

Reef heron/matuku moana (*Egretta sacra sacra*)

Threatened species conservation plan

June 2026



Approvals Panel			
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Introduction

This is a **threatened species conservation plan** for reef heron – matuku moana (*Egretta sacra sacra*) (Figure 1), also known as blue heron in Aotearoa-New Zealand, and internationally as Pacific reef heron or eastern reef egret.

The reef heron – matuku moana is classified as **‘Threatened – Nationally Endangered’** by the Department of Conservation (DOC) and is considered a taonga species by Ngāi Tahu. Further out in the wider Pacific some indigenous peoples consider the reef heron a sacred species, reflected in the scientific name “sacra”.

The maintenance of indigenous biodiversity is a legal responsibility for district councils (RMA S.31(b)iii & Council’s Biodiversity Strategy p.6). This plan has been written to assist Christchurch City Council (Council) to meet its statutory obligations to halt the decline of indigenous biodiversity, and to assist with meeting two key goals and their associated objectives as set out in the Council’s Biodiversity Strategy 2008-2035 (Refer Appendix 1):

Goal 1: Conserve and restore indigenous biodiversity in Ōtautahi-Christchurch and Banks Peninsula.

- ✓ Priority internationally, nationally and locally threatened species are protected and restored,
- ✓ Ecosystems, sites and habitats supporting biodiversity are protected and restored,
- ✓ Species and habitats important to Ngāi Tahu are protected, and where appropriate, restored, and
- ✓ Plant and animal pests are managed to minimise their impact on biodiversity.

Goal 4: Improve and facilitate research and monitoring of indigenous biodiversity.

- ✓ Monitoring programmes for the biodiversity of Ōtautahi-Christchurch and Banks Peninsula are established, coordinated and maintained,
- ✓ Biodiversity research is supported, coordinated and managed to enable sustainable management of biodiversity, and
- ✓ The community is involved in biodiversity research and monitoring.



Figure 1: Reef heron, Koukourarata Stream mouth, Port Levy, December 2022.



The need for a conservation plan

The reef heron is one of New Zealand's rarest and most threatened coastal birds and an exceptionally rare species in Canterbury. The current designation of "Nationally Endangered" is the second highest category on the Department of Conservation's (DOC's) threatened species classification system (Robertson *et al.*). The total national population is estimated at 300-500 birds (Adams 2022), with the bulk of the population found in the northern North Island, the Wellington west coast, Nelson-Marlborough, coastal Otago and southern Fiordland (Figure 2).

In Canterbury, a population probably numbering 10-20 birds is resident along the Kaikoura coastline, and a very small population (currently <5 birds) lives on the north-western coastline of Banks Peninsula. This is the rarest indigenous breeding bird in the Christchurch-Banks Peninsula District, isolated by c.150 km of coastline from the southern extent of the Kaikoura population at Goose Bay, and by c.370 km of coastline from the northern extent of the Otago population at Warrington. If the reef heron disappears from Banks Peninsula there will be a 500+ km gap along the coastline of the eastern South Island where the species will effectively be absent and locally extinct.

Reef herons are cautious and tenacious birds that are able to persist in small populations for decades. The Banks Peninsula population is a good example of this, numbers remaining at <5 birds since at least the early 1980s. However, this tiny population is susceptible to local extinction in the face of a sudden pervasive threat such as bird flu or an increase in predators. This report outlines some possible wildlife management levers that could be pulled to firstly safeguard the resident reef heron population, and secondly, to assist the population to increase. The local breeding and feeding range of reef heron falls almost exclusively on Council-administered paper road around the coastline of Banks Peninsula.

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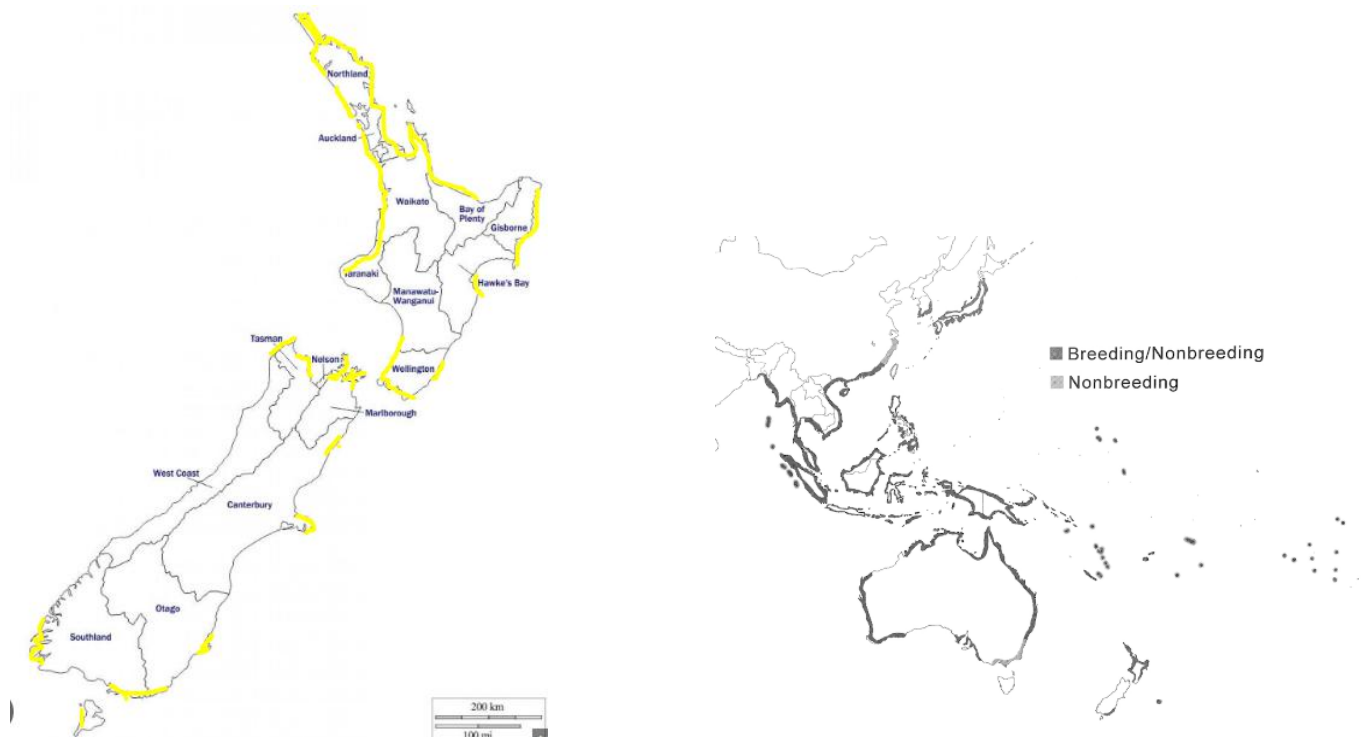


Figure 2: Distribution (yellow shaded areas) of reef heron/matuku moana populations around New Zealand (left), and global distribution (right).

¹ (global map reproduced from <https://www.heronconservation.org/herons-of-the-world/list-of/herons/eastern-reef-heron/>)

National and local population trends

The national situation

Nationally, the reef heron population is low (300-500 birds) but is considered to have been stable over the past 40 years (Adams 2022). This is the case in the reef heron's strongholds like the northern North Island and Nelson-Marlborough and also appears to be the case in Canterbury, where the small Kaikoura population and the tiny Banks Peninsula populations have persisted since the 1980s until now and have not slipped into local extinction, although their survival is incredibly tenuous.

The local situation

Until at least the 1940s, reef herons were more widespread and abundant on Banks Peninsula and Pegasus Bay. Concentrations of up to 10 birds were recorded. They became much scarcer at about the same time that the white-faced heron (an Australian colonist) began to expand locally. It is not clear what competitive impact the white-faced heron has had on reef herons, but white-faced herons now occupy and outnumber reef herons in all coastal environments, including even the mostly rugged and remote coastlines of Banks Peninsula. Certainly, white-faced herons have several competitive advantages over reef herons, including nesting in trees (generally a safer environment than caves and crevices), having a much broader habitat and dietary range, a greater tolerance of disturbance, and more easily becoming habituated to human activity. That said, reef herons still enjoy an extensive, uncluttered habitat on Banks Peninsula, so threats more pervasive than the intrusion of white-faced herons are likely the usual suite of mammalian predators, habitat degradation and human disturbance.

A further decline in the local reef heron population seems to have occurred in the late 1980s when the regular winter visitation of 1-2 birds to the Avon-Heathcote Estuary ceased and when reports of occasional birds on the eastern and southern parts of Banks Peninsula stopped. Since that time sightings have essentially been of a small population persisting for the last forty years on the north-eastern peninsula coast. No more than 3 birds have been seen on any one date, but given the secrecy of the species, it is fair to assess the population as <5 birds.

Table 1: Numbers of Reef heron recorded on Banks Peninsula coastal bird surveys 2012-2023.

Year	2012	2017	2020	2023
Number	1 (2)	0 (1)	3	2

Christchurch City Council monitoring data. Numbers in brackets are birds seen outside the survey dates.

Biology

The reef heron is a coastal heron species, favouring rocky and sandy coastlines year-round and sometimes also visiting estuaries and river mouths. They live in pairs and family groups but generally spend much of the day alone, feeding or roosting as solitary individuals. Unlike the much more abundant white-faced heron (*Egretta n. novaehollandiae*) - confusingly also known as matuku moana - reef herons rarely form flocks, do not roost communally and do not occur on inland habitats such as freshwater wetlands, river edges or short grassland. Both species occur on rocky, stony and sandy coastal habitats so care is needed to correctly identify a bird seen at a distance or in poor light conditions as a bone fide reef heron.

Identification

Reef herons in New Zealand have uniform dark bluish-grey plumage, sometimes with a white patch under the chin. In breeding plumage, they have short nape plumes at the back of the head. Bill-colour varies from greyish brown to yellow, leg colour is greenish-yellow and the eye is yellow with a dark pupil.

Compared to a white-faced heron, the reef heron appears stockier, accentuated by its heavier bill and its typical crouched and neck-tucked-in appearance, but it is in fact a slightly smaller bird. Comparative metrics are:

- ✓ reef heron, length 66 cm, wingspan 90 – 100cm, weight 330-470g
- ✓ white-faced heron, length 67 cm, wingspan 100 – 110 cm, weight 450 - 690g



Figure 3: A reef heron (**left**) in flight has diagnostic uniform dark bluish-grey wings, which is markedly different to the contrasting two-tone dark grey and light grey pattern on both the upper and lower wing surfaces of the white-faced heron (**right**).



Figure 4a, b & c: Reef heron, noting the darker uniform plumage and green-yellow legs and bill compared to the lighter grey plumage of the white-faced heron (Refer Figure 5a, b & c below), with its the white feathering around the face, the chestnut feathering on the breast and belly, as well as the dark bill. Typically reef herons take a hunched-up pose and appear shorter-legged and more compact than a white-faced heron, but as seen clearly in Figure 4b. When fully extended, the neck of the reef heron is as long as that as its congener and the bird can look uncharacteristically tall and slender.



Figure 5a, b & c: White faced her.



Figure 6: The profile of a reef heron can vary between a hunched up or more elegant stretched out pose. However, it always appears proportionately short-legged and heavy-billed.



Figure 73: A white-faced in hunched up pose (left) always has an exaggerated long-leg appearance. Juvenile white-faced herons (right) have grey faces and white chins making them appear superficially like a reef heron. The grey plumage however is always several shades lighter.

In the tropics, including the Pacific Islands, reef herons are dimorphic, having a white morph in addition to the blue morph resident in New Zealand. White morph individuals may potentially reach Banks Peninsula as storm-blown strays as evidenced by a single bird confirmed at the Avon-Heathcote Estuary in Christchurch in June 1987. This morph is separated by other “white egrets” occurring locally by its heavy bi-coloured (yellow and grey) bill, proportionately shorter legs and general heavier build (Figure 8).



Figure 8: The white morph of the reef heron.

Local distribution

Within the Greater Christchurch area, reef herons are restricted as a resident-breeding species to the north-western coastline of Banks Peninsula (Figure 9). Their core local range seems to be on the outer coastline between Port Levy and Pigeon Bay, with movements (to feed) into both these inlets and the outer parts of Lyttelton harbour. Occasionally birds are observed at Taylors Mistake and the Avon-Heathcote estuary, and rarely in outer Akaroa Harbour. There are recent records of vagrants to the lower Heathcote River, Little Akaloa and to Lake Ellesmere/Te Waihora. Other records on bird mapping apps like e-Bird and i-Naturalist (for example at Akaroa township and Christchurch Botanic Gardens) are considered erroneous.

Other than the Avon-Heathcote Estuary, there have been no confirmed records of reef heron on Pegasus Bay beaches and coastal wetlands (Brooklands, Ashley, Ashworths, Kowai, Waipara) for more than 30 years.



Figure 9: Distribution of reef heron sightings over the last 20 years (2004 – 2024) in Christchurch-Banks Peninsula © eBird, downloaded 26.6.2024.

Favoured locations on Banks Peninsula

More detailed study is needed to identify the breeding, night-roosting and regular feeding sites of reef herons on Banks Peninsula, but from observations between 2004 and 2024e the following sites seem to be locations where reef heron regularly occur. More observations (and in some cases access permissions from landowners), would be needed to ascertain what exact use reef herons are making of these sites.

Reefs and islets in the vicinity of Baleine Point and Beacon Rock (presumed, roosting, & nesting)



Figure 10: Beacon Rock reef and islet.

Privately owned Pukerauaruhe Island, Port Levy (presumed feeding, roosting, & nesting)



Figure 11: Pukerauaruhe Island aerial view. (left) and reef heron roosting on the island (right), Oct 2020.

Koukourarata Stream mouth, Port Levy (presumed feeding & roosting)



Figure 12: Reef heron roosting and feeding amongst a flock of Canada geese, Koukourarata Stream, Dec 2019

Purau Stream mouth, Purau Bay (possible feeding & roosting)



Figure13: A reef heron is a regular visitor to the stream mouth and adjacent shoreline at Purau Stream Mouth.

Feeding ecology

Reef herons feed on small fish, crabs, other marine crustaceans, molluscs, and worms. They forage stealthily and purposely by either moving slowly around a shoreline, searching for visible prey, or by standing motionless and spearing a passing fish or crab. In bright sunlight conditions, they often crouch with half-open wings, creating a shadow on the water, removing the reflective glare and allowing them to see prey below the water's surface.



Figure 414: Typical reef heron feeding poses – neck fully extended; horizontal crouch with half-opened wings; stationary with neck tucked in.

Breeding ecology

Reef herons breed from September to December. Pairs are monogamous and usually nest well apart from other reef herons. The preferred nesting habitat is a coastal cave, rock crevice, rock shelves under an overhang or in cliff-side vegetation (Heather & Robertson 2015). There is an abundance of suitable nesting habitat on the coastline and islets/rock stacks of Banks Peninsula.

Nests are an untidy platform of dry vegetation, including high tide debris, seaweed, sticks and twigs. One to three eggs are typically laid with incubation lasting 25-28 days. Both parents incubate and guard the chicks through the 5 - 6-week fledgling period and for a period beyond that may only last a few weeks or extend through to the end of summer. Reef herons probably typically live for up to 10 years, with the oldest birds living up to 15 years.



Figure 515: Reef Heron foraging in typical rocky shoreline habitat.

Conservation goals

The species conservation plan for the reef heron focuses on identifying and protecting breeding sites and ensuring roosting and feeding areas are managed in a way that supports the species, and threats are identified and mitigated. Public awareness will be increased through promoting the rarity and conservation needs of the species. This will be achieved through publication of monitoring & research findings, and through the promotion of collaboration and coordination between Council, DOC, Runanga, the Banks Peninsula community and other stakeholders.

Short term goals

- ✓ To safeguard the local breeding reef heron population on the north-western Banks Peninsula coastline to prevent local extinction. **(Note that local extinction would not only mean the loss of this nationally endangered species from the Greater Christchurch area but would create a gap of over 500 km of the South island's east coast where the species would be absent).**
- ✓ Facilitate an increase in Banks Peninsula reef herons to reach a self-sustaining population size of >10 birds.

Long-term goal

- ✓ Facilitate an increase in the local reef heron population that enables the species to repopulate the north-eastern, eastern and southern parts of the Banks Peninsula coastline.
- ✓ In time, assist reef herons to utilise the Godley Head to Avon-Heathcote Estuary coastline as regular wintering habitat.
- ✓ Work toward a Banks Peninsula/Christchurch coastline population of >20 reef heron by 2050.



Figure 17. Juvenile reef heron – note greyer plumage than adults and duller bill.

Actions

Monitor and study the Banks Peninsula reef heron population

Little is known about reef herons on Banks Peninsula other than that the population has been very small for many decades but has persisted in the face of what are likely numerous threats and a genetic bottleneck. Better understanding is needed around the ecology and population dynamics of these birds. Note that with such a small and vulnerable population, the monitoring and research of reef herons on Banks Peninsula must be minimally intrusive and place the bird's safety and ability to live unmolested as a top of priority at all times.

- ✓ Undertake boat-based breeding season (Oct-Nov) surveys around the full coastline of Banks Peninsula every three years as part of Council's coastal bird survey programme. Work closely and share resources with the Department of Conservation to achieve this. **Very high priority**
- ✓ Monitor the north-western coastline of Banks Peninsula (the current core area for reef heron) annually in the breeding season – including the 3-yearly boat survey recommended above – and also undertake annual winter (June-July) surveys in this area. This should give more accurate data on population size (including fledgling survival), inter-annual trends and winter dispersal. **Very high priority**
- ✓ Participate in and contribute data to region-wide and/or nation-wide census of reef herons if these occur. **High priority**
- ✓ Support research using hidden trail camera technology to observe reef heron nests and detect any predation losses of eggs, nestlings and attendant adults. **Medium priority**
- ✓ Consider supporting research on reef heron movements, site fidelity and survival through banding and satellite/GPS-tracking of Banks Peninsula reef herons. **Medium priority**
- ✓ Encourage documentation of reef heron observations by Council and Department of Conservation staff, local residents, both commercial and recreational boaters, and the wider community to build up a data set of records using the (e.g.) the eBird phone or i-Naturalist app. **High priority**



Figure 16: Monitoring/observing a reef heron on the Kaikoura coastline.

Threat management

The main threats to reef herons on Banks Peninsula (and formerly on the Ōtautahi-Christchurch city and Pegasus Bay coastlines) are unknown, but are assumed to include predation, human disturbance, competition from other species (possibly including from white-faced herons), habitat degradation, pollution (such as oil spills) and disease threats (such as bird flu). The conservation plan involves measures to assess and mitigate these threats, including:

- ✓ Work with key partners to identify breeding locations and safeguard them as best as possible from threats such as predation by mammals and human disturbance. This needs to be done with minimal disturbance to the reef herons themselves. Key partners include DOC, local Runanga the Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust and provable landowners. **High priority**
- ✓ Where possible, undertake mammalian predator eradications on islands, islets and rock stacks to create safe breeding locations for reef herons and other coastal birds. This has already commenced on Pukerauarehe Island in partnership with Runanga and DoC and could expand elsewhere as opportunity arises. **High priority**
- ✓ Consider reef heron breeding opportunities as part of future predator-exclusion fencing projects around Banks Peninsula. **Medium priority**
- ✓ Consider ‘no-go’ zones or safe distance markers around reef heron breeding areas to manage the risk of people on and off sea inadvertently approaching too close. A safe distance is probably c.200m. **High priority**
- ✓ Monitor and consider creating “no-go” zones for fisher access and the growing recreational activity of coasteering (people moving along the coastal wash zone on foot or by swimming) within 200m of reef heron breeding sites, or possibly within a wider stretch of shoreline within the foraging range of a pair of reef herons but the precise breeding site is not known. **High priority**

Habitat management

Reef herons live in a relatively remote habitat that would appear to offer abundant feeding, roosting and breeding opportunities. Although the Banks Peninsula coastal environment has been heavily impacted by earthquake cliff collapse and debris falls, and in places has been degraded by the spread of invasive weed plants, on balance this coastline would still appear capable of supporting a much larger population of reef herons than it does currently.

- ✓ Ownership of coastlines, headlands, islets and stacks along the north-western coastline of Banks Peninsula where reef herons occur should be determined through desktop survey of paper roads and other public land. **High priority**
- ✓ Ecologically important parts of the coastline, islets and stacks that fall within Council-controlled land will be managed by the Council for biodiversity values. **High priority**
- ✓ Council should identify the key sites on council land and determine what resources are required to enable an improvement of habitat conditions, possibly including the removal of browsing, grazing and predatory mammals from areas important to reef herons, other threatened/at risk coastal birds and biodiversity values. **High priority**

Population augmentation

The Banks Peninsula reef heron population is currently likely less than five birds, and possibly as low as three. It has survived for a long time (40+ years) at this level but is clearly highly vulnerable to local extinction and facing a genetic bottleneck. Supporting the resident birds to breed successfully may not be enough, and the supplementation of additional birds to augment the existing population is probably necessary.

- ✓ Work with partners to consider opportunities to increase the local population by translocating birds from larger populations elsewhere. This might be done by releasing a small number of wild birds (probably juveniles) from regions such as the Marlborough Sounds, Golden Bay or the North Island. **High priority**
- ✓ In appropriate circumstances, encourage bird rescue organisations around the South Island to release any rehabilitated reef herons on Banks Peninsula. This may only be suitable for juveniles as adult birds are best released back on coastlines where they were found. **High priority**

A strong positive - unlike the yellow-eyed penguin, another “Threatened – Nationally Endangered” species reduced to a critically low population level on Banks Peninsula – is that reef herons do not appear to be facing the triple threats of being predated at sea, dying from disease and facing limited availability of quality nesting habitat. This suggests that the population could potentially “take off” if some additional birds are added to the population.

Promote community awareness and support for reef herons

The reef heron conservation plan should involve education and outreach activities to inform the Banks Peninsula and wider Christchurch communities about the species and elevate reef heron as iconic indigenous coastal bird that is battling to survive. This species should join the ranks of tui, bellbird, kereru, New Zealand scaup, paradise shelduck, pied cormorant and little black cormorant as species that have successfully made comebacks as a result of habitat provision, predator control and other forms of human help.

- ✓ Advocate for public recognition that reef heron/matuku moana should have special iconic status on Banks Peninsula in the way that penguins, kereru and tui do. **High priority**
- ✓ Engage with Rūnanga around possible collaboration in research, monitoring and protection of the north-western Banks Peninsula reef heron population. Accommodate Māori cultural knowledge, perspectives and aspirations in the conservation and management of reef heron in the Christchurch – Banks peninsula area. **High priority**
- ✓ Seek industry partnerships to help fund research/predator control at key sites. **Medium priority**
- ✓ Encourage reporting of reef heron sightings by people working around the peninsula and by the wider community and visitors. **High priority**

Review Period

This Threatened Species Conservation Plan for reef heron/matuku moana should be reviewed every 5 -10 years.

References

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Appendix 1: Christchurch Biodiversity Strategy implementation targets and actions relevant for reef heron

Biodiversity Strategy guidance and expectations

Of the six guiding principles outlined in Council's Biodiversity Strategy 2008-2035, the first four provide direction around council responsibilities to protect threatened species like the reef heron and to assume leadership responsibility for this in Christchurch and Banks Peninsula.

1. The Council's indigenous biodiversity priorities are to protect existing biodiversity in threatened land environments and to protect existing habitats for indigenous biodiversity and nationally and locally threatened species.
2. The Council has a leadership responsibility in the protection and enhancement of indigenous biodiversity in Christchurch and Banks Peninsula.
3. The Council is committed to a partnership approach with iwi, government, agencies, landowners, business and the community in achieving biodiversity outcomes.
4. The Council acknowledges the important biodiversity protection role of rural landowners and recognises that implementation of this strategy will be more effective where biodiversity initiatives are integrated with rural land management requirements and landowner goodwill is maintained

Four key goals of the Biodiversity Strategy provide a mandate for monitoring populations of reef heron grebe and for undertaking actions to conserve and restore the species by way of a Threatened Species Conservation Plan:

Goal 1: *Conserve and restore indigenous biodiversity in Christchurch and Banks Peninsula.*

Goal 2: *Raise awareness and understanding of indigenous biodiversity.*

Goal 3: *Encourage widespread participation in support of indigenous biodiversity conservation.*

Goal 4: *Improve and facilitate research and monitoring of indigenous biodiversity.*

The following tables outline the objectives, implementation targets and implementation actions under Goals 1-4 that are relevant to conservation actions for reef heron². These provide the mandate for undertaking inventory and monitoring work; threat reduction and predator control, as well as advocacy for the benefit of reef herons on Banks Peninsula. Priorities have been determined as part of the Council's Biodiversity Strategy consultation and decision-making process.

² <https://ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/The-Council/Plans-Strategies-Policies-Bylaws/Strategies/BiodiversityStrategy-3Part1Chapters7-9.pdf>

Goal 1 objectives	Implementation target	Implementation actions	Priority
Objective 1.1: Priority Internationally, nationally and locally threatened species are protected and restored.	Target 1.1.1: Nationally and locally threatened species are identified, prioritised and monitored for conservation.	Action 1: Surveys of Christchurch and Banks Peninsula indigenous plants and animals [including birds] are undertaken.	Very high
	Target 1.1.2: Plans are prepared and implemented for nationally and locally threatened species protection.	Action 1: Conservation plans are prepared for nationally and locally threatened species.	High
		Action 3: Protection measures are initiated for priority species. See Action 1 above and Targets 1.1.1 and 1.2.1.	Very High
Objective 1.2: Ecosystems, sites and habitats supporting biodiversity are protected and restored.	Target 1.2.1: Ecosystems, sites and habitats with indigenous species on Council and private land are identified, prioritised, protected and restored where appropriate	Action 1: Surveys are undertaken of habitats with indigenous plants, invertebrates, lizards and fish [including birds], with priority given to land environments with <10% indigenous cover.	Very high
		Action 2: An assessment and prioritisation of biodiversity on Council owned or managed land is undertaken.	Very high
		Action 3: Management plan(s) and or other legal mechanisms provide long term protection for priority biodiversity on Council land.	Very high
		Action 4: High priority biodiversity sites are purchased on Banks Peninsula (including the Port Hills), Kaitōrete Spit and the plains. See Strategy concept plans for initial options.	Very high
	Target 1.2.3: Management of biodiversity on private land is appropriately supported.	Action 1: Technical advice is made available to landowners. See Target 2.1.1. Action 2.	High
	Target 1.2.6: The gene pool of locally occurring indigenous species is maintained.	n.a.	Very high
	Target 1.2.7: The relative costs and benefits of biodiversity restoration and protection projects are understood,	Action 1: Develop criteria and prioritise biodiversity restoration projects.	Very high

	and projects prioritised on a City wide basis.		
	Target 1.2.8: Ecosystem function is improved (including species restoration) to compensate for previous biodiversity losses and enhance remnant indigenous biodiversity	Action 2: Implement habitat restoration for priority sites on Council managed land. See Target 1.2.7 Action 1 and Target 1.2.8 Action 1.	Medium
		Action 3: Council works with Ngāi Tahu on species, habitat and ecosystem recovery programmes such as Kaupapa Kererū and Koukourāta Ki Uta Ki Tai, Te Roto o Te Roto o Wairewa Mahinga Kai Park and Te Waihora Mahinga Kai project	Very high
Objective 1.3 Species and habitats important to Ngāi Tahu are protected and where appropriate restored.	Target 1.3.1: Council is familiar with the species and habitats important to Ngāi Tahu.	Action 1: Work with Ngāi Tahu to identify and prepare a database of sites and species within Christchurch and Banks Peninsula and establish appropriate systems to protect sensitive information pertaining to sites.	High
Objective 1.4 Plant and animal pests are managed to minimise their impact on biodiversity.	Target 1.4.1: Pest management plans, policies and initiatives (internal and external), including for domestic animals on Council managed land, are prepared, contributed to, coordinated and implemented.	Action 1: A Council pest management strategy is developed.	Very high
		Action 3: Control of plant and animal pests is extended to new Council managed sites with priority on protecting nationally and locally threatened habitats and species.	Very high
		Action 4: Control of plant and animal pests is maintained on priority existing Council managed biodiversity sites with nationally important and or locally threatened habitats and species such as the species on the oxidation ponds.	Very high

		Action 5: Council contributes to pest control programmes on private land in partnership with individual landowners where this improves biodiversity management of Council land or is part of an agreed multi agency pest plan and or protects priority sites (subject to cost benefit analysis).	Very high
Objective 1.5 New Council policy will take account of and be aligned with the goals and objectives of the biodiversity strategy.	Target 1.5.1: Strategies, bylaws and policy decisions will ensure that priority biodiversity is protected and maintained	Action 1: Council policy will take account of indigenous biodiversity priorities	Very high
	Target 1.5.2: Council capital and operation programmes will ensure the continued protection of priority biodiversity.	Action 1: Biodiversity initiatives will be funded as appropriate in the LTCCP	Very high

Goal 2 objectives	Implementation target	Implementation actions	Priority
Objective 2:1 Information on local biodiversity is collated and readily available to Council staff and the community	Target 2.1.1: Council maintains a data base of easily accessible (subject to privacy and cultural sensitivity limitations) biodiversity information	Action 1: Biodiversity information about Council managed land is recorded on an asset management system.	Very high
		Action 2: Biodiversity information on private land is easily available to appropriate Council staff for project prioritisation, monitoring, grants assessment, and prioritisation of technical and management assistance to landowners.	Very high
Objective 2:2 Opportunities are promoted to inform and enhance community understanding of biodiversity values, issues and management	Target 2.2.1: Landowners, the public, conservation trusts and organisations sufficiently understand biodiversity issues, opportunities and constraints to enable appropriate protection and management.	Action 1: Public information, and training for landowners and conservation managers, is provided to assist biodiversity protection and enhancement.	High
	Target 2.2.2: There is general community support for biodiversity protection and restoration.	Action 2: Promotional initiatives are coordinated with DoC, ECan and other conservation organisations.	High

Objective 2:3 The community understands Ngāi Tahu values and roles in biodiversity management	Target 2.3.1: Cultural biodiversity information is made readily available by Council in partnership with Ngāi Tahu.	Action 1: Initiate discussions with Ngāi Tahu and disseminate culturally appropriate biodiversity information for staff and public use.	Very high
	Target 2.3.2: Ngāi Tahu information about culturally important areas and species is identified, collated and maintained.	Action 1: Consult with Ngāi Tahu and record information in Council data bases as appropriate.	Very high

Goal 3 objectives	Implementation target	Implementation actions	Priority
Objective 3:1. Strategic partnerships are facilitated, developed and maintained by Council with Ngāi Tahu, agencies, organisations and others with an interest in or responsibility for biodiversity, including other Canterbury local authorities	Target 3.1.1: Partnerships enable the conservation of indigenous biodiversity.	Action 1: Council actively seeks partnerships with institutional, community and business to promote, protect and enhance biodiversity	Very high
	Target 3.1.2: Partnerships with Ngāi Tahu (specifically ngā Papatipu Rūnanga) to sustain and manage biodiversity are built, strengthened and maintained	Action 1: Identify the appropriate individuals and group(s) within Ngāi Tahu to work with on specific biodiversity projects in consultation with Ngā Papatipu Rūnanga.	Very high
		Action 2: Council staff training encourages familiarity with Rūnanga biodiversity aims and objectives	High
		Action 3: Opportunities for joint projects are investigated including land purchase, protection, restoration and research projects.	High

Goal 4 Objectives	Implementation target	Implementation actions	priority
Objective 4.1: Monitoring programmes for the biodiversity of Christchurch City are established, coordinated and maintained.	Target 4.1.1: Monitoring ensures biodiversity sites are appropriately managed and objectives for conservation and restoration are achieved.	Action 1: Council in partnership with other agencies develops and implements methods to measure the health of remnant and restored biodiversity	Medium
	Target 4.1.2: Monitoring programmes enable the viability and trends of priority ecosystems and species to be sufficiently understood to guide management actions.	Action 1: Monitoring programmes are maintained, and initiated where appropriate, to determine ecological change over the long term.	Very high
	Target 4.1.3: Pests are monitored to enable appropriate management to be undertaken	Action 1: Regular monitoring of priority pests is undertaken.	Very high
Objective 4.2: Biodiversity research is supported, facilitated, coordinated and managed to enable sustainable management of biodiversity.	Target 4.2.1: Research programmes enable the viability and trends of priority ecosystems and species to be sufficiently understood to guide management actions	Action 1: Research is undertaken on the maintenance of priority remnant habitats in areas with	High
	Target 4.2.3: Research programmes enable prioritisation of biodiversity protection and management.	Action 1: Biodiversity needs are prioritised and applied to research project objectives.	Very high
Objective 4.3: The community is involved in biodiversity research and monitoring	Target 4.3.1: Community biodiversity monitoring programmes provide better information on biodiversity.	Action 1: Existing monitoring programmes are evaluated and coordinated with Council programmes and research needs.	High
		Action 2: New community research and monitoring programmes are facilitated to complement and assist Council biodiversity protection and restoration.	Medium
Objective 4.4: Community attitudes to biodiversity are monitored.	Target 4.4.1: Monitoring gauges community support and concerns about biodiversity.	Action 1: Resident surveys (formal and informal) are undertaken.	High
		Action 2: Council will engage with iwi, community groups, organisations and trusts to maintain and increase understanding of community attitudes, concerns and initiatives.	Very high



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