

# Papatai o Roto Papatai o Raro

## Look beneath the surface

**Seaweed**  
28 February  
to 8 March **2015**

*Riley and Steve Hathaway  
from Young Ocean Explorers.*

Photo: Richard Robinson © 2014



NZ ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

## About NZAEE Seaweeek

Seaweeek is an annual, national celebration of the sea hosted by the NZ Association for Environmental Education. It provides special opportunities to experience the beauty and mysteries of, and learn more about, the diversity and significance of our marine environment.

It is the only nationwide event dedicated to learning from the sea and developing a better understanding of what sustainability might mean in the marine world.

**Most of all, Seaweeek is fun! It provides thousands of people the opportunity to see, do, hear and discover something different.**



## Events

Some 65,000 Kiwis 'Looked Beneath the Surface' during Seaweeek 2015 during 209 registered events and 10 competitions. With many more unregistered events in schools and communities we estimate the total number of participants to have been around 80,000.

NZAEE Seaweeek's 2015 'Ocean Champion' initiative showcased online the diverse contributions of 17 great nominees. Their work included: mobilising Kiwis to clean up our beaches and seas; developing and advocating the use of technology to reduce seabird by-catch; patrolling beaches to protect shellfish beds from over harvesting; advocating for marine protection; educating and inspiring others. Conservationist, campaigner and Earthrace Conservation founder Pete Bethune was voted the 2015 Seaweeek 'Ocean Champion', and awarded \$500 in prize money from the New Zealand Coastal Society at a special event in Auckland.

The Seaweeek team joined with the Bay of Plenty's Matakōkiri Team to participate in a science wānanga on the Makatu Marae, teaching marine metre squared for soft shore to 45 children.



In Northland the Experiencing Marine Reserves team organised six Community Guided Snorkel Days and two Community Guided Kayak Days during Seaweeek, which were well attended. There were 26 similar events organised throughout the country for Seaweeek.

*"Thank you so much for committing your time, skills, and knowledge at our Matakōkiri wānanga. Our tamāriki and whānau had an amazing experience and the knowledge and korero you shared with them was invaluable. It has enhanced the aim of our wānanga - to ignite an interest in science for our tamariki and allow them to experience the prospects it could bring them in the future."*

Te Taumata o Ngati Whakaue Iho Ake Trust's Matakōkiri Team

## Getting the message out

Political and media interest in Seaweeek was greatly increased this year. Mainstream media now pick up on it in a significant way, increasing public awareness, participation and buy-in to events, and raising the profile of Seaweeek's sponsors.

Seaweeek 2015 was promoted nationally, regionally and locally.

**S** On TV: Marine biologist, campaigner and renowned underwater photographer Dr Roger Grace was interviewed on TVNZ's 'Good Morning' show.

**S** On air: A special edition of Radio NZ's 'Our Changing World' marking Seaweeek <http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/ourchangingworld/20150305>; interviews on Radio NZ with Seaweeek Coordinator Dr Mels Barton, and with Sea Cleaners' Hayden Smith; items on Access Radio, Radio NZ youth station 'The Wireless', MORE FM, Maori and community networks.

**S** In print: Items in local papers, newsletters and magazines; a double-page spread in 50,000 special issues of the NZ Herald promoting Auckland's Seaweeek events; teaching features in 'Starters and Strategies' teachers' magazine and the 'Education Gazette'.

**S** Online: regular e-newsletters kept Seaweeek's database of over 2700 members updated, while postings on You Tube, Facebook and Twitter greatly expanded Seaweeek's reach, with regular updates to over 1600 Facebook friends, and Seaweeek Twitter reach expanding to over 500,000, with 51 of Seaweeek's 256 followers retweeting our tweets.

Plus...

**S** Postings in libraries, I Sites, Council websites and service centres, Eventfinder, links from over 40 organisational websites and e-mail networks across the country.

**S** A Seaweeek advert on the silos at Silo Park and on the Volvo Ocean Race screens in the Viaduct Basin during Seaweeek was viewed by thousands of race spectators.



## Resources

**S** The new Seaweeek website [www.seaweeek.org.nz](http://www.seaweeek.org.nz) provided links to a wide range of resources and information, and downloadable posters, flyers and documents.

**S** An Auckland sponsor printed hard copies of the beautiful posters and certificates, but demand outstripped supply again!

**S** The NZ Marine Studies Centre's 'Marine Metre Squared' resources (bilingual North Island and South Island Rocky Shore Guides, Sandy and Muddy Shore Guide and Rocky Shore Colouring Book) again proved extremely popular. A new 'Mudflat Mysteries Educational Activity Book' was launched during Seaweeek, as well as posters showing the life cycle of a crab and seashell identification.

**S** Copies of the 'Our Big Blue Backyard' DVD were sent to regions, and public screenings were licensed for free by Natural History NZ. They also provided two books of the series as prizes for the national poetry competition.

**S** The 'Young Ocean Explorers' book and DVD, launched during Seaweeek 2015 by Young Ocean Explorers, will be given free to every school in New Zealand.

**S** Special resources for teachers were compiled by the Waikato University Science Learning Hub for Seaweeek, along with a Pinterest board and development tutorial for teachers.

**S** Seafood New Zealand created an interactive digital info-graphic for their website especially for Seaweeek <http://www.seafood.co.nz/seaweeek/>

**S** NZ Coastal Society launched a free smartphone app for recording recreational fishing catches <http://www.fish4all.co.nz/>

# How effective was Seaweeek?

Seaweeek's goal is that: Seaweeek inspires New Zealanders to celebrate and learn from the sea. It is an annual opportunity to discover the mysteries of and renew our connections with the sea.

Regional Coordinators organised events specifically to meet the Seaweeek objectives and were very pleased with participation levels.

1. Becoming more aware of the effects humans are having on the sea:  
*"The talk revitalized my desire to produce art that speaks of the destruction plastic has on our ocean and life within. Need to put some thought into how to reveal the effects of overfishing in my art work."*  
Seaweeek event attendee
2. Increasing their understanding of the contribution the sea makes to New Zealand's social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing:  
*"... the artists continue to be unrivalled ambassadors for the celebration of the natural, cultural and connecting values of our ocean... through their work they have inspired and challenged audiences to care about our ocean and take action, and have brought the ocean and deep sea to life for those who might never go there."* Bronwen Golder, The Pew Charitable Trusts, in support of the Kermadec Artists 2015 Ocean Champion nomination
3. Understanding more about how the sea connects communities and how it is connected with the land:  
*"Just because you're not close to the sea doesn't mean you're not connected to it - as the team at the Community House in Alexandra, Otago showed with their Seaweeek 2015 interactive display".*  
Facebook Friend
4. Knowing where to access more information about our marine environment:  
The Seaweeek website <http://seaweeek.org.nz/> and its social media channels serve as a one-stop-shop for information, resources, events listings and links relating to Seaweeek and the marine environment. Launched late in 2013, the site has received lots of very positive feedback.



Seaweeek's national coordinator and network of regional coordinators are key conduits for informing growing audiences, event organisers and participants about the varied opportunities provided by Seaweeek .

5. Having access to exciting experiences in, on and for the marine environment:

Regional Seaweeek programmes provided a variety of experiences in, on & for the marine environment.

*"Four of our classes took part in Seaweeek 2015 in week 5. We visited a beach and organised a clean up, sandcastle competition and we took part in the marine meter squared survey."* Teacher

*"I made contact with a scientist who can come to the school I teach science at and support our mangrove forest study."* Seaweeek Event Attendee

6. Reporting increased inspiration to celebrate and learn from the sea:

*Polluted waters.*

*Sea creatures dying,*

*STOP IT. We can save the sea.*

Winner (age 10) Seaweeek Haiku poetry competition

*"Proud of my two eldest who joined a beach clean up in Raumatī to kick off Sea Week yesterday. While a relatively 'clean' beach this weekend, it's still amazing to see how much we collected in just 50 minutes."* Facebook Friend

*"I learned about the vulnerability of species and I feel able to spread the information to others"*  
Seaweeek Event Attendee

**People are truly enthusiastic about Seaweeek and already planning events for 2016 - some of which will take place in November 2015 to help educators and event organisers to plan ahead.**



## What people said ...

*"121 participants were surveyed and 100% of participants rated the event four and above for value out of five." Event Coordinator*

*"I will reduce my plastic straw use and do more environmental volunteering." Seaweed Event Attendee*

*"Urgent need to have more 'no-take' zones in the Hauraki Gulf & how important it is to include recreational as well as commercial fishing in bans." Event Coordinator*

*"Several students came along and felt very inspired. Some of them want to try to use this method for a science fair project. They were amazed to find out how much life there is in the sea that they previously even didn't know existed." Event Coordinator*

*"Emphasises the need to have kelp forests in and around NZ waters. Good one!" Facebook Friend*

Zoe (12) says *"When I went under the water I thought I was on a different planet, it was so cool."*  
#Seaweed2015YOE. Entry in Seaweed Selfie competition

*"Sea Week is about to start. We've got to clean up our act. Seriously!" Member of Parliament*

*"I have an abiding memory of snorkeling with my Dad, such a great memory, made me love the sea too." Facebook Friend*

*"So many ways to get engaged in marine conservation!!!" Regional Coordinator*

*"Glad you loved it - we're stoked to be launching the book during Sea Week" Sponsor*

**With thanks to our major sponsors and all our regional sponsors for their support.**



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