

Tawharanui is an example of what pest free New Zealand could be.



The Ecology Bush beside the Waikokowai Stream is an area full of lush broadleaf trees, puriri, karaka, tairie, pukatea and nikau palms. Observe the puriri trunk fallen across the stream near the bridge, and is still growing. In the stream are kokopu and fresh water mussels. Watch for a very large longfin eel that lives under the bridge. Follow the track up hill.



The trail has taken you from the lush broad-leaf forest near the stream to a forest of kauri, totara, rimu and tanekaha. The photo shows a kauri trunk (left) a totara trunk (right). Enjoy the bush from the rest area of log seats before continuing the walk.



Out of the bush into farm pasture. Follow the yellow markers back down the road with extensive views of Anchor Bay. The gully known as M16 circled in the photo has had 60,000 trees planted over three years adding to a corridor of planting across the sanctuary.



Seaward Ecology Trail. There is a choice of going straight back down the farm road or taking the track down to the rocky foreshore and around the coast.

Tawharanui Open Sanctuary is a joint project between Auckland Council AC and Tawharanui Open Sanctuary Society Incorporated (TOSSI).



Tawharanui Open Sanctuary Society Inc.



Ecology Trail at Tawharanui Open Sanctuary



Ecology Trail is a loop walk taking 40 minutes to an hour. Ecology Bush is original primary forest with ancient native trees a peaceful place to pause. Most of the Tawharanui peninsula was once cleared for farming. The marine reserve is a 'no take-zone'.



The Ecology Trail starts 50 metres from the Anchor Bay car park at the Sanctuary Hut. Here there are maps and all the information you might require for walking. Tawharanui Open Sanctuary combines conservation, farming and recreation.

From the Sanctuary Hut take a walk up the knoll opposite for great views of Anchor Bay. From here you are looking at a marine reserve where protection has brought about abundant marine life. When the sea conditions are calm it is great for snorkelling among crayfish, snapper, leatherjackets and red moki. On the deeper reefs school fish are common.



Bottle nose dolphin are regular visitors to the area and if you are lucky you might see them playing and surfing in on the waves. Orca move through infrequently and feed on stingrays and eagle rays. In July 2003 an orca was rescued off Anchor Bay.



Now walk along the road to the view of the Waikokowai Stream mouth.



Waikokowai Stream mouth provides excellent habitat for a pair of paradise shelduck. A pair of rare pateke (brown teal duck) can often be seen feeding here. Two pairs of endangered New Zealand dotterel have made their nesting territories on the opposite bank for over seven years. They have fledged chicks most years. Colour bands on their legs allow us to observe their success.

Hauturu (Little Barrier Island) can be seen on the horizon out in the Hauraki Gulf. Further along -

A bridge over a small dam on your left was built by the Americans during the war. It supplied water to their camp at the west end of the park. If you choose the shorter Ecology Track, missing the coastal section, you will return over this bridge.



Now walk along the road following the yellow markers.



Waikokowai Stream has a mud dam with a grassy slope on your left. This was built to collect water for the farm troughs. Here you might encounter more pateke. Native kokopu in this stream use the overflow pipe as a pass to and from the sea. Now the trail will take you beside the Waikokowai Stream where secondary forest growth provides good habitat for birds. Watch for the friendly little North Island robin, noisy saddleback, chiming bell-bird, tui and native pigeon. Take time to listen to the bird song as you follow the yellow markers.



You are leaving the secondary growth zone. Please wash your boots at the station to prevent spreading a fungus like disease called kauri die back. Follow the track into a primary forest where you will experience a cathedral of ancient trees.