Pureora Forest Park (98,000 ha) straddles the Hangangaroa and Rangitoto Ranges between Lake Taupo and Te Kuiti. It is a hidden wonderland of tall trees, clear rivers and rare wildlife.

The park is managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC) to safeguard its natural and historic features and to provide for the enjoyment of visitors.

Pureora was once a thriving timber village—today just a few houses remain along with DOC’s field base. Sections of forest were extensively logged between 1930 and the early 1970s, with exotic trees also planted for timber (many are now logged). Despite this, the park still has one of the largest tracts of native broadleaf podocarp forest in the North Island, and its towering trees and luxuriant undergrowth are truly awe-inspiring.

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Plants and animals
The vegetation of the park changes from lowland podocarp forest dominated by rimu, matai, tawa and totara through to higher altitudes montane forest with Hall’s totara, rātā, beech (Nothofagus) and kāmahi. These forests grow on pumice and ash-derived soils. There are also nationally important wetlands and shrublands within the park—many of the shrublands are known as frost flats, and are home to endangered plants like Turner’s kikubi, while the forest contains the parasitic flowering plant Dactylanthus taylorii (on tree roots) and endemic musketoes in the canopy.

Cycling/mountain biking
C1. Timber Trail (grades 2 & 3) 85 km
The Timber Trail between Pureora and Ongarue offers 1-2 days of cycling through magnificent native forest, across deep gorges (all bridged), along historic bush tramways and through Ongarue’s tunnel and spiral. Shorter sections can be cycled from various access points (see separate brochure).

C2. Select Loop (grade 2) 7 km
A gentle ride through beautiful forest on a formed 2WD metalled road. Enter off Waitaramoa Rd.

C3. Okahukura Loop (grade 2) 14 km
Access is off Waitaramoa Rd then Okahukura Rd. The track is also used by quad bikes. Suitable for skilled riders but not particularly technical.

C4. Waione Loop (grade 3) 25 km
This is accessed from Pimpiriro via the Timber Trail and adds a challenging circuit. The loop part of the track traverses native forest and open clearings.

Hunting
A permit is required to hunt wild animals in the park and can be obtained online at www.doc.govt.nz/hunting or from the DOC office at Te Kuiti.

Accommodation
The park is a great place to explore on a weekend or for a longer visit, whether you stay at a campground or in cabin accommodation.

Camping
There are three main picnic and camping sites. Kakaho is in eastern Pureora on Kakaho Rd, and Ngaherenga comprises two sites on Barryville Rd near the Pureora Field Base. A self-registration system operates, with fees $6 per adult and $3 per child per night. Basic facilities include fireplaces, toilets and picnic tables. There are excellent opportunities for bushwalking and swimming at Kakaho, and the Totara Walk, the Timber Trail and Forest Tower are near Ngaherenga. There are four camping shacks at Pimpiriro Flats (no charge).

Forest giant.

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Walking and tramping

There are many entry points to the Park, with tracks of varying standards and lengths.

1. Totara Walk: 1 hr, 1.7 km loop
   - A short, flat track off Waimonoa Rd leading to the geographical centre of the North Island (marked with a cairn).

2. Mt Pureora: 2 hr, 6 km
   - The summit provides panoramic views of Lake Taupo, Tongariro National Park, Mt Taranaki and Kaimanawa Ranges (weather permitting). The track starts from the Link Rd car park on the northeast side of Mt Pureora, with boardwalks and steps in place to make walking easier.

3. Toitoi Track: 1.30 hr, 2.6 km
   - A short, flat track off Titiraupenga Rd and passes the YMCA Taringamotu River Camp.

4. Centre of the North Island Walk: 10 min, 250 m
   - An alternative access to the summit, starting from Tit Rd (off Cabbage Tree Rd) along the Timber Trail. Past the 10 km marker, the track climbs up the northeast side of Mt Pureora.

5. Mt Titiraupenga Track: 4 hr, 6 km
   - From Link Rd car park, the track crosses many small streams before climbing a southern ridge of Mt Titiraupenga, joining the Arataki Track just below the summit rock. The summit is Māori land and a taonga (treasure) to local iwi. Please respect cultural values by not climbing the summit rock.

6. Arataki Track: 1 hr 30 min to junction with Mt Titiraupenga Track
   - This track begins off Titiraupenga Rd and passes the YMCA camp. It climbs steadily to join the Mt Titiraupenga Track, 10 minutes below the summit rock. Please do not climb the summit rock (see 5 above).

7. Rimu Walk: 1 hr, 1.7 km loop
   - From the Kakaho Campsite this loop walk follows the Kakaho Stream through dense rimu forest before climbing to a viewpoint. The walk enjoys a short distance along the Kakaho Rd.

8. Bog Inn Track: 60 min, 1.7 km to Bog Inn Hut
   - To reach the track, turn off Link Rd onto Titiroi Rd just north of the Kakaho Campsite, then further along Titiroi Rd take Bog Inn Rd to reach the car park. An easy 10 minute climb from the car park leads to the mountain mire known as the Bog. This is a fragile area; please keep to the track.

9. Waibao Lagoon Walk: 15 min, 720 m
   - From SH52 turn onto Waibao Rd and travel approximately 7 km on a gravel road before turning left into the Waibao Lagoon car park. The lagoon, a 10 minute walk from the car park is one of the most beautiful spots in the park, surrounded by tall rimu and kahikatea (although the lagoon can dry out in summer).

10. Waibao Track: 1 hr 30 min, 4 km
    - This track leaves from the Waibao Lagoon car park and follows an old road for 30 minutes to Pukapuka Stream and then a steady 1 hour climb will bring you to the junction with the Haungarora Track.

11. Waibaha Track: 3 hr, 9.4 km to hut
    - The track follows the Waibaha River through shrubland into dense podocarp forest. The Waibaha Hut is in a clearing overlooking the river where the Waibaha and Hauhungaroa tracks meet. There is a small camping area beside the hut.

12. Haungarora Track (Link Rd to Mangakahu Valley Rd): approximately 3 days
    - This 45 km track traverses the Mangakahu Range. Follow the Mt Pureora Track before dropping down a southern ridge of the mountain to Bog Inn Hut (2 hr 30 min). After skirting the bog, climb the ridge to Mt Weraora (3 hr) turn east and drop steeply to the Waibaho Track junction (2 hr 30 min). The track continues onto the Waibaha Hut (4 hr). Continue upstream from the Waibaha Hut on the true left of the Waibaha River, just to the south of Tit Awamutu Stream, the track turns southwest and climbs the ridge onto the crest of the Haungarora Range.

13. Ketemaringi Track: 4 hr to Totara Stream Crossing
    - From the end of Ketemaringi Rd, climb steadily for 1 hour to Ketemaringi trig. The track then turns south and descends easily down a ridge to emerge onto Totara Stream Rd, with a further 1 hour walk to the car park at the Totara Stream crossing.

14. Mangatutu Track: 2 hr to ridge
    - This hunter’s access track is off the Okahuna Loop track (C3) in the north block of the park. The track crosses two streams before climbing steeply onto the main ridge near Mt Raglan, where it ends.

15. Waipapa Loop Walk: 30 min return
    - Located behind Pureora Forest Park Lodge, the track passes through tall podocarp forest. If the road gate is locked, allow an extra 10 minutes to walk to start of track. (Separate information sheet available.)