



## Whangamata (Otahu River)

Route card No. 005 | Skill level: Beginner | Distance: 10 - 12 Km | Map no: BB36

**Start/ finish point:** Pohutakawa Crescent on Southern end of Whangamata  
**Coastguard:** Channel 84 (16 for emergencies)  
**Comms coverage:** Communication coverage is intermittent with VHF & phone

**Introduction:** Whangamata is one of those sleepy places that has a myriad of kayaking opportunities no matter what your ability. The town is in an excellent location, bounded by quiet estuaries, a Pacific Ocean surf beach and bush covered hills. Bush and beach exist side by side here so marine and land-based recreational opportunities are legendary. Discovering the Otahu River is just one of them: it's a great place to start and ideal for all, including families wanting a generally sheltered, flat water, scenic paddle.

**Description:** Drive to the southern end of Whangamata to Pohutakawa Crescent where there is parking & toilets. From here you can view out to the ocean and the mouth of the Otahu River. Carry your kayaks across the dunes to the sandy beach on the river side of the small estuary. From here it is a gentle launch on to the river. Initial cliffs and bush clad shores give way to flax lined banks. Head as far up the river as you wish although the further you head upstream the narrower it gets and the more flow there is. The river winds its way up towards the hills and alongside the highway. Once you feel you've seen enough turn round and head back downstream, ideally using an outgoing tide to aid you. There are a few areas you can stop for lunch but the banks further upstream can be very muddy and steep when the tide goes out so ensure you

have accessible provisions for a drink/snack on the water if necessary. On return, ensure you exit the river before the estuary mouth as here the tidal flow is stronger and more turbulent as the river meets the sea.

### Hazards:

- Other watercraft
- Tidal currents, especially at the river mouth.
- Muddy banks



**Please note;**

Every care has been taken to ensure the information contained in this Trip Card is correct at the time of publication, but things change and you will need to confirm the information provided. You will also need to get further information to ensure a safe trip, this will include an up to date, relevant weather forecast and the ability to understand its implications for the area and talking to locals in the area to garner new information on any hazards in the area. It is also expected that an appropriate level of knowledge, skills and equipment are required to safely complete the trip. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you are unsure of any information or you find the Trip Card needs updating. Cheers Peter Townend, Yakity Yak Kayak Club. Updated: December 2013



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