

Easy access walks



SOUTH ISLAND

FREE



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Introduction

There are walks accessible to people of all abilities in scenic and interesting places all over New Zealand. Some are suitable for wheelchair users, mountain buggies and young families.

This brochure highlights some of the best easy access walks and describes their features, surfaces and the facilities nearby. Information panels are often provided beside these walks so you can learn more about what you see.





Using this brochure

To help you choose which site best suits your needs the whole access experience is rated.

Accessibility rating

- A** Track and associated facilities have no impediments and are fully accessible to unassisted wheelchair users.
- B** Track and all facilities are mostly accessible to wheelchair users. Impediments to access are noted.


Track type

-  Short walk suitable for unassisted wheelchair users, mountain buggies and walkers.
-  Short walk suitable for wheelchair users with assistance. Also suitable for mountain buggies and walkers.
-  Short walk suitable for mountain buggies and walkers.
-  Short walk relatively barrier free suitable for walkers. They may have steps, steep or narrow sections.

Note: Time and distances are return and approximate.

Accessible facilities

Where possible the Department of Conservation (DOC) has built fully accessible amenities at the start of easy access walks. Where this is not the case, future structures and improvements will include such facilities where practical.






-  Toilets available with are fully accessible unless otherwise stated.

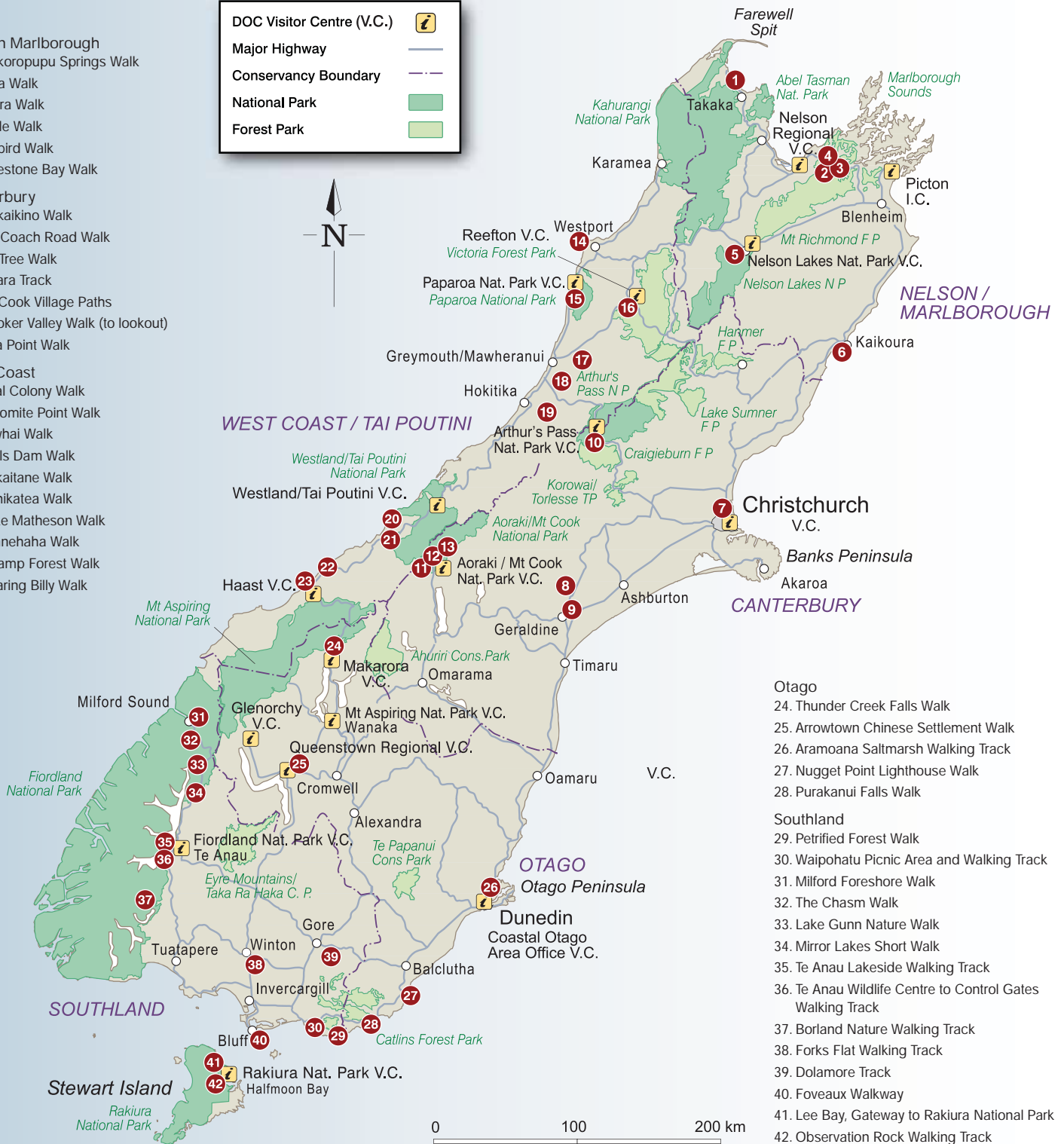
Key

- Nelson Marlborough
- 1. Waikoropu Springs Walk
- 2. Tawa Walk
- 3. Totara Walk
- 4. Circle Walk
- 5. Bellbird Walk
- 6. Limestone Bay Walk

- Canterbury
- 7. Otukaikino Walk
- 8. Old Coach Road Walk
- 9. Big Tree Walk
- 10. Totara Track
- 11. Mt Cook Village Paths
- 12. Hooker Valley Walk (to lookout)
- 13. Kea Point Walk

- West Coast
- 14. Seal Colony Walk
- 15. Dolomite Point Walk
- 16. Tawhai Walk
- 17. Colls Dam Walk
- 18. Rakaitane Walk
- 19. Kahikatea Walk
- 20. Lake Matheson Walk
- 21. Minnehaha Walk
- 22. Swamp Forest Walk
- 23. Roaring Billy Walk

DOC Visitor Centre (V.C.)	
Major Highway	
Conservancy Boundary	
National Park	
Forest Park	



- Otago
- 24. Thunder Creek Falls Walk
- 25. Arrowtown Chinese Settlement Walk
- 26. Aramoana Saltmarsh Walking Track
- 27. Nugget Point Lighthouse Walk
- 28. Purakanui Falls Walk
- Southland
- 29. Petrified Forest Walk
- 30. Waipohatu Picnic Area and Walking Track
- 31. Milford Foreshore Walk
- 32. The Chasm Walk
- 33. Lake Gunn Nature Walk
- 34. Mirror Lakes Short Walk
- 35. Te Anau Lakeside Walking Track
- 36. Te Anau Wildlife Centre to Control Gates Walking Track
- 37. Borland Nature Walking Track
- 38. Forks Flat Walking Track
- 39. Dolamore Track
- 40. Foveaux Walkway
- 41. Lee Bay, Gateway to Rakiura National Park
- 42. Observation Rock Walking Track

Contents



Nelson / Marlborough

2



Canterbury

4



West Coast

6



Otago

9



Southland

10





Further information

14



Nelson/Marlborough

Waikoropupu Springs Walk, Golden Bay



- B** Location: 9 km north of Takaka
- Length: 1.5 km / 35 min
-  Surface: gravel and boardwalk
-  Toilets: no handrails

This is New Zealand's largest natural spring and a sacred place for Māori. The waters are crystal clear.





Waikoropupu Springs, Jan Herold, www.megalithic.co.uk

Tawa Path, Pelorus Bridge Scenic Reserve

- A** Location: SH 6, between Blenheim and Nelson
- Length: 2.2 km / 30 min
-  Surface: gravel and boardwalk
-  From the café, walk through one of Marlborough's last river-flat forests, which has towering beech, rimu, and kahikatea trees and plenty of birds.



Totara Path, Pelorus Bridge Scenic Reserve

- B** Location: SH 6, between Blenheim and Nelson
- Length: 1.4 km / 20 min
-  Surface: gravel with gentle slopes
-  Walk through podocarp, broadleaf and beech trees. A magnificent ancient totara tree is a feature.



Totara Walk, DOC

Circle Walk, Pelorus Bridge Scenic Reserve



- B** Location: SH 6 between Blenheim and Nelson
-  Length: 816 m / 20 min
-  Surface: gravel. No wheelchair access beyond the bridge

A lovely walk with pleasant views of the Pelorus River.



Pelorus Bridge Campground, Diana Parr

Bellbird Walk, Nelson Lakes National Park


- B** Location: Kerr Bay, St Arnaud
-  Length: 616 m / 15 min
-  Surface: gravel


One of New Zealand's 'Mainland Islands', the Rotoiti Nature Recovery Project is a sanctuary in honeydew beech forest and excellent for bird watching. Extend your walk to Honidyew Walk (1.2 km / 45 min) which is wheelchair assisted.



Bellbird Walk, naturepic.com

Limestone Bay Walk, Kaikoura Peninsula Walkway

- A** Location: South Bay, Kaikoura
- Length: 500 m / 5 min
-  Surface: sealed

 Follow a pathway around the coast to a seat and wheelchair turnaround. Experience panoramic views of the ocean, rocky coastline, twisted limestone, seals and seabirds.



Limestone Bay Walk

Canterbury

Ötukaikino Walk,
Ötukaikino Wildlife Reserve
(Wilson's Swamp)

B Location: Ötukaikino,
1 km north of
Christchurch
Length: 2.2 km / 35 min
Surface: gravel, earth
and boardwalk

Toilets: no wheelchair access

A wahi tapu (sacred) site. The water, mud and vegetation were once used by Tohunga (Māori priests) for embalming. Now part of a wetlands restoration project, it's a 'living memorial' site.



Ötukaikino Walk, DOC

Old Coach Road Walk, Arthur's Pass National Park

B Location: 6 km south of
Arthur's Pass Village
Length: 2.2 km / 30 min
Surface: gravel, sealed
and boardwalk

Toilets: no wheelchair access
This pleasant forest walk follows a century-old coach road that was cut into the hillside to avoid the flood prone Bealey River. Rock wall remnants are still visible.



Old Coach Rd, Arthur's Pass, Stewart Webb

Big Tree Walk, Peel Forest Park Scenic Reserve

B Location: 21 km from Geraldine
Length: 1.8 km / 30 min
Surface: packed earth, a few steps and steep slopes. Path to big tree is not wheelchair accessible
Toilets: assistance required

A lovely shaded walk beneath totara and matai trees. Bush tramline remnants, used for timber milling, are visible as the track winds through the bush.

Totara Walking Track, Talbot Forest Scenic Reserve

B Location: Tripp St, near Geraldine town centre
Length: 800 m / 20 min
Surface: gravel and hard earth
Talbot forest sits atop a 2.5 million year old basaltic lava flow. The walk goes through podocarp forest with lots of birds, picnic spots and extensive views.

Mt Cook Village Paths, Aoraki / Mt Cook National Park

B Location: Mt Cook village
Length: 2 km of pathways / time variable
Surface: sealed, packed gravel and some gentle slopes. One path has steps

Walk along red tussock lined paths with spectacular views of Aoraki / Mt Cook and the Southern Alps.

Hooker Valley Walk (to lookout), Aoraki / Mt Cook National Park

B Location: Hooker Valley Rd, before Mt Cook village. Begin at the visitor centre
Length: 1.8 km / 30 min
Surface: gravel
Toilets: at Mt Cook Village

This popular walk to the Alpine Memorial lookout has superb views of the Southern Alps when clear.



Hooker Valley walkers, DOC

Kea Point Walk, Aoraki / Mt Cook National Park

B Location: Hooker Valley Rd, before Mt Cook Village. Park at White Horse Hill campground
Length: 7 km / 1.5 hr
Surface: gravel and steep slopes.
Toilets: at Mt Cook Village



Walk through sub-alpine grasslands to the Mueller Glacier moraine wall formed in 1913. The walk includes panels about kea and when it's clear, ends with stunning mountain views.



Kea Point walkers, DOC

West Coast



Seal Colony Walk, Cape Foulwind

- B** Location: 12 km south of Westport
 Length: 800m/10 min
 Surface: gravel with some gentle climbs

This densely populated seal colony, also presents a great view of the coast. There are pups from mid-November.





Dolomite Point Walk, Pancake Rocks, Punakaiki

- B** Location: Punakaiki Village
 Length: 1.8km/30 min
 Surface: sealed and gravel. One path has no wheelchair access (signposted)

Walk through nikau palms to viewing platforms and see the amazing limestone layers. Watch waves force water up blowholes creating powerful geysers and dramatic noises at high tide.





Tawhai Walk, Tawhai picnic area

- B** Location: SH 7 south of Reefton
 Length: 470m/5 min
 Surface: boardwalk and gravel. Gentle slopes
Toilets: not wheelchair accessible

Enjoy a short walk through mature tawhai forest with ferns and many native birds, including the rare kakariki (parakeet).





Colls Dam Walk, Nelson Creek

- B** Location: 29km north of Greymouth, Gows Creek Rd carpark
 Length: 2.4km/1 hr
 Surface: gravel. Two short steep sections
Toilets: not wheelchair accessible

An 1860's gold mining site with good examples of tailraces, tunnels and water races, plus a dramatic lookout above the historic dam.





Rakitane Walk, Arnold River Bridge

- B** Location: Anua St, Moana on Lake Brunner, southeast of Greymouth
 Length: 2.2km/30 min
 Surface: gravel. Short steep sections
Toilets: at Moana car park

View Lake Brunner from the bridge then walk to a little sandy beach. Beautiful podocarp forest lines the track.



Kahikatea Walk, Lake Kaniere

- B** Location: 19km east of Hokitika, Lake Kaniere Rd. Start at the Sunny Bight picnic area
 Length: 1.2km/15 min
 Surface: boardwalk and gravel. Narrow sections

Feel the presence of towering kahikatea trees, see views of Mt Tuhua and the lake and listen for kakariki, kaka, robin and bellbird.



Lake Matheson Walk, Fox Glacier


- A** Location: 6 km from Fox Village on Lake Matheson Rd
-  Length: 2.4 km / 45 min
-  Surface: gravel and boardwalk. Gentle slopes
- Toilets: at café



Lake Matheson, DOC



A beautiful walk famous for reflections in the lake of Aoraki/Mt Cook and the Southern Alps.

Minnehaha Walk, Fox Glacier

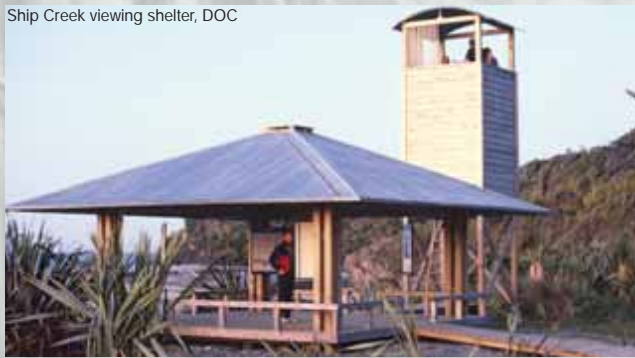
- B** Location: SH 6 south of Fox township
- Length: 1.35 km / 25 min
-  Surface: boardwalk and gravel, uneven sections

Enjoy this easy loop-walk following a gentle bush stream through lush forest with many native birds.


Swamp Forest Walk, Ship Creek, Haast

- B** Location: 15 km north of Haast, SH 6
- Length: 1.54 km / 30 min
-  Surface: boardwalk, no curbing. Steps to tower
-  Walk to the information shelter beside the beach and inland to an ancient fossilised kahikatea forest.

Ship Creek viewing shelter, DOC




Roaring Billy Walk, Haast River

- B** Location: off SH 6, to Haast River
- Length: 1.52 km / 30 min
-  Surface: gravel. A short gentle slope

Walk through botanically diverse rain forest to a viewing platform overlooking the impressive Roaring Billy Falls.



Otago

Thunder Creek Falls Walk, Haast Highway

- A** Location: SH 6, 55 km east from Haast
- Length: 220 m / 5 min
-  Surface: sealed

See the spectacular Thunder Creek plunge 28 m into the Haast River. The forest here is silver beech.

Arrowtown Chinese Settlement Walk, Arrowtown



- A** Location: Arrowtown Village
-  Length: 860 m / 20 min
-  Surface: gravel

On this fascinating walk follow the history of Chinese settlers during the 1860s gold rush.





Chinese Settlement house

Aramoana Saltmarsh Walking Track, Aramoana Ecological Reserve


- B** Location: 8 km past Port Chalmers, Dunedin
- Length: 700 m / 20 min
-  Surface: boardwalk and gravel. Entrance less than one metre wide
-  The largest and most complete salt marsh on the eastern coast. It is rich in biodiversity and ecologically significant.

Nugget Point Light-house Walk, Catlins

- B** Location: 25 km south of Balclutha
- Length: 1.16 km / 30 min
-  Surface: gravel, steps and slopes
-  Toilets: no wheelchair access

See the 1870s lighthouse set on an exposed headland. The surrounding water is rich with marine life including dolphins and seals. Remember to take binoculars.

Purakanui Falls Walk, Catlins

- A** Location: south of Owaka off SH 92
- Length: 760 m / 20 min
-  Surface: hard earth and packed gravel

The beautiful Purakanui Falls cascade over stony platforms towards a cool pool below. Dense podocarp forest lines the track and there is a lookout at the top of the falls.

Southland

Petrified Forest Walk, Curio Bay Scientific Reserve

- B** Location: Curio Bay, Catlins Coast
-  Length: 130m/5min
-  Surface: gravel to viewing platform, stairs to beach



Toilets: at campground, not wheelchair accessible

At low tide remains of and ancient petrified forest is visible. Yellow eyed penguins may be seen.

Yellow eyed penguin, naturespic.com




Waipohatu Picnic Area and Walking Track, Catlins Conservation Park

- B** Location: Haldane, southeast of Tokonui
- Length: 1.5km/30min
-  Surface: gravel. 1 m wide suspension bridge
-  Toilets: at picnic area

An easy walk beneath remnant coastal forest notable for its large variety of native ferns.


Milford Foreshore Walk, Fiordland National Park

- A** Location: Milford Sound, Piopiotahi
- Length: 1.9km/40min
-  Surface: gravel and boardwalk

A forest walk through native podocarp and silver beech. Native ferns, shrubs and mosses thrive here. There are great views of Mitre Peak and Milford Sound when its clear.



The Chasm Walk, Fiordland National Park



- B** Location: Cleddau Valley, Milford Rd, SH94
-  Length: 968m/20min
- Surface: sealed with a short uneven section from car park to start of track. Small step at bridge

The Chasm waterfalls are spectacular. Carved by the powerful Cleddau River forcing its way through a narrow boulder filled hollow.

The Chasm Walk, naturespic.com




Lake Gunn Nature Walk, Fiordland National Park

- B** Location: Milford Rd, SH94
-  Length: 2.12km/45min
-  Surface: gravel

Mighty beech trees and native birds are features here. Side trips can be made to Lake Gunn beaches.



Mirror Lakes Short Walk, Fiordland National Park

- A** Location: Eglinton Valley, Milford Rd, SH94
- Length: 464 m/5 min
-  Surface: boardwalk

On a fine day small the lakes provide spectacular reflections of the Earl Mountains. Take your camera!



Te Anau Lakeside Walking Track, Te Anau



- B** Location: Te Anau lakefront
-  Length: 1.7 km / 30min
-  Surface: gravel and earth. Uneven surfaces
-  Toilets: at visitor centre



Follow the beautiful southern shore of Lake Te Anau to visit the wildlife centre, with views to the Kepler mountains.

Blue Duck, Te Anau Wildlife Centre, DOC

Te Anau Wildlife Centre to Control Gates Walking Track




- B** Location: Te Anau lake front
-  Length: 5.6 km / 50 min
-  Surface: gravel and earth. Uneven sections



Te Anau Wildlife Centre, DOC

Walk along the eastern shore of Lake Te Anau to the Control Gates (Waiau River) and the start of the Kepler Track, a Great Walk .

Borland Nature Walking Track, Fiordland National Park

- B** Location: Borland Lodge, off SH99 north of Tuatapere township
-  Length: 2.2 km / 40min
-  Surface: earth and gravel. Short steep slopes. Note: wheelchair access as far as the swing bridge
-  Toilets: at Borland Lodge

Enjoy a nature walk through mature beech forest. Self-guiding fact sheets provide an introduction to the forest ecology.

Forks Flat Walking Track, Hokonui Forest Conservation Area




- A** Location: Dunsdale picnic area, Dunsdale Valley Rd, Winton
-  Length: 5.6 km / 1 hr
-  Surface: gravel and boardwalk. Gentle slopes



A scenic walk through native forest to a beautiful waterfall. An excellent picnic spot.

Dunsdale Picnic Area, DOC

Dolamore Track, Croydon Bush Scenic Reserve



- A** Location: Dalamore Park Rd, off Reaby Rd. 10 km northwest of Gore
-  Length: 2.04 km / 30min
-  Surface: boardwalk
-  Toilets: at domain



Dolamore Track boardwalk, DOC

A riverside loop walk through attractive forest that provides a glimpse of what much of Southland once looked like.

Foveaux Walkway, Bluff Hill / Motopöhue Scenic Reserve



- B** Location: Stirling Point, Bluff
-  Length: 6.2 km / 3 hr
-  Surface: gravel and boardwalk, some steep slopes and uneven sections

At the southern tip of New Zealand, this exposed walk follows the rugged coastline to Lookout Point. On fine days there are views across Foveaux Strait to Stewart Island.



Foveaux Strait sunrise, DOC

Lee Bay, Gateway to Rakiura National Park

- B** Location: Stewart Island
-  Length: 254 m / 10 min
-  Surface: gravel

Walk the first part of the famous Rakiura Great Walk at Lee Bay to see a dramatic coast-line and beautiful native forest.



Rakiura Track entrance, DOC

Observation Rock Walking Track, Golden Bay Scenic Reserve



Location: Excelsior Rd, Stewart Island



Length: 59 m/5 min



Surface: gravel with a steep slope

A short forest track leads you to the rock forming the lookout, with great views over Paterson Inlet/Waka a te wera, particularly at sunset.



Observation Rock. DOC



Te Puke Maui's legendary anchor stone - Lee Bay

naturespic.com

Further information

Visitor Centres

You can find out more about any of these walks at the nearest DOC visitor centre or www.doc.govt.nz



Feedback

We aim to continually improve our information about accessible recreation opportunities. Your suggestions and feedback are welcomed and should be sent to recreation@doc.govt.nz. Thank you.

Other publications:

Easy Access Walks, North Island, DOC (2007).
Accessible walks of the South Island, Anna and James Jameson (2000).

Security

Theft from vehicles is not common, but can happen. Remember to lock your vehicle and take your valuables with you. Car park security is available in some places.

DOC HOTline
0800 362 468

Report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies
For fire and search and rescue call 111

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