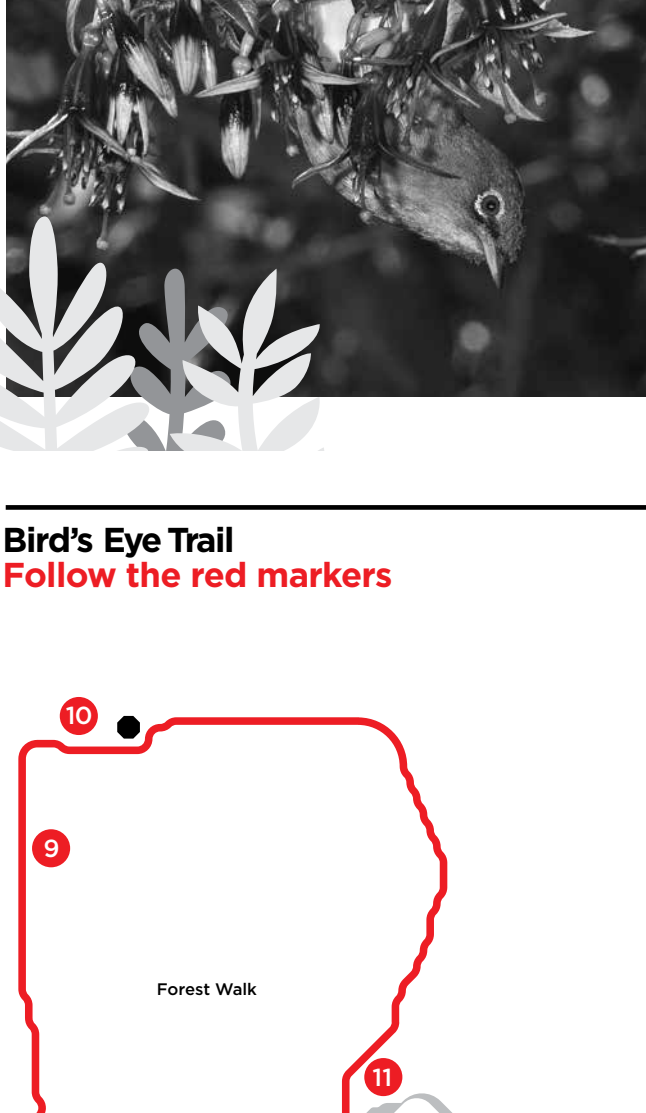


**FOLLOW
THE
RED
MARKERS**

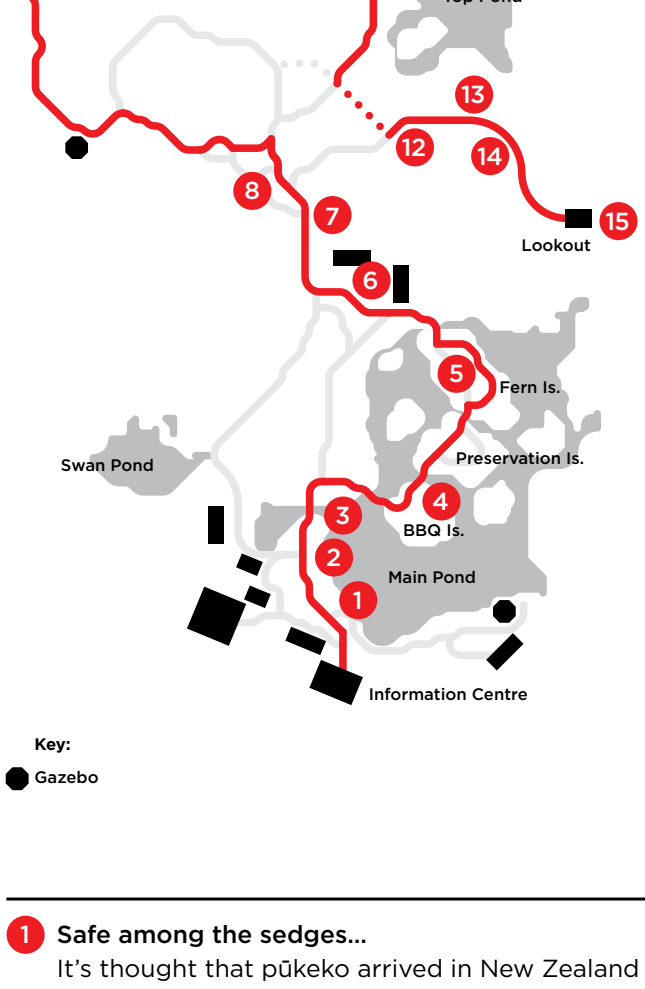
Bird's Eye Trail

View Ngā Manu plants through the eyes of birds



Bird's Eye Trail

Follow the red markers



Key:
● Gazebo

- 1 Safe among the sedges...**
It's thought that pūkeko arrived in New Zealand about 1000 years ago. One advantage of being a recent arrival is that their behaviour had already evolved in the presence of mammals. Our family of pūkeko often choose the relative safety of these small sedge islands for nesting. The whole tribe are involved with nest-building, feeding, and protecting the chicks.
- 2 A duck which perches...**
Around the pond edge you can see and hear many small ducks roosting on the perches we have installed over the water. These grey teal/tētē are very nomadic and seasonally quite common in Ngā Manu. We've erected nest-boxes as a substitute for the hollow trees they will often use for nesting.
- 3 Acrobats across the water...**
On a warm day you may see the acrobatics of fork-tailed welcome swallow/warou as they chase insects above the pond. This species self-introduced from Australia in the late 1950s. They often use structures near water, like our bridges, to attach their nests built from mud and grass.
- 4 Safe and secure...**
Take the bridge to Barbeque Island where you will see a korimako/bellbird feeder station between the golden tōtara trees. The mesh on the station excludes tūi which would otherwise chase the smaller honey eater away from the resource. The korimako breeding season starts in August and may extend to five clutches. The female prefers a nest site where foliage is dense - the tōtara offer the cover she needs.
- 5 To make a cosy nest...**
Look around and you will see three species of tree fern native to New Zealand. Common to all is the furry covering on the emerging fronds called fern-scale. The small filaments have great insulation qualities and are collected by pīwakawaka/fantail to line their delicate nests.
- 6 Always worth visiting if you are feeling peckish...**
The pūriri is a generous year-round pantry, providing fruit for kererū/New Zealand pigeon and flowing nectar for tūi and korimako/bellbird. Usually fruit from the previous season is available at the same time as the new flowers appear. Pūriri doesn't occur naturally this far south but has been planted widely because of its value as a bird food source.
- 7 Stick around for tales of woe...**
Parapara/bird-catcher tree is a coastal tree from northern New Zealand and offshore islands. It is notable for its extremely sticky seed pods which can ensnare insects which, in turn, will attract and catch small birds. Then even larger birds - like kōtare/kingfisher and ruru/morepork - can become ensnared as they swoop upon the struggling prey. A vicious cycle - but for what reason? Can you guess?
- 8 Big seed meet big bird...**
Taraire is another tree that occurs naturally in the north of the North Island. It produces large fruit containing a single seed which is dependent upon kererū/New Zealand pigeon for dispersal. Thankfully for taraire, kererū numbers are recovering so can perform this ecological service.
- 9 In the shadows by day...**
You may be lucky enough to spy a ruru/morepork quietly secluding itself in the mottled camouflage of this whekī/rough tree fern grove. Typically they choose a still and sombre setting such as this to escape the attention of birds during the day. If discovered, they will be hassled with a chorus of abuse which even the smallest birds will join. Once darkness falls, the tables are turned.
- 10 Keeping the songsters happy...**
While on the forest walk you may have heard a lot of tūi song spilling from the treetops. Tūi are abundant throughout the Reserve. Here, on opposite sides of the track, are two plants which produce the nectar so keenly sought by our honey eaters. Rewarewa, with its tall straight trunk, produces bright red flower clusters; while climbing rata vine produces orange flowers.
- 11 Our symbol of abundant life...**
The pīwakawaka/fantail has been adopted as the symbol of Ngā Manu. Our site is a habitat haven for pīwakawaka, with the mix of wetland and bush edge providing the ideal conditions for hawking small insects on the wing. Pīwakawaka will often be your travelling companions, hovering around waiting for for you to disturb insects with your activity.
- 12 A taste worth travelling for...**
The kahikatea species has been in existence for more than 160 million years. It is dominant in what little remains of New Zealand's lowland forests and wetlands. Female trees produce masses of orange fruit in late summer. In pre-European times this prolific fruiting event would have drawn huge flocks of kererū/New Zealand pigeon and tūi down to the lowlands.
- 13 The golden badge tells all...**
The tall skeletons of last year's flower stems indicate how prolifically the harakeke/flag flowers. The plant provides food and protection for birds, bats, and geckos. Birds such as tūi and korimako/bellbird thrust their heads down into the throats of red flowers, seeking nectar. The golden badge of pollen leaves no doubt about what the tūi have been up to.
- 14 Not your ordinary parasite...**
The bright-green-leaved plant ahead is pirinoa/green-flowered mistletoe, the most widespread of our eight native mistletoes. The plant produces yellow fruit which are eaten and dispersed by korimako, tūi, and silvereye/tauhou. We have a goal to restore a flourishing population of mistletoes to the Reserve. You can learn more about their mysteries in our Mistletoe Garden near the kea aviary.
- 15 Bird's eye view...**
The Lookout Tower provides an action-packed overview of the birds and the forest. Take time to watch them as they thread the canopy, searching for food, chasing each other, or sunning themselves. Imagine an earlier time when the massed chorus of birdsong would have risen like mist from our lowland swamp forest, up the slopes of the bush-clad hills beyond.

The Bird's Eye Trail ends here - you can wander along other forest paths or head back to the Information Centre (turn left just after Station 12).

