



22 October 2020

# Wellington trail notes

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## Tararua Ranges

### Route

This section involves 3-6 days through the forest and alpine terrain and includes many steep ascents and descents. It begins at 150m above sea level and reaches its highest point at Mount Crawford 1462m.

- Warning: Weather in the Tararua Ranges is notorious for deteriorating rapidly. Be prepared for extreme conditions at all times. There can be gale-force winds and heavy rain. Snow can fall in any season. Be prepared to wait out storms or for streams to subside after heavy rain. Do not cross swollen streams. Be sure to fill in intentions book at the start of the track.

The trail is divided into three stages of 1-2 days each, depending on fitness and weather conditions.

- 1) Poads Road (Levin) to Te Matawai Hut (900m), via Gable End Ridge
- 2) Te Matawai Hut to Nichols Hut (1160m) via Dracophyllum Hut
- 3) Nichols Hut to Pārāwai Hut (Ōtaki Forks, Road End, 100m) via Waitewaewae Hut (310m)

If exiting from the Mangahao-Makahika Track, walk approximately 7km down Gladstone Road to Poads Road on left, crossing an old concrete bridge and walking uphill to the car park and information boards. Note - the DOC information board here describes the former

Te Araroa route via Waiopehu Hut. The official route now bypasses Waiopehu and goes up Gable End Ridge.

From Levin, take transport for 7km to the car park at end of Poads Road.

## **Poads Road to Te Matawai Hut via Gable End Ridge - 13.8km / 7-8 hours**

- Note: From September 2018 - the new route to Te Matawai Hut bypassing Waiopehu Hut uses Gable End Ridge. This is a tough section, expect lots of mud, allow plenty of time, take plenty of water and be aware of the weather.

The track starts at a DOC noticeboard which describes the no longer used Te Araroa route. The track initially crosses private farmland; follow the blue posts and farm track. Cross the stile at the fence-line on the Park boundary and enter the bush. About 75m along this track passes the former Te Araroa route branching uphill to Waiopehu and continue along the well-defined benched track. The first of three minor creeks is bridged.

Pass the Six Discs track (which also goes to Waiopehu), then cross Blackwater Stream on a suspension bridge. Shortly after, bear right on a small grassy patch above the main South Ōhau River. The track up Gable End Ridge is on the right, a short distance from the grassy patch, about 1½ hrs from Poads Road.

From here no water is available until Te Matawai Hut – the water tanks are small so in the busy summer period and in hot weather ensure you carry plenty of water.

The track heads steeply up a bushed spur, which eases off slightly after roughly 20 minutes. It climbs steadily over Mayo Point (666m) and exits the bush edge just before Gable End (903m) after about 2½-3 hours. You are now in open scrub with good views on a clear day. It is another hour of ups and downs to Richard's Knob (985m) where the track meets Dora Ridge. Turn left (southeast) and follow the Dora Ridge Track down to Butchers Saddle (690m). Climb to the Yeates Track junction (810m), at the signpost bear right and ascend the ridge for about 30 minutes to a helipad and Te Matawai Hut (900m, 18 bunks).

## **Te Matawai to Dracophyllum Hut - 8km / 4-5 hours**

This route to Dracophyllum Hut (1100m, 2 bunks) climbs Pukematawai (1432m), along the main range, over Butchers Knob (1158m) then through bush to Dracophyllum Hut. 700m ascent, 500m descent.

Follow Northern Crossing Track up the ridge to shoulder of Pukematawai (sign where Main Range Track starts). Much of track is above the bushline and can be covered in snow in winter (June -September)

Descend on the Main Range Track over various bumps to the bushline beyond Butchers Knob. Dracophyllum Hut is another hour away through beech forest. (Small hut with 2 bunks & water tank).

## **Dracophyllum Hut to Nichols Hut - 5km / 4 hours**

The route to Nichols Hut (1160m, 6 bunks) Track climbs Puketoro (1152m) Shoulder of Kelleher (1142m) and Nichols (1242m) (all unmarked) along Main Ridge to Nichols Hut.

The track is mainly through bush, climbing into open at Puketoro and Kelleher (un-marked). At Kelleher Shoulder a cairn marks where the track descends down a steep tussock ridge, snaking down to bush. From here it follows an undulating ridge, finally climbing to top of Nichols(unmarked) from where the track descends through tussock to the hut, east of the saddle.

## **Nichols Hut to Waitewaewae Hut - 8km / 4-5 hours**

Route to Waitewaewae Hut (310m 16 bunks) via Mt Crawford 1462m. 380m ascent, 1240m descent.

- Note: In strong winds and rain it may be necessary to stop at Nichols Hut until weather clears

Follow the ridge up the summit of Mt Crawford for great views of the Tararua Range, Kāpiti Island, the coast and possibly Mt Taranaki. Descend to Junction Knob, turn right to Shoulder Knob, where the track re-enters the bush, and descends steeply to the Ōtaki River (bridged) and then Waitewaewae Hut.

## **Waitewaewae Hut to Pārāwai Hut - 10km / 4-6 hours**

Route to Pārāwai Lodge (100m altitude, 18 bunks) and Ōtaki Forks car park. Ascend to the Plateau (530m) then descend Saddle Creek (200m), and cross Ōtaki River swing bridge to carpark. 250m ascent, 460m descent.

Follow the marked track down the terrace the hut is on. The wet weather track then climbs and crosses a number of gullies and streams before the climb to the Plateau. These streams can be difficult and dangerous to cross in heavy rain. Be prepared to let levels fall during wet weather.

- Dry weather route - follow the track to Ōtaki Forks for roughly 100m along the terrace then drop down the bank on the unmarked route and cross the Ōtaki River. Below here the river bends around to flow east. Cross back to the west bank on the bend and head to the orange marker by a side stream just below the long slip in the west bank. Follow the markers and track up this stream (Arapito Stream) to join the main wet weather track where it crosses Arapito Stream. This point is signposted.

After crossing Arapito Stream the track climbs up the valley crossing a number of gullies before reaching the Plateau. The track crosses Plateau Stream three times in a short distance before a short 20m to 30m climb to the saddle. From here the new track heads south along the ridge climbing gently. (The map still shows the old route closed by a large slip). There are a couple of flat boggy sections on the ridge. From the ridge, the new track crosses a steep slope before dropping down to the old tram track. A well-graded track leads

from here to a swing bridge over the Ōtaki River. It then climbs over a terrace on the south side of the river before dropping to Pārāwai Lodge. The carpark and road are across another swing bridge beside the Waiotauru River.

There is a DOC warden located across the swing bridge near the overnight carpark.

If continuing on to the next section (Pukeatua) turn left at the road and continue for 2km to end of the road: camping area, and the start of Fenceline and Pukeatua Tracks. Ōtaki Township is 10km away down Ōtaki Gorge Road. Transport recommended as road narrow and winding.

## Potential hazards

- Poisons & traps
- Farming operations Do not disturb stock
- River crossings - Never cross flooded rivers
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Weather extremes - be aware of the weather forecast and be prepared to wait bad weather out if necessary

Weather in the Tararua Ranges is notorious for deteriorating rapidly. Be prepared for extreme conditions at all times.

Be prepared to wait out storms. Snow can fall in any season. Be sure to fill in intentions book at the start of the track.

Views in the Tararua Ranges in clear weather are outstanding.

River swimming at Waitewaewae Hut.

## Levin

### Getting to/from the start

From the north Te Araroa enters the Wellington region at Poads Road, 7km from Levin (Taitoko). Levin has a full range of service and amenities available and is a good point for resupply.

### General / visitor information

- [Levin i-SITE Visitor Information Centre](#) - SH1 next to the adventure playground P: 06 367 8440.

### Getting there/away

- Levin is on [State Highway 1](#), and on the [North Island Main Trunk](#) Line with a [station](#) used by the [Capital Connection](#) long-distance commuter train between Wellington and Palmerston North - P: 0800 801 700
- [InterCity](#) - P: 04 385 0520

- [Naked Bus](#) - P: 0900 62533 (calls cost)
- Rental Cars - multiple options available

## Accommodation

- [Makahika Outdoor Pursuits Centre](#) is a privately owned property; situated approx. 1.7 km from the farm exit of the Mangahao-Makahika Section of the Te Araroa Trail on Gladstone Road, Levin. It is a residential leadership camp, booked most Mondays-Fridays, however, 'trail-walkers' are welcome.
  - Accommodation available for ONE NIGHT ONLY (unless during christmas where more than one night is possible) to TA Walkers: Black Hut. This hut includes:
    - Hot shower
    - Composting toilet
    - Outdoor kitchen space and marquee - please use your own cookers (sink and dishwashing bits included etc)
  - Two non-bookable (first in first serve) cabins available - \$25 per cabin per night. This includes:
    - Single bed with power supply
  - Kōha (donation) for your tent site and use of the shower, toilet, kitchen etc is appreciated to ensure we can maintain the facilities that we have built for hikers. We hold all drop boxes for no cost. Occasionally, we will run you into town (30km return trip) BUT we do NOT resupply you. There is a local shuttle company which costs roughly \$20 for a return trip to town if there is 6-8 of you to resupply. Please remember, this is our home, not a government owned site. During christmas, each TA walker provides a dish from their country to join the Christmas table – that way the 20-25 TAs who are normally with us on Christmas Day, contribute and are part of a truly international day. Plus you can stock up on a little bit of alcohol for your celebrations. Regards, Sally, John and the team at Makahika OPC email [jsdux@ihug.co.nz](mailto:jsdux@ihug.co.nz) OR [Makahika@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Makahika@xtra.co.nz)
- Beni Paroli (AT hiker) P: 06 368 4570, 027 9304151 E: [pepperonis@xtra.co.nz](mailto:pepperonis@xtra.co.nz) for pickup, shower, meal and bed - Levin;
- [Levin Holiday Park](#) (camping, cabins & motel units) - 38 Parker Ave, Levin - P: 06 368 3549 - E: [lh@xtra.co.nz](mailto:lh@xtra.co.nz)
- [Tōtara Lodge Motel](#) - Cnr Devon & Bristol St - P: 06 368 4114 - E: [reservations@totaralodgemotel.co.nz](mailto:reservations@totaralodgemotel.co.nz)
- [Panorama Motel](#) - 170 The Avenue SH 1, Levin - P: 06 368 5401 or 0800 660 220 - E: [admin@panoramamotel.co.nz](mailto:admin@panoramamotel.co.nz)
- [Bentons Motel](#) - 2 York Street (Cnr of York - P: 06 367 8282 - E: [bentonsmotel@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bentonsmotel@xtra.co.nz)
- [Serendipity B&B](#) - 86 Macarthur St, Levin - P: 06 368 6766 - E: [relax@serendipitynz.co.nz](mailto:relax@serendipitynz.co.nz)

## Resupply

- [New World Supermarket](#) - 21 Bath St, Levin - P: 06 368 6538
- [Countdown Supermarket](#) - 15 Bristol St, Levin - P: 06 366 0050

## Ōtaki

### General / visitor information

- [Ōtaki I-SITE Visitor Information Centre](#) - 239 Centennial Park, SH 1, Ōtaki - P: 06 364 7620 - E: [otaki@i-site.org](mailto:otaki@i-site.org). Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm / Sat 10am-3pm/ Sun 10am- 2pm

## Maps

NZTopo 50 series Levin (BN33), Shannon (BN34 briefly), Featherston(BP33)

## Ōtaki Accommodation

- [Bridge Lodge Ōtaki](#) - 3 Ōtaki Gorge Road, Te Horo - P: 06 364 6667
- Standard DOC camping ground 2km up road at School house Flat (near start of Pukeatua Track), \$6.00
- Self-catering cottage on Gorge Rd, Te Horo - P: 06 364 3220.
- [2 Campgrounds at Ōtaki Beach](#), - approx 6 km west of SH 1
- [Ōtaki Manaaki B & B](#) - 102 Rāhui Rd, Ōtaki - P: 0274 783 220
- [Ōtaki Motel](#) - 260 Main Highway, Ōtaki - P: 06 364 8469 or 0800 662 243 - E: info@otakimotel.co.nz
- [Railway Hotel](#) - 6 Arthur St, Ōtaki - P: 06 364 7165

## Resupply

- [New World Supermarket](#) - 155-163 Main Highway, Ōtaki North - P: 06 364 8640
- [Countdown Supermarket](#) - Cnr Mill Rd & Aotaki St, Ōtaki - P: 06 364 9001

## Transport

Ōtaki Forks Transport Options: Bookings Essential

If exiting at Ōtaki Forks the Gorge Road is narrow and winding - not safe for walkers.

- [Pickup/dropoff from Ōtaki Forks](#) - P: 06 3643220 or 0274 426968 - E: [pipsteele@xtra.co.nz](mailto:pipsteele@xtra.co.nz)
- [Local Taxi Service](#) - Wally (retired) Phone 06 362 6319
- [Paraparaumu Taxi Service](#) - Tues,Thurs, Fridays 10am-3pm P: 0800 508 294

## Accommodation

- For the closest self-catering rural cottage accommodation, and pickup/dropoff from Ōtaki Forks, P: 06 3643220 or 0274 426968 - E: [pipsteele@xtra.co.nz](mailto:pipsteele@xtra.co.nz)
- [Bridge Lodge Backpackers](#) - 3 Ōtaki Forks Rd, Ōtaki - P: 06 364 6667 - Accommodation. Camping Ground, Tent & Backpackers
- Beni Paroli (AT hiker) 06 364 6261 [pepperonis@xtra.co.nz](mailto:pepperonis@xtra.co.nz) for pickup, hot shower, meal and accommodation Ōtaki Beach.

# Pukeatua

## Route

### Pukeatua - 14km / 6-7 hours

The first part of the Pukeatua Section climbs steadily through a mixed forest with grass clearings that provide sweeping views of Ōtaki Forks and the Tararua Range. The highest

point is at Pukeatua (812m). The track then descends back down towards the Waikanae River.

From the Department of Conservation information sign, follow the Fenceline Loop Track for 700m to a marked junction to Pukeatua Track.

The track takes a sharp left uphill turn to a south-west ridge. It is marked with the Department of Conservation orange triangles.

Continue up-hill for about 3 hours with a hard right turn just prior to exiting the bush before Pukeatua (812m) and a good lunch spot.

The track skirts the scrubby tops on the eastern side to Pukeatua Summit. From the summit, the track follows the south side of a westerly ridge to a saddle and then northwest down a ridge to a broad ridge and intersection. Turn right at the fork (large orange triangles) following the DOC markers and down towards the covenanted land section and pine forest. The area adjacent to the pine forest is private land covenanted with the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust to preserve the native forest. Walkers are required to respect the protected area and stay on the marked track. Recent logging of the pine forest has damaged the track, and the trail marking is unclear. Follow the bulldozed logging road which is steep at times, so take care.

On reaching the stream go upstream for just 10m then left, crossing the stream on to a four-wheel-drive track leading to a gate and gravel road.

Exit left and walk down the road, crossing the pedestrian bridge to the South Mangaone Road Car Park and track end.

From the car park continue down South Mangaone Road (5km) turn right into Ngātiawa Road (1km) and right into Reikiorangi Road (5km) leading to Waikanae Village.

If continuing on the next section (Kapiti Coast) after crossing the railway line and SH1 turn left and proceed south on the footpath. Cross Te Moana Road (traffic lights) and down SH1 to the Waikanae River road bridge.

## Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track
- Poisons & traps
- Forestry operations
- Small stream crossings
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Weather extremes
- Few water sources. Only at the start and finish

Leave gates as you find them.

Dogs on a leash only.

# Waikanae

## Accommodation en route

- Ruth Carter offers camping at their house immediately adjacent to the DOC carpark at the end of Mangaone South Rd - contact her in advance on [theoldemill@gmail.com](mailto:theoldemill@gmail.com)
- River Pā - 20 Reikorangi Rd - close to Waikanae en route - P: 022 053 3618 or just turn up. Self-catering, hot shower, indoor mattress,
- [El Rancho Holiday Park](#) - 58 Weggery Drive, Waikanae Beach. - P: 04 902 6287. Situated between new motorway and beach, can be reached from the river for those north-bound.
- [Kāpiti Gateway Motel](#) - 114 Main Rd, Waikanae - P: 04 902 5876 - E: [info@kapitigateway.co.nz](mailto:info@kapitigateway.co.nz)
- [Ariki Lodge Motel](#) - 4 Omaha St, Waikanae - P: 04 293 6072 - E: [info@arikilodgemotel.co.nz](mailto:info@arikilodgemotel.co.nz)
- [Country Patch B&B](#) - 18 Kea St, Waikanae - P: 04 293 5165 - E: [stay@countrypatch.co.nz](mailto:stay@countrypatch.co.nz) -
- [Birdsong Cabin](#) (B&B) - Wīnāra Avenue, Kāpiti Coast, Wellington P: 022 691 2255
- [Riverstone B&B](#) - 111 Ngatiawa Road, Waikanae - P: 06 44 293 1936 / E: [eppie@riverstone.co.nz](mailto:eppie@riverstone.co.nz)
- Missy Sinai - P: 027 6557012 - offers a shower and place to rest up near the end of the Mangaone South track.

## Resupply

- [New World Supermarket](#) - 5 Parata St, Waikanae - P: 04 293 3400
- [Countdown Supermarket](#) - Ngaio Rd, Waikanae - P: 04 293 5532

# Kāpiti Coast

## Route

An easy day's walking after the rigours of Tararua tramping! The trail is virtually level walking for the whole 22km, taking in some of the Kāpiti District's icons – the Waikanae River, an estuary and scientific reserve, Kāpiti Island in full view from the beach, Queen Elizabeth Park, and the distinctive cafes and local art outlets in Paraparaumu, Raumati and Paekākāriki.

## Waikanae River - 4.5km / 1¼ hours

From the Waikanae Bridge take the track downriver on the true right bank (north).

Follow main track downstream for 4.5km. Pass a footbridge over the river and continue under the expressway. Cross the second footbridge towards the Otaihanga Domain.

## Otaihanga, Estuary and Scientific Reserve - 2.5km / ½ hour

Exit bridge into Otaihanga Domain. Immediately turn sharp right on river side of the toilets. Follow the true left bank (south side).

After 500m veer left to boardwalk and track through the Waikanae Estuary Scientific Reserve.

Ignore sidetracks. After 15min join an older section of the Reserve Track that exits on to Manly Street.

Turn right and follow grass verge for 5min skirting the lagoons. Just before the houses, turn right, leaving the verge to enter another section of the Waikanae Estuary Scientific Reserve.

Follow boardwalks over swamp, sand dunes and on to the beach.

## **Paraparaumu Beach to Raumati South - 8.5km / 3hr**

At beach turn left (south) by yellow Marine Reserve triangles. Weather and tide permitting, keep on the beach heading south for 8km.

Walking along the beach is safe and accessible right to Queen Elizabeth Park except in extreme high tides; in which case use local roads running parallel with the beach. All major streams are bridged.

When near to high-rise apartments, you can divert to cafes at the boat launch area.

At the end of Raumati South Beach, turn inland through piles of driftwood where you see a triangular "Total Fire Ban" sign. Continue for a short distance then turn right on to the Coastal Track.

## **Queen Elizabeth Park - 3.5km / 1½ hours**

Follow undulating Coastal Track - the one nearest to the sea - for about 1.5km to picnic and toilet area. Turn left (inland) onto the sealed road for 100m.

Turn right at next road intersection and follow along another 100m before rejoining the coastal track.

August 2018, the Coastal Track at Raumati South is closed due to coastal erosion. The alternatives are:

- Continue along the beach at low tide
- Continue on the Coastal Track at your own risk,
- or use the alternative Inland Track. Follow a track uphill to the north briefly, this soon joins up with the Inland Track. Head along this, down a hill and join a major sealed track. Turn right (south) and a short distance along turn right onto a small track signposted "Coastal Track 900 metres". This takes you back on to the Coastal Track - continue as above.

At end of Coastal Track cross the small Wainui Stream and continue along the beach until you see a large building, the Surf Life Saving Club, on your left. A little way past this, head up onto the north end of The Parade. An alternative is to use the road bridge 100m upstream and cross a field on the right to the Surf Life Saving Club.

## Paekākāriki - 2km / ½ hour

Continue along The Parade for 1.7km then turn left into Beach Road, Paekākāriki's main street.

Cross over the pedestrian crossing to the right-hand side of the road and head past the shops toward the railway lines.

## Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track
- Tides, waves & rivers - safer at low tide. Will need to walk along the road in certain conditions
- Small stream crossings
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Do not be tempted to take a short cut through the Waikanae Estuary, the sand can be very soft and dangerous at low tide

## Paraparaumu & Paekākāriki

### Getting to/from the track

The track starts and finishes on State Highway 1 so care needs to be taken if being dropped off by car, but there are suitable parking areas at both ends.

A regular train service from Wellington to Waikanae (The Kāpiti Line), stops at Waikanae, Paraparaumu and Paekākāriki.

### Paraparaumu Accommodation

- [Barnacles Seaside Inn BBH](#), 3 Marine Parade, Paraparaumu Beach - P: 04 9025856  
E: [barnacles@clear.net.nz](mailto:barnacles@clear.net.nz)
- Marie Bismarck is a "Trail Angel" living near the Trail at Paraparaumu Beach and offers camping, water, shower for Te Araroa walkers. E: [mariebismarck@gmail.com](mailto:mariebismarck@gmail.com)

### Paekākāriki Accommodation

- [Paekākāriki Holiday Park](#) - 180 Wellington Rd, Paekākāriki - P: 04 292 8292
- [Belvedere Motel](#) - Cnr Paekākāriki Hill Rd and SH1 - P: 04 292 8478 - E: [belvedere.motel@xtra.co.nz](mailto:belvedere.motel@xtra.co.nz)
- [Finn's Hotel](#) - 2 Beach Rd, Paekākāriki - P: 04 292 8081 - E: [finnskapiti@xtra.co.nz](mailto:finnskapiti@xtra.co.nz)
- [Paekākāriki Beachfront B&B](#) - 136 The Parade, Paekākāriki - P: 04 905 8595 - E: [info@paekakarikibnb.co.nz](mailto:info@paekakarikibnb.co.nz)
- [Jacinta Rose](#) would love to host walkers, offering a hot shower, a place to pitch your tent and place to cook - they have a house right on the trail - please free to contact her on 027 605 8311 - the bonus is there is no cost!!

### Resupply

- Paekākāriki Village Grocery Store - 11 Beach Rd, Paekākāriki Village - P: 04 292 8020 - open 7 days

## Paekākāriki Escarpment Track

### Route

This new track from Paekākāriki to Pukerua Bay runs high above State Highway 1 and the railway, reaching 220m above sea level. There are spectacular views, and it is one of the highlights of the Te Araroa Trail.

- Be aware that it is steep, narrow and exposed, and crosses private property.
- The walk should not be attempted by those without a reasonable level of fitness, or who suffer from vertigo.
- Please keep to the marked track and do not enter the rail corridor (you risk a \$20,000 fine).
- There are seats and interesting interpretive signs along the way but no amenities.
- If section walking, please park thoughtfully - please park at the railway station NOT on Ames St.
- Parking is extremely limited and the roadway is narrow. The road is an emergency alternate SH1 route and any parking on the street makes this difficult. Parking at the railway station is preferred for all track users and provides more direct access to the track.

Stay on the right-hand side of Beach Road, and at the end cross the railway lines. Immediately turn right on to the footpath alongside SH1. Follow the signed route through the trees until it comes back out onto the footpath. After about 50m, take the stairs under the bridge and onto the Escarpment Track – Do not cross State Highway 1.

Initially, the track undulates and passes through groves of coastal bush. After 10 minutes there is an open area (old quarry), seating and views worth stopping for. Continue on over a small bridge and a cantilevered section of pathway around a rock face.

From here, the track is over steep terrain, and there are no handrails on the steps. Children should be supervised.

Suitable footwear should be worn and carry an extra layer in case the weather turns - it can be exposed up there.

Begin the steep ascent via steps and a zig-zag path and continue up to the highest point of the track ("the Lookout"), before starting a descent down many steps. You will traverse 2 lovely sections of Kohekohe forest before another steep descent then cross 2 swing-bridges.

The track continues beside private property and the rail corridor. Continue along the old (now closed) Muri Station and go through Muri Park and onto Sea Vista Drive, cutting through the walkway to Pukerua Bay Railway Station. Please note that you can buy a ticket for the return journey by train at the dairy in Paekākāriki, or on the train but tickets can only be purchased using cash on the train.

Section walkers heading south to north should park in the Pukerua Bay Railway Station carpark and enter the track from there following these directions in reverse - there is not enough room to park safely at the end of Muri Road.

For walkers continuing south on Te Araroa Trail, from the Pukerua Bay Railway Station cross the railway track at the safe crossing point then proceed up a slight incline to Te Motu Road, turn right and walk right to the end where you will cross the footbridge over SH1, then once on the western side of SH1 walk south a further 250m to the start of the next section.

## Conditions

Conditions of the agreement giving public access to the land are that no horses, dogs, bikes or motorised vehicles are permitted.

Keep to the track; do not walk on to farmland, or the rail tracks.

## Potential hazards

- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Weather extremes
- Few water sources No water sources on track - take with you
- Steep stairs - unsuitable for those with vertigo or cardio illness.

The track is over steep terrain, and there are no handrails on the steps. Children should be supervised.

The walk should not be attempted by those without a reasonable level of fitness, or who suffer from vertigo.

Suitable footwear should be worn and carry an extra layer in case the weather turns - it can be exposed up there.

Conditions of the resource consent and the agreement with Kiwirail giving public access to the land are that no horses, dogs, bikes or motorised vehicles are permitted.

Please do not jeopardise the future of the track by ignoring these requirements.

Keep to the track; do not walk on to farmland, or the rail tracks.

## Centennial Highway

### Route

Pretty coastal strip but dogged by a narrow footpath and heavy traffic for most of the way. The latter part is along the beach at Pukerua Bay, exiting up a bush track to rejoin State Highway 1.

From Paekākāriki Village walk west towards the beach.

Turn south into Ames Street.

Follow Ames Street to park/reserve near end.

Through park to sandhill track at the far end (south).

Exit track at the car park.

At far side (south end) of Fishermans' Table Restaurant car park, continue along the footpath beside State Highway 1 (Centennial Highway) for 5km.

Exit at southernmost car lookout on Centennial Highway (before hill). Take four-wheel drive track toward Pukerua Bay Beach.

Exit onto Brendan Beach about 50m before private property gate.

Follow beach around to footpath/road - Ocean Parade.

Continue 500m along Ocean Parade to a second lot of toilets and car park (Pukerua Bay Beach).

Enter Goat Track behind toilets.

Exit Goat Track at Rāwhiti Road.

Continue along Rāwhiti Road turning left into Teihana Road West for 100m - shops (and toilets)

Route continues across Teihana Road West up SH1 (south) via Arā Harakeke (Flax Pathway).

## Potential hazards

- Please take caution on roads as they can be very busy. Stay as far off the road as possible and stick to footpaths.

### Accommodation on route:

- [Beach Haven B&B](#) - Pukerua Beach Road, Pukerua Bay - P: 04 2399384

## Arā Harakeke

### Route

This track comprises 3 short, easy sections:

- 1) Pukerua Bay to Plimmerton - 1hour 20 minutes
- 2) Plimmerton to Pāremata Bridge - 40minutes
- 3) Pāremata Bridge to Porirua Railway Station - 1 hour

The route continues south (right) along the footpath on the right-hand side of State Highway 1, passing a wooden sculpture until it reaches Arā Harakeke ("Flax Pathway")

At Whenua Tapu Cemetery continue on Arā Harakeke past the large Taupō Swamp. At Northpoint Street go south. Continue to the railway underpass on to Steyne Avenue. Turn left, and just before Steyne Avenue crosses the Main Trunk Line turn right to the coastal pathway (still Arā Harakeke). Follow path then under railway, exit walkway across the car park, and cross the Mana/Pāremata Bridge over the Pāuatahanui Estuary mouth.

Proceed to second pink pedestrian rail overbridge via the Pāremata station platform. Exit overbridge to right along Pāremata Crescent, becoming Papakowhai Road. Continue along Papakowhai Road then to Aotea Lagoon across the road on right. Toilets en-route at Plimmerton and Aotea Lagoon.

Exit Aotea lagoon at the main entrance (south). Cross Whitford Brown Avenue. At the pedestrian crossing and turn left, then right into Okowai Road. Enter into the Gear Homestead grounds on the right. Exit Gear Homestead passing through the Adrenalin Forest. The Gear Homestead and the Aotea Lagoon both provide lovely picnic areas. If you are a daredevil, take time out for some heart-pumping action at the amazing [Adrenalin Forest](#) confidence course.

Turn right onto Aotea subdivision track to State Highway 1. Left into State Highway 1 walkway, then right on to The Ramp (road bridge to Porirua City). Turn left immediately over the bridge into Bullock Lane (beside estuary) and follow a waterside path to Station Road.

If continuing directly to Colonial Knob, take the 1.5km Raiha Walk to Elsdon (campground)

## Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track Rail service vehicles/cycles Plimmerton-Pāremata.
- Tides, waves and rivers. It is safer at low tide when you can walk the beach at Plimmerton.
- Few water sources.

## Porirua

Provides a mixture of walkway cycleway, tramping tracks and road walking

### Accommodation option en route - Plimmerton

- [Moana Lodge Backpackers](#) 49 Moana Road, Plimmerton - P: 04 233 2010 - E: [info@moanalodge.co.nz](mailto:info@moanalodge.co.nz)
- [Aquavilla B&B](#) 16 Steyne Ave, Plimmerton - P: 04 2336116 - E: [info@aquavilla.co.nz](mailto:info@aquavilla.co.nz)

## Accommodation

- [Camp Elsdon](#) - 18 Raiha St, Elsdon, Porirua - P: 04 237 8987 - E: camp\_elsdon@xtra.co.nz -
- [Aotea Camping Grounds](#) - 3 Whitford Brown Ave, Papakowhai - P: 04 235 9599 - E: [aoteacamping@vodafone.co.nz](mailto:aoteacamping@vodafone.co.nz)
- A variety of motels and B&B's including [Amethyst Court Motor Lodge](#) and [Belmont Motor Lodge](#).

## Resupply

- [Pak N Save Supermarket](#) -12 Parumoana St, Porirua - P: 04 238 0601
- [New World Supermarket](#) - Cnr Walton Leigh & Lyttleton Ave, Porirua - P: 04 237 0012
- [Countdown Supermarket](#) - Cnr Parumoana and Lyttleton Ave, Porirua - P: 04 239 6060

# Colonial Knob

## Route

Few capital cities offer walks with such spectacular views as the section of Te Araroa from Porirua to Wellington's suburbs of Johnsonville or Khandallah. On a clear day, the views stretch up to Mt Taranaki in the north, across to the South Island's Kaikōura Ranges and Marlborough Sounds, and embrace the city's attractive harbour and hillside suburbs. There is easy accessibility to the start and endpoints for the 21km walk.

## Porirua to Elsdon - 3km / 45 minutes

From Station Road (adjacent to Porirua Railway Station), cross Lyttelton Avenue at the pedestrian crossing and turn right.

On Northern edge of New World Supermarket car park turn left onto the pathway. Follow the path to city centre uncovered carpark.

Cross the carpark and cross pedestrian crossing on Hagley Street and turn left.

Cross Titahi Bay Road at the crossing.

Immediately cross Hagley Street again towards the south.

Follow the Raiha Walkway on the right-hand side of pine trees along the grass verge.

Follow the signed route along grass beside Te Wānanga driveway.

Continue along the walkway through to Raiha Street.

Exit to the right. Walk 200-300m to Colonial Knob Walkway car park on left (past Elsdon Camp).

## Elsdon to Colonial Knob - 4km / 1 hour

Follow the marked track up Colonial Knob.

## Colonial Knob to Mt Kaukau - 14km / 4¼ hours

Follow markers down the other side (blue) to edge of Spicer Forest.

Cross stile turn right and follow fenceline on edge of the forest.

Turn left into the forest following yellow circles through the forest and down to the valley floor.

Exit through the gate and turn left into Ōhariu Valley Road.

Walk along the road (approx 5kms) to crossroads. Straight through crossroads to Rifle Range Road to end. Enter Old Coach Road.

(Optional exit into Johnsonville at Truscott Avenue.) Continue along the marked track towards television mast on Mt Kaukau. (Optional exit down to Woodmancoate Road, Khandallah)

## Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track take plenty of care along Ohariu Valley Road - it is narrow and twisting
- Farming operations - Go around cattle and take extra care at calving/lambing
- Forestry operations in Spicer Forest (occasional)
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold along the tops
- Weather extremes along the tops
- Few water sources along the tops

Dogs on leash only allowed in the Northern Walkway sections. Other sections of the walkway are not suitable for dogs as they go through private farmland.

### Cellphone Coverage

Good coverage apart from Ōhariu Valley Road, Rifle Range Road and Old Coach Road.

## Ngaio

### Route

This section of Te Araroa follows the Wellington 'Skyline Track' then Bells Track to Ngaio (suburb).

From Ngaio the route follows Wellington City Council's 'Northern Walkway' through Trelissick Park, over Te Ahumairangi Hill (Tinakori) and through Wellington Botanic Gardens, ending at the top Terminus of the Wellington Cable Car.

There are exits to Wellington suburban shops and city transport from Mt Kaukau (Khandallah), Ngaio and Wadestown.

From Mt Kaukau viewing platform head south/west down Skyline Track. In 30 minutes, turn sharp left (south) down steep Bell's Track to Awarua Street for approximately 1km.

200m before the bottom of Awarua Street turn right into Cummings Park. Exit the park at Ngaio Library, turning right down Ottawa Road (joins Northern Walkway)

Follow Ottawa Road to the roundabout and continue straight into Waikowhai Road. After roundabout use pedestrian crossing and keep to the footpath. Turn hard left down into bush clad Trelissick Park (before suburban rail underpass).

Soon after 'Wrightwicks Field' leave the Northern Walkway and follow Te Araroa signs along the valley floor. After the river gorge, turn hard right to rejoin the Northern Walkway up a steep track to Hanover Street. At top of Hanover Street turn left into Wadestown Road. Cross Wadestown Road at bus toilets, go up steps to Weld Street.

Head up Weld Street, cross Margaret and Wade Streets. Near the top of Weld Street turn sharp left (east) into Te Ahumairangi Park (previously "Tinakori Hill") on a gravel vehicle track. Follow Northern Walkway around the side of the hill with city views to St Mary Street.

At the lower end of St Mary Street, leave Northern Walkway and turn right up Tinakori Road for 300m. Cross over Tinakori Road at the pedestrian crossing and enter Wellington Botanic Garden through the 'Founders Gate'. Follow Te Araroa signs through the Gardens uphill to the Cable Car Terminal.

## Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track
- Farming operations
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold High winds and rain are common on Skyline Track

Dogs on leash only

Bypass in Trelissick Park through Northern Walkway if Korimako Stream flooded

The section along the tops are very exposed and prone to high winds.

## Accommodation

Tui Birdsong Bed and Breakfast - 18 Orari Street, Ngaio. Our place is very close to the Northern Walkway part of the TA, with loads of transport options. We have a really comfortable private bedroom set up for our bed & breakfast guests - with private toilet and

shower, wifi, a small fridge, washing machine, bbq and we can help answer lots of your questions about the Wellington Region (we have lived here so long)! Especially the best spots for coffee and cake/cheese scones. We'll also provide continental breakfast if you'd like, or not! Tui, Kaka, Kererū, piwakawaka are some of the native birds that frequent our garden. We're keen on tramping/hiking, so our eyes wouldn't glaze over at your stories. Careful walking, Belynda and Adam - [Belyndajack@gmail.com](mailto:Belyndajack@gmail.com) 027 2898608

## Wellington City

### Route

This section traverses the Botanic Garden, the City and around to Oriental Bay. There are many spectacular views of Wellington's picturesque harbour, a wander right past the New Zealand Government Buildings and a walk down Wellington's "Golden Mile" shopping strip - passing outdoor shops in Willis and Mercer Streets: Kathmandu, Macpac and Bivouac.

### Botanic Gardens - 2km / 30 minutes

This section begins at the top of the Botanic Garden. From the north side of Cable Car terminal head north on a sealed level path past the Observatory and a sundial then downhill on the 'City to Sea' walkway. There are numerous garden paths but Te Araroa follows the 'City to Sea' walkway through the garden. You will pass various sculptures, go through native bush, pass a café, a large rose garden, a playing field and then head downhill through 'Bolton St Memorial Park'. A pedestrian bridge takes walkers across the main city motorway, then leave the City to Sea by turning hard left.

Walk down past a white 12 storey high rise building to Bowen Street. Just before the Bowen Street exit, take a minute to inspect the cutout steel sculptures dedicated to Te Araroa - these were unveiled in 2017 by the Mayor of Wellington.

Follow Bowen Street down slope to Lambton Quay, passing the New Zealand Government Buildings (aka "the Beehive").

### City, Waterfront, Oriental Bay - 4km / 1.5 hours

This route begins at the corner of Bowen Street and Lambton Quay. Turn right and follow Lambton Quay (Te Araroa plaques in the pavement) through the main city shopping street (800m) until it merges with Willis Street. Follow Willis Street then turn left into Mercer Street. Cross Victoria Street and enter the Wellington Civic Centre. Walk through the centre and up onto a large wood decorated pedestrian bridge to the harbour. Descend the steps on left then turn right, pass large white water feature and walk out to the waterfront. Turn hard right (south) and follow the wharf past the Te Papa Museum and the boat harbour. Continue left and follow Oriental Parade (and beach) to the far end (east).

- Note: In the city, the route is marked with brass plaques in the pavement. Along the waterfront, the route is not heavily marked though somewhat obvious - follow the waterfront past Te Papa Museum to the far end of Oriental Bay. If you're thirsty, stop for a drink at one of the Te Araroa-themed drinking fountains en route.

## Potential hazards:

- Vehicles on road or track Multiple Road crossings through the city
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold

## Wellington City

### General information

- [i-SITE Visitor Centre](#) - Civic Square, Cnr Victoria & Wakefield Sts, Wellington - P: 04 802 4860.
- [DOC Visitor Information Centre](#) - 18 Manners St, Wellington - P: 04 384 7770 - E: [wellingtonvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:wellingtonvc@doc.govt.nz).
- [Wellington City Central Library](#) - 65 Victoria St, Wellington - P: 04 801 4040. You can get trail maps printed here - for a small charge.

### Getting there/away

- [Interislander](#) ferry to/from Wellington & Picton - multiple departures daily - P: 0800 802 802
- [Bluebridge](#) - P: 0800 844 844
- [Air New Zealand](#) - regular flights to and from Wellington - P: 0800 737 000
- [Jetstar](#) - P: 0800 800 995
- [InterCity](#) - P: 04 385 0520
- Rental Cars - multiple options available
- Mana Bus - P: 09 367 9140

### Accommodation

Full range of hostel, motel and other accommodation providers including:

- [Trail Angel](#) - Nova offers a great place to stay, call on 021 033 0343 they also are happy to hold parcels for you - just make contact. All this on a "Koha basis"
- [YHA Wellington](#) - 292 Wakefield Street, Te Aro, Wellington P: 04 801 7280 E: [wellington@yha.co.nz](mailto:wellington@yha.co.nz)
- [Hotel Waterloo & Backpackers](#) - 1 Bunny St - P: 0800 225 725
- [Base Wellington](#) - 23 Cambridge Tce - P: 04 801 5666
- [BBH Lodge in the City](#) - 152 Taranaki St - P: 04 385 8560
- [Nomads Capital Backpackers](#) - 118-120 Wakefield St - P: 0508 666 237
- [Wild Zebra Backpackers](#) - 58 Tory St - P: 0508 00 5858

## Wellington South

### Route

From a small picnic area about 100m before Carlton Gore Road the route climbs uphill on to the slopes of Mt Victoria, following Wellington's 'Southern Walkway' for its full length right down to the south coast. The cover is mainly native bush but with various grassed areas, playing fields and two small pine tree plantations. There are short stretches of suburban roads.

From Mt Victoria the route is on a ridge and approximately parallel to Alexandra Road, crossing the road several times. Early in the walk, keep an eye out for the "Summit Walkway" if you wish to pop up to the top to admire the views. There are numerous city walking tracks and mountain bike trails so keep focused on the pink Southern Walkway signs. Some of these tracks are shared walking/cycle tracks, and cycle tracks also cross the walking tracks, so be alert.

From the Mt Victoria Summit, descend the steps, pass public toilets and onto the grass verge on the right-hand side of Alexandra Road. Pick up the Southern Walkway track again (pink signs) and continue on this route. Alternatively, descend Alexandra Road to Constable Street, crossing at the traffic lights to Coromandel Street.

At the top end of Coromandel Street, follow the paved zig-zag path to another small plantation of pine trees. Soon the trail climbs a few flights of steps and emerges into Truby King Historic Park. Exit the Park's long driveway and turn hard left onto Manchester St and very soon hard right onto Sutherland Crescent. This road ends at Melrose Park where the route skirts around the north side of the playing field which is also the Wellington Zoo boundary fence (see Hamadryas Baboon if you're lucky). There is a water tap outside the changing rooms.

At the far side of Melrose Park turn left and climb a steep clay track to the summit of Mt Albert (use marked high route option). Continue along ridge top then veer right past the new concrete reservoir and head downhill to Mt Albert Road. Turn hard left on to Mt Albert Road then right into Buckley Road. After 200m turn left downhill into Sinclair Park. This grassed valley merges into Buckley Road Reserve. At the bottom of the grassed paddock turn right and follow Houghton Bay Road to the coast. Cross the road to the sea. Turn right and walk along the coast (1km) to Island Bay. At Island Bay veer right into Reef Street, cross the street and enter Shorland Park at the far end at 'The Parade' corner. Walk through Shorland Park to the sea boundary where there is a stone cairn memorial to the end (or beginning) of Te Araroa in the North Island.

## Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track - Multiple road crossings
- Tides, waves & rivers - safer at low tide Take care on the south coast during storm conditions
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold

To reach the South Island and continue your walk you will need to return to Wellington to catch a ferry or Wellington Airport if flying. Buses leave every 10 minutes from The Parade beside Shorland Park.

## General information

- [i-SITE Visitor Centre](#) - Civic Square, Cnr Victoria & Wakefield Sts - P: 04 802 4860. Temporarily closed until further notice
- Department of Conservation Visitor Centre - 18 Manners St - P: 04 384 7770 - E: [wellingtonvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:wellingtonvc@doc.govt.nz)
- DOC Pōneke / Wellington Visitor Centre, <https://isite.nz/find-an-isite/listing/doc-poneke-wellington-visitor-centre>

## Getting there/away

- [Interislander](#) ferry to/from Wellington & Picton - multiple departures daily - P: 0800 802 802
- [Bluebridge](#) - P: 0800 844 844
- [Air New Zealand](#) - regular flights to and from Wellington - P: 0800 737 000
- [Jetstar](#) - P: 0800 800 995
- [InterCity](#) - P: 04 385 0520
- [Naked Bus](#) - P: 0900 62533 (calls cost)
- Rental Cars – multiple options available
- Mana Bus - P: 09 367 9140
- [Sounds Air](https://www.soundsair.com) (<https://www.soundsair.com>) - regular flights between Wellington and Picton (Koromiko airport) with shuttle service to/from Picton. Great scenic flight and only 20 mins! NZ only: 0800 505 005. Tel: +64 (0)3 520 3080. [info@soundsair.com](mailto:info@soundsair.com)

## Accommodation

Full range of hostel, motel and other accommodation providers including:

- [YHA Wellington](#) - 292 Wakefield Street, Te Aro, Wellington P: 04 801 7280  
E: [wellington@yha.co.nz](mailto:wellington@yha.co.nz)
- Hotel Waterloo & Backpackers - 1 Bunny St, Wellington - P: 0800 225 725 - W: [www.hotelwaterloo.co.nz](http://www.hotelwaterloo.co.nz)
- [Base Wellington](#) - 23 Cambridge Tce, Wellington - P: 0800 2273 69 or 04 801 5666 - E: [wellington@stayatbase.com](mailto:wellington@stayatbase.com) - W: [www.stayatbase.com/hostels/new-zealand-hostels/base-wellington](http://www.stayatbase.com/hostels/new-zealand-hostels/base-wellington)
- [BBH Lodge in the City](#) - 152 Taranaki St, Wellington - P: 04 385 8560 - E: [enquiries@lodgeinthecity.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@lodgeinthecity.co.nz) - W: [www.lodgeinthecity.co.nz](http://www.lodgeinthecity.co.nz)
- [Nomads Capital Backpackers](#) - 118-120 Wakefield St - P: 0508 666 237 - W: [www.nomadsworld.com](http://www.nomadsworld.com)
- [Wild Zebra Backpackers](#) - 58 Tory St, Wellington - P: 0508 00 5858 - E: [reception@wildzebrabackpackers.co.nz](mailto:reception@wildzebrabackpackers.co.nz) - W: [www.wildzebrabackpackers.co.nz](http://www.wildzebrabackpackers.co.nz)