

Releasing Trout

If treated with care, unwanted trout can be released successfully. It is important that the correct technique is used to ensure the survival of released trout. Generally you should observe the following:

1. Play the trout as quickly as possible to the bank or your net.
2. Keep the trout in the water at all possible times.
3. Moisten your hands or the net you use to prevent damaging the mucus on the trout's skin.
4. Hold the trout upside down in the water to relax it.
5. Use forceps or pliers to remove difficult hooks. If the trout is hooked deeply, cut the line as close as possible to the lure. The lure will eventually drop out.
6. Revive the trout in flowing water prior to releasing it.



Photographer: Dave Hern

Ngaruroro River Fishery

The Ngaruroro River, and its major tributaries, originate in the Kaimanawa, Kaweka, and Ruahine ranges and flow to the sea midway between Napier and Hastings. This large river system has over 100kms of fishable water. It is a wild rainbow trout and brown trout fishery with the rainbows dominating. The trout are generally in excellent condition with some very large specimens present. Sea run brown trout enter the river at times.

Anglers have access to a wide variety of angling experiences, from the remote backcountry fishing in the ranges, to more accessible water in the middle and lower sections. The river provides for all types of fly fishing from nymphing, wet and dry fly and spinning.

The middle to lower sections have a gravel bed and are wadable, while the upper part is more bouldery and more care is needed. The normal river flow is such that it is difficult to cross in many places. Numerous access points are available in these sections.

The upper catchment is a remote backcountry fishery. The entire true left bank is Crown land administered by the Department of Conservation as Forest Park. There are numerous huts within the Forest Parks, that are accessible by foot, rotary or fixed winged aircraft. The area holds good numbers of rainbow trout of a large average size and is renowned for its spectacular water clarity.



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Photographer: Dave Hern



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General Ngaruroro Fishing Information

Upper Reaches Ngaruroro River

Primarily remote backcountry water with significant gorges and sections of deep water. Public access via Department of Conservation designated aircraft landing sites within the Kaimanawa and Kaweka Forest Parks, also private landing sites on adjacent privately owned land, and Forest Park walking tracks upstream of Kuripapango (Napier-Taihape Road).

Anglers can raft some sections to gain access to these remote locations. Jet boat access from the middle reaches of the main river up to the Taruarau confluence is also possible. All types of flies, nymphs and spoons are suitable with larger and heavier flies often giving better results due to the depth and strength of the flow of the river. While rainbows dominate, with some large specimens present, the occasional brown is landed. In summer this section is well worth a visit because algae growth further downstream can make fishing less enjoyable.

Tributaries in this section include the Taruarau and Ikawatea Rivers. These are smaller waters and generally require lighter gear and a more discrete approach. Topographical Maps NZMS 260 - U19, 20 and 21 provide more detail. The Kaweka Forest Park map is also useful. Refer access points 1 - 3.

Middle Reaches Ngaruroro River



Photographer: Dave Hern

Downstream of the Whanawhana cableway the river flows out over the Heretaunga Plains and can be accessed from a number of points. The riverbed is primarily gravel and is braided (multi channelled). Rainbow trout dominate in this section.

Fishing methods and gear is similar to the upper reaches.

Tributaries in this section include the Ohara, Poporangi, Tutaekuri-Waimate and Karamu Streams.

Topographical maps NZMS 260 - U 21 and V 21 provide more detail. Refer access points 4 - 12.

Tributaries

Taruarau

Originates in the inland tussock and beech forest country. Public access is limited on this river except for the Napier-Taihape Road and from the end of Comet Road in the southern end of the Kaweka Forest Park. This backcountry water provides good quality angling from summer onwards. Refer access points 13 and 14.

Ikawatea

A major tributary of the Taruarau, it drains the northern part of the Ruahine Forest Park. The lower river flows through private land with no public walking access. The upper part is within the Ruahine Forest Park with the only practical public access being by helicopter to the Department of Conservation designated landing site alongside the Ikawatea Forks hut. Waterfalls above the hut prevent upstream migration of trout.

Ohara/Poporangi

A large tributary of the Ngaruroro River with a shingle bed. Fishes well in the early summer months before flows drop to low levels and the trout drop back out to the main river. Access is available via access points 15 and 16.

Tutaekuri-Waimate

A deep spring-fed stream originating near Swamp Road. This stream, although very close to Hastings, is not easily accessible. It joins the Ngaruroro a short distance upstream of the Chesterhope Bridge at the "Floodgates" (Access 11). The upper reaches can be accessed from Omahu Road between Taradale and Fernhill. To obtain access to fishing water you need to seek landowners



Photographer: Dave Hern

permission to cross their property.

Karamu

A slow meandering stream that flows from near Havelock North and joins the Clive River. Bait fishing along with fly and spinner methods are allowable. Access from Karamu North Road and numerous other points over private land with landowner permission.

Regulations

The Ngaruroro River downstream from its confluence with the Kiwi Creek, excluding tributaries, is open all year around. The only exception is the Karamu Stream which is also open throughout the year. The tributaries and the upper river open for fishing on 1 October and close on 30 April.

There is no minimum size limit but there is a maximum size limit of 550mm above the Whanawhana cable and all tributaries.

The daily bag limit is one sport fish for the Ngaruroro River above the Whanawhana cable, including all tributaries, elsewhere two per day.

Fly and spin fishing is permitted in the Ngaruroro River and its tributaries.

Regulations may change, and anglers should read the sports fishing guide for the current regulations.



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Ngaruroro River Access Points

1 Boyd's Airstrip

A regularly used designated Department of Conservation landing site for fixed wing aircraft and helicopters located in the Kaimanawa Forest Park on an old river terrace above the river. Access within this park, and the Kaweka Forest Park across the river, provides foot access along the river. It is possible to fly into the Boyd and raft down the river to Kuripapango, but care is needed.

2 Other Landing Sites (Boyd to Kuripapango)

A number of other designated landing sites for helicopters exist between Boyd's and Kuripapango both within the Kaweka Forest Park and privately owned land managed by commercial operators. These include the Department of Conservation Ngaawapuria, Omarukokere, Rocks Ahead, Kiwi Mouth, and Cameron huts. The privately owned areas together with their landing sites are confined to the true right hand side. Permission from the commercial operators is required to land or fish from these sites.

3 Kuripapango

Access off the Napier-Taihape Road at several points at Kuripapango. Just before the road bridge a picnic site gives access to the river, both upstream towards the Cameron hut with a number of river crossings, and downstream for approximately 1km. The driveway to the Department of Conservation's Robson lodge, alongside the Napier end of the bridge, provides good access to nearly 2km of river downstream of this point. Another picnic area provides access to some pools on the other side of the bridge but slightly upstream. Access for rafts is also available at these points for the keen angler willing to raft out to below Whanawhana.

4 Whanawhana Road

A 500m gravel road leads off Whanawhana Road and ends up alongside the Ngaruroro River. In this area the river has exited from the upper gorge section and is now an open braided river. Foot access in both directions and across the river is only limited by river flow and depth. Access to Whanawhana Road is via Matapiro Road which is off the Napier-Taihape Road.

5 Matapiro Road

One kilometre past the junction of Omapare Road a private gravel track leads down to the river. Vehicle access is available with landowner permission. Please ring the adjacent landowner (Tony Connor 06-874-3886 or son 06-874-3841) before using this accesspoint.

6 Maraekakaho

Two hundred metres along Kereru Road from Maraekakaho Road a metal access road leads off to the right to the river. Provides walking access both upstream and downstream of this point.

7 Ohiti Road

Approximately 4.5kms along Ohiti Road a gravel vehicle track leads to the river.

8 Fernhill Bridge (Omahu)

A Regional Council access track on the Napier and upstream side of the bridge passes back under the bridge and heads downstream.

9 Carrick Road

Another Regional Council access track provides good access both upstream and downstream to the section of river between SH50 and the expressway. Carrick Road is reached off Omahu Road via Twyford, Evans and Nicholl Roads.

10 Ormond Road

Access to the river is gained off Omahu Road and via Ormond Road.

11 Chesterhope Bridge (Pakowhai Road)

Regional Council access tracks at both ends of the bridge provides access to the section of the lower river.

12 River Mouth (Waitangi/Awatoto)

The Regional Council access at this point provides good access to the joint mouths of the Ngaruroro and Tutaekuri Rivers.

Tributary Access

Taruarau River

13 Napier-Taihape Road (Gentle Annie)

Most of the land in this area is privately owned and landowner permission is therefore required.

14 Comet Road

Drive to the end of Comet Road, within Kaweka Forest Park, and a Department of Conservation walking track heads steeply down to the Taruarau River 1 1/2 hours away. The return trip will take longer. For those keen to stay overnight there is the option of tenting or Shute's hut, a 20 minute walk from the river.

Ohara/Poporangi Streams

15 Big Hill Road

Access off Kereru and Big Hill Road. The land at this point is privately owned and landowner permission will be required.

16 Mangleton Road

Public access for 3km up the Ohara Stream exists from the road bridge.



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