

Kaumira Canyon¹

Map CA18 Waituna	Drop 20m	Rope 2 x 30m	Anchors Bolts	Length 450m	Height 90m	Rock Greywacke	Area 5.7km ²	Flash Flood Moderate	Season 10-04
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Kaumira is a classic of the Canterbury region. The canyon section is quite continuous, with medium length drops into large and often deep pools. There are several good jumps to be found. On some pitches, you can set the rope short to rappel off the end and slide into the pool!

Carpark to start 40'
Canyon descent 2h
Return to car 20'
TOTAL

v4a3II**

Approach by car

The drive is through rural back roads to access this canyon, so take a good map as is no cell reception.

From the north head to the Cave township. Follow the Cave-Pareora Road south 5.4km turning at Cannington Road on the right. Then follow the obvious tar-sealed road 3km onto Blackline road. 9.4km further on you will see the signs for Mt Nimrod Rd and Reserve.

From Timaru, head south on SH1 for 13km and cross the Pareora River. Take the first right after the bridge and follow Pareora River Rd for 15km.

Keep left at a 'Y' junction to stay on Pareora River Rd and follow it through the Pareora Gorge. About 500m beyond the gorge, turn left onto Limestone Rd. Then almost immediately, turn right and follow Motukaika Rd for 11.3km.

Turn right and follow Back Line Rd for 2.1km until you see signs for Mt Nimrod Rd and Reserve.

Follow DOC signs on a legal public access route to the reserve. Leave all gates as you find them.

Approach on foot

Mt Nimrod Reserve is a small area of public

land, surrounded by private farms. Unfortunately, the farmers have had a lot of trouble with trespassing and anti-social behaviour on their land.

Ensure that you keep to the track, and respect the adjoining private land.

From the Mt Nimrod DOC camping area follow the signposted track to "Mt Nimrod". Cross the bridge to the TL and follow the track to a high point with great views of the surrounding mountains. Descend the track to the stream. You can ascend the TR side of the canyon as well however it is steeper and has more ascent and descent.

The DOC track continues on the other side looping back to the car park, providing an alternative activity for others,

It is worth walking a few minutes upstream before beginning your descent.

Route Description

Although the highest pitch is 20m, a pair of 30m ropes means you can retrieve the ropes from dry land.

There are options for jumps from the top of R1. You will need to use a handline (usually in place) to access the jumping ledge and abseil bolts.

For R2 and R3, the rope can be set several metres short, so that you rappel off the end of the rope and slide the last few metres into the deep pools.

Below R4, it's possible to climb back up the TR rim of the canyon for a 10m and 14m jump. This pool is a great example of why it is important to remember to check all jump or slide pools beforehand. The pool is usually deep enough on the TR, but gets shallow quickly on the TL. If you don't jump in exactly the right place, you could very easily injure yourself.

Boulder hop 15 mins downstream until you reach a concrete weir.

Exit the stream on the TR to a 4WD track and walk 5 minutes back to your car.

Water

Low to moderate flows in normal conditions. The canyon is a long way east of the main divide, so will often still be in condition when it has been raining in the high mountains.

The picture below is of the concrete weir, about 5 minutes walk up the exit track from the camping area. It shows a normal low flow, suitable for intermediate canyoneers.

Escapes

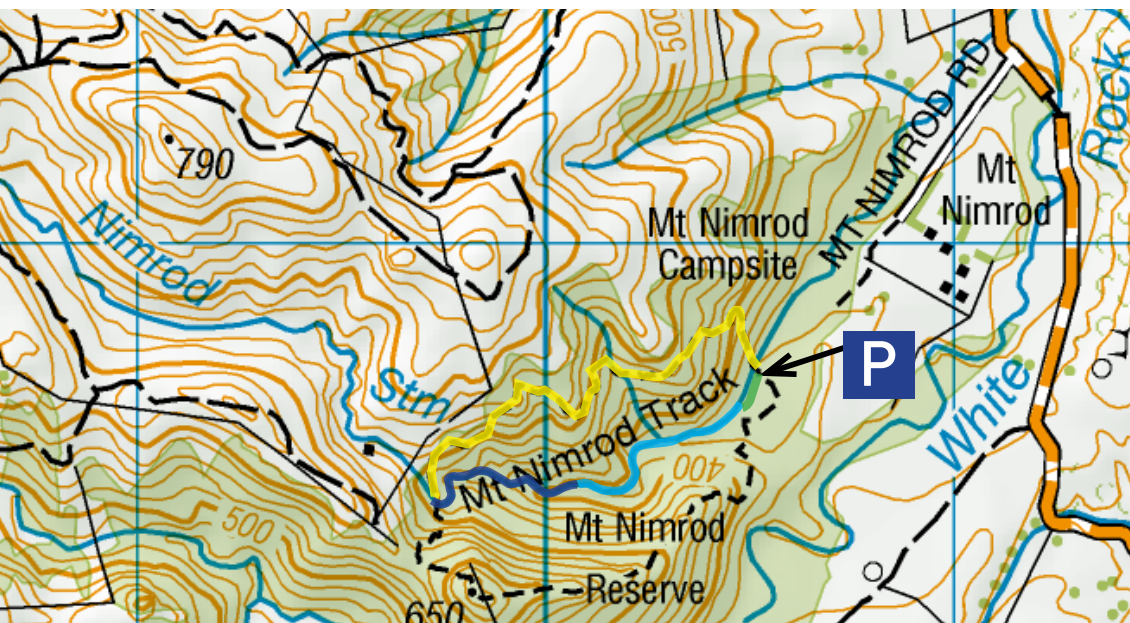
There are no easy escape points in this canyon, although there are plenty of places where you could get to a higher point above any flood waters.

Notes

This canyon is guided commercially by Big Rock Adventures. A courtesy call to the operator is a good idea to ask about current conditions and any groups heading through.

Big Rock Adventures offer canyoning courses to help develop your skills.

<https://www.bigrockadventures.co.nz>

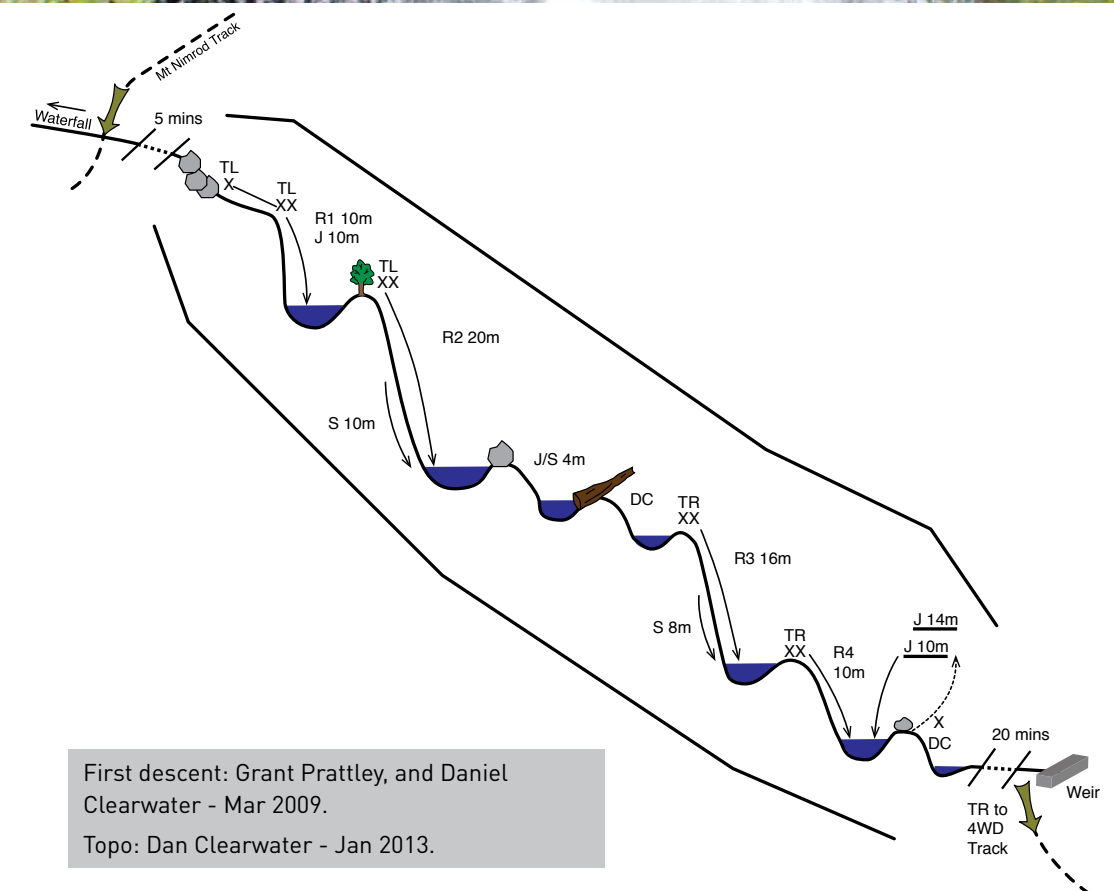


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¹ Adapted from 39 Kaumira Canyon, pages 338-343, Canyoning in New Zealand, Daniel Clearwater. 2015.



Above: A classic canyon pool jump from 10m on R1.
Photo / Grant Prattley



First descent: Grant Prattley, and Daniel Clearwater - Mar 2009.

Topo: Dan Clearwater - Jan 2013.

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Above: A canyoneer sliding off the end of the rope on R2.
Photo / Grant Prattley