



BLUE

Creek v3a1II ★

Location

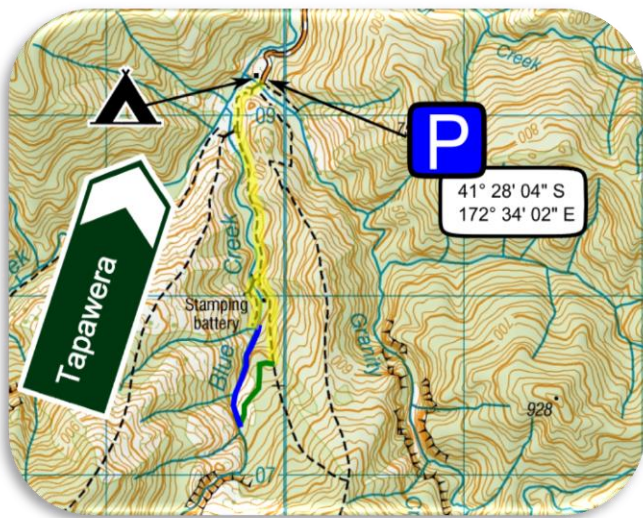
Mt Owen massif, Kahurangi National Park.

Character

A deep, narrow, continuous and mostly dry limestone slot canyon with a lot of small rappels.

Map

BQ23 Wangapeka Saddle.



Approach by Car

From the small country town Tapawera, turn onto Tadmor valley Rd. After 8.6km, turn right onto Tadmor-Bushend Rd, which turns into Wangapeka River Rd. Follow this road, which turns to gravel, to the DoC campground at the end of the road, which is named Courthouse Flat.

Approach on Foot

From Courthouse flat walk about 15 minutes along the track to the Blue Creek resurgence. Branch off on the marked track towards Granity Creek hut.

The track climbs relatively steeply for 10 or so minutes, before leveling out for perhaps 100m or so. At the end of the level section, the track does a sharp 90 degree left turn and immediately heads steeply uphill for 15 meters to a 'Danger, Mineshafts' DoC sign. Back at this 90 degree turn, the old Blue Creek Access track begins, but it is hard to find. Instead of turning 90 degrees left, turn 90 degrees right and scramble up a few meters to the side of a bluff, where you will cross the access track tucked close to the base of the bluff.

Following this track for a few meters, you'll see an old sign indicating Blue Creek Gorge on a tree.

Follow the intermittent markers along the occasionally overgrown track to the Canyon. Do not attempt this track unless you have experience in following unmaintained tracks. This is not a good area to get lost, as there are plenty of holes in the Karst landscape waiting for the unwary.

Rock

Marble.

Water

A couple of thigh to waist deep pools.

Anchors

Bolted and natural anchors. Inspect all bolts prior to use. Natural anchors are jammed logs or rocks.

Gear

Spare anchor material in case the bolts are missing.

Route Description

After a couple of nice raps the narrows become deep and continuous. None of the pitches are long, but many involve difficult starts and are overhung.

With good downclimbing/spotting skills and use of temporary anchors most of the drops without bolts *can* be down-climbed. Use caution, and rappel anything you are not 110% confident of downclimbing. Be wary that most of the pitches are from old debris jams that have created a false floor in the canyon.

You'll hear the resurgence as you exit the narrows. Skirt round the pool to join the tramping track on the true left to get back to the car.

Time

Car to old track turn off	30 mins
Turn off to canyon	30 mins
Descent of Canyon	2-3 hrs
Return to vehicle	20 mins
Total	3.5-4.5 hrs

Flash Flood Danger

High. Continuous narrows and large drainage.

Escapes

The narrows are continuous and deep. No escapes once committed.

Notes

Run as a commercial trip by Abel Tasman Canyons. A courtesy call on 03 528 9800 is highly recommended. www.abeltasmancanyons.co.nz

