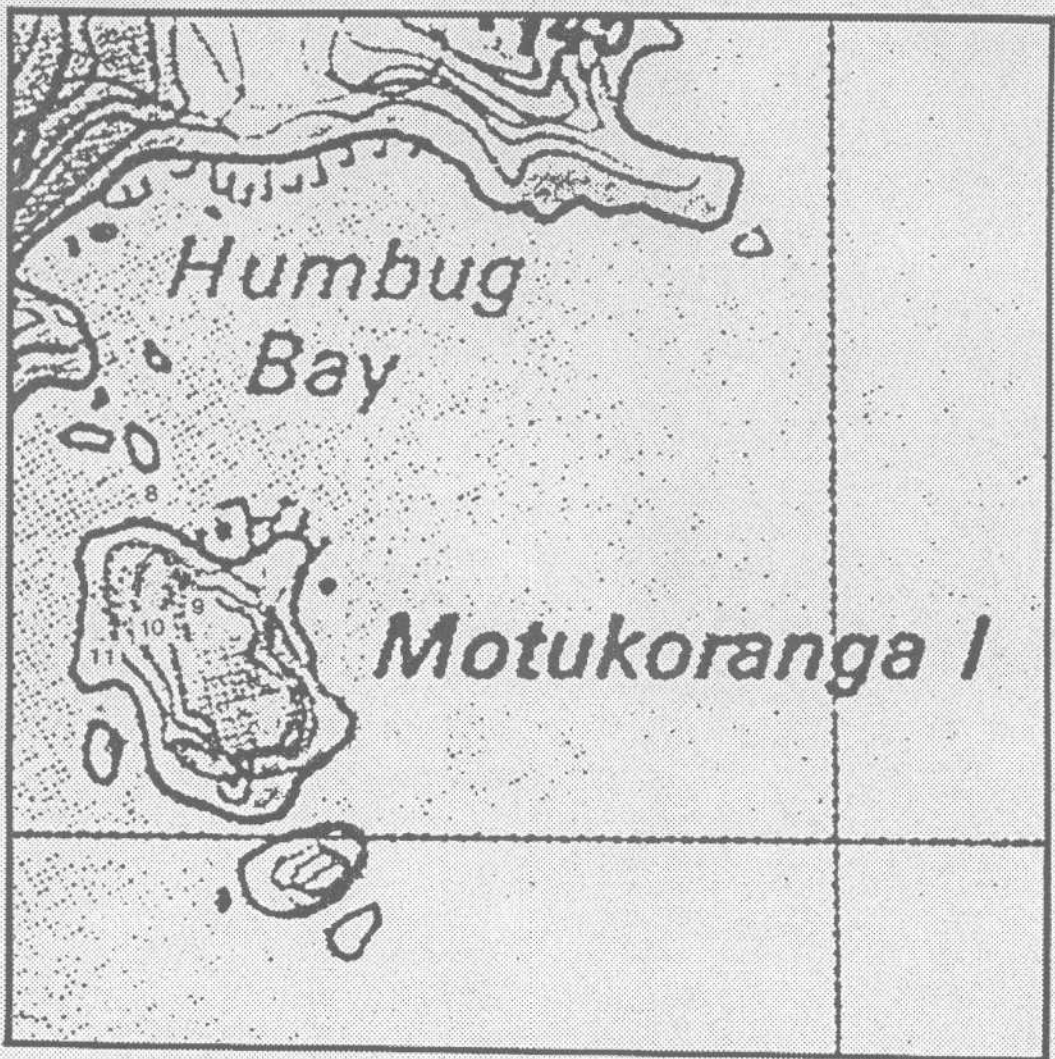
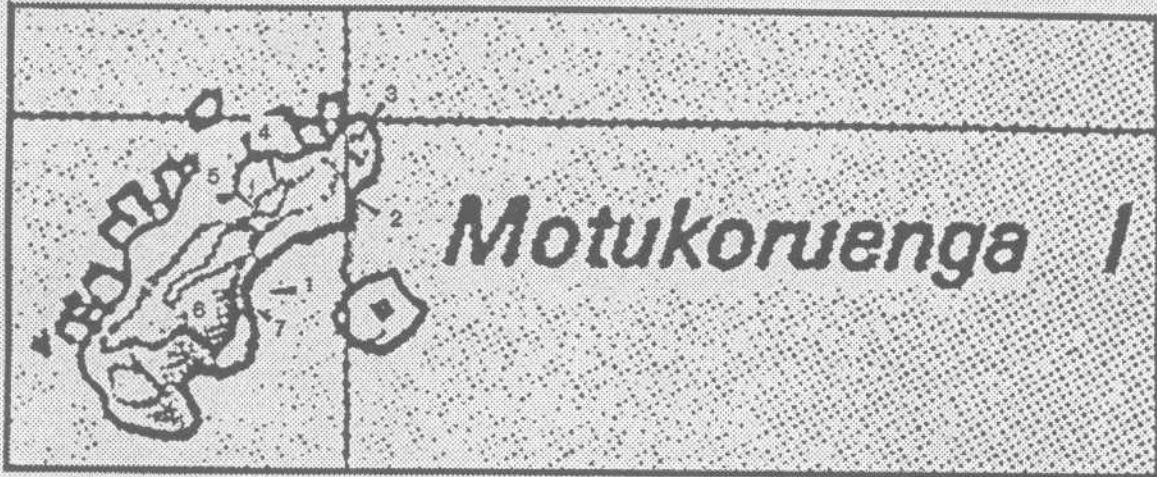


STRUCTURES AND FEATURES MAP



cently for cultivation (most likely marijuana). The activity suggests that the island has a good climate which is suitable for horticulture.

The highest point on the Island was reached by scaling a steep vegetated cliff face (Point 4). Here, along a narrow ridge, were observed 2, possibly 3, doubtful terraces or shallow pit depressions each measuring approximately 2 x 3 metres. Once again the evidence for human occupation was minimal. Approximately 30 metres to the southwest of these doubtful earthworks, there is a low eroding spur where 2 green obsidian flakes and a small hangi were noted (Point 5). Bird burrowing activities have disturbed these finds.

On the second, and possibly the largest land unit was discovered the most extensive archaeological evidence (Point 6). Beneath a relatively high canopy of regenerating trees, and across a small basin-shaped valley opening to the southeast, was the remains of earthworks and shell midden. A series of terraces, 2 or possibly 3, were located on the ridgeline to the north overlooking the valley. Occasional catseye and tuatua shells were exposed on the surface and in cross-section where a large ground subsidence had occurred on the lower slopes. Large smooth rocks and boulders were scattered about in the leaf litter and were the only other signs of the area having been occupied. The impression gained from the evidence is that it was the location of a small seasonal occupation area of one or two houses associated with gardening and marine resource gathering activities. If the earthwork depressions on the ridgeline about the valley are related to pit storage, it is likely that occupation may have extended over the winter months on some occasions.

3. Motukoranga

Motukoranga was accessed from the northwest corner of the Island to the south of Humbug Bay (see Structures and Features Map, Point 8). Here at the high tide mark, behind the boulder beach and at the start of the vegetation cover, a large (c. 30 x 15 cm) obsidian rock core was noted (dark green in colour). The find was partly hidden under soil eroding from the bank behind and was left in situ. It is possible that previous trampers on the island had redeposited the rock at this point, having found it on the Island at another location, or alternatively, it may be an artefact from Maori occupation. The top of the Island was reached by traversing the steep cliff-face on the northwest side.

The object of the inspection was to identify the three previously recorded sites on the Island and identify any other archaeological structures and features (Attachment 1). The previously recorded sites comprised a small terrace complex, a shell midden and pa site (T10/304, 455 and 456).

The previously recorded terraces were located on the main ridgeline leading up to the highest point on the island. However they were found to be more extensive than previously recorded, possible 3 clusters of 4 terraces, and particularly concentrated on the slopes above the small headland pa. One cluster

of terraces is located approximately 30 metres above the pa on a relatively steep pohutukawa covered slope (see Pa Site and Associated Terraces sketch plan attached). They comprise 5 terraces (10 to 15 m long and 2.5 to 3 m wide) and were unusually in that they were associated with large old pohutukawa and a few large surface rocks. Shell midden was not observed on the terraces.

The pa is located on a small headland (Point 11) which has been cut from the main part of the Island by a defensive ditch dug into the underlying rock (5 to 2 m deep, 2 to 3 m across and 10 m long). The interior comprises three small (8 x 10) roughly rectangular back-scarped terraces which have dense covers of low scrub vegetation and flax. However, beneath a dense leaf litter mat was observed a shell midden including tuatua, mussel, catseye and paua. A small copse of young karaka trees was concentrated on the steep earth slopes leading down to the rocky shoreline on the southeast side of the pa.

The impression gained from the pa and the associated terrace earthworks is that that they relate to a single occupation. However, the pa appears to have provided insufficient living space and adjacent slopes above the site were also occupied.

4. Summary discussion

Motukoruenga and Motukoranga Islands, located on the northern side of Mercury Bay, Whitianga, were briefly inspected on the 28 January 1995 with Department of Conservation staff and Peter Johnston, a representative of Ngati Hei. Archaeological evidence was found on both islands. Shell midden indicates that the rocky coastlines and reefs surrounding the midlands (gastropods) and adjacent sandy beaches (bivalves) were used for shellfish gathering by the occupants. Motukoruenga was probably used by a small group (one or two) houses who undertook gardening and fishing activities. Occupation may have extended here through the winter months but further investigations of possible pit earthworks is required to substantiate this interpretation. The archaeological evidence on Motukoranga is consistent with a small extended family group in occupation of a defended pa and adjacent living terraces located outside and above the earthworks.