

**Title: KAYAKING New Zealand's Offshore Islands**

**Subtitle:** *Chatham Islands, Stewart Island, D'Urville Island, White Island, Auckland Is., Campbell Island, Macquarie Island (Aus).*

**Author:** Max Grant

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Or see: <http://q-kayaks.co.nz/publications-reviews/>

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**Review:** Paul Caffyn



Max's first book *Fiordland and Beyond* describes a circumnavigation of the South Island as a dynamic duo his with daughter Melz. This new wee gem writes of Max paddling around New Zealand's smaller islands, including those in Sub-Antarctic waters. What really sets the book off is the inclusion of colour photos in the text.

So many paddling books published these days, not only are they devoid of maps but also they have no illustrations, no colour, no black and white pics, perhaps just a thumbnail of the author on the rear cover. For me, photos to illustrate paddle journeys are part of a book, even though sometimes they may be just a central colour plate section with photos surrounded by too much blank white. Photos need to be story-telling photos that are embellished with good explanatory captions. Maps showing the route followed are also vital in my view; nothing so peevish as having to get out a world atlas or Google-maps to follow a trip.

Max has excelled with the new book; with up to three colour photos per page and reasonably sized maps showing the route followed. A nice mix of photos, from close-ups to the big landscape pics. The only black and white is on the prologue page, a corker photo of Max and his future wife paddling a C2 kayak down a slalom course; one of those strange kayaks where you have to kneel and use single blades paddles. It is a superb tight action shot.

The sub-title includes the islands circumnavigated or visited. The most significant in my view is the story of circumnavigating the Chatham Islands with Dave Herrington in 1999. Max was planning to paddle a double kayak with Dave out to the islands, a multi-day trip to cover the 700 kms but Maritime Safety Authority NZ shut the paddle down with a 'notice of imposition' with mention of a significant fine for disobeying.

Instead they flew two single kayaks out to the islands. Their successful first kayak circumnavigation of both Chatham and Pitt islands made the front page of *The Chatham Islander*. This chapter is 'diary' style, with the date, distance covered and the daily paddling. Sadly, back in 2002, Max's paddling mate died in a motor bike crash, and Max has dedicated to the memory of David Herrington

The Stewart Island circumnavigation is also a good yarn while the last one is about a family trip south from Bluff to the Sub Antarctic Island, The Snares, Auckland, Campbell and Macquarie islands. No mention of the sea sickness they all suffered on the big Southern Ocean swell but a good tale of wildlife, flora and early maritime history.