

# Tauranga Harbour

## our special place

*Te ora o te iwi*



*Working together to care for Tauranga Harbour*  
*Kia ngatahi te tiaki i Te Awanui*



# *Te Awanui – Ngā ripo o te ora* *Tauranga Harbour – ripples*

Thanks to the many people who have helped bring this booklet to reality. If you'd like further copies, please call Environment Bay of Plenty on 0800 ENV BOP (368 267).

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Cover photo: Pilot Bay Pier

*He aha ra tera e whakakarekare mai ra,  
Whatever is that creating ripples  
i a Te Awanui,  
on Te Awanui,  
he matangi, he matangi,  
a breeze, a breeze,  
he matangi mariri ke  
an especially gentle breeze*

*The imagery here is that each of the three  
resident iwi are symbolised as a gentle  
breeze (matangi mariri) which in poetic  
Maori minds acknowledges that their  
presence creates ripples (of life) on  
the harbour.*



# les of life

*Tauranga Harbour or Te Awanui is a regional treasure. The sheltered waters of the region's harbours are a major attraction to many people.*

*Locals and visitors alike enjoy fishing, diving and swimming within the clear waters.*

*A special place to live, work and play.*

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## Tauranga Harbour fast facts

- Covers 218 square kilometres.
- Has two entrances – at Mauao (Mt Maunganui) and Otawhiwhi (Bowentown).
- Has two marinas with a total of 1050 berths.
- There are 10 Estuary Care groups working to protect the harbour.
- There are 25 boat ramps.
- There are 380 swing moorings.
- There are 120,000 people living in the Tauranga Harbour catchment.



### Did you know?

The name Tauranga means landing place

## Enjoying our harbour

*Tauranga Harbour is the western Bay of Plenty's biggest playground.*

Tauranga Harbour is a special place and we all share a responsibility to protect and care for it. Environment Bay of Plenty is working with our communities to achieve that goal.

One of New Zealand's largest natural harbours, it is home to the country's biggest export port, the Port of Tauranga. Windsurfers and jet skiers seek action while yachts and launches cruise the harbour.

Hundreds of people use the harbour everyday, for strolling along beaches, watching birds, unwinding with a spot of fishing, or burning off some energy skiing or kite boarding.

For many people, Tauranga Harbour is the reason why they live in the western Bay of Plenty. It offers so many recreational opportunities and they enjoy the sheer beauty of its sparkling blue waters.

# Things to do on and around Tauranga Harbour

*Here are some of our top tips for things to see and do*

- ★ Watch the cruise ships come in the narrow harbour entrance between Mauao and Matakana Island.
- ★ Sizzle up some sausages and enjoy a free barbeque with your mates at Fergusson Park or Kulim Park.
- ★ Explore the rock pools at the base of Mauao at lowtide.
- ★ Climb to the summit of Mauao or Bowentown Head and watch the sunrise or sunset.
- ★ Enjoy an ice cream at Salisbury Wharf.
- ★ Walk or run around Waikareao Estuary enjoying the bird song as you go.
- ★ Go fishing off the Bridge Marina breakwater or off the rocks at the northern side of Mauao.
- ★ Take a walk along the Kauri Point jetty north of Katikati.
- ★ Have fish and chips at Pilot Bay boat ramp while watching the sailing boats.
- ★ Wander along the waterfront at Omokoroa Peninsula or enjoy the cliff-top walkway around the tip of the Omokoroa Peninsula.



For more tips from locals and visitors on enjoying Tauranga Harbour look out for the top tips scattered throughout this booklet – they are marked with this starfish symbol.

There are lots of bush and coastal walks around our harbour.  
For more information visit:

- [www.wbopdc.govt.nz](http://www.wbopdc.govt.nz), *keyword – walks*;
- [www.tauranga.govt.nz](http://www.tauranga.govt.nz), *keyword – walks*;
- [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz), *keyword – Bay of Plenty walks*.





## *A special place for all*

*Colin Bidois Chairman of Te Runanganui o Tauranga Moana*

Te Puna features heavily in the treasured childhood memories of Colin Bidois. As a child he remembers walking out into the harbour at Te Puna with a nail on the end of a stick and spearing flounder.

Fishing is still Colin's favourite activity particularly from the northern outlet of the harbour. He also likes gathering kaimoana - pipi and mussels - from the harbour.

"Each hapu has their own special spots and has responsibility for these spots as part of their kaitiakitanga or guardianship. If you want

to collect kaimoana it is always good to check with the local hapu first," he advised.

The impact of pollution from incoming vessels on pipi and mussel beds is a concern for Maori. Colin explained that tangata whenua have initiated a rahui (ban) on the taking of shellfish around Mauao because of concerns about the depletion of kaimoana there.

Fortunately Colin believes the future of the harbour is positive.

"The councils are very conscious of the need to do everything they can to preserve the harbour so it can be enjoyed by people recreationally and continue to contribute to the economy. Both pakeha and Maori people alike recognise the need to keep the harbour as healthy as possible for human and economic reasons," he said.

"We must leave for our future generations a good, clean, healthy, enjoyable harbour," he added.

*"We must leave for our future generations a good, clean, healthy, enjoyable harbour."*



*Maungatapu Marae, Wikitoria Street, Maungatapu*

## *Our harbour's cultural heritage*

Tauranga Harbour is an area of significant Maori and early European settlement. Tangata whenua history recounts the arrival of the Takitimu and Mataatua waka in the 12th Century, from which the iwi of Ngati Ranginui, Ngaiterangi, Ngati Pukenga and their associated hapu are descended. Hauraki iwi, from the Tainui waka, also claim an interest in the northern harbour catchment.

### *A meaningful place*

Tauranga Harbour or Te Awanui is a physical and spiritual symbol of identity for all whanau, hapu and iwi living in the harbour catchment area. It was once the means of access and communication among the various whanau, hapu and iwi around its shores and still is the source of kaimoana.

The connections Maori have with the harbour are based on the following philosophy:

**Toi tu te moana** (*health of the sea*);

**Toi tu te whenua** (*health of the land*); and

**Toi tu te tangata** (*health of Maori people*).

"If the ocean or our water is healthy and our land is healthy then mankind is healthy," says Chairman of Te Runanganui o Tauranga Moana, Colin Bidois.

Today there are 24 marae in and around Tauranga Moana.

An Iwi Management Plan for the Te Awanui was completed by the three iwi of Tauranga Moana in 2008. This plan sets out tangata whenua issues for the harbour and recommends actions to be undertaken. The Iwi Management Plan can be viewed on Environment Bay of Plenty's website [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz).



'Matangi' was a ferry that in former times plied the harbour and is commemorated in a well known popular song, the lines of which says:

*E rere ra te 'Matangi'*  
*Ki waho o Tauranga*  
*Kei reira ra koe e hine*  
*E arohatia nei e*

*Fly on the 'Matangi'*  
*From out of Tauranga*  
*For there is where dear maiden*  
*You are so dearly loved*

This song is a well-known love song. The imagery here is that this object (a ferry) is a symbol of modern mankind's contribution to the sustainable development of Tauranga as a working and useful harbour.



"Being out on the water and kayaking from the Harbourside near The Strand to Memorial Park and back is wonderful on a sunny day."  
Andrea Lloyd, dog lover, Mt Maunganui.



# Working on our harbour

## Our harbour wardens

The harbour wardens promote safe boating and keep local boaties and visitors informed of rules and regulations. They are a great source of information and are therefore ideal people to ask about local conditions, navigation safety rules, where to find ski lanes, and other harbour safety tips.

Harbour wardens carry an official warrant and they may fly the harbour warden flag from their boat.

If a harbour warden asks you to stop you must comply.

# Safe Boating checklist

- ☐ Tell someone where you are going and when you will return.
- ☐ Check the weather forecast.
- ☐ Life jackets of the correct size for everyone on board.
- ☐ Distress signals – flares, VHF radio, cellphone and torch.
- ☐ First aid kit.
- ☐ Anchor with chain and enough rope.
- ☐ Spare fuel.
- ☐ Knife.
- ☐ Chart of area.
- ☐ Bailer, oars and boat hook.

***It is also wise to pack the following, particularly outside the harbour limits:***

- ☐ An emergency position indicator radio beacon – EPIRB
- ☐ Communications – VHF or SSB radio.

For more information on the Navigation Safety bylaws for Tauranga harbour, visit [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz), keyword - Navigation Safety





## *Helping out on the harbour*

*Brian Rogers, volunteer harbour warden and Waterline editor*

Harbour wardens are the eyes and ears of the harbour masters. Brian Rogers sees his role as a harbour warden as educating and informing harbour users, rather than policing.

"I've been boating on the harbour all of my life so it's a very special place to me and I want other people to enjoy it and stay safe," he said.

Brian's top tip for safe boating is simple - read the signs by all the boat ramps before entering the water.

Te Puna is Brian's favourite spot on Tauranga Harbour. He

used to enjoy cruising up the channel in his little yacht and anchoring in a spot sheltered from the sight of city lights and houses. Now his family home overlooks Te Puna inlet so he gets to enjoy it all the time.

As editor of Waterline and a volunteer harbour warden, it's not surprising that the harbour is the focus of Brian's life.

He grew up here, went boating with his dad and granddad and even his marriage vows are linked to his love of the water.

"When I got married my wife Claire had it written into my vows that

I would promise to love, honour and limit my boat collection to 24. Now I have to sell one before I can get a new boat," he said.

Brian joked that non-boaties did not know what they were missing.

"An hour kayaking after work is great therapy - you get fresh air, exercise and it's addictive," he said.

***"Going kayaking on the harbour after work is like therapy."***

## Our port

The Port of Tauranga is New Zealand's largest port by shipping volume. Its convenient location serves New Zealand's major population base and important export earning industries located in the golden triangle, comprising of the Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Auckland regions.

Exports of logs, forestry products, kiwifruit, steel and dairy products are shipped all over the world while imports include, oil products, fertiliser, grains, vehicles, palm kernel, cement and coal.

The Port of Tauranga funds two university research programmes which examine the effect of the Port's activity on sea life in the Tauranga Harbour and surrounding waters. These studies are part of the Port's continuing research programme and will provide valuable information about how the Port's operations can best be managed in harmony with harbour ecosystems into the future.

## Port of Tauranga fast facts

- On average, more than seven million tonnes of exports and five million tonnes of imports cross the Port's wharves annually.
- More than 2000 ship movements in and out of the harbour occur every year.
- During the 2007/08 season 38 cruise ships visited the Port. This amount is likely to increase every year.
- Port of Tauranga has a "live" harbour conditions monitoring system on its website. The system provides real-time information on maximum wave height, wind direction and tides. Visit [www.port-tauranga.co.nz](http://www.port-tauranga.co.nz), keyword- Harbour Conditions





## *Living in our harbour*

Our harbour is home to thousands of plants, shellfish, birds and fish. Some of these are part of our lifestyle. We enjoy collecting pipi, catching kahawai and watching the mohu-perereru or banded rail. To keep enjoying these things we need to work together to protect them so future generations can also enjoy them.

### **Fish**

Estuaries play an important role in the lives of many marine and freshwater fish. Inanga (a whitebait species) spawn in autumn in the lower reaches of rivers and estuaries. The hatchlings drift out to sea to feed, returning after six months to live the rest of their adult lives in freshwater. Our native eels, the short-finned and the long-finned eel, spend all their adult life in freshwater, but travel thousands of kilometers to spawn in the Pacific Ocean - the exact location is not known but is thought to be near Tonga.

Many marine species also spawn, feed and shelter in New Zealand estuaries. Common commercial species found as juveniles and adults in Tauranga Harbour

include the Sand and Yellow-Bellied Flounder, Grey Mullet, and Snapper.

*Some of the common fish that can be found in the harbour are:*

- Yellow-eyed mullet and Grey mullet;
- Flounder, Parore, Snapper and Kahawai;
- Spotties and Herrings;
- Bronze whaler shark;
- Short-tailed and Long tailed stingrays
- Trevally, Kingfish and Tarakihi;
- Koheru, Jack mackerel and Piper;
- Spotted stargazer, Triplefin species and Goby species.

## Shellfish

The harbour is home to many different species of shellfish including crabs, mussels and snails. They move nutrients and waste material between the sediment and the water column and are also an important source of food for fish and birds.

The health of the harbour's shellfish depends on the quality of the water. If there is more sediment and nutrients in the water, this can affect how the shellfish eat and how quickly they can grow. Toxins within the sediment can also contaminate the shellfish.

Kids - see if you can spot some of these species next time you are out and about on the harbour and tick them off as you discover them.

*Common species that live within Tauranga Harbour are:*

- ☐ Mud whelk;
- ☐ Titiko (mud snail);
- ☐ Horn shells;
- ☐ Tuangi (cockle);
- ☐ Mud crab;
- ☐ Pipi;
- ☐ Scallop; and
- ☐ Mussel.



*Top, Left to right: Crab, Scallops, Pipi  
Bottom: Mussels, Whelks, Tuangi (cockle)*



"I like hunting for crabs and paddling at Fergusson Park."  
Morgan Hatch, aged seven, amateur explorer, Welcome Bay.





## Birdlife

There are a large number of birds that live in and around Tauranga Harbour. At low-tide large flocks of shorebirds are seen gathering on tidal flats to feed. Birds forage through seagrass beds and tidal flats for invertebrates and shellfish. Some birds wade or dive for small fish.

The harbour is home to resident birds, as well as birds that migrate here and only live in the harbour for part of the year. Some common migratory species include the Bar-tailed Godwit, the Lesser knot and the Pied oystercatcher. The common resident species include the New Zealand kingfisher, White faced heron and Pied stilt.

Tauranga Harbour is also home to some birds which are under threat because their habitat is changing or has been destroyed.

Native birds are naturally found in New Zealand and are also found in other countries. Endemic birds are only found in New Zealand.

*Notable resident birds in the Tauranga Harbour include:*

- Mohu-pereru – Banded rail;
- Matata – North Island fernbird;
- Puweto – Spotless crane;
- Matuku – Australasian bittern; and
- Koitareke – Marsh crane.

*Some of our harbour visitors include:*

- Tuturiwhatu – Banded dotterel;
- Ngutu parore – Wrybill;
- Kaki – Black stilt;
- Kuaka – Bar tailed godwits.



"Explore Bowentown headland and domain, which is a great spot for archaeological sites, especially terraces."  
Rebecca Harfield, heritage buff and visitor, Auckland.



**Left to right, top to bottom:**  
*Banded dotterel, Little black shags and a Little shag, North Island fernbird, Bar-tailed godwit, Australasian bittern, Variable oystercatcher, New Zealand dotterel, Red-billed and Black-billed gulls.*



# Tauranga Harbour map









## *Looking after our harbour*

*Kirsty Walker, Estuary care volunteer*

Kirsty Walker is an inspirational volunteer. She is an active member of Te Puna Estuary Care Managers Group and spends hours on her weekends slopping through the mud, cutting and clearing mangroves.

It's not glamorous work but the results speak for themselves. The group has made a huge difference to the restoration of the estuary for the benefit of the wider community. The group won a Weedbusters Award in 2008 for its voluntary work restoring the Te Puna Estuary.

The sights, smells and serenity of Tauranga Harbour are what make it special to Kirsty.

"The harbour is just so beautiful. It's a source of pleasure to look at, to get involved in - to fish, swim or kayak in. It's the most lovely thing to look out and see the tide changes because there is something very soothing about water," she said.

Kirsty admits she spends more time in the harbour than out. She and her husband Graham have an old launch that they fish from. In summer Kirsty enjoys kayaking and jumping off the wharf at Te Puna.

One of her favourite spots is the Jess Road wetland. It is here that the Te Puna Estuary Care Managers Group are working on

developing a reserve with walkways, bird nesting islands and native plants.

"It's already a beautiful, peaceful spot and I'm excited about how it will look when we have finished the restoration work," she said.

Kirsty has lived at Plummers Point for four years. However, she has heard stories from her neighbours about the days when the estuary was a sandy beach where white herons (kotuku) lived.

"The land I can see from my window was originally harbour board land and was grazed paddocks. Now it is a carpet of mangroves," Kirsty said.



## Sea grass

Sea grass or eel grass (*Zostera capricorni*), is a native flowering marine plant which typically grows on sandy or muddy inter-tidal areas of a harbour or estuary. Sea grass beds stabilise the sea bed and prevent erosion. They also provide food and shelter for estuarine animals including juvenile fish and birds.

Unfortunately sea grass beds are declining in Tauranga Harbour due to the subdivision of land and clearance of bush in the Tauranga Harbour catchment. These activities expose sediment (soil and sand) and nutrients from fertilisers and effluent, which are then washed into streams and rivers by rainfall and are then carried into the harbour. Higher levels result in the growth of algae which also block the amount of available light.

See page 26 for ways you can help keep the sea grass beds, and the harbour in general, healthy.

## Sea lettuce

Sea lettuce is a naturally occurring green algae native to New Zealand.

Nuisance blooms of sea lettuce can affect the way our harbour looks as it accumulates along the shoreline.

The research Environment Bay of Plenty has done shows that sea lettuce blooms in Tauranga Harbour are a natural event. These events are linked to the El Nino weather pattern which brings persistent westerly winds that drive coastal water offshore. In these conditions nutrient-rich water from the deep ocean moves into shallower water (up-welling) which then enters the estuaries. The natural increase in nutrients provided through up-welling is the main cause of the blooms in Tauranga Harbour, not pollution.

Environment Bay of Plenty has factsheets on both sea grass and sea lettuce as well as mangroves, biosecurity, sedimentation and the Recreation Strategy in Tauranga Harbour. Pick them up from one of our offices or visit our website [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz).



## What is an Estuary Care group?

Estuary Care is one of the programmes supported by Environment Bay of Plenty. These groups are involved with estuary restoration work to enhance our harbours, including planting, pest control and mangrove management.

Estuary Care groups are working around Tauranga Harbour at Waikaraka estuary, Uretara estuary at Katikati, Waikareao estuary, Welcome Bay, Matua and Waimapu in Tauranga city and Tanners Point/Athenree, Omokoroa, Te Puna and Prestidge Road, Western Bay of Plenty.

If you want to do your bit for your community call 0800 ENV BOP (368 267) and ask for the Estuary Care officer.

## For more information:

Environment Bay of Plenty has a factsheet on mangroves in Tauranga Harbour. Pick one up from one of our offices or visit our website [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz)

## Mangroves

Mangroves are something you either love or hate. To some they are native marine plants that minimise erosion. To others they are pests that are taking over our estuaries and preventing easy access to the water.

Mangroves are native marine plants that have been growing in harbours and estuaries in New Zealand for 19 million years. The calm, shallow estuaries in Tauranga Harbour are ideal growing conditions for mangroves.

Mangroves are important to the marine ecosystem and can provide protection from erosion and storm surge. They are a nursery ground for some juvenile fish.

Nutrients from fertilisers and effluent, plus sediment from the catchment are washed into streams and rivers by rainfall and are then carried into the harbour. This has created more habitat for mangroves to grow. Too many mangroves can restrict our access and enjoyment of the harbour.

## What you can do to stop further mangrove spread?

- Minimise sediment runoff when undertaking earthworks.
- Plant out any riparian areas to trap sediment and reduce nutrient runoff.
- Join an Estuary Care group.





# Pests

*Many unwanted plants and animals live in or around the land surrounding the Tauranga Harbour.*

## Around our harbour

**Pest animals include** Possums, rats, mustelids (ferrets, stoats and weasels) cats, mice and Argentine ants which eat native plants and birds or eat food that native animals need.

**Pest plants include** Spartina, saltwater paspalum, morning glory, ice plant, gorse, pampas, woolly nightshade and wild ginger. These pests can smother native plants or increase sedimentation around the harbour.

## In the harbour

There have been two marine pests identified in Tauranga Harbour.

- The Asian date mussel, which is a small shellfish that can form large colonies, smothering native plants and animals.

- Undaria (Asian kelp) which attaches itself to artificial structures and also prevents native plants and animals from living there.

In the future Sea Squirt or Styela clava may also be a threat to the harbour.

All boaties should regularly check and clean their boat hulls to minimise any possibility of transporting Undaria plants to any special marine areas such as Tuhua (Mayor Island).

Environment Bay of Plenty has a factsheet on Biosecurity in Tauranga Harbour. Pick it up from one of our offices or visit our website, [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz).

For more information on marine invaders check out the Biosecurity New Zealand website, [www.biosecurity.govt.nz](http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz).



"Brunch with my friends or a coffee at Nautilus while enjoying the views out to Mauao and the harbour." Marg Amor, party organiser, Otumoetai.

# *Health of our harbour*

## **Water quality**

Tauranga Harbour is a popular place to fish and swim. Its water quality is generally good, and safe for swimming.

Every two months Environment Bay of Plenty takes samples from various sites in the harbour. Environment Bay of Plenty also carries out a bathing suitability survey every summer and checks the quality of the water against the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) and Ministry of Health (MoH) guidelines for monitoring recreational water quality. You can visit Environment Bay of Plenty's website at [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz) to see if the water in your area is safe for swimming. Public health boards issue these warnings.

The amount of material suspended in the water has increased in some parts of the

harbour. This could be caused by sediment run-off from land, storm water discharges, and suspension of material by wind and waves.

Some parts of the harbour are showing increased levels of indicator bacteria which show contamination from faecal matter. Contamination can be caused by situations including sewage spills, leaking septic tanks and livestock.

The levels are still safe for swimming and other recreational activities. However, Environment Bay of Plenty staff are working to reduce these levels to maintain and improve the water quality in Tauranga Harbour.

For more information about water quality in Tauranga Harbour check our website, [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz), keywords - swimming, water quality.



## Sedimentation

Sedimentation is the build up of sand and silt and is a natural process in all harbours, including Tauranga Harbour. However the amount of sedimentation has increased over the years due to changing land-use and development.

Sedimentation has affected many aspects of harbour life and can interfere with many harbour uses. For example, navigation channels have become more shallow, mangrove areas have increased and some habitats such as sea grass beds and shellfish beds have been lost or damaged.

The Tauranga Harbour catchment will continue to face pressure due to urban growth and climate change. Land management

programmes previously run by Environment Bay of Plenty, including fencing off stream margins around the harbour, re-vegetation of steep land, and farm environment plans have been important in reducing the amount of sediment entering the harbour. Coupled with the work of Estuary Care groups around the harbour and compliance audits on earthworks site by our Pollution Prevention team, improved land management plays an important role in reversing the effects of sedimentation.

Environment Bay of Plenty has a factsheet on sedimentation in Tauranga Harbour. Pick it up from one of our offices or visit our website, [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz).



"Enjoy a barbecue lunch with your family and then doze in the shade at Kulim Park or watch the kite surfers at Fergusson Park."  
Emlyn Hatch, public transport fanatic, Welcome Bay.

Tanners Point, Tuapiri





## Our climate

Climate Change will have a significant impact on our lives and our ecosystems. Within the Tauranga Harbour, Climate Change means there could be loss of salt marsh and the growth of more mangroves. There could also be more flooding events due to heavy rainfall and more shoreline erosion as the sea-level rises.

We know Climate Change will happen so it is important to plan for sea-level rise and heavy rain events. This will help us to prevent damage to people and property in the event of flooding and erosion.

Environment Bay of Plenty staff are already planning for Climate Change.

The issues Environment Bay of Plenty are discussing include:

- supporting the Coast Care and Estuary Care programmes;
- adapting land-use practices to cope with Climate Change;
- supporting pest plant and pest animal management; and
- enhancing the resilience of ecosystems by improving water quality and natural habitat and reducing the stress caused by invasive species.

For more information on Climate Change in the Bay of Plenty visit our website, [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz), keywords - Climate Change



Kauri Point Jetty

# Threats to our harbour

- Silt washing into the harbour can trap pollutants, smother shellfish beds and change the way water circulates.
- Land development around the estuary boundary can lead to the loss of wetlands, coastal shrublands and forest - a buffer between land and estuary.
- Stormwater often contains sediments and pollutants including heavy metals from roads.
- Sediment, nutrients and contaminants are washed into the waterways which run to the harbour - affecting all that lives there.
- Invasive weeds can quickly overcome native plants – reducing habitat for native birds and insects.
- Rats, stoats, dogs and cats can devastate native fauna - including birds that live in harbour dunes, forest reserves and salt marsh.
- Stock grazing can destroy delicate saltmarsh and stream edges – nesting grounds for birds and spawning habitat for whitebait.
- Farm run-off contains bacteria, nitrogen and phosphorus, polluting the harbour and speeding mangrove growth.
- Rubbish dumping contaminates the land and water, spreads weeds and looks terrible.
- Reclaiming and draining land breaks up and damages natural areas.
- Septic tank effluent leaching or sewage spills in the catchment can pollute waterways and the harbour and make shellfish unsafe for people to eat.
- Over-fishing diminishes future seafood resource.
- Driving on the beach, dunes or mudflats can damage plants, birds and other creatures of the estuary.
- Shoreline erosion is sometimes exacerbated by vegetation removal or weed infestations.
- Oil spills can cause a lot of damage to the harbour and upset plant and animal life.



## Did you know?

Environment Bay of Plenty runs a Pollution Hotline seven days a week. If you see an oil spill on the harbour, people dumping rubbish in the harbour or its catchment area call 0800 73 83 93.

# Caring for our harbour

*We all have a role to play in keeping our harbour beautiful. There are many simple steps we can take to care for Tauranga Harbour at home, in our garden, on our farm, and on or around the water.*

## At the harbour

- Help your children learn why the harbour is important.
- Walk on marked paths and tracks.
- Park in marked areas.
- Do not drive on the beach, dunes or mudflats.
- Keep your dog on a leash near bird habitats, or avoid walking dogs in those locations.
- Take your rubbish home - even better, pick up and dispose of other people's rubbish.
- Regularly check that your boat is not leaking oil or pollutants.
- Avoid gathering shellfish after a heavy rain as poor water quality may mean they are unsafe to eat.
- Regularly check and clean the hull of your boat for pests.



"Grab a deck chair, a chilled drink and watch the cruise ships come into Pilot Bay on a warm summer's evening."  
Elisabeth Andrews, Te Puke





### Did you know?

Environment Bay of Plenty can also provide assistance to help landowners fence and plant waterways entering the Tauranga Harbour. For more information call 0800 ENV BOP (368 267).

## Your farm or lifestyle block

- Fence streams and waterways to keep stock off stream banks and out of the water (a reticulated stock water supply provides better environmental care).
- Plant along streams and waterways (ideally in native plants relevant to the harbour environments).
- Avoid overgrazing steep slopes and pasture near waterways.
- Catch and control stock effluent.
- Avoid spraying chemicals near waterways.
- Apply fertiliser sparingly and with care, especially near waterways.
- Run a nutrient budget to avoid overuse of fertiliser.
- Call Environment Bay of Plenty on 0800 ENV BOP (368 267) for a copy of *A Guide to Regional Plans – Farming Activities*.

## Your home and garden

- Make sure your septic tank is in good working order.
- Don't pour pollutants into or wash paint brushes in storm water drains.
- Wash your car on grass so pollutants don't flow into stormwater drains.
- Plant native trees and shrubs to help attract birds.
- Take rubbish, including green waste, to the landfill not the estuary and recycle wherever possible.

Anzac Bay, Waihi



# *Managing our harbour*

Tauranga Harbour is one of the region's biggest playgrounds. It's therefore important to get the balance right between protecting the harbour's natural character and ecological values and providing opportunities for people to access and enjoy the harbour.

One of the ways to manage this balance is through resource management plans and strategies.

An overarching strategy was developed in 2006 called the Tauranga Harbour Integrated Management Strategy. It addresses issues like:

- Water quality;
- Protecting salt marsh and bird habitat;
- Sedimentation; and
- Population growth and its impact on the harbour.

Other plans feed into this overarching strategy including the Tauranga Harbour Recreation Strategy. This strategy manages recreational use of the harbour and was adopted in 2008.

The Strategy proposes a number of actions including:

- A webcam for monitoring harbour mouth crossings;
- Increased enforcement of the five-knot rule;
- A Tauranga Harbour website featuring an events calendar, water quality information and ship movements;
- Establishing a harbour recreation forum which would include representatives from recreation groups and tangata whenua; and
- Research into the reduction in shellfish beds.

The Regional Coastal Environment Plan places restrictions on certain activities within the harbour and its margins. Structures such as seawalls, jetties and marinas all require resource consent under the Resource Management Act 1991.

For copies of the Tauranga Harbour Recreation Strategy, Tauranga Harbour Integrated Management Strategy or the other policies and plans that govern our harbour, call 0800 ENV BOP or visit [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz).





## *Living the Dream*

*Jennifer Roberts, Harbourmaster - Western Bay of Plenty*

As the western Bay of Plenty Harbourmaster, Jennifer Roberts is regularly out on the water for her job. When she's not at work she enjoys nothing better than exploring the harbour's estuaries and inlets.

Jennifer says a huge aspect of her job is about education. Raising awareness of boat safety and the Navigation Safety Bylaws is important for us all to be able to enjoy the harbour.

The primary issue concerns the five-knot rule, says Jennifer.

"A small percentage of jet skiers and water skiers go over the speed limit when they're close to the shore and this puts other

people's safety at risk. Basically if you're within 200 metres of the shore then you must stick to five-knots."

The rest of her days are filled with tasks like checking buoys and beacons around the harbour and responding to any oil spills that may occur.

Jennifer's career was a natural progression for her. As a child she loved boats and used to skip school to go sailing.

Her dream was to sail on big square-rigged ships but as she said "there weren't the opportunities for women to do that at the time".

So she went overseas where she worked on

a large square-rigged sailing ship in Norway. She started out on the ship peeling potatoes and scrubbing floors before eventually being promoted to second mate. This valuable experience helped Jennifer gain the qualifications she needed for her current position as a Harbourmaster.

Despite working on the harbour every day Jennifer is still struck by the beauty of the place and likes nothing better than heading out on the water on her days off. In their shallow bottomed kauri launch, Jennifer and her husband love exploring the estuaries and creeks in the harbour, anchoring near the mudflats and watching the birds.

# Who does what?

## Contact details of agencies

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### Environment Bay of Plenty

Call 0800 ENV BOP (368 267) [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz)

**Contact for:** Pest plant and pest animal advice; soil conservation information; riparian management advice; Environmental Enhancement Fund; Estuary Care groups; Coast Care groups; navigation and safety; coastal management, and resource consents for structures and discharges etc.

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### Tauranga City Council

Call 07 577 7000 [www.tauranga.govt.nz](http://www.tauranga.govt.nz)

Tauranga City Council covers from Bethlehem in the north, reaching west to Pyes Pa, south around the harbour via Maungatapu and Welcome Bay, and east covering Papamoa and Mauao.

**Contact for:** resource consents for subdivision and land-use; stormwater drainage, water supply; sewage disposal; refuse collection and disposal; local reserves; signs; and roadworks.

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### Western Bay of Plenty District Council

Call 07 571 8008 [www.wbopdc.govt.nz](http://www.wbopdc.govt.nz)

The Western Bay of Plenty District is made up of five wards, Waihi Beach, Katikati, Kaimai, Te Puke and Maketu.

**Contact for:** resource consents for subdivision and land use; stormwater drainage, water supply; sewage disposal; refuse collection and disposal; local reserves; signs; and roadworks.

## Ministry of Fisheries

Call 0800 4RULES (478 537) [www.fish.govt.nz](http://www.fish.govt.nz)

The Ministry of Fisheries works to ensure that fisheries are used in a sustainable way and that New Zealand has a healthy aquatic ecosystem.

**Contact for:** advice on recreational/commercial restrictions on fishing in the Tauranga Harbour; customary Maori fishing; and general fishing information.

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## Department of Conservation

Call 0800 366 1080 [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

The Department of Conservation is the Central Government organisation charged with conserving the natural and historic heritage of New Zealand on behalf of and for the benefit of present and future New Zealanders.

**Contact for:** information on management of conservation land vested in the crown, information on indigenous flora and fauna of the Tauranga Harbour catchment, and advice on conservation programmes that you can be involved in.

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This brochure was put together by Environment Bay of Plenty and printed in March 2009. Information is presented as a guide only: if in doubt please talk with an expert.

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