



TARANAKI

like no other

A WALKER'S GUIDE

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taranaki.co.nz/visit

A photograph of two people walking away from the camera on a dirt path. The scene is bathed in the warm, golden light of a sunset or sunrise, with long shadows and a hazy sky. The path leads into a wooded area with trees and bushes. The text 'WELCOME, HAERE MAI' is overlaid on the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font. 'WELCOME,' is on the top line, and 'HAERE MAI' is on the bottom line, with the latter text partially enclosed by a red rectangular background.

WELCOME, HAERE MAI

From Maunga to sea, the lush Taranaki landscape, spectacular coastline and cultural heritage provides numerous activities for those with a sense of fun and adventure.

A network of walking tracks links these many attractions offering a unique perspective to the legendary landscape of Taranaki

You can safely walk many of the tracks in this brochure without any specialist clothing, equipment or skills. However, if you want to attempt the moderate or challenging walks, good planning and preparation is essential.

- Allow time – Plan your route and allow enough time to get around changing tides and daylight hours.
- Tell someone
- Know your limits
- Go prepared – Make sure you have enough food, equipment, and clothing
- Take appropriate means of communication.
- Look after the environment – Take only photographs and leave only footprints.
- Be sensible – Don't walk alone, check the weather
- Be respectful



TE PAPAKURA O TARANAKI

The 2518m volcanic peak of Taranaki Maunga offers more than 200km of walking tracks through untouched bush, clear streams, mystical ngāhere/ forests and breath-taking views. Tracks range from 15-minute family-friendly walks to the three-to-five day around the mountain hike. The full range of available hiking tracks can be found at [doc.govt.nz](https://www.doc.govt.nz).

NORTH TARANAKI VISITOR CENTRE

Note: The North Taranaki Visitor Centre is under construction until Summer 2027. A variety of short family-friendly walks start from the North Taranaki Visitor Centre including to the **Viewing Platform** (featuring stunning views of Taranaki, the coastline and inland to the central North Island mountains), historic **camphouse**, and **Ambury Monument** a memorial to climber Arthur Ambury. Slightly longer walks include the **Connett Loop Walk** (40 min return), through forest laden with moss and lichens (goblin forest); the **Mangaoraka Loop Track** (30 min return) which starts 4.5km down Egmont Road from the visitor centre, and the **Veronica Loop Track** (2 hr return) which leads past Ambury Monument and climbs a long series of steps, looping back to the visitor centre.



EAST TARANAKI

Stratford Plateau is the start of the track to the Manganui ski field, and offers a range of spectacular sights from the plateau **Lookout** to the stunning **Manganui 100m suspension bridge**, connecting the Manganui gorge to the ski field via a short walk from the Plateau. Family-friendly walks include the **Kamahi Loop Track**, a short walk through ‘goblin forest’ starting from the Ngāti Ruanui Stratford Mountain House and the **Potaema Track**, a wheelchair/pushchair-friendly track starting from the Potaema picnic area on Pembroke Road showcasing a huge variety of vegetation, from flowering plants and hanging moss, to towering forest and wetlands.

POUĀKAI CROSSING

 18.4km  7-9 hours

 Moderate/Challenging

The Pouākai Crossing is one of the hero walks on the Maunga. It features centuries of volcanic activity from the towering Dieffenbach cliffs, boomerang slip, and red water of the Kokowai Stream to the fragile Ahukawakawa Wetlands, Pouākai Hut and the picture-perfect Pouākai Tarns. A slightly shorter route to the **Pouākai Tarns** can be accessed from Mangorei Road End (**Length:** 10km, **Time:** 5-6 hrs). The track involves several hours of walking uphill on mostly wooden steps and batten boardwalk. *Warning – if hiking the Pouākai Crossing, you will need to organise transfers. Unbridged streams may be impassable after heavy rain. For weather conditions, track updates and hut tickets (if staying at Pouākai Hut) go to doc.govt.nz.*



TARANAKI MAUNGA SUMMIT TRACK

 14km  8-12 hours return  Challenging

This summer-only climb is the most spectacular and adventurous in Taranaki and is not to be taken lightly. Be well prepared, check weather and track conditions and consider doing the annual guided open climb. The track features ever-changing views as you ascend from montane forest to scoria and rock. Refer to the **Mt Taranaki Summit Climb brochure** at doc.govt.nz for detailed maps and track information.

NB: Parking is limited during summer. Shuttles can be arranged or alternatively the climb can be started from the Stratford Plateau carpark.

YORK LOOP TRACK

 5.3 km  3 hours  Moderate

Starting at the top of York Rd, Midhirst, the track follows part of the old Egmont Branch Railway Line, constructed in 1901 to provide metal for roads and rocks for Port Taranaki. You will come across many of the old workings, such as the site of old bunk houses and cottages, and an old crusher site.

WALKS

1–4 hours



PATEA LOOP TRACK

 2km  1.5 hours (round trip)  Easy

From the Ngāti Ruanui Stratford Mountain House follow the Waingongoro Track a short way before heading uphill through forest with large Pahautea/mountain cedar trees. The track follows the Te Popo stream before returning to the car park.

DAWSON FALLS VISITOR CENTRE, MANAIA ROAD, KAPONGA

Only 30 minutes drive from Stratford, the picturesque Dawson Falls road end/Te Rere o Kapuni offers a variety of spectacular vistas and interesting sites. Short walks include to the **Dawson Falls Power Station**, one of the world's oldest continuously operating generators and to **Dawson Falls** (Te Rere o Noke) an 18m high waterfall. A small visitor centre has information and displays (limited opening hours).

WILKIES POOLS LOOP TRACK

 2.3km  1-1.5 hours (round trip)

 Easy/Moderate

Wilkie Pools are a series of remarkable plunge pools formed by the scouring action of water-borne sand and gravel on 20,000-year-old lava. Named after the Wilkie brothers who farmed locally. The track winds through 'goblin forest', crossing the unbridged Kapuni Stream to the pools. The first 400m of this track is baby buggy/wheelchair friendly with assistance.

WALKS

1–4 hours



KAPUNI LOOP TRACK

 2km  1-1.5 hours (round trip)  Moderate

The Kapuni Loop Track follows the Kapuni Stream, where alpine plant species can be found out of their vegetation zone due to water- and wind-borne seed distribution, and continues past Te Rere-o-Noke before heading uphill through goblin forest to the visitor centre car park.



NEW PLYMOUTH

Sitting alongside the Tasman Sea with Taranaki Maunga at its back, New Plymouth offers many great walking tracks. From coastal vistas to lakes, gardens and heritage trails, each walkway comes with its own story, coffee spot or sparkling surf beach.

NEW PLYMOUTH COASTAL WALKWAY



 13km  3-4 hours  Easy

 Ngāmotu Beach, Bayly Road to Wills Rd, Bell Block

The award-winning Coastal Walkway is a sea-edge promenade stretching the length of New Plymouth. Ideal for walking, running, cycling, skating or simply enjoying the view, the walkway is great for all ages and abilities. There are many access points, toilets and drinking fountains and much to see including Len Lye's wind wand sculpture, art installations, and Te Rewa Rewa bridge.

LAKE MANGAMAHOE



 6km  1.5-2 hours  Moderate/Challenging

 Starts at the end of Lake Access Rd, off Junction Rd

Lake Mangamahoe is set in a 262ha production forest and offers a range of walks with spectacular views of Taranaki Maunga. You will see the dam, which turns the lake into a water catchment area for New Plymouth and a small collection of redwood trees planted in 1931. Adjacent to the lake are dedicated areas for horse riding (see npdc.govt.nz for trails) and mountain biking (access from Plantation Road off SH3).



TE HENUI WALKWAY

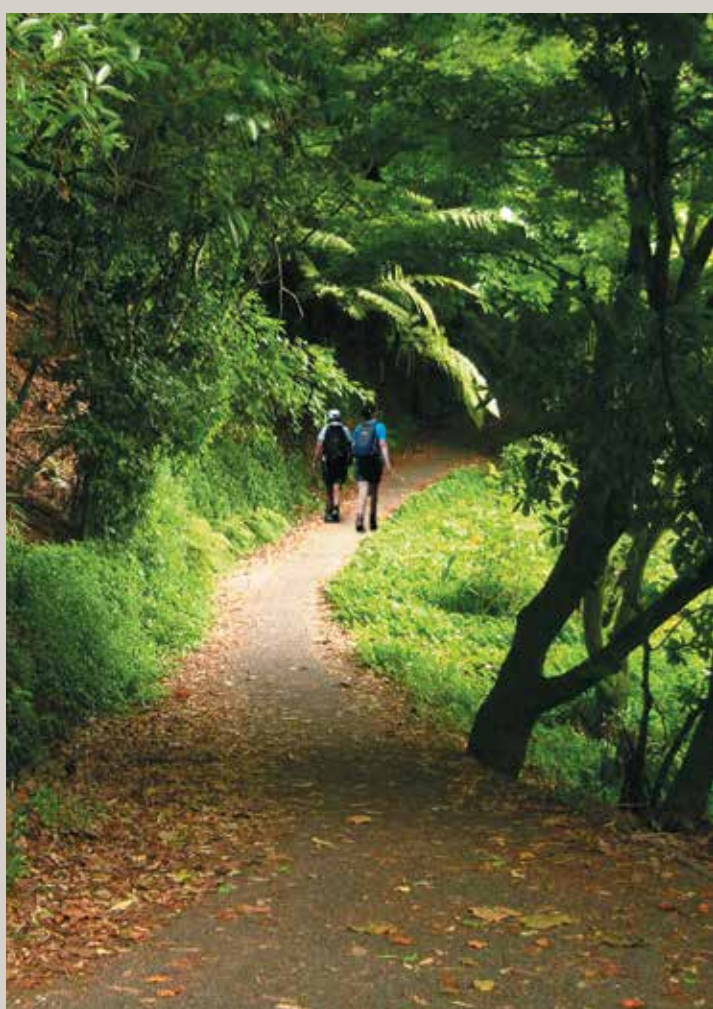


 5.9km  Up to 2 hours

 Easy/Moderate

 Starts at Coastal Walkway by East End Reserve, Strandon

One of the most beautiful walkways in the city, the Te Henui winds up from the coast, following the Te Henui river and showcasing a variety of native and exotic flora. There are several access points, picnic areas, swimming holes, a bowling club and many hungry ducks. Along the route is the Te Henui Cemetery featured in the Taranaki Garden Festival, and three pā sites. The fascinating history of the area is explained on signboards dotted along the walk.



HUATOKI WALKWAY



Length: 5km  1.5 hours  Easy

 Starts at the Coastal Walkway by the Wind Wand

Following the meandering Huatoki Stream, the walkway stretches from the Coastal Walkway to Huatoki domain and Tupari Reserve. Highlights include several signboards explaining places of cultural interest, an old flour mill site and Halamoana, a sculpture by Filipe Tohi. Rare epiphytes (or air plants) can be seen on the trees of the Bendall Walk off Tupari reserve.



MANGATI WALKWAY / HICKFORD PARK PATHWAY

 2.3-6km  2-2.5 hrs for both

 Easy/Moderate

 Starts at corner of Mangati Rd and Wanaka Tce, Bell Block

The walkways pass through farmland and coastal plantings, offering picturesque vantage points and intriguing historic sites. The undeveloped mown Hickford Park Pathway, of cultural significance to Puketapu hapu, runs along the foreshore providing access to the rocky beach and expansive vegetative dunes while the Mangati Walkway provides a great off-road link from the Coastal Walkway through to De Haviland Drive.



WAITARA HERITAGE TRAIL

 6km  1.5 hours

 Easy/Moderate

 Starts at the corner of West Quay and McLean St, Waitara

Waitara has a rich history. With European settlement starting in 1841, conflict quickly escalated over land rights, which lead to the first Taranaki War in 1860–61. The Trail features 16 information boards detailing the towns often turbulent past.

MEETING OF THE WATERS / ARAHEKE BUSH WALK

 3km  1 hour return  Easy  

 Starts at Meeting of the Waters Carpark, Waiwhakaiho Rd

Enjoy a picnic, swim in the river and take a short family-friendly walk. The Meeting of the Waters and Araheke Bush walkways combine into one loop track that explores a forest of native trees, ferns and mosses, crossing bridges over both the tailrace of the Mangorei Hydro Station and the Waiwhakaiho River.



WHITECLIFFS WALKWAY WAI PINGAO STREAM LOOP

 6.5km  3-4 hours (return along beach at low tide)  Moderate



 Starts at the boat ramp at the end of Pukearuhe Rd (off SH3, 6.4km north of Urenui)

This walkway includes the dramatic Whitecliffs and the protected Parininihi Marine Reserve. From the carpark the walkway crosses farmland (closed for access from 1 July–30 Sept) to Mt Davidson and down through Ngāti Tama land to the Wai Pingao Stream, then to the coast and south along the beach to return to Pukearuhe.

Warning – for your own safety, check tide times and make sure you are back at Pukearuhe no later than two hours after low tide. Please keep a safe distance from the cliffs to avoid falling rocks. Sections of track are subject to washouts. See doc.govt.nz for latest information.

RATAPIHIPIHI RESERVE/ NIKAU LOOP TRACK



 1.9km  Up to 1 hour  Easy

 Starts at the end of Rātapihipihi Rd, off Cowling Rd

With dappled light shining through nīkau palms, kohekohe trees and tawa, this lush temperate rainforest walk is well graded and easy to follow although the track can be steep in places. Learn the history of the area and some interesting facts about trees and plants through a series of interpretation panels.

HEREKAWE WALKWAY



 1.5km  40min-1 hour  Easy/Medium

 Start from Manadon St or the Back Beach car park

From Back Beach the walkway follows the Herekawe Stream, featuring bridges and beautiful native bush. A community project, the walkway links residential areas with the coast and has re-established natural habitats.



STRATFORD

Located in the heart of Taranaki and the gateway to Taranaki Maunga, Stratford is a fascinating and picturesque district located in central Taranaki. Originally named after Stratford-upon-Avon, the famous home of William Shakespeare, many street names and parks are dedicated to the great bard including the distinctive glockenspiel clock tower.

STRATFORD HERITAGE WALKWAY



 1km  30-40 mins  Easy

 Starts at the Bell Tower on Miranda St, Stratford

The Walkway features several memorials to the Boer War and the two world wars including a Bell Tower, Hall of Remembrance, and the Malone Memorial Gates (the largest war memorial to an individual soldier in New Zealand).

STRATFORD DISCOVERY TRAIL



 6km (for the entire loop)  1.5-2 hours  Easy

Get the kids to grab a crayon or pencil and then take a walk along the Discovery Trail to find the hidden icons located on scroll signs along the way. Each icon relates to one aspect of Stratford's unique and varied history and can be rubbed onto the appropriate spot on the Kids Icon Hunt map. There are six to collect! See stratford.govt.nz for a brochure and map.



CARRINGTON WALKWAY



 3-9km  1-4.5 hours

 Easy/Moderate

 Starts at western end of Regan St

This urban and river bush walk starts at the western end of Regan St and follows the Pātea River east. Once you reach King Edward Park, you will come across additional side routes which offer different vantage spots of the points of interest along the way, such as the McCullough Rhododendron Dell and Thomson Arboretum.



CARDIFF CENTENNIAL WALKWAY

 3km  1.5 hours  

 Moderate

 Starts at the large carpark on Ōpunake Rd

Following the Waingongoro River, the walkway features steep slopes, river flats, natural bush, farmland and a swing bridge at the halfway point. Sights include two weirs built to dam the river and supply water to the Cardiff Co-operative Dairy Factory that operated from 1891 to 1951. A picnic area is located a short stroll from the carpark.



MOUNT DAMPER FALLS

 2km return  40 mins–1 hour

 Easy

 Starts at the intersection of Okau and Mangapapa Rds, Tahora, Forgotten World Highway

At 74m high, Mt Damper Falls is one of the highest waterfalls in the North Island and has become a ‘must see’ for travellers. Nestled in the northern Taranaki Ngāhere/ forests just off the Forgotten World Highway, the track traverses private farmland before crossing a small bridge and entering lowland forest leading to two viewing platforms.

Please note – The Mt Damper Falls track is closed to dogs from August 1–October 31 each year due to lambing. Along the track you will see the junction for the Mt Damper Track, a challenging 8-hour tramp.



SOUTH TARANAKI

South Taranaki district encompasses a large portion of the Taranaki region and boasts some of the best fishing, surfing, and tramping in New Zealand. At the heart of this lush dairying district is the main town of Hawera, a centre with a rich history, and home to an iconic water tower, which offers views of Taranaki Maunga and surrounding farmland from the top (access through the isite).



LAKE ROTOKARE WALKWAY

Loop Track:  4.2km  1.5-2 hours;

Ridge Walk:  6km  3-5 hours

 Easy/Moderate

 Starts at Lake Rotokare

Information Hut at the end of Sangster Rd

Lake Rotokare Scenic Reserve is a stunning 230 hectare predator-free environment featuring native and endangered flora and fauna. The Loop Track suits pushchairs and mobility scooters for a short distance with boardwalks, seats and a platform for viewing fernbirds and waterfowl. The Ridge Walk, with 1220 steps, follows the predator-proof fence for beautiful views of the lake before joining the Loop Track. See rotokare.org.nz.

Please note – Lake Rotokare is a predator-free zone so check your vehicle and bags for stowaway rodents before entering. Sturdy walking shoes are recommended as there are muddy areas.

NOWELL'S LAKES WALKWAY

 3km  45 mins  Moderate

 Rifle Range Rd, off Manawapou Rd, Hāwera

This pleasant walk leads through farmland to Nowell's Lakes, two freshwater lakes with ground-fed pristine water, providing a clean habitat for a variety of fish. Thousands of swan plants throughout the walkway give rise to swarms of caterpillars and clouds of Monarch butterflies between February and April. There are four walks in total in the area which are well signposted and have seats and picnic tables dotted along the way.

ŌPUNAKE LOOP WALKWAY

 7km  3-4 hours  Easy/Moderate

 Multiple points, but best place to start is at the boat ramp by Ōpunake Lake on Layard St

The longest of the South Taranaki walks, the walkway features stunning views and plenty for history buffs. Looping around Ōpunake Lake, it passes along the cliffs and the Old Cottage Hospital - the birthplace of famous New Zealand runner Peter Snell - and Te Namu Pā, where Wiremu Kingi Matakatea repelled 800 Waikato Māori for an entire month with a single rifle.

ŌHAWE BEACH – WAIHI BEACH COASTAL WALKWAY

 5km  2.5-3 hours  Moderate  

 Starts at Ōhawe Beach, at end of Ōhawe Rd, Ōhawe

There are several points of interest on this dramatic South Taranaki coastline. The Waingongoro River mouth is where the region's first Māori settlers lived and the cliffs along the coastline contain 3-million-year-old soft papa rock. Near Ōhawe Beach you'll also see the Rangatapu Marae and remnants of a pioneer tram rail.

This walkway is tidal and is only safe to walk up to 2.5 hours before or after low tide. The cliffs along the coast are unstable so beware of falling debris.

DENBY ROAD LOOP PATHWAY

 2.4km total loop  1.5 hours  Easy/Moderate

 Multiple points but best place to start is the car park at Waihi beach

Meandering along a stretch of Denby Road, the pathway offers great views of the coast, maunga and farmland.

MANAIA WALKWAY LOOP

 1.2km  20-30 minute loop  Moderate

 Manaia Golf Club, 117 Bennett Drive, Manaia

This marked pathway ambles through a golf course, historical sites (including the Remembrance Steps and Manaia Redoubt – blockhouses built by the Armed Constabulary in 1880-81) and along the Waiohura Stream.

LAKE ROTORANGI WALKWAY

 1.5km  40 mins  Easy

 Starts at the end of Rotorangi Rd, Pātea

The walkway loops the southern end of the longest manmade lake in New Zealand, crossing the 82m high Pātea dam and then heading past three totara carvings - Pou Tiaki, Rahui and a carved archway – created by Pātea carvers a feature of the walkway is a grove of black beech or tawhai rauriki, which flower in a burst of brilliant red in October and November.

PĀTEA RIVER HISTORIC WALKWAY

 1.5km  1-1.4 hours  Easy/Moderate

 Starts at the corner of York St and Bedford St, Pātea

Follow the lower end of the Pātea River through pastures and pine forest past a series of signs containing historic photographs and illustrations telling the stories of several points of interest dating back to the 1860s.

Please note – Bring sturdy shoes as there is a steep climb along the walkway that can be muddy and slippery in wet weather.

MANAWAPOU VIADUCT

 2km return  20 mins  Easy

 Rest area at the bottom of the Manawapou hill on SH3 12km south of Hāwera (across the stile)

Following a sealed road that meanders for one kilometre through a valley, it is an easy 20 minute stroll to the imposing 133 metres long railway bridge, part of the Marton-New Plymouth line. Information boards at the entrance and at the Viaduct tell some of the bridge's history.

A WALKER'S GUIDE



For visitor information, maps, souvenirs, internet facilities, and accommodation, activity and transport bookings for Taranaki:

NEW PLYMOUTH ISITE VISITOR CENTRE

Puke Ariki, 1 Ariki Street, New Plymouth

Email: i-site@npdc.govt.nz **Phone:** 06 759 0897

Hours: Monday–Sunday 10.00am–5.00pm

STRATFORD ISITE VISITOR CENTRE

Prospero Place & Miranda Street, Stratford

Email: info@stratford.govt.nz **Phone:** 06 765 6708 or 0800 765 6708

Hours: Monday–Friday 8.30am–5.00pm.

Saturday 9–1pm, closed Sundays and Public Holidays

SOUTH TARANAKI ISITE VISITOR CENTRE

121 High Street, Hāwera

Email: visitorinfo@stdc.govt.nz **Phone:** 06 278 8599

Hours: Monday–Friday 8.30am–5.00pm.

Weekends and public holidays 10.00am–3.00pm.

All isites are closed Christmas Day.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION VISITOR CENTRE

Te Papa-Kura-o-Taranaki, 2879 Egmont Road

Email: northtaranakivc@doc.govt.nz **Phone:** 06 756 0990,

Hours: 8.30 am – 3.30 pm daily.

North Taranaki Visitor Centre is under construction until Summer 2027

For more information, head
to taranaki.co.nz/visit

venture
T A R A N A K I

Te Puna Umanga