

TRIP

of a

LIFETIME

by Kathleen Clements, Form II
pupil at Owenga School, Chatham
Islands

January 25, 1986, and Dad, Joe and I were on our way to South-East (Rangatira) Island. It was Open Day and they were taking me there to see the black robins. We were only allowed to stay there for the day; it was too good to miss!

We set off in the boat called the *Moonwalker*. We were to go to Pitt Island first and I was going to stay with Jo Wyld and Mr Moffat. The trip over was good but I did not like it much because I was sick all the way over. On the way we stopped to look at Sail Rock which is a big rock that just sticks out of the sea. At about 4 o'clock we finally reached Pitt Island and Dad rowed me ashore to Glory Bay.

After saying our goodbyes to Dad and Joe we spent the rest of the day riding the horses. We had to ride around the property to see if all the calves had been marked. I really enjoyed riding the horses.

When we had finished that job we decided to try to catch some goslings. We only caught one but it was good fun trying. After that I went riding by myself and took some photos of Glory Bay and of the reserve. It was such a beautiful sight but I had to return for tea. We had duck for tea and then we had to get the cow in and kill a mutton.

In the morning I got up early, excited about my trip to South-East Island. I had breakfast and waited for Dad and Joe to come and get me. I saw the *Moonwalker* come into Glory Bay and saw Dad put the dinghy in the water and row ashore to get me. We set off for South-East Island and the black robins.

When we arrived we were met by Mr Chappell, the Ranger in charge over there. He told me I was the first person to come that day and he took me up to introduce me to the other people on the island. (More than 60 Islanders visited in 5 days.)

Afterwards Mr Chappell and I started off. First he took me to where the black robins were and introduced me to Mr Merton, who was watching 'Atlas' the female and 'Crunch' the male. Atlas was a very lazy bird who never fed her chicks much, so poor old Crunch was flying rather busily backwards and forwards with food for them. It looked quite funny watching poor old Crunch doing all the work.



Male tomtit feeds black robin fledglings. Because some fostered black robins were found to be slightly mal-imprinted with tomtit characteristics which inhibited breeding, black robin nestlings are now returned to robin nests prior to fledging. Thus, production is still enhanced through fostering, but the imprinting problem has been overcome. Photo: Don Merton

