



Experience a different 9 to 5

with a summer job at the

Department of Conservation

Photo: Petrus Hedman

Ranger (Captive Rearing Tara iti)

Location	Te Ārai, Auckland
Dates of Employment	2 November 2026 to 2 April 2027
Salary	Salary range based on skills and experience is \$61,189 - \$67,446

Mō te tūranga | About the role

The New Zealand Fairy Tern/ Tara iti is New Zealand's rarest endemic breeding bird. There are currently fewer than 45 birds left in the population. The survival of this species is supported by a dedicated team of DOC staff. Every year a few tara iti chicks are hatched at Auckland Zoo then raised at our Te Ārai pen, where they learn to forage for fish, communicate, grow up, and eventually take flight with other wild birds.

As the Captive Rearing Ranger with a main base at Te Ārai, you will be supporting this programme during the breeding season. This role is focussed on predator control, fish husbandry, and site maintenance. You will work closely with DOC staff, Auckland Zoo, and technical experts to deliver this highly specialised conservation programme.

Key Tasks

- Undertake predator control, including trapping, live dispatch, and monitoring
- Carry out fish husbandry tasks
- Assist zookeepers with the care and monitoring of tara iti chicks
- Bird monitoring and observations
- Maintain site infrastructure, including solar and aquarium systems
- Transport fish and equipment between Te Ārai, Warkworth, Auckland Zoo, and other sites
- Deliver public advocacy and education around tara iti and shorebird protection
- Regular fish resupply trips including overnight stays
- Support wider programme tasks as required

Ngā pūkenga me ngā wheako | Skills and experience

- Experience in one or more relevant areas (e.g. fish husbandry, predator control, bird conservation)
- Interest in shorebird ecology, behaviour, and species protection (desirable)
- Willingness to undertake predator control, including kill-trapping and humane dispatch
- Comfortable working outside in isolated and remote environments for extended periods
- Ability to work both independently and as part of a small, specialised team
- Practical skills in basic infrastructure maintenance (e.g. plumbing, power tools)
- Strong problem-solving skills and adaptability in dynamic environments
- Full New Zealand driver's licence (manual preferred)
- Comfortable driving long distances and able to stay away from home overnight
- Strong communication skills e.g. with stakeholders, volunteers, colleagues
- Willingness to obtain 4WD and LUV certifications (training provided)
- Current First Aid certificate (desirable)
- Availability to work evenings, weekends, and public holidays including Christmas

Mō te tīma | About the team/Location

The tara iti recovery programme operates across Auckland and Northland, focusing on protecting and increasing the population of this critically endangered species. The programme is supported by DOC rangers, technical advisors, the Tara Iti Recovery Group, and Auckland Zoo. This role is based at our Te Ārai pen, a remote coastal location within Te Ārai Regional Park.

Te Ārai offers a unique working environment close to Mangawhai, with access to beaches, walking and horse-riding tracks, and a strong outdoor lifestyle, while still requiring a high level of self-sufficiency due to the remote nature of the work site.

Additional Information

Roster: Rangers work 5 days on/ 2 days off with days off during the week. All Rangers are expected to work weekends and public holidays including Christmas. This is a full-time 40hr/ week role with flexible working hours during peak or emergency periods.

Accommodation: Shared accommodation can be provided for the duration of the contract if needed.

Number of positions: 1

Me he pātai anō, whakapā mai | For further enquiries

Please contact Kate Sparks ksparks@doc.govt.nz