

# THOMSONS BUSH



**Thomsons Bush** is one of the few remnants of the kahikatea dominated swamp forest characteristic of central southern Southland. This vast forest was known as Taurakitewaru by the local Maori (prior to European settlement) who had strong spiritual ties to the native forest which helped sustain their physical and cultural needs.

**Location:**

584 and 574 Queens Drive  
83 Gimblett Street

# History

The earliest map prepared by JT Thomson in 1857 illustrates the extent of these forests, however within 20 years much of the forest had been cleared.

In July 1867 Governor Grey granted Thomas Watson, Thomas M McDonald and George M Williamson title to part of the land. The remaining lots of "Thomsons Bush" were granted to JT Thomson by the Governor in 1882. When Thomson died two years later his parcels of land were transferred to the surviving members and next of kin. By the early 1900s the Borough was becoming aware of the significance and value of the bush remnant.

In 1990 subsequent minor realignments of the Waihopai River near the reserve resulted in the layout and flood banks as we see them today.

Waihopai Walkway (extends along flood banks of Waihopai River) was officially opened in 2003. It provides good pedestrian access and links from the flood banks to the reserve.

## General use

Thomsons Bush offers an important recreational resource, providing opportunities for picnicking, walking, running and as an 'educational classroom', while management of the reserve still prioritises on retaining its indigenous vegetation of kahikatea, matai and ribbonwood.

The high ornithological values attributable to Thomsons Bush are also of importance to this reserve and are primarily related to the swamp/podocarp forest and backwater of the Waihopai River, providing a variety of habitats for native bush birds.

Entomologists consider Thomsons Bush to have both significant conservation and scientific values.

## Facilities

For more information on the walking track please see the Short Walks brochure for a plan and description.



Accessible toilets



Parking



Play equipment



Interpretation



Picnic facilities



Dog on lead



Remove any dog waste

Council appreciates that you take your rubbish with you.



Thomsons Bush is managed by  
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