



Darran Kerei-Keepa at work as a cultural monitor in Kaikōura. Photo: Dr Jeremy Habberfield-Short

Finders not keepers

It can be tempting to pick up something ‘old looking’ but you should leave archaeological artefacts in place unless they are in danger of being lost or swept away.

If you take an object away from its surroundings, we lose the chance to understand the bigger history of the place. Sediment layers and other objects around an artefact can tell us the age of the site, who used it, and what they did there.

If you find archaeology, take a photo, record the place you found it, and contact Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga or your local museum. If you find kōiwi (human remains) contact the police.

Case study: Finding taonga tūturu

Susie Baker (Kaikōura resident):

“The summer after the Kaikōura 2016 earthquake, my son Jayden and I spent hours investigating the new low tide line in Jimmy Armers Beach/ Waiopuka Bay. New rockpools and objects were exposed by the uplifted land. One item caught our eye; a large flat green stone, shaped by hand. Could this be a piece of pounamu?

Knowing that this was special taonga, Jayden and I took the stone to the museum. Kaikōura Museum identified it as a tōki carving tool.

The Museum explained to us that this was a taonga tūturu (protected object). The curators followed the Taonga Tūturu process and notified the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, who thanked my son and I for handing in this taonga.”

Darran Kerei-Keepa (Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura cultural monitor):

“The taonga tūturu Susie and her son found is now held in the Whare Taonga at Takahanga Marae in Kaikōura. It is an interesting piece as it had been in the sea for a long time – the edges are smoothed out, it’s broken up, and there is sea moss growing on it.

Māori have a special connection to taonga because it is a direct link to our tīpuna. We can touch something our tīpuna handcrafted hundreds of years ago.

Archaeology confirms what Māori already know about their local sites. For Kaikōura whanau, discovery of taonga or archaeological sites is physical evidence for what we have been told over the years.”

Fact file

Did you know, you can be prosecuted and fined for wilfully damaging an archaeological site? Archaeological sites are protected by The *Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014*. Māori artefacts are also protected by the *Protected Objects Act 1975*.



Jayden points to the taonga tūturu tōki he found, now displayed in the Whare Taonga at Takahanga Marae. Photo: Susie Baker



The Whare Taonga at Takahanga Marae. Photo: Darran Kerei-Keepa



HERITAGE NEW ZEALAND
POUHERE TAONGA