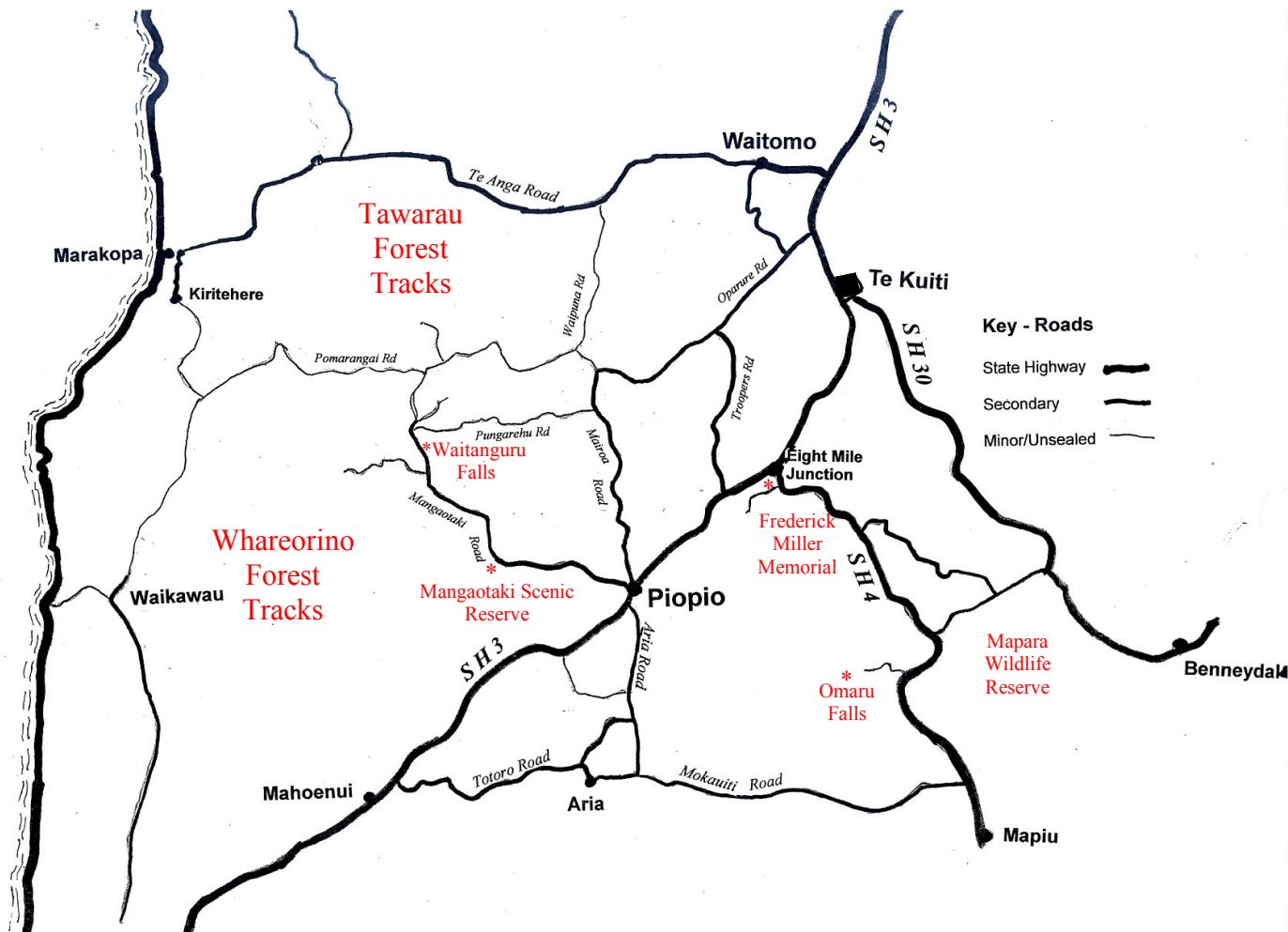


HIKING & WALKING TRACKS

The wider Piopio area provides many opportunities for great walks, varying in difficulty from very easy for the recreational walker, to challenging for the serious hiker. Even our quiet country roads, particularly those mentioned in our information on scenic drives, provide beautiful and invigorating walking conditions. These roads are more especially an excellent walking option in Winter, when many of the designated walks and/or tracks may be wet and muddy underfoot. The walks are listed roughly in order of difficulty. The Mangaotaki Scenic Reserve Walkway is convenient and close to Piopio. Other walks involve more travel, but combined with other attractions, make an excellent full day's outing. Tracks in the Whareorino and Tawarau Forests are more suited to people with moderate to good fitness and experience. As advised under the information for these tracks later in this brochure, do seek further advice from the Department of Conservation in Te Kuiti.



Hiking and Walking Tracks

Hiking and Walking Tracks

Mangaotaki Scenic Reserve

(Easy 30-minute loop, uneven surface)

A five minute drive from Piopio on the Mangaotaki Road. The car park is on the left immediately after crossing the



Mangaotaki River bridge. This is an easy 30 minute walk on a track through picturesque native bush with many fine specimen trees, some of which are named. It is a lovely area for a picnic. On the opposite side of the road to the walkway is access to the Mangaotaki River, an area known to the locals as Slippery Rock.

Waitanguru Falls

(20 minutes return on well graded and stepped track)

This walk is to view attractive falls which are surrounded by native trees and foliage, set in a Scenic Reserve. There is easy parking and a picnic area at the roadside. It is a 25 minute drive from Piopio on the Mangaotaki Road.



Omaru Falls

(Easy to moderate, 1 hour return)

A well-marked track leads through native bush and farmland to look out over spectacular falls. There are great picnic spots alongside the track. The car park and track entrance are approximately 500m down Omaru Road, just off State Highway 4, about 25 minutes drive from Piopio.

Frederick Miller Memorial

(Moderate to Steep, 50 minutes return)

This walk is through native bush and farmland, with a final steep ascent through rhyolite rocks to spectacular views from the cross at the summit. This cross honours Frederick Miller, the first Missionary in this district. To access the track turn right off State Highway 4 into Tuhua Road, just south of the Eight Mile Junction, and travel a short distance to the Information Kiosk and swing bridge on your right. This is the commencement of the walk. The Kiosk gives a historical account of the activities in this region in the late 1800's.



Mapara Wildlife Management Reserve

(Moderate grade, 1 hour loop track)

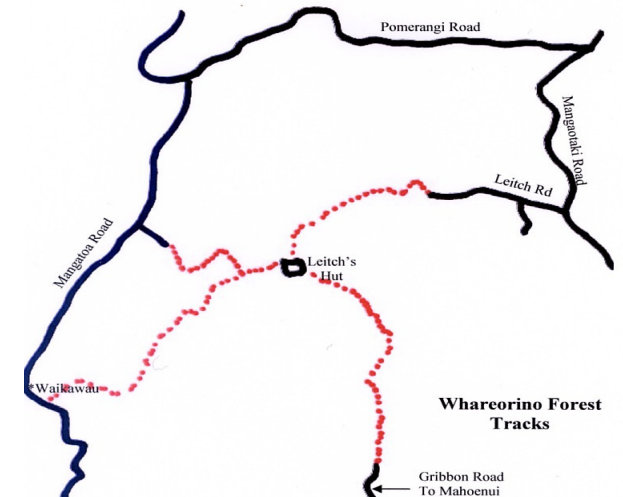
Home of the rare and beautiful North Island Kokako, one of New Zealand's most ancient birds. Kokako can be heard (best at dawn) from a moderate grade walking track through beautiful native forest. Access is from the Mapara South Road, off State Highway 4 and Aratoro Road, approximately 25 minutes drive from Piopio. There is a small information kiosk at the entrance.



Whareorino Conservation Area

This area is the largest forested area in the Western King Country. It is dominated by the Herangi Range (highest point 810metres) and is a very valuable forest area covering a range of altitudes from lowland to montane in a wide variety of habitats. It is also home to some threatened species including the New Zealand Bush Falcon, Archeys and Hochstetters frogs and long-tailed bats. If lucky you may see these bats at dusk near Leitch's Hut. The terrain is generally steep, heavily forested and in a high rainfall area. It is important that hikers are well prepared. Leitch's Track is popular, well known and well marked. The three other tracks in the Whareorino Forest, i.e. the Waikawau Track, Mahoenui Track, and Mangatua Track are more challenging. If you wish to hike on these tracks you are strongly advised to seek up-to-date information from the DOC website, www.doc.govt.nz, (Waikato/Maniapoto region), or local Maniapoto Area DOC office in Taupiri Street, Te Kuiti, telephone 07 8781050.

Maps – Use NZ Topo50 Marakopa BF51 and Piopio BF32 (1:50 000) Available from DOC.



Leitch's Track

(Moderate to steep, 3 hours to Hut, 6 hours return)

The best known hiking track in this area and very popular on well marked tracks through farmland, native forest and a river valley where the Leitch's hut is situated. A true wilderness experience. If you wish to stay in the hut, tickets may be purchased from the DOC office in Te Kuiti. Free camping is also allowed in Leitch's Clearing but you will need to purchase tickets if you wish to use the hut facilities. Access to the track is from the end of Leitch Road where there is a free DOC carpark. It is approximately a half hour drive from Piopio via Mangaotaki and Leitch Roads.



Mahoenui Track

(Moderate to steep)

3½ hours one way, this is an extension to the above hike. Continue from Leitch's Clearing downstream on the banks of the beautiful upper Awakino River to Gribbons Road, Mahoenui.. It crosses privately owned farmland, so please telephone the owner Chris Barker (07) 877 8746 if passing through or using the carpark. This section is closed during Spring when sheep are lambing and dogs are strictly not allowed. Allow an hour to drive from Piopio to the pick-up point on Gribbons Road, Mahoenui.

Waikawau Track

(Experience necessary)

It is a 7 hour hike to the hut. The carpark is on the northern side of the Waikawau River on Crawford Road, just off Manganui Road. First please phone the owners, Mike and Dot Maxwell (06 752 9891) for permission. Follow the markers along the Waikawau and Mangapapa rivers. The track continues over the Waikawau Saddle to

Leitch's Clearing. Follow clearing to Awakino River, cross and walk north for a few minutes to Leitch's Hut.

Mangatoa Track

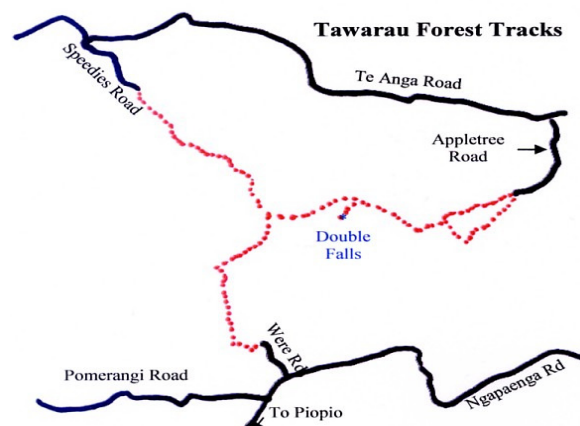
(4½ hours to Hut)

Start from the carpark at the saddle on Mangatoa Road. Follow the ridge line up to Herangi Range. The track then drops down to Waikawau Saddle, then on to Leitch's Clearing.

Tawarau Forest

Tawarau Forest is a beautiful area north of Piopio and west of Waitomo. Within the forest are some of the best remaining examples of virgin forest growing in a karst (limestone) landscape. It is known for having 'cool climate' vegetation. The forest is home to many New Zealand birds, native frogs and an exceptional diversity of land snails. There are a number of options for walking the tracks so for more in depth information visit the DOC (Department of Conservation) website www.doc.govt.nz or telephone the Maniapoto Office in Te Kuiti, 07 878 1050. Some of these tracks may be inaccessible in winter or in wet conditions.

Maps – Use NZ Topo50 Piopio BF32 (1:50 000) Available from DOC



Tawarau Falls Loop Track

(3 hours loop or 2 hours return to Falls)

Features amazing limestone cliffs, native vegetation, scenic waterfalls and river crossings. Access is from Appletree road. Other options are to link up with the Gorge Track or combine with the Double Falls Walk which would be five and a half hours return.



Gorge Track

(3½ hours)

Access is from Wera Road. This track follows the Mangaohae Stream and features wonderful limestone formations, lush native vegetation and a river gorge where the Mangaohae stream meets the Tawarau River. The end of the track is on Speedies Road. The walk begins and ends by walking through farmland.

Double Falls Track

(3½ hours from Wera Road or 2 hours from Appletree Road)

Please check with the Maniapoto DOC office in Te Kuiti before undertaking this walk. The track from Appletree Road features regenerating native forest, a radiata pine forestry block and spectacular limestone outcrops containing giant oyster fossils. There is a steep decent to the first of the falls. Between the two sets of falls there is an ideal spot for a picnic. If accessing the Double Falls Track from Wera Road, the first part of the track will be on the Gorge Track, as above. The Double Falls Track will branch to the right over a swing bridge after about two hours walk.

