

Curio Bay volunteer rangers

Every summer the Department of Conservation trains and supports volunteer rangers who are based at Curio Bay for up to a month at a time. The rangers educate visitors about how to enjoy their stay and how to help conserve our unique wildlife and environments.

Rangers also help with predator control, surveys and wildlife research. Make yourself known to the ranger during your time here and support the work they do by following the guidelines they give. If you have any questions they will be happy to talk with you.

Being a volunteer ranger is a unique opportunity to experience the bay while helping to play a vital role in conservation. Talk to the ranger if you would like more information or an application form for the position.

Predator trapping

Volunteers have to constantly help protect our defenceless endangered birds from predators such as stoats, weasels, ferrets and cats, which are vicious and indiscriminate killers.

Humane kill traps have been developed specifically for these introduced predators. The traps are baited with either rabbit meat or a hen's egg and are checked daily.

Please do not move or tamper with traps as they are specifically located to achieve maximum results. There is a safe sample trap for you to have a look at beside the viewing platform at the fossilised forest.



Dead stoat and the trap in which it was caught



Fishing

All beaches in this area are part of the Catlins Coast Marine Mammal Sanctuary. There is also a set-net ban in place to help protect Hector's dolphins. Please familiarise yourself with the Ministry of Primary Industries rules and regulations which are signposted in the campground.

Cod can be caught from the rocks around the campground, but please do not fish at the fossilised forest area as this poses a risk to the yellow-eyed penguins.

Be aware that waves on this coast can be dangerous as they are very powerful and unpredictable.

Fossilised forest

Approximately 100 metres down the road from the campground entrance is the car park and viewing platform for the fossilised forest.

During low tide you can wander around the fossils but please keep an eye on children as the sea can be dangerous and the rocks extremely slippery. In order to protect the fossilised forest for future generations, it is illegal to take souvenirs.

Further information

To learn more about Curio Bay, its wildlife and the marine mammal sanctuary please:

- read the information panels
- talk to the volunteer ranger and campground staff
- contact the Department of Conservation office in Invercargill, phone 03 211 2400 or email invercargill@doc.govt.nz

www.doc.govt.nz

Cover: Sea lions. Photo: Mark Oster.
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Experiencing Curio Bay and its wildlife



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Welcome to beautiful Curio Bay

During your visit you may encounter endangered and protected New Zealand birdlife and marine mammals. This pamphlet gives you a few practical tips to make those encounters safe, ensuring the best possible experience for both you and the wildlife found here.

New Zealand sea lion/whakahao

New Zealand sea lions/whakahao often make themselves at home on the beach or at the campground. They can be found playing, sleeping or wandering around during the day or night. Always be aware that you share this campground with them.

Sea lions are naturally curious, but they do not like to be disturbed or crowded. You should always keep at least 10 metres away from them, even if they are sleeping. If you get too close they may warn you off with a roar and a short charge. If this happens do not try to chase them away as they may take this as a threat. Simply move quietly away and they will soon relax.

Sea lions are not pets! Never feed them and do not leave food or rubbish around your campsite.

If you encounter sea lions in the water, do not interact with them as they may think you want to play and their play can be boisterous. Just get out of the water calmly.

Sea lions often wander onto the roads so take care as you drive around the campground. Please drive slowly and give them the right of way.

Photo: Ros Cole

Yellow-eyed penguin/hoiho

Rare yellow-eyed penguins/hoiho and their chicks can often be seen in or near the fossilised forest during the summer. While you are more likely to view penguins in the early morning or evening, their routines do vary throughout the season.

If you keep at least 10 metres away from them and never block their path, they will often spend hours relaxing and socialising, in full view, after a long day at sea.

At times a ranger may restrict access around the penguins. Please follow their instructions, as they do this so that you can get the best possible viewing experience with the least possible stress to the penguins.

Yellow-eyed penguins like to keep their nests secret. Please do not venture into the vegetation where they nest. You may scare them away from the bay forever, and you also run the real risk of injury by disturbing sea lions resting there.

Every yellow-eyed penguin colony is unique and you may find different viewing requirements in other areas. This colony doesn't seem to mind the presence of people too much. Help us keep it that way by encouraging everyone to respect the penguins and give them space.

You are welcome to take photographs but please limit the use of flashes as they have very sensitive eyes.

- Keep at least 10 metres between you and any wildlife
- Dogs are not allowed in the campground or fossilised forest area
- It is an offence to disturb or harass any native wildlife

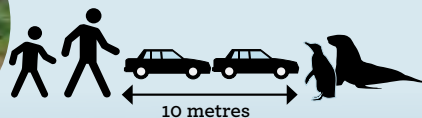
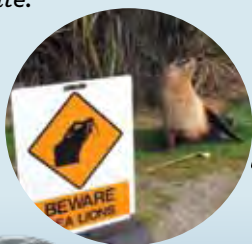


Photo: Sam O'Leary

Hector's dolphin/upokohue

Hector's dolphins are one of the smallest and rarest dolphins in the world. If you look carefully at the sea in front of the camp shop, you will often see them playing in the surf or further out in the bay. Look for their distinctive dark, rounded dorsal fin that looks like a Mickey Mouse ear.

Porpoise Bay is used as a nursery area by a pod of up to 20 Hector's dolphins, so you may also see young calves. The pod moves up and down the bay throughout the day so there is no best viewing time.

This bay is one of the only places Hector's dolphins come so close to shore without being enticed. If you are swimming and dolphins are present, please enter the water at least 50 metres away from them. Should they approach you then you are in for a wonderful experience. Just relax and let them interact with you if they want to. Do not go towards or try to attract them in any way, as this will usually discourage them from staying around. Any interaction must be on their terms. Do not touch the dolphins as your hands often carry bugs that can cause them harm.

Māori names for Hector's dolphins include tutumairekurai, upokohue, tūpoupou, aihe, papakanua, tukuperu, pahu, pōpoto and hopuhopu.

