

TE KOPAHOU RESERVE

EXPLORE WELLINGTON

Discover Wellington's Town Belt, reserves and walkways



TE KOPAHOU RESERVE, WRIGHTS HILL AND THE KARORI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Absolutely Positively Wellington City Council
Me Heke Ki Pōneke

EXPLORE

Te Kopahou Reserve has important conservation values and is a unique Wellington asset. Within the 600 hectare reserve you will find a variety of walking and mountain biking tracks, popular diving, surfcasting and beachcombing areas, fur seals, interesting flora, historical sites and outstanding views. Most of the land is administered by Wellington City Council.

For more information on other walking tracks and mountain bike tracks visit the Feeling Great website at www.feelinggreat.co.nz.

HOW TO GET THERE

OWHIRO BAY ENTRANCE

The pedestrian and vehicle entrances to the start of the Coastal Track are at the west end of Owhiro Bay Parade.

Parking

Parking is available in the car park at the west end of Owhiro Bay Parade on the seaward side. The road beyond the quarry is not suitable for cars but okay for 4WDs. The gate is closed on Sundays to all vehicles from 9am to 6pm. Please drive on the formed coastal track. No off roading.

Public Transport

Weekdays: Take the No. 29 Southern Shopper bus to Owhiro Bay. There are also occasional No. 4 buses to Happy Valley and frequent No. 1 buses to Island Bay Terminus on The Parade. It is a 2.5km scenic walk from Island Bay to the start of the Coastal Track.

Weekends: Take the No. 1 Island Bay bus.

BROOKLYN ENTRANCE

The northern entrance to the reserve is via Brooklyn wind turbine. Turn off Ashton Fitchett Drive onto the sealed road at the gate to the car park. Please stay on the road and marked tracks – some adjoining land is privately owned. Vehicle access beyond the wind turbine is strictly by arrangement.

Parking

Parking for approximately 40 cars is available at the wind turbine. The road to the wind turbine is open daily to vehicles from 8am to 5pm, April to September, and 8am to 8pm, October to March.

Public Transport

Weekdays: Take the No. 7 Kowhai Park bus to the Karepa Street – Ashton Fitchett Drive intersection. The wind turbine is a 2km walk up the hill.

Weekends: Take the no. 7 Kingston bus to the Brooklyn traffic lights. Follow the signs up Todman Street to the wind turbine (3km). There is no bus service from Brooklyn to the wind turbine.

HAPPY VALLEY ENTRANCE

Access to the reserve from Happy Valley is via the Tip Track. The entrance is at the start of Happy Valley and Landfill roads, through the locked steel gates to the left of the intersection. Follow the 4WD track up the hill.

Parking

There is no parking available at the Happy Valley entrance. Visitors are asked to park in a safe and legal manner on Happy Valley or landfill roads or further down on Murchison Street or in the car parks adjacent to the Happy Valley sports fields. *Note – these are busy roads used by large vehicles.*

Public Transport

Weekdays: Take the No. 29, 4 or 1 bus and get off near Landfill Road.

Weekends: Take the no. 1 Island Bay bus.

WRIGHTS HILL ENTRANCE

Wrights Hill is one of the few places where road access is available to the top. A road runs from Campbell Street to just below the summit.

Parking

Free car parking is available at the top of Wrights Hill Road.

Public Transport

Weekdays: Take the no. 21 Wrights Hill bus. Get off on Campbell Street just past Wrights Hill Road. It is a 1.6km uphill walk along Wrights Hill Road to the car park at the top.

Weekends: There is no bus service to Wrights Hill Road in the weekend.



KARORI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Access to the sanctuary is through the visitor centre at the end of Waiapu road.

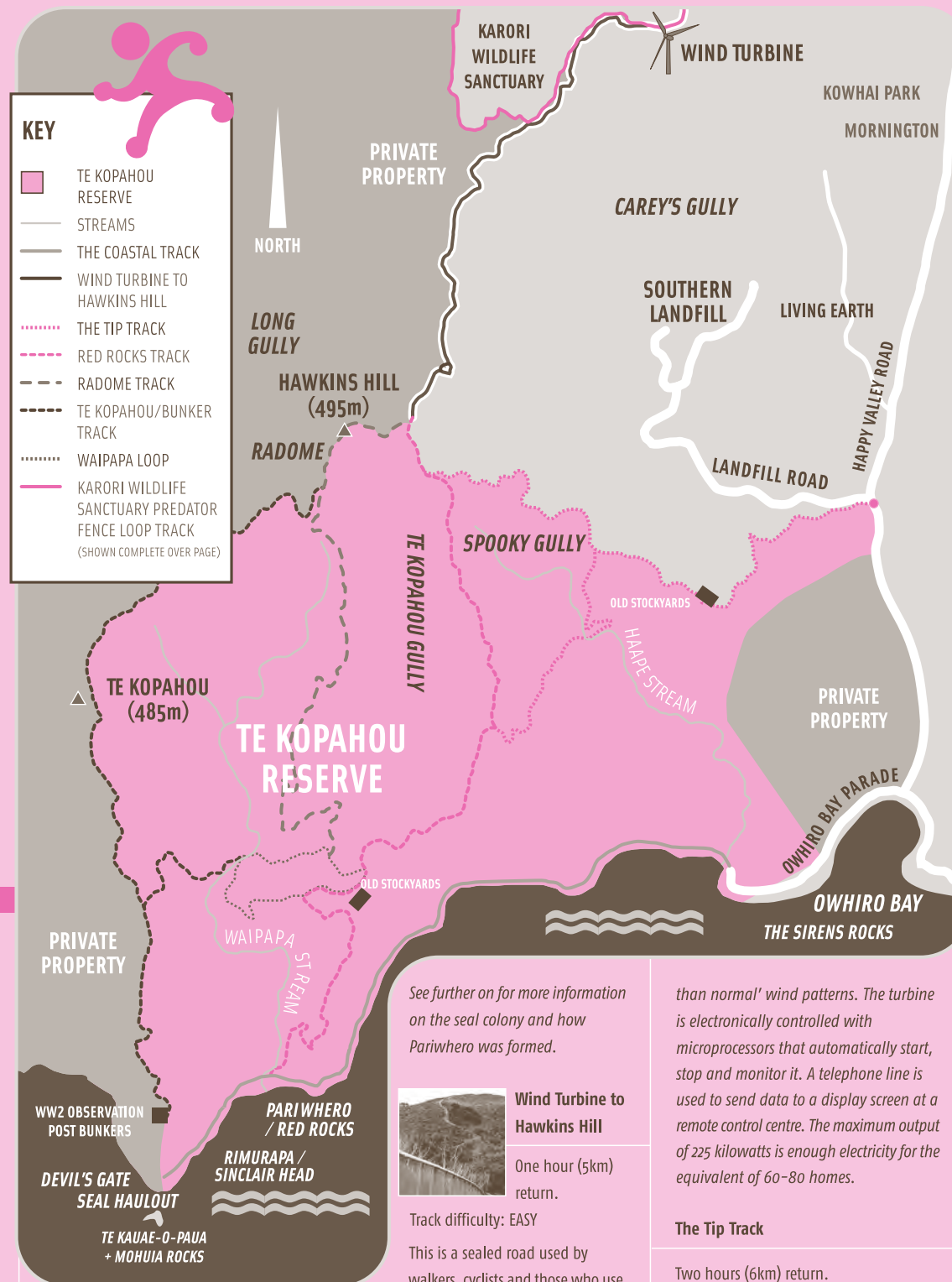
Parking

Free car parking is available in the sanctuary's car park at the end of Waiapu Road. Disabled car parking is also available.

Public Transport

Weekdays: Take the No. 12, 17 or 18 Karori, the 22 or 23 Mairangi or the 21 Wrights Hill bus. Get off at the first stop after the Karori Tunnel. The Sanctuary's visitor centre is an easy five minute walk from the bus stop down Waiapu Road.

Weekends: Take the No. 12 or 17 Karori or the 22 or 23 Mairangi bus. Get off at the first stop after the Karori Tunnel.



TRACKS AND WALKS



The Coastal Track

Two to three hours (8km) return from the quarry gate. *Track difficulty:* EASY

The Coastal Track follows the coastline from Owhiro Bay, past the old Owhiro Bay Quarry and Red Rocks (Pariwhero), to Sinclair Head (Rimurapa). Rimurapa and Pariwhero were made scientific reserves in 1983 and 1972 respectively, and are administered by the Department of Conservation. The land north of the 4WD track, from the quarry to Sinclair Head, is administered by the City Council. The track is easy and popular with all users. Care and courtesy should be exercised. Be wary of vehicles.

See further on for more information on the seal colony and how Pariwhero was formed.



Wind Turbine to Hawkins Hill

One hour (5km) return.

Track difficulty: EASY

This is a sealed road used by walkers, cyclists and those who use vehicles to reach private property and service the radar equipment. It is a 2km walk from the car park to the summit and the start of the tracks to Red Rocks (Pariwhero) and Happy Valley. Squeeze past the gate at the car park and follow the sealed road. An alternative route is to walk the first section on the perimeter track of the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary (see further on for more information on the sanctuary).

The Brooklyn wind turbine was installed in March 1993 as part of a research project. Meridian Energy inherited the single turbine when the company was formed in 1999, and data gathered from the turbine has helped to shape the future of wind developments in other parts of New Zealand and Australia.

The Brooklyn site was chosen for the wind evaluation project due to Wellington's 'higher

than normal' wind patterns. The turbine is electronically controlled with microprocessors that automatically start, stop and monitor it. A telephone line is used to send data to a display screen at a remote control centre. The maximum output of 225 kilowatts is enough electricity for the equivalent of 60-80 homes.

The Tip Track

Two hours (6km) return. *Track difficulty:* AVERAGE

This walk takes you from the Happy Valley gate to the sealed road near the top of Hawkins Hill. The ascent is steep in places with a good place to rest half way up in the abandoned stockyards. This track is a favourite with mountain bikers and walkers.

Look to the north and you can see the Living Earth Plant and the Southern Landfill.

This area is known as Carey's Gully, and is home to many of the city's key waste treatment and disposal assets. After you flush or pull your plug, your sewerage goes through the city's 1000 kilometres of sewer pipes to the treatment facility at Moa Point. Fully treated effluent goes into Cook Strait, and the remaining sludge is pumped via a pipeline to the dewatering plant operated by United Water International.

Wellington City has one of New Zealand's most advanced systems for the disposal of sewerage sludge. The sludge is mixed with green waste and turned into compost at the Living Earth plant. Living Earth uses an average of 25 tonnes of green waste per day and 55 tonnes of sewerage sludge. This is waste that otherwise would be headed for our landfills. The Living Earth facility helps divert organic waste away from landfills by turning it into a valuable commodity. It also helps reduce leachate and methane – both harmful pollutants.

Wellington City Council owns and operates the landfill. Each year about 100,000 tonnes of waste are received. As much as possible is recycled or reused, and the remainder is buried.

Carey's Gully is named after Mick Carey, an early quarryman in the region. It is highly unlikely that he ever dreamed his name would be associated with some of the country's most advanced infrastructure.



Red Rocks Track

Two to three hours (4.5km) one way.

This route starts north of the top of Hawkins Hill and finishes at Red Rocks (Pariwhero) and is steep in places. Add an extra hour (or 2km) to walk out by the Coastal Track and the quarry gates. Plan your trip carefully before attempting this walk.

Radome Track

Two hours (4km) return. *Track difficulty:* DEMANDING

This route has a steep rough descent. The entrance is found just past the Airways Corporation domed radar station. Once in the valley floor, an alternative return route could be by the Red Rocks or Te Kopahou/Bunker Track.

Airways Corporation Radar Station
The dome built in 1990 holds both primary and secondary radars, and is part of a network of radar stations. The next one to the south is on Mt Robinson (near Picton) and to the north at Ballance (near Palmerston North). Radar and communications equipment is used to control aircraft from the Christchurch Air Traffic Control Centre and the Wellington Control Tower.



Te Kopahou/Bunker Track

Three hours (9km) return. *Track difficulty:* DEMANDING

The start of the track is reached by following the sealed road from the wind turbine car park to the radome and by walking south along the ridge. At the end of the gravel road there is an intersection of two tracks. Facing Cook Strait, the western (or right hand) track passes into private property and permission of the landowner should be obtained before entering. The track to the east (or left hand) below the trig is the Te Kopahou/Bunker Track. It descends rapidly, reaching a saddle with a second intersection. Carrying straight on will bring you to the Te Rimurapa headland (Sinclair Head). It is classified as a Maori reserve and the site of an early settlement site and the Rimurapa observation post dating back to World War Two. The New Zealand Army had an observation post

on the headland and the derelict remains are still evident. This route from the trig to the bunkers is a steep 2km (4km return) and would take a further two hours return from the top. Remember to leave extra time for lunch at the bunkers as this is an excellent view point.

On the way back you may decide to head into the valley at the saddle and come back either by the coastal, Red Rocks or Radome tracks.

Waipapa Loop

One hour (2km) return. *Track difficulty:* DEMANDING

Use this track to link with Te Kopahou, Radome and Red Rocks tracks. The valley floor is a very pleasant place for a breather or lunch. There are some waterfalls in this catchment.



Discover numerous tracks and amazing views in the Te Kopahou Reserve, including Red Rocks, the Brooklyn wind turbine and the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary.

Walk through Wellington's beautiful parks and discover the area's views, stunning flora and fauna and some early history of the area.



🌀 The Naming of Te Kopahou

Te Kopahou is the ridge beginning at Highbury forming the eastern side of the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, continuing south between the Silver Stream tributary of Karori Stream and the headwaters of Owhiro Stream, reaching Cook Strait at Sinclair Head (Rimurapa).

Te Kopahou was also a pa site of Ngati-Rangi and Ngati-Hikerata burned by Te Rauparaha c. 1850. Site unknown. (From The Great Harbour of Tara, G. Leslie Adkin, 1959, p.32).

An approximate translation is “a bent or folded feather”.

🌀 Naming of Pariwhero

Red Rocks and its surrounding reserve are of national significance.

Maori traditions provide three explanations for the colour of Red Rocks (Pariwhero).

Maui stained the rocks with blood from his nose (blood which he used to bait his hook prior to catching Te-Ika-a-Maui – the North Island). The rocks are also associated with the legend of Kupe. In one story Kupe got his hand clamped by a live puaa shellfish and his blood stained the rocks; in another, Kupe's daughters cut

themselves in grief fearing him dead after a long absence.

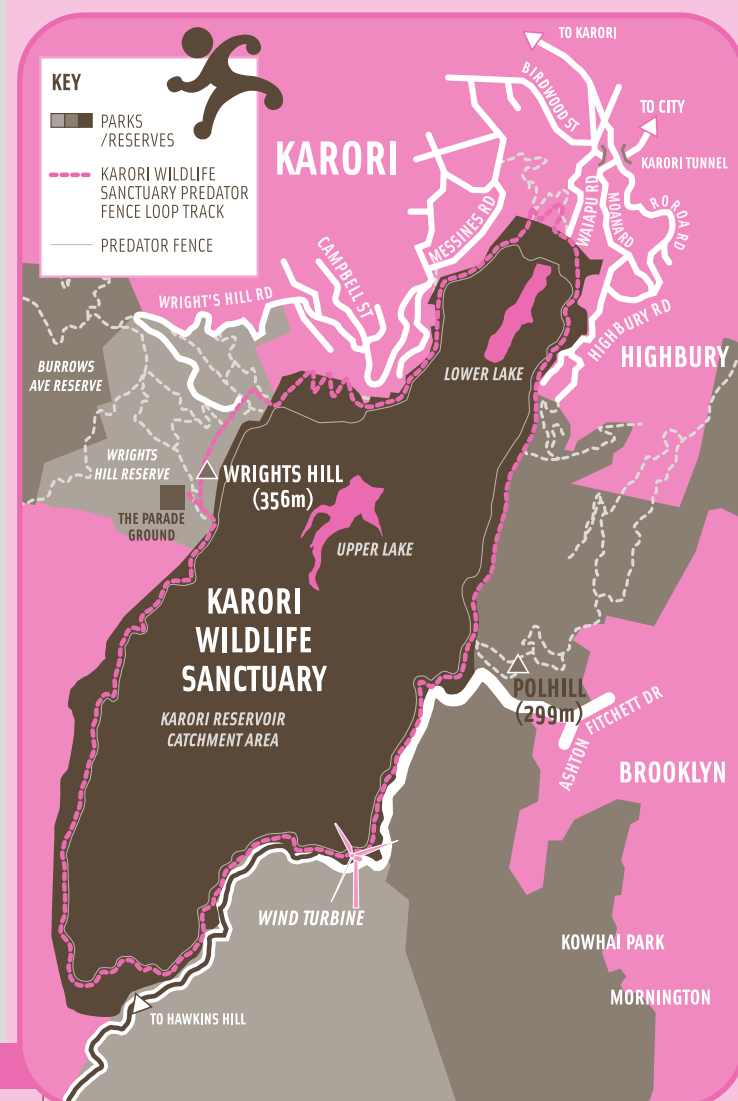
Traditional evidence suggests that Ngati Mamoe had an ancient pa called Taumata-patiti in the bay east of Sinclair Head, and a pa called Makurerua in the hills behind the bay. There are several archaeological sites, including middens and terraces, in the area. The karaka grove also indicates Maori occupation.

🌀 TeKauae-o-Poua rock

‘The jaw-bone of Poua’, is a large isolated rock near Sinclair Head. It is said that the Ngati-Ira people of Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara (Wellington Harbour) had a proverb: “Kia mahaki ra ano te kauae o Poua, Katahi ka riro ai te whenua” which means “when the jaw-bone of Poua becomes loose, then only will the land be lost [or pass into other hands]”.

🌀 Mohuia rock

A rock off Sinclair Head, named for a daughter or niece of Kupe. There are three big sea-washed rocks off the point named, on a rock islet, and another about half a kiolmetre away. The tall isolated rock is Mohuia.



Karori Wildlife Sanctuary Predator Fence Loop Track
(the north east side of the track is also known as The Rollercoaster)

Four hours (9km) round trip.
Track difficulty: AVERAGE TO DEMANDING

This is a challenging walk around the perimeter of the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary. Loose rock makes walking slippery in a couple of steep sections. The walk provides panoramic views of Wellington Harbour, the south coast and the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary.

The walk can be started at a number of locations, including Wrights Hill, the wind turbine, from the end of Highbury Road, the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary Administration Offices, 31 Waiapu Road or at the end of Campbell Street next to the Scout hall. It can also be done in sections.

To the east of the car park at the administration offices, is a white rail

fence. A sign posted, “Karori Sanctuary Circuit” points you in the right direction. Follow the path south, past two houses and along a short distance of tarseal to a fence. There is a single track that zigzags up the hill before opening up to a 4WD track. Follow this track south to a fork in the road. The north track leads to George Denton Park on Highbury Road. The south track continues on until splitting again. Take the west track, which is for pedestrians, mountain bikes and vehicle access. The east side is for downhill mountain bikers. Both ends are sign posted. This track leads up to the wind turbine.

At the wind turbine car park head west. There is a stile over the fence between the car park and the dirt road which runs along the outside of the sanctuary fence. Follow the fence line south and then west around the ridge that separates the sanctuary and Te Kopahou Reserve. After about 30 minutes the undulating road reaches a low saddle linking Long Gully farm and the sanctuary's Faultline Track, visible on the inside of the fence.



Note the green tags on the sanctuary fence posts, these were sold to members of the public for \$100 to raise money for the sanctuary.

The walk continues along the dirt road, gently climbing towards Wrights Hill. Pass under the power pylon. Approximately 100 metres further on the track forks; take the first vehicle track leading away from the fence. Head up to the parade ground, a grassy area leveled and cleared for use by the military in 1942 when building the nearby gun emplacements (see Wrights Hill for more information). Head back towards the sanctuary fence, 20 metres on and you come to a walking track heading north through gorse. This leads to the top of the hill to Telecom's transmission towers and the gun sites. Follow this path up to the road and head north past the transmission towers to the viewing platform.

Take the track down the hill (under the viewing platform) and follow the Campbell Street fork two minutes later to bypass the extreme downward slope, which follows the fence line.

The bush track zigzags down the hill to the rear of the Campbell Street Scout den. To avoid the steep and difficult climb alongside the fence, follow the track through the revegetation site towards Versailles Street, up to the fence line at the top of the hill. The walk continues along the gently undulating dirt road for approximately 15 minutes.



Come to the point on the road where the sanctuary fence changes direction and drops down to the lower dam,

sign posted “To Birdwood Street Steps”. Leave the fence here and continue on through the bush taking the St John's Pool track, which zigzags down the side of the valley. At the first junction turn right, sign posted “Round the Fence Track” and head down to the Kaiwharawhara Stream. As you reach the stream you can see the Golden Crown mine, which is 70 metres long. Head up stream to the boardwalk crossing at St John's Pool.

Walk straight up through the bush onto Waiapu Road and the sanctuary office car park.

St John's Pool

George Alexander Troup, Mayor of Wellington from 1927 to 1931 bought 10 acres of land stretching down to the Kaiwharawhara Stream. Part of this land was given to the Bible class for tennis



courts and a swimming bath was officially opened in January 1909. The pool gradually fell into disuse and in 1933 the committees of the Kelburn and Northland schools had a new concrete dam constructed across the stream. A shallow pool, 2ft to 3ft 6in deep, 50ft long and 25ft wide complete with diving board and a path along each side for the use of swimming instructors, was formed. However, the newly constructed pool had a very short life. By 1937, Karori School had its own baths built and only those locals who knew of its existence continued to use the St John's Pool. The remains of the pool can still be seen today.



Karori Wildlife Sanctuary

The sanctuary offers a wide range of walks for all ages and abilities. For first time visitors, a guided tour is recommended. Experienced guides are available during the day and night to share the secrets and developments of the sanctuary. Alternatively, you can guide yourself with the aid of a sanctuary map and spend as long as you like exploring.

Day-time guided tours offer an insight into the valley's fascinating history – from dairy farming, gold mining and water reservoir to present day wildlife safe haven. Expert guides are knowledgeable about the wildlife and sanctuary's conservation plans. On the two-hour tour, you will walk through parts of the lower valley, which has two unique historic dams, historical buildings, Morning Star goldmine, bird feeding stations and many other attractions.

Nocturnal tours take approximately two hours and encompass the dusk chorus followed by the distinctive calls of morepork, kiwi and weka. The sound echoing through the valley, while star gazing and enjoying the extensive glow-worm show, is a truly unique opportunity. Added to this, there is always the possibility of sighting a kiwi.



WRIGHTS HILL

Wrights Hill is seen from the eastern suburbs, central city and western suburbs. There is little open ground except on top of the hill itself where a well-developed lookout is located, offering dramatic views. Wrights Hill has significant heritage features, including the World War Two gun emplacements and tunnels. These are looked after by the Wrights Hill Fortress Restoration Society and there are a number of public open days throughout the year.

The area has a mix of native and exotic vegetation. Secondary native forest on the hillside and ridgetop is at various stages of regeneration. Wrights Hill Reserve is managed by Wellington City Council and is one of the city's significant ecological sites. It borders the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary and forms part of the ecological corridor running west and north from the sanctuary.

Wrights Hill has an extensive track network for walking, and there is a shared walking/mountain biking connection to the Polhill/Hawkins Hill ridge and Makara Peak.



WRIGHTS HILL FORTRESS

Wrights Hill Fortress was built in the 1940's as a long range coastal battery to protect Wellington City and surroundings from possible enemy attack and invasion from the Pacific in World War Two. The extensive underground work started in November 1942 and included a massive 620 metres of interconnecting tunnels. The fortress was used for training purposes up to the mid 1950's but a government decision in early 1960 resulted in the guns being cut up for scrap. The gun emplacements were filled with rubble and other equipment removed from the fortress.

After years of neglect the fortress complex was “rescued” in 1988 by the Karori Lions Club who opened them up to the public for the first time in 1989. The Wrights Hill Fortress Restoration Society was formed a few years later and it has been actively restoring the coastal battery to its former state. Thousands of voluntary hours and tens of thousands of dollars have been spent on restoration work. This includes digging out gun pit number one, restoring the radio room, waterproofing the inside of the tunnels, rebuilding wooden walls, repainting and completely rewiring the fortress. A replica gun barrel, 10 metres long, was built to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the installation of the guns at the top or Wrights Hill. The incorporated society's aims are “to restore and preserve the Wrights Hill Fortress as an historical monument for the benefit of the community”. Membership is available to anyone for a small charge and money raised from membership and open days goes towards restoration costs.



KARORI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

The sanctuary is a unique conservation attraction where visitors can step back in time, experience a slice of New Zealand's natural heritage and enjoy the peaceful scenic surroundings. Over 35 kilometres of bush tracks and paths criss-cross 252 hectares of regenerating forest. A predator-proof fence surrounds the sanctuary and mammalian pests have been removed providing a safe haven for the numerous rare and endangered flora and fauna that have been released inside, such as the little spotted kiwi, weka, brown teal, saddleback and kaka. Visitors have the opportunity to explore New Zealand bush and wetlands and discover the wildlife in their natural environment.

The sanctuary is located at the end of Waiapu Road, Karori and is open from 10am. For further information call 04 920 9200 or visit their website at www.sanctuary.org.nz.

Seal Colony

Sinclair Head is a 'haul out' area for New Zealand fur seals during the winter. The colony has up to 150 seals, generally all male. 'Haul out' sites provide winter refuges where animals can gain condition before the next breeding season. Please note that the seals are only present at Sinclair Head during the 'haul out' season.

Seal Facts
‘Haul out’ season: May to October
Breeding season: late November to January
Weight of average condition bull: 160kg
Favourite food: squid, octopus, barracuda, hoki, conger eel
Eaten by: sharks, orca, leopard seals

Fur seals are protected by law and should not be disturbed. If you see anyone disturbing the seals, or if you see an injured seal, please contact the Department of Conservation, on 0800 DOC HOT line (0800 362 468).

Geology

Red Rocks was formed about 200 million years ago during underwater volcanic eruptions. The raised shore platform with its pillow lava is noteworthy, being well preserved and very accessible. The purple coloured pillow lava erupted onto the sea floor and instantly cooled. The red colour is caused by finely dispersed iron oxide (haematite). The green colour is caused by the clay mineral, chlorite. Red and white banded rocks contain silica. Eventually all of these rocks were compressed, tilted, uplifted and eroded to form the exposures we see today. On both sides of Red Rocks greywacke sandstone and argillite siltstone are found. The City Council bought and closed the 80-year-old quarry in 2000. It has since been recontoured and is progressively being planted with appropriate native species.

SAFETY AND REGULATIONS

Wear strong shoes/boots as some of the tracks are rough. Be prepared with suitable clothing as weather conditions can change quickly. Take water and food. The only fresh water is in the valleys and it is NOT recommended for drinking.

- There are no rubbish facilities in the reserve. Please take all your rubbish home
- Camping is prohibited
- Fires are prohibited
- Firearms and shooting is prohibited
- Keep to the formal tracks. All tracks are shared
- Vehicle access is prohibited on all but the Coastal Track and sealed roads. Wellington City Council may grant vehicle permits for one off events and trips. Vehicles are reminded to keep to the formed tracks. All tracks are shared by walkers and mountain bikers. It is an offence to drive any vehicle in a manner likely to endanger any person
- Removal of geological material (rock etc) from the scientific reserve is prohibited
- It is an offence to disturb the seals
- Trail bikes are prohibited in all areas except the Coastal Track where registered motorbikes are permitted
- Dogs must be kept on a leash at all times. Dogs are banned from Sinclair Head during seal 'haul out' season, May to August. *For more information refer to the Wellington City Council Dog Control Policy.*

FLORA AND FAUNA

The coastal edge of Wellington supports many plant species adapted to the Cook Strait conditions. The steep coastal cliffs that bear the full force of Cook Strait gales support a mosaic of coastal scrub, flax and tussock land and scree. Dense scrub, including taupata, stunted karaka and manuka would once have dominated but deforestation, intensive browsing, fire, quarrying and pest animals have destabilised many cliff faces. Threatened plants such as *Muehlenbeckia astonii* (shrubby torarora), speargrass and *Brachyglottis lagopus* (a yellow daisy-headed herb) still occur within the coastal vegetation. Inland from the coast, the original vegetation was a mix of coastal and broadleaf forest species. Sheltered hillsides originally bore tawa forest studded with very large rimu and northern rata. Rotting trunks are still evident on what are now grasslands around Hawkins Hill. Spooky Gully is home to one of the few mature coastal forest remnants.

The coastal environment is also home to invertebrates, including the rare speargrass weevil, lizards and birdlife. Among the coastal birds are: the banded dotterel, shags, gannets/takapu and reef herons. Birds more commonly found inland can also be observed, such as grey arbler/riroriro, pipit/pihoihoi and kingfisher/kotare.

Other Explore Wellington brochures featuring major tracks and walkways and art and heritage walks in the city are available at stands at the Visitor Information Centre on Wakefield Street, Wellington International Airport and the Wellington Railway Station. Brochures are also available by phoning Wellington City Council 04 499 4444, or visit our website www.feelinggreat.co.nz for details.

The new Mountain Biking brochure is also available at the Visitor Information Centre, Wakefield Street or check out www.feelinggreat.co.nz for information about mountain biking in Wellington.

Planting a tree is a wonderful way to commemorate something special or to take an active part in creating a greener future. There are lots of ways you can help restore the city's reserves, bush and coastal areas – and some don't involve getting your hands dirty! Phone 499 4444 or visit www.Wellington.govt.nz for more information.