

had is clearly seen on both sides of the Main Divide where massive rivers of ice have carved out steep-sided valleys, leaving a series of cirques and hanging valleys along the dividing ranges.

The composition of flora in the wilderness area is influenced not only by differences in the environment and climate, but also because of its history of glaciation - the main consequence being the absence of beech species throughout. The Westland beech gap extends from Paringa in the south to the Taramakau River in the north, and exists because podocarp forest re-established much more quickly following periods of glaciation. The vegetation varies from tall forest in the low-altitude river valleys to grasslands and herb fields at high altitudes. Common forest species include rimu, miro, kāmahī, broadleaf, southern rātā and Hall's tötara.

Forest gives way to an extensive zone of subalpine shrubs that include *Dracophyllum* and *Oleria*. Above the shrub zone, tall tussock grasslands of snow tussock occur. With increasing altitude the tall tussock is replaced by hardy short-tussock species. Herbaceous species adapted to alpine conditions are found through these high-altitude areas and some extend to the highest regions dominated by rock and ice.

Kea, rock wren/pīwauwau, blue duck/kowhiowhio and New Zealand falcon/kārearea are some of the key native bird species found in the area.



On summit of Mount Adams Photo: © R Squire



Rock wren/pīwauwau
Photo: J Van Hal

Further information

For information, intentions, maps, weather forecasts and track condition updates:

Westland *Tai Poutini* National Park
Visitor Centre
Main Road,
Franz Josef Glacier
Phone 03 752 0796

8.30 am - 6.00 pm (summer),

8.30 am - 5.00 pm (winter)

westlandnpvc@doc.govt.nz

Hokitika Area Office
Sewell Street, Hokitika
Phone 03 756 9100

DOC HOTline
0800 362 468

Report any safety hazards or
conservation emergencies
For fire and search and rescue call 111

Suggestions for corrections or improvements
should be emailed to: recreation@doc.govt.nz

Cover: Descending from Mount Adams.
Photo: © Russell Squire

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NEW ZEALAND
environmental
CARE CODE

- Protect plants and animals
- Remove rubbish
- Bury toilet waste
- Keep streams and lakes clean
- Take care with fires
- Camp carefully
- Keep to the track
- Consider others
- Respect our cultural heritage
- Enjoy your visit
- Toitu te whenua (Leave the land undisturbed)



route guide



Mount Adams

FRANZ JOSEF WAIJU AREA



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

General information

Time: 2 days

Grade: Route

Experience: Suitable for well-equipped and experienced backcountry trampers and climbers only

Best season: Summer.

NZTopo50: BW16 Whataroa; BW17 Harihari

Hazards: Flooded rivers, rock fall and avalanche.

Safety: Safety is your responsibility. Check the latest conditions at the Westland *Tai Poutini* National Park Visitor Centre in Franz Josef before leaving – conditions can change rapidly. Leave accurate intentions with a responsible person, carry a personal locator beacon, and don't forget to sign out at the end of your trip.



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

This trip should not be attempted when it is raining, rain is forecast or the river is running high. If you are travelling beyond the snowline then make sure you check avalanche conditions, are sufficiently equipped and experienced to assess the conditions and choose a safe path through avalanche terrain.



Introduction

Mount Adams sits proudly on the edge of the Adams Wilderness Area in the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o Te Moana, and is a focal point for travellers along State Highway 6 from Lake Ianthe to Lake Wahapo. At 2208 metres high, the summit provides commanding views across the alps, Adams Wilderness Area, the coastline and the flats in between. The route from Little Man River (Dry Creek) up to the bush edge on Mt Adams was re-opened in 2009. The route is well marked and windfalls are cleared every two years.



The time given is a guide only and will vary greatly with fitness and weather conditions. Tramping in this area is very demanding and you should allow plenty of time to reach your planned destination.

Getting there

Access to the Mt Adams Route is approximately 10 km north of Whataroa on the northern side of the Little Man River (Dry

Creek) bridge. A short farm track leads off State Highway 6 in towards the mountains and your vehicle can be parked near the first gate (be careful not to block the farm access).

Route description

State Highway 6 – bush edge

Time: 5 hours

Follow the farm track upstream for approximately one kilometre before dropping down into the riverbed. The route crosses and re-crosses the river several times as you boulder-hop upstream. Orange markers have been placed on the true left where you enter and exit bush sections – however storms and floods may alter the route up the river bed and you will have to pick the best crossing places on the day. The valley soon becomes confined by steep hillsides and after approximately 2 hours you will reach the second major tributary joining the main river on the true right. At this point the main river cuts sharply back on itself and into a tight gorge. Look for the large orange triangle marking the route entrance into the forest on the true right, around 50 metres up from the confluence. This is the last creek so make sure you have enough water with you to last until you reach the snowline and beyond.

The route climbs very steeply up tree-root-covered ground to the crest of a spur about 20 minutes into the forest.

As you continue to climb the forest progressively gets more stunted and eventually you are moving through subalpine scrub. After climbing steadily for approximately 3 hours you will pop out onto a sloping tussock-covered ridgeline. Further up the ridge there are several good locations to camp – between approximately 1545 m and 2100 m.



The marked route ends just past the bush line at the two yellow and orange deer posts. Travel beyond this point is suitable only for mountaineers and those experienced in alpine travel. You must take a map, compass and alpine equipment, and know how to use them.

Adams Wilderness Area

Gazetted wilderness areas provide extensive natural settings with diverse topography and very high levels of natural character. No tracks, bridges or huts are provided; they are places in which people must be self-reliant and travel entirely on nature's terms. This is a setting in which people are unlikely to encounter others, or find evidence of others having been there. Legal protection of gazetted wilderness areas ensures that these special places are protected for future generations.

The Adams Wilderness Area was gazetted in 2003 and covers some 46,587 hectares of public conservation land in the central Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o Te Moana. The core of the area consists of the vast névés of the Garden of Eden and the Garden of Allah, which drain to the Wanganui and Perth rivers. Quirky and interesting place and feature names abound in the wilderness area, inspiring adventure and exploration.

The area comprises some of the most complex mountain country in the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o Te Moana making it a challenging climbing and ski-touring environment. Parties have to negotiate a maze of gorges, ice falls, glaciers and dense subalpine scrub, not to mention the changeable weather.

Over the last few thousand years glacial advance and retreat has been largely responsible for the modification of the Adams Wilderness Area landscape. Evidence of the impact glaciation has

