

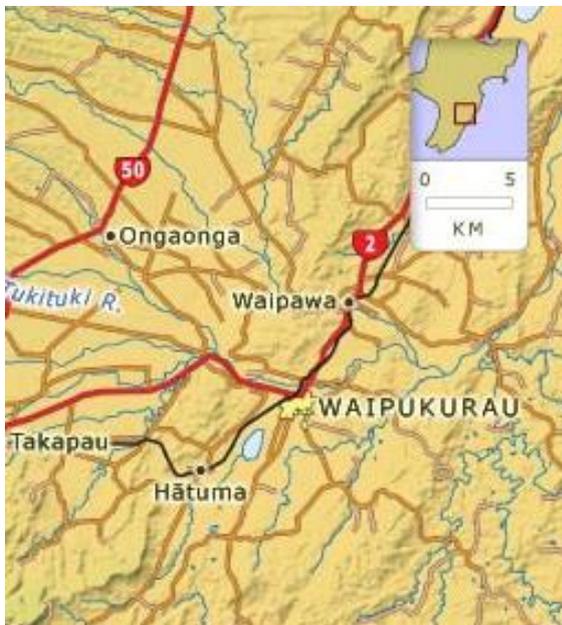
HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Lake Whatumā is a significant waterway for Heretaunga Tamatea. It lies at the heart of the spiritual and cultural wellbeing and identity.

The lake derives its name from its use as a plentiful source of kai and is a taonga of great significance. Throughout history, many hapū utilised the lake's resources.

The Lake was a significant mahinga kai. It was particularly known for eels, but also other freshwater fish, freshwater mussels, birds (including kereru), and raupo pollen. Its surrounds provided toitoi, patete, koareare. Around the lake was forest known as a source of kererū. The name of the lake is said to be a reference to the lake's first discoverers eating until they were fully satisfied.

Up until the 1940s the hapū located at Tapairu, Whatarākai, Mataweka and Takapau undertook regular food-gathering excursions to Lake Whatumā, particularly for tuna, kōkopu, kākahi and native birds. Continued drainage and the impact of surrounding land use meant that by the 1950s, the lake had degraded as a food source.



Lake Whatumā was a traditional area of residence to a permanent population and was utilised by a number of surrounding hapū who travelled to the lake to gather resources on a seasonal basis. There are numerous archaeological remains indicating there was a high population in the area. The remains of several fortified pā are still in the area.

The modern town of Waipukurau is named after a Māori pā (fortified village) of the same name, which was located on top of the hill by Racecourse Road.

With the arrival of European settlers the lake's name was shortened to Hatuma.

The lake itself went right up to where the Mitre10 store is now located along the Hatuma Half Marathon course on Takapau Road.

TVNZ's Waka Huia included an episode about it, click on the links here to view: [Part one](#) and [Part 2](#). For more information about the history of Waipukurau [click here](#)