

# Horoirangi Marine Reserve



NELSON/MARLBOROUGH CONSERVANCY



Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

## Tikanga Māori

Nau mai 'aere mai, e ngā manu'iri o ngā 'au e w'ā  
*Welcome to all people from all four winds*  
Mai i te 'au kāinga o tenei ro'e me kii ko Ngāti Tama o  
Wakapuaka

*From us, the home people of Ngāti Tama of Wakapuaka.*

Mai i rānō he ka'a te 'ononga i waenganui i te lwi Māori me  
te ao tūturu.

*For all time the link between Māori people and the natural  
world has been strong.*

E w'akanui ana tātou i a Tangaroa me ngā tini rawa o te  
moana.

*We respect Tangaroa and the multitude of his resources.*  
Engari kua mōumoutia e tātou aua rawa, kia ā'ua ngaro  
'aere ai.

*But we have wasted these resources, and some are  
disappearing.*

Me w'akarerekē i ērā tikanga, me ma'i ta'i tātou w'akaora ai  
i ngā tamariki a Tangaroa

*Let's change these ways, and work in unison to restore  
Tangaroa's children*

kia rite anō ki ngā rā o ō tātou tūpuna,  
*to what they were in the time of our ancestors,*  
mau tonu ai mō ngā w'akatupuranga e 'eke mai nei.  
*and retain them for the generations to come.*

## Horoirangi Marine Reserve

Steep eroding bluffs provide a dramatic backdrop to  
Horoirangi Marine Reserve. The boulder and bedrock reefs  
nestled below are the beginnings of the Nelson Boulder  
Bank, a geologically unique boulder spit and scenic  
reserve stretching southwards to Nelson harbour. To the  
north lies the Whakapuaka (Delaware Bay) Taiapure. The  
creation of Horoirangi Marine Reserve in 2006 added  
another dimension to the protection of this distinctive  
coastline along the eastern flank of Tasman Bay.

Situated 12 km north of Nelson city, Horoirangi Marine  
Reserve extends north-east from Glenduan ("The Glen")  
to Ataata Point, the southern headland of Cable Bay, and  
offshore for one nautical mile (1852 m). The marine reserve  
is a little over 5 km long and covers 904 hectares.

The name Horoirangi derives from the Māori name of  
the highest peak (Drumduan) overlooking the reserve.  
For Māori, the hilltop was an important indicator of sea

conditions: cloud covering the peak signalled imminent  
bad weather and sea travel was suspended.

**Horoirangi Marine Reserve protects all marine life  
within its boundaries. No fishing or taking of marine life  
is allowed.**



Tarakahi, one of the more common fish in the reserve. Photo: Eric Simmons

## What are marine reserves?

Our record in protecting natural areas on land is a  
good one, but only in recent years have we realised the  
importance and benefits of protecting areas of our diverse  
coastline and seas.

Marine reserves are areas of sea within which all marine life  
and habitats are fully protected. As such, marine reserves  
are able to recover from past exploitation and function  
as close to their natural state as possible. They provide a  
benchmark against which the effects of other activities in  
our seas can be measured, and allow us to study marine  
life and learn about an environment we sometimes overlook.

You are welcome to visit and enjoy a marine reserve.  
Walking, picnicking, swimming, boating, diving and  
photography are all encouraged. Educational and scientific  
activities are allowed too, provided they do not harm or  
threaten the reserve's plants or animals.

## Marine environment

The bluffs overlooking Horoirangi Marine Reserve are  
more than a dramatic landscape; they are also the source  
of rocks for the rugged boulder reefs below. A distinctive  
feature of the reserve, these reefs form a wide intertidal  
zone and extend offshore for up to 400 m and to a depth of  
around 20 m.



A sea horse shelters within the  
fronds of a large brown seaweed.  
Photo: Eric Simmons

The boulders on the upper  
shore, regularly moved by  
the waves, are mostly devoid  
of life. Lower down and  
subtidally the reefs are much  
more stable—a matrix of  
interlocking boulders, some  
in places measuring metres  
across, interspersed  
with occasional patches  
of bedrock. Bedrock is  
more common around  
Mackay Bluff and towards  
the north of the marine  
reserve, culminating in the  
spectacular rocky outcrops  
of Ataata Point.

These intertidal and subtidal reefs are home to a typical  
array of animals—shellfish, anemones, sponges and sea  
squirts cling to the rocks; snails, starfish and crustaceans  
move secretively amongst the boulders; and various fish  
patrol above. Ambush starfish are unusually common in  
Horoirangi, their medley of startling colours providing a  
sharp contrast to the subdued hues of the rocks and most  
other shallow-reef species.

Brown seaweeds form a dense forest between Mackay  
Bluff and Ataata Point; elsewhere their leathery fronds  
occur only as a sparse fringe below the low water mark.  
Other types of seaweeds are uncommon in Horoirangi,  
though sea lettuce can be seasonally abundant.

The delicate tentacles of sea anemones belie their deadly intent.  
Photo: Ken Grange





Hermit crabs are common on the offshore sediments. Photo: Eric Simmons

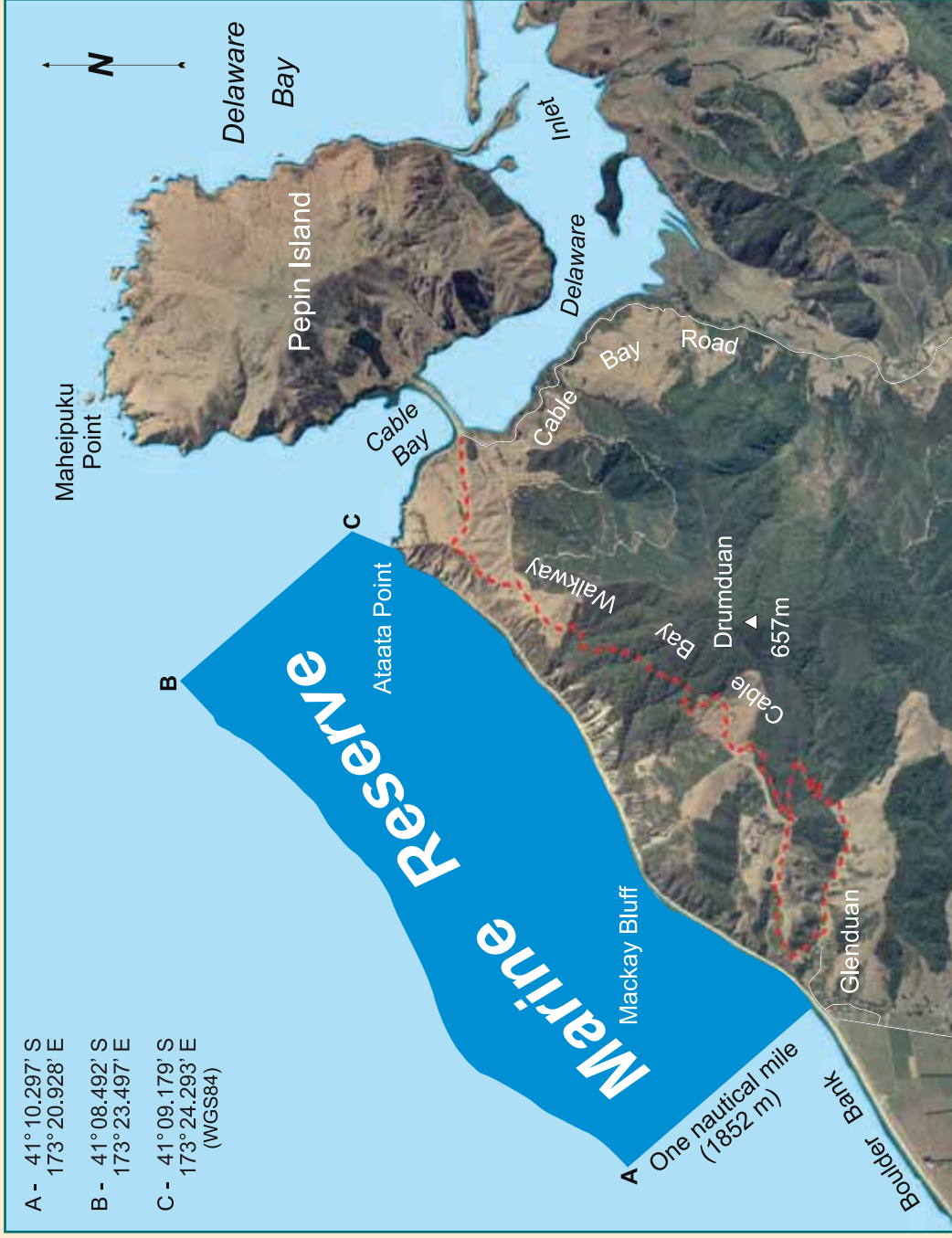
Soft sediments lie beyond the outer reef edge: mixes of mud, sand, shell and gravel closer to shore, with soft mud dominating offshore. In some shallower areas, wave action has sculpted the sediments into large ripples. Although various burrowing worms, shellfish and shrimp-like animals dominate these offshore sediments, more conspicuous are the surface dwellers, such as hermit crabs, urchins and brittle stars.

### How to get there

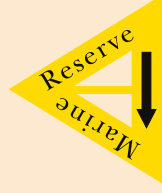
The southern end of the marine reserve at Glenduan is a short, 12 km drive from Nelson. From here you can walk along the reserve, but watch for the incoming tide and take care over the boulders, as they can be unstable and slippery. Kayaks can also be launched and retrieved—with care—across the Boulder Bank.

For larger boats, there are good launching facilities at Nelson and Mapua, before embarking on a 12 km boat trip north along the outer Boulder Bank. While out on the water, keep a wary eye on the weather and sea conditions; there is little shelter along this stretch of coast and stiff sea breezes regularly occur in summer.

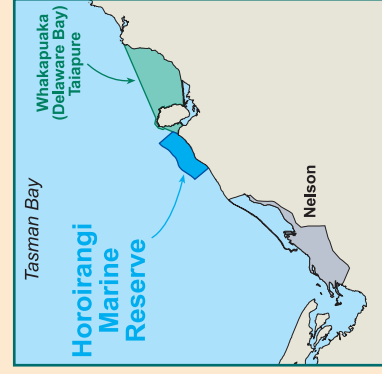
At the northern end of the marine reserve, and well worth the 21 km drive, is Cable Bay. Although you cannot reach the reserve from here on foot, kayaks and small boats can be launched from Cable Bay beach for a pleasant trip across to Ataata Point and into the northern sector of the reserve.



Horoirangi Marine Reserve covers 904 hectares and extends offshore for one nautical mile (1852 m) from the mean high water mark between Glenduan and Ataata Point, the southern headland of Cable Bay. The southern boundary extends offshore in a more or less north-westerly direction to Point A (See map.). The northern boundary extends from Ataata Point in a generally north-easterly direction to Point C (312 m from shore) and thence in a more or less north-westerly direction to Point B at the outer corner of the reserve (This is not a legal description of the marine reserve).



Large yellow triangles onshore mark the northern and southern boundaries; offshore buoys mark the ends and the outermost corners of the reserve. [Note: these markers may not always be present due to operational requirements.]



Locality map



Fossicking among the boulders on the lower shore. Photo: Andrew Baxter

## What to see and do

### A place to enjoy...

While fishing and taking marine life are prohibited in the marine reserve, other forms of recreation are welcomed. The reserve is a great place for walking, exploring the intertidal zone, snorkelling, diving, kayaking and boating. For bird watchers, variable oystercatchers and blue penguins nest along the rocky shoreline; over winter, spotted shags roost on the rocky crags at Ataata Point.

A climb up the Cable Bay Walkway through the neighbouring farmland requires sturdy footwear and reasonable fitness, but will reward you with expansive

A vividly coloured ambush starfish waits patiently to trap its prey. Photo: Eric Simmons



views over Horoirangi and out across Tasman Bay (Note: the walkway is closed during the spring lambing season; no dogs are allowed at any time.). A walk along the Nelson Boulder Bank is also worth the effort, though be prepared for windy conditions and rough, ankle-testing rocks.

### to learn from...

Discover the diversity of marine life on the intertidal boulder reefs. The low shore is a fun place to explore and study, especially when a low spring tide coincides with a calm sea.



Good crayfish habitat occurs in the reserve, especially around Mackay Bluff and towards the north of the reserve. Photo: Eric Simmons

For a different perspective of the reserve, don a mask and snorkel and plunge into a world of waves and pulsating light, of seaweeds, invertebrates and fish. Some of the best diving and snorkelling is found around Mackay Bluff and towards the north of the reserve, especially near Ataata Point. Look for crayfish lurking in overhangs and crevices and the more common fish—wrasses, triplefins, goatfish, blue cod, blue moki, tarakahi, and perhaps an elusive snapper. Over time, divers may witness a gradual increase in the numbers of some species due to the cessation of fishing in the reserve.

### ...and to take care of

Take a close look but remember, because this is a marine reserve, it is illegal to remove any boulders or driftwood, or take or harm any marine life. If you do look around or under boulders, take care not to harm or crush any plants or animals.

## Monitoring and research

A major benefit of marine reserves is the opportunity they offer to study marine environments in their natural state.

The Department of Conservation is monitoring changes to the marine reserve now that fishing has ceased. Please be careful around any scientific equipment. If you catch a tagged fish outside the reserve, please return the tag and catch information (fish length, location) to the Department or the Ministry of Fisheries.

## Looking after the marine reserve

The Department of Conservation manages Horoirangi Marine Reserve with support from a local community advisory committee. However, its continuing protection also depends on caring and vigilant visitors.

It is important that the rules in the following section are complied with. If you see people fishing in the marine reserve or harming the reserve in any way, please report the activity to the Department as soon as possible. Call the conservation emergency helpline 0800 DOCHOTline (0800 362 468).

Colourful sponges, some quite large, are found on the deeper reefs. Photo: Eric Simmons



## How does the marine reserve affect you?

Enjoy your visit to the marine reserve.

You are welcome to boat, anchor, dive, swim, land, picnic and walk here.

Please remember, **all animals and plants, and the seabed, are totally protected.**

- **No fishing, netting, spearing, taking or killing of marine life** (All methods of fishing, including shellfish gathering, from the shore or at sea are prohibited.)
- **No disturbance or damage** to marine life or the seabed
- **No polluting**
- **No removal of any natural material.**

(Note: This is not a complete summary of offences within the marine reserve. Offence penalties are up to 3 months imprisonment or a \$250,000 fine. Boats, vehicles and equipment may be seized.)

### Wildlife

Please do not disturb wildlife. At sea, approach marine mammals and birds slowly and carefully, avoiding sudden boat movements or loud noises. No more than three boats at a time should be around any marine mammal. Onshore, keep at least 20 metres away from any seals and avoid disturbing birds and their nesting sites.

### Dogs

There are strict controls on where and when dogs may be exercised; for details, please refer to the Nelson City Council dog control by-law.

No dogs are allowed at any time on the Cable Bay Walkway.

### Fires

Please do not light fires on the coast.

Fires are prohibited in the neighbouring Boulder Bank Scenic Reserve.

### Facilities

No rubbish facilities are provided; take all rubbish away with you.

Toilets and parking are available at Glenduan and Cable Bay.

## For further information

We hope you enjoy your visit to Horoirangi Marine Reserve.

To find out more, visit the DOC website [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz) or contact:

### Department of Conservation Regional Visitor Centre

Millers Acre Centre – Taha o te Awa  
79 Trafalgar Street, Nelson 7010  
P O Box 375, Nelson 7042  
Ph: (03) 546 9339  
Email: [nelsonvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:nelsonvc@doc.govt.nz)

For compliance and other information on the reserve, contact:

### Department of Conservation Motueka Area Office

Cnr King Edward and High Streets, Motueka 7120  
P O Box 97, Motueka 7143  
Ph: (03) 528 1810, Fax: (03) 528 1811  
Email: [motuekaao@doc.govt.nz](mailto:motuekaao@doc.govt.nz)



An octopus moves purposefully over Horoirangi's subtidal reef.  
Photo: Eric Simmons

**DOC HOTline**  
**0800 362 468**  
Report any safety hazards or  
conservation emergencies  
For fire and search and rescue call 111

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Glenduan looking north  
towards Mackay Bluff.  
Photo: Andrew Baxter