



Duration: 3-5 days  
Distance: 60km (one way)

# Abel Tasman Coast TRACK GUIDE

Great Walks

Te Puketea Bay, Photo: Darryl Wilson

## Plan and prepare

It is important to plan your trip thoroughly to ensure you stay safe and have a great time. Before you go, know the **Outdoor Safety Code** – 5 Simple rules to help you #makeithome.

1. Plan your trip
2. Tell someone
3. Be aware of the weather
4. Know your limits
5. Take sufficient supplies

### TELL SOMEONE YOUR PLANS

Tell someone you trust your plans and when they should hear from you next. Include the national/international emergency service numbers: 111-Police for points of contact in New Zealand, +64-4-381-2000 for international. Find more information at [mountainsafety.org.nz](http://mountainsafety.org.nz).

### Further information and booking

Visit the Great Walks website or contact your nearest DOC Visitor Centre.  
Nelson Visitor Centre, 79 Trafalgar Street, Nelson  
Phone: +64 3 546 8210  
Email: [nmbookings@doc.govt.nz](mailto:nmbookings@doc.govt.nz)

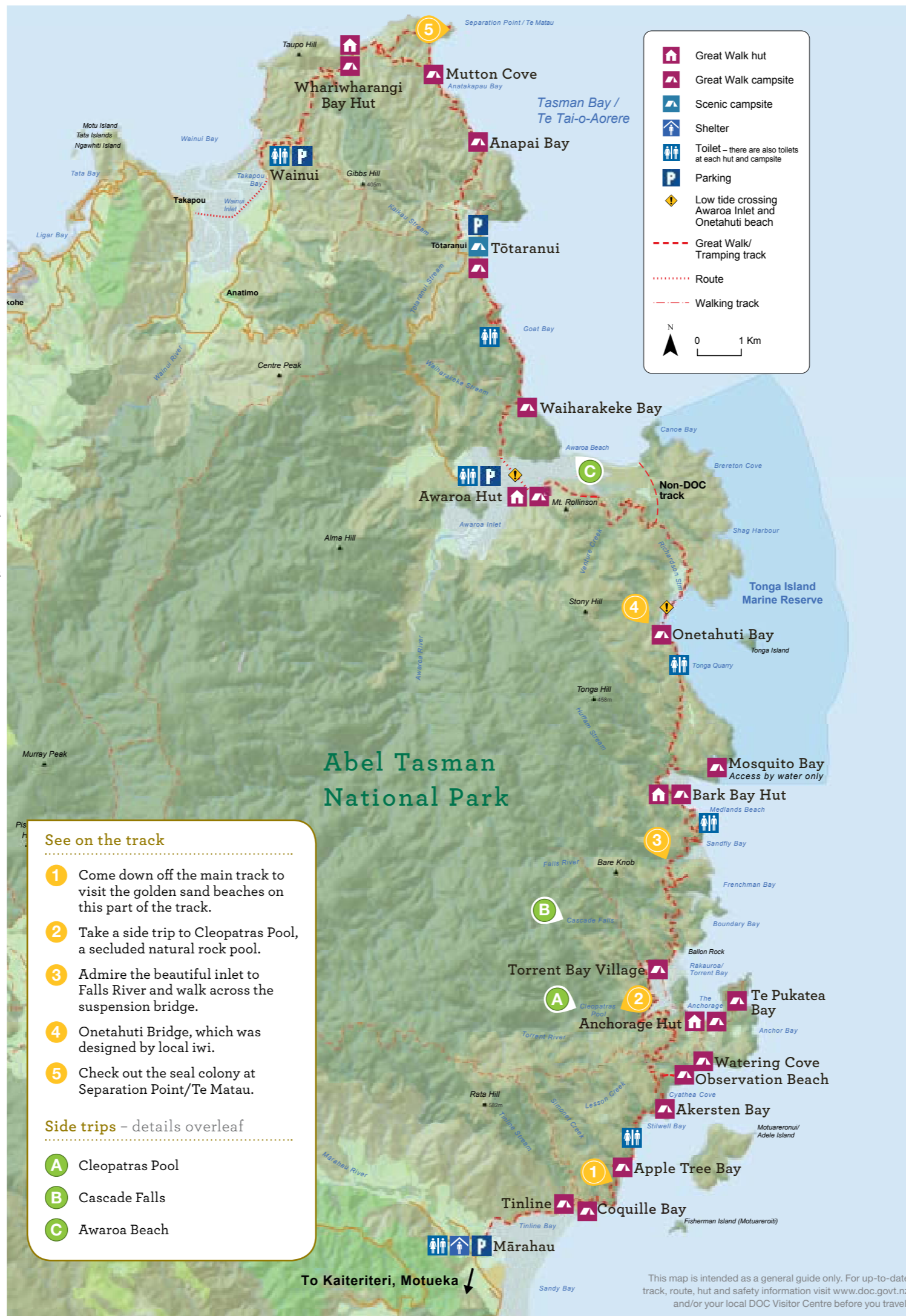
▶ Book online [greatwalks.co.nz](http://greatwalks.co.nz)

Facebook: [facebook.com/greatwalks](https://www.facebook.com/greatwalks)

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New Zealand Government



## Welcome to the *Abel Tasman Coast Track*, one of ten unforgettable journeys.

Blessed with a mild climate, golden beaches and lush coastal native bush, the Abel Tasman Coast Track has it all. Choose to hike the whole track, water taxi between different locations or kayak from Mārahau to campsites in the southern section of the track at any time of the year.



### Plants and wildlife

**Bellbird/korimako** are easily recognised by their melodious song, described as sounding 'like small bells exquisitely tuned'. Well camouflaged, they are usually heard before they are seen. Females are dull olive-brown with a pale yellow cheek stripe. Males are olive green with black outer wing and tail feathers.



Photo: Shellee Evans

**Fantail/pīwakawaka** are known for their friendly 'cheet cheet' calls and energetic flying antics. Easily recognised by their long tail which opens to a fan, they have a small head and bill and two colour forms, pied or black. Their broad tail allows them to change direction quickly while hunting insects.



Photo: Marnaki Barrett

**Wood pigeon/kererū** are large birds with green and bronze feathers on their heads and a smart white vest. The noisy beat of their wings is a distinctive sound in our forests. Kererū are the only disperser of large fruit and their disappearance would be a disaster for our native forests.



Photo: DOC

**Shags/kawau** – spotted shags are medium-sized, grey-blue marine birds with a long, slender bill and yellow-orange feet. They are often seen on the rocky headlands. Pied shags are black and white and can often be seen standing on the beaches near the tide mark.



Photo: Shellee Evans

**Fur seals/kekeno** are found along the coast of the park, particularly on the more remote granite headlands and boulder beaches. Seals are quite confident mammals but *visitors must stay about 20 m away*. Human activities are the cause of most threats to kekeno today.



Photo: Tony Day

**The rocky coastline** around Tonga Island Marine Reserve is a fascinating place to explore, particularly with snorkel and mask. Between the tides you will find diverse plant and animal life that live in this ever-changing environment such as neptune's necklace, tubeworms and pink algae.



Photo: Fernie McKenzie

This map is intended as a general guide only. For up-to-date track, route, hut and safety information visit [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz) and/or your local DOC Visitor Centre before you travel.

# Track guide

The track can be walked in either direction, depending on the tidal crossing at Awaroa. Below is the 5-day track description from south to north.

The times are approximate and will vary according to your fitness, direction of travel and the weather.

## Mārahau to Anchorage

**4 hr, 12.4 km**  
Crossing the estuary over the Mārahau causeway begins your journey. On the far side of the estuary, pass through open country to Tinline Bay.

The track rounds Guilbert Point to Apple Tree Bay, then passes through beech forest with large kānuka trees. After Yellow Point it turns inland, winding in and out of several little gullies before emerging in open country overlooking Rākauroa/Torrent Bay and the coast and islands to the north. Descend to the beautiful Anchorage Bay where there is a hut and campsite.

### A Side trip – Cleopatras Pool

**20 min from Rākauroa/Torrent Bay**  
The cool clear water of this natural rock pool makes it a beautiful swimming hole.



## Anchorage to Bark Bay (Wairima)

**High tide track: 4 hr, 11.5 km**  
**Low tide crossing, Torrent Bay estuary: 3 hr, 8.4 km**  
From Anchorage Bay, cross a low ridge to Torrent Bay estuary.

**!** Rākauroa/Torrent Bay estuary can be crossed within 2 hr either side of low tide, or take the all-tide track leading around it to Torrent Bay. Keep to the public track through the private houses.

At the northern end of Rākauroa/Torrent Bay beach the track climbs steadily, then sidles around two valleys and above an inlet to Falls River, which is crossed by a 47-metre suspension bridge. Beyond the river, the track meanders through lush coastal forest before dropping back to the coast. Follow the track to the hut and campsite beside Bark Bay estuary.

### B Side trip – Cascade Falls

**1 hr 30 min return from Rākauroa/Torrent Bay**  
A beautiful waterfall hidden in native bush is a great spot to cool off. The track is quite steep in parts but well worth the hike!



### C Side trip – Awaroa Beach

**40 min one way**  
Awaroa Beach is famous in New Zealand. It was bought in 2016 through a crowd-funding campaign to enable it to become public national park land.



## Bark Bay (Wairima) to Awaroa

**4 hr 30 min, 13.5 km**  
Cross Bark Bay (Wairima) estuary (**check tide timetable**) or follow the all-tide track, and climb steeply to a saddle. Stands of mānuka hide the sea.

Return to the coast at Tonga Quarry, where Tonga Island is surrounded by marine reserve. A short distance on is Onetahuti Bay. At Onetahuti beach, cross the channel north of the campsite 4 hr either side of low tide. The track then climbs over Tonga Saddle. If you want to visit the Awaroa Beach, turn right along a non-DOC track through private land down to the beach. Turn left and walk along the shore to the western end of the beach. At low tide (check tide times) you can cross the inlet to get to either the hut or camp or pick up the Coast Track on the other side of the inlet. At high tide retrace your steps back to the main track then continue down to the hut or camp, approaching it from the north-east.

## Awaroa to Tōtaranui

**2 hr 20 min, 7.1 km (tidal)**  
**!** Cross Awaroa estuary within 1 hr 30 min before and 2 hr after low tide. The estuary may be impassable following very heavy rain.

From its northern side the track crosses a low saddle and drops to Waiharakeke Bay. It re-enters the forest then emerges at Goat Bay.

The track takes you up around an old landslide at Goat Bay and then climbs steeply to a lookout above Skinner Point before descending to Tōtaranui. Follow the road through the main campsite to the camp office.

This is the water taxi pickup point and Coast Track walkers' campsite.

## Tōtaranui to Whariwharangi

**3 hr 15 min, 9.8 km**  
Head around Tōtaranui estuary, then climb over a low saddle and wind down through lush forest to Anapai Bay. From here to Mutton Cove, sandy beaches alternate with rocky headlands of regenerating kānuka.

Leave the coast at Mutton Cove and climb to another saddle, then descend to Whariwharangi Bay. The hut (a restored farm homestead) and campsite are just behind the beach. Add 1 hr to go via Separation Point.

## Whariwharangi to Wainui or back to Tōtaranui

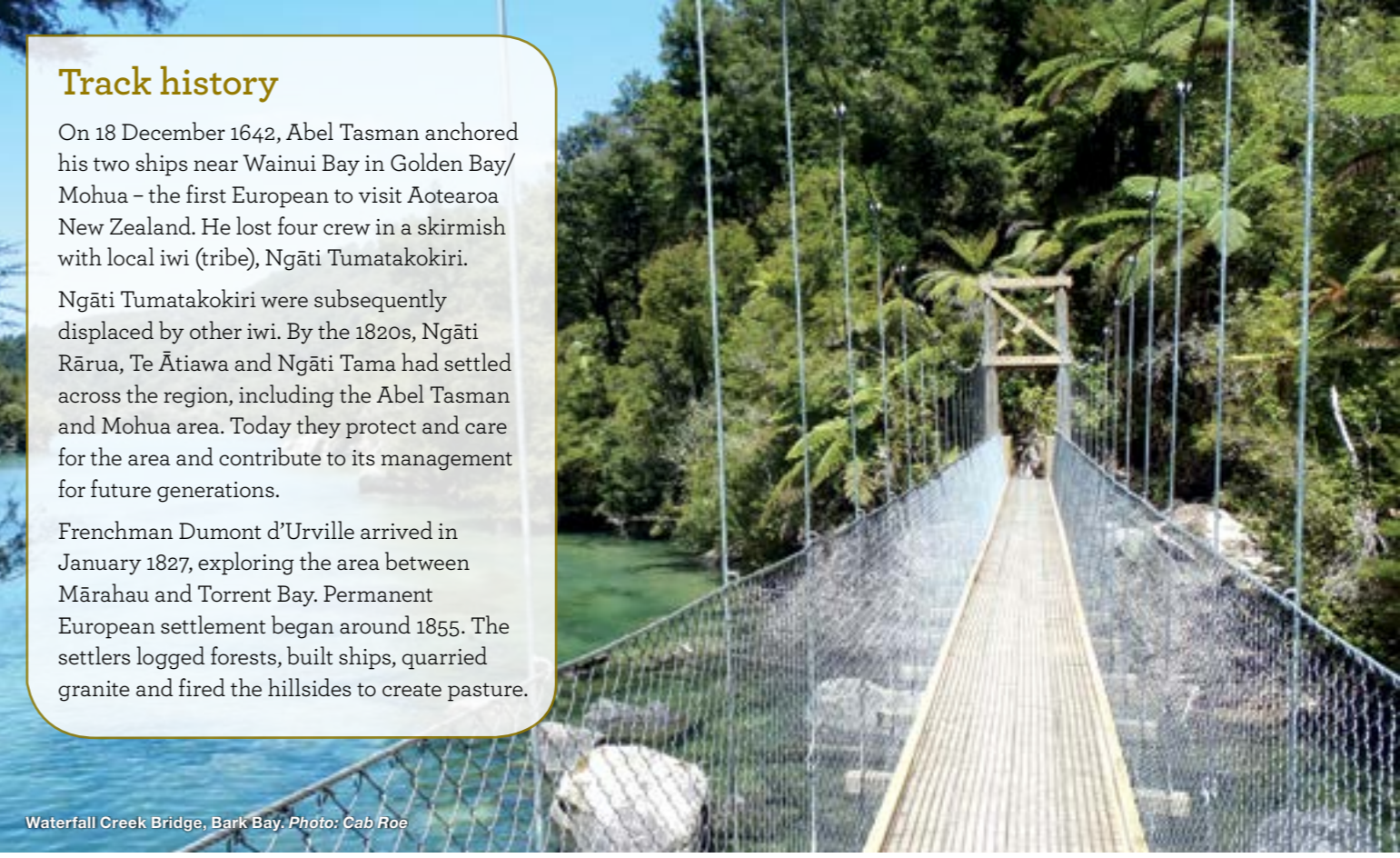
**2 hr, 5.7 km or 3 hr, 9 km**  
From Whariwharangi Hut follow a small stream, then climb out of the bay to a saddle overlooking Wainui Inlet. At this point you can either go down to the car park at Wainui or take a left turn onto the Gibbs Hill Track. This track will take you over the steep Gibbs Hill then back down to Tōtaranui. From Tōtaranui you can get a water taxi back to Mārahau.

## Track history

On 18 December 1642, Abel Tasman anchored his two ships near Wainui Bay in Golden Bay/Mohua – the first European to visit Aotearoa New Zealand. He lost four crew in a skirmish with local iwi (tribe), Ngāti Tumatakokiri.

Ngāti Tumatakokiri were subsequently displaced by other iwi. By the 1820s, Ngāti Rārua, Te Ātiawa and Ngāti Tama had settled across the region, including the Abel Tasman and Mohua area. Today they protect and care for the area and contribute to its management for future generations.

Frenchman Dumont d'Urville arrived in January 1827, exploring the area between Mārahau and Torrent Bay. Permanent European settlement began around 1855. The settlers logged forests, built ships, quarried granite and fired the hillsides to create pasture.



Waterfall Creek Bridge, Bark Bay. Photo: Cab Roe

## Staying Safe on the Abel Tasman Coast Track

### TIDAL CROSSING

Allow time to wait until it is safe to cross the channel at Onetahuti beach, 4 hr either side of low tide. Awaroa Inlet is only passable at low tide. If you are early wait at Pound Gully (north side) or Awaroa Hut (south side) until the water recedes. If your trip plans do not work with the tides, check out the water taxi options between Awaroa Bay and Tōtaranui before setting off.

### BE PREPARED FOR ALL CONDITIONS

While the Abel Tasman coast is generally warm and dry in summer, it is a coastal environment that can change quickly, so be prepared for rain, cold and windy conditions.

### HEAT EXHAUSTION

- > **Prevention:** carry and drink water regularly throughout your walk.
- > **Watch for symptoms:** headaches, thirst, weakness, dizziness, nausea or vomiting.
- > **Treatment:** move to a cool shaded area to rest, remove excess clothing and give water to drink.

### WASPS AND SANDFLIES

If you are allergic to wasp stings take your medication, such as antihistamines, with you.  
Sandflies are tiny black insects that cause itchy bites. Bring and use insect repellent and sting cream.

### IN A CASE OF AN ACCIDENT OR A SERIOUS INJURY

Contact Police Search and Rescue via Department of Conservation staff or boat transport staff radios.

### REMEMBER

- There are no cooking facilities.
- Filtered water sites are at: Anchorage, Bark Bay (Wairima), Awaroa, Whariwharangi huts/campsites and Tōtaranui campsite.
- There is a risk of giardia if you drink untreated water. Be prepared to boil, treat or filter drinking water if the DOC water filter systems are not working correctly.
- Toilets are available at all huts, campsites and car parks, and at Goat Bay, Pound Gully, Tonga Quarry, Medlands and Stilwell Bay.
- Take all rubbish away with you.

## TIDAL INFORMATION

## Elevation profile

