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Fish Forever Matters #3 - Lena Huia on her transect monitoring project, new baited underwater video stations are set, we share a Fish Forever campaign update and a profile of the Booth family.

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Welcome to our May/June 2015 update for news of what we've been doing and where we're going.



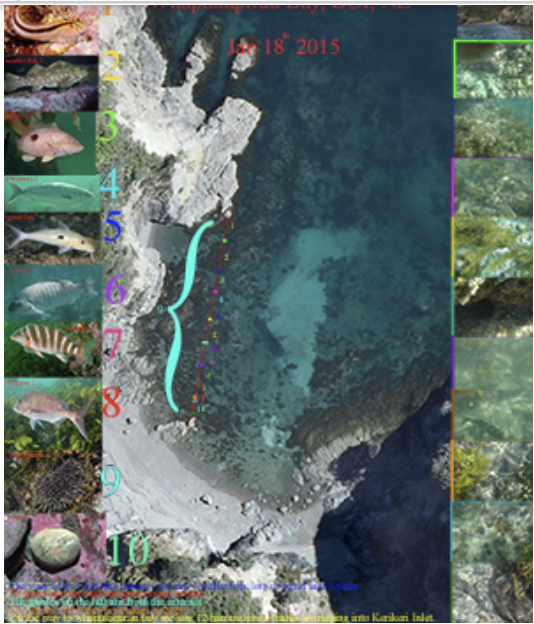
- [Lena Huia's Transect, Whapukapirau Bay](#)
- [Baited Underwater Video Monitoring](#)
- [Fish Forever Campaign Update](#)
- [Profile: The Booth Family](#)

Our latest adventures have been of a practical sort; getting out on the water and recording what's there. Two projects are underway in the Urupukapuka/Waewaetorea area: a detailed marine habitat and description report and a fish abundance survey using baited underwater video. First we turn to a simple but inspiring project conceived by 12-year-old Lena Huia.



Lena Huia Booth (pictured here snorkelling) has had a long connection with the ocean – she has been sailing with her family since she was born and learnt to snorkel when she was seven. Her family is very much entwined in the natural environment of the Bay of Islands, living on their old family land in the Kerikeri Basin, close to the water. Her father, Chris Booth, is known locally and internationally for his large-scale sculptures that consistently draw our attention to the environmental landscape. Little wonder that Lena Huia has the initiative to start her own project, casting a keen, young eye on what is going on in our waters.

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This non-, detailed [visual transect report](#) shows perhaps an hour in the life of the underwater world of Whapukapirau Bay, on the west side of the Cape Brett peninsula. Lena Huia decided to undertake a monitoring project here to compare what she remembers from her previous snorkel in this bay with what is there now.

Fish Forever met with Lena Huia and her dad, Chris, to talk through her diagram and see if we could uncover a little bit more about her motivation and discoveries.

“We did a transect of Whapukapirau Bay, on the Cape Brett Peninsula. We are seeing how many fish there are and what it looks like and if it’s changed. We just put the points where we saw the fish. We did it at low tide but we were snorkelling.”



And why this bay? “I wanted to go back there because the time before [*summer 2014*] I saw a puffer fish, and I wanted to see if I could see another one. But sadly there were heaps less fish this time...

"I was surprised by how little fish there were, and how much more kina barren there is in just a year compared to the time I did it before."

Fish Forever asked Lena Huia if you needed much experience to undertake a monitoring project like this: "No you don’t need to be experienced at all, you just need to know where you saw the fish and took the pictures...that’s really all...and you have to know how to snorkel and swim of course!"

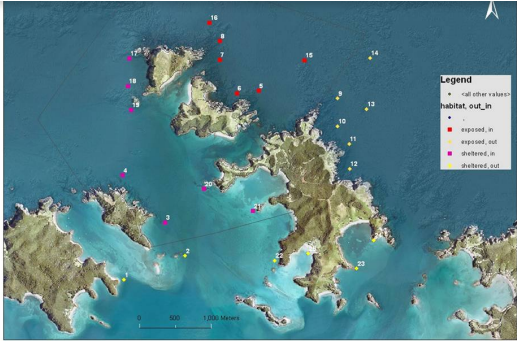
Lena Huia is keen to repeat this project next year. What's more, she also cooking up plans to get her friends and then, hopefully, other Bay of Islands young people engaged in this kind of simple monitoring project. A brilliant way to encourage us all to look a bit deeper.

You can read the full [Lena Huia Booth interview on our website](#).

BAITED UNDERWATER VIDEO MONITORING



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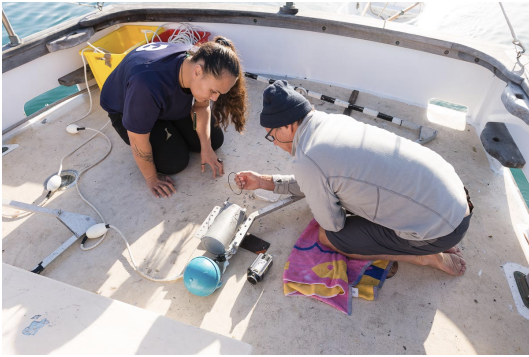


Fish Forever's baited underwater video project around Urupukapuka, Okahu and Waewaetorea is underway. The project is designed and led by Vince Kerr and supported by Arianna Hemi (studying marine science at Bay of Plenty Polytechnic), with Arethusa as the team's research vessel, skippered by Dean Wright.

A total of 24 sites have been set up and, just for fun, a camera was dropped at the end of the wharf at Otehei Bay, which is a voluntary no-take fish-feeding site. The project is designed as a long-term study, useful for comparison into the future – 5 years, 10 years or longer. Once data is gathered and analysed, the resulting report will provide a good indication of the relative abundance of the target species (snapper, trevally, kingfish and a few others). This data should form a baseline for the long-term study of changes once marine protection measures are put in place.

The sites are arranged in four sub-groups: exposed and semi-sheltered in the proposed marine reserve area; and exposed and semi-sheltered outside the proposed reserve site. This approach to monitoring will enable our results to be directly compared to other places like the partially protected marine park at Mimiwhangata, the Goat Island Marine Reserve at Leigh and Poor Knights Marine Reserve where long-term data sets using this method have been collected.

To get an idea of what this project involves, check out this [BUV video clip taken in the Goat Island Marine Reserve](#).



FISH FOREVER CAMPAIGN UPDATE May/June 2015



Since the publication of the [submission report](#) late last year (along with some [encouraging press coverage](#)) followed by our [conversation with Minister Maggie Barry](#) earlier this year, the Fish Forever team is working hard to find the best path forward to reach our goals. Our commitment is steadfast (we want marine reserves!) but the story is multi-layered and every decision has its own set of complications.

At a local level there is work to do to fully engage hapū and address concerns from some recreational fishers, whilst on a legislative level it is likely that [marine protection planning processes will change under this government](#). If this new legislation arrives in the near future we will be looking at engaging our community in a whole new process with an emphasis on collaboration and consensus building – more on this soon.

The Fish Forever team is open-minded and eager to make a real difference. We are instigating dialogue with those who might help unpick the complex issue of marine protection in our wonderfully diverse community. The priority is to build strong relationships that create the foundation for a model that the Bay of Islands community wants and can support, rather than one that is foisted upon it by outsiders. If you are interested to be involved or have ideas for us please come along

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to a meeting or get in touch with us.

On the side, the team is exploring ideas for locally-led projects that will help galvanise the community for the bigger steps to come. We also continue to gather essential ecological data about the state of the Bay's marine environment through various monitoring processes.

NEW FEATURE: *Each newsletter, Fish Forever will aim to interview somebody who has worked closely with the team over the years. We have such a diverse range of characters involved in the Fish Forever project with varied strengths, skills and interests: it is high time we share that diversity with our supporters. We are delighted to profile **the Booth family** in this newsletter, partly in honour of the contribution to this newsletter by one of the younger Booths - Lena Huia.*



The Booth family have resided in the Bay of Islands for a long time...and there are quite a few of them. In this photo (taken toward the middle of last century) you see the family. From left: Robin, John, Chris, Joyce, Webber and Stan.

This band of brothers has an important thing in common: in their own way, they are all change agents, with a keen eye on the preservation of Aotearoa’s – and especially Peiwhairangi’s - native and natural beauty. Not content to accept the status quo (read: slow decline) in our environment, each profiled below has played their part in local ecological restoration – both the doing part of it as well as the tricky job of raising awareness in the community.



As Acting Chair and resident of the Eastern Bay of Islands, John Booth is tangled up in Fish Forever’s every step. The team has benefited from his experience and guidance since the inception of the campaign. After retiring from professional life in academic research for Fisheries/NIWA, John became involved in local mainland pest control to reduce chances of re-invasion of the pest-free islands of Ipipiri. Over the years he has been immersed in related conservation projects and now works with Living Waters on the reduction of flow of silt and nutrients into the Bay of Islands as well as with Fish Forever, with its focus on establishing marine reserves.



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John’s twin brother Chris Booth is best known to many for the [Rainbow Warrior Memorial](#) (1988-90). While he has been active in conservation work for most of his life Chris agrees that the most meaningful impact in this arena has been through his creativity as a sculptor. Of his current work he says: “I’m working closely with Te Runanga o Ngati Rehia to raise funds to build an entranceway sculpture at Bulls Gorge called [Te Haa o te Ao \(Breath of the World\)](#) which will move reflecting how much our district is doing to combat climate change.” Chris’s daughter, Lena Huia, also features in this newsletter – yes, she’s that snorkeller! [And this is her monitoring project](#).

Webber Booth has been very much hands-on in his conservation work. “In 2011 elders of Ngati Torehina, kaitiaki of Harakeke, welcomed my offer to control pests on Harakeke Island. I was going fishing anyway.” This 12-hectare island landward of Tikitiki (Nine Pin) has coastal forest matched in quality only by Motukokako in the Bay of Islands. In Jan 2015 DOC personnel together with two rat dogs and one stoat dog pronounced Harakeke clear of these pests. To maintain this status monthly or ideally bimonthly visits are required. “It’s not always a piece of cake - it’s a near vertical rock landing. I’ve fallen in a couple of times - but that’s all part of the fun.”



You can read the full version of the [Booth family profile on our website](#).

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