Hemi Matenga

Facilities

- Public transport (to Waikanae)
- Parking
- Walking tracks
- Dog walking (on leash)
- Look out
- Bird watching

Highlight

Climb the hills above Waikanae and get a taste of the Tararua’s. Explore the forest on the way to the top and be rewarded with panoramic views of the Kāpiti coast.

Description, values & significance

The 330 hectare Hemi Matenga Scenic Reserve overlooking Waikanae protects one of the largest remaining areas of kohekohe forest in the Wellington region, and is one of the largest areas of this forest type in the North Island. The reserve rises steeply from 150 metres to its highest point, Te Au, 514 metres above sea level and offers walking and tramping tracks of various lengths and difficulty.

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

The main entrance to Hemi Matenga Scenic Reserve is at Tui Crescent, where there is a small parking area by a reservoir. Kakariki Grove provides access beside another reservoir 500 metres south of the Tui Crescent entrance. A tramping track back down from the summit exits the reserve at Huia Street, about 2 km north of Tui Street.

Threatened species/species of interest

The reserve is on the western edge of the Tararua Ranges and hosts gecko, skink, and native birds such as the falcon. The forest is mostly kohekohe and olearia paniculata (akiraho). Hemi Matenga is part of a network of ecosystem “stepping stones” linking the Tararua’s to Kāpiti Island, particularly for birds and also plant species as they can spread using the network. Many forest birds can be seen in the reserve including fantail, tui, bellbird and kereru.

Key threats

The Department of Conservation (DOC) manages Hemi Matenga and pests are controlled in the reserve. However, reinvasion from the adjacent forest is a constant threat that will only increase now possum control in the adjacent Tararua Forest Park is being withdrawn. DOC have focused resources on Project Kaka (a band extending from Mount Bruce to Otaki).

Walks (length)

You can walk ‘Kohekohe Walk’ an easy 30 minute walk, ‘Parata Walking Track’ an easy 1-2 hour return, or ‘Te Au Track’ a 3-4 hour track for experienced well-equipped trampers.
Walks (grade)
Easy to hard

Manager
Department of Conservation

Protection status
Scenic Reserve

How to get there