

Blackberry Flats, Tawarau Forest, Waikato

Wild file

Access: Were Road end. Turn off SH37 Waitomo/Te Anga Road onto Waipuna Road, then onto Were Road

Distance: 6.7km

Time: 6-7hr

Grade: Moderate

Topo50 Map: BF32

Description

Starting on farmland, the track prepares the uninitiated with shin deep mud before entering Tawarau Forest, which starts off light and airy, with lovely clearings beside the stream below, insects buzzing through the heavily scented air and pongas framing the view to the magnificent limestone faces on the other side of the stream.

But soon the bush becomes more dense and envelops walkers with ferns reaching shoulder height. Gaiters are a definite advantage on this trip. Fallen trees and buried track markers make for slow progress. Despite following Mangaohae Stream for its entirety, the track does not offer any easy opportunity to get to the water: the stream has cut into the limestone leaving a mix of sheer rock and rubble.

At the track junction leading off to Double Falls and Apple Tree Road is a worthwhile side trip to the wire bridge spanning the stream. The view is superb, a definite photo opportunity and the only decent view of the stream on the entire trip. Back on Gorge Track, a short way on from the junction, and just under three hours after starting out, Blackberry Flats is reached. The best camping is at the northern end of the flats. Either continue on to Speedies Rd, (if transport has been arranged), or double back to Were Road.

Elevation Profile



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Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to map this route correctly, Wilderness Magazine does not take responsibility for any errors in the route. Users should use discretion when planning their routes and gather as much information as possible before departing.

