

Otapukawa Hut via Koanui Hut, Te Urewera

From the Lions Education Centre on Matahi Valley Road, head up Ngutuoha Stream for 30 minutes on the Koanui Circuit track to a small confluence. Between the channels a marked turnoff leads to a steep climb up 'The Wall' to reach Tawai Ridge. The ascent is aptly named: it rises 400m in just 3km. Another less steep option would be the Otamatuna Ridge Track from near Ogilvies bridge. At the junction of Tawai Ridge, head south to Pt661 and take a left-hand track which descends to Waiti Stream. From here, it is less than a kilometre downstream to Koanui Hut. The hut, set on a picturesque terrace, has 19 bunks, a log burner, plenty of cooking space and running water. There is a spacious deck on which to relax.

Next up is the long ascent back to Tawai Ridge and at Pt661, head south along a waterless, undulating trail before dropping into Otapukawa Stream. You'll pass the Mangaone 'staff use only' hut and several magnificent rimu.

Otapukawa Hut sits on an elevated plateau 800m upstream, just below the first confluence. The track to it is easily missed, because there is no signage. (Follow the 4WD vehicle track on the true right. Where it peters out, look for a narrow dirt path on the left).

The third day is straightforward, but after heavy rain could prove troublesome. Follow the Otapukawa downstream, with around 40 shallow crossings; a pleasant stroll, with a 4WD track guiding you on the most amenable path. Once at the road end, an easy 30min walk northwards completes our loop.

A visit to this area highlights the need to acknowledge and nurture the mauri of the northern Te Urewera ecosystem. The word 'mauri' can be translated as 'spirit' or 'life-force', denoting spiritual as well as environmental values. It is a worthy setting in which to enhance both.

Wild File

Access From SH2, turn into Bells Road, halfway between Whakatane and Opotiki.

It becomes Matahi Valley Road. It is approx 25km from SH2 to the Lions Education Centre.

Grade Moderate-difficult

Time Lions Education Centre to Koanui Hut 4-5hr, Koanui Hut to Otapukawa Hut 5-6hr, Otapukawa Hut to LEC 2.5hr.

Distance 23.8km

Total ascent 1699m

Map BF40 Matahi

Elevation Profile



Otupakawa Hut via Koanui Hut, Te Urewera

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

www.memory-map.com

