

HAUHUNGATAHI – Old Baldy

260 Series Map: Ohakune, S20

Topo50 Map: BH35 Turangi

How to get to START:

- Exit Taupo southwards on **SH1** to Turangi
- In Turangi use **SH41** towards Tokaanu and turn left to **SH47**
- Pass the turn off to Whakapapa in 1 hour
- Turn left on to **SH4** at National Park in 1:15min
- Pass the Lodge Motel on the right then the old prison on the left before crossing the railway line in 1:20min
- Turn left to Erua Road at the Crossing Backpackers and park at the road end (**OB01** 736masl) just short of the railway line in 1:25min.

Times and distances from Police Station, Taupo

Rough Description: A moderate walk which, if any longer, might be described as falling in the fit category. The start is at Erua near National Park and the route uses a very overgrown, underused track which has a brutal first section in that it goes steeply uphill through dense forest. Once the bush-line is reached the going is easier but still tough as the slope is still significant as it passes through rough tussock type vegetation and bog. The final ascent is easier as it is rocky to firstly reach the Trig point (**OB09** 1518masl) then the out-lying conical summit (**OB10** 1524masl) in about 3 hours. The descent can be done in about 2 hours. Care must be taken throughout as there are many trip-up type roots on the forest section and deep, often water-filled, hidden holes in the bog area.

Detail: From the spot indicated for parking (**OB01** 736masl) which is between the riding school arena and a huge new shed (indoor equestrian events?) set off south on the right hand side of the railway track – walking is easier this side. After 5 minutes or so keep a wary eye open across the rail-track for the weather-beaten, faded wooden track notice indicating the start of the walk (**OB02** 742masl).

The first part of the track is so over-grown it is a struggle to get through – flax and other scratchy type bushes - and it soon become quite steep plus many roots threaten to cause trip ups. Soon the heavy vegetation lessens and really nice forest is entered – but the slog uphill continues. There are many large native species including Cedar and Totara whilst the slope does ease a bit after about 50 minutes (**OB03** 992masl).

The first indications of the bog ahead appear after about 1:20minutes (**OB04** 1132masl) when the slope really does ease and pools plus muddy patches are encountered.

Track notice – if you can see it



Thick bush with Old Baldy in distance



A perfect spot for a refreshment break is found in an open area with quite a large bog pond (**OB05** 1146masl). After this there are actually poles marking the track but, since these are old and very faded, they are not too easy to spot and would be impossible to see on overcast or low-cloudy days. Care must be taken whilst traversing this next area as there is a lot of bog and many, well-hidden quite deep holes for the unwary to stumble into. The track is also very vague and easily lost – especially on the return. Within the forest area there was reasonable bird-life with Grey Warbler and Cuckoo being heard whilst out on the moor / boggy area the high-level skylark (Pipit) was very obvious. Visibility does improve (**OB06** 1171masl) the further one walks and a fair view of the target hill is soon seen plus views of Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe are also obtained. After enjoying the low bush there is then a small section of more dense, higher scratchy bush to pass through (**OB07** 1205masl).

The view is then much more open, the bush is lower – with a lot of carpet daisy – but it is still tricky, tiring walking as the surface has a lot of tussock, eroded areas and bog holes. After about 2:30minutes the slope increases (**OB08** 1360masl) as the conical top of Hauhungatahi is approached. The last few metres involve rock-hopping to reach the trig point (**OB09** 1518masl) and from here it is only a 5 minute wander to get to the real summit (**OB10** 1521masl). Good panoramic views are available from the summit.

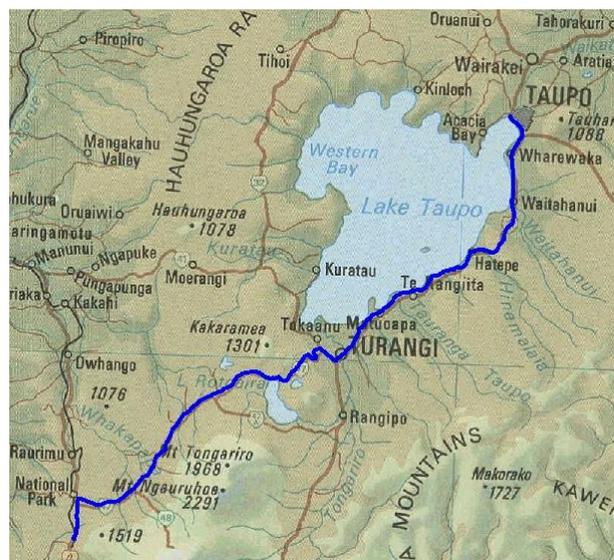
Erua and railway from start



Trig with Ngauruhoe behind



Access



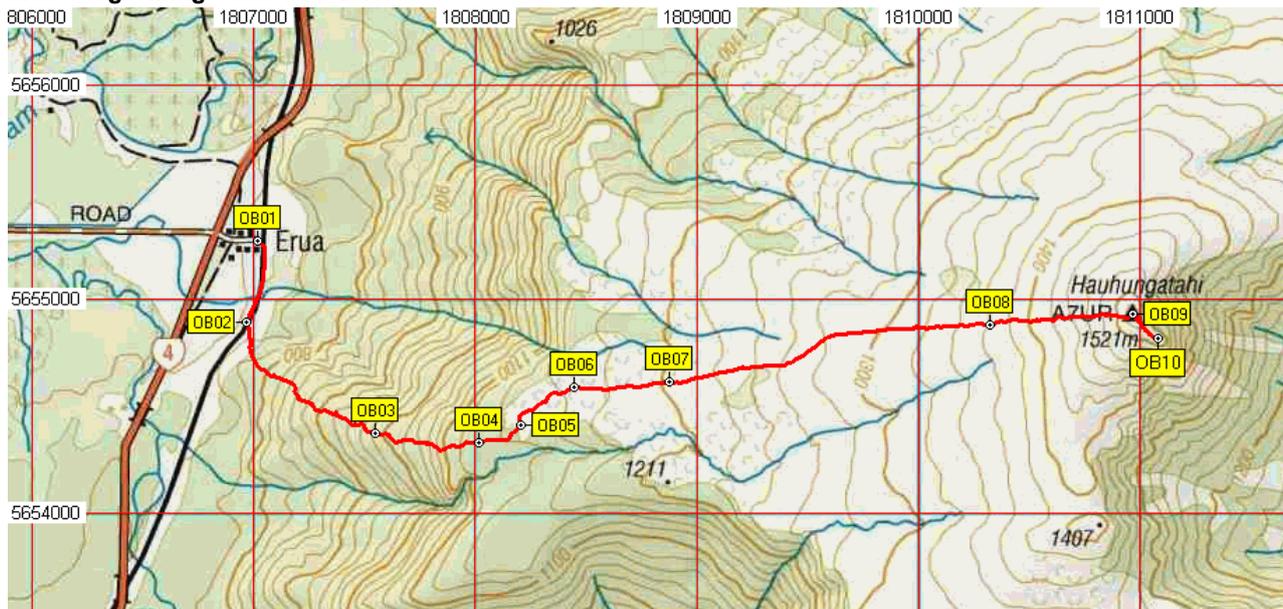
The route described on the left is shown above

The distance walked is a bit over 10km with 5.2km in and then out again plus an allowance of about another 3km for the altitude (700 odd metres) gained and lost giving an overall estimate of just over 13 km.

Panorama northwards from summit



Map and Google Image with GPS Data



Waypoints – NZ Grid

Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
OB01	2717085	6216939	736	Park at Erua Road end at railway line
OB02	2717037	6216559	742	8min; Cross railway line after walking due south to find and use old path with "track" notice
OB03	2717618	6216039	992	50min; Slope easing after fair grunt up heavily overgrown poor track
OB04	2718085	6215997	1132	1:20min; Slope much less and first of boggy sections and pools
OB05	2718274	6216081	1146	1:30min; Open with bog and pools for Smoko. Track is poled from here upwards
OB06	2718511	6216253	1171	1:50min; Lower tussock and bush with clear view of Hauhungatahi
OB07	2718940	6216280	1205	2hrs; Small rise or minor crest with higher bush
OB08	2720388	6216549	1360	2:40min; Steeper slope, still boggy with tussock up final part of hill with rock top
OB09	2721031	6216596	1518	2:55min; Trig point on rocky top for lunch
OB10	2721149	6216486	1524	5min from Trig point on conical summit

NZTM

Easting	Northing
1807007	5655000
1806959	5654619
1807540	5654100
1808007	5654058
1808196	5654142
1808433	5654315
1808862	5654342
1810310	5654612
1810954	5654659
1811072	5654549

Notes

- GPS = Garmin GPSMap 60CSx
- WP = Waypoint as taken by GPS
- MASL = metres above sea level

Total Distance : 5.173 Km
 Minimum Altitude : 736 Meters
 Maximum Altitude : 1518 Meters