

Te Ara Moana

The sea-going pathway

Kayaking Auckland's south eastern coast

For more information phone 09 301 0101
or visit www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz



Waitawa Regional Park

Te Ara Moana

Te Ara Moana means 'the seagoing pathway'. It is one of many routes traditionally paddled by Māori to travel between settlements, carry goods for trade and source food. To this day the Iwi of Tamaki Makaurau maintain strong ties with the Hauraki Gulf, Tikapa Moana (Firth of Thames) and Te Ara Moana.

This waka (canoe or kayak) trail is well used by paddlers so these notes and the map overleaf are a guide, suggesting paddling times and recommending campgrounds on regional parks.

Please read through the safety information, book your campsite and plan your journey before you set out. And don't forget to tell someone your plans.



Omana to Waharau, our way to go

We recommend setting off from Omana Regional Park in Maraetai and heading south, over five days. Park your vehicle at Omana and make sure it's locked, taking all your valuables with you. Drop a note into the box at the rangers office if you are leaving your car at the park.

If you'd like to do the trail in reverse, that's ok too, just make sure you check the tides. There are parking facilities at Waharau Regional Park or a drop off area across the road on the seaward side on Kawera Avenue.

Look out for the brightly coloured orange and blue posts, near the shore marking campgrounds along the way.

Practice makes perfect

If you are not very experienced or a bit cautious, you may like to do parts of the trail first as training for the whole journey. Always paddle with a companion or group.

As you round Wairoa and Matakaitai Bays, and Koherurahi Point, you will see a fine pa site rising up on the headland and catch the first glimpse of Kawakawa Bay township around the next corner.

Prevailing winds from the Firth of Thames can roughen up the water in this area.

Just past the Koherurahi Point wharf and boat ramp is a small beach and the Waitawa Bay Campground. Here you will find a small shelter, water supply and toilets.

Take care not to drag your kayak across the midden (archaeological rubbish pit) on the foreshore. From the shore you can look out to the distant Coromandel Ranges and Moehau.

Please do not venture beyond the campground as this park is not yet open to the public and there are special access conditions for kayakers only.

DAY 3 Waitawa Regional Park to Tawhitokino Regional Park 10km

Paddle out of Waitawa Bay and you'll see the Coromandel Ranges in the distance and continue on below Pawhetau Pa, one of Auckland's most significant pa sites, and you'll clearly see the terraces and defensive ditches.

If in need of supplies, stop at Kawakawa Bay township by landing at Te Iwirahirahi Point.

Paddlers might see a variety of water craft launching and landing at Kawakawa Bay but as you round Raukura Point it gets quiet once again. A number of rocky inlets can be explored before taking a quick stop at the popular Waiti Bay beach.

Day three ends at Tawhitokino Regional Park. This park and campground is accessible only by foot or boat and is a chance to relax under the shade of pohutukawa on a beautiful white sandy beach. Your campground has toilets and a simple shelter for cooking only.

Checklist

- Te Ara Moana trail map.
- Campsite booked.
- Check marine weather forecast and tides.
- Check kayak, drain plug and equipment (don't overload).
- Lifejacket – wear this at all times.
- Camping gear, food and correct clothing.
- Drinking water.
- Two forms of communication (cell phone/radio) in a water-tight bag.
- Tell someone your plans and when you're due back.
- Check kayak and equipment for plant and animal pests.

Campsite bookings

You don't need to book the trail, but you do need to book your regional park campsites in advance. Phone the Auckland Council on 09 301 0101 for bookings. See our website for campground information and directions.

In an emergency

Dial 111 and ask for the police. Give your nearest campground name or landmark if possible.

If using a VHF radio, use channel 16 (maritime distress channel) and call "Mayday, mayday, mayday," followed by your vessel description and location. Repeat until you get a response.



Photo by Bernhard Götschmann

If you capsize, stay with your kayak and hold onto your paddle. Wear reflective clothing – see and be seen. Or visit www.coastguard.co.nz for more information and to download a '2 Minute Form'.

► **To contact a park ranger** phone 09 301 0101

When camping at this special spot, you may be lucky enough to see one of New Zealand's rarest flightless birds, the North Island weka. The size of a large hen, these birds call to each other at dusk – so you'll almost definitely hear them.

DAY 4 Tawhitokino Regional Park to Tapapakanga Regional Park 8km

A shorter fourth day gives paddlers the chance to relax on Tawhitokino Beach before heading further south towards Tikapa Moana, the Firth of Thames. Views of the south-eastern sides of Waiheke and Ponui Islands give way to the dramatic vista of the Coromandel Ranges and Moehau.

Paddlers can take a break at the north and south ends of Orere Beach before landing at Tapapakanga Regional Park where there are two camping options.

Stay at either the remote Waikaha Stream Campground or the Beachfront Campground near the park hub (Ashby Beach).

DAY 5 Tapapakanga Regional Park to Waharau Regional Park 8km

The last section of the trail sees paddlers entering the Firth of Thames. You will pass more mussel farms after rounding Waimangu Point and can stop in at the popular boat launching area at Matingarahi.

From here, the route follows the pebbly coast and passing travellers on East Coast Road before coming to the end of the trail at Waharau Regional Park where you can camp at the Tainui and Blackberry Flats Campgrounds.

Access to the Tainui campground requires a portage across the road, approximately 470m at high tide, and a little further to Blackberry Flats.

From Waharau Regional Park it is a ninety minute road trip back to Auckland's CBD.

DAY 1 Omana Regional Park to Duder Regional Park 11km

Begin your journey at Omana Regional Park. Spend a night at the Clifftop Campground or get started straight away. You can launch from the beach at the park at high tide or walk down to the boat ramp at Omana Esplanade.

Paddle past the neighbourhoods of Maraetai and consider stopping off at one of the local café's for your last chance for real coffee on the trip. There are also plenty of beaches to stop at along the coast and around the Whakakaiwhara peninsula.

As you pass Umupuia Beach, you can carefully explore the rocky shoreline and small beaches on the south side of Duder Regional Park.

Your destination, Te Wharau (Malua Bay) Campground is located on the eastern side of the Whakakaiwhara Peninsula, a secluded part of Duder Regional Park. The campground is an archaeological site so please 'camp lightly'. Water and a toilet are just above the campground, at the top of the steps. Please use the concrete pad for any heating or cooking of food to minimise any fire danger, and please note there is no shelter at Duder.

DAY 2 Duder Regional Park to Waitawa Regional Park 14 km

If setting out from Duder at high tide, you can hug the coastline, otherwise paddle into the wide expanse of shallow water that is the Wairoa River mouth. The wooden marker posts set in the water to your right mark the boat channel up the Wairoa River – if you're up for a side trip, kayakers can make it as far as Clevedon Village.





Please avoid landing on shellbanks along this stretch of coast, especially between August and February when endangered New Zealand dotterels and oystercatchers are nesting.

Continue along the mangrove fringed coastline and look out for the renowned local oyster farms in the water.



Key

-  Campground
-  Launching/access point
-  Kayak trail
-  Auckland boundary
-  Regional park
-  Public open space
-  Marine reserve
-  Shellbank – nesting birds

Park	Location	Portage (m)		 		
		Low tide	High tide			
Omana Regional Park	Te Puru (Kellys Beach)	450	140	✓	✗	✓
	Omana Beach Boat Ramp	1360	1340	✓	✗	✓
Duder Regional Park	Te Wharau (Malua Bay)	75	6	✓	✗	✓
Waitawa Regional Park	Waitawa Bay	30	12	✓	✓	✓
Tawhitokino Regional Park	Tawhitokino Campground	60	22	✓	✓	✓
Tapapakanga Regional Park	Waikaha Stream	40	20	✓	✓	✓
Waharau Regional Park	Tainui Campground	525	470	✓	✓ with shower and kitchen	✓

