



Longwood Forest Track

(Map 135, 136, 137)

Northern Start	Junction of Otautau-Tuatapere and Merrivale Rds, Merrivale
Southern End	End of Ports Water Race Track
Distance	52km
Time	2-3 days
Tramping Standard	Tramping track

Route

PLEASE NOTE - It is the DEER ROAR at the moment (March/April) we recommend that all walkers wear a High Vis Vest while walking through the Longwoods Forest. Thank you...

Walk 7.5km up Merrivale Rd into the forest, all the way to the road-end. A washout about 6km up Merrivale Rd prevents 2WD vehicles progressing further but there is roadside parking there.

Note: *the only reliable water source on Te Araroa for over 13km is Merry Creek, accessed a short distance down a 4WD track that departs Merrivale Rd on the left hand side, just beyond the final farm paddock.*

Merrivale Rd end to Bald Hill - 4.3km / 2hr

From the road end a short 4WD track leads off to the start of the Longwood Forest Track. The first orange track markers are encountered a little further along. A GPS may come in handy here (and across the tops) as the ground trail is not always obvious. The track climbs gradually for 2.5 km to a clearing but soon re-enters the forest. From here it's only 500m to the tree line from where the transmission tower is visible on clear days. The track is marked by poles across the open tops to the transmission tower at a road end upon Bald Hill.

Bald Hill to Martins Hut - 15.5km / 7hr

Descend the road from the transmission tower. Water may be available from small streams draining from the left. This is in the vicinity of the gates which cross the road. Fill up here as there is no other easily available water source for some distance. Continue down the road to the old quarry from where the track departs on the right near a square steel plate sign. The track within the forest is well marked and easy to follow through increasingly stunted forest. In open sections, however, the route is lightly marked with poles. Continue through forest and shrublands across "Little Baldy" and the saddle to the main Longwood ridge. The track from here is often indistinct but follows markers to and beyond the Longwood trig. The descent on the marked track is fairly steep and through forest to historic Martins Hut, built 1905 and the last (or first if northbound!) hut on Te Araroa.

Martins Hut is compact with 4 timber bunks with mattresses. It would provide welcome shelter in poor weather. There is a small water tank behind the hut - though do treat the water. Another water source at Martins Hut is small stream off on an unmarked side track between the toilet and the hut. This is off to the left as you are facing downhill. Water also becomes more readily available on the main track lower down.

Martins Hut to Long Hilly Track - 23.5km / 9hr

100m past Martins Hut the route leaves Martins water race and continues down to a forestry road. Turn right here and 10min later turn left onto Cascade Rd. Follow Cascade Rd for about a kilometre to the Ports Water Race Track, which starts at a small foot bridge on the right (south)

side of the road. This may not be obvious if overgrown so pay close attention and navigate carefully. The track then follows the Ports water race, which was constructed to supply water for gold mining at Round Hill. While the race was abandoned in the 1950s it remains largely intact. This track has had recent maintenance work and is well marked. It hugs a steady contour line beside the water race as it winds its way through gullies and across the hill side. The area comprises regenerating podocarp forest. The water race margins, however, were exempt from milling and retain a number of mature rimu, kamahi, and totara trees.

At the end of the Ports water race, the track joins the Long Hilly Track, and its a further 6km (1-1.5hrs) to Colac Bay.

Other Information

Accommodation en route

[Martins Hut](#) - Basic 4 bunk hut - The water source at Martins Hut is a small tank behind the hut. There is also a small stream off on an unmarked side track between the toilet and the hut. This is off to the left as you are facing downhill. Water also becomes more readily available on the main track lower down.

Potential Hazards

- Vehicles on road or track on Merrivale rd
- Poisons & traps
- Farming operations
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Weather extremes
- Few water sources between Merrivale Rd and Martins Hut

Requirements

- Keep to the track
- Respect private land
- No litter
- No dogs
- No horses
- No firearms
- No vehicles
- Camp with care
- Wear hi-viz clothing/pack cover and don't use headphones

Amenities (Start)

- No amenities
- Roadside parking only

Amenities (On Route)

- No amenities
- Accommodation Martins Hut