**Time to Leave the Dock and Explore**

**V5.24**

Many requests have been made seeking advice on where to go once you are in NZ.

You have come a long way so it is frustrating for we kiwis to see you sitting at the dock when you could be exploring our wonderful country. Yes, the water is colder but there are wonderful walks and beautiful scenery to enjoy. And if you are a fisher person then you will not go hungry.

The following tracks the trip Chameleon during the past few years –to the top of the north island and to Great Barrier. These were La Nina years so finding an anchorage on the east coast of North Island NZ was a challenge- but it did not blow from the NE all the time! I like walking and kayaking. David likes getting rid of me so he can read in peace. So I have concentrated on telling you about walks. This is version 5.24. Feel free to contact me with any further suggestions or comments.

Enjoy, Patricia: Ghradio@xtra.co.nz

To date our most used reference is the SpotX book and in fact you should have this on board as I will refer to it and not duplicate what you can find there. It gives guidance on where to anchor in the various wind conditions you will encounter. (It also comments on fishing but they have another more detailed Fishing Guide).

***Spot X Cruising New Zealand****, Author: Mike Pigneguy ISBN: 1-877374-69-5. Price $44.99*

We have also perused **NZ’s Northland Coast** by David Thatcher but it is pricy at $85 and we find the SpotX layout easier to navigate.

Chameleon lives at Gulf Harbour and it is hard to get to an anchorage in the north from Kawau in daylight unless the wind is perfect. As Great Barrier is a day sail away we generally start and return from there. We stopped at some places in both directions but cover them only once. I include cell phone coverage comments for both the Spark and Vodafone networks – when I remembered to check! For the first trip we did not have an external antenna which was rectified for the 21/22 season and made a big difference. Needless to say neither provider could be relied upon for the entire trip as they have carefully shared the coverage. Our new Teltonika modem cleverly choses which provider to use and distributes the signal throughout the boat. And those with StarLink will have no problem anywhere.

**If you want to go north directly from the Whangarei area then start at 6.**

1. **Great Barrier Island**

**Ref Spot X page 69-85** I will only comment on specific walks as SpotX does a good job of the anchorages. ***Spot X Cruising New Zealand****, Author: Mike Pigneguy ISBN: 1-877374-69-5. Price $44.99*

Get the DOC publications from the office near the shop in Fitzroy or elsewhere. Some are out of date – including the web site. No fires, no dogs, and remove any garbage from DOC land.

Ref to DOC website <https://www.greatbarrier.co.nz/our-great-walks/>. There are walks everywhere so just get out and explore. Great Barrier DOC tel. 09 429 0044 Also Coromandel DOC 07 867 9080. email greatbarrier@doc.govt.nz.

Cell phone coverage, and therefore internet, has been divided by Spark and Vodafone throughout the Island. Basically it is Spark in the south and Vodafone in the north! With a few weak anomalies. Starting from the north there is a Vodafone tower on a ridge on the Man of War side of Kaikoura Island. It gives good line of sight coverage to all the east side of Fitzroy Harbour, including Kaiaraara Bay (particularly the north side) and the north end of Forestry Bay. The large bay on the south side of Man of War, Onerua bay – called Red Cliffs by locals, has good internet coverage as the tower is visible. Some of the east end of Kaikoura Island ie the west side of Fitzroy harbour, also has good Vodafone coverage. There is erratic to no Vodafone coverage on the east side at Whangapoua beach especially if your dinghy capsizes in the surf and your iPhone sinks in the backpack! Down south at Tryphena, and from memory Whangaparapara, it is Spark country.

Medical: There are very good medics / nurses at the medical centre, Aotea Health, just across the road from the shop at Fitzroy. Nurse Adele Robertson will make house or boat calls if needed. Ph 09 4290047 or direct to Adele tel 0211417719. Note: There are a lot of wasps at many anchorages.

Fuel and water: Fuel is available at the Fitzroy dock- 9am to noon Monday through Saturday. Also Monday and Friday 4:30 to 5:00pm. Other times there is a $10 surcharge if under $100.00. Call Jackson to check availability 0212939313. Water is sometimes available but check first. And always check if off season. There is a fishing related supply shop at the dock for bait and tackle. Same hours I presume.

Garbage: You can buy orange garbage bags, $5, at the shop. No organised recycle except cardboard near the shop. In 2022 you could just bring your bottles, glass and plastic, to the former recycle area and leave them in a box or bag. This may change. This area, just up from Fitzroy dock is where you leave the orange bags.

Shopping : There is a store at Fitzroy that stocks essentials. Yes, it is considerably more expensive but everything has to be shipped in from the mainland. The Island Navigator only docks at Tryphena now and the store then goes to pick it up. During peak season the ship delivers Tuesday and Thursday so produce is available the next morning after unloading. From about mid March it is only once a week on Thursday. It is possible to place an order with Mary Fisher but Countdown manages to mess things up and I have had no success either working directly with them or through Mary at the shop. Contact for Mary Fisher is 021 0644420 and email fisher.3@xtra.co.nz

The closest anchorage is at Forrestry, as there is not much room in the harbour.

Radio/Weather forecasts: VHF weather is on 71 or 69 depending on position – and is often spotty. 7:30am and 1:30pm and 5:30pm. Listen to Bream Head to Cape Colville or wait until you hear area Colville. The latter is more accurate for Barrier we think. You get a better signal on your SSB which is available 1:30 and 5:30pm on 4146 and 6224. It is also quicker as it goes direct to the area forecasts and you don’t have to listen to all the Auckland areas.

Starting from the north:

**1.1 Katherine Bay, Nimaru Bay** 36\* 07.895S and 175\* 20.95 6.5m Low -no cell phone coverage – but walk up the hill track.

This is a pretty Bay and not highly frequented except during the festive season. We anchored on the shore side behind the mussel farm in Nimaru Bay and it was well protected from the 35Kts that developed on our trip from the mainland. You will likely move to and fro between the two bays depending on the swell direction. If the wind and swell start to strengthen and come from the East/North quadrant go across to To Roto Bay and get protection from Tumatopura Pt and Bird Rocks. 36\*06.722S and 175\*21.141E, 9m but could get a bit closer. Good holding. We stayed here during E30g38 and ENE25-35.

There is a track from Katherine Bay camp site to Abercrombie but the start is well disguised. Go ashore at the far right side of the long sandy beach (next to Nimaru) and then find the Onewhero stream. Walk back past the camp ground, along the large pohutakawa branch that heads north west and you will soon find the start of the track. It gets better as you climb. Near the top there is a T intersection. Turn left to go up to the lookout at the top. It takes 25min to the T and a further 5 minutes to the lookout. Spectacular views from way south, west to Little Barrier and north to the Mokes and down into Katherine. Similar to what you get from Mt Hobson but without the 1200 steps! You can also turn right at the intersection to go down to Karaka Bay. In this direction there is a stool seat about 4mins down with no view but excellent internet connection. Good cell phone from the lookout too but you have sun in your eyes. The track goes down towards the outdoor camp and dock at Karaka Bay. At the farm gate there is another track that goes down to Bar-b-que Bay.

Good kayaking at Katherine Bay.

If you feel like a long walk, destination Whangapoua on the other side, then start at the very end of the bay. It is very tidal so bring your dinghy, or kayak, way up. On the right side of the little village of Motairehe climb the steep road which then becomes Kawa Rd. Veer left into Mabeys Rd and arrive at the parking area. Go through the sand hills to the beach. Note where you come out as it is hard to find when you want to return after walking the beautiful beach. It took 1 hour and 25mins beach to beach plus 1.5hrs on the beach, so take a lot of water.

The shore across the bay from the mussel farm is worth exploring. The end tip, Ahuriri Pt has a hole in it so a fun kayak. There are big rocks and lots of sea weed so I am sure fishing and cray hunting would be good. I saw shark fins though. This beach and the next is all boulders but behind the boulder walls are fresh water streams and grassy areas for young to explore. I hesitate to give the position of where we anchored as it is day only- but the best we could find up this close to the point. 36\*06.001S and 175\*20.694E 11m. See above for a better spot further down about opposite to the fish farm in Nimaru.

 **Abercrombie Harbour**

* 1. **Nagel Cove** 36\* 08.494S and 175\* 19.218E 8m mid tide Vodafone 2, Spark 0

A useful anchorage in moderate north quadrant winds but in gale force NE the winds come down the valley and you get strong east gusts and uncomfortable sea.

Of interest is that in 1848 the 3 masted barqe, Stirlingshire, was launched in Nagel Cove which shows how extensive the kauri forests used to be on the Barrier. The farm is now owned by Chinese who are keen fishermen but not interested in the land. It is reverting to gorse and weeds but you can still climb to the top and check out ocean conditions. The track starts on the SW side by 4 pine trees and a small beach. When it branches take the left track towards the wind generator masts. The ridge track no longer is passable.

Nagel was very busy when we arrived so we anchored further along at what we call the Flying Fifteen anchorage. It has an upturned FF on pedestals. I have no idea what is behind this!

**1.3 Flying Fifteen anchorage** 36\* 08S and 175\* 19.66E 13m no Spark, good Vodafone

Do not swim anywhere at this end of Abercrombie from late afternoon as bronze whaler sharks inhabit the bay. Fisherman return and clean their catches so it is a good feeding time for all.

Good kayaking. (It took me about an hour to Karaka Bay)

**1.4 Karaka Bay**, 36\* 09.067S and 175\* 21.006E no cell phone coverage

There is an outdoor adventure camp here. Bush and farm tracks start to the left of the big corrugated iron building. Go up and over 2 gates and follow the signs from there to take you to Katherine Bay. Remember the tide range when you tie to the dock at the Orama Settlement wharf. See 1.1 for more detail of the walk.

**Fitzroy Harbour**

* + 1. **Fitzroy** 36\* 10.334S and 175\* 21.503E Vodafone 2, Spark 0 Fuel available at dock

We anchor away from the mooring area when it is busy and leave the dinghy at the dock. This anchorage is near Quoin Island. There is a bar/restaurant up the road from the shop that opens when they feel like it. Called The Yacht Club it is never open before 3pm.

Several must do walks in the area but DOC have infiltrated with their wood steps and walkway fetish.

*Old Ladies Track* – poorly named as it starts with an uphill climb up steps! Walk up the road from the shop, past the sometimes open restaurant and take the turn left to the tracks before the road turns right. This track can be as long or as short as you like. It is attractive as it skirts the river and is through lovely bush.

The *Redfern Loop track* has one of the best stands of bush in the area but really is no longer a loop as the half that used to go through farm land is now a gravelled road. Sadly the beautiful bush part has a lot of wooden steps and walkways but is still outstanding. The surprise at the top end is a kick. A swing bridge takes you to the top of a kauri tree! We get to the start by taking the dinghy across to the ARC dock opposite the Fitzroy dock. Tie at the back of this dock and walk up past the two lawns of the Glenfern motel and follow the signs. Views from the top are good. You can also access the track from the road about 0.5km up past the shop. Keep going past the Old Lady turn off. An easy walk which takes about an hour including time at the kauri tree. We go up the road and down through the valley as you appreciate the bush more. So when you start, go past the first sign post to Redfern walk and go up the road to the second sign which is at the end of the seal. Also take the short track to Sunset Point near the top as there are good views from there.

If there is no water at Fitzroy dock you can ask the motel manager if you can get some at their dock. This is run by Auckland Council.

The *Bridle track* to a waterfall starts across the road from the shop and is pleasant. You can also access it from the anchorage at Forrestry.

* + 1. **Forrestry Anchorage** 36\*10.394S and 175\* 21.576E 10m -and nothing much less than this.

We anchor here to dinghy to the dock. Beware of bird crap if you stay overnight, but it is a good NE wind anchorage. You can access the Fitzroy tracks from here. If you look towards Fitzroy you will see, about 80m to the right of the house on the water, a boat shed, rails, then 10m to the right is a small landing. Take the track up and go to Fitzroy via the road or the Bridle track on the other side of the road. It is very pretty and you can also divert from this track to the waterfall. And at the waterfall, about 20m from where you come out, you can take another track to Kaiaraara Rd

**1.7 Kaikoura Island** 36\*10.219S and 175\* 19.316E divides Abercrombie and Fitzroy Harbour/Man of War and has a variety of great walks. These are best accessed from Bradshaw Cove where you can leave the dinghy on the beach but you can land people at the Man O War side and at the dock. Bradshaw Cove has poor holding on a rubbly bottom so not good in gale force winds. A fish finder enables you to find a flat bottom. The track up from the grassy area immediately gives options just past the WW2 buildings. Man O War 3k, East track 6k, and west track 9k. Your first easy trip can be to the airfield at the top which goes up the old 4WD track. The airfield is 550m long, a good flat hard strip and it is used so stay to the side. At the northern end is a track to Mt Overlook which is 2hr return. On the other side of the road in the opposite direction from the airfield is a flat boring track which leads to the Ridge track. There is no track to Mitre peak.

The tracks on Kaikoura are wonderfully free of steps and my favourite is to take the west track, just to the right past the buildings. As you leave the scrub behind there is good bush and wonderful views west to Little Barrier, south down the coast, and into Abercrombie. About 20min up from the start divert to see the WW2 bunker. Further on the track is a lovely grotto. I make a loop out of this walk by taking the Ridge track at the turn off near the east end. This is a lovely flat track with surprisingly good vegetation. Then at the T intersection take the flat boring walk left towards the airfield and then back down the 4WD track to Bradshaw.

The ranger is Clint Stannard tel 021731340, web site [www.motukaikoura.org](http://www.motukaikoura.org/). Email motukaikoura@gmail.com. Donations to the Trust account are to ASB 12 3077 0580668 00.

**1.8 Kaiaraara Bay** 36\*11.03S and 175\*21.68E 10m L-2. Everything is quite deep. OK in moderate north quadrant winds but not great holding in gale and storm NE winds. There are a lot of muddy spots due the river on the left which is where the logs used to come down from the kauri damns. At the end of the bay on the right is Bush's Beach which is where you leave the dinghy for the walks but remember the big tides as you will be gone a while.

This huge bay has room for all and is where you will anchor to walk to the summit of Mt Hobson on the Kaiararra track. You will only do Hobson once as there has been an infestation of wooden steps and paths! Beautifully done but not as pleasant to walk on as soft soil. Especially when there is over 1000 of them, but the view from the top is fantastic and you can make a loop walk out of it if you have time and energy! Much of the historic parts of the trip have been destroyed by storms so there is not much left of the kauri damns. Walk to the Kaiaraara Hut, 30min, and go over the swing bridge. After 629 steps and several bridges you get to the Hobson/dam turn off. The dam lookout is 65 steps down to the explanatory board.

On the other side of the Bay is Blair Landing, just room for one dinghy and a kayak. You will see 2 posts that point to the landing as it is hard to see unless you are anchored deep into the bay. This is quite historic as Blair House was owned by the owner of the logging company. There is a lovely walk through the bush to Forrestry Rd and if you turn right and walk along the gravelled road about 20min there is a turn off to Kaiararra Hut.

Returning to Bushs Beach , after the 5 min up the hill there is a turn off to either Kaiarrara Hut or right to Kiwiriki. This latter track is good despite the number of up hill sections as there are not many steps and good views from the top. You see the entrance to Fitzroy, Smokehouse Bay, and out to Little Barrier and the Mokes. A good idea is to be dropped off at Kaiaraara and picked up at Kiwiriki or v.v. 1Hour 45min. There is a shallow river to cross so you will get wet feet. If you are walking in the reverse direction do not cross the river too early. Stay on the track until you see the marker and then cross.

There is a loop walk starting at the Kaiaraara hut. Veer right at the hut and walk up Forestry Rd about 30min and take Line W track on the right. It follows a pleasant ridge walk with a few glimpses of the bay and then drops down a precipitice clay drop – pole needed- to the Kiwiriki Track and then right to return to Bushs beach . About 2hr return.

Good fishing at the mussel farm.

* 1. **Kiwiriki Bay** 36\*12.149S and 175\*20.839E, 10m This is the little bay just to the south side of the entrance. We call it Obsession Cove. We were here in storm conditions as we dragged when further into the bay despite a Rocna anchor and 55m chain. The wind had changed from NE to SE. There are patches of soft mud throughout Kiwiriki even behind the twin islands but this is our choice of a good bay for shelter in high winds.

If you want to be further in the bay for easier access to the track then 36\*12.225S and 175\*21.216E 8m.

Or if you want an anchorage close to the river try the little cove on the left as you enter the bay. 36\*12.047S and 175\*21.203E, 10m H-2. Near high tide the river at the end is well worth a kayaking. Go past either side of the mangroves and head up the river. First it is bordered by grasses and then you are enveloped by bus and trees. Really beautiful. You can get a long way with a dinghy too but watch for branches in the water.

There are fewer flies and wasps in Kiwiriki than Kaiaraara. The DOC tracks start at the north side of the bay near the head. Hard to see unless you know where. From the high tide line look left and just west of the first little outcrop you will see a small landing if the tide is low. The you will see the DOC sign up under the trees. 15min up the track is the turn off, left to Kaiaraara or right up a challenging track to Forrestry Rd. This latter track is about 1.5hrs one way. You go across a river which even after a deluge was only calf height. You follow the river for a very pleasant walk but then it starts going vertical and a pole is needed.

Good internet in this bay.

**1.10 Smokehouse Bay** 36\* 12.188S and 175\* 19.975E

This is a very social and popular anchorage so these coordinates are a short way along the coast. There is good anchoring all around so don’t feel you have to immerse yourself in the mob. If you want to stretch your legs go up through the scraggy bush past the outhouse to the road. Turn left if you want to walk to the Barrier Gold honey place. Only manuka and kanuka to see on the walk so maybe a kayak would be nicer. Don’t forget to gather more firewood if you use some for heating the wash water.

**1.11 Red Cliffs/ Oneura Bay**

This bay is just west of Smokehouse and is a good anchorage in heavy weather. There is a track on the left side of the beach which goes to the road at the top but remember to take note of where the track meets the road for the return trip. Sharks are plentiful in the late afternoon.

**Southern Anchorages 2.1-2.3**

Please note that in the 2022/23 seasons the following three southern anchorages were closed for anchoring because of the Caulerpa pest seaweed. This was extended in the 23/24 season to include all the west coast anchorages. However, it is possible to get a permit to anchor there especially in an emergency. Email Biosecurity New Zealand on Caulerpa@mpi.govt.nz or phone MPI Biosecurity 0800 80 99 66. Complete the form which will be provided, which includes your boat name and approximately when you want to be at which anchorage. On leaving you must ensure you do not takeaway any weed, photograph your clean anchor and send photos back to Caulerpa@mpi.govt.nz.

Full information is at: [www.biosecurity.govt.nz/caulerpa](http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/caulerpa)

**2.1 Whangaparapara Harbour**

There is good walking from here. We usually anchor in what they call Graveyard Bay, tucked in on the left just inside the entrance. The walks start at the end of the Bay. Once you set off take the first uphill track on your left. It is short but has a wonderful selection of native trees before you get to the top. Then on your return to the bottom you can carry on and find all the other longer tracks. Fuel at dock.

**2.2 Tryphena Harbour**. Not much of interest here but you could get pushed here with winds on your trip across from the mainland. The harbour is full of buoys so it takes some skill when dropping your anchor. Fuel at the dock I am told.

**2.3** **Blind Bay.** Closed and only used for shelter anyway.

**4.1 Arid/Rakitu Island 36\* 7.1S and 175\*29.5E**

It is hard to get on the east side of Great Barrier in La Nina conditions. The swell from the east seems to be never ending. This anchorage is a small beautiful cove on Arid island to the east of the northern side of Great Barrier. No dogs ashore. It is DOC owned and there is a great walk to the other side through farm land. Interesting kayaking as there are craggy caves around the cove. Busy during school holidays and no good in north quadrant winds.

**Back to the Mainland.**

No need to give detail about Whangarei and Marsden as those there will know more than I do. This area is a boaties mecca and there is nothing it does not have. I was amazed at the developments surrounding Marsden Cove. In addition to nautical things and friendly marina staff (09 432 7740) there are now supporting facilities such as a supermarket, doctor, dentist, pharmacy, hairdresser, and the marine store rents cars. Tel 0275223766.This latter is very useful to get your final fix at McLeods Pizza Barn in Waipu! For prescription Meds contact the pharmacy at 09 7770012.

**6.1 Urquharts Bay/ Bream Head** 35\*50.845S and 174\* 31.788E, 4.7m half tide

Don’t rush by as there are a couple of good walks from here. A moderately easy loop walk to: gun emplacement, Busby’s Point, Smugglers Bay Beach view and back. Takes about 2 hours. Go ashore on right side and turn right at the track.

A more rigorous walk is to Lion Peak. When ashore turn left instead of right and shortly you will see a sign post to Smugglers Bay. Well travelled as that is a great beach for locals and visitors. After the beach it starts going up in rather nice bush and ferns. Over 1100 steps and a bit of a let down at the top but if you want more walking you can continue along the Te Whare track! An hour to the top but quicker on the return!

**6.2** **Taurikura Bay** 35\* 49.795 S and 174\*31.461E, 5.0m low tide

If Urquharts is busy this pretty bay is a good option for more walks. Follow the channel between the right side of the big sand bar and the land. The lowest depth, 3.9m on our trips, is around the wharf so take care there. Nice beach and walking access along the road to the Mt Manaia track. A busy road but footpath all the way. There is no need to go to the official start of the track as on the right side of road there is an early settlers memorial and you can start the track there. Be aware there are 1127 steps but the track is through lovely bush and the views of Whangarei Harbour are great. And there is a pub at the end and shortly after this a fish n chip shop plus café with 10 choices of ice cream flavours. (There is a private jetty on the left side of the bay past the island if you can be dropped off for the walk).

**6.3** **McLeods Bay** 35\*48.938E, 174\*29.848E 10.9m H-1

Going up the main channel after the entrance you can veer right to anchor in McLeods Bay. There is a small wharf for easy access to the tracks but be aware it is heavily used by fisherfolk. It takes 15 minutes to head up the hill to the shop and café. Follow the road back and then cut across the grassy area behind the hall to reach the main road. From the dock you can take the right hand Reotahi DOC track and after 20min at Tiller Park take the steps to Mt Aubrey summit track with good views. It comes down at Darch Pt at the old meat works. Take the road from the Darch Pt car park and then reverse course back along the Reotahi Track to the dock.

7.1 **Tutukaka** 35\*37.01E and 174\*32.13E, 4.5m half tide

Please note that you need to avoid Tutukaka in strong easterlies and heavy swells.

It is a good stop over and has 4 choices of eating and a pleasant walk to the Light ’house’. This walk is done at low tide plus or minus half tide as you cross an isthmus to the island where the light is situated. This walk starts up a track just behind the fishing club. At the top turn right along the road and this leads you to the start of the track when the road ends. Lovely views. 35min one way.

Take your dinghy to the marina, immediately turn right behind the break water and leave it at the dinghy dock. There is a pleasant café across from the marina. Avoid the Snapper Rock which is over priced and under whelming. There is a small supermarket around the corner which includes a post office.

**7.2 Wooleys Bay / Whale Bay 35\* 33.465S and 174\*29.809E 7.4m L+2**

 Good walking from here. A 1.5h loop takes you from main trail, left towards the view point. Just before this drop away to the right towards Manapouri. The beach is beautiful. Lots of lovely golden sand. Take about the middle steps up to the road and head for an ice cream at the shop. Basic essential as well as the 20 flavours of ice cream. Go back on main road and before it heads up the hill go right towards the beach then first left, Ringer Ave, to find a very poorly marked Te Aroroa track marker. After a time it splits and take the right fork to Ridge track to Whale Bay.

**8.1 Mimiwhangata** 35\* 25.862 and 174\* 25.107E 4.7m Vodafone 2-3, Spark 2

We sailed in the ebbing tide from Great Barrier and had a positive current pushing us into the Mokes. Fishing would be great based on the bird life and bait balls but we have a slow boat so pressed on.

The above anchorage is tucked in around the corner and is out of the swell that can come in. A short kayak ashore to the start of a couple of good walks over the farm land. The beach disappears at high tide so better to take a dinghy to the main land. The beautiful long beach is often surfy so we take the dinghy around past the little head land to the next bay where there is a DOC camping site. Just walk back the few minutes over the headland track to walk the beautiful beach. The oyster catchers are very protective of their young and will dive at you which is scary given their long red beaks. The lookout walk, 40m, is at the far end of the DOC beach.

If the swell gets too uncomfortable move to:

**8.2 Whangaruru** 35\* 21.332S and 174\* 20.527 6m Spark 4 Vodafone 5

There are dozens of anchoring options. This one is on the eastern side of the little island and is useful for quickly getting to Bland Bay. The other favourite is **Puriri Bay** as it has access to the two walks along the peninsula ridge. S35\*21.974 and E174\*21.372. 4.1m L +2. During summer there is a full recycling and general refuse facility at the DOC camp site. (It closes just after Waitangi weekend).

The end of the bay is a long isthmus and so you will be taking your dinghy to shore, to walk across to Bland Bay and the beautiful beach walk. Half tide to half tide going high. We go to the far right side with the dinghy and tie to a handy tree, just to the right of a small private slip. Walk about 50m back and take the walkway to the road. Cross over and take the track to the beach. You cannot walk through the camp ground, nor the maori land on the other side of the road. There is another entrance at the far end of the camp ground, sign posted as the CD station. The camp shop has a few basic food needs, like ice cream.

The Puriri Bay anchorage is great in strong easterlies. There are two walks of about 1.5hrs each, but they can be combined. Go ashore and walk up past the recycle centre and past the road gate a little way. There is a DOC sign about the track that takes you up the hill. An orange post then takes you into the bush and eventually you reach a T junction. I went right to the southern track that goes along the ridge and then down to Admiralty Bay and back along the road to Puriri. It has steps. The northern track is accessed further along the road from this track and is prettier, no steps and no views. Even at the ‘Lookout” which now has trees blocking it. If you are doing both at the same time then start at this track and do both in a clockwise direction. After lots of rain they are both boggy at the bottom. Access to SOTA peak NL-095

**8.2.1 Oakura Bay 35\*23.39S and 174\*21.170E, 6.8m low tide**

This is the bay at the entrance of Whangaruru Harbour. Not suitable in an easterly swell but a lovely long beach. A great walk to appreciate the best range of NZ seaside baches I have seen. All eclectically different. The old fish and chip shop remains – closed Mon/Tu, but dinghy landings need to be at far left of beach. Good kayaking.

**8.3 Whangamumu** 35\* 14.996S and 174\* 17.825E 5.8m no to poor Vodafone and Spark at edges but OK towards the middle.

This attractive historical anchorage is by the old whaling station, where you can walk up to the waterfall. The track over to the Bay of Islands is at the end of the bay. After the steep daunting trek up you are rewarded with a lovely view of the anchorage and then a bush walk to the Bay of Islands. Good fishing, and dolphins visit often. In 2023 the Cape Brett track was permanently closed due to kauri dieback disease. But you can get to it from the Bay of Islands side and Deep Cove as this avoids the kauri grove.

**8.4 Kauri Cliffs** 35\* 03.635S and 173\* 55.832E 4m no cell phone until you walk up the hill or go a mile out.

This is a truly beautiful cove. Our favourite but it is not often calm enough to stay here.

A very sandy beach and you can walk around it behind the rocks to get further along on the northern side. (Where there are a couple of comfortable private rocks for hair cutting)! You are surrounded by sand, trees of varying shades of green from Norfolk pines to poplars and other exotics, as well as pohutakawas, flaxes, and cabbage trees. There is a fresh water stream. You cannot see the resort due to the steep cliffs. A short walk up goes to a seat for a view of the anchorage but if you continue it just goes up, and up, and up ,…until finally you get to a big garage store room facility and a walkway to a kauri grove and the conifer grove and resort. This walk up the road is not recommended as the gravel is very sharp and ruins your sneaker soles. Interesting kayaking and good diving on both the reefs on the side.

**8.5 Opounui Cove** 35\*00.742S and 173\* 53.612 6m Vodafone 4 and Spark 1

A pretty short stop as good protection from NE-E winds. A steep gravel beach to private farm land. Another dotterel nesting sign but this seems to be a ploy to keep you away as we saw none here or at Kauri Cliffs. Lots of native trees. No walking.

**8.6 Mahinepua Bay** 34\* 59.920S and 173\* 51.133E 5.5m Vodafone 4, Spark 1

This is a long shallow bay and this anchorage is quite a way out. It is by the small motus which are good for kayaking interest. A popular anchorage but too busy for us.

**CHART NOTE : Cavalli Passage a 1:20,000 NZ5121 is useful.**

**8.7 Cavalli Islands, WAIITI Bay, Motukawanui Bay, 35\*00.447S and 173\*55.932E**

This is another favourite spot as the walk from one end of the island to the other is great. One of my favourites. DOC have ruined many walks by erecting wooden stairs and walkways which make them most unpleasant. This track, now maintained and free of gorse, is just a natural narrow dirt track with vistas on both sides of the island to enjoy. Rollers crashing on the rocks on one side and the northland coast on the other. This anchorage can get fairly crowed in the season but if the weather is settled the little islands to the north are worth a visit. Good kayaking and fishing. And a short trip to Whangaroa if the wind direction changes. This is an easily accessible SOTA peak.

**8.8 Whangaroa**

8.8.1 Water Buoy anchorage, Pararako Bay 35\* 01.175S and 173\* 48.115E no cell phone but move across the bay to 8.8.2

8.8.2 Opposite water buoy, Pararako Bay 5.1m 35\*01.406 and 173\* 45.335S Vodafone 2, Spark 3-4

8.8.3 Fishing Club 5.1m 35\* 02.852S and 173\* 44.482E S5 V2

8.8.4 Waitapu Bay 35\* 02.34S and 173\* 45.343E 5.8m

8.8.5 Duke’s Nose, Pekapeka Bay in Rere Bay 35\* 00.61S and 173\* 43.82E

Whangaroa Harbour has something for everyone. Except food supplies. No matter what the wind direction or strength you can find a good spot to anchor and there is plenty of room.

The **water buoy** is a god send. Go down the second bay on the left from the entrance and find it on the left side. For $10 you can fill your tanks and the water is good. Do not waste it for boat cleaning! Even with a watermaker it is good to be able to catch up on laundry.

There is a **fuel dock** prior to the Fishing Club. Prices are good. In fact the best in Northland. Strong winds will challenge your boat docking skills.

The Fishing Club has basic meals for a cook’s night off. The dinghy dock is beside it. Lovely to sit and have a cold beer with friends.

There is a much appreciated and well managed **refuse and recycle centre** beside the fishing club and blue bags can be purchased at the Club. $5. This is the only convenient refuse place so make good use of it.

Now the walks. Tie off at the dinghy dock at the fishing club and walk back along the road. You will see a sign on the right to St Pauls peak. This a SOTA peak. It does not take long, about 30min, and is worth it for the view down the harbour. Don’t be put off by the chain near the top. It is good practise for the Duke’s Walk!

My favourite walk is up the Duke’s Nose. Access is from the first bay on the right as you enter the harbour. Go right down to the end on the left and find a spot. Best to have someone deliver you as there is not much room for dinghies by the steps. This walk is not for the faint hearted as near the end there is a lengthy vertical climb up a pole. Straddle it and it is easier than it looks. Spectacular views from the level top out towards the ocean and over the harbour. This 40min climb is not to be missed.

**9. 1 Takerau Bay** 34\* 59.574S and 173\* 33.314E 8m Spark 1 Vodafone 0

This pretty bay is just south of the entrance to Mangonui. More of a day anchorage as the holding is not great and it can be swelly. Nice for a kayak and a walk ashore. No dogs allowed on the beach.

**10 Mangonui**

10.1 Butler Point 34\* 59.181S and 173\* 32.327 E 5m Spark 4, Vodafone 1-2

This spot happens to be on a buoy near Butler Point and we stayed through a sub tropical low bringing 55kts.

This is a fishing port and now a tourist centre. It is an attractive town to wander through with two main attractions for us - the well stocked 4 Square supermarket right on the water, and the fish and chips at the local pub. (NB. **Not** the more famous fish and chip place). For ladies there is a very nice dress shop, Antonetta’s, south along the waterfront road. A short time at the commercial dock is OK for the dinghy. The whaling museum at Butler Point is worth a visit, as is a walk through their grounds. The Mangonui Cruising Club has a gathering on Friday nights and welcome visiting cruisers to share their delicious meal options. You need to select your meal by text the day before.

It is interesting to watch the fishing boats loading with ice then returning with their catch. Many of the big fishing boats are away during the summer so if you contact the very obliging port captain, who runs a local motel, there maybe a buoy available for a short stay. Contact Steve on 021 02202009

**11. Matai Bay, Karikari Peninsula** 34\* 49.482S and 173\* 24.730E ref SpotX page 30

Another popular anchorage with a long sandy beach. Sadly for us the swell made it untenable so we will return when there is no La Nina. The Karikari Peninsula was difficult to explore during a La Nina year. Next year we hope to expand this section!

**12.1 Waipapa Bay, Karikari Peninsula** 34\* 47.713S and 173\* 23.718E 6.5m Vodafone 1, Spark 1

The cliffs heading up to Cape Karikari are spectacular. Orange sandy soil and sparse vegetation make the landscape very different from other parts of NZ.

We went around the top and tucked into the north eastern side between two rocky outcrops for protection from the swell. The rocky shoreline seems to be loaded with paua judging by the local maori harvesters. I think this is all maori land but you could not see the marai which probably is in a more sheltered spot inland. I went for a walk and there are many 4WD tracks but I never did find the light house.

We moved into the bay to escape the swell and anchored at :

**12.2** Maraewhiti. 34\* 48.928S and 173\* 23.245E.

 Not a place to leave the boat unattended if you get my meaning. We moved away from what looked like the area dump to a spot by the luxurious

**12.3** Carrington Estate Winery. 34\* 50.095S and 173\* 22.883E

**13.1 Tom Bowling Bay** 34\* 24.949S and 172\* 58.703E 12m no cell signal at all

By now you are probably wondering what on earth we are doing up this part of the world. We would not recommend going up this far unless you are on your way around the top to go down the west coast. Or you just want to mark it off the bucket list. Check the weather and the currents. The Navy tables are needed here as the currents are strong. You do not want to be driven onto the scenic de Surville cliffs. We stayed 3 days and never got ashore. 3m waves suit neither kayak nor dinghy!. But we were comfortable on board into the wind. And the trip up and back provided entertainment from dolphins and whales.

**14 Bay of Islands**

This area needs no introduction and is well known to cruisers who arrive here. We like Urupukapuka for the different walks and the attraction of the restaurant/bar where a cold beer and good meal are appreciated as a reward. Covid has negatively affected the meal quality but should improve for 2023/24.

Download the map from the DOC web site.

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/northland/places/urupukapuka-island-recreation-reserve/?tab-id=50578>

14.1 Paradise Bay, Urupukapuka 35\* 13.132S and 174\* 13.5 E

V 0-1, S4-5

14.2 Russel Yacht Club 35\* 16.411S and 174\* 07.570E V0-1, Spark 4

14.3 Orokawa Bay 35\* 15.261S and 174\* 11.998E

V1-2, S 4-5 a good place to shelter in miserable weather

The mooring field at the Russel Yacht Club is annoyingly long and large but after the long dinghy ride to the dock you have a pleasant walk to town for resupplies. There is no Uber service in Russel and only one taxi so keep that in mind if you are not a weight lifter. If you anchor at Russel township behind the buoys you can take your dinghy closer to the town side of the commercial dock for a short stay. A fine dining experience at the Duke of Marlborough Hotel is a must. There is an interesting gift shop with kiwiana and other items of high quality. The ferry service to Pahia is frequent if you need any banking or just want to wander around. There is a big supermarket in Pahia but a long walk unless a bus back to Opua has been organised.

**14.4 Pahia** 35\* 16.815S and 174\*5.893E (info provided by SV Aradonna) This anchorage is between Taylor Island and the submarine cable. Tour boats go to the north of this island. A very useful anchorage for a big reprovision at the Countdown supermarket. There is a dinghy dock behind the T of the main wharf.

**14.5 Deep Cove 35\*11.563S 174\*18.225E 14m, H-2**

A wonderful place to hide up in a gale. Takes 20m to walk up to the Cape Brett track. Turn left to Cape Brett which is a rewarding but longish walk, or right to the SOTA peak/DOC hut which takes an hour through scrubby terrain.

**15 Kawau Island ,**

**15.1** Bon Accord Harbour36\* 25.392S and 174\* 50.311E 5.8m V5 S5 wow, back in civilization

We normally anchor at Schoolhouse Bay which has the advantage of being close to the dock. There are a several great walks from this side. The only downside is that the ferries come in and out and cause a bit of a wake. This time we went further down Bon Accord Harbour.

Walk up the road from the Schoolhouse bay dock and try and find the track that leads off to the left and goes up along the stream. It is not marked but is before the road gets steeper and makes a right hand turn. This takes you off the road which is dusty in the summer time. When you get to the end of this track go left and take the turn off to the copper mine. If you started between the half tides going low you will be able to walk around the shore from the copper mine and go up another track. A loop walk is always more interesting. There are several walking options on the island. The Mansion House walk is pleasant too and sometimes the café is open for refreshments.

The Yacht Club has a good restaurant/bar so is a good place to meet at the end of the day. Basic food stuffs are available at the shop. Fuel and water are available from the easy access dock. Dinghys are best left at the RNZYC dock a little further on near the Lidgard House.

**15.2 Rabbit Island 36\*24.851S and 174\* 47.356E 10.5m H+3**

Just opposite Bon Accord and a good place to fish.

**16 Maharangi Harbour** 36\* 28.297S and 174\* 43. 474E 4.8m Vodafone 3, Spark 3-5

This is a huge protected harbour and many boats moor here for the winter. The above anchorage is well into the bay near Grant Island and reduces the dinghy distance to Warkworth which is 4.2nm up the river. This is a great trip but plan to go up with the tide and return with the ebb. And follow the buoys! NZ is in IALA A . The first red buoy is just past Grant Island. After the next red buoy ignore the green buoys around this area as they mark an oyster farm. You will then see a green triangle so hang a left and enjoy the scenery up the well marked river. There are mangroves, native bush, pine trees on the hills, an old cement works with boats on the hard, and nearing Warkworth you will see Robertson Boat Yard. At Warkworth there is a long area of dock so no trouble finding a place near the far end for your dinghy. Warkworth is an attractive town to walk around and apart from no Jaycar (there is a Noel Leeming) you will find anything you need. Cafes seem to specialize on pies so you will not go hungry. Restaurant reviews I think are written by family! There are two supermarkets but the gas station is a bit of a hike up to the main road if you need gasoline. There is a Hunting and Fishing and a good lingerie shop. A PaperPlus and several pharmacies also make Warkworth a great spot for stocking up easily. And the locals are friendly and helpful completing the needs for a very enjoyable place to visit.

Back in Maharangi we found several good walks. Check the tides, which can be up to 3m, before you leave your dinghy at the dock as it dries out at low tide. From the dock, cross the car park and head towards the bay entrance past the Scott House. You can walk around what is an island at low tide. If you go up the road about half a k from the car park you can take the track on the right. Go right at the top then drop left on a track that ends up at Scott House.

If instead of taking this track you stay on Ridge Rd you will eventually see a steep track going down to the bay at #59. You can go left to the car park or to the right.

Auckland Anniversary weekend at the end of January is a good time to visit this harbour as it hosts the largest regatta of classic boats in the country.

**17 Hauraki Gul**

**17.1 Motuihe Island 36\* 48.659S, 174\*56.28E 7m H-1**

A popular island with a lot of walks. We anchored away from the dock/beach area on this southern side as it gets very busy over holiday and weekend times. This anchorage is a short kayak to the barge ramp where you can walk up to access all the tracks. We had good holding in strong NE winds but were advised by SV Rangonui that holding on the northern side is poor. The DOC website shows all the tracks so chose whichever one you want. To cover the island go up from the ramp, turn right then left to arrive at Ocean Beach. Walk along to the NW end and go up past the Rangers House, past the “i” store to the grave stones. The flat area used to be the naval parade ground. Back down to the beach and up the track but turn left and follow track to Snapper, then Calypso Bay. You can go back via Bald Knob Trail but at lowish tide you can walk around the coast cliff to Ohinerau Bay and get to the other side of Bald Knob Track. Tke the western/sea side of Tieke Bush Track. This is the best track on the island for views, bird and bush life. It comes out on the main track/road not far from the left turn back to the barge ramp.

**17.2 Islington Bay, Rangitoto 36\*47.124S and 174\* 53.859E 6m H+2**

This was for the NE/E blow of 30-53Kts and with 40m chain we held well. Others did not! We moved into the centre of the bay for the strong west wind that followed.

**17.3 Hook Bay Waiheke Island 36\* 44.72S and 175\*10.4E 7.8m half tide**

This end of Waiheke is a good place to leave for Coromandel. A visit to **Stony Batter** is a must. Tours are on the half hour and well worth the entry to see in the over 2ks of underground tunnels the various WW2 activities that took place here. Ignore the signs of “No entry” along the beach fence. Cross the stile at the left side of the bay and follow the 4WD road up for about half an hour until you see the sign – left to Stony Batter. You will exit in a different place so return to the road, walk back about 200m Towards Hook Bay then take the DOC track to the left to visit gun emplacements 1& 2.

**17.4 Huse Bay Waiheke Island 36\*46.508S and 175\*10.886E 7m**

This bay is over the hill and is on the south side of Waiheke. Good in E to NE and N conditions. We tried Waiti but too much wrap around swell. And Man o War is too busy and Opopo too shallow. Kayak to the Opopo DOC track which is on the right/east side about 15m up from the shore. It is overgrown at the start as you go straight up but then joins a 4WD track as you swing along the top. Great views. There are very few markers so keep looking behind to know how to return. If you get lost near the top, walk back along the fence at the top to find the stile you crossed. There is a V in the track and you take the right side to return to the rubbly beach.

**18 The Coromandel**

**18.1 Woolshed Bay, 36\*47.33S 175\*27.147E, 5.5 H+1**

A good protected and popular bay to meet friends ashore. Privately owned by Spencer family so permission needed from manager at the far eastern end house if you want to walk.

**18.2 Oamaru Bay 36\*44.204S and 175\* 27 878E 7m H.**

Near a mussel farm for fishing.

**18.3 Ngahitaunu Bay 36\* 43.225S and 175\* 26.209E 5.1m H+2**

A really pretty series of small coves and lovely sand. You can walk around them all at low tide. The prettiest bay in the Coromandel and can fit a lot of boats. Good for swimming and kayaking. The cove furthest to the north just inside Hautapu Pt has a track up to the top of the hill. Not well travelled and you start in long grass and turn left at the concrete water tank. Close to shore has no cell phone coverage.

**18.4 Motuwi/Double Island 36\* 40.569S and 175\* 23.992E 8m L+2 behind the reef.** A very small anchorage as the wind comes through the gap and boats are every which way. We did not stay long but kayaking would be interesting.