Nikau Reserve

Facilities

- Parking
- Walking tracks
- Bird watching
- Picnic table
- Look out

Highlight
Pillar-like Nikau Palms, the most southern palm tree species in the world, line the track like Greek columns and once you climb above them you are treated to panoramic views.

Description, values & significance
This reserve is a regionally significant kohekohe/ nikau forest remnant. The nikau forest, with its nikau pillars, provide a stunning background to picnics or photos. The panoramic views from the top take in the coastal plains, Waikanae township, Kāpiti Island, and north up the coast to Mount Taranaki and are worth sitting down for. Enjoy a family friendly nature encounter right off State Highway 2 and walk for as long (or short) as you like.

Accessibility/How to get there/particular time of year to visit
If you are driving south it is easy to find. Turn off State Highway 1 at the Lindale turnoff (north of Paraparaumu) and the reserve is on your left with a car park before the road swing round underneath State Highway 1.
If you are driving north also take the Lindale turnoff north of Paraparaumu, but follow the sign at the roundabout to Nikau Valley, then take the first left which is a short road that appears to be heading toward the southern exit from State Highway 1, but turns into the Nikau Reserve carpark. Parking at the rest area.

Threatened species/species of interest
The reserve boasts an outstanding grove of nikau palms at the reserve entrance and a good population of large leaved milk tree (Streblus banksii), a regionally endangered species. You will come across fantail, grey warbler, and possibly spy tui, bellbird or even kereru. The reserve is across the road from a breeding colony of little shag and is an important link in a chain of forest remnants linking the Tararua Ranges to Kāpiti Island.

Key threats
Pest plants and animals, fire, and vandalism are the key threats to this forest remnant. The reserve is bordered on three sides by grass and on the forth by pine trees resulting in a large edge to core ratio exposing more of the reserve to wind, light and pest incursions which may potentially alter the reserve’s ecology.
Walks (length)
There is a very short gravel path from one side of the loop walk to the other. The stepped path up through the bush and back will take about half an hour. There is a 20-minute steep climb through nikaus to a lookout at the top of ridge.

Walks (grade)
Loop track easy, ridge climb medium.

How to get there