

Lower Whirinaki Track – Mangamate Stream Track loop, Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne Conservation Park

This loop showcases the ancient Whirinaki Forest, which was saved from the sawmill by New Zealand's budding green movement in the 1980s. The two-to-three day track is studded with giant podocarp trees, including rimu, totara, matai and miro.

From the car park, the track soon reaches Te Whaiti-Nui-A-Toi Canyon, where a stream cuts through an ancient lava flow. An hour further, there is a 200m detour to Whirinaki Falls, also worth a look. From here, it's another 45 minutes to Vern's Camp – an old track-cutters camp in a forest clearing. The marae-like, A-frame structure is open on three sides, with a fireplace at the back. From the camp, the track rises above the Whirinaki River, skirting below pumice cliffs. From here, it's another two hours to the 25-bunk Central Whirinaki Hut.

About 30 minutes after CW hut, at the bridge over the Taumutu Stream, the track branches left onto the Taumutu Stream Track, and shortly after heads left again onto the Mangamate Stream Track. The route from here is almost entirely through the stream.

After another 90 minutes, the trail leaves the stream with a steep uphill slog to Mangamate Hut, at 812m. This nine-bunker is a quaint, cosy refuge with a fireplace and a deck.

The trail heads steeply down the hill from the hut, before again entering Mangamate Stream, for about an hour's wet walking. Emerging from the waters, watch out for native ongaonga stinging nettle that line the track in places, growing several metres high.

After another hour, the track again reaches the Whirinaki Waterfall Loop Track, from where it's a short walk back to the car park.

WILD FILE

Access River Road car park. DOC advises against parking at the start of the track, due to crime in the area

Grade Moderate

Time River Road to Central Whirinaki Hut, 4.5hr; Central Whirinaki Hut to Mangamate Hut, 2.5-3hr; Mangamate Hut to River Road, 3hr

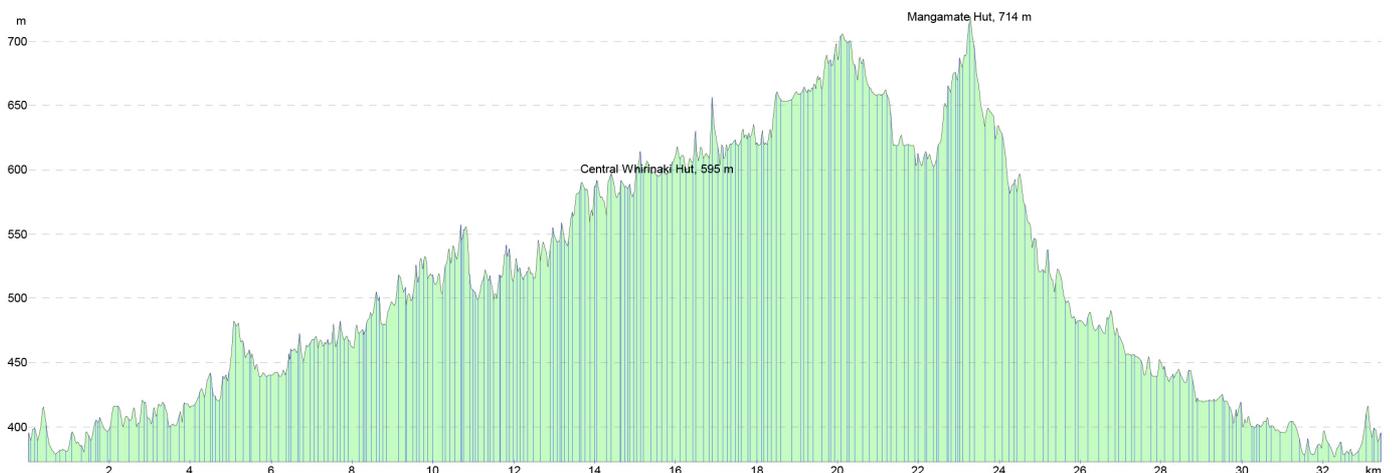
Distance 33.5km

Total ascent 1742m

Accommodation Central Whirinaki Hut (\$10, 25 bunks); Mangamate Hut (\$5, nine bunks)

Map BG38

Elevation Profile



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