

Links to the Wider World

This section aims to provide links to articles and items related to caves and karst that may lie outside the normal ACKMA sphere of influence but may still be of interest. All links are functional at the time of publishing but may not open if viewing at a later date.

As this journal is already getting quite long, I have restricted these links to those subjects relating to New Zealand.

How Nature Creates Uncannily Spherical Boulders

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/concretion-spherical-rocks>

Meg Neal, October 2017



“Large boulders shaped like nearly perfect spheres can be found in a handful of places around the world. Perched amid craggy, sandy landscapes, these curious orbs have been confounding onlookers for centuries.

Some are so superbly round they appear to defy nature, which has led to wild speculation as to their origins: ancient gods? alien eggs? evidence of giants?

In fact, spherical boulders are molded over millions or even billions of years by a natural but long-misunderstood geological phenomenon called concretion.”

An exceptionally round concretion in the Moeraki Boulders cluster in New Zealand – photo by Tom Hall/cc by 2.0.



The Quest to Rediscover New Zealand’s Lost Pink and White Terraces

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/pink-white-terraces-new-zealand-hochstetter-lost>

Kelsey Kennedy, September 2017

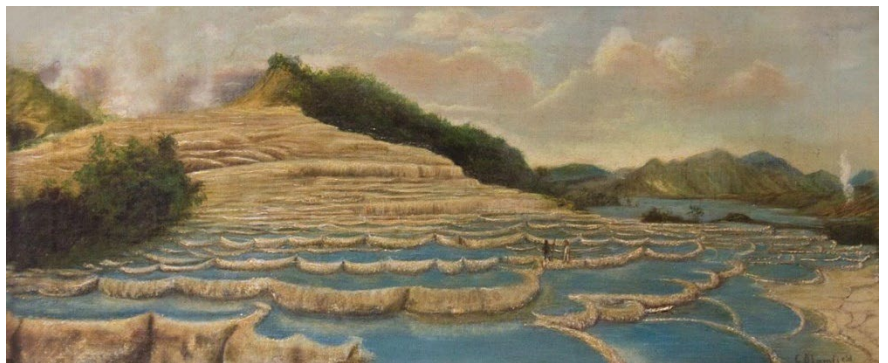
A German diary from 1859 might point the way to a geothermal wonder buried by a volcanic eruption.

Roughly the size of a city block and up to eight stories high, the Pink and White Terraces of New Zealand were one of the top tourist attractions in the British colony during the 19th century. Visitors came from around the world to admire the dramatic, colorful, cascading formations—formed by the mineral-rich waters of a geothermal spring—on the shores of Lake Rotomahana, at the foot of Mount Tarawera on the country’s North Island.

“Pink and White Terraces” by Charles Blomfield 1886 (public domain).

The Tarawera eruption (June 1886) lasted about five hours, buried the region in ash, and dramatically reshaped the landscape.

The fate of the terraces—blown to bits or buried or something else—is a mystery, well and truly lost. The only survey of the terraces before the eruption, completed in 1859, wasn’t rediscovered until 2010, when a research librarian found it in a diary in a family archive in Switzerland.



Even with that, the precise locations of the terraces is unknown, which has meant that no one could determine whether they survived the eruption. Finally, 131 years after the Tarawera eruption, there’s new hope the terraces can be rediscovered, and perhaps even resurrected, thanks to that 1859 diary.

How One Man and His Dog Rowed More Than 700 Kākāpōs to Safety

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/richard-henry-kakapo-conservation>

Sabrina Imbler, February 2020

"In 1893, in Auckland, New Zealand, 48-year-old Richard Henry was going through a peculiar midlife crisis. It wasn't for any of the usual reasons, such as a failed marriage (though he had one) or a failed career (though he had been chasing a dream job for several years), but rather it was over his obsession with flightless, moss-colored parrots called kākāpōs."

"Several months later, Henry got that dream job: caretaker of Resolution Island, an 80-square-mile, uninhabited hunk of rock off southern New Zealand that he hoped to turn into a predator-free sanctuary for kākāpōs and other native birds. For the next 14 years, he toiled away alone on the island in pursuit of this revolutionary conservation idea. He rowed hundreds native birds from the mainland, across choppy waters, to keep them safe from the snapping jaws of furry little predators."

Right: The chubby, moss-coloured, papaya-scented kākāpō. Photo by Andrew Digby/New Zealand Department of Conservation



Caver 'rescue' deep under Mt Owen puts skills to test

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/nelson-mail/news/300828669/caver-rescue-deep-under-mt-owen-puts-skills-to-test>

Nelson Mail, 13 March 2023



"A caver injured after a fall deep in the Kahurangi National Park was the scenario that tested the skills of an international group of cavers and emergency services.

Sixty Kiwi and six Australian cavers worked together over the weekend for the triennial New Zealand Deep Cave Search and Rescue (SAR) training exercise, co-ordinated by police and other agencies.

This year's exercise was held at the Bulmer Cavern, which runs for 74.3km through Mount Owen – the longest in the country – and is 750 metres deep."

The triennial Deep Cave Search and Rescue exercise took place in the Bulmer Cavern through Mt Owen in the Kahurangi National Park at the weekend. Photo by Jessie Nash.