

## MATARIKI 2024

Matariki, New Zealand's newest national holiday, will be celebrated this year on Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> June. This annual event marks the first appearance of the star cluster Pleiades (Matariki) and begins the Maori New Year. The theme for this year comes from a Maori proverb "Matariki whetu heri kai" meaning "Matariki the bringer of food."

The three major principles that guide Matariki are:

Remembrance of the PAST- honouring those who have died since the last rising of Matariki;

Celebrating the PRESENT - gathering together with family and friend;

Look to the FUTURE - planning and looking forward to the promise of a new year.

It is a time to reflect, to be thankful for the harvest, to feast and to share the bounty with family and friends.

Some of our cities wished to celebrate by having fireworks displays but that is almost the opposite of the quiet contemplation of the stars implied in this festival and practiced for centuries by our Maori people. An advisory group met under the chairmanship of Professor Rangi Matamua and they came up with a set of values to guide organisers which include:

Aroha	- love and respect for one another
Whakamaumahranga	- remembrance
Kohatitanga	- unity
Manaakitanga	- caring
Mana taiao	- environmental awareness
Kaihaukai	- feasting
Wananga	- discussion
Noho tahi	- coming together (literally becoming one)
Ngakau atawhai	- kindness
Whakamu	- celebrations
Tuakiritanga	- identity

There will be numerous public celebrations, and as well other recommended ways of celebrating Matariki are:

- \* Getting family together to share food.
- \* Having quiet moments to wonder and marvel at the stars.
- \* Planting a tree or preparing the vegetable garden for new planting.
- \* Inviting neighbours for a chat and a cuppa.
- \* Reflecting on your connection to te taiao, our natural environment. Get into nature, appreciate its beauty and think about how you can help it to flourish.
- \* Sharing stories with whanau (family) and friends and reminiscing on loved ones lost.
- \* Making plans for the future.

Matariki is about celebrating who we were, who we are and who we want to be.

NGA MIHI O MATARIKI - HAPPY MATARIKI

- Anne Phibbs csb  
June 2024