



CUPOLA

Creek v4a5IV ★★ ★

Location

Lake Rotoiti, Nelson Lakes

Character

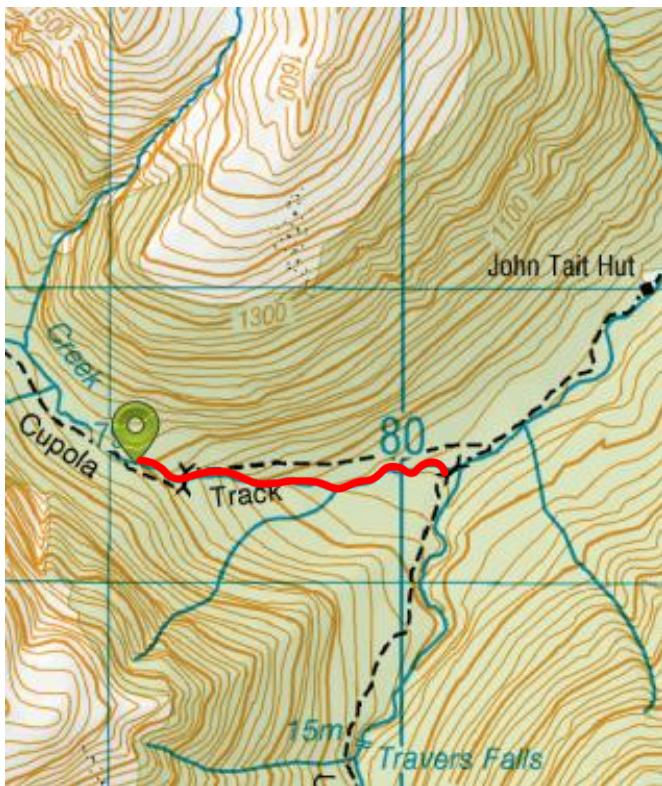
It is a big walk to get in there, but oh man it is worth it. The rock is bullet hard and clean washed. There are lots of interesting aquatic challenges, but nothing too scary. The canyon is slotted throughout, although often not deep, so sunlight pours in. And there are some crazy features, like the 'cave' where the canyon walls wrap around each other.

Map

Topo map: [BS24 Mt Robert](#)

Rotoiti car park: [-41.806957, 172.846785](#)

Start of canyon: [-41.980102, 172.747564](#)



Approach by Car and Boat

Drive to St Arnaud/Lake Rotoiti (1hr from Nelson/Motueka). Take boat to Coldwater Hut at head of lake (8km, www.rototiwatertaxis.co.nz). Alternatively, it is a 2hr walk from the Mt Robert car park to Coldwater Hut.

Approach on Foot

Hike to John Tait Hut (15km, 3.5hrs from Coldwater Hut), which sleeps 27 and is a good place to spend the night before doing the canyon. Hike from John Tait Hut to start

of the canyon (2km, 30min). Enter the canyon a few hundred metres above the second bridge. Exit the canyon at the first bridge (which is a good jump).

Rock

Greywacke, very hard

Water

Reasonably high volume, very cold.

Catchment

12.2 km² catchment

Anchors

Slinged trees and SS double bolts with rings

Gear

2 x 30m rope

Route Description

8 rappels and quite a lot of jumps. Lots of swimming – the canyon is very narrow, so you are often forced into the flow. Some hazardous aquatic features, including undercuts and sieves, so you need to be confident in whitewater. Some can be bypassed and most of the canyon is scout-able from the rim. Best done in summer flows. The last section before the bridge is mostly flat, but there are still a few good jumps in there.

Time

Boat, St Arnaud to Coldwater Hut	15m
Walk from Coldwater Hut to canyon	4h
Canyon descent	4h
Return to Coldwater Hut	4h
Boat, Coldwater Hut to St Arnaud	15m
Total	12.5h

Flash Flood Danger

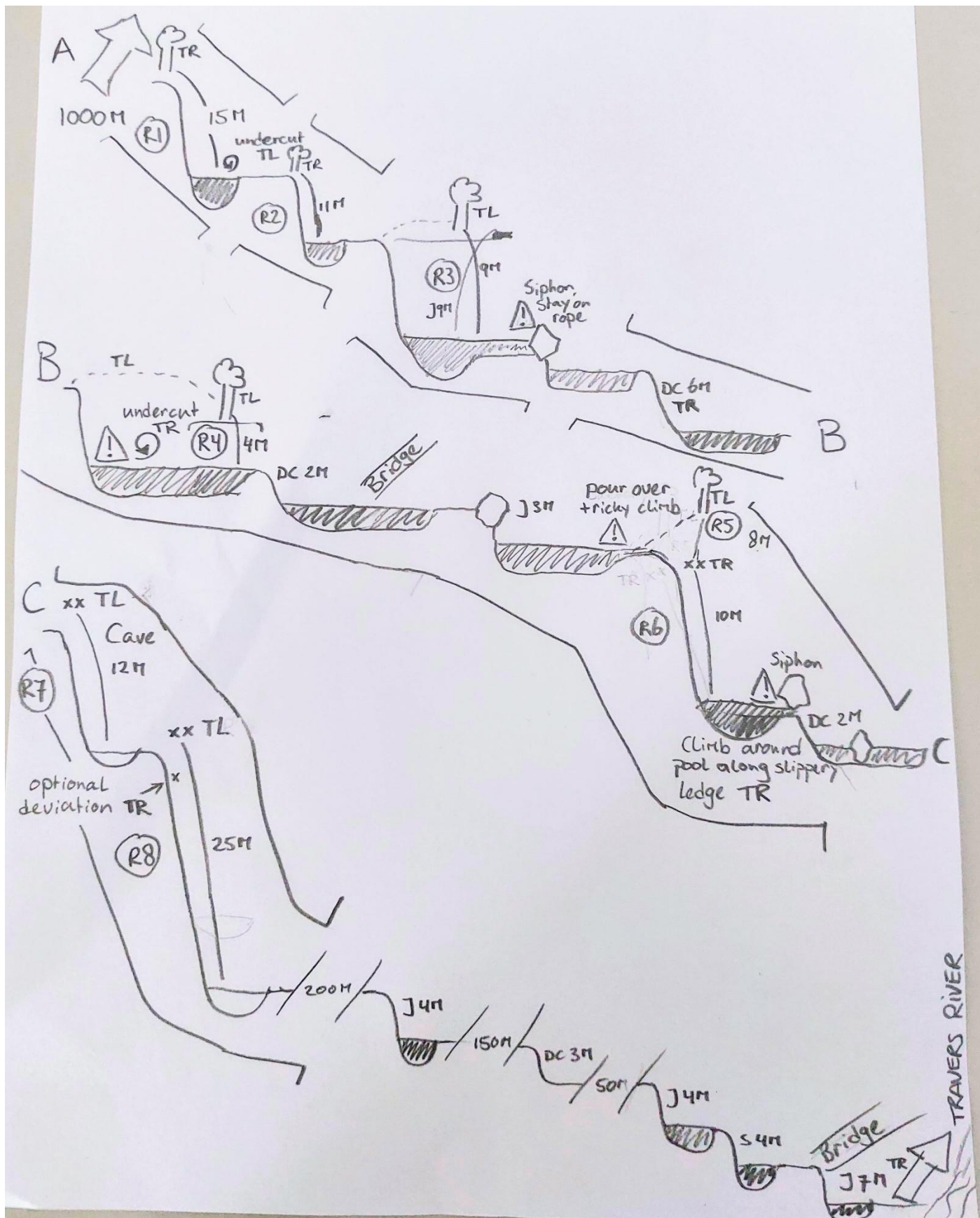
Moderate. The catchment is mostly rock.

Escapes

Very narrow, but not that deep. There are quite a few easy escapes

Notes

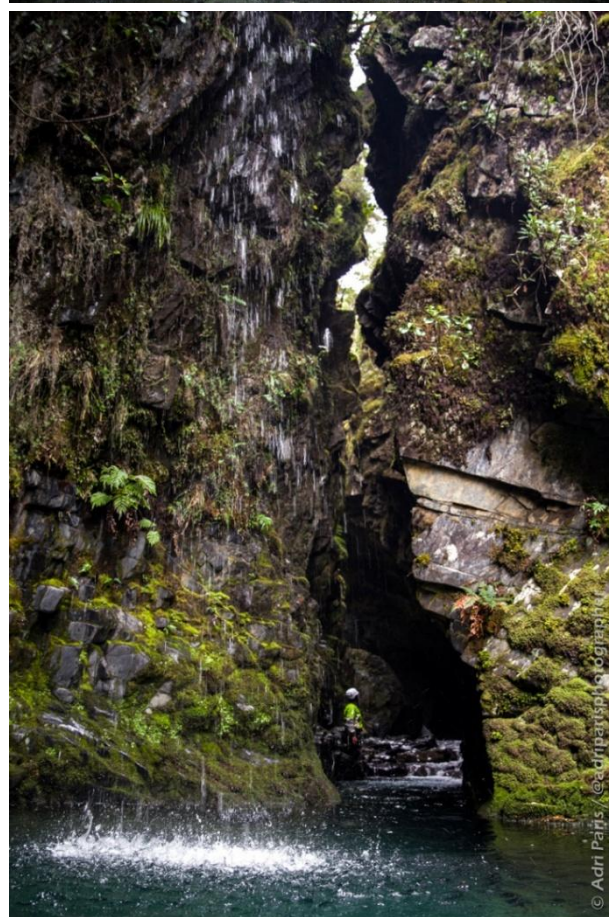
First descent: James Scoltock, Lee Den Haan, Adrien Paris, Richard Bramley. 30 Jan 2018. [Video](#)



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Topo by Richard Bramley
and Toine Houtenbos
www.kiwicanyons.org



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