HINEMAIAIA CAVE

Topo50 Map: BH36 Motutere

GPS: NZTM on WGS84

How to get to START: Exit Taupo on **SH5** for Napier

- In about 20 – 25 minutes turn right into Taharua Road
- Another 7– 8 minutes right into Clements Mill Road which quickly becomes gravel
- Around 10 minutes on this gravel, forest road pass Te Iringa car park on the left
- About 2km further on you come to a "White Bridge" – wooden and pale coloured
- Several other camp grounds and car parks are then passed
- 1 hour 20 min end of Clements Mill Road with toilet – park here (**WP01**)

Total driving time to the start is roughly 1:15 min to 1:20 min

Rough description: This is a short tramp distance-wise but it can take 5 – 6 hours since there is no marked track so keen eyes and rough walking abilities are required as are log walking skills since there are two log bridges to cross – there are wet feet alternatives. Careful study of the GPS trace (red line) will show the track was lost once or twice but was soon relocated. The entrance to the cave is more of a land bridge since daylight can be seen through it, on this visit little or no cave exploration was done so carry a torch if exploration is planned.

Detail: From the car park set off on the sign-posted Hinemaiaia (Cascade) Track which heads downslope to the S and immediately crosses a wooden bridge (**WP02**721masl) then swings round to head SE and downhill. In less than 10minutes head off left up along a bit of a bluff on a very basic track to the NE then swing round to more of a ENE bearing – this is along more or less the edge of a bluff with the stream line a long way below. Within half an hour whilst heading SE again the sounds of the cascades can be heard (**WP4**736masl) and soon the roaring white water can be seen – there are a few spots on the edge where good views are possible. The track is not clear to follow and there is a critical turn to the right downhill on soft loose material at around 50 minutes (**WP05**754masl). There is a second sharp bend (WP06750masl) ten minutes later which leads to the edge of the stream line, a tricky crossing on a log (**WP07**753masl). The log is easy to walk over but the problem is in getting off the bank and safely on to the log – it is worse on the way back and it can be safer to walk a few metres up-stream and across as then only the feet get wet.

Tricky log crossing

There is a second (**WP08**755masl) log crossing some twenty minutes later but this one is easy access and walking. To continue on the track turn immediately to the right on completing this second crossing but if a break is desired go straight ahead a few metres to the small clearing / campsite (**WP09**755masl) then backtrack S to relocate the track. The direction is now SSW but soon turns sharply to the left to go SE.

Second log crossing

Whilst heading to the SE the route soon passes quite close in below bluffs (**WP10**757masl) on the LHS. Apart from this there are not too many features to take note of apart from the fact that the stream line is closely approached two or three times with one of these being just after passing a tree carrying a fair amount of red-fungus (**WP11**758masl). A small side stream (**WP12**761masl) now joins from the LHS (N) and this is a bit incised and steep and getting over, or more correctly into, it can be tricky. A matter of metres up this stream line the entrance to the cave is revealed as a huge opening – in fact what is seen (**WP13**767masl) is more of a land-bridge as the stream line passes under the massive pumice bluff.
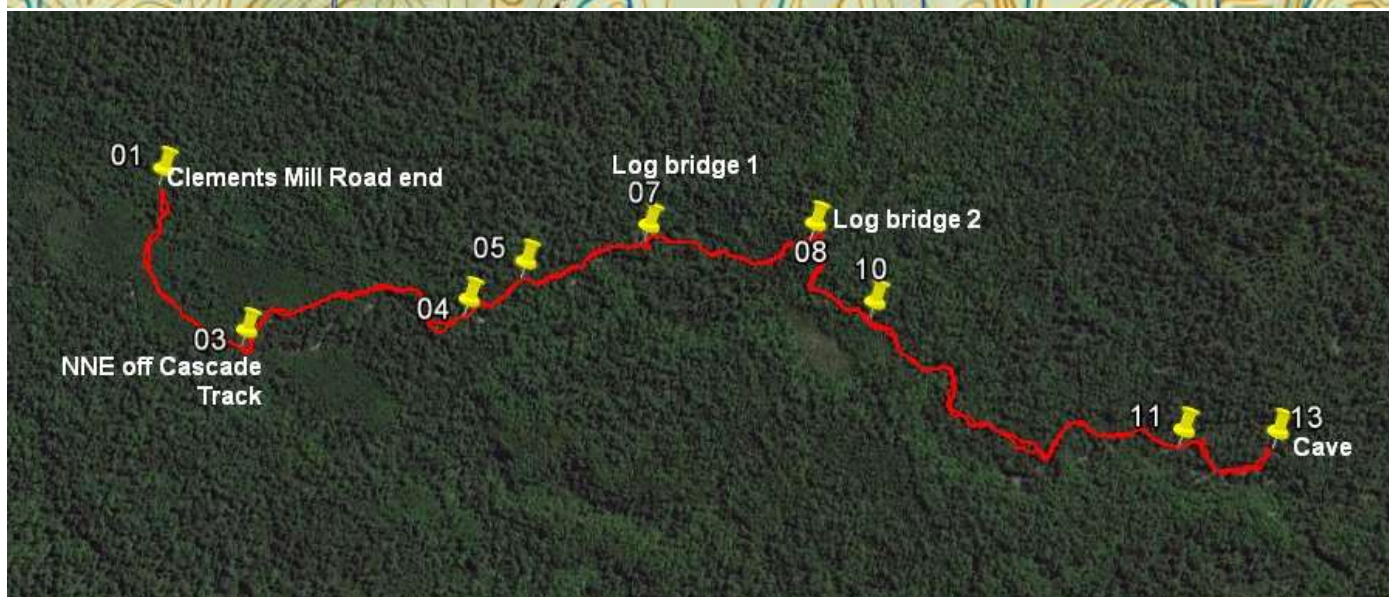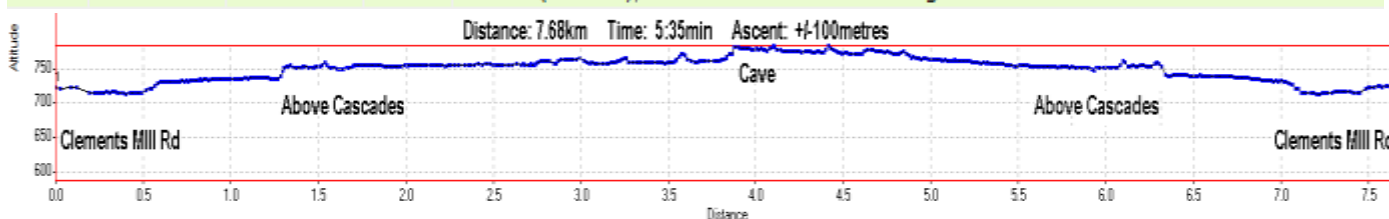
Cave entrance

Top entrance of stream line to cave

Birdlife is pretty good throughout this outing with robin being heard and seen, kaka being heard along with several other unidentified. The mapped distance shows that 7.7km were walked whilst the GPS measured distance was a fraction over 10km but there are no "taxing" ascents involved though over 200metres are ascended during the outing.

Clements Mill Road

Clements Roadend Campsite

930

986

Cascade Track

01 Clements Mill Road end

Log bridge 1
07

Log bridge 2
08

05

04

10

03
NNE off Cascade Track

11

13
Cave

N...	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	1872142	5679133	725	Park at end of Clements Mill Road
02	1872154	5679089	721	50m (1min); Wooden bridge
03	1872341	5678744	715	500m (9min); Up left off Cascade Track along bluff edge
04	1872862	5678796	736	1.17km (26min); Hear then see cascades down below to the right
05	1872996	5678879	754	1.36km (49min); Turn right downhill on loose, fairly steep track
06	1873264	5678952	750	1.66km (58min); Sharp right turn
07	1873285	5678953	753	1.69km (1:05min); Tricky log crossing of stream or wet feet crossing metres downstream
08	1873674	5678942	755	2.14km (1:23min); Second, easy log crossing. Straight for clearing or right for track
09	1873701	5678961	755	2.17km (1:40min); Small clearing for "smoko" or camping. Due S to get back on track
10	1873807	5678753	757	2.48km (1:47min); Close below bluff on LHS
11	1874503	5678430	758	3.13km (2:18min); Very close to river edge after tree with red fungus
12	1874692	5678392	761	3.79km (2:52min); Turn up incised side stream
13	1874717	5678419	767	3.83km (2:57min); Entrance to cave / land bridge

Distance: 7.68km   Time: 5:35min   Ascent: +/-100metres

Cave

Above Cascades

Above Cascades

Clements Mill Rd

Clements Mill Rd

Notes:	•	*GPS* Garmin GPSmap 62sc
	•	*WP* = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
	•	*masl* = metres above sea level