



Cape Rodney-Okakari Point Marine Reserve (Goat Island)

Hauraki Gulf Marine Park







Hauraki Gulf Marine Park
Ko te Pataka kai o Tikapa Moana
Te Moananui a Toi




Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Please remember

Visitors are encouraged to enjoy boating, swimming, snorkelling, scuba diving, and picnicking in the marine reserve. However, please note that a number of activities are prohibited or restricted to protect the area's marine life and habitats. The following are offences under the Marine Reserves Act:

-  • Fishing of any kind
-  • Taking or disturbing any marine life, including shellfish and seaweeds
-  • Taking of any part of the sea floor, including rocks and shells
-  • Feeding the fish, as this disturbs their natural behaviour

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

-  • Do not litter – place your rubbish in the bins provided near the toilet block
-  • Protect birds and animals by leaving your dog at home
-  • Do not light fires anywhere in the reserve

For a map of the marine reserve with boundary coordinates visit www.doc.govt.nz.

For more information

Tāmaki Makaurau/
Auckland Visitor Centre
137 Quay Street
Auckland 1010
Phone: 09 379 6476
Email: aucklandvc@doc.govt.nz
www.doc.govt.nz

To report any offences call:

Mahurangi/ Warkworth Office
28 Baxter Street, Warkworth 0910
Phone: 09 425 7812
Email: warkworth@doc.govt.nz

DOC HOTline
0800 362 468

Report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies
For Fire and Search and Rescue Call 111

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New Zealand Government

A place for study

The marine reserve is a place where natural and undisturbed marine environments and life can be studied. This is important as it gives researchers something to compare to when investigating the effects of human activity and climate change.

The reserve protects a large range of near-shore and reef-dwelling organisms in a clean, largely silt-free environment, which contrasts with much of the inner Hauraki Gulf.

Overlooking Te Hāwera-a-Maki/Goat Island is the University of Auckland's marine laboratory, a centre for the scientific study of marine life. The Goat Island Marine Discovery Centre is located on the same site and is open to the public. For information and opening hours visit www.goatlandmarine.co.nz.

If you come across any field or research equipment within the reserve please do not disturb it.

Snapper and diver. Photo: Tony and Jenny Enderby

About the reserve

The Cape Rodney-Okakari Marine Reserve is New Zealand's first marine reserve. Established in 1975, the reserve protects 547 hectares of shore and sea on the north-eastern coast around Cape Rodney, Okakari Point and Te Hāwera-a-Maki/Goat Island. The marine reserve is about one and a half hours' drive north of Auckland, near Leigh.

Five kilometres of coastline and an area extending 800 m offshore are included in the reserve.

Marine life now flourishes in an area where fish populations were once greatly reduced. Crayfish and snapper are now abundant and the reserve has become an important breeding and nursery area for many species.

The University of Auckland's marine laboratory was established in 1964, before the marine reserve. However staff and students soon discovered that people were eating the experiments, affecting research.

It took a further 11 years for the marine reserve to be established and is now one of more than 40 marine reserves around New Zealand.

Goat Island: pōhutukawa, Glass bottom boat and beach. Photo: Tony and Jenny Enderby

The benefits of marine reserves

Marine reserves provide a sanctuary for all marine life, and allow scientists to study marine life with minimal disruption from human activity.

They also provide great recreational opportunities. Visitors can enjoy swimming, snorkelling, kayaking and diving in teeming, clear waters as well as boating, exploring rock pools and walking on the beach in beautiful, natural surroundings. All forms of marine life and habitat are protected, so fishing, shellfish gathering, removal, introducing or disturbing any marine life or habitat is strictly prohibited. This includes all plants and habitat, dead or alive. Doing any of these things could result in vehicles, boats and equipment being seized, a fine of up to \$250,000 and/or up to 3 months imprisonment.

How you can help

The marine reserve is managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). 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, please report this to DOC as soon as possible by phoning one of the numbers overleaf. Surveillance and enforcement of the reserve is carried out by DOC enforcement officers and honorary rangers (community volunteers appointed under the Marine Reserves Act 1971).



Ngāti Manuhiri – iwi guardians

Ngāti Manuhiri, the local Maori tribe and traditional guardian of this area, supports kaitiakitanga (guardianship) of Te Hāwera-a-Maki/Goat Island.

Ngāti Manuhiri claims mana whenua and mana moana (customary rights) over this area. It exercises kaitiakitanga in the protection of wāhi tapu (sacred places) and food-gathering places traditionally handed down from ancestors as taonga tuku iho (heirlooms).

Te Hāwera-a-Maki is important to the history of Ngāti Manuhiri and (in particular) Ngāti Manuhiri direct descendants. Ngāti Manuhiri and other Ngāti Wai Tribes claim direct lines of descent from Manaia, the people who came from the legendary ancestral land of Hawaiki 52 generations ago.

Te Hāwera-a-Maki has been occupied following the landfall by the Moekakara canoe, captained by Tahuhunuiarangi. He was a great grandson of the first Manaia and commander of the waka that claimed the district from Te Arai to Tawharanui. His people were numerous and became known as Ngai Tahu, and were absorbed by the Ngāti Manuhiri people who live in the area today.



'E tangi ana nga reanga o utu, e mahara ana nga reanga a tai ma ta aha ra e whakamahana taku ora kia tina.'

'When the land, river and sea creatures are in distress then I have nothing to be proud of.'

Pou whenua, Ngāti Manuhiri. Photo: Liz Maire



Visiting the reserve

Under the water

The marine reserve offers some of the best snorkelling and scuba diving opportunities close to Auckland.

Beneath the waves is a variety of habitats - rocky shores exposed at low tide as well as deep reefs, underwater cliffs, canyons, and sand flats. Each habitat harbours its own creatures: seaweed forests provide nurseries for scores of coastal animals, while deeper waters host sea squirts, anemones, sponges, and tube worms.

If you are diving, please take care not to break off small fragile animals such as hydroids, lace corals and sponges, feed fish, or move rocks as this will disturb the vulnerable marine life living underneath.

On the shore

At low tide you can explore the fascinating rocky shore. If you turn rocks over to look underneath, do it carefully and remember to turn them back - otherwise the creatures underneath, which need the dark and damp, will die.

In most shallow areas, particularly from the main beach, there are many varieties of fish, shellfish, sea stars, crabs, and other creatures.

Do not feed the fish as it changes their natural behaviour.

Coastal walkway

A coastal walkway starts from the driveway near the marine laboratory car park, and follows the coast for 1 km across University of Auckland land. It passes alongside farmland, as well as through remnants of coastal broadleaf forest and restoration planting. A loop walk around the farm is also possible. Please allow 1.5-2 hrs to return to the car park. Remember to keep to the track. Dogs are not permitted.

Boating in the reserve

There is no public boat launching facility in the marine reserve. The nearest boat launching ramp is in Omaha Cove, just below the township of Leigh.

Boats are permitted to navigate and anchor carefully in the reserve, but please remember that:

- Dragging anchors can damage marine life.
- There are a lot of swimmers, divers and snorkelers in the reserve - take care.
- Fishing rods should be stowed out of sight when travelling or anchored in the marine reserve.

Visiting Te Hāwere-a-Maki/Goat Island

This small 9 ha island is a scientific reserve and an important nesting area for seabirds. You are welcome to visit the island but please stay on the intertidal rock platform - there are no tracks because walking through the vegetation disturbs plants and nesting seabirds.

Geology

Te Hāwere-a-Maki/Goat Island sits just 250 m from the beach and is geologically interesting. With a fault line running through the middle, the island reflects the geological history of the Auckland region from 250 million years ago to the present. Distinct hard greywacke features on its seaward side, with softer sedimentary rocks on the landward side. Caves have been eroded into the cliff faces by wave action.

Visitor facilities

Toilets, changing rooms and information displays are near the main car park. Drinking water and other refreshments are not available in the reserve.

A visit to the Goat Island Marine Discovery Centre on the mainland is a must for all visitors to Leigh and Goat Island. It is near the University of Auckland's Leigh Marine Laboratory. For information and opening hours visit www.goatlandmarine.co.nz.

Snorkel hire and a glass-bottom boat operate seasonally (and weather-permitting) from the main beach.

There is a range of accommodation available in Leigh and along Goat Island Road, as well as cafes, restaurants, takeaway food, hire equipment, a petrol station, and a general store.

For further information visit www.leighbythesea.co.nz.

Car parking

Car parking is limited and the area is very popular during peak holiday periods, so please consider other visitors.

- Public vehicle access is not permitted over the bridge on to Auckland University land or private land.
- There is a 5 min loading zone near the beach to drop off and pick up gear only. There is strictly no parking in this zone.
- Larger vehicles, including campervans and buses, should park in the lower car park. Avoid the sharp turn by accessing it from the main car park (see map).
- Goat Island Road is not suitable for very large buses.
- No overnight parking is permitted in any of the car parks.

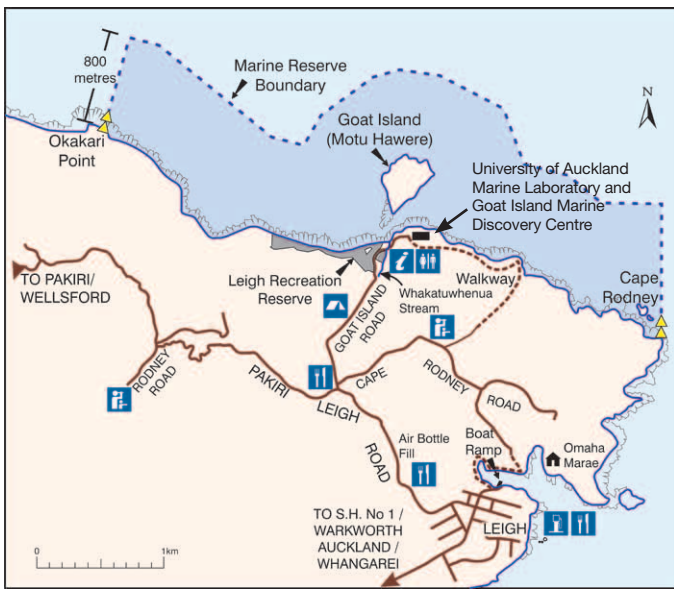


Crayfish and shrimp. Photo: Samara Nicholas



Dogs

Dogs are not permitted at any time in the car park, or on the beach.



- Diving
- Lookout
- Walking
- Information
- Swimming
- Snorkelling
- No fishing
- No boat fishing
- No shellfish gathering
- No fish feeding
- No dogs
- No fires

