

S7

Matariki

by Waitangi Teepa

illustrated by Thaw Naing

Ready
to Read

Have you ever looked up at the night sky and gazed at the stars? You might have seen a group of seven stars called Matariki.

Matariki is also the name for the Māori New Year.

You can see the stars of Matariki for most of the year, but they disappear from the night sky in Aotearoa in late April. The stars appear again in winter (in late May or early June).

When the stars appear again, and the new moon has risen, it is the beginning of the Māori New Year and there is much to celebrate.

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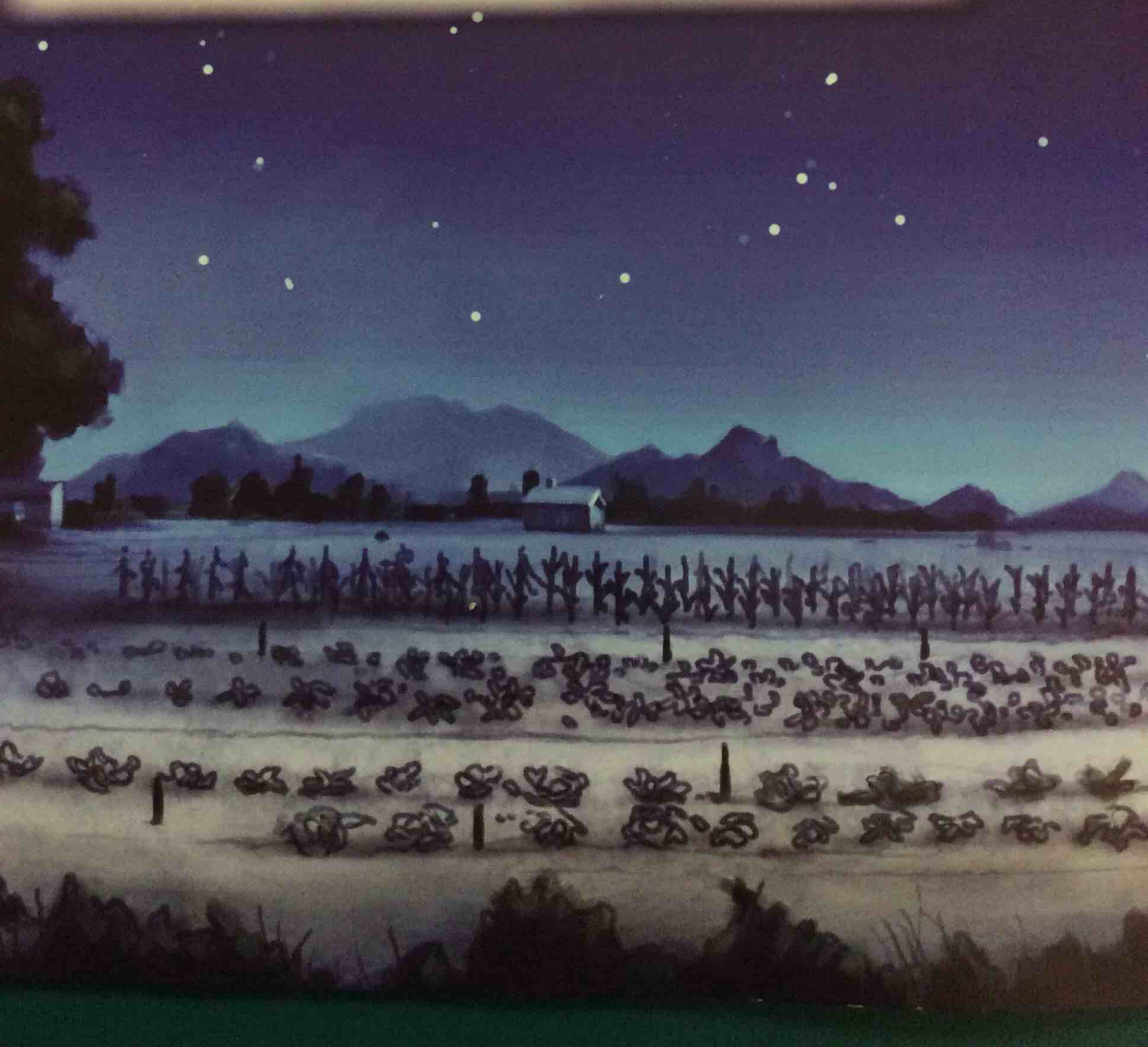
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The Seven Sisters

The Matariki group of stars has other names as well. One of its names is the Seven Sisters.

In some stories, Matariki is the name of the biggest star. She is the eldest sister and guides her younger sisters to their places in the sky.

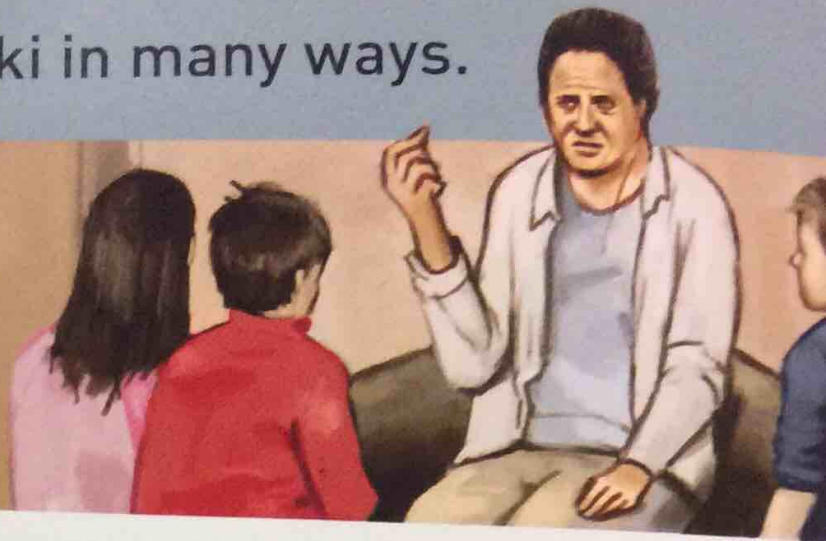


The old stories also tell us that when the stars
shine brightly, the year will be warm
and good for growing crops.
There will be plenty of seafood to gather.
Plants will grow tall and strong.

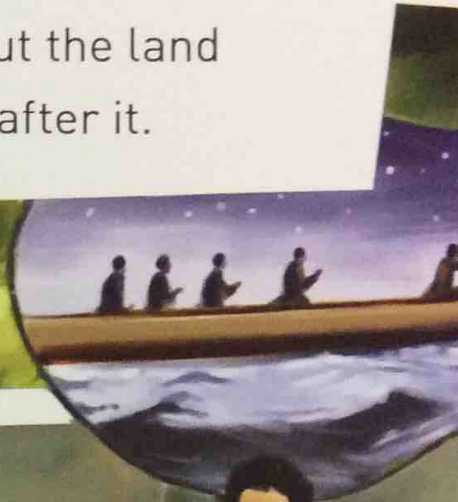


We can celebrate Matariki in many ways.

It is a time
for sharing family stories,



for learning about the land
and how to look after it.

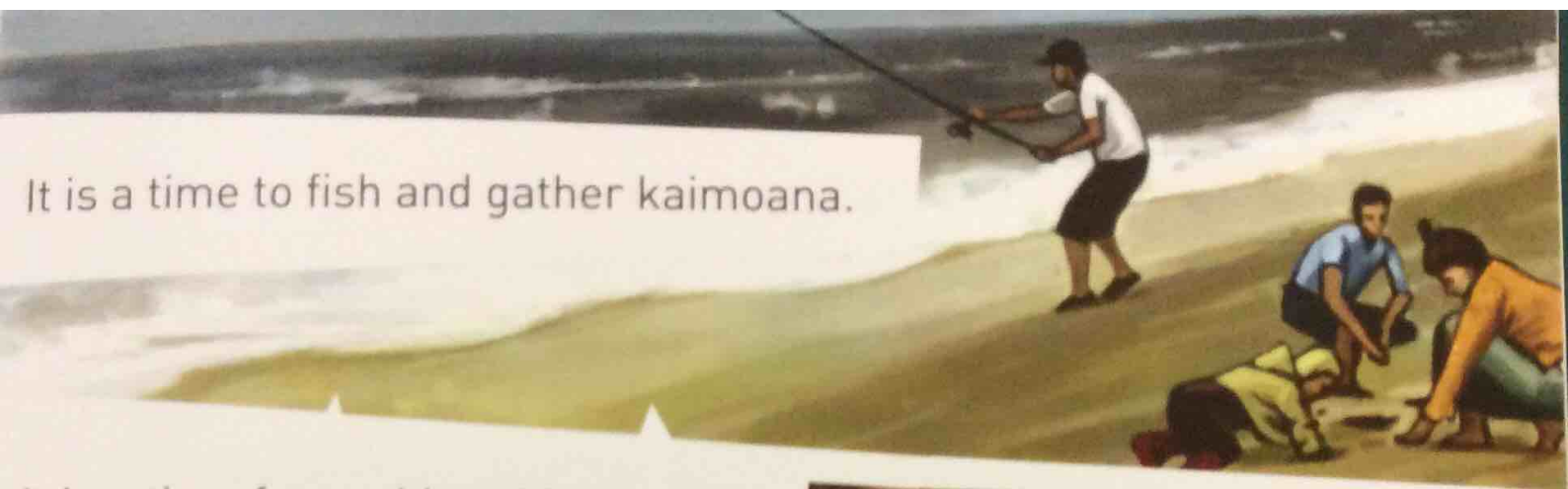


It is a time
for hearing stories of the old days,
for learning about how people
used the stars in the past.



It is a time to plant trees and winter crops





It is a time to fish and gather kaimoana.



It is a time for making things,
to learn how to weave and carve.



It is a time for making and flying kites.

Matariki is a time to make plans for the future
and to forgive and forget problems of the past.
It's a time to enjoy being with our family and friends.

