

Ngongotahā Summit, Rotorua

September 11, 2022

Jubilee Track

Mt Ngongotahā Nature Loop Track

Mount Ngongotahā Nature Loop Track

Distance: 3.2 km loop track

Difficulty: Grade 1

With gentle gradient and even surfaces, flora and fauna is seen ramifying among the bush. A good number of information panel is erected to highlight the biodiversity of the unlogged native forest. The track is ideal for families and school groups.



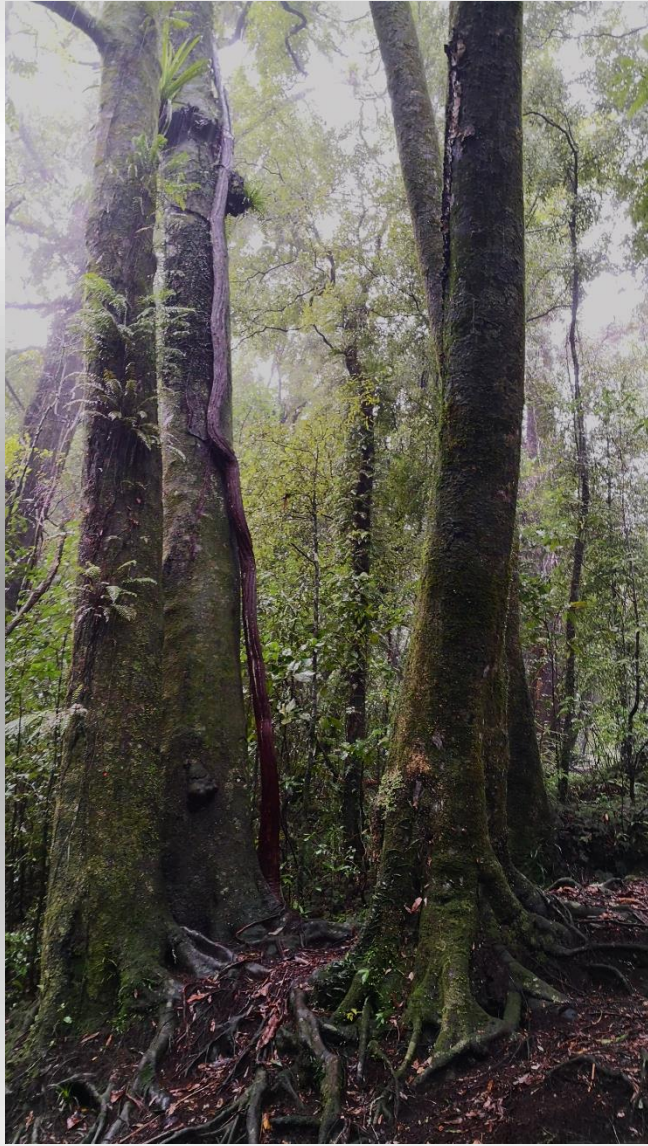
Jubilee Track

Distance: 2.4 km one-way

Difficulty: Grade 1.5

Heading to Mt. Ngongotahā, this Rotorua outskirts track overlaps and intersects with part of Nature Loop Track. Steep to moderate steep gradient. There is an addition of 200m Mountain Road walk to Ngongotahā Summit.







RIMU
Dacrydium cupressinum
20 to 35m. A forest canopy tree with bark scaling off in large flakes. Branches in weeping form. Leaves fine and sharp. Cones are set at irregular intervals, male and female on separate trees. Extensive milling for timber has depleted rimu, once common in the podocarp forests which at one time covered much of New Zealand.

One-minute walk through the short farmland area, we step into Violet Bonnington Reserve. This is the starting point of the track.

Quite a sudden transition, there's a near immediate move into native bush.

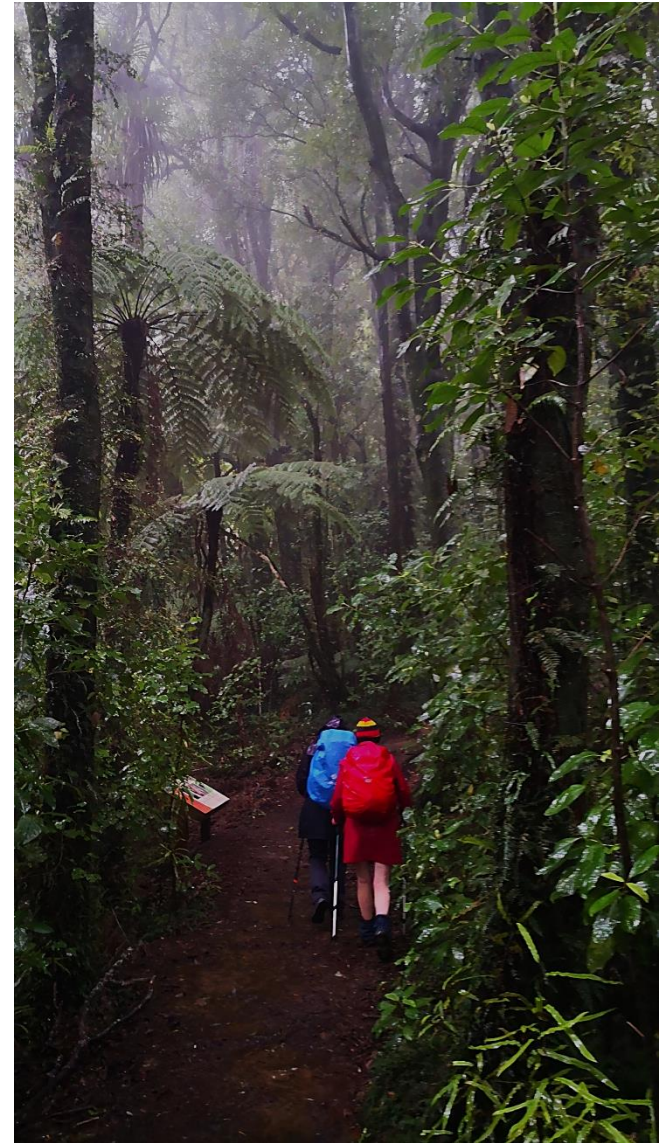
A long stretch of decaying leaves, all lying on the track, the Nature Loop Track.

Giving a sense of freshness, Winter is over. Carry on another season, another go, another walk...

Misty zone, wetly ground, steeply slope, here's the mystical Mount Ngongotahā.

Rising above Rotorua City, the mount of fairy homeland...

...thin, reedy voices and flutes pervade whenever mist sways through the bush.





*Inside the misty canopy, there we ascend uphill.
Carrying all over, with majestic **raindrops** that **colour seasonal**
changes...warmth and coldness...with resulting **mixing** of
turbulence...yes, mist and fog.
Lucky enough, comes and goes...still persisting with a hazy
atmosphere up in the canopy **top**.*

Somewhere out there, the towering Rata (40m tall ~ 1.8m girth) -



a symbolic character of a vibrant native forest – representing an unleashed struggle for existence.

...Hardly can survive through time with human exploitation, lumbering...

...and pest do away...all coming with continuous effort in forest restoration, the passion.

Setting in an open area, the huge Rata can be seen in a distant.

Setting on a viewing platform, the root system is much protected with easy watching.

Setting with banding of trunk with metal plate and clearing of surrounding vegetation...saving disruptive pest possums from climbing up and jumping across respectively...

Woo, where is the fairy people, Patupaiarehe?

Rain keeps falling. Is this the water coming from Patupaiarehe woman's tahā (calabash bowl)? The Maori legend of Ihenga-Patupaiarehe woman still carries on...

This the place of Ngongotahā (ngongo = to drink; tahā = calabash) maunga (mountain)...with drifting bird songs in peaceful ground.



At the first crossing of Loop Walk and Jubilee Track, we are a bit hesitate on whether should straight up on the Jubilee or tangentially follow what is suggested to keep on the Loop Track.

To my intention, as usual, to finish the walk within the shortest period of time...as soon as possible, I mean with the plausibility of having something different, a more...feel of the beauty forest.

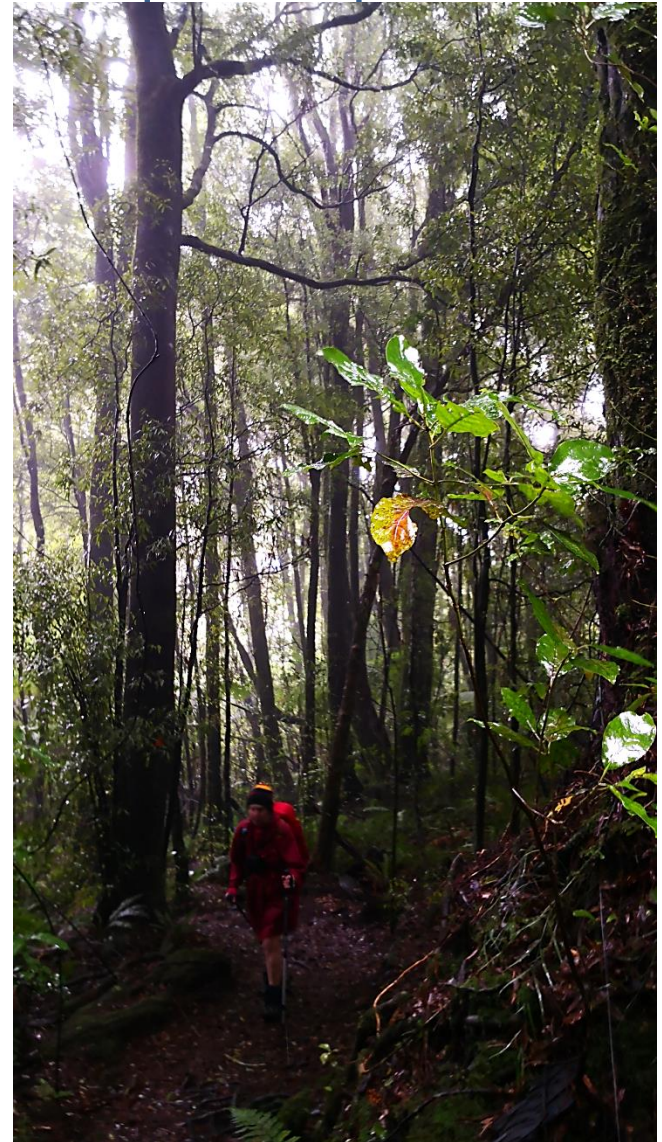
Only four of us, the other three wanderers are quite open to either of the routes...Ooh, just have a challenge right now, straight ahead. (The other eight of today's group stick to the Loop Track only.)

...Getting steeper and more zigzag, there is much root around along the Jubilee Track. The rain gets heavier and heavier, seems not stopping at all.

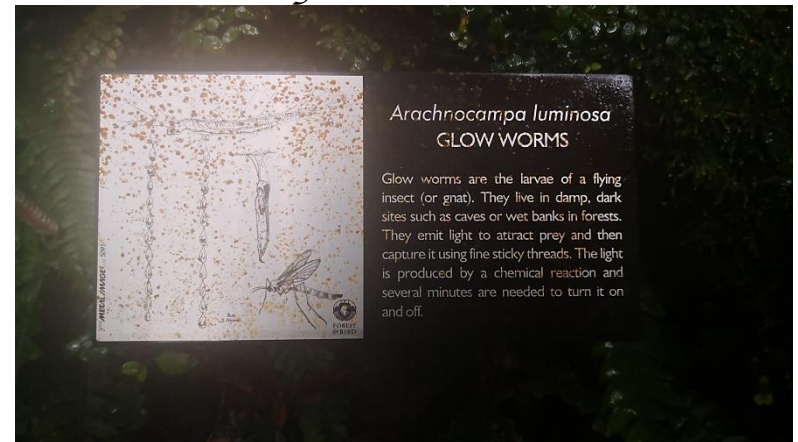
Water ponding all on the way, doesn't matter...just carry on. There's no reason to look back. Straight to the top, to see the fairy-like people. Ngongotahā Summit is the place for Patupaiarehe. In the forest and the misty mountain tops, they lived in Waikato in North Island (around Rotorua and in Urewera mountains), and some in South Island.







*Just enjoy what one has... What is out there. What can be seen!
Not the fairy at the moment, maybe it's not that misty today.
Trekking up the Jubilee Track is like going into another
entrance...somewhat going in between many, many large tree
trunks. The way back is all downhill.
Similarly, the way back is like going through another, another
exit in between large tree trunks. Keep going, carry on...
The carpark is around 375m above sea-level. There is about 375m
descent from the summit.
All the way down to the second junction meeting the Loop Track.
This time, we head back to the Loop Track and follow the western
branch down Mount Ngongotahā.
What a lovely circuit through the
bush. The passion with the forest
is a delight. Carry on with nature.
Carry on till tomorrow. There's no
reason to look back.
Carry on, carry-on, carry-on-on...*







The afternoon is lovely. With all the rain gone, Rotorua is on a sunlit day.

Not cold at all. It's warm and relaxing at the carpark.

The green pasture is around. Handsome green after days of rain wash. We are departing Paradise Valley Road, further along State Highway 5 (on the western side of Lake Rotorua) and back.

Still early and got quite much time, Dianne suggests having a cuppa at Alley Cats Café at Tīrau before heading back to Hamilton. Just having a birthday gathering for celebration!

