Conservation in action! Pukaha Mount Bruce plays a key role in the captive breeding of threatened wildlife, restoring native wildlife to the area, as a valuable education facility and as a tourist icon.

Pukaha Mount Bruce in northern Wairarapa incorporates the National Wildlife Centre and is one of New Zealand’s most important conservation areas. Visitors are able to experience some of our rarest species that cannot be viewed anywhere else on mainland New Zealand. Encounter wild kaka and kakariki swooping in for the 3pm daily feed or massive eels churning the water at their 1.30pm feeding time. Entice café overlooks the forest where you can watch the takaha forage.

Pukaha Mount Bruce is located on State Highway 2, 30km north of Masterton and 10km south of Eketahuna. Vehicle access includes a sealed road and carpark. There is space for motor-homes and buses to park. Open daily from 9am to 4:30pm. Closed Christmas Day.

The area contains a regionally threatened shrub Teucridium parvifolium, a nationally endangered tree, Pittosporum obcordatum, a critically endangered tree, Olearia gardneri and threatened native birds including kokako, and stitchbird (hihi). The captive residents include tuatara, the living “fossil” that roamed the earth with the dinosaurs, and kiwi poking through the leaf-litter in the nocturnal house. You will also see takaha, a colourful flightless bird that was saved from extinction through the pioneering efforts of the Pukaha Mount Bruce National Wildlife Centre.

Ongoing pest control is critical for the restoration of the Pukaha forest. Thousands of pest animals, including possums, rats, mustelids, mice and feral cats, have been killed in this operation. Protecting Pukaha forest means more than just protecting the reserve itself, a control zone around the reserve buffers it and keeps it as free from pests as possible.
Community Involvement
Pukaha Mount Bruce is under the guardianship of a strong partnership between The National Wildlife Centre Trust, Rangitāne o Wairarapa and the Department of Conservation. These three groups are drawn together in to their unique community partnership through the Pukaha Mount Bruce Board which was established in 2006. They share a common vision to restore the place to its natural, tranquil beauty and to restore the forest’s legendary dawn chorus. It contains the Pukaha Mount Bruce National Wildlife Centre. Conservation education is a big feature of Pukaha Mount Bruce, running programmes for up to 4000 students a year.

Walks (length)
As well as walking around the aviaries, there is a 4km, 2 hour loop track around the lowland podocarp forest of Pukaha Mt Bruce that climbs to a look out. Access to this track is only available via the Pukaha Mount Bruce Visitor Centre and an entry fee is required.

Walks (grade)
Easy to moderate

Managers
Pukaha Mount Bruce is under the guardianship of a strong partnership between The National Wildlife Centre Trust, Rangitāne o Wairarapa and the Department of Conservation.

How to get there