



Manukau Parks



Mangemangeroa Reserve



Te Kaunihera o
MANUKAU
 City Council



This brochure highlights Mangemangeroa Reserve, one of the many great walks for you to enjoy in Manukau City.

108 Somerville Road, Howick, Manukau City.

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Discover Mangemangeroa Reserve

A magnificent landscape of farmland, coastal native bush and stunning estuary views, Mangemangeroa Reserve is one of Manukau's 14 premiere parks. The reserve is in the Mangemangeroa Valley, an area of significant scenic, environmental and cultural value.

The Maori word Mangemangeroa means 'valley of the mangemange', (*Lygodium articulatum*) a twisting climbing fern used by Maori to tie raupo thatch to manuka-framed whare (huts) and for making hinaki (eel traps).

History of Mangemangeroa Reserve

Ngai Tai and Ngati Papoa (iwi of Tainui descent) occupied the Mangemangeroa Valley from around the 14th century until 1870, drawn to the area because of its proximity to the ocean, making it a great source of Kaimoana (sea food). It also provided suitable sites for kianga (villages).

The Maori inhabitants burned off small areas of bush and grew crops in the fertile patches of soil along the estuary. Under increasing pressure from European settlement, Maori left their traditional homes and relocated to Waiheke Island.

Remnants of Maori occupation can still be seen throughout the reserve. There are several shell midden sites indicating cooking areas. Consisting of mainly tuanga (cockle), pipi and mudsnails, some of the midden sites also contain pieces of burned hangi stones and charcoal.

Missionary William Thomas Fairburn became the first European owner of the land in 1836. He bought it at the request of nine local chiefs who hoped it would prevent inter-tribal warfare.

After the Treaty of Waitangi was signed, the land adjacent to the Mangemangeroa Creek became Government land. It was surveyed and sold off in 1849 to settlers William McAuley and Peter Searles for £1 an acre. William McAuley's sod cottage was situated close to the site of the present barn. The arum lilies below the barn are escapees from his garden.

In 1870 George Somerville, an Irish migrant, bought the farm and grew oats, wheat and hay on the arable areas. In the 1900's they turned to dairy farming for butter and milk production. Occasionally they grew barley for the breweries. Later, sheep and horses grazed the land. After his grandson Archie died in 1992, at the request of the Forest and Bird Society, Manukau City Council bought the reserve.

Walkway and Access to the Reserve

The main entrance and car parking area is located at 108 Somerville Road, Howick, next to the large barn. An unformed path passes through pasture leading to the formal walkway, which passes several fascinating features including a waterfall, freshwater creeks, and boardwalks over mangroves and mudflats. The walk includes steps, and some short steep sections.

The reserve can also be accessed from the end of Sandspit Road or Pohutukawa Ave, although car parking is limited at these points. At low tide it is possible to walk from Shelly Park Beach to Cockle Bay. The walk is suitable for people with an average level of fitness and takes approximately 3 hours return to the main car park area on Somerville Road.

Alternatively, there are two shorter walk options. The Rotary Loop is a short half hour loop track leaving from the main car park area. There is also the option of walking up to Archie's Lookout and back to the main carpark across the pasture.



Flora (vegetation)

The native flora is varied and interesting and includes a large stand of mature coastal broadleaf forest that extends down to the edge of the Mangemangeroa Creek. This kind of forest is now relatively rare and is of regional and national significance.

Large taraire, karaka, puriri, kohekohe and kowhai dominate the canopy throughout most of the forest. There is also a small but dense stand of young totara near the start of the bush section of the walkway. Smaller plant species, such as mapou, mahoe, nikau palm and tree ferns are dotted throughout the reserve. The estuary features an extensive area of mangrove and saltmarsh vegetation including sea primrose, remuremu and arrow grass.

Fauna (birdlife and other animals)

The reserve and the surrounding valley are home to a variety of indigenous bird species. Walking through the forest you may hear or see tui, NZ pigeon (kereru), fantail (piwakawaka), silvereye (tauhou), grey warbler (riroriro) and at night morepork (ruru), as well as a number of exotic species.

The estuary and saltmarsh wetland provides habitat for various wader birds such as white-faced heron (matakamoana), pied shags (karuhiruhi) and black shags (kawau), the pied and variable oystercatcher and, during the summer months, godwits and knots.

The reserve supports insect species including weta, the native cockroach and native bees. Most of the puriri trees are home to native moths. The creek provides a habitat for aquatic life including short-fin eels, banded kokopu and koura (fresh water crayfish). The surrounding farmland gives people the chance to wander amongst grazing cattle.

Ecological Restoration and Community Support

Community groups such as the Friends of Mangemangeroa Society, Royal Forest and Bird Society, Rotary and local schools play an important role in restoring native vegetation within the reserve.

The edge of the forest is very susceptible to invasive weeds and wind damage. Manukau Parks, with the help of these groups, is currently planting a native shrub buffer along the forest edge and throughout the grassy gullies. Planting trees also reduces erosion.

Manukau Parks is committed to reducing the number of introduced plants and animals within the reserve, through extensive animal and plant pest control.

Reserve Bylaws

Alcohol: Liquor bans are in place in the main car park entrance to the reserve on Somerville Road. Check council's website on www.manukau.govt.nz for more information.

Dogs: In order to protect wildlife, dogs are prohibited along the Mangemangeroa foreshore. In all other parts of the reserve, including grazed areas, dogs must be on a leash at all times.

Acknowledgements

Manukau Parks would like to formally acknowledge the Friends of Mangemangeroa Society for their continuing commitment to Mangemangeroa Reserve and contribution to the information in this brochure.

If you would like to join the Friends of Mangemangeroa Society, please go to: www.aerolink.co.nz/mangemangeroa/main.html

