

Te Ara Pātaka, Banks Peninsula

WILD FILE

Access Gebbies Pass, On Gebbies Pass Rd

Grade Moderate

Accommodation Packhorse Hut, nine bunks; Rod Donald Hut, nine bunks

Time Gebbies Pass to Packhorse Hut, 2hr; Packhorse Hut to Rod Donald Hut via Mt Herbert, 4.5hr; Rod Donald Hut to Hilltop Tavern, 5hr

Distance 35.8km

Total ascent 1980m

Map BX24, BX25

Description

Formerly known as the Summit Walkway, Te Ara Pātaka follows a ridgeline from the Lyttelton crater to the Akaroa crater, over Mt Herbert – the highest point on the peninsula at 919m. It's a reasonably easy two day track that can also be done in three.

From Gebbies Pass, it takes a couple of hours through pine forest and open country to get to Packhorse Hut, an old stone building with a bright red roof and window frames.

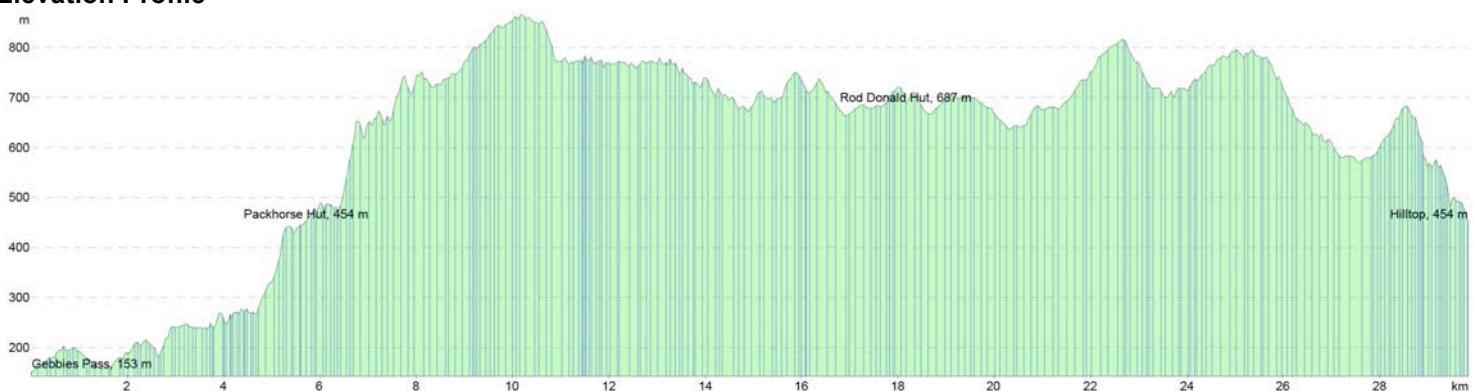
Sidle around Mt Bradley to reach Mt Herbert Shelter then continue to the summit of Mt Herbert for excellent 360-degree views. The grassy ridgeline below Mt Herbert, towards Port Levy Saddle, can look like white gold, offering views towards Mt Evans, Lyttelton Harbour, Godley Head and Pegasus Bay, with the Kaikoura Ranges in the distance. Soon, you reach a large totara graveyard. Early European settlers felled these once-majestic trees for timber and burnt them, or let them waste to make way for pasture. Some trunks still bear charcoal stains.

At Port Levy Saddle, the track crosses a road and soon dips down to Rod Donald Hut.

Slog back up to the ridgeline through a path cut through thick gorse and cruise around the side of Mt Fitzgerald to Mt Sinclair Scenic Reserve. From there it's up and over Mt Sinclair and through daisy meadows with views of Lake Forsyth to Montgomery Park Scenic Reserve, in sight of Akaroa Harbour. On the way down to the Hilltop Tavern you'll pass a giant totara standing tall, perhaps like its friends had they been left to grow.

NOTE: The track is closed for lambing from August 8 to October 15. Return walks to Packhorse Hut via Kaituna Valley Rd and Rod Donald Hut via Port Levy Saddle are possible year around. Mountain biking is allowed on some sections.

Elevation Profile



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Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to map this route correctly, Wilderness Magazine does not take responsibility for any errors in the route. Users should use discretion when planning their routes and gather as much information as possible before departing.

Maps are created with Memory-Map software, version 6. This software shows purple tracks and hut icons as verified routes and huts – meaning they are where they say they are and should be passable. If a purple track is shown on the maps in this document, it is the route from the Memory-Map software. If a red or blue route is shown, it has been drawn by Wilderness.

Te Ara Pātaka, Banks Peninsula. Map 1



Te Ara Pātaka, Banks Peninsula. Map 2

