

KAWAKAWA BAY

260 Series Map: Kuratau T18

Topo50 Maps: BG35-Tihoi & BG36-Taupo

How to get to START: Exit Taupo Northwards on SH1 over the control gates bridge then left near the top of the hill to Pohihi Road

- left to Whangamata Road signposted to Kinloch
- left to Kinloch Road signposted to Kinloch
- follow signs to the lakefront
- park (**WP01**) on the domain opposite the shops near the public toilets close to the marina.

Rough description: A tramp that can be tackled in almost any weather conditions and that takes two hours each way. The track, which is shared with cyclists, is fairly good though it can be slippery in wet weather and there are a few slopes which take a bit of an effort and require care. Good views over Lake Taupo can be had and there is a DoC toilet on the shore edge when Kawakawa Bay is reached. The only other way to get to this bay is by boat.

Detail: From the car park (**WP01** 367masl) on the lakeshore walk north west along the wide grassy track which lies under some bluffs – there is a grassy area and houses above the bluffs. Within less than 10 minutes cross a low bridge (**WP02** 365masl) over the Whangamata Stream and follow the sign indicating the track.

The description below is based on the old track which has been largely upgraded and rerouted by early 2010. The track has been improved to become part of the bike track being built and expanded to encircle much of Lake Taupo. Study of the map indicates just where re-routing has happened and the profiles show that gradients have been eased. Many of the features described are now only accessible if the older parts of the track are followed – eg at WPs4, 5 and 7.

Start of the Kawakawa Bay Track (WP03)



In fact there is a choice at this point:

- As indicated above walk along the beach for about 5 minutes then turn off right when the track sign (**WP03** 363masl) for Kawakawa is seen. However, if the water level is too high
- On crossing the bridge turn right uphill on a newish track. When a low wall comes into view there is a branch in the track (**WP13** 372masl) – go left then right onto the grassy area. Walk along the grass between the houses and the bluffs on the left. The entrance (**WP12** 371masl) to a small track can be found in the lower left (SW) corner of the grassy area. This track links in to the Kawakawa Bay track.

The track now loops round above the bluffs in broad-leaf woodland then falls to cross a stream line on a newish bridge (**WP04** 362masl) just before a flight of very steep steps is ascended. The slopes are all quite easy for the next while then there is a sharp bend in the track (**WP05** 388masl) from where good views over Lake Taupo can be had.

Steep Stairs



Whilst at this corner take time to look at the huge drop down to the lake below but also look at the ground surface – it is covered in sand. When southerly winds blow sand is blown off the bluff face and deposited around here – also in your eyes on a bad day. Soon after this one of the uphill grunts of the day commences but there is some respite at about 50 minutes when the slope eases. The approximate halfway point has a peg (**WP07** 478masl) marking it with 3.1km on the Kinloch side and 2.7km on the Kawakawa Bay side.

The best viewpoint of the day is reached in under 1:30min (**WP08** 504masl) after a fairly long section of winding, undulating track which passes several well vegetated gullies on the left hand side.

View from the lookout (WP08)



Turn-off for Climbing Bluffs



This viewpoint makes a good refreshment stop, then it is downhill all the way with some fairly serious steps – these are bad news on the way back up. Once on the level a small T-junction (**WP09** 359masl) is marked with a pile of stones – going left for 5 minutes leads to the base of the bluffs where some serious rock-climbing is possible. Back on the main track it then takes only a couple of minutes to reach the lake edge where again good views can be obtained – there is a DoC toilet here (**WP11** 362masl). In summer time this is a busy spot with a fair number of boats and kayaks moored and picnics or lunches being consumed. Much of the last section of the track can be badly dug up by rooting wild pigs.

View of Bluffs and Lake



NZ Grid
NZTM

GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

GPS: NZTM on WGS84

Access & Location



The location of the tramp can be seen above as the **BLUE** line whilst the **RED** line is the road route to Kinloch

Map and Google Image with GPS Data

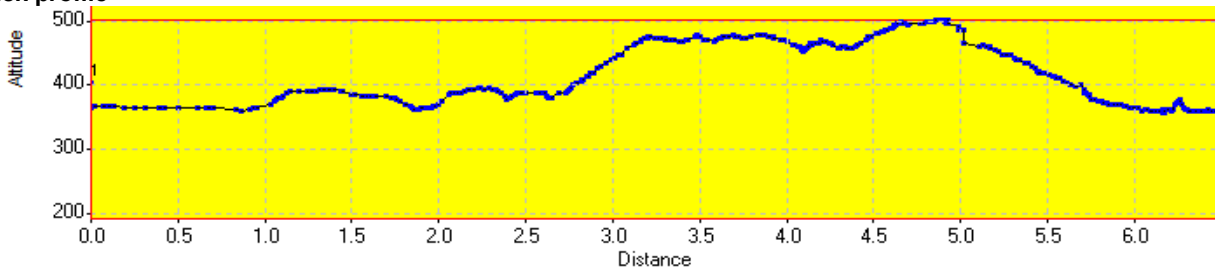


Track colour key: Red = old walking track now being superceded Blue = diversion over grass domain WPS 12 - 13
 Yellow = new walking and biking track upgrading in hand from 2009 onward with mapped sections as at April 2010

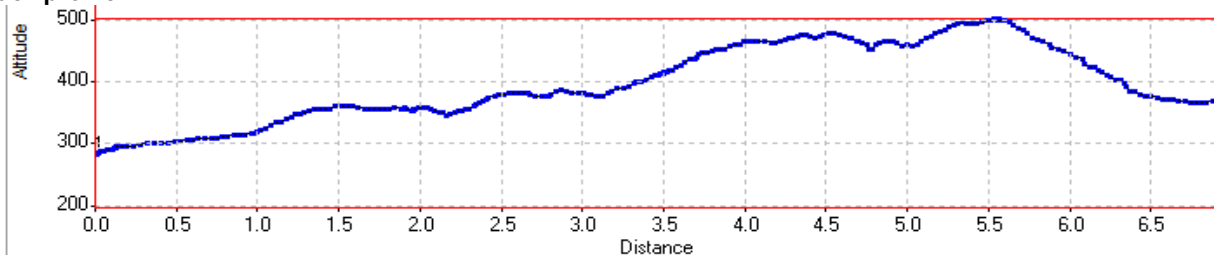


Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	1854015	5716287	367	Park on shore edge opposite shops in Kinloch and walk NW along shore path
02	1853510	5716705	365	8min: small bridge and Y-fork with path entering from upslope on right. Follow sign on to beach
03	1853284	5716835	363	12min: off beach to the right, through gate and uphill on Kawakawa Bay track
04	1852574	5716914	362	25min: new bridge over small stream then flight of steps
05	1852163	5716964	388	37min: bend in track with huge drop to lake on sandstone bluff - sand being blown up & deposited
06	1851575	5716831	475	51min: more or less level after long grunt up to the SW
07	1851434	5716681	478	58min: marker posts with 3.1k covered and 2.7k to go
08	1850429	5716547	504	1:25min: viewpoint rocks after undulating, winding track passing several vegetated gullies
09	1849780	5716176	359	2:05min: small T-junction with path off left to climbing area on bluffs
10	1849842	5716143	372	2:08min: base of the bluffs used for climbing
11	1849696	5716055	362	2:15min: DoC toilet on lake edge near picnic area. Track edge badly dug-up by wild pigs
12	1853315	5716839	371	Track entrance off grassy area above bluffs near new houses - beach bypass route
13	1853446	5716790	372	Y-fork in new track going north. Turn left on track past low wall to grassy area and go right (NW)

Old track profile



New track profile



Notes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPS Garmin GPSMap60 CSx on WGS84 and NZTM • WP = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit • masl = metres above sea level 	April 2010
		NZTM Grid