

Natural History Trail

Year 4–6



AUCKLAND WAR MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Instructions for teachers and parents:

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this trail has been designed for use by groups of children accompanied by an adult.

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Each accompanying adult should be given a trail sheet. The groups should begin at different points along the trail to avoid congestion. A mark with a highlighter pen to show each group's starting point on the map and the trail is most helpful. Groups then follow the trail in numerical order until all the stations have been seen.

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1 Video

How do different animals swim through the water?

Why do you think some fish swim in schools?

2 Poor knights Wall

Here you are so deep, the water is too dark for plants to live. Can you find these animals:

- Coral? [I often look like a plant but I am actually made up of many small animals]

- a red kina? [I have long spines that can shoot tiny hairs through thick diver's gloves]

- glowing slugs that are poisonous to fish?

3 Rock Pool

What differences in life do you notice between the exposed, moderately exposed, and sheltered rocky shores? What do you think causes the differences?

What stops the animals from drying out when the tide is out? What sea animals do you think would not survive out of water?

5 Beach

Where are most of the living shellfish hiding? [Only the dead ones are piled up on top of the sand]

Why do you think they might be hiding?

Can you find their long tubes reaching up for food?

Can you find any plants whose roots stop the sand from blowing away?

7 Mangrove Estuary

Can you find the special roots of the mangrove tree that poke above the mud for air?

Why do you think the tree needs these special roots?

Look at the birds that live here. What helps them find food buried in the mud?

What helps them walk on mud?

Look at the high tide cube around the mangrove tree. What animals live in the mangrove swamp at high tide?

9 Kauri Tree

What sounds can you hear?

What plants and animals can you find on the branches of the tree?

When the tree is damaged, it oozes out gum. Why do you think the tree does this?

10 New Zealand Forest Birds

Look at the different shapes of bird beaks. What do you think the different shapes might be used for?

Can you find:

- a bird that has a fanned tail to fan insects out from hiding?
- the world's heaviest parrot that can't fly?
- New Zealand's smallest bird?

11 Limestone Cave

What sounds can you hear?

The drips help make the stalactites hanging from the ceiling. Can you find any?

Glowworms use their light to attract insects for food. Which insects do you think might be eaten by the glowworms?

12 New Zealand Mountains

Plants living here must survive harsh conditions. Can you find any plants that have:

- hairy leaves to stop the wind drying them out?
- thick leaves for storing water?
- strong roots to stop the plant sliding away as stones roll down the mountain?

15 Kiwi

Can you find the nostrils? It is the only bird with nostrils at the tip of its beak. Why do you think it needs them there?

Can you find the whiskers?

What do you think they are used for?

The feathers of most birds are designed to help them fly, what do you think the kiwi's feathers are used for?

The kiwi's features and lifestyle are similar to mammals. Can you think of a mammal that comes out at night and lives off worms and grubs?

17 Tuatara

The tuatara is not a dinosaur or a lizard. It is an ancient reptile. Find these ancient features:

- ear holes? It has none!
- teeth that are just zigzags cut into the jaw. Once the teeth wear down, they can't be replaced! [See skeleton]

What other animals existed on New Zealand when it split off from Gondwanaland?

18 Moa

Can you find any relatives of the moa?

How do you think all these flightless birds ended up in countries so far apart?

Can you find:

- stones moa swallowed to grind up food?
- moa footprints?
- a moa's egg?