



Taranaki Ringplain Fisheries

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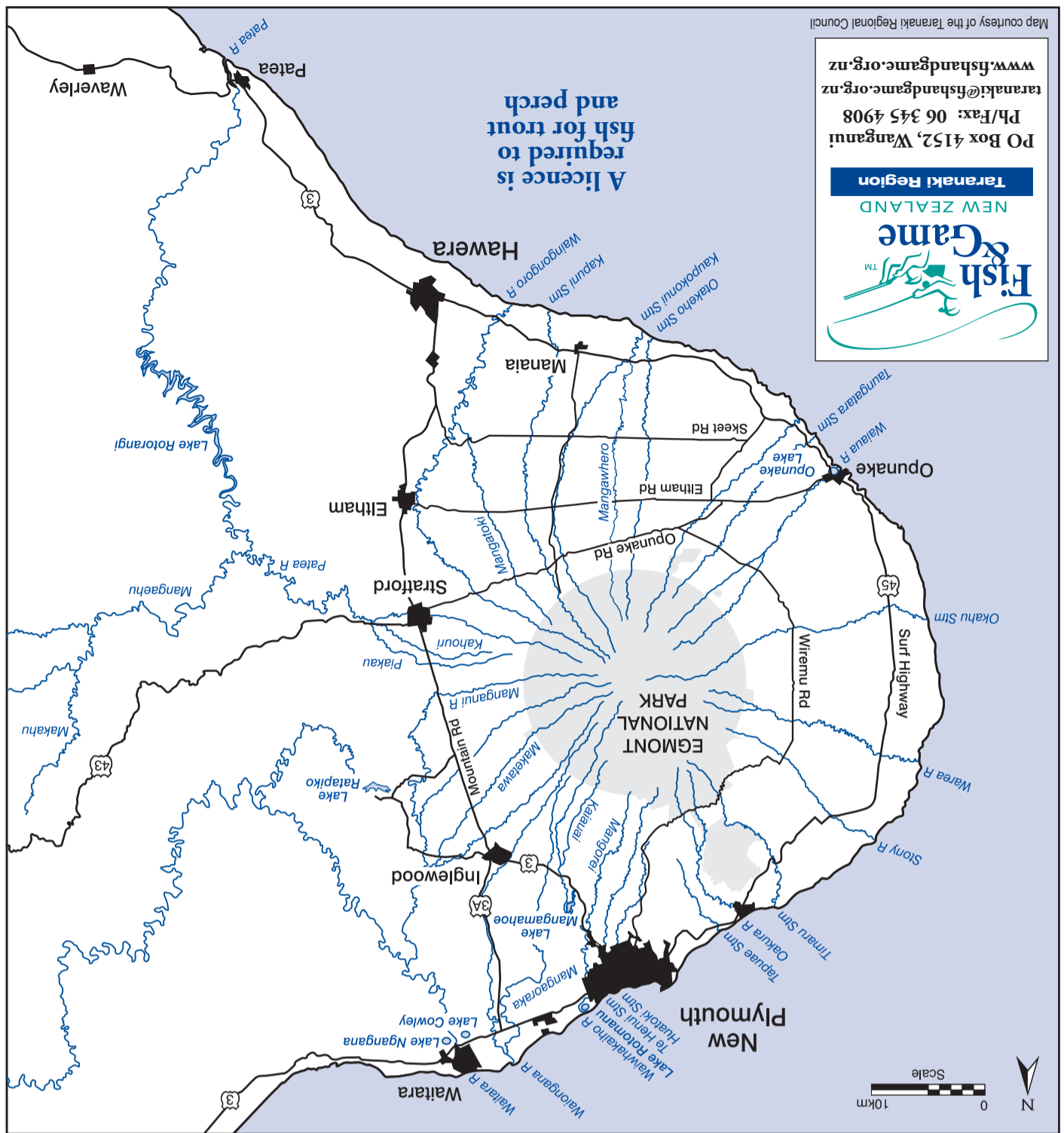
With more than 40 recognised trout streams, many smaller fishable tributaries and seven lake fisheries, waters originating on the bush-clad slopes of Mt. Egmont/Taranaki offer a wide variety of freshwater fishing experiences in a scenic and un-crowded environment.

Brown trout are the dominant species, averaging 1.2 – 1.5kg, but frequently reaching 2kg or more. Brown trout were introduced to Taranaki from the late 1800's and they have formed self-sustaining wild populations well adapted to cope with the rapid rises in river level that occur with heavy rainfall on the mountain. Rainbow trout up to 2kg or more are also present in several waters, though most populations are maintained by releases of hatchery reared fish. Lakes Mangamahoe and Ratapiko, the Waingongoro River between Eltham and the sea and Kaupokonui Stream support the most productive rainbow trout fisheries.

Taranaki ringplain streams generally hold between five and 20 trout per km, depending on stream size and channel configuration. Meandering stream sections tend to contain more habitat and therefore more trout than sections where the channel is straight. In smaller streams, large trout often reside in the pools, while in larger rivers, the riffles, runs and pocket water can also be productive. A good strategy is to don a pair of polaroid sunglasses and carefully survey several km of stream in an upstream direction. Getting to know a stretch of water is a sure way to improve your catch rate.

The headwaters of streams, above 300 metres in altitude, remain in pristine condition throughout the year, offering quality "sight-fishing" opportunities for large trout in crystal clear water. The impacts of intensive dairy farming are apparent in the middle and lower reaches of streams, particularly during low flow periods, when there is an increase in streambed algal growth and a decrease in sensitive mayfly and stonefly aquatic insect species. In these conditions, trout often feed on terrestrial insects falling onto the water surface, which provides exciting dry fly fishing for cruising fish. Algal growth and the often bouldery nature of streams, means that care should be taken when wading.

Live bait fishing with creeper (Dobsonfly larva) and worm is popular early in the season and during and after freshes. Nymph and dry fly fishing is also popular, with small flies (size 14-16) being most successful. Wetflies are often used in the lakes. Spinners



Map courtesy of the Taranaki Regional Council
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(tobys, veltics, z-spinners, rapalas) are also popular in lakes (except Lake Mangamahoe which is fly fishing only) and the larger river pools.

An extensive network of sealed roads provide numerous access points for the angler, but there are few "queen's chain" areas alongside streams in rural areas and anglers must obtain permission to cross private farmland. Landholders seldom refuse access when asked.

REGULATIONS



Photo: Glenn Stewart

All Taranaki Region fish licence categories are valid anywhere in New Zealand except the Taupo Fishing District.

Regulations may change from season to season. Anglers should refer to the regulation guide obtained free with their fishing licence.

Open Season

All Taranaki ringplain rivers and streams are open from 1st October to 30th April inclusive. The lower reaches of a number of rivers are open all year, as are Lakes Mangamahoe, Rotomanu, Ngangana and Opunake. There is a winter season from 1st June on Lakes Ratapiko and Rotorangi. Please check your regulation guide for details.

Baits and Lures

Regulations are liberal, with bait fishing allowed in all waters except Lake Mangamahoe (fly fishing only with fly rod, fly reel and fly

line), the Stony River, Kaiuau Stream and the Kapuni Stream upstream from Skeet Road Bridge (all fly and spin fishing only).

Daily Bag Limit

Two trout in all rivers, streams and lakes, except the Waingongoro River downstream of Eltham Road (4 fish), the Stony River (1 fish limit for brown trout) and Kaiuau Stream and Kapuni Stream upstream from Skeet Road Bridge (1 fish limit). There is no limit for perch.

Perch

Perch are found in Lakes Rotomanu, Cowley, Ngangana, Ratapiko, Rotorangi and a number of ponds on private land. Perch are a white-fleshed good eating species that can grow to 1.5kg in Taranaki. Perch can be caught by bait fishing or by using small red and white veltic spinners or similar.

Didymo

Please help to protect our rivers and lakes from aquatic pests such as didymo. **CHECK, CLEAN and DRY** all your gear before entering another river or lake anywhere in New Zealand.

POPULAR FISHERIES

Waiwhakaiho River

New Plymouth's closest river is best fished in its upper reaches, or in the lower river below the outlet of Mangorei power station. The Waiwhakaiho contains mostly brown trout, which grow to 2.3kg or more, plus the odd rainbow. The river is subject to

Photo: Craig McEwen



rapid rises in flow with heavy rainfall on the mountain. Access to the upper river is through farmland off Alfred or Egmont Roads, with bridge crossings at SH3 (Egmont Village) and Peters Road.

Access to the lower river is from Devon Road (SH3), lower Smart Road, and from Rimu Street, Merrilands Domain (Audrey Gale Park) and William Street (Balsom Park), which are all off Mangorei Road. At Rimu Street, head down the hill, turn right and walk

along the gravel track at the end of the road. The pool at the end of the gravel track marks the upstream limit for all year fishing.

Large brown trout in the upper reaches are best targeted with small nymphs or a dry fly during the evening rise. Early season bait fishing with creper or worm is effective. The lower river fishes well in the mornings before the power station discharge begins. Fly, bait and spin fishing will all take fish.

Kaiaua! Stream

This bouldery upper Waiahakaitaho tributary provides challenging nymph and dry fly fishing for large browns up to 2.6kg. Kaiaua! Stream has a one fish daily bag limit and methods are restricted to fly and spin fishing only. Access is through farmland on the true left-hand side of Alfred Road and from the Alfred Road Bridge (difficult). The upper Kaiaua! is reached through farmland off Hill Road, which is off Albert Road. Nymph and dry fly methods work best.

Lake Rotomanu

Located near the Waiahakaitaho River mouth in New Plymouth, this fishery is stocked with takeable rainbow trout in October each year.

Good-sized perch are also present, which makes it an ideal place for junior anglers. There is easy access to the entire lake margin.

Proceed east along Devon Street East, through the lights at Fitzroy and into Clewong Road, which leads to the lake. All methods are effective, with the “bubble float and worm” being popular. Excessive weed growth has adversely affected the angling in Lake Rotomanu

in recent years, but a return to chemical control of weed growth in spring 2012 should see this fishery again provide good angling opportunities.

Lake Mangamahoe

Located midway between New Plymouth and Inglewood on SH3, the Lake Mangamahoe hydro reservoir is the region's third most popular fishery. Wild brown trout up to 2.6kg and hatchery rainbows (Lake Tarawera strain) up to 2.25kg are present. Turn off SH3 onto a road running along the western shoreline. Trout often

cruise the lake margin in shallow water and a number of bays provide good fishing. The lake outlet channel at the end of the road is also

popular. Lake Mangamahoe is designated fly-fishing only with fly rod, fly reel and fly line. Small (#16), waterboatman, damsel, midge

or snail imitations suspended below a bushy dry fly are effective, as are Hamills Killer, Rabbit, Fuzzy-wuzzy, Woolly Bugger and Red Setter patterns in sizes 8-12. The use of booby-type flies on a

sinking line and short trace can also be effective.

Waiongana and Mangaoaraka Streams

Located on SH3 midway between Bell Block and Waitara, the Waiongana and its tributary Mangaoaraka Stream contain brown trout averaging 1.5kg. Both streams are best fished in their middle and lower reaches. They can be reached from bridges at Devon Road (SH3), Te Arai Road West (off Ninia Rd) and Manureahi Road. The Mangaoaraka can also be reached from Corbett Road and the lower reaches from Mahoeatahi Road off SH3. The lower Waiongana can be reached by turning off SH3 onto Tate Road and then left into Brown Road. Bait fishing with creper and worm is effective early in the season and after freshes. Fly fishing with small (#16) hare and copper or halfback nymphs under a bushy dry fly indicator, brown and green beetle imitations or dry flies such as the Coch-y-Bondu are also effective.

Lake Ngangana

Located next to the Taranaki Kart Club track at the end of Joll Street, Waitara, this 4ha lake is stocked with two-year-old rainbow trout in spring each year. There is a walking track round the lake giving good access to a dozen fishing sites. Whatever the weather, the lake water remains clear and there is always a sheltered spot out of the wind. Lake Ngangana is open all year to fly, spin and bait fishing and is a good place to take the family fishing. Turn east



Photo: Craig McEwen

Located on the south-eastern slopes of Mt. Taranaki, the Waingongoro River is one of the most popular ringplain fisheries. In its upper reaches, it is a clear mountain stream supporting 5-20 takeable brown trout per km. Below Eltham the Waingongoro are present. The Waingongoro is perhaps the only river in NZ where stocking with rainbow trout has succeeded in changing a fishery

Waingongoro River

This scenic hydro lake east of Eltham is 46km long and contains plenty of perch that grow to 1kg or more. Few trout are present in the middle and lower reaches of the lake, but the upper reaches from Glen Nui boat ramp up to the first river rapid can produce good conditioned brown and rainbow trout to 2.25kg. Access to the upper reaches is via Anderson and Rawhitiroa Roads at Eltham. The middle reaches are accessed via Tawhiti, Ararata and Tangahoe Valley Roads. The lower reaches via Ball Road off SH3. Perch can be caught by trolling with flies or spinners or fishing off weedbeds with a spinner or worm. Deep trolling is the preferred method for trout.

Lake Rotorangi

Running through the heart of Stratford, the Patea is one of the ringplain's most productive brown trout fisheries. Takeable rainbow trout are also released into the river at Stratford in late January each year for a kids' fishing event. Good fishing is available within Stratford township, although the largest fish are present below Skinner Road. Large browns up to trophy size are also present in the river below Patea Dam, where there is 15km of fishable water between McColl's Bridge and the dam face. The upper river is best fished from tracks within King Edward Park and along the walkway between Juliet Street and Swansca Road. The middle reaches are accessed from Skinner Road Bridge and through farmland off Bird and Hungers Roads. The lower Patea is reached via Ball Road, which runs off SH3 just north of Kakarama. All methods work well, with spin and bait fishing predominating below the Patea Dam.

Patea River

Located 9 km along Tariki Road, off SH3 mid-way between Inglewood and Stratford, Lake Karapiko is a 21-hectare hydro reservoir that contains hatchery rainbow trout up to 2.7 kg, with wild browns up to 2 kg and perch up to 1.5kg also present. Spin and bait fishing methods are popular, although wet-fly fishing will also take fish. Trout cruising the lake edge can also be targeted with damselfly, waterboatman or snail imitations. The lake margins adjacent to Tariki Road can be reached via the water ski and powerboat access points. Permission to fish other parts of the lake margin should be sought from the local landowners. Lake Karapiko is closed for duck shooting in May, but re-opens on 1st June.

Lake Karapiko

Located 4km south of Inglewood on SH3, this Mangana! River tributary holds a population of large brown trout up to 2.5kg. Good water quality, wily fish and an entrenched and bouldery riverbed make for challenging fishing. Erosion in a headwater tributary has adverse affected the fishery since 2008, but fish numbers are gradually increasing as habitat stability returns. The Maketawa is reached from the SH3 and Junction Road (difficult) bridges and through farmland off upper and lower Norfolk Road. Creper fishing is effective, but nymphing predominates with hare and copper, halfback, caddis and stonefly patterns favoured.

Maketawa Stream

are favoured.

and Mangana! Roads and SH3. Nymph and bait fishing methods Junction Roads, the middle and upper reaches from Tariki, Croydon lower Mangana! River can be fished from Everett, Bristol and migratory pathway along the river after a break of 75 years. The a fish pass and downstream residual flow has now restored the the Mangana!'s flow into the Motukawa hydro scheme, although trout up to 2.5 kg. In its middle reaches, a weir diverts much of the mountain, the Mangana! holds moderate numbers of brown

Mangana! River

and take the first right into Joll Street.

into Princess Street off SH3 just north of the Waitara River Bridge

Photo: John Hardie Boys



Photo: Michael Bakker

A number of additional fisheries are noted on the location map.

Other Fisheries

Stony River.

fishing is recommended. Bait fishing is banned from the entire or from the top of Saunders or Punihō Roads. Nymph or dry fly from Mangarete and Wiremu Road bridges (off Saunders Road) from the Kaihiti Stream swing bridge. The upper river is reached be reached from upper Kaihiti! Road opposite the rugby club or Kaihiti! Road and Brophy Road. The Stony River walkway can Highway 45 Bridge, or through farmland off upper and lower the mountain. The lower river can be reached from the Surf catchment, it is prone to flash flooding with heavy rainfall on fishery when it is available. As the Stony is the steepest ringplain river is open all year to enable anglers to make the most of the opportunities during periods of relative stability. The entire Releases of two-year-old hatchery rainbows provide good angling the fishery and since then the river has been very unstable.

1998, a major erosion event in a headwater tributary decimated NZ river to be granted a Local Water Conservation Notice. In water quality of any ringplain stream and in 1985 it was the first Located near Okato in coastal Taranaki, the Stony has the best

Stony (Hangatahau) River

the shore nearest the Waitaua River or by the boat ramp.

where the inlet race meets the lake is productive, as is fishing from launching in Layard Street. Fishing with a weffly, spinner, or bait Domert or Layard Streets in Opunake. There is a ramp for boat track on the Opunake side of the Surf Highway Bridge, or via rainbow yearlings. The lake is reached by a short walk down a from the adjacent Waitaua River and is also stocked with R-strain This shallow hydro reservoir contains wild brown trout originating

Opunake Lake

fly, or bait fishing with creper or worm will take fish.

Located 5km west of Manata, the Kaupokonui and its largest tributary, Mangawhero Stream, contain good-sized brown trout. Rainbow trout are also present and have increased in abundance in recent years as a result of annual releases from Fish & Game's Hawera hatchery. The Kaupokonui is fished from bridge crossings at Eltham, Skeet and Upper Glenn Roads and Surf Highway 45, through farmland off Manata Road, or upstream from Kaupokonui beach at the end of Lower Glenn Road. The Mangawhero is best fished above and below Skeet Road Bridge, or by crossing the Kaupokonui a short distance upstrem of Surf Highway 45, or through farmland off Upper Glenn or Rama Roads. Nymph, dry

Kaupokonui Stream

fishing is banned in the Kapuni! Stream above Skeet Road Bridge. Bait imitations, Coch-y-Bondu or caddis dry flies are effective. Bait hare and copper or halfback nymphs, brown and green beetle farmland off Inaha or Winks Roads. Fly fishing, with small (#16) reaches. The lower river pools near the sea can be reached through Kokiri and Normanby Road bridges provide access to the lower and Eltham Road bridges, or through farmland off Palmer Road.

of small flies is required. The upper river is reached from Palmer well educated and a careful approach and delicate presentation the Kapuni! above Skeet Road Bridge. Kapuni brown trout are middle and upper reaches. A one fish daily bag limit applies to large brown trout, plus the occasional rainbow, particularly in its

Kapuni Stream

imitations are recommended for the evening rise.

with black and gold toby's, z-spinners, rapalas or veltics. Caddis work well in the middle and lower reaches, including spin fishing or worm is effective in the larger pools near Eltham. All methods fly fishing is best in the upper reaches. Bait fishing with creper and Normanby Roads and Surf Highway 45. Nymph and dry including Rogers Road off Datzell Road, Skeet, Mawhitiviti! reaches is via a handful of road ends and bridge crossings off SH3, Street within Eltham township. Access to the middle and lower and Cornwall Roads off SH3 and from road ends off Collingwood the Cardiff walkway upstream of Opunake Road, from Finnerty beginners. The upper river (brown trout only) is accessed from up 70% of the catch. This productive fishery is a great place for from one dominated by brown trout, to one where rainbows make