

## TAVORA RESERVE – GUIDE & WALK

**A COPY OF THIS GUIDE IS ALSO AVAILABLE FROM THE LETTERBOX, 100M FROM THE START OF THE TRACK (AROUND THE FIRST CORNER). PLEASE DROP THE GUIDE INTO THE LETTERBOX AT THE END OF THE WALK AFTER USE.**

In 1993 the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust secured this land for the purpose of improving the breeding habitat for the endangered yellow-eyed penguin/hoiho. They named the area Tavora - an ancient Māori name for 'penguin'.

At the time of purchase very few natural values remained. Intensive farming practices over decades had destroyed much of the natural vegetation. The area contains remnants of the original coastal forest which has been enhanced by more recent planting. Many organisations and volunteers have worked intensively at the Reserve restoring the vegetation. The Trust thanks all those involved.

**Yellow-eyed penguins:** (*Megadyptes antipodes*) This is a breeding area for the hoiho (noise-shouter), one of the world's most endangered penguin species. As multiple threats in both the marine and terrestrial environments affect them, hoiho are undergoing a serious decline in abundance, despite conservation management efforts.

Normally they are out to sea during the day except during breeding season. If you are lucky enough to see one of these extremely shy birds, or hear them calling, do not get close to them, try to keep at least 50m away.

If you come across injured wildlife please phone **0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468)**.

This leaflet guides you on a circular walk around the Reserve. The beach is approx. 10/15 minutes' walk one-way; the 3km circular walk takes about 1-1¼ hour.

**ABOUT THE WALK: FOLLOW THE YELLOW TRACK MARKERS. FROM THE CAR PARK, THE WALK GOES ALONG THE STREAM TO THE BEACH AT THE SOUTH END. IT THEN HEADS UP THE HILL THROUGH THE BUSH, ALONG THE CLIFF TRACK, THROUGH THE NGAIO Paddock AND JOINS THE ROAD BACK TO THE CAR PARK. PLEASE NOTE:**

- The hill through the bush is steep, it can be slippery.
- The cliff edge is unstable in some areas so keep your distance from the edge, stay safe.
- Stick to the marked track (yellow markers).
- Treat all electric fences as live.

**TO START: FOLLOW THE TRACK TOWARDS THE BEACH. WHERE A YELLOW MARKER IS NUMBERED, INFORMATION APPEARS BELOW:**

### 1 Riparian planting

The track follows the stream (on the right) and you pass through an area developed to improve the stream ecology and its recreational appeal. Some of the larger shrubs and trees were planted in 1994/95. A selection of colonising plants used include flax and cabbage trees. You may also notice several Hall's tōtara planted by the Trust's first patron Lady Reeves in 2000. Additional plantings and increased vegetation have brought birds back to this area to eat the fruits and disperse seeds.



## **2 Wetland**

Occasionally the mouth of the stream becomes blocked and as a result the area is prone to flooding. Only plants that can tolerate waterlogged soils can exist here. Native wetland turf communities consisting of glasswort, bachelor's button, shore leptinella, three-cornered sedge and some shrubs e.g. saltmarsh ribbonwood, appear to have survived despite grazing. On higher edges, plantings include mānuka and flax and on the south side of the stream, ngaio. Riparian planting undertaken alongside the stream has increased water quality. Native eels and galaxiids have been recorded, in addition to grey herons, spotted shags and paradise ducks.

**YOU WILL PASS AN UNNUMBERED TRACK MARKER ON YOUR LEFT LEADING UP THE HILL. CARRY ON TO THE BEACH. RETURN TO THIS MARKER TO CONTINUE UP THE HILL**

## **3 Dunes/Beach**

In 2001 the Trust began work to restore the dune system to its natural state. Essential to this is the replacement of introduced marram grass with the native golden sedge or pīkao. Pīkao creates a more mobile dune with a lower flatter profile. A natural dune system dominated by pīkao also contains a greater diversity of plant species.

The shore spurge, sand tussock, sand coprosma, Cook's scurvy grass and sand convolvulus have all been planted here. Remnants of a cushion plant can be seen on the sand dune to the south.

## **4 Southern lookout over Mainland plantings**

Take a seat for a minute here to enjoy the view. The vegetation at the bottom of the north slope is part of some of the original plantings at the Reserve. Planting at this site took place from 1994-96 and was carried out by Mainland staff, the Trust's founding sponsor. Growth has been spectacular here and it gives an image of what the whole Reserve might look like in the future.

**CONTINUE ON THE TRACK LEADING UP THE HILL**

## **5 View of dunes looking south**

Approaching track marker 5 the views get better as you leave the bush behind and you can see the dunes below. Work at the southern end started in 2004 to reshape the dunes to make a suitable environment for pīkao.

Planting will continue at this end to complete the dune redevelopment. More established planting is seen at the northern end. These dunes have a natural gently-sloping profile, created by the native vegetation planted here.

**CONTINUE ON THE TRACK ALONG THE CLIFF TOP PATH**

## **6 Rocky headland**

The convergence of the Southland current and the cooler waters offshore provide a rich supply of food for not only yellow-eyed penguins but also a variety of marine life including marine mammals. Look out to sea - whales and dolphins have been observed passing by. Stay on the track and look down at the rocks below - you may see NZ fur seals that frequently haul out there. Here a rare cress grows on exposed cliff edges. On a hot day you may see common skinks darting into the vegetation by the trackside as you approach.

## **7 Northern lookout and seat**

Did you find the seat? Look behind you, just before track marker 7. The cliff face of the bay to the north of the seat used to be the main yellow-eyed penguin nesting area. The area is prone to slips and in 2000 only 2 nests were left from an

original 10 counted in 1983. There are now none here.

Trapping lines are maintained year-round to protect the nests from mustelid predators (ferrets and stoats).

**FOLLOW THE YELLOW TRACK MARKERS OVER THE STILE, UP THE HILL TOWARDS THE TREES. AT TRACK MARKER 8, GO OVER THE SECOND STILE**

### **8 Ngaio paddock**

Through the gate are the first plantings carried out by the Trust here in 1994. Initially a windbreak of ngaio and flax were planted around the perimeter to provide shelter for more tender plants that were planted behind e.g. Hall's tōtara and broadleaf. On purchase of the land, there were remnant trees from the coastal forest that existed pre-grazing. These trees are still visible today and include, ngaio, kōwhai, narrow-leaved lacebark, lowland ribbonwood and cabbage trees.

Planting in the ngaio paddock continues to fulfill the Trust's vision of coastal forest extending from the adjacent Goodwood Bush through the paddock and eventually down to the sea.

**AS YOU PASS THE LETTERBOX, THIS IS THE END OF THE WALK. PLEASE RETURN THE GUIDE TO THE BOX FOR OTHERS TO USE - THANK YOU**

Follow the yellow markers to the locked gate at the roadside and then proceed left (south) along the road to the car park. Please be alert for cars/cycles.

Further information about hoiho, the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust and a list of the plants at Tavora Reserve (common and scientific names) can be found on our website: <https://www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz/>

*Penguins. Plants. People. Passion.*

### **Common and scientific names of plants at Tavora Reserve:**

Bachelor's button, *Cotula coronopifolia*

Black māpou, *Pittosporum tenuifolium*

Broadleaf, *Griselinia littoralis*

Cabbage trees, *Cordyline australis*

Cook's scurvy grass, *Lepidium juvencum*

Cress (rare), *Lepidium tenuicaule*

Cushion plant, *Scleranthus biflorus*

Flax, *Phorium tenax*

Glasswort, *Sarcocornia quinqueflora*

Golden sedge/pīkiao, *Ficinia spiralis*

Hall's tōtara, *Podocarpus laetus*

Kānuka, *Kunzea robusta*

Kōwhai, *Sophora microphylla*  
Lemonwood, *Pittosporum eugenioides*  
Lowland Spaniard, *Aciphylla subflabellata*  
Lowland ribbonwood, *Plagianthus regius*  
Mānuka, *Leptospermum scoparium*  
Marram grass, *Ammophila arenaria*  
Narrow-leaved lacebark, *Hoheria angustifolia*  
Ngaio, *Myoporum laetum*  
Saltmarsh ribbonwood, *Plagianthus divaricatus*  
Shore leptinella, *Leptinella dioica*  
Shore spurge, *Euphorbia glauca*  
Sand convolvulus, *Calystegia soldanella*  
Sand coprosma, *Coprosma acerosa*  
Sand tussock, *Poa billardierei*  
Three-cornered sedge, *Schoenoplectus pungens*