

Kanakana

Mahinga Kai Web Series Transcript

English

The ancestors of kanakana, they appear in a fossil record about 450 million years ago.

Now when you consider that dinosaurs appeared in the fossil records 250 million years ago, these are very, very ancient fish.

These fish don't even have jaws.

There's no bones in this fish.

They don't even have the pectoral fins that normal fish have.

They have these two ones on the top, whereas most fish have fins going up the side.

This is one of the earliest vertebrates, so it's very, very primitive.

They're actually attaching onto the skin of a fish, or a whale, they've got two little teeth coming up and working it, and sucking off the blood.

They've got a really bad, sort of, rep. Like, they've been marketed as the vampires of the sea.

But they're not, they're beautiful creatures, and ancient, and, um, almost like the fossils of our waterways and should to be allowed to be here forever more.

Steph Blair mihi

Te Reo Māori

I kitea ngā tūpuna o te kanakana i te mauhanga mātātoka tōna 450 miriona tau te pakeke.

Nā, ina whakaarohia ngā mokonui, i kitea i te mauhanga mātātoka e 250 miriona tau te pakeke, nō tāukiuki rā anō ēnei ika.

Kāore tonu he kauae o ēnei ika.

Kāore ō rātou wheua.

Kāore hoki ō rātou paihau, pērā i ika kē atu.

E rua ngā paihau o runga nei, heoi, mō te nuinga o ngā ika kei ngā tahataha kē.

Koinei tētahi o ngā kīrehe whai tuaiwi tuatahi rawa, nō reira, he tino tōmua.

Ka rapa atu ki te kiri o tētahi ika, o tētahi tohorā rānei. E rua ngā niho paku ka mahi haere kia ngotea ai te toto.

He rongō kino tō rātou. Kua karangahia rātou ko ngā ngongototo o te moana.

Engari, kāore tonu i pērā. He ātaahua, he tawhito, ānō nei ko ngā mātātoka o ō tātou arawai. Me whai wāhi mai ki konei mō ake, ka tika.

Steph Blair mihi



Kanakana

English

For us growing up, a lot of the time was spent up there at night, gathering the, the kanakana.

And that was done usually on a dark night.

They, the kanakana don't like the moon.

So if you had a moon, a big moon, a full moon or that, you're wasting your time.

And they generally run, um, after a flood, after some rain.

That fresh water, all the new water gives them a burst of energy to move up the river.

So there were just hundreds, thousands of kanakana.

So we used to gather them and distribute them to whānau.

That was one way that we, that we gathered, and the other way was getting in the river, in the holes.

Because they sleep in, through the day, they're nocturnal.

So you could always pretty be assured of getting, getting a feed in those holes.

Stevie Ray: So mahinga kai is one of our nine tall trees of Ngāi Tahu,

It was essential to the survival of our people.

And I still believe that it is.

I believe that, um, mahinga kai is one of the things that binds you to who you are and where you come from.

Stevie Ray mihi

Steph: Stevie's just finished her environmental management degree, last year.

Te Reo Māori

Nō mātou e tupu ana, he rite tonu tā mātou noho atu ki reira i ngā pō, kōhi kanakana ai.

I te nuinga o te wā, mahia ai tērā mahi i ngā pō pōuriuri.

Kāore ngā kanakana e pai ki te marama.

Nō reira, mēnā he marama hua, he moumou wā noa iho.

Ka mutu, puta mai ai rātou whai muri i tētahi waipuke, i te ua rānei.

Mā tērā wai māori, mā te wai hou e whai ngao ai rātou ki te ahu pērā atu i te awa.

Nō reira, he manomano ngā kanakana.

Kohia ai e mātou, ka tukuna atu ai ki ngā whānau.

Koirā tētahi tūāhua kohikohi. Ko tētahi atu, ko te kuhu ki te awa, ki ngā rua.

Moe ai rātou i te rā, inā hoki, he ohopō rātou.

Nō reira, kāore e kore he nui ngā kai i aua rua rā.

Ko ngā mahinga kai tētahi o ngā wāhi matua e iwa i te kokoraho a Ngāi Tahu.

He mea mātuatua e ora ai te iwi.

E whakapono ana au he pērā tonu.

E whakapono ana au ko ngā mahinga kai e hono nei i a koe ki tō tuakiri, ki tō tūrangawaewae.

Stevie Ray mihi

Nō tērā tau tonu i oti ai i a Stevie tana tohu tikanga whakahaere taiao.



Kanakana

English

She's now currently working, um, under Dr Jane Kitson.

She's taken on board a lot of those things that she grew up with, all those, um, customary, you know, cultural practices

and she's able to compile them together with some science, and she's kind of got the best of both worlds really.

Stevie: Duncan and Keith, they've been gathering kanakana for probably 50 or so years, maybe more, maybe less.

They religiously come out here every year to gather the kanakana.

They've taken me under their wing to teach some of the next generation how to gather them, and their method with being in the river and using the hook.

Apart from the fact they love eating the kanakana, is that they want to look after that species, and they want to know the answers to the questions that pop into their heads.

So they do a lot of background work for Jane.

Jane: This fishery has declined in numbers, well, whānau members are saying there have been less of them around.

Um, science hasn't been able to really monitor the abundance because they're such a cryptic creature.

They come out at night, and they hide in the banks during the day, so it, um, not easily found by scientists.

You have to have special ways of monitoring them.

And the customary methods, because the whānau are out there and harvesting them and gathering them, they're the best methods to actually look at the species.

They're a customary fish, they're not a commercial fish.

Te Reo Māori

Mohoa nei, e mahi ana ia i raro i te maru o Tākuta Jane Kitson.

Kua mau ia ki ngā mātauranga i tupu mai ai ia, arā, ko ngā tikanga me ngā kaupapa ahurea.

Ka mutu, ka taea e ia te hanumi ki ngā tikanga pūtaiao, ā, kua whai oranga i ngā ao e rua.

Tōna 50 tau a Duncan rāua ko Keith e kohi kanakana ana.

He rite tonu tā rāua haere mai ki konei ia tau ki te kohi kanakana.

E atawhai mai ana rāua i ahau kia ako ai ētahi o tōku whakatupuranga ki te kohi, tae atu ki ā rāua tukanga mō roto i te awa me te whakamahia i te matau.

I tua atu i tā rāua rata ki te kai i te kanakana, e hiahia ana rāua ki te tiaki i tērā momo, ā, e hiahia anō ana ki ngā whakautu ki ngā pātai ka hua ake.

Nō reira, he nui ā rāua mahi hei tautoko i a Jane.

Kua mimiti haere tēnei mahinga. Hei tā te whānau he iti iho ngā kanakana o konei.

Kāore tonu i tino taea e te pūtaiao te tātari i te rahinga, inā hoki, he kīrehe hākirikiri tonu.

Putā mai ai rātou i ngā pō, ā, ka huna i ngā tahataha i ngā rā. Nō reira, me uaua ka kitea e ngā kaimātai pūtaiao.

Me whai tukanga motuhake hei aroturuki i a rātou.

Ko ngā tikanga tuku iho, i te mea e puta ana te whānau ki te kohikohi haere, koirā ngā tukanga pai mō te tiroiro i te kanakana.

He ika tuku iho, ehara i te ika ka hīia arumonitia.



Kanakana

English

And the people that love them the most and have done the most work with them are the customary fishers.

And they're pretty much the forefront of, um, actually gathering the information.

So this is a fish that is very much loved by the people, the whānau.

But these are fossils, living fossils in our waterways now.

Um, very special and unfortunately they're having a hard time, as well, with the numbers going down.

With barriers preventing them from going to their spawning areas, with water quality issues.

And, I just wanted to help with them.

I am a scientist, ecologist and also a whānau member.

My story here is more in the science role.

I felt, um, in some ways that if I can help with their recording of the, um, abundance and research, and help to add some of the knowledge that isn't there about the life cycle of the kanakana.

So they have a very strange life cycle in the sense that they start off in fresh water as a small larvae, looks like a tiny eel, and they filter feed.

So they're actually taking the nutrients from the waterways, all the different things in there.

Then, they go out to sea as a sort of small, silver fish, that looks much, very much like this.

They've got the disc by then.

So it's about four years in the fresh water first, three or four, another four years out to sea as a, um, parasite on large fish,

And then they come back to fresh water to spawn.

Te Reo Māori

Ko te hunga arohanui ki a rātou, ko te hunga ka kuhu ki te nuinga o ngā mahi, ko ngā kaihao mana tuku iho.

Ko rātou tonu kei mua e whai mōhiohio ana.

Nō reira, he ika tēnei e arohanuitia ana e te iwi, e te whānau.

Heoi, he mātātoka ēnei, he mātātoka ora i roto i ō mātou arawai.

He whitake rawa, heoi, e āhua raru ana i te torutoru haere o ngā ika,

i ngā ārai e aukati nei i tā rātou haere ki ngā wāhi whakawhānau, i te paru hoki o te wai i ētahi pito.

E hiahia noa ana au ki te āwhina atu.

He kaimātai pūtaiao, he kaimātai hauropi, he mema whānau anō hoki au.

Ko aku mahi i konei e hāngai ana ki te pūtaiao.

I whakaaro au ka taea pea e au te āwhina i ngā mahi arotake i te rahinga, ngā mahi rangahau, me te āpiti atu i ētahi mātauranga kāore i tino mōhiotia mō te oranga o te kanakana.

He āhua rerekē tō rātou oranga, inā hoki, ka whānau mai i te wai māori he torongū iti, ānō nei he tuna iti, ā, ka kai mā te tātari.

Nō reira e tango mai ana rātou i ngā taiora i ngā arawai, ngā mea katoa o roto.

Kātahi, ka puta atu ki te moana he ika paku, he hiriwā, he pēnei rawa te āhua.

Eke ana ki taua wā, kua whai kōpae ngote.

Nō reira, ka noho i te wai māori mō ngā tau e 3-4, ā, e 4 tau anō i te moana, he pirinoa ki ngā ika nui,

kātahi ka hoki mai ki te wai māori ki te whakawhānau.



Kanakana

English

And then they're not feeding in our fresh water, and that's why they're so full of fats and goodness when they come in.

When we first, when they first come in to the rivers, they're sort of a turquoise blue, they're a beautiful colour.

So they've come from the sea, because they're coming up to, ah, migrating now to spawn.

And so as they come into the river it makes sense to start looking like the river.

And so eventually when they've been in the river for a long time, they become brown.

So usually when they're a fresh one they'll be, um, brilliantly blue, turquoise blue.

Just a gorgeous colour. And these ones must have been in the river just a bit longer.

51! Unaffected, gunmetal grey.

Steph: I was appointed, um, a Tangata Tiaki in around 2001, I think it was, so that's, like, a long time ago.

So I guess it's someone, a guardian of a particular area.

My area is Awarua.

I guess it's my, my place, my standing place and my whānau, and I guess it's a responsibility, I feel, for us, to look after the place and allow those things to be still there for the next generations.

There's a few different ways people cook them.

I myself like them, you know, quite well cooked cos they have that gristle in them, and I don't like that chewy sensation, so I like them well cooked.

They have a definite, kinda, fish taste to them.

Um, a lot of people think they taste like eel, but they don't, I don't think they taste like eel.

Te Reo Māori

Kāore i te kai i roto tonu i te wai māori - koirā i kīkī ai rātou i ngā momo whakamōmona inā hoki mai ana.

Ka kuhu tuatahi mai rātou ki ngā awa, he āhua kārikiōrangī te tae – te ātaahua hoki.

Kua haere mai rātou i te moana, inā hoki, kua heke mai ki te whakawhānau.

Ka hoki mai rātou ki te awa, he whai take kia ōrite haere te āhua ki tērā o te awa.

Nō reira, mēnā ka roa rātou e noho ana i te awa, ka parauri haere.

I te nuinga o te wā, mēnā kātahi anō ka tae mai, he kahurangi rawa, he kārikiōrangī te tae.

He ātaahua rirerire. Te āhua nei kua āhua roa ake ēnei ika i roto i te awa.

51! Kāore i pāngia. He kiwikiwi.

I tohua au hei Tangata Tiaki i te tau 2001, ki taku mōhio. Nō reira, kua āhua roa te wā.

He momo kaitiaki i tētahi takiwā.

Ko Awarua taku takiwā.

Koinei taku takiwā, taku tūrangawaewae me taku whānau. Nō mātou tonu te haepapa hei tiaki i tēnei wāhi e ora tonu ai aua mea mō ngā uri whakahaheke.

Arā tonu ngā momo tikanga tunu rerekē a tēnā, me tēnā.

He pai ki ahau kia tunua rawatia, inā hoki, he pakaua kei roto, ā, kāore au i te rata ki ngā mea kākatikati rawa. He pai ki ahau kia tunua rawatia.

He tāwara ika tō rātou.

He tokomaha ngā tāngata e mea ana he pērā te tāwara i te tuna. Engari kāore i te pērā – kāore au e whakaaro he pērā i te tuna.



Kanakana

English

I'm not sure, I don't know how to describe, because there's nothing really that tastes like them.

They're really rich.

Once I could have ate probably two in a sitting, but one would, yeah, one would be heaps now for me.

You try it. Just put it in your mouth and try it, and then take it out if you don't want it. Good girl.

When we're out in the river, for me it's thinking about those, ah, tūpuna that, they walked in the same, you know, footsteps as what...we've been walking in their footsteps.

So that's pretty special in itself.

And then having the next generation like Stevie, with me, and Ātaahua, my moko.

So that's really special.

To be able to, yeah, to stand back out of it and look back in, kinda thing.

Oh definitely part of my identity, part of who, who I am and my whānau.

We were lucky enough to, um, grow up here and be part of it, so, yeah, that old saying, you know, "I am the river and the river is me."

Te Reo Māori

Aua – tē taea e au te whakamārama atu, inā hoki, kāore he kai he pērā tonu te tāwara.

He mōmona rawa.

Tērā te wā, ka pau i ahau ngā mea e rua i te wā kotahi. Heoi, ka mātua i te mea kotahi ināianei.

Whakamātauria. Meatia ki tō waha, ka tango mai ai mēnā kāore i te hiahia. Ka pai, e kō.

I a mātou i te awa, ka whai whakaaro au ki ngā tūpuna, ki a rātou i takahi i tēnei ara, ā, ko mātou e whai ana i ō rātou tapuwae.

He mea hirahira tērā.

Ka mutu, kei konei, kei taku taha ngā whakatupuranga hou, a Stevie rāua ko taku mokopuna, ko Ātaahua.

He tino hirahira tērā.

Kua āhei ki te tū ki te taha, ka mātakitaki atu.

He wāhanga nui o taku tuakiri, o taku whakapapa, otirā, o taku whānau.

Maringanui ana mātou i tupu mai ai mātou ki konei, i whai wāhi ai ki tēnei. Tērā ia te kōrero, "Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au."

