

## **Rata's rich red returned to Awaroa for Queen's Birthday**

Queen's Birthday weekend (5 – 7 June) will provide the perfect opportunity for volunteers to plant 50 northern rata around the Awaroa estuary and peninsula – bringing the rich red of the native flowering rata flowers back to the district. Once flowering in summer, the rata will attract native birds back into the area.

The rata plants are part of a delivery of 100 being made to the Able Tasman Birdsong Trust from the Project Crimson. The remaining 50 plants will be planted out on Pitt Island in September. The Project Crimson, supported by Meridian Energy, has spent the past 20 years supporting community groups right right across New Zealand to protect and regenerate both rata and pohutakawa into their natural growing ranges – two native species that were in decline.

The ATBST, is delighted with the Project Crimson rata and is thrilled that the Trust, along with the Awaroa Ratepayers Association, can support Project Crimson's aim by returning some much needed red to the area.

“Our vision is to protect and enhance the biodiversity of our special area, attract more native birds and improve the experience of the many visitors we get into the Park and surrounding areas.”

“The rich red flowers of the rata and pohutukawa are synonymous with our New Zealand summer and while this area used to be full of rata, their numbers have declined, along with the native birds. This is a wonderful way to promote their return.”

Members of the local community who would like to volunteer to help with the rata planting in September should contact the Able Tasman Birdsong Trust at [www.abeltasmanbirdsong.co.nz](http://www.abeltasmanbirdsong.co.nz). More information about Project Crimson can be found at [www.projectcrimson.co.nz](http://www.projectcrimson.co.nz).