



# BLUE WELLINGTON

eNews June/July 2011

## Next meetings:

### Wed 3 Aug 6pm, Meow café: Public Opposition Of Polluted Stormwater (POOPS)

Let's get together to talk about our priorities for increasing awareness about our storm water drain issues. Come along to Meow at 6pm on Wednesday 3 August for a great discussion and beer.

### Wed 25 Aug 6pm, Meow café: The Kermadec Islands Marine Reserve – impressions of a pristine marine environment



Join us to hear Tom Trnski, Research Manager and Curator Marine Biology at the

Auckland Museum, talk about his recent expedition to the Kermadec Islands. This was a voyage of discovery to one of the few remaining pristine marine environments in the world. Tom will describe the background to the expedition, show many beautiful images and discuss the challenges of establishing marine reserves in New Zealand and elsewhere. Find out more at <http://kermadec.aucklandmuseum.com/#&slider1=2> and <http://kermadec.aucklandmuseum.com/expedition-team/dr-tom-trnski/>.

## Whales on the move

It's that time of year when whales are migrating from the cold Subantarctic waters to warmer tropical climes. Scientists from the Department of Conservation (DOC) have been out again with whalers turned whale watchers spotting these magnificent animals as they pass through the Cook Strait. DOC survey leader Nadine Bott says humpback numbers seem to be on the up, with over 60 animals spotted by the team, compared to just 18 whales in 2005. Laura Boren, DOC's national mammal co-ordinator says there have been fewer sightings of southern right whales in New Zealand waters this year, which is strange after high numbers during the 2010 migration season. The southern right whale migrations run from May through to October, so perhaps they are just lagging a bit behind this year? Keep your eyes peeled.



In happier news, a recent study has shown that whales from a small surviving population around remote, sub-Antarctic islands have found their way back to the New Zealand mainland: [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/06/110627095642.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/06/110627095642.htm).

Sadly, one humpback whale didn't make it and was found washed up on the beach at Fitzroy Bay (on the eastern outer mouth of the harbour). DOC staff attended the scene, took measurements of the animal for research purposes and are liaising with iwi about the remains.

## Fur seal entanglement highlights marine debris problem

In June DOC reported a young fur seal pup entangled in a piece of fishing net. While rescue seemed a success, it was later reported that the animal was found dead, having been injured too greatly. Discarded fishing equipment and other trash is a major threat to our wildlife. While we'll do our best to encourage the industry to be more careful, these incidents are unlikely to stop anytime soon. You can help by taking part in beach clean efforts. To find out an event, visit our event calendar on [www.bluewellington.org.nz](http://www.bluewellington.org.nz). If you see trash on the coast, PLEASE pick it up and put it in a bin. <http://blog.doc.govt.nz/2011/06/28/marine-debris-threatens-wildlife/>.

### Fur seal SOS

It's the time of year when Wellington is abound with young fur seal pups, fresh out of the nest. While it's important to enjoy these animals, it's also critical that we all learn a bit more about them and how we can help. Crying, sneezing and coughing are all normal behaviours. Being harassed by people or entangled in marine debris is not. To find out more, check out .DOC's fab brochure [The seal deal: Caring for kekeno together](#).





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## Did you know?

The diversity of triplefins (or cockabullies) is greatest in the New Zealand region, where a third of the world's known species occur. At least 30 species are known here and all but two species are endemic (found only in New Zealand).

## Critter of the month

Variable triplefin (*Forsterygion varium*). One of the more common species of triplefin in Wellington waters, these little fish (up to 20cm long) are most abundant in water less than 10m deep.



Image: Kirstie Knowles

## Eyes and ears



Please help our local marine enforcement officers by reporting any illegal or suspicious activities.

Call **0800 4 Poacher** (0800 4 76224) for illegal fishing or 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468) for wildlife or marine reserve related issues.

## Greater Wellington environmental pollution hotline

Under New Zealand's Resource Management Act, it is illegal for anything other than rain-water to go into stormwater drains. If wastewater or liquid household wastes such as detergents, oils or paints get into the stormwater drain, they will pollute streams, aquifers, harbours or the sea.

Greater Wellington Environmental Protection Team Leader Susan Smith said people pouring substances such as cement and paint down the stormwater drain could face enforcement action. "There are a few simple things people can do to prevent pollution. Leave small leftovers of paint and solvents to dry rather than pouring them down the drain. Some paint retailers also accept your unused/ unwanted paint. Clean paint brushes in the laundry sink, or in a bucket that you tip somewhere in your garden.

"And, if there is a spill, make sure you have an absorbent rag to clean it up with. Dispose of any waste with your household rubbish. Don't hose it away."

If you see any incidents of pollution going into our city's waterways, call the council's pollution hotline on **0800 496 734**.

Source: [www.scoop.co.nz](http://www.scoop.co.nz)



## Coastal conservation close-up: Island Bay Coast Care

Island Bay Coast Care is a community volunteer group, supported by Greater Wellington Regional Council, Wellington City Council and the wider community, working to restore remnants of a threatened coastal ecosystem on the Wellington coastline. Since 2003 the group has planted approximately 20,000 native plants. This, combined with the hard work of weed removal, has seen a total restoration of the fore dune of Island Bay and protection of the threatened pingao beds. The coastal ecosystem is now flourishing in what was once a wilderness of exotic weeds.

The group its final planting session on 18 June. Now it's all systems go to keep the invading weeds under control. To help give this awesome group a hand, check out Blue Wellington's event calendar and head along to its working bees. You can also find out more at [www.gw.govt.nz/Island-Bay-Coast-Care-2/](http://www.gw.govt.nz/Island-Bay-Coast-Care-2/).



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