

The Kindy Chronicle

Matariki Workshops a massive hit

Over the course of Term 2, the Southland Kindergarten Association has transformed the Invercargill Public Library into our very own Matariki Art creation Hub. A massive shoutout goes to Aletta Reid for being there to help host these vibrant workshops.

It has been truly incredible watching the local community gather in this welcoming space. Together, we have seen hundreds of unique artworks being made, proudly crafted by participants of all ages and abilities. Now, these beautiful creations are ready to be displayed!

We warmly invite everyone to visit our upcoming exhibition, 2 - 5 July at Ōtepunī Gardens in Invercargill, to celebrate creativity, connection and the Māori New Year.

"Matariki hunga nui"
(Matariki brings people together.)



Ruhanui

Rakaunui/Full Moon - 30 June 2026

Whiro/New Moon - 14 July 2026

The Story of Puaka – Star of the South

At this time of the year if you look up into the frosty pre-dawn skies of Murihiku, you might see a brilliant, blue-white star shining high and bright above Orion's belt, this is Puaka the older sister to the famous Matariki cluster.

Because Matariki gets so much attention, with big celebrations and songs all over Aotearoa, some say Puaka gets a little bit jealous! She always makes sure to rise earlier than her younger sister, stepping out into the cold morning sky first, shining as brightly as she can to make sure she is seen.

Sometimes it is hard when a little sister gets all the attention and all the songs! It is okay that Puaka feels a little jealous. But the truth is, the whānau down south couldn't have survived without her. Puaka reminds us that even if you aren't the one everyone is singing about, you still have a very special and important job to do.



Star: Rigel / Puaka

Constellation: Orion

Rises: 5:30am - 6:30am

Location: North-East

Long ago, as the warm summer months faded, Māori would journey south on their waka to Rakiura | Stewart Island and its neighbouring islands to gather the prized titi (muttonbird). When the days grew shorter and the fierce winter winds began to howl across Te Ara o Kiwa, the whānau would search the early morning sky. They were waiting for Puaka.

When the bright star finally appeared, she delivered a clear message, the titi harvest was finished and the deep winter cold was closing in. This was the signal for the people to load their waka with pōhā | special kelp bags brimming with the titi they had worked so hard to prepare. Guided by her light, it was time to leave the freezing southern shores and migrate back north to warmer climates until the following year.

So, while Matariki is famous for her grand celebrations, we always remember to look up and say thank you to Puaka. Her shining light was the protective guide of the south, making sure the people knew exactly when to journey home and stay warm.