

Danahars Track Circuit, Tongariro Forest Conservation Area, Central Plateau

WILD FILE

Access From Pukehinau Road, off SH47

Grade Moderate. Care needed with water levels on Mangatepopo Stream. Compass and navigation skills essential

Time Car park to Waione Stream, 4-5hr; Waione Stream to Tall Chimney Biv, 2.5hr; Biv to car park, 2.5hr

Distance 26.5km

Total ascent 1292m

Map BH34

Description

Criss-crossed by old logging roads, the Danahars circuit can be done as a (long) day tramp but, as navigation can be challenging, two days allows a leisurely pace and the chance to take your time over the tricky sections. From the Okupata Caves parking area, a 3km walk back along Pukehinau Road will take you to Danahars Track on the left, which then leads to above Mangatepopo Stream, where a narrow track drops into the stream. A couple of ropes are in place to assist with the 20-30m downstream wade before arriving at the Okupata Stream and Mangatepopo junction. The track emerges from the left bank of the Mangatepopo and up onto a plateau where a westerly compass course leads to Waione Stream, keeping the Whanganui River headwaters on the right. Then head south along the 42 Traverse Track, climbing steadily through valleys bright with toetoe in flower, before dropping back to the Waione and crossing Cut-off Creek and Bluey's creek. The next landmark is the 'pond', a man-made waterhole from milling days, located near Pt 793. About 500m from this tarn a narrow gravel gravel track heads left; missing it could mean the long way home.

That track leads to a hunters' camp, Tall Chimney Biv, and from there it's back to compass navigation, setting an easterly course for the car park and picking up logging routes going the right way. The trail passes a stand of decrepit blue gums – remnants of trial Forest Service plantings – and climbs a rocky ridge giving superb views of Mts Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe. It then sidles around Pt 783 and drops steeply through thick kanuka and toetoe to a tributary of Okupata Stream.

After crossing the stream, which could be dodgy in high flow, there's a steep pumice chute, but watch out for the yawning tomos – underground holes and caverns found in pumice country – waiting to swallow trampers. Then it's left onto Pukehinau Road and the tramp's end.

A satisfying hike through a scenic area with many tracks to explore for those competent with map and compass.

Elevation Profile



Danahars Track Circuit, Tongariro Forest Conservation Area, Central Plateau

NZ Topo50 Plus North Island. Copyright © 2015 Crown Copyright Reserved. LINZ

www.memory-map.com

