

NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Puketarata - Taranaki's latest Garden of National Significance



Puketarata, a large country garden north of Hawera, has been awarded Garden of National Significance status just two years after opening its gates for the Taranaki Rhododendron & Garden Festival.

Puketarata, independently assessed by the New Zealand Gardens Trust for its National Significance status, will now be among 13 Gardens of Significance in Taranaki opening their garden gates for the iconic Festival running from October 30 until November 8 this year. The 2009 Taranaki Rhododendron & Garden Festival will also feature over 50 stunning gardens including Gardens in Development and Vegetable Gardens as well as a new, yet to be announced, category.

Owners Ken and Jennifer Horner, who started their home and garden project from a bare paddock in 1983, say their new garden status is a huge responsibility.

"I really enjoy gardening – my first memories of gardening were with my Grandparents Griff & Louie Williams at Ohangai. My grandfather was the founding chairman of the Pukeiti Garden trust," says Jennifer.

"We're really passionate about native plants and enjoy the increased native bird life they have brought to the garden."

Covering approx one and a half acres on the brow of a northerly facing hill about 6 km from Hawera, Puketarata has north east views of inland Taranaki up the Mangemange river valley towards Lake Rotokare and north west views to Mt. Taranaki.

The garden planting is a mix of natives, rhododendrons, roses, the usual and unusual garden shrubs and perennials. There's an emphasis on greens and texture rather than all round colour. The garden is settled into the landscape and easily accessible.

A large lawn adjacent to the house, providing warmth and privacy, has been used for family games and is located on the northern side. The grass tennis court on a level below the house, is connected by a haka. A small orchard area has been under planted with mainly daffodils while a vegetable and herb garden area and a berry house can be found behind the home. The gully below

the house has been systematically planted with a mix of natives, deciduous trees and rhododendrons which can be viewed from the haha and tracks in the gully area.

The garden and house are adjacent to the Puketarata Pa, one of the many pa in this area. It was constructed some 400 years ago and evidence of the trenches, house sites and midden are still visible.

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