

Mount Holdsworth Track, Tararua Forest Park

A trip up Taratahi/Mt Holdsworth has so much going for it: amazing views, a short traverse along the tops, a choice of routes and the possibility of an overnight stay in a hut. All of which makes it ripe for piquing the imagination of those new to tramping.

The track begins at Holdsworth Campsite. There are several routes to the summit of Mt Holdsworth and all start by crossing the footbridge over the Atiwhakatu Stream. The most popular route is the Gentle Annie Track; it's as well-formed and graded as any of the Great Walks.

From the road end, the trail begins on the Donnelly Flat Loop Walk which meanders alongside Atiwhakatu Stream for about 1km until the junction with Gentle Annie Track.

Here, the trail climbs a spur to gain 260m over 2km to reach Rocky Lookout. This provides a terrific view of Taratahi and indeed the entire Holdsworth-Jumbo Circuit.

The climb continues steadily as the track weaves in and out of gullies, eventually levelling off for the final kilometre past Pig Flat to Mountain House Shelter. At Pig Flat there is a junction with the River Ridge Track, which leads to the Atiwhakatu Stream and then back to the road end.

The track from Mountain House is well-appointed, with steps all the way to Powell Hut which lies just above the bushline and offers killer views of the Wairarapa Plain from its deck. Open tops and raw ridges beckon irresistibly.

This is the fourth hut on this site and bookings are required for overnight stays. Ever-popular, Powell is very much a hut for the masses with 32 bunks separated into several bunk rooms of various sizes.

From the hut it's a good 45 minutes to the summit or Taratahi/Mt Holdsworth (1470m). The track now becomes a well-trodden route marked by poles, leading up through mountain daisies and other pretty alpine plants, and veering from several scree slopes. A panorama unfolds from Masterton to Cape Palliser.

Things only improve at the summit, where there's a full 360-degree view, with the main Tararua Range rising to the west above the deep gash of the Waiohine Gorge. The tops are often obscured by cloud. To the north are the 1500m peaks of Angle Knob, McGregor and Three Kings.

Wild file

Access Holdsworth Campsite, Mount Holdsworth Road end

Grade Moderate

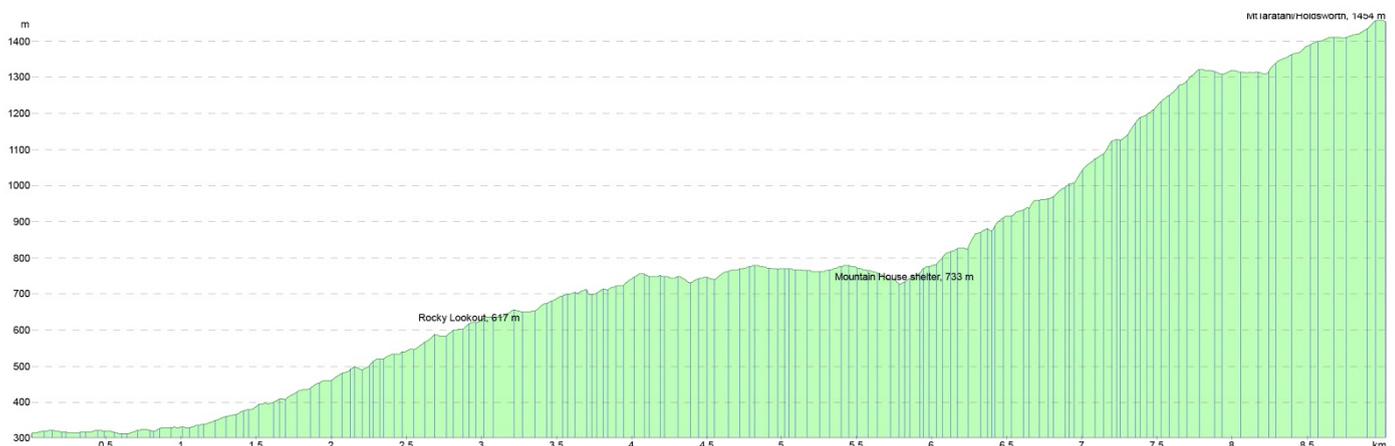
Time 8hr return

Distance 18km return

Total ascent 1339m

Total ascent **Topo50 map** BP33, BP34

Elevation Profile



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