Maori Legend

In Maori legend, Doubtful Sound and the other fiords were created by a godly figure (atua) who came wielding a magical adze and uttering incantations. The atua created the arms of the sound by four young sea gods named Taipari, who created the arms and the entrance to the region often meant a perilous sea journey. Little evidence survives of the occupation of Fiordland by Maori. However, in 1980, the name Fiordland was given the Maori name Te Waipounamu.

In Doubtful Sound, Captain John Grono established a sealing station in 1823. About the same time in the early 1800s the sealing era was waning and hundreds of thousands of fur seals were killed for their blubber and skin.

European Explorers

Doubtful Sound was originally named 'Doubtfull Harbour' or 'Doubtful Harbour' by Samuel Wallis in 1766 and 'Doubtful Harbour Sound' by John Gore in 1794. Captain Cook spotted the entrance to Doubtful Sound in 1770 while on his first visit to New Zealand. Doubtful Sound was originally named 'Doubtfull Harbour' in the British Hydrographic Office chart published in 1840. No European name was given to the entrance to Doubtful Sound until the publication of the chart of Doubtful Sound & Manapouri by New Zealand's Hydrographic Office in 1840. No European name was given to the entrance to Doubtful Sound until the publication of the chart of Doubtful Sound & Manapouri by New Zealand's Hydrographic Office in 1840.

Early Maori

Little evidence survives of the occupation of Fiordland by the Maori. Venturing into the region often meant a perilous sea journey by canoe or large vessels. These first arrivals would have led an isolated existence as they explored the fiords. Maori from outside the area took an interest in the region resources most notably pounamu (jade). They made seasonal journeys from the east by way of traditional pathways across passes such as Wilmot Pass. Landmarks were named and woven into chants.

Captain Cook encountered a Maori group in Dusky Sound, and throughout the 19th century there were reports, mainly from sealing and whaling captains, of Maori living in the wilds of Fiordland.

Fiordland National Park

Doubtful Sound is situated within the Fiordland National Park. The park is 1.25 million hectares, 0.1% of the total area of New Zealand and is one of the largest national parks in New Zealand. In 1986, Fiordland National Park was declared a World Heritage Area on account of its superlative natural features, its exceptional beauty and its role in demonstrating the world’s evolutionary heritage.

In 1990, Fiordland was linked with three other national parks - Mount Aspiring, Westland and Aoraki Mount Cook, to form an expanded World Heritage Area of South West New Zealand. It was given the Maori name Te Waipounamu.

**Wildlife**

**Blue Penguins**

Blue Penguins were first sighted in Doubtful Sound in 1973 but, due to their shy nature, were not confirmed for Doubtful Sound until 1986. They were later confirmed for Milford Sound in 1990. They prefer to live closer to land than the Fiordland crested or tawaki. They are among the largest penguin species growing to 40cm.

**Dolphins**

Dolphins are mammals and while they have adapted well to the sea, they still return to land to give birth to their calves. The lifespan of these dolphins is thought to be about 25 years.

**Dusky Sound**

Dusky Sound is a popular scuba diving destination. The water is relatively shallow, just 30m in places, and is popular with divers.

**Fur Seals**

Fur seals are seen at Nee Islets near the entrance to Doubtful Sound. Doubtful Sound is home to a resident pod of around 60 bottlenose dolphins. In playful mood they will ride around the fiord.

**Penguins**

**Fiordland Crested Penguins**

Fiordland crested or tawaki is also often seen in Doubtful Sound, but it is one of the rarest penguin species in the world. The water is generally between 2.5m and 3m. The water temperature in the fiord averages a bracing 11 degrees Celsius. In the sheltered areas it is generally between 11 to 12 degrees. The water is relatively shallow, just 30m in places, and is popular with divers.
Doubtful Sound

Welcome to this most remarkable part of New Zealand, located in the heart of a designated World Heritage Area. It is remote, wild and imposing. You will see and feel the power of nature in this spectacular place.

Your journey to Doubtful Sound begins in Manapouri (17km from Queenstown and 22km from Te Anau). The excursion includes a cruise across the island-studded Lake Manapouri, and a coach trip over Wilmot Pass to Deep Cove, where you board our vessel for a cruise on Doubtful Sound. As you journey to Doubtful Sound you will experience a magnificent cross section of wilderness - a lake, alpine pass and a fiord.

Doubtful Sound is the second largest of Fiordland National Park’s 14 fiords (Dusky Sound is the largest). It is three times longer than Milford Sound and it has a sea area roughly 10 times larger than Milford Sound due to its greater length and its three arms - Hall, Crooked and First. All three arms are found on the southern side of the fiord. Thompson and Brashford Sounds connect to the north.

Doubtful Sound reaches about 430m at its maximum depth. Near the entrance there are sills where the water is relatively shallow (90m). The waters of Doubtful Sound are subject to tides but the range is only moderate, generally between 2.5m and 3m. The water temperature in the fiord averages a bracing 11 degrees Celsius. In warm weather the temperature can reach 15 degrees in shallow places but in the deepest basins it is a uniform 11 to 12 degrees.

Doubtful Sound has one of only two marine reserves in Fiordland. It covers the narrow passage called Te Awaits Channel between Bauza and Secretary Islands. The water is relatively shallow, just 30m in places, and is popular with divers.

Wildlife

Fiordland is home to a variety of marine mammals, mostly dolphins and seals. One of the world’s rarest penguins, the Fiordland crested penguin, is also often seen in Doubtful Sound, as is the little blue penguin. Many other bird species can be found in the forest - listen out for these when we turn the engines off.

Bottlenose Dolphins

Doubtful Sound is home to a resident pod of about 60 bottlenose dolphins. In playful mood they will ride the bow waves of vessels and leap and somersault in the air. Research shows these dolphins seldom feed on fish and squid and may dive to depths of over 200m in search of prey. They can remain powerful when pregnant or nursing a calf. They have a gestation period of around 12 months and mothers will nurse their calves for about 19 months. Calving occurs every two to three years. The lifespan of these dolphins is thought to be about 25 years. The bottlenose dolphins feed on fish and squid and may also scavenge on carrion. They are among the largest known of their species and are much larger than dolphins in temperate or tropical habitats.

Like all dolphins they are built like torpedoes. Their backs are dark grey, grading to white around their bellies. They can reach 3.8m (10 feet) in length. Research has shown dolphins form cliques of between 6 and 10 individuals. Adult males return to the sea in late summer. The born calves are up to 1.2m long and can weigh up to 100kg.

Fur Seals

Fur seals are seen at Nea Island near the entrance to Doubtful Sound all year and can also be sighted basking on the rocks around the fiord.

Seals are mammals and while they have adapted well to the sea they need to come ashore to breed and moult. The breeding season is signalled by the arrival of bulls in November and October. They set up territories which are fiercely defended. Females arrive about a month later and pups are born in mid December. Around 10 days after the pups are born their mothers mate with the leader of the harem (he commonly has up to 10 females). Adult males return to the sea in late summer. The cows, immature adults and young seals remain undisturbed for another 10 months. The fur seals sleep and relax ashore during the day and feed at night eating mainly squid, octopus and fish.
Lake Manapouri

Lake Manapouri is regarded as New Zealand’s most charming and beautiful lake. It is renowned for its numerous islands, deserted beaches, seductive arms and clear water. Lake Manapouri, the fifth largest lake in New Zealand, is exceptionally deep as a result of the grinding, scooping action of the ice age glaciers. The name Manapouri is thought to be an adaptation of Manawapore (or Manawapouri), which means sorrowful or anxious heart.

- **Location of Real Journeys Visitor Centre.**
- **Pearl Harbour** – Real Journeys Visitor Centre.
- **Hunter Mountains (1,768m)** – In front of the mountains the conspicuous shaped hill is the Monument, site where we see our first view of the lake with its 34 islands.
- **Hope Arm** – Backed by the 1,710m Mount Titiroa (what appears to be snow on the upper slopes is weathered granite.
- **Channel Islands** – The major group of islands on the lake.
- **The Beehive** – Its shape is caused by glacial action.
- **Pomona Island** – The largest of the lake’s islands and the halfway point across the lake.
- **Deepest part of the lake – Depth 444m**.
- **South Arm** – Pylons at the head indicate part of the transmission line route.
- **The first section of transmission line**.
- **West Arm** – The site of the underground power station.

Doubtful Sound

Doubtful Sound lies at the geographical heart of Fiordland. Deep Cove at the head of the fiord is 40km from the open sea, which makes Doubtful the second largest fiord.

- **Lady Alice Falls**
- **Rolla Island**
- **Commander Peak – 1,274m.**
- **Mount Danae – 1,509m.**
- **Mount Crowfoot – 1,695m.**
- **Elizabeth Island – Named after Elizabeth Bristowe, wife of John Grono.**
- **Malaspina Reach – Named after Captain Alessandro Malaspina who commanded the Spanish exploration of Doubtful Sound in 1793.**
- **Grono Bay – Site of an early sealing station set up by Captain John Grono.**
- **Marcaciones Point – Site of the first landing by the Spanish, Baza Island.**
- **Marine Reserve – Between Baza and Secretary Islands.**
- **Nee Islets – Named after Luis Nee, botanist on the Spanish expedition; site of a large fur seal colony.**

Shaping the Landscape

Fiordland lies next to a dramatic fracture in the boundary between two of the plates making up the earth’s crust – the Pacific and Indo-Australian Plates. The Alpine Fault marks the place where they meet, with the Indo-Australian Plate diving beneath the Pacific Plate. In the collision, the land on the Pacific Plate is being heaved up to form the Southern Alps, the mountain backbone of the South Island. Consequently, Fiordland is a geographically complex region.

It is renowned for its speckled granites and kindred igneous rocks. Limestone shows up spectacularly in places, and the dark slate of the southern fiords dates from some 450 million years ago. These are among New Zealand’s oldest rocks.

A mere two million years ago ice ages developed as the earth’s climate cooled. Snow built up across the Fiordland landscape, and turned to ice. In valleys like that of Doubtful Sound, glaciers ground their way towards the sea. Warm periods were interspersed with cold so that the glaciers retreated and advanced many times, and each time they advanced they sculpted more of the landscape, deepening valleys and scraping the sides. Their impact was colossal.

On the eastern side of Fiordland the glaciers scooped out the beds of Lakes Te Anau and Manapouri to well below sea level. The effect of the glaciers on Lake Manapouri may be seen in the low rounded hills and islands on the eastern part of the lake, giving way to the deep U-shaped valleys of the western end.

Manapouri Power Station

When you arrive at West Arm you will see the signs of the power station in the form of an above ground control building, a switchyard and four sets of transmission lines that loop across the head of the arm on their way to join the national grid. The generation however, occurs some 176m below lake level in a powerhouse excavated from the granite. The power station was built to supply the power requirement of Comalco Aluminium Smelter, situated 171km away at Bluff. Work began on the power station in 1963 and was completed in 1971.

An awesome feat of engineering, the project was international, with drillers, tunnellers and engineers from around the world.

Travel down the 2km spiral access tunnel to the machine hall is by coach (please note access is not always possible).
Early Maori

Little evidence survives of the occupation of Fiordland by Maori. Venturing into the region often meant a perilous sea journey by canoe or larger vessels. These first arrivals would have led an isolated existence as they explored the fiords.

Captain Cook encountered a Maori group in Dusky Sound, when Tu crafted Doubtful Sound he was assisted by four young sea gods named Taipari, who created the arms – First Arm or Taipari-poto (short), Crooked Arm or Taipari-nui (big), Hall Arm or Taipari-roa (long) and Deep Cove or Taipari-tiki (little).

Doubtful Sound

Doubtful Sound was originally named 'Doubtful Harbour' by Captain Cook when he sailed past in the Royal Navy ship Endeavour on his first circumnavigation of New Zealand in 1770. Twenty-three years later the outer reaches were eventually explored by a round the world Spanish expedition under the command of Alessandro Malaspina. Like Cook, Malaspina also worried about sailing into Doubtful Sound and so he dispatched a long boat with the hydrographer Don Felipe Bauza in charge.

In 1990, Fiordland was linked with three other national parks - Mount Aspiring, Westland and Aoraki Mount Cook, to form an expanded World Heritage Area of South West New Zealand. It was given the Maori name Te Waipounamu.

The excursion includes a cruise across the island - to the seals on Nee and Shelter Islands, only a short distance from Doubtful Sound. As you journey to Doubtful Sound you can feel the power of nature in this spectacular place.

Fiordland National Park

Doubtful Sound is situated within the Fiordland National Park. The park is 1.25 million hectares, 3% of the land area of New Zealand, and is one of the largest of the 14 national parks in New Zealand. In 1986, Fiordland National Park was declared a World Heritage Area on account of its superlative natural features, its exceptional beauty and its role in demonstrating the world's evolutionary history.

Sealers

About the same time in the early 1800s the sealing era was dawning in Fiordland and hundreds of thousands of fur seals were killed for their blubber and skin. They landed at the eastern end of Bauza Island, Marcaciones de Susana. When Tu crafted Doubtful Sound he was assisted by four young sea gods named Taipari, who created the arms – First Arm or Taipari-poto (short), Crooked Arm or Taipari-nui (big), Hall Arm or Taipari-roa (long) and Deep Cove or Taipari-tiki (little).

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