

These tracks are administered by the Matamata Piako District Council

- 1 Howarth Memorial Wetland
- 2 Reservoir Loop Walk
- 3 Domain Lower Walk
- 4 Domain Upper Walk
- 5 Tul Domain Track
- 6 Whakapipi

See separate pamphlet for details on the mountain bike track

— Short Walk
 - - - Walking Track
 . . . Tramping Track

1 Howarth Memorial Wetland Loop Walk

Time: 1 hour return
 Distance: 4 km
 Start/Finish: Old Railway Bridge across the Waihou River

This attractive wildlife refuge has been developed from a swampy area, which served as the rubbish dump for Te Aroha for nearly a century. The creation of a wetland to increase wildfowl in the area began in 1948 when local members of the Fish and Game Association had a pond bulldozed in the swamp to attract game birds. Members donated their time towards clearing wild growth and rubbish, as well as developing this walking track and planting hundreds of trees. The wetland remains a natural ponding area of the Waihou River.

A particular success in the scheme had been the establishment of a native grey teal population. Their 30 nesting boxes can be seen in various places around the walk. The wetland remains a natural ponding area of the Waihou River.

The track meanders around the edge of the pond. Side tracks across boardwalks give access to hides and great places to view grey teal, kingfisher, pied stilt, white faced heron, pukeko and black shag. There are also access points at the retail courts at Spur Street, Stanley Road and Ritchie Street.

2 Reservoir Loop Walk

Time: 25 min return
 Distance: 1km
 Start/Finish: Mokena Geyser, Te Aroha Domain

Follow the Tul Domain Track from the geyser. A short detour leads to the No 22 spring, a romantic grotto originally known as the Honeymoon Spring. Newly married couples would dip their wedding rings in this spring to ensure a long and happy marriage. Shortly after returning to the main track there is a junction with the Reservoir Loop Track off to the right. The track follows along the old access road until the reservoir is reached. This reservoir was constructed in 1905 to supply the town of Te Aroha with a reliable water supply by collecting water from nearby

streams. Examples of old valve and pipe work can be seen. The track continues around the reservoir and then a series of steps start the walk back down to the Tul Domain Track. At this junction turn left and return to the domain.

3 Domain Lower Walk

Time: 20 min one way
 Distance: 600m
 Start: Mokena Geyser
 Finish: Wyborn Leisure Pool

The Mokena Geyser is the world's only hot soda water geyser. The track is tar sealed for 300m from the geyser. The first point of interest is a vertical shaft covered by a timber cover. This is intersected with a horizontal shaft dug from the domain. This was constructed to provide an inhalatorium room where people could stand in the intense vapours for the treatment of respiratory problems. It was decided that this would be too dangerous and the tunnel was used to collect hot water instead. The track continues along to the first of two cold water springs, No 21. This magnesium spring was used for the treatment of stomach troubles. The next spring is No 20 and is the iron spring for the treatment of anaemia. The track continues down to the No 20 Pool and Wyborn Pool. This can be combined with the Domain Upper Walk for a 45 min loop track.

4 Domain Upper Walk

Time: 25 min one way
 Distance: 1km
 Start: Mokena Geyser
 Finish: No. 21 Spring

The track proceeds up the Whakapipi Lookout/Te Aroha Mountain Track. A feature of this part of the walk is a large kauri tree. After 400m the track branches off the main track to the right. The track passes an old water reservoir that supplied the Te Aroha Hot Springs with water. The track continues along an old water race that supplied the cold water reservoir. A flight of steps goes down to the banks of a small stream and ties up with the Domain Lower Walk at the sight of the No 21 Magnesia Spring.

Track Classification

Walking times are approximate and should only be used as a guide.

Short Walk: well formed with easy grades. Suitable for people of all ages, fitness levels, abilities and experience. Constructed to allow walking shoe access.

Walking Track: Easy well formed walking surface suitable for people of most ages and fitness levels. Physically well defined or clearly marked.

Tramping Track: Requires skill and experience, suitable for people of average fitness. Marked, limited track formation.

Route: Requires a higher degree of skill, experience and route finding ability. Suitable for well equipped trampers. Routes may be marked or unmarked.

For Further Information

There are a series of pamphlets and Parkmap on the Kaimai Mamaku Forest Park available.

Department of Conservation
 Box 9003, 253 Chadwick Road West
 Greerton, TAURANGA
 Ph (07) 578 7677
 Fax (07) 578 1634
 www.doc.govt.nz

Te Aroha i-SITE Visitor Centre
 102 Whittaker St, Te Aroha (Domain)
 Ph (07) 884 8052
 Fax (07) 884 8259
 www.tearoa-info.co.nz

Facilities are sometimes subject to vandalism. Please report any damage or impassable tree falls to a DOC office or the safety watch number below.

DOC HOTline
0800 362 468
 Report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies
 For the end search and rescue call 111

Please Remember

Camp at designated sites or beside the huts. This reduces the impact on native vegetation and for other users of the park. Toilets are provided.

No fires may be lit within the Kaimai Mamaku Forest Park. Fires are a hazard to any bush area. Removal of firewood can quickly cause substantial damage to a site.

Native plants and animals must not be disturbed, destroyed or removed. The bush is a taonga, a treasure for all. Even dead plants and animals have a part to play in providing nutrients for the environment.

No dogs or other domestic animals are permitted except for hunting purposes, with a current permit. Dogs and other animals have reduced populations of native birds in our parks. The law forbids bringing animals in to this conservation area.

Hunting is by permit only. For the safety of all users hunters must have a permit. Available from Department of Conservation officers.

WARNING
 Mine tunnels and shafts are very dangerous and may be hidden by vegetation
 • Keep to marked, official tracks
 • Do not enter tunnels unless they are clearly marked for public access.

Te Aroha and Waiorongomai Walks



- Protect plants and animals
- Remove rubbish
- Bury toilet waste
- Keep streams and lakes clean
- No fires
- Camp carefully
- Keep to the track
- Consider others
- Enjoy your visit
- Toitu to whenua (Leave the land undisturbed)



View from Mount Te Aroha

New Zealand Government

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Department of Conservation
 Te Papa Atauhai

Introduction

At 952m Mount Te Aroha is the highest point in the Kaimai Mamaku Forest Park. There are a number of different tracks up and around this distinctive mountain.

Te Aroha Township was developed during the 1880's as a spa town. There are 22 springs in the area, 15 of which are hot. The Domain at Te Aroha still retains the look of Edwardian times and visitors can experience stepping back in time. Many of the old bathhouse buildings remain and the formal gardens have only been altered slightly.

The Waiorongomai Valley lies just south of Te Aroha Township. The area is a nationally significant historical area dating back to the gold mining days of the late 1800's.

Te Aroha History

Far back in time Mount Te Aroha gained its name in Maori legend. One story tells how the Arawa chief, Kahumatamoe was on his way home from visiting a kinsman at Kaipara. As was the habit of this explorer, he ascended to the highest possible point along the way. As he stood on top of the mountain, he decided to name it "Aroha ki tai". This was an expression of his love for his father, who was buried on Mount Moehau and his family who lived at Maketu. There are other legends relating to the naming of the mountain.

Geology

The Tul Mine area, on the northern slopes of the mountain, was mined to provide lead flux for the Waiorongomai smelters. However, the ore contained too much zinc to be of use. In the 1960's the area was extensively mined but the venture failed due to mercury contamination of the ore. The most significant result of this period is the presence of the large tailings heap on the site. The tailings amount to approximately 100 000 tonnes. The combination of high heavy metal concentration, porous tailings and acidic leachate have created an inhospitable environment where plants have been unable to establish.

Traces of gold were discovered on Mount Te Aroha in 1880. Prospectors burnt much of the native vegetation looking for a gold bearing reef, which was never found. Their attention turned to Waiorongomai when Buck Reef was discovered.

Waiorongomai History

A prospector, Hone Werahiko found gold in the Waiorongomai Valley in 1881. Miners rushed the area to peg out claims and make their fortunes. The area appeared perfect for mining with an enormous gold bearing reef, water for hydraulic power and a plentiful supply of timber. Ambitious and expensive engineering projects were undertaken but yields were low, as the rock proved unexpectedly hard and the gold difficult to extract. One of these projects is the Piako County Tramway, which is New Zealand's oldest tramway still on site.

Geology

Mount Te Aroha is part of an ancient volcanic chain of Miocene-Pliocene age, from 24 to 2 million years ago. A string of large volcanoes erupted along the line of the present day Coromandel and Kaimai Ranges. Mount Te Aroha is part of this chain and is mainly composed of thick andesitic and dacitic rocks. The present form of the ranges owes a great deal to large scale movements along the Hauraki Fault.

Following the eruptions geothermal activity deposited minerals in faults and fissures in the rocks, including gold and the sulphides of lead, iron, zinc, copper and mercury. In the 1850's and 60's gold-bearing quartz veins were discovered at Coromandel and Thames, triggering gold rushes in this region. The Waiorongomai Valley is located in this mineralised zone. The jagged spine of Buck Rock, on the side of Mount Te Aroha, marks the line of the main quartz reef. Buck Reef is 5.5 km long and extends from the Waiorongomai valley out under the Waihou River and the Hauraki Plains.

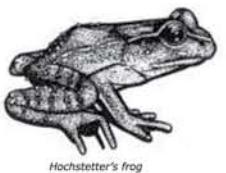
Vegetation

The Te Aroha ecological district has a very diverse range of vegetation communities, with several species reaching their northern or southern limits. Mount Te Aroha is the northern most limit of both silver beech and kamahi. The transition between towai, a common species in Coromandel Ranges, and kamahi, which is common in the Bay of

Plenty, occurs in the Te Aroha district. These species both occupy a similar niche, meaning one excludes the other.

The forest below about 200m has a distinctive semi-coastal element with the primary vegetation comprised of kohekohe, puriri and tawa forest. There are also patches of secondary vegetation including kanuka and small areas of exotic conifers. The local community planted these in the late 1800's as a fashionable park species.

Above Whakapipi Lookout the track goes through a mid-altitude forest of tawa with emergent rimu and miro and then through a transition zone of tawari and tawa to the high-altitude cloud forest of stunted silver beech, tawari and tawhoewho. These different zones reflect the changes in conditions with increasing altitude: this includes lower temperatures and higher rainfall, wind velocity, humidity and fog.



Hochtetter's frog

Wildlife

The Te Aroha area supports a diverse range of forest dwelling birds, not only common forest birds, but some that are at risk nationally. Bellbird, tui and NZ pigeon are common with whitehead, NI rifleman and NI robin also visible on occasion. The endangered kokako, NI brown kiwi, kaka, NZ falcon and the long tailed bat are present in low numbers, with the migratory long tailed cuckoo present during the summer.

The Te Aroha stag beetle (*Geodorcus auriculatus*) was first identified in 1903. It is rarely seen and its distribution is poorly understood. It has a Category A threatened species status. They are fully protected under the Wildlife Act 1953. The black coloured beetle is flightless and the males are larger than the females and have large mandibles shaped like miniature stag antlers.

Remnant populations of Hochtetter's frogs have been recorded in a number of scattered locations in the Kaimai Ranges, always near water. They are well camouflaged with brown to olive colouring and partially webbed back feet. They have a maximum size of 5cm. None of the four remaining species of NZ native frogs have a tadpole stage. Eggs are laid directly on the ground. The young of Hochtetter's frogs are hatched with small legs and can move independently. Introduced predators, the clearance of native vegetation and mining played a major part in putting this species on the threatened species list as a Category B species.



stag beetle