



Orokonui Ranger

Permanent Role, 40 hours per week

Purpose of the role

- **Biodiversity restoration:** pest monitoring and control, weed control, and management of threatened species.
- **Asset management:** track maintenance, fence monitoring and maintenance, building and infrastructure projects.
- **Duty phone holder:** Share responsibility for the Orokonui duty phone, a central component of the surveillance system for the mammal resistant fence. The duty phone is manned 24 hours a day, all year round, with duty phone holders responsible for providing emergency response to any fence breach alerts.

Organisational background

Orokonui Ecosanctuary Te Korowai o Mihiwaka is a 307-hectare fenced ecosanctuary, located 20 minutes' drive north of Dunedin, that has provided a safe, predator free environment for many of New Zealand's most threatened indigenous species since 2007. This includes breeding populations of South Island Kākā, South Island Tīeke, Takahē, Haast Tokoeka Kiwi, Jewelled Gecko, Tuatara, South Island Robin, Otago Skink, and Green Skink, established within the sanctuary via translocation from their original habitats. The philosophy of the sanctuary is 'wildlife on wildlife's terms'; species translocated to the ecosanctuary live freely, in their natural habitats, as they would in the wild.

Most of the land on which the sanctuary is located is administered by the Department of Conservation (a 231-hectare Nature Reserve), with a further 76 hectares privately owned by the Orokonui Ecosanctuary Trust. The Trust was appointed to manage and control the Nature Reserve by the Department of Conservation in 2007.

The core objectives of the sanctuary are to restore the wildlife and ecosystems of the Orokonui Valley, as described in the restoration plan; to inspire the wider community and visitors to the ecosanctuary to become actively involved in conservation; and to support them to develop the skills to do so through the Orokonui volunteer, education, and visitor programmes.

Orokonui Ecosanctuary works in collaboration with, and under the mana of, Kāti Huirapa Rūnaki ki Puketeraki, mana whenua for the Orokonui Valley. We also work with other rūnaki and iwi

partners in respect to translocation of taonga species. The Department of Conservation is a key stakeholder in our work, as are other local institutions: the Dunedin City Council, Otago Regional Council, Otago University, and Otago Polytechnic. Orokonui Ecosanctuary has provided inspiration for, and actively partners with, many local conservation projects including the Open Valley Urban Ecosanctuary, the Halo Project: Beyond Orokonui, and Predator Free Dunedin.

Orokonui Ecosanctuary has two affiliated entities: Orokonui Ecosanctuary Trust, which is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the sanctuary; and the Orokonui Foundation, a capital fund established to support the ecosanctuary in the long-term via interest generated on investments. Both entities are registered charitable trusts.

The Orokonui Ecosanctuary team

Orokonui Ecosanctuary is a community driven not-for-profit organisation, with around 25 people employed in a variety of roles, from biodiversity restoration, education, reception, guiding, communications, café, administration, and management. Our work is supported by our volunteers, our members, and our wider communities. We are a successful, tight-knit team, bound by a shared passion for conservation, and a belief in the value of the work that we do.

The Orokonui Ranger role sits within the Operations Team, led by the Operations Manager. The Operations Team are collectively responsible for the restoration of the biodiversity of the Orokonui Valley as described in the restoration plan (including species translocations, species monitoring, and animal husbandry); the biosecurity of the sanctuary (including pest monitoring and control, weed control and incursion response); and the management of assets, such as the mammal resistant fence, tracks, and buildings.

Job description

The successful applicant will assist the wider Operations Team with the following activities, as required:

Biodiversity restoration

- **Pest monitoring and control**
Sanctuary-wide tracking tunnel and targeted poison operations; trap construction, deployment and maintenance within the sanctuary and on the external fenceline; predator incursion response
- **Weed control**
Sanctuary-wide weed control, including mowing, brush cutter and chainsaw work; knapsack and machine spraying; exotic tree control; tree felling and poisoning; and hand tool weeding

- **Threatened species work**
Supporting species translocations; species monitoring and survey

Asset and infrastructure management

- **Track maintenance**
Maintenance of 5.2km of public walking tracks and 60km of monitoring tracks: brush cutter and chainsaw work, graveling and compacting, maintaining water tables
- **Fence monitoring and maintenance**
Detailed inspection of the mammal resistant fence; tree and vegetation control; repairs and maintenance (e.g., post bracing, lichen removal); maintenance of alarm system; emergency fence repairs and training; maintenance of fence access road and culverts
- **Infrastructure projects**
Construction of enclosures; building and visitor asset repairs and maintenance

Duty phone holder

The Orokonui Ecosanctuary mammal resistant fence has been installed with a surveillance system to monitor potential fence breaches; the alarm system also activates in response to the timed opening of vehicle and culvert gates. Alerts are received via the duty phone, which is manned 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. The duty phone holder is required to respond to any potential breach immediately, with a reaction time of no more than 45 minutes (and ideally, less) between an alert being received and on-site inspection, at any time of day or night. In addition, the duty phone is the first point of contact for any emergency or afterhours incidents.

- **Take an equal share of the duty phone roster**
The duty phone roster is shared between Operations Team members. Each team member takes an equal share of the roster, holding the duty phone for a seven consecutive day period once every four weeks. When rostered on the duty phone, the holder must ensure that the phone has reception and is within hearing distance, and that they are no more than 45 minutes' drive from the sanctuary, at all times.
- **Monitor weather conditions**
It is the responsibility of the duty phone holder to proactively monitor weather conditions, via the sanctuary's onsite weather stations and through multiple weather-forecasting websites. Extreme weather events that have the potential to compromise the safety and biosecurity of the sanctuary (weather warnings for snow, rain, strong winds or high temperatures) need to be monitored intensively and communicated to other team members and wider Orokonui staff as required.

- **Be prepared to respond**

The duty phone holder must be mentally and physically fit to hold the duty phone 24 hours a day for seven consecutive days, including emergency response, in addition to normal working hours. While rostered on the duty phone, the holder must be ready and able to carry out physically demanding work, often in adverse weather conditions, and to problem-solve, and make sound decisions regarding sanctuary biosecurity, their own health and safety, and that of others.

Full training for fence breach and emergency response will be provided. Typical fence breach scenarios can include the removal and clearing of debris from culvert grates in heavy rain; checking and clearing the fence of branch or tree fall in strong winds; removal of accumulated snow from the hood of the fence; carrying out emergency repairs if the fence is damaged; carrying out regular checks of fence and culverts in adverse weather conditions.

Person specifications

This is a field-based role that is physically demanding and requires resilience, practical skills, problem-solving abilities, and a genuine love of working outdoors in all weather conditions. The successful applicant will have:

- A high level of physical fitness
- A positive attitude to completing tough, hands-on work
- Proven field experience of practical conservation or outdoors work
- A practical mindset, good problem-solving abilities
- Strong communication skills, and commitment to teamwork

Desirable skills, experience and qualifications include:

- Experience in pest monitoring and control, weed control, track maintenance, infrastructure and asset maintenance
- Experience and qualifications (or willingness to gain qualifications) relating to Light Utility Vehicles (LUV), quad bikes and 4WD vehicles
- Experience and qualifications in the use of chainsaws (arborist training preferred, but not essential)
- Experience in the use of power equipment, e.g., mower, brush cutter, power barrow, tractor
- Experience in infrastructure maintenance, e.g., track construction, water tables, basic construction or carpentry skills
- Current Growsafe standard certificate, experience in herbicide use and handling of hazardous substances
- Practical knowledge and experience of applied health and safety processes and procedures, in an outdoor setting

- Excellent communication and relationship skills: ability to establish a rapport with people from all walks of life, and to maintain a positive organizational culture and relationships.
- A practical understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Current clean driver's license and first aid certificate

Personal attributes:

- A passion for conservation, nature and the outdoors
- Hard working, with a high level of personal accountability
- Practical and resourceful; good problem-solving skills
- Self-motivated and proactive
- A friendly and open communication style
- Flexible and adaptable

Application process

To apply for the role, please email a cover letter and CV to Elton Smith, Operations Manager, elton@orokonui.nz. The deadline for applications is Friday the 13th of February, at 5pm. For questions, further information, or a confidential discussion regarding the role, please contact the Operations Manager by email.