



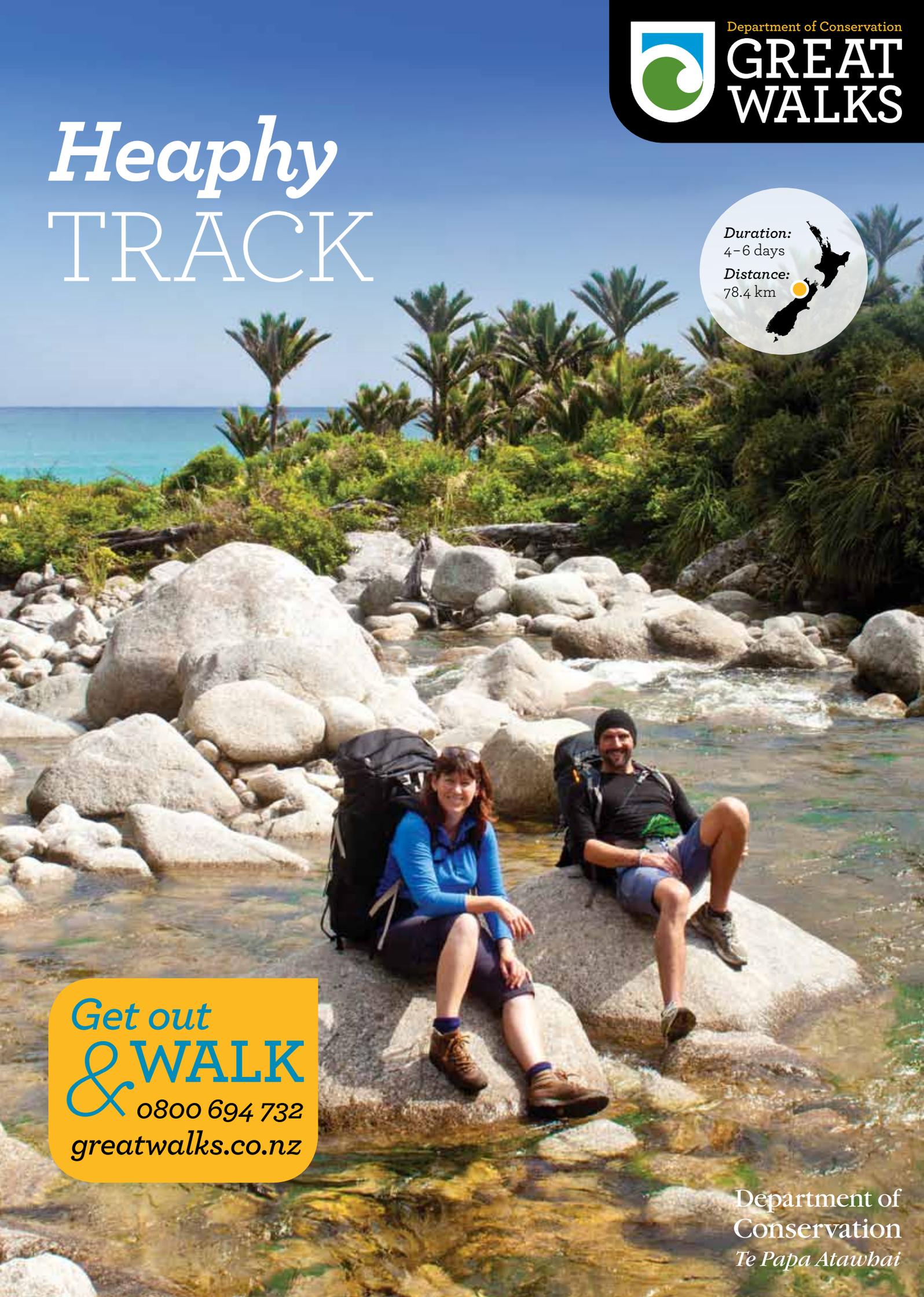
Department of Conservation

**GREAT  
WALKS**

# Heaphy TRACK

Duration:  
4-6 days

Distance:  
78.4 km



Get out  
& **WALK**  
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Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

If it's varied and rugged landscapes with mountain views you're looking for, you'll be spoilt for choice on the **Heaphy Track**.



*The Heaphy Track is located in Kahurangi National Park in the northwest of the South Island and has a range of options to suit different fitness levels. Tackle the track in 4 or 5 days, or take your time and soak in the views over 6 days. There is also a popular 2-day, overnight return trip on the western side from Kohaihai to Heaphy Hut.*

- Retrace the steps of early Māori seeking pounamu (greenstone) and 19<sup>th</sup> century prospectors from the Collingwood and West Coast goldfields.
- Look and listen out for great spotted kiwi/roa around Goulund Downs.
- Try and spy the nocturnal carnivorous land snail *Powelliphanta* around Heaphy Hut on a damp night.

*“Amazing wild, empty beaches littered with driftwood contrasted with wild tropical mountainsides... Beautiful.”*

Ben, United Kingdom



## Track guide

 The Heaphy Track can be walked in either direction. The track is well marked and signposted, but some sections may be steep, rough or muddy. This guide describes a 4 day easy hike for independent, non-guided walkers travelling from Brown Hut to Kohaihai.

### Day 1: Brown Hut to Perry Saddle Hut

17.5 km, 5 hours

As you wind your way through bush, you'll climb gradually, following a route once surveyed for a road. It's 4 hours to Aorere Shelter, which affords views of Aorere Valley and on clear days Mt Taranaki/Egmont. A short track about 30 minutes before Perry Saddle Hut leads to a viewpoint at Flanagans Corner, the highest point on the track at 915 metres.

► If you're in need of cooling down, take a dip in the pool near the hut in Gorge Creek.

### Day 2: Perry Saddle to James Mackay Hut

24.2 km, 6 hours 30 minutes

Sidle through tussock clearings and patches of beech. Where the valley widens, the featureless Goulund Downs open tussock area is revealed, which can be disorientating when the mist lowers.

Pass the famed pole to which walkers before you have tied their old boots and on to Goulund Downs Hut. Rest up here, or continue on to James Mackay Hut, offering views of the Tasman Sea and Heaphy River mouth 750 metres below.

### Day 3: James Mackay Hut to Heaphy Hut

20.5 km, 6 hours

Beech forest gives way to nīkau palms as you descend to the Heaphy River and Lewis Hut, where you'll encounter the infamous West Coast sandflies!

The track then crosses the Heaphy River and takes you through a forest of kahikatea, rimu and rātā—be aware that in times of heavy rain, especially at high tide, sections of the track may be prone to flooding. Towards the river mouth, nīkau palms become more common, and the sea's incessant roaring grows louder.

► The Heaphy River mouth is an exciting place. The river surges out through a narrow gap into the sea—incoming waves halt the flow, and the churning of salt and fresh waters is spectacular. In some conditions, small waves can even be seen running upriver!

### Day 4: Heaphy Hut to Kohaihai river mouth

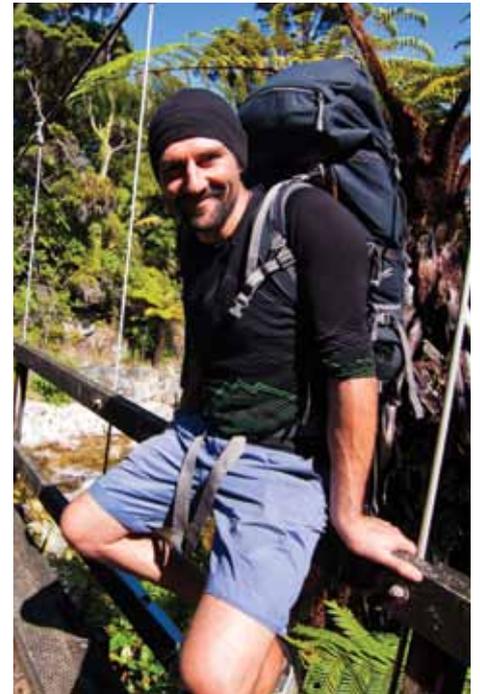
16.2 km, 5 hours

The track south to Kohaihai is through forests of rātā, karaka trees, vines and groves of nikau palms. Soon Scotts Beach appears—the clearing here is a good spot to rest before climbing over Kohaihai Saddle. The track follows the bank of Kohaihai River for 400 metres to the car park.

### Day 2 highlights

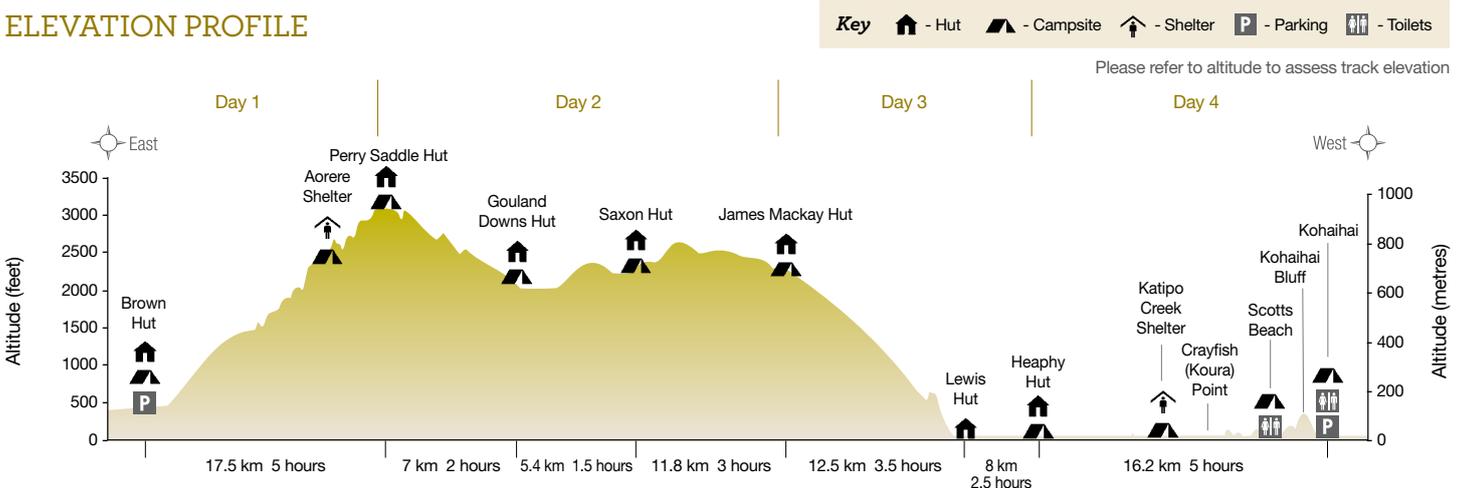
The area around Goulund Downs Hut is worth exploring. Look out for:

- A small patch of beech forest on a limestone outcrop that has escaped erosion
- Limestone arches, which are the remnants of old caves
- A small waterfall flowing out of a cave passage



DOC is currently exploring options for mountain bikers on the Heaphy Track. For an update, contact your nearest DOC visitor centre.

## ELEVATION PROFILE





## GETTING THERE

You can start the Heaphy Track from the following locations:

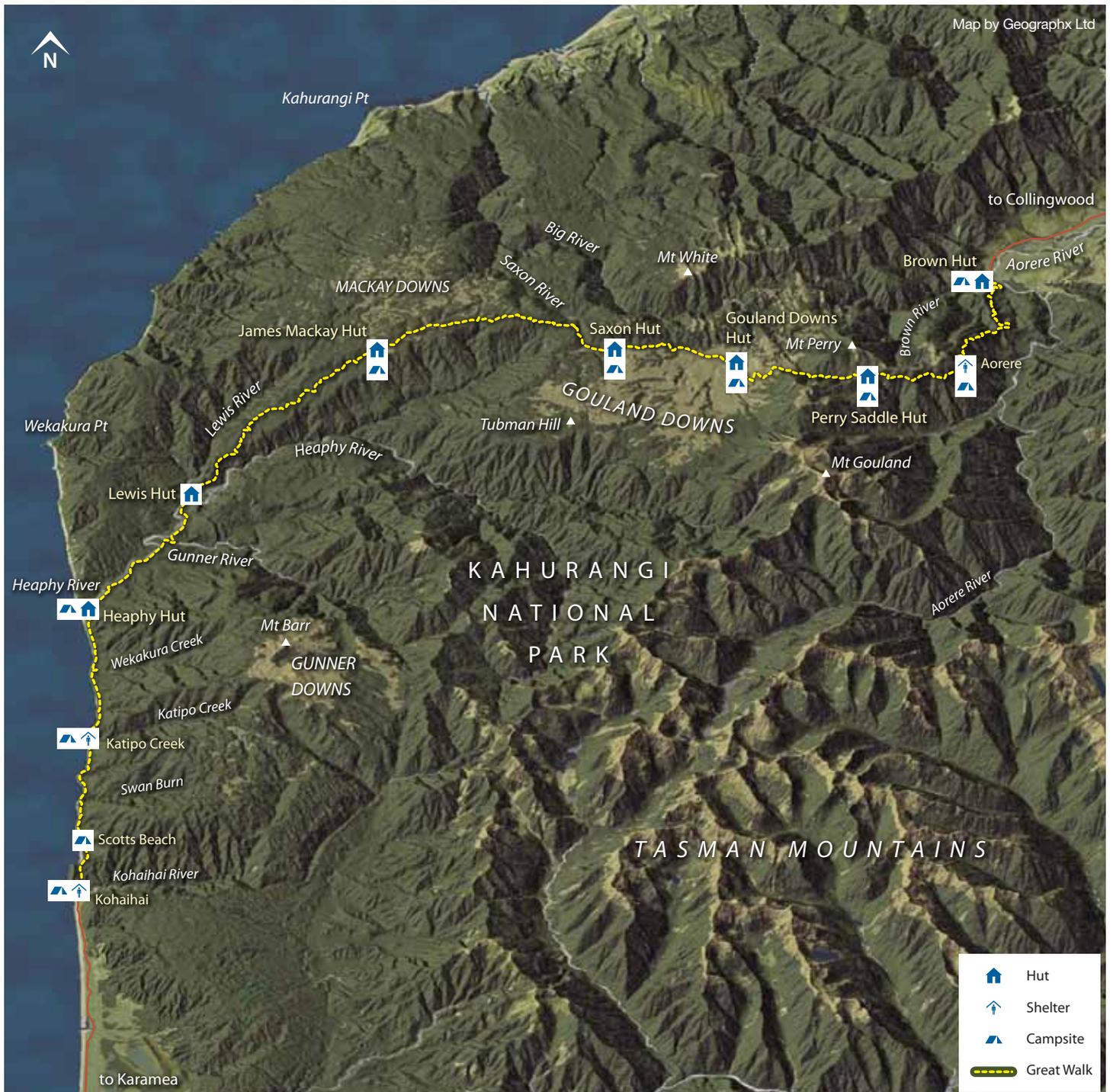
1. Brown Hut, Golden Bay. From Collingwood, take the road up Aorere Valley to Brown Hut (28 km).
2. Kohaihai, West Coast. From Karamea, head north to the car park and campsite at Kohaihai River (15 km).

The ends of the track are 463 km apart by road, so you will need to arrange transport at each end.

Bus, taxi and air services are available to either end of the track (limited bus services operate in winter).

Refer to the back of the brochure for transport options and services.

This map is intended as a **general guide only**. For up-to-date track, route, hut and safety information visit [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz) and/or your local DOC Visitor Centre **before you travel**.



## Plan and prepare

It is **important** to plan and prepare your trip and be well equipped on a Great Walk.

Before you go, know **The Outdoor Safety Code**—5 simple rules 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



- Book your trip well in advance including your accommodation, transport and transfers to the start/end of the track.
- Safety is your responsibility—leave your trip details with a trusted contact. See [adventuresmart.org.nz](http://adventuresmart.org.nz).
- Weather on the track is changeable, so be prepared and check the forecast before you go. See [metservice.com](http://metservice.com).
- A good level of fitness is required to walk the track. You can expect to walk up to 7 hours a day, depending on your fitness and weather conditions; and carry a pack of up to 15 kg for the whole length of the track.
- The right outdoor clothing, gear and equipment will greatly improve the enjoyment of your trip. Pack all necessary equipment, your own food and drinks (including an extra day's supply) and personal effects.
- Food and drinks are not available for purchase at Great Walks huts and campsites.

## Heaphy Track safety

- Weather on the Heaphy Track is changeable with annual rainfall averaging over 4000 mm. Heavy rain can occur with little warning, and even small streams are dangerous in flood. Be prepared for rain, snow and wind, especially on the exposed sections of the track.
- During winter, adverse weather can damage the track significantly. These areas will be marked by signage and warning tape, although you should check with the Nelson DOC Visitor Centre prior to your walk.
- Sections of the coastal track are subject to large wave surges during high tides and rough seas—this may cause the track to be temporarily impassable. When planning your trip, ensure you check tide charts and allow adequate time in case of delays.
- For a comprehensive gear list, see **Plan & Prepare** at [greatwalks.co.nz](http://greatwalks.co.nz).

Air New Zealand is proud to support the Department of Conservation by funding biodiversity projects in and around the beautiful Great Walk tracks.

AIR NEW ZEALAND 

Cover image:  
Wekakura Creek.  
Photo: DOC/90 Seconds  
Page 2:  
Nikau palm fringed wild West Coast.  
Photo: DOC/90 Seconds  
Quote: [rankers.co.nz](http://rankers.co.nz)

Page 3:  
Swingbridge over Wekakura Creek.  
Photo: DOC/90 Seconds  
This page:  
Great spotted kiwi.  
Photo: Rod Morris

## PLACES TO STAY

 **The Heaphy Track huts** have bunks, mattresses, a water supply, toilets, hand-washing facilities and heating with fuel. They may also have a lighting source, basic cooking facilities with fuel and a DOC ranger may be present.  
**\$32 per adult per night; 17 years and under stay free.**

 **Great Walks campsites** offer basic facilities including toilets, sinks and a water supply. Some also have picnic tables and cooking shelters. Great Walks campsites can only be accessed on foot and are not accessible by vehicle.

Bookings are **essential** all year round. Great Walks huts and campsites **must be booked in advance**.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND BOOKINGS

Visit the Great Walks website or contact your nearest DOC Visitor Centre for further information and bookings.

**P:** 0800 NZ GREATWALKS (0800 694 732)

**E:** [greatwalks@doc.govt.nz](mailto:greatwalks@doc.govt.nz)

**W:** [greatwalks.co.nz](http://greatwalks.co.nz)

 **Book online [greatwalks.co.nz](http://greatwalks.co.nz)**

## Great spotted kiwi/roa

*Great spotted kiwi/roa live within Kahurangi National Park in the area around Goulund Downs. You may not see one, but you may hear the birds calling to each other at night from the Perry Saddle, Goulund Downs and Saxon Huts.*

*Male great spotted kiwi make a shrill, repeated, drawn-out whistle of 'kiwi'. The females make a harsh, low 'churr' sound.*



## Other Great Walks

1

### Lake Waikaremoana

**Duration:** 3-4 days | **Distance:** 46 km

Trace the shoreline of beautiful Lake Waikaremoana 'the sea of rippling waters' for spiritual and cultural enlightenment. Walk through ancient rainforest, pass giant podocarp trees and admire stunning views from Panekire Bluff.



**Huts:**  
**\$32**  
adult/night

**Location:** Te Urewera National Park, east North Island  
**Nearest towns:** Rotorua, Napier, Wairoa, Gisborne

2

### Tongariro Northern Circuit

**Duration:** 3-4 days | **Distance:** 43 km

Winding its way past Mt Tongariro and Mt Ngauruhoe, this Great Walk lets you explore dramatic volcanic landscapes including craters, glacial valleys, native beech forest, alpine meadows and emerald-coloured lakes in this World Heritage area.



**Huts:**  
**\$32**  
adult/night

**Location:** Tongariro National Park, central North Island  
**Nearest towns:** Taupo, Turangi, Ohakune, Waiouru

3

### Whanganui Journey

**Duration:** 3-5 days | **Distance:** 145 km

The Whanganui River winds its way from the mountains to the Tasman Sea through countless hills and valleys. This journey lets you take a multi-day canoe or kayak trip to experience its most remote scenic beauty, history and cultural significance.



**Huts:**  
**\$32**  
adult/night

**Location:** Whanganui National Park, south-west North Island  
**Nearest towns:** Whanganui, Taumarunui, Ohakune

4

### Abel Tasman Coast Track

**Duration:** 3-5 days | **Distance:** 55.2 km

Blessed with a mild climate, golden beaches and coastal forest, the Abel Tasman Coast Track really has it all. Choose to walk the whole track or water taxi or kayak between different locations at any time of the year.



**Huts:**  
**\$32**  
adult/night

**Location:** Abel Tasman National Park, north-west South Island  
**Nearest towns:** Nelson, Motueka, Takaka

6

### Routeburn Track

**Duration:** 2-4 days | **Distance:** 32 km

The Routeburn Track traverses the Southern Alps of New Zealand and passes through ice-carved valleys and beech forest. Walk alongside pristine rivers and glistening alpine lakes offering breathtaking views and mountain scenery.



**Huts:**  
**\$54**  
adult/night

**Location:** Mount Aspiring & Fiordland Nat. Parks, South Island  
**Nearest towns:** Queenstown, Te Anau and Invercargill

7

### Kepler Track

**Duration:** 3-4 days | **Distance:** 60 km

An adventure above the clouds! The Kepler Track takes you from the gentle, beech-forested shores of Lakes Te Anau and Manapouri to the exposed tussock lands and the summit of Mount Luxmore for spectacular alpine views.



**Huts:**  
**\$54**  
adult/night

**Location:** Fiordland National Park, south-west South Island  
**Nearest towns:** Queenstown, Te Anau and Invercargill

8

### Milford Track

**Duration:** 4 days | **Distance:** 53.5 km

Experience the stunning grandeur of the Milford Track including rugged mountain peaks, breathtaking sheer canyons and majestic waterfalls. Walk beside pristine rivers and amongst lush, green rainforest before crossing Mackinnon Pass and reaching spectacular Milford Sound.



**Huts:**  
**\$54**  
adult/night

**Location:** Fiordland National Park, south-west South Island  
**Nearest towns:** Queenstown, Te Anau and Invercargill

9

### Rakiura Track

**Duration:** 3 days | **Distance:** 32 km

Escape on an island adventure and exchange the hustle and bustle of mainland life for the tranquillity of the Rakiura Track. Revel in the peacefulness and idyllic surroundings with the bush, birds and beach at your side.



**Huts:**  
**\$22**  
adult/night

**Location:** Stewart Island/Rakiura  
**Nearest towns:** Invercargill (20 min flight) or Bluff (1 hr ferry)



Reid Helicopters service the Heaphy track for heli hiking and heli biking, catering for up to 6 passengers. Specialising in return trips from Kohaihai back to Nelson. Contact us today

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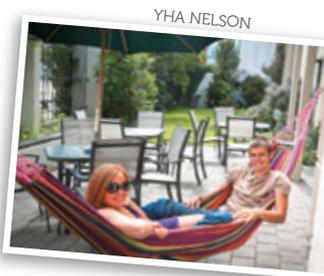
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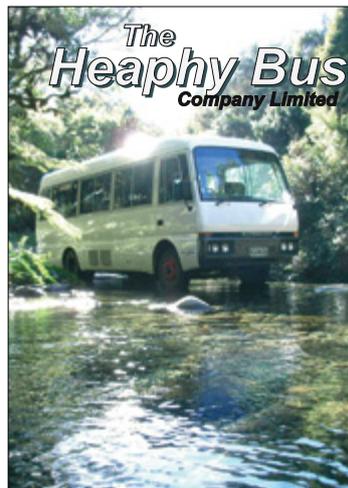
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