

DOGS AND BIRDS



Taking your dog out for a walk should be a fun, pleasurable experience for you both. Often you will encounter bird life as you pass through the many habitats along our coast and rivers. As a responsible dog owner keep your dog under control and the birds will be spared a disturbing or fatal experience.

Many owners are unaware of the damage their dog can do to our special bird life. Sadly, it is not uncommon for Little Blue Penguins to be hurt and even killed by dogs on Taranaki beaches.

NPDC has a list of beaches where dogs are banned totally or not allowed during daylight saving times.

TSB Community Trust // Ngā Motu Marine Reserve Society

WHERE YOU CAN TAKE YOUR DOG:

(Though still keeping a watchful eye)

Dog exercise areas include:

ON LEASH COASTAL AREAS

- Tongaporutu Domain
- New Plymouth Coastal Walkway
- Peringa Park / Lake Rotomanu
- Te Henui Walkway
- Lee Breakwater
- Oakura River – Corbett Park

Beaches with control between August and April for nesting birds:

- Parininihi Marine Reserve
- Wai-iti Beach
- Bell Block Beach
- Tapuae Marine Reserve
- Oakura Beach

OFF LEASH AREAS

Dogs off the leash should be well trained and obedient.

- Merrilands Domain
- Sportsgrounds

TIPS:



Bring a toy such as a ball, frisbee or a stick for your dog to play with, this way they will have fun and not be affecting wildlife.

If your dog is sometimes hard to control in public areas keep it on a leash, this way it will be under control. Only let your dog off the leash in an area where you are certain people and wildlife will not be disturbed .

Use a retractable lead, this way your dog can have more freedom and still be under control.

If your dog is off its leash keep a very close eye on it, and make sure it stays away from birdlife and habitats such as rocky and scrub areas where birds may be.



A GUIDE TO PROTECTING OUR BIRDS IN TARANAKI

BIRD AWARENESS

ABOUT:

We are very lucky to have many shore birds living along our coastline.

For some this is their permanent home, for others it may be a breeding area, or a resting or feeding area while on migration.

Birds are easily distressed by being chased or disturbed by dogs.

IDENTIFYING BIRDS:

We share our beaches with many different birds, from the relatively common Red Billed and Black Backed Gulls to Oystercatchers, Terns, Pied Stilts, Reef Herons and Little Blue Penguins. Some beaches are also roosting and feeding sites for rare birds like Dotterels.

Visit this website for more information about 6 local vulnerable shore birds:

<http://tinyurl.com/6shorebirds-Taranaki>

For general bird identification and bird sounds go to: www.nzbirds.com

WHERE THEY ARE:

Birds are found nesting and resting all along the Taranaki coastline – on sandy beaches, in rocky places, on cliffs and islands. Even city areas like the mouth of the Te Henui River and Port Taranaki have penguins coming ashore.

Penguins spend a lot of time on shore in summer when nesting and then during their moulting period when they have to stay on land. There are very few Reef Herons; you will see the same ones patrolling long stretches of the rocky shore. Pied Stilts are seen more frequently near river mouths, nesting among stones. Oystercatchers feed on the sand and mudflats, and nest on the shore or among rocks.

BIRD HOT SPOTS

Be Extra Watchful Of Your Dogs In These Areas:

- Wai-iti Beach
- Waiongana Stream mouth
- Waiwhakaiho River mouth + lagoons and Lake Rotomanu
- Te Henui Stream mouth
- The shore of the Sugar Loaf Islands Marine Protected Area and Tapuae Marine Reserve
- Tapuae River mouth

FROM THE BIRD'S POINT OF VIEW:

SEAGULLS AND DUCKS

Allowing dogs to chase these birds teaches them bad habits, and if not stopped, tells them that it is ok to chase and disturb birds. Even seagulls and ducks need time to rest and to feed undisturbed. It also means your dog is more likely to chase slower moving birds such as Little Blue Penguins which often cannot escape and are extremely vulnerable to dog attack – even a light shaking by your dog can kill a penguin.