

Thotupola Kanda Nature Trail – Horton Plains National Park.

Trail Difficulty: Easy | Moderate | Strenuous | Tough

Trail Head: 400m from Pattipola Entrance of Horton Plains National Park on Pattipola – Ohiya road.

Nearest Town: Pattipola

Nearest City: Nanu-Oya

Access to Trail head:

Route to Pattipola Entrance of Horton Plains National Park

Colombo -> Awissawella -> Dehiowita -> Karawanella -> Kitulgala -> Ginigathhena -> Hatton -> Thalawakele -> Nanu-Oya -> Ambewela -> Pattipola -> Pattipola Entrance – Horton Plains National Park (approximately 200km)

Pattipola Entrance of Horton Plains National Park is accessible by any kind of a vehicle which is not very long (because of hairpin bends).

Trail End: Thotupola Kanda Peak

Total Length: 1.3 km

Elevation Gain: 200m (Elevation at Trail Head: 2170m | Elevation at Trail End: 2361m)

Approximate time: 1 hour

Hiking Season: Best months are February to April. July to September is also fairly dry. Avoid monsoon months.

Permit Required: YES. Permit can be obtained from the Pattipola Entrance – Horton Plains National Park

Trail to Thotupola kanda will let you experience the unique montane forest ecosystem of Horton plains with minimum difficulty. On a clear day, you will be able to enjoy the breath-taking view of the surrounding savanna and forest patches of Horton Plains from the summit.

Even though Thotupola kanda is the third highest peak in Sri Lanka, this trail is easy to tackle since the elevation gain from trail head to the peak is quite small.

The trail head is located on Pattipola – Ohiya road. Walk 400m from the Pattipola entrance of Horton plain National park towards Ohiya. Then turn left on to the trail from the waypoint **TP01**.

0 to 400m: Enter the trail from the main road climbing few cement steps. As you proceed, the first 150m of the trail will be fairly flat. The trail goes through a fairly dense forest with thick under growth. At around 180m from the trail head a less prominent trail can be seen merging from your right (**waypoint: TP02**). Do not turn; continue along the left branch which is the more prominent trail.

At around 200m from the trail head, you will experience a slight ascend. After the climb the trail will again become flat. The trails then goes through a slight descend, and at around 400m from the trail head, you will reach an important point where the trail makes a 90 degree right turn (**way point: TP03**).

400m to 1.3km: As you walk along the trail after making the sharp right turn, you will experience a section with moderate ascend at around 600m from the trail head (**waypoint: TP04**). You will experience a change in the vegetation pattern as well. The larger trees will disappear and you will be surrounded by smaller bushes and scrubs. This change may be due to very strong winds present in the area.

At around 800m from the trail head, you will reach a point which is somewhat like a small peak (**waypoint: TP05**). The surrounding will be clear with no trees or large bushes present.

From the small peak mentioned above, the trail climbs down a bit and enters a forest patch. There after the trail become pretty much flat.

At around 1km from the trail head, you will again hit an open area (**waypoint: TP06**). From this point onwards the climb will be somewhat steep for about 250m. After the climb again an open area will be reached (**waypoint: TP07**). After this point the trail will be flat until you reach the peak (**waypoint: TP08**). There is a small radio transmission antenna erected at the summit point.

Tips, Notes & special remarks:

- No water sources are available once you are on the trail. Make sure that you carry enough water with you.
- Fairly strong winds may be experienced at the summit as well as in the sections of the trail which is open without forest cover.
- Some sections of the trail go through thick undergrowth and therefore wearing shorts may not be a very good idea.

Way Points

	N: dd° mm.mmm'	E: dd° mm.mmm'	Elevation
Pattipola Entrance	6° 50.347	80 48.715	2170 m
TP01 (Trail Head)	6° 50.121'	80° 48.634'	2193 m
TP02	6° 50.129'	80° 48.732'	2209 m
TP03	6° 50.169'	80° 48.864'	2246 m
TP04	6° 50.101'	80° 48.920'	2264 m
TP05	6° 50.050'	80° 48.992'	2313 m
TP06	6° 50.002'	80° 49.047'	2300 m
TP07	6° 49.984'	80° 49.184'	2359 m
TP08 (Summit)	6° 49.982'	80° 49.211'	2361 m