

Things to remember

Marine reserves are special places that protect the environment, plants and animals within them. Under the Marine Reserves Act 1971 it is illegal to:

- fish, or gather marine life of any kind (including attempting to gather or fish)
- damage or take natural things, including shellfish, seaweed and shells
- litter or pollute, dump fish waste or discharge toxic substances
- interfere with marine life.

Penalties under the Act include confiscation of fishing equipment, vessels or vehicles, fines of up to \$250,000 and imprisonment for up to 3 months. Penalties also apply to the owners of dogs that disturb wildlife.

Protect our wildlife

Your dog is dangerous to native marine life - the smallest dogs have killed penguins!

If taking dogs into the reserve, remember that seals are sensitive to disruption and will try to escape to sea if they feel threatened. Keep your dog on a lead, stay at least 20 m away and don't feed seals or try to get a selfie with them.

Drones may require authorisation. Drones can:

- ▶ disturb, injure or kill native birds
- ▶ disturb marine mammals
- ▶ disturb other visitors.

An authorisation is required from DOC to use drones near marine mammals for any reason, including private use. To apply, visit www.doc.govt.nz/drones

If fishing outside the reserve

Catch and size limits apply for fishing outside the reserve boundaries. Visit www.fisheries.govt.nz or text 'app' to 9889 to check the rules before heading out.

Care for Aotearoa

- Protect nature**
Keep your distance and don't feed wildlife. Follow any rules restricting dogs, fires, drones or vehicles.
- Be prepared**
Stay safe in the outdoors by planning and preparing for your trip.
- Keep New Zealand clean**
Take all rubbish with you and use toilets where provided.
- Show respect**
Respect others, respect culture.



Further information

Department of Conservation
PHONE: 0800 275 362
EMAIL: info@doc.govt.nz
www.doc.govt.nz

0800 DOC HOT 362 468
 For safety hazards and conservation emergencies

0800 ASK DOC 275 362
 For general enquiries

Cover image:
 Taputeranga Marine Reserve.
 Photo: Leon Berard

Published by:
 Department of Conservation
 PO Box 5086,
 Wellington 6145,
 New Zealand

Editing and design:
 Te Rōpū Ratonga Auaha,
 Te Papa Atawhai
 DOC Creative Services
 November 2024

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
 New Zealand Government

RZ80468



Taputeranga Marine Reserve



Marine reserve marker	Boat ramp	Information	Toilet	No removal of marine life, including: No fishing from shore No fishing from a boat No fishing with a net Do not remove crayfish Do not remove shellfish	
Marine reserve	Dive site	Parking	Snorkel trail		
4WD track	Education centre	Snorkel trail			

0 200 400 600 m

WGS84. Imagery: GeographX

Welcome

Taputeranga Marine Reserve occupies part of Wellington's south coast, between Lyall Bay and Te Kopahou Reserve to the west of Ōwhiro Bay.

The picturesque coastline is a popular walking and running area, and its rockpools are great places for children to learn about marine life. Snorkellers and divers can explore shipwrecks off the coast or spot the reserve's marine animals and landscapes.

Reserve boundaries

The eastern and western reserve boundaries are marked by large yellow triangles on shore. The landward (northern) boundary is at the mean high-water mark. The southern boundary is unmarked. For your location in relation to marine reserve boundaries around New Zealand, download MarineMate, a free app for smartphones.

Getting there

Taputeranga Marine Reserve is about 6 km from Wellington city. Buses run regularly from the city centre to Island Bay and Houghton Bay, both next to the reserve. Visit metlink.org.nz for bus information.

Animals of Taputeranga Marine Reserve

The reserve's location at the confluence of several water currents and its complex topography help it support a unique mixture of plant and animal species in a small area. The number and sizes of species in the marine reserve area have increased since the reserve was formed – Taputeranga is home to over 180 species of fish, crayfish (kōura/rock lobster), kina (sea urchin), pāua, starfish, crabs, sponges and octopus. The mararī/butterfish and pākirikiri/blue cod are now less wary of divers, and large crayfish are often seen in the open.

There is a variety of birdlife in the reserve too, such as oystercatchers and reef herons close to shore, white-fronted terns just off the coast, and large albatrosses soaring above the waves out to sea. Little blue penguins breed on the south coast, protected from predators by traps and custom-built nest boxes.

Look for fur seals lazing on the rocks or sunning themselves on the water surface. From the shore you may also see dolphins, orca, leopard seals and even whales.

- ▶ Divers will enjoy the submerged wrecks – the HMNZS *Wellington* (F69) navy frigate near Taputeranga Island, and the Taiwanese fishing vessel *Yung Pen* in shallow water near Ōwhiro Bay – note that coastal sea conditions are fickle. There are other dive sites in the reserve, too. Pop in to Dive Wellington at 432 The Esplanade/ divewellington.co.nz to find out more.

On the coast

The reserve shoreline is a scenic place to explore rockpools and to exercise. It is close to Te Kopahou Reserve, which has walking routes along the coast and over nearby hills for a great view of the south coast. Visit Te Kopahou Visitor Centre or the Te Kopahou Reserve page of wellington.govt.nz for more information.

The coast's windy weather makes it ideal for spotting seabirds and marine mammals. Grab a guidebook and binoculars or camera and see what's around!



The reserve is named after Taputeranga Island in Island Bay.
Photo: Julian Butler Photography



Why we have marine reserves

Marine reserves are the 'national parks' of the sea, seabed and foreshore, in which all natural features, including marine life, are legally protected. They provide places for scientific research and for the recovery of marine life by reducing or eliminating threats associated with human activities.

As these are protected 'no take' areas, our taonga (treasured) plant and animal communities can flourish for all to enjoy, now and in the future. Taputeranga Marine Reserve protects species and habitats that are also present at other marine reserves around New Zealand. It is part of the marine reserve network that enables species to move between reserves and that acts as a backup if a major event (like an earthquake or landslide) wipes out large areas of habitat.

History

The Wellington south coast's early inhabitants relied on its abundant seafood; narrow boat ramps from early European fishers can still be seen carved into rocky reefs. A marine reserve here was proposed in 1987 to protect culturally important sites, diverse plants and animals, undersea reefs and biological oddities for restoration, recreation and study. Taputeranga reserve was officially opened in 2008. The local community played a major role in the application process and is still involved with the reserve.



Southern black-browed albatross, with Kaikoura ranges in background.
Photo: Leon Berard

Things to do

On the water

On a warm day the bays in the reserve are very refreshing. There is a dive platform at Island Bay in summer, and space to lay out a towel at Princess Bay. Kayaking around Taputeranga Island is popular on a calm day, and Houghton Bay is enjoyed by surfers.

Under the waves

The reserve offers wonderful opportunities for snorkelers and divers to discover the underwater scenery and wildlife.

- ▶ The snorkel trail near Island Bay is a great place to explore the underwater world. The sign at the beginning of the trail (see map) has more information.

How you can help

DOC is responsible for managing Taputeranga Marine Reserve. You can help keep the reserve as a special place by reporting illegal or suspicious activity.

- ▶ Call 0800 DOCHOT (0800 362 468) immediately if:
 - you see anyone fishing or taking marine life from the reserve
 - marine animals are in danger or are being harassed.
- If possible and safe to do so, take photographs of illegal activities, the people involved and vehicle licence plates.
- ▶ To report pollution, oil spills, navigation hazards and dangerous boating, contact Greater Wellington Regional Council's environment hotline – 0800 496 734.
- ▶ Take all rubbish with you or place it in the bins provided.

Dogs are prohibited on the beaches of Princess Bay and eastern Island Bay. There are dog exercise areas at Houghton Bay and Island Bay west of the pier. Visit wellington.govt.nz/dogs to find out more.

To report illegal fishing activity outside the reserve, call 0800 4 POACHER (0800 47 62 24).

Get involved

Join the groups and organisations that support the marine reserve and work to keep it a special place.



MountainsToSeaWellington.org



octopus.org.nz



forestandbird.org.nz (search for 'Places for Penguins')



taputeranga.org.nz