



EAGLE'S NEST

canyon v4a3V ★★ ★

Location

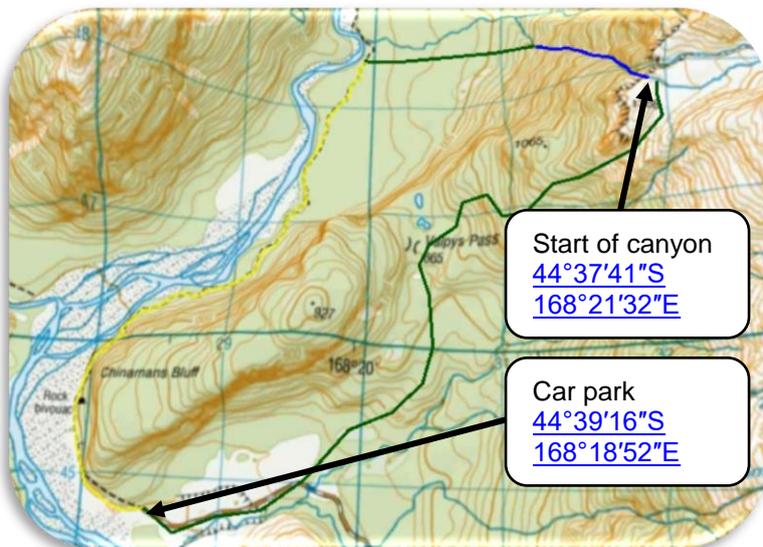
Dart Valley

Character

A stunning, steep and slotted canyon. It starts high up Mt Earnslaw and continues without pause all the way down to the valley. 700m of descent and over 40 rappels. A real classic, although also quite a big day!

Map

CA10 - Lake Williamson



Start of canyon
[44°37'41"S](#)
[168°21'32"E](#)

Car park
[44°39'16"S](#)
[168°18'52"E](#)

Approach by Car

Drive to the Dart Valley carpark, 1hr 15mins drive from Queenstown. From Paradise onwards the road is gravel and you must cross several fords, which are straightforward in a 2WD car when flows are normal and the road has recently been graded.

Approach on Foot

Walk back up the road for 1km and head into the bush just before the last ford. Make your way up to Valpys Pass. Climb up to point 1368, avoiding the bluffs. The canyon starts where the left branch of the creek heads over the bluffs. [At the time of writing, this approach had not been tested. On the first descent the top was reached by following the true left of the canyon all the way from the bottom.] At the end of the canyon (~600m altitude), bush bash back down to the Dart Track and walk back to the car. It may be possible to arrange a pickup by jet boat.

Rock

Beautiful hard, clean schist.

Water

Medium flow in normal conditions. This topo was prepared after descent during a dry spell and therefore water hazards may appear that are not described here. It is often impossible to avoid the flow.

Catchment

4.6km² (~50% more than The General canyon).

Anchors

Predominantly single bolt anchors (in hard, good quality rock). The occasional tree or thread anchor. [At the time of writing R10 needs a bolt for descent – it can be rappelled from the R9 anchor as one 50m rappel, but pull down is risky.]

Gear

Minimum 2 x 60m ropes. Most bolts will survive floods, however a hand bolting kit should be taken. [The galv maillons used throughout, in combination with SS hangers, may need replacing.]

Route Description

The canyon starts by dropping off the bluffs at around 1,300m. From where the left and right branches the canyon slots up properly. From here it is almost continuous back-to-back rappels (more than 40 of them!) all the way down to 600m. There are so many stunning rappels you will almost be sick of them by the end! The rappels themselves are fairly non-technical, and the anchors are easily approached (only the occasional safety line may be needed). At the time of writing most of the canyon pools were filled with gravel and there were very few jumps. If this changes after a flood there will be many jumps and slides.

Time

Vehicle park to start of canyon	5hrs
Canyon descent	7hrs
Return to Vehicle	2hrs
Total	14hrs

Flash Flood Danger

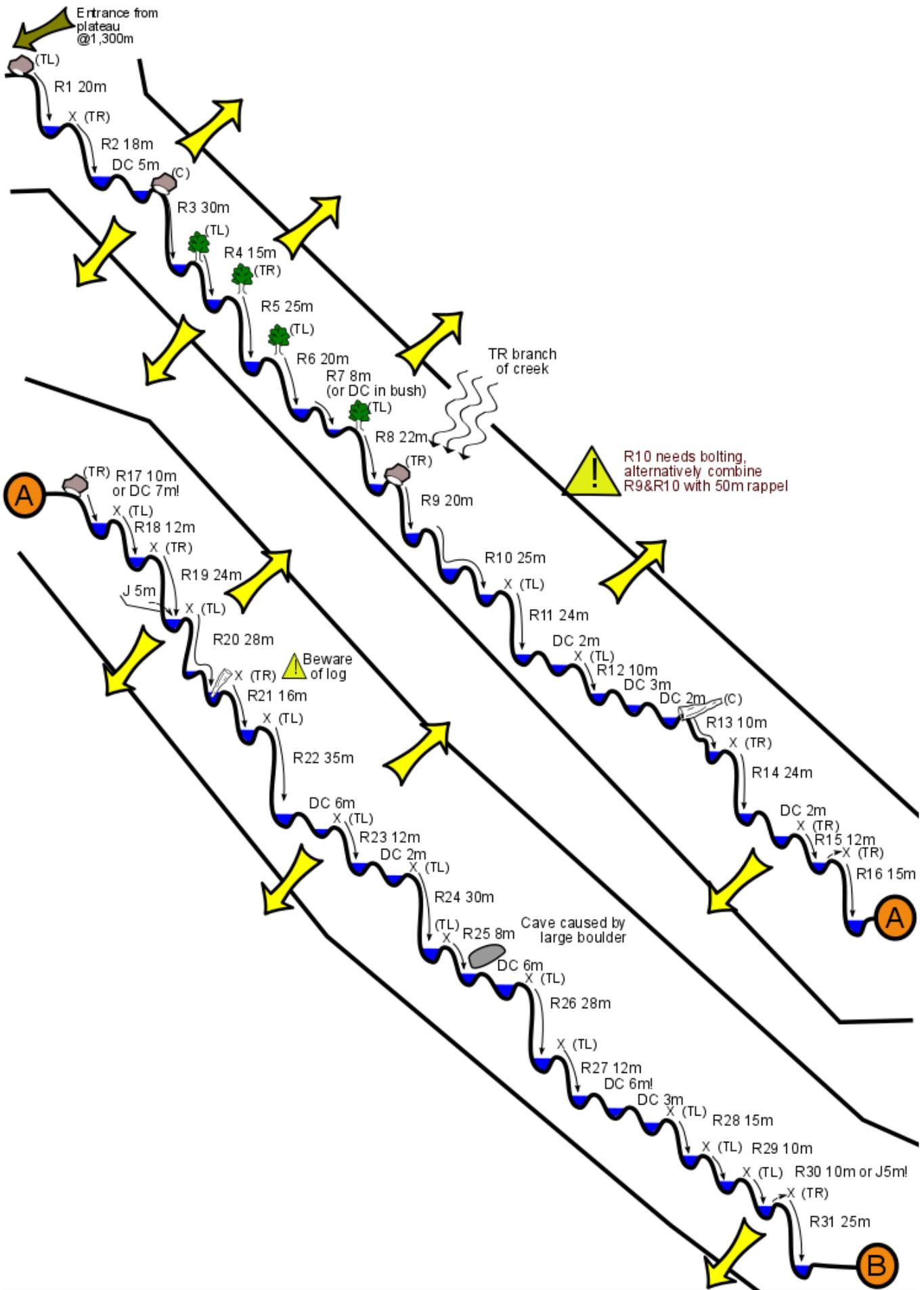
Very high. The canyon is narrow and slotted throughout. Beware of snowmelt in the spring.

Escapes

Only a handful of escapes. Commitment level is high!

Notes

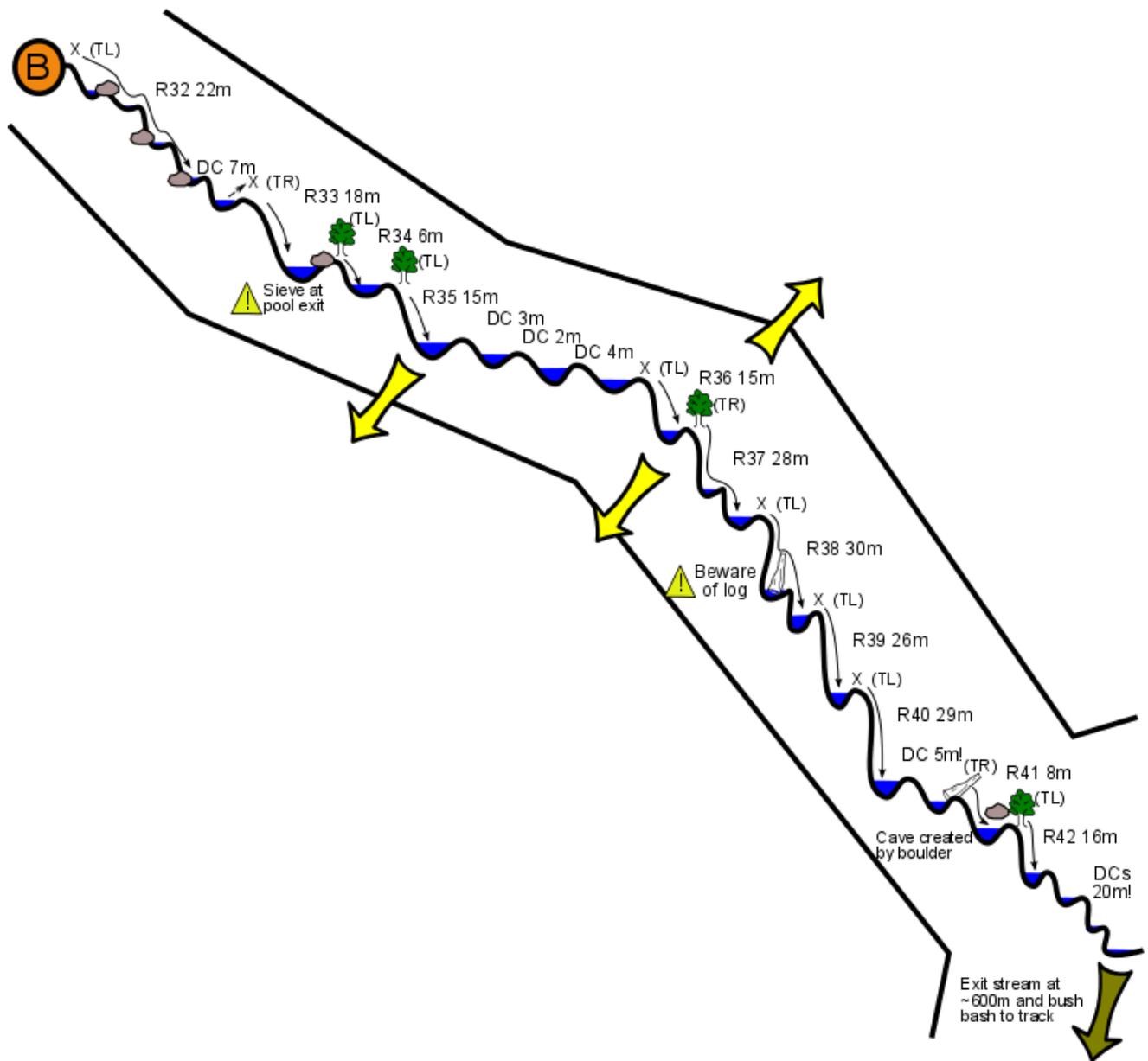
First descent: 1/3/2017, Toine Houtenbos, Alain Rohr, Richard Bramley.
<https://youtu.be/UPijgaOr9Y>



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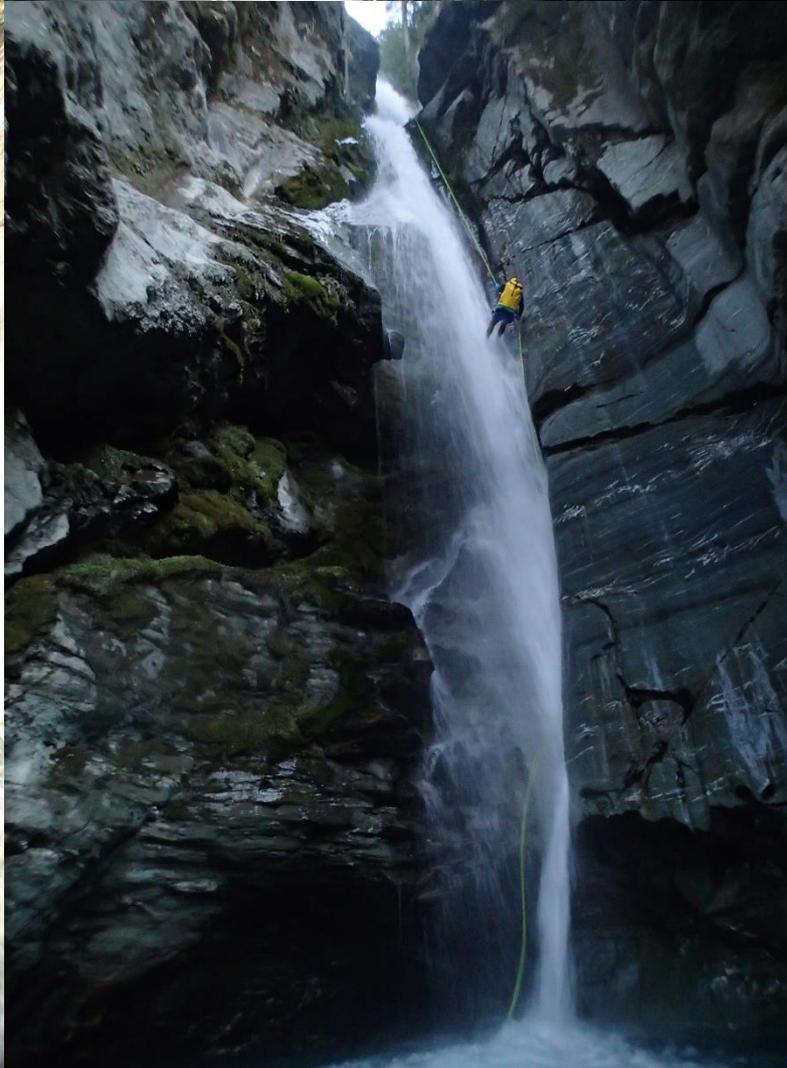
Topo by Richard Bramley
www.kiwicanyons.org



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