

Ecologically Significant Marine Area Assessment Sheet for Wading and Aquatic Birds

Name/Area: Hen and Chickens Islands

Summary:

The Hen and Chicken Islands are approximately 10 nautical miles (18.5 kilometres) to the east of Whangarei Harbour. The Marotere (Chickens) Islands are 20 kilometres from Marsden Point and Taranga Island (Hen Island) is approximately 24 kilometres from Marsden Point. Sail Rock is about the same distance. All the islands within the group are Nature Reserves.

Many seabird species breed on the islands and thousands of shearwater and petrel species feed and rest around the islands and Bream Bay. Little blue penguins and shags also breed on the islands.

Threatened and At Risk bird species – Hen and Chickens Islands

<i>Species Common Name</i>	<i>Scientific Name - updated 2013</i>	<i>NZ threat classification</i>		<i>Site status / significance NB. Specific to site</i>
Pied shag	<i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Breeding
Red-billed gull	<i>Larus novaehollandiae scopulinus</i>	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Visitor, occasionally breeds
Caspian tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Rare visitor
Sooty shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>	At Risk	Declining	Breeding
Flesh-footed shearwater	<i>Puffinus carneipes</i>	At Risk	Declining	Breeding
Little blue penguin	<i>Eudyptula minor</i>	At Risk	Declining	Breeding
White-fronted tern	<i>Sterna striata</i>	At Risk	Declining	Visitor occasionally breeds
Pycroft's petrel	<i>Pterodroma pycrofti</i>	At Risk	Recovering	Breeding
Little shearwater	<i>Puffinus assimilis haurakiensis</i>	At Risk	Recovering	Breeding
Fairy prion	<i>Pachyptila turtur</i>	At Risk	Relict	Breeding
Common diving petrel	<i>Pelecanoides urinatrix urinatrix</i>	At Risk	Relict	Breeding
Fluttering shearwater	<i>Puffinus gavia</i>	At Risk	Relict	Breeding
Grey-faced petrel	<i>Pterodroma macroptera gouldi</i>	Not threatened	Regionally significant/mainland population	Breeding
Australasian gannet	<i>Sula serrator</i>	Not threatened	Regionally significant	Offshore

Assessment of Ecological Significance for birds – Coast outside Harbours and Estuaries

Bream Tail to Waipu Cove Bird Values: Assessment of Ecological Significance			Hen and Chicks Islands	Poor Knights Islands
Overall Ranking		Notes		
Representation	supports most taxa expected for habitat type		H	H
	large example of its type	1.	H	H
Rarity and Distinctiveness	supports indigenous species threatened, at risk, or uncommon, nationally or within the relevant ecological scale		H	H
	supports species endemic to the Northland-Auckland region or at distributional limits within the Northland region		M-H	M-H
	distinctive of a naturally restricted occurrence		L-M	L-M
Diversity and Pattern	high diversity of indigenous ecosystem or habitat types		M	M
	high diversity of indigenous taxa		M-H	M-H
	its composition reflects the existence of diverse natural features or ecological gradients		M	M
	contains intact ecological sequences		M-H	M-H
Ecological Context	provides or contributes to ecological linkages, networks, buffering functions	?N/A	M	M
	supports the natural functioning of freshwater or coastal ecosystems	2. ?N/A		
	supports life stages of indigenous fauna		H	H

1. Arbitrary as partly based on size of area selected for assessment
2. All could be ranked high as the areas were considered as coastal zones with connections to adjoining estuarine or freshwater wetlands.

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