TĪRAMA MAI

THE STORY OF TE TAU HAU, THE NEW YEAR

Ka puta Matariki ka rere Whānui.

Ko te tohu tēnā o te tau e!

Matariki reappears, Vega starts its flight.

The New Year begins!

The appearance of the Matariki star cluster – made up of nine stars – welcomes in Te Tau Hau, the New Year. Rising in the north-east sky, the star cluster is not always readily visible in all parts of Aotearoa-New Zealand.

For those living in Te Waipounamu, the South Island, Puanga is a brighter star in the night sky which rises earlier than Matariki and is often considered to herald the New Year. Some iwi celebrate Puanga rather than Matariki as Te Tau Hau.

The rise of Puanga and Matariki is often acknowledged as being a time of coming together and of reflecting on the past year, on the people who have passed and on whakapapa (genealogy).

Whakapapa sets out the beginning and continuing relationships between everything – past and present. It accounts for the way in which all things have been created: the stars, Earth, sky, oceans, rivers, elements, minerals, plants, animals and all people.

The legend of Matariki

Matariki is said to be the shortened name of Ngā mata o te ariki o Tāwhirimateā. God of winds and weather, Tāwhirimateā was the only child who did not want his mother, Papatūānuku, separating from his father, Ranginui. Following the separation, Tāwhirimateā sought retribution and instigated a series of attacks on his siblings, all of whom recoiled from his wrath, except his brother Tūmatauenga, god of war and of humanity.

A significant battle followed which was won by the more skilful Tūmatauenga. The defeated Tāwhirimateā fled skywards to his father, but not before pulling out and crushing his eyes, casting them upwards where they stuck to the chest of Ranginui. These fragments became known as Matariki.

The nine stars of Matariki are Matariki, Tupu-ā-nuku, Tupu-ā-rangi, Waitī, Waitā, Waipuna-ā-rangi, Ururangi, Pōhutukawa and Hiwa-i-te-rangi.

Matariki is one of the closest star clusters to Earth at 444.2 light years away. It is visible most of the year, except for a brief period when it is obscured by the Sun, just before we herald in Te Tau Hou, the New Year.

Scan here for more information

Sources / Resources
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TĪRAMA MAI

PUANGA

Puanga kai rau.

When Puanga rises, food will be abundant.

I am the star Puanga. I am the older sibling of Takurua and Matariki. Some say that I am jealous of the attention Matariki receives and that is why I race to be first in the night sky. Because I appear before Matariki, maybe I welcome in the New Year?

HE MARAMATAKA
THE LUNA CALENDAR

Māori observe a maramataka, or lunar calendar, with the phases of the moon and stars in the night sky guiding the planning of gardens, harvesting of food and understanding of natural occurences. For instance, the height of the nor-west arch Te Māuru, when seen above Kā Tiritiri-o-te-Moana, Southern Alps, determined the intensity of a southerly expected the following day.

Puanga was considered the significant star for many living in the Canterbury area. Its rise in the sky to the south was often read as a sign of bad weather to come, while a rise to the north was a good omen.

Phases of the Moon

Scan here for more information

Sources / Resources
Dr Jim Williams retrieved at https://matariki@dunedin.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Puaka-Matariki-Essay.pdf
Christine Broadbent, Maori Cosmology 2017 retrieved at http://astrologyfoundation.co.nz/maori-cosmology
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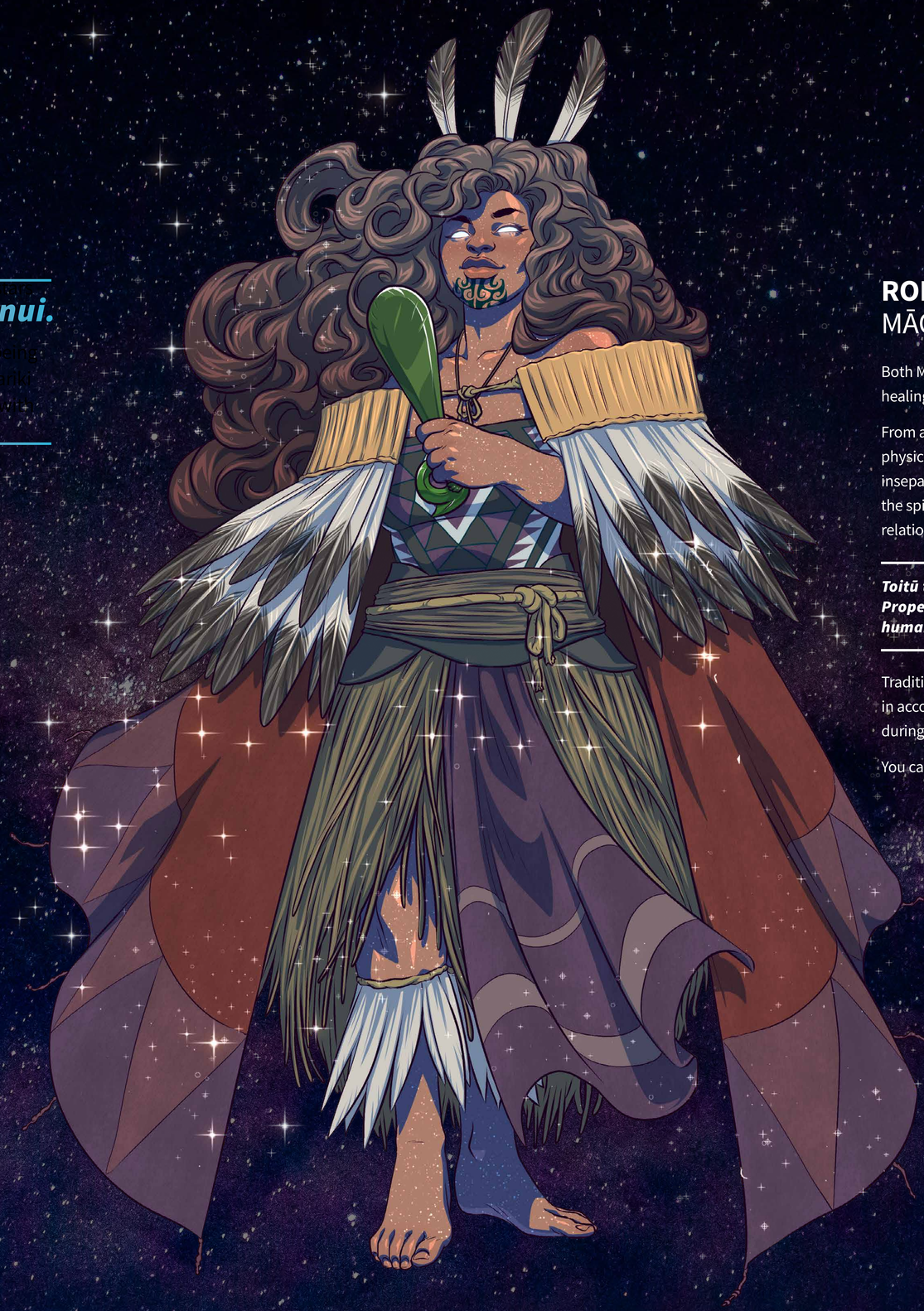
TĪRAMA MAI

MATARIKI

Matariki hunga, Matariki ahunga nui.
Matariki has many admirers,
Matariki brings us together.

I am the star Matariki. I am the mother and Rehua the father, of the Matariki star cluster.

When you see me high and bright in the night sky, I will bring you wellbeing and good luck.



RONGOĀ MĀORI
MĀORI MEDICINE

Both Matariki and Rehua are regarded as having knowledge associated with healing and wellbeing.

From a Māori perspective, illness occurs when there is an imbalance between physical, emotional, mental and spiritual wellbeing. Rongoā, or healing, is inseparable from Te Wao Nui a Tāne, the forests of Tāne, the environment and the spiritual realm. It is the role of the tohunga (tribal experts) to address these relationships and restore balance.

Toitū te marae o Tāne, Toitū te marae o Tangaroa, Toitū te iwi.
Proper use of Tāne's realm, of Tangaroa's domain ensures humanity's survival.

Traditionally, tohunga were responsible for the timing of the harvest of plants in accordance with the maramataka (lunar calendar). There are certain times during the year that plants are able to be harvested and used for healing.

You can visit a local rongoā garden at 565 Marshland Road.

Scan here for more information

Sources / Resources
Matamua, R. 2017
Library website https://my.christchurchcitylibraries.com/te-rongoa-maori/

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TĪRAMA MAI

TUPU-Ā-NUKU

Ngā kai a Matariki, nāna i ao ake ki runga.

The foods of Matariki, gathered up by her.

My name is Tupu-ā-nuku. I am the star connected to foods grown in the ground, both cultivated and wild. When you see me bright and clear, I hold the promise of a warm and successful growing season.

TE WĀ O TE HAUHAKE
THE TIME OF HARVESTING

Traditionally, celebrations of Puanga and Matariki follow the harvesting of crops when the pātaka (storehouses) became full.

Tohunga (tribal experts), looked to Puanga and the Matariki star cluster to determine how abundant the next year's harvest would be.

Ngāi Tahu food growing and gathering habitats were shaped by maramataka (the lunar calendar). Specific maramataka were developed for where harvesters lived and where their primary resources were located within their wakawaka, a traditional method for dividing harvesting areas.

Mahinga kai

Mahinga kai refers to natural resources from the environment. This can include the tools used, the likes of pounamu (greenstone), rongoā (medicine), dyes, as well as the flora and fauna harvested from the land and waterways for food. It also describes a method of managing these resources. Rights to gather particular resources from specific places, wakawaka, were handed down through generations.

Scan here for more information

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Dr Jim Williams https://ourarchive.otago.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10523/5199/Williams_E_Pakihi_Hākinga_A_Kai.pdf?sequence=4
Ngāi Tahu Mahinga Kai https://ngaitahu.iwi.nz/our_stories/mahinga-kai-documentary-series-launched/ https://ngaitahu.iwi.nz/our_stories/ka-taki-mai-te-mauru-when-the-nor-wester-howls-tk78/
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TĪRAMA MAI

TUPU-Ā-RANGI

Ka rawe koe e ngā kai i taona e Rehua. How wonderful you are, the foods cooked by Rehua.

I am the star Tupu-ā-rangi. I connect with food that 'comes from the sky', such as the birds, and berries and other fruits of the forest. When you see me bright in the sky the coming year will be a good one for harvesting berries and hunting birds.

NGĀ KAI O TE RANGI
FOOD FROM THE SKY

The tītī, also known as the muttonbird or sooty shearwater, is a migratory seabird, found at a number of locations including the Muttonbird Islands to the south and west of Rakiura-Stewart Island. The young birds are considered a delicacy, very rich in flavour and fats from food provided by their parents. Tītī are a popular trading food across Aotearoa-New Zealand.

The kererū (wood pigeon) was once an important food source. The bird's feathers were used for various items including cloaks. With the passing of the Ngāi Tahu Settlement Act in 1998, the kererū was formally recognised as a taonga (treasured) species and is now protected accordingly.

The tī kōuka (cabbage tree) was a significant food source for early Māori and provided a fibre resource prized for its strength.

Scan here for more information

Sources / Resources
Te Karaka, Makarini 2018 https://ngaitahu.iwi.nz/our_stories/ka-taki-mai-te-mauru-when-the-norwester-howls-tk78/
Libraries website https://my.christchurchcitylibraries.com/ti-kouka-the-cabbage-tree/

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TĪRAMA MAI

WAITĪ

Ka ora te wai, ka ora te whenua,
ka ora ngā tāngata.
If the water is healthy, the land is healthy, the people are healthy.

My name is Waitī. I have a special connection to all those creatures living in fresh water – the rivers, streams and lakes.

WAIMĀORI
FRESH WATER

Water is associated with the beginnings of life. For Ngāi Tahu, this occurred when Mākū came together with Mahoranuiātea and conceived Rangi.

According to Ngāi Tahu tradition, it was Te Rapuwai who first classified the waters of Te Waipounamu. Water was viewed according to its nature and uses, which in turn determined its future uses. Water was also a source of foods, with marine farming and aquaculture both traditionally practiced in coastal and inland areas.

Today, work is being done to protect Aotearoa-New Zealand's water. Te Mana o te Wai, is a central concept for freshwater management and aims to lift the standard for how we care for freshwater. It includes protection of wetlands, ensuring fish passages up and down rivers and streams, and improving land and water management on farms and in communities.

Scan here for more information

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https://ourarchive.otago.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10523/5198/Williams_E_Pakihi_Hakinga_A_Kai.pdf?sequence=4
https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/national-policy-statements/national-policy-statement-freshwater-management/

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TĪRAMA MAI

WAITĀ

Ka whakahotu ngā tai, ka nui te ika.

Regular tides, lots of fish.

My name is Waitā. I am the star who is associated with the ocean and the numerous types of food gathered from the sea.

WAITAI
SEA WATER

Māori used the maramataka (lunar calendar) as a guide for best times to fish, go eeling, hunt and plant. This included māra mātaitai, the name given to seafood gardens, such as the seeding of shellfish beds.

The sea not only provides food, but the means to contain and preserve kaimoana (seafood).

The outer skin of rimurapa (bull kelp) is airtight when air becomes trapped in the honeycomb-like structures. When a blade of rimurapa is used to preserve food inside, known as pōhā (bull kelp bag), it can be kept safely for up two or three years.

Pōhā are still used today by Ngāi Tahu to preserve many types of food, and to transport preserved food from one area to another, including tītī (muttonbird).

Scan here for more information

Sources / Resources
https://www.tpc.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Appendix-17-Effects-on-Mahinga-Kai.pdf p14
https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/discover-collections/read-watch-play/maori/traditional-maori-food-gathering

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TĪRAMA MAI

WAIPUNA-Ā-RANGI

Matariki tāpuapua.
The Pools of Matariki.

I am the star Waipuna-ā-rangi and I link the Matariki star cluster to the coming of rain. The proverb Matariki tāpuapua refers to the rainy winter season, coinciding with the appearance of Matariki in the sky.

HE ROIMATA O RANGI
THE TEARS OF RANGI

The word for rain is ua and a drop of rain is kōpata. Whakataritari ua was the name for weather leading up to rain, while taru whakaru was damp, cloudy weather.

Maomao was the moment when rain stopped. Māwake rangitahi referred to a sudden short squall, and māwake pā roa to a continuing rainstorm. A day of rain was called koripo marama.

The natural world offers the keen observer insight into the coming weather:

- At Arowhenua-South Canterbury a thin collar like cloud surrounding Tarahaoa (Mt Peel) was known as the "three-day cloud" foretelling that rain was imminent within three days.
- For Kāti Kuri at Kaikoura, rain with no wind was a precursor to a southerly forming which will stick around for two to three days.
- Swarming namunamu (sandflies) on Te Tai-Poutini-West Coast are indicators that rain will shortly be on its way.

Scan here for more information

Sources / Resources
https://teara.govt.nz/en/tawhirimatea-the-weather/print
Te Karaka, Makariri 2018 https://ngaitahu.iwi.nz/our_stories/ka-taki-mai-te-mauru-when-the-southwester-howls-tk78/

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TĪRAMA MAI

URURANGI

Ko ngā hau ki ētahi wāhi; Ko ngā kai kei Orariki.
No matter which way the wind blows (or the season), one can always procure food at Taumutu.

I am Ururangi. I am the star who will determine the winds for the coming year.

TE HAU ME TE HĀ
THE WIND AND THE BREATH

Everything starts with the murmur of the wind – its breath. Hau (wind) stems from the root word 'ha', the breath. 'Ha' creates the spark of life known as 'mauri'.For Māori, the land must have a 'hau'. The hau of land is its vitality and fertility. Ngāi Tahu have an expression that represents this view when they talk about Te Waihora-Lake Ellesmere which declares, "Ko ngā hau ki ngā whenua, ko ngā kai ki Orariki – Whatever the season or wind, food will be found at Orariki". Te Waihora-Lake Ellesmere was famous as the food basket for Ngāi Tahu. It's 'hau' was everywhere…

Māori extended the concept of human kinship, whakapapa, to natural phenomena – including the winds.

Māori extended the concept of human kinship, whakapapa, to natural phenomena – including the winds.

Scan here for more information

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TĪRAMA MAI

PŌHUTUKAWA

I am Pōhutukawa, the oldest star in the Matariki cluster. I am associated with those who have died. When the Matariki star cluster is in the night sky, we should take time to remember those who have passed away – particularly in the preceding year.

TE MAURI TE ORA
LIFE FORCE AND WELLBEING

The concept of mauri is central to Māori understanding of the environment. Mauri is considered to be the essence that provides life to all living things, giving health to a person or place.

Passed down from the primal parents, all things have a mauri – Including inanimate objects – so it can be found in people, animals, fauna, fish, waterways, rocks, mountains.

Ko te mauri he mana atua, he mana hei whakahua i te kai, hei pupuri i te kai, kei riro ki etahi atu wahi; mauri ki uta, mauri ki te wai, ki nga awa, ki nga roto, mehemea he maunga kore manu, he ngahere kore manu, a he awa kore kai (ika, tuna, aha ranei) ka whakanohoia he mauriora.

This passage suggests that mauri is godly power that can affect food gathering and can be found inland and in waterways. If there is a mountain or forest with no birds or a river with no fish then the mauri is depleted. This can be restored unless the place is dead.

Mauri connects all living things, and so is the binding force between the physical and the spiritual. When the mauri is extinguished, this is associated with death.

ing, and so is the binding force between the physical and the spiritual. When this mauri is extinguished, this is associated with death.

Scan here for more information

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TĪRAMA MAI

HIWA-I-TE-RANGI

Kua ara ake ahau i te papa o te whenua
Kua kite ahau i ngā whetū e tūtaki tahi ana
Ko Matariki te kairūri
Ko Atutahi kei te taumata o te mangōroa

The scope of our imagination is from the earth to the stars.
Professor Te Wharehuia Milroy, Kura Reo ki Te Waipounamu, 2014

My name is Hiwa-i-te-rangi and I am the star who is connected to the promise of a prosperous season. You may call me a 'wishing star'.

TĪTIRO KI NGĀ WHETŪ
LOOK TO THE STARS

Oceanic navigation uses the knowledge of star position to establish location. For example, as we move northwards the Southern Cross gets closer to the horizon. Currents, cloud forms, wave patterns and the behaviour of bird and marine life, are all used.

The whole calendrical system was impacted by traditional astronomical knowledge – not just at the New Year. The seasons of the year were also measured by heliacal rising and setting of stars.

Both new moon and full moon continue to be important timers. This is instrumental for traditional methods of agriculture, cultural events, celebrations and rituals.

Whakapapa (ancestral lineage) weaves cosmos, gods, human life, flora and fauna, land and sky, into a total dependent system. For humans to thrive, there must be balance across the system.

Scan here for more information

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