

Recreation

With spectacular views of the sprawling tussock grasslands, the park provides opportunities for walking, mountain biking, four-wheel driving, horse trekking, hunting and cross-country skiing.

Because Te Papanui Conservation Park is managed by the Department of Conservation as a remote recreational experience, visitors should take precautions when visiting this area—vehicles must carry a winch or some form of extraction device, in case of boggy conditions.

The formed 4WD track in Te Papanui is in good condition from the main gate to the park's highest point, Ailsa Craig. Check at the local DOC office for conditions on the rest of the track if you would like to travel further.

Note: Because of the fragile environment, mountain bikes and vehicles must keep to the 4WD track through the park.



Te Papanui Conservation Park is very exposed. Wintery conditions can occur at any time of the year and the area is subject to snow, especially during winter. There is little shelter and it has few navigational landmarks.

There are no DOC huts in the park (the only huts in the area are derelict).

Hunting

Permits are required for hunting pigs and red deer in Te Papanui Conservation Park and can be obtained online at www.doc.govt.nz/hunting or at your local DOC office.

Dogs are permitted but must be kept on a lead at all times while crossing the Dunedin City Council water reserve (access No. 3).



Check, Clean, Dry

Stop the spread of didymo and other freshwater pests. Remember to Check, Clean, Dry all items before entering, and when moving between, waterways.

Safety

Remember—your safety is your responsibility.

• Leave your intentions with a trusted contact. Information on the Outdoor Intentions system can be found at www.adventuresmart.org.nz/outdoors-intentions



- Check the weather forecast before you enter the area.
- Cellphone coverage is not reliable in the conservation area. A compass, GPS and personal locator beacons are recommended.
- NZTopo50 (1:50 000) maps are recommended.
- Lighting fires is not permitted.



Drinking from the creeks in Te Papanui is not recommended as giardia may be present. We recommend that visitors bring their own water. Because of its extensive tussock grassland, Te Papanui is vulnerable to fires. Absolutely no fires are allowed in the park.

Weather

Te Papanui is subject to some very rapid changes in weather. Be prepared for adverse conditions, and ensure you carry warm clothes.

Further information

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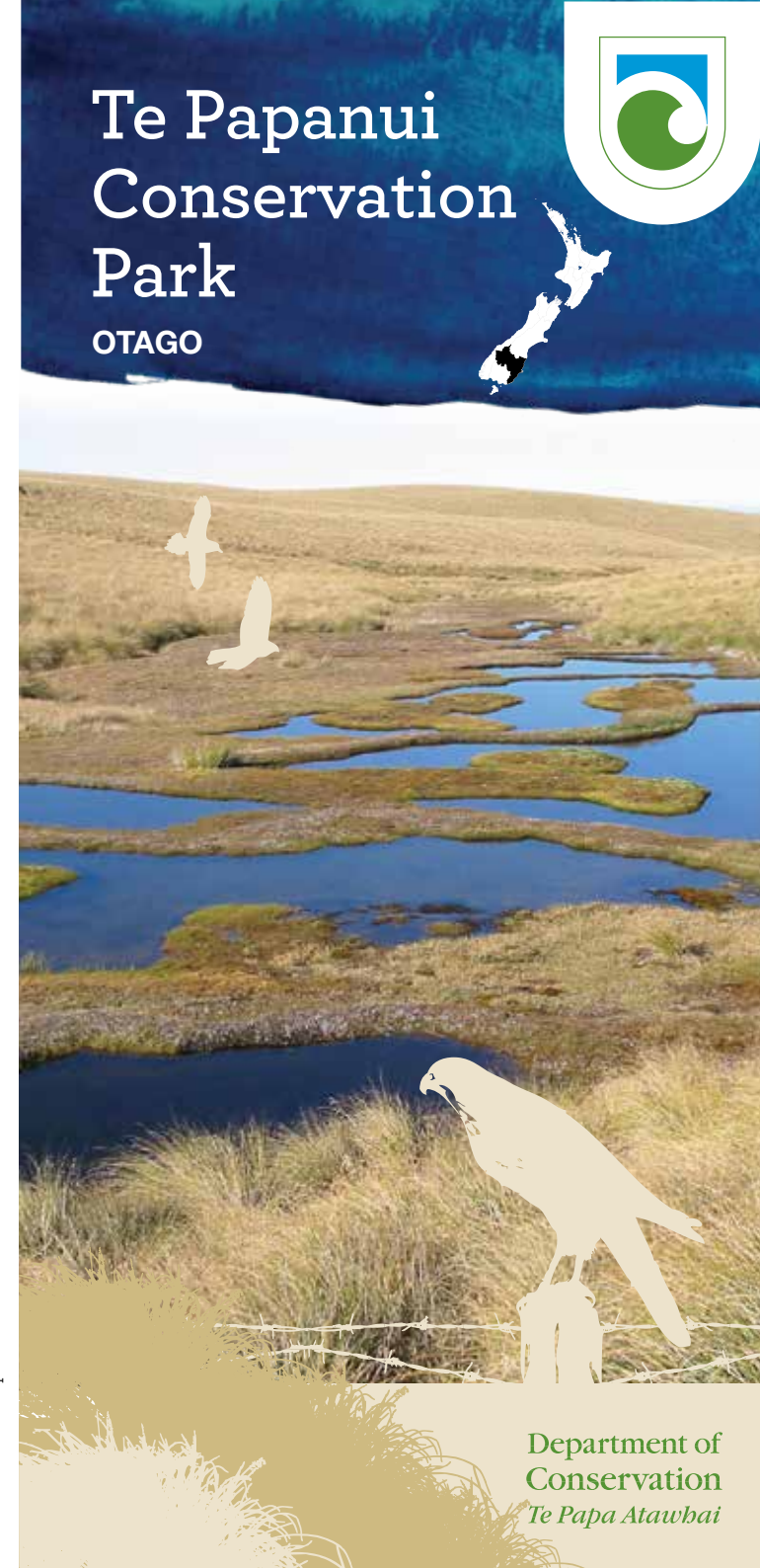
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Report any safety hazards or
conservation emergencies
For fire and search and rescue call 111



Cover: Te Papanui wetlands. Photo: J Barkla

Te Papanui Conservation Park

OTAGO



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Te Papanui Conservation Park

Te Papanui Conservation Park covers 21,000 hectares of sweeping, rolling, tussock grasslands on the Lammermoor and Lammerlaw ranges, 50 km west of Dunedin.

Te Papanui Conservation Park is special because it is an area of very high ecological value, protecting a large intact indigenous tussock grassland area. Tussock grasslands are becoming rare on an international level due to grazing and burning.

The park was created from existing protected areas, land purchased by the Nature Heritage Fund, and as an outcome of the pastoral lease tenure review process. It began with the Nardoo Scientific Reserve in the 1980s. Situated next to the southeast corner of Te Papanui, this was one of the earliest tussock reserves. When the Department of Lands and Survey converted large areas of tussock grasslands into farms, they were persuaded to set aside part of the Waipori Farm Settlement. And pastoral lease tenure review of Rocklands Station and Halwyn Station followed in the 1990s.

The new Te Papanui Conservation Park was opened in March 2003. Te Papanui is managed by the Department as a remote experience area. It has opportunities for walking, mountain biking, four-wheel driving, horse trekking, cross-country skiing and hunting.

Plants and animals

The park is of national importance as a biogeographical centre. Over 500 species of native insects have been recorded, including nationally rare species and several endemic to this area. With outstanding landscape qualities, the park provides a home for a wide variety of native plants and animals. A significant amount of narrow-leaved snow tussock/*wī kura* (*Chionochloa rigida*) and rare wetland plants cover the area, including mossfields that are spongy to walk through.

Native fish are also present in the area. Eldon's galaxias (*Galaxias eldoni*) and dusky galaxias (*Galaxias pullus*) are nationally endangered. Taieri flathead galaxias (*Galaxias depressiceps*) are nationally vulnerable.

Parallel streams dissect the slopes, while there are small patches of silver beech/tawhai forest in some gullies. The broad expanses of tussock grassland are relieved intermittently by bogs and tarns and there is a strong sense of remoteness.



Gentians.
Photo: J Barkla

Dusky galaxias. Photo: Simon Madill



Importance of water

The park also fulfils a significant role to the people of Otago region, protecting 60 percent of Dunedin's water catchment area.

During the Otago gold rushes, the Waipori goldfields around Lake Mahinerangi used water from this area (now the park). Large water races were constructed and also fed Gabriels Gully in Lawrence 50 km away. Many of these races are still clearly visible. From Te Papanui, two pipelines deliver up to 65 percent of Dunedin's water, with intakes at Deep Creek, built in the 1930s, and Deep Stream, built in the 1970s.

A series of hydroelectric stations were built in the Waipori Gorge by the Dunedin City Council. These water races were used to maximise the catchment of the Waipori River. An intake structure and tunnel at the top of the Eldorado Track takes water from the Deep Stream headwaters into Lake Mahinerangi.



Deep Stream. Photo: DOC

In 2006, TrustPower built two hydroelectric power stations on this diversion. Twelve turbines at TrustPower's Mahinerangi wind farm started generating power in 2011, on land accessed by Eldorado Track and bordering Te Papanui.



Photo: Simon Madill

Access

There are three access points into Te Papanui Conservation Park.

- 1 On SH87 from Outram, turn left at Clarks Junction into Old Dunstan Road. The entrance to the park is approximately 5 km past Rocklands Station on the left. The road is suitable for all vehicles to the park gate; from there 4WD is recommended.

Note: The park gate is locked during winter (4 June - 20 October). Depending on track conditions it may be locked earlier. Please check at your local DOC office. The Dunedin City Council closes Old Dunstan Road from Sutton Stream to Styx Creek during winter (early June - 30 September).

- 2 Via Waipori Road then Mountain Road onto Gardiners Track through Glendhu Forest. The road is suitable for all vehicles to the start of Mountain Road; from here 4WD is recommended.

Note: The park gate on Gardiners Track is locked during winter (4 June - 20 October). Depending on track conditions it may be locked earlier. Please check at your local DOC office.

During weekdays, Mountain Road and Gardiners Track may be closed due to logging operations.

- 3 Via Mahinerangi Road, then into Eldorado Track to the locked gate. From here there is walking access only across Dunedin City Council water reserve to the park.

