

Pell Stream Hut, Lewis Pass Scenic Reserve

At the trailhead, don't take the Lake Daniell Track but veer right onto the 4WD track across swampy terrain to the shingle bank. Here, the Maruia River is fast-flowing, careering towards the footbridge over the Sluice Box. Further upstream is a wider, shallow crossing. On the far bank, relocate the 4WD road running parallel with the Alfred River. At a large slip, which has obliterated the road, either criss-cross the Alfred River until regaining the vehicle track, or follow a detour route lightly marked with pink tape.

After an hour, look out for the track signpost on your right. If you have the time, the road continues across Pell Stream to Blackadder Res. Beside this red-roofed hut is a memorial to Ross Blackadder (20) who was accidentally killed nearby in 1938.

From the signpost, a marked benched track leads east and uphill into beech forest where robins, tomtits and bellbirds sing. Two small gullies are sidled, and some 90min later the track descends into Gilchrist Creek. Beyond this sizeable tributary a massive landslide has destroyed the track, so you will need to criss cross the stream, threading through logjams. Search for remnants of track that cut directly across river flats. There are occasional track markers or cairns along unstable scree slopes, and you'll also wade into the cold current. The original track stayed on the true left of Pell Stream, but it is now classified as a route.

After another 90min there's a side track that bypasses the main gorge. One needs a head for heights and good balance to climb above a gnarly slip where the track disappears abruptly. Higher up, on mossy terraces, the ground trail is marked with red or white permolat nailed to tree trunks. This is typical South Island beech forest – a delightful place to wander.

After an hour, it's down to Pell Stream, from where you have two options to reach the hut. Either bash up-river across the flats, which are overgrown with scrub, or look for orange markers pointing into the bush on the true left. This recent deviation climbs to more terraces above the river. There is no track, just an eclectic mix of pink tape and permolat.

Back by the river, Pell Stream Hut can be seen about 200m upstream on the far bank.

Wild File

Access Marble Hill campsite, SH7

Grade Difficult

Time 6–7hr one way

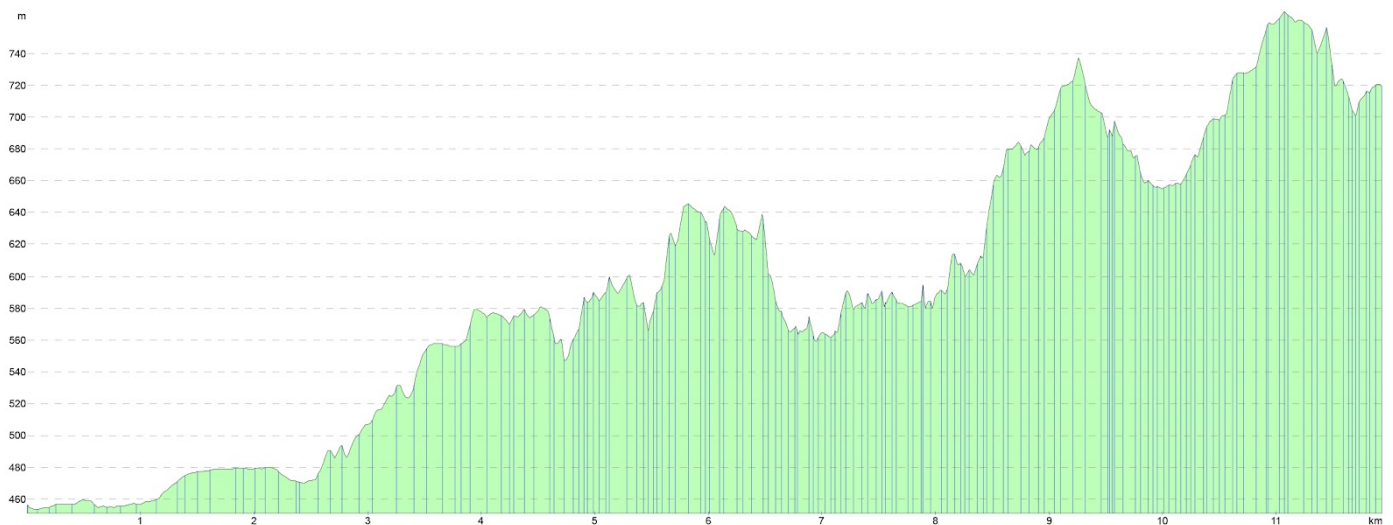
Distance 12km to hut

Total ascent 460m

Accommodation Pell Stream Hut (basic; four bunks)

Topo50 map BT22, BT23

Elevation



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