Coromandel Rivers

Coromandel rivers are popular with trout anglers who appreciate the large amount of accessible fishing water and superb scenery. Many of these waters can easily be fished on a day trip from Auckland or Hamilton but if you want to stay longer then camping sites are located beside most rivers.

Rainbow trout are present in all rivers described in this pamphlet. Brown trout are present in the Waihou system and are common in some feeder streams including the Waitawheta and Waitekauri but they are absence from other Coromandel rivers due to high water temperatures

Lower Waihou River and feeder streams Waihou River

The Lower Waihou River is a popular fishery for Paeroa anglers but these waters are often overlooked by visiting anglers. Nearly all the fish caught are rainbows averaging about 1.5 kg. The best fishing occurs during the whitebait season (October/November) or around river mouths during summer.

Trolling in the Lower Waihou using light gear is effective. A good concrete boat ramp is located adjacent to the Waihou River Bridge on State Highway 2 (Paeroa – Auckland).

Puriri River

Small stream that offers some attractive water in the vicinity of State Highway 26. Trout stocks are limited.

Komata River

From State Highway 26, the Komata looks a small insignificant stream not worth the effort of fishing. But further upstream the Komata offers good fly fishing water with stable pools and boulder runs. Although the trout are generally small (0.5 kg), they are plentiful. Later in the season, usually May/June, a run of large spawning rainbows enters the Komata from the lower Waihou. Access can be gained from Komata Reefs Road which runs alongside the river.

Hikutaia River

A small attractive river flowing over a boulder/cobble bed that holds rainbow trout averaging 0.5-1 kg, with the occasional much larger fish during the May/June spawning runs. There is at least 10 km of good water with access from Maratoto Road, Old Maratoto Road, and State Highway 26. Upstream from the Whangamata Track, the Hikutaia is restricted to fly fishing only and is open to angling from 1 October to 30 June.

Ohinemuri River System

Ohinemuri River

The Ohinemuri is one of the most popular rivers in the region with excellent access and a good population of both rainbow and brown trout.

The Ohinemuri arises from numerous small streams in the Waihi basin. Many of these streams hold trout and are fished by local anglers (especially the Ruahorehore, Waimata, Walmsely and Mataura) but these are very small waterways often less than two metres wide and of limited interest to most anglers. The largest of these streams is the Waimata with access from Ford Road or Crean Road. An esplanade reserve extends from Ford Road to the Ohinemuri confluence.

Near Waihi, the Ohinemuri offers long runs with the occasional large, stable pool. During summer, trout can easily be spotted providing good dry fly or spin fishing.

Access to the Ohinemuri River at Waihi can be obtained from Victoria Street, State Highway 2 (to Tauranga), Baxter Road, Golden Valley Road, and State Highway 25 (to Whangamata). A 20-metre wide esplanade reserve, providing public access, extends outwards from both sides of the river.

The most popular section of the Ohinemuri, and probably the most productive, is the Karangahake Gorge between Paeroa and Waihi. Here there is a variety of water present – long deep pools, boulder runs, and extensive rapids. Convenient access is provided by State Highway 2, which runs parallel to the river. During summer, the best fishing is in the faster flowing water at the heads of pools or where there is breaking water. About equal numbers of rainbows and browns are present, the latter often of considerable size.

Waitawheta River

The Waitawheta rises on the eastern slopes of Mt Te Aroha in the Kaimai-Mamaku State Forest Park and then flows for about 20 km northwards before entering the Ohinemuri River opposite the township of Karangahake. Generally the scenery is spectacular with kauri forest and high basalt bluffs. Remnants of the gold rush era can be seen throughout the valley in particular the tramway that ran adjacent to the river.

Unless there has been recent heavy rain the river is usually very clear and fish can be easily spotted. Approximately, equal numbers of rainbow and brown trout are present. Access to the lower reaches can be obtained by wading across the Ohinemuri River at Kauaeranga. This section of the Waitawheta consists of long deep pools and is best suited for spin fishing. At present, access is difficult but should soon improve with the construction of a proposed DoC track alongside the river.

Access to the middle reaches can be obtained from either Dean Road or Dickey Flat Road. Both roads lead to attractive sections of river with large groves of kauri trees,and good access provided by DoC tracks. Dean Road can be reached from Franklin Road via Waitawheta Road. Dickey Flat Road can be reached from Kennedy Road via Waitawheta Road.

Access to the upper reaches can be obtained from the DoC track at the end of Franklin Road, which can be reached from State Highway 2 via Waitawheta Road. Several huts and camping sites are provided and this is an excellent location for a weekend away. Recent surveys have shown that the upper reaches hold a high population of large rainbow and brown trout (averaging 1.5 - 2kg, with the occasional trout over 4 kg). But be warned, these trout are extremely wary and while offering a considerable challenge for experienced anglers, novices will have greater success on the Ohinemuri.

Waitekauri River

This is a feeder stream of the Ohinemuri River with a good population of rainbow and brown trout.
Access to the lower reaches can be gained from State Highway 2 where there is full esplanade reserve coverage upstream for about 4 km (1.5 km above Campbell Road). The middle reaches flow across private land parallel to Waitekauri Road and landowner permission is required.

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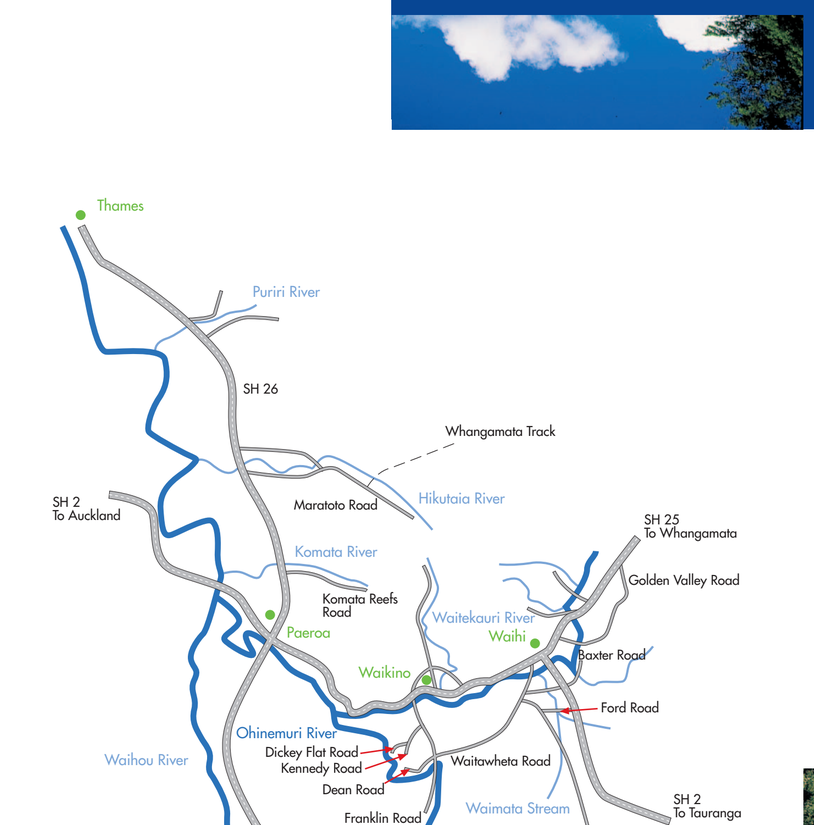

Continued angler access

- it's primarily up to you!

Less than 50% of the rivers in the Auckland/Waikato region are covered by esplanade reserves (the "Queens Chain"). But notwithstanding the presence or absence of an esplanade reserve, anglers are dependent upon landowner goodwill to fully enjoy angling opportunities.

Accordingly make sure you take the time to extend to landowners the common courtesies that you would expect:

- Ask their permission before you cross their land.
- Don't
  - clamber over fences
  - walk through crops
  - disturb stock
  - leave gates other than as you found them
  - deposit rubbish
  - take your dog onto a landowners property unless you square it away with them that it is OK to do so. Hydatids and sheep measles can pose a serious threat to a farmers livelihood; so leave your dog at home unless you're certain that the farmer doesn't object to it on their land.

In our experience very few landowners will refuse access to genuine anglers.

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Waiwawa River

The Waiwawa River flows north-east from its source in the Coromandel Ranges across the Coromandel State Forest Park and into the Whitianga Harbour near Coroglen.

During the early 1980's, a wild trout fishery became established in the Waiwawa after the river was stocked with ova (trout eggs) obtained from Huakiri River rainbow trout. Trout soon became established in all the rivers entering Whitianga Harbour and these waters now offer many kilometres of productive trout fishing.

Excellent access to the middle reaches of the Waiwawa is provided by the Tapu-Coroglen Road. Upstream from the confluence with the Ranghian Stream a 20 metre esplanade reserve, providing public access, runs alongside both banks of the river. The Ranghian and Torondo Streams both hold trout and are pleasant small streams to fish.

Mahakirau and Kaimarama Rivers

These two small rivers come together to form the Whangamaromaro River immediately upstream from the State Highway 25 Bridge about 10 kilometres south of Whitianga.

The Mahakirau is an interesting river to fish with an abundant trout population. The water is usually clear and convenient access is provided by 309 Road (Whitianga – Tapu) which runs alongside the river. Upstream from State Highway 25 an esplanade reserve runs alongside the true left bank (left bank looking downstream), while upstream from the confluence with the Takugawaiua Stream there is full esplanade reserve coverage.

The Kaimarama is a smaller river than the Mahakirau and has been more affected by agricultural runoff, nevertheless it offers attractive fishing water with reasonable trout numbers. Above the confluence with the Mahakirau the first three kilometres of river has full coverage by esplanade reserves.

Kaipara River

During the summer months, the Kaipara River has very low flows, nevertheless a healthy trout population is maintained in the large pools that are a feature of the upper reaches. Because of low flows this is a difficult river for nymph or dry fly fishing, but it's a safe river for children to learn spin fishing with an abundant population of rainbow trout averaging about 0.5 kg.

Tapu River

A small attractive stream with rainbow trout averaging 0.5 kg. The best fishing is in the gorge where there are large stable pools or in the upper reaches where the Tapu meanders across pastoral land. Probably not worth a special trip, but an interesting small stream nevertheless. The Tapu runs alongside the 309 Road (Whitianga – Tapu).

Kauaeranga River

The Kauaeranga River rises in the Coromandel Ranges and flows towards the Firth of Thames. This is a delightful river with clear water and a boulder/cobble bed. Excellent access is provided by the Kauaeranga River Valley Road which runs alongside the river for much of its length. Scenic values are high with the surrounding forest and rugged mountains of the Coromandel Forest Park. DoC camping areas are present along the middle and upper reaches of the river, and accommodation is available at Thames.

Rainbow trout are abundant in the upper reaches of the Kauaeranga River and although a high catch rate is often achieved, these trout are generally small. Most anglers therefore fish the middle reaches which hold fewer, but larger fish (average 0.75 – 1 kg). In mid-summer, algal blooms can be frustrating for fly fishers using nymphs, however dry flies are often very effective in such conditions.

Tairua River

The Tairua rises in the Coromandel Ranges and flows for most of its length through impressive scenery before entering Tairua Harbour. This is recognised as an excellent dry fly river especially during spring (using green beetle flies) and midsummer (cicada flies) because of the extensive areas of manuka scrub bordering the river.

In the middle reaches, attractive water for fly fishing can be reached from the end of Hikuai Valley Road which runs parallel to the river for approximately 10 kilometers. Access to the upper reaches can only be gained by foot from the State Highway 25A Bridge (Tairua – Kopu). An esplanade reserve follows the true left bank for approximately 3 kilometres. Further upstream the river flows through the Tairua Forest, which is public land.

A DoC camping ground is located alongside the river at the end of Hikuai Valley Road.