take all completed forms and your dry cleaning receipt with you to the store.
- Please return your trigene containers to the quarantine store.
- Be on time and have all your gear cleaned to the required standards
- If you have any questions ring the kakapo team or your trip leader early so they can help ensure you have a smooth and enjoyable visit.

Enjoy your time on the island - it is a very special place.



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Form A: Quarantine Self Audit Check Sheet

- Complete the relevant sections and have this form with you to hand to the Quarantine Officer.
- **One form to be completed by every person travelling to islands**

Departure Date: / /20		Departure Time: am/ pm	
Name:		Departure point:	
		Destination:	
Items being transported	Items have been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scrubbed clean of all soil, seeds and vegetation, • checked for the presence of rodents and invertebrates. • Treated with Trigene antiviral disinfectant if necessary as detailed on Form B 	Date Inspected: / /20	
		Who inspected?	
	Tick if in compliance	Inspected by island biosecurity person	Comments
Boots			
Other footwear			
Socks			
Clothing			
Raincoat			
Jacket/Swandri/Down Jacket			
Head torch			
Field equipment (boxed)			
Field equipment (unboxed)			
Sleeping bag (drycleaned if required, see box on page 4)			
Other items of extra risk			
SIGNED:		SIGNED:	
Person travelling		Staff member responsible for island biosecurity.	

FORM B: DISEASE QUARANTINE QUESTIONNAIRE

- Please fill out this questionnaire honestly – your answers won't stop you going to the island, they will just help you to protect kakapo from disease.

Section One	Yes	No
Do you work with wild, pet or captive birds?		
Do you own pet birds?		
Do you have any birds at home? eg. chickens/aviary birds (do not include wild birds)		
Have you had close contact with birds in the last 18 months? eg. friend's pet birds, previous work with birds, behind the scenes visit to an aviary		
Has any of your equipment had close contact with birds in the last 18 months? Remember to consider items such as raincoats, hats, boots, gloves, jackets, pocket knives, head torches, notebooks, cameras and camera bags etc. etc.		

- If you have answered YES to any of the above, complete Section Two.
- If you have answered "no" to ALL of the above please complete section three.

Section Two	Yes	No
Have you showered including washing your hair since your last contact with birds?		
Are your clothes anti-viral treated (eg with Trigene™), or new, and never worn in the presence of birds since being antiviral treated?		
Has all of your gear and equipment which may have been in contact with birds been washed or soaked in an anti-viral disinfectant such as Trigene™? Has your sleeping bag been drycleaned?		

DIDYMO QUESTIONNAIRE

Section Three	Yes	No
Have you been in contact with any waterways that may have contained Didymo recently?		
Is there a chance that any of your clothing and/or equipment may be contaminated with Didymo?		

- If you answered yes to either of the above questions, then we will need to ensure that any contaminated equipment has been adequately cleaned and dried.

VISITOR'S DECLARATION

1. I declare that the above information is a true and accurate account of my association with wild, pet, or captive birds.
2. I understand that visitors to the island can pose serious risk to bio-diversity because of the transport of diseases via micro-organisms, and pests via small seeds.

Signature of Volunteer/Visitor Date/...../.....

Name.....

FORM C: INSTRUCTIONS FOR DISINFECTION:

- To protect the kakapo from viral infections found on the mainland, please ensure you follow these instructions carefully. If unsure, contact the kakapo staff for further information (see box on page 1).
- **Trigene™ will be mailed out to you when you let the kakapo team know you require it.** If you have not received trigene a week out from your trip please contact Jo at jledington@doc.govt.nz , (03 211 2400) or for non kakapo trips, contact your trip leader.
- All disinfectants work best where excess dirt has been washed off BEFORE applying the disinfectant.

How to Use: TRIGENE™ Antibacterial and Anti-viral Disinfectant

For clothing:

Add 50mL of Trigene™ per load of washing instead of laundry detergent. Use a normal wash cycle, no soaking is required.

If clothes are very dirty, put them through a normal wash first.

Then rewash as above.

Don't forget to treat your hats, jackets, gloves etc.

For boots:

Clean boots thoroughly using a brush and water to remove dirt, mud, seeds etc.

Pour diluted Trigene™ (10mls trigene to 1 Litre of water) over the outside of the boots and leave the soles to soak in the solution for 30 minutes. Rinse off with water.

For other items (eg head torch, field equipment):

Clean all surfaces thoroughly with damp cloth to remove dirt, mud, seeds etc.

Make up a 1% trigene solution (10mls trigene to 1 Litre of water). Wipe down all surfaces with the solution, leave to dry.

☺ Thanks for following these instructions and helping us keep the island fauna safe from disease! Help us to recycle, reuse and reduce by returning your trigene containers when you go through quarantine ☺

Trigene™ - Ethical Agents Ltd, 54 Hobill Ave, Wiri, South Auckland – ph 0800 800 624