



Please note that introduced wasps can be an unwelcome feature of this part of the route in summer. Be careful not to disturb their nests as their stings are extremely painful.

People heading in the opposite direction should follow up the vehicle track on the true left of this stream and look for the track sign at the forest edge, towards the upper limit of the grassy flats. Note too that the track is a little steep and rough in the early stages as it clambers up from the valley floor.

It is a further 30 min down the road to Andrews Shelter.



## Huts

Casey Hut needs to be booked in advance - visit [doc.govt.nz/hut-bookings](https://doc.govt.nz/hut-bookings).

## Care for Aotearoa



### Protect nature

Keep your distance and don't feed wildlife. Follow any rules restricting dogs, fires, drones or vehicles.



### Be prepared

Stay safe in the outdoors by following the Land Safety Code.

- ▶ Choose the right trip for you.
- ▶ Understand the weather.
- ▶ Pack warm clothes and extra food.
- ▶ Share your plans and take ways to get help.
- ▶ Take care of yourself and each other.



### Keep NZ clean

Use toilets where provided. Take all rubbish with you.



### Show respect

Respect others, respect culture.

### Further information:

#### Arthur's Pass National Park Visitor Centre

104 West Coast Road,  
Arthur's Pass 7654  
8.30 am - 4.30 pm daily

**PHONE: 03 318 9211**

**EMAIL: [arthurspassvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:arthurspassvc@doc.govt.nz)**

[doc.govt.nz](https://doc.govt.nz)

**0800 DOC HOT  
362 468**

For safety hazards and  
conservation emergencies

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This information was accurate at the time of printing. For the latest information on DOC's policies and facilities, visit [doc.govt.nz](https://doc.govt.nz).

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**Te Kāwanatanga  
o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government

# Casey Saddle – Binser Saddle route guide

Arthur's Pass National Park



## Summary



**Time:** 2-day loop.

**Grade:** Advanced tramping track.

**Best season:** Summer, autumn and winter.

**Experience:** Mostly unformed track for challenging day or multi-day tramping/hiking trips. The track has directional markers, poles or rock cairns for wayfinding. The track may be rough and steep with unbridged stream and river crossings. Suitable for people with moderate to high fitness who have backcountry (remote area) and river crossing skills and experience.

**Required maps:** NZTopo50: Cass BV21.

**Hazards:** Flooded rivers / side streams, wasps.

**Note:** 'True left' and 'true right' refer to the side of the valley or river when facing and looking downstream.

**Safety:** This route guide must be read in conjunction with *Tramping in Arthur's Pass National Park*, a free brochure with important safety information, and New Zealand's Land Safety Code. Before setting out, check the latest track conditions with the Arthur's Pass Visitor Centre.

## Well tracked and easy-going

This is a pleasant two-day tramp, crossing easy saddles on well-defined tracks through open tawhairauriki / mountain beech forest. The middle section of the track travels through open, grassy river terraces alongside the Poulter River. This part of the trip is also the only mountain biking route in the Arthur's Pass National Park, although the bike route does not go over Binser Saddle. The weather is regularly drier in this south-eastern corner of the park than to the west, and there are no main river crossings. Accordingly, this tramp can often be undertaken when conditions elsewhere in the park are unsuitable.

## Getting there

The track ends are within 30 min walk of each other on Mount White Road. The track starts at Andrews Shelter on Mount White Road. Turn off State Highway 73, 24 km east of Arthur's Pass village. The Binser Saddle car park is 2 km further down Mount White Road.

## Andrews Shelter to Casey Hut

**Time:** 7–8 hr one way

Well-marked forest tracks link the easy open tussock flats on Hallelujah Flat and Casey Saddle to Andrews Shelter and Casey Hut.

### Andrews Track

Just upstream of the bridge near Andrews Shelter, a marked track begins on the true left and climbs steeply through open scrub to the beech forests above. It continues to climb but then meanders across frequent side creeks, while generally keeping much to the same contour. Eventually it rejoins Andrews Stream at Hallelujah Flat (about 2 hr 30 min from the shelter).

From the start of Hallelujah Flat, follow the grassy flats over Casey Saddle. The saddle itself is a mixture of tussock and low scrubs, dominated by sprawling bog pine *Halocarpus bidwillii* and the lighter-coloured *Hebe odora*.

Parties travelling in the opposite direction should look for the track leaving Hallelujah Flat a little below the side creek on the true left. This gives a view right up the creek bed to the scree and ridge-crest beyond and is about 10 min downstream from the last clear view back up Hallelujah Flat to Casey Saddle. For the first 10 min, the track keeps within a few metres of the stream bank; then it climbs into the beech forest.

### Casey Track

Beyond the saddle, keep to the terrace immediately above Surprise Stream. After a few min, the track crossing the saddle drops into the streambed below a small swamp. The forest track to Casey Hut begins a few min below the Surprise Stream and Pampas Stream confluence. **In heavy rain, crossing Surprise Stream at this point can be difficult.** The forest track sidles above Casey Stream until it drops down to the old Casey Hut site (burnt down in 2015), before continuing around and connecting to the vehicle track that heads down the Poulter River.

Casey Hut (12 bunks) stands on a terrace overlooking the Poulter River just downstream from the confluence of the Casey and Poulter Rivers. The journey from Casey Saddle is about 2 hr.

## Casey Hut to Pete Stream

**Time:** 4–5 hr one way

From Casey Hut, head south on the obvious vehicle track heading down the river. The track continues all the way to Pete Stream, mostly through open tussock grassland with matagouri / tūmatakuru, mānuka and small-leaved coprosma scrub.

Fine open vistas are soon seen from the broad bed of the Poulter valley. Upriver to the north is Mount Morrison on Snow Cup Range. Across the river on the south-western flanks of Poulter Range, hundreds of hectares of beech forest lie ravaged from a single storm late in 1981 that flattened almost every standing tree on these exposed hillsides.

Midway between Mount Brown Creek and Pete Stream, the track climbs easily over a broad old alluvial fan and returns to the lower terraces. The poplars between the track and the hillside mark the site of the old Minchin homestead. E.C. Minchin – after whom Lake Minchin was named – began runholding here in 1857 and remained until 1870. In the late 1800s, ownership of the run passed to Major Thomas Woolaston White, who built a new homestead near Lake Letitia on what became Mount White Station.

## Pete Stream to the road

**Time:** 3 hr 30 min one way

From the ford at Pete Stream, climb the terraces on the true right of that stream towards a marker on the terrace rim. It is easy to miss the turn-off to Binser Saddle, so be vigilant when nearing Pete Stream. Follow the outer lip of the highest terrace until a track winding through the low mānuka scrub becomes obvious. The track soon enters the forest, keeping close to the edge of this terrace. It takes a fairly direct line on to Binser Saddle, beginning at an easy gradient but getting steeper further on. The forest is open tawhairauriki / mountain beech and for the most part the track is easy to follow.

Near the saddle, a stream runs close to the track, so water is no problem. The climb to the saddle is further than it may seem from the Poulter valley floor, being some 600 m).

Beyond the saddle, a pleasant little open flat has good camping sites, with running water a few minutes on down the hill. At the bottom left-hand corner (heading westwards) the track re-enters the forest. After passing through windthrown trees and thick regeneration, the track becomes dry, open and mossy. After crossing a side stream, it winds through more storm-ravaged forest and drops steeply down to the Waimakariri River flats, emerging just east of Lower Farm Stream.