

Totaranui walks

Abel Tasman National Park



Introduction

For those interested in the natural history of the Totaranui area, there is a series of walks of short and medium length, which offer not only enjoyment and exercise, but also provide an opportunity to learn about the park. When these walks are added to the sections of the Coast Track running north and south from Totaranui, and the fire-access track up to the commanding viewpoint of Gibbs Hill, they provide a good selection of alternatives for walking and exploring; especially for those who also like to learn something along the way.

How to get there

Private transport


Totaranui is 32 km east of Takaka. The last 12 km is narrow, unsealed winding hill road. Travellers must drive carefully and be prepared to give way.


Public transport

There is a scheduled bus service each day to Totaranui in the summer season, arriving about 11 AM. For much of the year there is a daily boat service from Kaiteriteri/Marahau to Totaranui and return—consult local i-SITES or DOC offices for the latest on public transport.



Accommodation

 There is a large campground at Totaranui which is open all year round. Bookings are required for the busy period from 16 December to 10 February. The camp has ablution blocks, fireplaces and a filtered water supply, but no power or hot water.

 There is also an Education Centre which may be booked when not in use by school groups. For further information on bookings, prices, etc contact

DOC at Totaranui ph (03) 528 8083. Email Totaranui@doc.govt.nz

The walks

Pukatea Walk, 30 min, 0.8 km

The only part of Totaranui to escape from fire and axe during the days of farming development is a shady hillslope just north of the estuary. The Pukatea Walk is a short botanical ramble through a variety of plant associations and will take you no more than 30 minutes to complete.

The walk leaves the Coast Track at the bottom of Anapai Hill and at first runs through a kānuka/gorse shrubland typical of local abandoned farmland. Next follows a joyous wander along a curving boardwalk through a raupō swamp. Impressive both in spring, with the raupō's brilliant green, sword-like leaves, and in autumn, when bullrush seedheads form and the leaves bleach down to grey as winter approaches.

Next a dry ridge forest of beech trees smelling of honeydew, but soon into magnificent dark, damp pukatea forest with glades of tall nīkau palms, buttressed pukatea trees with riotous rigging of supplejack hanging everywhere, occasional massive rātā trees and tall black mamaku treeferns. The smells, textures and dankness of tropical forests are never as apparent as here.

The walk ends on a promise for the future—under tall kānuka forest are dense thickets of pukatea, rimu and kahikatea, pointing to the time some decades ahead when traces of last century's destruction will slowly fade from the landscape.

Headlands Track, 1 h, 1.6 km

Like other walks in the Totaranui area, Headlands Track is largely an introduction to dramatic changes in vegetation as fertility, slope, aspect and damage from past fires all have some influence on the state of the present plant cover. Extensive die-back of beech trees has now resulted in dense pockets of regeneration, particularly along infertile ridges where drought stress

on the vegetation can be severe. On better soils the forest grows taller and beech is joined by northern rātā, massive and intertwined.

There are lovely views of Totaranui from various places along the ridges.

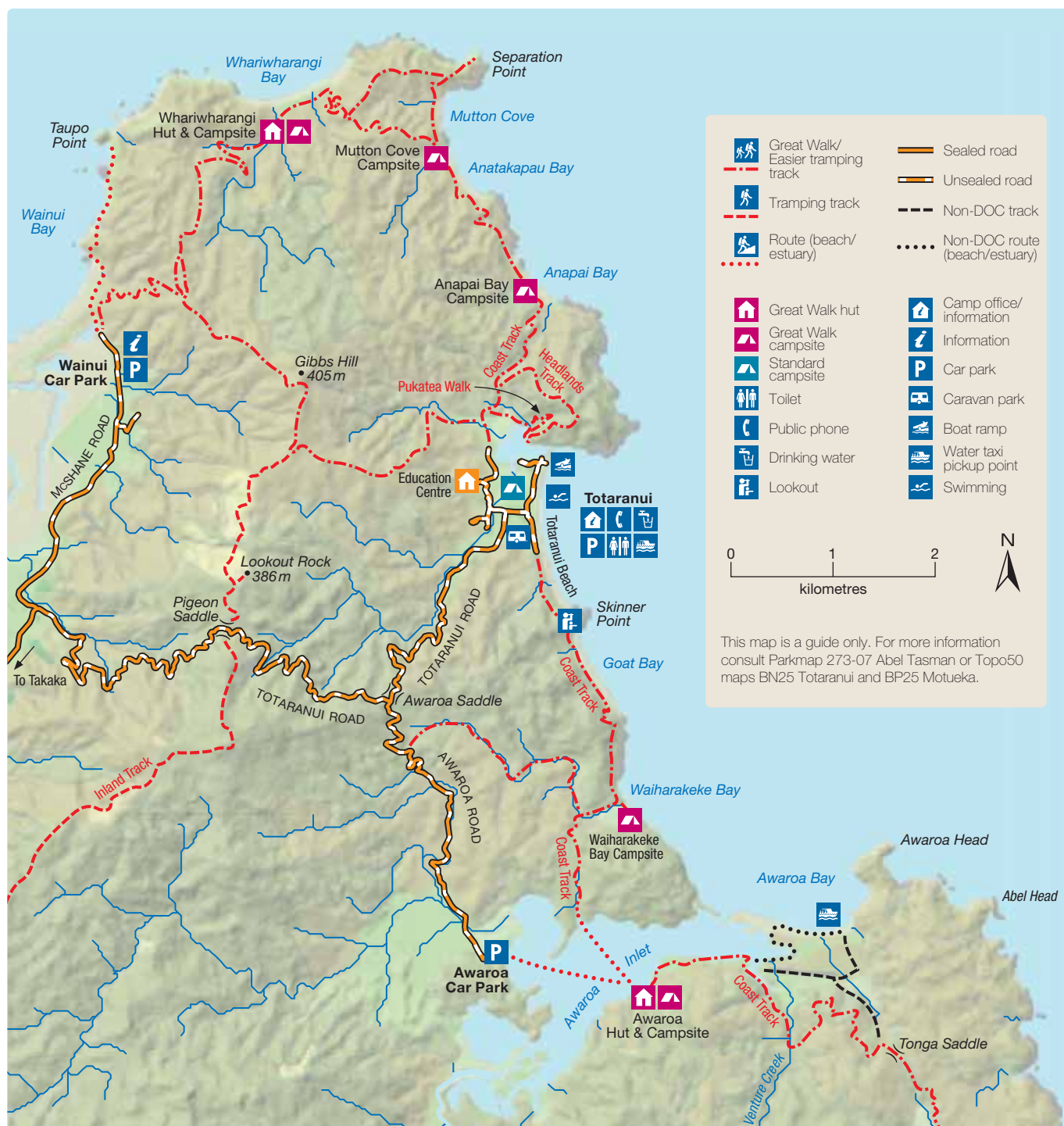
Anapai Bay, 2 h return, 4.2 km

The way to Anapai is simply the first section of the Coast Track heading north towards Separation Point. Again there are sharp contrasts in vegetation between dry ridgecrest kāmuka associations and the lush valley forest seen on the gentle descent into Anapai Bay. Anapai is one of the National Park's loveliest bays,

its beach divided into two (some insist three) by rock outcrops with considerable contrast of shapes between the harder rock at the northern end of the beach, and the softer, more deeply weathered granite to the south. An easy one-hour walk from the Totaranui camp office to Anapai.

Lookout Rock Track (Pigeon Saddle), 1 h return, 1.8 km

The dusty road between Wainui and Totaranui assumes a different character near Pigeon Saddle and encounters for the first time something approaching a canopy of native forest. For a break from the drive and



This map is a guide only. For more information consult Parkmap 273-07 Abel Tasman or Topo50 maps BN25 Totaranui and BP25 Motueka.

a walk in this forest, take the short track from Pigeon Saddle to Lookout Rock. Found in this higher altitude forest are good-sized rātā, red beech, rimu, mataī and miro, trees which have mostly been milled out in areas closer to the coast.

The Lookout Rock (a muddle of granite corestones at the highest point of the ridge) gives an almost 360-degree view over dense forests, shrublands, nearby farmlands and the beautiful bay at Wainui. Thirty minutes' walk should see you on top of Lookout Rock.

Gibbs Hill–Whariwharangi, 5 h 30 min return, 18.3 km

All tracks to Gibbs Hill from Totaranui, Pigeon Saddle or the Coast Track above Wainui Bay are first and foremost fire access routes. For the most part they cross either open country or arid, scruffy, gorse/mānuka regeneration. Views along the ridgeline tracks are superb; from Nelson round to D'Urville Island to Farewell Spit (with Mt Taranaki on clear winter days) and Golden Bay. The Gibbs Hill Track is useful for those doing a day trip to Whariwharangi who prefer to take different routes out and back (note: there is no water anywhere along these ridges, and anyone travelling from Totaranui to Whariwharangi or Awapoto Hut via Gibbs Hill will not find water until they reach these destinations). Allow about 1 h 30 min for the steep climb to the hill top and a further hour down to Whariwharangi Bay. Allow 3 hours from Whariwharangi to Totaranui along the Coast Track.

Goat Bay–Waiharakeke, 1 h 40 min return, 6.8 km

From Totaranui the Coast Track wanders south through tall, airy forests of kānuka. It is only a few minutes to Skinner Point where there is a wonderful view of Totaranui Beach and the coast south to Awaroa and Awaroa Head. The 10-minute walk along Goat Bay beach can be a little tiresome when the tide is in and the sand is soft, but there is more than adequate reward in the panorama of rātā forest, sea-smoothed granite rock and noisy waves.

If it takes you about 20 minutes to get to Goat Bay, it will take you another 30, at most, to Waiharakeke. Instead of forested hills, this pleasant beach runs back into a large swamp which is slowly reverting to kahikatea and pukatea forest. A century ago, Waiharakeke boasted a sawmill and a logging railway; now it is one of the coast's quiet places.

Totaranui to Awaroa Bay, 2 h, 7 km (tidal)

Before you start check when it's low tide! Awaroa Inlet and Venture Creek must only be crossed close to low tide and definitely only crossed up to one and a half hours before low tide and up to two hours after it. Following heavy rain the inlet may be impassable. If you plan to return to Totaranui by water taxi, make your booking before you start the walk.

From Totaranui follow the Abel Tasman Coast Track to Awaroa Hut. From here follow the track through the village to Venture Creek. Cross here and follow the edge of the estuary to Awaroa Bay beach. If you are returning to Totaranui by water taxi this departs from the southern end of Awaroa Bay.

Great Walk/Easier tramping track

- Moderate day or multi-day tramping/hiking.
- Track is generally well formed, may be steep, rough or muddy.
- Suitable for people with moderate fitness. Limited backcountry (remote areas) experience required.
- Track has signs, poles or markers. Major stream and river crossings are bridged.
- Light tramping/hiking boots required.

Tramping track

- Challenging day or multi-day tramping/hiking.
- Track is mostly unformed with steep, rough or muddy sections.
- Suitable for people with good fitness. Moderate to high-level backcountry skills and experience (including navigation and survival skills) required.
- Track has markers, poles or rock cairns. Expect unbridged stream and river crossings.
- Tramping/hiking boots required.

Route (beach/estuary)

- Challenging day or multi-day tramping/hiking.
- Track unformed and natural, rough, muddy or very steep.
- Suitable for people with above average fitness. High-level backcountry skills and experience (including navigation and survival skills) required.
- Complete self-sufficiency required.
- Track has markers, poles or rock cairns. Expect unbridged stream and river crossings.
- Sturdy tramping/hiking boots required.



NEW ZEALAND
environmental
CARE CODE

- Protect plants and animals
- Remove rubbish
- Bury toilet waste
- Keep waterways clean
- Take care with fires
- Camp carefully
- Keep to the track
- Consider others
- Respect our cultural heritage
- Enjoy your visit
- *Toitū te whenua* (leave the land undisturbed)



Please remember



Safety: Carry a day-pack with a parka, sunhat, sunscreen, drink and a jersey. You will need lunch if you are going up to Gibbs Hill.

DOC HOTline
0800 362 468

Report any safety hazards
or conservation emergencies
For Fire and Search and Rescue Call 111

Remember your safety is your responsibility. To report any safety hazards in the outdoors call
DOC HOTline 0800 362 468.



Rubbish: Day visitors must take out their own rubbish.



Giardia has been found in some park waters. It can be removed from drinking water by boiling, filtering or chemical treatment. All tap water at Totaranui is filtered.



Pets: No domestic pets are permitted in the National Park, including Totaranui Campground.



Tides: Check tides at the Totaranui camp office.

Further information

Department of Conservation

Nelson Regional Visitor Centre

Millers Acre/Taha o te Awa
79 Trafalgar Street, Nelson 7010
PO Box 375, Nelson 7040
Ph: (03) 546 9339
Email: nelsonvc@doc.govt.nz

Golden Bay Area Office

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