

QEÀ2

Gauntlet

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April 30, 2023

Gauntlet Map

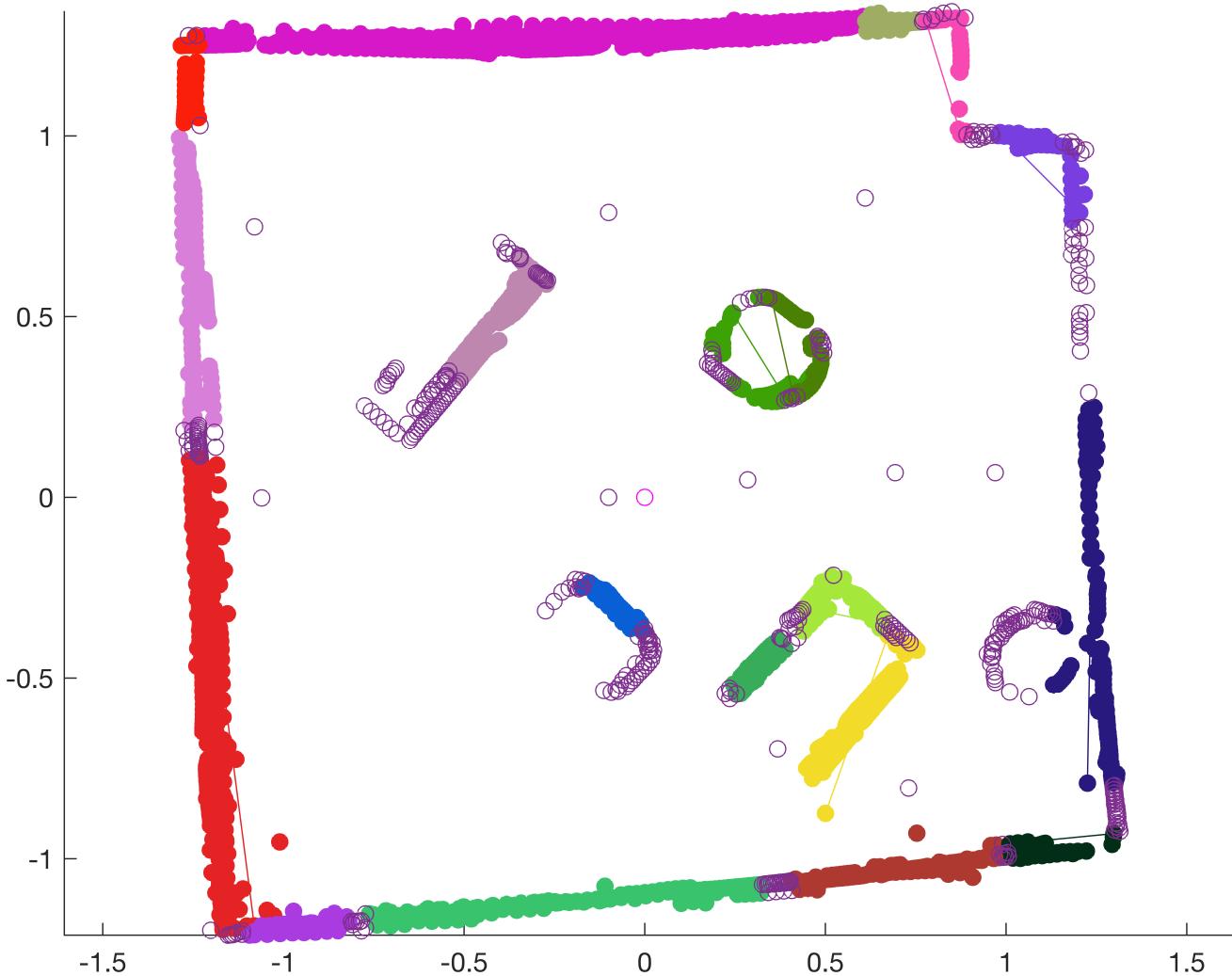


Figure 1: A map of the Gauntlet using LIDAR Data

Equation for Potential Field

Suppose we have a potential field $V(x,y)$ over a line C . We perform a discrete summation to integrate it across this line which also results in a potential field. Therefore, the equation for the potential field due to any point (a,b) on a line segment is below where u represents the position along a line segment:

$$\int_0^1 V du = -0.1(\sqrt{(x-a)^2 + (y-b)^2})^{-3.5},$$

where $a(u) = (x_1 + (x_1 - y_1))u$, $b(u) = (x_2 + (x_2 - y_2))u$,
and, x, y represent position vectors.

The equation for the potential field due to any point (a,b) on a circle is below where u represents the position along a circle:

$$\int_0^1 V du = 1000(\sqrt{(x-a)^2 + (y-b)^2})^{-4}$$

where $a(u) = x + rad(\cos(2\pi u))$, $b(u) = y + rad(\sin(2\pi u))$
and, x, y represent position vectors.

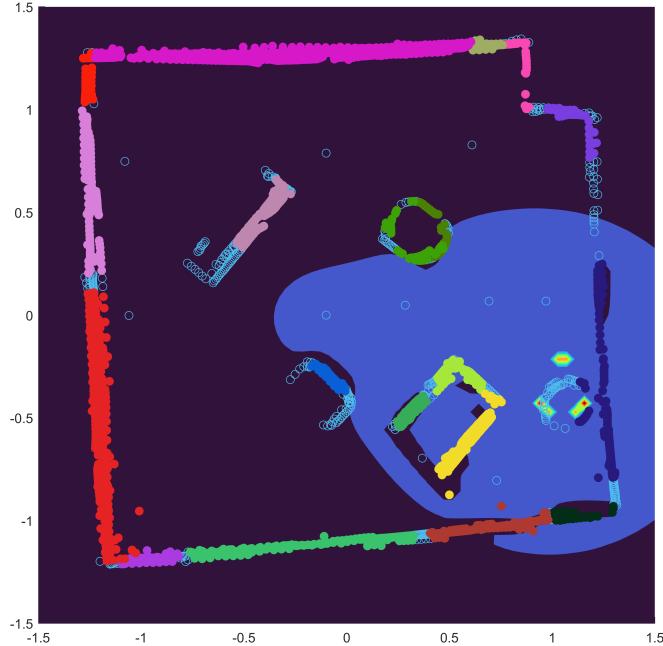


Figure 2: A contour plot of the potential field.

Quiver Plot

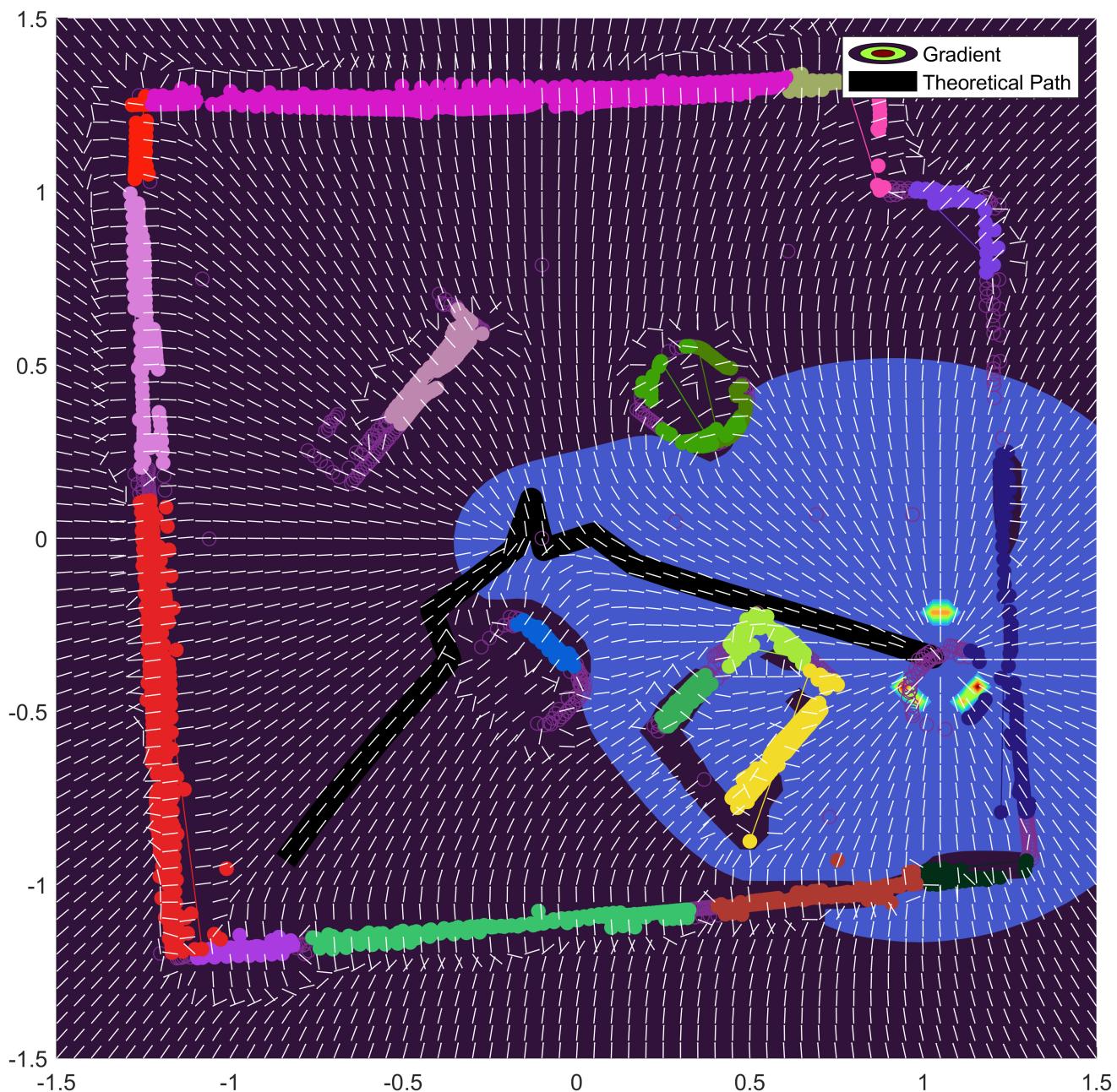


Figure 3: A quiver plot of the gradient of our potential field with theoretical path.

Gradient Descent

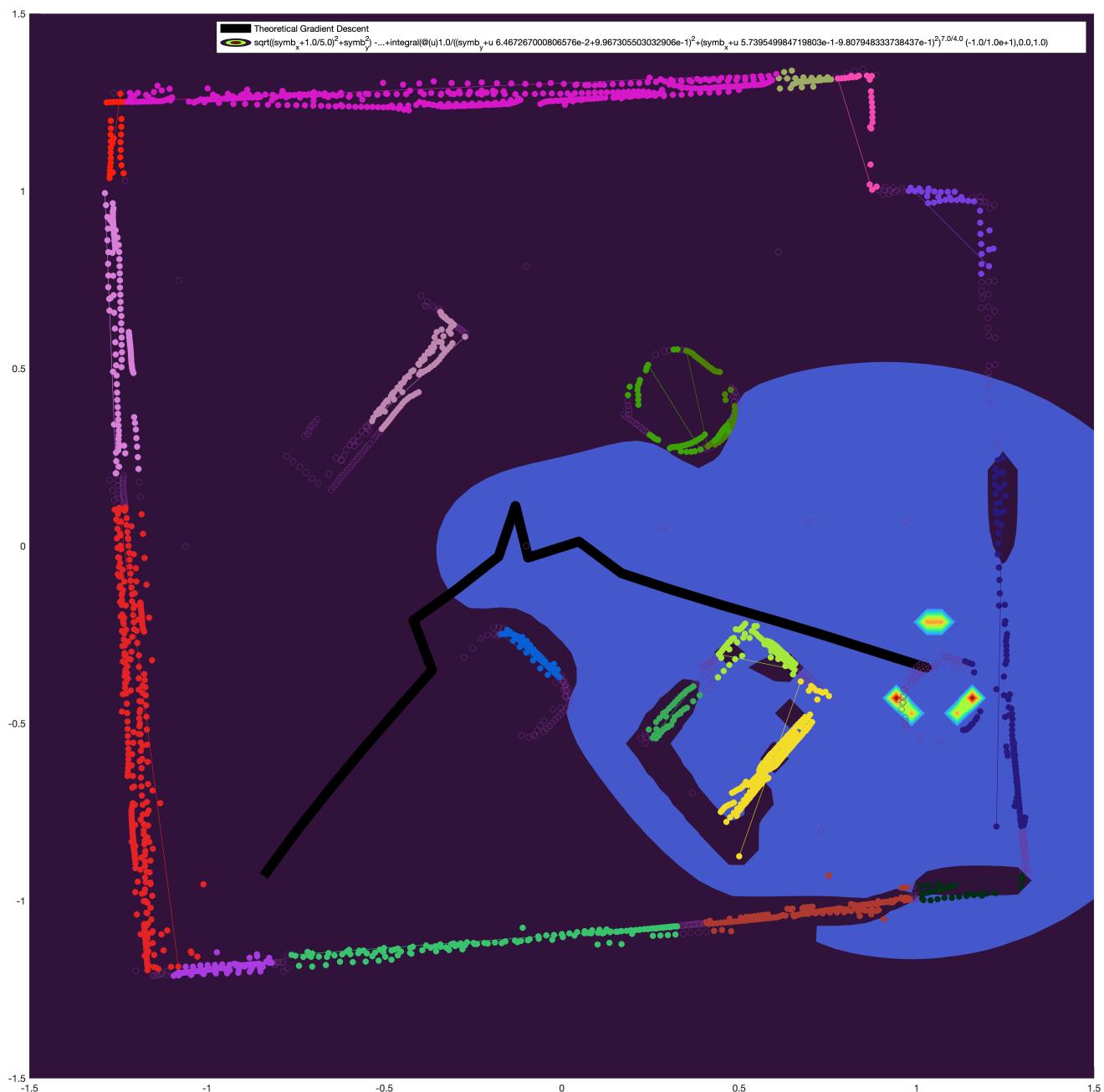


Figure 4: A theoretical path of gradient descent from the starting point to the BoB.

Introduction

Our mission was to move the neato through the gauntlet as accurately as possible through the gradient path without hitting obstacles to gently tap the Barrel of Benevolence.

Line Fitting

We define our initial candidate segment as joining two random points. Points are classified into either of two categories, inliers and outliers, based on the vertical distance. The inliers are also required to satisfy the longest gap threshold threshold otherwise the candidate segment is discarded.

Calculating the horizontal position of a candidate point in the direction of the candidate segment can be done by just taking the dot product of the unit vector of the candidate segment and the vector formed by the candidate point (origin is taken as the start of the segment).

To find the longest horizontal gap, we sort the horizontal positions and then calculate the gaps with a linear walkthrough. This is faster than the pair-wise point comparison approach in the compendium which takes quadratic runtime (our approach is $O(N * \log N)$ for the sorting cost).

To calculate vertical distance in the direction of the candidate segment we take the dot product of the unit orthogonal vector to the candidate segment and the vector formed by the candidate point (origin is taken as the start of the segment). Finding an orthogonal vector in 2D relies on the fact that vector (x, y) is always orthogonal to vector $(y, -x)$.

We repeat this process until we find the best fit line.

Circle Fitting

Let the center of a circle be (x_c, y_c) with radius r . Any point (x, y) on the circle can be represented as $(x - x_c)^2 + (y - y_c)^2 = r^2$. Therefore, we need to minimize the following equation:

$$\min_{x_c, y_c, r} \left(\sum_{i=1}^M [(x_i - x_c)^2 + (y_i - y_c)^2 - r^2]^2 \right),$$

where M is the number of points.

Now, we substitute $z = x_c^2 + y_c^2 - r^2$ and convert it to linear least squares problem.

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{x_c, y_c, r} & \left(\sum_{i=1}^M [2x_i x_c + 2y_i y_c - z - x_i^2 - y_i^2]^2 \right) \\ & = \min_w \|Aw - b\|^2, \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{where } w = \begin{bmatrix} x_c \\ y_c \\ z \end{bmatrix}, b_i = \begin{bmatrix} x_{1,i}^2 + y_{1,i}^2 \\ \vdots \\ x_{M,i}^2 + y_{M,i}^2 \end{bmatrix}, \text{ and } A = \begin{bmatrix} 2x_{1,i} & 2y_{1,i} & -1 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots \\ 2x_{M,i} & 2y_{M,i} & -1 \end{bmatrix}.$$

We use the RANSAC approach to fit a circle to three random points from the set. We perform linear regression using the above minimization equation to find x_c, y_c, z for the circle.

Then, we compute the radius $r = \sqrt{x_c^2 + y_c^2 - z}$ and the orthogonal distance of each point (x_i, y_i) from the the circle edge. We then set a threshold distance to find the number of inliers as points that have lower distance from the circle edge than this. If the circle has a radius close of the radius of BoB and consists of most inliers, then we classify it as the best fit. Otherwise, we repeat this process until we find the best fit.

Experimental Validation

It took around 1 minutes and 27 seconds for the neato to get to the BoB.

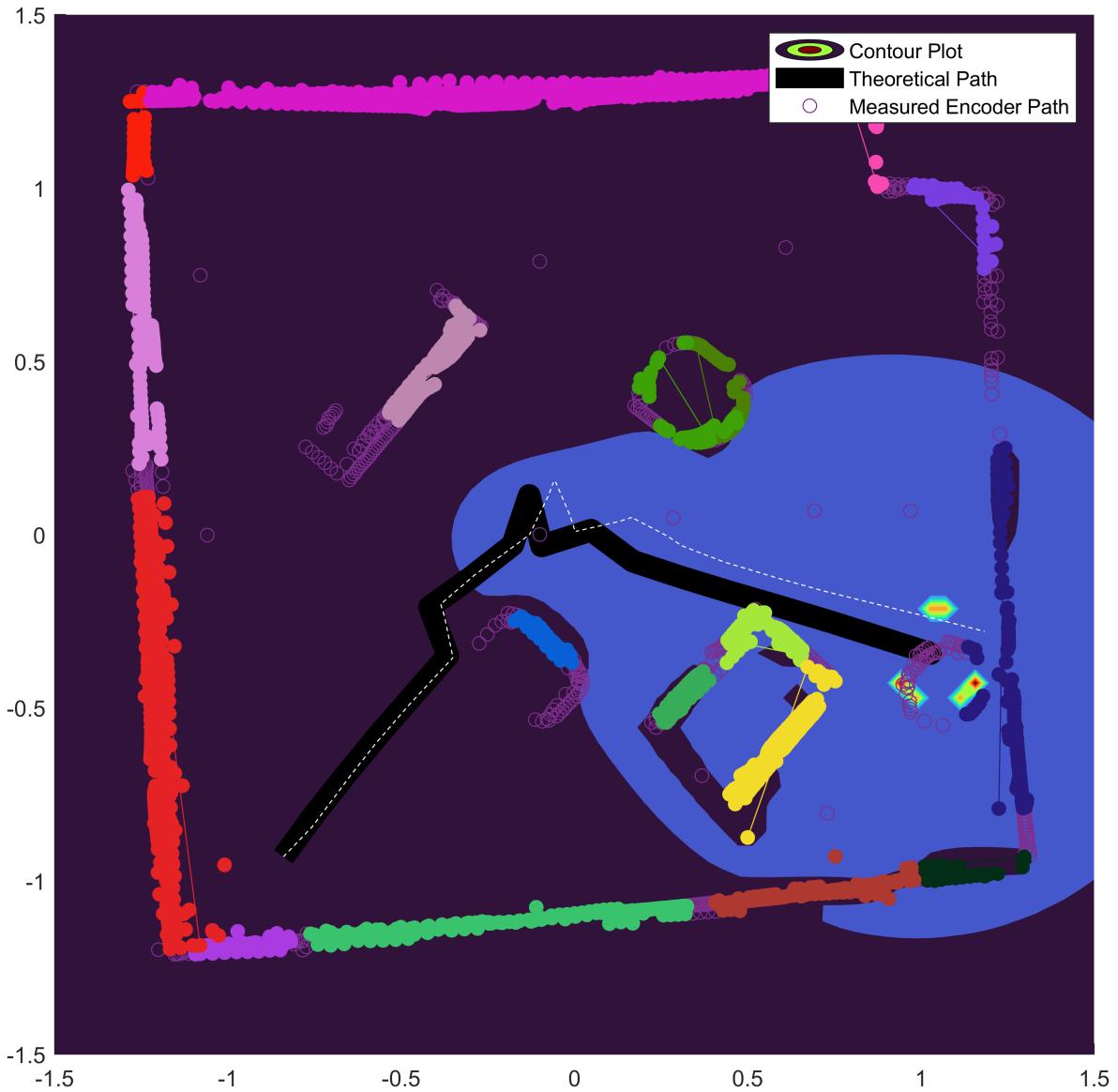


Figure 5: The measured path of gradient descent from the starting point to the BoB.

We used 14 scans of LIDAR data points for creating the Gauntlet map. The measured path was pretty similar to the theoretical path. The robot took a longer time to get to the BoB because we made it move slowly so that the path would be more accurate.

The RANSAC approach for line fitting and circle fitting described in the above section was used to achieve this level of accuracy and successfully move the neato in the Gauntlet.

Video

[Click here to watch the neato traverse the Gauntlet. \(YouTube\)](#)

[Click here to watch the neato traverse the Gauntlet. \(Google Drive\)](#)

Code

[Click here to view the repository of code to conquer the Gauntlet.](#)