

Becketts Hut, Takitimu Conservation Area, Southland

If you have a taste for tussock and classic remote huts, a jaunt to Becketts Hut in the Takitimus will be right up your alley. It's an ideal weekend getaway if you're in the southern reaches of the country, and will almost certainly give you a sense of solitude if you're after some peace and quiet.

The Takitimu Conservation Area is just south of Te Anau and, with 12 huts and a plethora of tracks to explore, is a perfect stomping ground to get away from the crowds.

The track starts from the six-bunk road-end Lower Princhester Hut, a stop on the Te Araroa Trail. It's on the edge of the forest, with a flowing stream and gentle bank for easy water collection.

Set off into the beech forest up the Princhester Saddle Track. Roughly two hours along the steep marked track, the route opens up into the tussock-filled Waterloo Burn. From here, the track is only vaguely marked for another kilometre or so before a sign marks a split where the Te Araroa Trail branches to the right, while the Becketts Hut path continues straight down the valley.

Weaving through the tussock leads over the Waterloo Burn several times, which could get your feet wet depending on the amount of recent rainfall. After some tussock-hopping through a boggy field, the orange triangle will come into view on the true left of the river, marking the pathway up to the hut from the valley.

Becketts Hut is a true relic. A four-bunker with all the markings of a classic, it has a massive open fireplace, small kitchen counter with some emergency food stocks, and a healthy supply of camping chairs stowed in the loft cupboard above the doorway.

For the return trip, following the riverbed and avoiding the tussock scrambling will shave off some time back to Lower Princhester Hut.

Wild File

Access Princhester Road end off SH94

Grade Moderate

Time 4hr to Becketts Hut

Total ascent 521m

Distance 9.37m to Becketts Hut

Accommodation Lower Princhester Hut (\$5, six bunks); Becketts Hut (free, four bunks)

Map CE08

Elevation Profile



Becketts Hut, Takitimu Conservation Area, Southland

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

www.memory-map.com

