



## Walk of the Month

Welcome to 10,000 Steps Northland's 'Walk of the Month'. Each month a stunning walk somewhere in Northland will be highlighted. If you have a favourite track or walk in your community contact us on email at [10000steps@sportnorth.co.nz](mailto:10000steps@sportnorth.co.nz).

### September's Walk of the Month – Lake Ngatu (Awanui) - The Far North

This month's 'walk of the month' took us to Lake Ngatu (Awanui) which is just north of Kaitiaki. The walk came highly recommended by Russell Ujdur, Sport Northland's Far North District Coordinator, who is also a member of the Bushland Trust Committee who has been working closely with the Department of Conservation to help re-establish native growth around the lake.

Lake Ngatu is one of the Far North's natural gems and is very well utilised and enjoyed by many locals - you will also often see waka ama paddlers out practising on the water.

Lake Ngatu is found just 5 kilometres north of Awanui and to get there you will need to travel 3 kilometres north of Awanui and then make a left turn onto Waipapakauri Road. After a short drive on this rural, country road turn left again on Sweetwater Road and follow through until you see the Department of Conservation sign for Lake Ngatu. There is safe parking at several different spots around the lake but the most common site is by the public toilets at the top end of the lake.

The single track around the lake is extremely beautiful, flat and mostly accessible. The track starts at the far end of the carpark and heads towards the waka's along the lakes edge. It is a very easy track to follow as you circumnavigate the lake.

After walking along a grassy verge which meanders through a lovely Manuka forest, the track spills out onto the road for a short distance. Track markers will lead you back onto the grass and through the trees again. Hugging the fence line, follow your nose and you will quickly see a wide track cleared through the gorse with plenty of young native plants growing. This track will take you towards Sweetwater Road which is where you will be guided to the first carpark where the walk is almost completed.

The Department of Conservation have managed this area very well and have supplied benches to sit on to view the lake, the birds and the surrounding area. Although the lake looks quite large, do not let it deceive you from completing the walk. As a walker, you can easily complete this walk in an hour depending on your walking pace. This is also a great track to jog if that is of interest to you. There are no hills to navigate and most of the track is under the canopy of native Manuka trees.

All up this walk will have you achieving **5,000 Steps** (4 kilometres) and is the ideal place to take the kids and all the family for some outdoor enjoyment.



*View of Lake Ngatu and the re-established native growth surrounding the lake*