

NUMBER ONE

canyon v3a3IV★

Location

Northern Tararua Range, abeam Tokomaru.

Character

Challenging navigation to reach a shallow, intermittent canyon with a variety of obstacles.

Map

BM34 Palmerston North and BN34 Shannon.

Approach by Car

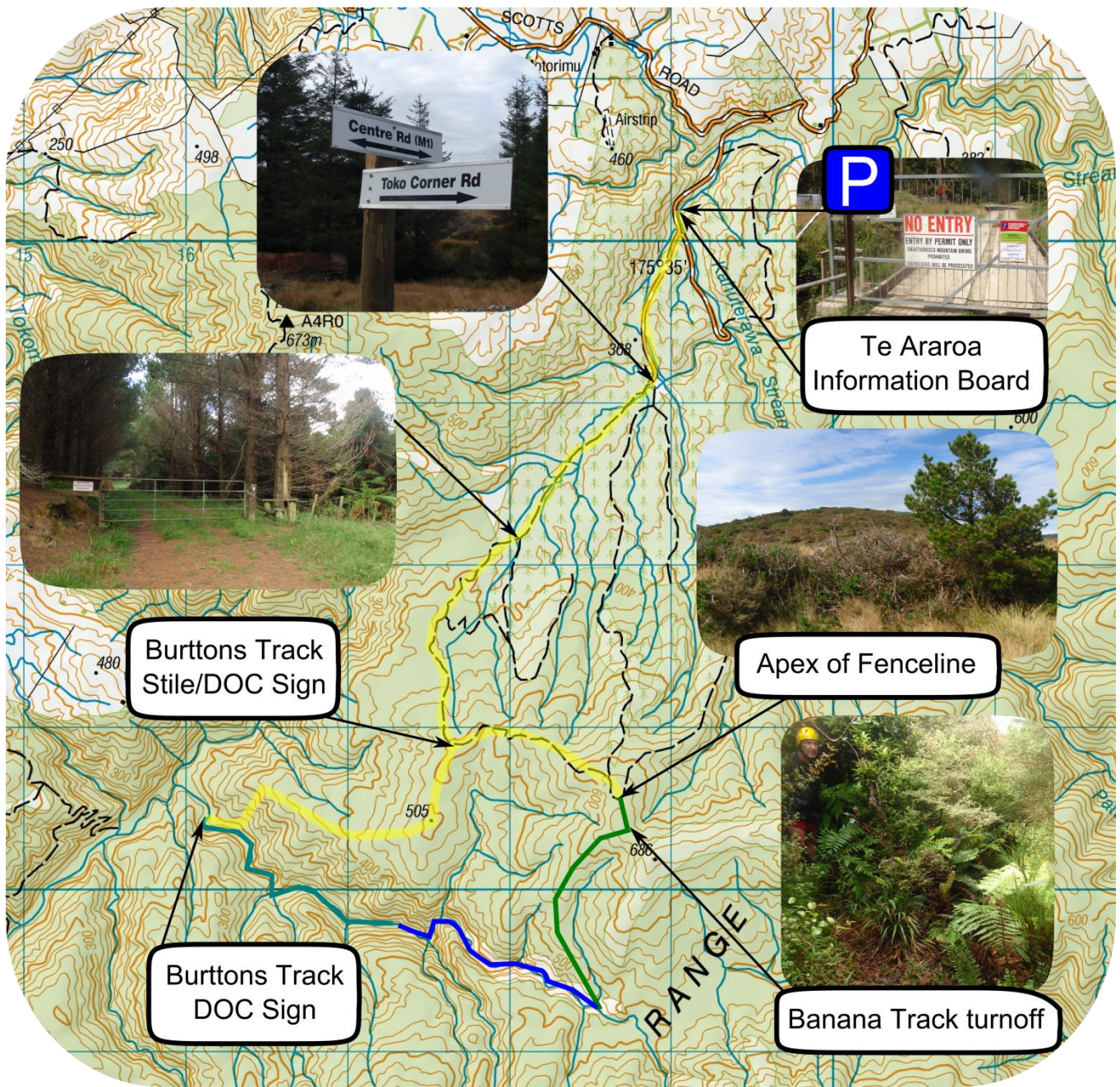
From Tokomaru, drive north on SH57 for about 4 km to Scotts Road. Follow Scotts Rd to a signposted 'T' junction. Turn right and park off to the side by the locked forestry gate and 'Te Araroa' information board.

Approach on Foot

Read the Te Araroa info board, then cross the pedestrian access at the locked forestry gate and start your stopwatch. Follow the main forestry road south for 15 minutes and turn right into 'Toko Corner Rd' The Te Araroa markers start from the car park and although they are sometimes tricky they are definitely present. There are numerous forestry tracks that branch off. If in doubt, keep to the main track, and don't take any branches that head sharply uphill to the east.

35 mins from the car park, cross a stile by a farm type gate (with a Te Araroa marker) and begin ascending up a broad ridge. From here, the route finding becomes much easier for a while. Continue following the fence line vehicle track past another farm type gate (45 mins from car park) to the Burtons Track DOC sign and another stile (55 mins from car park).

Keep following the fence line track, which gets a little overgrown and slightly difficult to follow in places up to a clearing that is the apex and intersection of several vehicle tracks. (1hr15min).



From the Apex of the fence line, cross the fence line into DOC land and bash directly toward the top of the rounded knoll ahead of you. You'll wade through Cutty Grass to the scrub line (50 meters or so) and here you should find the start of a rough hunters track through the bush.

The hunters track is not marked, but has a well defined foot pad. Follow the hunters track for 200m to the very top of the first rounded knoll. Here you should find an intersection of tracks. Take the right hand track (Banana Track) and follow pink 'X' marks on trees most of the way toward the toe of the Banana shaped spur.

When you loose the markings, find a way down into the river and congratulate yourself on making it here! (2hr15min from the car park)

If you do not find the hunters track at first, you're in for some scrub bashing and tricky navigation. Though once you are below the 600m contour on the Banana Spur, the forest is quite open and easy to move through.

Rock

Solid Greywacke

Water

Low volume Canyon with a few short swims

Catchment

8.2 km²

Anchors

Natural

Gear

1 x 60m rope, Natural Anchor kit. Map and Compass essential. GPS handy.

Route Description

The canyon has some nice sections of gorge, sections of open stream walking, some short swims a few jumps and a couple of rappels.

After drop 10, there is only one more very short gorge section, so you may wish to take off your wetsuits here. 45 mins below drop 10, keep a close eye out for orange triangles that indicate where Burtons track crosses the stream. Burtons track is only moderately well marked with orange triangles, so follow the track carefully until you reach the stile and easier walking.

Time

Car park to apex of fence line track	1hr15min
Apex to Stream via 'Banana Track'	1hr
Canyon descent	3hr30min
End of canyon to Burtons Track	45min
Ascent to Burtons Track Stile	1hr
Return via forestry roads to car	1hr

Total

8h30min

Flash Flood Danger

Low. Large drainage, but plenty of options to get out of the stream way

Escapes

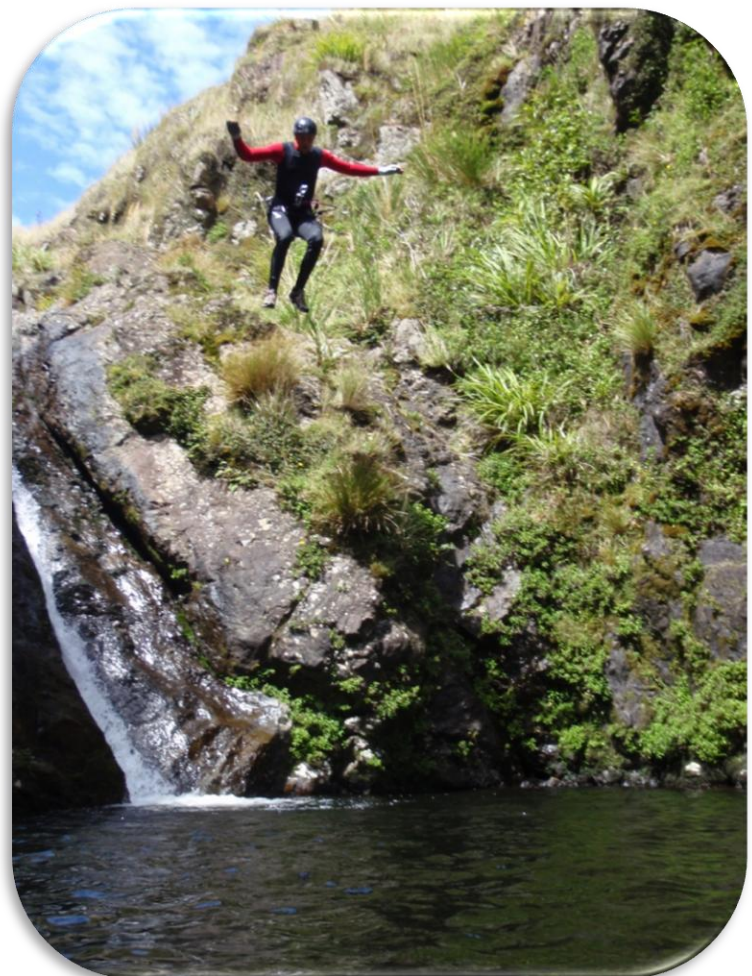
The easiest escapes are marked on the Topo. Returning to the car would involve lengthy bush bashing.

Notes

Partially explored by Tony Gates, Feb 2011.

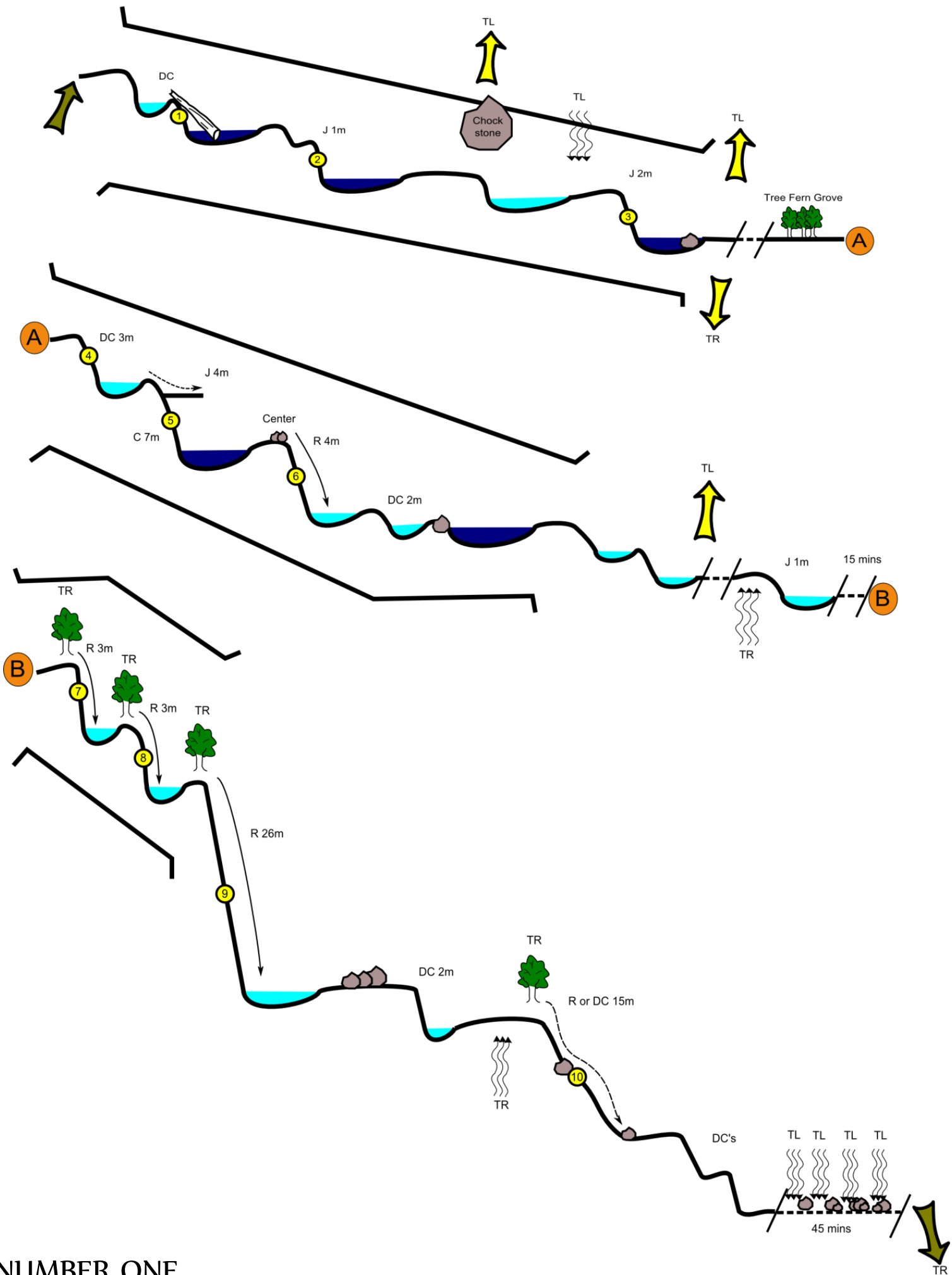
First full Canyoning descent; Daniel Clearwater, Pip Furness Feb 2011.

This area is popular with hunters, so wear bright clothing and avoid the area during the 'Roar' (Mid March to late April)



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Topo by Daniel Clearwater
www.KiwiCanyons.org