

Off-shore islands

There are many islands off the Coromandel Peninsula ranging in size from rock stacks of less than one hectare to islands as large as 1900 ha. Some are privately owned, some Maori owned and some are pest free nature reserves or wildlife sanctuaries managed by DOC.

Islands managed by DOC include the Mercury group (excluding Great Mercury), Cuvier, the Aldermen Islands, and Whenuakura and Rawengaiti islands off Whangamata. These islands hold endangered fauna such as tuatara, Middle Island tusk weta, Duvaucel's gecko, tieke (North Island saddleback) and Pycroft's petrel. There are also rare plants including Cook's scurvy grass, parapara and milk tree (*Streblis banksii*).

Many species that still survive on the off-shore islands have been lost on the Coromandel Peninsula because of pests such as rats and mice and loss of habitat. Keeping the islands pest free requires ongoing vigilance. Boating activity increases the risk of rat re-invasion especially as rats can swim 200 metres or more! For this reason, landing is not permitted on any of the above named islands. You may dive, sail, boat and fish around these special islands but please do not anchor close to shore and if you have pets aboard, do not let them get ashore.

One island where you are welcome to land is Mahurangi Island off Hahei Beach and adjoining Te Whanganui-A-Hei Marine Reserve. There is a walking track the length of the island but no other facilities or drinking water so make sure you go prepared.

Mahurangi Island and Hahei coast. Photo: T. Lilleby

Visitor Information

We hope you enjoy your visit to the Coromandel. For more information go to the DOC website at www.doc.govt.nz or contact:

Department of Conservation
Kauaeranga Visitor Centre,
Box 343 Thames 3540
Tel: +64 7 867 9080
Fax: +64 7 867 9095
Email: kauaerangavc@doc.govt.nz



The Kauaeranga Visitor Centre is 13 km up the Kauaeranga Valley near Thames and provides visitor information, maps, brochures, books, hut tickets and conservation related material. Staff can answer your queries regarding the state of tracks, hut bookings and other recreation advice. The visitor centre has seasonal opening days and hours, with 24 hour information panels under the covered verandah.

Further information

Information can also be obtained from the Department of Conservation's Hauraki Area Office in Thames (corner of Pahau and Kirkwood Streets).

Tel: +64 7 867 9180
Fax: +64 7 867 9181

I-Sites and Information Centres located in Coromandel, Paeroa, Pauanui, Tairua, Te Aroha, Thames, Waihi, Whitianga, Waikino and Whangamata also provide local visitor information.

DOC HOTline
0800 362 468
Report any safety hazards or
conservation emergencies



Suggestions for corrections or improvements should be emailed to: recreation@doc.govt.nz

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Coromandel Recreation

COROMANDEL PENINSULA



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Introduction

There are many walking, tramping (hiking), camping, swimming and sightseeing opportunities on the Coromandel Peninsula. This brochure is a guide to the recreational facilities north of State Highway 2 (Karangahake Gorge) provided by the Department of Conservation (DOC) for your enjoyment.

DOC is responsible for protecting and restoring New Zealand's natural and historic heritage. It manages threatened species, minimises biosecurity risks, restores and protects historic and cultural sites on public conservation land and encourages appropriate recreational use consistent with those values. Wherever possible these functions are carried out in partnership with the community and tangata whenua.

Getting There

The Coromandel Peninsula is just 1 to 2 hours drive from Auckland and Hamilton with the key access points at Kopu and Paeroa.

The main road across the bush covered ranges is from Kopu to Hikuai, providing access to the many beaches along the eastern coastline as well as Te Whanganui-A-Hei Marine Reserve. A number of other roads cross the ranges but not all are sealed.

The coastal road from Kopu north along the western shoreline ends at Fletcher Bay, at the top of the Peninsula, where there is a camping ground and recreation area managed by the Department. The road on the eastern side terminates at Stony Bay. It is possible to walk or cycle the 8km between Fletcher and Stony Bay. The roads are unsealed north of Colville.

At the southern end of the Peninsula, the Karangahake Gorge (SH 2) is the main route through from Paeroa to the beaches, forests and historic sites of the south.



Waikawau Bay. Photo: Greg Martin

Recreation information

For the purpose of this brochure, the Coromandel Peninsula has been divided into four zones - Northern Coromandel, Thames Central, Kuaotunu to Puauni and Southern Coromandel. Each zone has its own special attractions.

The long sandy beaches and pohutukawa-clad coastline of the Northern Coromandel have a special attraction for visitors as a place to relax and enjoy the scenery; to take part in water-based activities or to explore the walks and tracks in the area.

South of Coromandel town are the best remaining examples of the majestic kauri that once cloaked the peninsula until the intensive kauri logging industry in the 1870s to 1920s changed the face of the area forever. You can access kauri on a day visit or see relics of the logging days in the Thames Central zone.

Broken Hills and the Parakiwai Valley, both in the Southern Coromandel zone, contain old mine workings, tramways, tunnels, battery sites and camps, all accessible on a network of walks and tramps. Gold mining on a small scale still occurs at Broken Hills.

There is a wealth of historical and cultural heritage sites dating back over 800 years including some of the earliest settlement sites in New Zealand's history. Many sites are waahi tapu (sacred) meaning access is restricted or denied, and visitors must respect this but other sites such as Opito Pa, Whitianga Rock and Te Pare Pa are accessible in the Kuaotunu to Puauni zone.

A brief description is given of the recreation opportunities on conservation land within each of the four zones in the centrefold of this publication.



Kauri trees on Watai boardwalk. Photo: C. Rudge

Enjoying the outdoors safely

Tracks are marked by orange triangles and developed to different standards. In some instances, walking tracks change to tramping tracks so watch for signs indicating this. Choose the right type of track for your group. Be realistic. Safety is your responsibility.

Be well prepared for all types of weather and conditions. Have a first aid kit and survival kit and know what to do if things go wrong.

Check river levels before attempting to cross streams. Learn safe crossing methods.

Warning: Mine tunnels and shafts are very dangerous and may be hidden by vegetation. Keep to marked, official tracks. Do not enter tunnels unless they are clearly marked for public access.

Other activities

Mountain biking



A mountain bike track for more experienced bikers is situated between Fletcher Bay and Stony Bay at the top of the Peninsula. Mountain biking is also permitted on certain tracks in the Kauaeranga Valley and Maratoto Valley.

Off-road vehicles



Three tracks have been set aside for off-roaders at the end of Wires Road at Maratoto. One of these is specifically for motorcycles. Sometimes the gate is locked and intending users should phone 027 524 2132 to check whether the track is open.

Horse riding



The Hotoritori area in the Kauaeranga Valley is generally available for horse riding and horse riders may also use off-road vehicle tracks at Maratoto.

Hunting



Permits are required to hunt for pigs and goats on conservation land and should be carried at all times while hunting. Permits are available from the Kauaeranga Visitor Centre, Coromandel Field Centre, ph 07 866 1100 (mornings only) and Hauraki Area Office ph 07 867 9180.

Snorkelling



Te Whanganui-A-Hei Marine Reserve has a rich variety of underwater habitat and marine life for exploring with a snorkel. All marine life is protected.

Plants and animals

There is a diverse array of native plants and animals on the Coromandel Peninsula. Some are more common than others but many like Hochstetter's frog, NZ dotterel, brown teal and long-finned eel, once widespread, are now threatened and actively managed by DOC. Habitat loss, animal pests and human settlement have resulted in their decline. You can still see the plants and animals featured on this page, although striped gecko are very rare so if you happen to find one, please contact your nearest DOC office.

In the bush



Photo: Paul Schilov

Tui on flax flowers



Photo: Paul Schilov

Bellbird/korimako



Photo: Greg Martin

Pohutukawa



Photo: DOC

Pingao



Photo: Stephen Moore

Long-finned eel



Photo: Stephen Moore

Koura/freshwater crayfish



Photo: C. Rudge

Kauri



Photo: Greg Martin

Nikau



Photo: J.L. Kendrick

Pied shag



Photo: Greg Martin

Diving petrel



Photo: Nadine Gibbs

Common dolphin



Photo: Emiel Fokke

Snapper



Photo: Antoine Fouquet

Hochstetter's frog



Photo: Rob Chappel

Striped gecko



Photo: Rod Vovis

Little blue penguin



Photo: Dick Veitch

Eastern bar-tailed godwit



Photo: Lindsay MacFarlane

Kina



Photo: Helen Kettles

Orca

Along the coast



Photo: Peter Reese

NZ dotterel



Photo: DOC

Variable oystercatcher

Fresh water



Photo: Pia Urwin

Pateke/brown teal



Photo: Jane Maxwell

Pukeko with chick

Salt water

Accommodation

Pinnacles Hut

Pinnacles Hut in the upper Kauaeranga Valley is a three hour walk from the roadend. It has 80 bunks, mattresses, toilets, a cold shower, solar lighting, gas cookers and a gas BBQ. Bring your own cooking utensils. A warden is present at all times. Hut tickets must be booked through the Kauaeranga Visitor Centre before your trip.

Fees:

Adult	\$15.00/night
Child/Youth (5-17 years)	\$ 7.50/night
Preschooler (0-4 years)	Free

Note: Backcountry Hut Passes and Backcountry Hut Tickets are not valid for use at the Pinnacles Hut.

Fletcher Bay Backpackers

This is a comfortable ranch-style lodge with sunny verandah overlooking Fletcher Bay at the top of the Peninsula. There are 4 bedrooms with 2 bunk beds in each; full kitchen with stove, microwave and fridge; spacious lounge/dining room and bathroom.

Fees:

\$25 per person per night or the whole lodge can be booked for groups of up to 16 people.
Phone 07 866 6685 for bookings.

Stony Bay Bach

Located at Stony Bay, this small two room bach (cabin) sleeps 5, with 2 sets of bunks in bedroom and sofa bed in living room. Full kitchen with fridge/freezer and microwave plus hot shower and toilet.

Fee:

\$50 per night (sole occupancy)

Phone 07 866 1100 (mornings only) for bookings.



Waikawau Bay campground. Photo Greg Martin.

Conservation campsites

There are five coastal campgrounds set amongst bush and farmland at the northern end of the Peninsula, providing for a laid-back holiday. All operate on a first-come-first-served basis:

- Fletcher Bay
 - Port Jackson
 - Fantail Bay
 - Stony Bay
 - Waikawau Bay - bookings
- here are essential over Christmas/New Year.
Phone Camp manager:
07 866 1106
- Campgrounds with basic facilities: water supply; toilets; cold showers & fireplaces.
- Basic facilities: water supply, toilets & cold showers

If you prefer more of a bush setting beside a stream or river, then you have a choice of camping sites at:

- Broken Hills (Puketui Valley Road)
- Kauaeranga Valley
- Wentworth Valley - Bookings for the Wentworth Valley should be made over the summer holiday period by phoning the camp manager: 07 865 7032. Also phone in advance if you wish to bring your dog with you.

Camp managers on site during summer months, oversee camp facilities, enforce camp rules and collect fees. Loud noise and obscene language will not be tolerated.

Camping outside designated areas is not permitted.

Fees:

Adult	\$9.00/night
Child/Youth (5-17 years)	\$2.00/night
Preschooler (0-4 years)	Free



Backcountry campsites

There are backcountry camping areas (with no road access) near the Pinnacles Hut, Billygoat Clearing and at Moss Creek in the Kauaeranga Valley and Crosbies Clearing behind Thames. These are accessible via the track network and are reached after several hours of tramping.

Fees:

Adult	\$5.00 per night
Youth (11-17 years)	\$2.00 per night
Child/Preschooler (0-10 years)	Free

Please remember

Fires

Light fires only in designated fireplaces where provided in campgrounds, otherwise, you may use gas or spirit burners but not charcoal barbecues. Taking wood from the surrounding forest, including dead wood is not allowed. NEVER leave fires unattended.

Dogs

You may bring your dog to the Hotoritori and Booms Flat campgrounds, Kauaeranga Valley, and the Wentworth Valley but they should be leashed at all times. Inform the Wentworth Camp Manager in advance if you wish to bring your dog with you. Dogs are strictly prohibited at all other campgrounds. No other domestic animals are allowed except horses on designated horse riding trails.

Water

As water at campgrounds is drawn from streams and rivers, it is recommended you boil or purify it before drinking. This reduces the risk of possible infections.

Toilets

Use toilets located in campgrounds. Certified self-contained campervan owners may use their own chemical toilet. For health reasons, pit toilets are not allowed.

Rubbish

Please put rubbish in bins or rubbish transfer stations where provided. Better still, take it home with you.

Mobile phones

In many places on the Coromandel Peninsula there is limited or no mobile phone coverage.

Kauri dieback

Kauri are under threat from a disease caused by a soil pathogen. To prevent the disease spreading, always clean your footwear, bikes and camping equipment after use.

- Protect plants and animals
- Bury toilet waste when tramping
- Keep vehicles off beaches
- Keep our coast, streams and lakes clean
- Leave gates as you find them and respect any access restrictions
- Camp carefully
- Keep to the track
- Respect cultural heritage
- Enjoy your visit and Toitū te Whenua/ leave the land undisturbed



**NEW ZEALAND
environmental
CARE CODE**

Northern Coromandel

1 Coromandel Walkway (8 km, 7 hr return)

Start from Fletcher Bay or Stony Bay. If a one-way journey is intended, arrange for transport to meet you. The 8 km walk takes you along the coast, across farmland and through coastal forest with views of the Pinnacles, Great Barrier Island lying to the north and Cuvier Island in the east. It is possible to create a circuit using the mountain bike track (2) but this is much steeper and slippery in places.

2 Coromandel mountain bike track (8 km)

This is a challenging track between Fletcher Bay and Stony Bay following a stock route across farmland and through regenerating forest, offering superb views over the coastline. There is a steep ascent and descent from either end.

3 Stony Bay fishing track (2 km, 2 hr)

Signposted on the roadside into Stony Bay, this track provides access to remote fishing rocks. The track is through regenerating bush and can be overgrown. At low tide, it is possible to scramble round the rocks back to the Stony Bay campground.

4 Fantail Bay campground to bush (30 min)

From the campground under the pohutukawa trees, a track climbs up to the bush line for 1.5 kilometres, providing outstanding views along the coast. There is no access across the range.

5 Matamataharakeke (3 hr return)

Begin opposite the Waikawau Camp Manager's house at the top of the Pump paddock, over a stile next to the Matamataharakeke Stream. The track is part of the original Waikawau to Kennedy Bay route used by gold miners and loggers. It goes up the main ridge past a series of lookouts giving views over bush covered hills to coast and islands. Total distance 6.5 kilometres.

6 Papa Aroha (400 m, 40 min return)

This short walk adjoining the Papa Aroha Holiday Park, 14 kilometres north of Coromandel town, meanders through coastal forest of puriri, kohekohe and pohutukawa and provides access to an attractive beach.

7 Taumatawahine (600 m, 20 min return)

Start 1 km north of Coromandel town centre just after Frederick Street. This 600-metre, predominantly ponga bush walk comes out on Main Street and links back to Rings Road via a footpath.

8 Kauri Block (1.6 km, 1hr 30 min return)

Access is from the top of Harbour View Road or down a right of way beside 356 Wharf Road in Coromandel town. This area is regenerating bush with planted kauri. A side track leads to a pa site with spectacular views over the town and coast. This is an old mining area so for your own safety, please keep to the marked track.

9 Tokatea Lookout (600 m, 30 min return)

From the summit of Kennedy Bay Road, a short steep track takes you to a lookout with views over the Coromandel landscape. The site was used for marine surveillance during World War II. An on-site map of the area names many landmarks and off-shore islands. Please keep to the marked track as there are old mine shafts in the area.

10 Kaipawa Trig (3 hr return)

Access the track from Kennedy Bay Road summit (opposite Tokatea Lookout) up a steep track past a relay station or from the Whangapoua Road (SH 25) via an old benched mining road and vehicle track. The track takes you through regenerating native bush with the trig situated halfway between the two roads. Spectacular views over Coromandel coastline and Hauraki Gulf.

11 Opera Point (500 m, 15 min)

Seventeen km from Coromandel at the entrance to Whangapoua beside the estuary, a track follows an old tramway from the car park to a pleasant beach and the site of Craig's sawmill built in 1862. The Raukawa pa site on the reserve offers excellent coastal views.

12 New Chums Beach (1.5 km, 1 hr)

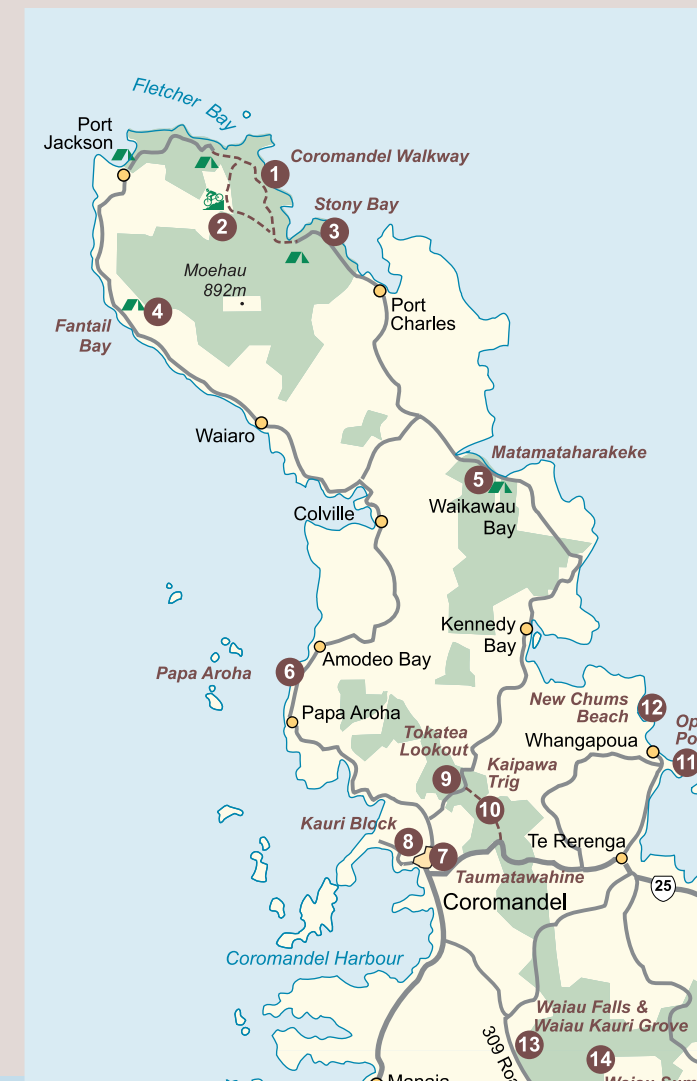
Cross the stream at the northern end of Whangapoua Beach and follow the rocky foreshore around to the headland. Here you will see a track that takes you over the saddle and down into New Chums Beach through a beautiful grove of nikau and pohutukawa. Enjoy a walk along the secluded white sandy beach.

13 Waiau Falls and Kauri Grove (30 min return)

Waiau Falls can be viewed from the roadside 7 km along the 309 Road. Another km up the road a 500-metre walking track takes you into one of the few mature stands of kauri on the Peninsula. The grove contains a 'siamese' kauri which forks just above the ground.

14 Waiau Summit Track (3-4 hr return)

This tramping track branches off the walk to the Waiau Kauri Grove and follows an old coach road over the range and back down to the 309 Road at Mahikarau. Walk along the road to car park.



Kuaotunu to Pauanui

1 Opito Pa Historic Reserve (45 min return)



Access is along the winding, steep Black Jack Road to the end of Opito Bay Road. The track drops to the beach and skirts the rocks below Tahanga Hill. At the base of the headland climb the wooden steps to the summit. The Ngati Hei pa site is at the southern headland.

2 Waitaia (2 km, 2 hr return)



Approximately 1 km south of Kuaotunu, turn into Waitaia Road and the track is signposted 1 km from the turnoff. It crosses private land and then passes through regenerating coastal forest with several stream crossings. The area is part of the Project Kiwi Kuaotunu Kiwi Sanctuary.

3 Rings Beach Lookout (45 min)



Along Rings Road, park in the reserve by Waiari Stream and cross the road and bridge to track entrance. The well graded track is short and steep and takes you up to the repeater mast giving views of the Mercury Islands and the north eastern Coromandel Peninsula. Significant plantings have been undertaken here by Kauri 2000.

4 Whitianga Rock (400 m, 20 min return)



From Ferry Landing (built in 1840), a walk with on-site information, takes you through the remains of a well fortified Ngati Hei pa site. The pa was situated on top of the rock, guarding the entrance to Whitianga Estuary.

5 Te Pare Pa (500 m, 15 min)



At the end of Pa Road, or at the eastern end of Hahei Beach, a track climbs up Hereheretaura Point to Te Pare Pa and provides views of the coastline and marine reserve.

6 Cathedral Cove (1 hr 30 min - 2 hr return)



Access is via the Cathedral Cove car park or Hahei Beach (allow a further 25 min each way for the latter). A kiosk provides a comprehensive overview of the history and features of the area, including the marine reserve. The 2.5-kilometre track from the car park gives access to Gemstone Bay, Stingray Bay and the beautiful sandy beaches at Cathedral Cove, separated by a natural rock arch.

7 Te Whanganui-A-Hei Marine Reserve



This marine reserve was established in 1992 and covers 9 square km of coastal waters from the northern end of Hahei Beach to the northern point of Mahurangi Island, across to Motukorure Island and south to Cooks Bluff. The coastal and island boundaries of the reserve are marked by yellow poles with floating markers also in place. All marine life within the reserve boundaries is protected. The clear sheltered waters are perfect for snorkelling, diving and boating.

7 The Gemstone Bay Snorkel Trail



Gemstone Bay is accessible by foot from the Cathedral Cove car park or by boat. It is a rocky bay fringed by pohutukawa. The snorkel trail is marked by floating buoys that illustrate the marine habitats and associated marine life that live in the waters below them.

Hot Water Beach

Hot Water Beach is located a few kilometres south of Hahei. For two hours either side of low tide you can dig into the sand, tap into the hot springs and create your own thermal pool. But take extreme care if swimming in the sea as there are dangerous undercurrents.

8 Whenuakite Kauri Loop (1 hr 30 min return)



From the Whenuakite car park 8 km north of Tairua on SH 25, go a short distance down the Lynch Stream/Sailors Grave track before branching off onto a loop track through regenerating kauri. There are good views over the forest before the 2.8 km track returns to SH 25.

9 Lynch Stream to Sailors Grave (5-6 hr one way)



From the Whenuakite car park, a track leads down Lynch Stream to Otara Bay through coastal forest. Another one hour walk takes you from Otara Bay to the Sailors Grave Road and Te Karo Bay. Arrange for transport to meet you. This track takes you through the heart of a community-based kiwi protection project.

10 Twin Kauri (30 min return)



Look out for the twin kauri on the roadside just north of Tairua where there is a loop track into the bush. Though short, the track is steep in places and can be muddy and slippery.

11 Pauanui car park to Cave Bay and Trig



A gentle 400-metre walk through pohutukawa dominated coastal forest and occasional small beaches to Cave Bay (20 min one way). From Cave Bay the track climbs up through forest to the trig (2.5-kilometres or 1 hr 30 min one way in total). An alternative, but steeper, route to the trig is via the signposted track at the car park (allow 1 hr 15 min one way). Views of Pauanui township can be seen from the trig.



Te Pare Pa and Hahei coastline. Photo: Greg Martin



Thames Central

1 Square Kauri (20 min return)



The 15th largest kauri on the Peninsula is found just west of the Tapu-Coroglen Road summit. It is estimated to be 1200 years old. The walking track is short (150 metres) but steep with 187 steps and offers good views across to the main Coromandel Range.

2 Waiomu Kauri Grove (2 hr 30 min return)



From the car park on Waiomu Valley Road, 15 minutes north of Thames, the track follows a formed road for 600 metres before heading into regenerating bush. Be prepared to get your feet wet as there are several stream crossings. About 25 minutes from the start of the track, a short side track leads to the old Monowai Goldmine battery site. Further up the main track the forest becomes more luxuriant and diverse, part of the Waiomu Ecological Area. A 10 minute climb to the main ridge takes you to a stand of regenerating kauri. Distance 2.5 kilometres.

3 Karaka/Waiotahi (6 hr circuit)



These two tracks start at the back of Thames and climb up into the hills behind the town. It is possible to make a circuit, with a 30 minute walk back along the road. Alternatively, a longer tramp can be made by continuing on to Crosbies Clearing and other tramping tracks down the central range.

4 Waiomu/Te Puru to Crosbies Clearing (6-7 hr return)



These tracks start behind the two townships along the Thames Coast. The Waiomu track continues on for 2 hr beyond the Waiomu Kauri Grove (2) to Crosbies Clearing. The Te Puru track follows an easy gradient for 30 minutes before climbing up a ridge to Crosbies Clearing.

5 Central Range tramping tracks

- Waiomu or Te Puru/Tapu Coroglen Summit (6 hr)
- Tapu Coroglen Summit / Crosbies Clearing/Kauaeranga Valley (9 hr).

These tracks can be overgrown at times and are recommended for the experienced trumper. For more information contact the Kauaeranga Visitor Centre.

6 Kauaeranga Valley



Thirteen km from Thames, the Kauaeranga Valley has eight campgrounds, one 80 bunk tramping hut, remote camping opportunities and numerous tracks and walks, both within the Valley and leading outside it. See the Kauaeranga Valley Recreation booklet for more information or contact the Kauaeranga Visitor Centre.

7 Piraunui Stream (4 hr return)



Look for the access to this track on the Kopu-Hikuaia Road just before the summit. A gentle grade descends through regenerating kauri forest then across private farmland to the Kauaeranga River. The river is unbridged so carefully assess before wading across to the Shag Stream Campground and the Kauaeranga Visitor Centre. Return by the same track unless you have arranged transport.

Track classification



Short walk - easy walking for up to an hour. Track is well formed with even surface. Few or no steps or slopes. Suitable for people of most abilities and fitness. Streams and river crossings are bridged. Walking shoes required.



Walking track - easy to moderate walking from a few minutes to a day. Track is mostly well formed although some sections may be steep, rough or muddy. Clearly signposted. Suitable for people with low to moderate fitness and abilities. Stream and river crossings are bridged. Walking shoes or boots required.



Tramping track - challenging day or multi-day tramping/hiking. Mostly unformed with steep, rough or muddy sections. Suitable for people with good fitness, moderate to high level backcountry skills and experience including navigation and survival skills. Expect river crossings. Tramping/hiking boots required.

Note: Distances given are one way unless a loop circuit. Times given are based on an average family group. They are a guide only and may vary depending on weather and track conditions.



The Pinnacles, Kauaeranga Valley. Photo: Adrienne Grant



Southern Coromandel

1 Kaitarakahi (7 hr return)



Sign-posted from the summit of the Kopu-Hikuai Road, this track crosses rugged terrain, climbing to a height of 835 m. It is recommended for experienced trampers only. The track continues into the Kauaeranga Valley.

2 Devcich Kauri (2 hr return)



The Devcich Kauri track branches off the Kaitarakahi track to the right after approximately 45 minutes and takes you steeply down to an ancient hollow kauri.

3 Broken Hills (5min to full day)



Accessible from two roads – off State Highway 25 at Hikuai or off the Kopu-Hikuai Road via Puketui Road. There are walking, camping, fishing, swimming and canoeing opportunities in the area. Impressive rock outcrops plus relics and tunnels from the gold mining and kauri logging eras, are all part of the track network. Please keep to tracks to avoid dangerous mine shafts. See the Broken Hills Brochure for more information.

4 Opoutere Beach (1 km to Spit, 45 min return)



About 17 km north of Whangamata, turn off to Opoutere and cross the footbridge by the estuary approx 4.3 km from the turn off. The Wharekawa Harbour Sand Spit Reserve is an important nesting site for the endangered NZ dotterel. Take care not to enter fenced off areas as they protect barely visible eggs that lie in shallow scrapes in the sand. Dogs and vehicles are prohibited.

5 Mines Walk (1 km, 30 min to picnic area)



This walk starts at the concrete ford at the end of Wentworth Valley Road, 7 km south of Whangamata. The track passes through regenerating forest above the river before dropping down to it, opposite the picnic area. Two mine shafts are visible from the track.

6 Wentworth Falls (2 hr 30 min return)



From the campground at the end of Wentworth Valley Road there is a 3 km walking track to the Wentworth Falls. The track follows an easy grade alongside the Wentworth River, with two bridged crossings, before climbing to a good view of the falls. Return by the same track. (It is possible to continue via a tramping track through to Maratoto - see 11).

7 Wharekirauponga (3 hr 30 min return)



This track starts at the end of Parakiwai Quarry Road, 2 km south of the Wentworth Valley. The track is along an old horse-drawn tram track (muddy in places) and passes unusual andesitic rock formations enroute to the old camp and battery site for the Royal Standard Goldmine. Beyond the battery site and tunnel are the Wharekirauponga Falls. The loop track beyond this point is steep and slippery in places. Return journey 10 km.

8 Waimama (600 m to Bay, 1 hr return)



From the car park at the northern end of Whiritoa Beach, cross the estuary and look for the steps leading up through the bush. The track leads to Waimama Bay and another small cove. Explore pa sites, rock art, beautiful secluded beaches and rocky coastal platforms.

9 Maratoto/Golden Cross (1 hr 45 min one way)



Accessed via the Maratoto roadend at Hikutaia, or the Golden Cross roadend at Waikino, this 4.3 km track takes you through an old mining area, regenerating broadleaf/hardwood forest and reverting pasture. There are some interesting landforms in the general area.

10 The Wires Track (3 hr to Wires Plateau)



The track is signposted off Wires road 500 metres before the gate and car park. The first section is through private land so please follow marker posts. Two beautiful falls are found not far off the track on the Hamuti Stream.

11 Maratoto/Wentworth Crossing (5 hr one way)



Starting from either the Wires Track/Whangamata 4WD track on the Maratoto side or the Wentworth Valley on the eastern side, it is possible to traverse the range. Transport needs to be arranged for end of track.



Camping at Broken Hills. Photo: Joy Mickleson.