



North Island brown kiwi. Photo: Andrew Walmsley

## A place to treasure

Mimiwhangata has a multitude of coastal stretches that are filled by broad beaches and sand dunes with a few areas of boulders, shingle and swamp. Beaches and dune areas are favoured nesting sites for threatened shorebirds.

Around the hard, greywacke rock cliffs are large pōhutukawa and kōwhai trees, both of which attract tūi in the flowering season.

Significant pockets of coastal forest remain on the hills above the beaches, dominated by kānuka, kohekohe, tōtara and taraire. Patches of karaka trees are generally associated with sites of early Māori habitation.

In the valleys, large pūriri trees are favoured by kukupā (native wood pigeon). One of the most colourful birds to be seen, the eastern rosella, is a recent introduction from Australia. Kākā, one of our native parrots, are occasional visitors from offshore-islands. At night, the calls of brown kiwi and morepork/ruru/koukou can often be heard. The recreated ponds and surrounding wetlands near the farm tracks are home to the rare brown teal/pāteke, spotless crane/pūweto and bittern/hūrepe.



Mimiwhangata. Photo: Danica Stent



Variable oystercatcher/tōrea pango. Photo: D. Stent

## Threatened shorebirds

The park is home to several species of threatened shorebirds, including the New Zealand dotterel/tūturiwhatu, which is a wading bird unique to New Zealand.

Sadly, New Zealand dotterel/tūturiwhatu numbers have declined over recent years because of habitat destruction, predation and harassment by people and dogs during the summer breeding season.

The New Zealand dotterel/tūturiwhatu will create nests, known as scrapes, on the beach and in the sand dunes. The birds lay two to three speckled eggs in their nest scrapes in the height of the holiday season.

The variable oystercatcher/tōrea pango is a commonly seen shorebird that varies in colour from pure black to pied and has an orange bill. It nests in similar areas to the New Zealand dotterel.

Breeding dotterel pairs will attempt to lead predators away from nests and chicks using conspicuous 'rat running', 'broken wing' and 'dying bird' displays. If you see these behaviours, leave the immediate area as quickly as possible. A sitting bird forced to leave a nest exposes its eggs or chicks to many dangers, including chilling or cooking in the sun, and attacks from dogs, gulls and other predators.

To keep disturbances to a minimum, temporary fences are erected every year around nesting sites. Please keep away from fenced-off areas and walk below the high tide line.

Sand dunes are fragile, as are many of the creatures that inhabit them.



New Zealand dotterel/tūturiwhatu. Photo: D. Dobbie

The marine areas around Mimiwhangata are just as varied in topography and biology as the land area. They include exposed and sheltered waters, as well as rocky and sandy coasts. These environments support a typical Northland open-coast biota. Sub-tropical reef fish, such as spotted black groper, are also known in the area.

Oral history and archaeological evidence shows Mimiwhangata was once inhabited by a substantial Māori community. Major pā sites are spread over the peninsula, and some evidence still exists of long-gone vegetable gardens on the hills.

## Getting there

Mimiwhangata Coastal Park is 48 km north of Whangarei and 52 km south of Russell. Take the old Whangarei - Russell coastal road, turn off at Helena Bay and continue on Webb Road. After Teal Bay, the road is unsealed, narrow and winding. Mimiwhangata Road is less than a kilometre on from the Ngahau Bay turn-off.

## Accommodation

**Mimiwhangata Lodge, Cottage and Beach House provide great options for a relaxing holiday beside Okupe Beach.**

All accommodations are available for up to week-long bookings, from 4 pm Friday until 10 am the following Friday. They offer comfortable accommodation right on the beach, with the lodge, cottage and beach house able to accommodate up to eight people each.

All linen is supplied for the lodge (except beach towels). Linen is not supplied in the cottage or beach house. All the accommodation is usually booked well in advance for the holiday season. Bookings are essential. Note: There is no cellphone coverage.



The lodge at Mimiwhangata. Photo: DOC

## Camping

**Basic camping is available in the secluded Waikahoa Bay.**

Water and toilets are provided.

There is no vehicle access directly to the campground, so all gear must be carried in over a steep, but short, path (approximately 5 minutes' walk).

Contact the Mimiwhangata Coastal Park for availability and bookings. Peak season bookings are accepted from 1 September for that Christmas and New Year.

- The gate to the campground is locked, and the combination is provided upon receipt of your deposit or camp fees.
- You must report to the resident ranger before selecting a camp site.
- No fires, dogs or overnight campervan stays are permitted within Mimiwhangata Coastal Park.



Aerial view of Waikahoa Campsite. Photo: DOC

## Conservation watch

Please help us look after this treasured place!

- Leave your dogs at home as they are a threat to nesting shorebirds, brown teal/pāteke and kiwi, and disturb the farm animals.
- Fires (including braziers) and fireworks are not permitted.
- Camping is only permitted at Waikahoa Bay.
- Please take all rubbish away with you.
- All native plants, wildlife and historic sites are strictly protected.
- Boats can only be launched by hand. There is vehicle boat launching to the north, at Teal Bay and Oakura.
- No nets or commercial fishing are permitted.



To report vandalism, or if you see sick or injured wildlife, phone the DOC HOTline 0800 362 468.

**DOC HOTline**  
**0800 362 468**  
Report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies  
For Fire and Search and Rescue Call 111

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### For bookings or further information, contact:

Mimiwhangata Coastal Park  
RD4 Hikurangi 0181  
Phone: (09) 433 6554  
Hours: 9.00 am – 4.30 pm  
Email: whangarei@doc.govt.nz  
www.doc.govt.nz

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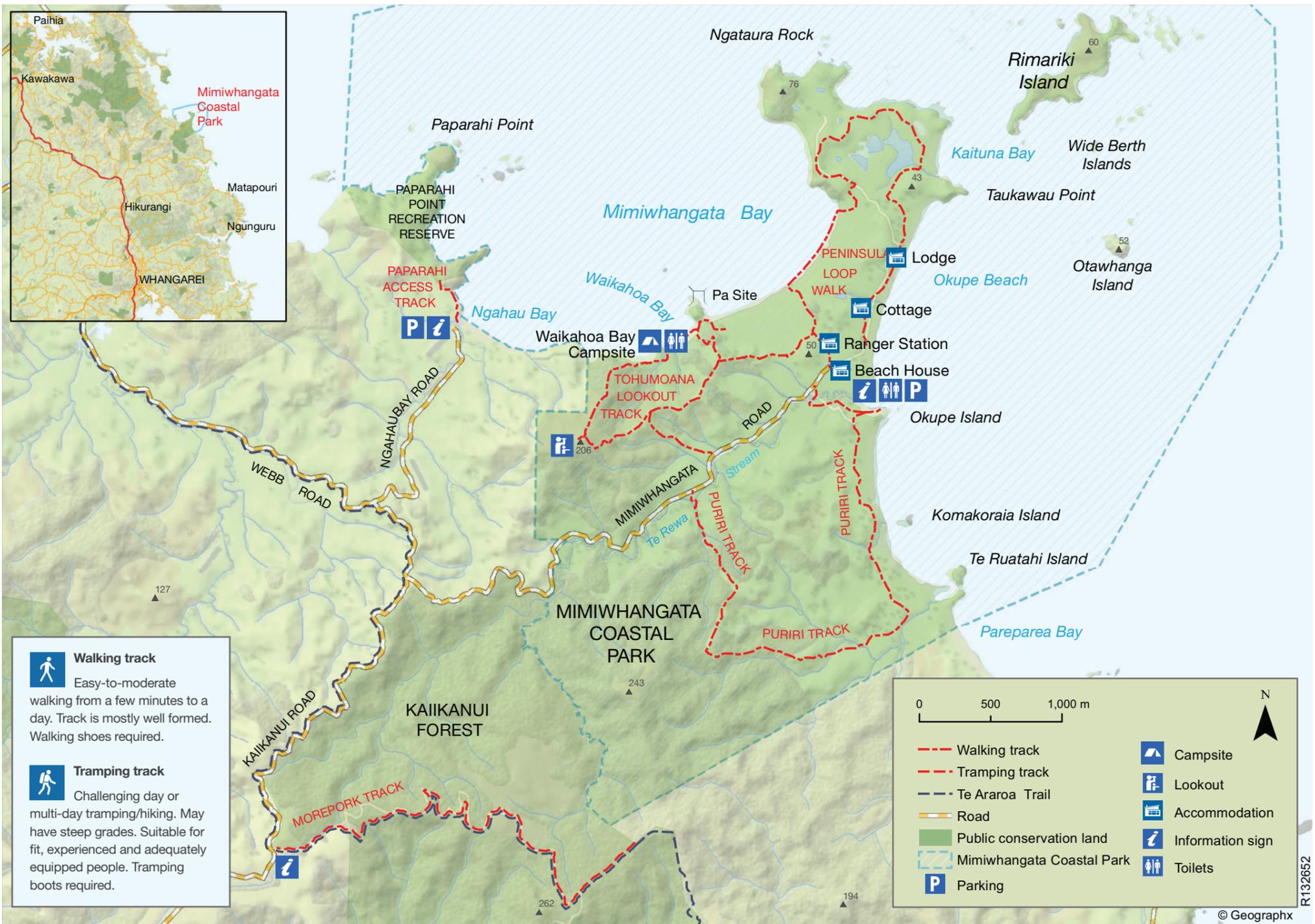
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# Mimiwhangata Coastal Park

NORTHLAND

Department of Conservation  
Te Papa Atawhai



## Recreation and walking

Mimiwhangata Coastal Park is a great place for beach activities such as swimming, snorkelling, picnicking and generally relaxing. It also has some great walking opportunities.

### Tohumoana Lookout Track

 Time: 1 hr 30 min – 2 hr return from the saddle  
Distance: 4 km

This track takes you to the high point of Tohumoana, where panoramic views await. The track is signposted from both the saddle of the Mimiwhangata Road and the car park at the end of the road.

There is an option to walk from the lookout down to Waikahoa Bay. This track option is quite steep with few steps and passes through regenerating mānuka and some large pōhutukawa before coming out onto the beach.

### Peninsula Loop Walk

 Time: 1 hr 30 min – 2 hr loop  
Distance: 5 km

This sidling walk around the headland provides a little of everything: sheltered beaches, rocky shores, archaeological sites, farmland, native vegetation, sweeping views along Mimiwhangata Beach and beyond. There are multiple opportunities to observe the local bird life, including the rare brown teal/pāteke – binoculars could be useful for keen bird watchers.

This is an informal route that follows the farm road north from the main car park, with many options for leaving or joining the track along the way.

### Puriri Track

 Time: 2 hr return  
Distance: 5 km

The track starts on the right-hand side of Mimiwhangata Road as it heads into the park. Cross Te Rewa Stream and follow the clearly marked clay track straight towards the bush (predominantly mānuka and regenerating tānekaha) to head up the side of the valley.

The route is quite steep up to the ridge top, from where there are impressive views of the peninsula and out towards the Poor Knights Islands. From the top, you can either return the way you came or continue along the ridge to head down to the coast and north along Okupe Beach back to the main car park. The start point is 2 km back along Mimiwhangata Road.

## Nearby tracks

There are two other tracks just outside the park that offer spectacular views, native forests and historical sites to explore.

### Morepork Track

 Time: 2 hr one way  
Distance: 4.2 km

Morepork Track is part of the Te Araroa Trail. It provides spectacular views out to the coast and the Poor Knight Islands. The track starts from the western end of Kaiikanui Road. Kaiikanui Road can be accessed either from the north through Helena Bay or from Pigs Head Road just off Whananaki North Road at Opuwhanga. This is a narrow winding dirt road – take care when driving.



### Paparahi Reserve Access Track

 Time: 15 min  
Distance: 500 m

The track starts from the car park at the end of Ngahau Bay Road, off Webb Road on the way to Mimiwhangata.

This track leads north along the beachfront from the car park at the western end of Ngahau Bay then, at the end of the beach, heads up the slope following the bush edge and on to farm land. Once in the reserve, roam as you please – there are no formed tracks in Paparahi Point Recreation Reserve. From the high ground at the back of the pā at Paparahi Point, the views on a fine day are stunning.

- ➔ Follow tracks and use stiles/kissing gates where provided.
- ➔ The rest of the farm is open for walking. Avoid disturbing stock and ensure gates are left as you found them.
- ➔ Farm hazards exist, and some fences are electrified.



Peninsula Loop. Photo: DOC

## Mimiwhangata Coastal park

Scientific studies in the 1970s revealed exceptional marine biodiversity in the near-shore habitats of the Mimiwhangata area.

### Protection

Special rules for this area aim to protect reef-dwelling fish and other species (such as pāua and rock oysters) that are vulnerable to overfishing, are long lived or have low reproductive rates.

- ➔ No commercial fishing is allowed in the area.
- ➔ Nets and long lines are not permitted, including those set by Kontiki and kites.

#### Amateur fishers may use only the following methods:

- ➔ Unweighted, single-hooked lines, trolling, spearing and hand picking
- ➔ Rock lobsters may be potted in a single pot per person, party or boat.

Normal regulations apply for permitted fishing in terms of daily bag limits, sizes, closed seasons, condition, shelling and pot escape gaps.

#### Amateur fishers may take only the following listed species of fish and shellfish:

<b>Finfish:</b>	snapper
barracouta	tuna (all types)
trevally	sole
billfish (all types)	shark (all types)
blue maomao	piper (garfish)
flounder (all types)	
grey mullet	<b>Shellfish:</b>
yellow-eyed mullet	rock lobster
mackerel (all types)	scallops
gurnard	common kina
kahawai	tuatua
kingfish	green-lipped mussel

School of trevally. Photo: B. Mackie