

# Polynesian Navigation Techniques

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The Polynesians were among the best sailors in the world. They could travel to islands thousands of kilometres away and still find their way back. They used a number of sources in nature to help them navigate.



**CLOUDS:** clouds move more slowly over land than over sea. Nearer land clouds have more colour



**STARS:** always rise and set at the same place on the horizon

**SUN:** The sun always rises in the east and

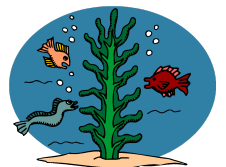


sets in the west.



**BIRDS:** seabirds fly out from land to their fishing grounds early in the morning and fly home in the evening. Most seabirds fly within 30-50kms of land.

**DRIFT OBJECTS:** drifting seaweed and other objects show the direction of currents.



**UNDERWATER LIGHTNING:** streaks of lightning flash out through the water from the direction of land.

**WHALES:** when Takitimu left Hawaiki a school of whales came to escort the canoe.

