



The presence of the hawksbill turtle gives a clue to the fact that the Kermadecs are in subtropical waters, although this species also visits northern New Zealand.

*Photo: Malcolm Francis*



The Kermadec Islands spotted grouper (pronounced groper) is one of the most intriguing inhabitants of the islands underwater world. Growing as large as 1.2 metres, it is curious enough to allow divers to touch it, making it a star attraction for divers who will visit the Kermadecs especially to see the grouper. A marine reserve is vital to protect such vulnerable fish. *Photo: Jaan Vool*



Instead of the massive coral reefs typical of tropical waters, Kermadec coral colonies grow to about two metres in diameter. They are New Zealand's only reef-forming corals.

*Photo: Jaan Vool*