

Takitimu Mountains

HUT, TRACK AND HUNTING ACCESS INFORMATION



The Takitimu Mountains are named after the ancient Māori waka (canoe) Takitimu that once visited our southern waters. Captain of the waka, Tamatea – the northern rangatira (chief) – wrecked Takitimu in rough weather at the mouth of nearby Te Waewae Bay. Ngāi Tahu tradition tells that three large waves – Ō-te-wao, Ō-roko and Ō-kaka – were followed by a cross wave that hurled the waka inland, strewing its cargo everywhere. The upturned hull became the mountain range.

To commemorate this fateful event these mountains are now called 'Takitimu'. The Ngāi Tahu Deed of Settlement places a Tōpuni, a special recognition of Ngāi Tahu cultural, spiritual, historic and traditional values, over the Takitimu mountain range.



Redcliff Creek, Takitimu Mountains. Photo: Karl Blass

Access

Legal access is limited to the Aparima River Track which starts at Pleasant Creek on Dunrobin Valley Road, and Princhester Road. However, 4WD vehicle access (experienced drivers only) is available further up the road via a locked gate – the key is available from the DOC Invercargill office, on a first-come-first-served basis. Contact the landowners to advise you have a key and will be travelling through their property – Pleasant Valley Station ph: 03-248 6133, Waterloo Station ph: 03-248 6145.

Huts

The Aparima, Cheviot Downs and Lower Princhester huts are standard DOC huts with water supply and a pit toilet, requiring one ticket per night or an annual Backcountry Hut Pass. All others are 'basic' huts and free of charge. Tickets or passes should be purchased in advance from a DOC office.

Please leave the huts clean and tidy for visitors after you. Portable stoves for cooking must be carried, as no cooking facilities are supplied in any of the huts.



Cheviot Downs Hut. Photo: Emmanuel Oysten

Route Guide

Dunrobin Valley Road to Aparima Hut via Aparima River Track: 2 hr, 6 km

This track commences at the bridge over Pleasant Creek on the Dunrobin Valley Road, just before the boundary of the farm owned by Pleasant Valley Partnership (see Access, above). The marked track generally follows the true right of the Aparima River, passing through red tussock, beech forest, and past wire-rush peat wetlands. A swing bridge over the river is 5 min from Aparima Hut (12 bunks).

Aparima Hut to Spence Burn junction: 1 hr, 5 km

Follow the old bulldozed track through the forest onto the open terrace overlooking the Waterloo valley. Along this terrace, about 30 min from the hut, there is a prominent bend in Aparima River and a marked track enters the forest near the edge of the high bank. A large peat wetland is reached after about 20 min. Cross the toe of the wetland to the track junction on the opposite forest edge.

Spence Burn junction to Aparima Forks Hut: 1 hr 15 min, 4 km

From the track junction follow the forest edge to the head of the peat wetland. After approximately half an hour the track stops on the true left bank of the main stream, downstream of the forks. Cross the main stream to some small clearings. Aparima Forks Hut (2 bunks) is found on a terrace a short distance above, on the true right bank.

Spence Burn junction to Spence Hut: 2 hr 30 min – 3 hr, 7 km

Enter the forest at the track junction, drop down to the Aparima River below the forks and ford the river. The marked route climbs sharply, and then traverses the true right side of the valley well above the river. It crosses to the other side after about 1 hr 30 min, then generally follows the true left bank until opposite Spence Hut (2 bunks), situated on an open site on the true right bank of the river.

Aparima Hut to Becketts Hut: 2 hr 15 min, 6 km

Becketts Hut (4 bunks) is sited just inside the forest edge at the top of a small tussock clearing, on the true left of the Waterloo Burn. Note: the floor of the Waterloo Burn valley is part of Waterloo Station (see Access, above).

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Te Papa Atawhai

Lower Princhester Hut to Becketts Hut: 3 hr 30 min – 4 hr, 8.5 km



Lower Princhester Hut (6 bunks) is sited at the end of Princhester Road (gravel), which branches off SH94 just over Princhester Creek. You need permission to access this area: Ph 03 249 5838.

A marked route climbs gradually up the true right of the Bog Burn catchment to a saddle in the Waterloo Burn headwaters. From there it bears left and downhill, crossing the Waterloo Burn. The route then follows the true left bank before re-crossing just before reaching open flats. Becketts Hut (4 bunks) is on the true left about an hour down the valley.

Wairaki River Valley 4 hr, 8.5 km



The Lower Wairaki Hut (4 bunks) is sited close to where the Wairaki River leaves the forest. A route to the Upper Wairaki Hut (2 bunks), in the headwaters of the catchment, starts at the hut. This route (not signposted) drops down from the hut to the river where a large orange triangle is seen on the other side of the river. Cross the river and follow the true left of the valley for about an hour, where you will reach a track junction and a DOC sign. This section is part of Te Araroa Trail. Continue to follow the true left for 3 hr. Note: access from Ohai to the Lower Wairaki Hut is only possible through Beaumont Station; permission is needed from the station owners – ph: 03-931 9858.

Cheviot Downs Hut

Foot access across private land to the Cheviot Downs Hut (6 bunks) on conservation land is restricted. Permission is required – ph: 03-249 8816. The hut has good views over the Te Anau basin and Fiordland, and gives access to climbs in the Excelsior Peak area.

Hunting and Fishing

The Aparima and Wairaki rivers both offer good trout fishing. Anglers should hold a current fishing licence. Deer, pigs and goats are present in low numbers. Permits for hunting are required and should be applied for in advance online: visit www.doc.govt.nz.

Dogs

The Takitimu Mountains is a Controlled Dog Access Area. Dogs are not permitted between 1 September and 30 November. For all other times a dog permit must be obtained from DOC's Lake Front Drive office, Te Anau – ph: 03-249 7924. Email: fiordlandvc@doc.govt.nz.

Track descriptions, and hut facilities

-  **Standard hut:** wood fire usually provided, water supply, pit toilets, no cooking facilities. Standard hut ticket required.
-  **Basic hut/bivouac:** basic shelter with limited facilities and services. Free.
-  **Tramping tracks:** mostly unformed surface, but marked with directional markers, poles or cairns. Tracks are suitable for backcountry visitors with moderate to high-level backcountry skills and experience.
-  **Routes:** unformed, suitable only for people with high-level backcountry navigation and river crossing skills and experience.
-  **Te Kōawa Tūroa o Takitimu:** culturally-significant site and accommodation.
-  **Te Araroa – New Zealand's Trail:** visit www.teararoa.org.nz

 To report safety hazards in the outdoors, call the DOC Hotline: 0800 362 468.

For Search and Rescue call 111 and ask for the Police.



BETWEEN WATERWAYS

New Zealand Government

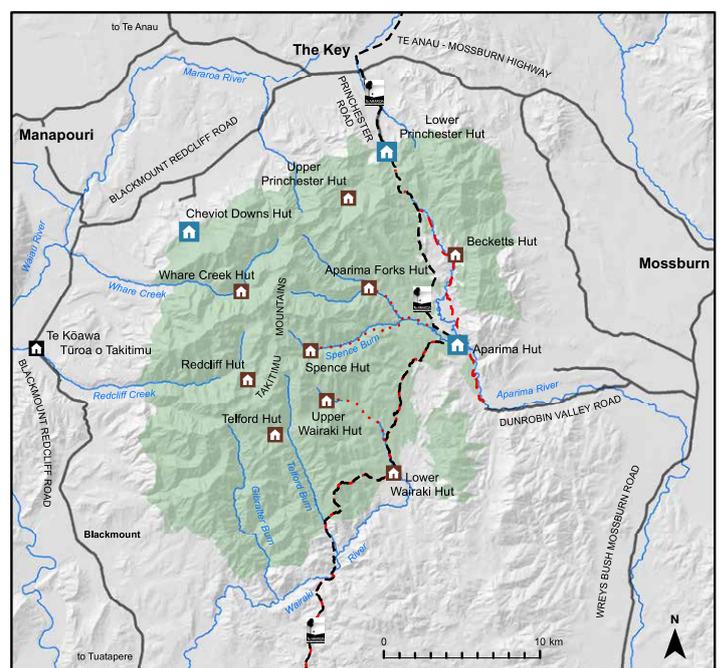
- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel and camp on durable ground
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Minimise the effects of fire
- Respect wildlife and farm animals
- Be considerate of others



Safety Information

Your safety is your responsibility. Choose a track or route that suits your level of fitness & experience. Follow the Outdoor Safety Code:

- **Plan your trip.** All trampers need to carry a sleeping bag, gas and cooker, sufficient food, wet weather gear and warm clothing.
- **Tell someone your plans.** Before you go into the outdoors, tell someone your plans and leave a date to raise the alarm if you haven't returned. To do this, use the New Zealand Outdoors Intentions process on the Adventure Smart website www.adventuresmart.org.nz. Enter your intentions into the hut book.
- **Be aware of the weather.** Weather and track conditions can change rapidly in this area, with strong winds, hail, snow and heavy rain possible at any time of the year, causing well-formed tracks to turn to deep mud and un-bridged river crossings to become dangerous.
- **Know your limits.**
- **Take sufficient supplies.** We recommend you carry a Personal Locator Beacon and/or Satellite Messenger/ Mountain Radio. Topographical maps are also necessary for navigation – we strongly recommend NZTopo50 series maps CD08, CE08 and CE09 that cover the area. These are available for purchase at DOC offices and most tramping equipment suppliers.



This map is not to scale and is not suitable for navigation.