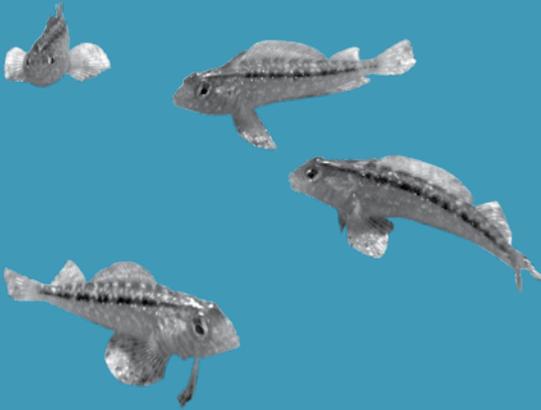




Experiencing
Marine Reserves

Te Kura Moana



Experiencing Marine Reserves Auckland Report 2022 - 2023

Report prepared by Sophie Journée on behalf of the Mountains
to Sea Conservation Trust -Te Kura Moana

All photography by Sophie Journée unless otherwise stated.





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Executive Summary

This year EMR has continued to expand our opportunities for communities to experience their local marine areas through snorkel, kayak, stand-up paddleboarding and spotlighting days throughout the Auckland Region. We were able to run these events with the continued support and funding from the Bobby Stafford-Bush Foundation, Tu Manawa Active Aotearoa, Auckland Council, and numerous local boards. We ran our third freshwater lake event in partnership with Pupuke Birdsong, Aotearoa Lakes, Whitebait Connection and Auckland Sea Kayaks, taking 150 people kayaking and snorkeling throughout the day. We were also able to run two marine monitoring workshops, one on Rakino and one at Enclosure Bay, helping to train community groups to monitoring rocky reef fish populations through the Reef Savers timed swim method. We also ran night snorkelling events for the first time in Auckland to great success, one at Torbay and one at Enclosure Bay on Waiheke. We were able to partner with Para Kore Ki Tama-ki, mana whenua, Whitebait Connection, community groups and other NGOs in order to provide additional activities at our events like guided walks, raranga workshops, waste minimisation workshops and beach clean ups.

Across the 2022/23 season, EMR's Auckland crew took 2394 participants and 288 volunteers out to explore Tīkapa Moana - Te Moananui-ā-Toi, the Hauraki Gulf and the Manukau harbour. Through stand up paddleboarding, kayaking, snorkeling and spotlighting, participants were treated to some excellent ocean conditions and marine/freshwater life encounters, from dolphins popping in to say hello to tiny nudibranchs hidden amongst the seaweed. Despite several extreme weather events we were able to run a total of 33 events across the Auckland Region, including three spotlighting events, three volunteer training days, two marine monitoring workshops, two stand-up paddleboarding days, 10 kayak days, and 14 snorkel days.

Since 2002, EMR has expanded to eight regions, with a team of 27 coordinators. Our Auckland EMR team has taken 88,774 people into NZ's marine reserves and over 228,698 people have been engaged in EMR organised marine conservation events.



Our team in Auckland

Our team has grown to 3 full time and 5 casual contractors for MTSCCT.



Samara Nicholas
Founder
Poutokoumanawa



Sophie Journée
Auckland Regional Manager
National Deputy Coordinator



Lorna Doogan
National Coordinator



Ella Walmsley
Auckland Coordinator



Wednesday Davis
Auckland Coordinator



Koha Kahui-McConnell
Auckland Coordinator



Brendan Doogan
Assistant Coordinator



Teschna Christie
Casual Coordinator



Aileem Sweeney
Auckland Coordinator

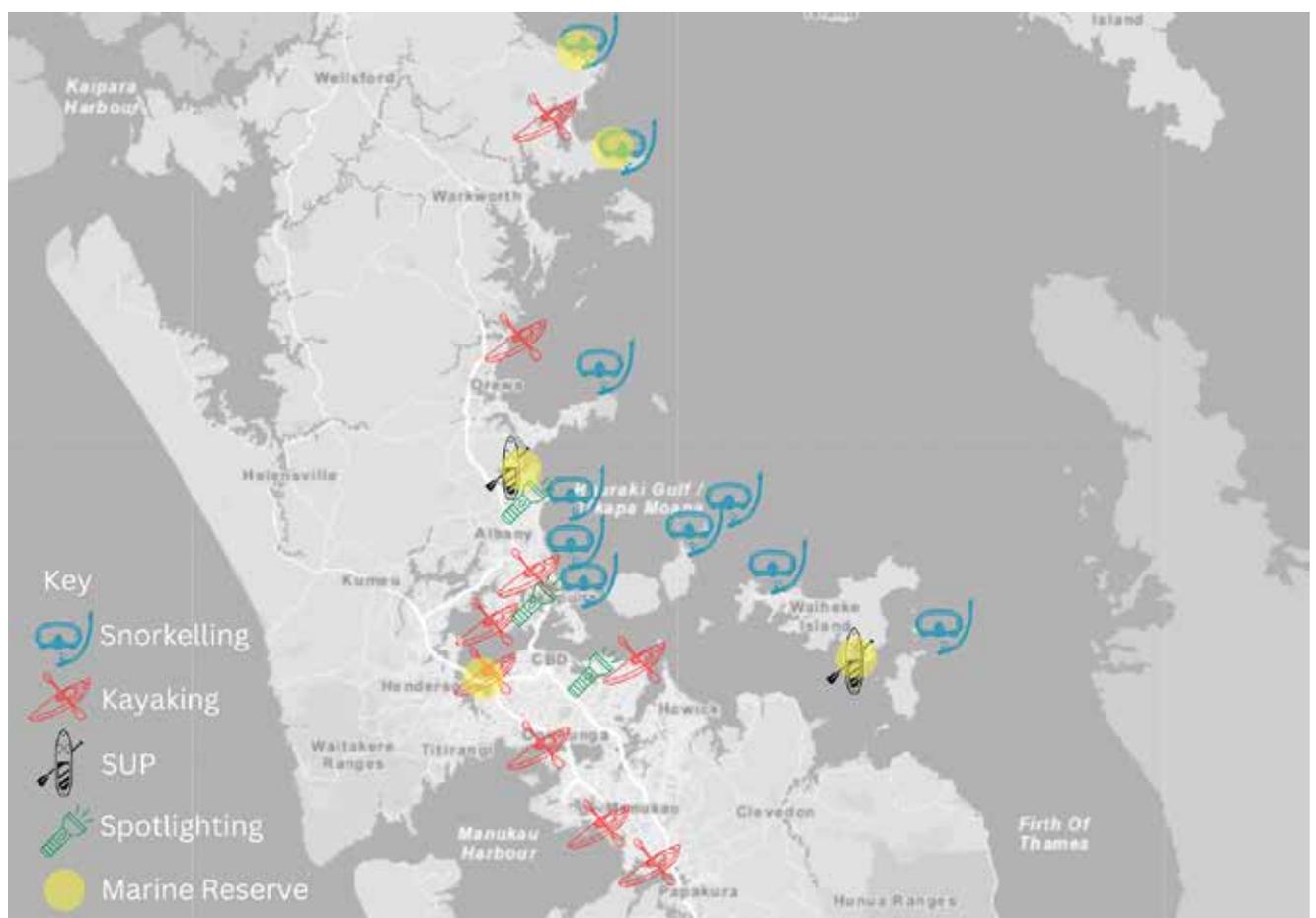
Auckland's Snorkel, Paddle, Spotlighting and Rockpooling

We have continued to provide snorkel, paddle, spotlighting and rockpooling as fun, safe and free/cheap summer events for community members of all ages. These events are an opportunity for communities to get out and experience their local environment as well as learn about issues facing our marine/freshwater ecosystems. We have continued to receive great feedback from participants, with many joining for multiple events throughout the season, or returning as volunteers. We continue to implement suggestions from both volunteers and participants, increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of our events.

Location	Date	Participants	Volunteers
AUT pools volunteer training day	2022-08-24	-	17
AUT pools volunteer training day 2	2022-09-21	-	19
Kaipātiki Kayak Day	2022-10-16	48	6
Rakino Marine Monitoring Workshop	2022-10-22	14	10
Manurewa Kayak Day	2022-10-29	30	6
Lake Pupuke Volunteer Training Day	2022-11-06	-	14
Motu Manawa Kayak Day	2022-11-13	98	6
Tāwharanui Snorkel Day	2022-11-26	155	20
Otata Rangatahi Snorkel	2022-11-27	10	-
Torbay Snorkel Day	2022-12-17	214	34
Waiheke Marine Monitoring Workshop	2023-01-13	6	3
Waiheke Snorkel Day	2023-01-14	160	18
Waiheke Night Snorkel	2023-01-14	47	8
Te Matuku Paddle Day	2023-01-15	24	3
Papakura Kayak Day 1	2023-01-22	50	2
Campbells Bay Snorkel Day	2023-02-19	167	10
Takapuna Snorkel Day	2023-03-04	162	11
Pupuke Snorkel/Kayak Day	2023-03-05	158	11
Torbay Night Snorkel	2023-03-09	53	10
Goat Island Snorkel Day	2023-03-11	279	23
Māngere Kayak Day	2023-03-25	68	2
Shakespear Snorkel Day	2023-03-26	178	11
Rotoroa Snorkel Day	2023-04-15	69	10
Whangateau Snorkel Day	2023-04-23	56	9
Poor Knights Snorkel Day	2023-05-14	23	13
Okura Paddle Day	2023-05-15	35	2
Pourewa Spotlighting	2023-05-19	37	-
Tahuna Torea Kayak Day	2023-05-27	48	2
Papakura Kayak Day 2	2023-06-04	48	2
Takapuna Rockpooling	2023-06-08	20	3
Kaipatiki Spotlighting	2023-06-19	30	1
Waiwera Kayak Day	2023-06-24	48	2
Awaruku Spotlighting	2023-06-28	31	2
Whangateau Kayak Day	2023-07-09	48	1
Total		2394	288
		Total participants	2684



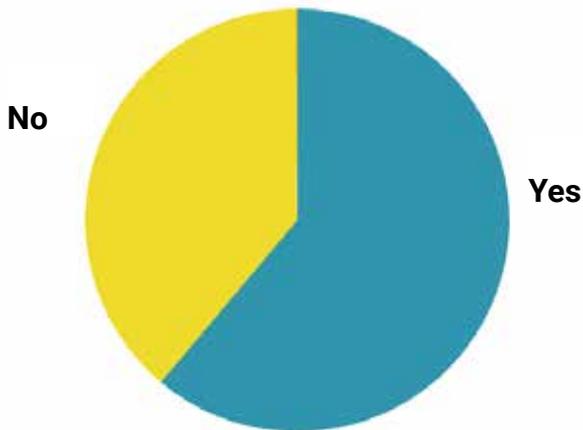
Map of events within Tikapa Moana - Te Moananui-ā-Toi - Hauraki Gulf and the Manukau Harbour



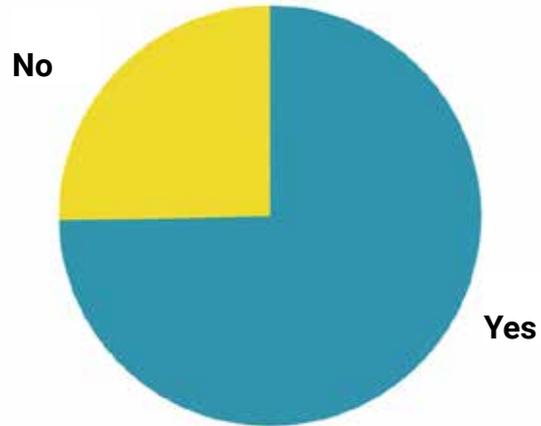
Overview of all events

From our evaluations, we had 963 responses from 28 events. Our uptake of evaluations continues to be strong with dedicated tent based volunteers ensuring we capture as many people as possible during our events. For many it was their first time snorkeling! 100% of participants felt safe and enjoyed themselves.

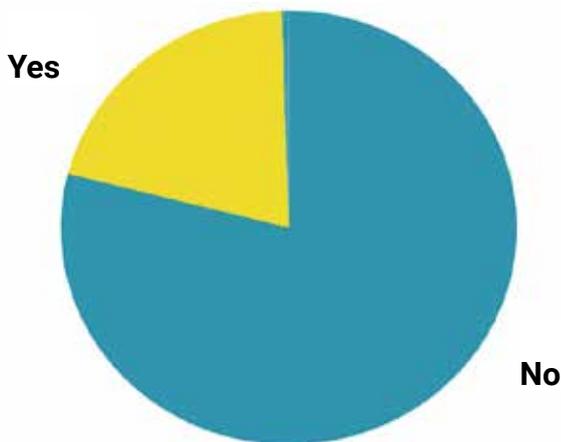
Is this your first EMR event?



Have you snorkelled/paddled before today?



Have snorkelled/paddled here before today?



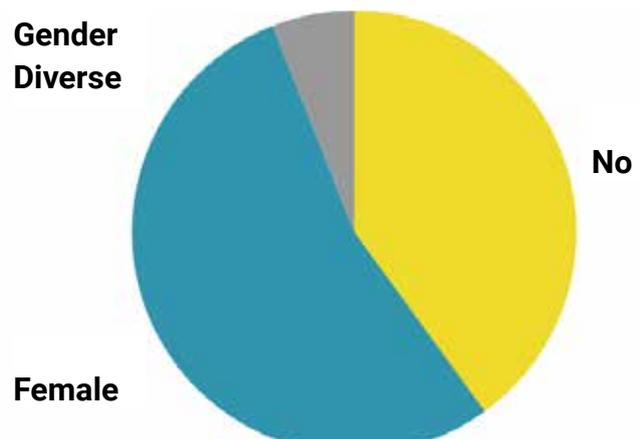
Would you snorkel/paddle in this area again?



Has your marine conservation knowledge increased?



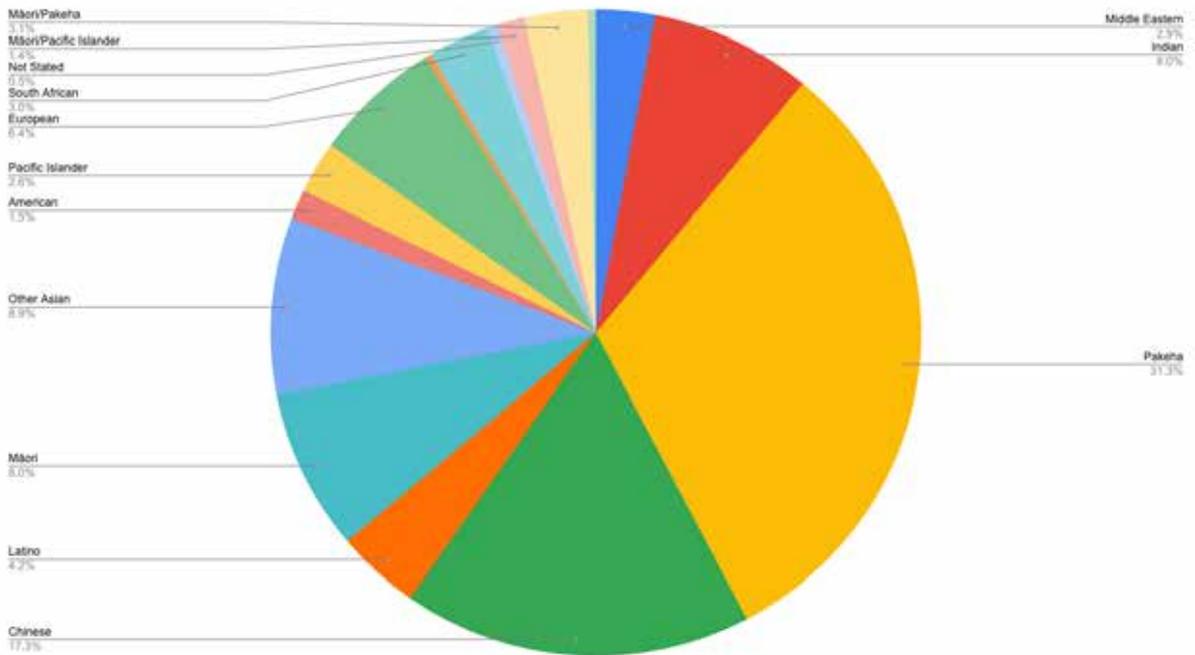
How would you describe your gender?



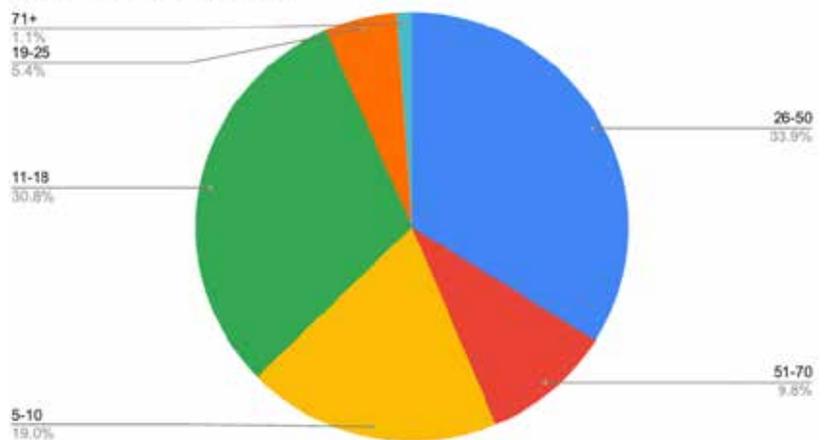
Demographics of participants

Our 2022/23 events were attended by a diverse group of participants. We had a total of 49 different ethnicities attend our events. This is a breakdown of the 14 most common. We would like to continue to increase Māori and Pacifica engagement in our events in the 2023/24 season.

What ethnicity do you identify as?



What age group are you?



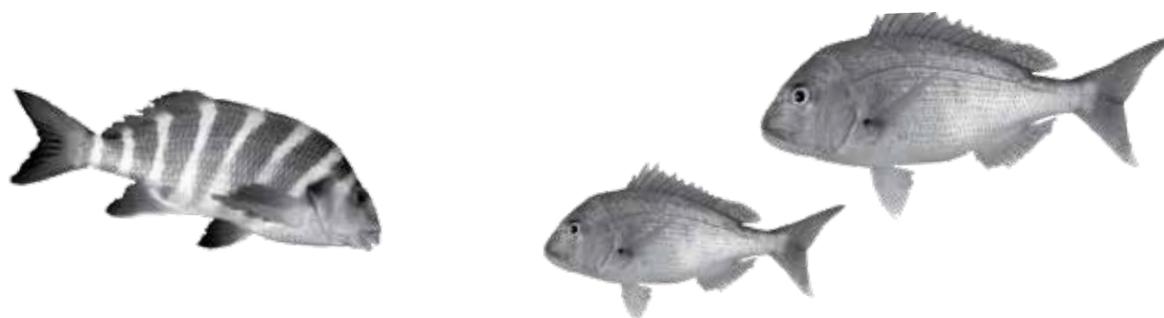
For the 2022/23 season we were underrepresented in the 19-25 and 71+ age ranges. We would like to increase participation in these age ranges for our next event season, in order to reach a wider Auckland audience.



AUT Pool Trainings

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
24th August 2022 21st September 2022	-	36	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis

To prepare for the 2021/22 season we ran two evening volunteer training sessions at AUT Millennium Pools. This allowed new volunteers to learn all about the upcoming season, how to do a safety briefing, guiding and snorkel essentials. A huge thank you goes to senior guides Ash, Guy and Evan for joining us for this session and imparting their expert guiding and freediving knowledge to our newest EMR volunteers.



Lake Pupuke Volunteer Training Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
6th November 2022	-	14	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis

We had a fabulous day at Lake Pupuke on the 6th November with volunteers joining us for our third Auckland Volunteer training day of the season!

We started the day with a theory-based workshop, going over the basics of snorkeling and freediving, ocean knowledge and snorkel equipment, health and safety and briefings before having a lovely pot luck lunch and getting in the water. Participants learnt about snorkeling at depth with Auckland Freediving Club's Ash King and in-water guiding and rescue drills with Sophie.





Kaipatiki Kayak Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
16th October 2022	48	6	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Koha Kahui McConnell

Back by popular demand! We had 48 people join us for an exploration of the Kaipātiki estuary, including a guided kayak instructed by Auckland Sea Kayaks with on water talks led by Neil Henderson from Kaipātiki Project. Neil talked about the importance of estuarine habitats as nurseries for baby fish, the challenges of land run off and sedimentation, and the fascinating migration of native tuna (eels) from local streams to the pacific islands and back.

In addition to kayaking participants were also led on a guided walk by Angela from Pest Free Kaipātiki, who shared the value of backyard trapping in order to protect local biodiversity, as well as participating in a freshwater monitoring workshop run by Whitebait Connection, who showed locals how to test the water quality of their waterways and how to identify freshwater fish and macroinvertebrates (including a very cute juvenile whitebait!).

Baptist Lobo | “Very informative event about conservation. Kayaking was a highlight, especially learning about the marine life.”

Anonymous | “My highlights were splashing my brother, kayaking and seeing the insects”





Rakino Marine Monitoring Workshop

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
22nd October 2022	14	10	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis

Our Auckland team had a blast over labour weekend helping Rakino locals and EMR volunteers up skill to become marine citizen scientists, in order to collect valuable observations on the abundance and diversity of rocky reef fish around Rakino Island. We started the day with a theory based workshop, going over the basics of how to perform our Reef Savers timed swim fish surveys and practicing our fish ID skills. Then we headed out into the water at Sandy Bay to complete some practice surveys on a couple transects, with a bit of extra time for a relaxed explore of the bay.

We had a stunning day with awesome conditions. Whilst snorkelling and doing our practice surveys we spotted parore, tāmure, spotties, whai repo/eagle rays, silver drummer, kokiri/leatherjackets, hiwihiwi/kelpfish, triplefins, red moki and jellyfish.

Anna Lydon | “It was very informative and has promoted discussion on Rakino - many people are keen to get underway with their own monitoring this summer.”

Silke Hartung | “I loved the whole day, great company, great to fresh up on critter knowledge, interesting to hear about the challenges of active restoration in the ocean - all sorts of new things I didn’t know before”



Manurewa Kayak Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
29th October 2022	30	6	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Brendan Doogan

Despite some overcast conditions we had a great time showcasing the Waimahia Inlet for our Manurewa Kayak Day. Whilst on the water participants got to learn about the importance of mangroves for estuarine health as well as hone their kayaking skills thanks to the expert instruction from Auckland Sea Kayaks. Many participants were learning to kayak for the first time so the shelter nature of the inlet made it the perfect spot for beginners.

When not on the water participants were able to learn more about the local waterways from Whitebait Connection and some of the local conservation initiatives being led by Te Pu-a-nga Maara, who also led a beach clean with a focus on microplastics, which is a major plastic pollutant for most Auckland beaches.

Charles Sorcer | "I loved kayaking with EMR because it was my first time."

Naumai-aaria | "I loved learning about the micro animals that play a huge role in our eco-system."

Tanya Sorrell | "Awesome day out. I'm so glad Auckland Council and Aktive sponsors these kinds of events. It is essential that Aucklanders are connected to the marine environment."



Motu Manawa Kayak Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
13th November 2022	98	6	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Brendan Doogan Koha Kahui McConnell



Our Auckland team had an awesome time running our 14th Annual Motu Manawa Kayak Day! We had 98 participants and 6 volunteers join us for an exploration of Auckland's most travelled through marine reserve - Motu Manawa, with guided kayak tours with Auckland Sea Kayaks and on water talks from Wendy from Friends of Oakley Creek, and EMR's Sophie and Wednesday. On land, participants joined Koha from Para Kore ki Tāmaki for a waste audit and games session and Brendan from Whitebait Connection to learn about freshwater monitoring and check out the local bug life!

Whilst on the water participants were able to explore up towards Pollen Island and Te Au-aunga Creek. We weaved our way through mangrove forests spotting a school of mullet, matuku moana - white faced herons flying overhead, nesting black backed gulls, noisy oyster catchers and diving kawau - pied shags.

Priya Adwani | "It was enjoyable experiencing a new activity, it was very fun."

Rahana Mohammed | "Always an awesome experience being out and learning with EMR. Love your work!"

C V R Shastry | "Learnt a great deal of local history and I am more eco-aware and eco-responsible now. Also kayaking feels easier now."

Tawharanui Snorkel Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
26th November 2022	155	20	Sophie Journée Teschna Christie Ella Walmsley Wednesday Davis

We were stoked to run our first snorkel day of the 2022/23 season at the Tāwharanui Marine Reserve. This is the first time EMR has ever been able to run a community snorkel day in the actual marine reserve and we were so excited to showcase this special part of Te Moananui-ā-Toi.

We had an awesome turn out despite the overcast day and choppy conditions, with 175 people being guided around this fully protected rocky reef habitat. Participants got to see huge tāmure/snapper, schools of sweep, lots of red moki, sassy hiwihiwi, sleeping whai repo/eagle rays and more.

We received lots of lovely feedback from participants about our epic volunteer snorkel guides, with the main comments being centred around feeling super safe whilst out exploring the reef and appreciating our volunteers passion for te moana. Also a special shot out to our safety kayak team who had to cope with the worst of the wind and took it like champs!



Anna Covic | “This was probably the most exciting thing I’ve done all year. Very fun and I felt very safe. Everyone is so kind, highly recommend. Thank you!”

Hine Morgan | “Everything was awesome, safety was perfect and the adventure was brilliant despite the choppy weather.”

Mishka Govender | “Teschna and Nicole were amazing, both looked after us and made me feel really safe even when I was nervous.”

Otata Rangatahi Snorkel

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
27th November 2022	10	-	Sophie Journée Koha Kahui McConnell

On the 27th November we join forces with the awesome Waiheke Marine Project and Noises Trust to take Waiheke based rangatahi and their guardians out on a snorkel adventure around Otata Island. From Matiatia wharf we ventured out to Otata Island with the help of Auckland Sea Shuttles. Once we arrived we were treated to a korero from Sue Neureuter from the Noises Trust who shared some of the challenges the marine environment around Otata and the Inner Gulf is facing and the need for more protection and restoration across Tikapa Moana/Hauraki Gulf.

Then it was time to get into our snorkel gear and go exploring around Blinking Eye Bay, where we saw a party of rays, parore, snapper, lots of kina, schooling sweep, red moki and more! We managed to finish up our snorkel just in time for the rain to start heading our way. We hopped back on the boat and went for a little tour around the island, on the lookout for kekeno/fur seals and spotted shags who like to frequent the island, with a nice bumpy ride back to Matiatia Wharf to finish up the day.



Jane Swan | "We all thought EMR was amazing at keeping us feeling safe and informed and balanced out with heaps of fun and adventure. My daughter has been going through a tough time so it was so special to see such a big smile on her face the whole day!"



Torbay Snorkel Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
17th December 2022	214	34	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Teschna Christie Ella Walmsley Koha Kahui McConnell

What a great way to end 2022! On the 17th December our Auckland team ran our biggest event of the season so far with 248 people getting out to explore the Tor at Waiake Beach. For many participants it was their first experience snorkelling and seeing the underwater world hidden beneath the ocean's surface! Despite the poor visibility, participants were able to spot nudibranchs, spotties, sweep, parore, starfish of all shapes and sizes, and some lucky participants even spotted an eagle ray!

We partnered up with Whitebait Connection to provide information stalls alongside the snorkeling, complete with macroinvertebrates from the local catchment to highlight the connection of water between the land and sea.

We received lots of lovely feedback from participants about our amazing volunteer guides and their awesome mahi to help you feel safe and supported while out exploring the reef life and appreciating our crew and their passion for te moana!

Sadaf Balsari | "Knowledgeable group of instructors and volunteers. Koha, Kai and Nishant were great. Very accomodating to first timers, would love to come again."

The Botros Family | "Great event. Real sense of community, staff are very helpful and very patient and welcoming".



Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
9th March 2023	53	10	Sophie Journée Ella Walmsley Koha Kahui McConnell

During Seaweek we hosted our first ever Torbay Night Snorkel and it was a blast! We had an awesome turnout and took 63 people exploring Torbay reef by torch light. It was a beautifully still night and we got treated to a stunning orange full moon. During the twilight snorkel participants spotted schools of parore, spotties, sleepy goatfish, nudibranchs, and whilst on the night snorkel we visited by curious piper, a huge short stingray, and even a little bit of bioluminesce!



Arnold Quhu | "This was so much fun! I have always wanted to snorkel at night but never had the confidence to do it myself. I can't wait to volunteer for you guys you all look like you have some much fun."

Anonymous | "Great guide! Silke was so knowledgable and made us enjoy it even more!"

Waiheke Events

Event	Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
Marine Monitoring Workshop	13th January 2023	6	3	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis
Waiheke Day and Night Snorkel	14th January 2023	207	26	Sophie Journée Ella Walmsley Koha Kahui McConnell
Te Matuku Paddle Day	15th January 2023	24	3	Sophie Journée Koha Kahui McConnell Teschna Christie

Our Auckland team had a stunning weekend on Waiheke running 4 events and getting 270 people out experiencing te moana first hand. We began on Friday with a Marine Monitoring Workshop aimed at teaching locals and volunteers how to survey fish populations on rocky reefs. After being introduced to the survey method, practicing their fish ID skills and going over essential water safety messages participants got to practice their new found surveying skills whilst snorkelling the rocky reef at Enclosure Bay.

The next day we ran our annual Waiheke Snorkel Day at Enclosure Bay, with gorgeous weather and great visibility snorkellers were able to spot lots of rays, snapper, parore, spotties and more! Whilst not in the water participants could join in on a raranga and rock painting workshop run by Leigh Tokirau from Ngāti Paoa ki Waiheke. As the sun set we transitioned into our twilight and night snorkels. Snorkellers got to see the reef come alive by torch light and even got a glimpse of some bioluminescence.

On the Sunday we ended our jam packed weekend of ocean exploring with a Paddle Day at Te Matuku marine reserve at the far end of Waiheke. Participants got to weave there way through the mangroves spotting wriggling tuna/eels, jumping makawhiti/mullet, soaring matuku moana/white faced heron and perching kotare/kingfisher.

Sybil Chang | "Gained alot of experience and knowledge about the local marine life. I really enjoyed snorkelling and gaining basic information on ocean first aid"

Kevin McElroy | "I'm very impressed with your operation. Our kids (5,7 and 9) were apprehensive but they got in and smashed it. We all had a blast!"

Jo Graham | "Totally the best snorkel we have done here. Awesome guide - careful but still let us have some fun. Thanks Ash! :-)"

Savanna Stent | "Amazing experience, fun and educational. Would do again in a heartbeat."

Sandra Otto | "Great discussions for more awareness and action for marine conservation."



Papakura Kayak Days

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
22nd January 2023	50	2	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Koha Kahui McConnell Brendan Doogan
4th June 2023	48	2	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis

In January and June the Auckland team held our Papakura Kayak Days. We were treated to some stunning weather for both events in order to explore the beautiful Pahurehure Inlet with the Auckland Sea Kayaks crew, launching from Bottle Top Bay boat ramp. 98 people joined us on this fun filled adventure, learning about the estuary's ecology and biodiversity. While paddling next to the mangroves participants were able to spot kotare/kingfisher, kahuruhuru/pied shag, white fronted tern and royal spoonbill.

Whilst on land Koha from Para Kore Ki Tāmaki, led a waste wise workshop, showing participants the importance of proper rubbish sorting in order to divert waste from landfill. We also had Wednesday from Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust showing people some weird and wonderful ocean critters from her taonga box and little freshwater critters collected from the local waterways.

Lia Thomas | "Being from Papakura it was special to explore a local area - the Pahurehure inlet. Seeing the marine artefacts and learning more about these species, the freshwater monitoring and seeing the bugs was interesting."

Yoku Lee | "Well explained, passionate and knowledgeable crew. Well prepared. Thank you, I learnt alot today"

Minerva Kaur | "Thank you for supporting us through this experience. My children have now become keen to be the guardians of the living world around us. "



Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
19th February 2023	167	10	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Teschna Christie Ella Walmsley

We were finally able to get back in the water after all the extreme weather that had accrued at the beginning of February. We had an awesome turn out to our first ever Campbells Bay Snorkel Day! 177 people were able to explore this urban rocky reef with the help of our epic volunteer guides, spotting kina, starfish, triplefins, goatfish and more! Whilst not in the water participants could learn about their local streams and waterways from Whitebait Connection and helped remove rubbish from the beach with Para Kore Ki Tāmaki.



Clare Brockway | “Love snorkelling with EMR. Such a great experience for old and young”

Karen Prins | “We loved meeting Sammy the starfish! Wednesday was an awesome instructor and really helped our 11yo overcome her fear.”

Anthony Fong | “The whole family really enjoyed the snorkelling! Such a great experience! Thank you so much”

Anonymous | “Becky was awesome, super helpful and made us all feel safe. Bhavik was really patient with the kids. Thanks heaps!”

Takapuna Snorkel and Rockpooling Days

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
4th March 2023	162	11	Sophie Journée Teschna Christie Wednesday Davis
8th June 2023	20	3	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Koha Kahui McConnell

To kick off Seaweek 2023 we ran our ever popular Takapuna Snorkel Day. We were super excited to take 176 people out to explore the reef. For many participants, it was their first experience snorkelling and seeing the underwater world hidden beneath the ocean's surface! Unfortunately the conditions were not ideal for spotting fish, however we enjoyed showing people how to improve their snorkelling skills and learn more about the unsung heroes of the ocean rimurimu/seaweed.

Then to celebrate World Ocean Day in June we ran our first ever rockpooling event at Takapuna. Takapuna is one of the best spots for rockpooling due to the volcanic formation of the rock creating many natural pools, cracks and crevices, perfect for marine critters to hide away in. Participants spotted a plethora of marine life in the tidal zone and helped contribute to the collection of biodiversity data that is used to inform future marine conservation efforts.



Anonymous | "We loved this! Saw creatures we had never seen before and Sophie was awesome and super knowledgeable. I can't wait to back and explore again!"

Kelly-Maree | "Knowledgeable guides, always good to learn about your local environment"

Vigineshwar | "It was a wonderful experience, Guy's crew was very supportive and friendly"

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
5th March 2023	158	11	Sophie Journée Koha Kahui McConnell Wednesday Davis Kate McKessar

We were stoked to run our first ever Lake Pupuke Snorkel and Kayak Day on Sunday, taking 110 people snorkelling and 48 people kayaking throughout the day. For many participants, it was their first experience snorkelling or kayaking in/on a lake! We were treated to blue skies and surprisingly good visibility for the lake. Participants learnt about the impacts of invasive weeds and pest fish on Pupukemoana from Aotearoa Lakes and then got to test out their ID skills in the water with our snorkel guides. Alongside snorkelling we had the awesome team from Auckland Sea Kayaks leading a guided kayak across the lake with commentary from Aotearoa Lakes. For those who wanted to stay dry we had kairaranga Shelley and Jodi-Ann leading a raranga workshop, teaching the tikanga around harakeke harvesting and some simple weaving techniques to create fun reusable plastic free alternatives to every day items.

Whilst not kayaking, snorkelling or weaving participants got to roam around the various education stalls set up by Pupuke Bird Song Trust, explore the Pumphouse via a guided tour from Mags Delaney-Moffatt, listen to live music put on by Takapuna North Community Trust, get in touch with nature based play with Harko Brown and enjoy a yummy sausage sizzle and cold drink courtesy of the local school.



Elena Wu | “Great event, extremely well organised. First time in the lake despite having lived here several times! Brilliant, engaging instructor Koha! Was amazing, with my 7 year old also was a bit scared but loved it in the end.”

Tegan Tehei | “Snorkelling was awesome and learning about what different types of weeds live in the lake.”

Poppy Taggart | “I liked snorkelling for my first time. Wednesday was a nice instructor.”

Goat Island Snorkel Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
11th March 2023	279	23	Sophie Journée Ella Walmsely Koha Kahui McConnell Wednesday Davis Samara Nicholas

What a way for the Auckland team to wrap up Seaweek 2023 by taking a record breaking 302 people snorkelling in Aotearoa's oldest marine reserve, Te Hāwere-a-Maki/Goat Island! With awesome visibility and beautiful blue skies snorkellers were able to spot huge tāmure/snapper, snoozing whai repo/eagle rays, schooling blue maomao, sassy hiwhiwi/kelpfish and more! For many this was their first time experiencing a marine reserve, and they were blown away at the abundance and size of the fish compared to their local non-protected reefs.



Benjamin Jeffares | "Great instructors and a well oiled event!"

Priya Bhikiatha | "I love and want to protect it more each time I go in and so do my girls"

Lauren McCann | "First time in the ocean and snorkelling. I felt so safe and had a blast!"

Māngere Kayak Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
25th March 2023	68	2	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Ella Walmsley Koha Kahui McConnell

Last Sunday we had the pleasure of taking 70 people kayaking on the Manukau Harbour, launching for Kiwi Esplanade Reserve in Māngere Bridge. We partnered with Friends of the Farm, Whitebait Connection, Auckland Sea Kayaks and Para Kore ki Tāmaki in order to showcase the local catchment, wildlife and how to look after this special part of Tāmaki Makaurau.

The awesome crew from Auckland Sea Kayaks led a guided kayak along the coastline next to Ambury Farm, with on water commentary from Janine representing Friends of the Farm and Wednesday and Sophie from Experiencing Marine Reserves. Participants spotted pied shags, white faced heron, yellow eye mullet and white fronted tern whilst paddling the coastline, with many learning to kayak for the first time. This coastline is a critical shore and sea bird nesting area and participants were able to learn how to do their bit to keep this fragile habitat safe and protected.

On land we had Ella from Whitebait Connection leading a freshwater monitoring workshop, where participants learnt what lives in their local waterways and how to protect these important freshwater habitats. We also had Koha from Para Kore Ki Tāmaki leading a waste wise workshop, helping participants reduce household rubbish and divert waste from landfill.



Malachi Te Pania | "Loved the kayaking! All was very educational. Enjoyed learning about our harbour and also waste management, was very helpful. Thank you! Fabulous."

Miriam Kolio | "Had an amazing experience, first time kayaking and would love to do it again. Thank you for an amazing day."

Noeah Kaitiaki Liumaehetao Le'cio | "I liked paddling with my mum."

Shakespear Snorkel Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
26th March 2023	178	11	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Ella Walmsley Teschna Christie Koha Kahui McConnell

On Sunday we had another great turn out for our Shakespear Snorkel Day with 189 people joining us in exploring Army Bay reef on the Whangapāroa Peninsular. We had participants who had joined us for our Goat Island Snorkel also come to our Shakespear Snorkel and were able to compare a protected reef to a non protected reef. Many noted that there was less abundance and diversity of marine life at Army Bay compared to Goat Island, however snorkellers were still able to spot triplefins, sea hares, starfish, spotties, parore and even an eagle ray!

We partnered up with Whitebait Connection to provide an information stall alongside the snorkelling, and participants were also able to do a beach clean up with some spot prizes up for grabs.

We received lots of lovely feedback from participants about our amazing volunteer guides and their awesome mahi to help you feel safe and supported while out exploring the reef life. A special shout out to our land based and kayak support volunteers also helping to keep everyone safe and comfortable in the water.



Maggie Qu | "I enjoyed the event very much, My team leader Wednesday is so helpful, I felt very safe and she is so patient to help me overcome my fear."

Oscar Bax Harding | "I loved seeing the sealife and being in my happy place, the outdoors."

Rotoroa Snorkel Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
15th April 2023	69	10	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis

Despite very windy conditions we were able to make the most of our Rotoroa Snorkel Day on Saturday by tucking into Maimai Bay to snorkel and experience what an inner gulf reef can look like outside of a protected area.

Some participants spotted large stingrays in the shallows, tiny triple fins, starfish, kina, and anemone, whilst also learning about the impacts of environmental threats like mediterranean fanworm, sedimentation and plastic pollution. Whilst roaming the pest free island sanctuary people also spotted rare endemic birds like takahe, tieke (saddleback) and pōpokotea (whiteheads), highlighting the contrast between the protected status of Rotoroa Island and the non-protected status of the water surrounding the island.



Campbell | “Awesome day. Even though the visibility was next to nothing, my 12 year old daughter said it was the best weekend in her entire life. And it’s only saturday..”

Nehuen Lopez | “I really enjoyed snorkelling here and wish to do it again sometime. Thank you so much”

Whangateau Snorkel and Kayak Days

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
23rd April 2023	56	9	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis
9th July 2023	48	1	Sophie Journée Aileen Sweeney

On the 23rd April we held our annual Whangateau Snorkel Day in memory of marine conservationist Dr Roger Grace. Roger was a founding trustee of the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust and spent many hours in the estuary doing his PhD research in 1966, pioneering science by SCUBA diving. Several years ago the Roger Grace Memorial Fund was created to continue to make waves for marine conservation.

We were able to show 114 people the wonders of this estuary, with snorkellers and layakers spotting mantis shrimps, triplefins, makawhiti (yellow eyed mullet), parore, and paketi (spot-ties), pied shag gannets and more. These events provides an opportunity to educate the public about the importance of mangrove forests as fish nurseries and to prevent coastal erosion, while immersing them in the habitat. We also covered the cockle closure and what that marine protection means in relation to water clarity.

Whitebait Connection- was on hand to showcase the freshwater habitats that feed into the harbour and educate people on how to protect these habitats for threatened native wildlife.

Lani-rain Feltham | "Learning about the area, getting kids in water and gear and giving them a chance to learn! Was excellent. Amazing guide."

Kat Goodard | "Sophie made Levi (5 years old) feel very safe in the water and was full of fun facts and enthusiam!"



Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
14th May 2023	23	13	Sophie Journée Koha Kahui McConnell

We were super excited to take 36 people out to explore one of the most spectacular marine reserve in Aotearoa! We had a magical day out at Aorangi Island, part of the Poor Knights Marine Reserve. Tucking into Maroro Bay ready for a guided snorkel throughout the stunning rocky reefs, archways and caves that make up the bay. Participants spotted large schools of blue maomao and two spotted demoiselles hiding in the archways and caves, with streams of dappled light reflecting off their scales. We also had curious sandager's wrasse come say hello as well as huge tamure/snapper and many other rocky reef fish.

After finishing our snorkel our awesome skipper Steve took us on a tour of Rikoriko cave where we tested out the epic acoustics, as well as visiting the always impressive Southern Arch. Whilst making our way back to Tutukaka marina we took a detour to explore the Pinnacles and spotted a large gannet colony, as well as a super rare seabird only found at the Poor Knights and the Kermadecs, a noddy!



Tiritiri o te moana Waipiti - Kelly Martin | "Swimming through the cave and seeing myriads of fish sheltering by the rocks was a definite highlight. Poor Knights were everything I had imagined them to be."

Peter Mayo | "Great day out. Beautiful area to snorkel in. I support the creation of more and larger marine reserves."

Anahere-a-nia DJ Ngawaiwa Martin | "I loved going into the caves, I am interested in becoming a volunteer cause they looed like they were having so much fun!"

Okura Paddle Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
15th May 2023	35	2	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Koha Kahui McConnell

On Sunday the 14th May our Auckland team hosted our annual Okura Paddle Day showcasing the beautiful Okura estuary marine reserve and the challenges facing this fragile ecosystem. We had 35 people join us in exploring and learning about the local environment, with expert paddle boarding instruction from Mission Bay Watersports, and on water talks from Experiencing Marine Reserves crew member Sophie and local volunteer Olivia. We spotted jumping mullet, swooping kōtare/kingfisher and flitting pīwakawaka/fantails whilst enjoying the peaceful serenity of the estuary in the afternoon light.

When not on the water participants got to learn about their local freshwater ways with Whitebait Connection's Wednesday and knowledgeable volunteer Spencer, as well as learning about marine biodiversity and the impacts of overfishing from EMR crew member Koha.



Vera Scheffer | "A great experience combining knowledge and fun. It was helpful to play a game to understand what you just heard."

Rene de Joux | "Nic and Paul were great, felt safe throughout. Enjoyed the education prior, very informative."

Kristine Joy Choi | "Great experience! Gained lots of knowledge and awareness of biodiversity in our moana."

Tahuna Torea Kayak Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
27th May 2023	48	2	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Aileen Sweeny

We had a great day exploring the Tāmaki Estuary taking 48 participants out kayaking around Tahuna Torea Reserve. We partnered with Whitebait Connection and Auckland Sea Kayaks in order to showcase the local catchment, wildlife and how to look after this special part of Tāmaki Makaurau.

The awesome crew from Auckland Sea Kayaks led a guided kayak along the coastline next to Tahuna Torea Reserve, with on water commentary from EMR crew member Wednesday. Participants spotted kāruhiruhi/pied shags, matuku moana/white faced heron, makawhiti/yellow eye mullet and kōtuku ngutupapa/royal spoonbill whilst paddling the coastline, with many learning to kayak for the first time. This coastline is a critical shore and sea bird nesting area and participants were able to learn how to do their bit to keep this fragile habitat safe and protected.

On land we had Aileen and Kate from Whitebait Connection leading a freshwater monitoring workshop, where participants learnt what lives in their local waterways and how to protect these important freshwater habitats. We also had EMR crew member Sophie leading a guided walk, showcasing the diverse range of coastal habitats and native flora and fauna that call Tahuna Torea Reserve home.



Anonymous | “Wonderful event highlighting the unique flora and fauna of Auckland’s estuaries.”

Sudharna | “Very good! 6 weeks new to NZ and I love this! :-)”

Mousa Mousa | “Thanks sooo much to Wednesday, Richard and Paul for the informative, enjoyable experience.”

Pourewa, Kaipatiki Awaruku Spotlighting

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
19th May 2023	37	-	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Ella Walmsley
19th June 2023	30	1	Sophie Journée Wednesday Davis Ella Walmsley
28th June 2023	31	2	Sophie Journée Kate McKessar

We have had a blast over May and June running three community spotlighting events, exploring Pourewa, Kaipātiki and Awaruku Creek. We partnered up with Eastern Bays Songbird, the Kaipātiki Project and Restore Hibiscus & Bays in order to highlight some of the awesome conservation work being done by these groups in the local area.

We were treated to an abundance of wildlife on show including kōura, banded kokopu, mayflies, tuna/eels, weta, spiders and more! Of course one of the show stoppers were the stunning glow worms, which live on the underside of banks and cliffs next to the streams in large colonies. We had commentary from the Mountains to Sea crew, Kaipātiki Project crew and Restore Hibiscus and Bays crew as well as EMR volunteer Spencer who had been helping to monitor the trap lines in Eskdale Reserve and was able to demonstrate how the possums trap work, with a loud bang! We also had Michelle from Eastern Bays Songbird bring her pekapeka/bat detector to check if there are any signs of pekapeka living in Kepa Bush.



Anonymous | "Great to hear use of Te Reo, learnt lots, the pace was perfect, allowing plenty of time to spot all the tiny littler critters."

Sarah Crowley and Ruby Alder | "Great for kids, we saw weta, mayflies and shrimps!"

Mary-Anne Goodin | "Amazing to see the life after dark in our local place, thank you to everyone!"

Amy Koroi | "Glow worms were amazing!! Ka rawe, ngā mihi."

Waiwera Kayak Day

Date	Participants	Volunteers	EMR Crew
24th June 2023	48	2	Sophie Journée Koha Kahui McConnell Wednesday Davis

We ran our first Waiwera Kayak day to great success by taking 50 people kayaking up the Waiwera river, learning about the ecology and biodiversity present in this important marine and freshwater ecosystems and safely connecting with the water. Participants spotted taranui/caspian tern, kāruhiruhi/pied shag, matuku moana/white faced heron, immortal jellyfish, and more, with many also learning to kayak for the first time! We had University of Auckland masters student and EMR volunteer Olivia Avery chatting with participants on water about her research on Wenderholm Regional park, which borders Waiwera estuary. We also managed to do an impromptu clean up by finding a bass guitar and a bucket of paint hiding amongst the mangroves.

Elizmari Badenhorst | “I enjoyed it and gained lots of knowledge. I will do this again anytime, the crew were really friendly.”

Elana Theron | “Great day out, nice friendly guides, even convinced the teens to smile.”



Te Ika o Te Tau - Fish of the Year 2023

Throughout March we ran our annual Te Ika o Te Tau competition in order to raise awareness for our unique ika! We had 39 Ika in the running for the top spot, with many organisations coming on board to back their favourite. We had a whopping 2491 entries come in breaking our previous record of 781 in 2022! Those who voted went in the draw to win one of our spot prizes, which included vouchers to the Goat Island Marine Discovery Center, Manta Watch adoption pack, Wilderlab eDNA kit and more!

Our 2023 winner was the Oceanic Manta Ray backed by Manta Watch! Manta rays had been a clear favourite from the start of the competition, with 661 people voting for manta rays as one of their favourite ika! We are thrilled to see so much love for our graceful ocean giants, which undertake huge voyages throughout our oceans. As marine megafauna, they are ocean sentinels telling us about the environment they live in.

In second place, with 511 votes is our incredible tuna - longfin eel backed by Kelly Tarlton's Marine Wildlife Trust. There are fewer eels today because of the loss of wetlands and historical commercial overfishing. They are migratory fishes starting their lives in the Pacific Ocean and travelling across the ocean back to New Zealand's waterways to find suitable adult habitat in lakes and rivers where they live until they undertake their migration back to the sea to spawn/breed and die.

In third place, with 412 votes is the beautiful manaia - big belly seahorsewhi were backed by Sustainable Coastlines! Big-bellied seahorses are the only seahorse species found around the New Zealand coastline and are one of the largest species in the world - growing up to 35cm!



Event	Events	Hosts
Raranga - Weaving	4	Shelley, Waiata, Riria, Hugo, Arahi, Leigh and Jodi-Ann
Freshwater monitoring	10	Whitebait Connection Aotearoa Lakes
Waste minimisation and beach clean ups	3	Para Kore Ki Tamaki Te Pu-a-nga Maara
Guided Walks	5	Pest Free Kaipātiki, Pupuke Birdsong, Kaipātiki Project, Restore Hibiscus and Bays, Eastern Bays Songbird

This season we were super excited to host raranga (weaving) and poi making workshops as well as guided walks alongside our events. Many of our events were designed to have a rotating tasters of activities - with participants being able to participate in a variety of experiences both on and off the water. These events aimed to encourage holistic engagement with te taiao.

Local kairaranga (weavers) led participants in short lessons around the tikanga of harakeke harvesting, preparation and weaving. Participants learnt to make a variety of woven creations including kono (bags), putiputi (flowers), tipare (headband), Matariki stars and ika (fish). In addition to the weaving workshops we also had Para Kore Ki Tamaki and Te Pu-a-nga Maara led participants in waste minimisation workshops and beach clean ups. In order to highlight more of the landbased ecology on our events we partnered with a number of local experts to provide participants with guided walks, through native bush, wetlands, reserves and foreshores. In addition to guided walks we also partnered with Whitebait Connection and Aotearoa Lakes in order to run freshwater monitoring workshops, helping to teach participants how they can monitor and help be kaitiaki/guardians of their local waterways.

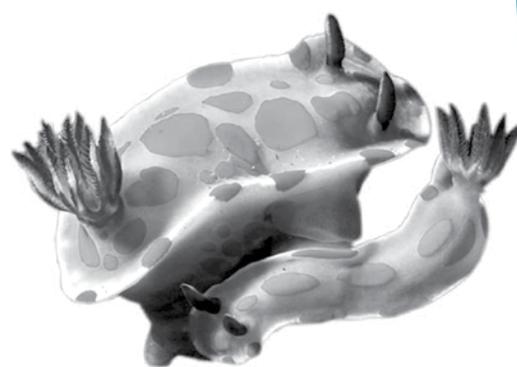


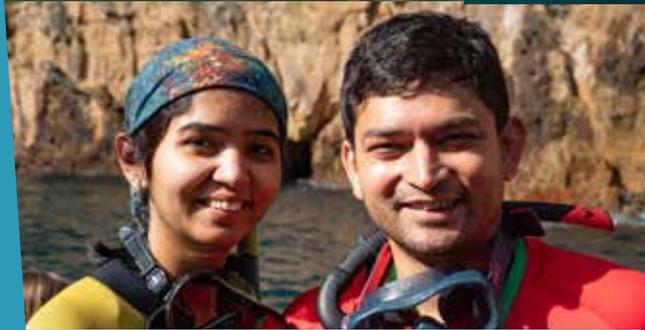
EMR Volunteering

We are exceptionally lucky to have 92 volunteers contribute to this season, totalling 1850 hours of time! All their hard work and passion is so valuable to our organisation and we greatly appreciate their contribution to creating future kaitiaki for te moana. They assisted as guides on snorkel days, wrangled boogie boards on the safety kayaks, washed and organised snorkel gear, buddied with participants on kayak days, helped us make ratio on school delivery days and helped us with trailer maintenance.

Our top 10 volunteers have contributed 730 hours. We are incredibly grateful for their support with many acting as senior guides, supporting and teaching our newest volunteers how to guide participants!

Ranking	Name	Hours
1	Becky Carton	116
2	Silke Hartung	107
3	Yolandi Badenhorst	92
4	Jan Dutton	67
5	Cheng Xu	62
6	Roshantha Polhena	59
7	Summer Johnston	58
8	Natasha Pareraukawa	58
9	Guy Pryor	57
10	Mike Simpson	54





Mountains to Sea School Programme

We have delivered our Mountains to Sea school programme to 13 schools this season, reaching a total of 1042 students and 244 adults. This is a fully funded programme that is targeted to schools that would otherwise not have the opportunity to experience this type of hands-on learning. Coordinators from EMR, WBC and Para Kore Ki Tāmaki came together to introduce the students to marine/freshwater biodiversity as well as the potential impacts humans are having on these environments. Through their theory sessions in the classroom and their local investigations to beaches, mangroves and streams these students slowly started to gain a greater understanding of some of the challenges facing their local environment. Waterlea School, Panama Road and Western Springs College were also able to include kayaking into their local investigation, gaining a different perspective of their local taiao, with some students learning to kayak for the first time. We partnered with Auckland Sea Kayaks to able to provide this additional activity. We also partner with Sustainable Coastlines to include litter Intelligence surveying up at Goat Island for Waterlea and Papatoetoe West Schools.



To compare their local environments to a protected site these students travelled to Goat Island Marine Reserve to discover some of the benefits of protection and to witness the ocean in its more natural state. Many of these students will have never been to a marine reserve before and many students had never even swam in the ocean before. This was highlighted by their beaming smiles as they saw the underwater world for the first time. Utilizing these local and marine reserve experiences the students then started to workshop and come up with action projects that would help protect, restore and enhance their local marine and freshwater ecosystems. Many students found that waste was a key issue for them and their community and set about creating initiatives and raising awareness for reducing waste in the environment. Other students focused on marine protection campaigns, restoring native fish spawning habitats, removing weed species and monitoring water quality in their local waterways. We were really impressed with how driven and passionate these students were and how they harnessed their skills in other areas like media, music and technology to create some outstanding actions.



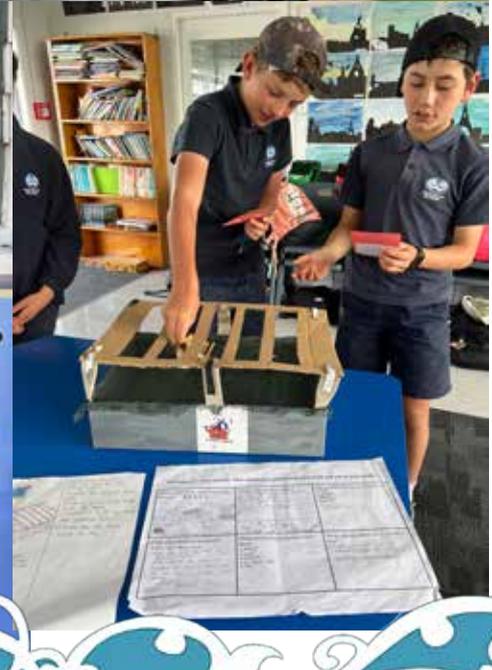
School/group	Students/ participants	Teachers and parent helpers
Wesley Intermediate	115	11
Waterlea School	160	86
Panama Road School	131	35
Kura Kaupapa Māori o Piripono	35	10
Papatoetoe West School	200	38
Meadowbank School	25	13
St Josephs School	18	11
St Thomas' School	130	12
Ruapotaka School	58	6
Glenbrae School	55	7
St Pius X School	67	6
Western Springs College	24	5
Alfriston College	24	4
Total reach = 1,286		

Action project Highlights:

Across our Auckland schools there were many students that completed individual as well as group actions to help enhance, protect and restore their local taiao. Some examples of student actions included weeding native plants around local waterways, riparian plantings, marine education websites, digital games, community posters, litta trap designs, stormwater art, letters to council, wai care monitoring, MM2 surveys, fundraisers, pest monitoring, beach clean ups, and more. The main environmental threat areas that were covered by students were plastic pollution, stormwater pollution, overfishing, lack of marine protected areas, lack of local biodiversity, loss of habitat and environmental pests. With some extra funding from the Maungakiekie Tāmaki Local Board with were able to supply Ruapotaka and St Pius X Schools with litta traps to help stop school based litter from entering the stormwater drains

Arahi (Western Springs College) | "I loved snorkelling at Goat Island. I had so much fun and it was a very engaging way to learn things I was interested in, like the activities we did such as identifying species. It was a great way to bond with the class and learn things together. Also I saw an eagle ray when snorkelling and it was so cool!"





Action Project highlights

Kina Wananga

During the April school holidays we teamed up with University of Auckland - Waipapa Taumata Rau, Goat Island Marine Discovery Centre, and Para Kore ki Tāmaki to bring together rangatahi from across Tāmaki Makaurau together to learn more about rocky reef restoration in Tikapa Moana Te Moananui-ā-Toi Hauraki Gulf, with a particular focus on kina and their impact on the rocky reef ecosystem.

University of Auckland lecturer Nick Shears and Phd student Kelsey Miller shared their work looking at the relationship between kina and diminishing kelp forests and how to restore reefs to a healthier balance. Rangatahi carried out experiments on kina collected from a healthy kelp forest compared to a kina barren to see the impacts of these two habitat types on kina health. Rangatahi also got to hear from Brianne who has been coordinating the Waiheke Marine Project's kelp gardeners group throughout the summer, aiming to reduce the number of kina on the rocky reef in Enclosure Bay, in the hopes that the kelp forests get a chance to grow back.

After their session in the lab rangatahi then got a chance to explore Goat Island marine reserve and observe kina in their natural habitat along with an array of other marine life that call Goat Island home. As an extra special bonus some of the rangatahi also got to learn about hydrophone research from Tim Haggart and University of Auckland Phd student Nakita Daniel, as well as getting the chance to make their own hydrophone to take home with them. Hydrophones are used in order to record the sounds that occur underwater, which can provide key insights on a variety of different marine issues.





Casual snorkel experiences and user paid programmes

In addition to our fully funded programmes, we also run casual snorkel experiences and user paid programmes. This helps to supplement our fully funded programmes and allows us to reach more students and their whānau. These user paid experiences include full EMR programmes, camps, youth programmes and NCEA snorkelling standards. We reached a total of 1,535 people through these experiences.

School/group	Students/ participants	Teachers and parent helpers
Kaipaki School	20	7
Hobsonville Point Primary School	70	11
Kristin School	74	8
St Dominics College	96	16
Albany Senior	20	3
Ecoquest	46	5
Whakatane Intermediate	50	13
Tamaki Sports	12	2
Whangaparaoa College	491	155
Warkworth Primary	178	57
Waiheke High School	59	10
Te Huruhi & Fossil Bay School	60	23
Green School	9	3
Young Ocean Explorers	15	4
Westlake Girls	16	2
Total reach = 1,535		





22 years of Experiencing Marine Reserves at the Poor Knights Islands

We ran our 22nd annual Poor Knights competition trip on Friday 12th May, sponsored by Dive! Tutukaka and The Bobby Stafford-Bush Foundation. We started our day with a minute's silence to show respect and aroha to Karnin and his whānau following the tragedy at Abbey Caves. Students came from as far north as Peria (Kaitiāia) and as far south as Dunedin to experience one of Aotearoa's best marine reserves. Students are selected based on action projects they have undertaken and the enthusiasm they show when studying & experiencing the marine environment.

For this year's trip we had 32 students and 30 guardians representing 26 schools from 7 regions of Aotearoa including Northland, Auckland, Taranaki, Gisborne, Wellington, Nelson/Tasman and Otago. Since 2002, we have taken representatives from 399 schools, totalling 563 students! Each student attends with a parent or guardian. We also had some second generation students attend as guardians! "Action projects this year included monitoring rimurimu with the Love Rimurimu project in Wellington, rahui monitoring, comparison of marine species at different areas, invasive species research, a kina barren board game, litter blitz with Sustainable coastlines, informative video about the impacts of microplastics and the local rahui says EMR founder Samara Nicholas. In addition to the opportunity to represent their school or region for the EMR ACTION prize, we offer the EMR Ocean Art prize. The Bobby Stafford-Bush Foundation supports this special prize for young kiwis that have experienced the marine environment with EMR and display that passion and experience through art.

To Paddy & The Bobby Stafford-Bush Foundation



Thank you so much for supporting us to keep growing and developing our programmes and events over the past nine years. Thanks to you, over 15,000 children and their whānau from all around Aotearoa have been able to experience our marine environment through our community events, school programmes and annual Poor Knights Trips. Your on going support has been greatly appreciated and has allowed EMR to continue to reach kiwi's from all backgrounds. Your funding of our new trailer gear set and uniforms has been extremely valuable in being able to continue our mahi. We wouldn't be where we are today without your generous contributions and we look forward to continuing to inspire kiwi's to become kaitiaki of te moana for many years to come.





Ollie Smith - St Thomas School - "Thank you for taking me on the best experience of my life so far. It was my first time at the Poor Knights and I liked all the different types of diversity of fish and seeing the schools of blue maomao swarmed around me. It was really exciting to be picked and it felt really special. I am an enviro leader and help do litterless lunches. I'm doing overfishing and raising awareness for my action project. The Poor Knights were definitely a lot different than my local area. My local area has lots of mud and my local area could look more lively if we banned fishing."

Bailey Liu - Glenbrae School - "This was my first ever trip to the Poor Knights, it was really cool. I got to see all the different kinds of fish and how to snorkel properly. It was quite different to Goat Island, this time the sea was a lot deeper, clearer and way more fish. I was really excited to be selected, for my action project I'm an enviroschool leader, I learn about wastes and rubbish. I want to make my community cleaner by picking up rubbish."



Tributes to Brian Stafford-Bush

It is with heavy heart that we say goodbye to our dear friend and ocean champion Brian Stafford-Bush. We have had a almost decade long relationship and with the support of the Bobby Stafford-Bush Foundation, we were able to expose thousands of families in Auckland to the underwater world and introduce the opportunity of bringing representatives from all over NZ from Stewart Island to Kaitaia for the ultimate marine experience at the Poor Knights Marine Reserve, since 2015. Moe moe ra Brian, you will be missed xx

“Our daughter deeply treasures her memories of her trip to the Poor Knights and they continue to trigger her interest in ecology and the marine world. She had the privilege of meeting Brian. We were struck by how he combined a very approachable and personable style with a deep commitment to making a difference. We feel very privileged to be among the numerous whanau who have benefitted from his vision and drive”

“I’m a 9-year-old Dunedin boy and I was on the trip this year. I was extremely nervous because had never snorkelled in the open water before and never been surrounded by schools of fish. I was lucky enough to be buddied up with Brian on the trip and he helped keep me calm in the water. He helped my confidence grow to a point where I could enter Shark Fin Cave and experience the light entering a cave and making the all fish sparkle. Thank you Brian for the once-in-a-lifetime experience”

“I had a lovely chat to Brian and Paddy at Schnappa Rock after the boat trip this year. They had so much passion and enthusiasm and you could really see the delight they took in providing such amazing opportunities to so many children (and the adults that come with them!). I’ll never forget the moment my son Ollie looked up from snorkelling and said “this is the best experience of my life so far”. For a child who has often been wary and anxious about new experiences, this was so special to hear him say this. This would not have been possible without the support of the Bobby Stafford-Bush Foundation and we will always be grateful that we got to be part of such an incredible opportunity”





"I'll never forget this experience. How great was it to share it with my mum!? This perfect day will inspire my art works in times to come"

"The support the Bobby Stafford-Bush Foundation has shown is underwritten by action and deeds of such value that they will remain with those children lucky enough to experience them for a lifetime. The opportunities and experiences afforded to those children (and parents) by the caring and selfless acts of Brian and the Bobby Stafford-Bush Foundation are completely priceless and give us all hope for a truly brighter, more sustainable, and more enlightened future. As a representative of the Trust Board, one of us was lucky enough to attend the dinner at Schnapper Rock following the trip to the Poor Knights (2023). The looks on the faces of the children, parents and caregivers betrayed nothing other than gratitude, wonder and respect for what Brian and the Bobby Stafford-Bush Foundation have done for them. Brian was a gift, and The Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust are truly grateful to have shared in the celebrations he brought with him"



Plans for the 2023-24 season

Next season we have 29 events planned for Auckland as well as the continuation of our Mountains to Sea school programmes and causal snorkel experiences, with an aim to reach 30 schools throughout the 2023/24 season. We are in the process on building a partnership with Young Ocean Explorers to offer school holiday programmes in order to increase our reach in Auckland. We would also like to continue to develop rangatahi mentorship in the Auckland region by partnering with local marae, alternative education providers and Uru Whakaaro to organise rangatahi specific training opportunities, wānanga, and sponsored event spots.

For our community events we have a couple of new locations that we will be adding for the 2023/24 season, including Motuora Island, Te Tinana, and Waikōwhai coast. We continue to have great success incorporating more collaboration into our community events, with local organisations and mana whenua providing land based activities like guided walks and workshops as well as on-water local knowledge. We would like to build on this momentum into the 2023/24 season and continue to increase our community event partnerships.

Volunteer recruitment will again be a big focus for our 2023/24 season as we are planning many events and would like to increase our community reach. Two pool based, one ocean based and one lake based training days are planned in the lead up to our summer events as well as throughout the season. Callum, our new volunteer coordinator, will be reaching out to local clubs, community groups, and universities to promote EMR volunteering. Last season we developed a new training module for our volunteers that has proved extremely useful. We will be adding to this resource by developing some complimentary training videos as well.

Finally we will continue to offer community based monitoring training to those that are interested as well as supporting the Wai Connection team with their catchment based project across Tāmaki Makaurau.



AUCKLAND SNORKEL & PADDLE SERIES 2023-24

Experiencing
Marine Reserves



Te Kura Moana

Experience the wonders of your local marine environment! The EMR programme has planned Community Guided Snorkel & Paddle Days around Auckland & Northland. We provide free hire of all snorkel/paddle equipment and provide experienced guides to lead your discovery.

Koha of cash, online or donations of time volunteering are appreciated for all events.

Snorkel Days*

- Tāwharanui Snorkel - Sat 11th Nov
- Motuora Snorkel - Sun 2nd Dec
- Otata Rangatahi Snorkel - Sat 16th Dec
- Waiake (Torbay) Snorkel - Sat 17th Dec
- Waiheke Day Snorkel - Sat 13th Jan
- Waiheke Night Snorkel - Sat 13th Jan
- Shakespear Snorkel - Sat 21st Jan
- Rototoa Snorkel - Sat 10th Feb
- Campbells Bay Snorkel - Sat 17th Feb
- Te Hāwera-a-Maki Snorkel - Sat 2nd Mar
- Whangateau Snorkel - Sun 3rd Mar
- Waiake (Torbay) Night Snorkel - Sun 3rd Mar
- Discover Takapuna Reef - Sat 9th Mar
- Discover Pupukemoana - Sat 23rd Mar
- Rotoroa Island Snorkel - Sat 6th Apr
- Poor Knights Snorkel - Sat 11th May

Kayak/Paddle Days*

- Waikōwhai Coast Kayak - Sun 15th Oct
- Tahuna Torea Kayak - Sat 18th Nov
- Manurewa-Kayak - Sun 26th Nov
- Te Matuku Paddle - Sun 14th Jan
- Okura Paddle - Sat 20th Jan
- Motu Manawa Kayak - Sat 3rd Feb
- Māngere Kayak - Sat 24th Feb
- Te Tinana Kayak - Sun 17th Mar
- Lake Pupuke Kayak - Sat 23rd Mar
- Papakura Paddle - Sat 27th Apr
- Kaipātiki Kayak - Sun 14th Apr
- Whangateau Kayak - TBC
- Waiwera Kayak - TBC
- Tāmaki River Kayak - TBC

The Bobby Stafford-Bush
FOUNDATION

Free
Ferry cost only
Discounted trip

* All events are subject to funding approval, stakeholder consultation and date changes

For event updates, registrations, weather calls and backup dates visit www.facebook.com/emr.mtsct or www.emr.org.nz or contact sophie@emr.org.nz

Version 1 - Updated October
See www.emr.org.nz for up to date information

Sponsors needed for
events



A huge thank you to our partners from the 2022/23 season!

Aotearoa Lakes
Auckland Council Sustainable Schools
Auckland freediving club
Auckland Sea kayaks
Auckland Sea shuttles
Auckland University Dive Club
Auckland Zoo
Charlie's Birds
Department of Conservation
Dive! Tutukaka
Dolphin Underwater Club
Eastern Bays Songbird
Friends of the Farm
Fullers 360
Goat Island Marine Discovery Centre
Global Dive
Kaipātiki Project
Kelly Tarltons Marine Wildlife Trust
Leigh Marine Lab
Friends of Awaruku
Friends of Te Auaunga/Oakley Creek
Friends of Okura Bush
MERC
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Restore Hibiscus and Bays
Rotoroa Trust
SUP Waiheke
Sustainable Coastlines
Tamaki Sports
Te Pu-a-nga Maara
Urban Ark
Uru Whakaaro
Waiheke Dive
Waiheke Marine Project
Waiheke Resources Trust
Whangateau Holiday Park
Whitebait Connection
Wildlife Shaun
Young Ocean Explorers



A huge thank you to the funders/sponsors of the 2021/22 season

Auckland Council Parks
Auckland Council Local Boards
Tu Manawa Active Aotearoa/Aktive
Bobby Stafford Bush Foundation
Water Safety
Fortuna Foundation
Foundation North
Lottieries
Gulf Innovation Fund Together
Eastern Bays Songbird
Fullers 360
Dive! Tutukaka
Wettie
Uru Whakaaro
Recreation Solutions





Auckland team 2022/23 highlights

Sophie Journee (Auckland Manager) | "I am really proud of what our Auckland team was able to achieve this season. With multiple challenges thrown our way we rose to the occasion and even managed to break our previous events record! A couple of stand out moments of the season for me was running our first ever Lake Pupuke Snorkel and Kayak Day and breaking our previous event attendance record for our Goat Island Snorkel Day."



