

Auckland's regional

With visitation figures probably twice that of our national park system, Auckland's regional parks are a conservation treasure. Text and photographs by GORDON ELL.

The expansion of the mainland gannet colony at Muriwai Regional Park was assisted by North Shore Forest and Bird, which gave money for fencing new areas. Still growing, the colony receives more than 250,000 visits from locals and tourists each year. White-fronted terns also nest on the cliffs, and seals from a colony on offshore Oaio Island are sometimes seen in the surf. Altogether, visitor statistics for Muriwai on the west coast exceed one million a year, with people also enjoying its dramatic coastal scenery, the challenging surf beaches, and public walkways.

