Walks in Golden Bay





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Introduction

Golden Bay, at the northern tip of South Island New Zealand, is a peaceful and undeveloped location, popular with visitors who enjoy the outdoors. Sheltered by Farewell Spit to the north and surrounded by Abel Tasman and Kahurangi national parks, the Bay offers a wealth of opportunities for visitors to explore, from sandy beaches and peaceful estuaries to limestone outcrops and native forests, rich in wildlife. Farewell Spit offers a sanctuary to flocks of migratory birds. From the springs at Te Waikoropupū flow waters that are among the clearest and purest in the world.

Takaka, the main centre, and Collingwood are bustling little towns, rich in local history and tales from the gold-mining era. They have plenty to attract visitors, including local crafts and good eating places.

This brochure provides information about some of the conservation areas of Golden Bay. Separate publications are available on Kahurangi and Abel Tasman national parks and the Farewell Spit and Puponga Farm Park area.

How to get there

Takaka, the main town in Golden Bay, lies 107km north and west of Nelson on State Highway 60. Collingwood, where the state highway ends, is 27km north of Takaka. Regular bus services are available from Nelson.



Accommodation

Department of Conservation accommodation is available at Totaranui campground and at the many huts and campsites in the two national parks. A full range of commercial accommodation is also available.

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Near Takaka







🛕 🏡 🏡 Paines Ford Scenic Reserve (30 min)

Paines Ford Scenic Reserve is located along State Highway 60, 3km south of Takaka. It is now connected to Takaka by a cycleway that extends through the reserve. It takes its name from the original ford across the flood-prone Takaka River on the main road into Takaka. A modern bridge now replaces the ford.

With its impressive line of limestone bluffs emerging from a remnant patch of forest, Paines Ford is one of New Zealand's best rock-climbing areas. Climbers come from far and wide to enjoy the challenge of the sheer rock faces—these are definitely not for beginners!

Non-climbers will enjoy a visit to the reserve to picnic, swim, walk or watch the climbers. There is a large picnic area beside the highway bridge. At the southern end of this area is a toilet, where the Paines Ford Tramline Track (a 30-minute walk) begins.

The track provides access to the climbing areas and some excellent swimming holes in the Takaka River. It follows the line of a railway that operated between the early 1880s and 1905 and was used to take timber from the Takaka valley down to Waitapu wharf. Dog walking is permitted but dogs MUST be on a lead.





No camping or fires are allowed in the reserve.







The Grove Scenic Reserve (20 min)

From Takaka, drive north-east towards Pohara Beach. At Clifton turn right and follow the signs (for about 1km) to a small car park and picnic area. From here a 20-minute walking track makes its way easily upwards to a viewing platform through a series of limestone blocks, some sculpted into wonderful shapes by water. The tentacle-like roots of northern rātā trees that hang down many of the blocks create an eerie atmosphere. Nīkau palms are also a feature of the reserve.

Usually, northern rātā begins its life in accumulated forest debris high in the branches of a tree. At the Grove, however, sufficient plant material is available on the limestone blocks for rātā to take a hold there. As the rātā trees get bigger, they send roots down to the ground, enveloping their rocky hosts like a giant hand.





No camping or fires are allowed in the reserve.







The 30-minute walk to Wainui Falls is popular as accessible waterfalls are not common in Golden Bay. The track starts from a car park in Wainui Bay 20 km north-east of Takaka. Look for the direction sign on the road side approximately 300 metres after crossing over the Wainui River Bridge.

From the car park the track crosses farmland for a short distance with one unbridged stream crossing. In heavy rain caution would be required. You then enter forest and climb to a point where you see the river surprisingly far below. Here you walk through a forest of nīkau palms, rātā trees and ferns. Keep a lookout for a possible sighting of the giant snail, Powelliphanta. Look but don't touch! A few minutes after crossing the swingbridge over the Wainui River, you will hear the falls before they suddenly appear, usually curtained in spray.

Children need to be closely supervised as there are steep drops off the edge of the track in some places.



No camping or fires permitted in this area.



The Abel Tasman memorial is situated beside the main road, in an outlying section of Abel Tasman National Park, just beyond Port Tarakohe, about 12 km north-east from Takaka on the road to Totaranui. An easy five-minute walking track leads to the memorial and viewing platform, which stands on a limestone outcrop above the sea.

Abel Tasman was the Dutch navigator whose expedition made the first European sighting of New Zealand in 1642. The memorial was built in 1942 to commemorate the tricentenary of Tasman's visit and 'reopened' in 1992 by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands when interpretation panels were fixed to the platform telling the story of Tasman's voyage from the Dutch East Indies/Indonesia to Golden Bay and of Māori seeing a gathering of strangers arriving on two ships.

From the memorial return to the car park the way you came or follow the narrow concrete path for a view of Port Tarakohe. From here it is a short walk down to the road and back to the car park.





Te Waikoropupū Valley (locally known as 'Pupu' Valley)





Pupu Hydro Walkway (Loop 1 hr 50 min)

Pupu Hydro Walkway begins 9 km from Takaka at the end of Pupu Valley Road. Follow the road towards Te Waikoropupū Springs, turning off to the right just before the bridge crossing Waikoropupū River.

The Pupu Hydro Walkway retraces an old gold-mining water race, which has been reused for power generation. Botanically the walkway is very interesting; the vegetation varies from mixed young beech-rimu forest to mature beech-podocarp forest. There is also a component of 'cold climate' plants: silver pine, mountain cedar and mountain toatoa, and a very rich fern component. One fern, Blechnum fraseri, looks like a miniature tree fern, while one of the mosses, Dawsonia superba, is the tallest moss in the world.

Bird life is plentiful, with an abundance of tuī, bellbirds, weka and kererū (native pigeons). Robins and fernbirds live in the pākihi vegetation above the track.

Stretching along the hillside for more than three kilometres is the water race, an amazing feat of engineering, begun in 1901 and completed by eight men six months later in 1902. Large sections of curving race were built on steep hillsides, running over several graceful aqueducts. At the downstream end the water was piped downwards with a drop of 123 metres to give the gold sluices enough pressure to work the river gravels of the valley floor.

The manager of the gold-mining company was Charles Campbell, after whom the creek and the race were named. The company mined until about 1910 and then abandoned the workings. In terms of dividends paid for capital invested, this claim was the richest in Golden Bay.

In 1929 the Golden Bay Electric Power Board built a small hydroelectric power station, which took water from the race. About half the length of the existing water race was used and the rest was left derelict. Many Golden Bay residents were uncertain about whether to take the electricity generated; the power board had to run a promotion campaign to convince them of the advantages of this new technology.

In June 1981 a fault developed, which engineers called a 'flashover'. The generating equipment was extensively damaged and the power board decided it was too expensive to repair. At that time, Pupu power station was thought to be the smallest station linked to the national grid.

The Pupu Hydro Society restored the station and built a viewing area to allow visitors to see the station operating. It began generating again in 1987.



Walking the track

Pupu Hydro Walkway is classified as a walking track. Although the climb to the water race line is a little steep, the first section, across Waikoropupū River to the power station, is an easy grade suitable for all ages. Beyond the power station the track crosses Campbell Creek and zigzags upwards to reach the race after about 30 minutes' climb. From here the track levels out and follows the race 'upstream' for a short distance to a lookout point above the power station. From here on you are strongly advised to carry small children in a backpack and watch other children carefully; a fall from the race and the water itself are potentially dangerous. The water race, which follows the steep contours of the hillside and is part canal and part aqueduct, was an engineering masterpiece for its time. If you look carefully in the water you might see large kōura (freshwater crayfish).

Follow the race for 30 minutes or so to the weir (the water intake), which marks the end of the walkway and is a beautiful picnic spot. The weir channels water from the creek into the race; a large shutter was raised or lowered to vary the amount of water taken from the stream. The Hydro Society 4WD vehicle access track from the weir makes the walkway a loop walk (50 min) back to the car park.



No fires are permitted on the walkway.

Track categories

Tracks are developed to different standards to cater for a variety of experiences. Choose the type of track that matches your skills, fitness and the experience you want be realistic. **Safety is your responsibility**.



Walking track ---

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



Tramping track ---

- · Challenging day or multi-day tramping/hiking.
- Track is 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 required.
- Track has markers, poles or rock cairns. Expect unbridged stream and river crossings.
- · Tramping/hiking boots required.



Route ·····

- · Challenging day or multi-day tramping/hiking.
- · Track unformed and natural, rough, muddy or very steep.
- Suitable for people with above average fitness. High-level backcountry skills and experience, including navigation and survival skills required.
- · Complete self-sufficiency required.
- Track has markers, poles or rock cairns. Expect unbridged stream and river crossings.
- · Sturdy tramping/hiking boots required.

Dogs



Dogs not allowed



Dogs allowed on a leash only



Dogs allowed. Keep your dog under control at all times



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6 🐧 💫 💫 Te Waikoropupū Springs (20 min)

Follow State Highway 60 north from Takaka on the road to Collingwood, turning left just beyond Takaka River. Follow Pupu Valley and Te Waikoropupū Springs roads to the springs' car park, 7 km from Takaka.

Te Waikoropupū Springs are New Zealand's largest freshwater springs and the largest coldwater springs in the southern hemisphere. They contain some of the clearest water ever measured and are set in a reserve that protects gold workings, regenerating forest and a fine patch of mature bush.

To Māori the area of Te Waikoropupū is a taonga or treasure and a wāhi tapu, a place held in high cultural and spiritual regard, both locally and nationally. The legends of Te Waikoropupū are told in the stories of Huriawa, its taniwha (guardian spirit). In Māori tradition the springs are waiora, the purest form of water and provide water for healing. In the past, the springs were a place of ceremonial blessings at times of birth and death and the leaving and returning of travellers.

A platform that sits partly over the water allows visitors to get a good view of the springs. A suite of interpretation signs at the entranceway tells the full story of this fascinating and beautiful place.

Well-formed walking tracks allow you to explore the reserve.

Allow 30-45 mins to visit the springs and return. It is worth spending extra time to enjoy the interpretation signs at the entrance.

The waters of Te Waikoropupū Springs, including Fish Creek and Springs River are closed to all forms of contact to prevent the introduction of the invasive alga Didymo and other aquatic pests.





On the way to Collingwood







7 🤼 💫 😭 Parapara Peak (9km, 5hr one way)

The route to Parapara Peak starts from a car park in Ward-Holmes Road. Ward-Holmes Road is just past Puramahoi travelling north towards Collingwood.

This full day tramp is suitable for fit and experienced trampers. It takes 4-5 hours to reach the alpine tops of Parapara Peak, 1240 m. Carry your own drinking water and allow plenty of time for the return trip. The best views of Golden Bay are from the ridge running north to the trig station.











The Washbourn Scenic Reserve is a delightful patch of forest, providing a very easy, 15-minute walk. It begins beside the highway, 15 km north of Takaka on the road to Collingwood. Keen botanists prepared to go beyond the track will find a very wide range of plants, including many species of native orchid.

Local residents are trapping predators in the reserve. You may see the traps located inside wooden tunnels-look but don't touch.







No camping or fires are permitted at this reserve.





Just north of Parapara Inlet on public conservation land is an interesting experiment in forest regeneration, managed by an Incorporated Society under an agreement with the Department of Conservation. Here, a variety of hardy but non-native trees has been planted on very poor soils. The idea of the project is to restore the area's natural forest cover faster than would be possible using only native species. The project began in 1974 and now much of the area is covered in tall trees. The shade beneath them provides just the right conditions for native species to take hold.

Turn right just north of Parapara Inlet (22 km north of Takaka) and then left, following Nelson Street and then Kendal Street. A shaded area at the road end provides a wonderful place for a picnic. The nearby estuary and coast provide good swimming, although swift currents develop as the tide moves in and out.



Many walking tracks allow you to explore the forest, estuary and beach. Dogs are allowed but must be kept under control.





No camping or fires are allowed in the reserve.

Beyond Collingwood







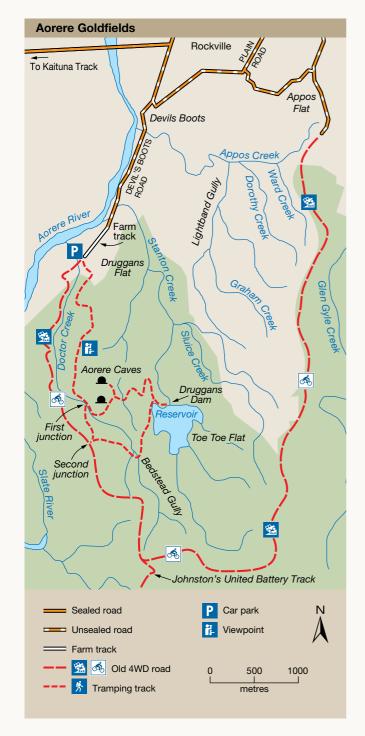


10 🏂 🚳 🗯 🖎 Aorere Goldfields Track (3 hr circuit)

From Collingwood follow the Aorere Valley inland. After 7 kilometres, turn off the main road at Rockville where Aorere Goldfields and Devils Boots are signposted. Follow the road and rough farm track past Devils Boots for another 2 kilometres until you reach the Aorere Goldfields car park.

Aorere Goldfields Track is a 3-hour loop, which gives you access to explore some of the more accessible gold-mining remnants, including the Slate River Sluicing Company Dam ('Druggans Dam') and the Aorere Caves. Further on, signposted off the 4wd road is the track to Johnstons United Stamper battery.





This rough track leads to the last intact and well preserved 20 head stamper in the South Island. Boots and a degree of fitness are recommended. As there is little shade along the track, sun protection is also required.

From the car park a 4WD track passes an old ground-sluicing claim worked in the 1880s and continues onto the large open area partly covered by pākihi vegetation, which is Druggans Flat. From here the track climbs steadily, passing a side track that leads to the untouched bush of Stanton Creek. It then follows part of the original benched miners' track. At the first junction, continue straight ahead. On the right you pass the end of a water race and a tunnel before the short side track to Stafford's Cave.

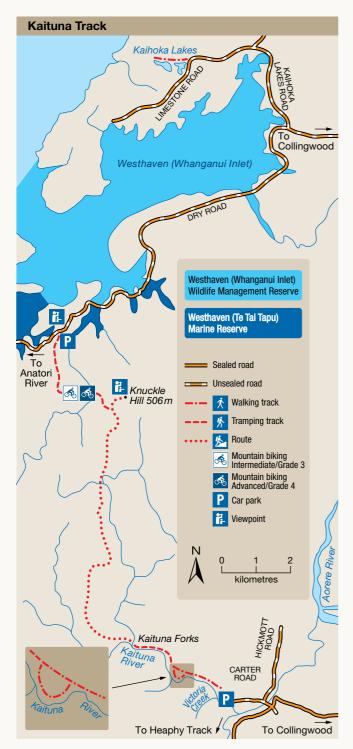
Stafford's Cave and Ballroom Cave (accessed by short side tracks a little further on) can both be explored if you are equipped with appropriate clothing, a torch and some care. Early miners recorded their names on some of the formations within these caves; please take care not to disturb these. Ballroom Cave is reputed to have been used by miners as a venue for dances.

From here it is another 20–30 minutes to the dam. On a fine day your effort is rewarded on this section of the track with excellent views of the Wakamarama and Burnett ranges, Ruataniwha Inlet and north to Farewell Spit. Immediately prior to the dam is the dam outlet, a tunnel cut through the rock, terminating in an iron control gate. Please do not enter this tunnel.

Once at the reservoir, a good place to have a break or lunch is on the left as you follow the track around the water's edge, past the race intake control on top of Druggans Dam. From the dam the track climbs around the side of the reservoir. A further 20 minutes takes you to a junction in the track. After a few minutes walk the track joins a 4WD (or mountain bike) track. Turn right and follow it downhill back to the car park. Alternatively, from the track junction you may take the short track, which links back to the first junction, and so retrace the first part of the track back to the car park.

Mountain biking

This area is great for mountain biking. From the car park, the 4WD road to Appos Flat makes an excellent ride. The round trip back to the car park takes 3-4 hours. Good fitness and moderate technical skill are required. Please follow the Mountain Bikers Code (page 22) at all times. Mountain biking is also permitted on the track to the caves and Druggans Dam.









11 5 Kaituna Track (8-9 hr or shorter walks from 20 min)

Kaituna Track begins approximately 15 kilometres from Collingwood. The track starts from the car park at the end of Carters Road and continues right through to Westhaven Inlet on the West Coast (8-9 hours). Most people, however, walk only to the site of the old Kaituna gold workings (20 min) or on to Kaituna Forks, a 2-hour return trip.

The Kaituna Goldfield was first worked in 1859 and continued until the late 1800s, although little gold was ever recovered. The present track follows the original packhorse track to the Kaituna goldfield.

From the car park, cross Little Granity Creek using the footbridge and follow the farm track for 400 metres to the start of the walk. A short track takes you past the remains of goldsluicing operations, water races, tailing piles and a small cave. The side track then cuts back onto the main track.

Past the Goldworkings the track suffered major damage in Cyclone Gita with slips and bridge wash outs. You can now expect stream crossings and some exposed drops in this section up to the Kaituna forks. Beyond the Kaituna Forks, the track changes to a 'route' and is suitable only for experienced and fit trampers. At the forks there is a river crossing which is impassable in flood. From here it is a further 5-6 hours over a marked route to Knuckle Hill. The route climbs over two ridges and crosses two streams before crossing an open pāhiki area to the base of Knuckle Hill. There it meets the old logging road that leads down to the car park on Dry Road. Allow yourself plenty of time if planning the through trip and be aware if travelling west to east that the Kaituna river is likely to be impassable in rainy conditions.



Beautiful native forest and gold-mining relics are the main attractions of the Kaituna Valley. Magnificent specimens of northern rātā, pukatea and rimu tower over a sub-canopy of nīkau palms, heketara, wineberry, kāmahi, and māhoe. Beech species are also present. For those with an eye for detail, there are many species of fern, orchid, fungi and perching plants. The rich forest and mild climate allow a wide range of birds to flourish: kererū (the New Zealand pigeon), tūī, fantail, tomtit, bush robin, rifleman, silvereye and bellbird.







12 🤼 💫 Mt Stevens route (7 km, 3–5 hr one way)

Mt Stevens route starts from the car park on a terrace 1 km south of Fifteen Mile Creek Bridge on Aorere Valley Road. Look for the sign post as you drive up the valley towards the start of the Heaphy Track.

The route up on to Mt Stevens, 1300 m, the highest point in the Wakamarama Range provides wonderful views of the Aorere Valley, south to Gouland Downs and the West Coast. The route is steep in places so you need to have a reasonable standard of fitness. Plan for a full day trip and allow 3-5 hours to reach the summit. Carry your own drinking water, especially in summer.









Head west from Pakawau over the Pakawau Saddle and down to Whanganui Inlet. Dry Road leads around the inlet, crossing several tidal streams before climbing to a car park at a saddle with a great view of the inlet mouth. Knuckle Hill Track is signposted from the car park. This aptly named hill provides the only elevated viewpoint over Whanganui Inlet, a huge estuary declared a marine reserve and wildlife management reserve in 1994.

From the car park, an old logging road climbs gently through regenerating forest to a clearing, where there is plenty of space to relax and picnic. This 5.6-kilometre section of road takes about one hour to walk or a little less to mountain bike. At the clearing, the marked route up Knuckle Hill begins—a short climb of 20 minutes. From the top, right on the boundary of Kahurangi National Park, are excellent views of the top of the South Island, particularly Farewell Spit and Whanganui Inlet.



- · Clean your bike to prevent spreading weeds.



Mountain bikers on Aorere Goldfields Track. Photo: Classic New Zealand Mountain Bike Rides

Mountain bike track grades



Intermediate/Grade 3

Steep slopes and/or avoidable obstacles possibly on narrow track and/or with poor traction. There may be exposure at the



Advanced/Grade 4

and obstacles that are difficult to avoid or jump over. Generally exposed at the track's outside edge. Most riders will find some

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15 🕅 Kaihoka Lakes (10 min)

At Pakawau, turn left off the main road and head over Pakawau Saddle, turning right on to Kaihoka Road just before Whanganui Inlet. Follow this road for 6 kilometres to Kaihoka Lakes Scenic Reserve.

Coastal hills form a dramatic backdrop to these beautiful lakes. A 10-minute walking track begins beside one lake and heads gently down to the other. There is space to picnic at the car park and further along the road next to the lake. The reserve is distinguished by its massed nīkau palms, which give the walk a tropical feel. Here and there, dense glades of young mataī, kahikatea, cedar and tānekaha indicate that the forest is recovering after past disturbance. Large, carnivorous Powelliphanta snails live in the reserve and a variety of water fowl can be seen on the lakes. Shags, paradise ducks, Canada geese and grey ducks all find shelter there among the raupō (bullrushes) and reeds.





Camping and fires are not allowed in Kaihoka Lakes Scenic Reserve.

Please remember



Safety

Use the track classification system (page 11) to choose an activity that suits your level of fitness, experience and equipment.

To report any safety hazards in the outdoors call DOC Hotline: 0800 362 468.

Remember: your safety is your responsibility.

Mt Stevens, Parapara peak and the Kaituna route are long day hikes

or conservation emergencies

For Fire and Search and Rescue Call 111

where you can face alpine conditions. Be prepared with warm layers and a good raincoat as a minimum, and consider taking a torch and plb if you are undertaking these tracks in winter with short day lengths.



Rubbish

Please take your rubbish away with you—no facilities are provided.



Water

Drinking—the purity of drinking water cannot be assured unless it has been boiled, filtered or treated.



Drones

All drone use on conservation land requires a permit, for both recreational and commercial purposes.



Check, Clean, Dry

Stop the spread of didymo and other freshwater pests. Didymo (Didymosphenia geminata) is an exotic algae that invades waterways.

To prevent the spread of freshwater pests such as didymo, always Check, Clean, Dry all footwear, bicycles, vehicles, fishing equipment and other items before entering, and when moving between, waterways.

For more information and cleaning guidelines go to www.biosecurity.govt.nz/didymo or www.doc.govt.nz/

Wasps

December until April. Carry antihistamine if you are allergic to their stings https://www.doc.govt.nz/wasps





- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel and camp on durable ground
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Minimise the effects of fire
- Respect wildlife and farm animals
- Be considerate of others

Further information:

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