Welcome to Dunedin

Dunedin’s beaches, shrubland, forested valleys and tranquil hills offer a fascinating variety of walks close to the city, and the surrounding styles of high and hilly terrain have spectacular views. Whether your interests are scientific, historical or simply a desire to enjoy the scenery, wildlife and the exercise, these walks will give you pleasure. Many trails are suitable for dog walking, and these are beginner and intermediate mountain bike trails.

For more detailed information on tracks around Dunedin see the guidebook Dunedin Trails and Tracks by Tony Manol, published by the Dunedin City Council and the Department of Conservation.

Natural history

The walks give access to diverse natural features, including ancient forests, young plantations, tussock-clad summits, developed farmland, spectacular coastal scenery, and new wildlife. Dunedin’s geology is widely varied, with igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rock, and volcanic hills following eruptions across the city for millions of years. Dunedin has a diverse native flora and fauna. The flanks of Mount Cargill, and the Pyramids in Okia Reserve, have large coastal cliffs that provide nesting sites for sea-birds. The small native birds are bellbirds/kakariki, grey warblers/riroriro, tomtits/miromiro and fantails/pīwakawaka. The silvereye/tauhou is common in winter, and there’s a small population of the rare native robin/tomtit in the Taieri Gorge.

Invertebrates include the red admiral and tussock butterflies. Skinks and geckos can be seen by keen observers in the wild places that surround Dunedin City. Several streams are home to some of our exclusive native kiloheka, introduced fish such as the common brown trout (Salmo trutta), new large variety of freshwater crayfish (Chionoecetes tasmanicus), weka, wild crabs, and New Zealand falcon/kārearea, which can both be seen. The silvereye/tauhou is common in winter, and there’s a small population of the rare native robin/tomtit in the Taieri Gorge.

Above the tracks a diverse scrubland dominates—all the highest or western areas. Forest track and sparses open spaces are flanked by grassed areas with small forest remnants. Most of the habitat, however, still covers the flanks of Mount Cargill, Flagstaff, Signal Hill and neighbouring areas. Much of it is protected.

Dunedin had a substantial forest in pre-European times, with tall beech and podocarp forest down to the beaches and Otago Peninsula. Only small forest remnants remain. What of the habitat, however, still covers the flanks of Mount Cargill, Flagstaff, Signal Hill and surrounding areas. Much of it is protected.

Invercargill has an island that is the original habitat from quartz-rich sediments washed up the coast from the mouth of the Clutha River/Mataura.

The Track Near Me website (mtbtracksnearme.co.nz) also be provided anonymously to Crimestoppers. Information can also be provided anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.
Ross Creek
Network of easy walking tracks, see inset map.

Hawkesbury lagoon and beach
1 hr 30 min, 4 km (round trip)
From the beach end of Beach St, head left along the beach, then up to the lagoon. Follow the causeway around the lagoon and then back up to Beach St. Dogs allowed on the beach only.

Hawkesbury Park
45 min, 4 km (round trip)
Starting at the car park on the Domain at St Betes St, follow the track around the perimeter to Marine beach. Follow the track through the cemetery back to the Domain. For a longer walk, continue along the beach.

Seacliff
1 hr, 2 km (round trip)
The entrance gate to Tindal King Reserve is on Russell Rd. There are access points at vehicle and vehicle tracks through the raised boundaries, paths and fences of the Seacliff Medical Hospital, built in the 1880s.

Silver Peaks circuit
0.8 hr, 1.9 km (round trip)
Two-day trekking loop by experienced, well-equipped backcountry trekkers with a good weather forecast. Not to be taken lightly. See www.doc.govt.nz or DOC’s Silver Peaks Tracks brochure for details.

Black Gully Dam/Cayres Creek
Black Gully Dam, 30 min, 1 km (returns)
Cayres Creek 5 hr 30 min, 9 km (two-way)
Black Gully Dam Track is accessed from Sample Rd. From here you can descend to the Cayres Creek Reserve at Tomakin Gull. For a longer return, return to Sample Rd via Jones Rd.

Mapoutahi
45 min, 3 km (returns)
From the graded end of Oceobank Rd walk 4 km on the seaside and submerged road to the beach. Head left to the steps that lead up Mapoutahi for good coastal views from the 20th century Whakapapa site.

Long Beach
1 hr 30 min, 7 km (round trip)
This family and dog friendly walk starts and ends at the car park on Beach Rd. It provides access to the beach, caves, Black Bull, Deluvia Creek, coastal sea, and large grassed reserve suitable for picnics and play.

Oropoune lagoon
1 hr, 3 km (round trip)
This wide-track pleasant walk around the Oropoune Reserve has several start points, including a parking area on Oropoune Rd.

Pluurikamau Inlet and Potato Point
1 hr 30 min, 5 km (round trip)
Starting at Oceobank at the centre of Punamunui School Rd and Oropoune Rd, follow what looks like a fence line until you see the track sign. Follow By Rd until it forks with Csaun Cl. Climb past a windbreak (Ngatokoroa) and continue following the track until you reach the locked gate.

Hayward Point
2 hr, 5 km (returns)
These are two start points for this track, the end of Hayward Point Rd at 1300 Assumption Point Rd or at 1300 Fustin St. There are good coastal views along the cliff tops, before following through regenerating bush to the more exposed Hayward Point.

Burns to Rutersls Ridge
3 hr 30 min, 6.5 km (round trip)
Four separate tracks make up a figure-of-eight circuit, which is a great day walk. The figure-eight walks begin beside Waitati Valley Rd (located Leith Saddle). Take either Burns Track or Rutersls Track to climb to highest ground, and then branch across to Swampy Ridge Track or up Burns Saddle Track to the Swampy Ridge Track. These are impressive views of Waitati and Silverstream valleys, Blue Ray, Mount Craig, and Silver Peaks.

Rain Gauge Sjur and Ramecke tracks
6 hr 30 min, 10 km (round trip)
From the junction of Silverstream Road and Whare Flat Rd, head up Ramecke Track following an abandoned water race (which is switched on across the Ramecke Stream) past several scenic native stands. Rain Gauge Sjur is at the top west. The track climbs steeply through alpine and sub-alpine to meet the highest head on Swampy Access Rd. You can reconnect to Ramecke Track by following Swampy Access Rd back and cutting right into Swampy Access Rd. To drop back down to the water race, continue on Swampy Access Track to Ramecke Track.

Graham Bush and Nicola Couch Track
4 hr 30 min, 6.5 km (round trip)
From the car park on the Outram-Mosgiel Rd, follow flats Bush Track, then climb steeply through native bush. Head up Mount Craig Rd, the track is on the left, looking up the hill. This can be walked or returned past the same starting point. The track here can be descended to Ramecke Track. From here you can either continue or return to the Domain. For a longer return, return to the same starting point.

Chalkies Track
3 hr 30 min, 4 km (returns)
A loop trapping track traversing Fowler Hill with a 460 m ascent. Start near to Lemonhouse Stream, about 4 km down Silverstream Valley Road from the DOC sign, climb up past Lemonhouse Falls. The track is very steep going to reach the top of Fowler Hill. For the return, follow the previous track back to the starting point.

Nicola Falls and Nicola Couch Track
1 hr, 1.5 km (returns)
From the car park at the edge of Inwood Creek, follow Swampy ridge Track (climbs steeply through native bush. The track meets the Swampy Summit Track. Return the way you came, or continue on the track through Mount Craig. This is parking at both Hall Rd and Mount Craig Rd. Welch for care.

Mount Craig
4 hr 30 min, 6 km (returns)
From the car park at Bethunes Gully head up the slope of Mount Craig through pine and native forest before running parallel views of the city and countryside.

All Beach
20 min, 1 km (returns)
From Crown Rd this track, the short AH Reed track follows the beach and is suitable for all ages.

Pyramids, Victory Beach and Okins Reserve
45 mins, 0.5 km (one-way)
From the end of Silk Rd via Bull Rd (a farm track) past the fantastically shaped Pyramids to Victory Beach and the Okins reserve. The yellow-eyed penguin/banded cormorant are also home to fair rains and sea lions.

Flagstaff loop
1 hr, 2.5 km (round trip)
From the Ball Rd car park on Flagstaff/Whitney Flat Rd follow the track to the right, up into Flagstaff Flat. Either return the way you came or continue on, taking all left hand turns to return for the walk.

McGrous and Pineapple tracks
30 min, 0.7 km (returns)
To walk the Pinkwood and McGrous Creek tracks you can either continue from Pinkwood summit (see walk 25) or start at the locked gates on Pinkwood Rd. From Bluff the McGrous Track is in the left, looking up the hill. This can be walked or returned past the same starting point. The track here can be descended to Ramecke Track. From here you can either continue or return to the Domain. For a longer return, return to the same starting point.

Forrester Park and Bethunes Gully MTB
Head up North Rd, then Hornback St. Forrester Park is on the right. Further up, the Bethunes Gully is on the left. Forrester Park has a big Bergie/intermediates track suitable for children. Bethunes Gully has three intermediates tracks covering both sides of the gully.

Outram Glen to Lees Stream Walk
3.5 hr, 12.5 km (returns)
Begin at the Outram Glen pony area off Outram-Mosgiel Rd. After 30 min a short, steep stepped section leads to a long traverse along the Taieri River. After about 1 hr to the bridge over to the same starting point.

Whare Flat MTB
Follow the track, run into Lusit Flat Rd. The entrance to the mountain bike trails is 1 km along the road. This is a working forestry block operated by City Forests – access is available from 6 pm to 6 pm on weekdays, 7 am to 9 am on weekends. Do not enter these areas during times of strong wind. Do not enter forestry operational areas.

Wakari Creek MTB
Purpose-bred bike tracks and intermediate trails that traverse stands of redwood and tui. You will need to cross the Taieri River at least three times of strong wind. Do not enter forestry operational areas.

Woodside Glen and Maungatua summit
Moana St – Aramoana Spit: 45 min, 3 km (return)
From Cowan Rd car park, the short AH Reed track follows the beach and is suitable for all ages.

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