Northland Regional Trail Notes

Cape Reinga to Ahipara

Last Edited: August 27, 2026 13:07:11 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: For southbound Te Araroa through-walkers this four-day section represents the start of their epic journey. From Cape Reinga, the track heads towards the West Coast, leading you past Te Werahi Beach, Cape Maria Van Diemen, Twilight Beach, Maunganui Bluff and Scott Point. From there, walkers undertake the long trek along 90 Mile Beach to Ahipara.

DESCRIPTION

North to South

As walkers pass through Kaitaia on their way North to start at Cape Reinga, they are advised to call into the i-SITE (Te Ahu Centre, Corner Matthews Avenue and South Road), where they can fill in Te Araroa Intentions Book. This is for their own safety on '90 Mile Beach'. While there, they can also find out about accommodation in Kaitaia and transit to Cape Reinga. Te Ahu is a large cultural centre with a library, computers, cafes and a cinema.

There are limited locations where camping is allowed between Cape Reinga and Ahipara — we suggest the following plan:

- Day One — Cape Reinga to Twilight Beach campsite (*12.5km*)
- Day Two — Twilight Beach campsite to Maunganui Bluff campsite (*28km*)
- Day Three — Maunganui Bluff campsite to Hukatere Lodge (*30km*)
- Day Four — Hukatere to Ngapae Holiday Park at Waipapakauri Beach (*17km*) or Ahipara (a further *14km*)

There is no free camping in the Aupōuri Forest, sand dunes, or on 90 Mile Beach, please camp only at the above locations.

Generally, there is water available in these locations — in extremely dry times, the tank at Twilight Beach may run out, so unless you are aware of recent rain, it is advisable to carry enough water from Cape Reinga to reach Maunganui Bluff.

From Cape Reinga, the track heads towards the West Coast, leading you down past steep cliffs and over rocks to the long, sweeping Te Werahi Beach. Note: You are best to set off at a lowish tide to make the rock scrambling and stream crossing safer & easier. Carry enough water for your first day.

Beyond Te Werahi Beach, you will experience gorgeous peach-coloured dunes, unusual dune grasses, and views of Cape Maria Van Diemen and Motuopao Island. You follow orange marker posts over Hērangi Hill, pass the turnoff to Cape Maria Van Diemen and along clifftops of flax and mānuka scrublands before dropping down to Twilight Beach. Exit near the south end of Twilight Beach up wooden steps from beach. Just above the south end of Twilight Beach (12km from Cape Reinga) is a small campsite with a toilet, water supply and a covered area — we recommend stopping here, then planning to reach Maunganui Bluff (28km away) the following day. Please camp only within the grassed area.

The track climbs up and over Scott Point, then drops down to Ninety Mile Beach on a steep set of steps, and crosses a swamp via a boardwalk. While passing over Scott Point, you will need to watch carefully for a quad motorbike track which veers right off the main 4WD track. Watch for the wooden post markers. Some have carved direction arrows.

- Note: If you come to a farm gate and a paddock, you will need to double back about 10 minutes, as you have gone the wrong way.
- Note: You will be walking near sacred 'Wahi Tapu' areas, and it is essential to follow the orange markers closely and do not wander off the marked track.

Follow Ninety Mile Beach south for approximately an hour until you come to Te Paki Stream mouth. This is a popular vehicle entrance/exit to the beach, so be prepared for cars and tourist buses around there and further south. From the stream mouth, it is 3.5 km, 1 hour upstream to the road should you wish to exit the beach here.

From Te Paki Stream, you walk down the beach to Ahipara. Try to time your walking to avoid high tide, as in parts the water can come all the way up to the dunes and make for either wet feet or the need to have a slow walk in the soft sand. Stopping and drying wet feet before continuing takes only a few minutes and may save you from troublesome blisters.

Landmarks you'll pass are The Bluff (40km from Cape Reinga), Hukatere (70km) and Waipapakauri (87km).

Leave the beach at the Kaka Street boat ramp and find your way to the Holiday Park (turn left on Takahe Road) or into Ahipara village, a popular holiday and surfing hotspot at the southern end of Ninety Mile Beach and 14km west of Kaitāia.

CONDITIONS

Track standard: tramping track

Potential Hazards

- Vehicles on road or track on Ninety Mile Beach and Kaka St boat ramp
- Tides, waves and rivers - safer at low tide
- Small stream crossings
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Few water sources. Fill up at the campsites as streams may be salty or dry
- Steep drop-offs - take care on wet rocks - can be slippery

Weather

Cape Reinga weather

NIWA 3-day forecast

ACCESS

Northern Start: Cape Reinga

Southern End: Boat ramp, Kākā Street, Ahipara

Te Araroa's northern terminus in the North Island is at Cape Reinga, which is accessible by road. Kaitaia is the most northern gateway town to Cape Reinga, servicing a population of approximately 5200. An alternative is Kerikeri, which has the advantage of being on the trail should you want to leave gear

Tide timetable for 90 Mile beach

TRANSPORT

Transport from Auckland to Kaitaia

- InterCity - P: 09 583 5780 - E: info@intercity.co.nz Buses currently four days a week. Monday, Wednesday, Friday Sunday. 7:30 am from the Sky City Coach Terminal, 102 Hobson St, Auckland. Prices start at $69, and increase as bookings fill up. This route uses the 70 seat bus to Kerikeri and transfers to a 20 seat bus for Kaitaia

Transport from Auckland to Kerikeri

- InterCity - P: 09 583 5780 - E: info@intercity.co.nz Buses currently every day. 7:30 am, 1:00 pm and 6:00 pm from the Sky City Coach Terminal, 102 Hobson St, Auckland. Prices start at $46, and increase as bookings fill up
- For September/October SOBO starters Hone Heke Lodge in Kerikeri is offering an accommodation & transportation package up to Cape Reinga. Please email stay@honeheke.co.nz or call David or Victoria 09-407 8170 for further information. www.honeheke.co.nz

Transport to Cape Reinga Trailhead

There is no public transport, however the following operators can assist.

From Kaitaia

- Ritchies Bus P: 09 408 3008, E: chris.bellas@ritchies.co.nz Subcontractors to Fullers Great Sights and InterCity. Will arrange Cape Reinga trips for groups of three or more
- Utea Park Pauly D - M: 021 804 002 - E: Uteapark@gmail.com All transport needs north of Kaitaia. Vehicle storage available. Local knowledge offered.
- Cape Reinga shuttles - Gordon Mac Rae On Facebook. WhatsApp +64 272 125 864
  I will collect you at your accommodation at a time that suits you.
  Rescues from Hukatere Lodge and Waipapakauri Ramp.
  Road sections transfers from Ahipara to Kaitāia and Kaitāia to Takahue Saddle Road
- Talia Popata (Talz) Kaitaia to Cape Reinga. 4 trips a day available, $250 share costs, 4 people max. Pick up from Ahipara. Also drop off to 121km mark or 135km mark and Emergency Pick ups M: 021 027 99776 E: taliapopata397@gmail.com

From Kerikeri

- For October SOBO starters Hone Heke Lodge in Kerikeri is offering an accommodation & transportation package up to Cape Reinga. Please email stay@honeheke.co.nz or call David or Victoria 09 407 8170 for further information. www.honeheke.co.nz
- Tuatua Rentals - P: 0274 858 453 - E: info@tuatuarentals.co.nz - Offers transfers from Paihia and Kerikeri - enquire about prices and transfers to/from other parts of the Northland trail.
- Tuatahi Airport Shuttle - Alex Nankivell - P: 021 087 53196
- Cape Reinga shuttles - Gordon Mac Rae On Facebook. WhatsApp +64 272 125 864
  I will collect you at your accommodation at a time that suits you.

From Whangarei, Mangonui

- Arthur Lancaster can provide drop-off service to Cape Reinga and/or long-term parking at Paua Bay, near Whangarei Heads. P: 09 409 7500. Arthur can also advise on commencing the walk at Spirits Bay.
- Peter Ellicott - from Northland Taxis offers a pick up from Mangonui and drop-off at the Cape for $100pp - min charge of $200 text him on 021 070 5783 - www.northlandtaxisshuttles.co.nz

From Auckland

- Salt Air - P: 09 402 8338 / 0800 472 582 - Charter flights to Cape Reinga
- Bellbird Adventure Tours: Kim Maree Thomas E: bellbirdadventuretours@gmail.com M: +64 22 029 8540
  I run a shuttle service from Auckland to Cape Reinga for thru walkers and cyclists. Approx 7hrs one-way shuttle. Two stops for restroom, and lunch stop in Houhora (45mins from the Cape).
  Transport costs are as follows: (2 person minimum, includes transfer from airport & accommodation) $450pp (2 people); $375pp (3 people or more).
  Email or call me for further info. N.B. I no longer provide solo runs.
  10% of your fare will be donated to the Te Ararora Trust for track and route improvements.

Ahipara

- Busabout Kaitaia - P: 09 408 1092 - E: admin@cbec.co.nz
- BusLink - Northland bus routes including Ahipara, Kerikeri, Paihia, Whangarei, Waipu, Mangawhai

Kaitaia

- InterCity - P: 09 583 5780 - E: info@intercity.co.nz - From Auckland - Kerikeri - Kaitaia
- BusLink - Northland bus routes including Ahipara, Kerikeri, Paihia, Whangarei, Waipu, Mangawhai...

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Pass Accommodation

Twilight Beach Campsite - km 12.8 - Included in The Trail Pass

The Bluff Campsite - km 40.7 - Private $

Hukatere Lodge Camp - km 70.51 - Private $

Ngapae Holiday park at Waipapakauri Beach - km 87.5 - Private $

Ahipara Holiday Park - km 101.5 - Private $

The Bluff

- Maunganui Bluff campground — This is a private camp operated by a local trust. They are supportive of Te Araroa and happy for walkers to stay here, however, please be sure to pay a $10/night fee, or this privilege will be at risk. The previous honesty box has been broken into repeatedly and may now have been removed. If possible, it is safer to pay $10 to Maunganui Bluff Trustee bank account 11-5027-0005402-11. This is difficult for hikers without a New Zealand bank account. A local caretaker may be present to collect payment in cash, but beware of imposters
- Take care using the water and check all taps are off - water gets very low in summer. Look to the stream on the right of the campground (when looking inland from the beach), there is a bathtub there for water resupply - while the water is fresh from a nearby spring, we'd still recommend treating it. Please respect that walkers are allowed to camp here with permission, be sure to camp on the grassed area of the campsite and don't go into the pine forest to camp.

Hukatere

- Hukatere Lodge and Hukatere Camping Ground - 809 Hukatere Rd, Houhora — P: 09 409 8705 or 021 884 145 — E: info@hukatere.com — Located right on Ninety Mile Beach

Waipapakauri

- Ngapae Holiday Park - 6 Matai St (off West Coast Rd), Waipapakauri - P: 09 406 7298 E: campngapae@outlook.com — They also offer transport to town, food or any other service upon request.

Ahipara

- Endless Summer Lodge, 245 Foreshore Road, Ahipara, 09 409 4181
- YHA Ahipara, 168-170 Takahe St, Ahipara - P: 09 409 4864 or 0800 888 988 E: ahipara@yha.co.nz
- Ahipara Bay Motel - 22 Reef View Rd - P: 09 409 4888 or 0800 906 453 - E: baymotel@ahipara.co.nz More can be found at www.ahipara.co.nz

Ahipara Trail Host

- Te Wairoa Farm Camp at the Southern end of the Ninety Mile Beach, right next to the golf course in Ahipara. P: 021 223 1194 We open our farm to campers. Facilities are basic, cold outdoor showers and portaloo. A basic kitchen is available. charge $10pp per night

Kaitaia

- Beachcomber Lodge & Backpacker — P: 09 408 1275 — E: mainstreet@xtra.co.nz — 235 Commerce St, Kaitaia. Private rooms, dorm rooms, kitchen, luggage storage, assistance with travel bookings. Bookings and check-ins are made at the Wayfarer Motel next door

Kaitaia Trail Host

- Rayanne King - E: rayanneking4@gmail.com P: 027 330 2776 I am offering accommodation in Kaitaia for up to four people in my self contained sleepout. It is fully self contained. I provide bedding. Also towels if needed. There is filtered clean water, free tea and coffee. A toaster, small oven and jug. The accomodation is in town approximately 10 minutes walk from bus stop. I am happy to pick up from Ahipara and drop to Ruaroa Road (km 122 for southbound) for a donation. I charge $25.00 to cover the costs per person. Also open for campers for $15.00.

FOOD AND SUPPLY

Waipapakauri Beach km 87.5

> *Karo Coffee and ice cream* (soft serve) van will be opening for the summer season from late of September until April 2027. Look for the flag flying @ the Ramp entrance!. Customers are welcome to fill water bottles also.
>
> Also up and running will be two small glamping huts tucked into sand dunes, shared bathroom facilities (gas hot water). Double beds/ microwave/ fridge/ airfryer. $150 per hut. Advisable to check availability 027 472 3311 Kay @ Karo.

Ahipara

- Superette Supermarket - 4 Takahe St, Ahipara - P: 09 409 4828

Kaitaia

- Pak N' Save Supermarket - 111 North Rd, Kaitaia - P: 09 408 6222
- 4 Four Square Supermarket - 65 Commerce St, Kaitaia - P: 09 408 1133

EXTRA INFO

Cape Reinga

- Far North i-SITE Visitor Information Centre — Te Ahu, Corner Matthews Avenue and South Road, Kaitaia — P: 09 408 9450 — E: kaitaia@visitnorthland.co.nz
- Department of Conservation Information Office — 25 Matthews Ave, Kaitaia — P: 09 408 6014 — E; kaitaia@doc.govt.nz

Kaitaia

- Far North i-SITE Visitor Information Centre — Te Ahu, Corner Matthews Avenue and South Road, Kaitaia — P: 09 408 9450 — E: kaitaia@visitnorthland.co.nz
- Department of Conservation Information Office - 25 Matthews Ave, Kaitaia — P: 09 408 6014 — E: kaitaia@doc.govt.nz

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

We encourage you to continue gaining the skills and knowledge required for a safe trip. The NZ Mountain Safety Council has lots of free resources and information you can use. These can be accessed via www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

The Northland Forests

Last Edited: October 16, 2026 07:28:30 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: From Ahipara, you'll walk east to Kaitaia, then through Raetea Forest and over some of the highest peaks in Northland, then on through Ōmahuta Forest and Puketī Forest.

In Raetea Forest expect a rough backcountry track, with frequent slips, damage and fallen trees

Mangamuka Track is a backcountry tramping track. The track surface is rough and it is not often maintained – the track is best suited to experienced trampers who have good navigational skills. There are frequent slips, slumps in the track and fallen trees, particularly after rain or high wind. You will need to climb around or over these, there may be marked diversions.

The track is best in summer.

This track becomes extremely slippery, wet and muddy in winter and following heavy rain. DOC rangers recommended only walking this track in summer.

For bookable DOC facilities (such as Puketi Hut / Uretiti Beach Campsite) you need to make sure that your Trail Pass and DOC Bookings account are linked – so that when you make the booking, the DOC system knows you have a Trail Pass and the discount is applied. When you registered we provided you with instructions of how to do this, to make sure you didn't experience delays in accessing the discount on bookable facilities. If you haven't created your DOC bookings account you must do so now. Once you have made an account, email booking@doc.govt.nz with a copy of your Trail Pass and they will connect the two. This may take 3-5 days.

DESCRIPTION

The Herekino Forest has now closed due to Kauri Dieback. From the boat ramp on Ninety Mile Beach please follow the Ahipara road to Kaitaia(*14.5km*). Please be careful on this road. From Kaitaia, walkers may need to catch a lift. The road walk is very dangerous as it is State Highway 1 to Ruaroa Road (*6km*). You can then walk up that road until you come to Takahue Road (*7km*) and then walk to Takahue (*4.3km*). Turn SE on Takahue Saddle Road for *2.5km* alongside the Takahue River and keep right at the junction with Warner Rd.

No camping on Warner Road beside the river please. There are no amenities at the Warner Road intersection. This is a swimming area for local children and people are understandably concerned about water pollution. There is a campsite with 1.5 km up the track, 1km before the saddle junction for Broadwood. There is no longer a toilet at this free campsite. Walkers should carry a small trowel for digging holes when required. Fortunately this is not very frequent on Te Araroa

See the Food and Supply section below for a possible meal stop at 271 Takahue Saddle Rd, just before the climb to the free campsite.

Raetea Forest Track - 18km / 9.5hr

This DOC time estimate is low. The Raetea Forest Track may take some walkers 12 to 15 hours.

From the junction with Warner Rd, go right and follow the old Takahue Saddle Road (just a track now) as it turns away from the River and climbs steeply through farmland for 2.5km. At the saddle, turn off left (east) following the orange markings up into the Raetea Forest.

It's a rough climb up to the ridge and onto a 580m peak, around km 140. There is a small tent space at the summit.

There is a small camping area approximately 1.5km up the hill (km 137) that may or may not have a good fresh water supply, *please note that the water supply after this point is limited or non-existent. The next water supply is at Makene Road (km 155.2), 18 slow kilometres away. Hard going in muddy conditions may required two days. You will need more water* than you might expect. We suggest taking 3 litres, especially if you will be cooking

UPDATE 17 September 2023. This camping area provides a place for a few tents, a picnic table and a rainwater tank The toilets and shower provided by the landowner are no longer maintained and are unusable. Use a trowel and don't leave mess for others.

The Raetea Forest has some of the highest peaks in Northland, so expect cloud and rain. The bush track follows the ridgeline on a largely west-east basis past:

- the 744m Raetea summit
- an unnamed highpoint of 727m (past a junction with a track leading north on a route out to SH1)
- the 638m Kumetewhiwhia summit
- the 445m Umaumakaroro summit

There is space to camp beside the radio repeater, on a short spur track near Raetea summit (km 143.3).

There is a camping spot near km 152.2. It is about 200 m after (southbound) a peak labelled 447m on maps.

The track then descends through bush and then private farmland to Mākene Rd, Mangamuka. The exit is into the yard of a house — they are used to walkers and happy to have you pass through — a hello and/or thank you always goes down well. There are a number of working dogs here whose bark is literally worse than their bite. Walk steadily down the driveway and you'll be fine.

Otherwise, and preferably, to avoid the dogs, SOBOs can follow the orange signs to the right and pass around the right side of the house. NOBOs can follow the signs to the left, and pass to the left of the house. Please leave any gates as you find them.

Makene Road to Omahuta Forest Road - 13km

There is a small camping area approximately halfway down Makene Rd, with toilet, river water, picnic table and washing line (km 155.3). By Donation.

Walk northeast along Makene Rd to the junction with SH1. Then carefully follow SH1 south for 5.5 km, being wary of fast traffic. This takes you through Mangamuka settlement and then south to Mangamuka Bridge.

From Mangamuka Bridge, continue south SH1 for almost a kilometre

Turn east onto Omahuta Road and walk 5km to the junction with Jacksons Road and Omahuta Forest Roads (this connection 13km/3hr).

Ōmahuta-Puketī Forest Track - 32km / 2 days

Warning: Some beehives en route, poison and trapping for possums, rats and mustelids occurs within this forest. Goat control operations using contract hunters also occur within this forest.

For forest hygiene and visitor safety reasons it is requested that in Ōmahuta and Puketī Forests camping is restricted to the sites recommended by DOC – those being Blackbridge Road (km 177.9) and Puketī Forest HQ (eastern edge of Puketī Forest). These sites have been identified for camping as they are away from kauri, therefore reducing the risk of spreading kauri dieback disease and will be poison exclusion zones for possum control operations. Therefore please plan around using only these two sites.

From the Jacksons Road junction (km 167.3, head east on well-formed single-track forestry roads (vehicles are rare). 700m up Omahuta Forest Rd, take the left fork onto Kauri Sanctuary Rd. Keep travelling uphill for approximately another 6km past an airstrip on your left and occasional beehives tucked into the forest (just button up and walk gently past). The next major junction is where Kauri Pā Road runs off left. That's the one to follow until turning off it onto Blackbridge Road km 174.6.

Ōmahuta-Puketī Forest Track is a challenging, wet route using river canyons – subject to flash floods. You need good equipment and navigation skills. Only go in dry weather.

Apple Dam campsite, which may be mentioned in older track notes and maps, is now closed because of the potential spread of Kauri Dieback disease. Camping is available 4 km further along on Blackbridge Road

Follow along to cross a concrete ford over a stream (NB: if water is flowing over the top of it, do not proceed as this means water levels in the Mangapukahukahu gorge will be too dangerous). Then climb a further 1.5km until, at the top of the climb, a 4WD track leads left along a soft ridge leading down to Mangapukahukahu Stream. The track is easy to follow down, past two old forestry skid sites. At the second/lower one, a track goes through the pampas grass on the right-hand side. It leads to a rough track (with orange markers) down through trees to the Mangapukahukahu Stream.

There is a new basic DOC campsite with shelter, water tank and toilet on Blackbridge Road at km 177.9, after the ford and just before the track down to Mangapukahukahu Stream. No fires allowed at Blackbridge Camp

The stream runs through a gorge and is subject to flash floods in heavy rain.

Do not try to go further if there is heavy rain in the region. Return back to the wet weather bypass around the north of the forest.

As long as the weather is clear, walk SE criss-crossing between shoal banks in the stream for 2.5km until meeting up with the Waipapa River. Immediately south (right) of the junction between Mangapukahukahu Stream and the Waipapa River, a track leads up the bank on your right and descends to a shoal where there's a shallow crossing of the main river. This short track can be difficult to spot. It is on the right bank of the stream just before it joins the river.

A short but very muddy climb up the far bank meets up with the Lower Waipapa River Track. It was upgrade three years ago and was well marked but has suffered some damage in storm conditions in early 2023. The undulating track can be slippery and arduous in wet conditions

Walk 2.5km northeast to the streamside junction with the Pukatea Ridge Track. (The alternative is to try wading between shoal banks in/out of the Waipapa River but there are some deep sections).

The Pukatea Ridge Track climbs steeply, (past a small freedom campsite 30m up the track, km 185.6) and then on up steps to the ridge through young kauri for 3.5km to meet the Takapau Track.

From the junction of Pukatea Ridge and Takapau Tracks, head northeast for 300m to the junction with Walnut Track and Pirau Ridge Road (a well-formed 4WD road). Follow Pirau Ridge Road east for 9 km to the Puketī Forest Headquarters, Waiare Rd. There's a campsite here. Take care on Pirau Ridge Road as vehicles and cyclists also use this road.

Ōmahuta-Puketī Wet weather bypass

If recent heavy rain makes the Mangapukahukahu Stream section unsafe walk past the Blackbridge Road junction at km 174.6, stay on Kauri Pa Road and follow the Omahuta-Puketi Forest Bypass route marked on Map 11 for 31 km to reach Waiare Road, near to Puketi Forest HQ at km 198.4. There is a possible camping spot at Louie's Stream. It's at km 8 km along the bypass route

In extreme conditions, it is possible to bypass the *Ōmahuta-Puketi Forest Track* completely and walk along the public roads south of the forests. This long road alternative is rarely used. Continue south (from Omahuta Road turnoff) on SH1 for 22km, turn left into Puketi Road and walk for 9km and Puketotara Road for 2km, then turn left up Mangakaretu Road to rejoin Te Araroa at km 205.4.

CONDITIONS

Track standard: tramping track

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track. Take care walking on roads, particularly SH1 *When road walking, walkers should should wear high visibility clothing or accessories, not wear any earbuds, and remain vigilant for traffic. Walk on the right side of the road, facing oncoming traffic, where possible.*
- Poisons and traps
- River canyons - flash floods. Use bypass in times of heavy rain.
- River crossings - Never cross flooded rivers.
- Small stream crossings
- Weather extremes
- Few water sources - carry plenty of water, refill whenever you can.
- Steep drop-offs. Bush track can get muddy and slippery so take care.

TE AO MĀORI

Local iwi know Herekino Forest as Orowhana, and the Herkino Saddle as Te Arai (the door) where spirits pause before fleeing north to Cape Reinga. Poupou totems mark the sacred site and the central pou is carved in honour of Taunaha, an ancestor.

The Herekino (Orowhana) Track was a project between Te Araroa Trust and the Department of Conservation. Te Araroa Trust also thanks the assistance given by the people of Whakamaharatanga Marae, also Te Runanga o Te Rarawa, and the Herekino Landcare Group in establishing the main track. Two other DOC tracks diverge from the Herekino Forest track - a tramp from Herekino Saddle through to the Kaitaia-Awaroa Road via Pukepoto Access Road takes 6.5hrs, and the tramp through to Larmer Road end, via the Kaitaia Walkway takes 11 hours.

ACCESS

Northern Start: Boat ramp, Kaka Street, Ahipara

Southern End: Puketī Recreation Centre, Waiare Road

TRANSPORT

- Some local accommodation places will provide transfers. Ask when you book.
- Peter Griffiths of Takahue - Can provide a drop-off and pick up service for a small fee and some backpacker accommodation is available. Contact him in advance on P: 09 408 3685.

- Local guide
- Roger Gale - P: 09 409 3807 - E: roger@treeskills.co.nz - is available for guiding through Raetea Forests

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Pass

Makene Road Campsite - km 155.2 - Private $

Blackbridge Road Campsite - km 177.4 - Included in The Trail Pass

Puketi Recreation Area Camping - km 198.4 - Included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)

Puketi Recreation Area Hut - km 198.4 - 20% discount on hut stay with The Trail Pass (Bookings required)

Northland Forests Trail Hosts

Before Raetea Forest track

- Peter Griffiths of Takahue - P: 09 408 3685 - Can provide limited backpacker accommodation.
- Overnight Camping is available at the Old School Grounds (now Takahue Marae), on NW corner of Takahue crossroads. Tenting, Toilets and water refill available and $10 koha appreciated. For any concerns call Karen Murray 021 0754 246
- *Krishna Sanctuary* Abhay and Jaya's veg/vegan meals and campsite at 271 Takahue Saddle Road, km 135.72 (just after leaving Warner Road). Advance booking essential for meal. For more details and booking, please visit krishnasanctuary.org/trail-walkers

After Raetea Forest track

- *Makene Road* - Eastern exit of Raetea Forest. Camping now available - toilet, river, picnic table and washing line. By donation. Caravan stay available with own solar shower and toilet. Email to book for caravan stay - trishterran@gmail.com
- *Mangamuka* - *Tautoko FM* offer a campsite behind the former Mangamuka Tavern building across the intersection from Managamuka Dairy. Enquiries at the dairy

Puketi Recreation Area (campsite)

- DOC Puketi Recreation Centre Campsite and Hut) Located in Puketi Forest, Waiare Rd, Puketi Hut booked through DOC - Pewhairangi / Bay of Islands - E: bayofislandsbooking@doc.govt.nz

Turn off SH10 at Pungaere Rd, 600m north of Waipapa and follow signs to the camp. Access: 7km of gravel. Accessible to vehicles and you can park next to your campsite.

Campsite Fees - Bookings are now required for the campground. Adult (18+ years): $10 per night, Child (5-17 years): $5 per night, Infant (0-4 years). Book online or pay cash on arrival at the self-registration stand. A $10 service fee applies to all phone, email and in-person bookings. The DOC Campsite Pass can be used at this campsite. Please ensure you have the correct funds to pay your camping fees, there is no change facility on site.

This campsite is now included in the 2024-25 Te Araroa Trail Pass.

Campsite Facilities:

- Approximately 20 campsites
- Cold showers
- Long drop toilets (there is usually toilet paper available, however it pays to take your own)
- Cold water tap
- Fires are currently not allowed due to the increased fire risks during summer

Puketi Forest Hut

Puketi Forest Hut Fees - Adult (18+ years): $25 per night, Youth (5-17 years): $12.50 per night, Child/Infant: (0-4 years): free. Hut tickets cannot be used in this hut. 20% discount on hut stay with The Trail Pass

Bookings are essential.

Facilities:

- 18 beds (two-tier platform bunks)
- Cold tap water - The water is not treated, you may wish to boil it before drinking
- Electricity
- Gas hob with wok burner
- Underbench fridge (small)
- Indoor fireplace (wood is sometimes available – check the wood store, otherwise take your own)
- 1 cold shower
- 2 non-flush toilets
- Indoor tables
- Mattresses

FOOD AND SUPPLY

Northland Forests

- *Krishna Sanctuary* Abhay and Jaya's veg/vegan meals and campsite at 271 Takahue Saddle Road, km 135.7 (just after leaving Warner Road). Advance booking essential for meal. For more details and booking, please visit krishnasanctuary.org/trail-walkers
- *Mangamuka Bridge Dairy* - SH 1 Mangamuka Bridge - P: 09 401 9184 - takeaways available. Opening hours: Mon-Fri: 7am - 5pm, takeaway closes 4:30pm / Sat-Sun: 8.00am - 3pm, takeaway closes 2:30pm (these hours may shorten in winter). Hours may vary

EXTRA INFO

Far North i-SITE Visitor Information Centre - Te Ahu, Corner Matthews Avenue and South Road, Kaitaia - P: 09 408 9450 - E: kaitaia@visitnorthland.co.nz

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This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

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- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

Puketi Forest (Bypass)

Last Edited: September 28, 2025 11:16:31 NZST

INTRO

Wet weather Bypass for Puketi Forest

DESCRIPTION

Puketi Forest Bypass - 31.5 km

If recent heavy rain makes the Mangapukahukahu Stream section unsafe, walk past the Blackbridge Road junction at km 174.6, stay on Kauri Pa Road and follow the Omahuta-Puketi Forest Bypass route marked on Map 11 for 31 km to reach Waiare Road, near to Puketi Forest HQ at km 198.4.

There is a possible camping spot at Louie's Stream, 8 km along the bypass route

ACCOMMODATION

Campsite

It is possible to camp beside Louies Stream at km 8 on the bypass. It's not an official campsite and there is no toilet. Please use your campsite trowel and consider others who may visit this location

EXTRA INFO

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- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

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Mangakaretu to Kerikeri

Last Edited: August 04, 2026 08:11:07 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: This route passes through farmland and pine forest and affords sweeping views of the Bay of Islands before arriving at the Kerikeri Basin, where Māori welcomed missionaries in 1819 to establish a Church Mission Settlement. Beautiful Kerikeri is one of New Zealand’s most historic sites.

DESCRIPTION

Please note, there is no camping between Puketi and Kerikeri (24km)

Mangakaretu track - 18km / 6 hrs to SH10 overbridge and picnic area

From Puketi recreation area campsite, walk out to Waiare road and turn right. Follow Waiare Road south for 2 km until you cross a small road bridge and then come to the start of the Upper Puketotara track on your left (km 201). This is an easy tramping track about 4km through to Mangakaretu Road at kilometre 205.3. You will be walking alongside a stream in QE2 reserve until you reach a fence corridor leading to Mangakaretu Road between bull paddocks. About the halfway point there is a pleasant waterfall area where you could stop for a snack.

Note. The Mangakaretu tracks pass alongside and between bull paddocks. It is essential to stay on the track, keep steadily moving, and to avoid wearing bright-coloured clothing.

Potential Hazards

- unstable ground, erosion, sinkholes - take care in soft ground
- Steep drop-offs, Occasional washouts next to rivers/streams - take care
- Farming operations
- Electric fencing

At times Landcorp may close this Upper Track for farming operations (see trail status alerts). If signage indicates that the Upper Track is closed, continue south down Waiare Road for another 3 km to the crossroads with Puketi Road and Puketotara Road. Turn left (east) and follow Puketotara Road for 2.5 km to the intersection with Mangakaretu Road. The signpost shows Kerikeri ahead, but the trail turns left (north) up Mangakaretu Road for 1.5 km to rejoin the route at kilometre 205.3

Follow the gravel Mangakaretu Road 5 km in a northeast direction before meeting the Lower Puketotara farm track at a marked stile on the left at km 210.1.

At times Landcorp may close this Lower Puketotara farm track for farming operations (see trail status alerts). If signage indicates that the Lower Track is closed, continue south down Mangakaretu Road for another 2.7 km to the junction with Puketotara Road. Turn left (east) and follow Puketotara Road for 4.7 km to the intersection with State Highway 10. Then turn left for 600m to rejoin the route at the SH10 parking bay/picnic area.

If the Lower Puketotara track is not closed, proceed across the stile and into the farm as follows.
Follow the narrow track northeast for about 500m, then turn southeast immediately after the stile to follow the fenceline around and then down through the pine forest. Then turn east to sidle around Maungaparerua (241m), with its wide outlook across the Bay of Islands.

Watch out for the farm animals. Move gently. When going past a herd of heifers or steers, be steadfast but wary as they are excitable.

Kerikeri River Track — 7km / 2 hours

Use the stile from the picnic area on SH10 and follow the Te Araroa and orange track markers around a private residence before coming back alongside the Kerikeri River.

Continue following orange markers through pleasant tōtara groves alongside the river for 3km until joining with the Department of Conservation's Kerikeri Walkway near Rainbow Falls Rd. There, one can view the 27m high Rainbow Falls that tumble over the basalt lava fields which flowed into the river valley after long past volcanic eruptions.

From then on, the track is a well-developed and marked bush track. It passes through stands of young kauri and tōtara. It also passes the remains of a powerhouse built as part of a hydroelectric generation scheme which operated between 1930-67.

Follow this track to the picnic area/carpark area on Landing Road, then cross the footbridge over the river to New Zealand's oldest house, Kemp House (1821-22) and the world-renowned Stone Store (1832-36) on the Kerikeri Basin.

HISTORY

The Kerikeri Basin is where Māori welcomed missionaries in 1819 to establish a Church Mission Settlement. This established the framework for New Zealand's bi-cultural society. Kerikeri is a beautiful place in the Bay of Islands and one of New Zealand's most historic sites.

CONDITIONS

Track Standard: Easy tramping track

Potential Hazards

- Vehicles on road or track
- Farming operations
- Electric fencing
- Small stream crossings
- Open drains
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- unstable ground, erosion, sinkholes - take care in soft ground
- Steep drop-offs, Occasional washouts next to rivers/streams - take care
- Farming operations
- Electric fencing

ACCESS

Northern Start: Puketī Recreation Centre, Waiare Road

Southern End: Stone Store, Kerikeri Basin

TRANSPORT

Mangakaretu Track alternative bypass route: Puketotara connection

- From the Puketi Recreation Centre, follow Waiare Rd south for 5kms
- Turn east onto Puketotara Rd for 13.5kms to SH 10.
- Turn north on SH 10 for 600m. On the eastern side of the road, just over the bridge and on the north banks of the Kerikeri River is the picnic layover (no facilities).

Kerikeri

- Air New Zealand Link - from Auckland airport - P: 0800 737 000 or 09 357 3000
- Salt Air - P: 0800 472 582 or 09 402 8338 - E: info@saltair.co.nz - from Kerikeri or Paihia
- Bay Of Islands Airport - for flight and shuttle transport info.
- InterCity - P: 09 583 5780 - E: info@intercity.co.nz - From Auckland - Kerikeri - Kaitaia
- Kerikeri Taxis, shuttles and Tours - P: 09 407 9515 or 021 407 951 - E: info@kerikeritaxis.co.nz
- BusLink - Northland bus routes including Ahipara, Kerikeri, Paihia, Whangarei, Waipu, Mangawhai
- For September/October SOBO starters Hone Heke Lodge in Kerikeri is offering an accommodation & transportation package up to Cape Reinga. Please email stay@honeheke.co.nz or call David or Victoria 09-407 8170 for further information. www.honeheke.co.nz

ACCOMMODATION

- Hone Heke Lodge Flashpackers has been welcoming TA Walkers have the last 10 years and we are looking forward to the 2026 walkers arriving from September.

  We recommend booking early to secure a spot for you/your group at this busy, super friendly hostel. Welcome to send your bounce boxes in advance (please email us). Check our reviews on Trip Advisor. Shuttle & accommodation package available on select dates -contact us. E: stay@honeheke.co.nz P: 09 407 8170/ text 027 414 4222

- KeriCentral Hostel - KeriCentral is a vibrant yet homely hostel/guesthouse located right in the centre of town. 150mtrs from restaurants, cafes, bus stop and shopping. Multiple outdoor entertaining areas, swimming pool, pool table, two kitchens and bbq area all at your convenience. With our limited beds in our dorm rooms and private rooms available you can be assured you'll have a restful sleep after a long day of tramping. We look forward to being part of your NZ adventure. Contact - 027 800 8067 or email on info@kericentral.co.nz

Kerikeri Trail Host

- Kerikeri hiker accommodation on Alderton Drive, near km 225
  - 2 campsites next to the Olive tree or camping on the deck in a sheltered corner.
  - A single or queen bed accommodation in my home for those who prefer inside comfort Both come with: fresh linen, hot shower, toilet, free wifi and recharge plugs, overnight fridge space, safe lockup, usually a bowl of fruit, local and where possible onward advice.
  - I charge $10 for outdoors and $25 for indoors. Call Aly Craig M: 021 897 197

- Kerikeri hiker accommodation on Waitotara Drive, just off the Kerikeri River Track at km 218
    - We offer a beautiful lawn with lots of space for tents and can also if the weather is not nice offer you inside accommodation. You will have access to bathroom and laundry facilities.
    - A lovely outdoor area and swimming pool that hikers are welcome to use. Hot drinks and snacks available. Happy for hikers to have an extra day after coming thru Puketi Forest.
    - We can do pickups/dropoffs into town and also from the Kerikeri Airport.
    - We charge $15.00 per hiker. Please phone Robby 021 023 21384 or Jeff 027 445 7136.

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- New World Supermarket - 99 Kerikeri Rd, Kerikeri - P: 09 407 0200
- Countdown Supermarket - 1 Fairway Drive. Kerikeri - P: 09 407 6163

EXTRA INFO

Kerikeri

- More information about Kerikeri
- Paihia i-SITE Information Centre: The Wharf 69 Marsden Road, Paihia - P: 09 402 7345 - E: bayofislands@i-SITE.org
- (DOC) - Department of Conservation - Bay of Islands area office - 34 Landing Rd, Bay of Islands - P: 09 407 0300 - E: bayofislandsbooking@doc.govt.nz

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- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

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Kerikeri to Waitangi

Last Edited: October 23, 2026 07:54:42 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: Journey from historic Kerikeri through Kororipo Pa, Waitangi Forest and Mt Bledisloe to the iconic Treaty Grounds at Waitangi

DESCRIPTION

Koropiro Pa Track - 1.5km

From the historic Kemp House and Stone Store on Kerikeri Basin, leave Kerikeri Road and follow the Kororipo Pā Track, which curves around the headland to the southeast.

Once on the headland, follow the wide pasture track southwest until a Department of Conservation marker post identifies a track heading southeast down into a gully and over a pedestrian bridge to Pā Road.

Walk southeast up Pā Road and turn northeast into Kerikeri Inlet Road. Continue for 2km to a forest gate and the northern end of Te Wairoa Road, the start of the Waitangi Forest Track. This route includes footpaths, grass, easy walking tracks and a road berm.

Waitangi Forest Track — 14.5km / 3 hours

As it leaves Kerikeri Inlet Road, the trail ascends gradually through young pines for 2.6 km to a road junction. Enter into Waitangi forest at Te Wairoa road entry point, then follow Te Wairoa Road, past Te Puke Road, until turning south on Bayly Road. (This replaces an earlier mapped route using Te Puke Road and Haruru Falls Road)

This forest has active logging operations. Be extremely careful of logging trucks and harvesting activities.

In partnership with Ngati Hapu Ki Waitangi:

- *Wear a high-vis vest/jacket throughout the forest for personal safety and to increase walker visibility for logging truck drivers.*
- *Stay on the track and do not deviate from the track for your safety.*
- *Trees may be felled within two tree lengths of the track.*
- *Heed all signs and do not enter areas marked as closed.*
- *Be aware of tree felling within*

At this point, anyone with interest in Te Araroa history may want to look out for a plaque and Te Araroa cairn on the side of the road with information about the trail, assembled from local volcanic rock by Kerikeri sculptor Chris Booth and restored in 2014. This marks the opening of this route; the very first Te Araroa track.

Continue on Te Puke Road 1km to pass Mt Bledisloe (105m) before turning east onto Haruru Falls Rd. Leaving the forest behind you, emerge onto Tau Henare Drive, Waitangi. Follow the road through the Waitangi Golf Course past the Waitangi Treaty Grounds and continue down to the Waitangi Bridge.

HISTORY

Te Araroa's first-ever track-opening plaque 7 February 7 1995. Then-Prime Minister Jim Bolger whisked a yellow tarpaulin off a local volcanic stone embedded with lines from A. R.D. Fairburn's poem 'To a Friend in the Wilderness' –

I could be happy, in blue and fortunate weather,

Roaming the country between you and the sun

South of here, the trail follows the same route that once connected the now-vanished Māori village Okura with Waitangi. It passes Mt Bledisloe (105m), and a short diversion to the summit lookout is worthwhile. The large swathe of land on view from this low summit includes the Waitangi Treaty Grounds below. The track descends past Mt Bledisoe before turning east (left) onto Haruru Falls Rd, Tau Henare Drive, and the Waitangi Golf Course to the Waitangi Treaty Grounds.

On 6 February 1840, New Zealand's founding document was signed here between Lieutenant-Governor Hobson, representing the British Crown and Māori chiefs. The manicured lawns and the solemn kaitiakitanga that surround the place indicate the importance now placed on the treaty. The Treaty Grounds (including the colonial Treaty House) and 1000 acres of land were gifted to the nation in 1932 by the former Governor-General, Lord Charles Bledisloe. As a British aristocrat, he perhaps saw more clearly than Pākehā New Zealanders then did what the Treaty of Waitangi meant to Māori and the nation. Te Whare Runanga (carved meeting house) was opened on 6 February 1940, 100 years after the signing. It stands facing the Treaty House, the two buildings together symbolising the partnership agreed between Māori and the British Crown, on which today's Aotearoa New Zealand is founded.

CONDITIONS

Track standard: easy tramping track

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track
- Forestry operations
- Bikes and horses

ACCESS

Northern Start: Stone Store, Kerikeri

Southern End: Waitangi Bridge, Paihia

EXTRA INFO

Kerikeri

- Kororipo Pa served as a coastal village, a fortified base for war parties and a trading post

Waitangi Treaty Grounds

- Open daily from 9am to 6pm (January and February) and 9am to 5pm during the rest of the year.
- Daily guided tours and Māori cultural performances are available.
- Whare Waka Café is located within the Treaty Grounds. Hangi and Concert evenings are scheduled from 1 December to the end of March on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.
- There are many side roads in this forest, so take care you are on the correct road.
- The track passes through the Waitangi Endowment Forest — part of New Zealand's conservation estate, a further gift to the nation by Lord Bledisloe in 1936.

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

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We encourage you to continue gaining the skills and knowledge required for a safe trip. The NZ Mountain Safety Council has lots of free resources and information you can use. These can be accessed via www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

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- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

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Paihia to Ōpua Coastal Walkway

Last Edited: September 26, 2025 15:17:07 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: This track provides wonderful views of the Veronica Channel.

DESCRIPTION

Paihia - Opua Coastal Walkway - 8.5km

From the Waitangi Bridge, follow the coastal Marsden Road via beach or footpath south through Paihia township.

At the southern end of Paihia Beach (junction of Marsden and Seaview roads by toilets/car park), you have 2 options:

1. When the tide is out, follow the coastline from Paihia Beach around to Haumi Bay.
2. If the tide is in, take the footpath south on Seaview Road to Haumi Bay.

From the southern end of Haumi Bay, follow the signed track beside/under the bridge and around the coast to the east until you reach Ōpua.

If the tide is too high to continue around the coast from Lemons Bay (km 250.4) take the steps up to Richardson Street

If planning to kayak to Waikare it is easier to launch from the Paihia beach. Contact Nick at Bay Beach Hire on 021 159 2185. Details in Waikare Connection information.

CONDITIONS

Track standard: mixed grade

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track
- Take care around water, slippery rocks

ACCESS

Northern Start: Waitangi Bridge, Paihia

Southern End: Ōpua Wharf, Ōpua, Bay of Islands

TRANSPORT

- Air New Zealand or see Kerikeri
- InterCity - From Auckland - Kerikeri - P: 09 583 5780 - E: info@intercity.co.nz
- Northliner Express Coach Service - P: 09 307 5873
- Kerikeri Taxis, shuttles and Tours - P: 09 407 9515 or 021 407 951- E: info@kerikeritaxis.co.nz
- Passenger Ferry: For Paihia - Russell. Departs on demand every 20 minutes from 8.30am until late. Last ferry 1 September to 30 October 7.30pm, 1 June to 31 August 5.30pm. Tickets are purchased on board. Waitangi drop-off subject to conditions.
- BusLink - Northland bus routes including Ahipara, Kerikeri, Paihia, Whangarei, Waipu, Mangawhai

ACCOMMODATION

- Bay of Islands Lodge, Corner of Kings & MacMurray Rds, Paihia - See special Te Araroa walker rates here. Call or Text: 021 560 306 - Email: andy@bayofislandslodge.com
- Waitangi Holiday Park & Mayfair Lodge backpackers - 1 Tahuna Rd, Waitangi - P: 0800 55 6660 or 09 402 786 - E: waitangiholidaypark@xtra.co.nz
- Centabay Lodge - 27 Selwyn Rd, Paihia - P: 0800 402746 - E: centabay@xtra.co.nz

Accommodation en route

- Beachside Holiday Park - 1290 SH 11, Paihia - P: 09 402 7678 Freecall 0800 55 6660 - E: info@beachsidehioliday.co.nz
- Opua Motel - 24 Franklin St, Opua - P: 09 402 7632 - E: opua.motel@xtra.co.nz they offer a 10% for TA Walkers

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- Countdown Supermarket - 9 Blackbridge Rd, Paihia
- 4 Four Square Supermarket - 41 Williams Rd, Paihia
- Opua General Store - next to Russell Ferry Ramp - P: 09 402 7575 - E: opuastore@paradise.net.nz

EXTRA INFO

Paihia

- i-SITE Visitor Information Centres - The Wharf, Marsden Rd, Paihia - P: 09 402 7345 or 0800 363 463 - E: paihia@visitnorthland.co.nz
- For further information on Paihia and Russell

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Waikare Connection - by Water

Last Edited: October 26, 2026 10:11:38 NZST

INTRO

Following consultation with local iwi in the Russell Forest, it has been decided that we will re route Te Araroa around Russell Forest. The key reason to do this is to respect the concerns of local iwi around reducing the potential spread of Kauri Die Back by our walkers. We have developed a new route that will take our walkers to the eastern side of the forest, before connecting back up with the original trail at km 287 km

Two options exist to negotiate the Waikare Inlet from Paihia or Opua through to the Punaruku Estuary on Whangaruru Harbour

- Waikare Connection - by Water, travelling by kayak from Paihia to Waikere
- Waikare Connection - by Road Bypass via the ferry from Opua to Okiato.

There is also the option to ferry from Paihia to Russell (and a chance to explore some of New Zealand's history in Russell), and take the Russell to Okiato walkway until you get to the Gas station at the junction of Aucks road. Alternatively, connect with Sheryl Wikaere and travel with her to Waikare - (there will be a cost involved and this is unsuitable for bigger groups) Contact Sheryl on peter1.sheryl@gmail.com

Tide timetable for Waikere Inlet

DESCRIPTION

Waikare Connection - by Water - 11km

Kayak up the inlet with Moana Kayaks, text Nick on 021 159 2185 to book. This company is based on the beach at Paihia. Minimum of four people per trip. The paddle from Paihia to Waikare takes between 3-4hr depending on weather conditions and fitness levels, and should only be done by persons with some experience. Optional picnic stop at Marriott Island. Cellphone reception is zero once past Marriott Island so GPS or good map skills are needed. Plan to start around 3 hours before high tide to arrive at Waikare near the top the tide.

Includes kayak hire, pack transport to Waikare, kayak pickup, dry bags, maps, full safety equipment. Pricing - $100pp, with minimum of 4 people. Kayaking may not be available for periods of 3-4 days when the tide is not suitable for reaching the Waikare landing point. Plan ahead to organise group and date.

There is approximately 18kms of kayaking. From Waikare walk north up Waikare Road (gravel, 6 km) and turn right to follow Russell Road (sealed, 13 km) to The Farm. Alternatively take a 2 km walk along Waihaha Road, opposite the landing point, to Sheryl’s place (027 309 3476)

Waikare Road - 6km

If you are not stopping at Waikare walk north on Waikere Road (gravel) for 6kms to the junction with Russell Whakapara Road at km 269

Russell Whakapara Road / Russell Road - 13km

A sealed road winding through the Ngaiotonga Scenic reserve to The Farm at Tutaematai

CONDITIONS

Track standard: mixed grade

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track.
  When road walking, walkers should should wear high visibility clothing or accessories, not wear any earbuds, and remain vigilant for traffic.
- If kayaking, be alert for other water users
- Poisons & traps
- Small stream crossings
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold

ACCOMMODATION

Waikare

Waikare and the accommodation providers on Waikare Road are not located directly on Te Araroa due to the closure of Russell Forest and Papakauri Track in 2021. The accommodation options below are approximately 2 km off the current route

For information re Waikare amenities, contact Sheryl Waikare on P: 027 309 3476 E: peter1.sheryl@gmail.com

- *Sheryl's Place* has tenting available for walkers at 228 Waikare Valley Rd ($20) - call Sheryl, or information at the Russell GAS station. Sheryl's place is 1km from the Russell Forest at 228D Waikare Valley Rd, just phone or text to arrange. Note that Sheryl's place is "off the grid" - composting toilet available on request and kauri dieback cleaning facilities available, please make use of these!

EXTRA INFO

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- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

Waikare Connection - by Road Bypass

Last Edited: October 26, 2026 10:20:27 NZST

INTRO

The Russell Forest Track has been removed from Te Araroa following consultation with local iwi. The routes described lead to the eastern end of Papakauri Road, near km 287.

Two options exist to negotiate the Waikare Inlet from Paihai or Opua through to the Punaruku Estuary on Whangaruru Harbour

- Waikare Connection - by Water, travelling by kayak from Paihia to Waikare
- Waikare Connection - by Road Bypass via the ferry from Opua to Okiato.

There is also the option to ferry from Paihia to Russell (and a chance to explore some of New Zealand's history in Russell), and take the Russell to Okiato walkway until you get to the Gas station at the junction of Aucks road. Alternatively, connect with Sheryl Wikaere and travel with her to Waikare - (there will be a cost involved and this is unsuitable for bigger groups). Contact Sheryl on peter1.sheryl@gmail.com

DESCRIPTION

Waikare Connection - by Road Bypass

By road via Ferry from Opua to Okiato - 14km

Walk from Paihia 6kms to Opua and take the vehicular ferry over the Veronica Channel to Okiato. From there, follow Aucks Rd for 5 km to the GAS Russell Garage at the junction with the Russell Whakapara Rd. Continue east into Russell-Whakapara Rd for another 9 km to the junction with Waikare Road at km 268.9, where walkers who have taken the kayak option via Waikare will join your route.
If you want a more relaxing route between exiting the ferry and joining with the Russell Whakapara Rd, turn left into Pipiroa Rd soon after leaving the ferry and link to the “Okiato to Russell Walkway”. This goes through wetland, bush, and around cliffs to rejoin Aucks Rd just before its junction with the Russell Whakapara Rd.

By road via Ferry from Paihia to Russell

Catch a ferry to Russell from Paihia at km marker 245.2, and then walk through Russell township and up Florence Ave. Beside the refuse centre there is a trail that takes you beside and off the main road, over boardwalks and through coastal mangroves, all the way to GAS Russell Garage (5kms) on the corner of Aucks Road and Russell Whakapara Road. Continue east into Russell-Whakapara Rd for another 9 km to the junction with Waikare Road at km 268.9, where walkers who have taken the kayak option via Waikare will join your route.

CONDITIONS

- Vehicles on road or track.
  When road walking, walkers should should wear high visibility clothing or accessories, not wear any earbuds, and remain vigilant for traffic. Walk on the

right side of the road, facing oncoming traffic, where possible.
- If kayaking, be alert for other water users
- Poisons & traps
- Small stream crossings
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold

ACCESS

Northern Start: Opua Wharf, Opua, Bay of Islands

Southern End: Waikare

ACCOMMODATION

Russell Outback Eco Retreat - Near the corner of Russell Whakapara Road and Paroa Bay Rd, 10.7 km from Okiato. 17 Paroa Bay Road. Call or text Clair on 021 558 514

- 4 single dorm beds available, $30/ person, composting toilet, hot shower, basic kitchen.
- AirBnB cabin bunks available $40/ person, composting toilet, hot shower, kitchen with gas hob.
- Limited camping $20 per person.
- Linen extra $10 for duvet and towels

EXTRA INFO

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

We encourage you to continue gaining the skills and knowledge required for a safe trip. The NZ Mountain Safety Council has lots of free resources and information you can use. These can be accessed via www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

Waikare to Ngunguru

Last Edited: October 01, 2026 15:12:50 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: This is a really enjoyable section where, if you're lucky, you'll meet some of the finest trail angels Te Araroa has to offer!

DESCRIPTION

Note: Some parts of Russell Forest have been affected by kauri dieback disease. Following consultation with local iwi, Te Araroa has been re-routed around the east side of Russell Forest. The key reason is to respect the concerns of local iwi around reducing the potential spread of kauri dieback by our walkers.

The new route takes walkers to the eastern side of the forest along the Russell Whakapara Road, and south to the junction of Papakauri Road.

Russell Whakapara Road from km 268.9 - 18km

Follow Russell Whakapara Rd for approximately 10.8 km to Rawhiti Road turnoff. Continue 2.6 km on Russell Whakapara Rd and you'll find The Farm on the right-hand side at km 282.5

The Farm offers camping and accommodation, and walkers are welcome to use the toilets and refill water for free. Cooked dinners and continental breakfasts can be arranged. The coffee shop opens early and serves espresso coffee. From The Farm, it's a sealed road to Helena Bay. A morning shuttle is available from The Farm's coffee shop to Webb Road, the start of the Helena Ridge Track.

New: instead of walking the road, you can walk through The Farm. This swaps about 4 km of road walking for farm tracks with beautiful coastal views over the Whangaruru Harbour. The track rejoins the route at km 285.9, at the junction of Whangaruru Wharf Road and Russell Road.

From The Farm continue south to pass Papakauri Road (the original Russell Forest Trail) at km marker 287. A further 1.5kms south is Tammy's Place at 2999 Russell Road.

Papakauri Road junction to Helena Bay - 13.6km

After passing Papakauri Road (km 287), keep going south on Russell Road, passing the Ōākura turnoff (6.5km) and the small settlement of Mōkau (8km) until reaching the junction of Russell Road and Webb Road, Helena Bay (13km). From the junction of Russell and Webb Road, follow Webb Road 0.5km to the start of the Helena Ridge Track.

Helena Ridge Track - 9km / 4 hours

Please exercise caution when walking this track and keep moving when crossing the slip areas, particularly during or after wet weather.

From Webb Road, climb the stile under the "High Chaparral" sign and make use of the cleaning station to ensure no dirt/mud remains on your footwear.

Immediately after the sign, do not go up the hill, but follow around the hill on the little track on the right. Follow an old farm track that sidles around steep pasture where mānuka trees are regenerating. Go through a small patch of bush before the benched track ends and begin to climb a steep hill to meet a ridgeline that undulates through regenerating bush.

While there is the occasional short scramble, the track is well formed and easy walking (though uphill most of the way).

At the highest point, the track turns east, alternating between pasture, farm track and native bush. Here you can enjoy glimpses of the magnificent canopy of large native trees below and the coast in the distance.

Note: When on farm tracks you may encounter some closed gates, and often, stretchy electrified wires. Carefully use the plastic handles to open, and leave gates open or closed as you found them.

At the very top there is another cleaning station. Please use this to again carefully remove mud from your footwear.

The last kilometre is an easy gravel farm track bringing you to Kaiikanui Road.

After coming out of the forest at km 307.5, approximately 1.7km before reaching Kaiikanui Road, there is a free camping spot with a water tank generously provided by the landowner. The water tank may be empty in dry conditions. There no toilet at this location.

The old route from Kaiikanui Road to Whananaki along the Morepork-Onekainga Track is closed.

Route to Whananaki via Kaiikanui Road - 13 km

On reaching Kaiikanui road, turn right (west) walk about 200 m and turn left into Bridle track road. This track will take you 1km along a 4wd track, then a rugged oxen track for 1.5km, then skirting around farm electric fences for the last km. Turn left into Whananaki North Road for 8km to the Whananaki Estuary track.

The Whananaki Estuary Track is 1.3 km long and will take you around the Estuary edge to the Whananaki Footbridge, the Whananaki Store and the campground.

Whananaki Coastal Track - 8.5km / 3 hours

Tide timetable for Whananaki Coastal Track

From Whananaki North village, there's a track next to the school which leads to the footbridge. Once across, head east along the estuary (if the tide is high, there is a 1km detour by road around the back of the settlement) around the small settlement and over the spit before heading south on Pukekawa Road parallel to the shore.

There is a possible diversion via a short, steeper track to the Capitaine Bougainville Memorial on the north point of Oruaea Bay. There are great views from here along the coast.

Note: There is limited beach access from the track – only at Sheltered Bay.

Beyond Pitokuku Point, a grassy track goes behind private baches and over a stile to join up with a well-graded pōhutukawa-lined farm track/driveway with excellent views of the coast and the Poor Knights Islands. Continue on the driveway until reaching the gate at McAuslin Road.

Leaving the gate at the north end of McAuslin Road, head south down the road (looking out for traffic) to Sandy Bay, enjoying the beautiful beaches as you go.

Matapōuri Road to Ngunguru - 15.5 km

When you arrive into Sandy Bay, turn right onto Matapōuri Road and head west, inland, for approximately 3km. Turn left onto Kaiatea Road for 3.5 km

Turn left into Te Toiroa Road. Pass Kiwi Bush Lane (a loop road). Then take the narrow 'Old Coach Road' to Pukenui Road, which you follow until you merge right onto Waiotoi Road. This takes you all the way into the seaside village of Ngunguru.

Ngunguru Road - 1.5km

Tide timetable for Ngunguru and Taiharuru Estuary Route

From Waiotoi Road, turn right/southwest onto Ngunguru Road. Just 200m down this road are the Ngunguru Village shops. If you need food supplies, now is a good time to get them as the next shops on the trail are 2–3 days' walk away

CONDITIONS

Track standard: Tramping track

Potential Hazards

- Vehicles on road or track.
  When road walking, walkers should should wear high visibility clothing or accessories, not wear any earbuds, and remain vigilant for traffic. Walk on the right side of the road, facing oncoming traffic, where possible
- No dogs allowed
- Multiple river crossings – please make an informed decision on tide flow and height of the river before crossing as this can be dangerous
- Do not cross rivers after or during heavy rain
- Please respect trail restrictions – do not trespass onto private property
- Clean boots before and after your walk to stop the spread of kauri dieback disease

ACCESS

Northern Start: Waikare

Southern End: North bank of Ngunguru River

TRANSPORT

Waikare

Waikare and the accommodation providers on Waikare Road are not located directly on Te Araroa due to the closure of Russell Forest and Papakauri Track in 2021. The accommodation options below are approximately 2 km off the current route

For information re Waikare amenities, contact Sheryl Wikaire on P: 027 309 3476 E: peter1.sheryl@gmail.com

- Sheryl's Place has tenting available for walkers at 228 Waikare Valley Rd (koha/donation please) - call Sheryl, or information at the Russell GAS station. Sheryl's place is 1km from the Russell Forest at 228D Waikare Valley Rd, just phone or text to arrange. Note that Sheryl's place is "off the grid" - composting toilet available on request and kauri dieback cleaning facilities available, please make use of these!

Russell Road - Tutaematai

- *The Farm* shuttle runs from The Farm at km 282.3 to Helena Bay on Webb Road, approximately 18 km by road. Contact The Farm on WhatsApp at +64 27 250 0046.

Matapouri

- A 2 B Auckland Airport Direct Shuttle (to/from Whangarei/Matapouri/Tutukaka) - P: 09 459 5221 or 027 273 7307

Ngunguru

- FREE BOAT SERVICE ACROSS THE NGUNGURU RIVER. This boat service connects you to the Official TA trail on the south side of the Ngunguru River and to *Nikau Bay Camp and Cabins*.
  If you decide to take the boat crossing TXT James ideally 24hrs before your arrival on 021 0242 1632
- BOAT CROSSING TIMES
  If you're staying at Nikau Bay Camp & Cabins the boat pick up time is generally around 2 to 5pm, but hey "I'm flexible" If you get in earlier txt me on 021 0242 1632 and I'll pick you up...AND...provided conditions are good and you're a confident swimmer you can swim/walk across the Ngunguru River, I'm happy to ferry your backpacks across by boat. There are FREE hot showers immediately waiting for you at Nikau Bay Camp when you come out of the water...James

ACCOMMODATION

The Farm at Whangaruru

A family-owned working farm and farmstay directly on Te Araroa at 3632 Russell Road, km 282.3, with plenty of fellow travellers around and great facilities.

Camp spots, dorm rooms and private cabins are available.

All stays include hot showers, flush toilets, a shared kitchen, Wi-Fi, a library and TV room. Also available are community dinners, sauna, laundry facilities, morning yoga, massage, horse treks, an espresso coffee shop and a shuttle service to Helena Bay.

Based on TA walker feedback, the Farm has started running a morning shuttle to Helena Bay and Webb Road for those wanting to skip some road walking. The distance is approximately 17.5 km by road.

Book directly at www.thefarm.co.nz, or message or call on WhatsApp at +64 27 250 0046.

Cash or EFTPOS accepted at reception.

Punaruku

Make contact with Tammy at 2999 Russell Road- they have camping sites $15 per person for a camping spot - call Tammy on 027 240 4121

Oakura Bay

- Whangaruru Beachfront Camp - Ohawini Rd, Oakura Nth - P: 09 433 6806 - It has cabins, caravans, motel and campsites. Fully equipped kitchen for use. Hot free showers and a laundry. We have a small camp shop that stocks most basics and necessities. Phone number 09 433 6806, email: office@wbc2014.co.nz Walkers are offered the camps winter rates through the summer months, which is significantly cheaper. i.e. Campsite is $22.00 per head, winter: $17.00. Cabins range between $85 to $70 per night. Discount $75.00 to $60.00. etc.

Oakura Bay Trail Host

- Situated in an ideal position for walkers to stay right beside the ocean at our stunningly beautiful Oakura Bay, after walking from Waikare. Ngawai and Justin run a fishing charter on the beautiful Oakura Bay beachfront called Oakura Bay Fish Dive and Cruise. It offers both beachfront tent sites and other tent sites with spectacular views overlooking the whole beach, as well as well set up caravans. The tent sites are just $15 per night for Te Araroa walkers which includes spectacular location, excellent hot showers, and free WiFi. It also has a range of well-setup caravans on the beachfront that many walkers prefer for a break with comfortable beds, great views, and impressive facilities. They range from just $25 per person per night and also include well-setup facilities, excellent hot showers, and free WiFi. They can be viewed by searching for "Oakura Bay Caravans" on Airbnb, but are much cheaper for the walkers. The camp is ideal day's walk distance from Waikare, They also offer walkers the option of being driven up to restart their trail walking the next morning after a relaxing and enjoyable stay. Drop Ngawai and Justin a line on 027 462 5872 or oakura@xtra.co.nz

Helena Bay

- Hopewell B&B - 1349 Russell Rd, Helena Bay Hill - P: 09 433 9608 - We offer a dinner option on request (booking required 24hrs before arrival) and we also have single room rates. Furthermore we offer walkers to pick them up of the trail and return them the next day, as we are about 4.5km away from the trail, on Helena Bay Hill. It offers a $5 discount on the dinner option for Te Araroa walkers.
- There is a Department of Conservation campground at Waikahoa Bay in the Mimiwhangata Coastal Park. It is 4.5km from the Webb/Kaiikanui/Mimiwhangata Rd junction down to the coastal park then a further 1km over a hill to the campground. If you wish to stay here - Don't take the Helena Ridge Track and instead continue along Webb Rd. When leaving Mimiwhangata, continue uphill on Kaiikanui Rd to rejoin the route near km 309.2. This road is getting more traffic than normal due to the long-term closure of Russell Road. Traffic may be controlled and escorted for safety. It may be possible to ask for a ride in the safety escort vehicle. The Department of Conservation Back Country Hut Pass does not apply and bookings are essential in peak season.

Helena Bay Trail Hosts

- *Alex and Dave* are friendly trail hosts in Helena Bay. We have a caravan that sleeps 3 and space for around 6 tent sites. Fresh water, hot shower, flush toilet and wifi available.
  - Please contact us for details.
  - Bookings preferred.
  - P: Dave 027 433 9016 or Alex 022 045 4391
  - E: lxmartist73@gmail.com
- *Kōmanawa Farmstay*, 361 Kaiikanui Road -
  - 30km south of "The Farm", 18km north of Whananaki.
  - 361 Kaiikanui Road is not on the current Te Araroa route. This section of Kaiikanui Road was part of Te Araroa before August 2026
  - Stay on Kaiikanui road past the turnoff at km 309.1
  - Instructions from Kaiikanui Road: Take the driveway on the right. Continue all the way until you reach the red Woolshed building and sign in before setting up. Please do not stop at any of the houses before The Woolshed - these are private residences.
  - Hot Showers, Bathrooms, Flat Camping Spots (next to a stream), Spring Water, Charging Station, Basic Supplies available.
  - $25/night per person cash or internet banking transfer.

Whananaki

- Whananaki Holiday Park, Whananaki North Rd, Whananaki - $21/person for tent, $37/person for dorm cabin. Online booking available, even if we are showing as full, we will accommodate TA walkers on tent sites - P: 09 433 8896 - E: stay@whananakiholiday.co.nz

Matapouri

- AirBnB - Matapouri Road, Sandy Bay - P - 09 434 4066 E - chris@oceanswatch.org Established Airbnb and will offer summer camping from November 2020. Own tent or use our 5m glamping tent. Please email in advance for directions. We are at the top of Sandy Bay hill close to the track, in a convenient spot for a night after walking up Sandy Bay hill (this is on the alternative route from Sandy Bay to Ngunguru).

- Toilet facilities are available at the beach.

Ngunguru Campsites

Nikau Bay Camp and Cabins km 349.1
A beautiful waterfront camp located right on the official TA trail. Once you arrive into Ngunguru village, James, the camp owner provides a FREE boat ride to take you across Ngunguru River to Nikau Bay Camp & Cabins . OR if you'd like to swim across the Ngunguru River James is happy to take your backpack across in the boat. They'll be a BIG HOT shower waiting for you at Nikau Bay Camp.

If you're keen to use this free boat service TXT James ideally 24hrs before your arrival on 021 0242 1632

Our camp has waterfront tent sites and cabin accommodation, a beach for swimming, complimentary fresh greens from our organic garden plus morning coffee & tea, clean drinking water, lounge area, toilets, simple laundry facility and a large kitchen area with hot and cold running water. Please use your own Cooker

You're also welcome to use our fridge in the house and charge your phones.
plus free use of our kayaks to explore Ngunguru River

Ngunguru River Bypass Trail Hosts

The Secret Spot Campsite

- On the Ngunguru River Bypass at Coalhill Lane, Kiripaka. 9km mark on the bypass route from Ngunguru.
- Shuttle available daily from Ngunguru village for those wanting to stay off the road (and up to Mackeral track in the morning if needed). Open for walkers every day of the year. SOBO and NOBO.
- A family owned organic farm, sheltered , forested riverside camp with some of Northlands best swimming holes. Hot outdoor shower, Toilet, Fresh clean water, fully equipped outdoor kitchen with gas cookers. Campfire and couches. Seasonal veges, fruit, eggs for those in need. Local knowledge and support. Happy to receive post parcels. Access to Whangarei if required. (10 mins by car) $25.00/night adult, $15.00 per child. Bookings essential on day or prior. WhatsApp/Text Anna 027 7097 111 or email korucreek@gmail.com

FOOD AND SUPPLY

Russell Road - Tutaematai

- *The Farm* (km 282.3) Cooked dinners are available. Continental breakfasts are available by arrangement. Fresh eggs and cold drinks are available for purchase at reception. Small canteen plus coffee shop open in the mornings.

Whananaki

- *Whananaki North Beach Store* - 2162 Whananaki North Rd, Whananaki Beach - P: 09 433 8466. This store shuts at 5pm. Also does Takeaway Fish and chips.

Matapouri

- *Matapouri Store* - 954 Matapouri Rd, Matapouri Bay - P: 09 434 3706
- Has an ATM which sometimes works, and sometimes people can get cash out with EFTPOS purchases from the store, but not with Credit Card purchases

Ngunguru

- *Tutukaka Store*
  This Store is well stocked. It has an ATM and is open 7am to 6.30pm daily

- *Ngunguru Store* Main Rd, Ngunguru - P: 09 434 3858
  This Store is the biggest shop on the Tutukaka Coast and is well stocked. It has an ATM and is open 7am to 7pm daily. Beside this store there is also a fish n chip and pizza shop.

EXTRA INFO

Unguided walk package

Bream Head Coast Walks - 395 Ody Rd, RD 4, Whangarei Heads - P: 09 434 0571 - E: Claire@coastwalks.co.nz - W: 3-day unguided walk package for up to 12 pax, season 1 October - 31 May - bookings are essential.

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We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

Ngunguru River Bypass

Last Edited: October 13, 2026 13:20:13 NZST

INTRO

A 13.5 km bypass from Ngunguru (km 348.25) to Mackerel Forest Track (km 357.5). This bypass is open all year, primarily following public roads. It is used when the section of Te Araroa between Ngunguru and Mackeral Forest closes seasonally. Check the main trail notes and alerts to find out if this bypass is necessary.

DESCRIPTION

Ngunguru River Bypass - Northern part - 13.5 km

From the corner of Ngunguru Road and Pāpaka Road, walk west out of the village and continue on the road margin until you reach a junction with Ngunguru Ford Road (10.5 km). (Ngunguru Road is a very busy road linking Ngunguru to Whāngārei - take a lot of care walking, stay as far off the edge as you can. Wear a hi-viz vest and do not use headphones.)

Follow Ngunguru Ford Road southeast for 3 km to the start of Mackerel Forest Track.

CONDITIONS

- Wear hi vis when walking on road shoulder
- Do not wear headphones as traffic is can be unexpected

ACCOMMODATION

Ngunguru River Bypass Trail Hosts

- The Secret Spot Campsite
  - On the Ngunguru River Bypass at Coalhill Lane, Kiripaka. 9km mark on the bypass route from Ngunguru.
  - Shuttle available daily from Ngunguru village for those wanting to stay off the road (and up to Mackeral track in the morning if needed). Open for walkers every day of the year. SOBO and NOBO.
  - A family owned organic farm, sheltered , forested riverside camp with some of Northlands best swimming holes. Hot outdoor shower, Toilet, Fresh clean water, fully equipped outdoor kitchen with gas cookers. Campfire and couches. Seasonal veges, fruit, eggs for those in need. Local knowledge and support. Happy to receive post parcels. Access to Whangarei if required. (10 mins by car) $25.00/night adult, $15.00 per child. Bookings essential on day or prior. WhatsApp/Text Anna 027 7097 111 or email korucreek@gmail.com

EXTRA INFO

- Map 21

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- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

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Ngunguru to Pataua North

Last Edited: October 01, 2026 15:13:51 NZST

INTRO

Cross the Ngunguru River to Nikau Bay, or follow Ngunguru Road, through Mackerel Forest to Horahora and Pataua.

From Ngunguru Village take the FREE boat service provided by James across the Ngunguru River where you will connect to the Official TA Trail on the southern shores of the River.
Remember to TXT James 24hrs before your arrival on 021 0242 1632 if you wish to use this Free boat service. More details can be found below in the Transport Section for the Ngunguru area.

Once you've arrived on the south side of the Ngunguru River you then walk on the scenic, quiet and safe Ngunguru Ford road for approximately 8km to the start of the Mackerel Forest Track."

DESCRIPTION

When the Nikau Bay route is not available, see the notes for *Ngunguru River Bypass*

Mackerel Forest Track - 3.5 km / 1.5 hours

The track passes through private forest and may be subject to occasional closures due to forestry operations.

- Open daylight hours only.
- NO dogs, guns, vehicles, camping or fires.
- Two river crossings – never cross flooded rivers.

From the forestry gate, the track follows Mackerel Road (a forest road) largely downhill through a pine forest. At the bottom of the hill, it crosses the Waitangi River which is usually knee/thigh depth. From there, the track follows the river bank through a recently harvested area of the forest.

The stream crossings at km 358.5 and km 359.25 rise quickly and significantly after heavy rain

It then turns south to meet and cross the Tāheke River – at the shallower ford between the deeper pools - and clambers up the southern bank. The track continues on the true right river bank until meeting an old logging track that climbs steeply up and around a pine-covered hill before dropping down to a logging gate on Pātaua North Road.

Pātaua North Road to Horahora - 7.7 km

From Mackerel Forest Track logging gate, turn left (east) to join the Te Araroa route at km 369.05 on Pātaua North Road

Horahora to Pataua River - 5.6 km

Follow Pātaua North Road to the footbridge across Pataua River estuary

CONDITIONS

Track standard: Tramping track

Potential Hazards

- Vehicles on road or track.
  When road walking, walkers should should wear high visibility clothing or accessories, not wear any earbuds, and remain vigilant for traffic. Walk on the right side of the road, facing oncoming traffic, where possible
- No dogs allowed
- Multiple river crossings – please make an informed decision on tide flow and height of the river before crossing as this can be dangerous
- Do not cross rivers after or during heavy rain
- Please respect trail restrictions – do not trespass onto private property
- Clean boots before and after your walk to stop the spread of kauri dieback disease

ACCESS

Northern Start: North bank of Ngunguru River

Southern End: Pataua River footbridge

TRANSPORT

Ngunguru

- FREE BOAT SERVICE ACROSS THE NGUNGURU RIVER. This boat service connects you to the Official TA trail on the south side of the Ngunguru River and to *Nikau Bay Camp and Cabins*.
  If you decide to take the boat crossing TXT James ideally 24hrs before your arrival on 021 0242 1632
- BOAT CROSSING TIMES
  If you're staying at Nikau Bay Camp & Cabins the boat pick up time is generally around 2 to 5pm, but hey "I'm flexible" If you get in earlier txt me on 021 0242 1632 and I'll pick you up...AND...provided conditions are good and you're a confident swimmer you can swim/walk across the Ngunguru River, I'm happy to ferry your backpacks across by boat. There are FREE hot showers immediately waiting for you at Nikau Bay Camp when you come out of the water...James

- A 2 B Auckland Airport Direct Shuttle - (to/from Whangarei/Matapouri/Tutukaka) - P: 09 459 5221 or 027 273 7307

ACCOMMODATION

Ngunguru Campsites

Nikau Bay Camp and Cabins km 349.1
A beautiful waterfront camp located right on the official TA trail. Once you arrive into Ngunguru village, James, the camp owner provides a FREE boat ride to take you across Ngunguru River to Nikau Bay Camp & Cabins . OR if you'd like to swim across the Ngunguru River James is happy to take your backpack across in the boat. They'll be a BIG HOT shower waiting for you at Nikau Bay Camp.

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Our camp has waterfront tent sites and cabin accommodation, a beach for swimming, complimentary fresh greens from our organic garden plus morning coffee & tea, clean drinking water, lounge area, toilets, simple laundry facility and a large kitchen area with hot and cold running water. Please use your own Cooker

You're also welcome to use our fridge in the house and charge your phones.
plus free use of our kayaks to explore Ngunguru River

Ngunguru

- Tutukaka Coast Motor Lodge - 2015 Ngunguru Rd, Ngunguru - P: 09 434 3840
- Goldstones - 8 Papaka Rd, Ngunguru - P: 09 434 3095 - E: watersedge@goldstones.co.nz
- Sam's Bush Retreat - Waipoka Rd, Kiripaka P: 09 437 5375 or 021 069 0937 - Mention Te Araroa to get a discount
- Baches to rent - Coastal Holiday Homes - P: 09 434 4146 or 027 482 6408 - E: info@coastalholidayhomes.co.nz
- Nikau Bay Camp and Cabins - 999 Ngunguru Ford Rd, Ngunguru - P: 021 024 21632 (texting preferred) - The owner cannot reply to phone calls from international numbers. Email instead, on ngunguru@live.com. James Johnstone can also be contacted on WhatsApp. James is your host at this beautiful spot on the southern shore of the Ngunguru Estuary. James can help get you across the estuary via boat/kayak. You'll need to text him at least a day in advance to arrange this. Then it's a nice walk along Ngunguru Ford Rd out to continue the route south.
- *James place* closes each year between 1 May and 15 September - people walking during this time will need to use the road detour - Directions for Te Araroa road detour around Ngunguru and Horahora Rivers, Head west out of Ngunguru on the main tar seal road to Whangarei for about 10.5km. Turn left onto Ngunguru Ford Rd for 3 km. Turn right onto the Mackerel Track. Turn left once this track brings you out onto Pataua North Rd. This by-passes Ngunguru and Horahora Rivers...happy travels
- Because accommodation in Ngunguru Township is minimal it's worth asking someone for accommodation on the Tutukaka and Ngunguru Community Facebook page the day before you arrive into Ngunguru

Ngunguru River Bypass Trail Hosts

- *The Secret Spot Campsite*
  - On the Ngunguru River Bypass at Coalhill Lane, Kiripaka. 9km mark on the bypass route from Ngunguru.
  - Shuttle available daily from Ngunguru village for those wanting to stay off the road (and up to Mackeral track in the morning if needed). Open for walkers every day of the year. SOBO and NOBO.
  - A family owned organic farm, sheltered , forested riverside camp with some of Northlands best swimming holes. Hot outdoor shower, Toilet, Fresh clean water, fully equipped outdoor kitchen with gas cookers. Campfire and couches. Seasonal veges, fruit, eggs for those in need. Local knowledge and support. Happy to receive post parcels. Access to Whangarei if required. (10 mins by car) $25.00/night adult, $15.00 per child. Bookings essential on day or prior. WhatsApp/Text Anna 027 7097 111 or email korucreek@gmail.com

FOOD AND SUPPLY

Ngunguru

- *Tutukaka Store*
  This Store is well stocked. It has an ATM and is open 7am to 6.30pm daily

- *Ngunguru Store* Main Rd, Ngunguru - P: 09 434 3858
  This Store is the biggest shop on the Tutukaka Coast and is well stocked. It has an ATM and is open 7am to 7pm daily. Beside this store there is also a fish n chip and pizza shop.

EXTRA INFO

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We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

Pataua North to Whāngārei Heads

Last Edited: November 03, 2026 12:10:45 NZST

INTRO

Cross a tidal estuary, walk through a kauri forest, and along an ocean beach to a spectacular headland

DESCRIPTION

Pataua River to Taiharuru Estuary - 2 km

Cross the river to Pātaua South Road and continue to Taiharuru Estuary Track

Note: Once you near the coast, it is private land between the road and the beach so, unfortunately, walking the beach is not an option here – please stick to the road.

There is bed and breakfast accommodation available at Ra Puawai Retreat, 27 Mahanga Road, near km 375.25, shortly after crossing the Pataua footbridge. Details in the Taiharuru Estuary – Accommodation section below. Local and accommodation information follows the Russell Forest to Whangarei.

Taiharuru Estuary Route - 6.4km / 2 hours

From the Pātaua River footbridge, walk south on the main road out of Pātaua. After 1.5km look for a grassed Council Reserve on the left where Pātaua South Road runs along the Taiharuru Estuary.

Walk through the reserve, step onto the 'beach', and head southeast to the rocky point ahead. This is a low tide route.

On rounding that, and crossing the small stream, head for the 2 white marker poles out on the sandbank.

After rounding the next point, you will be facing southwest at the corner.

To cross over the estuary, proceed along the water's edge until a pole with an orange triangle becomes visible – the shallowest place. This Route will look daunting when the tide is covering the estuary but makes sense once the tide goes out.

Stingrays feed in the shallow water of the estuary. They are not aggressive, but do not like being stepped on. To avoid contact tap the mud ahead with a hiking pole or splash the surface to disturb them

Tide timetable for Taiharuru Estuary Route

To cross the estuary stay well out beyond the mangroves and head for the furthest white pole ahead (orange marker) marking the shallowest crossing place.

Look for the prominent bare clay bank, south side (orange marker), and walk up the bank. Do not cross the fence into the pasture on the west side. Follow the southeast fenceline over the pasture, then along a driveway (at #405) to Taiharuru Road.

Note: This narrow accessway is public land. Please ensure at all times that you do not enter private property.

Turn southwest down Taiharuru Road for 500m to Harambee Road. 1km up this road is the small parking area.

Kauri Mountain Track - 3.2km / 1.5 hours

The track starts by winding up a long driveway, past private homes. (Use the stiles provided and leave gates as you find them as sheep sometimes graze the driveway). The coastal views north are spectacular.

Near the top of the driveway, follow orange markers to climb over a stile and up through pasture, then regenerating bush to the trig (where the view is blocked by bush). From there, follow the orange-marked bush track down the southern side to Kauri Mountain Road.

From the carpark, walk 2km southeast down this gravel Kauri Mountain Road to a farm gate (look for Te Araroa logo, orange marker). Enter the paddock here, leaving this gate as you find it, and follow the farm track across a paddock heading straight towards Ocean Beach. A few clay steps cut into the bank take you down to the beach.

Tide timetable: Check the best times for walking

Ocean Beach Walk - 7km / 3 hours

Wildlife sanctuary:

- Avoid dune nesting sites
- No dogs allowed

When you're first on the beach there is a stream/occasional estuary that changes shape a lot – do check it before attempting to cross and on some occasions, if the tide is high you're best to wait for the tide to drop a little.

Head south down the beach running parallel with DOC's Ocean Beach Recreation Reserve.

Near the southern end of the beach, a sand track leads up to a carpark, toilet and Ocean Beach Road.

Note: A freedom camping bylaw is in place that prohibits camping in this carpark.

Please take care when opening gates that you leave them as you find them. There may be farm animals on this track.

Bream Head (Te Whara) Track - 7.4km / 5-6 hours

Note: Low tide is preferably the best time for the very first part of this track.

Tide timetable: Check the best times for walking

This is a conservation area – no domestic animals are allowed (including birds, cats and dogs) and a freedom camping bylaw means Peach Cove is the only option in the Bream Head Scenic Reserve.

Walk to the southern end of Ocean Beach and climb to the ridge beyond. The track is well-formed but steep. Continue on past a WWII naval radar station to the Bream Head/Te Whara summit. It's worth the short detour to the viewing platform. The rock formations and coastal views are spectacular.

Halfway along the ridgeline, there is the track exiting to the north/Ocean Beach Road and another going steeply down to the south and Peach Cove (DOC hut – not included in the backcountry hut pass). This is a detour – see details in trail notes.

Continue along the ridge to Mt Lion (Matariki), then down a lot of steps to Urquharts Bay, passing the Busby Head loop track.

There are great coastal views from many parts of the track.

To continue Te Araroa south from this point onwards, you'll need to get across the channel to Marsden Point.

Urquharts Bay to Reotahi - 8.3km

Follow Urquharts Bay Road, Whangarei Heads Road, Bay View Road and Reotahi Track to Reotahi

Transport across Whāngārei Harbour

Blair Jones runs a water taxi across Whangarei Harbour from Reotahi where your trail ends, to the jetty on the Ruakaka side where your trail starts again. Just message him the day before on 021 114 7466. Tell him how many of you there are and what time you would like to be picked up. Trips are weekdays only. First trip at 8:00am and the Second 2:00pm. Price $100 per trip, Maximum of 5 TA Walkers. The price is $20pp. If you can get groups of 5, it will cost you $20 per person. Groups of 4 will cost $25 per person.

For more information on the Whāngārei Harbour Crossing and Marsden Point please visit Northland Regional Council.

Please consider the following links around boating safety in the Whāngārei area:

Northland Regional Council – safety information for boating in Northland 2018-2019

If you need to go to Whāngārei City to re-supply, there's good hitchhiking from here on along the road.

From the carpark, follow Urquarts Bay Road north onto Whāngārei Heads Road. After 5km, turn south on to Bay View Road and walk down to Little Munroe Bay.

Reotahi Track - 3km / 1 hour

The wide, gravelled track begins on the lower slopes of Mt Aubrey overlooking Little Munroe Bay. It goes around the harbour's edge to Reotahi Beach (and boat ramp) taking in stunning sea views and passing the historic remains of a freezing works. Very noticeable is the hum coming from the Marsden Point Oil Refinery, just across the 1.5km channel, and the start of Te Araroa's next coastal section.

Note: If you are hoping to wait and find a lift across to Marsden Point, you are better waiting here at Reotahi than continuing around to McLeods Bay, and note that on the Te Araroa maps, the route line ends at Reotahi.

From the northern end of Reotahi Bay, there is a dirt track heading off the side of Reotahi Beach Road. It climbs the hill to a playground at the end of Norfolk Road. Head up the road to a driveway just past #34. Take this driveway and turn right (north) over the front lawn past the last house. Beyond it are steps leading down to a small footbridge. This track leads to Matuku Street. Follow this, then up to the end of Darch Point Road where a well-defined track follows the headland around to the jetty at McLeod Bay.

Information on the Whāngārei Harbour crossing and Marsden Point

Note: Toilets, cafe, phone, accommodation available at the Whāngārei Heads village. At Marsden Cove marina you will find a cafe, toilets and phone facilities.

CONDITIONS

Track standard: Tramping track

Potential Hazards

- No dogs allowed
- At estuary crossings – please make an informed decision on tide flow and height of the tide before crossing as this can be dangerous
- Please respect trail restrictions – do not trespass onto private property
- Clean boots before and after your walk to stop the spread of kauri dieback disease

ACCESS

Northern Start: Pataua River footbridge

Southern End: Jetty at McLeod Bay (southern end), Whangarei Heads

TRANSPORT

Whangarei Heads

- A 2 B Auckland Airport Direct Shuttle - (to/from Whangarei/Matapouri/Tutukaka) - P: 09 459 5221 or 027 273 7307
- Stans Van Passenger Service - RD 4, Whangarei Heads - P: 09 434 0024

Transport across Whangarei Harbour

- Blair Jones runs a water taxi across the Whangarei Harbour from Reotahi where your trail ends, to the Jetty on the Ruakaka side where your trail starts again. Just message the day before on 021 114 7466. The trip charge is $100 for up to five people, so try to get a group together. Operating weekdays only, departing Reotahi 8:00 am and 2:00 pm. A second trip is possible if there are more than 5 people
- You can also call Peter on 027 417 2440. He runs a service as well. Please contact him at least 24 hours prior.

ACCOMMODATION

Pataua South

- Stonelee Cottage - Beasley Road, Pataua South, Whangarei - P: 09 436 5200
- Treasure Island campground - Mahanga Rd, Pataua South (km 375.25) - P: 09 436 2390, or 021 0266 8021 - E: treasure@xtra.co.nz - Please note: Not usually open in winter months, and the basic supply shop is only open for 6 weeks, over the peak summer period. New owners in 2025 now provide takeaway food until 6pm weekdays, and 7pm on weekends.
- Ra Puawai Retreat Bed and Breakfast, 27 Mahanga Rd, Pataua South. (km 375.25) P: 021 115 4969 E: ldprendiville@gmail.com . A genuine Kiwi 60's bach on the beach. Large deck for relaxing and taking in the stunning views. 3 bedrooms, sleeping 4. All beddings, towels etc provided. Heatpump and laundry with dryer. Full kitchen including coffee machine, coffee and basic supplies. Smart TV with SKY and unlimited WIFI. Hot Springs Spa, 2 kayaks, 2 paddle boards, dinghy plus life jackets. Brazier, wood supplied

Ocean Beach/Bream Head (Te Whara) Track

- *Jaggers camp* - a camp for koha/donation - look out for orange marker at km 389.5 on Ocean Beach south of Kauri Mountain. Please call ahead to book - P:021 243 1347 - water, toilets, showers (cold), camping, cabin
- *SALT* self-contained studio apartments - 75 Blue Horizon Rd, Whangarei Heads - P: 09 434 0785 - Available also is pick up/drop off for walkers with afternoon tea.
- Bream Head Getaway, 310 Ocean Beach Rd, Whangarei Heads - Accommodation $150 per night per room (5 rooms with a queen or king bed). Includes cooked breakfast use of laundry, hot tub/sauna, baggage service to walk Te Whara track with no packs and/or lift to boat ramp. Payment cash, Wise or PayPal
  Contact Melissa 021 550 249 (mobile or WhatsApp)
- *Te Whara* camp at the south end of Ocean Beach. The owners are Rupert and Wendy. They offer camping on their farm with hot shower and toilet facilities and drinking water supply. They are right next to the beach and Bream Head. You can find them at the very southern end of Ocean Beach at the beginning of the Te Whara track at 22 Ranui Rd, off the lower beach carpark. A great place to rest up with stunning beaches, mountain views and kiwis calling at night. Camping only $20 pp per night. Payments cash only. Your hosts Rupert and Wendy Newbold.
- Peach Cove (DOC) standard campsite and hut (8 people). Pre-bookings are required as this hut is locked - P: 09 470 3300

Whangarei Heads

- *Taurikura Studio Apartment* - 2397 Whangarei Heads Rd, Urquharts Bay - M: 021 296 5447. This is half way from end Te Whara Track to Reotahi Beach. Beatiful bed for a good nights sleep
- *Taurikura Peninsula Seaview Cabin and Camp*. There is a cabin for 2-4 persons and available and tent sites for camping P: Brenda 09 434 0150 M: 022 161 2285
- 2363 Whangarei Heads Road – *Robert and Megan* – P: 09 434 0096 E: rob@thenzartist.co.nz – On trail accommodation offering a room with two twin beds, a cabin with fold out double, or space for around 4 tents. Cooking facilities available in social room with pool and darts. Tea and coffee included. $30 for a bed, $15 to tent.
- *Sparkling Waters Lodge* B & B and self-contained accommodation available - 346 Ocean Beach Rd, Whangarei Heads Ocean Beach - P: 09 434 0979 or 021 949 189 - E: jagould@xtra.co.nz
- WHY (Whangarei Heads Yoga) Retreat - 16 Reotahi Rd, Whangarei Heads - P: 022 1608950 - E: whangareiheadsyoga@gmail.com WHY Retreat is a great place to recover and refresh. Comfortable beds, healthy meals, yoga classes, massage, therapeutic sessions and a sauna await just a few steps from the trail route. They offer a 15% discount on accommodation and one complimentary yoga class to trail walkers.
- Seaside Anchorage - 13 Stuart Rd, McLeod Bay - P: 09 434 0161 - E: northern2@slingshot.co.nz
- Thistle Do, bach available, or several tent sites. 25 Beach Road Reotahi. Right opposite where you get the boat for crossing to Marsden Point. Ph 09 434 0006; 027 356 6526 or book via the website.
- Reotahi Reserve. Te Araroa Walkers are allowed to camp here one night only by negotiation with the council. Please erect your small tent in the grass area over the low fence and away from the toilet area.
- *Camp Manaia* - 26 McDonald Road off Whangarei Heads Road under Mt Manaia.
  4 campsites available with good ablutions and small camp kitchen.
  $30.00 minimum per night per site - lockbox available for cash payments.
  Ph - 020 4107 6038 before arriving to check for space.

Sandy Bay

- *Sandy Bay* is north of Whangarei, near Tutukaka. Stay at the beach for a short break. Beachfront sheltered lawn to pitch your tent. Indoor shower and toilet table and chairs and large viewing deck with table and chairs. $10 koha per night per person. Owners live onsite. 27 McAuslin Road, Sandy Bay. Text Ian 021 986 518 or Aly 021 896 518 to book

Please consider the following links around boating safety in the Whangarei area

- Northland Regional Council safe boating information

FOOD AND SUPPLY

Whangarei Heads

Toilets, cafe, phone, accommodation available at the Whangarei Heads village

- The Deck Cafe, 1 Reotahi Road, Whangarei Heads 0174
- McLeod Bay Fish and Chips, 5 Reotahi Road, RD4, Whangarei Heads 0174
- The nearest resupply store is at Parua Bay, 7 km north along the road towards Whangarei
- Four Square, cafes, bakery, toilets, phone, ATM. Some supplies at the GAS petrol station

EXTRA INFO

Unguided walk package

Bream Head Coast Walks - 395 Ody Rd, RD 4, Whangarei Heads - P: 09 434 0571 - E: Claire@coastwalks.co.nz - W: 3-day unguided walk package for up to 12 pax, season 1 October - 31 May - bookings are essential.

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

We encourage you to continue gaining the skills and knowledge required for a safe trip. The NZ Mountain Safety Council has lots of free resources and information you can use. These can be accessed via www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

Bream Bay Walk

Last Edited: October 27, 2026 13:13:29 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: Bream Bay stretches along Northland's east coast and includes many sparkling beaches such as the Ruakaka, Waipu and Waipu Cove. The bay has great swimming, fishing, surfing, walking and sunbathing.

For bookable DOC facilities (such as Uretiti Beach Campsite) you need to make sure that your Trail Pass and DOC Bookings account are linked – so that when you make the booking, the DOC system knows you have a Trail Pass and the discount is applied. When you registered we provided you with instructions of how to do this, to make sure you didn't experience delays in accessing the discount on bookable facilities. If you haven't created your DOC bookings account you must do so now. Once you have made an account, email booking@doc.govt.nz with a copy of your Trail Pass and they will connect the two. This may take 3-5 days.

DESCRIPTION

Bream Bay Walk - 21km / 4 hours

From Marsden point, you get dropped off on a floating pontoon. SOBOs turn left to follow the beach around, duck under the Marsden point wharf and carry on South down the beach. This will be easier when it is not high tide. If the tide is high you can avoid the first 600 metres of the beach by walking along the wide grass strip outside the boundary fence, starting from the carpark

If you need to re-supply, then follow the 'Highway' to Marsden Bay Drive and the Marsden Bay Marina area.

Tide information for Bream Bay

If you want a respite from an easterly wind, there is a 3.5km inland DOC track which starts beyond the oil refinery (end of Mair Road) & follows a pipeline to end behind the Mighty River Power station at Ruakākā (end of Sime Road).

9km down the beach is the Ruakākā River mouth, which can be hazardous to cross on foot and should only be done at low tide.

Do not attempt to cross the river at the beach, instead turn west and walk 400m along the estuary shoreline. This is a wildlife sanctuary with many migrant and wading birds, so please do not walk inside the fenced-off nesting areas, and please keep moving to limit disturbances to the birds during nest season. Opposite the rock/concrete wall (on the south side) is the best place to cross.

(For assistance, you can contact Simon Ellison, who can help with a kayak crossing. Please arrange a day in advance, and a koha — donation — is appreciated. Phone: 021 233 6748)

Another 6km brings you to a sign on the sandhills for a track leaving the beach and going over the dunes to Tip Road.

From the beach, follow Tip Road west. Turn south onto Uretiti Road, and south again onto Nova Scotia Drive. This will take into the heart of Waipū.

Waipu to Cullen Road - 6.4km

To leave Waipū township, take Cove Road to the southeast and follow it 6.5km to the junction with Cullen Road.

An off-road trail is under construction with 5km now completed and available to ensure safe walking along this narrow high-speed local road. Known as the Waipu Cycleway and Walkway, the completed sections are:

1. Cove Road, from Waipu Village to Riverview Place. This section provides welcome shade during summer months with seating available.
2. Cove Road, from McLean Road to Cullen Road. There are attractive spots to rest with views of Bream Bay, offshore islands and local wetland restoration planting.
3. Cullen Road to Waipu Cove

For those staying at the Waipu Camp overnight or replenishing supplies at the Waipu Store — this section provides a flat, easy, safe walk

CONDITIONS

Potential Hazards

- Vehicles on road or track
- Tides, waves & rivers - safer at low tide
- River crossings - Never cross flooded rivers

- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Note: For hikers heading north from Marsden Point to Reotahi, the marina at Marsden Cove is a good point to organise a trip across the harbour.

ACCESS

Northern Start: Marsden Pt (beach)

Southern End; Corner Cove and Cullen Roads, Waipū

TRANSPORT

Ruakaka

- Marsden flyer - Ruakaka Shuttle Services - P: 09 432 8158
- A 2 B Auckland Airport Direct Shuttle - (to/from Whangarei, Marsden Point, Ruakaka - P: 09 459 5221 or 027 273 7307

Detour option available

- The Marsden Point Oil Refinery Visitors Centre, Marsden Pt, Ruakaka - P: 09 432 8194
- The display includes a 130sqm working scale model and an impressive 20 minute light and sound show. Photographs, records and models show the huge pipeline that stretches from Marsden Point all the way to Wiri in South Auckland.
- Detour off the beach to Ruakaka Town Centre, Marsden Point Rd.For more information log onto - Ruakaka Visitor Information

Waipu

- InterCity from Auckland - P: 09 583 5780 - E: info@intercity.co.nz
- Northliner Express Coach Service - P: 09 307 5873

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Pass

Uretiti Campsite - km 421.5 - Included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required). Register at the camp office on arrival.

Ruakaka

- Ruakaka Reserve Motor Camp - 21 Ruakaka Beach Rd, located on the beachfront/estuary - P: 09 432 7590 - E: ruakaka@motorcamp.co.nz - Tent sites and cabins
- Bream Bay Motel - 67 Bream Bay Drive - P: 09 432 7166 - E: enquiries@breambaymotel.co.nz
- Karawai Lodge - 24 Karawai St, Ruakaka - P: 027 570 0600 - E: karawailodge@gmail.com - ask for the "Te Araroa rate".
- Uretiti Beach DOC Campsite - located between the beach and SH 1, 5km north of Waipu - P: 09 432 1051 - Campsites, toilets, water, cold showers. $15 per night per adult. We also have hot showers for $2. Please pre-book on line, and then it is essential to register at the camp office before placing your tent.

Waipu

- *Janice & Brian Dainty, Waipu*, within walking distance to the lovely Waipu village, km 428.25. We have 2 spare bedrooms. $125 per night per room for a queen bed for 2 people. Includes a good breakfast & the use of the kitchen. Shower room, separate toilet and the use of the laundry. M: 021 035 9213. Please phone in the morning or the night before, as rooms may be booked. We will also offer to take guests to the top of Cullen road to begin the next part of their journey south.

- *Waipu Village* by the river a short distance from the trail, km 427.75
  Two spare bedrooms if anyone is wanting accomadation for a night. We can supply a hot shower, laundry, meals (dinner and breakfast) $ 20 per person. We can pick up and drop off along the trail close too Waipu. (Note: Work dependant!)
  Please call Richard M: 027 343 3028 or Juanita M: 027 935 9808 to check on availability

- *Camp Waipu Cove* - 869 Cove Rd, Waipu - P: 09 432 0410 - Cabins and camping available. Mention you are walking Te Araroa for a 20% discount on a tent site (doesn't apply to cabins).

Waipu Trail Hosts

- DragonSpell Retreat - Dragonspell. Can be found 7.5 km south of the turn-off before Waipu, at the very end of Cullen Road (442.15 km on trail map). Must contact first 027 507 7750 or cosmickali@gmail.com. Dragonspell is supported by koha

FOOD AND SUPPLY

Ruakaka

- Freshchoice Supermarket - Town Centre, Marsden Road, Ruakaka - P: 09 432 7400
- 4 Square Supermarket - Town Centre - Marsden Road, Ruakaka - P: 09 432 7873
- Bream Bay Medical Centre - Shops 8-9 Marsden Point Road, Ruakaka - P: 09 432 8060

Waipu

- 4 Square Supermarket - 43 Town Centre, Waipu - P: 09 432 0004
- 4 Square Supermarket - Town Centre - Marsden Road, Ruakaka - P: 09 432 7873

EXTRA INFO

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

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- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills

- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

Cullen Brynderwyn Walkway

Last Edited: October 16, 2026 20:05:10 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: This day walk is a mixture of sealed road, 4WD track and Department of Conservation bushwalk. Ascending 297 metres, it offers views of the surrounding landscape in every direction.

DESCRIPTION

Cullen Road to Cove Road (south) - 13.5 km

From the junction with Cove Road (north of Waipu Cove) (km 434.75), follow Cullen Road uphill for 7.5km. The road changes from sealed to 4WD track (at about the 4km mark) and eventually intercepts DOC's Brynderwyn Walkway. This is primarily a graded farm track, but has some steep sections that can be slippery after rain.

- Note — there may be forestry harvest traffic on Cullen Road, generally operating Mon-Fri (and occasional Saturdays) 5am-4pm. Please observe any signage and traffic management instruction, particularly when tree-chopping is taking place near the road. We recommend you wear a hi-viz vest and/or pack covers. The private track on the topographical map at the top of Ruru Way is not a shortcut up to Cullen Road from the campsite. You will be asked to turn around.

Turn east and follow the Department of Conservation's Brynderwyn Walkway (on Langsview track). You walk toward a highpoint of 297m and a trig at 276m for magnificent views in every direction.

Before the trig, pass through a kissing gate on the left and follow the marked track downhill. The track becomes a gravel 4WD and then a concrete driveway. Please follow the marked route, including the short bushwalk, turning off the concrete driveway, on your right as you near Cove Road (this is part of the access agreement). You will end up in the DOC carpark on Cove Rd (south of Waipu Cove).

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track
- Poisons & traps
- Farming operations
- Forestry operations
- Small stream crossings in paddock?
- Few water sources

No dogs allowed.

ACCESS

Northern Start: Corner Cove and Cullen Roads, Waipū
Southern End: Carpark at junction of Cove and Bream Tail Roads

ACCOMMODATION

Campsites

Te Waorahi Campsite - km 444.4 - private

Brynderwyns Trail Hosts

- DragonSpell Retreat - Cullen Rd, Waipu (look for the signs at the very end of Cullen Rd, 7.5km up from Cove Rd) - P: 027 507 7750 - E: cosmickali@gmail.com
- Te Waorahi Campsite - Waorahi Conservation have generously provided a free camping area with water and toilet. This is situated part way along The Brynderwyn ridge, and is just off the DOC track.

Mangawhai Heads

- Mangawhai Lodge - 4 Heather St, Mangawhai Heads - P: 09 431 5311 - E: info@seaviewlodge.co.nz
- Mangawhai Backpackers - Coastal Cow, is at 299 Molesworth Dr, Mangawhai Heads - P: 09 431 5246 - E: mangawhaibackpackers@gmail.com
- Mangawhai Heads Motel or Camping Ground, Mangawhai Heads Rd, Mangawhai Heads - P: 09 431 4675

Mangawhai Village Trail Hosts

- Mangawhai Camping - We have a basic cottage and tenting with water, electricity and toilet in our small orchard at Mangawhai village, close to Shops and Food. Donation of $10pp appreciated. Call first please on Oh too wun 796 496. Your hosts - Mark and Kerry

EXTRA INFO

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

We encourage you to continue gaining the skills and knowledge required for a safe trip. The NZ Mountain Safety Council has lots of free resources and information you can use. These can be accessed via www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation

- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

Bream Tail to Mangawhai Cliffs Walkway

Last Edited: August 28, 2026 11:49:19 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: This undulating farm and bush walk climbs up to offer trampers spectacular views of Kaipara Harbour and Mangawhai Heads. It is both a highlight of Te Araroa and a distinct, valuable day walk

DESCRIPTION

Tide timetable for Bream Tail: Check the best times for walking.

Cove Road carpark to Mangawhai Heads - 7.4km

From the DOC carpark on Cove Rd, walk downhill to your left (northwest) for 0.5 km to opposite the gates where the the concrete driveway you previously followed ends. Bream Tail Road branches due east off Cove Road

Follow the no-exit Bream Tail Road (like a private driveway) as it climbs uphill through farmland, offering spectacular views of the coast. Please leave farm gates as you find them. You can use stiles where provided.

After 1.8km, you leave the road & follow markers across a pasture to reach another tarmac driveway (part of a subdivision). Turn right for a few metres, then it's back into the pasture and down a south-eastern spur, across a marshy area at the bottom, then straight up by the bushline and over a steep hill.

Follow the well-benched track that then zigs northeast down into a bush gully (kauri galore), then zig-zags up the other side to come out at another section of the tarmac driveway. Just over the bank on the other side of it is DOC's Mangawhai Walkway, 3.5 km to Mangawhai Heads. Turn right/south and follow the track along the cliffs and down to the beach. Continue along the beach to the carpark at Mangawhai Heads.

Mangawhai Walkway was built as a loop track, combining the clifftop walk with a beach walk. The beach walk is scenic, but not suitable near high tide. For section walkers, more information can be found at Mangawhai Walkway.

CONDITIONS

- No dogs allowed
- Closed 1 August to 30 September for lambing

ACCESS

Northern Start: DOC Carpark on the west side of Cove Rd, uphill from and near the junction of Bream Tail and Cove Roads
Southern End: Beach carpark, Wintle Street, Mangawhai Heads

ACCOMMODATION

- Mangawhai Heads Motel - Mangawhai Heads Rd - P: 09 431 4675
- Mangawhai Lodge — 4 Heather St, Mangawhai Heads — P: 09 431 5311 — E: info@seaviewlodge.co.nz
- Mangawhai Heads Motel or Camping Ground, Mangawhai Heads Rd, Mangawhai Heads — P: 09 431 4675 — $15 per night
- Mangawhai Travellers Rest — 4 Insley St, Mangawhai Village (opp SuperValue) — P: 09 431 5389, 021 023 77242 (Alan/Lisa) — E: mangawhaitravellersrest@gmail.com — $20 per person inside, $15 per person camping, and a private room for two for $50 — Includes free wifi, recharging, shower and toilet.

Mangawhai Trail Hosts

- Mangawhai Camping — We have a basic cottage and tenting with water, electricity and toilet in our small orchard at Mangawhai village, close to Shops and Food. Donation of $10pp appreciated. Call first please on Oh too wun 796 496. Your hosts — Mark and Kerry

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- 4 Four Square - 3 Wood Street, Mangawhai Heads - P: 09 431 4656
- Mangawhai Deli - Shop 2, 7 Wood Street, Mangawhai Heads - P: 09 431 5887
- Supervalue - Moir Street, Mangawhai Village - P: 09 431 4585 Hours: Monday to Sunday: 7:00am – 7:00pm
- New World supermarket - 83 Molesworth Drive, Mangawhai. Hours: Monday to Sunday: 7:00am – 9:00pm

EXTRA INFO

Mangawhai Volunteer Tourist Information Centre - Molesworth Drive, Mangawhai Heads - P: 09 431 5090 - E: infocentre@mangawhai.co.nz

Extensive amenities - shop, phone, toilets & accommodation in the surrounding Mangawhai area - Wood St shops, Moir St village and various.

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

We encourage you to continue gaining the skills and knowledge required for a safe trip. The NZ Mountain Safety Council has lots of free resources and information you can use. These can be accessed via www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.