



NZMM 2008.75.12

## Curious Collections



Barnacles on the throat of a humpback whale calf.

Photo: Aleria Jensen, NOAA Photo Library.

Barnacles like *Coronula diadema* are super cool because they hitch a ride on humpback whales! Their hard, white shells grow right on the whale's skin, turning the whale into a moving home. Inside, the barnacle filters tiny food from the water. It's a clever way to travel the ocean and stay safe while they eat.

## School Holiday Programme: Te Ika Rere Flying Fish

17-26 Jan  
10am-2:30pm | \$5 per child  
Bookings recommended

These summer holidays, dive into *Ngā Huhua: Abundance* — a deep blue world teeming with life! Tamariki can create their own colourful fish kite inspired by koinobori — Japanese carp streamers, then follow a fun gallery trail to discover the wonders of Te Moana-nui-a-Toi, our big blue backyard.

Jan  
School  
Holidays



Join us in January to create a fish kite!

Make a manta finger puppet at home

## THE mini MĀUI CLUB

December 2025

### #21: Abundant Wildlife

Our new exhibition *Ngā Huhua: Abundance* is here, and it's bursting with fascinating sea life to discover. Meri Kirihimete!



Photo credit: Richard Robinson

## Te Whai Rahi: Gentle giants

Aotearoa is home to one of the ocean's most incredible creatures — te whai rahi, the oceanic manta ray. Manta Watch Aotearoa New Zealand (MWNZ) is a small group of scientists and ocean lovers who study these gentle giants. They do this through research and by working with everyday people who spot mantas while out on the water.

Oceanic manta rays are the largest rays in the world. They can grow up to 7 metres wide — wider than a bus — and weigh as much as 2 tonnes! Even though they're huge, they're peaceful filter-feeders who glide through the water eating tiny plankton.

Mantas live slow, careful lives. They grow slowly, live for a long time, and only have one baby at a time after more than a year of pregnancy. Because of this, their numbers can't bounce back quickly. Around the world, manta rays have been hunted for their gill plates, and their population has dropped by more than half. Today, oceanic manta rays are listed as Endangered.

In New Zealand, mantas are protected, but we still don't know very much about them. When MWNZ began in 2017, there were fewer than 30 confirmed sightings over 20 years! That's why the project relies on citizen scientists — regular people who send in photos and videos when they see mantas.

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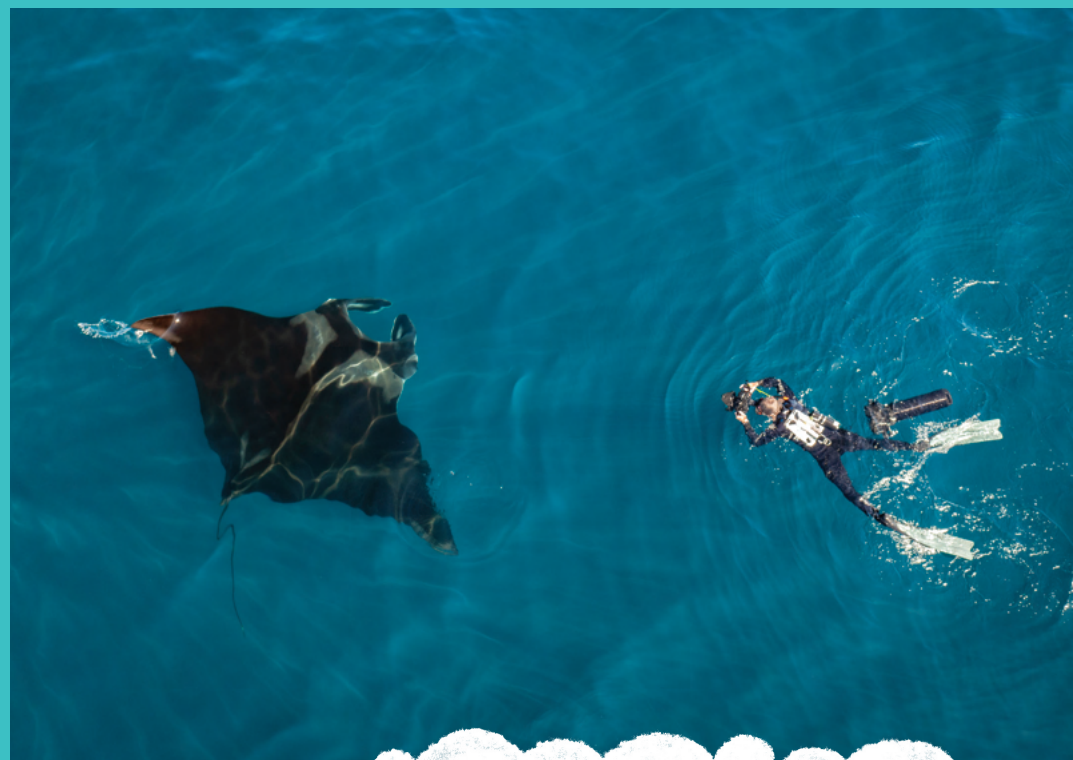


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If you're out boating, snorkelling, or fishing, keep your eyes open. If you're lucky enough to spot te whai rahi, take a photo or video (from a safe distance) and send it to MWNZ through their website.

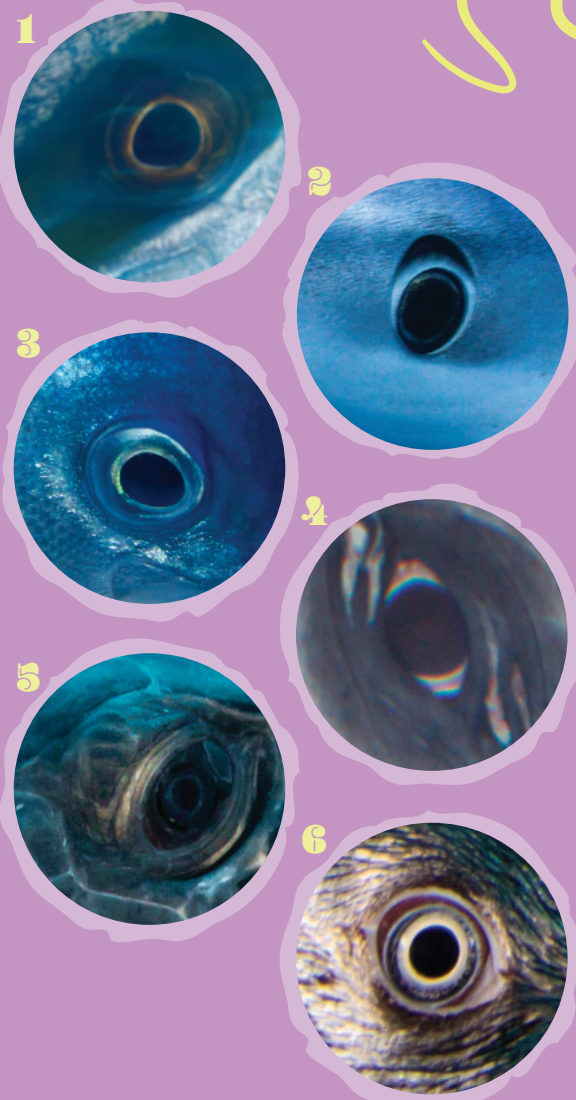
Your sighting could help scientists learn more and protect these amazing ocean giants for the future.

To learn more or to report a sighting, go to [mantawatchnz.org](http://mantawatchnz.org).



## Eye eye captain!

Match up the eyes with the animal and their name.



All of these amazing creatures can be found in our exhibition *Ngā Huhua: Abundance*, on now!

Photos: Richard Robinson

**kororā**  
little blue penguin  
*Eudyptula minor*



**honu**  
green or black turtle  
*Chelonia mydas*



**haku**  
yellowtail kingfish  
*Seriola lalandi lalandi*



**mako**  
mako shark  
*Isurus oxyrinchus*



**maomao**  
blue maomao  
*Scorpius violacea*



**terehu**  
bottlenose dolphin  
*Tursiops truncatus*

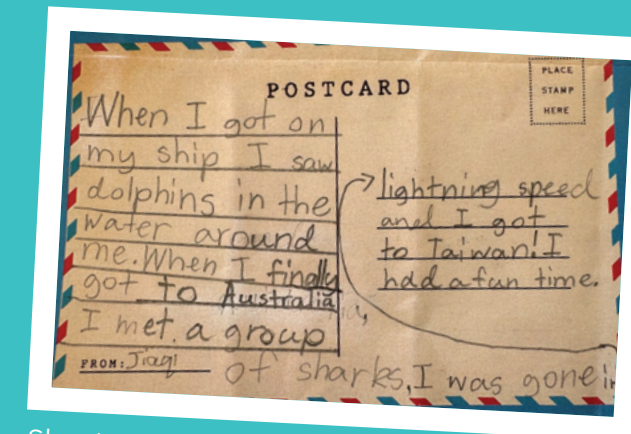


## Wish you were here

We had so many great entries to our Wish you were here competition — tino pai rawa atu!



**Yuzuka, 3**, for her drawing of her ideal holiday with sun, chocolate rainbow and a mermaid!



Shout out to **Jiaqi, 8**, for his exciting postcard.

## He hoa o te moana



### Friends of the sea

Have you ever met a crab, stingray, dolphin, or even a tiny rockpool friend?

Draw us a picture, send a photo or write a short story about your encounter.

We want to know more!

**Be in to win** a set of whale and dolphin stickers — plus your very own model Sunfish! Entries close end of January.



### Enter

by emailing us at [info@maritimemuseum.co.nz](mailto:info@maritimemuseum.co.nz)

or tag us on Insta or Facebook:

@nzmaritimemuseum



We also received this wonderful story from Margot about her family's adventure:

## My Pacific Voyage

I left the coast of New Zealand early one morning with my family. A gentle breeze pushed us forwards.

Our first stop was Tonga, as we moved north, we passed the Kermadec Islands. They were beautiful! We kept on going for a few days until we caught sight of Tonga. We stopped there to restock, explore, and learn Tongan things. We learnt how to say hello- "mālō e lelei." We had an amazing time and saw some stunning landscapes.

Then we stopped in Samoa and Fiji which also had interesting things. We learnt more and more at every stop. After exploring Fiji, it was time to explore New Zealand. We went south and explored the west side, stopped on Stewart Island, which was really cool. Then we came back to Auckland through the east side.



Answers: 1. haku 2. mako 3. maomao 4. terehu 5. honu 6. kororā



# What's on?

Find out what's going down at the Maritime Museum.

## Make Days: Mini Rope Wreath

Sundays 7, 14 & 21 Dec  
10am-2pm | Free

Get knotty and create your very own mini-rope wreath ornament. Learn simple rope-knotting skills and make your own miniature lifebuoy wreath to add to your christmas tree.

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Bookings advised.

## Make Days: Seashell Cards

Sundays in Feb  
10am-2pm | Free

We're making beautiful seashell cards to celebrate Valentine's Day and all things summer. Create your own ocean-themed card for someone you love — or keep it as a special beachy keepsake!

## Ted Ashby sailings

All aboard!  
Sailing times: 11:30am & 1:30pm  
Tickets start at \$15

All aboard the heritage vessel *Ted Ashby* for a bright summer adventure on the sparkling Waitematā! Help the crew hoist the sails, then relax on deck as the sunshine, sea breeze, and sweeping views of the city and Harbour Bridge roll past. We sail every day except Mondays — choose a sunny day and let the harbour carry you away. And if it's your birthday month, don't forget to grab your free sailing voucher!



We're having a summer holiday so there are no Make Days in January.



To find out more and keep up-to-date with what's on at the museum, please visit [maritimemuseum.co.nz/whats-on](http://maritimemuseum.co.nz/whats-on)

# Make a Manta

Create your very own mini te whai rahi to swim across your fingertips!

## You Need

- Felt - 2 colours
- Embroidery thread
- Scissors
- Marker
- Needle

### 1 Cut

Cut out the pattern and trace the shape onto your felt with the marker.

Cut out two body pieces and one face piece.

### 2 Sew

Sew the face onto one of the body pieces, leaving a gap at the bottom to poke your finger in. Then join the two body pieces together by sewing around the edges with a blanket stitch, or any neat stitch you like.

### 3 Add the details

Cut out some spots or patterns for the wings. Every manta is different!

Sew on a smile and add some eyes.



### Swim time!

Place your finger inside the puppet and make your manta swoosh through the air like it's flying underwater.

You could easily turn this into a Christmas decoration with a ribbon loop!

Don't sew? Use PVA glue instead!

