

OKATAINA WALKWAY EAST

260 Series Map: Tarawera, V16

Topo50 Map: BE37 Rotorua & BE38 Lake Rotoma

How to get to START: Exit Taupo on SH 1 North

- At Wairakei follow SH 5 to Rotorua
- Enter Rotorua and at roundabout follow SH30 to Whakatane
- At traffic lights go right on SH30 to Whakatane
- Next roundabout go straight on
- Traffic lights go straight on SH 30
- Over mini-roundabout, pass Rotorua Airport
- At Te Ngae go right on SH 30 to Whakatane
- Pass "Hell's Gate" thermal area
- Hapaurau Bay then pass Western Walkway
- At Ruato turn right into Okataina Road (7km)
- Park in car park (**OWE01**) on left at extreme end of the road; there are toilets.

Rough description: Total driving time is 1:30min to reach the start. Depending on what you do this can be a long walk as it can take 3 hours to 3:30 minutes one way down Lake Okataina to the top of Lake Tarawera, hence you could be looking at 6 - 7 hours if you do full length in and out. If this is the plan leave Taupo by 7:30am.

The walk is NOT strenuous as there are no real slopes to task you and the footpath is good and well marked. The forest is basically re-growth so not too many large trees but there are many ferns of various types. The walk is in forest all the way so not too many views but those that are offered of the lake are most picturesque on a good clear day. In July 2007 it was noted that there are "pegs" marking every kilometre of the track.

Detail: As in the directions above leave Taupo heading north on SH 1 then go to Rotorua where, soon after entering the city limits, a right turn is made at a round-about for Whakatane on to SH 30. Pass the airport, Hell's Gate then on the edge of the lake at Ruato follow the road off right to Okataina Lake. On reaching the end of this road (7km) enter the car park (**OWE01**) on the left overlooking the lake where toilets and the start of the Eastern Walkway path will be found along with many informative notices.

TTC devouring the notices



The route followed is shown in the map where the yellow boxes are waypoints taken by GPS at features that could be noted and the actual GPS trace (GPS recorded track) is shown in red. It must be noted that the route followed is not exactly as marked on the topographic map indicating that the track has been shifted to that originally mapped - the accuracy of the GPS points can be guaranteed as this track was taken by a high sensitivity device.

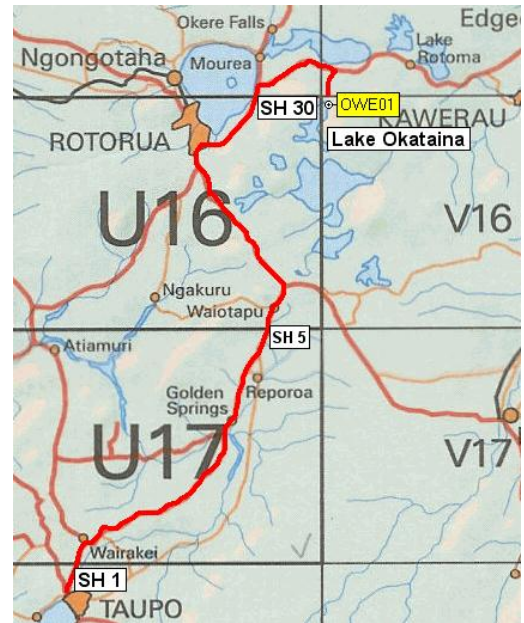
A T-junction (**OEWO2 329masl**) to Te Koutu Pa is arrived at in approximately 15 minutes walking from the car park, going straight arrives on the shoreline in a matter of minutes whilst the route to be followed is left. Immediately after this there is a very gloomy section of forest to pass through with low light conditions; this is due to being below quite high bluffs. The path is good and undulating to rolling in nature.

Good views over Lake Okataina can be had from Kaiwaka Bay (**OWE03 322masl**) which is reached in less than one hour from the car park. South of Kaiwaka Bay the path followed diverges from the mapped path and it has to be assumed there has been path realignment. The path firstly follows the shoreline then works round a stream line and more or less approaches the mapped path before crossing a headland and returning close to the lake.

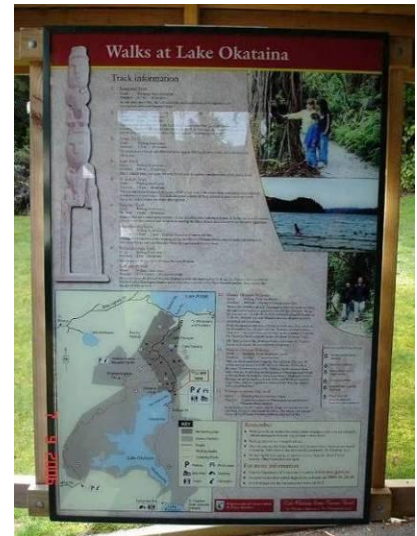
NZ Grid GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

Access



Historical facts



GPS data

From : 04-Jul-07 09:04:34
To : 04-Jul-07 12:11:09

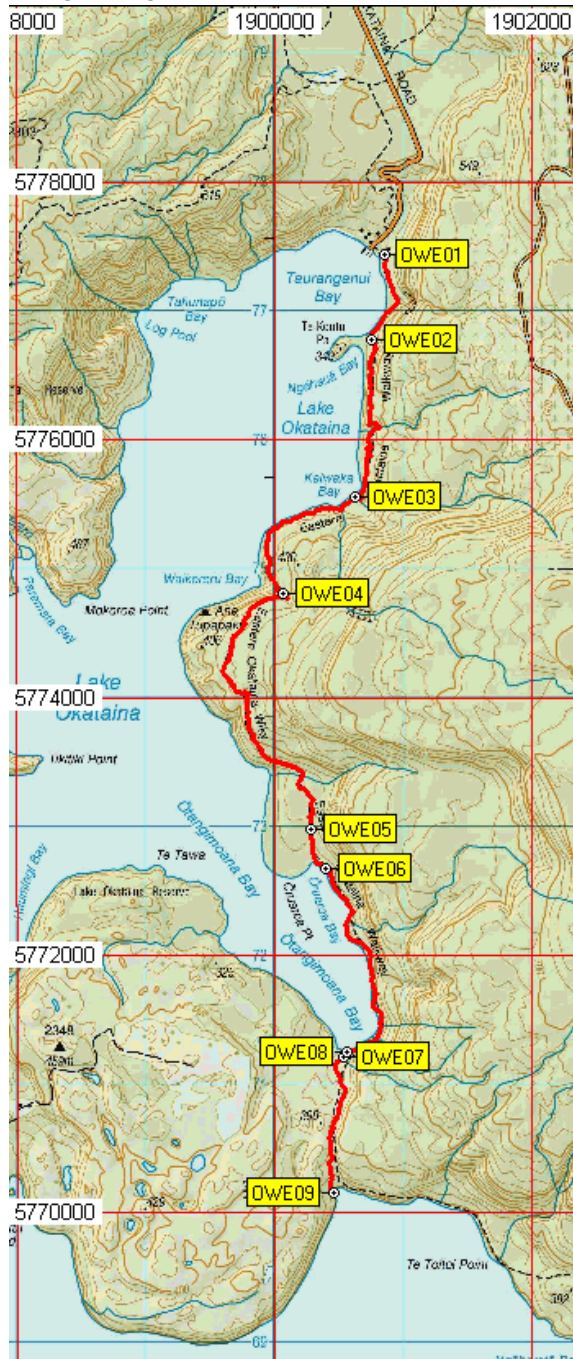
Time taken : 3:06:35
Total Distance : 10.297 Km

Minimum Speed : -0.083 KPH
Maximum Speed : 9.904 KPH
Average Speed : 3.311 KPH

Minimum Altitude : 317 Meters
Maximum Altitude : 462 Meters

NB One way data

Map and Google Image with GPS data



Waypoints – NZ Grid

Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
OWE01	2810907	6339387	322	04-JUL-07 Car Park at N end of Lake Okataina
OWE02	2810808	6338734	329	15 min walk, right at T-junction, straight goes to lakeshore & Te Koutu Pa
OWE03	2810679	6337506	322	40 min walk, lakeshore at Kaiwaka Bay
OWE04	2810120	6336766	389	1:20 min walk, near top of long uphill grunt
OWE05	2810335	6334933	348	2 hours walk, T-junction, go right down-slope
OWE06	2810448	6334635	335	2:10 min walk, 7km marker just before lakeshore
OWE07	2810591	6333176	334	2:45 min walk, T-junction with right to lake and notice for Lake Taranaki 20 min
OWE08	2810608	6333205	329	Lakeshore, 1 minute from notice then pass 9km marker on upslope
OWE09	2810511	6332117	320	3:05min with tea stop, edge of Lake Taranaki at 10.5km

NZTM

Easting	Northing
1900836	5777165
1900738	5776510
1900610	5775281
1900051	5774540
1900269	5772706
1900382	5772407
1900527	5770948
1900544	5770976
1900449	5769887



One of the “grunts” of the day occurs on the above described section as there is a long slope to ascend but it is not too steep and you should be up it in just over 1 hour 20 minutes (**OEW04** 389masl). A further deviation from the mapped path then takes you slightly further away from the lake over another raised area then, by going right at a small T-junction (**OWE05** 348masl), drops back down to the lake edge at Oruaroa Point (**OEW06** 335masl)).

This is a lovely spot for lunch with good views and black swans pottering in and out of the reeds on the lake edge. It takes another 30 odd minutes to reach the end of Lake (**OEW07** 334masl) Okataina from this point and there is a notice board here showing it is another 20 minutes to reach Lake Tarawera. The last section to Lake Tarawera is up and over a hilly section but it is not too steep and really does only take 20 minutes each way. There are good spots to be found overlooking the lake for a late lunch or refreshment break (**OEW09** 320masl).

Kaiwaka Bay



Millpond smooth lake reflections



Notes:

- **GPS** Garmin GPSmap 60CSx
- **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
- **masl** = metres above sea level