

## RUAPEHU Te HEUHEU

**260 Series Map:** Ohakune, S20

**Topo50 Map:** BJ34 Mnt Ruapehu

**How to get to START:** Exit Taupo on SH1 down the lake to Turangi where there is a choice:

### Option 1

- Follow the Desert Highway (SH1) and turn off right on to SH46 for Rangipo
- Meet SH47 at a T-junction and turn left then turn off SH47 on to SH48 signposted for Whakapapa and the Chateau, or

### Option 2

- In Turangi turn off SH1 on to SH41 on the right and then turn left off SH41 on to SH47. (This is the shorter route but the road can be slippery on frosty days)
- Turn off SH47 on to SH48 signposted for Whakapapa and the Chateau
- Continue up Bruce Road past the Chateau and park at the top near the Ski Village. Plenty of parking (**WP11629masl**) in the summer-time but little in the winter – of course ascending Ruapehu in winter is not really recommended.

**Rough description:** A fairly stiff tramp as there is an ascent of close to 900 metres from the Ski Lift at Knoll Ridge Café (**WP22009masl**). Parking is usually available overlooking Happy Valley. The chairlift is used to get up the first, frustrating few hundred metres as this is all pretty rough walking. The real ascent then starts 30 minutes up the Skyline Trail in line with the top of a ski tow. There is a whole range of terrain to cross from a rough track, loose sandy gravel, boulders and scoria, solid rock which can be fairly hard scrambling at times.

**Detail:** This is not a tramp to be undertaken lightly and, unless fairly high skill levels in alpine walking are held and if the plan is to do both Te Heuheu and Crater Lake in one, an early start and a fit party are both required. The trip up in the chairlift offers fantastic views if the weather is good, this little pleasure trip takes about half an hour and the cost covers up and down.

### Up on the ski lift



From above the Knoll Ridge Café (**WP22009masl**) head slightly to the left (W) and follow the rough road down into the valley where sign boards indicate the upwards route is called the Skyline Walk which is a poled route for quite some distance. This part parallels a ski tow and when the top tower of the tow (**WP32165masl**) is reached the route heads westwards and steeply upwards to get on to the Pinnacles Ridge. The soft gravelly area (**WP42257masl**) just above the uppermost Pinnacle makes a good morning tea stop – and allows a 5-10min jaunt on to the actual Pinnacle (**WP52262masl**).

### Start walking



There is a very clear beaten earth track up this amazing piece of geology but great care must be taken as it is possible to fall off!

The walk up the next part of the ridge is quite heavy going as it is through pretty soft, sandy gravel with the odd boulder but it is not quite like Ngauruhoe as the two steps up and one down does not happen. Everything changes a bit as a small reddish coloured, scoria bluff is arrived at (**WP62379mas**) and passed through.

### Really start ascending



Eventually the rim of the Summit Plateau (**WP72699masl**) is reached and the cairn on top of Te Heuheu (**WP82723masl**) only takes five minutes from here. To explore up in this area good visibility is a must and if the gods are being nice it is possible to walk round the Summit Plateau edge and get to Crater Lake then back down the mountain.

Returning directly from Te Heuheu takes less than two hours to get back to WP2 and the top of the chairlift – the Knoll Ridge Café also does mean coffees!

**NZ Grid GPS:** Geodetic Datum 1949

**NZTM GPS:** NZTM on WGS84

### Access



*The access route can be seen as the red line above whilst the tramp location is the blue line. The drive from Taupo to the car park takes about one and half hours..*

### Rough country



Above this mini bluff there is walking on boulders and rocks and a fair bit of scrambling – sometimes on and over the rocks and sometimes on the slightly looser material abutting the base of the rocky sections.

Sometimes the route – the poles have long disappeared – is on the left of the ridge, sometimes on the right and occasionally on the top and great care is needed. On the right (East side) of this there is often a snow and ice filled valley – looks like the lower reaches of a glacier.

### Looking down Pinnacles ridge



Nearing the crest



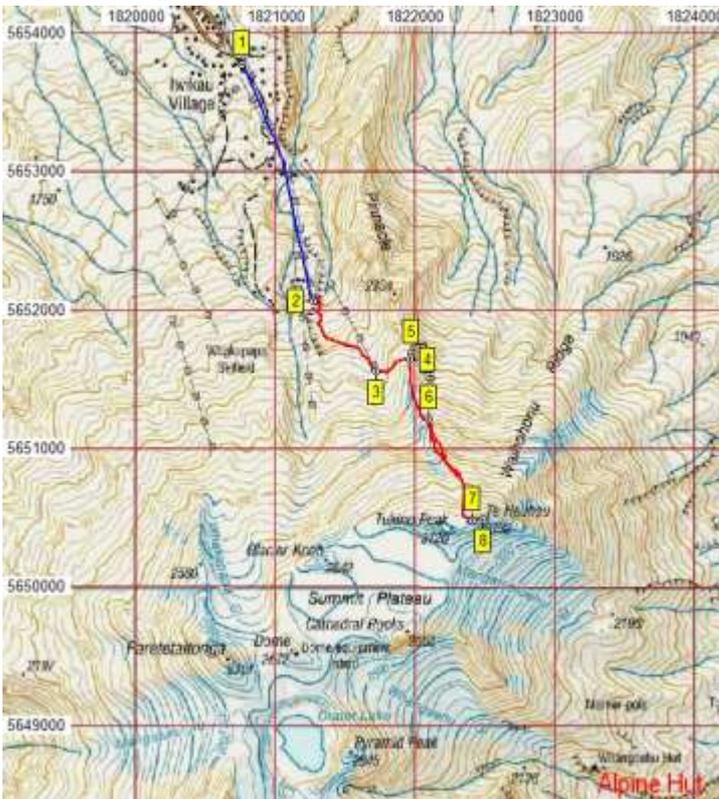
Hobbit on top of the world



The 2000m grass-hopper



Map and Google Image with GPS data

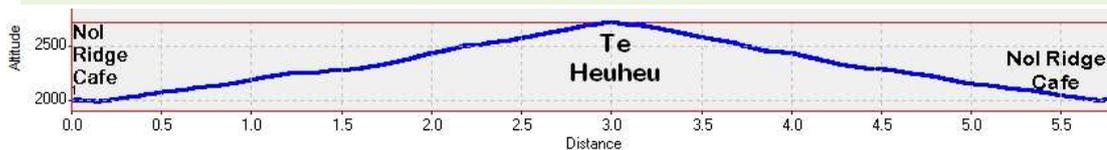


Waypoints - NZ Grid

| Na... | Easting | Northing | Alt(m) | Description  |
|-------|---------|----------|--------|--|
| 1     | 1820762 | 5653776  | 1629   | Car park area at top of Bruce Road   |
| 2     | 1821273 | 5652063  | 2009   | 20min (1.84km); Top ski lift station at Knoll Ridge Cafe and start walking     |
| 3     | 1821719 | 5651560  | 2165   | 31min (0.91km); Walking and at top end of ski tow above Knoll Cafe             |
| 4     | 1821964 | 5651644  | 2257   | 45min (1.23km); On the ridge above the highest Pinnacle                        |
| 5     | 1821973 | 5651688  | 2262   | 6min side trip of 100m to get on top of the highest Pinnacle on Pinnacle Ridge |
| 6     | 1822099 | 5651205  | 2379   | 1:23min (1.89km); Off loose gravels on to rock and up through small bluff      |
| 7     | 1822411 | 5650481  | 2699   | 2:41min (2.87km); On the ridge-crest overlooking Summit Plateau                |
| 8     | 1822495 | 5650486  | 2723   | 2:46min (2.99km); Te Heuheu peak   |

NZTM

| Easting | Northing |
|---------|----------|
| 2730845 | 6215632  |
| 2731354 | 6213920  |
| 2731800 | 6213416  |
| 2732045 | 6213500  |
| 2732054 | 6213545  |
| 2732180 | 6213062  |
| 2732491 | 6212338  |
| 2732575 | 6212343  |



From : 12-Mar-14 09:22:22  
 To : 12-Mar-14 14:30:44  
 Time taken : 4:58:21  
 Total Distance : 3.805 Km  
 Minimum Speed : 0.009 KPH  
 Maximum Speed : 4.540 KPH  
 Average Speed : 1.167 KPH  
 Minimum Altitude : 1996 Meters  
 Maximum Altitude : 2723 Meters  
 Overall score : 591 meters

|        |   |  |
|--------|---|--|
| Notes: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>GPS</b> Garmin GPSmap 60CSx</li> <li>• <b>WP</b> = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit</li> <li>• <b>masl</b> = metres above sea level</li> </ul> | <b>Distance and Altitude Data</b><br>Altitude range            1100 metres<br>Chairlift ascent            367 metres<br>Overall ascent walk        978 metres<br>Distance walked            5.81 km<br>Total time                    6 hours 45 minutes<br>Walking time                5 hours |
|--------|---|--|