



Manawatū MUST DO WALKS

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Please note this information should be used as a guide only.
To help ensure your safety we advise you review our safety page.
For more details, visit ManawatuNZ.co.nz/safety



For more must do walks and hikes, visit ManawatuNZ.co.nz/walk-hike



**MAP & GUIDE
MANAWATŪ**



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Manawatū MUST DO WALKS





1 Te Āpiti - Manawatū Gorge Walk



This is the main walk of Te Āpiti - Manawatū Gorge, taking you into the lush native vegetation of the iconic Gorge, up over greywacke ranges and out onto various viewing platforms offering breathtaking views of the river below and out across the Manawatū region. Birdlife is abundant along the track, and you will see a gorgeous array of native plants such as nikau groves and red flowering rata.

This walk is one way, so you will need to arrange transport to return you to the start. Alternatively, you can walk halfway and return the way you came, a popular option for those without transport arrangements. On the eastern side of the Gorge, across the Ballance Bridge, you'll find several shorter tracks that are perfect for families. This walk takes between 3 - 5 hours one way.

Location:	Car park at the Ashhurst end of the Manawatū Gorge, just past the Ashhurst Bridge
Distance:	11km one way
Fitness Level:	Intermediate
Distance from PN:	16km, 15 minutes drive

2 Tawa Loop



The Tawa Loop is at the western end of Te Āpiti - Manawatū Gorge and offers a chance to experience the uniqueness of the Gorge. A nice loop walk, this track provides all the beauty and wilderness of the main track, with less than half the distance and time. This loop track branches off the main track about 500m into the walk, meandering up and around the southern edge of the reserve.

The well-formed track follows a steady gradient, and is steep in places. At the halfway point, you'll come face to face with the mighty Whatonga, a 6m tall sculpture of an ancient Māori chief. Because of the 'big slip' of 2011, the Tawa Loop was developed using the tracks cut through the bush by the many machines needed to repair the slip.

Location:	Car park at the Ashhurst end of the Manawatū Gorge, just past the Ashhurst Bridge
Distance:	4km return
Fitness Level:	Intermediate
Distance from PN:	16km, 15 minutes drive

3 Manawatū River Pathway & He Ara Kotahi Pathway



The shared Manawatū River Pathway offers users the chance to experience up close the ever-changing views of the Manawatū River and its surrounds on an open, flat walkway consisting of asphalt and limestone. Following the river from the end of Maxwells Line through to Riverside Drive, the path stretches just under 10km. There are numerous access points along the path, allowing for the option of shorter walks.

Palmerston North's newest riverside pathway, He Ara Kotahi, connects the city with Linton Military Camp and Massey University. The star attraction is the 194m long He Ara Kotahi Bridge which from the sky looks like a fallen Karaka tree. The bridge is lit up by 'stars' (luminous spheres) at night.

As you walk past Victoria Esplanade, you'll see many short bush walks that are well worth exploring.

Location:	Various, including Dittmer Drive (He Ara Kotahi), Maxwells Line and Victoria Esplanade
Distance:	9.86km one way / 7.1km one way
Fitness Level:	Beginner
Distance from PN:	3km from The Square

4 Sledge Track



Starting as a nice, easy walk, you'll see waterfalls and swimming holes. After the first 30 minutes, just past the Argyle Rocks, the track gradually steepens and is suited to experienced walkers. For competent trampers, the Elevation (1.5 hours in) and the Platinum Mines (3 hours in), makes for a satisfying trek into some of the region's most spectacular scenery. A 22m swing bridge, added in 2017, has created a loop track.

Approximately 2.5km into the walk, the swing bridge takes you over the gully and into Arapuke Park, a Mountain Bike park. From here, you can return via Checkpoint Charlie Track and Pupurahi, or via the longer 7km route of Arapuke Road and Back Track. These are shared tracks, so please give way to mountain bikers. Make sure you follow the signs to walk the Sledge Track on the left side of the valley. Do not walk up the right-hand side.

Location:	Car park is at the end of Kahuterawa Road (gravel road), Palmerston North
Distance:	Up to 11km for the full walk
Fitness Level:	Beginner to Advanced
Distance from PN:	17km, 25 minutes drive

5 Bledisloe Park to Old West Road



This walk takes you through native bush, pine forest, farmland and stunning views, and has some short trails leading off the track taking you through the Massey Arboretum. This walk is part of the national pathway, Te Ararua, so be sure to follow this signage to ensure you stay on track. Passing the Turitea Stream, the track emerges into open space at the Atawhai Road access point, where you can finish your walk or continue onto Old West Road, and under the bridge, onto the Turitea Walkway. Bledisloe Park is a unique part of this walk, with the Turitea Stream, a gazebo to sit in and the Massey Arboretum with rare, exotic trees of all sizes.

Car parking is available at Bledisloe Park and Old West Road. If parking at Old West Road, ensure you cross the road under the Turitea Stream bridge for your safety. *Note: There are no toilet facilities available on this walk.*

Location:	Various, including Tennent Drive, Massey University Avenue and Old West Road
Distance:	3.2km one way
Fitness Level:	Intermediate
Distance from PN:	3.6km, 7 minutes drive to Bledisloe Park

6 Fern Walk, Totara Reserve



Located in Totara Reserve Regional Park, this walk leads you through some of the region's most ancient and accessible remnants of native bush, and offers sweeping views of the Ruahine Ranges. You'll see many iconic trees, including totara, matai, rimu, nikau and kahikatea.

The birdlife is another highlight of this walk, with native birds such as tui, fantails, bellbird and kereru making their home here. Along the way you'll come across a fantastic lookout point on the upper terrace that allows you to see back towards the Pohangina River and over the lower terrace that you started the walk on. This walk will take approximately 2 hours return.

Location:	Totara Reserve Regional Park, Churchill Drive, Pohangina Valley
Distance:	5km return
Fitness Level:	Intermediate
Distance from PN:	40km, 35 minutes drive

7 Pettifar & Gilchrist Loop Tracks



These popular loop tracks are located in Totara Reserve Regional Park, and take you down a series of terraces that lead to the Pohangina River. These walks make use of the Old Coach Road, a section of the original horse and cart track that once ran along the Pohangina Valley. You'll get to see a variety of native tress and bird life, and you'll pass through a kahikatea dominated forest in the wetter areas, while the drier areas have an abundance of totara trees.

An abandoned tree nursery on the Gilchrist Loop Track was once the source of the many large poplar trees that are now visible throughout the Pohangina Valley. Combined, these two walks form a figure eight and take approximately 1-2 hours per loop depending on your fitness.

Location:	Totara Reserve Regional Park, Churchill Drive, Pohangina Valley
Distance:	Pettifar 4.2km, Gilchrist 3.2km
Fitness Level:	Beginner to Intermediate
Distance from PN:	40km, 35 minutes drive

8 Rangiwahia Bush Reserve Walk



Discover this hidden stand of native virgin bush reserve in the historic settlement of Rangiwahia Village. It was left untouched by early settlers to the area, as it was considered an ideal water catchment for the growing village. Many of the magnificent native trees along the walk are labelled and include rimu, miro, matai, maire, kahikatea, rewarewa and several species of rata.

Managed by dedicated locals, this walk is marked out with orange triangles, and takes about 90 minutes to do the loop. It can get muddy, so ensure you have good footwear. There are some stunning viewpoints along the way, and bird life is plentiful at certain times of year, though not always easy to see, they can definitely be heard.

Location:	Mangoira Road, just east of the Rangiwahia Hall, Rangiwahia
Distance:	2.8km return
Fitness Level:	Intermediate
Distance from PN:	Approximately 71km, 1 hour drive

9 Mt Lees Reserve



Located in a beautiful rural setting, this unique scenic reserve offers visitors the chance to explore and enjoy the tranquil surrounds.

The sheltered bush walk has two main loop trails. One that loops the bush gully (1.8km return), which is generally flat apart from a short climb out of the gully and another longer loop that follows the boundary of the reserve (3km return). The track is an all-weather gravel track suitable for pushchairs, with a number of places to rest or picnic along the track.

There are two distinctive trees growing within the bush, a large kahikatea, thought to be more than 1000 years old and a 600 year old puketea which is listed as one of New Zealand's distinctive trees. During Spring there is a large display of many varied daffodil.

Location:	199 Ngaio Road, Halcombe
Distance:	1.8km or 3km return
Fitness Level:	Beginner
Distance from PN:	25km, 23 minutes drive

10 Rangiwahia Hut Track



This iconic track offers a pleasant amble up through red beech forest to the open tussock tops of the Ruahine Ranges. The hut is located at 1327m above sea level and the track is a well-graded climb.

On a clear day there are stunning views of the central plateau and across the Manawatu Plains, and there is a picturesque waterfall flowing into a pristine mountain pool near the top of the track. The hut is a DOC serviced hut with 13 bunks. There is water, and heating in the form of a wood burner. You will need to take your own portable cooking stove or use the wood burner. To stay overnight you need to pre-purchase DOC hut tickets from a DOC office or your local i-SITE. During peak times (November to April) beds must be pre-booked.

Location:	Renfrew Road car park at the road end, off Main South Road, Rangiwahia
Distance:	4.2km one way
Fitness Level:	Intermediate
Distance from PN:	85km, 1 hour and 30 minutes drive

Head outdoors and discover the wide variety of walks on offer in Palmerston North city and Manawatū.

The stunning terrain of Manawatū offers walks and hikes in the Ruahine and Tararua Ranges and surrounding landscape for all abilities, while closer to Palmerston North city you're spoilt for choice with riverside pathways and picturesque walking trails to suit all abilities.

All of this makes for a diverse and exciting outdoor playground, right in the big backyard of Palmerston North city and Manawatū.

Guide to Staying Safe

There is an incredible array of sights to be seen in Manawatū with ancient native bush walks to adrenaline packed activities. To help ensure you stay safe during your visit we have some handy tips and helpful links we recommend reviewing before commencing your visit.

Know before you go

These are the five simple rules of the Outdoor Safety Code to help you stay safe:

1. Plan your trip
2. Tell someone
3. Be aware of the weather
4. Know your limits
5. Take sufficient supplies



For more details, visit ManawatuNZ.co.nz/safety