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Marine reserve news from around NZ; launching Fish Forever video shorts; Derry Godbert profile; AGM date and name change.

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"The sea, the great unifier, is man's only hope. Now, as never before, the old phrase has a literal meaning: we are all in the same boat."
Jacques Yves Cousteau

Before launching into Fish Forever matters, let's look at what's going on around the country. Firstly, **Roger Grace** has kicked off a discussion for a network of marine protected areas for the Hauraki Gulf with [this proposal](#) released at the end of August and featured in the [Rodney Times](#). The [five main principles](#) and additional design elements outlined in the proposal are especially relevant to our work in the Bay of Islands.



Meanwhile, two of our top scientists - **Dr. Bill Ballantine** (who pioneered New Zealand's first ever marine reserve) and **Mark Costello** (Auckland University's Institute of Marine Science) - featured in the New Zealand Herald saying, loud and clear, that there need to be [more "no take" marine reserves in New Zealand](#).

They believe the definition of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) has become too loose and there is too little certainty about how effective they are. Dr Costello says that *"if organisations and countries want to report on marine biodiversity protection, then that can only be done robustly from within designated no-take reserves"*.

Meanwhile, in the South Island [a 17-person forum](#) has begun the lengthy process of deciding what parts of the South Island's eastern coastline should be protected, and how. Let's hope there's some no-take zones in there!

FISH FOREVER Spring 2015

Fish Forever continues to wait for the next move from Wellington regarding the review of the Marine Reserves Act, as outlined in a [recent news update](#) to those who made a submission on last year's proposal. We have contacted the key environmental organisations urging a coordinated response and will be following Forest & Bird's campaign closely.

Back home, we're building those relationships that will help us reach a united front in our planning for marine protection in the Bay of Islands. We look forward to reporting on this further in the near future. In the meantime, enjoy our Spring newsletter which has some things a little bit different (and hopefully inspiring!) to get your teeth into:

- Find out about [Fish Forever's video shorts project](#)
- Get your creativity flowing for the [renaming of the Bay of Islands Maritime Park](#)
- [Fish Forever talks to Derry Godbert](#), former science teacher, sailing instructor and conservation advocate

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VIDEO SHORTS - We need you!

Fish Forever has the germ of an idea...and it's all about giving New Zealanders a say in the future of the ocean.

The premise is simple: give our locals a soapbox for just a few minutes and let them talk about what the ocean means to them. More specifically, what the Bay of Islands means to them.

The interviewees may be divers, marine ecologists, sailors, fishos. They may be kayakers, hikers, observers, gatherers. They may have memories of the way things were, they may be creating memories for how they want it to be. The unifying factor will be a kinship with the Bay of Islands, where the marine environment informs and influences everyday life, where the future health of this environment *really matters*.

We are looking for a couple of enthusiastic, talented people with videographer skills and a passion for New Zealand’s marine environment to give this project wings. [Please get in touch!](#)

At this stage the project is not funded, but we think it has real potential to attract funding if we can get the right team together.

The video short series opens with some thoughts from long-time Fish Forever campaigner and former charter fisherman **Dean Wright** on his first trip to the Poor Knights. Enjoy.



Spawning jewel anemones, photo courtesy [Northland Dive](#).

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BAY OF ISLANDS MARITIME PARK NAME CHANGE!

The Bay of Islands Maritime Park AGM is **Weds 30 Sept, 5.30-7.30pm** at the Bay of Islands Yacht Club (a formal notice will be sent closer to the time). At the AGM we hope to be casting our votes for a new name for the organisation.

We are looking for a name that captures the vision:

Waking up with brimming biodiversity. Native naturally!

...and also acknowledges the mission statement:

Restoring native life on land, fresh water and sea. Dream by dream.

The name should be inclusive of all our activities - marine or freshwater - and will have a better connection with our full community. A sense of place is essential - the Bay of Islands. We're seeking something more aspirational, more contemporary, something that rolls off the tongue.

If a consensus can be reached at the AGM, the name will be changed there and then. We'd love to hear your ideas [via email](#) from which we can pull together a shortlist. Here are some suggestions to get the ball rolling...

- Naturally Bay of Islands
- Kura Taio Bay of Islands
- Future Bay of Islands
- Source, Bay of Islands
- Restore, Bay of Islands
- Treasures of Tangaroa
- Something that includes *Lifeforce/Mauri*
- Pristine Marine Bay of Islands Inc
- Bay of Islands Protection
- Bay of Islands Marine Wildlife Sanctuary Inc

Get creative, and [get in touch](#). Or [sign up for membership](#) so you can cast your vote at the AGM!



FISH FOREVER TALKS TO DERRY GODBERT

Derry has been heavily involved in local marine ecology during the course of his teaching career. He was part of two previous attempts to set up a marine reserve in the Bay. He's pleased to be involved in Fish Forever and the team is delighted to be able to draw on his historical experience. Derry is known locally for teaching

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many people in the Bay of Islands to sail.

What was it that enticed you into the world of conservation?

When I was five I remember the joy of seeing insects and other animals under stones and logs. At secondary school in Shropshire we had a wonderful biology teacher who gave up weekends regularly to take us out cycling to study the ecology of bogs, swamps, lakes and forests. His enthusiasm made us appreciate the fascination of these ‘natural’ areas that were of no apparent value to humans yet were essential providers of balance.

You’re a former science teacher, Derry. Can you tell us a bit about your teaching experiences in the Bay of Islands?

Isabella and I arrived in the Bay of Islands in 1974 with our daughter (9) and son (5). I got a job as HOD science at Kerikeri High School. I particularly enjoyed teaching senior biology. A highlight was working on Kina at a couple of sites at Tapuaetahi where we set out quadrats in 3-5 m of water. We also experimented with tagging and releasing Kina to do population counts. Really enjoyable! Other topics ranged from rocky shore studies, through mangroves, mud crabs, shrimps, sea anemones; the labs were full of seawater aquariums.

What do you most love about being here? What are your favourite parts of the Bay of Islands and why?

We came to the Bay of Islands after spending seven years in Auckland. I have always been keen on boats, particularly sailing and the Bay is a wonderful sailing environment for boating. I was also keen on diving and the Bay had wonderful diving experiences to offer and still has to a lesser extent. We make use of the bush areas and enjoy the bird life. Having a Kiwi calling in our garden and Kereru feeding on our berries is a definite bonus.

In the bay itself we particularly enjoy the Te Pahi islands, Black Rocks and Okahu. The first for the beaches, rocky environments. The Black Rocks for diving, watching fish and exploring the unique micro-environments with their small animals and large birds. Okahu gives us a feeling of being less heavily ‘used’ than other islands and is changing / developing so rapidly that it is exciting to observe. The water is still quite clear for diving there at times.

What changes have you seen in your lifetime?

In terms of water clarity, up to the 80s we could generally see the sandy bottom almost all the way from south west Moturua to Otehei bay. We often saw dolphins swimming close enough to the bottom to see them stirring up the clean white sand. I guess this is largely due to on shore development without enough control over reducing erosion?

We never used air bottles to gather kai moana. We could always get a feed of scallops for example in many parts of the Bay. In the last 10 years we are finding old scallop beds gone and current ones very impoverished. This is obviously partly due to increased population.

Our fishing methods have been pretty standard over the last 40 years. We have a standard trolling system white lure and hand line which would always catch us a Kahawai supper until they were put on the commercial fishing quota.

On the our way back from our annual school coastal cruise, virtually every boat - up to 5 to 10 in the fleet - would catch a Kingfish for the supper on the way back while passing Bird Rock. Until 8 years ago there were always large shoals of Tarakihi, Blue Maomao, Parore, etc. around Cape Brett and Nine Pin. The shoals, when they are there, are a bare shadow of themselves.



Read the [full interview here](#).

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Fairy prions and fluttering shearwaters feeding on krill being driven to the surface by schools of trevally, south of the Mokohinau Islands. This is from a series of images - one of which won a gold award at the 2015 Iris awards - taken by Dean Wright.

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