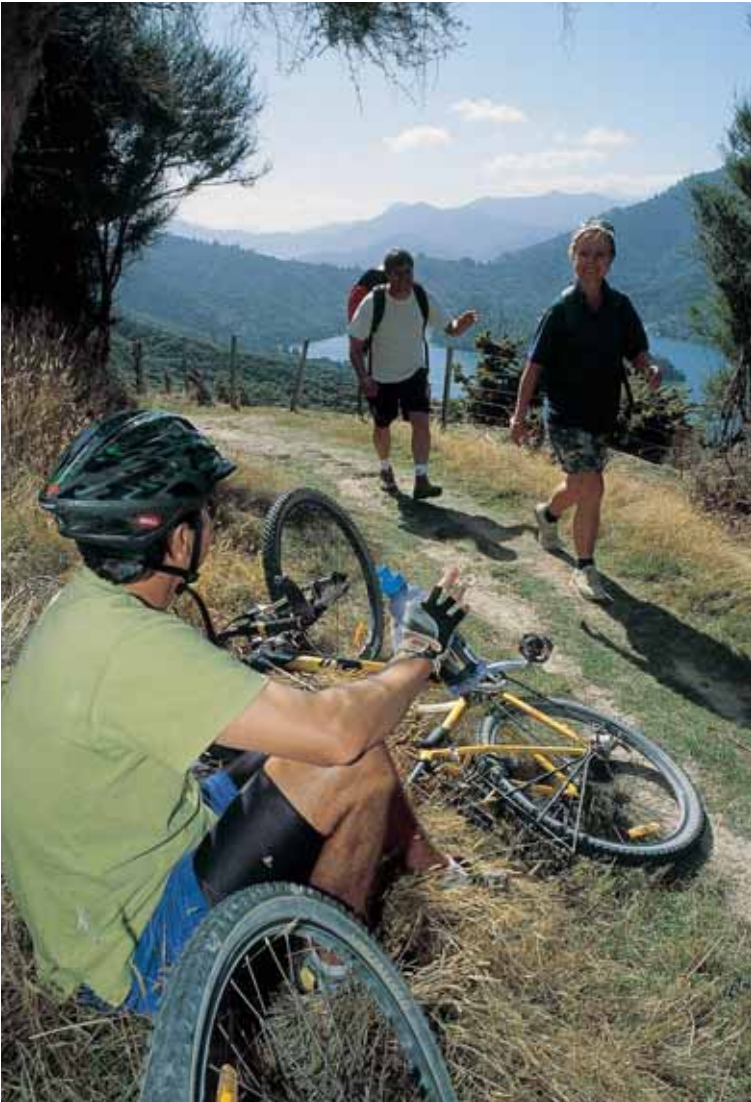




Queen Charlotte Track



MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



Weka. Photo: Bill Cash

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Introduction

Deep in the heart of the Marlborough Sounds, South Island, New Zealand, is the spectacular Queen Charlotte Track. Stretching from the legendary Ship Cove to Anakiwa, home of the Outward Bound school, the track passes through lush coastal forest, around historic bays and along skyline ridges, affording travellers unsurpassed views of both Queen Charlotte and Kenepuru Sounds. The 71-kilometre track is easy walking track standard and is suitable for both walkers and mountain bike riders, taking three to five days to complete walking, or two to three days for mountain bikers. Queen Charlotte Track is the Marlborough Sounds section of Te Araroa—The Long Pathway, a hiking trail the length of New Zealand, from Cape Reinga to Bluff. For more information on Te Araroa go to www.teararoa.org.nz. Much of the track's charm is its relative ease of access, which allows visitors to walk or bike the track in sections. It is also possible for visitors to arrange for a boat operator to transport their packs between accommodation places. Historic Ship Cove is the favoured point for beginning the track.

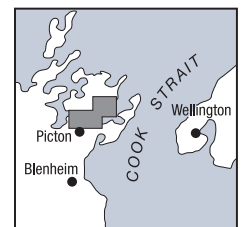
There are many places to stay along the way, either in private accommodation or in Department of Conservation (DOC) campsites. Road and boat transport services are available from Picton. Queen Charlotte Track is classified as a walking track, being wide and benched. All the major streams are bridged; however stout walking boots and a good level of fitness are required.

Mountain biking is allowed on the track all year round except for the section from Ship Cove to Kenepuru Saddle, which is closed in the busy summer season, between 1 December and 28 February (please read the mountain biking section for more information).

Getting there

Private transport

Anakiwa, Mistletoe Saddle, Torea Saddle and Kenepuru Saddle are all accessible by road. Anakiwa, Mistletoe Bay, Torea Bay, Camp Bay, Endeavour Inlet, Resolution Bay and Ship Cove can be accessed by sea. Many of the short walks can be enjoyed from these places.



Transport operators

A number of companies offer boat transport to and from points along the track, including Ship Cove. Regular and on-demand bus services link Anakiwa with Picton. Further information is available from Picton Information Centre, travel companies and accommodation houses.

What to take

While Queen Charlotte Sound is generally warm and dry in summer, remember it is a coastal environment, which can change quickly, so be prepared for rain, cold and windy conditions and muddy track.

Day visitors should take:

- food and water (some nearby lodges do meals and snacks; check opening hours)
- Queen Charlotte Track booklet
- sunhat, sunglasses and sunscreen
- stout footwear
- warm layer of clothes
- windproof rain jacket
- first aid kit: insect repellent, personal medication (e.g. antihistamine for allergy to wasp stings)
- camera (optional)

Summer campers should take everything suggested for day visitors plus the list below:

- at least one set of clothes to walk in and another dry set to change into at night
- pack with large waterproof/plastic liner
- sleeping bag
- tent and sleeping mat
- torch and spare batteries
- cooking stove, lighter and spare fuel
- cooking utensils: pot/pan/billy, pot scrubber
- eating utensils: knife, fork, spoon, plate, cup
- toilet gear: toothbrush, toothpaste, toilet paper, small towel, soap, hand-sanitising lotion
- earplugs (optional—you may be sharing campsites with a large number of other people)

- food (should be lightweight, fast to cook and high in energy value, e.g.
 - breakfast: cereal, firm bread, spreads
 - lunch: cracker biscuits, cheese, salami
 - dinner: instant soup, pasta/rice, dried vegetables/fruit, cheese or dehydrated meals).

Winter campers should also take warm, quick-drying clothing. Wool and modern synthetics are better than cotton as they dry quickly and give more warmth.

If staying overnight in accommodation houses and having your luggage transported, take everything suggested for day visitors plus the list below:

- daypack
- separate bag for transporting gear
- at least one set of clothes to walk in and another dry set
- toilet gear: toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, hand-sanitising lotion
- torch and spare batteries.

Before your trip, confirm with each accommodation house what will be provided, including meals, packed lunches, bedding and towels.

Below: Queen Charlotte Sound. Photo: Roy Grose



Walking the track

You can walk or ride the track in either direction, but it is best to set out from Ship Cove. If you wish to have your packs carried between accommodation places, you can arrange this with the boat operators. The walking times mentioned below are only a guide and lean more towards a person with a slow walking speed. A day walker with a light day pack will take less time than a trampler with an overnight pack. The track itself is well signposted but some accommodation places may not have signs. The private tracks leading off the track to the accommodation places may not always be of the same standard as the main track, which is maintained by DOC staff.

The map in this publication is not a route guide and we recommend that walkers who require more detailed map information purchase The Marlborough Sounds map, also published by DOC.



Ship Cove to Resolution Bay: 2 h, 4.5 km

There is no road to Ship Cove so you will need to arrange boat transport to start your walk there. Camping is not permitted at Ship Cove but there are toilet facilities. Most visitors to Ship Cove take time to explore the historic site and enjoy reading the interpretation panels around the site.

The track climbs away from the beach, passing through a largely unmodified forest, where the high canopy is complemented by a diverse understorey of shrubs and small trees. On the ridges higher up, beech trees dominate. After 50 minutes walking, you will reach a

lookout point at a saddle, where you will enjoy good views of both the inner and outer Queen Charlotte Sound. Beyond the saddle, the track drops into Resolution Bay, where there is a DOC campsite and further along private cabin accommodation.



Resolution Bay to (the head of) Endeavour Inlet: 3 h, 10.5 km

From Resolution Bay the track follows a well-graded old bridle path over a ridge and into Endeavour Inlet. It winds downward and follows the shoreline to the head of the inlet, where interpretation signs recall the antimony mining era. Cabin and motel accommodation are available on the way.



Endeavour Inlet to Camp Bay: 4 h, 11.5 km

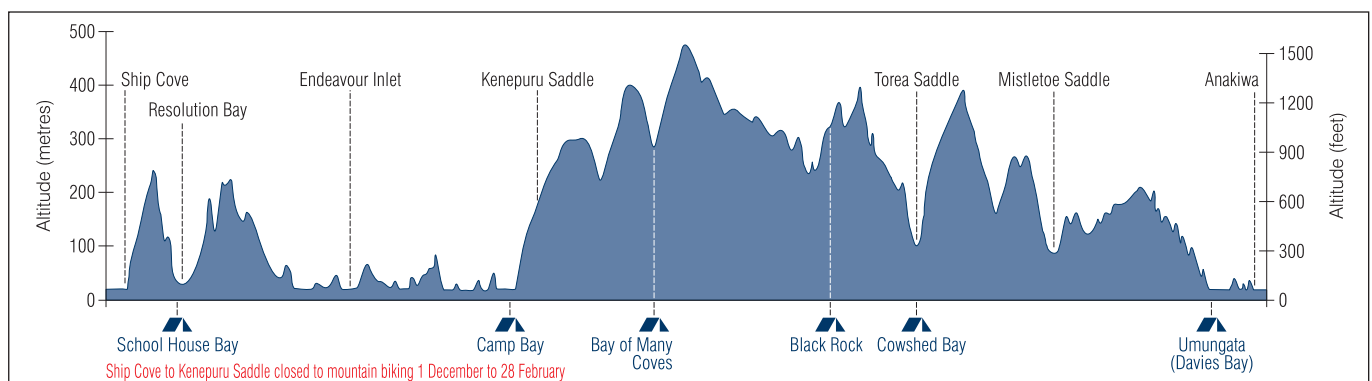
From Endeavour Inlet the track stays near the shoreline and wanders through regenerating forest rich in small birds. It rounds Big Bay to Camp Bay where there is a DOC campsite and, a little further on, cabin accommodation. It is possible to bypass Camp Bay by using a direct track to Kenepuru Saddle.



Camp Bay to Torea Saddle: 8 h, 24.5 km (3 hrs to campsite at Bay of Many Coves)

This is the longest and most arduous section of the journey; most mountain bikers will need to push their bike in various places here. However, from the top of the ridge you will be well rewarded with magnificent panoramas of the Sounds. Climb out of Camp Bay to Kenepuru Saddle and follow the ridge separating Queen Charlotte Sound from Kenepuru Sound. Above Bay of Many Coves and Kumutoto Bay are two DOC campsites, Bay of Many Coves and Black Rock Campsite. Above Cowshed Bay and Umungata (Davies Bay) are two DOC campsites, each with water, toilets and a cooking shelter.

Track profile



Eventually the track descends to Torea Saddle between Portage and Torea Bay. There is a DOC campsite at Cowshed Bay and private accommodation in Portage.



Torea Saddle to Mistletoe Bay: 4 h, 7.5 km

This part of the journey also follows the ridge line. Here gorse and manuka are prolific, sheltering shrubs and trees that will one day shade the way. A side walk leads to a lookout just before the descent to Mistletoe Saddle begins. At Mistletoe Bay there are cabins and campsites. To book contact Mistletoe Bay Trust (see the sections on accommodation/camping on page 16, and commercial operators for details of the Trust on page 25). Camp fees can be paid to the camp caretaker. There is also accommodation at Te Mahia Bay.



Mistletoe Bay to Anakiwa: 4 h, 12.5 km

Beginning on the road above Mistletoe Bay, this section follows old bridle paths high above the water. The track rounds an obvious point and descends to the DOC campsite at Umungata (Davies Bay). The final hour's walking is on an easy path through mature beech forest to Anakiwa. At Anakiwa are a carpark, shelter, toilet and phone near the track end, and a public jetty 800 metres along the road. Here you can catch a bus or a boat to Picton or to nearby accommodation (see transport details under commercial operators on page 24).

Short walks

With such good access by road and/or sea, most sections of the track can be used for day walks. There are also several short side-trips along the way.

- At Ship Cove, you can take the Waterfall Track to a small waterfall in the forest (30 minutes return).
- Behind Furneaux Lodge is a short walk to another waterfall. It passes through a forest of giant trees entangled in the thick cables of climbing plants and vines (30 minutes return).
- At the head of Endeavour Inlet, a track leads you to the antimony mines worked last century. Keep to the marked track around the shafts (2 hours return).
- In Mistletoe Bay, the James Vogel Nature Track allows you to explore the forest behind the picnic and camping area (45 minutes return). The Peninsula Walk explores

the peninsula between Mistletoe and Waterfall bays (30 minutes return).

Mountain biking

Mountain biking is a great alternative to walking the Queen Charlotte track. Biking is permitted on the track all year round except for the section between Ship Cove and Kenepuru Saddle, which is closed to bikes over the busy summer season, from 1 December to 28 February each year. Allow two to three days to ride the entire track, but sections of the track make good day rides, particularly between Ship Cove and Kenepuru Saddle (27 km) and between Mistletoe Bay and Anakiwa (12.5 km).

If you are moderately fit and experienced at mountain biking, the track is very rideable, albeit steep and challenging in certain sections, especially when rain has rendered it slippery and muddy. You may prefer to avoid the ridge-top sections of the central part of the track by riding along Kenepuru Road between Kenepuru Saddle and Portage.

There are no facilities along the way for repairing bikes; please make sure you have adequate tools and equipment and are competent to complete your own repairs.

Approximate biking times:

Ship Cove to Camp Bay: 5 h, 26.5 km

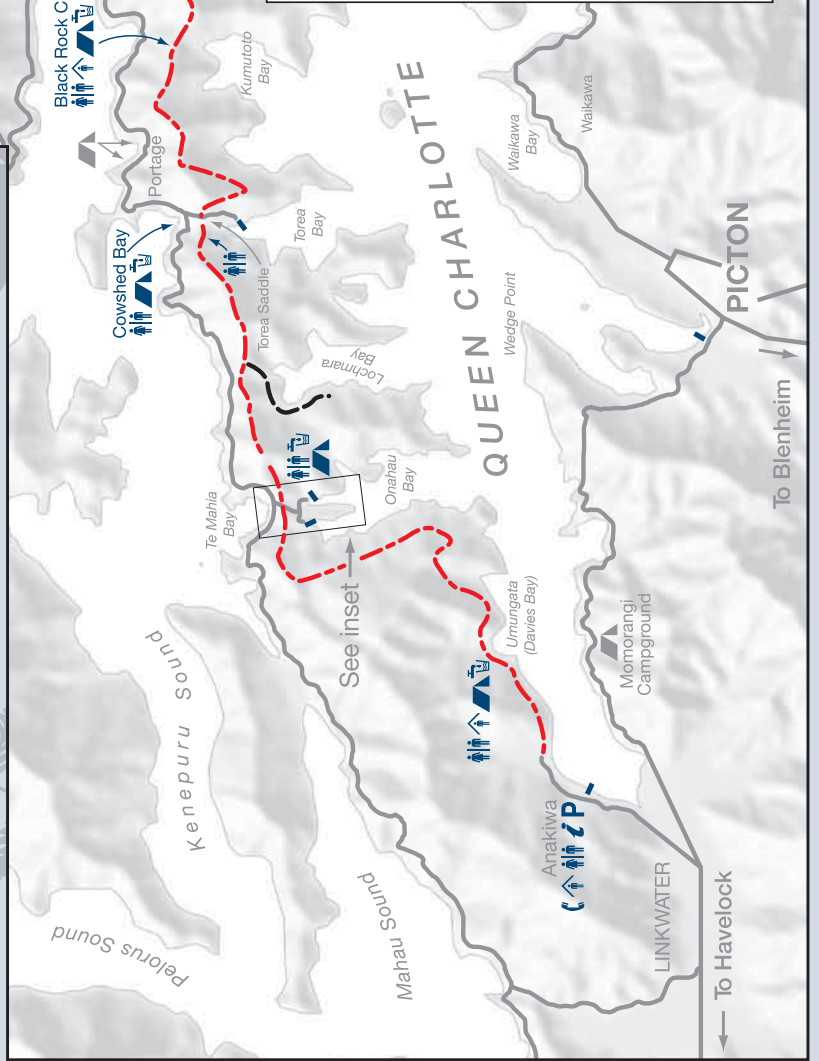
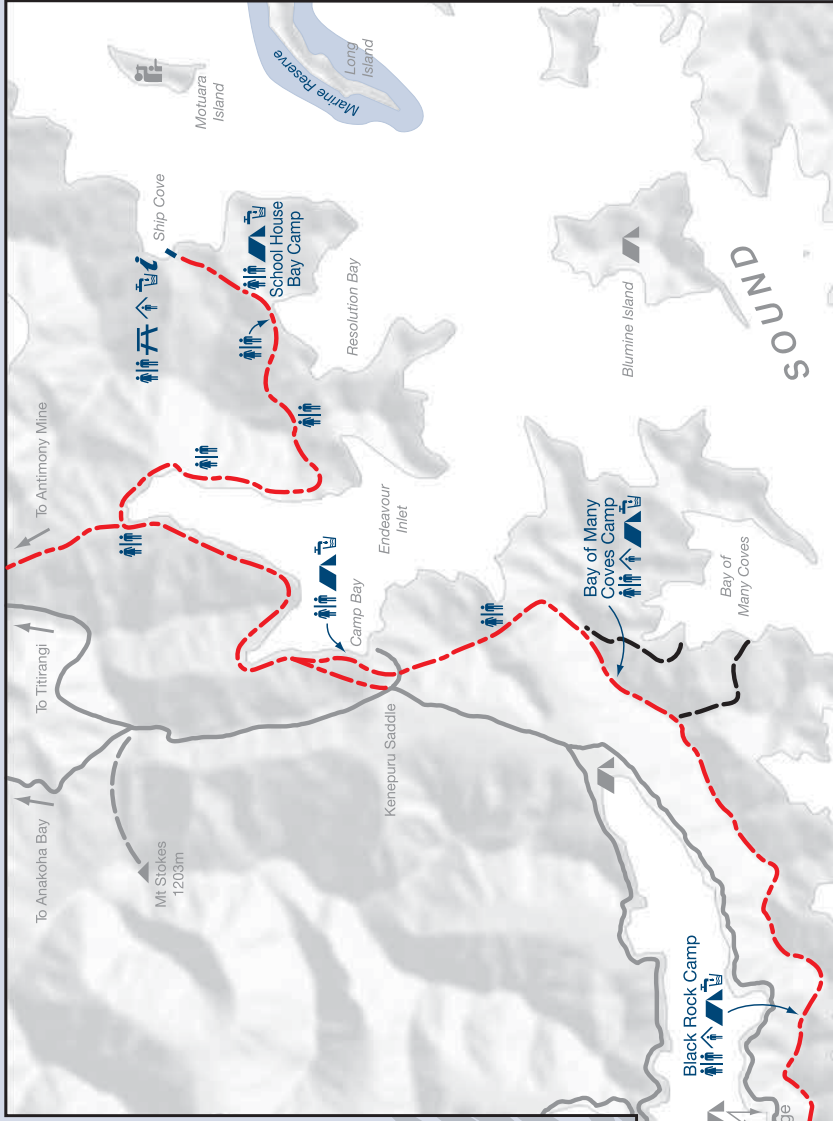
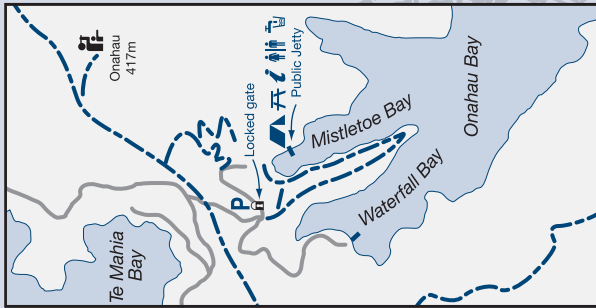
Camp Bay to Torea Saddle: 4 h, 24.5 km

Torea Saddle to Anakiwa: 4 h, 20 km.

While biking, please observe the mountain bikers' code:

- Ring your bell or give a yell.
- Always give way to others.
- Control your speed and braking.
- Pass with care.
- Give animals space.
- Take only photographs, leave only tyre prints.
- Look after yourself.

But most of all enjoy your ride!



KEY

	Easy Walking Track
	Tramping Track
	Non-DOC Tracks
	Road
	Water Supply
	Camp Site
	Public Jetty
	Public Phone
	Toilets
	Parking
	Information
	Shelter
	Picnic Facilities
	View Point

Queen Charlotte Track is the Marlborough Sounds section of Te Araroa—The Long Pathway, a hiking trail the length of New Zealand, from Cape Reinga to Bluff. For more information on Te Araroa go to www.teararoa.org.nz.



Accommodation/camping

A number of accommodation houses are marked on the map, providing hostel, cabin, motel and hotel lodgings, and tent sites. The private tracks that leave the main track to private accommodation are not constructed to the same standard as the Queen Charlotte Track and may be narrow, steep, and slippery when wet. Some private accommodation sites may not be signposted, so make sure you get clear directions when you book.

There are six DOC-managed, 'self-registration' campsites on the track, each with toilets and water supply. The campsites at Bay of Many Coves and Black Rock are not at sea level. There are no cooking facilities at the campsites; you need to carry your own cooker. Avoid disposing of food scraps around the campsites as this causes visible pollution and attracts vermin. Remember there are no rubbish facilities: please take your rubbish back with you to Picton.

Camping fees for DOC campsites are to be deposited in the self-registration box at each site or prepaid at the Picton i-Site or at the DOC Office in Picton. These fees go toward the upkeep of the camp facilities.

Toilets

Toilet facilities are provided and maintained by DOC with help from commercial operators. Toilets are provided on the track and at the track entrances (see map). There are three types of toilets: flush, containment and long drop toilets.

To ensure the toilet systems run efficiently and don't smell, close the toilet lid after use, and close the toilet door. Do not put rubbish or food scraps in the toilets. Closing the door will improve the vent efficiency and help to remove smells. For personal hygiene walkers should carry hand-sanitising lotion.

Please use the toilets where they have been provided and avoid polluting bush margins and waterways. If you do need to go to the toilet away from a toilet facility, go at least five metres off the track and bury your toilet waste in the shallow organic layers of the topsoil, well away from any flowing water. It is important not to defecate on the track.

CAMPSITE	Water supply	Cooking shelter	Fireplace	Toilet	Approximate altitude above sea level	Approximate number of tent sites	Water taxi stop	Time/distance from main track
School House Bay*	T	No	No	L	1 m	6	Yes	10 min/ 800 m
Camp Bay*	T	No	No	F	5 m	10	Yes	0 (on the track)
Bay of Many Coves*	T	Yes	No	L	305 m	4	No	0 (on the track)
Black Rock*	T	Yes	No	L	260 m	4	No	0 (on the track)
Cowshed Bay*	T	No	No	F	5 m	20	No	15 min/ 1 km
Mistletoe Bay (private)	T	Yes	No	F	5 m	10	Yes	10 min/ 1.2 km
Umungata* (Davies Bay)	T	Yes	No	C	1 m	20	No	0 (on the track)

Key

* DOC campsite

Yes this facility is available at the campsite
No this facility is not available at the campsite

T Treat, boil or filter water

F Flush toilet

C Containment toilet

L Long drop toilet

Below: Forest floor fungi. Photo: DOC



Please remember

The Sounds Foreshore Reserve

Public access to most bays and beaches in the Marlborough Sounds is guaranteed by the unique Sounds Foreshore Reserve. This is an approximately 20-metre wide strip of publicly owned land above the mean high water mark. If you use this reserve, please respect the rights of any nearby residents. Some landowners have riparian (private) rights to the foreshore.

Fire

- No fires are permitted in the open. The Marlborough Sounds is a restricted fire area. No fires are allowed unless a permit has been previously obtained from DOC or a Sounds Fire Warden.
- We encourage the use of gas cookers.
- During periods of extreme drought and high fire risk, the track may be closed and open fires are prohibited.

Water

- DOC cannot guarantee that giardia is not present in the water at the campsites or in the streams. All water should be treated, filtered or boiled for 3 minutes to make it safe to drink.
- Don't use soap in streams.
- Always carry drinking water, particularly between Kenepuru and Te Mahia saddles.
- Water taps are provided at the DOC campsites and washing sinks are provided in the cooking shelters.
- Water supplies are limited, so use sparingly.
- During dry seasons a water supply may be empty.

Outward Bound School

The Outward Bound School at Anakiwa owns the Anakiwa jetty and requires access to it at all times. Boat owners should use Tirimoana jetty, 800 metres away. However, the Outward Bound School welcomes visitors enquiring about the school and the courses it provides. www.outwardbound.co.nz

Private land

Sections of the track cross private land near to private houses and baches. Please respect the owners' property and do not take vehicles, firearms or dogs on the track. The sections of track on these properties only exist through the good will and cooperation of the land owners.

Rubbish

There are no rubbish facilities along the track: please take your rubbish away with you. Walkers leaving the track at Punga Cove are required to take their rubbish back with them to Picton.

Wasps

Wasps are common in late summer and autumn, particularly on beech trees. Carry antihistamines if you are allergic to their stings.

Pigs

While walking or riding, you may notice the ground disturbed in places alongside the track. This may be caused by wild pigs rooting for worms, grubs and plant roots. Pigs are rarely seen by walkers and if you are lucky enough to meet one, the pig will usually take fright and quickly disappear into the bush.

DOC HOTline
0800 362 468
Report any safety hazards or
conservation emergencies
For fire and search and rescue call 111

Environmental Care Code



Protect plants and animals
Remove rubbish
Bury toilet waste
Keep waterways clean
Do not use soap in streams
Take care with fires
Camp carefully
Keep to the track
Consider others
Respect our cultural heritage
Enjoy your visit
Toitu te whenua (leave the land undisturbed)



The memorial at Captain James Cook's sheltering spot, Ship Cove.
Photo: Steve Bagley

History

Maori tradition offers several stories explaining the origin of the Marlborough Sounds, called "Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka a Maui", or "The Prow of the Canoe of Maui". One legend tells how Maui, the Polynesian hero and explorer was paddling his waka with his brothers when, with a magical hook, he pulled up an enormous fish, which formed the North Island. Jealous, his brothers capsized the waka, which became the South Island, its intricately carved prow forming the Marlborough Sounds. The outer sounds are also associated with the renowned Polynesian explorer Kupe. Many Maori place names in this area commemorate his exploits.

For at least 800 years Maori have occupied the Sounds, where abundant kai moana or seafood from the sheltered inlets, together with birds, has sustained their developing culture. Evidence of their seasonal camps, permanently occupied villages and fortified pa can still be seen throughout the area. Queen Charlotte Sound was an important trade route long before the inter-island ferries plied its waters. Taking advantage of low saddles occurring between Sounds, Maori carried their canoes over land to avoid long sea journeys. Today, the saddle at Torea is still used to link Picton with Kenepuru Sound. The European name Portage, in the mid-section of the track, bears testament to this practice, meaning "hauling, or "carrying". All historic sites in the area are protected, both Maori and European.

Dutchman Abel Janzoon Tasman was the first European to sight the Sounds on his visit to New Zealand in 1642. He and his men spent Christmas of that year sheltering their ships—the Heemskerck and Zeehaen—from a storm near D'Urville Island but they never set foot ashore. That honour

went to Captain James Cook. Cook took advantage of the shelter and food available in the Sounds and made Meretoto, which he renamed "Ship Cove", his New Zealand base. Between 1770 and 1777, Cook and his crews spent 170 days sheltering there. It was at Ship Cove, that the first sustained contacts between Maori and Europeans took place. "Queen Charlotte" was the name he gave the Sound. The Maori name is "Totaranui", reflecting the totara trees growing there, a valued resource. While at Ship Cove he discovered a plant now called "Cook's scurvy grass", which yielded valuable vitamin C to cure scurvy among his crew. (On your boat trip to or from Ship Cove it is well worth taking time out to explore Motuara Island, rich in bird life (including saddlebacks) and its association with Cook's visits.)

In Endeavour Inlet during the 1880s, a small town grew around a series of antimony mines. Narrow, horizontal tunnels or "adits" were dug, from which vertical shafts descended deep into the hills. Early miners took the antimony ore on a tramway down the valley to a wharf, from where it was shipped to England to be processed and used for hardening lead and pewter.

Wildlife and vegetation

As you journey the track, you will pass through a variety of vegetation types, ranging from undisturbed native forests to gorse-covered hills where forest is regenerating and grassy farm land, all of which are typical of the New Zealand landscape. Both ends of the track begin in forested reserves. At sea level the forests are particularly lush: ferns, tree ferns, nikau palms, climbing kiekie and perching plants flourish, making up a spectacular coastal forest that has been lost in so many other places.

Clematis paniculata. Photo: Don Merton



Throughout the year colours change as trees bear flowers and fruit. In spring puawananga, the native clematis, wears a gown of creamy white flowers; in autumn bunches of red supplejack berries catch the eye, as do the orange skins of kohia, New Zealand passionfruit, discarded by birds. You may spot bright rows of tiny fungi adorning rotting wood and shiny-leaved karaka standing in groves along the shore, their large berries ripening to a rich yellow.



Supplejack berries
Photo: DOC



Bellbird and tui. Photo: J L Craig



Morepork
Photo: C S Robertson



Fluttering shearwater. Photo: Kim Westerskov

Birds

Listen and watch for forest birds as you walk along the track; mimic the bellbird or tui and you may well be rewarded with an answering call. Stir up the leaf litter and you may attract a darting piwakawaka or fantail or a South Island robin, looking to feast on insects of the forest floor. In summer, you may occasionally hear the calls of the long-tailed and shining cuckoo, while twilight stimulates the rasping calls of weka and the haunting cry of ruru, the morepork.

Where the track follows the shoreline, take time fossicking in the rocky strip between land and sea, especially at low tide. Enriched by twice-daily tides, the mud and silt of Endeavour Inlet and Big Bay estuaries are rich feeding grounds for white-faced herons, oystercatchers and kingfishers. Sitting patiently near the shore proves a worthwhile experience for watching wildlife. You may see various species of shag searching for food or sitting, statue-like, on a rock, drying their feathers before flying off or diving for more food. Occasionally, gannets are seen hurtling into the water to catch unsuspecting fish. Where fish are particularly plentiful, flocks of swooping terns and shearwaters may join in the fishing. Bottlenose dolphins are regular visitors to the Sound and you may be lucky enough to see them from the track frolicking and cruising out from the shoreline.



South Island Robin
Photo: Rod Morris



Above: Fantail. Photo: David Mudge



Spotted shag. Photo: Peter Morrison



Below: Gannets. Photo: Peter Blok

Commercial operators

Transport and activities

Dolphin Watch Ecotours

Experience the best of Marlborough with a 1-Day Dolphin Cruise & QC Track Walk combination tour! Dolphin Swimming, Eco-Cruises and Motuara Island Bird Sanctuary walks also available. London Quay, Picton. Ph 0800 WILDLIFE www.queencharlottetrackwalk.com

Cougar Line

Scheduled daily services to the Queen Charlotte Track. Free pack transfers for all walkers and mountain bikers. Operate 364 days. Oct–Apr 8 am 10 am 1:30 pm (also 6 pm mid Dec–Feb 28). May–Sep 9 am 1:30 pm. Bookings Essential. Ph 0800 504 090 cougarline@xtra.co.nz www.queencharlottetrack.co.nz

Endeavour Express

Daily service to all parts of the track for; walkers, mountain bikers, kayakers and holiday makers to their destination with friendly experienced local staff. Camping and mountain bikes are available to hire. See us on the foreshore at Town Wharf, London Quay, Picton. www.boatrides.co.nz Ph +64 3 573 5456

The Kenepuru Store, Portage Bay

Store up all you camping needs. Fishing tackle, fresh food, walkers lunches and snacks. Portage Adventure Centre hire kayaks, bikes, boats, sailing. Open all year www.portage.co.nz/shop Ph +64 3 573 4445

Accommodation

Te Mahia Bay Resort

Waterfront apartments and self contained motels. Coffee shop and general store. Easy track access. www.temahia.co.nz email holiday@temahia.co.nz Phone 03 573 4089

The Portage Resort Hotel

Rooms with great views, backpacker beds, restaurant, café and bar right on the beach. A wonderful place to stay with staff who care for you. Open all year. Kenepuru Sound, Marlborough, New Zealand R D 2 Picton. Ph +64 3 573 4309 or 0800 762 442 www.portage.co.nz enquiries@portage.co.nz

Mahana Lodge

Trackwalkers accommodation halfway between Ship Cove and Portage. Relax and revive in peaceful surroundings. Doubles and twins with ensuites. Home cooked meals available. Free kayaks, fishing, glowworms, native birds, safe beach. Ph +64 3 579 8373 www.mahanahomestead.com info@mahanahomestead.com

Mistletoe Bay Eco Village

Environmentally friendly accommodation 10 min walk off QC Track. Camping, 8 new chalets, sleep 6 www.mistletoebay.co.nz (03) 573 4048 or 021 375 444

Lochmara Lodge Wildlife Recovery and Arts Centre

Unique and beautiful, come rejuvenate and explore. Range of accommodation with water views. New cafe set right on the waters edge. Spa, massage, art, wildlife, free kayaks. Q C Track access. 03 573 4554 www.lochmaralodge.co.nz

Guided walks

Marlborough Sounds Adventure Co

2007 NZ Tourism Award winners. Our guided and freedom walk options have special highlights. Quality mountain bikes for rental, fully serviced by experienced mechanic. Sea kayak rental and guided options. London Quay, Picton. Ph 0800 283 283 anytime. Email: adventure@marlboroughsounds.co.nz Web: www.marlboroughsounds.co.nz

Wilderness Guides Picton NZ

Independent walking packages & upmarket gourmet guided walk options year round. Combine your visit with mountain biking or sea kayaking. Ph 0800 266 266 +64 3 520 3095, email info@wildernessguidesnz.com or www.wildernessguidesnz.com & www.queencharlottetracknz.com

DOC contact details

For more information about the Queen Charlotte Track, visit www.doc.govt.nz or contact:

**Department of Conservation
Picton Information Centre**

Picton Foreshore
P O Box 161, Picton 7250
Phone: (03) 520 3007
Fax: (03) 573 5021
Email: picton@i-SITE.org

or

**Department of Conservation
Nelson Regional Visitor Centre**

Millers Acre Centre/Taha o te Awa
79 Trafalgar Street, Nelson 7010
P O Box 375, Nelson 7040
Phone: (03) 546 9339
Email: nelsonvc@doc.govt.nz



Clematis paniculata. Photo: Markus Baumann



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