



## Domestic Animals

 Dogs and other pets are not permitted in national parks.

Our national parks have been preserved for their recreation values and to protect significant native flora and fauna. It is vital that the habitat of threatened species is properly protected.

## Camping

 Four self-registration campsites are provided along the Haast Highway and all have picnic tables, toilets and shelters. Camping along the highway is restricted to these areas. Fire places are provided, though, during extreme conditions, total fire bans are imposed. Camping fees should be put in the honesty boxes at each camping area or paid at the Makarora Visitor Centre.

## Further Information

- Visit the DOC Website: [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)
- For recreation and conservation information, visit the DOC Visitor Centres in the region:

Mount Aspiring National Park Visitor Centre  
Department of Conservation  
Ardmore Street (PO Box 93)  
Wanaka  
Ph; +64 3 443 7660  
Fax: +64 3 443 8777  
Email: [mtaspiringvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:mtaspiringvc@doc.govt.nz)

Makarora Visitor Centre  
State Highway 6, Makarora  
Private Bag, via Wanaka  
Ph: +64 3 443 8365  
Fax: +64 3 443 8374

Haast Visitor Centre  
State Highway 6, Haast  
PO Box 50, Haast 7844  
Ph: +64 3 750 0809  
Fax: +64 3 750 0832  
Email: [haastfc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:haastfc@doc.govt.nz)



## Te Wāhipounamu - South West New Zealand World Heritage Area



South West New Zealand is one of the great wilderness areas of the Southern Hemisphere. Known to Māori as Te Wāhipounamu (the place of greenstone), the South West New Zealand World Heritage Area incorporates Aoraki/Mount Cook, Westland/Tai Poutini, Fiordland and Mount Aspiring National Parks, covering 2.6 million hectares.

World Heritage is a global concept that identifies natural and cultural sites of world significance - places so special that protecting them is of concern for all people.

Some of the best examples of animals and plants once found on the ancient supercontinent Gondwana live in the World Heritage Area.



Above: Shrimpton Track in mist (Y Sprey)  
Cover: Thunder Creek Falls (S Sawyers)

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[New Zealand Government](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

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



# Walks along the Haast Highway

Five minute to five hour walks



MOUNT ASPIRING NATIONAL PARK



 Department of Conservation  
Te Papa Atawhai

## Haast Pass/Tioripatea Highway

This 140 km section of State Highway 6 is a spectacular and scenic road linking Wanaka and Haast. It reaches beyond wind-whipped Lakes Wanaka and Hawea, through golden tussock-covered hills, to wind among steep mountains cloaked in lush rainforest and cross tumbling rivers. It then skirts undulating forests that seemingly float in tea-stained swamps, to finally reach the foaming surf of the Tasman Sea.

The forested section of the highway passes through the mountain ranges of Mount Aspiring National Park, and provides a spectacular backdrop to much of the road. Formed in 1964, the park is the third largest of New Zealand's national parks.

The road gives a good insight into the Te Wāhipounamu – *South-West New Zealand* World Heritage Area. Established in December 1990, Te Wāhipounamu covers 10% of New Zealand, from Westland/Tai Poutini and Aoraki/Mt Cook National Parks in the north to Fiordland National Park and Waitutu Forest in the south.

Department of Conservation Visitor Centres at Wanaka, Makarora and Haast can provide up-to-date information on what to see and do along the road, along with displays on the region's natural and historic features.

Enjoy your journey.

Below: Haast Highway construction (1930's)



## Historic Journeys

Haast Pass/Tioripatea has always been an important route between Central Otago and the West Coast. Māori from the West Coast, Foveaux Strait and Coastal Otago crossed the pass to trade pounamu (greenstone) and food and named it Tiori-patea, meaning 'the way ahead is clear'. They had camps around Lakes Wanaka and Hawea and in the Makarora Valley, which they called Kaika Paekai, 'the place of abundant food'. Some journeys weren't as peaceful; Te Puoho, a northern chief brought his warriors through the pass in 1836 to raid the southern Kai Tahu and Kati Mamoe tribes. Initially, Te Puoho's raid was successful, winning an early skirmish near Wanaka, but further south all of his party were either killed or taken prisoner and used as slaves.

Charles Cameron, an explorer and gold prospector, is generally acknowledged as the first European to cross the pass, in 1863. A short time later, Julius Haast, Canterbury's Provincial Geologist, led a party of four over the pass and on to the West Coast where they 'Stood in the surf giving three hearty cheers'.

By 1876 there was a narrow pack track over Haast Pass/Tioripatea. In the following decade a government grant paid for the first construction work to be carried out on what some hoped would be a railway as well as a road, as it was cleared to as much as 10 metres wide. Prospectors and early settlers at Haast were the first to use the route. Next were our earliest tourists – on horse back – then livestock being moved to and from Haast on the coast.

Most of the work on the Haast Pass/Tioripatea road was carried out during the 1930s depression when up to 400 men were employed. They lived in temporary camps and spent long hard days with pick, shovel and horse-drawn carts. The onset of World War II stopped this and the road to Haast was finally completed in 1960. The last stretch, north of Haast, that linked the rest of Westland with Otago wasn't finished until 1965.

At 563 metres above sea level, Haast Pass/Tioripatea is virtually an all-weather road and the lowest of the three road passes that link Westland with the east coast.

## A Natural Journey

Most of the rock along the Haast Pass/Tioripatea road is schist, formed under intense heat and pressure. An important geological feature, the Alpine Fault, which runs the length of the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana, crosses the road just east of Haast, though unseen by travellers.

During the Ice Ages huge glaciers scoured and shaped the landscape, including the pass, to leave U-shaped and hanging valleys in their wake, as well as ice-smoothed granite outcrops such as Mosquito Hill near Haast. Silt and gravel spread by rivers in the millennia since, now covers the valley floors, creating the classic wide terrace flats of both the Haast and Makarora Valleys.

Rainfall varies considerably in the area: 3800mm a year at Haast to more than 8300mm on the low western slopes, to drop to 4500mm at Haast Pass/Tioripatea itself, and only 2000mm at the head of Lake Wanaka. Combined with altitude, this has a significant effect on vegetation.

West of the pass, kamahi is the most common tree, with swamp forests of rimu, kahikatea and silver pine thriving on the boggy lower slopes and terraces. From Thunder Creek to Makarora, silver beech/tahina dominates, with remnants of matai, miro, kahikatea and rimu in places such as Makarora Bush. At the drier, lower end of the Makarora Valley a few pockets of mountain beech/tamauka survive amongst the scrub and pasture.

Insect-eating birds such as fantail/piwakawaka, yellow breasted tit/miromiro and rifleman/titipounamu thrive in the invertebrate-rich forest. and mōhua (yellowhead) and kākāriki (yellow-crowned parakeet), are locally common.

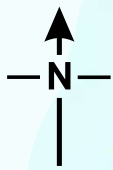
The striking Australasian or paradise shelduck/putakitaki is a familiar sight on the open river flats.

Introduced brown and rainbow trout are found in the Makarora, Young and Wilkin Rivers and provide excellent fishing – with the required licence.



fantail/piwakawaka





### 1 - Haast Visitor Centre



Just off the main highway at Haast, the centre has an interesting display on South Westland's natural and human history. There's also plenty of information available on the many walks between Fox Glacier in the north and Jackson Bay/Okahu in the south.

### 2 - Roaring Billy



**Bush Walk: 25 minutes return (1km)** This gentle walk through a beautiful podocarp and silver beech forest to the Haast River ends with a great view of the Roaring Billy Waterfall. The forest is lush with tree ferns, a special feature of the walk.

### 4 - Thunder Creek Falls



**Bush walk: five minutes return (0.2km)**

An easy walk along a sealed track, that passes through kamahi and silver beech to the 28 metre, spectacular and aptly named, Thunder Creek Falls.

### 6 - Haast Pass/Tioripatea

**Haast Pass Lookout Track: 1 hour return (3.5km)**

This track leads to a view point above the bushline with a stunning vista.

### 7 - Davis Flat



**Bridle Track: 1.5 hours one way (3.5km)**

Walkers can begin from either Davis Flat or Haast Pass/Tioripatea. It is a well graded track and follows a section of the old Bridle Track, the first link between Otago and Westland. As the distance between Davis Flat & Haast Pass/ Tioripatea is five kilometres we advise that 2 vehicles be used, so that one car can be left at the other end of the track.

### 8 - Cameron Creek



**Bush walk: 20 minutes return (1km)**

The walk takes you up through silver beech forest to a viewing platform overlooking the Makarora Valley and surrounding mountain peaks.

### 3 - Pleasant Flat



**Bush walk: five minutes return (0.2km)**



Starting from the carpark this is an enjoyable, short bush walk beside a tranquil mountain stream. Pleasant Flat is an attractive picnic and camping area with impressive views of Mount Hooker. Overnight camping is permitted; a small charge applies.

### 5 - Fantail Falls



**Bush Walk: five minutes return (0.2km)**

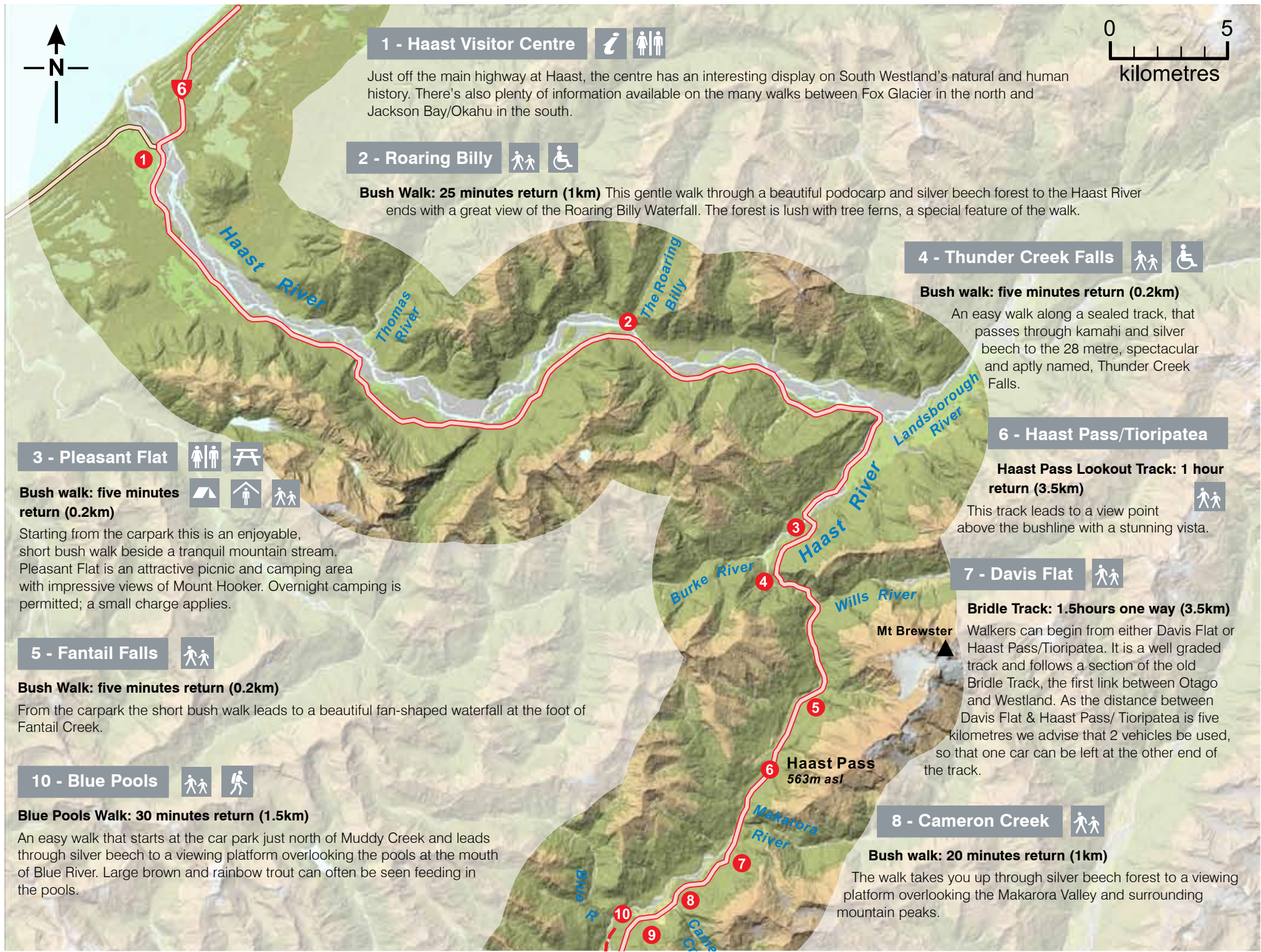
From the carpark the short bush walk leads to a beautiful fan-shaped waterfall at the foot of Fantail Creek.

### 10 - Blue Pools



**Blue Pools Walk: 30 minutes return (1.5km)**

An easy walk that starts at the car park just north of Muddy Creek and leads through silver beech to a viewing platform overlooking the pools at the mouth of Blue River. Large brown and rainbow trout can often be seen feeding in the pools.





### Young Valley: 1.5 - 2 hours one way (7km)

This track continues through beech forest from the Blue Pools to Rainy Flat, before opening up onto open pasture lands and bush sections through to the Young River Mouth.

### 10 - Blue Valley



### Camp Flat tramping track: four hours return (5km)

The track begins just beyond the swing bridge over the Makarora, to climb above the Blue River and the north branch, before it drops down onto Camp Flat. This is a pleasant place to stop for lunch or to camp overnight.

### 12 - Makarora Visitor Centre



The Visitor Centre contains interesting displays illustrating the natural and human history of the Makarora Valley.

### 14 - Boundary Creek



An attractive, lakeside picnic and camping area, with toilets and tap water; a small charge for overnight camping applies.

Picnic area

Camping

Shelter

Dogs on a leash

Toilets

Wheelchair access

Short Walk - well formed, easy walking for up to 1 hour.

Tramping Track - mostly unformed but have track directional markers, poles or cairns.

Base map image supplied by Geographx (NZ) Ltd

### 9 - Cameron Flat



### Nature walk: 15 minutes (1 km)

A camping area that catches the morning sun, and has imposing views of the Makarora River and the Cameron and Blue Valleys. Above the camping area a short track links with the beginning of the Blue Pools Walk. A fee for overnight camping applies.

### 11 - Makarora Bush



### Nature walk: 15 minutes (1km)

Starting from the car park, just north of the Makarora Visitor Centre, this looped nature walk passes through podocarp and silver beech forest with good specimens of matai, miro, kahikatea and rimu. Another feature is a pitsaw display that illustrates this pioneering timber milling technique.

### 13 - Mount Shrimpton



### Tramping track: 5 hours to the bushline and return (6km)

This track leads off the nature walk and climbs steeply to the bushline to give good views of the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana. In winter, alpine skills are essential.

### 15 - Boundary Creek Track



### State Highway 6 to the top flats 3-4 hr (6km)

This is a pleasant walk along an old musterer's track, above an upland river gorge. The track gives access to open flats. At the head of the flats a silver beech forest by the forks provides an ideal campsite.

### 16 - Kidds Bush



### Nature Walk: 30 minutes (1km)

### Sawyer Burn Track: two hours to the bushline and return (2.5km)

Both walks start from the Kidds Bush Recreation Reserve, six kilometres along Meads Road – turn off SH6 before The Neck; 32 km north of Wanaka. The nature walk is an easy loop track through mountain beech forest.

The Sawyer Burn Track climbs through the forest to the bushline and has superb views of Lake Hawea and the surrounding mountains.

Kidds Bush is an attractive picnic and camping area with toilets, tap water and day shelter. Overnight camping is permitted; a small charge applies.

