Waima Gorge

Isolation Hill Scenic reserve, Clarence (Kaikouras)

DOC Website for Isolated Hill area

http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/tracks-and-walks/marlborough/south-marlborough/sawcut-gorge-isolated-hill-route/

Below except from 'Tramping in the South Island, Mount Richmond to Arthurs Pass, by Sven Braybyn'.

Non-technical Gorge Tramping.
Wetsuits definitely recommended!

All photos credit Andrew Watson.

3 Day Gorge tramp;

- 1. Waima to Zoo Hut
- 2. Zoo to Box Stram Confluence
- 3. Out via Gorge.

4.11 Waima Gorge

· Hard

Isolation Hut

Brian Boru

Stream

The Zoo

Chalk Range

upper Waima

River

Waima gorge

Blue

Station

· Curious country

• 1-3 days

· Swimming

Tramping in the South Island

If this trip is to be done as a day-trip then access to the top of the Waining and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in and out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in an out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in a short stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in a short stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in an out of Headache Stream and gorge is via the vehicle track that sidles in an out of the vehicle track that sidles in an out of the vehicle track that sidles in an out of the vehicle track that sidles in an out of the vehicle track that sidles in an out of the vehicle track that sidles in an out of the vehicle track that sidles in an out of the vehicle track that sidles in an out of the vehicle track that sidles in an out of the vehicle track that

If multiple days are avaluated the Chalk Range make for an interesting access route into the upper Waima the Chalk Range make for an interesting access route into the upper Waima River. See the previous trip for a description of the track up onto the saddle below Isolated Hill. From this saddle the track descends steeply down scree and through forest to the hut in Brian Boru Stream. This is an interesting catchment, with numerous bluffs, incised streams and waterfalls. If time is a problem then it is possible to descend Brian Boru Stream and miss the upper section of the Waima gorge. The boulder-hopping down Brian Boru Stream is demanding, with some deep wading.

From Brian Boru Hut there is a good track through to 'The Zoo'. This track initially follows closely to a tributary stream, and then sidles high. Later the track crosses the stream and climbs to a fence line and bulldozed track on the side of Iwitahi Ridge. This track leads through to yards overlooking The Zoo. The hut here is hidden close to the yards. From The Zoo, follow a spur and fenceline up onto the Chalk Range, sidling to the west to avoid the bluffs near the top. Descend the other side to the Waima River.

The first kilometre or so below the Box Stream confluence is straightforward, except that there is a section choked with large boulders that is sidled on the true-right. The gorge then becomes very tight, and this is where most of the swimming takes place. In a couple of places it is necessary to jump into foaming water. Often the gorge is so narrow and twisted that you can not tell how long you are going to be swimming for. A log jam in this section of the gorge would prove extremely awkward. Below the Brian Boru confluence there is only one other place that requires swimming, although there is still a lot of wading and boulder-hopping.

Isolation 6 Brian Boru 2 Zoo 4

1 P29

Blue Mountain Station Upton Fells

Swale Stream: From the upper Waima River a farm track leads over to Swale Stream. Beeches Hut is derelict but (with permission) Swale Hut is a good place to stay. It is a little hidden away. There is an old pack-track starting just downstream of Swale Hut that can still be followed over into the Medway River. From Swale Hut it is worth following the stream down, past a waterfall, to Kangaroo Corner. A small waterfall does make the gorge below here impassable.



