

Auckland/Waikato Lakes Trout Fishing

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO



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Trout Stocking Programme

Lakes in the Auckland/Waikato region are stocked with rainbow trout and brown trout from the Eastern Fish & Game hatchery at Ngongotaha. Trout are stocked in autumn when they are 10 months old and 12-15 cm long. Lake Pupuke is stocked with two-year old trout that average 35-45cm. The accompanying table shows the trout releases that occur in a "typical year".

Trout releases in the Auckland/Waikato Region

Lake	Number of fish	Species
Pupuke	1000	Rainbow trout
	100	Brown trout
Whatihua	200	Rainbow trout
Parkinson	50	Rainbow trout
Mangatangi	500	Rainbow trout
Moana-nui	200	Rainbow trout
Karapiro	1500	Rainbow trout
	500	Brown trout
Arapuni	4000	Rainbow trout
	500	Brown trout

The rainbow trout are from the selective breeding programme carried out by the Ngongotaha Hatchery using the biggest, fastest growing trout from Lake Tarawera as the breeding stock. Research in the Waikato hydro-lakes has shown that Tarawera strain rainbows grow faster and achieve a larger average size than fish sourced from other waters.

Stocked brown trout are of Lake Waikaremoana strain. Although brown trout can be hard to catch, they live considerably longer and thus can grow larger than rainbows.

Lake Waipapa and the Mangatawhiri Reservoir hold abundant trout populations from natural recruitment and do not require stocking.

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Lake Fisheries Monitoring Programme

Trout are released into Auckland/Waikato lakes to enhance angling opportunities, and thus it is important that fisheries are closely monitored to ensure that good growth rates are achieved. Overstocking of lake fisheries can result in poor growth rates with few fish reaching a size acceptable to anglers. On the other hand, if too few fish are stocked then catch rates can decline.

All hatchery-reared rainbow trout can be identified by the absence of one fin, either an adipose or pelvic fin, removed at the hatchery so that each year class can be clearly identified. The subsequent growth and condition of these fish are not affected by this procedure. Fish and Game also carries out a tagging programme in several lakes – check for the presence of a yellow tag just below the dorsal fin. We would appreciate reports of tagged fish especially fish length and date of capture.

New to Freshwater Fishing?

Local tackle shops should be able to tell you what are the most popular lures and fishing techniques for lakes in their area. Fish & Game also has a pamphlet and DVD "Getting Started in Freshwater Fishing" that is aimed at assisting the complete novice (available for \$5 from the Fish and Game Office or most sport fishing retailers).



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Lake Karapiro

Lake Karapiro is the most accessible of the three hydro lakes with good public access from State Highway 1, five public boat ramps, and extensive walking tracks.

The upper reaches of Karapiro provide the main trophy fishery for the Auckland/Waikato Region – rainbows average 2kg, brown trout nearly 4kg. Fish of double figures (10lb+) are not uncommon. During October/November, the fishing can be hot, especially after dark, as big fish feed voraciously on smelt. Over the summer months there is often a massive caddis fly rise in the evenings and again the fishing in the upper reaches can be spectacular.

Access for shore based anglers can be obtained from Horahora Road. The stretch of water from the Little Waipa upstream to the tailrace can be very productive, especially for the evening rise. The mouths of the Pokaiwhenua and Little Waipa Streams are popular with anglers, although weed can be a problem at the latter. Spawning fish move up into the Pokaiwhenua Stream and the lower reaches, downstream from the falls on Arapuni Road, can provide excellent river fishing on large lake-run trout.

Trolling is popular in the main-body of Karapiro. The boat ramp at the mouth of the Little Waipa Stream is recommended as it provides good access to the best fishing water. Generally the best fishing is upstream but it is an offence to fish from a boat in the tailrace (upstream from the white marker post) unless the boat is securely anchored.

All springs, rivers and streams entering Lake Karapiro are closed to fishing except for the Waikato River, Pokaiwhenua and Little Waipa streams. The spillway and tailrace of the Arapuni Dam are both open to fishing (see section on Arapuni Dam walkways).



Waikato Hydro Lakes



Lake Arapuni

Lake Arapuni is the most popular trout fishery in the Auckland/Waikato Region. Attracting anglers to its excellent boat ramps, good catch rates, and great scenery especially in the upper reaches.

Most of the trout caught in Arapuni are rainbows averaging about 1.5kg with the occasional fish over 2.5kg. Only about 5% of the trout caught are browns, but they are often huge and Arapuni provides anglers with a real chance of catching a trophy.

Arapuni offers good trolling water although weed can be a problem in some places. There are five boat ramps located around the lake – the most popular of which are Jones and Arapuni landings at the northern end of the lake.

In the upper reaches, popular locations for the shore based angler include below the Waipapa Dam and the mouths of the Tumai and Mangawhio Streams. Access to the Mangawhio is by a walking track (1.5km) from the boat ramp about 1km below the Waipapa Dam. The lower reaches of the Mangawhio Stream, about 700m of water, are open all year. Access to the Tumai is by the Waikato River Trail starting from the eastern side of the Waipapa Dam. In the middle reaches, access to several beaches can be gained from Landing Road (metal road). In the lower reaches, the Arapuni Dam and Bridge are popular locations (see section on Arapuni Dam walkways).

All springs, rivers and streams entering Lake Arapuni are closed to fishing except for the Waikato River and the Mangawhio Stream.



Arapuni Dam Walkways

An extensive track system provides access to many fishing spots in the vicinity of the Arapuni Dam including popular fishing spots at Brandon's Pool and the Arapuni tailrace, spillway and headrace. These waters hold some of the largest trout in the region

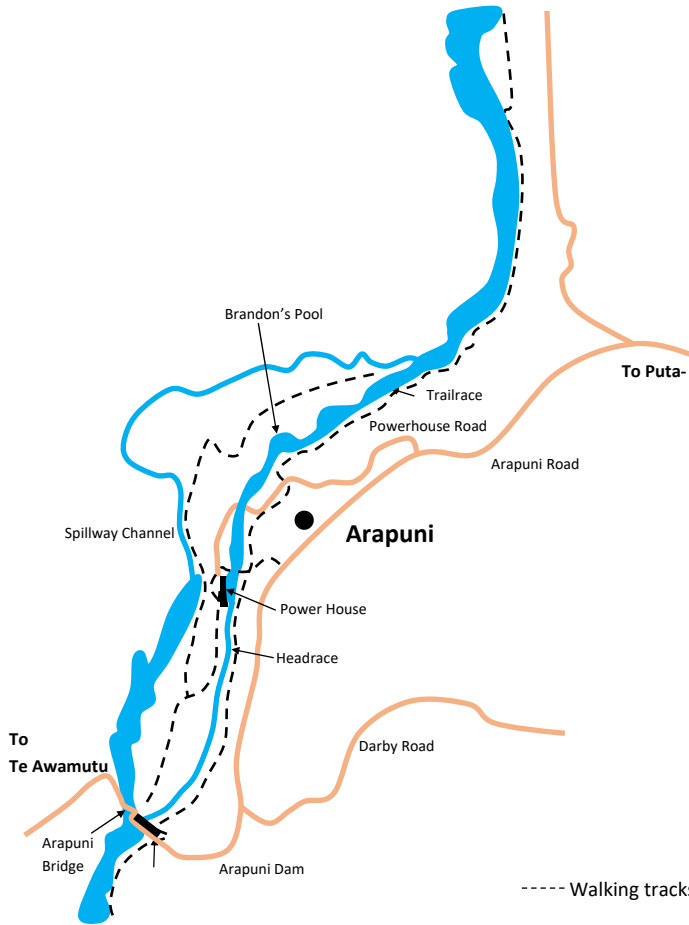
Access to the confluence of the tailrace and the spillway can be achieved from a track starting from the Arapuni Village that leads to a swing bridge across the river (alternatively park your car near the Arapuni Powerhouse and walk up the road to the swing bridge). Once across the swing bridge you will see concrete steps on the opposite side of the road. Walk up the steps and then around the transformer station where a gravel road leads down to the tailrace/spillway confluence. About 200m down this road, another road on the left leads to the headrace – this area is also open to fishing. The road down to the confluence is about 2km, and after 1.5km a track on the right leads to Brandon's Pool. There are other fishing spots in this area, including small backwaters and several boulder walls between the confluence and Brandon's Pool. As yet there are no tracks to these areas but you're welcome to find your own way.

The Waikato River Trail from Arapuni Road to the mouth of the Little Waipa passes many good fishing spots including productive water in the Arapuni Tailrace.

The Arapuni Bridge is popular with anglers who use light spinning gear with a small ball sinker and fly, which is bounced along the riverbed. After capture, trout are retrieved from the water by using a basket/net on a rope.



Arapuni Dam Walkways



Lake Waipapa

Lake Waipapa is favoured by those anglers seeking peace and solitude, enhanced by scenic surroundings of forests and towering bluffs. As the most isolated of the Waikato hydro lakes, Waipapa is little used for water based recreation other than for fishing.

Access to the lake is provided by a good boat ramp located at the northern end of the lake. The ramp has a reputation as being an unsafe place to leave a vehicle, but anglers can leave their car and trailer in the carpark next to the Waipapa power station.

Trolling is effective especially along the outer weed beds in the lower/middle reaches or along the cliffs in the upper reaches. The rainbows are smaller than those in Arapuni, but huge brown trout can still be expected. Waipapa is not stocked with hatchery-reared trout as it holds high numbers of wild trout.

The lower reaches of the Waipapa River, known as the Waipapa Lagoon, can only be reached by boat – though the entrance below the highway bridge may be impassable at low lake levels. This is productive fishing water often producing a high catch rate to anglers trolling or fly fishing from an anchored boat.

Shore based fishing is restricted to the northern lakeshore, the mouth of the Waipapa River and a small section of the Maraetai Dam tailrace. All springs, rivers and streams entering Lake Waipapa are closed to fishing except for the Waikato River and Waipapa River.



Mangatawhiri & Mangatangi Reservoirs

Two large Auckland water reservoirs in the Hunua Ranges have limited areas open to trout fishing. Both reservoirs contain wild rainbow trout with the Mangatangi fishery supplemented by hatchery releases.

Fishing is restricted to the face of the dams within the areas indicated by signs. Anglers may not enter the water unless they are wearing clean gumboots or waders. Fish shall be taken "whole" from the site – gutting or cleaning fish is not permitted anywhere on the site. Artificial lure/fly only can be used.

Fly fishing using a nymph is generally the most productive method of fishing. A long monofilament leader is used, generally 3-5m long, with a floating fly line. An indicator is placed about 2.5m above the nymph. The nymph is retrieved very slowly, just the occasional twitch. A wide variety of nymphs can be successful, and the most popular are those tied to imitate a small caddis larva.

A Water Access Permit is required and this is available at no cost by self-help from the fishing kiosks at the reservoirs.



Lake Moana-nui

Lake Moana-nui is an artificial lake formed by a small dam on a spring-fed creek on the south-western outskirts of Tokoroa. Access for the shore-based angler is excellent as the lake is surrounded by a recreational reserve. Moana-nui is stocked with rainbow trout and has a wild population of brown trout. Trout growth rates are rapid and the lake regularly produces fish over 3kg. Large trout can often be observed feeding on invertebrates in the shallow margins of the lake especially in the upper reaches.



Lake Pupuke

Lake Pupuke is situated in an old volcanic crater in the middle of North Shore City. It is managed as a mixed fishery having a good population of rudd, tench and perch and is stocked annually with two-year-old rainbow and brown trout of catchable size.

Most trout anglers fly fish from the shore, but spin fishing and harling are also successful. Unlike coarse fishing, most trout are caught during the winter months.



Waiuku Lakes

Two small lakes near Waiuku provide good conditions for trout growth because they are exposed to sea breezes that provide cool temperatures over the summer. However be warned, sea breezes can prove frustrating to anglers, especially fly fishermen, and thus it is recommended that you choose a calm day to fish these waters. Fishing from a float tube or small dingy can be productive.

Both lakes are stocked annually with rainbow trout, which grow to an average size of about 1.2kg with the occasional fish over 2kg. Brown trout are present in low numbers and are generally big fish but difficult to catch.

The main attraction of Lake Whatihua (Thompson's) is an excellent rise on calm days. Shore access is good, but permission should be obtained from one of the local landowners. Lake Whatihua is located next to the Waiuku-Kariotahi Road about 1.5km back from Kariotahi beach.

Parkinsons is a small lake just 1.5 hectares. Access is good and the lake is easily fished from the shore. Weed can occasionally be a problem but grass carp have been released into these waters by Fish and Game to reduce the weed infestation. Parkinsons Lake is located next to the Whiriwhiri Road just south of Lake Otamatearua.

