

New Ed Hillary Hope Forest Reserve

*Mangakirikiri Loop Track,
Hope Loop Track,
David Thom Loop Track*

*July 17, 2022
(Waitetuna, Waikato)*



ED HILLARY HOPE RESERVE

HOPE TRACK

KARAMU WALKWAY AND HOPE TRACK

The 700 m section of Hope Track from here north to the Four Brothers Reserve is closed annually from the lambing season (August - 13 October).
Description: Advanced track with numerous very steep, rough, slippery sections.

Time: 3 hours for the return

Footwear required: Hiking boots

Marked with BLUE coloured triangles

Descends very steeply to the valley floor and then connects with other tracks. Also forms a loop ascending steadily back up to the junction with Teahupua Stream track.

Valley views to the south, the summit, Raglan, Pirirua and Kaitake and over a large area of the reserve.

Markers of other colours may be present but these indicate biodiversity work areas and are not walking tracks.

DAVID THOM LOOP TRACK

Description: Intermediate track generally well formed with some steep sections that may be rough or slippery.

Time: 2 hours

Footwear required: Light bumping/hiking boots

Marked with ORANGE coloured triangles

Good views of refined pasture and abundant natural regeneration. From high up on the summit, huge views of the mountains towards Raglan, Pirirua and Kaitake. Plenty of ground cover plants. Good birdlife.

NOTE: that the area is occasionally used during lambing. When this is the case, warning notices will be placed at entry points and access may be prohibited. You are required to turn around and return your steps.

Markers of other colours may be present but these indicate biodiversity work areas and are not walking tracks.

VALLEY WALK

Description: Easy well formed track suitable for children and in wet weather.

Time: 30 minutes return

Footwear required: Walking shoes

Marked with GREEN coloured triangles and part of David Thom Loop Track.

Good views of refined pasture and abundant natural regeneration along the track and in pockets in the grassland. Good birdlife.

Follow the valley track north for 12 minutes. At the T-junction where the blue track joins on the right turn around and return your steps back to the carpark.

Markers of other colours may be present but these indicate biodiversity work areas and are not walking tracks.

MANGAKIRIKIRI LOOP TRACK

Description: Intermediate advanced track with some rough, slippery and very steep sections.

Time: 1.5 hours

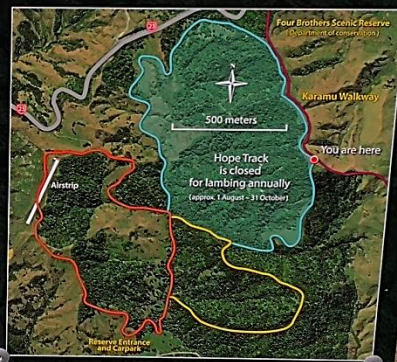
Footwear required: Light bumping/hiking boots

Marked with YELLOW coloured triangles

Follow the Mangakirikiri track a variety of interesting Taniwha history point trees and in other places through native vegetation. Some ground areas are forested areas of the reserve.

Markers of other colours may be present but these indicate biodiversity work areas and are not walking tracks.

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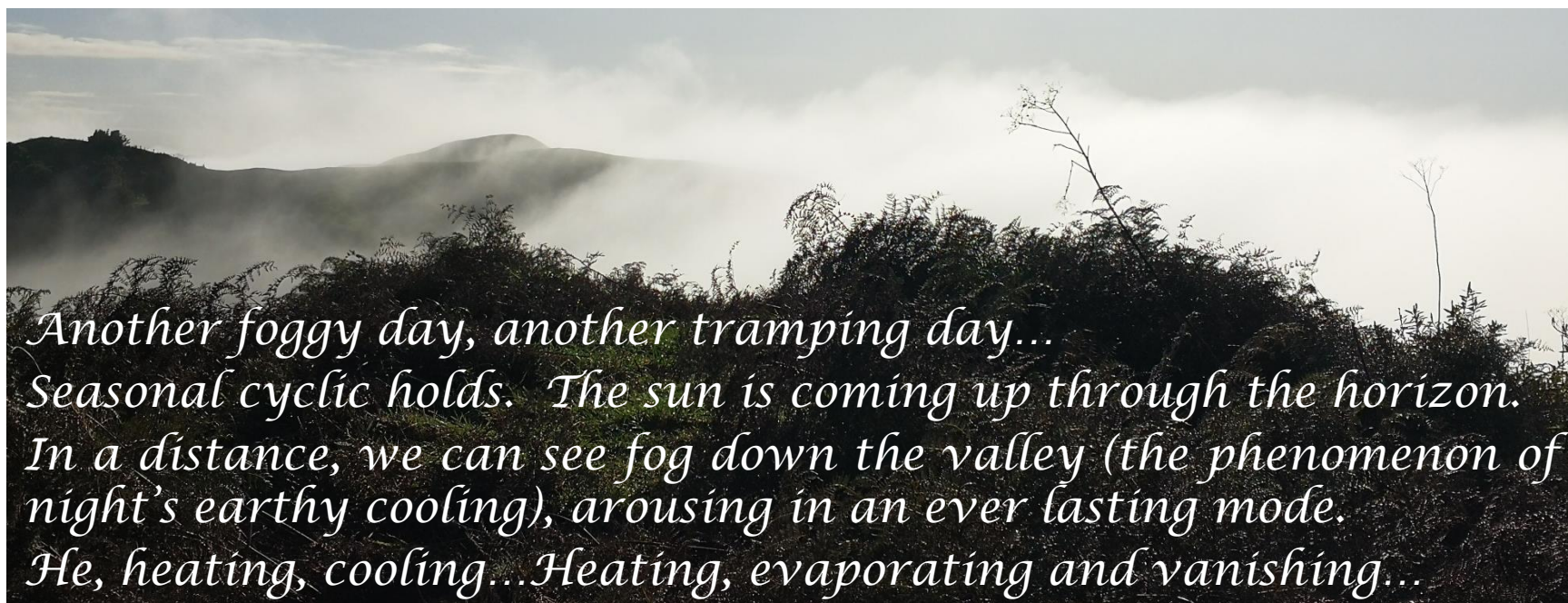
New Ed Hillary Hope Forest Reserve covers an area of 460 hectares (established forest 180 hectares and farmland 280 hectares). This Reserve is the contributions of Hope Family and local volunteers. Recognised in the Reserve name, the Hope Family has made significant contribution in flora and fauna conservation in the Waikato Region. The entrance is on Old Mountain Road (approx. 732 Old Mountain Road) in Waitetuna (midway between Raglan and Hamilton).

<i>Hillary Hope Reserve Tracks</i>	<i>Time (hours)</i>	<i>Descriptions</i>
<i>Mangakirikiri Loop Track</i>	1.5	<i>Intermediate-Advanced track with some rough, slippery and very steep sections</i>
<i>Hope Loop Track</i>	3	<i>Advanced track with numerous very steep, rough and slippery sections</i>
<i>David Thom Loop Track</i>	2	<i>Intermediate track generally well-formed with some steep sections that may be rough/slippery</i>

Meaningful to the environment, restoration project brings light to our nature. Ideas of diverse regeneration and strive to support native flora and fauna becomes visualised with the establishment of the Reserve. Opening in 2015, the Reserve forms part of the Waikato Regional Council's Halo Project (Halo: a 20km radius-ring around Hamilton, marking key tūi breeding sites) aiming at pest control and brining native birds back to Hamilton. Timber was logged and pasture was created in the past, ending up with environmental strain. Ecological degradation ensues with undesirable outcomes. In order to rectify such short coming, forest restoration covering upper catchment of Mangakirikiri Stream was realized in steep and erosion prone land. Ecological rejuvenation is done with erosion and siltation prevention. Retired farmland are being replanted with native vegetation. Removal of stock and goats has eliminated understorey browse and trampling, and furthermore



increased seedling survival. Over time, there is a gain in native flora and fauna coverage. The water quality of Raglan has improved with beneficial effect to native eels, whitebait and other harbour species. Positive steps to sustainability anew actions and come up with passion and enjoyment thus found - Native forest are now channeled with walking tracks.



Another foggy day, another tramping day...

Seasonal cyclic holds. The sun is coming up through the horizon.

In a distance, we can see fog down the valley (the phenomenon of night's earthy cooling), arousing in an ever lasting mode.

He, heating, cooling...Heating, evaporating and vanishing...

Yeah, the transition from solid to liquid and gas, am I right, a transformation?!

Forming a nice piece of work, bringing up mystery in an ever regenerating mind.

We are brought up together in our environment, our nature and some sort of "philosophy" from school, coming up with thoughts of what to be.

Yes, this way, the route to nature...Coming here to revise our experience with our own effort.



Mangakirikiri Track (Yellow Track)

Walking on the short common track for the three tracks of Hillary Loop Reserve after entering the pasture, we then turn right onto the Yellow Track.

It is unusual to stoop at the very start of the track. Pretty steep and slippery...Oho, ohoo, ohoooo...rather strenuous and exhaust.

Would there be any steeper, any more difficult...Covering with much undergrowth vegetation, the slope is slippery...with occasional eroded or polish rock outcrop, wetly moisture all over.

Frequent checking on the ground is needed. With caution, we have to slow down to gain balance.

Steep over steepy ground, body over bodily lift. What a start, quite scary!

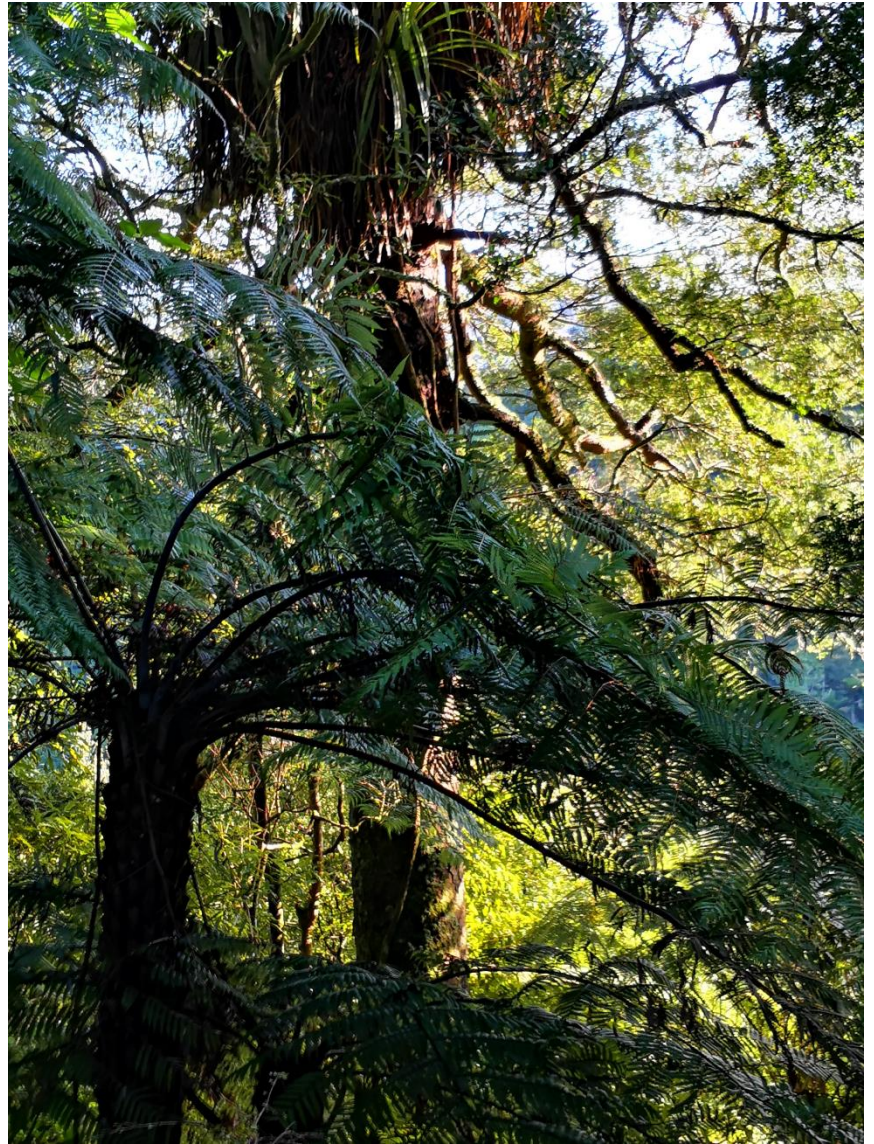
Fern over fern, tall fern everywhere. It's amazing to see so much fern towering over. Interspersed by other trees, the fern umbrella is still clearly seen in the bush.

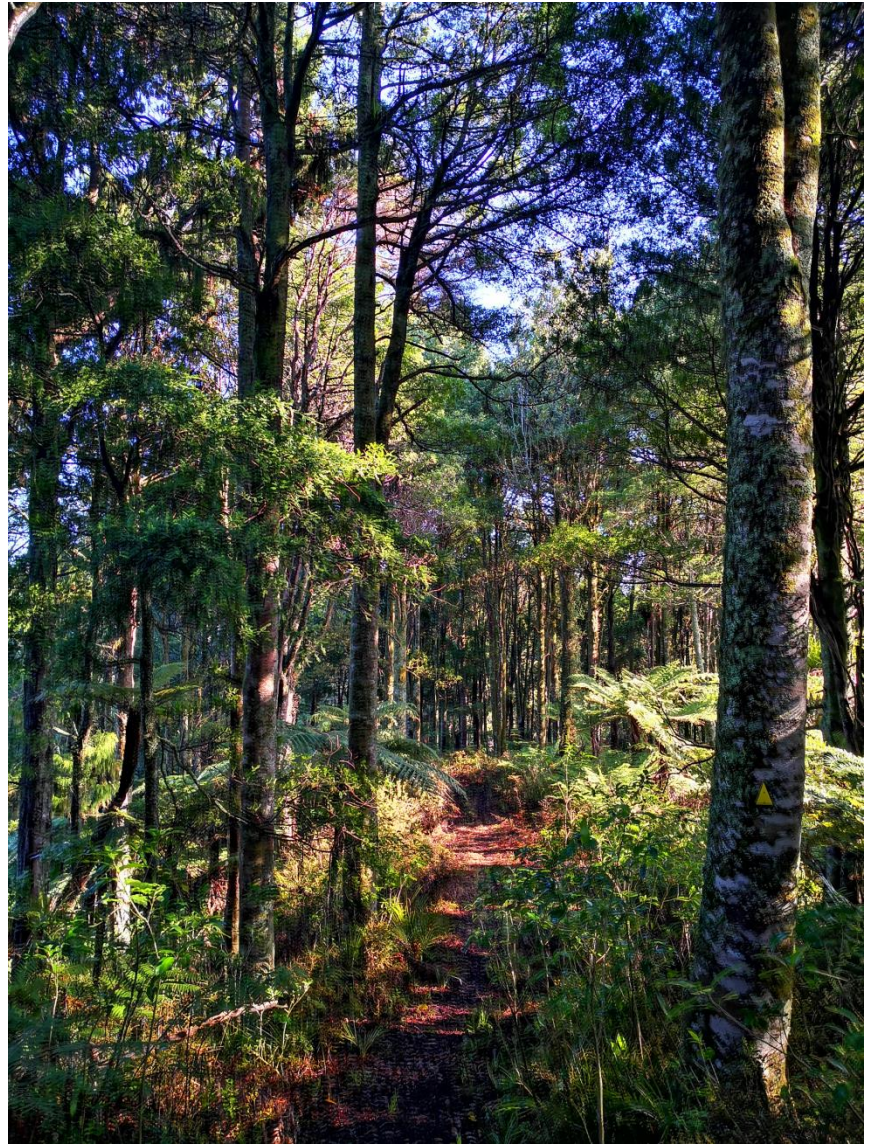
About 40% of NZ fern species found nowhere in the world.

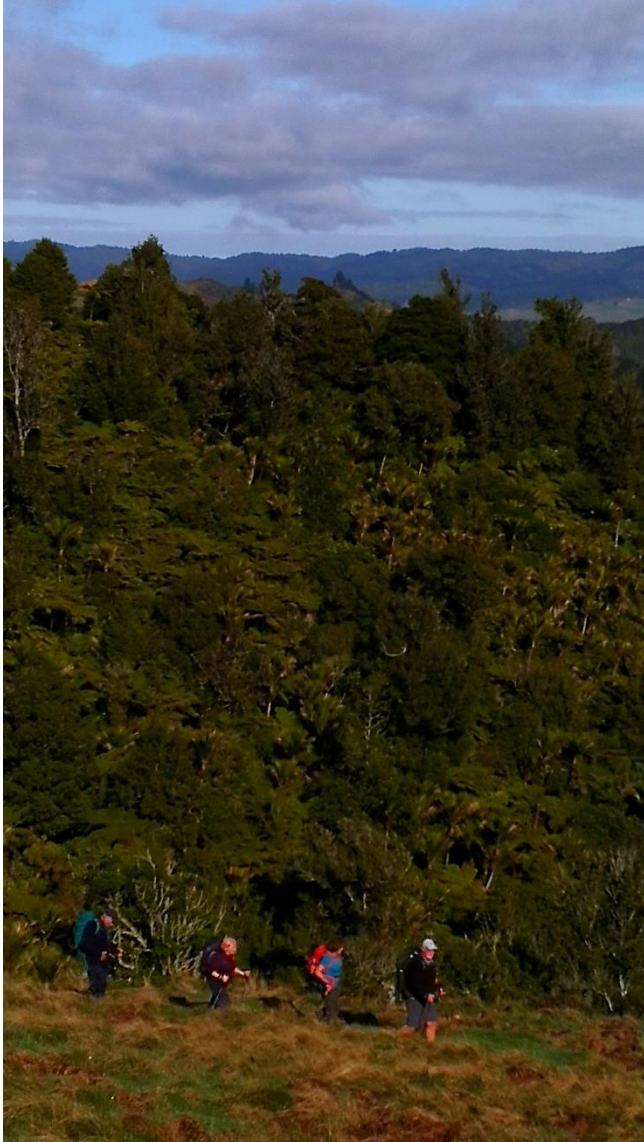
We got some on the hillslope, what are they? Mamaku, Ponga... Could anyone tell me?

Probably not, every other one is busy with walking poles, checking on their steps. Couldn't help not doing so!

Damp NZ forest, with a dense canopy of evergreen trees, looks great but not that easy to enjoy on a slanting ground.







Hope Loop Track (Blue Track)

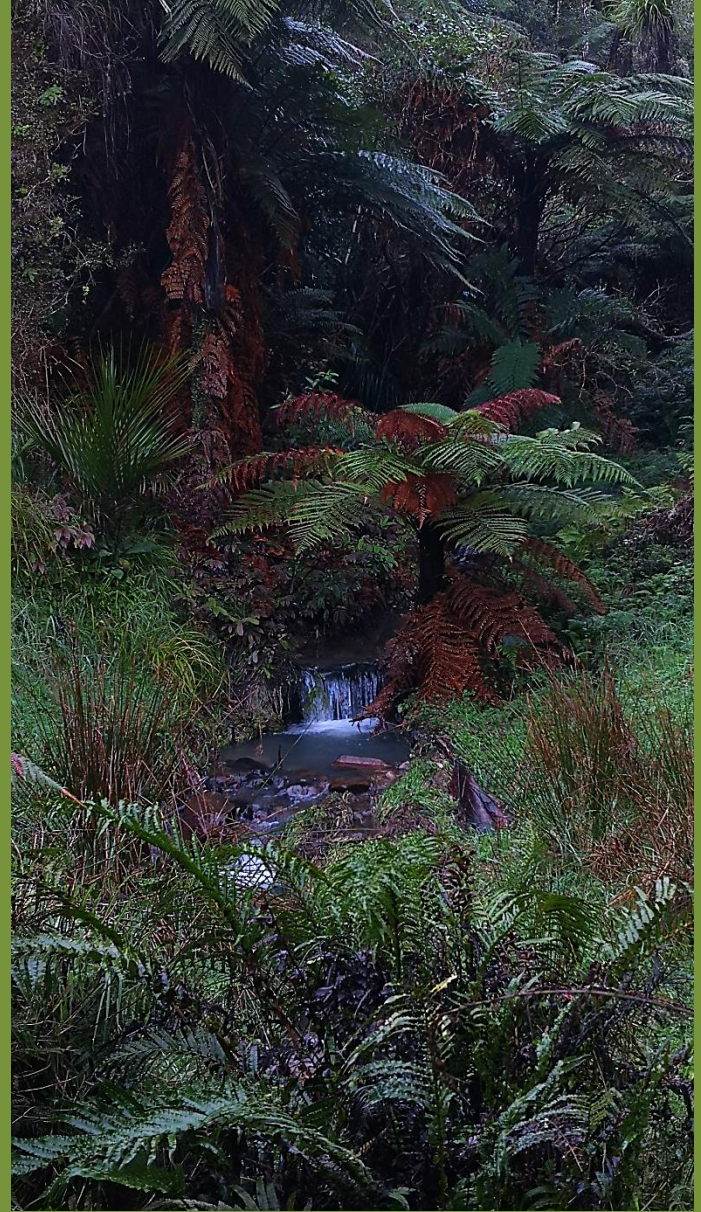
Turning uphill onto the Blue Loop, all the way up after down the Yellow Loop slope.

Climbing the slope, we come above the treeline...all a sudden a great span of view, oh! What a wonderful green landscape!

Mountain high opens into the crystal clear blue sky. Motionless turbine stands upright in the Te Uku Wind Farm, below the white drifting cloud

Below and above the distant treeline, perspective does make a difference. The most spectacular sight is just at an elevation below the distant treeline.

Nothing to worry, have a rest and give a camera shot...how nice the sunny weather be - Let's enjoy what's around.











Burrowing in the bush, it's a bit hard to climb uphill. This is the harshest part of the walk.

We have to stoop low towards the steep slope.

I hasten to skim over the slope in order to reach the top as soon as possible but without success, leaving some interminable exhaustion.

The crest is pretty flat. Here is the place meeting Karamu Walkway of Four Brothers Scenic Reserve.

Wandering down the crest, looking around to appreciate the surrounding pasture, we can see a farmer working distant away.



Green pasture rolls over, dotted with reflective ponds...so refreshing and relaxing...that's nature...not so...but green as usual in here...This is the place for outdoor grazing, the way of renowned NZ sheep, cattle rearing.

Clear sky, spotless hills, isolated shrubs and grasses, all envisage in the natural way for survival.

Not knowing of the onset, from where and at what time, the moving fog is on the move...Over the undulating terrain, moistening the pasture. We are totally immersed in it. Let's keep it as such restoration forever.

Restoration begins on our feet, not just the effort of Hope's Family.

There is landslide on a valley down the Blue Loop. Quite dreadful, it is the consequence of terrestrial force disturbance. The slide has not been reinstated yet.

We can see trees are being planted along the eroded slope.

Walking down cautiously on the edge of the slide...ending up having lunch on a smooth level ground below the slide.

Still got a gorgeous weather, having our stomach properly fed...regaining our energy and strength too. We are ready to break our lethargy upon extended walk.

Last section of Blue comes afresh with the Orange Loop.



David Thom Loop Track (Orange Track)

Loop up and down, taxing our ability, rather fed up with so much ups and downs...Getting hot with recurring motion...

The terrain is densely cover with native vegetation. Following much walking, we finally emerge from the bush and coming up with the sloping access gravel road leading to the airfield.

To my city guy's surprise, the airfield is all covered with grass, not concrete or gravel. It is a typical rural farm area airstrip. It seems that the runway has just been mowed.

A long stretch of green...where to go...checking around...oh, over there across the strip...heading to the farmland again, some more ups and downs.







The three loop tracks are much restricted to the non-pasture area. It is substantially vegetated with native plants.

Just an intuitive thought, undoubtedly takes much time and effort to restore.

We are quite please to have Tony leading us over the loops with such a good weather.

Our determination to get in touch with nature holds.

It only takes about four hours to complete the three loops. Refreshing our mind with mighty accomplishment, we end up taking a rest at the bottom of the valley track before head back to Hamilton.



