



Lakes380

Our lakes' health
past, present, future
Me hoki whakamuri,
kia haere whakamua



LAKE NGATU

Region: Northland **Location:** Kaitaia **Coordinates:** 35° 2'7" S 173° 11'53" E **Depth:** 6.1 m

Lake Ngatu is a dune lake with no inlets or outlets. The lake catchment is primarily mānuka/kānuka scrub and fenced pasture. It is a popular recreational area, although the water quality has declined in recent years.

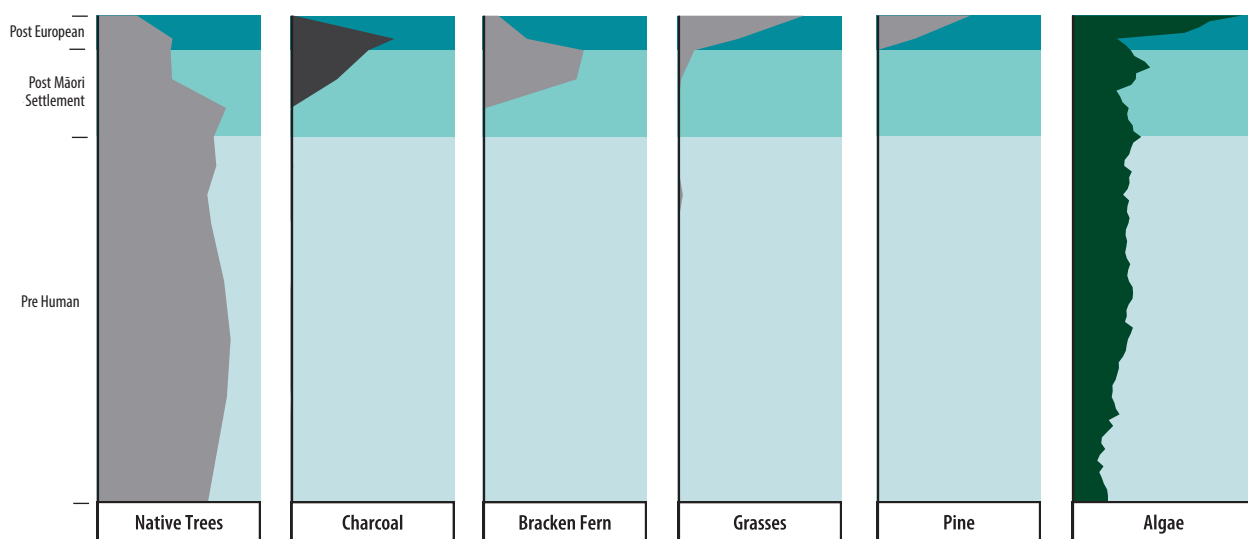
Initial results from the sediment core suggest that prior to human settlement Lake Ngatu was surrounded by native forest abundant in rimu, other tall podocarps and kauri.

Post Māori settlement some vegetation clearance began. This is highlighted in the graphic below by charcoal (fire) and an increase in bracken fern, often associated with landscape modification.

Post European settlement forest clearance continued. The native trees were replaced by grasses, and exotic trees such as pine were planted in the region.

Algae have always been present in the lake but there has been a sharp increase in levels in the last about 100 years.

POLLEN, CHARCOAL AND ALGAE LEVELS FOR THE PAST ~3000 YEARS



This graphic indicates the changes in abundance of plants, charcoal and algae through time.