

Ryde Falls, Oxford Forest Conservation Area

Wild file

Access Take Woodside Road from SH72, at the western end of Oxford. After 8km, turn right on Mountain Road to reach Coopers Creek car park

Grade Moderate

Time 5-6hr return

Distance 6.5km to Ryde Falls

Map BW22

Description

Oxford Forest Conservation Area is 11,350ha and is a remnant of the great beech and podocarp forests that once covered northern Canterbury.

From the car park, the track forks immediately, with an enticing route heading off to the summit of Mt Oxford.

However, the track to Ryde Falls meanders beside Coopers Creek West Branch before heading steadily up through the forest.

At a stile, the route doglegs sharply to the left and rises steeply, through a stand of fir trees, to a rocky outcrop, affording stunning views of (in winter) snow-covered hills to the north.

Now, far above the river, the track follows a ridge back into a beech forest and, after periods of rain, long stretches of boggy terrain. Shortly, a viewpoint of Mt Oxford is reached. From here, the rushing water of Coopers Creek West Branch can be heard and the track dives steeply down to a junction with the Link Track. A short side track leads to signed examples of totara, rimu (red pine) and matai (black pine) trees, the latter apparently becoming rare in the South Island.

A couple of very long and steep zigzags leads down to a stream crossing and a rude climb back up the other side.

A sign at a junction with the Korimako Track informs the falls are 500m further along the track.

Finally, a steep slope lead down to the fast-flowing creek, which must be crossed. There is a primitive campground with a pit toilet here. A short path then leads to the base of Ryde Falls, where the river tumbles through the forest in several tiers, the bottom being a beautiful curtain of white.

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.

