

TUPAPAKURUA FALLS

Topo50 Map: BH33 Retaruke & BH34 Raurimu

GPS: NZTM on WGS84

How to get to START:

- Exit Taupo southwards on **SH1** to Turangi
- In Turangi take **SH41** towards Tokaanu and turn left to **SH47**
- Pass the turn off to Whakapapa in 1:10min
- Turn right on to **SH4** at National Park in 1:17min
- Turn Left off **SH4** into Carroll Street, proceed to near the end
- Turn left into Station Road
- Park at NATIONAL PARK station (**01814masl**) in 1:20 – 1:30 min and 100km from Taupo – this offers fairly safe parking if required.

Rough description. This location offers alternatives:

- The Tupapakuria Falls and return to National Park in 4 – 5 hours – as described below
- Walk the length of Fisher Road down to Retaruke in about 4 – 5 hours
- Tupapakuria Falls then down the road to Retaruke in about 6 hours

Alternative 1 is a moderate out-and-back tramp of 13km to view a wonderful waterfall. With this target the walk is best done when it is or has been raining but this means the track will be slippery and tricky after the halfway point to the end since only the first section of track has been upgraded.

Alternative 2 is a much easier, if slightly longer, walk and is all on the paper road which starts as gravel near National Park as Fishers Road and becomes slippery and muddy in the middle sections and ends up as a superb “green” road on the approaches to Retaruke

Alternative 3 is for the hardened tramp as it includes the descent and slightly grunty re-ascent from the falls before continuing down the road to Retaruke. Distance wise this involves 18km plus about another 2km allowance for altitude gain and loss and requires around 6 hours.

For alternatives 2 and 3 someone has to move the transport round to Retaruke to pick up the trampers, the road route is given in description of those tramps.

Detail: As described above it takes a bit over an hour to cover the 100km from Taupo to the Station in National Park where there is safe parking plus the possibility of a hot meal or coffee and cakes if the out-and-back Alternative 1 is done. If desired the walk parallel to the railway can be avoided by getting dropped at the top of Fishers Road.

From the Railway Station car park head off North on the road which parallels the railway line for ten minutes then turn left to cross the railway, left again then right into Fishers Road where a signboard for Waimariri Scientific Reserve will be seen on the left. Fishers Road is gravel, quite rough in places with a loose surface, not maintained by Ruapehu Council and does get closed in wet weather.

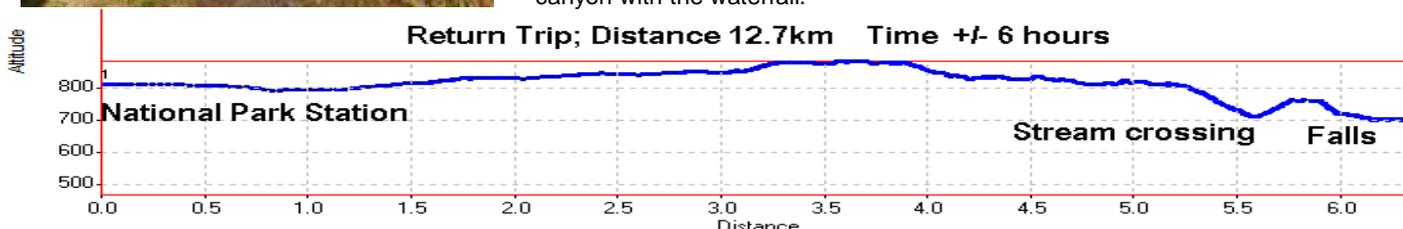
A short distance down Fishers Road there is a small track off to the right (**04818masl**) which leads to a wetland area and just after this there is a sign for Erua Forest (**05831masl**) on the right. In about 40 minutes from the station there is a small track off left (**06851masl**) uphill on an upgraded track sign-posted Tupapakuria Falls.

Start of upgraded track to Tupapakuria



The track offers easy walking, albeit slightly uphill, through lush forest basically heading S to SSW over undulating terrain. There is a change in direction to WNW just past the start of an old log skid (**07884masl**) on the left. One of the high points of the day, the Taranaki Lookout (**08881masl**), is reached in about 1 hour 10 minutes and can make a good morning tea / coffee stop whilst enjoying the views from the seats.

From here the track is not quite so good and a certain amount of care has to be exercised, especially in wet conditions, as the slopes can be slippery in this area of more mature forest with several impressive trees. Another relatively high point (**09810masl**) is reached in less than 2 hours where the sound of running water can be heard and a steep zig zagging descent starts. Fifteen minutes down into the valley there is a stream to cross (**10714masl**) and a small information notice before heading off to left and uphill; the aim now is to head round and get a view of the canyon with the waterfall.



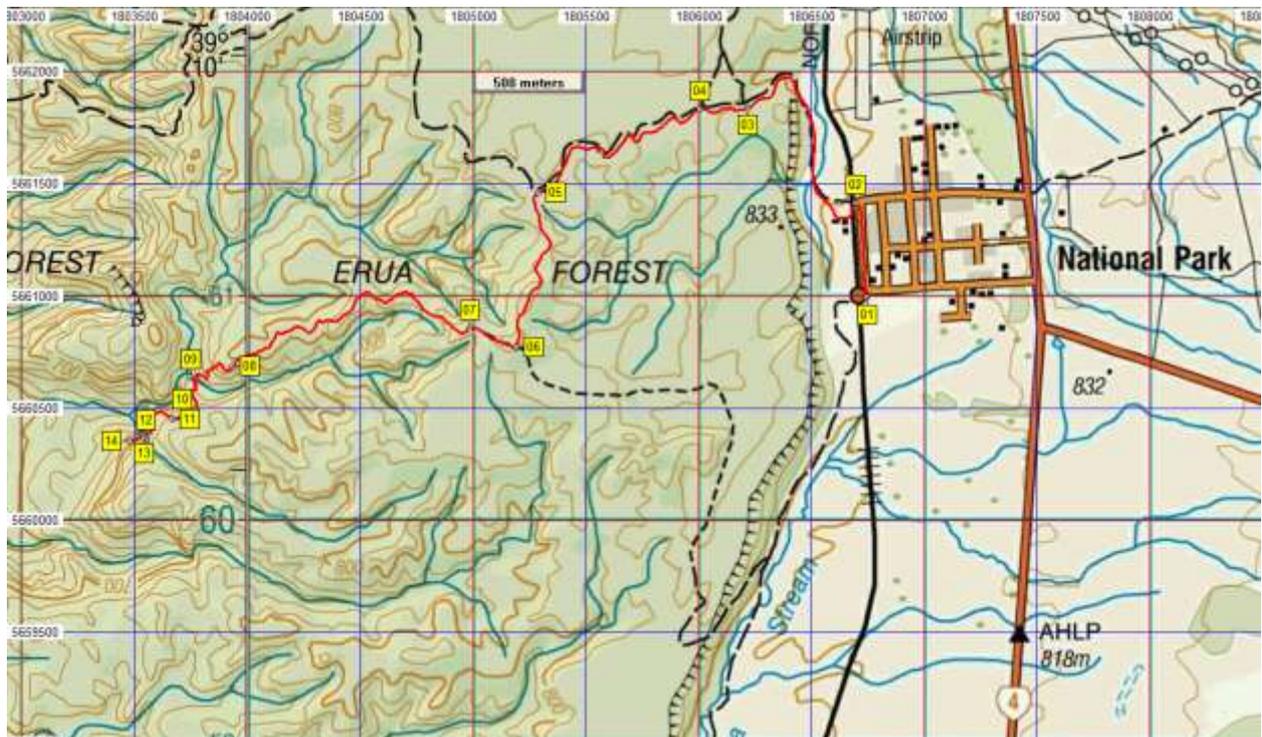
Fifteen minutes further on there is very thick, dense forest on quite strongly sloping (rolling) terrain (**11761masl**) and the waterfall can be heard; then there is a tricky, steep zig zagging descent. The less sure-footed find the next stream crossing (**12702masl**) slightly daunting; this is over a small, rocky gurgling stream but there are ample footholds though caution still has to be exercised. A short ascent from this stream-crossing brings you to a viewing platform (**13704masl**). After this it is well worth while spending 5 minutes continuing to the SW past an old bivouac site along to the snout (**14712masl**) of a narrow ridge where an even better view of the canyon and falls can be obtained as well as views to the west and south. From here it is about 1:15 minutes back to Fishers Road where the choice is right for National Park or left for Retaruke



The route is the red line on sheet BH34 above

National Park Station





Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
01	1806747	5660992	814	Car Park at National Park Station
02	1806696	5661417	810	15min (485m); walk due N, turn left over railway, left again then immediately right to Fisher Road
03	1806215	5661838	818	27min (1.57km); track off right on Fishers Road to wetland area (20mins)
04	1806004	5661837	831	30min (1.79km); renovated sign for Erua Forest
05	1805291	5661462	851	42min (2.80km); off left uphill (S) on upgraded track to Tupapakuria Falls
06	1805193	5660772	884	1:02min (3.62km); change to WNW direction with old "Log Skid" off on the LHS
07	1804986	5660859	881	1:07min (3.85km); Taranaki Lookout with views to the South and seats for a coffee break
08	1803936	5660690	810	1:50min (5.24km); high point above steep zig zag descent and the sound of running water
09	1803750	5660640	714	2:02min (5.57km); stream line crossing then left uphill to work round head of canyon
10	1803709	5660460	761	2:14min (5.76km); very thick forest in undulating area, hear waterfall then zig zags steeply down
11	1803669	5660451	753	2:18min (5.93km); T-junction with left branch being a new, less steep descent
12	1803550	5660366	702	2:30min (6.24km); steep descent and re-ascent with tricky crossing of small gurgling, stream line
13	1803539	5660374	704	2:32min (6.27km); view of Tupapakuria Falls and the canyon - good lunch spot
14	1803479	5660355	712	3:00min (6.36km); end of narrow ridge 5 mins beyond viewpoint with good all round views of area

- Notes**
- GPS Garmin GPSmap 60CSx
 - WP = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
 - masl = metres above sea level