

Kauritatahi Hut, Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Park

The trail begins from Aongatete Lodge with a gradual descent over 900m to a track junction. Both branches of the trail lead to the Aongatete River.

Take the northerly (right-hand) track and descend 60m to the river. Care should be taken here as the river may become impassable after rain.

The track climbs steeply out of the river and then ascends more gradually on a bulldozed track built for the construction of the Kaimai Railway Tunnel in the 1960s. The tunnel is directly beneath your feet.

Turn right at the junction with the North–South Track. After 800m, pass the trail to Upland Road then descend gently to Poupou Stream.

The track now narrows and becomes rougher. After crossing a sidestream there's a climb over and around a spur to gain Kauritatahi Stream, which is crossed six times on the way to the headwaters.

The first real climb of the day commences from the stream with a 140m ascent followed by a sidle of 1.2km to exit the Kauritatahi catchment and gain the northern slope of Ngatamahinerua (849m).

Turn left at the next track junction. With just 2km to go to the hut, the track gets steadily steeper, rougher and more overgrown, and a few rocky steps are awkward to negotiate while wearing packs.

A saddle on the south side of Ngatamahinerua offers some respite before more climbing to Te Hanga Ridge. This flat tableland is boggy in places, and the final kilometre is a squelch through mud.

Kauritatahi Hut is in a small clearing; a refuge in the misty swamp. It has three bunks and a good-sized deck.

The forest is diverse in this part of the Kaimai Range. Lower down, dominant trees are tawa and tanekaha interspersed with rimu, pūriri, beech, rewarewa, miro and tree ferns. Impressive stands of the world's tallest moss (*Dawsonia superba*) can be spotted beside the track, and on the tops there are a few dracophyllum.

Wild File

Access From Aongatete Lodge at the end of Wright Road. Park in the car park before the gate to the lodge

Grade Moderate

Time 5.5-7hr to hut

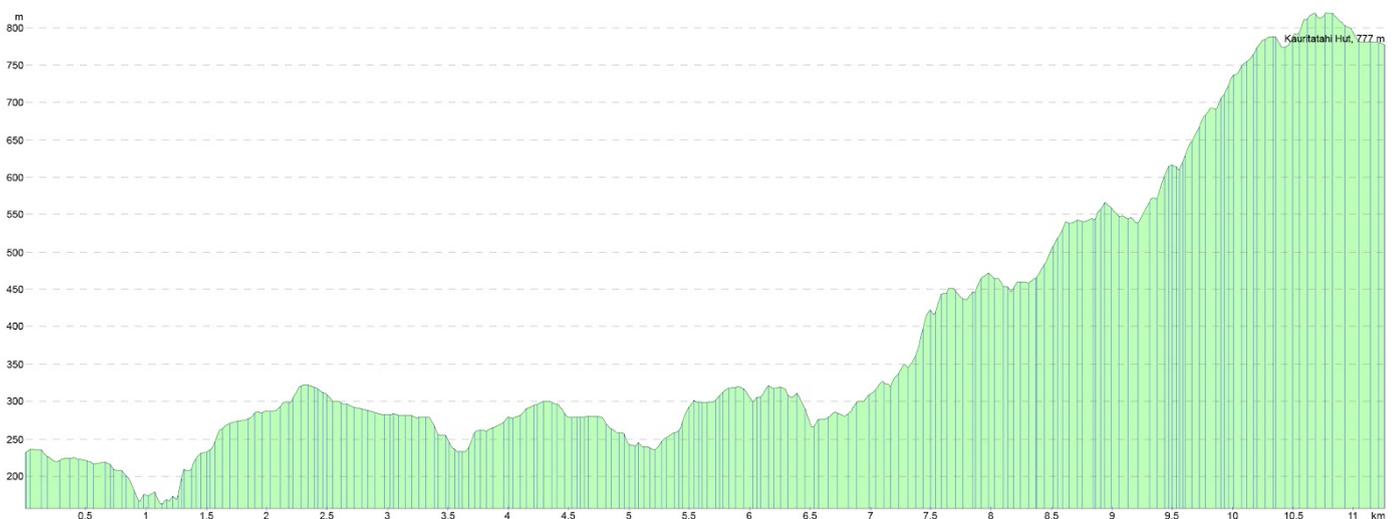
Distance 11.3km

Accommodation Kauritatahi Hut (free, 3 bunks)

Total ascent 1012m

Topo50 map BD36, BD35

Elevation



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