

## Wetlands you can visit in Canterbury

Stretching from the Clarence River in the north, to the Waitaki in the south, and tucked between the Southern Alps and the Pacific Ocean, the Canterbury Region is renowned for its extensive grassy plains and wide open spaces.

The plains were once clad in scrub and forests, burned off by Maori to encourage bracken fern growth (a food staple) and to create open hunting grounds for moa (large flightless birds). Forested wetlands were also burned, creating open water, swamps, lakes and lagoons.

Despite extensive drainage in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and its dry climate, the Canterbury Region retains a surprising diversity of wetlands, many fed by snow melt from the mighty Southern Alps, delivered by the region's iconic braided rivers.

With their wide shingle beds, sinuous channels, and highly variable flows, braided rivers are themselves a unique wetland habitat for several endangered species, including the black stilt (kakī) one of the world's rarest wading birds, and the McCann's skink. These rivers also provide pathways from upland wetlands to the sea for migratory fish like the longfin eel (tuna).

Alpine lakes, kettleholes, tarns, bogs, fens, and red tussocklands are also nestled in the montane areas, while swamps and marshes are found in the more fertile lowlands. Estuarine wetlands occur in many river mouths, coastal lagoons have

formed behind gravel bars, and underground wetlands are found in limestone country.

Many threatened species live in the region's wetlands, including fish like the lowland and upland longjaw galaxiid species, bignose galaxias, and the nationally endangered Canterbury mudfish. Birds such as the black stilt, wrybill, black-fronted tern, black-billed gull, the robust grasshopper, and a range of small low-growing plants also rely on Canterbury wetlands.

The region includes:

- **Te Waihora / Lake Ellesmere and Wainono** - extensive coastal lagoons valued for birdlife
- **Ō Tū Wharekai / Ashburton Lakes** – a cluster of montane lakes, kettleholes and tussock swamps
- **Travis and Otukaikino wetlands** – remnants of the great lowland swamps of Christchurch
- **Avon/Heathcote Estuary** – a complex of fresh and saline wetlands near Christchurch
- **Rangitata, Rakaia, Ashburton and Waimakariri** – great braided rivers
- **Northern Pegasus bay coastal wetlands**

Widespread liquefaction after the devastating 2011 and 2012 earthquakes was a sober reminder that much of the area under Christchurch City was once wetland. About 10% of Canterbury's wetlands remain, with even fewer in the lowlands, inland basins and along the coastal fringes. Remaining wetlands are threatened by weed invasion, introduced predators, and development. Vehicles also pose a threat to bird's nests on shingle beds.

Canterbury's wetlands are of special value to Ngai Tahu as sacred sites or food gathering areas. They are also valued by many Cantabrians for holiday making, fishing, kayaking, and as part of the attraction of the great outdoors. As interest in wetlands grows, many are now being restored or enhanced by agencies, businesses and community groups working in partnership.

### Canterbury Wetland Agencies

Environment Canterbury (Regional Council)  
[www.ecan.govt.nz](http://www.ecan.govt.nz)

Department of Conservation (DOC)  
[www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

Fish & Game New Zealand  
[www.fishandgame.org.nz](http://www.fishandgame.org.nz)

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Name	Features / Facilities (see key)	Access, further information
<p><b>Ō Tū Wharekai (Ashburton Lakes)</b></p> <p><i>Montane lakes / wetlands</i></p> <p>★★★★★</p>	<p>One of NZ's best inter-montane wetland systems. Nestled amongst high-country tussockland, against the towering Southern Alps. Mosaic of wetland habitats including the braided Upper Rangitata River, the 12 Ashburton Lakes and kettlehole wetlands formed after the retreat of glaciers, and some of Canterbury's best red tussock and <i>Carex secta</i> wetlands.</p> <p>Nationally important for wildlife; wrybills, Australasian crested grebes, scaup, black-fronted terns, Australasian bittern and marsh crane, species of fish and threatened plants such as pygmy clubrush (<i>Isolepis basilaris</i>), dwarf woodrush (<i>Luzula celata</i>) and water brome (<i>Amphibromus fluitans</i>).</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">      </div>	<p><a href="http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-visit/canterbury/mid-and-south-canterbury/o-tu-wharekai-ashburton-lakes/">www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-visit/canterbury/mid-and-south-canterbury/o-tu-wharekai-ashburton-lakes/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/science-and-technical/nzwetlands11.pdf">www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/science-and-technical/nzwetlands11.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/parks-and-recreation/places-to-visit/canterbury/raukapuka/hakatere-conservation-park.pdf">www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/parks-and-recreation/places-to-visit/canterbury/raukapuka/hakatere-conservation-park.pdf</a></p> <p>DOC Raukapuka Area Office (03) 693 1010</p> <p><i>At Mt Somers village, take Ashburton Gorge Road to the junction with Hakatere Heron Rd. Head on towards Lake Clearwater and L. Emma or turn right to L. Emily and L. Heron. Signs indicate walking tracks. For great views of the braided upper Rangitata River, climb Mt Sunday (fortress of Edoras in the Lord of the Rings film). From the Lake Emma car park, head around the lake, visit the historic hut and pass raupō and Carex wetlands to Lake Camp (2.5 hr).</i></p>
<p><b>Ashley Estuary and River</b></p> <p>★★★★</p>	<p>A nationally significant coastal wetland with dune and coastal landscapes. One of the largest largely unmodified wetlands in Canterbury. Braided, shallow channels provide a variety of alluvial shingle, mudflats, sand and shell banks for local wildlife, including royal spoonbill, black-billed gull, banded dotterel, white-fronted tern and the endangered wrybill. Important breeding area of migratory birds and spawning ground for inaka (whitebait).</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">      </div>	<p><a href="http://www.ecan.govt.nz/your-region/living-here/regional-parks/ashley-rakahuri-regional-park/">www.ecan.govt.nz/your-region/living-here/regional-parks/ashley-rakahuri-regional-park/</a></p> <p><i>Rakahuri Walkway (1 hour return) starts on the stop bank at the end of Park Terrace, Waikuku Beach. Follow the track to the lagoon or continue along the stop bank to the SH1 road bridge. Return along riverbed tracks, with options of rejoining the stop bank track. The riverbed tracks lead to the Ashley River mouth and views of the Ashley River, Saltwater Creek Estuary, and the estuary. Popular spots for fishing, camping, family gatherings, surfing and swimming. Waikuku beach also has good estuary views.</i></p> <p><i>Upstream, the Mike Kean Walkway starts in Rangiora near the Ashley River Bridge Picnic Area, Inland Scenic Route 72. Follow the winding track to the railway bridge and return along the stop bank or track.</i></p>

### KEY



Walks



Birdlife



Boating



Fishing / shooting



Highly scenic



Info centre



Interpretation panels



Lookout/ bird hide



Picnic area



Accommodation



Swimming or snorkelling

★★★★★ Must see

★★★★ Worth a special visit

★★★ Worth a short detour

★★ Plan to visit if passing

★ Short stop if passing

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<p><b>Avon/ Heathcote Estuary</b></p> <p><i>Estuary/ wetland complex</i></p> <p>★★★★</p>	<p>A diverse complex of salt marsh, mudflats, salt meadow, coastal bush and freshwater wetland areas at the mouth of the Avon and Heathcote Rivers in Christchurch's eastern suburbs. The estuary and associated wetlands and Bromley oxidation ponds host one of the highest densities of waterbirds in NZ. Over 100 species and up to 32,000 individuals have been recorded.</p> <p>Bexley Wetland - salt marsh, salt meadow, coastal bush and swamp bordering the Avon River. Restoration project underway.</p> <p>Te Huingi Manu Wildlife Reserve - Bromley oxidation ponds and pasture on western side of the estuary. Intensive predator control to protect breeding waterfowl.</p> <p>Charlesworth Saltmarsh along the southwest corner of the estuary is also being enhanced for birdlife. Tidal culverts will increase connection with the estuary.</p> 	<p><a href="http://www.estuary.org.nz/">www.estuary.org.nz/</a></p> <p><a href="https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/charlesworth-wetland-reserve">https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/charlesworth-wetland-reserve</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.mzih.org.nz/pages/2003_Conference_Proceedings_PDFs/22_Andrew_Crossland.pdf">www.mzih.org.nz/pages/2003_Conference_Proceedings_PDFs/22_Andrew_Crossland.pdf</a></p> <p>Christchurch City Council (03) 941 8999</p> <p><i>Avon River walkway extends along the eastern side of the River from Pages Road to Bridge Street (1 hour return) and beyond to Ebbside Street and then variously via streets and walking track to Spit Reserve.</i></p> <p><i>Bexley Wetland access and car park, corner of Wairoa Street and Morganwood Rd.</i></p> <p><i>Charlesworth via 1005 Ferry Road. Heathcote River Towpath and Steam Wharf Stream carpark at Settlers Crescent, off Ferry Road, information panels and viewing platform.</i></p>
<p><b>Brooklands Lagoon</b></p> <p><i>Coastal lagoon</i></p> <p>★★★★</p>	<p>This freshwater wetland, salt marsh and narrow 270 ha lagoon at the mouths of the Waimakariri, Kaiapoi and Styx Rivers is an important link in a chain of wetlands that runs along the central Canterbury coast. Breeding habitat, wintering site and feeding stop for birds migrating between the North and South Islands, supporting over 74 species and 3000 birds in peak season. Resident birds include white-faced heron, pied shag, oystercatcher, banded dotterel, red-billed gull, spotted shag, Australasian bittern and marsh crake.</p> <p>Riparian restoration projects at various locations along the Styx River, such as Janet Stewart Reserve off Marshlands Road.</p> 	<p><a href="https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/spencer-park/brooklands-lagoon-walk">https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/spencer-park/brooklands-lagoon-walk</a></p> <p>Christchurch City Council (03) 941 8999</p> <p><i>14 km northeast of Christchurch. Main access is off the Lower Styx Road and Heyders Road. Well sign posted. Short and long (3-4 hours) walks, 40 mins return to bird hide.</i></p> <p><i>See also Waimakariri Reg. Park/ Te Ruakaka Nature Reserve (below)</i></p>

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<p><b>Mackenzie Basin</b></p> <p><i>Montane wetlands</i></p> <p>★★★★</p>	<p>The Mackenzie Basin is the largest inter-montane basin in New Zealand, part of the South Island 'high country'. It has many wetlands including glacial moraines, braided rivers, kettleholes and lakes. Short walks around Twizel take you to several including Ben Ohau wetland, Waterwheels wetland, Wairepo Kettleholes and Pukaki Kettlehole.</p> <p>The 90-ha constructed Ruataniwha Wetlands host many bird species in summer such as black-fronted tern, torea (South Island pied oyster-catchers), tūturiwhatu (banded dotterels) and poaka (pied stilts). This is also the home of the rare black stilt (kakī). Unique to NZ, and once common on braided rivers and wetlands nationwide, <a href="http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/ahuriri-conservation-park/ohau-moraines-wetland-complex/">www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/ahuriri-conservation-park/ohau-moraines-wetland-complex/</a> now one of the world's rarest wading birds. The big nose galaxias - a fish found only in the Mackenzie Basin – live in small springs or wetland-fed tributaries in the complex. Rare and threatened plants include the small summer green lily, coral broom, several buttercup species and a sedge.</p> 	<p><a href="http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/lake-pukaki-area/things-to-do/lake-pukaki-area-tracks/">www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/lake-pukaki-area/things-to-do/lake-pukaki-area-tracks/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/ruataniwha-conservation-park/things-to-do/tracks/lake-ohau-area-tracks/">https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/ruataniwha-conservation-park/things-to-do/tracks/lake-ohau-area-tracks/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/ahuriri-conservation-park/ohau-moraines-wetland-complex/">www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/ahuriri-conservation-park/ohau-moraines-wetland-complex/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/omarama-area/things-to-do/wairepo-kettleholes-track/">www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/omarama-area/things-to-do/wairepo-kettleholes-track/</a></p> <p>DOC Twizel Area Office (03) 435 0802</p> <p><i>Walk to Ben Ohau Wetland off Pukaki Canal Road, on the western outskirts of Twizel. Follow a 4WD track (marked easement) to a small gate in the fence to access the wetland. Waterwheel wetland / Lake Pohaka is on the Darts Bush Stream track. Pukaki Kettlehole walk from just north of Pukaki River spillway. Explore the Ohau Moraines from the end of Quailburn Road 4.5km nth of Omarama. The site can be explored on foot or horseback.</i></p>
<p><b>Ocean Mail Scenic Reserve, Chatham Islands</b></p> <p><i>Coastal lagoon</i></p> <p>★★★★</p>	<p>The cloudy, cool, humid, climate of the Chatham Islands, 800 kms east of the South Island, supports extensive wetlands: rain-fed infertile bogs on elevated peat surfaces; swamps and fens in small valleys; dune lakes, seepages, damp turf and estuaries near the coast. They support 23 locally endemic wetland plants, including the forest tree tarahināu (<i>Dracophyllum arboreum</i>), and the peat-forming Chatham island bamboo rush (<i>Sporodanthus traversii</i>), and an endemic mudfish, <i>Galaxias rekohua</i>.</p> <p>The extensive Te Whanga Lagoon occupies a fifth of the area of Chatham Island. Ocean Mail Reserve has walkways and views.</p> 	<p><a href="http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/chatham-islands/places/ocean-mail-scenic-reserve/">www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/chatham-islands/places/ocean-mail-scenic-reserve/</a></p> <p>DOC Chatham Islands Area Office (03) 305 0098</p> <p><i>Accessed from mainland New Zealand by scheduled flights. No public transport on the island. Overnight stay recommended.</i></p> <p><i>A sign and cattle stop indicate each end of Ocean Mail Reserve on North Road towards Kaiangaroa, 12 km from the Wharekauri turn off. A short track to the dunes gives views of the beach and sea. Short or longer walks in the reserve. 4 km (1 hour) circuit.</i></p>

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<p><b>Te Waihora Lagoon (Lake Ellesmere)</b></p> <p><i>Brackish lagoon</i></p> <p>★★★★</p>	<p>At 20,000 ha Te Waihora (meaning 'water spread out') is New Zealand's largest coastal lagoon. It is shallow (average 1.4 m), brackish and usually closed to the sea by the 26 km long Kaitorete Spit. It is vitally important wetland habitat for a large range of native species including the threatened Australasian bittern. Over 160 species of bird and 37 species of native fish have been recorded, and up to 98,000 wetland birds use the lake at any one time. Migratory species include curlew sandpiper, sharptail sandpiper, pectoral sandpiper, red necked stint, ruddy turnstone, golden Pacific plover, red knot and the bar-tailed godwit, wrybill, black stilt and the banded dotterel. It is an important location for cultural, commercial and recreational activities.</p> 	<p><a href="http://www.wet.org.nz/">www.wet.org.nz/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.selwyn.govt.nz/recreation-And-facilities/parks-And-reserves/lake-ellesmere">https://www.selwyn.govt.nz/recreation-And-facilities/parks-And-reserves/lake-ellesmere</a></p> <p><i>Harts Creek Wildlife Management Reserve on the western margins of Te Waihora, 40 minutes from Christchurch has bird hide and boardwalk (40 mins return). Drive to Leeston via Lincoln. Turn left at the Lakeside turnoff, drive 10 km down Lake Road to the intersection with Harts Rd, then follow Harts Rd to the intersection with Timber Yard Rd and Lower Lake Rd. The reserve is signposted on the left with a car park down a short road.</i></p> <p><i>The boardwalk can sometimes be submerged. Please keep to the track as access crosses private land.</i></p>
<p><b>Travis Wetland Nature Heritage Park</b></p> <p><i>Lowland swamp</i></p> <p>★★★★</p>	<p>At 116 ha, this is the largest lowland swamp and fen basin remaining in Christchurch. It supports nearly 80% of Canterbury's pre-European wetland plant species, 70% of its lowland and freshwater bird species, and the rare Canterbury mudfish. Visitor centre, education programmes for schools, wheelchair friendly walks. Corsers Stream to the south is a stormwater channel restored to a natural creek. A pathway follows the streambank.</p> 	<p><a href="https://traviswetland.org.nz/">https://traviswetland.org.nz/</a></p> <p><a href="https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/travis-wetland/travis-wetland-walk/">https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/travis-wetland/travis-wetland-walk/</a></p> <p>Christchurch City Council (03) 941 8999</p> <p><i>Beach Road (main car park and access) and Mairehau Road (car park). Beach Road gates open from 8am to 5:30pm. Nearest Bus: 60 Parklands. Walkways (3.5 km), viewing tower, bird-hide, information panels, kiosk and education centre. Corsers Stream off Rebecca Ave, accessed via Anzac Drive, New Brighton Road and Brooker Ave</i></p>
<p><b>Tūtaepatu Lagoon</b></p> <p><i>Spring-fed lagoon</i></p> <p>★★★★</p>	<p>Spring-fed 49 ha lagoon and constructed wetlands within the 575 ha Tūhaitara Coastal Park (between the Waimakariri River mouth and Waikuku). Feeds a coastal freshwater system that runs the entire length of the park. Home to a diverse range of species including fish such as mudfish, inaka (whitebait), eel and birds such as bitten, banded dotterels, black-fronted dotterel and wrybill. Community and council restoration project (weed and animal pest control, planting natives including kahikatea and totara).</p> 	<p><a href="http://www.tuhaitarapark.org.nz/Tuhaitara_Park/About_the_Park.html">www.tuhaitarapark.org.nz/Tuhaitara_Park/About_the_Park.html</a></p> <p><i>25 km north of Christchurch. The main access to the park is from the end of Woodend Beach Road, a walking/cycling track leads to the lagoon. A viewing platform allows you to see over the raupo beds into the open water to view the many species of waterfowl, wetland and forest bird species.</i></p>

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<p><b>Waimakariri River Regional Park wetlands</b></p> <p><i>Braided river</i></p> <p>★★★★</p>	<p>Huge (15,000 ha) regional park on a braided river just north of Christchurch City. Many wetlands to explore, including:</p> <p><b>The Sanctuary (Templars Island)</b> - last remaining sizeable swamp in the lower River. Over 40 native plant species, Australasian bittern, marsh crane and spotless crane. Undergoing restoration.</p> <p><b>Te Rauakaaka Nature Reserve</b> - adjacent to Brooklands Lagoon, south side of the River. Regionally-significant saltmarsh and freshwater wetland habitats support threatened swamp birds and waders.</p> 	<p><a href="http://ecan.govt.nz/advice/recreation-and-parks/waimakariri-park/pages/default.aspx">http://ecan.govt.nz/advice/recreation-and-parks/waimakariri-park/pages/default.aspx</a></p> <p>Environment Canterbury (03) 353 9007</p> <p><i>Just 10 minutes north of Christchurch City. The main entrance for The Sanctuary is off Coutts Island Road if you are coming from Christchurch. Te Rauakaaka can be accessed from Kainga Rd on the eastern side of the railway line or walk along the stopbanks from Brooklands. Good views from the top of the stopbank between Brooklands and Kainga. Further walking trails planned.</i></p>
<p><b>Otipua Wetland</b></p> <p><i>Lake / restoration project</i></p> <p>★★★</p>	<p>Off State Highway One just south of Timaru, this wetland, 4 ha lake and channelized creek complex was formerly a large entrapped lagoon. Being restored by the Otipua Wetland Charitable Trust to create a significant habitat for lizards, fish and birds including royal spoonbill, pied stilt, swan, shelduck, scaup, paradise duck, white and white-faced heron, cormorant species, black-billed gull.</p> 	<p><a href="http://www.timaru.govt.nz/community/recreation/walking-and-cycling/otipua-wetlands">www.timaru.govt.nz/community/recreation/walking-and-cycling/otipua-wetlands</a></p> <p>Timaru i-SITE (03) 688 6163</p> <p><i>Loop walk (1 hr) off King Street/Main South Road. Track on southwest side of Saltwater Creek bridge gives quicker access to wetland, or park in Rothwell St and walk towards and over the bridge to the far side of the creek). Another frequently used access point is from Patiti Point Carpark – end of Patiti Rd.</i></p>
<p><b>Otutaikino Memorial Wetland Gardens (Wilson's Swamp)</b></p> <p><i>Urban wetland</i></p> <p>★★★</p>	<p>A 13 ha remnant of former swamp that dominated the Christchurch landscape in the mid 19th Century. A joint venture between Department of Conservation and Lamb &amp; Hayward Funeral Directors since 1992 is replacing willow forest with kahikatea swamp forest as memorial park. Pukeko, shoveler, grey teal, marsh crane and bittern reported.</p> 	<p><a href="http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/otukaikino-wildlife-management-reserve/">www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/otukaikino-wildlife-management-reserve/</a></p> <p>DOC, Mahaanui Area Office (03) 371 3706</p> <p><i>Entrance off Main North Road, between Chaney's Corner and the Belfast end of the northern motorway, 1 km north of Christchurch. Walkways (20-35 mins), interpretation boards, lookout areas, picnic area, wheelchair friendly paths</i></p>
<p><b>Riccarton Bush</b></p> <p><i>Swamp forest</i></p> <p>★★★</p>	<p>A majestic grove of 600-year-old kahikatea trees, the latest generation of a forest that established on this site 3000 years ago and the last kahikatea swamp forest on the Canterbury Plains. A predator-proof fence surrounds the stand and a historic house and gardens. Loop track (10 min), guided walks by arrangement.</p> 	<p><a href="http://www.riccartonhouse.co.nz/riccarton_bush/">www.riccartonhouse.co.nz/riccarton_bush/</a></p> <p>Riccarton Bush Trust (03) 348 4277</p> <p><i>16 Kahu Road, Riccarton. From the centre of Christchurch City, take Deans Avenue through Hagley Park to Kilmarnock Street and the Kahu Road entrance. No 24 bus from the city.</i></p>

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<p><b>Coopers Lagoon/Muriwai</b></p> <p><i>Coastal lagoon</i></p> <p>★★★</p>	<p>Lagoon wetlands and a wild coastal walk just inland from the coast, south of Taumutu (near Te Waihora). Abundant birdlife, including black swans, pukeko, royal spoonbill, bittern, and other waterfowl. A gentle walking track meanders alongside the Lagoon and adjacent sand dunes.</p> 	<p><a href="http://www.selwynconnect.co.nz/new-zealand/southbridge/activities/cooper-s-lagoon">www.selwynconnect.co.nz/new-zealand/southbridge/activities/cooper-s-lagoon</a></p> <p><i>From Southbridge take High Street towards the sea, turn left into Milltown Road head 2 km to a crossroad and turn right into Inwoods Road. Follow Inwoods Road for 4km until it becomes McEvedys Road. Travel 2.4 km down McEvedy's Road until you reach a small bridge and carpark.</i></p> <p><i>A 30 min track borders the Lagoon. Return on the same track or turn right into the sand dunes and return via the beach (stony, steep and exposed). <b>Beach not suitable for swimming.</b></i></p>
<p><b>Wainono Lagoon</b></p> <p><i>Freshwater lagoon</i></p> <p>★★★</p>	<p>A large (480 ha) river-fed, shallow freshwater lagoon and swamp separated from the sea by a gravel bar. Long-fin and short-fin eels, brown trout, flounder, whitebait, smelt, yellow eyed mullet, lampreys and 57 bird species recorded. The community, local iwi, and regional council are undertaking a restoration programme to control weeds, fence out stock, and plant natives in the lagoon, swamp and tributaries.</p> 	<p><a href="file:///C:/Users/karen/zMS%20folders/Downloads/WainonoLagoonMap.PDF">file:///C:/Users/karen/zMS%20folders/Downloads/WainonoLagoonMap.PDF</a></p> <p><i>On the coast east of Waimate, 30 mins south of Timaru. A 5 hr return track along the beach. Walkers can start at either the Dead Arm end off Poingdestres Road to the south, or the Hook Historic Memorial off Hook Beach Road to the north. Wetland areas are more quickly accessed from the Hook Beach Road entrance.</i></p>
<p><b>Halswell Quarry</b></p> <p><i>Constructed ponds &amp; wetland</i></p> <p>★★★</p>	<p>Halswell Quarry, the source of much of the blue-grey stone seen in many of Christchurch's older buildings, ceased operation and became a 60 ha Conservation Area in 1999. Its restoration involved creation of wetland areas and extensive native planting, creating habitat for a variety of birdlife. The park has recreational walks, historic sites and botanical collections.</p> 	<p><a href="https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/port-hills/halswell-quarry/halswell-quarry-walks/canterbury-wetland-walk/">https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/port-hills/halswell-quarry/halswell-quarry-walks/canterbury-wetland-walk/</a></p> <p><i>The entrance to the main car park is 1 km along Kennedys Bush Road. Gates are open from 7.30am to 7pm and, during daylight savings months, from 7.30am to 9pm.</i></p>
<p><b>Horseshoe Lake Reserve</b></p> <p><i>Oxbow lake, swamp forest</i></p> <p>★★</p>	<p>A loop of the Avon River (Otakaro) was cut off to form this ox-bow lake. Of traditional importance to Maori for seasonal harvest of fish and birds, in 1904 the site became a wildfowl sanctuary, with boating, fishing, shooting and snaring prohibited. A track and boardwalk meanders through groves of willows over native karamu, cabbage trees, tussock sedges, ferns.</p> 	<p><a href="https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/travis-wetland/horseshoe-lake-perimeter-walk">https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/travis-wetland/horseshoe-lake-perimeter-walk</a></p> <p>Christchurch City Council (03) 941 8999</p> <p><i>Main car park at the corner of Lake Terrace Road and Horseshoe Lake road. Further access is via Liggins, Parish or Reaby Streets (all off Queensbury Street) or off New Brighton Road next to the Council's pumping station and to the west, off Broomfield Terrace and Lake Terrace Rd</i></p> <p><i>Well developed walkway (30 min return), boating (no power boats), picnic sites.</i>  <b>All tracks and toilets were closed following earthquakes in 2012. Contact Christchurch City Council for current status.</b></p>

### Wetlands to visit in Canterbury

Name	Features / Facilities (see key)	Access, further information
<p><b>Styx Mill Reserve</b></p> <p><i>Fen, swamp, lakes</i></p> <p>★★</p>	<p>Significant remnant fen (no public access), swamp, riparian vegetation and constructed lakes along the Styx River – a spring fed river system that originates and flow through Christchurch City to Brooklands Lagoon. Willow forest, sedges, rushes, and several locally uncommon species, including sphagnum moss. Restoration to create an important new wetland and vital link in the network of wetlands on the northern edge of the city. The constructed ponds attract considerable wildlife, 23 wetland bird species recorded.</p> 	<p><a href="https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/styx-mill">https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/styx-mill</a></p> <p>Christchurch City Council (03) 941 8999</p> <p><i>Entrances from Styx Mill Road and Husseys Road. Panako Walkway from Husseys Road car park crosses a farm-bridge, then follows the river over a footbridge to the ponds. A side-track goes to a seat at Contemplation Point, but the main track follows a four-wheel drive track beside the ponds to the Cavendish Road exit. About 30 minutes walk one way. The circular Hussey View Walkway is wheelchair friendly.</i></p>
<p><b>The Groynes</b></p> <p><i>Wetlands and man-made lakes</i></p> <p>★★</p>	<p>Series of wetlands and lakes on the Waimakariri River south branch. Family-friendly park with walking, fishing, canoeing, picnics, boat hire. Common waterfowl, mallard, paradise, grey teal, NZ scaup, pukeko and kingfishers, as well as trout and other fish. While mostly exotic vegetation cover, small remnants still remain of native vegetation. Habitat restoration is ongoing to encourage more native wildlife.</p> 	<p><a href="https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/the-groynes">https://ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/explore-parks/plains-and-wetlands/the-groynes</a></p> <p>Christchurch City Council (03) 941 8999</p> <p><i>Access off Johns Road (SH1) and Groynes Drive, 9 km north-west of Christchurch Well sign posted. The main track, the Waimairi Walkway is on flat ground and suitable for people of all levels of fitness, age and mobility. Long (1.5 hrs) and short (20 min) loops from picnic area.</i></p> <p><i>East of the Groynes is Roto Kohatu off Saywers Arms Road, a recreational area for water sports.</i></p>
<p><b>Wigram Pond</b></p> <p>★★</p>	<p>A stormwater pond in Canterbury Agricultural Park, planted with native sedges and is an attractive area for walkers and picnickers. Tracks continue along the upper Heathcote River as it winds through the suburb of Hillmorton alongside the Curletts Reserve.</p> 	<p><a href="http://www.halswellcommunity.net.nz/index.php/info/environment/parks">http://www.halswellcommunity.net.nz/index.php/info/environment/parks</a></p> <p><i>Wigram, Christchurch. From the Templetons Road carpark, walk along the river over two footbridges to the third footbridge, 20 minutes return, or 1 hour return around pond and back, 1 hour 10 minutes return for full circuit along the Heathcote River (return on same track or loop back via Lincoln Rd). Shorter access to pond via Warren Cres.</i></p>