

POLBLUE BASE CAMP 2003

Itinerary

1. WALKING ITINERARY:

1.1 Day One: Friday - Home to Polblue Camping Area

My plan is to arrive at the Polblue Camping Area before dark and set up camp. This will be Polblue Base Camp for this trip. Polblue Camping area provides a site with water, shelter, fireplaces and toilets. It is located on the main Barrington Tops Forest Road (gravel) joining Gloucester with Scone.

Polblue Camping Area is situated alongside the Polblue Swamp, a large sphagnum moss alpine swamp, through which the Polblue Creek passes, on its way to Omadale Brook and the Hunter River. It would be an interesting walk some day to actually trace the creek to Polblue Creek Falls and beyond. Perhaps this can be done in two stages, the first from Polblue Swamp and the second using Horse Swamp Camping Area as a base (tracing the creek to Omadale Creek junction).

Having set up camp, an early night will be in order for an early start the next morning.

1.2 Day Two: Saturday - Polblue Camping Area to Polblue Camping Area

With an early start, walk down Barrington Tops Forest Road past Paddy's Ridge Trail to Green Gap Road. This road leads off the main road to the left into Stewarts Brook State Forest. The road is followed past a 1508m summit until the Green Gap Pine Plot is reached. The road continues past the plot for about 1km, passing a 1460m summit and finishes near the Paddy's Brush Flora Reserve. I will then consider a brief foray into the reserve (trying not to get lost of course), before returning along the road to Green Gap Pine Plot.

From here the road is followed around the edge of the pine plot and over Paddy's Creek (via a ford), before linking up with Paddy's Ridge Trail at the junction with Butcher's Swamp Fire Trail. The return to Polblue Base Camp is via Paddy's Ridge Trail, passing several summits over 1500m along the way.

Though walking along these rarely used 4WD and fire trails, I do plan to investigate areas off the trails along the way - which is part of my plan to become well versed in walking through the Barrington Tops area.

The distance walked will be about 15km.

If time permits, I may walk around Polblue Swamp and seek to follow Polblue Creek to its source. Polblue Creek flows into Polblue Swamp not far from its source, if in fact Polblue Swamp is not its source.

1.3 Day Three: Sunday - Polblue Camping Area, Horse Swamp and Home

With another early rise, I hope to pack up camp from Polblue fairly early and then head over to the Horse Swamp Camping Area via Barrington Tops Forest Road and Tubrabucca Road. I hope to leave the car at the campsite before beginning the day's walk.

From Horse Swamp Camping Area I plan to follow the Horse Swamp Trail, which begins opposite the turn off to Horse Swamp Camping Area. The trail makes its way past Horse Swamp to the Barrington Tops Forest Road.

Upon reaching the Barrington Tops Forest Road, I continue along the road for about 2km until Polblue Ridge Road is reached, heading off to the left. I then follow this road past several summits between 1350-1450m, until Tubrabucca Road is again reached. From here I follow Tubrabucca Road to the left and back to Horse Swamp Camping Area.

The distance walked will be about 10km.

If time permits I may have a wander through The Moonan Brook Pine Plot at the Firs Picnic Area, just off the Barrington Tops Forest Road.

2. MAPS:

There will be a need to purchase the following 1:25 000 topographic maps:

- Barrington Tops 9133-I-N
- Moonan Brook 9134-II-S

Also useful will be the CMA Tourist Map of Barrington Tops and Gloucester Districts and the Barrington Tops State Forests map from NSW State Forests.