



## National Park Criteria

National parks are distinguished from other reserves by special criteria defined in the National Parks Act 1980. A national park must be at least 10,000 hectares in size and 'contain scenery of such distinctive quality, ecological systems, or natural features so beautiful, unique, or scientifically important that their preservation is in the national interest'. Such areas are 'preserved in perpetuity as national parks, for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use and enjoyment of the public'.



Stewart Island (above) is presently a strong contender for national park status, though there are local opponents. The Crown has extensive reserves in a region noted for its forests and wildlife. Pictures show islands and harbour arms in the Paterson Inlet area near the settlement of Oban, and coastal dunes at Masons Bay where kiwi hunt by day.

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