

# Waitohu Dunes



## Facilities

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Parking        |  Fishing       |
|  Walking tracks |  Boating       |
|  Dog walking    |  Kayaking      |
|  Swimming       |  Bird watching |
|  Surfing        |   |



## Highlight

Waitohu dunes and wetlands are a Kāpiti Coast gem, connecting the mountains to the sea. Here is a unique opportunity to see an easily accessible dune, estuarine and wetland ecosystem all in one.

## Description, values & significance

The Waitohu Stream flows from the Tararua Ranges to the Tasman Sea just north of Ōtaki. It contains a small estuary with salt marsh wetlands and dunes and hosts a valuable floral community, and abundant local wildlife including birds and whitebait. Local volunteers and Greater Wellington Regional Council are doing a lot of work to restore and protect this ecosystem to insure its health and resilience, including weed removal and re-vegetation.

## Accessibility/How to get there/particular time of year to visit

Access is off Moana Road, Ōtaki Beach, or along Ōtaki Beach from the south.

## Threatened species/species of interest

The dunes support a number of important threatened plants including *Euphorbia glauca* (planted), pingao, *Coprosma acerosa*, *Mimulus repens* (regionally endangered), *Primelea villiosa*, and *Carex testacea*. The salt marshes feature *Schoenus pungens* and *Apodasmia similis*, and the estuarine wetland sustains *Plagianthus divaricatus*. Bird watchers will be treated to caspian turn, white heron and banded dotterel. Habitats such as this are under significant pressure from development and are being rapidly lost.

## Key threats

Motorised recreation, pests (particularly rabbits), vandalism, eutrophication (the increasing concentration of nutrients), pollution and sedimentation (from development) reduce the health of the stream and dunes. The Waitohu Stream and estuary is a naturally dynamic system of changing water channels and shifting sands. Urban development has resulted in the control of natural flooding and erosion, thereby altering the ecology of the dunes, wetland and estuary.

## Walks (length)

Short walk (up to one hour)

## Walks Igrade!

Easy

## Manager

Kāpiti Coast District Council, private, Greater Wellington Regional Council and local community

## Protection status

South side is Kāpiti Coast District Council Reserve, north side in private ownership - proposed QEII covenant.

## How to get there



## Community Involvement

There is a voluntary community group, Waitohu Stream Care Group, who work together to restore the dunes, wetland and estuary of the Waitohu Stream.