

VERNS CAMP or CLEARING and Waterfall Loop Track

Topo50 Map: BG38 Wairapukao

GPS: NZTM on WGS84

How to get to START:

1. Exit Taupo on SH1 North either through town or via the ETA
2. 10 minutes pick up SH5 at Wairakei and head for Rotorua
3. 1 hour turn right on to SH38 as soon as Rainbow Mountain is passed
4. 1:10 min pass through Murupara
5. 1:30 min pass through Te Whaiti
6. 1:33 min right into Minginui Road
7. 1:40 min bear right to Forest Park
8. 1:41 min right again on unsealed road
9. 1:45 min left to River Road then left again
10. 1:55 min cross bridge
11. 2 hours River Road car-park / track end waypoint **WP01**

Times from the Taupo Police Station on Tongariro Domain

Rough description: An easy to moderate tramp that basically goes down the Whirinaki Track for 9km to reach the large shelter erected in Verns Clearing which, nowadays, is signposted as Verns camp. The way in is very easy walking on first rate track. The same route can be used on the way out but, to give some variation, the Waterfall Loop Track can be used. The distance and times for either direction are basically the same but the Waterfall Loop seems harder as there are a few, almost "grunty" slopes.

The whole outing is in wonderful forest and, at the start, many of the trees are named. Apart from seeing many giants of the forest there are often Whio (Blue Duck) to be heard and seen along with other birdlife such as Robin.

Detail: From the carpark (**WP01**^{393masl}) it is out under the shelter at the track start in a SE direction to then do a bit of a loop to get over a stream line before passing a post with a track log- book holder (**WP02**^{390masl}) then head more or less S to a T-junction (**WP03**^{389masl}) To the right is the Waterfall Loop Track, to be used on return, whilst straight on is to the Bridge over the Te Whaiti Nui A Toi Canyon on the Whirinaki River. In less than 30 min cross a bridge (**WP04**^{3937masl}) and go to the right. At the next bridge again take to right branch (**WP05**^{399masl}) of the junction as the left leads up to Moerangi. Study of the profile shows that to this point the walking has all been virtually on the level but for the next 5km there are a few gentle slopes to be ascended.

The next feature to be noted is after descending a slope to a T-junction (**WP06**^{423masl}) going left over a bridge – straight ahead at this junction is the start of the Waterfall Loop Track. Five or six minutes later take note of a huge felled tree on the left (**WP07**^{430masl}), this tree used to block the track and a stiff climb up round past it had to be endured. From this point onwards keep the ears open and the eyes sharp as on many occasions Whio (Blue Duck) have been noted on this stretch of the river. It is now less than an hour on easy, slightly sloping track to get into the open grassland of Verns Clearing (**WP08**^{459masl}) and walk into the massive shelter. This shelter is as big as many huts and boasts a wood-burning stove, lots of seating – wide enough to sleep on – a huge bench plus running water!

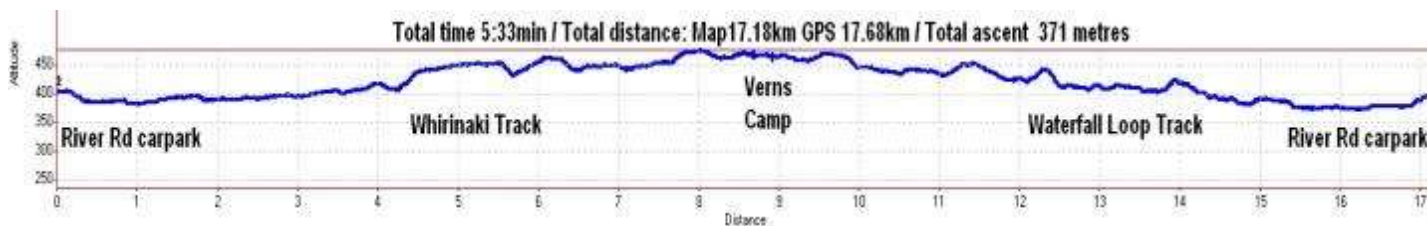
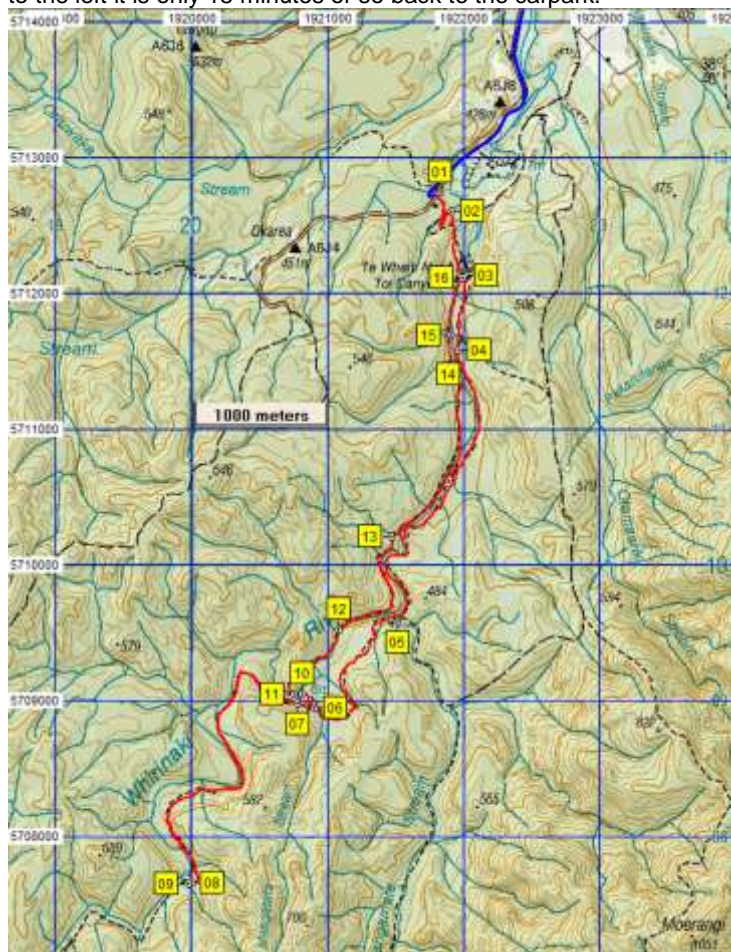


After a rest and lunch head back up the track that led you here to get back to the last junction (**WP06**^{423masl}) where there is a choice – go back the way you came to the right or via the Waterfall Loop Track to the left. There is a small ascent to get up to the viewpoint (**WP10**^{433masl}) above the falls and the vegetation is so thick that the actual falls are not too visible but it can be quite noisy. Also note that nearby there is a picnic table plus a DoC toilet (**WP11**^{428masl}) on a small spur track.



The road from Taupo through BF37 Waitapu map sheet then SW through BF38 Kaingaroa Forest to Murupara and Minginui can be traced above as the **BLUE** line. The **RED** line is the Tramp Route

From here onwards the walking is slightly more of an effort as there are quite a few slopes to ascend. The track is not as well groomed with a few roots waiting to trip you but it does get a bit wider with signs of quad bikes having passed and at one point it is wide enough to be an old (forestry?) road (**WP12426masl**). There are small waterfalls to pass with one you can touch (**WP14389masl**) on the left and then one on the RHS (**WP15391masl**) just before there are high views of the river below to the right. The walking now gets a bit easier and soon the junction with the main (Whirinaki) track is reached (**WP16374masl**) where by turning to the left it is only 15 minutes or so back to the carpark.



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
01	1921819	5712741	393	Car park at end of River Road, MInginui at N end Whirinaki track: exit under archway
02	1921905	5712614	390	10min (475m):: Track log book on RHS. Miro, Matai, Tawa, Khamahi & Totara trees
03	1922016	5712134	389	18min (1.02km): straight on at T-junction then up to bridge on canyon, right is for Falls Loop
04	1921956	5711587	397	26min (1.57km); T-junction after bridge, go right for Verns Camp
05	1921511	5709588	399	1:20min (4.25km); go right after bridge at T-junction. Left is for Moerangi Hut
06	1920901	5708957	423	1:45min (5.68km); left at T-junction down over bridge. Straight for Falls Loop (Blue Duck zone)
07	1920772	5708989	430	1:48min (5.82); site of previous huge tree-fall with up-and-over bypass, now clear (Blue Duck Zone)
08	1919996	5707662	459	2:38min (8.63km); Verns Camp, toilets, table, piped water = lunch
09	1919971	5707658	477	30min lunch break then exit Verns Camp Northwards for return go left at WP06 after bridge
10	1920805	5709059	433	4hrs (12.09km); view of Whirinaki Falls but heavily vegetated cover, see kidney ferns + on track
11	1920748	5709054	428	4:05min (12.19km); DoC toilet on spur opposite falls viewpoint with nearby picnic table
12	1921074	5709522	426	4:16min (12.89km); bend in track then wider, hilly quad-bike / old motor track
13	1921472	5710212	429	4:37min (13.99km); go right, downhill at Y-fork dropping parallel to river
14	1921885	5711403	389	5:03min (15.46km) pass waterfall on LHS
15	1921902	5711695	391	5:09min (15.76km); second waterfall on RHS then high views of river and camping area below
16	1921991	5712116	374	5:18min (16.22km); left at T-junction with outward path with 15min to carpark

Notes:

- **GPS** Garmin GPSMap 62sc
- **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
- **masl** = metres above sea level

Updated: June 2019