

Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust – 2013 – Annual Report



The Northland-based Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust was established in 2002, as a charitable umbrella and support organisation for the Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR) marine education and Whitebait Connection (WBC) freshwater education programmes. These are both leading models in education for sustainability in New Zealand and now available nationally.



Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust trustees celebrate the opening of EMR headquarters

Experiencing Marine Reserves

Since 2002, EMR has expanded to be sustainable and active in 7 regions with a team of 20 coordinators nationwide. EMR has guided snorkel experiences in marine reserves around New Zealand involving 19200 students, with 33028 volunteer hours contributed. The wider community is reached via 262 printed media articles and over 4653 people have been engaged in EMR organised marine conservation events, taking our total number of known participants to 26,746 New Zealanders.

Summary of achievements

- Expansion and continuation of the EMR programme in seven different regions including: Gisborne, Northland, Wellington, Hauraki (Coromandel), Nelson, Auckland & Taranaki.
- 90% increase Facebook 'likes' now at 381
- Inspires action for the environment - 477 projects reported that meet our requirements for 'actions' during 2012-2013.
- 54 people attend our annual national Marine & Freshwater Education Wananga Conference, the only forum for marine & freshwater educators to network
- Spread of the community guided snorkel days – connecting and engaging all kiwi's with conservation and value its benefits
- Continued exposure in the media nationwide and as part of annual trip to the Poor Knights http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qi_DHCcPvYg
- 'How to' create a marine reserve resource for schools and community groups, includes a marine reserve application template and links to the curriculum
- Continued promotion of the value of our marine reserves such as the Kermadec EMR feature clip now at 717 views <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8kIYhIJWsCk&feature=g-all-lik>
- Supports marine conservation initiatives – <http://www.northernadvocate.co.nz/news/best-of-north-lies-south-of-the-surface/1820959/>

Experiencing Marine Reserves

EMR Kaupapa
 Making a Tangaroa
 - Protecting our Seas
 Experiential marine education
 for schools and communities

Information - Experience - Action

Introduction to Marine Biodiversity

- Investigate... Local/Unprotected Marine Areas
 - Thorough safety management, such as wetsuits worn at all times
 - 12 adult/under 18 ratio
 - many parents share the experience
 - Look & Learn - no hurting tangaroa's children
- Experience a Marine Reserve**
 - Be engaged and inspired
- Make Comparisons**
- Take Action**
 - initiate your marine conservation project today

Be connected. kaitiaki/guardians. Make a difference!

Supported by:
 ASB Community Trust
 The Trusts Foundation
 Department of Conservation
 To see other supporters and programme info, www.emr.org.nz

EMR is a programme of the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust
 #EMR3406
 Purchase top quality 'Water' snorkel gear and support EMR at the same time!
 Snorkel gear and products for sale on <http://www.emr.org.nz/shop>
 We only send thanks to our supporters and generous contributions from schools.

Whitebait Connection (WBC)

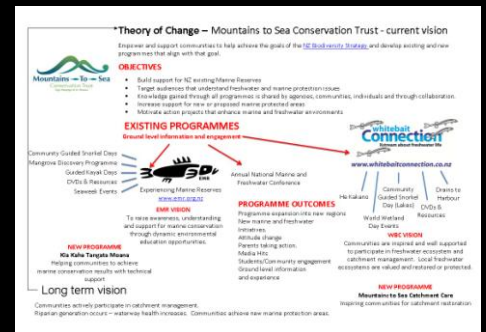
Since 2002, WBC has expanded to be sustainable and active in 6 regions with a team of 17 coordinators nationwide. WBC has guided freshwater experiences around New Zealand involving 53,982 New Zealanders and with 57,069 hours of volunteer time contributed. Over 1185 school programmes have been delivered, 38,944 native seedlings have been planted, 17 hectares of riparian margins have been restored, 26 cubic meters of riparian rubbish has been removed, 4 Whitebait Spawning areas have been adopted and the wider community has been kept informed by over 62 printed media articles.

Summary of achievements

- Expansion and continuation of the WBC programme in several regions: Northland, Gisborne, Wellington, Nelson- Marlborough, Canterbury and West Coast.
- Increase in website traffic – over 6000 visits per month.
- Inspires action for the environment and attitude change – as documented in our 2013 national report.
- 54 people attend our annual national Marine & Freshwater Education Wananga Conference, the only forum for marine & freshwater educators to network
- Creation of the [‘How to run a regional freshwater hui’ planning documents](#).
- Representation and presentation at the NZFSS Conference in Hamilton including the Whitebait Special Session, which resulted in WBC partnering with DOC to lead a nationwide whitebait management steering group.
- The update of the WBC coordinators handbook.
- Continued promotion of the value of whitebait conservation and catchment protection and restoration.
- Supporting and adding value to existing catchment protection initiatives – WBC coordinators work directly with other stakeholders including; schools, landowners, conservation trusts, councils, Landcare groups and Iwi.
- Creation of resources, templates and branding material for national team e.g. Stickers, banners, tshirts, posters, teaching resources.
- Working knowledge of the RIVA’S technique in a native freshwater fish context.
- National exposure during World Wetlands Day LEARNZ experiences and Conservation Week events including during our partnership event at Lake Ngatu and community planting and dune lake snorkel days.

Trust vision – Theory of Change

Empower and support communities to help achieve the goals of the NZ Biodiversity Strategy and develop existing and new programmes that align with that goal. Below is our Theory of Change model.



whitebait connection
Xstream about freshwater life

Check out the Whitebait Connection programme

KEY CONCEPTS

- Values of freshwater
 - Interdependencies, interconnections and cycles of the environment from the mountains to the sea
 - Ecology and biodiversity
 - Threats to the freshwater environment
 - Introducing personal and social responsibility - sustainability

Stages of the programme...

- Make connections**
Learn about freshwater biodiversity and threats. Form connections. Share existing knowledge.
- Dive in**
Survey and form question. Plan inquiry methods.
- Explore and Discover**
Investigate. Experience. Connect. Document.
- Find the Treasure**
Collect and analyse. Summarise. Learning. Share findings.
- Take action for freshwater**
Carry out environmental action. Build on knowledge, inspiration and connections made.

Supported by:
WBC Community Trust
Department of Conservation
New Zealand National Council

To see other supporters and programme info:
www.whitebaitconnection.co.nz

Whitebait Connection is a programme of the
Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust CCF 23496

More info:
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www.whitebaitconnection.co.nz

WHANGAREI LEADER, SEPTEMBER 10, 2013 7 NEWS

Kids form a whitebait connection

Oratia Valley School students want to spread the word about whitebaiting rules and regulations. The students have been learning about freshwater biodiversity and the amazing life of whitebait with the Whitebait Connection programme.

They visited their local waterway and found their river is unfortunately polluted. They decided to create a clean-up day to raise awareness of the whitebait lifestyle, the whitebaiting rules and regulations and the need to check shoes and dry all equipment to stop the spread of invasive weeds into the river.

They did all of this in time for Whitebait Week which started on August 16.

The Oratia Valley is the only waterway in Northland where the Department of Conservation has actually listed orange, vine and

the students have begun a monitoring programme of the site with the Whitebait Connection.

Whitebait is a collective term describing the diverse range of five species of native freshwater fish that require large, cool, shallow water with fast flowing streams and streams during the summer.

The five main species of whitebait are: hatched lokepa, giant lokepa and shortfin lokepa, with the most abundant and banded lokepa only existing in New Zealand. Whitebait Connection coordinator Kim Jones says, "There are rules and regulations around what you can do for them but be strict as to how many you can take during the season."

"This is one of their most important and their link to the wider ecosystem, whitebait are under threat".

Currently four of the five species are declining at a rapid rate and are listed as some endangered where they were once abundant.

"The Whitebait Connection hopes to fund an ongoing monitoring and identification and restoration work shop next autumn."

Contact Kim Jones on Kingdown information on 027 487 2426 to register interest.