

Meet the wildlife of Waiwhakaheke Bay - The Cliffs

Waiwhakaheke - place of descent

Karoro - black-backed gull



breed in small numbers on Pukekura - Tataroa Head. They are sometimes mistaken for albatross. In reality these large seagulls with a prominent yellow bill have around one third the wingspan of an albatross. Breeding - September to January.

Tarapuka - red-billed gull



nest near the lighthouse. On windy days they can be seen soaring about the cliffs. Red-billed gulls are scavengers, and have been known to frighten unguarded shag chicks into regurgitating their last meal. Breeding - September to January.

Kekeno - New Zealand fur seal



choose inaccessible rocky platforms below the lighthouse to breed. The pups play safely in rock pools isolated from the sea. Breeding - pups born in December. The seals seen hauled out on the rocks are mainly non-breeding males.

Toroa - royal albatross



breed on Pukekura - Tataroa Head. The cliffs are on their flight path to and from the nesting area and their ocean feeding grounds. Wingspan - 3 metres. Breeding - October to September the following year.

For guided tours of the royal albatross colony, visit the

ROYAL ALBATROSS CENTRE



Some are here to breed, some to feed, and some just to hang out. All make use of this place in their own special way.

Parekareka - spotted shag



nest on cliff ledges, making them safe from approach by predators. Watch how they fly in from below, losing speed to land on the ledge beside the nest. Breeding - September to January.

Rimurapa - bull kelp



The holdfast of this plant firmly anchors it to the rocks and the blades are filled with pockets of air to keep them afloat.