



ABC Cave to Philip J Cox Memorial Hut

2.5 hr, 4.8 km

Retrace your steps from ABC Cave to the main route and follow the marked route past The Gap and down Yellow Ridge before reaching Philip J Cox Memorial Hut.



Philip J Cox Memorial Hut to Mountain Road

1.5 hr, 2.2 km

Descend the steep and narrow route, reaching the south branch of the Waikouaiti River. Take great care when crossing the river—it can be dangerous after heavy rain.

Beyond the Waikouaiti River is a grassy clearing with an 'Experienced Trampers Only' sign. From here there's a steep clay track leading to Mountain Road.

Please note: The road is closed to vehicles—it is 6 km from the route end back to the car park, taking approximately 1.5 hr.



Huts

Jubilee hut has 10 bunks. Philip J Cox Memorial hut has 4 bunks. Both huts have mattresses, water supply and a toilet. Trampers need to carry their own cooker. On-line bookings are required for Jubilee hut. Check www.doc.govt.nz for updated information and for bookings. Hut tickets for Philip J Cox Memorial hut must be pre-purchased from DOC

There are no rubbish disposal facilities—please carry your rubbish out with you and leave the hut clean and tidy.



Camping is permitted in the vicinity of the huts and 50 m from the track. Lighting fires is not permitted.

Philip J Cox Memorial Hut.
Photo: Karen Connor.

Introduction

The Silver Peaks Range lies right at Dunedin's back door, between the Taieri River to the west and Blueskin Bay and Waitati in the east. The Silver Peaks Scenic Reserve and adjoining areas provide day walks and challenging backcountry tramping, all less than a 30-minute drive from the city.

The main track, which becomes a route suitable for experienced trampers only, crosses tussock-covered schist hills with occasional clumps of bush and regenerating forest. The highlight, from any of the four 700-metre plus peaks on the main ridge, is an almost uninterrupted panorama of much of inland and coastal Otago.



Warning

Although the Silver Peaks aren't high by some standards, this is exposed, rugged, challenging country, with weather conditions that can change rapidly. It is often both fogged-in and blasted by south-westerly storms or chilled by the prevailing nor-easterly.

Take 1:50 000 scale topographical map: Topo50 series CE17 – Dunedin and navigational aids.

Go with a group.

Be aware that a good standard of fitness, equipment and experience is necessary.

Track classifications



Tramping track: mostly unformed, but has track directional markers.



Route: unformed and natural—may have directional markers. For experienced trampers only.

Getting there

From Dunedin, head north on State Highway 1. Just past the Waitati Store at Blueskin Bay, turn left onto Double Hill Road and then take the right fork, Semple Road, which runs into Mountain Road.



View from Painted Forest. Photo: A. Lonie.

Tracks



Silver Peaks Track

Mountain Road car park to Jubilee Hut

3–4 hr, 9 km

Please ensure you follow the orange markers. The track begins from Mountain Road car park, which follows Green Ridge to the site of the former Green Hut. The site is now a pleasant picnic and camping area (please note that there is no drinking water) where you may see fern birds (mātā) or, more likely, hear their short sharp 'tchip tchip' call and the metallic double note 'uu tick, uu tick'.

The track heads uphill from the Green Hut site and past the turnoff on the right that leads to Possum Hut. The sign beside it, 'Pulpit Rock', and the orange markers confirm the main track to the left. The track traverses a ridge and climbs steadily to Pulpit Rock. The 360° view from the pulpit includes the coast and many major inland ranges.

From Pulpit Rock and along the ridgeline you can view the Painted Forest, a significant stand of silver beech / tawhai.

This area is very exposed and weather conditions can change suddenly; Māori named this section Paekohu, or 'fog ridge', for good reason. At the sign for Jubilee Hut, follow the marked track uphill to the flat rocky crest for a commanding view of the neighbouring valleys and the Rock and Pillar Range.

The track then descends into the schist-tor-encrusted upland valley. After passing a prominent schist tor or obelisk, turn left to look down a steep ridge into the valley. From here Jubilee Hut can be seen in the distance, up on the valley's left flank. Reaching it means negotiating the aptly named Devils Staircase, an unbenched, steep 340-m descent—take extreme care. At the bottom is a small campsite next to Cave Creek.

The track crosses the creek several times before reaching the sign on the true left, indicating Jubilee Hut is a 5–10 minute climb above the intersection.

Please note: The section of this track beyond Jubilee Hut is classified as a route for experienced trampers only.

DOC HOTline
0800 362 468

Report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies
For Fire and Search and Rescue Call 111



9 421005 175615 >



NEW ZEALAND
environmental
CARE CODE

Toitū to whenua Leave the land undisturbed

- Protect plants and animals
- Remove all rubbish
- Keep streams and lakes clean
- Camp with care
- Please bury toilet waste
- Keep to the track
- Consider others
- Respect cultural heritage
- Enjoy your visit

Cover image: "Silver Peaks Route". Photo: D. Jack.

Published by Publishing Team, Department of Conservation,
PO Box 10420, Wellington | May 2012

New Zealand Government



Silver Peaks Tracks

OTAGO



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Side trips

Possum Shelter Route

2-3 hr, 3 km

From Green Hill, the route goes down to the south branch of the Waikouaiti River and then climbs out to Mountain Road. On the way, it passes the historic Possum Hut (provides shelter only), a memorial to the hut's builders and old gold diggings from the depression years of the 1930s.



Crossing Cave Creek below Jubilee Hut. Photo: J. Gordon.

Swampy Ridge Track to Swampy Summit

1.5 hr, 3 km

Signposted from Hightop, it takes approximately 1.5 hr to reach Swampy Summit. The track follows part of the historic route that linked the Waikouaiti and Dunedin settlements. The track beyond Swampy Summit connects with others in the area, as described in the brochure, *DOC Walks Around Dunedin*.



Blueskin Bay from Swampy Summit. Photo: J. Gordon.

East of Mountain Road

Black Gully Dam Track is accessed from Semple Road and trampers can go right through to the Careys Creek Reserve at Evansdale. Also from Careys Creek are two routes that reach Mountain Road and can make for a good loop for fit parties.



New Zealand pipit (pīhoihoi) are found in the Silver Peaks area. Photo: J. Gordon.

