

Whariwharangi in the dark

Night time at Whariwharangi hut is a great time to listen to (and maybe see) our native owl - ruru or morepork.

The morepork is New Zealand's only surviving native owl. It is known for its melancholic call. Often heard in the forest at dusk and throughout the night. Its Maori name, ruru, reflects this call. During the day, moreporks sleep in roosts. By night they hunt a variety of animals – mainly large invertebrates including scarab and huhu beetles, moths and caterpillars, wētā and spiders. They also take small birds, rats and mice. In Māori tradition, the morepork or ruru was often seen as a watchful guardian. As a bird of the night, it was associated with the spirit world. Its occasional high, piercing call signified bad news, such as a death, but the more common 'ruru' call heralded good news. (Te Ara New Zealand Encyclopaedia)



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Whariwharangi is also a good place to see native fish in streams around the hut, glow worms on the banks near the streams and invertebrates peaking out in all the bushes. Check out the large mahoe (whiteywood) trees on the track before the hut as they are excellent habitat for weta and other insects.

