

FREE



Kepler TRACK

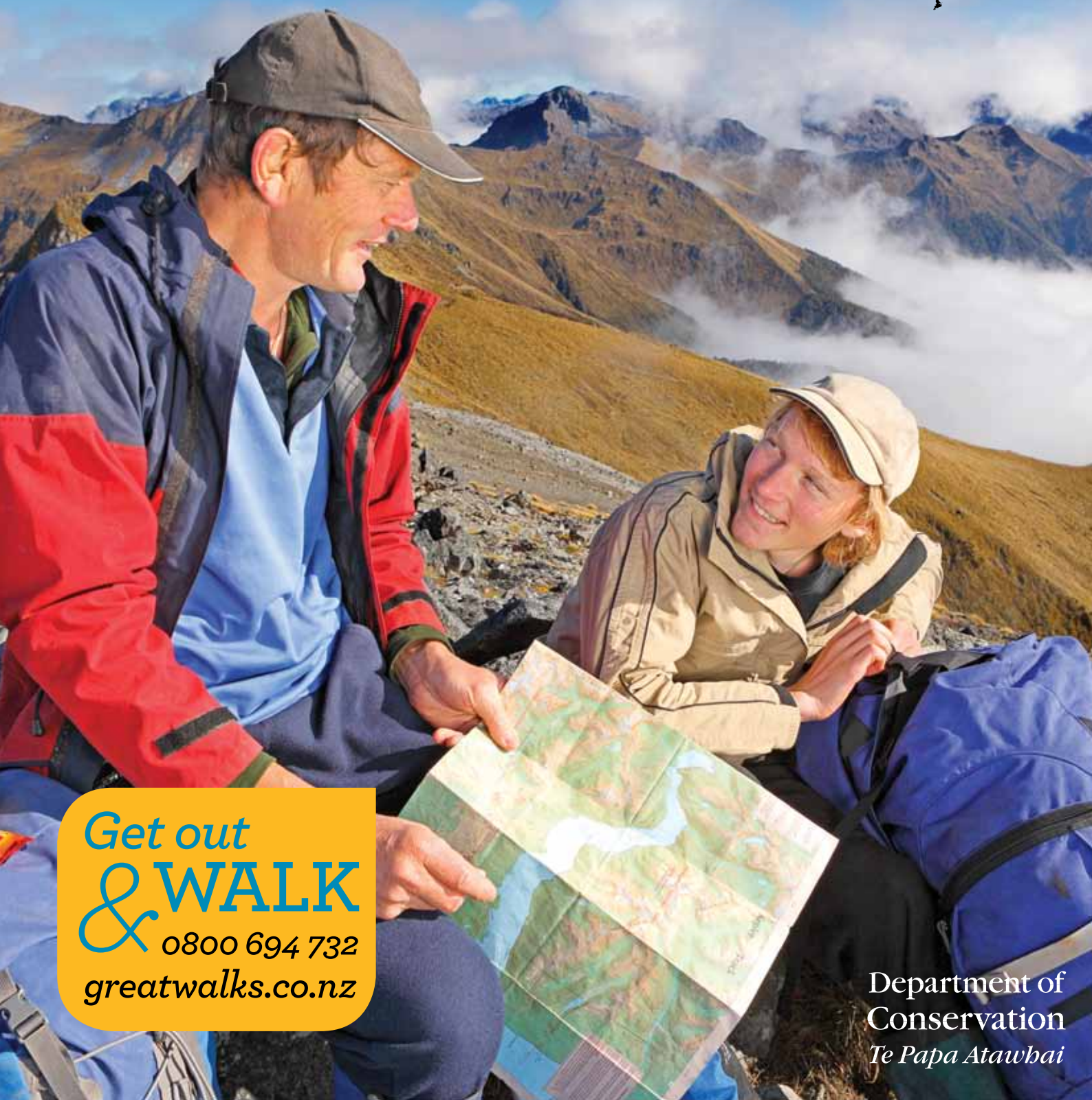
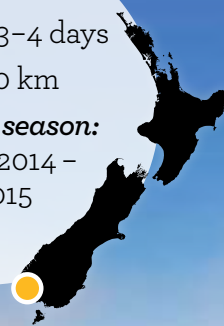
Duration: 3-4 days

Distance: 60 km

Great Walks season:

28 October 2014 -

29 April 2015



Get out
& WALK
0800 694 732
greatwalks.co.nz

Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

The Kepler Track is an incredible wilderness experience right on Te Anau's doorstep. It's a fantastic opportunity for families, groups and individuals to experience the most accessible of Fiordland's Great Walks.



This Great Walk traverses Fiordland National Park in the southwest of the South Island and is part of the Te Wāhipounamu – South West New Zealand World Heritage Area.

The remarkable scenery includes everything from remote lakes and peaceful beech forest backdrops, to rocky peaks and exposed alpine tussock lands.

- ▶ Listen out for the haunting night call of kiwi.
- ▶ Take the family for an overnight stay in Moturau Hut, which is beside a beautiful beach and has stunning views of Lake Manapouri.
- ▶ While away the evenings in one of the cosy and spacious huts offering stunning alpine panoramas.

Cover image: Above Luxmore Hut.
Photo: Rob Suisted (naturespic.com)


This page: Hanging Valley Shelter. Photo: DOC
Quote: rankers.co.nz

“By far the best hike I have ever done. Alpine section gives amazing views of the Southern Alps and Lakes. Absolutely stunning.”

Colby, United States



Track guide

 *The Kepler Track is a circular track and can be walked in either direction. The track is well marked and signposted, but some sections may be steep, rough or muddy. Winter conditions make the track more challenging—see safety information. This guide describes a 4-day easy hike for independent, non-guided walkers.*

Day 1: Kepler Track car park to Luxmore Hut

13.8 km, 5–6 hours

The track takes you through beech forest along the shore of Lake Te Anau, the largest body of fresh water in Australasia, to Brod Bay. From here a challenging climb takes you under impressive limestone bluffs, before emerging above the bush line to panoramic views of the Te Anau Basin and surrounding mountains. Luxmore Hut (1085 metres) is a 45-minute walk from the bush line.

Day 2: Luxmore Hut to Iris Burn Hut

14.6 km, 5–6 hours

Start your day on top of the world. Departing the hut, climb to a ridge just below Mount Luxmore, with stunning views across the south fiord of Lake Te Anau to the Murchison Mountains—home of the rare, flightless takahē. A welcoming sight after a day on the tops, Iris Burn Hut is situated in a large tussock clearing. Listen for kiwi calling at night.

Day 3: Iris Burn Hut to Moturau Hut

16.2 km, 5–6 hours

Experience ever-changing scenery as the track takes you over a low saddle, then down past a large slip caused by heavy rain to Rocky Point. The track then winds through a gorge and lowland beech and podocarp forest, before reaching the shore of beautiful Lake Manapouri. The beachside Moturau Hut has stunning views of the lake.

Day 4: Moturau Hut to the Kepler Track car park

15.5 km, 4 hours – 5 hours 30 minutes

The last day is easy walking across a unique and fragile wetland. The track then follows the Waiiau River terrace to the swing bridge at Rainbow Reach. You can leave the track here and catch a shuttle bus to Te Anau, or continue alongside the Waiiau River to the Kepler Track car park.



Luxmore Cave. Photo: Stokedforsaturday.com

Optional side trips

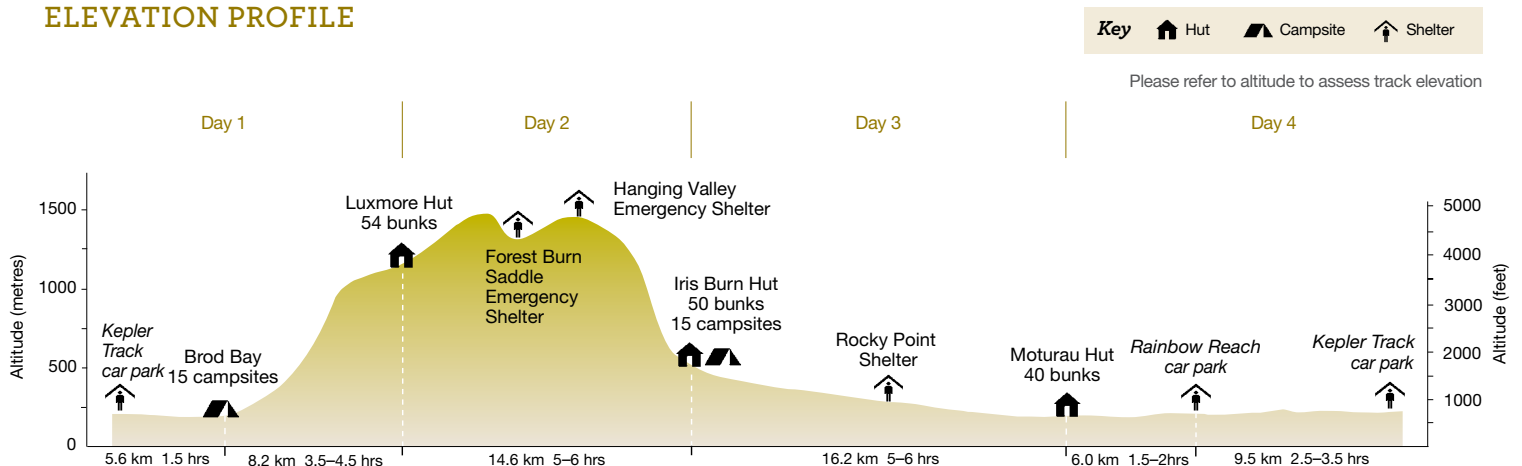
Day 1: Luxmore Cave

➤ *The cave is a 10-minute walk from Luxmore Hut and is clearly signposted. Please indicate your intentions in the visitors' book provided in the hut when visiting the cave and ensure you take a torch.*

Day 2: Iris Burn Waterfall

➤ *A 20-minute walk from Iris Burn Hut leads to an isolated waterfall, perfect for a refreshing dip after the day's walk.*

ELEVATION PROFILE





GETTING THERE

You can access the track from the following locations.

1. Kepler Track car park 5 km drive from Te Anau.
2. Fiordland National Park Visitor Centre 50 minute walk along the lake front to the entrance of the track.
3. Rainbow Reach car park 12 km drive from Te Anau.

Shuttle buses provide a daily service to the entry and exit points on the track during the Great Walks season. A scheduled boat service also offers transport to Brod Bay.

Refer to the back of the brochure for transport options and services.



AIR NEW ZEALAND 



Plan and prepare

It is **important** to plan and prepare your trip and be well equipped on a Great Walk.

Before you go, know **The Outdoor Safety Code**—5 simple rules to help you stay safe:

1. Plan your trip
2. Tell someone
3. Be aware of the weather
4. Know your limits
5. Take sufficient supplies



- Book your trip well in advance including your accommodation, transport and transfers to the start/end of the track.
- Safety is your responsibility—leave your trip details with a trusted contact. Further research on safety outside of this brochure is essential. See adventuresmart.org.nz.
- Weather on the track is changeable, so be prepared and check the forecast before you go. See metservice.com.
- A good level of fitness is required to walk the track. You can expect to walk up to 6 hours a day, depending on your fitness and weather conditions; and carry a pack of up to 15 kg for the whole length of the track.
- The right outdoor clothing, gear and equipment will greatly improve the enjoyment of your trip. Pack all necessary equipment and your own food and drinks (including an extra day's supply).
- Food and drinks are not available for purchase at Great Walks huts and campsites.

Kepler Track safety

- The information within this brochure relates to the Kepler Track within the Great Walk season (28 October 2014 - 29 April 2015).
- This track is not recommended for children under the age of 10, due to the exposed mountainous environment and often adverse weather conditions. An overnight stay at Moturau Hut is an option to include the whole family.
- Fiordland National Park lies in an area with high rainfall and changeable weather patterns. Cold temperatures, snow, strong winds and heavy rain can occur at any time of the year.
- The Kepler Track contains complex avalanche terrain and the risk of avalanche can extend into December. During the Great Walks season, DOC manages this risk to a low level and may close the alpine section of the track between Luxmore Hut and Iris Burn Hut if avalanche conditions exist.
- For detailed safety information and a comprehensive gear list, see **Plan & Prepare** at greatwalks.co.nz.



In the Great Walks off-season (early May to late October) facilities are greatly reduced (no gas for cooking, limited water supply, no rangers or emergency radio facilities) and there are additional safety hazards to consider:

- The winter environment in Fiordland is very cold and wet, with ice, snow and short daylight hours. DOC does not manage hazards such as flooding or avalanche.

Walking the track at this time should only be attempted by fit, experienced and well-equipped people. For more information see doc.govt.nz/keplertrack_winter.

PLACES TO STAY



The Kepler Track huts during the Great Walks season have bunks, mattresses, heating, toilets, basic cooking facilities, solar-powered lighting and cold running water, and a DOC ranger is in residence. The huts do not provide cooking utensils or showers. **\$54 per adult per night; 17 years and under stay free.**



Great Walks campsites offer basic facilities including toilets, sinks and a water supply. Some also have picnic tables and cooking shelters. Great Walks campsites can only be accessed on foot and are not accessible by vehicle.

Bookings are **essential** during the Great Walks season (28 October 2014 - 29 April 2015). Great Walks huts and campsites **must be booked in advance**.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND BOOKINGS

Visit the Great Walks website or contact your nearest DOC Visitor Centre for further information and bookings.

Phone: 0800 NZ GREATWALKS (0800 694 732)

Email: greatwalks@doc.govt.nz

Web: greatwalks.co.nz



Book online greatwalks.co.nz

Kids Restore the Kepler



Ruud Kleinpaste. Photo: Barry Harcourt

Students from Fiordland schools and early childhood centres are taking the future of their backyard into their own hands! Kids Restore the Kepler aims to help Fiordland's young people develop knowledge, values and skills so they can be confident, connected and actively involved in caring for their environment.

With funding from major sponsor Kids Restore New Zealand, along with Distinction Hotels NZ, they are working with the Fiordland Conservation Trust and DOC to lead the community in bringing back the birdsong to the Kepler.

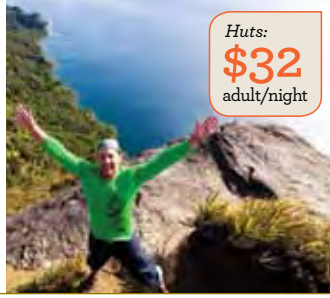
Find out more at kidsrestorethekepler.co.nz.

Other Great Walks

Lake Waikaremoana

Duration: 3–4 days | Distance: 46 km

Trace the shoreline of beautiful Lake Waikaremoana ‘the sea of rippling waters’ for spiritual and cultural enlightenment. Walk through ancient rainforest, pass giant podocarp trees and admire stunning views from Panekire Bluff.



Huts:
\$32
adult/night

Location: Te Urewera National Park, east North Island
Nearest towns: Rotorua, Napier, Wairoa, Gisborne

Tongariro Northern Circuit

Duration: 3–4 days | Distance: 43 km

Winding its way past Mount Tongariro and Mount Ngauruhoe, this Great Walk lets you explore dramatic volcanic landscapes including craters, glacial valleys, native beech forest, alpine meadows and emerald-coloured lakes in this World Heritage area.



Huts:
\$32
adult/night

Location: Tongariro National Park, central North Island
Nearest towns: Taupo, Turangi, Ohakune, Waiouru

Whanganui Journey

Duration: 3–5 days | Distance: 145 km

The Whanganui River winds its way from the mountains to the Tasman Sea through countless hills and valleys. This journey lets you take a multi-day canoe or kayak trip to experience its most remote scenic beauty, history and cultural significance.



Huts:
\$32
adult/night

Location: Whanganui National Park, south-west North Island
Nearest towns: Whanganui, Taumarunui, Ohakune

Abel Tasman Coast Track

Duration: 3–5 days | Distance: 60 km

Blessed with a mild climate, golden beaches and coastal forest, the Abel Tasman Coast Track has it all. Choose to walk the whole track or water taxi or kayak between different locations at any time of the year.



Huts:
\$32
adult/night

Location: Abel Tasman National Park, north-west South Island
Nearest towns: Nelson, Motueka, Takaka

Heaphy Track

Duration: 4–6 days | Distance: 78.4 km

From forest to coast, the Heaphy Track combines all of New Zealand’s scenic beauty into one Great Walk. Travel through expansive tussock downs, lush forests and nikau palms to the roaring seas of the wild West Coast.



Huts:
\$32
adult/night

Location: Kahurangi National Park, north-west South Island
Nearest towns: Nelson, Westport, Collingwood

Routeburn Track

Duration: 2–4 days | Distance: 32 km

The Routeburn Track traverses the Southern Alps of New Zealand and passes through ice-carved valleys and beech forest. Walk alongside pristine rivers and glistening alpine lakes offering breathtaking views and mountain scenery.



Huts:
\$54
adult/night

Location: Mount Aspiring & Fiordland Nat. Parks, South Island
Nearest towns: Queenstown, Glenorchy, Te Anau and Invercargill

Milford Track

Duration: 4 days | Distance: 53.5 km

Experience the stunning grandeur of the Milford Track including rugged mountain peaks, breathtaking sheer canyons and majestic waterfalls. Walk beside pristine rivers and amongst lush, green rainforest before crossing Mackinnon Pass and reaching spectacular Milford Sound.



Huts:
\$54
adult/night

Location: Fiordland National Park, south-west South Island
Nearest towns: Queenstown, Te Anau and Invercargill

Rakiura Track

Duration: 3 days | Distance: 32 km

Escape on an island adventure and exchange the hustle and bustle of mainland life for the tranquillity of the Rakiura Track. Revel in the peacefulness and idyllic surroundings, with the bush, birds and beach at your side.



Huts:
\$22
adult/night

Location: Stewart Island/Rakiura
Nearest towns: Invercargill (20 min flight) or Bluff (1 hr ferry)

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link Southern Cities with Great Walks**

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- Milford Track
- Routeburn Track
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