

WEST COAST RAIN FOREST

New Zealand
wood pigeon
or kererū

Silvereye
or tauhou

Fantail, or piwakawaka

Weka or wood hen

Rich rainforest

This walkway sits within the Mahināpua Bush, a remnant forest that once flourished on dunes deposited by the Tasman Sea. The forest is rich in plant and animal life.

Tall kahikatea trees line the swampy margins of the lake and creeks, while rimu tower above the forest canopy. Rimu are easily recognised by their tall trunks and wide reaching branches, with weeping branchlets and needle-like leaves. These trees can grow to more than 35 metres in height, and generally live for 600 – 800 years, with older specimens up to 1000 years.

Tūī

Miro were once abundant in Mahināpua Bush, but along with many other native trees, they were heavily logged for their beautiful timber. The bark and trunks of miro look like they have been hit by a hammer. This is very different from the peeling bark of rimu. Miro produce reddish-purple fruits, which are a favourite food of the native New Zealand wood pigeon, or kererū.



Giant rimu and miro tower above the forest canopy.

Creatures of the forest

The forest surrounding Lake Mahināpua is home to an array of forest and wetland birds. Species you are likely to see, or hear, in the forest include the bellbird, tūī, grey warbler, fantail, kererū and, if you're very lucky, the bush falcon. Bellbirds and tūī are famous for their beautiful song.

Around the lake you may see white herons, kingfishers and water fowl such as scaup and paradise and mallard ducks.

Tūī are easily recognised by their glossy black and metallic blue-green feathers with a white tuft under the throat. While tūī sing beautiful melodies they can also mimic other sounds making harsh clicks, barks, cackles and wheezes. Tūī also mimic humans picking up repeated words and phrases.

Fantail, or piwakawaka, are frequently seen in the forest and are easily recognised by their long fan-like tails. Their friendly 'cheet cheet' calls, and wonderful aerobatics attract much attention. Their fan-like tails allow the fantail to quickly change direction in mid-flight when hunting for prey. This clever bird will closely follow humans in the bush, dancing and darting to collect insects disturbed as people walk by.

Kererū is the Māori name for New Zealand's native wood pigeon. It is a large, beautiful bird with bright



Tall, straight kahikatea trees line the lakeside and low lying land.



green and bronze feathers on its head and a smart white breast. The beating of its wings is often heard before it can be seen. Kererū is the only remaining native bird with a beak big enough to swallow large fruits and seeds of some native plants.

The grey warbler, or riroriro, is one of New Zealand's lightest birds, weighing only 6.5 grams! It builds a domed hanging nest with a small entrance hole. The grey warbler is treated rather poorly by the shining cuckoo, which tricks the warbler by laying its eggs in the nest, leaving the warbler to feed and raise the cuckoo chicks. The cuckoo chicks usually hatch first and will rather nastily evict the warbler eggs or chicks from the nest, ensuring they have the exclusive attention of their grey warbler 'mum'.



Wētā is the Māori name for a group of large, spiny and wingless insects found only in New Zealand. They are related to grasshoppers and crickets. Wētā live in dark and damp caves and rot holes in trees. Male wētā construct an elaborate network of tunnels and dens, where they look after a harem of many females.



New Zealand Tree Wētā.

New Zealand falcon
or kārearea

Bellbird or korimako

Grey warbler
or riroriro