

WAIPAPA TRACKS

Topo50 Map: BF34 Benneydale, BF35 Whakamaru

How to get to START: Exit Taupo northwards on SH1 and turn off at the top of Control Gates Hill left to Poihipi Road. The route is to follow Poihipi to the end, turn right on SH32 to Whakamaru then left on SH30 towards Mangakino then left again heading for Benneydale. At about one hour (70km) turn right into Ranginui Road, which is gravel, and go for about 1.5km then turn left into a car park area.

Rough Description: This is classified as a “fit” grade of tramp as it does take about 8 hours, is mainly on “routes” not tracks and the area has in the past suffered a great deal of windfall so there is endless clambering over trees – some of them absolute giants. Then there are several stream crossings thrown in to help keep the feet cool and the boots clean. But the saving grace is that this is all pretty well undisturbed forest with several awe-inspiring giant trees, amazing birdlife – many Kaka – and if one is careful and can follow the various coloured markers there is endless tramping to be done.

Tramp briefing



First stream crossing on log



Detail: The start of the trail (WP01520masl) is easy as it is a gravel road heading SW out of the carpark but within 200m the road is abandoned (WP02516masl) and the adventure starts with a tricky root infested descent down to cross a stream line using a fallen tree as a bridge. If features as such are expected then be prepared to be disappointed as most of the time and energy will be spent following the incipient trail which is marked with orange triangular markers. In fact there are so many different coloured markers it would be possible to get confused and lost – there are orange, pink, white, yellow and some of the silvery old venetian blind type markers. Basically most of the pink markers are on trap lines and they run N-S as this is an area with a lot of DoC input – there are all sorts of traps to be found / seen as well as a few “seed collectors” under some of the large trees. It has to be emphasised that the trail as shown on the attached map and detailed in the GPS records really should be strictly followed – ensure you know the bearing you are on and that compass skills are up to the job.

N...	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	1827355	5740709	520	Ranginui Carpark 1 hour drive from Taupo
02	1827211	5740592	516	200m (3min); Start of Track off road, steep down for log crossing of stream line
03	1826463	5740067	550	1.21km (33min); Last orange marker go to white
04	1826371	5739989	545	1.34km (38min); Ohahau Stream
05	1825563	5739594	566	2.31km (1:15min); Second stream
06	1824954	5739553	576	2.96km (1:24in); Creek
07	1824701	5739542	577	3.21km (1:45min); Third stream crossing
08	1823998	5739503	572	3.94km (1:54min); Creek
09	1823853	5739513	573	4.03km (2:05min); First swamp
10	1823771	5739513	576	4.25km (2:14min); Second swamp
11	1823617	5739512	578	4.41km (2:18min); Third swamp
12	1823569	5739517	579	4.46km (2:19min); Fourth and last swamp
13	1823190	5739509	610	4.86km (2:53min); SAR tracks crossing point
14	1822725	5739538	601	5.35km (3:10min); Kaka Road end, do not use road but head S
15	1822729	5739468	606	5.42km (3:12min); Orange flagging
16	1822698	5739376	600	5.43km (2:59min); Yellow Line
17	1822690	5739350	599	5:51km (3:14min); Orange flagging
18	1822618	5739262	604	5.64km (3:17min); Track enters from right
19	1822597	5739196	600	5.72km (3:17min); Orange flagging
20	1822572	5739158	600	5.75km (3:19min); Pink line crossing
21	1822565	5739141	608	5.71km (3:18min); Orange flagging
22	1822523	5739106	607	5.79km (3:20min); Orange flagging
23	1822469	5739084	608	5.87km (3:22min); Orange flagging
24	1822455	5739051	607	5.90km (3:24min); Start on track with yellow markers
25	1822578	5738802	605	6.29km (3:32min); Grassy valley / meadow
26	1822459	5738691	621	6.47km (3:37min); Access to Limestone Rd
27	1822907	5738256	613	7.24km (3:55min); Start of white markers
28	1823310	5738193	591	7.74km (4:07min); Cross-cutting strong animal track
29	1823366	5738100	580	7.87km (4:11min); Track at bend off right out to road for Pureora Lodge
30	1823995	5738240	589	8.67km (4:30min); Turn due S to Pureora Lodge track
31	1823995	5738091	543	8.83km (4:38min); Steep, huge steps down into valley, slippery
32	1823929	5737854	562	9.11km (5:07min); Pureora Lodge BBQ site for lunch stage 2
33	1824624	5738106	554	10.14km (5:23min); Lookout on Loop Track
34	1824705	5737990	556	10.31km (5:27min); Left off Loop Track to Waipapa south track junction
35	1825005	5738060	545	10.64km (5:34min); Sign warning hunters there are children about from Pureora Lodge
36	1825098	5738095	519	10.76km (5:39min); Stream and wet feet almost guaranteed
37	1826042	5738204	527	11.92km (6:16min); Creek to keep feet moist
38	1827586	5740321	527	15.28km (8:09min); Ranginui Road at sign for Waipapa Hunter's Access, go left
39	1827356	5740702	529	15.76km (8:18min); Back at carpark

NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

Tramp Location



Times/ distances are taken from Taupo Police Station

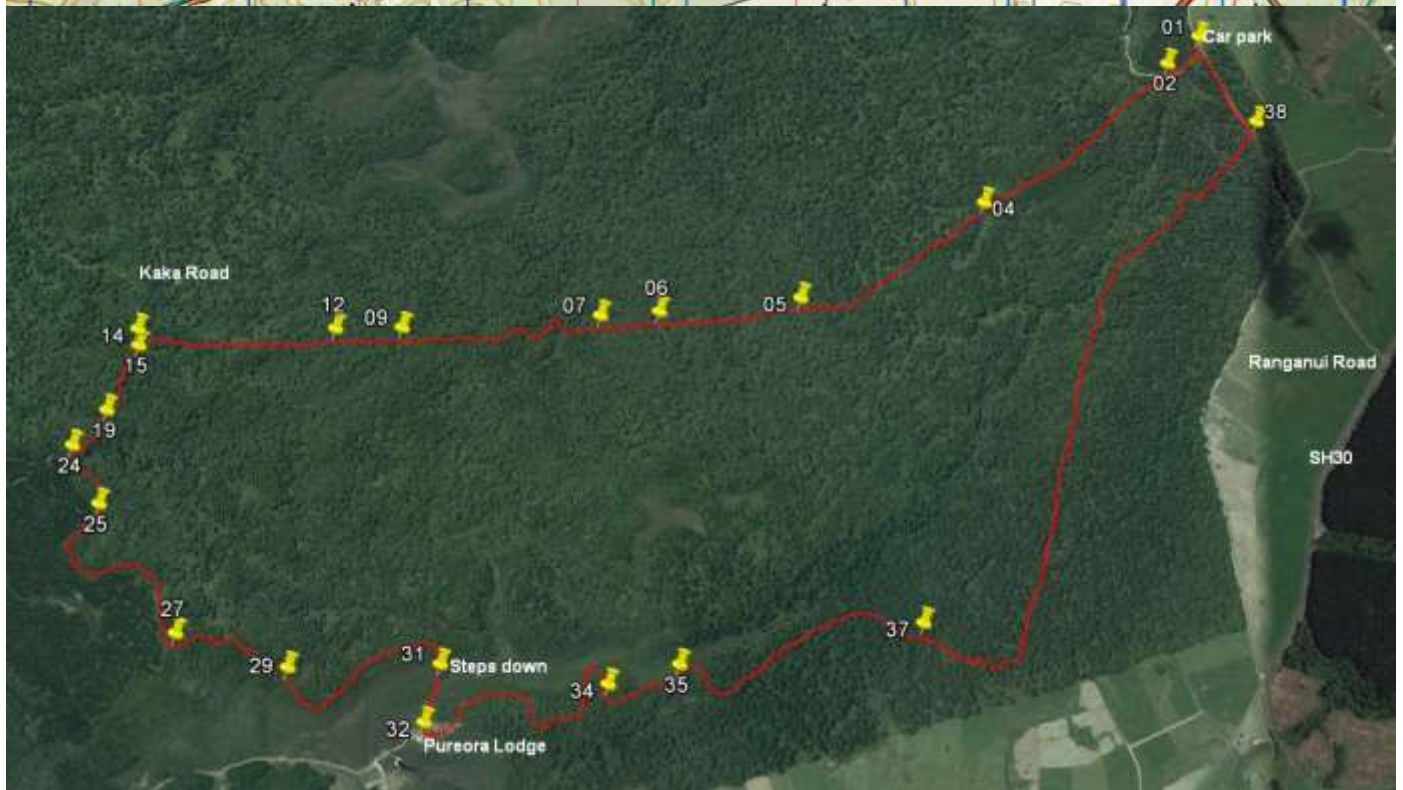
Track markers galore



Forest giant



Map and Google



Once off the road the route basically heads SW on a magnetic bearing of 214degrees for 1.93km crossing the Ohahau Stream (**WP04**^{545masl}) about halfway. There is then a long section of 2.8km on a bearing of 244 degrees magnetic passing through a few boggy areas and crossing more stream lines to emerge into the open at the end of Kaka Road (**WP14**^{601masl}). Contrary to all hope the road is not used but it is back into the forest for a tricky 0.6km on a bearing of 184magnetic following orange markings to arrive at a point where the track markers become yellow (**WP24**^{607masl}) and coniferous forest borders on the RHS as the route swings to the SE then to the SW at a grassy meadow (**WP25**^{605masl}). Access to Limestone Road is then passed (**WP26**^{621masl}) as direction swings from SW to SE then loops round to SSE and white markers are now followed (**WP27**^{613masl}). Soon after this there is a section of about 500m heading to the SE where a clear animal track crosses (**WP28**^{591masl}) and if an escape route is desired there is a junction with a track going off right (**WP29**^{580masl}) which leads to the road that goes to Pureora Lodge

Superb forest



Time for reflection



A couple of hundred metres after this junction the route swings back to the NE as it follows the edge of the drop to the Karamarama Stream and allows the odd glimpse of Pureora Lodge down in the valley below. There is then a sharp turn to the right (WP30589masl) as the track heads due south towards the lodge and a very steep flight of huge, slippery steps (WP31543masl) is descended to cross the stream which, for a change, is bridged. Then it is a bit of a scramble up to pop out into the open at the BBQ site at Pureora Lodge (WP32562masl). This makes an excellent stop for lunch, or possibly a second lunch, before tackling the way back to the start.

Warning for hunters



Sign at the exit point



There is one kilometre of easy walking after the lodge as the Loop Track, tourist standard, is followed passing a look-out (WP33554masl) on the way. However the really hard work of the day is just starting since the remaining 6 or 7 kilometres are badly infested with windfalls and some of these are really large trees requiring big efforts to get over them. If you have doubts in the mind then back-track to Pureora Lodge and walk out to the road from there after arranging that your transport will come round and pick you up – the access road into the lodge is gated!

The first 400metres is a straight line bearing on 50 degrees magnetic with an interesting old sign (WP35545masl) lying on the ground warning hunters that there could be children in the area (out of Pureora Lodge). From this sign it is steeply down to ensure wet feet if they have stayed dry until this time as the river crossing (WP36519masl) is deep enough to get over the top of the boots. The route then swings NE to SE with another opportunity for feet washing (WP37527masl). Finally the route swings on to a NNE bearing for 1.5km and the pretty hard work continues due to the windfalls, especially now as around 7 hours tramping will have been done. Finally when very close to the stream line on the left the direction changes slightly to follow a NE bearing and finally hits Ranginui Road (WP38527masl) at a sign showing that this is the access point for hunters 500metres from the starting carpark. It has to be said that there really are very few features of note on the latter sections apart from DoC seed collectors under some of the trees but there are ample markers to ensure an easy exit from the forest – track markers, ribbons etc.

Notes:

- **GPS:** (Garmin GPSMap 62sc
- **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
- **masl** = metres above sea level (as recorded by GPS units)

From : 31-Aug-16 08:37:20
To : 31-Aug-16 16:56:13

Time taken : 8:18:52
Total Distance : 15.758 Km
GPS distance 19.07km
Minimum Speed : 0.012 KPH
Maximum Speed : 5.618 KPH
Average Speed : 1.895 KPH

Minimum Altitude : 489 Meters
Maximum Altitude : 617 Meters
Total ascent 546metres