

## About Cooks Cove Walkway

The walkway is suitable for medium levels of fitness as there is some hill climbing required. Good, comfortable walking shoes are recommended.

The use of this walkway has been made possible through the generous permission of the landowners, Hauiti Incorporation. Please respect the property, do not disturb or approach farm animals and leave gates as you find them.

Information panels along this walkway tell the story of Captain James Cook and the crew of the *Endeavour's* visit to Cook's Cove (Opoutama), the Māori history of local iwi Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, and the excavation of an archaeological site at Opoutama first occupied by Māori.

The panels were installed in December 2012 and are the result of a joint partnership between the Department of Conservation and Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti.

Blessing of the information panels at the entrance to Cook's Cove.



## Getting there

Cooks Cove Walkway is situated at the southern end of Tolaga Bay, 52 km north of Gisborne. On SH35 take the Wharf Road turnoff, 2 km south of Tolaga Bay township. There is a small car park adjacent to the walkway entrance. You can also park at the larger beach car park adjacent to the motor camp, 200 m beyond the entrance.



New Zealand Historic Places Trust memorial, commemorating Cook's visit.

### Please note:

- This walkway is closed each year for the lambing season from 1 August until the start of Labour Weekend (fourth Monday in October).
- The walkway may not be used to gain fishing access to Pourewa Island or to fishing grounds (fishing equipment and firearms are prohibited).
- Camping is not allowed.
- Do not light fires.
- Dogs are not allowed on the walkway.
- No mountain biking allowed on this walkway.

### Safety

 Please remain on the track at all times. The coastal bluffs are extremely steep and for safety reasons should not be approached.

To report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies:

**DOC HOTline**  
**0800 362 468**  
Report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies  
For Fire and Search and Rescue Call 111



All photos, unless otherwise credited, are copyright DOC.

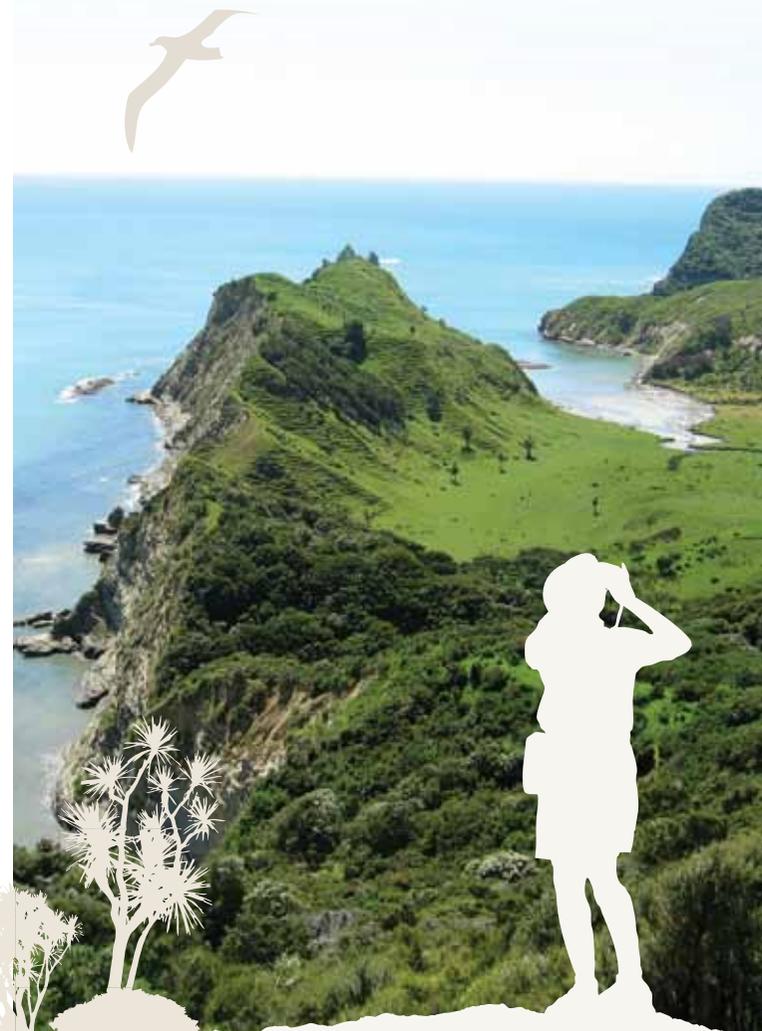
Published by:  
Department of Conservation  
Turanganui-a-Kiwa/Gisborne Office  
PO Box 668, Gisborne 4040  
New Zealand  
June 2014

Editing and design:  
Publishing Team, DOC National Office

[newzealand.govt.nz](http://newzealand.govt.nz)

# Cooks Cove Walkway

Tolaga Bay



Department of  
Conservation  
Te Papa Atawhai

## History

The walkway is named after the cove and the English sailor and explorer, Captain James Cook. He visited the area in 1769 as part of his circumnavigation of New Zealand.

### Local Māori

At that time the Tolaga Bay area had already been inhabited by Māori for many centuries. The main iwi (tribe) living at the bay and using Cook's Cove for fishing and gathering other seafood was Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, who made their homes around the rich, coastal land of Tolaga Bay and the alluvial flats of the Uawa and Mangaheia rivers.

There were large cultivations on the flats surrounding the low hills, and pā (fortified villages) on prominent ridges and high points, both inland and along the coast itself. An estimate of the early population of Tolaga Bay is 1,200 people, a significant number at that time.

### The Endeavour arrives in Cooks Cove – October 1769

When James Cook's vessel, the *Endeavour*, first approached Tolaga Bay, he had already spent two-and-a-half weeks exploring the New Zealand coastline. He reached Poverty Bay in early October 1769, after a journey of more than a year, from Plymouth Sound, England, via Tahiti.

Along with this crew (including able seamen, officers and gentlemen) he made a number of records of what he saw, providing us with an interesting picture of the past.

As the *Endeavour* anchored in Tolaga Bay, a number of canoes came alongside bringing the crew fish and kumara. There was a great deal of contact between the locals and the visitors while the ship was anchored in the bay.

### Observations of the culture and diversity of the landscape

One of the crew (Sydney Parkinson) described the country as 'agreeable beyond description' and Joseph Banks, the botanist on board, collected 20 new plant species, some of which the crew sampled.

The Tahitian high priest Tupaea, who travelled on board the *Endeavour*, spent time in discussions with local priests (tohunga) and appears to have made a deep impression as several places were named after him.

The crew of the *Endeavour* spent time at the place now known as Cook's Cove (Opoutama) where

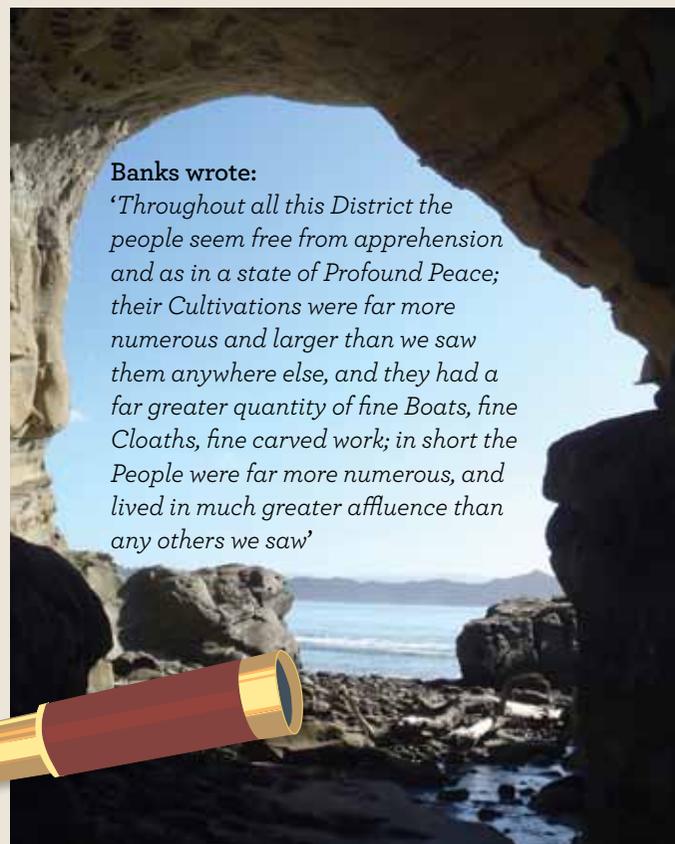
they dug a well to collect fresh water. They were also much taken with the Hole-in-the-Wall rock formation.

The visitors were received with warm and friendly support and the crew's overall impressions of the bay were extremely positive.

### Cook's departure

Cook weighed anchor and left Tolaga Bay in the early hours of the morning of Sunday 29 October 1769, after taking on supplies of wood, water and food.

The *Endeavour* visit was well remembered by the different hapū (sub-tribes) of Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, and there are various accounts describing the kinds of goods that the local people acquired from Cook and the effect that they had on the local economy.



#### Banks wrote:

*'Throughout all this District the people seem free from apprehension and as in a state of Profound Peace; their Cultivations were far more numerous and larger than we saw them anywhere else, and they had a far greater quantity of fine Boats, fine Cloaths, fine carved work; in short the People were far more numerous, and lived in much greater affluence than any others we saw'*



### Highlights:

- Make your way through the 'Hole in the Wall' (Te Kotere o te Whenua), a narrow coastal cliff ridge, with an impressive sea arch formed by the sea cutting its way through a narrow passage.
- Inspect the New Zealand Historic Places Trust 1966 memorial, commemorating Cook's visit.
- Use the interpretation panel shaped as a frame to take a photo.
- Grab a picnic lunch at the cove amongst the picturesque surroundings.

### Track guide

*Time: 2 hr 30 min (return)*

*Distance: 5.8 km (return)*

*Location:* Tolaga Bay, 52 km north of Gisborne

*Facilities:* Toilets are available near the wharf and the cove. There is no drinkable water on the walk; please bring your own.

Cross a small, open paddock to begin the Cooks Cove Walkway. The track then climbs through light bush and across open grassland, keeping mainly to a farm track just below the cliff tops. After about 20 minutes, you will reach a lookout point (120 m above sea level). This spot gives the first views of Cook's Cove itself. The cove consists of a sheltered inlet with the weather-beaten Mitre Rocks standing to the left of the entrance and Pourewa Island rising up on the right. The track winds down through regenerating bush, and after 200 m passes a small pond and then enters the coastal flats of the cove.

