

Introduction

The Waimea Basin - the plains and low hills around Nelson and Motueka - has many small reserves and places of conservation or recreation value. This brochure provides information about the natural and human history of those areas and the things to do there: picnicking, walking, swimming, bird-watching and other activities.

Near Nelson

Cable Bay Walkway

Evidence of Maori occupation in the Cable Bay area (Rotokura) dates back to about 1150 AD; the area was a fishing ground and a campsite was maintained there. Delaware Bay, across the estuary, was the site of the main pa. In 1863, the pa occupants heroically rescued the crew of the Delaware during a terrible storm.

Cable Bay was once known as Schrodgers Mistake, after a Nelson skipper mistook the bay for another and put his boat on the rocks there. The laying of New Zealand's first international telegraph cable gave the bay its modern name. The operation, from Sydney to Cable Bay, took 11 days and transmission began on 21 February 1876. A fire razed the station in 1914 and in 1917 the cable was moved to Titahi Bay, near Wellington.

How to get there

The walkway starts at either Cable Bay, 21 km north of Nelson, or the Glen, 12 km out of the city.

What to do (see map at left)

Cable Bay offers many recreational opportunities including boating, sea kayaking, snorkelling and walking on Cable Bay Walkway.

The complete walk takes about 3½ hours one way, and requires transport arrangements to be made. From the Cable Bay end a shorter return trip is to the top of the first hill (1hr return) or to the forest edge (2hr return). From the Glen

end, a round trip to the airstrip and back takes about 2 hours.

Cable Bay Walkway offers wonderful coastal views of the Boulder Bank, Nelson City and Kahurangi and Abel Tasman national parks. The middle section of the track passes through a patch of beautiful and varied native forest.

The track is a tramping track. It is steep in places and strong footwear is recommended.

Please remember

The entire walkway crosses private farmland and is closed during lambing for part of each spring; no dogs are allowed at any time. Please respect the stock and farm property.

The Boulder Bank

The internationally-renowned Nelson Boulder Bank is a natural spit of boulders, formed of the debris of land slips from the Mackay Bluffs (see map), swept southwards by sea currents over 10,000 years. The bank is 13 kilometres long, the last eight kilometres forming a spit which separates Tasman Bay from Nelson Haven. Its width varies from 55 metres at high tide to 240 metres at low tide.

Maori camped on the bank and fished there. They used boulders from the bank - some up to 50 kg - to hammer the rough forms of stone tools from quarries in the nearby hills.

The shelter offered by the Boulder Bank was a major factor in choosing the site of Nelson. In 1848 a beacon was erected near the end of the bank and, in 1862, the cast iron lighthouse building that remains today. In 1906 a cut was made in the bank to allow easier passage to Nelson Harbour for shipping. 'The Cut' now separates Haulashore Island from the bank.

How to get there

Access is from Boulder Bank Drive (off Atawhai Drive (SH6)) or by boat from Nelson. A ferry service is available from Nelson. Contact Nelson Visitor Information i-Site to find out more.



PHOTO: Mark Baumann-Skyjark Productions

The Cable Bay Walkway provides stunning views of the Boulder Bank stretching towards Nelson City.

What to do

A walk along the Nelson Boulder Bank is an opportunity not to be missed. The eight kilometre walk, from Boulder Bank Drive to 'The Cut' takes 2-3 hours one way. The Boulder Bank is rough, dry and very exposed, so be prepared for all kinds of weather and wear strong shoes.

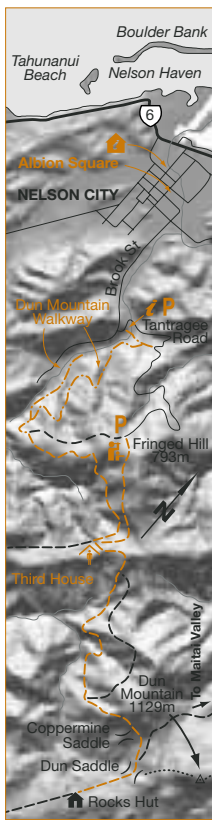
Albion Square

In the heart of Nelson City is a lovely and historic area known as Albion Square. Part of this square is an historic reserve looked after by DOC. There are several historic features here that complement the nearby Hardy Street Girls School, an old (1864) post box still in use, the Suter Gallery and the Queens Gardens.

Interpretation panels on both Hardy and Bridge streets help orient visitors to the square and its features, and provide more detail on its history.

On the Bridge Street side of the reserve is a 'standard test chain' used by early surveyors to check the length of their chains. Between there and Hardy Street are three historic buildings of note. First is the brick powder magazine which dates from around 1861. Here the Provincial Government, and later the army, stored explosives.

Nearby is the 1866 fire station,



designed in the style of the Provincial Government buildings that graced the square from 1861 to 1969. The station was used to house the bodies of the Maungatapu murder victims, five miners brutally slain by a notorious gang near Nelson in June 1866.

The last building is the hexagonal trout hatchery built in 1867 by the Nelson Acclimatization Society and used for raising trout for Nelson's rivers. Water initially came from the same supply as a nearby flour mill; by 1877 enough trout had been released in the Maitai River for the society to issue the first fishing licences.

Dun Mountain Walkway

Dun Mountain Walkway follows the line of New Zealand's first railway, which serviced the Dun copper mine from 1862 to 1866. Copper ore was discovered in 1852 and sourced to a reddish-brown mountain which was named Dun Mountain after the rock - dunite. In 1857 a company was formed in England to mine the ore, which also contained chromium.

The railway line was 21 km long and linked the mine to Nelson's port. The wagons were pulled up to the mine by horse and descended by gravity, their speed being controlled by 'brake men'. Following the mine's closure a horse-drawn passenger tram continued on the city to port section until 1909.

How to get there

The walkway starts on Tantragee Road, off Brook Street, four kilometres from the Nelson city centre. Access can also be gained from Fringed Hill summit (792m), 6½ km further along the same road.

Walking the track (see map at left)

From Tantragee Road the Dun Mountain Walkway zig-zags up to the former railway alignment. This it follows, through pine and native forest, to a junction, where it descends back to Brook Street. The walkway is a walking track; it is 9.5 km long and takes 3 hours.

Beyond the junction, the alignment continues through beech forest to Third House shelter (1 hr), where it meets a track from Fringed Hill. A further 45 minutes (past another track from Fringed Hill) brings you to the sudden change in vegetation from mature forest to the stunted manuka and scrub of the 'mineral



The old Armoury, Albion Square.

belt', an infertile, distinctly-coloured landform that occurs in patches between St Arnaud and D'Urville Island.

The railway alignment continues around Windy Point to Coppermine Saddle (this is as far as most mountain bikers usually go). From here a rougher track leads up for about 20 minutes to Dun Saddle, meeting the route from the Maitai valley.

Dun Saddle is the boundary between the City Council waterworks reserve and Mt Richmond Forest Park. From here marked routes extend in both directions: north over Dun Mountain towards Maungatapu Saddle and south for 40 minutes to the 20-bunk Rocks Hut.

Please remember

The track is shared with mountain bikers. Bikers should always give way to walkers and stay in control of their bikes. No animals, firearms or fires are allowed. Be wary of sudden weather changes, especially beyond Third House.

north-eastern corner of Bells Island at high tide during the summer season, when there are many northern hemisphere migratory birds present.

How to get there

The most popular areas of the Waimea Inlet are Tahunanui 'back beach', Monaco, Rabbit Island (the Rabbit Island gates are closed at night) and Mapua. Boat ramps are provided at Nelson, Monaco, Mapua and on the inside of Rabbit Island (high tide only).

Please remember

The outgoing tide can cause embarrassing and inconvenient delays for boat owners - time your visit carefully. Please follow the rules regarding dogs, hunting and fires in individual places (more information from Nelson City and Tasman District councils). Do not disturb the birds.

To the South

Eves Valley Scenic Reserve

The little reserve in Eves Valley is a regenerating beech-podocarp forest covering 28 hectares.

The reserve has many picnic areas, good access to the stream and a scenic, 20-minute bush walk.

How to get there

Eves Valley is off Waimea West Road, 27 km from Nelson.

Please remember

Dogs and camping are prohibited. Fires may only be lit in the fireplaces provided.

Snowdens Bush Scenic Reserve

Although severely modified, this reserve is an example of a forest type that once covered much of the Waimea Plains. It is dominated by totara, titoki and matai, and since grazing was stopped in 1972, a varied understorey has developed.

This 5.6 hectare reserve is a popular picnic and recreation area, with several paths meandering through the forest.

How to get there

The reserve is on Waimea West Road, just west of Brightwater, 21 km from Nelson.

Please remember

Camping and dogs are not permitted

Belgrove windmill

The Belgrove windmill was built in 1897 on the Nelson railway line. It was used to pump water to help cool engines beginning the steep climb to Spooners tunnel.

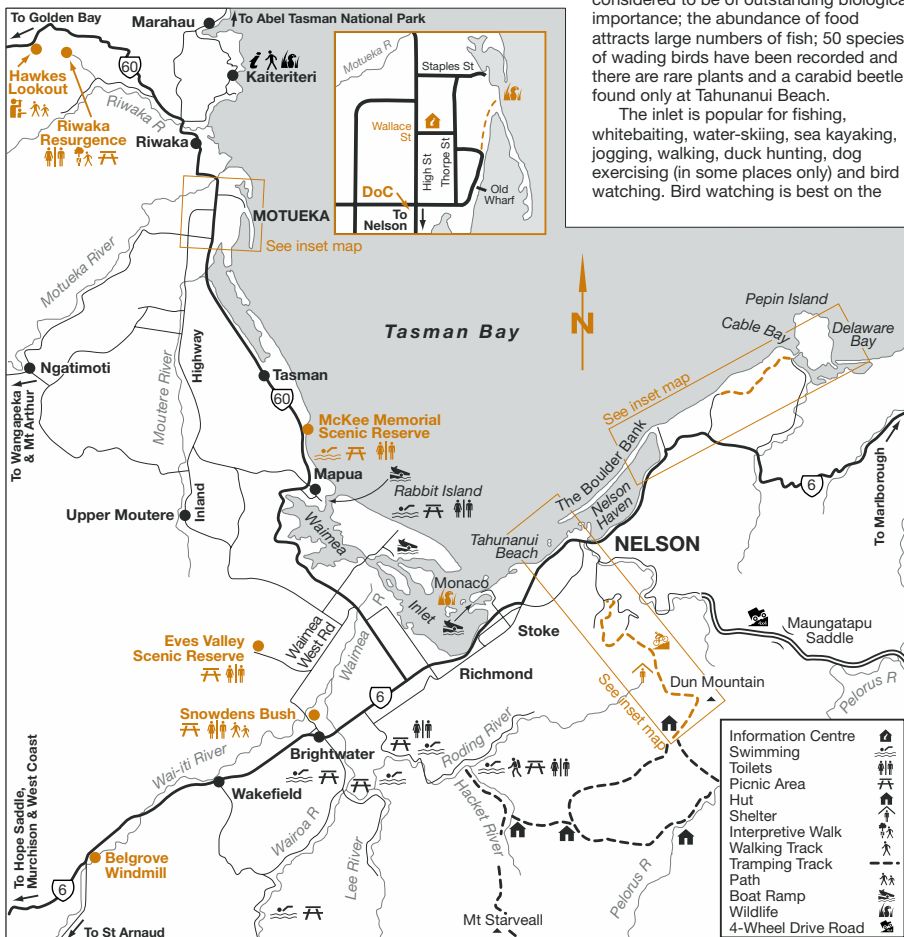
When the line closed, amid much protest in 1955, the windmill was left in place because it was also being used for domestic supply. It is one of only two such windmills remaining in the country.

How to get there

The Belgrove windmill is on State Highway 6, 39 km south of Nelson.

Please remember

The windmill is beside a busy weighbridge; watch out for logging trucks.



Protect plants and animals

Remove rubbish

Bury toilet waste

Keep streams and lakes clean

Take care with fire

Camp carefully

Keep to the track

Consider others

Respect our cultural heritage

Enjoy your visit

Toitu te whenua
(Leave the land undisturbed)

Track classifications

Walks are described using the national track classification system:



- Path**
- well marked and always benched
 - waterways bridged
 - few steep sections
 - boots not necessary
 - for all ages and fitness levels
 - some suitable for disabled visitors



- Walking track**
- well marked and usually benched
 - boots not generally needed
 - waterways usually bridged
 - for most fitness levels



- Tramping track**
- marked but often not benched
 - may be steep and rough in places
 - some unbridged waterways
 - boots advisable
 - moderate fitness required



- Marked route**
- marked but little or no formed track
 - terrain usually steep and rugged
 - many waterways unbridged
 - back country 'sense' and good fitness needed

Hope Saddle

In 1871, a winding, precipitous track was cut through the bush over Hope Saddle. In 1879 the first horse drawn vehicles started using it, as part of the route from Nelson to Westport.

At the saddle today, travellers can stop for a while and enjoy the views of forests and mountains. There is a shelter and toilet; interpretation signs and picnic tables are provided at two viewing points.

How to get there

Hope Saddle is on State Highway 6, 75km south of Nelson.

Near Motueka

Motueka River delta

The Motueka River delta consists of the rivermouth, the Motueka sandspit and the 'Kumaras' estuary. The delta is formed of sediments from the Motueka and Riwaka rivers, swept into continually changing shapes by the sea.

The area was very important to Maori for food gathering. It is also where the first European settlers to Motueka landed in May 1842.

The whole area is ecologically important. It has extensive areas of rushland and saltmarsh where whitebait spawn; it is rich in shellfish and therefore a major feeding ground for wading birds, up to 10,000 of which feed or roost on the sandspit in summer.

Besides bird watching and whitebaiting, the delta area is popular for fishing, walking, swimming, and dog exercising (approved areas only). The sandspit has an all-round view, from D'Urville Island to the Richmond and Arthur ranges and Abel Tasman National Park.

How to get there (see main map)

Access is at the end of Staples Street, just north of Motueka, or along the foreshore from the old Motueka wharf.

Please remember

Fires are not permitted. Dog walkers must keep to the designated areas.

Riwaka resurgence

The north branch of the Riwaka River pours out of the cave-riddled marble of Takaka Hill in this beautiful area of Kahurangi National Park. Damp forest, clear cold water, tranquil pools, and moss-covered and water-worn marble rock create a fairyland quality.

How to get there

The Riwaka resurgence is 11 km from Riwaka township and 16 km from Motueka. Hawkes lookout is on State Highway 60, 10 km from Riwaka.

What to do

A short path (10 minutes) leads through the forest to where the river emerges. There is wheelchair access as far as Crystal Pool (5 min). Other attractions include picnicking, walking and fishing.

For a view down on to the resurgence, drive up to Hawkes lookout on Takaka Hill. A five-minute path takes you through bush and marble outcrops to a spectacular viewpoint.

Please remember

Dogs and camping are not permitted. The rocks in the riverbed are very slippery.

Further information

For further information contact:

Nelson Visitor Information i-Site
Cnr Trafalgar & Halifax Streets, NELSON
Phone (03) 548 2304

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Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy
Private Bag 5, NELSON.

Safety Watch
0800 999 005
Report any safety hazards

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The Waimea Basin

A guide to conservation areas



PHOTO: Mark Baumann-SkyJark Productions

The Belgrove Windmill.



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai