

Howletts Hut via Daphne Hut, Ruahine Forest Park

Howletts Hut is named after one of New Zealand's pioneering trampers; William Howlett, who set up a 'sort of alpine club' in the 1890s, and spent innumerable summers botanising the local ranges. The club didn't last long – Howlett was ahead of his time – but his name and influence did. So, when the Ruahine Tramping Club built a hut on Daphne Ridge in 1940, it was natural to name it after the man who had shown such interest in the Ruahine Range. When the Heretaunga Tramping Club took over the hut in the late 1970s, they undertook a major rebuild, and have steadily improved it ever since.

On the map, Howletts Hut looks not too far from the road end; but getting there can be quite arduous. The direct approach up the Tukituki River is slow bouldery travel. Far better, in winter, is to head in on a track from Kashmir Road via Daphne Hut. That leaves just a short spell in the river, and then the steep grunt up Daphne Spur. Even better still: climb to the tops near Longview Hut, summit Otumore, 1256m, then traverse north to Daphne Ridge and the hut.

Howletts lies right on the bush-edge; an attractive combination of orange and blue, with a steep gabled ridge and an effective potbelly stove inside. Grand views expand eastwards to Hawke's Bay, but the best view is further along the ridge, where the Sawtooth Ridge appears in sharp profile. It's a serrated bit of real estate in summer, but winter snow and ice lend it a grandeur as impressive as parts of the Southern Alps.

Wild File

Access From Kashmir Road Road, west of Makaretu

Grade Moderate

Time 4.5-6hr

Distance 7.81km

Total ascent 1346m

Accommodation Daphne Hut (12 bunks, \$5), Howletts Hut (8 bunks, \$5)

Map BL36

Elevation Profile



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Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to map this route correctly, *Wilderness* does not accept responsibility for any errors. Users should plan their routes and gather as much information as possible before departing. The GPX file associated with this route has been drawn using Memory-Map software, version 6. Use discretion when following the route, especially when no track is marked on the map. The GPX file in these cases are a 'best guess' of the route only. Users should use a combination of GPS, visual observations, maps and compass to find the best possible route. Memory Map shows purple tracks and hut icons as verified routes and huts. Red or blue routes are those drawn by Wilderness.

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