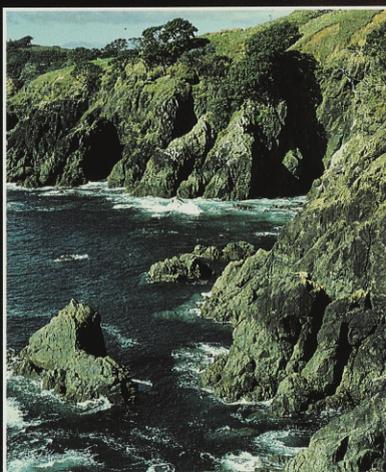


Marine protected areas

The only enemy is indifference

by Dr Bill Ballantine

Although New Zealand does not have many marine protected areas yet, it has had one for a decade and this one is highly unusual in both nature and rules.



The "Leigh" reserve was the first created (1977) and it is highly successful in terms of popularity, value to local fishermen, and as a means of understanding more about the marine environment and our effects upon it. In fact the proper title of this reserve is the "Cape Rodney to Okakari Point Marine Reserve" and it covers 5 km of coast, to 800 m seawards, near the village of Leigh on the coast north-east of Auckland.

The success of Leigh is rather surprising and does not support current conventional wisdom on how to select and run marine protected areas.