



Two Thumb Track

(Map 106, 107, 108, 109, 110)

Northern Start	Bush Stream carpark, Rangitata Gorge Rd
Southern End	Junction of Pioneer Dr and SH8, Lake Tekapo Village
Distance	72.5km
Time	3 days
Tramping Standard	Tramping track

Route

The Two Thumb Track is a fine high country trail that provides a challenging traverse through the Te Kahui Kaupeka Conservation Park. This is from the south side of the Rangitata River through to Boundary Stream at Lake Tekapo. The park opened in April 2009 and resulted from the successful tenure review of the Mesopotamia and Richmond Station pastoral leases.

Mesopotamia Station was once owned by the English polymath, Samuel Butler. The surrounding mountains, wide braided river and hanging valleys give this remote part of the South Island its lost world character, and inspired Butler's fantastical satire, Erewhon. It's an open and expansive environment that has a big country feel to it.

New Zealand's Colonial Secretary Dr Andrew Sinclair was drowned in the Rangitata River after surveying the wide braids of the river system with Julius von Haast in 1861. He was seeking a way through the river to get back to Butler's homestead. His grave is now marked as an historic site.

In pre-human times lower areas were most likely forested. However, burning reduced forest cover to remnants and resulted in the snow tussock cover that predominates today.

The start of the track is sign-posted, at the Bush Stream carpark beyond Mesopotamia Station, and is mostly unformed but marked with poles from there. Access is via Rangitata Gorge Rd. The huts en route are classic musterers' huts and add an important historic dimension to this tramp.

Bush Stream car park to Crooked Spur Hut - 9km / 4hr

** Please see the "Additional Information" for transport details - there is very little traffic past Peel Forest and your most reliable method will be a pre-arranged ride with Alps2Ocean.

Follow markers from the carpark up towards Bush Stream. Once at the stream, travel is up or adjacent to the river bed, crossings as required. These crossings are straightforward in normal flows but can be tricky after rain or during spring when the stream is fed by snow melt. Take extreme care at these times, and crossings are recommended as early as possible in the mornings during the snow melt. The Sawtooth Bluff can be particularly tricky.

The track later leaves the stream bed on the left to avoid a gorged section. In the process it climbs and then descends back towards Bush Stream.

Ford Bush Stream a final time near a concrete slab, the last remains of an old swing bridge. From the true left side a formed track climbs towards Crooked Spur Hut (5 bunks). This track was still used for mustering purposes up until 2009 and the climb to the hut takes about 1hr.

Crooked Spur Hut is tired but provides adequate accommodation. It's in a good location with views down Bush Stream to the Rangitata River.

Crooked Spur Hut to Stone Hut - 9.5km / 5hr

From Crooked Spur Hut the track goes west around Crooked Spur and climbs steadily for 1½hr to a saddle at 1500m. From the saddle the track descends to cross Pack Horse and Sweeps Streams before returning to Bush Stream. Travel is then up the true left bank to an old stock bridge. Cross it to reach Stone Hut. Stone Hut (8 bunks) is in reasonable condition.

Stone Hut to Royal Hut - 6km / 2hr

Beyond the hut Te Araroa follows Bush Stream to Royal Hut (8 bunks). Prince Charles and Princess Anne reputedly visited as children, hence the hut's name.

Royal Hut to Camp Stream Hut - 14km / 6hr

The first part of the day involves a climb over the Two Thumb Range via Stag Saddle (1925m), the highest point on Te Araroa. From the hut cross Bush Stream and follow the poles upwards. The climb to the saddle is fairly steep in places but quite safe in reasonable weather. The contours ease towards the saddle, where cell phone coverage is available. From the saddle it is possible to scramble up to the ridge on the right hand side and then to descend the ridge line past the turn off to Rex Simpson Hut (private) and .1468 to a 4WD track. While unmarked this route is generally sound underfoot and affords excellent views across Lake Tekapo to Mt Cook. This should only be attempted by people confident in navigating and should not be attempted in poor weather. Turn left onto the 4WD track, which fords Camp Stream on its way to Camp Stream Hut (6-bunks). Note this hut is owned and managed by the Mackenzie Alpine Trust who ask for a \$10pp donation to overnight here - please carry some cash and use the honesty tin inside the hut.

The alternative marked (and poor weather) route down from Stag Saddle is lightly poled and runs down into the tussock covered Camp Stream Valley. Lower down this valley the 2 routes converge at the 4WD track, turn left here to access Camp Stream Hut, which is on the true left side of the stream. Camp Stream Hut is compact but in reasonable condition.

Camp Stream Hut to Boundary Stream carpark - 18km / 5hr

The track leaves Camp Stream Hut for the Ski Field Road. Trampers leave the hut and follow the track down the true left of Camp Stream, before crossing just above the confluence with Coal River then continuing on the true left before the steep climb to the road. There is a car park well down the road for those wanting to exit here.

Meanwhile Te Araroa continues on conservation land parallel with Lake Tekapo and along the base of the Two Thumb Range. The track crosses Washdyke Stream on its way to Boundary Stream where it descends above the true right bank to a car park at Lilybank Road.

Please note that once you cross Boundary Stream, you are surrounded by private land and camping is **NOT** welcomed - continue all the way to Lake Tekapo Village, or if you wish to camp make sure you do so before crossing Boundary Stream.

Follow the road shoulder 13km south towards SH8.

Note - wear a hi-viz vest and/or pack cover on this walk and don't wear earphones, as the road is narrow and can be very dusty (poor visibility) in summer.

The road walk ends at the Lake Tekapo Regional Park, which affords lakeside walking for the final 3km section into Lake Tekapo Village.

Other Information

Transport to and from the trailheads is available.

To/from Geraldine - to either end of the trail, contact Wayne from [Alps 2 Ocean](#) for assistance, ph 0800 425772.

Geraldine Community Vehicle Trust offer a service to Peel Forest Store on weekday mornings. Cost \$14.00.

P: 03 6931007 - E: geraldine.mini.bus@gmail.com

To/from Tekapo, at the Tekapo end of the trail, contact [The Cook Connection](#) on P: 0800 266 526 or

E: travel@cookconnect.co.nz

To/from Tekapo and Geraldine/Twizel on request, [Tekapo Taxis](#) (Billy Morgan) P: 021 1536547 or E: info@tekapotaxis.nz

[Lilybank Rd](#) to or from Tekapo \$45 first person, then \$5 per additional passenger.

Roundhill Ski Area to or from Tekapo \$50 first person, then \$5 per additional passenger.

Tekapo to or from Twizel \$75 first person, then \$10 per additional passenger.

Geraldine to or from Tekapo \$120 first person, then \$15 per additional passenger.

Accommodation en route

[Peel Forest Farmstay](#) - 10km from SH72 on the road to Mesopotamia Station. Private rooms and bunk rooms available, self-catering. Contact Steve and Jenny Deans - P: 03 6963509 - E: sjdeans@ruralinzone.net

[Crooked Spur Hut](#) - 5 bunks - This Hut is tired but provides adequate accommodation. It's in a good location with views down Bush

Stream to the Rangitata River

[Stone Hut](#) - 8 bunks - This hut is in a reasonable condition

[Royal Hut](#) - 8 bunks - W:

[Camp Stream Hut](#) - 6 bunks - Compact Hut but in a reasonable condition - note this hut is owned and managed by the Mackenzie Alpine Trust who ask for a \$10pp donation to overnight here - please carry some cash and use the honesty tin inside the hut.

Lake Tekapo Village

General Information

Lake Tekapo Information Centre - State Highway 8, Lake Tekapo - P: 03 680 6686 - W:

[Tekapo Springs Sales & Information Centre](#) - State Highway 8, Lake Tekapo - P: 03 680 6579 - E: sales@tekaposprings.co.nz

[Heartlands Fairlie Resource and Information Centre](#) - 67 Main Street, Fairlie - P: 03 685 8496 - E: fairlie@xtra.co.nz

[Aoraki Mount Cook National Park DOC Visitor Centre](#) - State Highway 80, Aoraki Mount Cook Village P: 03 435 1186 -

E: mtcookvc@doc.govt.nz

[Kiwi Treasures & Information Centre](#) - State Highway 8, Lake Tekapo - P: 03 680 6686 - E: kiwitreasures@clear.net.nz

[Twizel Information Centre](#) Market Place, Twizel - P: 03 435 3124 - E: twizelinfo@gmail.com

Tekapo Tourism - W: <http://www.tekapotourism.co.nz/>

Getting there/away

[InterCity](#) - P: 03 365 1113

[Atomic Shuttles](#) - P: 03 349 0697 - daily buses to Queenstown and Christchurch

Transport to trailheads

[The Cook Connection](#) - P: 0800 266 526 or 021 583 211

Accommodation

(** CLOSED 2017-2018) [YHA Lake Tekapo](#) - 3 Simpson Lane, Lake Tekapo P: 03 680 6857 E: laketekapo@yha.co.nz

[Tailormade Backpackers BBH](#) - 9-11 Aorangi Crescent, Lakee Tekapo - P: 03 680 6700 - E: taylor-made-backpackers@xtra.co.nz

[Lake Tekapo Motels and Holiday Park](#) - 2 Lakeside Drive, Lake Tekapo - P: 03 6806 825 or Freephone 0800 853 853 -

E: info@laketekapo-accommodation.co.nz

[Lake Front Backpackers Lodge](#) - 2 Lakeside Dr, Lake Tekapo - P: 0800 840 740

Fairlie Holiday Park (30min drive from Tekapo) - 14 Allandale Rd, Fairlie - P: 03 6856190 - E: fairlieholidaypark@gmail.com - Kitchen, TV room, library.

Many other accommodation options are also available.

Resupply

[Tekapo Services Ltd \(4 Square supermarket\)](#) - Main Street - Tekapo Twizel Rd, Lake Tekapo - P: 03 680 6809

[Doughboys Bakery](#) - 65 Main Rd, Tekapo - P: 03 680 6655 - Snacks and bakery goods

Bounce Box

Annie from BeSpoke Cycles is keen to receive and hold your bounce boxes - BeSpoke Bike Tours |16 Murray Place Tekapo

| +64 (0) 21 151 3742

Potential Hazards

- Vehicles on road or track Lilybank Rd
- River crossings - Never cross flooded rivers
- Small stream crossings
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold only take ridge route down from Stag Saddle in favourable conditions
- Weather extremes

Requirements

- Keep to the track
- Respect private land
- No dogs
- No horses
- No firearms
- No bikes

Amenities (Start)

- No amenities
- Car park
- Toilets
- Accommodation nearby at Mesopotamia Station

Amenities (On Route)

- No amenities

- Accommodation huts