



Brook Homestead Walk

## How to get there

Take State Highway 1 south, turn off at Drury and follow the signs to Waiuku. From Waiuku drive up the Āwhitu Peninsula through Matakawau. About 2km past Matakawau turn right down Brook Rd into the park.

For public transport information: phone Auckland Transport **09 366 6400** or visit [at.govt.nz](http://at.govt.nz)

## Please take your rubbish home

Your parks provide open space, fresh air, a home for native plants and animals, clean water, beauty and inspiration. Help keep them this way.

- No bins • No rubbish • Better parks •

## Dogs

Dogs are prohibited from the park and adjoining beaches but are allowed under control on a leash on the Esplanade Reserve at the end of Brook Road.

For detailed information visit [aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) or phone Auckland Council on **09 301 0101**.

## Āwhitu Regional Park

On the south west shores of the Manukau Harbour, Āwhitu Regional Park is a peaceful retreat. It has tranquil bays, rolling pastures and a rich history. Transformed wetlands lie behind the park's two long, sandy beaches (Kauritūahi Beach and Brook Beach) and provide a wonderful habitat for the rare fernbird (mātātā) and banded rail (moho pererū).

Both the Āwhitu Peninsula and the park take their names from the pre-European Māori settlement of Āwhitu, which was located at the western end of Ōrua Bay to the north of the park. It was named because of the 'yearning' (āwhitu) felt by Hōturoa, the commander of the Tainui canoe (waka), when he left the district. The traditional name for the Park's location was Kauritūahi, so named for the single kauri tree which stood on the small islet off the park.

## Māori Heritage

The Ngāti Te Ata and Ngāti Kahukoka people originally occupied the Āwhitu Peninsula. Their descendants still maintain strong links to this land, with marae located in and around Waiuku.

The large waka Toki-a-Tāpiri, which now rests at the Auckland War Memorial Museum, came from this area. Evidence from middens on the park indicates Māori used the local area extensively for fishing and resource gathering. You can learn more about the park's stories from the interpretation boards scattered throughout the park.

## Plants and animals

Āwhitu has an outstanding variety of mature exotic trees, planted by the Brook family who settled on the land in 1875. The Brook Homestead is surrounded by Lawson cypresses and Japanese Cedars. Look out for the huge macrocarpa trunk, which is almost 6 metres wide. It is one of the largest in the world.

The Brook family had a tradition of planting a kauri tree to mark a family event. Look out for these trees around the park.

More recently planting has focussed on native species to enhance the important wetlands and naturally regenerating coastal forest nearby.

The original wetlands at Āwhitu were drained to create more pasture for farm animals.

This process is being reversed – the stock have been removed, the drains blocked, the floodgate removed and volunteers have helped plant around the edges. Slowly nature returns – first the



## Auckland Council manages 28 regional parks

For more information on any of these parks: phone **09 301 0101** or visit [aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

### Ranger contact details

To contact a park ranger use the phone at the information board just inside the park entrance and follow the instructions. If using a mobile phone call **09 301 0101**.

## Volunteering

We would love to have your help with work in regional parks. Age and physical ability is no barrier as there are tasks and projects to suit all individuals and groups.

For more information on volunteering: phone **09 301 0101** or visit [aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

plants, then the insects, birds and fish. And now the wetlands at Āwhitu are considered some of the best and most extensive left in the Auckland region. The wetlands, along with salt marsh, beach and intertidal areas, create unique and valuable bird habitats at Āwhitu.

The wetlands harbour a small number of fernbirds (mātātā). You can occasionally spot these shy birds but you'll need sharp eyes – when the fernbird is threatened it will freeze, raise its head and look just like a reed.

They are also home to the paradise shelduck (pūtangitangi) mallard, bittern, Californian quail, kererū, pūkeko and tūi.

## History

English immigrants John and Sarah Brook built the Brook Homestead, originally called Brook Haven, in 1878. It remains a central feature of the park. The family added the bach in front of the homestead in 1907.

The old jetty, which remains at Kauritūahi Bay, was also built by the Brook family. It was a lifeline to the outside world when this far-flung place had no roads. Basic supplies and visitors came in across these boards, and kauri posts and farm product went out.

In 1971, John Brook's grandson Fred sold his land to the Auckland Regional Council (ARC). Āwhitu Regional Park was officially opened in 1975 and continues to operate as a working farm.

To mark the park's 25th anniversary, a carving (pouwhenua) depicting the fernbird (mātātā) was erected overlooking the wetlands in November 2000 by the Brook family. The sculpting of this park taonga was completed as a collaboration between George Flavell (Ngāti Te Ata kaumatua), John Allen (park ranger) and Willie Apiata VC (park volunteer).

## Park facilities

### Prime picnic spots

Find your own favourite spot and picnic with friends and family any time at Āwhitu Regional Park. Please do not bring your own solid fuel BBQs due to the fire risk of disposing of the hot embers. This includes but is not limited to wood fire, coal and pellet BBQs.

This bookable site includes a BBQ and large shaded area near the main car park and toilets. The Recreation Paddock can be booked for groups of up to 100 people for daytime activities. Conditions apply.

# Āwhitu Regional Park



Visit [aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) or call **09 301 0101** for more information.



## Campgrounds

### Brook Campground

The campground is located behind Brook Homestead and is accessed by the internal park road. Turn right off Brook Road and you will come to a locked gate to the left of the main car park. Once through the gate continue past the dam, over the cattlestop to the Brook Homestead campsite on the right hand side of the road.

### Peninsula Campground

The campground is on a headland overlooking the Manukau Harbour and is accessed by the internal park road. Turn right off Brook Road and you will come to a locked gate to the left of the main car park. Once through the gate continue past the Brook Homestead campsite (on right) and take the first turn on the left. Follow the road to the Peninsula campsite overlooking the beach.

## Staying overnight in selected car parks

### Āwhitu CSC overnight parking area

Summer (daylight savings) and Winter (non-daylight savings): CSC campervans can stay for 1 night in the CSC parking area during summer.

Winter Special: CSC campervans can stay up to 3 nights in the CSC parking area when the vehicle-based campground is closed. The Brook Homestead and Peninsula vehicle-based campgrounds offer up to 7 nights' stay for CSC campervans.

## Other accommodation

### Āwhitu House

Āwhitu House, built in the 1930s, is located just inside the entrance of the park and a five minute walk from the waterfront. Āwhitu Regional Park offers a working farm and historic homestead.

### Āwhitu Education Camp

Āwhitu Education Camp is suitable for school and community groups. For bookings and charges please call Auckland Council on **09 301 0101**.

## Bookings

For information and bookings for these overnight facilities, phone **09 301 0101** or visit [aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)



# Feature walks

## Brook Homestead Walk - - -

**45 minutes, 1.5km**

From the car park follow the red way-markers along the foreshore, past the historic Brook jetty and up onto the headland where the Brook Homestead sits amid a glade of trees. The homestead has recently been repainted in its original colour scheme.

## Hatton Road Walk - - -

**20 minutes, 1km**

Follow the blue waymarkers from Hatton Road to the lookout. Then continue to Settlers Valley Walk.

## Settlers Valley Walk - - -

**1 hour 30 minutes, 3km**

Follow the yellow way-markers and you will get to explore most of the park. This walk takes in the wetlands, the two white sandy beaches and climbs up to the viewpoint to take in stunning views of the Manukau Harbour.

# Cycling

## Settlers Farm Track

**1 hour, 3km**

Follow the yellow way-markers and you will get to explore most of the park. Watch out for no-go areas through regenerating bush.

# Stop kauri dieback

[kauridieback.co.nz](http://kauridieback.co.nz)

A disease known as kauri dieback (Phytophthora taxon Agathis), which is threatening the survival of kauri trees, has been identified at Āwhitu Regional Park. Help prevent the spread by keeping to the defined tracks, using the hygiene stations when provided and cleaning footwear before and after your visit.



Historic jetty

### Be safe in regional parks

<p><b>The water safety code</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be prepared.</li> <li>2. Watch out for yourself and others.</li> <li>3. Be aware of the dangers.</li> <li>4. Know your limits.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Land safety code</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choose the right trip for you.</li> <li>2. Understand the weather.</li> <li>3. Pack warm clothes and extra food.</li> <li>4. Share your plans and take ways to get help.</li> <li>5. Take care of yourself and each other.</li> </ol>
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**Key**

- Barbecue
- No cars
- Bus parking
- Camping
- Certified Self-Contained (CSC) vehicle car park
- Golf course
- Information
- Lookout
- Parking
- Phone to contact ranger
- Picnic area
- Mountain biking
- Swimming
- Canoeing / kayaking
- Boatramp
- Horse riding
- Toilets
- Walking
- Gate
- Wool Shed
- Historic Site
- Bach
- No dogs
- Bookable Site
- Streams
- Roads
- Parkland
- Sand
- Cliffs
- Campground
- Bush
- Wetland
- Non parkland
- No track access for bikes or horses due to kauri dieback stations.
- Track closed.

# Ranger recommendations

**Tips on how to make the most of your visit to Āwhitu Regional Park.**

## If you have two hours...

For a brief taste of Āwhitu take the five minute walk from the western end of the car park to the pouwhenua (carving) which overlooks the park's wetlands and beaches and the Manukau Harbour.

Return to the car park and head down to Kauritūahi Bay for a swim near the historic jetty below the Brook Homestead.

## If you have half a day...

Choose from a barbecue at Kauritūahi Bay or walk to neighbouring Brook Beach and find your own peaceful picnic spot. Either beach is great for swimming around high tide and you will have time to visit the Brook Homestead and admire the impressive trees that surround it.

## If you have a full day...

Take a leisurely walk or bring your mountain bike to roam around the park and take in all its attractions. Find a fishing spot or enjoy a round of golf at the adjoining golf course. See if there are any fairies at home as you meander through the mature bush along the Kauri Walk.