

TREETOPS WILDLIFE

When the Maori arrived in New Zealand about 800 years ago, birds dominated the fauna of the country. The only mammals were seals and sea lions living along the coast, and three species of bat. To this the Maori added the 'Polynesian' rat and a small form of the domestic dog.

On the other hand, over the next six hundred years, they drove about 20 species of bird to extinction. The arrival of Europeans about 200 years ago did not improve the situation. Captain Cook, the first European to set foot in the country, released pigs into the forest to provide a food supply for future visitors. Later arrivals brought more animals with them, some for food or farm use, some as pets, some for hunting and some simply to remind them of 'home'. Eventually New Zealand gained about 40 species of mammal and about 30 types of bird.

At the same time about a dozen more native bird species have slipped into extinction, and many more are on the brink today. The animals you will see around Treetops, both in the paddocks and in the forest, reflect this mixture of introduced and native animals.

THE MAMMALS

Largest of the animals on the Treetops Estate is the **Indian water buffalo**. The Treetops herd is one of only three in New Zealand. The horn length is noticeably less than that of their counterparts in Asia or Australia, probably due to the cooler climate. Unlike in Australia, there are no truly wild buffalo herds in this country.

Of the four species of deer on the estate, the largest is the **wallaby** (called **elk** in North America). All wapiti in this country are descended from 18 Rocky Mountain elk, presented by President Roosevelt in 1905 and liberated in Fiordland National Park in the South Island. In the wild it is still confined to this relatively small area of the country. It is however, widely distributed in deer farms.

Slightly smaller is the closely related **red deer**. By far the most abundant deer, not only at Treetops but also in the wild and on deer farms, it was introduced into New Zealand from Britain between 1851 and 1923.

The attractive **fallow deer** is our third largest species. First introduced in 1864 from Britain, fallow deer exist in the wild in small pockets throughout the country but, unlike red deer, have not spread naturally beyond their original liberation sites.

Treetop's smallest deer, the **sika**, is found only in this part of the country, where the population is descended from the pairs presented by the Duke of Bedford in 1905. Although these deer were brought from England, the species hails originally from China and Japan.

Treetops is also home to a small flock of **Arapawa sheep**. This breed moults naturally, and so does not need to be shorn. Spanish sailors liberated it on Arapawa Island in the New Zealand Marlborough Sounds. The intention was to found a captive population that would breed, and provide a source of fresh meat for subsequent voyagers.

The **wild pig** of Treetops is the **Captain Cooker**, so named because Captain Cook released the founding population in this country in 1773. This and other early releases were, like the sheep, intended to provide a breeding population for food for subsequent voyagers. Only domestic pigs were liberated, but they have reverted to something resembling the European wild boar, although both size and colour varies greatly.

In the forest, anywhere in New Zealand, you will find the **possum**. The Australian brushtail possum was introduced between 1837 and the 1920s to supply the fur industry. Shortly after that it was finally realised that possums constituted a major threat to the native forest, and attempts have been made to at least reduce their numbers ever since. However, they continue to be a valuable source of fur. Possums are nocturnal, spending the day nesting in clumps of vegetation.

The other marsupial you may see at Treetops is the **tammar wallaby**. This native of Australia is found on mainland New Zealand only in the Rotorua region, where it is thought to have been introduced in about 1912. It is the smallest of the six species of wallaby in New Zealand. Wallabies are nocturnal, emerging from forest at night to graze in clearings and farmland.

Rabbits and **hares** may also be seen on open ground in the estate. Both were first introduced from Britain in the mid 1800s to provide sport, and have subsequently spread throughout the country. Rabbits are now a major pest, the population sometimes reaching plague proportions, especially in the South Island. The same is not true of hares, due to their more solitary habits, their large home ranges and the fact that they do not dig burrows.



THE BIRDS

Unlike the mammals, the birds on the Treetops Estate encompass both introduced and native species. Most prominent are undoubtedly the **pheasants**, which abound in the park. Introduced as game birds between 1840 and 1920, the New Zealand form is actually a hybrid of the English and Chinese forms. In the same, open areas of the estate you may also encounter the small **California quail**, and the considerably larger **turkey**, both hailing from the USA, while among the native birds the raucous **spur-winged plover** perhaps more often heard than seen. In swampy areas the **pukeko**, another noisy native, is easily identified by its deep blue plumage, red bill and white tail underside.

On the water itself you will spot introduced **mallard**, and native **grey duck**, as well as their hybrid form. **Canada geese** and (Australian) **black swans** are the largest water birds on the estate, followed by the native **paradise shelducks**. These noisy, strikingly coloured ducks are usually seen in pairs, the male being black save for white wing feathers, while the female is a rich chestnut brown with a white head in addition to the white wings.

A similar mixture of introduced and native species is found in the forest. Wherever you are on the Treetops Estate, you are likely to hear the familiar songs of the **blackbird** and **song thrush**, both introduced from Europe in the 1860s to remind settlers of 'home'. The **house sparrow**, too, was introduced to add 'European touch' to an alien forest, as were a variety of finches, such as the **chaffinch**, **goldfinch**, **greenfinch** and **yellowhammer**. However, you will also encounter some uniquely New Zealand birds amongst the trees. Most prominent is the **tui**, its extraordinarily varied song making it one of this country's premiere songbirds.

Less variable, but also melodious is the song of the **bellbird**. In contrast, the weak, high pitched 'tee-tee' of the **tomtit** is likely to go unnoticed until you spot the pretty black and white male bird.

The thin, chattering call of the **fantail**, too, is likely to escape your notice, but you will certainly recognise this very well-named bird when you see it. In contrast, the little **grey warbler** may well not be spotted at all, but its sad, warbling song is very much part of the New Zealand bush. It is the main target of the **shining cuckoo**, a migrant from the Solomon Islands, and in early summer you may hear its distinctive call: a series of whistles, each rising, followed by a single descending whistle.

Flocks of small birds moving through the forest canopy, peeping to themselves are likely to be **silverweaves**. Look for the distinctive white ring around each eye to identify them. As for the most famous New Zealand bird of all, the **kiwi**, it is thought to be present in the more remote reaches of the park, but being a nocturnal animal, you are very unlikely to spot one.



TREETOPS TOPOGRAPHY

The Treetops Valley lies at the southern edge of the vast Mamaku Plateau. This was created over 200,000 years ago when a massive volcanic eruption threw out about 200 cubic km of hot rock and ash - a 'pyroclastic flow' - forming a vast plateau of ignimbrite (a type of volcanic rock) to the west of the crater. After the eruption the volcano collapsed inwards, leaving a circular caldera, 15 km wide, in which Lake Rotorua now lies.

Over the subsequent millennia, erosion has bitten deeply into the surface and edges of the Mamaku Plateau. Treetops is one such erosional valley, created by the workings of numerous streams upon the softer portions of the ignimbrite. Here and there a harder portion has resisted, and now stands out as a cliff or outcrop.

THE TREES



The results of several influences can be seen in the New Zealand forest. One is its ancient history, in particular the split from the supercontinent of Gondwana, 80 million years ago. A second, much more recent one that of the extinct giant bird of New Zealand, the moa.

When New Zealand parted company with the rest of the world, dinosaurs still ruled the land, and types of evergreen trees, called podocarps, dominated the forest. Flowering plants, which were to take over as the dominant plant form, from grasses to giant trees, were a relatively recent arrival. Isolated from the rest of the world, podocarps have continued to dominate the North Island New Zealand forest, right up to the present day. In contrast, most of the flowering trees in our forests are the result of wind-blown seeds, crossing the Tasman from Australia.



However, the popularity of the tall, straight podocarps, both with the Maori for buildings and canoes, and with the Europeans, for building and export, mean that in many forests mature podocarps are rare today. This is the case on the Treetops Estate where the dominant trees are flowering **tawa** and **rewarewa**, although the latter is a protea and as such probably has its origins amongst the original Gondwana flora. Of the podocarps, the most common is the **rimu**, several impressive examples of which can be seen along the Stairway to Heaven Track and at Captain Cook's Stand.



TREETOPS MUST DO ACTIVITIES

In the heart of a forest in the middle of New Zealand's incomparable Volcanic Plateau, Treetops offers an unbeatable range of activities, both on the estate and further a field, to suit everyone's taste.

SELF GUIDED WALKS

Walk out the door, and into adventure! The forest is all around you and, within minutes, you can be at the start of the more than 40 km of trails that wind through the Treetops Estate. Follow one of the guided walks described overleaf, or plot your own course using the map and the notes below. Visit towering stands of rimu trees or the beautiful Bridal Veil Falls, follow crystal-clear streams through leafy glades, or stand high on the valley rim, and take in the stunning view. Wildlife abounds in the valley. Spot deer and buffalo in the lowlands, and unique native birds on the forested slopes. Your walk may last less than an hour, or most of the day. Various picnic options are available, ranging from Chef's packed sandwich lunch through to an exclusive lunch for two at Bridal Veil Falls. Other popular picnic spots are Daydream and Kokako Heights. For the energetic, there is mountain biking. We have the gear you need, including excellent mountain bikes, so why not take a packed lunch and make your way to the farthest corners of the estate?

OTHER TRAILS

Buffalo Run; lower end
The trail runs through the open valley floor, from the junction with the **Pheasant Trail** to the junction with **Gobbler's Folly** and **Cabbage Tree Walk**. The track is wide (4WD) throughout, and offers the swamy land of the central valley, and good opportunities to see wildlife. At the **Gobbler's Folly** (straight ahead through gate) **Cabbage Tree Walk** (right) junction. You have the choice of taking either of these tracks, or turning left to continue over pasture to Dawn Rise.

Cabbage Tree Walk
This short trail runs along the base of a low ridge, with views over the cabbage tree filled wetlands of the valley. It is best approached from the junction with **Gobbler's Folly** and the **Buffalo Run**, since its junction with the **Pheasant Trail** is far from clear.



Dawn Rise Trail
This half-hour loop trail passes three of the four ponds on the property, and affords fine opportunities for viewing deer. Start by passing through the gate just beyond the farm buildings, on the right of the **Pheasant Trail**. The wide (4WD) track winds over the hill, then down to the **Dawn Rise Lake**. Sweeping round the far side, it then becomes less easily discerned as it makes its way back over the pasture, under a stand of mature pine trees, to rejoin the **Pheasant Trail** close to the **Duck Inn**. Return along this trail past **Lake Reflection**.

Day Dream
There are two trailheads, one at the uphill side of the helipad on the lower access road, the other opposite the start of the **Tawa Trail** along the upper access road. Both are about 5 mins walk from the lodge. The wide (4WD) track leads upwards through grassland. At the first junction, turn left if approaching from the helipad, or go straight ahead if coming from **Tawa Trail**. At the next junction, turn right. The summit is reached after about 15 mins. There are tables and seating and fine views across the surrounding countryside.

Gobbler's Folly
This short trail runs along a ridge between the **Pheasant Trail** and the end of the **Buffalo Run**. There are views to either side over the valley. At the **Buffalo Run** end, you can return either via **Cabbage Tree Walk** (left) or via **Buffalo Run** straight ahead which will take you to the far end of the valley, right brings you to **Dawn Rise**.

Jurassic Park Trail
The trailhead is at the far side of a grassy clearing, set up for clay pigeon shooting, about 15 mins walk down the upper access road from the lodge. There is some space for parking. The trail drops steeply into a wooded valley, then turns left to run along the bank of a very picturesque stream. There is a viewing platform at a bend in the stream. The latter section of the trail has views over the neighbouring valley, before terminating behind **Pheasant Cottage**, close to the estate entrance. Returning to the road, and thence back to the clearing makes a round trip of about 15 mins.

Stag's Highway
The trail starts and finishes on the **Buffalo Run**. At either end it winds through quite attractive valleys, but the middle section, through forest at the foot of the valley escarpment, is muddy and steep in places, with few views to compensate you for your effort.

Tawa Trail
The trailhead is about 5 mins walk along the upper access road from the lodge. The wide trail drops steeply into the valley. Tawa is the dominant tree in the forest, and some impressive examples can be seen here. The trail rejoins the access road after 15 mins, where you have a choice of turning up the road to return to the lodge (15 mins) or continuing down to **Jurassic Park Trail**. (2 mins)

GUIDED SAFARIS

Photographic Safari
The Treetops Estate offers endless photographic opportunities from panoramic views, through woodland glades and rushing waterfalls dappled with sunlight, to majestic stags and unique birds flitting elusively through the canopy. Your guide is an internationally recognised photographer, who will teach you how to make better use of your own camera, and advise you on making the most of your photographic opportunities. The lessons you learn here will improve your photography for the rest of your life! (3 hours minimum)



4WD Safari
A one-hour venture into the heart of the estate. Our guide will take you deep into the quietest corners of the valley, where you will have the opportunity to see and photograph the wildlife of the estate in natural surroundings. Walk home or have a picnic at one of the numerous vantage points. (1 hour)



Horse Back Safari
The Treetops stable includes horses for all levels of rider from absolute beginners through to experienced horsemen and women. And there is no doubt that horseback is an incomparable way to take in the sights and sounds of the estate. Let our horseman, Diddy, lead you along trails that wind through native bush and open grassland to view rushing streams, tumbling waterfalls, deer, buffalo, and many birds. Horse riding lessons are also available. (2 hours minimum)

Great Eco Treasure Hunt
Children are naturally inquisitive, and the Great Eco Treasure Hunt provides the perfect way for the budding biologist to learn about New Zealand's unique flora and fauna. It is a mystery adventure safari, taking children deep into the forest to discover for themselves what makes this country's animals and plants so special. (3 hours minimum)



Maori Indigenous Food Trail
"Haere mai taua te hikoi i te ngahere" "come walk with me in the forest". We are introducing a new experience for guests: The Treetops Lodge & Wilderness Estate Maori Indigenous Food Trail.

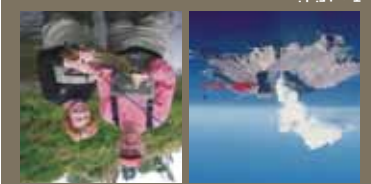
For 800 years before the coming of the Europeans, Maori harvested the forest for food and medicines. Your Maori guide will lead you through the forest and show you many of the traditional plants that were utilised. In keeping with Treetop's eco-friendly ethos the focus of the fine cuisine is on locally-grown produce including native ingredients. Our Chef comments, "Native herbs are not commonly used on menus in New Zealand so utilising them in our cuisine provides a new culinary experience, in particular for guests from overseas."

The forest food trail educates guests on native Maori cuisine and the indigenous herbs and plants used, and is headed by leading local expert, Charles Royal. Charles who has created the tour exclusively for Treetops, has more than 20 years experience with Maori food. The tour starts with the background to Maori cuisine and how this translates to the modern day. During the tour, guests will sample a series of foods made with native herbs sourced on the property whilst learning about their medicinal and nutritional properties. The tour includes a Maori-style lunch for two. (2 hours minimum)

Bird Watching/Nature Trail Safari
Spot unique New Zealand birds, and learn about the many unusual forest plants that abound in the Treetops Estate. Commentary and birdcall tapes are available, or be led through the forest by a knowledgeable guide.

Ways to end a magical day, (3 hours minimum)
The Treetops Estate offers a range of activities to suit all tastes and budgets. Whether you are a family, a group of friends, or a couple, we have something for everyone. Our guided walks, horseback safaris, and photographic safaris are all designed to provide a memorable experience. We have a variety of accommodation options, from self-catering cottages to luxury lodges. Our staff are friendly and knowledgeable, and will ensure you have a wonderful time. Contact us today to book your Treetops experience.

Helicopter Safaris
The awesome splendour of the Volcanic Plateau, its dozen lakes, its numerous volcanoes and thermal regions, its farmland and forest, is laid out before you when you see it from the air. Land on the summit of mighty Mt Taranaki, source of the biggest eruption in New Zealand's recorded history. Fly out to White Island, 45 km offshore in the Bay of Plenty, and take a walk in the crater of an active volcano! For an ill-fated experience, these tours can be combined with a three-hour cruise on a luxury motor launch on beautiful Lake Taupo, including lunch, fishing and water sports. Or, for something completely different, fly to the Treetops Estate for lunch, vineyard tour and a walk in the prime wine-growing regions. For lunch, vineyard tour and a walk in the Treetops Estate, you may like to visit this incomparable region!



Trot Fishing
New Zealand's most famous trout fishing in the world. Many years ago, the Treetops Estate was the best year-round brown and rainbow trout fishing in the world. Many years ago, the Treetops Estate was the best year-round brown and rainbow trout fishing in the world. Many years ago, the Treetops Estate was the best year-round brown and rainbow trout fishing in the world.

TREETOPS AND BEYOND

The Ultimate Luxury Lodge & Wilderness Experience

TREETOPS

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TREETOPS TOP TRAILS

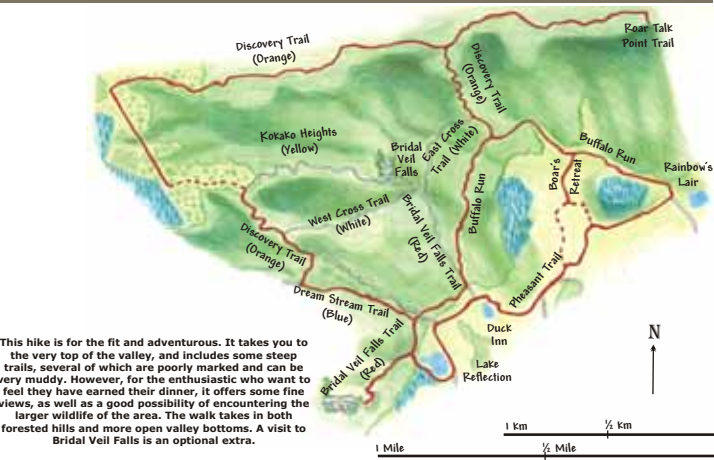
Over 40 km of trails wind through the Treetops Estate. On this spread we give detailed directions to the three most popular walks. Overleaf is a guide to some of the animals and plants you may encounter.

The guided walks are all circular routes, and vary in length from one to four hours (about 2-8 km / 1 ½ - 5 miles). To help you plan a route that suits you the major features of each walk are given in the opening paragraph. Each walk is accompanied by a map, which marks not only the route described, but also any crossing trails. This enables you to easily shorten your walk should you so wish, simply by using

the map. It is also, of course, possible to go outside the loop of the guided walk, giving yourself a longer walk. A network of trails crosses the Treetops Estate, and you can easily cross from one guided walk to another, or plan your own route. A complete map of all the walking trails is also available.

We have graded the walks from A through to C, as follows:
A: Easy, with well-marked tracks and easy inclines.
B: Moderately difficult. May include some steep sections.
C: Difficult, with several steep sections. Tracks not always well marked.

Discovery Trail **TIME:** 3 Hours Return **GRADE:** B, C



This hike is for the fit and adventurous. It takes you to the very top of the valley, and includes some steep trails, several of which are poorly marked and can be very muddy. However, for the enthusiastic who want to feel they have earned their dinner, it offers some fine views, as well as a good possibility of encountering the larger wildlife of the area. The walk takes in both forested hills and more open valley bottoms. A visit to Bridal Veil Falls is an optional extra.

Starting at the far right of the lawn, take the path towards the **Glow Worm Falls**. Following the red markers, turn left at the first two intersections, and left again onto the **Bridal Veil Falls Trail**. The path descends steeply through a grove of mahoe trees, before levelling out somewhat to run downhill beside a stream.

Upon reaching the junction with the **Staircase Falls Trail**, turn right, and continue downhill on the **Bridal Veil Falls Trail**.

At the **Lake Reflection** junction, turn left to continue on the **Bridal Veil Falls Trail**. Following the red markers, within ten minutes you will reach the trailhead of the **Dream Stream Trail** going straight ahead. Take this trail, following the blue markers until you reach the **Discovery Trail**. Enjoy the native bush and the sound of the stream. You will pass the **Staircase Falls Trail** on the left.

Turn left up the **Discovery Trail** which is marked continuously with orange markers. The hard, red clay track climbs steeply. We will pass the **West Cross Trail** on the right. As we climb higher, don't forget to pause to admire the fine views across the valley. You may be able to recognise the more golden-green heads of the rimu trees towering above their neighbours at Captain Cook's Stand on the far side.

Eventually the steep climb levels out abruptly as we reach the gently undulating surface of the Mamaku Plateau. While you pause to catch your breath, look about you. To the right is the top of the **Kokako Heights Trail**, marked yellow. This could take you, in about 25 minutes, down to Bridal Veil Falls. (See Bridal Veil Falls walk for continuing walking options).

Ahead and to your left is a meadow consisting of grassland and scattered clumps of taller vegetation, often clustering around the stumps of a long-dead tree, some of considerable size. A mighty forest once stood here. Over a century ago the land was cleared, firstly by milling then by burning, for farming. However, the volcanic soil lacked mercury and selenium, trace elements essential to livestock (supplied throughout the Volcanic Plateau by topdressing). The farm failed and the land is now reverting to forest once more. But grazing by deer is preventing the regenerating forest from encroaching on all areas equally, hence the odd patchwork you see before you. Be warned: the area is quite extensive and forms a natural maze. Be sure of your direction before venturing out too far into it.

Follow the orange markers and move forward through the meadow. Make your way towards the line of pine trees to your left about 400 metres distant. Do not be surprised if you startle deer grazing amongst the bushes.

A fence runs along the boarder of the pine plantation. Upon reaching this, turn right, and follow it, through a couple of deep gullies for about 500 metres. The pine is called **Radiata**, and is actually Monterey pine from California. In their home country they are relatively small, slow-growing trees. Here, they young rimu. Perhaps one day the lost forest giants will return. Watch out for bush lawyer. This innocuous-looking vine is actually covered with thousands of minute hooks, which will entangle in your clothes and skin if given a chance.

After about 1 ½ km (approx 30 mins walk) the **Discovery Trail** turns right off the main trail into the forest and down the bluffs. This is marked orange and is the downhill leg of the **Discovery Trail**. But first, take the extra 40 minutes to enjoy a spectacular view from **Roar Talk Point**.

Roar Talk Point (optional extra approx 40 mins return)

Before turning down the **Discovery Trail**, consider continuing on along the ridge track, following the red markers, to the fine viewpoint at the end of the valley. Proceed along the track until you encounter a gate. At this point turn right and follow the sidetrack into the forest. Although narrow adjacent to the path, the vegetation soon clears to reveal a wide track that takes you, in about a minute, to the very edge of the Mamaku Plateau. **Roar Talk Point**. Be warned: the cliff at this point is sheer; while the view is unsurpassed, it is not for those nervous of heights!

After admiring the view, return the way you have come to the marked orange **Discovery Trail** downhill leg.

Main route

The down hill leg of the **Discovery Trail** is marked orange and begins at the intersection with the **Roar Talk Point** turnoff and follows down a ridge, projecting into the valley. As you reach the far end of the ridge, the ground starts to drop steeply, and the trail becomes clear, zigzagging downwards.

The path is generally (but not always) easy to follow. After about 15 mins it begins to level out. On the right you will pass the **East Cross Trail**, marked with white plastic triangles. If you choose to take this trail, it will bring you, in less than 10 minutes, to the main **Bridal Veil Falls Trail**, where you can turn right to reach the falls in a further five minutes. (See Bridal Veil Falls walk for continuing walking options).

Instead, we will continue on down the **Discovery Trail**, within a few minutes we reach a major track junction. This is the end of the **Discovery Trail**, and the 4x4 track, in both directions, is the **Buffalo Run Trail**. The right hand path will return you to the lodge in about 30 mins; the left hand route takes about an hour.

Turning right (30 mins to lodge)

Turning right, in about 10 mins, you will run into the **Bridal Veil Falls Trail** on the right. The first right leads up to the falls. Do not take the first right. About 40 metres beyond this the second right leads away from the falls and back to the lodge. Take the second right and follow the red markers down the **Bridal Veil Falls Trail** towards the lodge, and in less than 5 mins you will reach the **Discovery Trail**. Crossing the **Discovery Trail** and backtracking along your previous route will bring you to the lodge in about 15 mins.

Turning left (1 Hour to lodge)

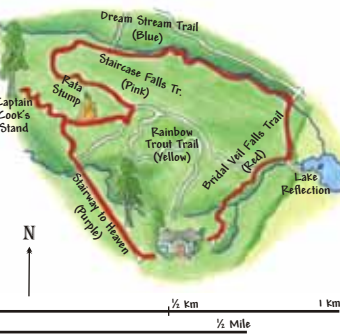
We, however, will take the left hand branch of **Buffalo Run Trail**. In about 10 mins we reach a gate. Pass through into the upper reaches of an open valley bottom. Walk quietly and you may well see wild pigs, deer or even water buffalo.

Ten minutes walk brings you to the **Boar's Retreat Track** to your right. This track is an option, although it is not clear after the first 200 metres, and you will have to make your way across the pasture by the best route until you encounter the wide 4-wheel drive road called the **Pheasant Trail**. When you do so, turn right onto it.

Alternatively, continue on down the **Buffalo Run Trail**, passing behind a small hill on the far side of which the trail meets the **Pheasant Trail**. Turn right and follow this wide trail for about a kilometre, past **Duck Inn** on your left and the trailhead of the **Buffalo Run** on your right. Passing through a gate, the road soon swings to the left, just past an old orchard on the left. You will pass the trailhead of the **Discovery Trail** on your right. A little further on, up and over a bank on the right, **Lake Reflection** can be seen. There is a path on the right up onto **Palm Beach** once you reach the far end of the lake. Walk along the beach and continue on the path around the back of the lake, through a gate, and so back on to the red marked **Bridal Veil Falls Trail**. Go straight ahead and continue up towards the lodge. You are now back on the same track you started on, and bearing left towards the lodge at the bottom of the **Staircase Falls Trail** will bring you back to the lodge within ten minutes.

Stairway to Heaven & Dream Stream Trails

TIME: 1 hour **GRADE:** B



This walk takes in a wide variety of habitats, from mature forest, including one of the few remaining areas of rimu forest on the estate, to one of the most picturesque streams. There is a great view from Captain Cook's Stand but the climb is steep. The walk remains within the forest throughout its length.

The **Stairway to Heaven Trail** is marked purple and starts on the far side of the road, across from the guests' car park. The wide path climbs steeply for about a minute before reaching a fence line. Turn right, and follow this. The track soon levels out. Note the large rimu trees scattered through the forest along the route. One has a large rata vine winding up its trunk; more about this later.

After about 10 mins, you ford a stream and shortly after reach a junction where the **Stairway to Heaven Trail** turns to the right. We will, however, continue straight ahead towards **Captain Cook's Stand**. This stand of towering rimu trees is reached after about 10 mins. Rimu is a major forest tree in much of New Zealand, and a popular timber tree. Large trees are rare in this valley, no doubt because logging has removed them over the past century (a number were milled to create the huge beams of the lodge). There is also a view over the valley from here.

On the way back down, turn left at the **Rata Stump** turnoff marked red. Proceed down to the **Rata Stump**. Rata starts life as an epiphyte, a small shrub growing high in the fine branches of a larger tree. Then it puts roots down the trunk of its host to the ground (remember the tree we saw earlier), the roots grow to encase the trunk, and ultimately the host is strangled and the rata, now a fully-fledged forest giant in its own right, takes its place. The original tree eventually rots away, so all old rata, like this one, are hollow.

Continue down the trail by the **Rata Stump** back to the **Stairway to Heaven Trail** where we turn left and continue along it. Within a minute you will reach the intersection with **Staircase Falls Trail**. The path to your right leads down to the **Rainbow Trout Trail** on the right, which will take you back to the lodge in about 10 mins. We will turn sharply left and after a few minutes walk descend steeply on the **Staircase Falls Trail**. As you reach the valley bottom, a side branch to the left takes you up a short path to a position to view the **Staircase Falls**. After viewing the falls, take the main track downwards with the stream to your left.

Very soon you will intersect with **Dream Stream Trail**. Turn right and follow the blue markers through some picturesque bush, along the banks of a crystal clear brook. Watch out, however, for bush lawyer. This innocuous-looking vine is actually covered with thousands of minute hooks, which will entangle in your clothes and skin if given a chance.

After about 10 minutes, the **Dream Stream Trail** terminates at the intersection with **Bridal Veil Falls Trail**. Continue straight ahead onto **Bridal Veil Falls Trail** following the red markers. **Lake Reflection** will soon be reached through the trees to your left and you will pass the track to the lake. Continue to follow the red markers up the hill. You will come to the **Staircase Falls Trail** marked pink on the right. Bear left, following the red markers. The trail climbs steeply through a grove of mahoe trees, before levelling out where it meets the track to **Living Waters**. Turn right, and follow the track up the hill, ignoring two paths to the left of the first to **Glow Worm Falls**, until you come out onto the lawn of the lodge.



Bridal Veil Falls **TIME:** 1 ½ - 2 hours return **GRADE:** A, B



This trail has as its goal a visit to the beautiful Bridal Veil Falls. The return trip can be selected from a number of alternative routes, depending upon the fitness and time constraints of the individual. The walk is mostly within forest.

Starting at the far right of the lawn, take the path towards the **Glow Worm Falls**. Following the red markers, turn left at the first two intersections, and left again onto the **Bridal Veil Falls Trail**. The path descends steeply through a grove of mahoe trees, before levelling out somewhat to run downhill beside a stream.

Upon reaching the junction with the **Staircase Falls Trail**, turn right, and continue downhill on the **Bridal Veil Falls Trail**.

Within a few minutes **Lake Reflection** will be ahead and slightly to the right. Take the right hand path, leave the red markers, go through the gate and this will put the lakeshore on your left. Note the long-leaved toe toe, with their white fluffy seed heads, and the taller, spiky-headed cabbage trees.

Lake Reflection is home to a variety of waterfowl, among them (introduced) mallard ducks and Canada geese, and (native) paradise shelducks.

Cross **Palm Beach**, and turn left onto the wide track down the bank on the far side of the lake. Follow the road up and past the intersection with the **Discovery Trail** to your left. Continue along the road to your right and pass by an old orchard on the right. Pass through the gate and along the road for less than 100 metres. The thorny gorse bushes visible from the road may not look like much but are worthy of comment. Gorse was introduced from Britain to be used as a hedging plant. But in the warmer climate it ran rampant, growing into small trees up to 4 meters tall, as you see here.

Within 100 meters turn left on a narrower road, through the gate and on uphill. Ignore the first track on your left opposite the large radiata pine. Radiata is actually Monterey pine from California. In their home country they are relatively small, slow growing trees. Here, they reach full size in only 20 years, and are the mainstay of the New Zealand timber industry. Other prominent trees on this section are natives: rewarewa, putaputaweta and pigeon wood.

About 40 meters further on, at the 'Y' junction, turn left onto the **Bridal Veil Falls Trail**. Here you will join the red markers. The forest is now taller, the dominant trees being mahoehe, tawa and rewarewa. Following red markers, you will cross a stream, and the path will continue on uphill more steeply, and may be somewhat muddy after rain.

Ignore the **East Cross Trail** to the right, and shortly after, the **West Cross Trail** to the left, and continue on straight ahead. After about a minute, take the right hand fork again when the **Kokako Heights Trail** branches off to the left. The path now follows a stream valley, and a further four minutes walk will bring you to **Bridal Veil Falls**.

When you reach the falls, you can contemplate your return trip. If you are short of time, or feel that you have had sufficient exercise for the day, return by following the red markers all the way back to the lodge.

anything you have attempted so far. Both meet again on the **Discovery Trail**, after which there are a number of opportunities for you to leave this guided walk and follow the signposted paths back to the lodge.

Kokako Heights (approx 25 mins)

This route is graded 'C'. Follow the track back from the falls and turn right onto the **Kokako Heights Trail**. The kokako is one of New Zealand's most useful songbirds. It is also exceptionally rare, and the chances of encountering one on this trail are low. On the other hand you will encounter some lovely stands of tawa and, from the higher reaches, some spectacular views.

The path climbs at times very steeply. It is not always clearly trodden, so watch out for the yellow plastic triangle markers nailed to trees. Soon it is running along a ridge, and eventually emerges into a more open grassed area.

At the summit the path meets the **Discovery Trail**. Turn sharp left, and follow this trail. This meanders steeply downhill, once again affording some spectacular views. Eventually it passes the exit from the **West Cross Trail**.

West Cross Trail (approx 15 mins)

Follow the track back from the falls, past the turn off to **Kokako Heights** and on to the second track on the right. This is the **West Cross Trail** and is marked with white markers. The track meanders through a grove of ferns, following a stream and generally climbing until after about fifteen minutes it meets the wide **Discovery Trail**. Turn left and continue down this.

Both routes

Going down the **Discovery Trail**, about 200 metres beyond the junction with the **West Cross Trail**, you pass the **Dream Stream Trail** on the right. If you wish you may take this, reaching the **Staircase Falls Trail**, in about 5 mins, where you can turn right and visit the beautiful secluded falls or go left to follow the picturesque stream down to **Bridal Veil Falls Trail**.

We, however, will continue on down the **Discovery Trail**. A further ten minutes walk brings you to a crossroads with the **Bridal Veil Falls Trail**. Ahead is a gate. However, we will take the right hand trail, and within a few metres will pass the lower end of the **Dream Stream Trail**. Turn left and follow the red markers back to the lodge.

For the more adventurous, you may take either of the last two side paths you have just passed: **Kokako Heights** and the **West Cross Trail**. Note that **Kokako Heights** is more strenuous than