

# MATARIKI AT TE MANAWA PŌHUTUKAWA



Kia Ora, Ko Pōhutukawa toku ingoa. I live in the Matariki cluster. My connection is to those we love who have passed away. When you see me each morning it is a reminder to send love to those you miss.

## HE AHA TE MEA NUI O TE AO? HE TĀNGATA, HE TĀNGATA, HE TĀNGATA

*What is the most important thing in the world?  
It is the people, it is the people, it is the people.*

### CONNECTING WITH PŌHUTUKAWA

Pōhutukawa is named after an ancient pōhutukawa tree at Te Rerenga Wairua (Cape Reinga). Some iwi believe that she is the oldest of the children of Matariki. Her story is where the saying "*Kua whetūrangihia koe - You have become a star in the night sky*" originates. An important time of the year, Pōhutukawa in the sky gives us time to connect with those who we treasure. There are many ways we can do this:

Make a candle for the person you treasure.

Find the Matariki cluster in the sky.

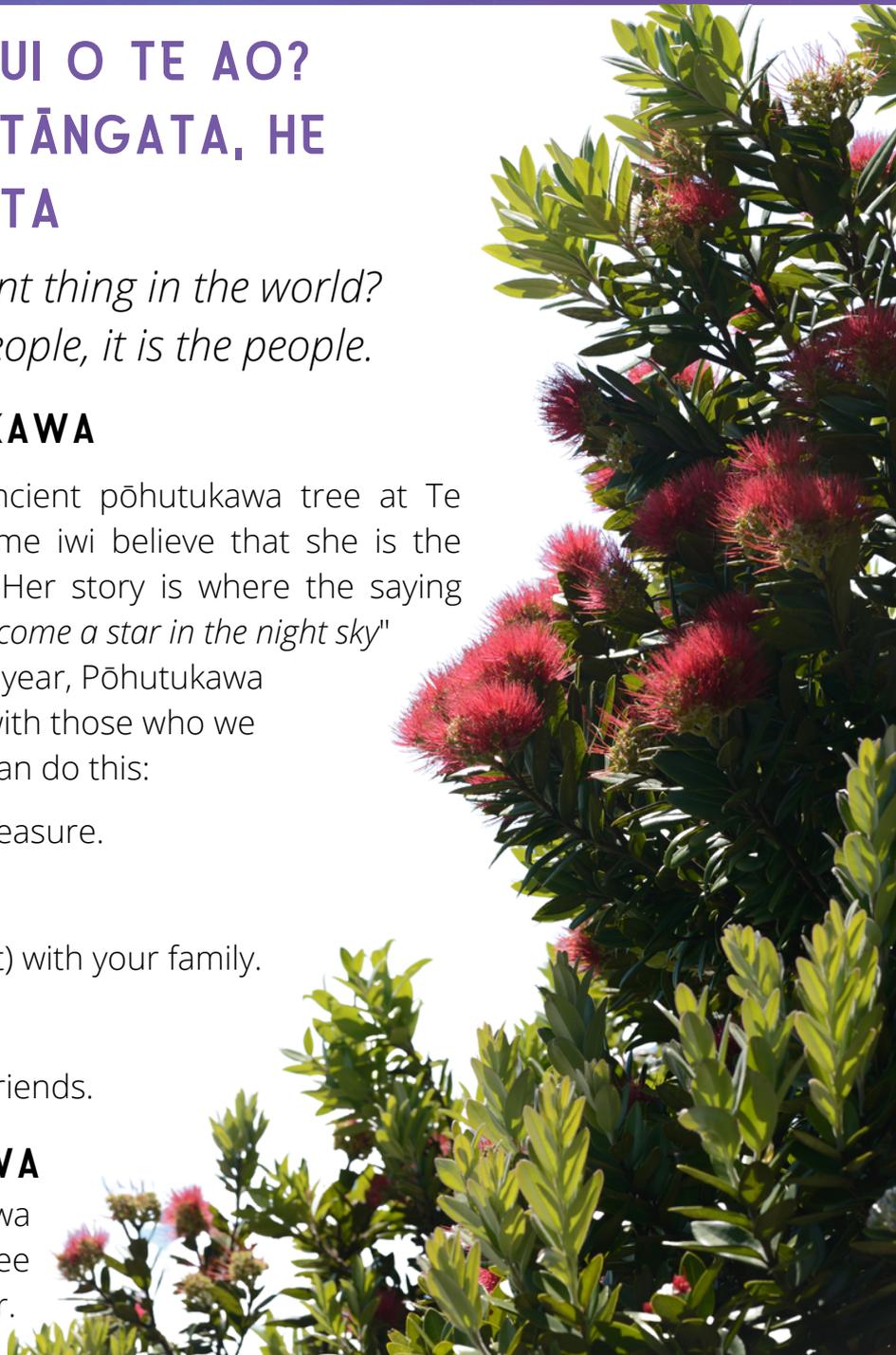
Make and share parakuihi (breakfast) with your family.

Weave stars as a whānau.

Share waiata and stories with your friends.

### GUARDIAN STAR PŌHUTUKAWA

Some of the kōrero for Pōhutukawa refer to this star as one of the three guardian stars of the Matariki cluster.



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## REMEMBERING THOSE WE TREASURE

There are lots of ways we can remember those important to us who have passed on. Check out some of the ideas below:



Create a poem from their name. Use each letter of their and use it as the start of a sentence or word that represents them. Maybe A is for Amazing baker, B for Beautiful singer and so on...

What was their favourite food? Recreate it with your family and share memories you have of them over some yummy kai.



Write them a letter. You could share your recent activities, tell them about your day, or write them a story.

## ALL ABOUT WHĀNAU

One of the important aspects of Matariki is coming together as a whānau and spending time together. As Pōhutukawa reminds us to treasure those we miss, it is also an opportunity to find out more about your family. Can you find out more about a passed family member? Do you have a great-great-great grandparent who liked to wear woollen socks? Maybe you have a family member who was in a band? This is a perfect time to interview your family and find out things you never knew. Can you add a new name to your family tree?



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## ABOUT PŌHUTUKAWA TREES

Pōhutukawa trees are a special part of New Zealand. As well as being important to Matariki the Pōhutukawa is considered New Zealand's Christmas Tree.

We have two types of pōhutukawa in New Zealand: mainland and Kermadec. The pōhutukawa is related to (and appears similar to) the rātā. Despite their similarities, a pōhutukawa leaf is green on top with hairs underneath, giving a whiter appearance.

Pōhutukawa trees grow across Aotearoa but have adapted to survive coastal weather. Their leaves have a waxy coating, protecting them from the harsh salt air.

Pōhutukawa trees typically flower from December to January. It is said that if a pōhutukawa flowers before December a long hot summer is to follow.

The trees themselves are large. Older trees are often wider than they are tall, growing up to 20 metres tall and 50 metres wide.

## THREATS TO THE TREES

There are two predominant threats to the safety of our pōhutukawa: possums and myrtle rust. Possums show a preference for eating the leaves of rātā and pōhutukawa trees, although they will settle for many others. Myrtle rust is a fungal disease that is established in Aotearoa. As a member of the myrtle family, the pōhutukawa is susceptible to this disease. Other common threats include people and weeds, both of which can cause damage to young and established trees.



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## DRAW A PŌHUTUKAWA

Follow along with the steps to draw your own pōhutukawa flower. Use pencil to create your basic shape so you can colour it in later.

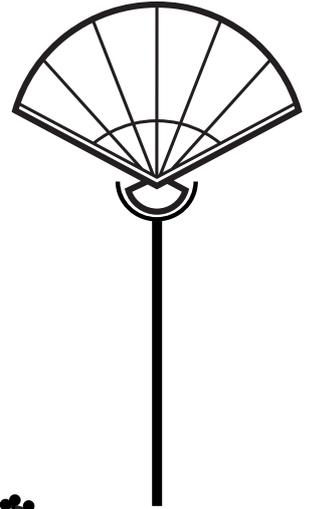
**Step 1** Start with a line for the stem of your flower.



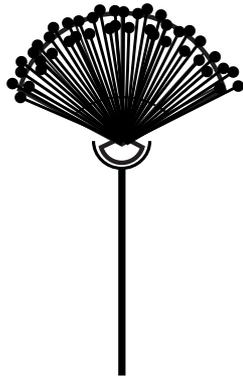
**Step 2** Add a semi-circle to the top of your line for the start of the flower.



**Step 3** Draw a fan/shell shape to form the outline of your flower.



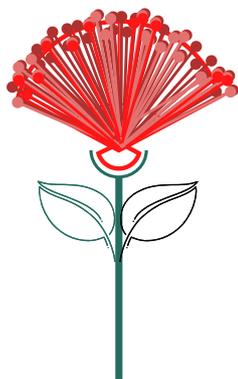
**Step 4** Add lines to your fan/shell shape for the petals of the flower. Draw the petals different lengths, then add small dots to the top of your lines for the end of the petals.



**Step 5** Add curved lines for leaves.



**Step 6** Add colour



## PŌHUTUKAWA AT TE MANAWA

We are the caretakers of many objects that tell the stories of people who have passed.

We share these stories by having objects on display in our exhibition spaces.



What is your favourite object on display?  
Whose story does this object tell?

