



Waiau Pass Track

(Map 92, 91, 90, 89, 88, 87)

Southern Start	Boyle Village
Northern End	St Arnaud Village
Distance	115.5km
Time	5-8 days
Track Standard	Tramping track

At 1870m, Waiau Pass is the most likely portion of the route to be blocked by snow and has some avalanche risk on its southern face. Before embarking, trampers should contact DOC at the Nelson Lakes Visitors Centre in St Arnaud (03 5211806) to enquire about the route's current condition.

Hazards

River crossings - take care with Wairoa, Motueka, Waiau and Ada Rivers, these rivers are unbridged
Never cross flooded rivers

Weather extremes - snow or heavy rain can occur at any time of the year

Avalanche zone - Travers Saddle, track to Blue Lake, Waiau Pass

Route

Boyle Village to Boyle Flat Hut – 14.5km / 4hr

Approximately 100 meters along Magdalen Rd there is a carpark and the beginning of the St James Walkway. The track is initially through forest margin to a swingbridge over the Boyle River. Then following above the true right of the Boyle River to the turnoff to Magdalen Hut. Cross another swingbridge here and continue for 3.5km to Boyle Flat hut.

Boyle Flat Hut – 12 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: Numerous sources.

Boyle Flat Hut to Anne Hut – 15km / 6hr

Continue down the Boyle River valley. The track alternates between forest and open tussock environments. After 4km you will come to the tiny Rokeby hut (2 bunks) continue along the valley through similar terrain for another 4km before a short climb up to Anne Saddle (1136m). Another 7km through increasingly open country will bring you to the new and spacious Anne Hut in the middle of wide, open tussock fields. If you're lucky you may even spot a wild horse or two.

Anne Hut – 20 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: Numerous sources.



Anne Hut to Waiau Hut – 25km / 7-9hr

From the hut the track heads northeast along the Henry River toward Ada Flat. Te Araroa departs from the Saint James Walkway here. Cross the Ada River and continue around the eastern/right side of the homestead to enter the Waiau Valley. From this point it is another 14km to the Waiau Hut. Travel is over mostly flat, open ground, but forest cover increases as you move further up the valley. There are some side-streams to cross but these will be straightforward at normal flows.

Waiau Hut – 6 bunks, toilet facilities

Water availability: Numerous sources.

Waiau Hut to Upper Waiau Forks – 8km / 3hr

Travel is initially along the riverside/riverbed until the crossing of Caroline Creek. Continue along the valley on the true right of the Waiau River for around 5km. This track can be rough at times and crosses some unstable boulder fields. Cross the river at the marked crossing to the camping area.

Upper Waiau Forks camping area – no facilities here, but a lot of flat ground that has become an informal campsite. Please observe the usual rules around waste disposal close to tracks and waterways.

Water availability: Numerous sources.

Upper Waiau Forks to Blue Lake Hut – 7km / 6-8hr

The climb up to Waiau Pass is a challenging route that involves steep climbing over exposed and rocky ground. The route is predominantly above the tree line so ice axe and crampons will be necessary if snow is present.

From the pass the track descends via a steep slope covered with scree to the head of Lake Constance. Follow the western shoreline for 1km where the track climbs up steeply and traverses high above the lake to the moraine at the end of the lake. Past the moraine the track descends through bush to Blue Lake Hut.

Blue Lake Hut – 16 bunks, fireplace (a very popular hut so be prepared to camp at peak season)

NB: Please be aware the local Maori iwi (tribe) Ngati Apa ki te Ra To consider Blue Lake/Rotomairewhenua sacred. Please refrain from washing yourselves, your clothes or dishes in the water.

Water availability: The main reliable source will be the stream running into the southern end of Lake Constance.



Blue Lake Hut to West Sabine Hut – 7km / 3hr

Descend from Blue Lake Hut to the Sabine River West Branch crossing numerous side streams. Cross at the swing bridge to the hut.

West Sabine Hut – 34 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: Numerous sources.

West Sabine to Upper Travers Hut – 8km / 6-8hr

The track follows the Sabine River East Branch for about 3km before beginning to climb, initially through forest, then more steeply beside a stream. There are few markers on this section but the track becomes more defined as it climbs up through mixed rock and tussock to the Travers Saddle (1787m). From the saddle, the descent to the Upper Travers hut (1320m) is steep in places and care should be taken.

Upper Travers Hut – 24 bunk, fireplace

Water availability: Water is scarce after the first 3km when the track leaves the Sabine River East Branch.

Upper Travers Hut to Lakehead Hut – 18km / 8hr

Cross the tussock in front of the hut and then descend via the Travers Valley. The track becomes gentler as it descends the valley to John Tait Hut, some 6km (3hr) from Upper Travers Hut.

John Tait Hut – 27 bunks, fireplace

Continue alongside the Travers River alternating between forested and open sections. After 9km there is a swingbridge to the true right bank of the Travers River, and it's a further 3km from there to Lakehead Hut.

Lakehead Hut – 28 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: Numerous sources.

Lakehead Hut to St Arnaud – 9km / 2-3hr

A gentle track leads alongside the lakeshore to the DOC campground and public recreation area at Kerr Bay. At the trailhead turn right towards the campground or head left along Kerr Bay Rd. Just beyond the bridge over Black Valley stream you will see the sign indicating the start of the Black Valley stream walk. This trail takes around 20 minutes and exits on the main road opposite the St Arnaud store.

Water availability: Numerous sources.



Richmond Alpine Track

(Map 87, 86, 85, 84, 83)

Southern Start	St Arnaud Village
Northern End	Hackett Hut
Distance	87.5km
Time	5-7 days
Track Standard	Tramping track

Hazards

Vehicles on SH63 out of St Arnaud - take care and walk as far off road as possible

Never cross flooded rivers

Track exposed to sun, wind or cold

Weather extremes - be aware of weather forecast and wait out bad weather if necessary

Few water sources in parts

Route

St Arnaud to Red Hills Hut – 16km / 5-6hr

Head east from the village along State Highway 3. Turn left into Tophouse Road. Approx 1km along Tophouse Rd you'll see DOC signage to Beebys Hut. This is where you head – up a steep slope with plenty of zigzags softening the gradient – little comfort, but the views are rewarding. This route is a fairly popular MTB track so stay alert and be ready to move to the side of the track. As you near the top and the slope flattens, look for the rock cairn and large orange marker on your right just as the bush turns to tussock. Here you're at 1300m. Turn right and descend a long ridge to a saddle (1050m) with open patches offering spectacular views both north and south. A long ridge climb follows back to a height of 1200m, then another ridge descent, another saddle, another climb (to 1050m) to a rocky knoll, then an old 4WD track will take you down to Red Hills Hut.

Red Hills Hut – 6 bunks

Water availability: There are a number of small streams crossing the route, however, the first one is the most reliable.

Red Hills Hut to Porters Creek Hut – 10.5km / 4hr

Initially the track crosses an area of tussock before beginning a traverse above Maitland Creek. At times the track descends to straightforward crossings of side streams before climbing again. Cross the Motueka River Right Branch at the confluence with Maitland Creek. From this point there are two steep uphill sections before the hut. The first leads from the riverbank up a gravelly slope to a small area of beech forest. The track then descends to a large open and mostly dry riverbed. Follow the markers about 500m up the riverbed to the second climb, which heads up Porter's Ridge before a short descent to the bright orange Porters Creek Hut.

Porters Creek Hut – 6 bunks, fireplace



Water availability: Numerous sources.

Porters Creek Hut to Hunters Hut – 9km / 3hr

The track is undulating with some straightforward stream crossings. At around 20 minutes before the hut the track crosses a field of sharp and sometimes unstable boulders.

Hunters Hut – 8 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: Numerous sources.

Hunters Hut to Top Wairoa Hut – 10.5km / 4hr

From the hut descend through beech forest to the true left bank of the Motueka River Left Branch. Cross where marked and follow the true right bank to a second crossing that takes walkers back to the true left bank. The track then heads up a lightly forested ridge leading eastward below Mount Ellis. The track continues its general upward trajectory along an exposed ridge to a highpoint of 1374m before dropping down via steep and uneven track to the bright orange Top Wairoa Hut.

Top Wairoa Hut – 6 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: Water is scarce beyond the second river crossing.

Top Wairoa Hut to Mid Wairoa Hut – 7km / 4hr

This section of track is challenging. The track follows the river – crossing it 7 times – and is often steep, narrow, or precariously situated on the edge of significant drops. Take it slowly and keep safe.

Mid Wairoa Hut – 6 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: Numerous sources.

Mid Wairoa Hut to Tarn Hut – 6.5km / 4hr

Cross the river via a swingbridge a short distance downstream from the hut. From this point the track climbs very steeply but becomes a little easier as it progresses. Watch for the sign posted turnoff to Tarn Hut. The track becomes steep again for a time and begins to enter a more alpine environment closer to Tarn Hut. This hut is reached by sidetrack that drops down from the main track.

Tarn Hut – 5 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: No water available between the huts.



Tarn Hut to Rintoul Hut – 8km / 4hr

A track leads from the hut back up to the main track that follows a bush-clad ridge to an area below Purple Top (1562m), the only significant open section on the route. Follow marker poles over the rocks and back down to rejoin the ridgeline for the remainder of the way to Rintoul Hut.

Rintoul Hut – 6 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: No water available between the huts.

Rintoul Hut to Old Man Hut – 4.5km / 4hr

An extremely steep track leads from the hut up above the tree line to the slopes of Mount Rintoul. Continue climbing to the summit of Mount Rintoul (1731m), and some of the most spectacular views of Te Araroa, then traverse to Little Rintoul (1643m) before descending via a ridge and returning to the forest. Old Man Hut is accessed via a sidetrack shortly after reaching the forest.

Old Man Hut – 5 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: One tiny creek is located immediately as you reach the tree line from Rintoul Hut but it should not be relied on. There are no other sources en route.

Old Man Hut to Slaty Hut – 10km / 4hr

Climb back up to the ridge from the hut then continue along the ridge, at first in the trees, then above the tree line as the track makes its way up to Old Man (1514m). Descend Old Man to Ada Flat – mostly through open tussock but some short, forested sections. The track veers to the left crossing the slope below Slaty Peak (1544m) as it sidles around to the hut.

Slaty Hut – 6 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: No water available between the huts.

Slaty Hut to Starveall Hut – 5km / 2.5hr

From the hut circle around the east side of Slaty Peak then descend a short distance to the forest. Travel is initially mainly on a ridgeline before the track heads around Mt Starveall via the east face then descends to the hut located on the tree line.

Starveall Hut – 6 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: No water available between the huts.



Starveall Hut to Hacket Hut – 6km / 3hr

After an initially steep descent the track levels off somewhat. The forest here has been heavily storm damaged so is quite open as the track continues its descent to Hacket Creek. There are 8 crossings of Hacket Creek and then a short walk brings you to a foot bridge that crosses Hacket Creek once more immediately before the hut.

Hacket Hut – 6 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: No sources for the first 2km, some small streams in the next 2km and numerous sources in the final stretch.

Exit to Nelson

For those wishing to resupply at Nelson it is a 1.5hr walk to the Hacket Carpark and the road to Nelson.



Pelorus River Track

(Map 83, 82, 81, 80)

Southern Start	Hacket Hut
Northern End	Junction of Maungatapu Road and State Highway 6, Pelorus Bridge
Distance	46km
Time	3-4 days
Track Standard	Tramping track

Hazards

Never cross flooded rivers
Vehicles on on Maungatapu Rd

Route

Hacket Hut to Browning Hut – 3.5km / 1hr

The track is initially through a flat area of grass and scrub to a crossing of Browning Stream. After the crossing the track is alternately in and beside the stream. A flood track provides an alternative route in wet conditions. The latter half of the track leaves Browning Stream and zigzags upwards through mixed native forest before emerging in a small clearing at the hut.

Browning Hut – 8 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: Numerous sources.

Browning Hut to Rocks Hut – 11km / 4.5hr

Cross Browning Stream close to the hut and make your way through the forest. The track is initially easy going but soon begins a strenuous climb up to Totara Saddle. A sign near the saddle indicates the track to Rocks Hut.

Beyond this point the track climbs more gently as it makes its way upwards. The route loosely follows a ridgeline and passes through open tussock areas, and large areas of storm damaged trees – some terrifyingly large. At the aptly name area “The Rocks” there are some amazing views down to the city of Nelson, especially if you are willing to climb one of the large stone monoliths.

Beyond this point the track passes through many small streams as it covers the last kilometre to the hut.

Rocks Hut – 16 bunks, 2 flush toilets

Water availability: No reliable sources after Browning Stream until the last kilometre.



Rocks Hut to Middy Hut – 5km / 2hr

From Rocks Hut the track descends gently but consistently all the way down the Pelorus River. A swing bridge provides easy access across the river. Middy Hut is located just a few hundred meters down river of the bridge.

Middy Hut – 6 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: A couple of small streams cross the first half of the track but best to fill up at the hut as few reliable sources.

Middy Hut to Captains Creek – 5km / 2hr

The undulating route on this section takes walkers across 3 swing bridges; first over Fishtail Creek, then over to the true left of the Pelorus River, and just before the hut a final bridge over Captains Creek – the namesake of the day's destination and the final hut in the South Island for northbound Te Araroa walkers!

Captains Creek Hut – 6 bunks, fireplace

Water availability: Numerous sources.

Captains Creek to Pelorus Bridge – 21.5km / 6-7hr

Beyond Captains Creek Hut the track stays on the true left of the Pelorus River all the way to the Pelorus Bridge. The first 8km are on a track that climbs high above the river at times. From Emerald Pool the road end is around an hour walk and the going is easier from here as the track leaves the Mount Richmond Forest Park and enters private land.

The walking track ends at the terminus of Mount Richmond Road. Follow this road for about 2km to an intersection with Maungatapu Road. Follow Maungatapu Road east with the Pelorus River on your right. The Maungatapu Road heads through farmland and forestry over gentle terrain and exits onto the highway at the Pelorus Bridge. Cross the bridge to your right to the shop and campground.

Water availability: Numerous sources on walking track but scarce on the road. Last reliable source is about 4km from the intersection of Mt Richmond Road and Maungatapu Road.



Pelorus Bridge to Anikawa

(Map 80, 79, 78)

Southern Start	Junction of Maungatapu Road and State Highway 6, Pelorus Bridge
Northern End	Northern end of Anakiwa Road, Anakiwa
Distance	38km
Time	1-2 days
Track Standard	Mixed – farm, road and formed track

Hazards

- Poisons & traps in Pelorus Scenic Reserve
- Farming operations
- Vehicles on road – walk as far off the road as possible
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Few water sources

Route

Follow the signs to the Circle Walk. This track leads alongside the true left bank of the Pelorus River to a footbridge crossing the Rai River. After the bridge follow the signs to Dalton's Bridge.

Although initially in the forest, the track soon enters farmland. Please respect the wishes of the landowners who have allowed access to their property by staying on the marked route and off the nearby laneway/farm track.

The route is well marked and stiles are available for navigating fences. Occasionally you may encounter an electric fence dividing pasture but these are usually either possible to go over or under.

At the end of Dalton's Track continue along Kaiuma Bay Road, which lies in front of you opposite the stile leaving the farm. After around 9km turn right into Te Hoirere Road. After another 1.5km turn left at the highway and follow the road shoulder for 2km into the small town of Havelock. For those stopping for the night the accommodation options are mostly located at the far (south) end of town.

Beyond the township continue on the footpath to Mahakipawa Road/Queen Charlotte Drive. Turn left here and continue to the signposted start of the Link Pathway (Te Ara Tuhono) and that will take you on a very pleasant route all the way around that peninsula, using the route of an old bridleway that was overgrown and forgotten until restored by the Link Pathway team. Near Moenui, the formed track ends and you'll need to revert to the road shoulder. Continue on this road into Linkwater township (small shop and a pub). Just past the school the Link Pathway begins again beside the road. Turn left at Anakiwa Road and continue along Link Pathway to Anakiwa. The Queen Charlotte Track begins on the coast at the far end of Anakiwa township.

Water availability: The Linkwater shop or pub.



Queen Charlotte Track

(Map 78, 77, 76)

Southern Start	Anakiwa
Northern End	Ship Cove
Distance	70km
Time	3-5 days
Track Standard	Tramping track

Hazards

Stay aware of mountain bikers

Route

The Queen Charlotte Track is the most developed section of Te Araroa in the South Island. Some of the track passes through private land and is managed by the Queen Charlotte Track Land Cooperative in partnership with the Department of Conservation and the Marlborough District Council. To aid in funding the track users are required to purchase a pass for this section. These are available from the i-Site in Havelock.

The track passes through terrain that varies considerably; amazing indigenous forest gives way to scrub and farmland, exposed rocky coastline and tranquil coves. The wildlife can include rare native birds and lizards as well as goats and pigs – you may even spot dolphins and seals!

As the track is designed for both biking and walking it is maintained to a high standard and is a consistent width and quality throughout. However, the nature of the soil means that the track becomes extremely slippery when wet. Extreme care should be taken during wet weather. Although the inclines found on track are generally mild compared to other Te Araroa sections, it should be noted that between Schoolhouse Bay and Ship Cove there is a steep descent. This is the roughest section of the track and extreme care should be taken, especially in wet conditions. **Camping is not permitted at Ship Cove, so if you need to overnight, do it at Schoolhouse Bay and walk to Ship Cove (4.5km/2hr) in time to be collected.**

The amount and variety of accommodation options means there is much scope for individualisation when planning your walk so listed below is only a selection of Department of Conservation camping areas and walking times. There are many other accommodation providers along the track – from budget to luxury – and walkers are encouraged to research the options most suited to their needs. Note that cellphone reception at Ship Cove is limited, so organise return transport before leaving Anakiwa.

Walking Times and Distances

Anakiwa to Cowshed Bay Campsite (Portage) – 20.5km / 8hr
Cowshed Bay Campsite to Camp Bay Campsite – 23km / 8hr
Camp Bay Campsite to Schoolhouse Bay Campsite – 22km / 7hr
Schoolhouse Bay Campsite to Ship Cove – 4.5km / 2h

Water availability: Numerous sources.