Welcome to Te Angiangi Marine Reserve. Established in August 1997, the reserve is the result of many years of work by the local community and the Department of Conservation. We hope you enjoy your visit to this special part of Central Hawke’s Bay.

Te Angiangi Marine Reserve

This reserve lies on the Central Hawke’s Bay coast of the North Island and is about 30 km east of Waipukurau and Waipawa. It can be reached via State Highway 2 by following local roads to Blackhead and Aramoana.

Te Angiangi Marine Reserve protects a piece of the coastline of approximately 446 hectares (1.3 square nautical miles). The reserve is special in that it contains several marine habitat types, including a boulder bank area, rocky intertidal platforms and a sheltered bay that is perfect for learning to snorkel.

Offshore the presence of the warm East Cape Current and the colder Southland Current means many typically “northern” and “southern” marine species occur in the reserve. Sometimes these can be seen swimming together, or sheltering in the same crevice. The east coast between East Cape and Cook Strait also has very high rates of larval rock lobster settlement. As a result crayfish form a conspicuous and important part of the reef community.

How do I get there?

Turn off State Highway 2 at Waipawa or Waipukurau.

From Waipawa: Turn east into Tamumu Road, then follow Pouerere Road. Just before Pouerere Beach turn right into Gibraltar Road and head to Aramoana.

From Waipukurau: Head southeast on Tavistock Road (which becomes Farn Road) and follow Motere and Long Range Roads to Blackhead. The drives from both Waipukurau and Waipawa to the reserve take approximately 30 minutes.

Boats can be launched with the aid of a 4WD vehicle or tractor from the beach at Blackhead, Aramoana or Pouerere.

There are campgrounds at Blackhead and Pouerere.

Things to remember:

- Taking fish, plants and other marine life from the reserve is prohibited.
- Keep the ocean and shore clean.
- Respect the rights of others to use the reserve for marine environment studies and other educational purposes.

Marine reserve care code

The marine reserve has been established to protect representative marine habitats and communities for science and education, and to provide a safe haven for marine life to live and breed.

The success of the reserve in achieving these objectives will depend on the public showing a caring and responsible attitude, and a commitment to the conservation of the area.

Tikanga Maori

The name of Te Angiangi for the marine reserve was chosen by Ngati Kere to honour local history. When Ngati Kahungunu settled the region, Central Hawke’s Bay was divided between Te Aomatarahi and Tāraia. Te Aomatarahi, a descendant of Porangahau, was given the lands east of Tukituki River and mana whenua passed to his descendants Tu Mapuhiarangi and Te Angiangi. The area covered by the mana of Te Angiangi included what is now the marine reserve.

Stingray Bay, Te Angiangi Marine Reserve. Photo: J Holborow.

Marine reserves are special or representative areas of the coastal and marine environment in which marine life and natural features are fully protected. They help allow the ecosystems within them to return to near their former natural state and provide scientists with an opportunity to study marine life in the absence of activities such as fishing.
During calm conditions experienced snorkel and scuba divers will have no difficulty swimming off the edge of the intertidal rock platform. There are about 138 hectares of reef to explore. The most spectacular underwater scenery is found in depths of 9-15 metres south of Aramoana. Dense Ecklonia kelp forest covers most of the reef, which is broken in places by long sandy guts. Common reef animals include paua, opal shells, rock lobsters, and reef fish such as red and blue moki, butterfish, banded wrasse, marblefish and sweep. Colourful nudibranchs (sea slugs) and large schools of butterfly perch and tarakihi are found at depths of 24-36 metres on the Boulder Bank, or Sponge Garden. This community is dominated by finger sponges and red seaweeds. Several types of fish, including sea perch, scarlet wrasse, blue cod and common roughy are more abundant here than anywhere else in the reserve.

At low tide a broad rock platform is exposed, giving access to a fascinating variety of marine life. Distinctive plants and animals include the golden limpet, and large beds of Neptune’s necklace, pink coraline seaweed and eel grass. Small fish, crabs, juvenile paua and kina inhabit the rock pools. When exploring the rock pools please return any rocks you look under to their original position. This will help protect the plants and animals living on and under them. Also avoid walking on the eel grass beds. Trampling will kill these plants and result in the sand trapped around them being washed away.

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What to see and do

On the water

On foot

A walk is a great way of exploring the coast. At low tide many types of bird take advantage of rich feeding areas on the intertidal platforms. Kingfishers, gulls, herons, variable oyster catchers, pied stilts and flocks of eastern bar-tailed godwits are common. At high tide small flocks of gulls, white-fronted terns and Caspian terns can be viewed roosting on the sand at the mouths of small streams. Banded and New Zealand dotterels, both of which are nationally threatened, can also be seen in the reserve at times.

In the water

The marine reserve is well suited to shore diving and the best way to appreciate it is to go for a swim with a face mask on. A distinctive feature of the marine reserve is the large pool known as Stingray Bay. This bay is almost completely cut off from the open sea at low tides, forming a sheltered lagoon and is an excellent place for beginners learning to snorkel.

Investigating rock pools. Photo: DOC.

Snorkelling in Stingray Bay. Photo: DOC.

A banded wrasse. Photo: S Wing.

Clown nudibranch. Photo: C Vernon.

Kina surrounded by sea lettuce. Photo: S Wing.

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