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# Ngā whakataukī e hāngai ana ki a Matariki

## Matariki whakataukī (proverbs)

Matariki is a time to reflect, share stories, and plan for the New Year. It's the perfect time to connect with whakataukī and learn from the wisdom of those who came before us.

## He aha te whakataukī? | What are whakataukī?

Whakataukī are proverbs that are often used to describe emotions, situations or events. Whakataukī are very important within te reo Māori and are applied within the language to convey messages and meaning to others. There are many

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Accept | Whakaaetia

recordings of them.

## Ngā whakataukī | the proverbs

### **Ka mahi ngā kanohi tīkonga a Matariki**

*The ever-alert and protruding eyes of Matariki*

This proverb is said of a person who is awake and alert at night.

### **Ka kitea a Matariki, ka wera te hinu**

*When Matariki is seen, the fat is heated*

When Matariki rose in winter, kererū (wood pigeon) were taken, preserved in their own fat and stored to be eaten later.

### **Ka kitea a Matariki, ka rere te korokoro**

*When Matariki is seen, the lamprey migrates*

Korokoro are lamprey – an eel-like fish – also known as kanakana and piharau. Korokoro start their life in rivers, and when they are around four-years-old they swim to the sea, where they live for another three or four years. Towards the end of their life they return to freshwater to spawn. This activity happens in mid-winter when Matariki is seen in the sky.

### **Nā Matariki te karaka tonu, kia korokoro**

### **Ka tīmata te kake i ngā awa ki te whānau i o rātou nei tamariki**

*When Matariki calls,*

*the lamprey begin their ascent of the river ways to give birth to their young*

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The rising of Matariki in winter is synonymous with rain. The pooling of rain water on the ground in winter is immortalised in this saying.

### **Ka puta Matariki, ka rere Whānui, ko te tohu o te tau**

*Matariki appears as Whānui flees; this is a sign of the New Year*

Whānui is the star Vega in the Lyra constellation. Whānui sets in the early morning of winter just before Matariki rise in the eastern sky.

### **Te ope o te rua Matariki**

*The company from the cavern of Matariki*

This proverb can be used when speaking of the many chiefs who have left this world and gathered in the cavern of Matariki.

### **Matariki hunga nui**

*Matariki, the gatherer of people*

During the Matariki festivities, people gather together to celebrate the passing of the year and the hope of a new season. This whakataukī speaks to us about the gathering of people during Matariki.

### **Matariki ahunga nui**

*The great mounds of Matariki*

Matariki is a time when food like kūmara are stored in large piles and shared among friends, whānau, and the wider

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## **Hauhake tū, ka tō Matariki**

*The harvest ends when Matariki sets*

In the month of Haratua (around May), you can see the Matariki star cluster set with the sun in the west. When this happens, it's a sign that the season for harvesting food has come to an end. This whakataukī is used before winter begins to remind people to prepare themselves for the cold months ahead.

## **Ngā kai a Matariki, nāna i ao ake ki runga**

*The food supplies of Matariki, scooped up*

The Matariki cluster is connected with food and its appearance in winter is said to determine the bounty of the impending year. This proverb is said during the early morning New Year ceremony.



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**Ko Matariki te kaitō i te hunga pakeke ki te pō**

*Matariki draws the frail into the endless night*

Matariki has a strong association with the dead. During these cold days and nights, those who are old and frail can be more at risk of passing away.

**Matariki kāinga kore**

*Homeless Matariki*

Matariki is always on the move, travelling the sky. This cluster is also somewhat isolated, with no other bright stars located near their vicinity. For these reasons Matariki is said to be without a home. This proverb can be applied to a person who is constantly travelling, or to someone who isolates themselves from others.

**Matariki whanaunga kore; Matariki tohu mate**

*Matariki the kinless; Matariki sign of death*

Matariki rises in winter, a time when the weak and frail often succumb to illness and die. Matariki is often seen in the sky when people pass away and this statement is a reminder to people that while we celebrate and enjoy Matariki it is also a connection to death.

**Kua haehae ngā hihi o Matariki**

*The rays of Matariki are spread*

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**Ka rere ngā purapura a Matariki**

*The seeds of Matariki are falling*

This proverb refers to the snowfalls of winter when Matariki is in the morning sky.

**Kua tau ngā purapura a Matariki ki te whenua,  
kua huihui ngā iwi i te pūmahana o te kotahitanga me te aroha**

*The frost and snow of Matariki is upon the land,  
and the people have converged in unity and love*

**Q****Ka mahuta a Matariki i te pae, ka mahuta ō tātou tūmanako  
ki te tau**

*When Matariki rises above the horizon, our aspirations rise to  
the year ahead*

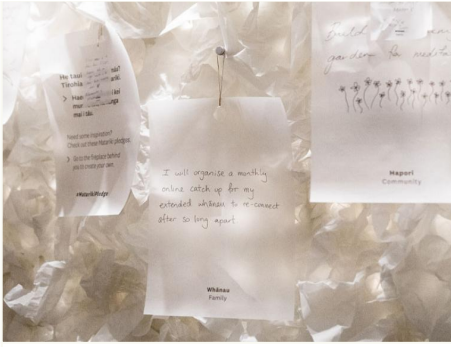
**Tērā Matariki huihui ana mai. Ka ngaro rā, ē, te whetū  
kukume ata**

*Behold Matariki clustered above. Lost, alas, is the star that  
hauls forth the dawn*

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## How to celebrate Matariki at home

There are many ways you can celebrate Matariki. Here are a few suggestions for what you can do at home.

## Matariki recipes and stories

Find inspiration for your own Matariki feasts with these recipes – and the kōrero (stories) behind them.

## Matariki songs

Enjoy these three waiata (songs) that celebrate Matariki and learn a little about the background and meaning of each song.

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