



## Look after yourself

The coastline provides many opportunities for enjoyment – but make sure that your visit is a safe one.

- Be sun smart - New Zealand has the highest skin cancer rate in the world and sunburn can occur all year round. Make sure you slip, slop, slap and wrap, and remember to reapply sunscreen throughout the day.
- Many coastal cliffs are quite unstable and can collapse without warning. Avoid standing close to the edges of sea cliffs or overhangs. Never try to climb a cliff.
- Be water safe – be careful of waves, especially when fishing and exploring rock platforms. Watch for the tide coming in.
- Not all Northland beaches are patrolled by Surf Lifeguards. Always watch for rips and never swim alone. If you are at a patrolled beach, swim between the flags.
- Be aware of boating rules and regulations. Always observe the rules of the harbour and coast and remember the 5 knot rule. Travel 5 knots (walking pace) within 200m of shore or a structure, within 50m of another boat, raft or person in the water and within 200m of a boat flying a dive flag.

For tips on water safety go to:  
[www.watersafety.org.nz/goodadvice](http://www.watersafety.org.nz/goodadvice)

*We can all continue to enjoy the best our coastal environment has to offer if we all do our part and Care for our Coast.*

*CoastCare is working with the community to help solve many of the issues mentioned in this brochure.*

*To find out more about CoastCare Northland visit [www.nrc.govt.nz](http://www.nrc.govt.nz) or phone 0800 002 004.*

### Northland Regional Council Offices

#### Opua Office

Unit 10, Opua Marine Park, Opua 0200.  
Telephone: 09 402 7516 Facsimile: 09 402 7510

#### Kaitaia Office

192 Commerce Street, Kaitaia 0410.  
Telephone: 09 408 6600 Facsimile: 09 408 6601

#### Dargaville Office

61B Victoria Street, Dargaville 0310.  
Telephone: 09 439 3300 Facsimile: 09 439 3301

#### Main Office

36 Water St, Whangarei.  
Private Bag 9021, Whangarei 0140.  
Telephone: 09 438 4639 Facsimile: 09 438 0012

Email: [mailroom@nrc.govt.nz](mailto:mailroom@nrc.govt.nz)

Freephone: 0800 002 004

24/7 Environmental Hotline: 0800 504 639

Website: [www.nrc.govt.nz](http://www.nrc.govt.nz)



Caring for Northland and its environment



# Act now – protect Northland's Coast

*Clean beaches... clear water... a rich variety of marine life... as Northlanders we have long enjoyed - and come to expect - these things from our coast.*

But unless we all start to take more responsibility for our environment, some of what we take for granted may not last. Pressures on our coastline are enormous and environmental impacts are increasing every year due to our expanding population.

The way we use the coast today will determine what is left for future generations.

This guide shows how we can minimise and reduce our impact on the coastal environment while still enjoying what it has to offer.

**If you want to help make a difference, join a CoastCare or conservation group. Phone the Northland Regional Council on 0800 002 004 or email [mailroom@nrc.govt.nz](mailto:mailroom@nrc.govt.nz).**



## A habitat = a home

A habitat provides the right combination of food and protection for living things to survive. By conserving coastal habitats we help protect many animals and plants. A number of coastal habitats, such as sand dunes, salt marshes and rockpools, are especially sensitive to disturbance by humans. Take special care in these areas.

### Sand dunes

Coastal sand dunes are important as they act as buffer zones or shock absorbers between waves and the land, protecting people and their houses and property from storm surges, cyclones and even tsunamis.

Sand dunes are held together by the plants that grow on them and are extremely sensitive to both vehicle and foot traffic. Once vegetation is destroyed there is little to prevent the sand from blowing away or being washed away by waves.

- Use designated tracks when going to or from the beach to avoid damaging fragile plants and birds that live in and on dunes.
- Respect beach regeneration areas. Dunes need grasses and plants to hold them in place.
- Don't drive on sand dunes. Make sure all vehicles and motorbikes use designated access-ways to get to the beach.
- Use designated tracks to get horses to and from the beach. Ride below the high tide mark.
- Boogie boards damage vegetation; ride the waves, not the dunes.
- Don't remove sand, shells, pebbles or boulders from beaches as this can worsen erosion and other problems. A resource consent from the Northland Regional Council is required to remove any sediments or materials from a beach and anyone caught illegally removing these materials faces fines or prosecution.



- Dogs can disturb or even kill beach wildlife. Know local rules about dogs on beaches; keep your dog under control and off the sand dunes.
- Come to a CoastCare planting day and help restore the sand dunes.

### Salt marshes and rockpools

- Leave rockpool animals and plants in the water where you found them. They will die if left exposed to the sun.
- Keep away from saltmarshes and mangrove forests as they are important habitats for wading birds, fish and other animals. They are sensitive to trampling and take a long time to recover.

**Report stranded or dead marine animals to the Department of Conservation 0800 DOCHOTline (0800 362 468)**

