

FREE

 GREAT  
WALKS

# RAKIURA TRACK



Duration: 3 days  
Distance: 32 km (loop)



Great Walks season:  
All year

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Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*



# RAKIURA TRACK

ESCAPE on an island adventure, and exchange the hustle and bustle of the mainland for the tranquility of the Rakiura Track.

Located in Rakiura National Park on Stewart Island/Rakiura, this is a leisurely hike suitable for anyone with a moderate level of fitness. Relax and unwind in the peaceful surroundings, with the bush, birds and beach at your side.

During the winter months, the island's weather is cool yet settled, making the Rakiura Track a great winter escape! This is a journey that links the past with the present – Stewart Island/Rakiura is steeped in history.

The Rakiura Track is a circular track and can be walked in either direction. The track is well marked and signposted, but some sections may be steep and rough and muddy. This guide describes a 3-day easy hike starting from Lee Bay for independent, non-guided walkers.



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## ELEVATION PROFILE & TRACK GUIDE



**Day 1: Lee Bay car park to Port William Hut**



### ➤ 3-4 hours, 8.1 km

Step through the chain link sculpture commissioned to commemorate the forming of the Rakiura National Park to start your island adventure. Enjoy stunning coastal views as the track makes its way from Lee Bay to picturesque Little River. Rounding the tip of Peters Point brings you to Maori Beach. From here, it is a sweeping beach walk to the swing bridge, before climbing up the forested ridge and dropping down into Magnetic Beach and Port William Hut.



COVER: Keri Moyle ([signsoflife.co.nz](http://signsoflife.co.nz))

ABOVE LEFT TO RIGHT: Rainbow, Jeremy Pearce; Track junction, Keri Moyle ([signsoflife.co.nz](http://signsoflife.co.nz)), Gallons Sawmill site, Keri Moyle ([signsoflife.co.nz](http://signsoflife.co.nz))

MAIN PHOTO: Maori Beach, Keri Moyle ([signsoflife.co.nz](http://signsoflife.co.nz))



 6 hours, 13 km

Say farewell to the east coast as you make your way through beautiful regenerating podocarp forest, as well as lush and dense virgin forest. Take a breather at the log haulers: massive machines that were used to drag forest giants from the depths of the gullies. The track descends to North Arm, an important food gathering (mahinga kai) site for early Māori, on the shore of Paterson Inlet/Whaka a Te Wera.



 4 hours – 4 hours 30 minutes, 11 km

A moderate and undulating walk takes you through kāmahi and rimu with stunning vistas across the inlet. The track then follows the coast down to secluded bays and is interspersed with historic mill sites. Sawdust Bay has tidal mudflats, making it a great spot to watch wading birds feeding at low tide. Then it is on to Kaipipi Bay, where a small grassy knoll on the water's edge provides views across the sheltered waterway. The track ends at the Main Road/Fern Gully car park. From here it is 2 km to Oban.





Photo: Sabine Bernert

Air New Zealand partners with the Department of Conservation to help bring native birds back to the beautiful Great Walks.

AIR NEW ZEALAND 



Photo: Jeremy Pearce



Photo: Jake Osborne



Photo: D Morris



Photo: Eamonn Ganley

- 1 You might be lucky enough to hear the **Rakiura tokoeka/kiwi** calling or see its footprints, and occasionally catch a glimpse of the iconic bird in its natural environment when walking the track.
- 2 Immerse yourself in the **history**, from early Māori settlement sites around Maori Beach and Port William/Potirepo to sawmilling relics dispersed along the track, dating from 1861 to the 1930s.
- 3 Take a short water taxi ride from Oban to Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara. This predator-free island is home to many rare and endangered birds and species. It is a regular haul-out for the world's rarest seals, the **New Zealand sea lion/whakahaio**.
- 4 Wander through beautiful native forests. The Rakiura Track takes you through rimu and kāmahī forest with a rich diversity of tree ferns, ground ferns, perching orchids, **clematis/puawānanga**, and southern rātā.
- 5 Be greeted by a cacophony of birdsong. The Rakiura Track hosts a multitude of native birds, including Buller's mollymawks /toroa, little blue penguins/kororā, tūī, parakeets/kākāriki, and **New Zealand pigeons/kererū**.

## GETTING THERE

The Rakiura Track can be walked in either direction, starting from two locations:

- The official entrance to Rakiura National Park at **Lee Bay**, 5 km from Oban.
- The **Fern Gully** car park, 2 km beyond the Rakiura National Park Visitor Centre, on Main Road in Oban.

To get to Oban, the only township on Stewart Island/Rakiura, you can take a 20-minute flight from Invercargill or a 1-hour ferry trip across Foveaux Strait from the southern port of Bluff.

In Oban you'll find accommodation, supplies, equipment hire and transport to and from the start of the track.

*Refer over the page for transport options and services.*



## Sign me up! What do I do next?



- 1 Start off at [greatwalks.co.nz/rakiura](http://greatwalks.co.nz/rakiura) for more information.



- 2 Book your huts and campsites online or at a DOC Visitor Centre.



- 3 Book your transport to and from Stewart Island/Rakiura and the track – operators are listed online and in this brochure.



- 4 Buy your food and **pack your bags** – download the Great Walks packing list and make sure you have everything you need for a 3-day independent unguided walk.



- 5 Read up on **safety** and make sure you're well prepared for your journey and changeable weather at [greatwalks.co.nz/rakiura](http://greatwalks.co.nz/rakiura). Make sure you have left your intentions with a trusted contact at [adventuresmart.org.nz](http://adventuresmart.org.nz).



- 6 Visit the closest **DOC Visitor Centre** (Rakiura National Park Visitor Centre, Oban) to pick up your **tickets and official track guide**, and chat with the friendly staff for the latest weather forecast and track conditions.



- 7 **All set!** Lace up your boots and get hiking. Don't forget to share your experience on [facebook.com/GreatWalks](https://facebook.com/GreatWalks).

## PLACES TO STAY



Photo: Keri Moyle ([signsoflife.co.nz](http://signsoflife.co.nz))

DOC operates 2 huts and 3 Great Walks campsites along the Rakiura Track, which **must be booked in advance all year round**.



### Great Walks huts

\$22 (1 May – 30 September) per adult per night; 17 years and under free (booking required).

\$24 (1 October 2017 – 30 April), per adult per night; 17 years and under free (booking required).

The huts have bunks, mattresses, heating, toilets, and cold running water. A DOC ranger may be present. These huts do not provide cooking facilities, cooking utensils, linen or showers.



### Great Walks campsites

\$6 per adult per night; 17 years and under free (booking required).

The campsites offer basic facilities including toilets, sinks, cooking shelters and a water supply. Great Walks campsites can only be accessed on foot.

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For information about visiting Stewart Island / Rakiura and having the ultimate island experience, visit our website and facebook page or ask at any i-SITE Visitor Information Centre.

**www.stewartisland.co.nz**  
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*How many have you done?*

Opening 2018/19

Tracks shown: Lake Waikaremoana, Whanganui Journey, Tongariro Northern Circuit, Abel Tasman Coast Track, Heaphy Track, Paparoa Track, Milford Track, Routeburn Track, Kepler Track, Rakiura Track.

Kepler Track.  
© Daniel Deans

Department of Conservation  
**Visitor Centres**

DOC visitor centres are located nationwide and are staffed by DOC rangers with in-depth local knowledge about conservation places and activities. Visit them to plan and prepare for your outdoor adventures.

[doc.govt.nz/visitorcentres](http://doc.govt.nz/visitorcentres)

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Day 3: Sawdust Bay. Photo: Keri Moyle (signsoflife.co.nz)



## Know before you go

It is **important** to plan your trip thoroughly to ensure you stay safe and have a great time. Before you go, know the **Outdoor Safety Code – 5 Simple rules** to help you #makeithome.

1. **Plan your trip.** Travel times vary greatly in New Zealand, so carefully planning your route is essential. Seek local information about what to take, and allow enough time for the journey. Book accommodation, transport and transfers to the start/end of track early.
2. **Tell someone your plans.** Safety is your responsibility. Leave your intentions – including your trip details and emergency contact information – with a trusted contact. It could save your life if things go wrong. Head to [adventuresmart.org.nz](http://adventuresmart.org.nz) for more information.
3. **Be aware of the weather.** New Zealand weather is very changeable. Plan for the worst, expect the best. Check [metservice.com](http://metservice.com) for the most up to date info.
4. **Know your limits.** Always follow the track markers and signposted tracks. Off-track navigation is not recommended for novice walkers in New Zealand. A good level of fitness is required to walk the track. You can expect to walk up to 6 hours a day depending on your fitness level. If you get in trouble don't make a bad situation worse. Think **STAR** – Stop / Think / Assess / React.
5. **Take sufficient supplies.** With New Zealand's changeable conditions many hikers are frequently caught out by isolated local conditions. Carry – and expect to use – rain jackets all year round. Take an extra day's supply of food and an emergency shelter. Don't rely on cellphone signal alone for communication. Food and drinks are not available to purchase at Great Walks huts or campsites. Plan to be self-sufficient.

## Rakiura Track safety

- The weather is very changeable and difficult to predict. Walkers should come well equipped and prepared for all weather conditions, as extreme weather can occur at any time of the year.
- **Keep to the main track at all times.** Off the tracks the valleys are steep-sided and densely bush-clad.
- Go to [greatwalks.co.nz/rakiura](http://greatwalks.co.nz/rakiura) 'Know before you go' section for detailed safety information, and 'What to take' section for a comprehensive gear list.

## Remember – your safety is your responsibility

- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel and camp on durable ground
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Minimise the effects of fire
- Respect wildlife and farm animals
- Be considerate of others

