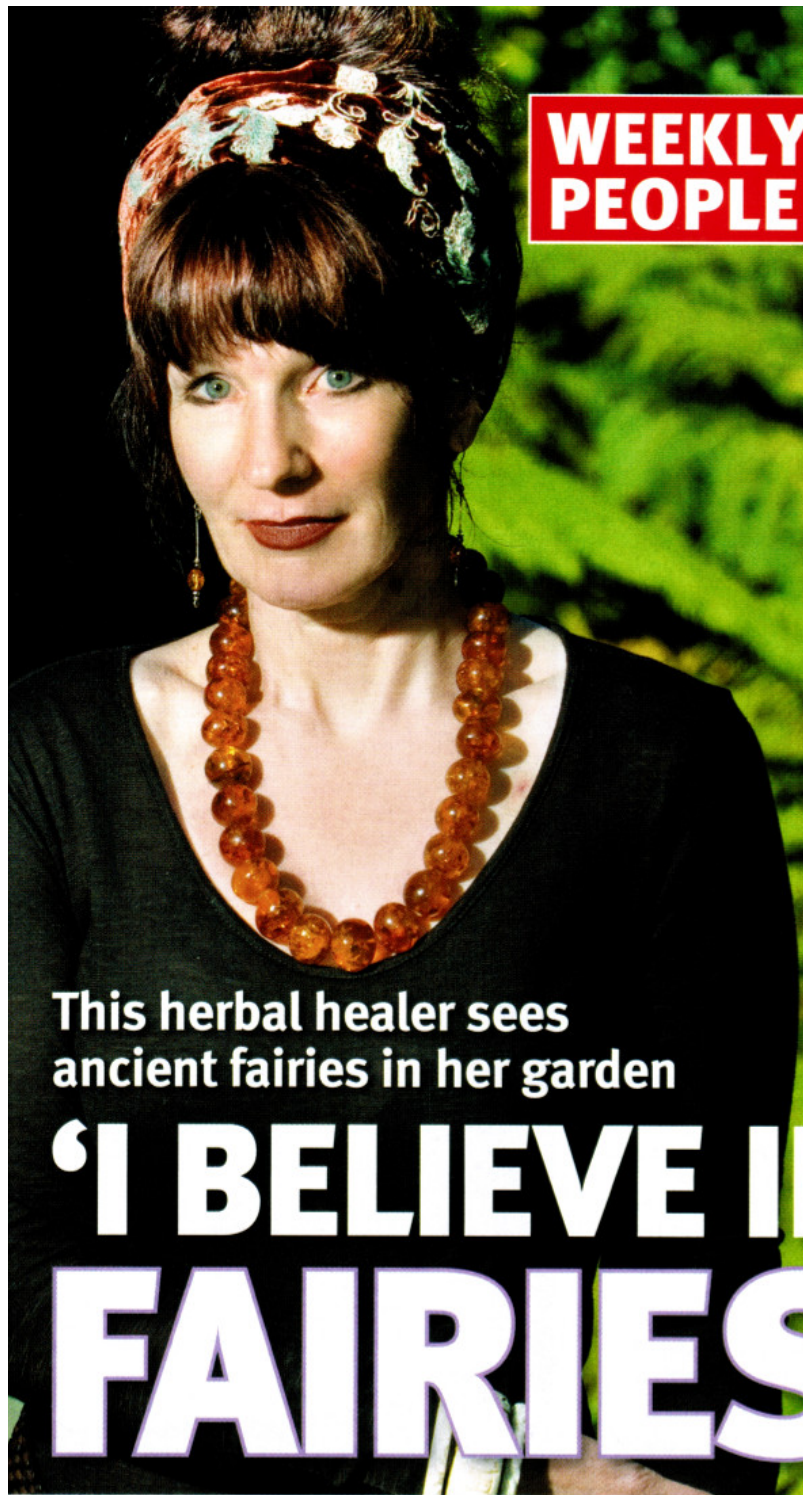


WEEKLY PEOPLE



This herbal healer sees ancient fairies in her garden

'I BELIEVE IN FAIRIES'

Medicine woman Franchelle Ofsoske-Wyber says she has fairies at the bottom her garden. Not only can she see the magical little creatures, she believes they help her find the best healing plants for her potions.

Franchelle, who lives in West Auckland, says the fairies are actually Maori nature spirits called patupaiarehe.

"They're quite different from the ones in the fairy stories we hear as children," says Franchelle. "Patupaiarehe are like guardians and have more of a protective role. They have an ethereal quality – you can't touch them and, if you try to, your hand will go right through them.

"Sadly, there aren't many of them left.

They guard the most sacred places such as the Urewera ranges, and have pale skin with light reddish hair."

Born in New Zealand to a Russian mother and a Native American father, Franchelle (55) comes from a long line of psychic healers. She first discovered she could see patupaiarehe at age seven.

But it was Maori friends who later encouraged her interest in sacred herbal medicine. "They recognised I had certain abilities and really fostered that," she says. "The plants here are amazing. I find that native manuka is particularly effective for negative emotions like hatred or anger. If we're unhappy for long enough, it can become a physical condition. Bitterness and resentment can eat away at a person



Top: Franchelle with Maori elder Dr Rose Pere
Above: This New Zealand stamp from 2000 features a patupaiarehe



Franchelle with Native American elders Gil and J Reuben Silverbird

FAIRY REMEDIES

Kauri

To heal the heart

Manuka

To ease hatred and anger

Poroporo

To ease bitterness and resentment

King fern

To improve security after job loss or an abusive situation

Mingimingi

To ease depression that has no apparent cause

and you can end up with all sorts of nasty health problems."

Formerly an astrologer whose predictions appeared in the *Weekly* and now a tutor at the Wellpark College of Natural Therapies in Auckland, Franchelle has created her own range of flower essences using native plants.

But she doesn't just go out and pick them. Franchelle says all the plants are gathered with the guidance of fairies, and she recites ancient chants before harvesting them.

A mum of three grown-up daughters, her business is so successful she's had to limit the number of clients she sees.

"I could see people around the clock, seven days a week for the rest of my life and still not manage to help everyone," she says.

"We are seeing a real resurgence in people wanting to return to simpler ways of healing. I love that I'm part of this very old way of working, with the help of the fairy people."

Vicky Tyler