

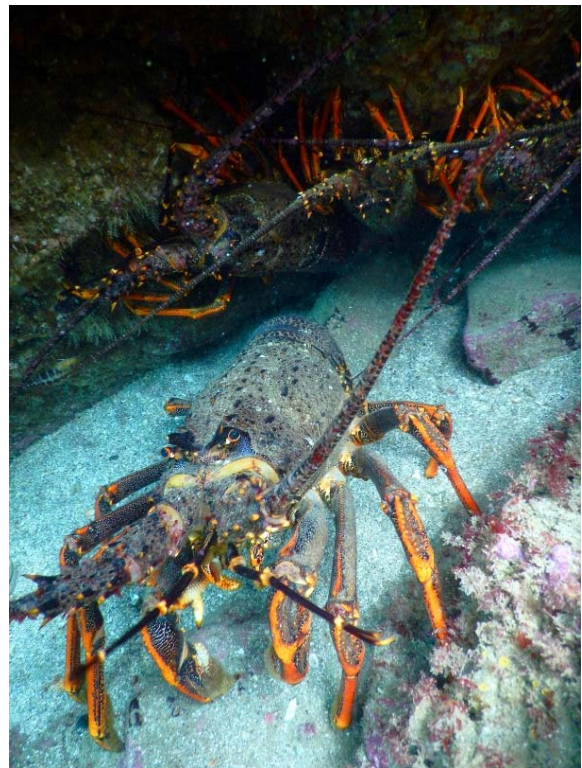


PhD project on rock lobster movement in marine reserves

A PhD scholarship is available through the Institute of Marine Science to examine the movement, habitat and resource use of rock lobster *Jasus edwardsii* in New Zealand's oldest marine reserve. Rock lobster are one of the most valuable seafood species in New Zealand and also play an important role as predators in coastal ecosystems. Lobster populations in the Leigh marine reserve have declined dramatically in recent years and this project aims to understand the cause and ecological implications of these declines.

The research will primarily involve:

- Tagging and tracking lobster inside marine reserves to assess habitat and resource use, and exposure to fishing on the boundary.
- Field surveys to investigate environmental and anthropogenic factors that affect the population dynamics and health of lobster.
- Field and laboratory experiments to better understand the ecological role of lobster coastal ecosystems.



The scholarship is available to international and domestic students, and consists of a stipend of NZ\$27,000 per annum (tax-free) and University of Auckland PhD fees. The duration of the scholarship is three years with a possible 6 months extension. Additional funding is also available for research expenses and conference travel.

Applicants for this project should hold a first class MSc, honours degree, or equivalent. The project will involve SCUBA diving so the applicant must have relevant experience in scientific diving and preferably experience operating small boats. The PhD position will be based at the Leigh Marine Laboratory (www.marine.auckland.ac.nz), which has extensive seawater systems for experiments and a range of boats providing ready access to the surrounding coast.

Applications should include a curriculum vitae, academic transcripts, contact details of two academic referees and a cover letter that states why the candidate is interested in the position and how their qualifications and experience make them a good fit for the proposed research.

Please email Dr Nick Shears (n.shears@auckland.ac.nz) with completed applications and for any additional information. Closing date for applications is 28th February 2017 with the expectation of commencement of the PhD in May 2017.