

## Broken Axe Pinnacles, Tararua Forest Park

The trip begins at the Holdsworth Road end, along the easy-going track to Atiwhakatu Hut. Be warned, this track is a remarkable juxtaposition to what lies just ahead, on this three night circuit around the valleys and tops of the Tararua Range.

The beech forest recedes as you climb the steep track that leads from Atiwhakatu Stream to Jumbo Hut, situated just above the bushline, at 1200m.

From Jumbo Hut, the track follows the ridgeline north, climbing up and down various peaks and saddles. During conditions of low cloud some navigation with a map and compass is required to avoid following the wrong ridge, but on a clear day the route is well-defined.

The first major climb is Angle Knob. Views of the western ranges open up at this point.

The Broken Axe Pinnacles are next. A side track has been cut, which skirts the worst of the pinnacles if you prefer.

An iron loop is anchored to a rock to enable packs to be lowered on a rope.

The track continues along a ridge before the final climb of the day, Girdlestone, before you Tarn Ridge Hut is reached.

Tarn Ridge Hut is nestled on a small sheltered bench just off the main ridge. Nearby is the grave of a tramper, Basil Blatchford, who succumbed to hypothermia during a storm in 1959.

From Tarn Ridge Hut, backtrack over Girdlestone to locate the ridge leading to Mitre.

From Mitre, there is an extended descent along an eroded ridge into the Waingawa River.

The track re-enters the bush halfway down. Mitre Flats Hut is large and comfortable, or you can continue on to Atiwhakatu Hut.

The track to Atiwhakatu winds through a diversity of bush and riverside scrubs. There are also several good camp spots by the river.

### Wild file

**Access** From the end of Mount Holdsworth Road

**Grade** Moderate. Open, exposed tops and narrow pinnacles.

**Time** Holdsworth Lodge to Jumbo Hut, 4-5hr; Jumbo Hut to Broken Axe Pinnacles, 2-3hr; Pinnacles to Tarn Ridge Hut, 4-6hr; Tarn Ridge Hut to Mitre Flats Hut, 4-5hr; Mitre Flats Hut to Atiwhakatu Hut, 4-5hr; Atiwhakatu Hut to Holdsworth Lodge, 2-3hr

**Distance** 38.5km

**Total ascent** 3355m

**Accommodation** Atiwhakatu Hut (\$5, 26 bunks), Jumbo Hut (\$15, 20 bunks), Tarn Ridge Hut (\$5, 16 bunks), Mitre Flats Hut (\$15, 14 bunks)

**Map** BP34, BN34

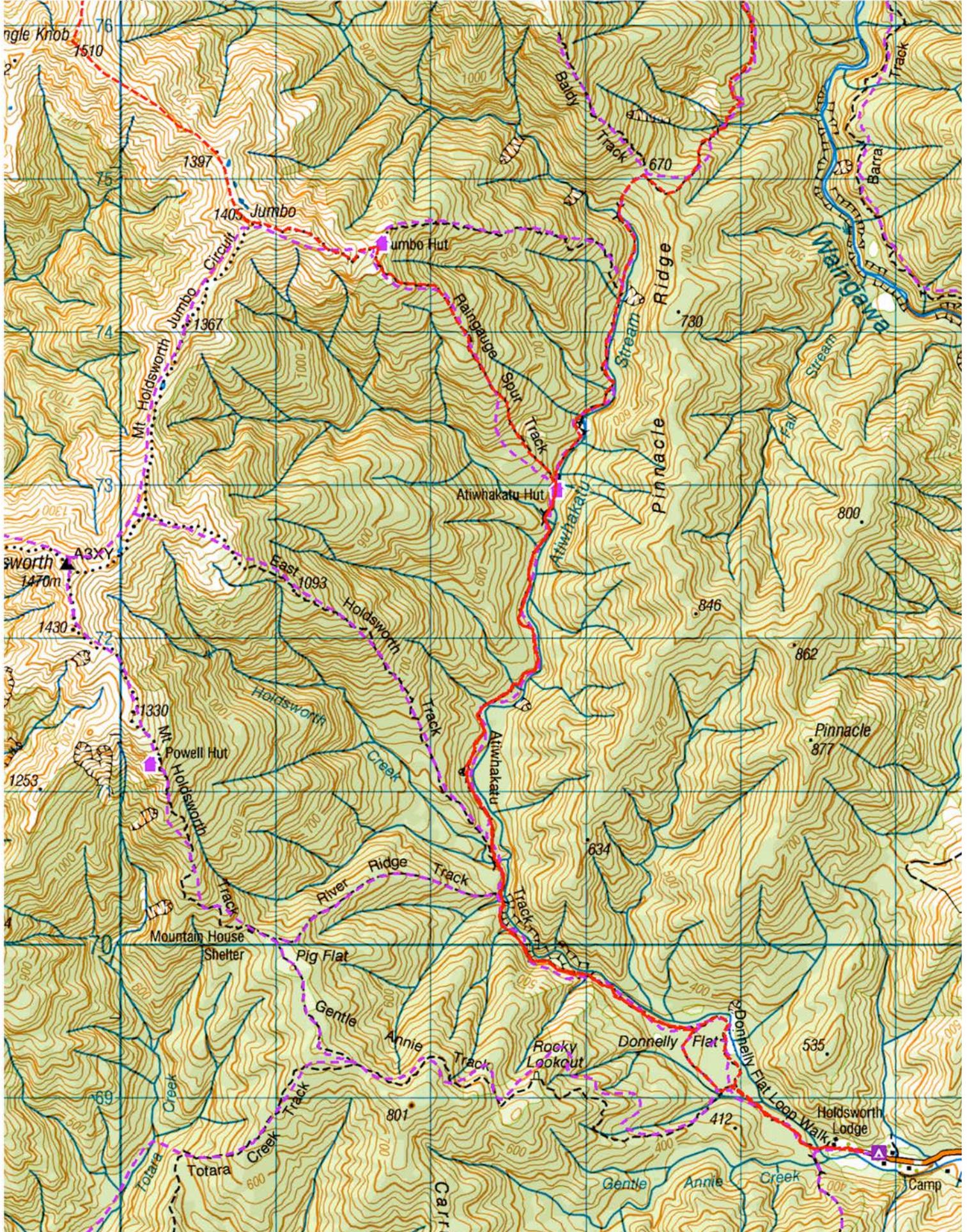
### Elevation Profile



# Broken Axe Pinnacles, Tararua Forest Park. map 1

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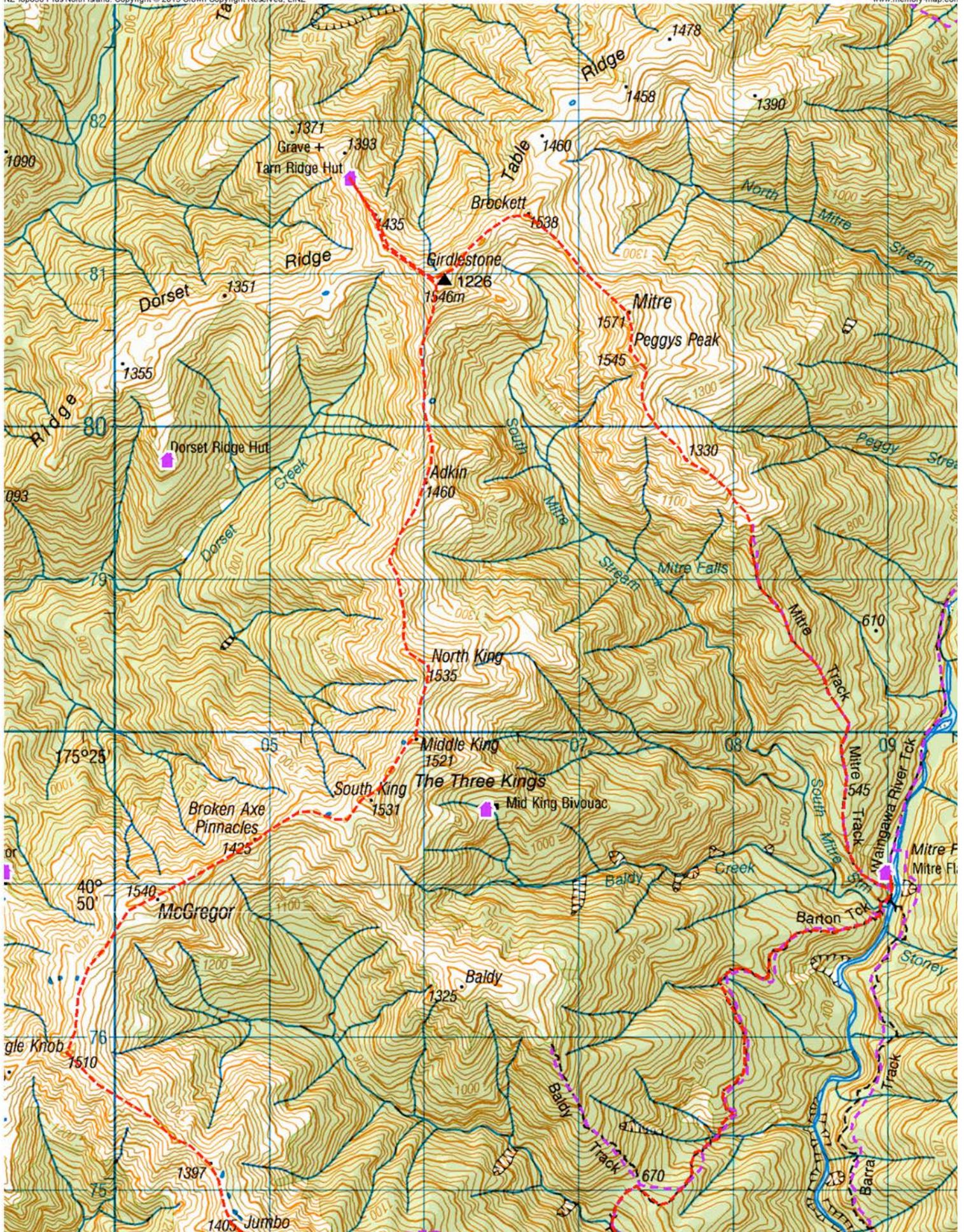
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Broken Axe Pinnacles, Tararua Forest Park. map 2

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Broken Axe Pinnacles, Tararua Forest Park – trail map by New Topo

