

CENTRE of NORTH ISLAND, TITIRAUPENGA to YMCA HUT

Topo50 Map: BF35 Whakamaru

NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

How to get to START:

1. Exit Taupo on SH1 North
2. Near the top of the hill out of Taupo turn left into Poihipi Road
3. Follow the road out past the Wairakei Forest then turn left into Whangamata Road following the signs for Kinloch
4. Do NOT turn left at the next sign for Kinloch but go straight ahead
5. At the T-junction on SH32 (Western Bay Road) turn right and proceed for about 1.5 km
6. Turn left to Kakaho Road in 35 min and cross the bridge over the Huruhurumaku stream, then the road becomes gravel (37 min)

Pass signs for Kakoha Forest Park plus the campsite and the start of the Rimu Walk then go right at Y-fork. There are then a few side roads:

- 47 min the YMCA Hut is signed to the right – you can go this way
- 50 min Swamp Road is on the right, then in
- 53 min turn right to Waimano Road and go left off this to car park (TRP1 in Fig 3) at the sign for Centre of the North Island

The route can be traced on the maps with the route from Taupo passing close to Kinloch. This meets SH32 north-east of Tihoi and the gravel forest road then goes off left from SH32.

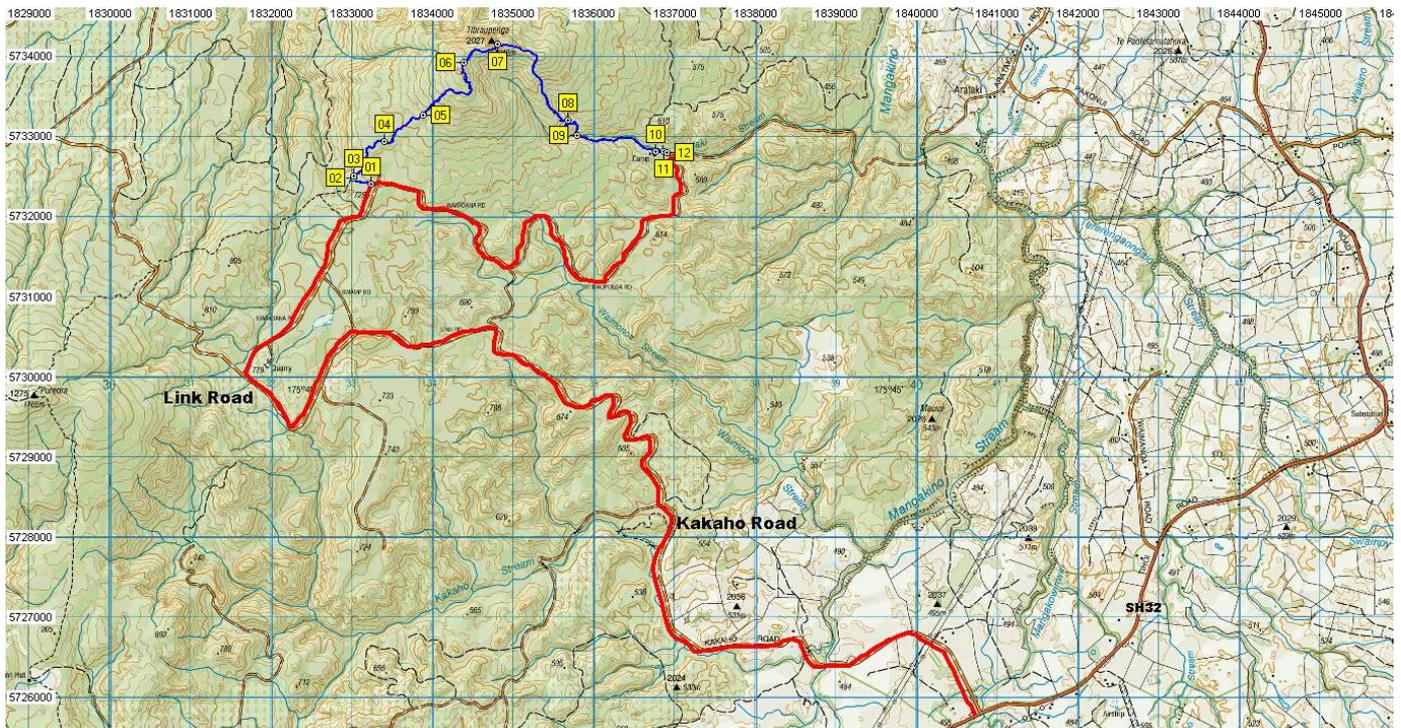
Times and distances from the Taupo Police Station on Tongariro Domain

It is slightly shorter on the return to turn north on SH32 then cut cross-country till Poihipi Road is met and follow this back to Taupo.

If the turn signed for the YMCA Hut is followed, proceed to a Y-fork and go left as this leads to the desired car park.

Rough description: An easy to moderate, muddy in places, slightly tricky tramp of 3:45 hours over 8km with altitude range of about 600metres with lots of roots and “anti-hobbit” sized steps. A way-marked path is used which passes the beacon for the Centre of the North Island, goes close to the top of Titiraupenga and then down to the YMCA Hut on Arataki Road all in the Pureora Forest. The tramp described can be made slightly more adventuresome if a care is not taken just before the final ascent close to Titiraupenga and about 2 minutes after WP7. The track turns hard left at one point and there are the vestiges of a track going straight on and then down a gully. This small adventure is not recommended as it is actually very steep in the gully and can be hard, tricky work getting back up to the top.

Forest road access route from SH32



The access route from SH32 is shown above. The trip from the police station on the Domain in Taupo to the car park (WP01) takes plus or minus one hour.

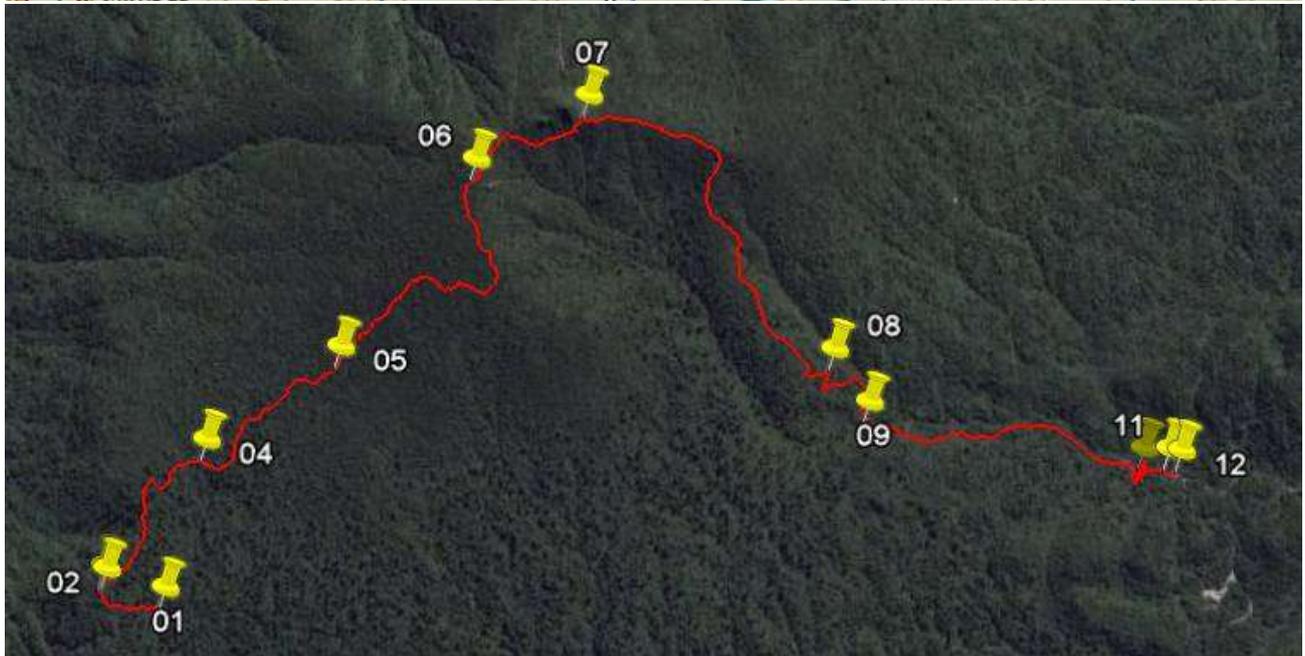
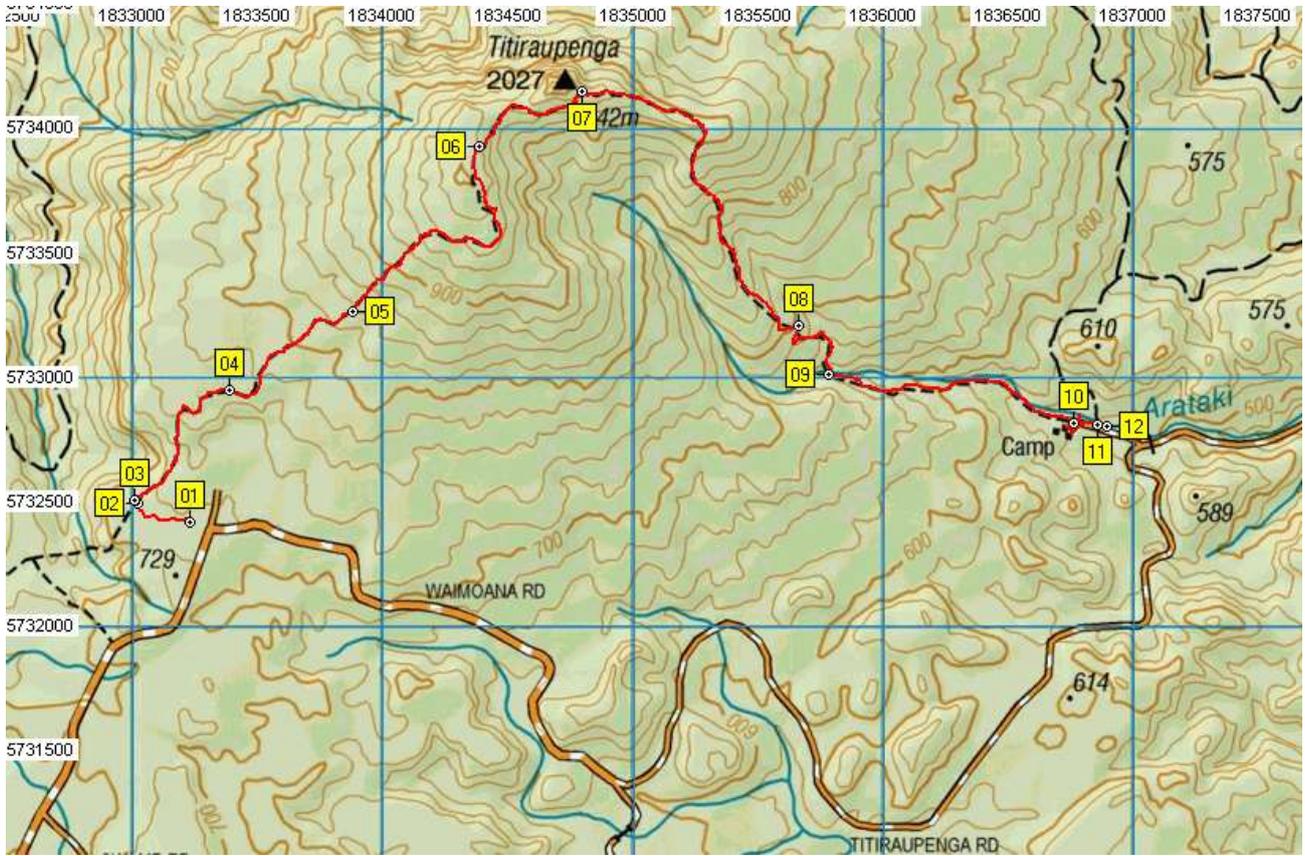
Care should be taken once on the forest roads as these are working areas and there can be traffic – some of it big and heavy. The road surface on the gravel road is good but caution needs to be used on wet or frosty days and the route is as mapped with the red line being the GPS trace imported on to the 1:50,000 topo map. The start and end waypoints of the walk are shown as WP01 and P12 with WP10 being the YMCA Hut



The walk is the RED line the BLUE is road access from Taupo

Track notice





Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
01	1833225	5732420	718	Car park with notice for Centre of North Island
02	1833016	5732495	723	7min (281m); T-junction with straight for CNI and left for Link Track
03	1833009	5732506	724	8min (312m); Beacon for Centre of North Island
04	1833385	5732946	766	23min (1.04km); Stream crossing in undulating to rolling forest
05	1833876	5733266	832	38min (1.77km); Stream line crossing then uphill
06	1834383	5733929	1003	1:19min (3.07km); Level minor crest (smoko) then downhill section
07	1834795	5734148	991	1:55min (3.07km); T-junction with private access to Titiraupenga off left
08	1835657	5733205	704	2:45min (5.38km); Wooden seat on RHS after long descent using degraded steps
09	1835777	5733012	641	2:55min (5.82km); Minor stream crossing
10	1836760	5732816	549	3:21min (6.94km); YMCA Hut (lunch)
11	1836852	5732811	525	3:44min (8.17km); Locked gate just below YMCA Hut
12	1836894	5732804	522	3:48min (8.22km); Car park metres beyond locked gate



On the access route map, **SH32**, Western Bays Road, is marked and the forest access road (Link Road) is shown in red from the junction with the highway. The label (**TRP1**) is the starting car park, if at all possible a driver should then move the vehicle to TRP9 to meet the trampers as they exit from the YMCA Hut – otherwise it is a long walk back along the forest road. On the way back the forest road is again followed out from **WP12** back towards the starting point but turn left at the first junction – this leads to Link Road which goes to SH32 by turning left. A variant is then used by going north on SH32 then turning right on to Marotiri Road, follow this to meet Poihipi Road; then use Poihipi Road all the way back to SH1 and Taupo. The difference in distance is only one kilometre but does avoid using the same road out and in.

Detail: From the car park (**WP01**, 718 masl) the track is very obvious, well marked and before getting into your stride you are at the concrete beacon with plaque marking the centre of the North Island (**WP03** 723masl) one minute after passing a T-junction to the Link Track (**WP02**). The well marked track is now in mature, thick forest and within 20 minutes there is a small stream to cross (**WP04** 766masl) in this undulating to rolling area. Height is gradually gained but there is nothing steep at all and another small, usually dry, stream line is crossed 15 minutes later (**WP05** 832masl). After this slope does increase a bit and within a total time of about 1:15minutes a minor flat top crest is reached (**WP06** 1003masl) – this makes a good refreshment stop before heading off downhill for a bit

For almost the first two hours there are no views apart from the very impressive forest through which you are walking – there are some huge native species and very impressive coatings of mosses on the trees – indicating just how damp and wet this area is. The first glimpse of open sky, or the inside of the clouds, comes at an area with a minor landslip minutes before you come to a notice board and signpost (**WP07** 991masl) at a T-junction. If you go left here you set off on the ascent of Titiraupeunga but this track was not explored on this outing and the notice does indicate Private Land.

Follow the track to Arataki Road and YMCA but if, in a matter of minutes, you find yourself going down rather steeply stop and consider! Are there any fluorescent track markers? If not, you have gone off track – as many others have done by the state of wear in this little gully area – and you must turn back upslope. When you re-ascend look carefully and you will find the track winding quite steeply upwards round the edge of a rock outcrop. When this walk was done there were no-easy-to-see track markers indicating this turn off. Be warned as the gully can be very slippery and is steep, few people seem to know if straight ahead actually goes anywhere

Mossy forest



Notice board near crest



Confirmation of location of YMCA



Once on track, with markers, there is a bit of a rocky scramble to get to a minor crest in minutes and, if it is clear, there is a very good view of Titiraupeunga. After this it is back into the forest and an unrelenting, never-ending descent continues until a wooden seat is found on the right (**WP08** 704masl) at about 2:40 minutes. Soon after this you pop out into the clear to cross a stream line (**WP09** 641 masl) followed by pretty easy walking for another 20 minutes or so as you walk more or less parallel to the stream and it can be heard gushing and gurgling away a lot of the time.

It should be noted that the route walked on the descent does not follow the mapped path and the GPS trace is shown on the map presented. The YMCA Hut (**WP10** 549masl) offers a good place for lunch, assuming it is not occupied, as there are tables and benches behind the hut. From here it is a matter of a minute or so to walk out past the locked gate (**WP11** 525masl) to, hopefully, find your transport waiting (**WP12** 522masl) – if not it is quite a long trail back along the forest road to the starting car park.

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

Updated June 2019