

Hunua Ranges Regional Park



Falls Road

How to get there

The Hunua Ranges are one hour drive from Auckland CBD. Travel south on SH1 and take the Papakura exit. Follow Beach Road across Great South Road and along Settlement Road. Turn right by Edmund Hillary School into Hunua Road. Follow Hunua Road through the Hunua Gorge to the Hunua village.

Hunua Falls

Just before entering Hunua village, turn left into White Road, then right into Falls Road and follow this road to the Hunua Falls carpark.

Wairoa Dam

Drive through Hunua village, continue for 8km and turn left into Moumoukai Road. Wairoa Dam is on the left about 1km along this road.

Upper Mangatāwhiri

As for Wairoa but keep following Moumoukai Road to its end in the Mangatāwhiri Valley.

For public transport information:

phone Auckland Transport 09 366 6400 or visit at.govt.nz



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Hunua Falls

Hunua Ranges Regional Park

The Hunua Ranges frame the region's southeastern skyline and make up Auckland's largest forested landscape. More than 14,000 hectares of native forest filters about 2,300mm of rain annually into four dams, which supply much of Auckland's water.

The park itself features bush clad ranges with streams, waterfalls and magnificent views, tramping tracks and mountain biking. The Hunua Ranges are also home to Auckland's only mainland population of one of New Zealand's rarest birds the kōkako and is a refuge for the native Hochstetter's frog.

While parts of the Hunua Ranges are accessible to experienced trampers only, two key areas provide plenty of tracks, views and activities suitable for families. The first of these is in the west of the ranges and includes the popular Hunua Falls and Wairoa Reservoir. The other takes in the south and central part of the ranges around the Mangatangi and Mangatāwhiri reservoirs.



Hunua Falls

History

Māori used the hills and forests of the Hunua Ranges primarily as a source of food and timber, and as a refuge, rather than for permanent residence.

Rugged terrain, poor soils and difficult access meant this land was the last in the Auckland region to be settled by Europeans. From around 1870 parts of the forest were cleared for farming and for timber, but farming was always a marginal activity here.

The Hunua Falls have been a popular attraction for Aucklanders since Victorian times. Visitors would travel by steamer to Clevedon and take day trips to the waterfall.

Two manganese mines have previously operated in the Hunua Ranges. During World War II, ore from a mine in the Moumoukai Valley was transported from the hilltop via a flying fox, to a railway on the valley floor.

However, water is the main resource taken from the Hunua Ranges. The four water supply dams include the Mangatangi Reservoir, which is New Zealand's largest water supply dam and second largest earth dam. The extensive 169-hectare lake holds 37 million cubic metres of water and has an average daily yield of 101,100 cubic metres.

Auckland City Council began purchasing land in the Hunua Ranges for water supply purposes in the 1940s, acquiring almost all of the ranges by 1960. Approximately a third of the ranges are planted in pine trees. A commercial forestry company leases this area from Auckland Council and access is restricted to the public for safety reasons.

Plants and animals

The forest that covers the Hunua Ranges is home to an enormous variety of plants, animals and birds. It is special because it extends from sea level to heights of over 600 metres.

The Hunua Ecological District contains 20% (450 species) of New Zealand's total native plant species, including more than half (over 100 species) of the country's native ferns and related plants. The ranges are also home to more than 600 species of fungi.

At 688 metres, Mt Kohukohunui is the highest point on Auckland's mainland and some of the plant species found near its summit are not found anywhere else in the region.

The Hunua Ranges are a haven for two special species – a legendary bird and a primitive frog. Thanks to more than 15 years of intensive pest control, the Hunua Ranges supports the only mainland Auckland habitat of the rare kōkako, which is renowned for its beautiful, haunting call. Māori legend has it that Maui returned tired and thirsty from a journey to the sun and was given a drink by the kōkako. As a reward, Maui stretched the legs of the kōkako (a weak flyer) so it could run and climb trees.

Today, Auckland Council and the Department of Conservation work together, helped by many volunteers, to reduce predators so the kōkako population is conserved and increased. The kōkako recovery area has also become home to the North Island robin and whitehead.

Hochstetter's Frog is one of the world's most unusual frogs. It doesn't make a noise and it doesn't have webbed feet. It is also the world's most primitive amphibian, a remnant from Gondwanaland. While this frog is found in the Hunua and Waitakere Ranges, you are unlikely to see it, as it is nocturnal, silent and extremely well camouflaged.



Kōkako

Hunua Ranges Regional Park links to both Waharau and Whakatiwai Regional Parks through its track network.

Waharau Regional Park

Waharau Regional Park extends from the gravelly shore of the Firth of Thames (Tikapa Moana) into the eastern foothills of the Hunua Ranges. The coastal part of this park lies between the Waharau Stream in the north and sandy Waihihi Bay in the south. There are two campgrounds, picnic and barbecue areas for visitors to enjoy.

A series of loop tracks explore the foothills of the Hunua Ranges and link to some of the more rugged tramping tracks in the ranges.

Whakatiwai Regional Park

Also situated on the Firth of Thames is Whakatiwai Regional Park. It is characterised by a series of gravel ridges, which are unique in the Auckland region and internationally significant. Some remnant patches of the original kowhai forest grow on the gravel ridges.

Whakatiwai also features a shelly foreshore, which attracts migratory birds such as godwits (kuaka), knots and turnstones.

The steep Whakatiwai and Workman tracks provide links to Hunua Ranges Regional Park and spectacular views over the Firth of Thames to the Coromandel Peninsula.



A young stand of kauri trees



Kauri tree on the Kauri Loop Walk

Stop kauri dieback

kauridieback.co.nz

A disease known as kauri dieback (Phytophthora taxon Agathis), which is threatening the survival of kauri trees, has been identified in the Waitākere Ranges. Help prevent the spread of kauri dieback by keeping to defined tracks and cleaning footwear before and after your visit.

Volunteering

We would love to have your help with work in regional parks. Age and physical ability is no barrier as there are tasks and projects to suit all individuals and groups.

For more information on volunteering:

phone 09 301 0101 or visit aucklandcouncil.govt.nz



Auckland Council manages 26 regional parks

For more information on any of these parks: phone 09 301 0101 or visit aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

Please take your rubbish home

Your parks provide open space, fresh air, a home for native plants and animals, clean water, beauty and inspiration. Help keep them this way.

- No bins • No rubbish • Better parks •

Dogs

Hunua Ranges Regional Park is a large and diverse area and restrictions on dogs vary within the regional park. Dogs on leads are welcome in many parts of the ranges but they are banned in some areas for the protection of wildlife.

Dogs are prohibited in picnic areas, camping areas, and exclusive areas around and including the water supply dams and on the Kohukohunui Track.

Note: Temporary restrictions may apply during seasonal farming operations (lambs and calves) under Clause 10 of the Dog Management Bylaw.

Park facilities

Prime picnic spots

Whether it is beside a dam, near a picturesque stream or high on a ridge, there are plenty of beautiful settings for picnicking in the Hunua Ranges. Find your own favourite spot or use the picnic tables provided at Hunua Falls, Wairoa and Mangatāwhiri.

Feel free to use the wood-fired barbecue (BYO wood) at Upper Mangatāwhiri or bring your own gas barbecue to the park.

No open fires permitted.

Accommodation

Campgrounds

Upper Mangatāwhiri Campground

This campground is a great camping spot for families, located in a large grassy area with a stream to enjoy and lots of walking tracks nearby. It is an ideal place to take the bikes for the Moumoukai Mountain Bike Skills Area and the Mangatāwhiri mountain bike trails.

Blackberry Flats Campground and Tainui Campground

These two beautiful campgrounds are located in Waharau Regional Park, on the eastern slopes of the Hunua Ranges.

Remote campgrounds

There are eight remote campgrounds spread around the park accessed via tramping tracks. They have grassy areas for tenting with basic toilets and water.

Restrictions and conditions apply at some campgrounds. You can book up to six months in advance.

Staying overnight in selected car parks

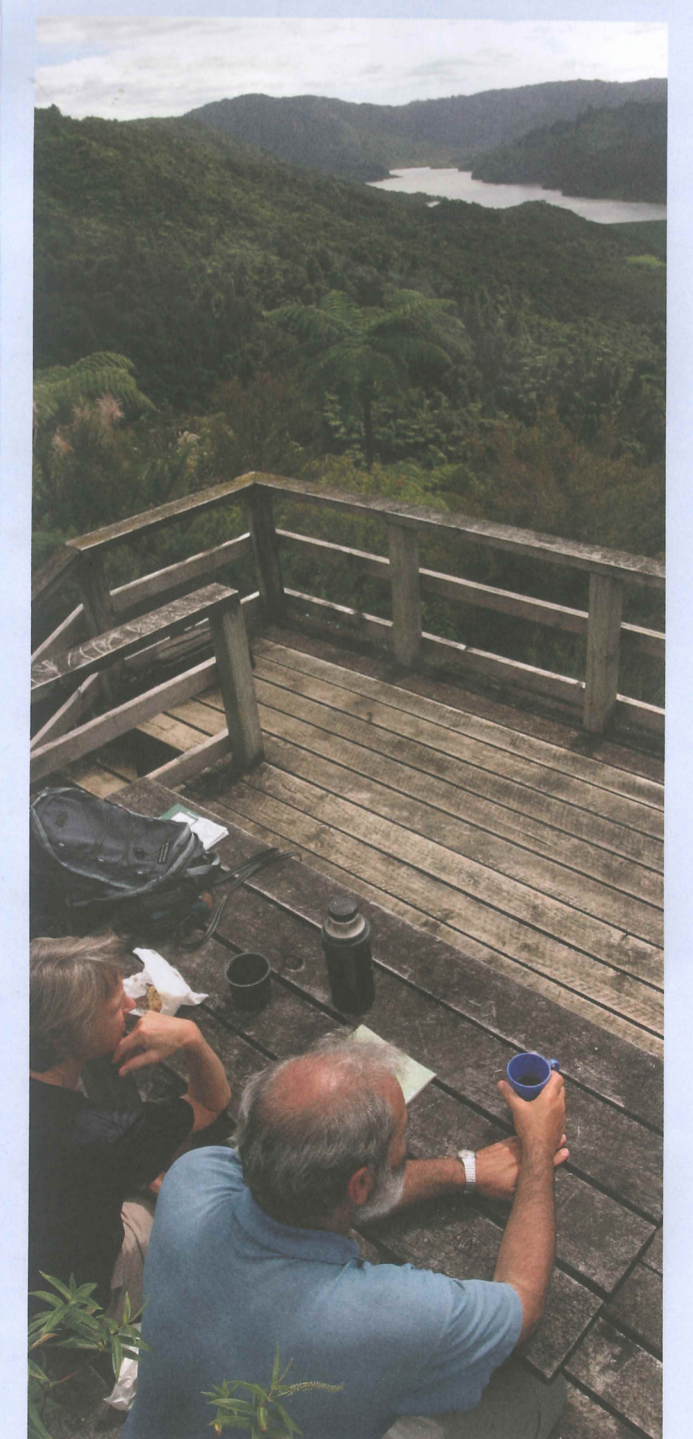
Campervans, vehicle units and caravans with a Self-containment certificate (SCC) can stay overnight for a maximum of two nights in approved sites. Conditions apply.

For camping information and bookings phone 09 301 0101 or visit aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

Lodges

Kōkako Lodge is nestled near Hunua Falls and is ideal for community groups, families or schools.

It has accommodation for 85 people with full kitchen and bathroom facilities. There are also facilities for kayaking and archery, a high and low ropes course, and an orienteering course. Phone Kōkako Lodge 09 292 4349 for more information.



Walking, tramping and mountain biking

The Hunua Ranges can be explored extensively on foot and in some areas by mountain bike. The feature walks on this page are a great introduction to the park with views, waterfalls, dams, native forest and its wildlife to discover.



Mangatangi Dam

Feature walks

Hunua Falls Loop Walk --- 20 minutes, 800m

This is a great way to see the popular Hunua Falls from all angles and enjoy the surrounding forest. The track is clearly signposted from the Hunua Falls car park. The track climbs from the Wairoa River through beautiful lush forest, follows along a shady stream and arrives at an excellent lookout platform. Once you have soaked up the views, continue along the track as it loops through more of the forest and back to the base of Hunua Falls.

Cossey-Massey Loop --- 3 hours, 8.3km

Combine the Cossey Gorge Track with the Massey Track to create this rewarding loop walk – a favourite of visitors to the Hunua Ranges. The track is metalled, but is steep in places and involves wading or rock hopping across Cossey Creek. Enjoy beautiful views, impressive native forest, sparkling waters and giant kauri trees along the way.

Wairoa Loop Track --- 3 hours, 6.2km

The Wairoa Loop Track climbs from the south side of the Wairoa picnic site (off Moumoukai Road) to a lookout platform 1.5km from the entrance. The lookout is a short distance from the main track and provides magnificent views of the Wairoa Reservoir.

Suspension Bridge Loop --- 1 hour 15 minutes, 3.9km

The loop combines the Suspension Bridge Track with part of the Wairoa Cossey Track. Start at the suspension bridge over the Wairoa Stream, near the car park on the Wairoa Reservoir Access Road (off Moumoukai Road). The walk takes you through lush vegetation, climbing to a spectacular lookout platform above the Wairoa Reservoir. Continue on the track to the junction with Wairoa Cossey Track. Turn right at the junction and follow the track back down to the road.



Walking in the bush

Mountain bike trails

Moumoukai Mountain Bike Skills Area

Practice your riding skills on the Moumoukai Mountain Bike Skills Area before heading out on your ride.

Valley Loop Track

1 hour 30 minutes, 14km

This easy grade loop follows Mangatangi Hill Road, Graeme White Road and Moumoukai Valley Road. Metal roads form a loop with shady spots for picnics and some good swimming holes in the river. You will need to cross Milne Stream at the end of Moumoukai Valley Road, then left onto Manning Road to return to the start. The best way is to start from the Mangatāwhiri car park and follow the river down through the paddocks to Mangatangi Hill Road.

River Track

15 minutes, 2.6km

A medium grade track that detours off the Valley Loop Track 1km from the carpark. Take this track before the Moumoukai Farm Track.

Moumoukai Farm Track

1 hour 45 minutes, 15km

An intermediate grade track that detours from the Valley Loop Track, 3.5km from the car park. Following the red markers, it winds through areas once cleared for farming where regenerating kākūka now borders the remaining paddocks. The single track crosses these paddocks and several small streams. You will need to cross Milne Stream at the end of Moumoukai Valley Road, then left onto Manning Road to return to the start.

Mangatāwhiri Challenge Track

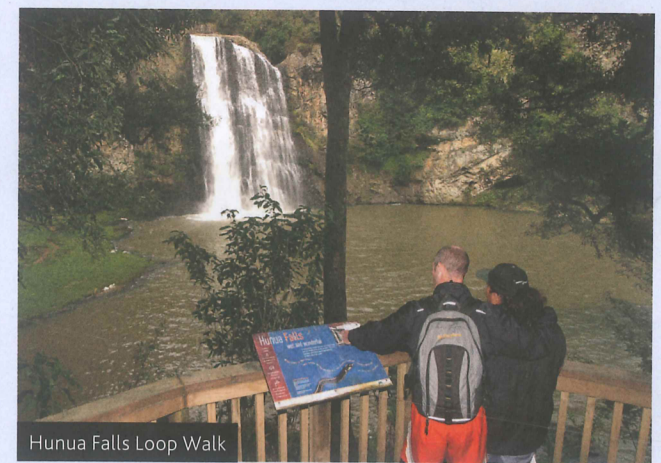
2 hours (depending on fitness/ability), 15km

From the Upper Mangatāwhiri Campground, follow the Waterline – Keeney Road. Just past the timber gate, turn left onto Wairoa Hill Road and then left onto the single track. The route follows along a ridge with excellent views of the Mangatāwhiri and Wairoa Dams. This track finishes at the Repeater Campground, join up with Repeater Road until the junction with Moumoukai Road, turn left and follow Moumoukai Road for a short distance before taking a left turn onto the Challenge Downhill Track back to the car park. (This track is difficult and is not recommended in wet conditions.)

Alternatively continue down Moumoukai Road to the Upper Mangatāwhiri Campground.



Key			



Hunua Falls Loop Walk

Remote tramping

The interior of the Hunua Ranges offers challenging tramps into remote areas requiring back country experience and navigation skills. These tracks should not be attempted without a detailed track map.

Remember to play it safe in the bush. Carry a detailed track map, warm clothing, food and drink, and always tell someone where you are going.

Do not attempt challenging tramps in bad weather. Remember to allow enough daylight hours, especially in winter.

Ranger recommendations

Tips on how to make the most of your visit to Hunua Ranges Regional Park.

If you have two hours...

Like many, you will want to make the Hunua Falls your first stop. Avoid the crowds by taking your picnic on one of the short walks and find your own secluded picnic spot.

If you have half a day...

There is a great range of walks and mountain bike tracks that will give you an introduction to the park in half a day. The Massey-Cossey Loop is a great half-day walk, or go mountain biking in the Mangatāwhiri Valley.

If you have a full day...

You may want to take on a longer, more remote tramp into the inner Hunua Ranges. Make sure you are well prepared. Alternatively, for a more leisurely escape, head to the Wairoa Reservoir where you will find a picnic area on the edge of the dam, and a choice of walking tracks and lookout points to explore.

Be safe in regional parks

The water safety code

1. Be prepared
2. Watch out for yourself and others
3. Be aware of the dangers
4. Know your limits

The outdoor safety code

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



International volunteers camping

Ranger contact details

To contact a park ranger use the phone at the information board at Hunua Falls, or use the phone at the car park near the Upper Mangatāwhiri Campsite. If using a mobile phone, call 09 301 0101.



Regenerating forest



The Cossey-Massey Loop takes walkers through impressive native forest to Cosseys Reservoir and back