

Volunteering with Mountains to Sea

For the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust including its programmes Experiencing Marine Reserves, Whitebait Connection and NISP in the delivery of events, school programmes and monitoring.

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Role descriptions

Definitions

Supervisor - casual volunteer or volunteer staff	Person or persons responsible for supervising a student group/ assisting a group with activities and following instructions of the coordinator. Supporting the field activity (snorkelling/ stream investigation/ planting/ kayaking/ monitoring), by taking responsibility for others within the activity. The role of 'supervisors' is to assist coordinators and supervise the participants in and near the water who are expected to be fit, healthy and free from the influence of drugs or alcohol.
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Water-based activities

Snorkel guides

Volunteer guides will each take a small group of the public (maximum 6), assisting them to snorkel and identify the fish they see. The groups will keep close to the shore, and sessions will last about 20 minutes. Volunteer guides will do 2 - 3 sessions and then take a break. A full briefing will be held before the event. You will need to be an experienced snorkeler i.e. comfortable in the marine environment. You can look after the group, plus a basic knowledge of what you're likely to see in the way of fish and other marine life.

Snorkel guide ratings

Senior guide	Proven capability (previous events or training attended) or adequate qualifications (dive master etc), experience and knowledge of the area.
Assistant guide	Working with a senior guide, could have an additional ratio or bring people back to shore
Trainee guide	working under the direct supervision of a senior guide – no additional ratio
Land-based	A catch all for any volunteers who will not be assisting in water. Assists in registration tent and helps gear, evaluation or shore-based spotter. Outlined below.

Kayak support

Survey events - The Kayak waiver form must be signed.

 2026 MTS Kayak Liability Waiver Form.pdf

EMR Kayak Safety Watch

 2026 EMR Kayak Safety Watch Form.pdf

Event-based

Safety Kayak for snorkel days	Volunteers to provide support to the snorkelling groups and guides from kayaks i.e. making sure snorkelers don't stray off from their groups or too far from the shore. Again, volunteer kayakers will do 2-3 sessions and then take a break. You will need to be an experienced kayaker .
Kayak Day - Volunteer	Often a seat filler for the double kayaks or to assist in on water biodiversity briefings. No experience required. Under the H&S umbrella of the kayak operator.

Monitoring Based

Kayak Monitoring Assistant	To assist the coordinator with kayaking in a river situation, helping to stabilize the kayak while undertaking water monitoring activities. Loading and unloading of kayak equipment on-site. You will need to be an experienced kayaker.
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Land-based activities

Community Events

Volunteers will help the people attending with any equipment and safety gear required, plus retrieve gear at the end of the activity, talk to people about the specific areas attributes etc. Less special skills or experience is needed for these jobs, except the ability to follow instructions. Participation in the activities on offer is generally required for action-based events, these Community events may be, but are not limited to Snorkel days, Kayak days, planting days, spotlighting and educational experiences.

Stream investigations

As a stream life investigation supervisor, you would supervise a small group of up to 4 students with their stream investigation. Overall Health & Safety will be managed by Whitebait Connection. No previous experience is required as students are leading the investigation (with supervision).

Shore Watch

Watch snorkelling at all times. Checks for any emergency signals or a member of the group separated from the main group. Check-in/out for participants. Communicate with the registration area about participant movements near the water.

Nursery work

To assist the coordinator in all aspects of nursery work, propagating, repotting, weeding, and organising plant stock (usually offered in Whangarei only)

Land based marketing

Helping to collect donations, promote programmes and actions. General MTSCT advocacy.