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Toitu te marae a
Tane-Mahuta, toitu te marae
a Tangaroa, toitu te tangata.
If the land is well and the sea
is well, the people will thrive.



Photo: Cathedral Cove Dive

About the reserve

Te Whanganui-o-Hei (Cathedral Cove) Marine Reserve was established in 1992 to protect and restore the diversity of the marine environment. The reserve protects 9 km² of shore and sea on the eastern side of the Coromandel Peninsula between Hahei and Cooks Beach.

Reefs of hard rock, soft sediments, intricate caves and underwater arches provide habitat for plants, crustaceans, molluscs and fish, many of which can be seen on the snorkel trail at Gemstone Bay.

Getting there

You can visit the marine reserve via the Cathedral Cove walkway, which takes around 40 min. Gemstone Bay is 15 mins along this track and is one of the best snorkelling spots in the reserve. To reach the start of the walkway you can take the coastal track that starts at the northern end of Hahei Beach, or park at the start of the walkway up Grange Road.

From 1 October to 30 April, this car park is for drop-offs only. A shuttle bus operates from Hahei to the start of the track.

Geology

Although Coromandel Peninsula is formed from some of the oldest sedimentary rocks in New Zealand (around 150 million years old), the coastline and islands around Te Whanganui-o-Hei were only formed about 8 million years ago from volcanic eruptions. These eruptions produced two kinds of rock: rhyolite and ignimbrite, which formed some amazing features both below and above the water. Ignimbrite is a mixture of volcanic ash and pumice; it is the light-coloured rock at Cathedral Cove. This rock is prone to erosion, so structures such as Cathedral Cove and Te Hoho Rock have formed over time. Rhyolite is formed from lava, and is more dense and darker in colour; it can be seen on the islands and further down the coast. Some of these islands, such as Castle Island, are remnants of the molten magma at the centre of the volcanoes – these are often referred to as volcanic ‘plugs’.

Follow the marine reserve rules

- Do not litter – take your rubbish with you.
- Protect birds and animals by leaving your dog at home.
- Do not light fires anywhere in the reserve.

All marine life and habitat are protected within the reserve. Fishing, shellfish gathering and the removal, introduction, or disturbance of any marine life or habitat, including by feeding fish, is strictly prohibited. This includes all plants, animals and habitat, dead or alive. Breaking these rules could result in your vehicle, boat and equipment being seized, a fine of up to \$250,000 and/or up to 3 months imprisonment.

Keep your speed down

Exceeding 5 knots in a boat or jet ski within 200 m of the mainland, outer islands or a dive flag, or within 50 m of a boat or person on the water, is an offence under the Maritime Transport Act 1994.

How you can help

DOC manages the marine reserve. Its success depends on the care and vigilance of visitors like you. If you see people taking fish or other marine life within the reserve, report this to DOC at the DOC HOTline (0800 362 468) as soon as possible.

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Spotted a conservation-related illegal activity?
Call the 24-hour conservation emergency helpline:

DOC HOTline
0800 362 468
Report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies
For Fire and Search and Rescue Call 111

The marine reserve is supported by The Friends of Te Whanganui-o-Hei Marine Reserve Trust. The trust relies on your donations. If you would like to donate go to: www.cathedralcove.marinereserve.org.nz

What are marine reserves?

Marine reserves are areas of sea and shoreline where all marine life is fully protected. They are an effective conservation and marine management tool, allowing the marine life to thrive. As of 2020, New Zealand has 44 marine reserves, all managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC).

The benefits of a marine reserve

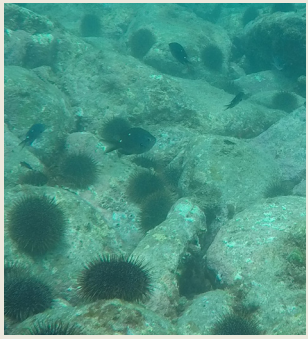
As sanctuaries for all marine life, marine reserves create direct and indirect benefits for the whole ecosystem. Intensely fished species like snapper and koura/crayfish can recover, which in turn supports the resilience of the ecosystem. Sometimes these benefits extend beyond the reserve as fish and larvae ‘spill over’, supporting neighbouring habitats and populations – including some fished species.

Marine reserves also:

- give scientists the unique opportunity to study marine life free from fishing pressures
- provide educational opportunities for schools and visitors, helping to build awareness and promote the conservation of marine environments
- are great places for recreation. Visitors can enjoy swimming, snorkelling, boating, kayaking and diving.

Te Whanganui-o-Hei (Cathedral Cove) Marine Reserve





Kina barren. Photo: Glass Bottom Boat Whitianga

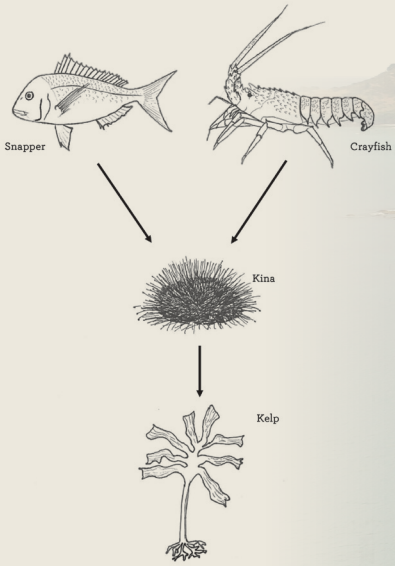


Healthy kelp bed. Photo: Glass Bottom Boat Whitianga

Kina barrens

Kina (urchin) barrens are areas of rocky reef that lack natural kelp cover. Kina graze on kelp and their population increase leads to dramatic losses in kelp cover. Kelp, such as *Ecklonia radiata*, is an important habitat and food source for marine communities, so when kelp forests are lost it affects the diversity and productivity of the whole ecosystem.

These barrens have become an ecological indicator for the overfishing of species that graze on kina, such as snapper and kōura. Scientists have found that kina numbers increase when snapper and crayfish populations are reduced. Kina barrens are less common within marine reserves (including Te Whanganui-o-Hei), as the kina's natural predators such as snapper and kōura have been able to recover.



Ngāti Hei iwi – guardians of the marine reserve

Te Whanganui-o-Hei Marine Reserve is part of the area first claimed by Hei, leader of Ngāti Hei, who arrived in 1350 AD on Arawa waka. Hei settled his people in the area around Mercury Bay, asserting ownership by referring to Motueka Island as 'Te Kuraetanga-o-taku-Ihu' (the outward curve of my nose). The area was named 'Te Whanganui-o-Hei' (the great bay of Hei). Hei's descendants, as tangata whenua, still retain a strong ancestral and spiritual attachment to the site, and continue their role as guardians, or kaitiaki, of their rohe moana (coastal area).

Māori have practiced kaitiakitanga (guardianship) of natural resources, such as kaimoana (seafood), for hundreds of years. The enablement of iwi guardianship over natural resources is central to DOC's conservation goals - DOC has therefore made iwi engagement and partnership integral to its management of marine reserves.



Meet the locals

There is a great diversity of life to see in the marine reserve. Here are some locals to look out for while visiting the reserve



Snapper, Tāmure



Yellowtail Kingfish, Haku



Rock Lobster, Kōura Moana



Blue Maomao



Clown Nudibranch



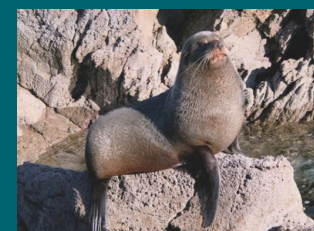
Leather Jacket, Kokiri



Stingray, Whai



Yellow Moray, Kaingārā



Fur seal, Kekeno



Sandager's wrasse

Photos: Cathedral Cove Dive

