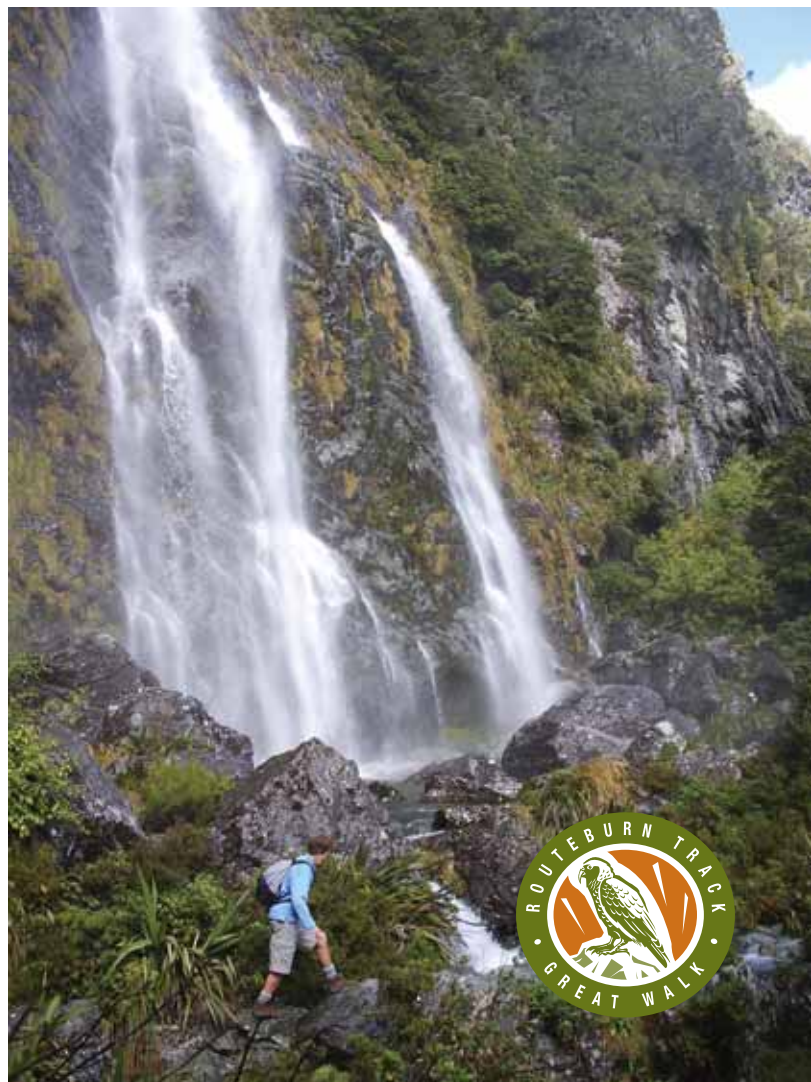


# Routeburn Track

Independent Tramping

SOUTHLAND/OTAGO – 2006/2007 SEASON



Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

## CONTENTS

The Routeburn Track	3
Other Activities	5
What to Take	7
Accommodation	9
Transport	10
Weather Information	11
Safety Information	12
Track Notes	14
Maps and Track Profile	16
Winter Tramping	19
History	21
Natural History	22
Conservation Projects	24
How to Book	26
Terms and Conditions	27
Transport, Equipment and Accommodation Suppliers	29
Contact Details	32

Cover photo: Earland Falls - Routeburn Track. Photo: Odette Singleton

## The Routeburn Track

The Routeburn Track traverses thirty-two kilometres of Mount Aspiring and Fiordland National Parks, part of Te Wāhipounamu - South West New Zealand World Heritage Area and is administered by the Department of Conservation on behalf of the New Zealand public.



View of the Routeburn Flats. Photo: Sue Scott

### Location



The Routeburn Track is located in the southwest of the South Island. It extends between the head of Lake Wakatipu and S.H. 94, the Te Anau - Milford Road. The nearest townships of Queenstown, Te Anau and Glenorchy have a full range of accommodation. Shops in Queenstown and Te Anau can cater for all your tramping needs, including equipment hire.

### Getting There

The Routeburn Track can be accessed by road at either the Routeburn Shelter, (the starting or finishing point at the Mount Aspiring National Park end of the track), or at the Divide (the starting or finishing point at the Fiordland National Park end of the track). Public transport services both ends of the track, see transport contacts listed later in this brochure.

#### Road Distances and Times

Queenstown to Glenorchy - 48km, 40 mins  
Glenorchy to Routeburn Shelter - 25km, 30 mins (unsealed road)  
Queenstown to Te Anau - 197km, 2 hours  
Te Anau to Divide - 85km, 1½ hours  
Divide to Milford Sound - 35km, 30 mins  
Te Anau to Invercargill, 1¾ hrs  
Queenstown to Invercargill, 2¼ hrs  
Queenstown or Te Anau to Dunedin, 3½ hours  
Queenstown to Christchurch, 6 hours  
Te Anau to Christchurch, 8 hours

## Walking Seasons

The Routeburn Track can be walked in either direction and in conjunction with the Greenstone or Caples Tracks.

### Late October to late April - Great Walks Peak Season (bookings required)

Most walkers take 3 days/2 nights to complete the whole track but can also walk into one of the huts and return the same way; or stay up to two nights at each of the four huts or two campsites. Howden and Routeburn Flats Huts are ideal stops for families or those not wanting to complete the whole track.

Bookings are essential and can be made online, via [www.doc.govt.nz explore - tracks and walks – great walks](http://www.doc.govt.nz/explore/tracks-and-walks/great-walks), or by post, fax, email or phone. Bookings open July 1 each year for the coming season.

### May to Mid October - Off Peak/Winter Season

No bookings are required for the offpeak/winter season. High snow loadings and avalanche danger can occur, especially between Lake Harris and Mackenzie Hut and may well make the track impassable. Some facilities are removed from the huts and track during the winter. See Winter Tramping Notes on page 19 for detailed information.

## Can I Do It?

Physical fitness and good equipment will make the difference to your enjoyment of your trip, regardless of the weather. It is suggested that walkers start a fitness programme at least two months before departure and include carrying a full pack up and down stairs or hills. Walkers can expect:

- to carry a pack weighing up to 15kgs for up to 20kms each day
- parts of the track to be rough and/or uneven
- **at least one days rain** while on the track
- to walk through water up to half a metre deep during or after heavy rain
- to cross unbridged streams
- to get wet, muddy boots - it's part of the Routeburn Track experience
- the good company of your fellow walkers, friends, family and, during the Great Walks peak season, Department of Conservation staff who are located at each hut.

**The alpine section of the Routeburn Track is not recommended for children under the age of ten** due to the mountainous terrain and adverse weather conditions.

## Other Activities

There is no charge to those wishing to independently day-walk on the Routeburn Track.

### Guided Walks

#### Overnight Trips

Ultimate Hikes hold the only DOC approved concession for overnight guided walks on the Routeburn Track during the Great Walks Peak Season. Visit their website, [www.ultimatehikes.co.nz](http://www.ultimatehikes.co.nz)

#### Day Walks

There are a number of guided day-walk opportunities available starting from either end of the track.



Day walkers at the Route Burn. Photo: Sue Scott.

### Fishing

Information correct at time of printing. Please check for latest conditions. To combat the spread of the invasive alga DIDYMO (*Didymosphenia geminata*) into Fiordland and Mount Aspiring National Parks, all equipment, including footwear, must be cleaned and dried thoroughly before moving from one waterway to another.

- Route Burn – A fishing licence is required. Fishing season from 1 November – 31 May. Fly-fishing only. Bag limit – 0. Compulsory catch and release.
- Greenstone and Caples Rivers – A fishing licence is required. Special conditions may apply; refer to your Regulation Guide. Fishing season from 1 November – 31 May. Flyfishing only. Bag limit – 1.

## Hunting

Hunting is not permitted on the Routeburn Track. Hunters can use the track for access to the side valleys, where limited hunting opportunities are available. Rifles must be carried with the bolt removed when on the track. A hunting permit is required, available from the Fiordland National Park Visitor Centre in Te Anau and the Department of Conservation offices in Glenorchy and Queenstown.



Routeburn Valley. Photo: DOC

## Mountain Biking

Mountain biking is **not permitted** on the Routeburn Track.

## Dogs and Other Pets

It is an offence under the National Parks Act 1980 to bring dogs and other introduced animals into Fiordland and Mount Aspiring National Parks. Please leave your animals at home.

## What to Take

The Routeburn Track traverses a high alpine area. The following gear is essential, no matter how warm it is on the day of departure. Most equipment is available for hire or purchase in Te Anau and Queenstown. A full range of food is available from supermarkets in Te Anau and Queenstown. Basic stores are also available at Milford Sound and Glenorchy.

## Clothing

You will need at least one set of clothes to walk in and another dry set to change into at night. It may not be possible to dry clothes in the huts. It is essential that this clothing is carried as your safety and the safety of others could well depend on it. NB: cotton clothing such as jeans, T-shirts and sweatshirts is **not** suitable. Polypropylene, which is quick drying (but can be flammable), is recommended.

Boots:	need to be comfortable and well broken in
Socks:	(wool/polypropylene) 2 pairs
Shorts:	(nylon)
Shirt:	(wool/polypropylene)
Longjohns/trousers:	(wool/polypropylene)
Jersey/Jacket:	(wool/polar fleece)
Undershirts/T shirt:	(wool/polypropylene)
Mittens/Gloves:	(wool/polypropylene)
Raincoat:	(waterproof, windproof with hood)
Over trousers:	(wind and water proof)

Woollen hat/balaclava, sunhat and sunglasses. Extra socks, underwear, shirt or lightweight jersey.



Appropriate clothing for walking the Routeburn Track.  
Photo: Mountain Safety Council

## Personal Equipment

Pack:	with large waterproof/plastic liner
Sleeping bag:	good quality down or hollofil
Matches/ lighter:	in waterproof container
Torch:	spare batteries
Eating utensils:	knife, fork, spoon, plate, cup
Cooking utensils:	pot/pan/billy and cleaning utensils
Toilet gear:	soap, toothpaste, toilet paper, small towel (do not wash or use soap in lakes or streams)
First aid kit:	insect repellent, sunscreen, blister kits, pain relief, assorted bandages
Survival Kit:	survival blanket, whistle, paper, pencil, high energy snack food
Drink bottle:	1 - 2 litre capacity (you need to drink regularly during the day)
Optional extras:	camera, lightweight shoes for in hut, ear plugs for communal bunkrooms (you will be sharing huts with up to forty other trampers).
Campers:	campers will require a tent, ground sheet and gas cooker.

## Food

### Food is not available for purchase on the track

Food should be lightweight, fast cooking and high in energy value e.g:

Breakfast: cereal, firm bread, honey or other spreads

Lunch: cracker biscuits, cheese, salami, margarine, jam/ jelly, fruit

Dinner: instant soup, pasta/rice, dried vegetables/fruit, cheese or dehydrated (freeze dry) meals.

You will also need: snacks, biscuits, muesli bars, tea/coffee, powdered fruit drink, emergency food in case of any delays on the track.

## Accommodation

Camping outside the designated campsites and staying overnight in the shelters is **not permitted** on the Routeburn Track. Facilities for guided walkers are not available to independent walkers.



Routeburn Falls Hut. Photo: Keith Springer.

## Huts

There are four Department of Conservation huts on the track – Routeburn Flats, Routeburn Falls, Mackenzie and Howden.

During the Great Walks Peak Season huts are supplied with gas cookers, tables, benches, cold running water, lighting and heating in the main kitchen/dining hut.

Bunkrooms have communal sleeping arrangements with mattresses provided. Ablution blocks have flush toilets and wash basins (cold water only). There are no showers in the huts. Walkers are expected to leave the accommodation clean and tidy, and take their rubbish out with them. Smoking is not permitted in the huts or shelters on the track.

Department of Conservation track staff are stationed at each hut. They are equipped with radios for use in emergencies and for weather forecasts. For your own safety please sign the hut books on your arrival.

## Camping

There are only two designated campsites on the Routeburn Track – sited near the Routeburn Flats and Lake Mackenzie Huts. Campers share an open cooking shelter (no gas provided) with an adjacent water supply and a pit toilet.

**The use of hut facilities by campers is not permitted.**

## Water

To avoid dehydration you will need to drink regularly while walking, even on cooler days. As you may not be able to find water on the track you should carry some with you.

Drinking water at the huts and shelters comes from nearby rivers, lakes or roof catchments and is not treated.

Giardia may be present in some areas. Regular testing is not carried out. If you wish to treat water boil it for five minutes, use a filter or chemically treat it.

## Toilets

Please use toilets at the huts and shelters. If this is not possible, bury toilet waste well away from watercourses. Remember, drinking water at the huts and shelters comes from rivers and lakes.



Howden Hut and Lake Howden. Photo: DOC.

## Transport

The Routeburn Track is not a circuit track and there are over 350 kilometres (4 hours) of road transport required between both ends of the track. Transport will cost up to \$NZ120 per person if you need to return to your starting point. The track is well serviced by public transport during the Great Walks Peak Season. A selection of transport operators is listed on pages to the rear of this brochure and should be contacted directly for transport bookings. Walkers flying in or out of Queenstown International Airport should not try to fly on the same day as you intend to walk the track.

**Warning** - Vehicles left at road ends have sometimes been broken into or vandalised.

## Weather Information

Centred near latitude 45° south, Fiordland and Mt Aspiring National Parks lie in an area of predominately westerly airstreams, known as the Roaring 40s, delivering high rainfall and changeable weather patterns to the area. Cold temperatures, snow, strong winds and heavy rain can occur at any time of the year.

Westerly winds pick up moisture as they cross the Tasman Sea. As winds rise to cross the Southern Alps the moisture condenses and falls as heavy rain in the west, snow at higher levels. Rain decreases in intensity towards the east.

### Be prepared for at least one wet day on your trip.

During cold, wet and windy conditions, exposure and hypothermia can affect anyone and it can kill. From initial signs to unconsciousness can take as little as 30 minutes. Correct clothing is essential.

During warm weather dehydration can lead to heat exhaustion. Water should be carried between huts.

**Please check for current conditions or weather warnings before departing on your trip.**



View of Hollyford Valley from the Hollyford Bluffs.  
Photo: Chanelle McAllister

## Weather Information at Mackenzie Hut

	Highest Temp°C	Average daily high°C	Lowest temp°C	Days with rain
October	22	14	- 1.5	15
November	24	15	- 2.5	17
December	25	17	- 1	18
January	28	18	0	13
February	29	20	- 1	9
March	28	19	- 2.5	12
April	23	14	- 4	14

## Safety Information

### Safety and Track Closure

Your safety and the decisions you make are your responsibility. If any injury or illness occurs during the Great Walks Peak Season the Department of Conservation staff

**DOC HOTline**  
**0800 362 468**

**Report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies**  
For fire and search and rescue call 111

should be contacted. They will be able to arrange emergency evacuation from the track if required. There is no cellphone coverage on the track.

At times avalanche danger (especially in October and early November), flooding and high winds (which can occur at any time) may cause certain parts of the track to become impassable. **Walkers due to start** on the track **may** be unable to proceed onto the track. If this is the case a full refund will be given.

**Walkers already on the track** will be notified of hazards or weather conditions as soon as possible by DOC staff, located at each hut. If the track has to be closed walkers will be informed of their options. These could include having to spend an extra night on the track, returning via the direction already walked, or being helicoptered over a hazard area. Please refer to the cancellation policy on page 28 of this brochure.

**Outside the Great Walks Peak Season** walkers have to be totally self sufficient. They should carry mountain radios and/or personal locator beacons (PLBs) and leave intentions of their trip, including transport to and from the track, at the Fiordland National Park Visitor Centre in Te Anau or the Glenorchy Visitor Centre.

### Flood Areas

After heavy rain flooding is possible in the Routeburn Valley. Stream and river levels will drop rapidly once rain stops. If you are caught between streams which are in flood, seek higher ground and wait for water levels to drop.

### Slips

There is one area which is prone to slips after heavy rain. This area is halfway between Routeburn Flats and Routeburn Falls Huts. Care is required when crossing this area. If in doubt, do not cross.

### Avalanches

Thirty-two avalanche paths cross the Routeburn Track between Lake Harris and the Earland Falls.

- Avalanches can occur at any time but are most common during or directly after snow and rain, especially during the September to early November period.
- Avalanche and snow hazard can change rapidly from low to high within a 24 hour period.
- Start zones of avalanche paths often cannot be seen from the track.



Routeburn Valley in snow. Photo: DOC.

### Fires

Fire is a major threat within Fiordland and Mount Aspiring National Parks and open fires are not permitted.

### Lost

The Routeburn Track is well marked but if you become lost stop, find shelter and stay calm - you will survive. Put on extra clothing and assist rescuers should you hear them searching for you. Please record your name in the hut book at each hut.



- Protect and respect natural and cultural heritage
- Show care for plants and animals
- Keep waterways clean
- Take all your rubbish with you
- Use toilets provided
- Carry a fuel stove
- Stay on tracks and camp carefully
- Share the outdoors - be considerate of others
- Toitu te whenua - leave the land undisturbed

## Track Notes

Please refer to the maps and track profile on pages 16 - 17.

The Routeburn Track can be walked in either direction (the following description is from east to west). Times are approximate and will vary according to fitness, weather and direction of travel. Overnight use of the Harris Saddle day shelter and other track shelters is not permitted.

The Routeburn Track can be linked with the Greenstone or Caples Tracks to make a 5 day/4 night circuit (see map on page 3). These tracks are rough and uneven in places and delays can be caused due to flooding. There is no guarantee of obtaining a bunk in these huts as there is no booking system for these backcountry tracks. Late arrivals may have to sleep on the floor. Backcountry Hut Tickets must be purchased in advance and gas cookers are required. Refer to Greenstone/Caples Track Guide for more information.

### Routeburn Shelter to Routeburn Flats Hut, 6.5 km, 1.5 - 2.5 hours

From the car park at the Routeburn shelter (458m) cross the swing bridge to the well formed, easy graded track. Past Sugarloaf Stream the track is a remnant of the old bridle path built in the 1870s and climbs directly to Bridal Veil Stream. It then sidles above the Routeburn Gorge. A second swing bridge takes you back across the Route Burn to the open grassed flats around Routeburn Flats Hut. Where the track forks take the right track to Routeburn Flats Hut (20 bunks) and a camping area five minutes from the hut, or take the left track to continue to Routeburn Falls Hut.

#### Side Trip - North Branch of the Route Burn, 4 - 5 hours return.

From the Routeburn Flats Hut cross the unbridged Route Burn and follow the North Branch through beech forest and tussock clearings. Good views of Mt. Somnus, North Col and Mt. Nereus can be found at the head of the valley.



Swing bridge over the Route Burn.  
Photo: N. Scott

### Routeburn Flats Hut to Routeburn Falls Hut, 2.3 km, 1 - 1.5 hours

This is a steady climb through beech forest crossing two swing bridges. Excellent views of the valley below can be seen from a slip that was created during heavy rain in 1994 which washed away the original track. Care should be taken crossing this slip, especially after heavy rain. The Emily Creek bridge is considered to be the halfway mark.



Routeburn Falls. Photo: Sue Scott.

Beware of early or late season avalanches that can fall as far as this bridge. Routeburn Falls Hut has 48 bunks.

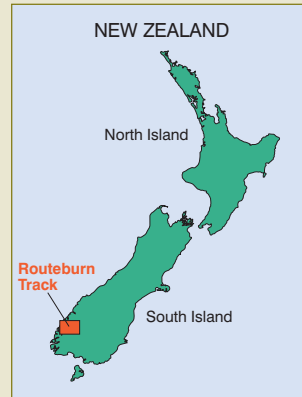
### Routeburn Falls Hut to Mackenzie Hut, 11.3 km, 4.5 - 6 hours

This sub-alpine section of track is very exposed and can be extremely hazardous in adverse weather conditions. Ensure that you listen to the advice of Department of Conservation staff in such conditions. The track climbs steadily, following the Route Burn to its outlet from Lake Harris. A steep side through moraine and the bluffs above Lake Harris leads to the Harris Saddle/Tarahaka Whakatipu (1255m) and the shelter, which is available for day use only. Allow 1½ - 2½ hours for the climb. Sub-alpine herbs and cushion plants are a feature of the vegetation. These areas are very fragile so please keep to the track. A short, steep, rocky climb



Summit of Conical Hill, looking to the head of the Hollyford Valley. Photo: Les Molloy.

from the Harris Saddle up Conical Hill gives superb view of the Hollyford Valley through to Lake McKerrow, Martins Bay and the Tasman Sea. Allow one to two hours for the



## Routeburn Track Maps

The Fiordland National Park Visitor Centre in Te Anau and the Department of Conservation office in Queenstown have maps of the Routeburn Track area available for purchase.

### Routeburn Track Map

Scale 1:65 000

### Topographic Maps

#### Sheets D40, D41 & E40

Scale 1:50 000

### Terramap

Scale 1:50 000



return trip. From the saddle the track drops steeply down a gully and traverses along the exposed Hollyford face, before a bush descent onto a series of zig-zags to Lake Mackenzie Hut (50 bunks). Allow three to four hours for the descent from the saddle. Nine campsites are sited five minutes from the hut. No camping is permitted between Routeburn Flats and Lake Mackenzie or around the edge of Lake Mackenzie.

### Mackenzie Hut to Howden Hut, 8.6 km, 3 - 4 hours

The track crosses a small flat before climbing steeply to the bushline. It then gradually descends past the 'Orchard', an open grassy area dotted with ribbonwood trees, to the Earland Falls (174m). An emergency bridge is situated down stream should the falls be in flood. The track continues its gradual descent to Howden Hut, situated at the junction of the Routeburn and Greenstone/Caples Tracks. A campsite is situated at the Greenstone Saddle 20 minutes down the Greenstone Track. Lake Howden Hut has 28 bunks.



Earland Falls. Photo: Sue Scott.

### Howden Hut to The Divide, 3.4 km, 1 - 1.5 hours.

The track climbs for about 15 minutes to the Key Summit turn-off. The one hour to two hour return side trip climbs above the bushline to an alpine wetland and tarn interpretive walk. Please remain on the track and boardwalks as this is a fragile area. You will be rewarded with magnificent views of the Darran Mountains and the Hollyford Valley.

From the Key Summit turn-off the gradual downhill walk to The Divide is through silver beech forest. The Divide (532m) is the lowest east/west crossing in the Southern Alps. A shelter, carpark and toilets are located at The Divide.

## Winter Tramping

During the Off Peak/Winter Season (May to mid October) the Routeburn Track remains open, weather and track conditions permitting. Some bridges are removed to avoid damage from avalanches and some facilities are not available. No bookings are required but hut tickets are necessary.

Huts may not have running water but a nearby water supply will be available. Radios, gas cooking rings, lighting, fuel for heating are also removed. Flush toilets are closed in winter but a pit toilet is provided.

Department of Conservation staff are not always present on the track and their availability should not be relied on in the event of an emergency.

**A winter crossing of the Routeburn Track should only be attempted by experienced, well-equipped parties.**

During the winter months much of the country above bushline:

- May be covered by snow making the track impassable as a through route.
- Snow and ice conditions on the Hollyford Face can be extremely dangerous.
- Thirty-two active avalanche paths cross the track with the most dangerous areas being north of the Earland Falls; the zigzags above Lake Mackenzie, which also become ice covered; the Hollyford face, which can also develop deep snow drifts and the track above Lake Harris. Depending on snowpack and weather conditions, travel in these areas may be extremely hazardous.
- Biggest avalanche risk is during or directly after snow and rain.
- Avalanche and snow hazard can change rapidly from low to high within a 24 hour period
- Start zones of avalanche paths cannot be seen from the track.

**Always check current weather and avalanche conditions before departing on your trip.**



Crossing avalanche debris. Photo: DOC

## Equipment

In addition to the equipment listed for walking during the Peak Great Walks Season you should also carry: Gas cooker, toilet paper, torch or gas light for at night in hut, extra food in case you are delayed on the track, extra warm clothing, mountain radio and personal locator beacon (PLB).

## Intention Forms & Safety

During winter for your own safety intention forms should be completed at the Fiordland National Park Visitor Centre in Te Anau. **Please don't forget to sign out.** Intentions forms can also be left in the box outside the Department of Conservation office in Glenorchy.



Mackenzie Hut after a snow fall. Photo: DOC.

## Transport

Transport to and from the track must be organised before departing on the track. In winter there are no regular transport services to the track ends. Transport operators listed near the end of this brochure may be able to help.

## Hut Fees

A Backcountry Hut Pass or Backcountry Hut Tickets can be used. These must be purchased prior to departure from any Department of Conservation Visitor Centre. At the hut record your name in the hut book with your Backcountry Hut Pass number beside it, or deposit the tear-off section of your Backcountry Hut Tickets in the box provided and record your name in the hut book.

## Further Information

For further information about walking the Routeburn Track during the Off Peak/Winter Season please contact:

Fiordland National Park Visitor Centre (Open 7 days)  
Department of Conservation  
P.O. Box 29, Te Anau.  
Tel: (03) 249 7924, Fax: (03) 249 7613  
Email: [fiordlandvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:fiordlandvc@doc.govt.nz)

20

## History

A wide selection of books on this topic are available from the Fiordland National Park and Queenstown Visitor Centres.

A trail from Martins Bay, up the Hollyford Valley and over into the Routeburn Valley to the pounamu (greenstone) source at the head of Lake Whakatipu-wai-Māori, was commonly used by Tai Poutini (West Coast) iwi, who regularly travelled south via this route to obtain koko-takiwai. Pounamu was much valued as a material for tools, weapons and ornaments.

The tradition of "Ngā Puna Wai Karikari o Rakaihautu" tells how the principal lakes of Te Wai Pounamu (South Island), were dug by the rangatira (chief) Rakaihautu. Rakaihautu was the captain of the canoe, Uruao, which brought the tribe, Waitaha, to New Zealand. Rakaihautu beached his canoe at Whakatū (Nelson) and travelled south.

The first Europeans to view the Hollyford Valley were Southland runholders David McKellar and George Gunn, who on 9 June 1861 climbed to the top of Key Summit via the Routeburn.

Early European surveyors, prospectors and explorers followed the track route when travelling from Lake Wakatipu to the Hollyford River/ Whakatipu Ka Tuka and western valleys.

### Te Wāhipounamu – South West New Zealand World Heritage Area



South West New Zealand is one of the great wilderness areas of the Southern Hemisphere. Known to Māori as Te Wāhipounamu (the place of greenstone), the South West New Zealand World Heritage Area incorporates Aoraki/Mt.Cook, Westland /Tai Poutini, Fiordland and Mount Aspiring National Parks, covering 2.6 million hectares.

World Heritage is a global concept that identifies natural and cultural sites of world significance, places so special that protecting them is of concern for all people.

Some of the best examples of animals and plants, once found on the ancient supercontinent Gondwana, live in the World Heritage Area.

In 1870 a bridle track was started to link Kinloch and Routeburn with the new Martins Bay settlement. However, failure of the isolated settlement and incorrect routing of the road meant construction ceased after four years. Tourism began in the 1880s, with visitors being taken into Routeburn Flats by horse and then guided on foot to the Harris Saddle/Tarahaka Whakatipu.

The Routeburn Track is one of New Zealand's most popular tracks, with over 13 000 walkers completing the track each year.

## Natural History

A wide selection of books on the following topics is available from the Fiordland National Park and Queenstown Visitor Centres.

### Geology

The track follows close to a major fault zone which has thrown together both metamorphic and sedimentary rocks. During the Ice Ages, the last of which ended some 10,000 years ago, huge glaciers carved out the rock. The Hollyford glacier was so large it curved around the southern end of



Lake Harris. Photo: DOC.

the Darran Mountains and flowed 50 km north to Martins Bay. It overtopped the main divide at Key Summit and two lobes flowed to the south - one to Lake Wakatipu via the Greenstone Valley and the other to Lake Te Anau via the Eglinton Valley. When the glaciers retreated they left the distinctive U-shape main valleys, smaller hanging valleys, cirque basins and residual glaciers like Donne Glacier on the eastern face of Mount Tutoko.

### Flora and Fauna

Beech is the dominant forest tree, with red beech around the start of the Routeburn Valley on sunny, frost-free sites. Mountain beech occurs at higher altitudes within the Routeburn Valley. Silver beech competes best on the wetter Hollyford faces along with broadleaf and fuchsia. A feature of the beech forest is the abundance of ferns, mosses, lichens and perching plants.



Pineapple shrub (*Dracophyllum menziesii*).  
Photo: Chanelle Mc Allister

The track passes through several avalanche paths colonised by ribbonwood, one of New Zealand's few deciduous trees. Above the bushline between Lake Mackenzie and the Routeburn Falls are snow tussock grasslands, and herbfields with mountain buttercups, daisies, and ourisias. Bog communities, with sundews, bladderworts, orchids, daisies and bog pine occur around tarns on Key Summit.

### Common Fauna

The area surrounding the Routeburn Track has an abundance of native birds. There is also a significant number of introduced animals including whitetail deer in the lower Routeburn Valley, red deer throughout the forested areas and chamois about the mountain tops. Animal pests such as possums, rats and stoats are also widespread.

#### Bush

Riflemen, bellbirds, robins, yellow crowned parakeets, mohua (yellowheads), tomtits, fantails and wood pigeons.



Robin. Photo: R. Morris

#### Subalpine scrub

Rock wrens, kea, New Zealand falcon.



Rock Wren. Photo: Ros Cole

#### At night

Ruru (morepork), native bat



Morepork. Photo: Dick Veitch

#### Fast-flowing river and Lake Harris outlet

Whio (Blue duck).



Blue Ducks. Photo: R. Morris

## Conservation Projects

Department of Conservation biodiversity staff are carrying out an extensive stoat trapping and intensive rat control programmes in the Routeburn valley. This is part of a much wider programme in upper the Wakatipu Valleys.



Stoat. Photo: DOC

Stoats were introduced to New Zealand in the 1880s to control the explosion of introduced rabbits. Prior to this time, New Zealand's native birds and bats (bats are the only mammal native to NZ) had enjoyed an

environment free of predatory mammals. The introduction of stoats has seen a steady decline of our bird species. Today the stoat, along with the ship rat, are considered a great threat and have already led to the extinction of some species.

The stoat control programme began in the Routeburn Valley in 2000 to protect mohua (yellowhead) and whio (blue duck). Stoat traps are placed at approximately 200m intervals along the length of the track and up some side valleys. Rat control is on a 100m x 100m grid and uses bait in tunnels only rodents can access. As stoat and rat numbers have declined as a result of control measures other bird life has also benefited in the valley with increases in the numbers of kaka, bats and parakeets to name a few.

### Mohua

The endangered mohua (yellowhead/bush canary) is slightly larger than a sparrow. It has a bright yellow head, neck and breast with the rest of the body being brownish yellow.

It is a tall-forest specialist, with strong legs and bill adapted to foraging for insects from the crevices of bark of mature trees. Mohua's use of small tree holes for nesting



Mohua (yellowhead). Photo: DOC

and roosting expose them to greater predation than other birds, as there are no avenues of escape when a rat or stoat puts its head in the entrance of its nest.

Mohua are only found in the South Island of New Zealand. They can often be seen feeding in noisy groups with brown creepers and parakeets on the fan behind the Routeburn Flats hut or in the canopy in the first three kilometres of the Routeburn Track.

### Whio

The whio (torrent/blue duck) is a unique and endangered species. It is endemic to New Zealand and has no close relative anywhere in the world.



Whio (Torrent/Blue Duck). Photo: DOC

It is blue-grey in colour with a reddish-brown spotted breast, a pale pink bill and yellow eyes and weighs about 800 - 900 grams.

Living in fast flowing streams and rivers whio are often seen standing on rocks or feeding on fresh water invertebrates. Whio remain in territorial pairs all year. The female call is a low rattling growl, while the male call of "fee-o" gives the duck its Maori name.

On the Routeburn Track single whio can sometimes be seen at Routeburn Flats or on the tarns north of the Harris Saddle.

The Department of Conservation acknowledges the support of local tourism company, Real Journeys, with the Whio Recovery Programme in Fiordland.

## How to Book

Bookings are required for the peak season between 24 October 2006 and 25 April 2007 and will open at 9am (New Zealand time) on 1 July 2006.

For those wishing to walk the Routeburn Track outside the peak season please refer to the Winter Tramping Notes section.

### Before Booking

It is strongly recommended that you read the following track information sections before making a booking:

- Track location and travel times
- What to take
- Accommodation
- Safety and Track Guide
- Terms and Conditions

### To Make A Booking Online

You can make a booking online through our website [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz) You will have 25 minutes to complete your booking.

You will require the following information:

- Which huts and/or campsites you wish to book.
- Names and ages of all walkers.
- Credit card (Visa and Mastercard) to which payment will be charged via the ANZ Bank online secure payment system.

The Department of Conservation will not hold your credit card details.

Personal information held about walkers will be used for booking purposes only and will not be handed out to any third parties.

### To Make A Manual Booking

You can book by completing a Routeburn Track Booking Form and sending it to the Great Walks Booking Office in Te Anau by either fax, mail, email or phone. Contact details are listed on the back of this booklet. Full payment in New Zealand dollars must accompany your booking.

## Commercial Groups

A concession (an official authorisation) is required to operate any commercial activity in an area managed by the Department of Conservation. Concessions are required for, but not restricted to: guiding operations (including tramping, walking, fishing, hunting, climbing, ski tours, kayaking, canoeing); transport services; commercial education or instruction activities.

The Department of Conservation managed huts and campsites on the Routeburn Track cannot be booked by commercial operators.

More information regarding concessions can be found on our website [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz) About DOC, Concessions

## Discounts

Members of Federated Mountain Club, NZ Deer Stalkers Association and Mountain Safety Council staff and instructors who hold a current Backcountry Hut Pass are entitled to a 10% discount on hut fees. The Backcountry Pass and associate membership numbers must be quoted to DOC staff when making a booking. Please contact the Great Walks Bookings Office in Te Anau for details. No other discounts are available.

## Terms and Conditions

- For safety reasons accommodation passes are not transferable to another person.
- The cost will automatically be charged to your credit card at the time of booking. No booking will be accepted without payment. All prices are in New Zealand dollars and include GST (goods and services tax). Current prices can be found on our website [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz) or on the booking form.
- Confirmation will be sent by email or post. Accommodation passes can only be collected from the Great Walks Bookings Offices in Te Anau and Queenstown.
- The alpine section of the Routeburn Track is not recommended for children under 10 years. Children 14 years and under must be accompanied by an adult.
- For booking purposes the following age classifications for hut and campsite passes apply:

Adult	18 years plus
Child/Youth	5 - 17 years
Infant	0 - 4 years

## Alterations, Transfers and Cancellations Policy

- Bookings are only valid for the dates confirmed. Penalty fees of 100% of the accommodation fee will apply to those who do not have a valid accommodation pass for the night.
- Changes made at DOC offices may incur a \$10 service fee per change.
- If the Department of Conservation closes the track due to severe weather or track conditions, a full refund will be given on the unused accommodation tickets. Those walkers already on the track may be required to exit the track. Cancelled groups will be able to set out on the track only if there are vacancies available once the track reopens.
- If walkers wish to transfer or cancel their bookings the following fees apply, based on the earliest start date that is held against the booking:
  - More than 10 days before the start date and within 48 hours of making the booking – **full refund**
  - More than 10 days before the start date and more than 48 hours after making the booking – **25% cancellation fee**
  - Between 3 - 10 days before the start date – **50% cancellation fee**
  - 1 - 2 days before start date and on or after start date – **no refund**
  - Transferring a booking 1 - 2 days prior to start date – **first night's accommodation fee is forfeited**
  - Transferring a booking more than 2 days before start date – **no transfer fee applies**
- Bookings can only be transferred within the current Great Walks season.

## Travel Insurance

We recommend you arrange travel insurance to guard against loss of costs associated with cancellation or delay of your trip. The Department of Conservation will not be liable for injury, damage or any costs incurred by intending walkers and is unable to rearrange forward transport and accommodation bookings.

## Transport, Equipment and Accommodation

Please book with the relevant operator. Times and prices may not be applicable outside the Great Walks season.

### Transport

#### TRACKNET

**Fiordland's Track Transport Specialists.** Passenger service operates during Fiordland's Great Walks season. 3 times daily service between Queenstown, Te Anau, Milford Sound, Kepler, Routeburn and Milford Tracks. Also to/from Invercargill, Dunedin, Bluff, Manapouri, Hollyford & Mavora Tracks daily. Ph 03 249 7777 or 0800 483 262 (push 2 ).  
www.greatwalksnz.com, e-mail res@tracknet.net

#### Sea Kayak Fiordland - Fiordland Wilderness Experiences

Kayak with friendly professional guide, small group, real sea kayaks on Milford Sound before or after the track. Meet Te Anau 6.30am, Divide 7.45am or Milford 8.30am for kayaking. Transport to Divide, Te Anau or Queenstown. Doubtful Sound kayaking also available. Contact Bill & Daphne, Ph 0800 200 434 or 64(0)3 249 7700. Email: info@fiordlandseakayak.co.nz  
Web: www.fiordlandseakayak.co.nz SKOANZ, QUALMARK.

#### Kiwi Discovery

All transport requirements to/from Routeburn Track and Milford Sound. **Independent track packages:** accommodation, track transport, DOC hut fees, track briefing, Milford Sound cruise, equipment hire. Great pre/post track adventure option - Landsborough Wilderness Experience. Kiwi Discovery, 37 Camp St, Queenstown. Tel: 03 442 5109/0800 505 504 Internet: www.kiwidiscovery.com/tracks Email: tracks@kiwidiscovery.com

#### Real Journeys

Finish your Routeburn Track experience with a Milford Sound daytime or overnight cruise. Overnight cruises include meals, wildlife viewing and kayaking. Choice of private cabins or quad-share compartments. To book Milford Sound cruises or Te Anau Glowworm Caves Tel 03 249 7416, Freephone 0800 65 65 01 (NZ only), Email info@realjourneys.co.nz  
Website www.realjourneys.co.nz

#### Backpacker Express

Track transport to Routeburn, Greenstone/Caples, Rees/Dart tracks, Queenstown, Glenorchy, and Milford. Jet boat access to Dart Track, Rockburn and Beansburn. Free vehicle parking. Most comprehensive service available at unbeatable prices. P.O. Box 48 , Glenorchy, NZ. Ph. (03) 441-0303, Fax (03) 442-9940. Email: info@glenorchyinfocentre.co.nz  
Web: www.glenorchyinfocentre.co.nz

### **Milford Sound Red Boat Cruises**

Make the most of your track experience and book a spectacular Milford Sound Red Boat Cruise. Get up close to nature and view the natural wilderness of the fiord. Daily cruise departures, delicious meal options, informative commentaries, and experienced, friendly staff. For bookings: Tel: +64 3 441 1137, Call Free: 0800 264 536 (NZ Only), Email: [rbinfo@redboats.co.nz](mailto:rbinfo@redboats.co.nz), [www.redboats.co.nz](http://www.redboats.co.nz)

### **Buckley Transport**

"We go anywhere - anytime." Free quotes. Track transport daily, day walks, drop-offs and pick-ups, airport transfers, sight-seeing. Personalised trips by arrangement. B & B available. Ph +64 3 442 8215, fax +64 3 442 8219. [www.buckleytransport.co.nz](http://www.buckleytransport.co.nz) email [edbuckley@ihug.co.nz](mailto:edbuckley@ihug.co.nz)

### **Kinloch Lodge Transfers**

Boat transfers between Glenorchy and Kinloch, Road transfers between Kinloch, Routeburn and Greenstone/Caples Trail ends. Kinloch is the ideal base for walking with DOC campsite plus all facilities at Kinloch Lodge. On-line reservations available [www.kinlochlodge.co.nz](http://www.kinlochlodge.co.nz) Phone 4424900

### **Information & Track Centre**

Track transport including Milford Sound options, hut passes, equipment hire and accommodation in Queenstown. We're next door to DOC at 37 Shotover St., Queenstown. Ph (03) 442 9708. Web: [www.infotrack.co.nz](http://www.infotrack.co.nz) Email: [track@infotrack.co.nz](mailto:track@infotrack.co.nz)

## **Equipment**

### **Alpine Sports**

The hiking specialists! Absolutely everything you need for tramping. Packs, sleeping bags, rainwear, boots, trekking poles, cookers etc to buy or hire and secure gear storage facilities. Expert pack and boot fitters. Queenstown's Number One tramping shop. Open 7 days 9am - 7pm. 39 Shotover St, Queenstown. [www.alpinesports.co.nz](http://www.alpinesports.co.nz) Email: [alpinesports@xtra.co.nz](mailto:alpinesports@xtra.co.nz) Phone: 03 442 7099.

### **Outside Sports Te Anau**

Quality outdoor equipment for hire; sleeping bags, boots, jackets, cookers etc. Stockists of NZ's leading outdoor brands: Macpac, Icebreaker, Fairydown, Earth Sea & Sky. Town Centre, Te Anau. Open 7 days, 9am - 9pm. Ph (03)249 8195, Fax (03)249 8023. Email: [info@teanausports.co.nz](mailto:info@teanausports.co.nz) Website: [www.teanausports.co.nz](http://www.teanausports.co.nz)

## **Accommodation**

### **Steamers Beach Lodge / West Arm Lodge**

Affordable quality opposite DOC Te Anau. Private or shared accommodation options (singles, twin, doubles, quad etc). Sky Movies, Internet, pay phones, modern laundries & kitchens, drying room, OSP & car storage, lockers, games room with pool table. Ph 03 249 7737 Or 0800 483 262 (push 3). 1 Te Anau-Manapouri Road. [www.teanau.info](http://www.teanau.info) e-mail [res@teanau.info](mailto:res@teanau.info)

### **Te Anau Lakeview Holiday Park**

Spacious park opposite DOC on Lakefront featuring brand new amenities (2006), Motels, Tourist flats, Cabins, Lodges and sheltered tent sites. Laundries, Internet, Sky, Luggage Lockers, car storage, Tracknet information centre on-site. Guided Great Walks depart here daily. Ph.03 249 7777 or 0800 483 262 (push 1 ). 1 Te Anau-Manapouri Road, Te Anau. [www.teanau.info](http://www.teanau.info) e-mail [res@teanau.info](mailto:res@teanau.info)

### **Milford Sound Lodge**

Located in Milford Sound, it's the perfect base to rest, relax and explore Fiordland. A range of accommodation options, cosy dorms, private twin/ double rooms and hot showers after your big adventure on the track. Bookings essential Phone 0064-3-249-8071, email [bookings@milfordlodge.com](mailto:bookings@milfordlodge.com) or web [www.milfordlodge.com](http://www.milfordlodge.com)

### **Glenorchy Holiday Park and Information Centre**

Backpacker's lodge, cabins, caravan and tent sites. All facilities provided. General store for tramping supplies, information and booking service including track transport and Dart River jetboat trips, storage and tramper's carpark. P.O. Box 48, Glenorchy, NZ. Ph (03) 441 0303, Fax (03) 442 9940. Email:[info@glenorchyinfocentre.co.nz](mailto:info@glenorchyinfocentre.co.nz) Website: [www.glenorchyinfocentre.co.nz](http://www.glenorchyinfocentre.co.nz)

### **Kinloch Lodge**

Situated on the lakefront between the Routeburn and Greenstone tracks, Kinloch Lodge is the ideal base for walking in the area. Facilities include: Hot tub, boot dryer & gear drying area, small shop, café/restaurant, self catering, bike hire, kayak trips and a range of cosy accommodation from backpackers to Heritage lodge. On-line reservations available [www.kinlochlodge.co.nz](http://www.kinlochlodge.co.nz) Phone 4424900

### **Te Anau Lakefront Backpackers**

Central lakefront location. Full range of accommodation. BBH member hostel. Internet, deluxe spa pool. Secure gear storage, off-street parking. Track information (see website) and tour bookings. 48-50 Lakefront Drive, Te Anau. Ph. +64 (3) 249 7713, Fax +64 (3) 249 8319. Email: [info@teanaubackpackers.co.nz](mailto:info@teanaubackpackers.co.nz) Website: [www.teanaubackpackers.co.nz](http://www.teanaubackpackers.co.nz)

## Contact Details

### Great Walks Peak Season

To make a booking or for further information about the Routeburn Track during the **Great Walks Peak Season** contact:

#### Great Walks Bookings Office

Department of Conservation  
Lakefront Drive, P.O. Box 29  
Te Anau, NEW ZEALAND.

Tel. (03) 249 8514 International ++64 3 249 8514

Fax. (03) 249 8515 International ++64 3 249 8515

Email: [greatwalksbooking@doc.govt.nz](mailto:greatwalksbooking@doc.govt.nz)

Website: [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

Office hours: 8.30am - 6pm (7 days, Nov - April)  
8.30am - 12 noon. 1pm - 4.30pm  
(Mon - Fri, May - Oct)

### Off Peak/Winter Season

For further information about walking the Routeburn Track during the **Off Peak/Winter Season** please contact:

Fiordland National Park Visitor Centre  
Department of Conservation  
P.O. Box 29, Te Anau.

Tel. (03) 249 7924, Fax: (03) 249 7613

Email: [fiordlandvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:fiordlandvc@doc.govt.nz)

Website: [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

Office hours: 8.30am - 4.30pm



North branch of the Route Burn. Photo: DOC.