

WHAKAPAPANUI TRACK

Topo50 Map: BJ34 Mnt Ruapehu & BH34 Raurimu

GPS: NZTM on WGS84

How to get to START:

Exit Taupo on SH 1 down the lake to Turangi then you have the choice:

- 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
- In Turangi turn right off SH1 on to SH41 and then turn left off SH41 on to SH47 and proceed as above.

Pass the Chateau on the left and then pass the entrance to Whakapapa Lodge, from where this walk was done. The track is on your right a few metres up the road from Whakapapa Lodge and the car park with the toilet.

Opposite **Track** is **RED** track start is **YELLOW**

Rough description: An easy 7km, 2 hour circular, or out and back, walk on a well formed track through Montane forest (beech / silver birch for the Europeans) basically following the Whakapapanui stream downstream from near the Chateau in Whakapapa Village.

Nothing spectacular on this track but nice secluded forest which is pretty wet in parts with a lot of lichens and moss on the trees plus some mistletoe, look for the anti-possum bands.

Detail: From the Bruce Road, as indicated above in the directions to the start, walk down the well-formed and sign-posted track. In 10 minutes you will come to a T-junction (**WP04**^{1125masl}), right takes you to the Whakapapanui Walk – going straight takes you to Golden and Silica Rapids. This early part of the walk is described in more detail in the Silica Rapids walk.

In 8 minutes walking you go downhill and cross Golden Rapids (**WP05**) just above an obvious stream confluence. In another 2 minutes there is a T-junction (**WP06**) where you turn left – going right gives another view of the rapids. A couple of minutes further on there is a bit of a fence on the right over which there is a view down to an overflow channel.

There is often quite a lot of birdlife in this area and you will notice that there must also be a lot of possum activity as many of the trees are banded to protect them – assume some of what is being protected is mistletoe but at the time of this walk this was not seen.

Yet another T-junction is reached in a total walking time of 20 minutes (**WP8**) with the right branch going down some steps where there is a seat from where you can watch the river flow past. Continuing down the left branch of the path a seat with views of Ngauruhoe is reached in a total of 40 minutes walking (**WP10**) then there is a wetter area with well-formed boardwalk through the bog.

In just under an hour you cross a bridge with good mountain views – Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu – and then you are back on to SH48. At this point you have a choice – go back the way you came or walk up the road, the latter is not recommended during busy times.

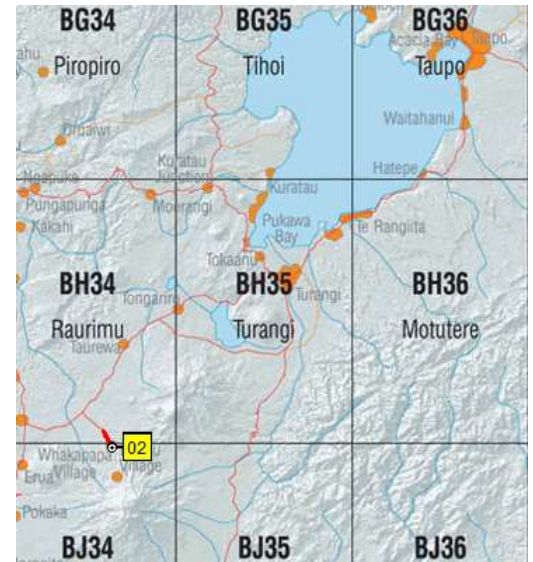
Although mistletoe was not seen it is assumed that trees with two wide metal bands round the trunk probably have mistletoe growing between the bands. There are bands above and below to stop possum reaching the mistletoe, or other protected plant, from the ground or via aerial routes through the surrounding trees. This form of protection is no longer used as it proved to look good but did little good since the possum could still get at the plants.

Near the end of the track there are some views of the mountains just before you reach State Highway 48 (just past **WP13**).

The options are to turn round and go back the way you came or walk up the highway past the golf course etc – but this does mean some little distance walking on the road with traffic, not a good idea but possible.

The track can easily be seen on the extract of the map shown. It should be noted that the walk described here does not meet the road (SH48) as marked in this map but actually rejoins the road nearer **WP13**; some track re-alignment has taken place.

Overall there is an altitude loss of around 150 metres from the start to the end point. This has to be regained on the return.



Heavy moss covering in thick forest

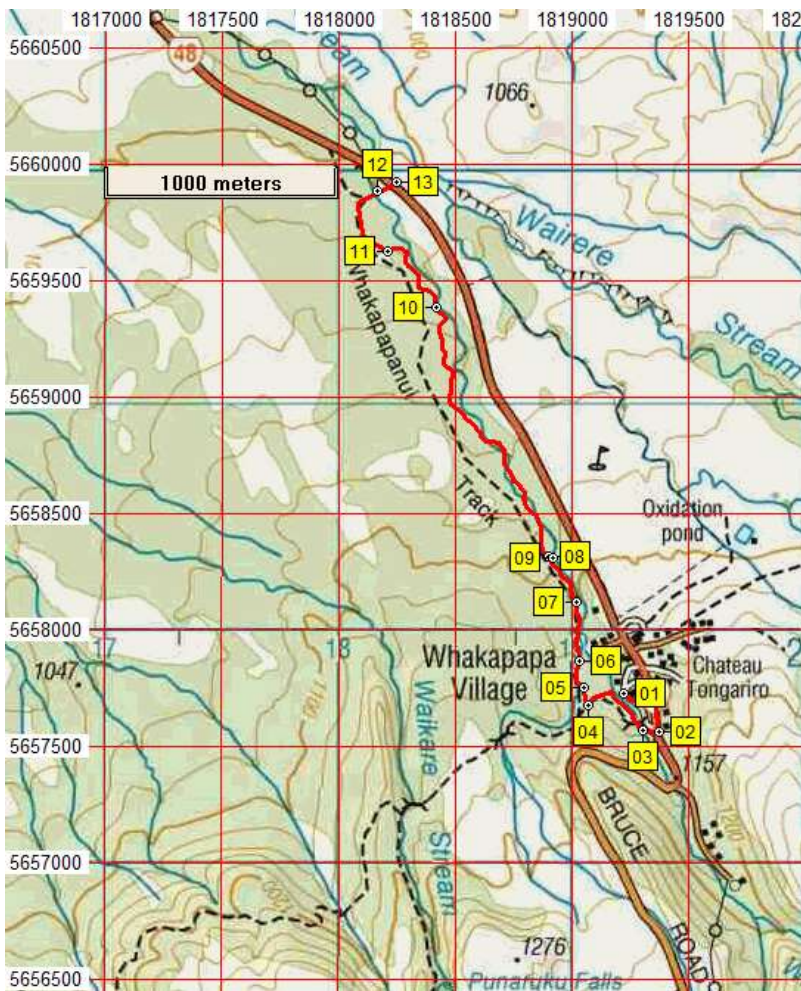


Banded trees

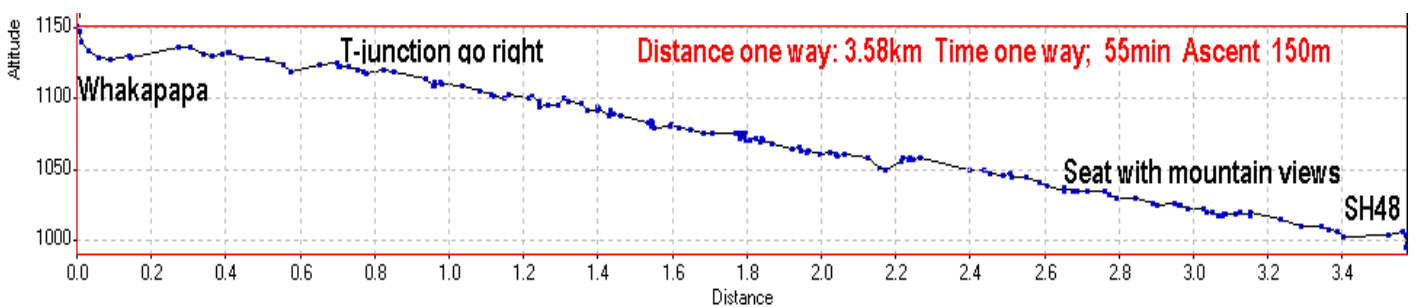


Ruapehu from near the end of the walk





Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
01	1819223	5657728	1147	Whakapapa Lodge camp - walk back out to the road and go right
02	1819373	5657564	1136	2min (275m); turn right onto walk from main road
03	1819303	5657570	1130	3min (338m); mid bridge, up steps then parallel to stream line
04	1819069	5657679	1125	7min (702m); T-junction, go right for Whakapanui track
05	1819050	5657750	1119	8min (770m); downhill & over Golden Rapids at confluence of streams
06	1819032	5657864	1117	10min (936m); T-junction, go left as right is for a view of rapids
07	1819018	5658118	1101	12min (1.16km); view over overflow channel above streamline
08	1818899	5658314	1093	20min (1.40km); T-junction with steps on right down to river + seat
09	1818920	5658307	1081	(1.41km); seat with views
10	1818419	5659386	1035	40min (2.71km); seat with mountain views, Ngauruhoe
11	1818207	5659629	1019	45min (3.09km); open area with boardwalk through bog
12	1818163	5659886	1002	54min (3.55km); bridge with good mountain views, Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu
13	1818248	5659923	1006	55min (3.58km); junction with Whakapapa Road below Chateau



Notes:

- **GPS** Garmin Summit
- **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
- **masl** = metres above sea level as recorded by GPS unit