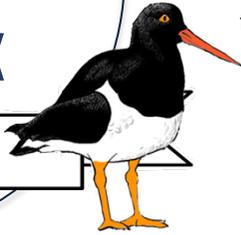


Discover TĀHUNA TŌREA SELF-GUIDED WALK

NAU MAI HARAE MAI



Tāhuna Tōrea means 'the gathering place of oystercatcher'. The reserve is an important sanctuary for a variety of native birds and has a fascinating history of Māori occupation.

On your walk today you'll learn more about the history of the area, its transformation into a sanctuary for wildlife and the special plants and animals that live here.

Did YOU KNOW?



Most New Zealand shorebirds breed between September and November. Many nest on the ground, creating a simple 'scrape' or hollow in the sand. The eggs and chicks are at risk from predators including rats and hedgehogs, which is why pest control is important. Why do you think dogs are not allowed on the reserve?

How could you help protect the nests of shorebirds when visiting the beach?

1 – ENJOYING THE ESTUARY

Parks and reserves are great places for people to visit and relax. How many different activities can you think of that people could enjoy here? What's your favourite thing to do when you visit a beach or reserve?



2 – HISTORICAL LANDMARKS

Enjoy the view from the top of the hill!
How many landmarks can you recognise from here?
500 years ago there was a large pā (fortified village) on the headland opposite. Why do you think this area would have been a good place for people to settle?

3 – SEARCHING FOR SHELLS

The taikoraha (mudflats) were once a good place to gather kai moana including shellfish, kairau (mud crabs) and ika (fish).
How many different shells can you spot? Can you find a matching pair?
See if you can identify tio (oysters), pipi, tuangi (cockles) and kawari (whelk).
Remember to return anything you find.



Did YOU KNOW? *Oystercatchers can eat 350 cockles in one day!*

4 – BIRD WATCHING



The green bench on the beach is a lovely place to sit and watch wading birds as they forage for food in the intertidal zone.
The best time to view them is 2 hours before or after high tide.

You're likely to spot tōrea (oystercatchers) probing for food. Also look out for kuaka (bar-tailed godwit) that visit here as part of an epic migration – they breed in the Arctic during our winter months and then fly 11,000 km without stopping to feed here over summer.



5 – INVESTIGATING MANGROVES

As you walk up the path from the beach take a closer look at the mangroves to spot some of their special adaptations: Because they live in salty, muddy water with low oxygen levels they grow roots called pneumatophores "new-mato-fores" to take in air. They can get rid of excess salt from their leaves
- look for salt crystals underneath them.
New plants grow from bud-like propagules.



6 – HERONS AND KINGFISHERS

The lookout is a great place to watch matuku moana (white-faced heron) and kōtare (kingfisher) roosting or searching for fish and mud crabs amongst the mangroves. You might see and hear other birds too. Close your eyes and each time you hear a new bird call hold up a finger.

How many different birds could you identify?





7 – LOOKING FOR PŪRIRI MOTH HOLES

At the end of the boardwalk, to your left you'll find some trees riddled with holes - how many can you count?

The holes have been made by ngutara (pūriri moth caterpillars) that live inside for up to 7 years and grow up to 10cm long.

They would have provided Māori camping here with a tasty snack. Can you find a tree nearby that could have been used for firewood to cook them on?



10 – SEARCHING FOR CRABS

Kairau (mud crabs) are an important source of food for fish and wading birds. They also help to recycle nutrients in the estuary. Look for crabs under the smaller rocks; lift them carefully and remember to place the rocks and crabs back where you found them.

Did YOU KNOW?

Crabs eat plankton, bacteria and algae found in the mud. They can travel up to 200m away from their burrows in search of food.



8 – UNCOVER A MIDDEN

Look out for a sign on your right and pull away the grass near it to reveal a 400-500 year old midden containing old shells and fish bones. This provides evidence that people once camped and fished near here. Other archaeological finds nearby include fishing hooks.



11 – WONDERFUL WETLANDS

How many different native birds can you spot at the freshwater pond?

- kawau paka (little shag)
- warou (welcome Swallow)
- pūtangitangi (paradise shelduck)
- kōtare (kingfisher)
- matuku moana (white-faced heron)
- pūkeko

Did YOU KNOW? Feeding the ducks bread can make them sick! They have plenty of natural food to eat in the pond.



9 – LOOKING FOR KAWAKAWA LEAVES

Look for heart-shaped kawakawa leaves that have many traditional medicinal uses:

- a cure for cuts, wounds and stomach pains
- chewed to relieve toothache and for fresh breath
- the liquid from boiled leaves treats bruises and colds
- added to a steam bath to soothe aches and pains
- crushed and used as an insect repellent

Try tasting a leaf, they have a peppery flavour.



Did YOU KNOW?

The holes in the leaves are made by the caterpillar of the Kawakawa Looper Moth. They are the only insects to eat these leaves. See if you can spot one hiding under a leaf.

12 – GET TO KNOW YOUR NATIVE TREES

As you walk along the Lower Bush Walk track you'll find lots of signs to help you identify trees that have been planted within the past 50 years. Can you spot the following trees and find out more about them?

- Karaka What did Māori have to do to the poisonous orange fruits before they could eat them?
- Tōtara What was the wood traditionally used to make?
- Nīkau What did Māori use the leaves for?
- Rimu What did Captain Cook use the young leaves to make?
- Kahikatea Which birds help to spread the seeds of our tallest species of native tree?

Look out for coloured tags on trees that help park rangers and volunteers identify where they've placed rat and possum traps. Why do you think it's important that pests and weeds are controlled in a reserve?

