

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter March 2018



It's an easy walk to Coppermine Creek Mine Site, southeast Ruahine Forest Park. [Woody Lee]

Club Nights

All are welcome to our club nights. These are held on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North. Doors open 7.15 pm for a cuppa before start at 7.30pm.

8 March 2018

Arctic Passage

Peter Wiles

The ice is retreating and the permafrost is melting dramatically. Peter spent August 2017 as one of the first tourists to sail the Northern Sea Route (NSR) (aka the NE Passage) across the top of Russia in the Arctic visiting some of the most remote and politically inaccessible islands on the globe.

29 March 2018

Arizona Trail

Glenn Pendergrast

In April and May of 2017 Glenn hiked the Arizona National Scenic Trail, aka The Arizona Trail (AZT), which runs for 1,300 km from Mexico up to the Utah border. The southern half crosses many small mountain ranges whereas the northern half is easier going on a high plateau. The highlight of the trail is walking across the Grand Canyon just a few days from the finish.

Upcoming Trips

2-4 March

Maungahuka/YTTY (3 day) M/F
Grant Christian 354 5843

A classic Tararua circuit from Otaki Forks via Field Hut and along the main range, over the Tararua Peaks and the ladder to Maungahuka Hut. Continue along the main range until we drop down to Waitewaewae Hut and out along the valley. A three-day trip leaving Friday morning.

4 March

Ohau Gorge E/M
Warren Wheeler 356 1998

A fun summer trip in the Tararua Forest Park that starts from Poads Road carpark behind Levin. We first follow the sidle track for about an hour through delightful lowland forest above the Ohau River, then rock hop downstream for about 2 hours and back to the carpark. Some of the pools can be a bit deep so expect to get more than wet feet.

10 March

River Crossing Course All/Training
Graeme Richards 353 6227

Looking for some river safety training? This Outdoor Training NZ course will cover river features, dynamics and safety when tramping around rivers. The morning will involve indoor instruction followed by dry land practice of river crossing techniques. Following lunch we will analyse and practice river crossing techniques at the nearby river. Bring your own pack with pack liner that is similar to a normal tramping weight (content isn't important so is typically towels and water bottles for bulk and weight), lunch and change of clothes. This course is free to PNTMC members thanks to a training grant provided by Eastern and Central Community Trust.

11 March

Manawatu Walking Festival E/M
Dave Grant 328 7788
Oroua/Tunupo

PNTMC and the Oroua Blue Duck Protection Project are hosting this trip for the Manawatu Walking Festival, with co-leaders Dave Grant and Janet Wilson. We welcome PNTMC club members to join with us in looking after the visitors.

Leaving PN i-Site at 8am we will travel by bus to Heritage carpark on the western edge of the Ruahines. We will be venturing with the Walking Festival folk into the Oroua above Iron

Gates Gorge to show them Blue Duck habitat, hopefully the birds themselves, and for Janet to outline the ecology of the birds and the history, activities, and results of the Protection Project.

We will then have lunch at Heritage Lodge and then venture up the Tunipo Track as far as time allows, to enjoy the climb through mixed beech and podocarp forest to alpine scrub and tussock. We need to be back at the carpark by 3.30pm, and in PN by 4.30pm.

17-18 March (rescheduled from 10-11 Feb)

Pouakai Circuit E/M
Kathy Corner 027 618 5722

The DOC blurb says: Egmont National Park's premier 2-3 day tramp offers spectacular views of Mt Taranaki and the surrounding countryside. The 25 km track passes through forest, alpine tussock fields and the unique Ahukawakawa Swamp. It is certainly one of my favourite tramps. We will either leave Friday night or early Saturday morning. It is a 3- 4 hour walk to Holly Hut and then a further 2-3 hours to Pouakai Hut. Give me a ring if you are interested.

17-18 March

McGregor Biv F
Chris Tuffley 359 2530

The plan is to head in via Atiwhakatu and Raingauge Spur, and come out over the Broken Axe Pinnacles and down the Baldy Track, hopefully with a side trip to the plane wreck on Shingle Slip Knob on the way there. Leaving Friday night and either camping at Holdsworth Lodge or walking in to Atiwhakatu to give us a head start on the next day.

18 March

Tunupo-Toka Circuit M/F
Craig Allerby 323 7913

A traverse over the highest points on the Ngamoko Range, Ruahine Forest Park. We can either start from the Limestone roadend or the Oroua valley carpark. We will need to leave a second car at the opposite roadend to ferry us back as it is not a complete circuit, unless you want a long walk along the gravel road! Not me! Depart 7.30am.

24-25 March

Pureora MTB/Tramp
Richard Lockett 323 0948

Basing ourselves at Pureora Village and fly camping out to try and hear the elusive kokako singing at dawn! Plus a bike and hike up to Mt Pureora and or Bog Inn Hut. A late afternoon Friday departure would be good.

25 March

**Ohingaiti Boulders
Doug Strachan**

**E/Family
353 6526**

Depart 9am from Milverton Park for an 80min drive to the carpark. There is an honesty box where you pay \$5 a head (children under 12 free) to access concretions reminiscent of Moeraki boulders. From the carpark, we walk for half an hour down and across open farmland to a remnant of bush (about 150m x 50m in area), where there is a flush toilet and the scattered boulders. There's also a geocache somewhere amongst the boulders if anyone is into geocaching. We will spend about an hour exploring the boulders and having a snack. Bring togs because we will go home via the Ruahine Dress Circle, which is a pleasant swimming spot. Bring something like sandals or reef shoes to wear when swimming as the stony stream bed is surprisingly hostile to feet. Also camera, drink, snacks, lunch, sunscreen, sunhat, raincoat, towel, petrol & ice cream money.

30 March-2 April

**Easter Eggmont Explorer
Warren Wheeler**

**M
356 1998**

There is lots to explore around the mountain and on the way to the summit. What we actually do will depend on the weather and whatever else is thrown at us. Options include Waiaua Gorge via the high level track, Kahui Hut and summit climb, and much more.

7-8 April

**Waitewaewae Hut
Michael Allerby**

**M
323 8563**

Leave PN at 8.00am and head down to Otaki Forks, the starting point of the approx. 6hr tramp in to the 16 bunk Waitewaewae Hut, located on the banks of the Otaki River. Return the same route the following day.

8 April

**Puketurua/Burn Hut
Dave Grant**

**M/F
328 7788**

Been wanting to do this trip into the western Tararuas for some time as an alternative route to Burn Hut. Had a go a couple of years ago but got beaten by the weather. From the end of the Mangahao Road the idea is to follow the track around the top reservoir (No.1) to Baber Creek. We will then head up the old Puketurua Track to the main ridge and go north along the ridge to reach the Burn Hut Track a kilometre or so south of Burn Hut. This section along the ridge through tussock and scrub is basically untracked so be prepared for a bit of bush bashing. Lunch at Burn Hut then follow back

and head down the track to College Creek and out to the top Mangahao Reservoir again.

14-15 April

Kiritaki Hut

M

Richard Lockett

323 0948

Situated in the south eastern Ruahines an ex Forest Service well looked after by locals. We will approach from the western side of the Ruahine Range via No.1 Line with options for a bit of stream travel, returning via same route. Depart 7.30 am from Milverton Park.

14 or 15 April

Farm Walk

M

Malcolm Leary

06 327 7825

Hunterville hinterland is rich in farming history with large highcountry sheep and cattle stations offering spectacular views and plenty of exercise. You may well be rewarded with some of Edith's rural hospitality back at their homestead.

Trip Grading

Trip grades depend on many factors, especially weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient trapper should expect to do the trips in the following times:

Easy (E): 3-4 hrs

Medium (M): 5-6 hrs

Fit (F): about 8 hrs

Fitness Essential (FE): over 8 hrs

Other grades:

Technical skills (T)

Instructional (I)

Trip participants

Contact the leader at least 3 days in advance. Trips leave from Milverton Park. A charge for transport will be collected on the day.

Gear for trips

Minimum gear for day trips is appropriate footwear, pack, lunch and snacks, waterproof jacket, overtrousers, gloves, warm hat, torch, toilet paper, matches or a lighter, sunblock, first aid kit, and a survival bag or space blanket. Each person needs to be equipped to survive overnight.

Personal Locator Beacons – Free for trips

The club has purchased two PLBs for members' use. If you want to take one of these on a trip, contact Martin or Anne Lawrence on 357-1695. Note that this applies to any trip you are going on - it doesn't need to be a club trip.

Trip leaders

Complete the trip intentions form and leave with one of Overdue Trip Contacts or drop into 44 Dahlia St or email to pntmctrips@gmail.com with the date and trip name in the subject line. If you

are unable to run your trip as scheduled, advise a trip coordinator as soon as possible so that alternatives can be arranged.

Overdue Trips

If a club trip is late returning, please do not worry unduly as there is probably a good reason for the delay. If you are in any doubt, please phone one of the Overdue Trip Contacts:

Janet Wilson	329-4722
Martin and Anne Lawrence	357-1695
Graeme Richards	353-6227

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20th of each month to Warren Wheeler, the newsletter editor, direct or via our web site <http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>

From the President

This month I thought I'd share a recipe for wonderful pumpkin scones that makes good use of the pumpkins that will be harvested soon. I love to take them tramping for lunch - the sight of the lovely orange colour and spicy taste will have the other members of your group asking for the recipe!

PANCH PHORA (5 Spice) PUMPKIN SCONES

Buy packets of whole spice seed - cumin, mustard, nigella (I couldn't find these so I make 4 Spice Scones), fennel and funegreek seeds.

Combine 2 tsp each of cumin, mustard and nigella with 1 tsp each of fennel and fenugreek - mix and store in a jar to make more than 1 batch of scones.

800g pumpkin peeled and chopped
40g butter
1 egg yolk
1/4 cup caster sugar
2 1/2 cups self raising flour
approx 1/3 cup milk
2 tbsp Panch Phora spice mix
1/3 cup pumpkin seeds if you like

Firstly, season and roast the pumpkin with a little oil, then cool and mash (this can be done at any stage - I prepare and freeze mine if I have extra pumpkins). I think this also works with non-roasted (microwaved or boiled) pumpkin if you use a dry type - not wet mushy pumpkin. Do 2 lots at a time if you have lots of pumpkin.

Preheat oven to 200°C. Grease 20cm x 30 cm rectangular pan, line with baking paper if you wish.

Dry fry spices over medium heat stirring until fragrant and popping (careful not to burn).

Beat butter, sugar and egg yolk with mixer until combined - stir this with the spices into pumpkin.

Stir in sifted flour and enough milk to make a soft, sticky dough. Knead gently until smooth. Press dough in to pan. Sprinkle with pumpkin seeds if using. Use a wet knife to cut into squares. Bake approx 25min or until scones sound hollow. Enjoy.

Janet

Notices

Hut and Track News

Jumbo Hut has new anchor wires and is again Open for Bookings. (Loose wires reported to DOC were due to be inspected and tightened.)

Whakarara Road end access has been finalised via a 300m walk from the locked gate down to the Makarora River and a 700m walk upriver to the old mill site where we used to be able to park. Allow an extra half hour if heading to Parkes Peak or up river.

Kashmir Road is on the maintenance programme to fill some bad ruts and holes. Meanwhile, a 4WD is recommended.

Rangi Hut has been upgraded with a new bench layout and a fresh coat of paint. The bookings trial for this hut (and Sunrise) will carry on until Anzac Weekend.

Top Gorge Hut is about to be upgraded from two beds to four beds/bunks. Other improvements include lining the walls and capping the chimney. This work is being carried out by Ruahine Deerstarkers who have a hut maintenance agreement with DOC. A new biodiversity track is also to be cut from the hut up to the ridge track.

Tracks leading to Daphne Hut and Howletts Hut are due to be cleared of numerous trees and heavy branches felled by heavy snow last year.

Huts and High Places PNTMC Challenge 2018

Huts and High Places Challenge 15 Dec 2017 - 9 Dec 2018

Our PNTMC Challenge 2018 aims to inspire you to visit new places, support our club and have fun in the hills.

There are points to be earned for visits, bonus points for new places and bonus points if you are on a PNTMC trip.

To add more challenges to the fun, committee members have added their own challenges. Points for these can only be earned once.

Huts and High Places

- Visit to DOC or NZAC hut 1 point
- Visit a named high point 1 point
- Bonus points for each hut or high point**
- If a club trip 1/2 point
- If your first visit 1/2 point

Committee Challenges

For a bonus of 5 points (once for each challenge):

- Pack float or swim a pool on a river (Warren's Challenge)
- Go on a club organised beginners trip (Anne's Challenge)
- Photograph a whio (Janet's challenge)
- Summit Tahurangi - Mt Ruapehu (Grant's Challenge)
- Visit Ngamoko or Mid Pohangina Hut (Martin's Challenge)
- Visit 3 or more huts on a trip (Graeme's Challenge)
- Camp above 2000m - not near a hut (Bruce's Challenge)
- Hut warden at Rangi Hut (Committee Challenge)
- Bring a new trumper on a club trip (Woody's Challenge)

Points to be gained fairly while visiting the DOC estate and in the spirit of the Challenge - talk to Janet or committee members if in doubt.

There is no restriction on how you can get to these places i.e. helicopters, boats, bikes etc acceptable.

Send your trip details, places visited etc to Janet or add them to the online spreadsheet which is now up and running for this challenge.

Here are the results to date. You can read all about Elly's epic summer tramping in the Trip Reports on page 7-10.

Name	Huts	Highs	Bonus	TOTAL
Elly	44	32.5	20	96.5
Chris T	32.5	19	20	71.5
Warren	15.5	4.5	25	45
Janet	17	4.5	15	36.5
Graham	12	4.5	15	31.5
Grant	8	4.5	15	27.5
Martin	10.5	0	15	25.5
Kathy	6	0	15	21
Anne	4.5	0	5	9.5
Dieter	0	0	5	5
Woody	1.5	0	0	1.5

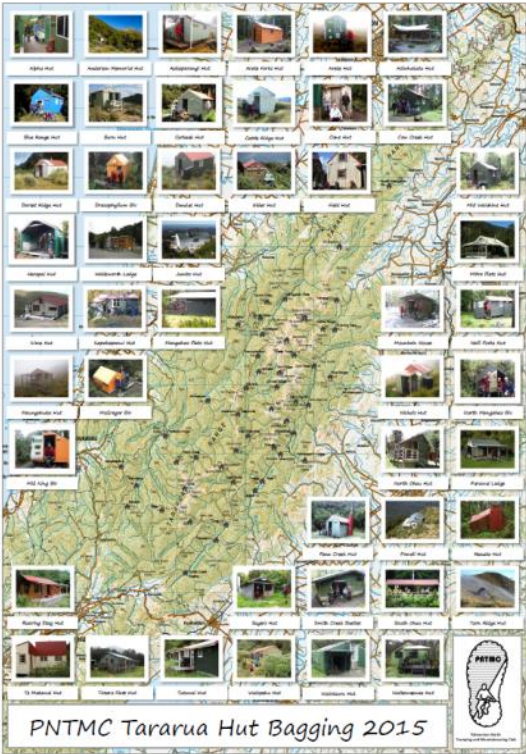
PNTMC Hut Bagging Posters

Posters are still available for both the Ruahine Hut Bagging 2012 and Tararua Hut Bagging 2015.

Size	Members	Non Members
A2	\$8	\$12
A1	\$16	\$24

Post and tube is about \$15 extra depending on where it is being sent.

Sale proceeds go towards our maintenance of the Mid-Pohangina Hut and Ngamoko Hut in Ruahine Forest Park. Contact Warren (06) 356-1998.

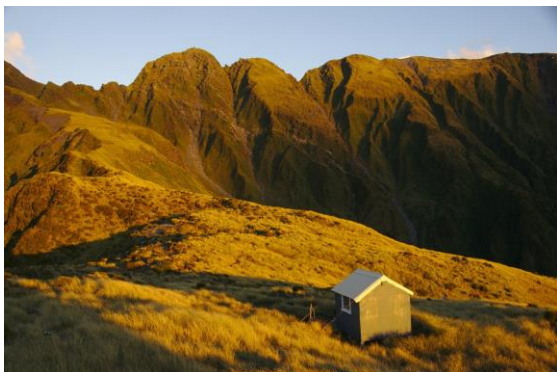


Trip Reports

New Year 2018 Hut-hopping in the Hokitika Ranges Chris Tuffley

New Year's tramping plans with Dion morphed from finally walking the Five Passes route in Aspiring to bagging remote huts on the West Coast, and on Dec 27th he flew down to CHCH from AKL to join me and we were off; west over Arthur's Pass and south to Hokitika. Leaving my mountain bike at the Toaroha road-end - it's always good to have options! - we drove around to the Hokitika Gorge and set off up Gerhardt Spur, scarcely feeling our, ah, no, that would be struggling beneath the weight of our seven day packs. Whose idea was this again??

A flight of three kea treated us to our personal airshow, making it all worthwhile, and then an evening snapping lovely golden light on the Diedrich Range morphed into a moonlit photoshoot of Gerhardt Spur Biv while Dion sensibly slept. Rising to another sunny day we carried on up the spur and then south along the Diedrich tops, negotiating several steep sketchy sections and the inside of a cloud (hey! Where'd the view go??) as we made our way to Frisco Hut, startling an injured chamois as we sidled beneath the high peak of O'Connor. The chamois clearly wasn't used to seeing people heading to Frisco: the hut book there went back to 1983, and was only half full at that! Nonetheless it featured multiple entries by MTSC's Jean Garmen and Ivan Rienks - something we were about to get as used to seeing here as in the Ruahines!



Evening at Gerhardt Spur Biv, Diedrichs Range.

After our ten hour day across the tops to Frisco it was time for a rest! So following the "Buglass Highway" - a long vanished track recently reopened by Andrew Buglass of the Permolat group - we dropped down to the beautiful, blue, wild and tumbling Hokitika

River, then took the steep! steep! at times hand-over-hand (yes, seriously) track up to Bluff Hut. Done by lunch time! Six kea flapped lazily across the sky - a seventh from the other direction falling in to formation for several wing-beats, before continuing on its way - as we lunched and chatted to the other party at the hut. "You're from Palmy? Do you belong to any of the clubs?" Turned out we were sharing the hut with former PNTMC member Jonathan Astin and his wife - small world!

Listening to the rain on the roof next morning I was mentally preparing myself for a difficult day lounging in my sleeping bag, when Dion declared it "Wet - but not wet enough for a hut day, I'm afraid!" And so off we went, back down the steep! steep! at times hand-over-hand (yes, seriously) track to the Hokitika River and on up the Mungo Valley. Ambitions of carrying on over Toaroha Saddle were quickly shelved when we reached Poet Hut three hours after leaving Bluff, soaking wet and finding it to be a much nicer hut than we'd expected. Really rather pleasant, in fact! And so the afternoon was spent in cutting wood, drinking tea, reading 1960s Woman magazines, and passing comment on the persistent rain falling outside. "Oh look, it's getting lighter!" "Hmmm, heavier again now" "Might be a bit lighter again!" "Nope, heavy still".

The hut-hopping continued the next day with our second soaking wet arrival at a hut only three hours after setting out, feeling disinclined to go any further. The six-bunk Top Toaroha Hut felt positively mansion-like after the two and four bunk huts we'd been frequenting till now! But to my disappointment its library was singularly lacking in back issues of Woman magazine. This time we actually burnt some of the wood we gathered, and the calls of "lighter now" "heavier again" gradually got further apart until finally a long clear spell let us venture outside for an extended exploration. The hut weka popped by for a visit, but alas was a rather reluctant photographic subject...

The fine spell eventually extended all the way into the following morning (gasp!), and we set off along the rugged track down the Toaroha Valley. A slip to negotiate here...a fixed rope to use there...and then we were at the Crystal Biv turn-off, where I peeled off up the hill while Dion sensibly continued on down valley to Cedar Flats. Up the steep! steep! at times hand-over-hand (yes, seriously; whose idea was this again??) track I went, negotiating the

inside of a cloud (look Ma, no view!) once more to reach Crystal Biv and then Yeats Ridge Hut, before dropping back down to rejoin Dion at Cedar Flats. A spell of rain in the middle of an otherwise fine day ensured my third soaked arrival at a hut in as many days, this time with the added indignity of a wardrobe malfunction: a 20cm rip down the backside of my shorts. When did that happen??

The Cedar Flats hut weka was just as reluctant a subject as Top Toaroha's; the nearby hot pools were a hit (ease yourself in slowly!); and look, there are Warren's and Esther's names in the hut book, on their Mega Trip! Sharing a hut for only the second time on our six nights out we learnt that my bike was (a) still at the road end, and (b) the subject of comment and speculation by the local farmer. Alas, he was not there for us to satisfy his curiosity on reaching it the next day...and after a 30km ride (wardrobe malfunction and all; whose idea was this again??), I was back with the car and we were off! east over Arthur's Pass, admiring the glorious red rata bloom and vowing to return.

We were Chris Tuffley and Dion O'Neale

This Summer Was Made for Tramping Elly Arnst

After last "summer", we couldn't have asked for better tramping weather - days without strong winds for traversing the tops, and low river levels offering great options for the more blowy weekends. Generating my own forecasts from a mish-mash of sources alongside some strategic trip planning has meant that only one of my trips has been cut short; whereby seven days became four, so I really can't complain too loudly. Planning aside, tramping is ultimately dictated by what Mother Nature sends our way.

It doesn't feel as though I've been out enough in the last few months and definitely not as much as I'd have liked (my boot inner soles tell a different story). Then again, given the trips conjured up, my body is probably thankful of the other rest-inducing priorities in my life.

Most of my excursions this year have been into the Ruahines and I've managed to tick a few places off my bucket list - Sawtooth, Ruahine Corner, Colenso and Maropea Forks, along with some which weren't on there i.e. the Pohangina River Traverse (thanks Chris!). I've spent far more time wading in waterways than

I imagined possible, even preferring them to scrambling up and down tracks on long warm days.

I've seen a lot more huts and high points than people, and the good experiences far outweigh the bad.

The Highlights

- Traversing Sawtooth
- Birthday celebrations at the "Party Biv" (Tarn Biv)
- Solo at Aokaparangi on New Year's Eve in the middle of a howling gale, followed by a stunning day on the Main Range
- Pack floating the Pohangina gorge below Leon Kinvig at 9am. Chris and I convincing each other it was a good way to complete Warren's challenge - chilly, but invigorating and surprisingly fun!
- The night sky at Ruahine Corner;
- Salted Maple Frozeballs;
- Snowberries - handfuls of sweet, ripe goodness on the Longview Track.

The Lowlights

- Mozzies at Colenso. In the hut. At night. Biting. Not much sleep!
- Climbing the final 120m out of the river to Top Maropea at the end of an 11 hour day
- Speargrass, leatherwood, tussock wading, and more speargrass!
- Hours (and hours and hours) of wet boots!

Favourite Hut (so far): Tarn Biv has it all – sunrise to the east, Sawtooth to the west.

Favourite High Point (so far): Tiraha; munching on crystallised ginger with the world at your feet - what's not to love!

Worst Hut (so far): Top Maropea; the mankiest hut I visited (closely followed by Happy Daze and Neill Forks), but after a long day and drizzle I was grateful for some kind of shelter. On the upside, the toilet was incredibly clean!

Worst High Point (so far): Te Pohatu; leatherwood (enough said!)

On track, off track, up rivers and down, tussock wading, bush bashing, and clambering around.

Happy highs, tired sighs, and the odd bad word (whispered quietly under my breath, not to be heard!).

So if you can, get out there, go exploring, see what you can discover. Here's hoping that this autumn will be made for tramping too...



New Year's solitude in on the main range.



Contemplating the Gorge (pre-swim)



Stunning weather on Sawtooth Ridge.



Sunrise at the Party Biv (Tarn Ridge).

17-18 February 2018

Makaretu Loop

Elly Arnst

Three cars were already in the Ngamoko Road carpark when I arrived mid-Saturday morning. Two men and a boy returned as I was preparing to set off, and tell of hunters high on the ridge. I am slightly wary (after some tales I've heard), but was reassured that they were "experienced, responsible guys". However, I came across paths with no one on my Apiti Track side, gradually gaining elevation towards the tops.

The trip was meant to be an easy alternative to other options I had contemplated for the weekend, a leisurely start (11am) preceding two seven-ish hour days. Saturday went to plan, Sunday...well; I didn't really add that up until Saturday night! I'd been wanting to walk the Longview-Makaretu-Awatere loop for a few months, but after my last 2wd slip and slide on Kashmir Road, decided that coming in from Ngamoko Road was a far more car friendly option. It just requires a lot more walking! I'd go in via the river to Awatere Hut, and then climb up and along the tops the next day before joining back into the Apiti Track.

Heading across the farm, it didn't take me long to realise that my GPS wasn't loading correctly, forcing me to resort to old fashioned map reading, which was thankfully bang on the

money! I made good time to the unmapped (but signposted) junction down to Makaretu in spite of some serious dawdling, track clearing, and map consultations. It is worth noting at this point, that I initially learned of this track on www.routeguides.co.nz – a great resource for descriptions of both tracks and unmarked routes, including some GPX files. However, things do change over time, so if you find it's not supplying entirely accurate information – please consider contributing.



Walking the Apiti track

A quick lunch and I was off, dropping rapidly down the well-marked track into the south branch of the Makaretu River. From then on it was anyone's guess where to go – some old permat markers were intermittently visible, but for the most part the simplest route was down the very slippery, brown riverbed. The banks closed in and, confronted by two large orange triangles, I followed a track up to Makaretu, instantly liking the hut sited in its sunny, grassy clearing. I briefly contemplated stopping there for the night, then retracing my steps back to the car.

However, after a quick snack and a book scribble, I headed out. The river became noticeably larger, but also less slippery and the bends often had relatively clear bypass tracks. It did eventually come to the inevitable point of wet boots (so far, I'd been lucky!) Just upstream of the junction with the North Branch, another marked (but unmapped) track

climbs to Happy Daze. Glimpses through the trees of the river below revealed camping spots that offering attractive alternatives to staying in the rather manky hut! Upon entering the clearing I found a hut full of gear, but empty of people – out hunting I presumed. Another quick scribble and back to the river.



Happy Daze (seen better days?)

Entering the North Branch I was momentarily taken aback by how beautiful it is. Wide pools of calm glassy water overhung by trees, a log positioned photogenically across the expanse. It took some mental adjustment to change travel direction from downstream to upstream and I found myself following in the footprints of one, possibly two pairs of boots, and a dog. Counting the side streams off on my map, I noticed differences in algae growth and slipperiness of the riverbed around each new water injection. Several long shingle sections meant longer stints out of the water and on one of these (about 1km from Awatere) I was greeted by a wagging tail and a wet nose. The hunters (and dog) were returning to Happy Daze, and gave news of an empty hut ahead.



Awatere Hut

And empty it was. Awatere is a great little hut (one of my favourites), renovated in recent years and with a view towards the river from

the front step. The usual hut activities ensued: unpacking, washing, dinner, trawling the hut book. A look at the map and a quick add up promised the next day would be a much longer walk.

I was tired and tried to read for a while, but by 8:20pm the light had dimmed through the skylight – enough for me to hide in relative darkness on the bottom bunk and close my eyes. I woke a couple of times, but thanks to earplugs, failed to hear the pattering of the resident mouse as it investigated my bag.

I rose early, a morepork still calling outside the window, and found traces of mouse on my gear. Luckily all was intact! I had contemplated several routes to Longview – up the hill to Rocky Knob, upstream and cut up to the track, or out to Kashmir and back up the usual way. A few heavy showers overnight meant the vegetation was sodden and I didn't fancy walking wet along potentially windy tops, so I opted for the dry (track) option.



Early morning at Moorcock Saddle

When I set out the sun was just rising and I needed my head torch to see through the first bush section. The light from the rising sun played on the clouds above Longview as I walked along the exposed ridge. Moorcock was reached quickly and the climb to Longview tackled, interspersed with pauses to shove handfuls of large sweet snowberries into my mouth. They are the best ones I've had by far this season!

In typical Longview fashion, the breeze got stronger the higher I climbed. I made it to the hut without needing to put on extra layers (a first) to find it also strewn with gear and thankfully no bodies – perhaps surprising given the amount of empty cans! Scribbles done and layered up, I set off for Rocky Knob. The track along the top is well cut and mostly

clear, undulating through leatherwood which provides some respite from the wind.



Rocky Knob

The obligatory scramble to the top of the Knob completed, I rejoined the rather featureless track. The clouds hung low and the wind blew, so I just put my head down and walked. Te Pohatu was a non-distinctive leatherwood infested blimp. Not on my "to revisit" list! By the time I rejoined the Apati Track the sun was out and the wind abating. Dropping rapidly down, I soon reached the Makaretu junction - completing a full loop. Seven hours. Unfortunately at least two more lay between me and the car.

It's funny what goes through your head on long days, what incentives you can conjure up to keep walking. Rum and raisin ice cream - I haven't had it for years. In fact I rarely buy ice cream, but for some reason it was stuck there - a mental carrot in my weary mind. I turned up eagerly at the Norsewood store splattered with mud, hook grass, and dried bloody scratches, but alas there was none!! Maybe next time I'll try think of Hokey Pokey...

3 February 2018 Shingle Slip Plane Crash (Almost) Ange Minto

Richard and Warren decided to make a Wairarapa weekend of it and come down to stay Friday night for an early(ish) start Saturday as we had a long day ahead. Sunday they thought they'd head to the vintage machinery show at Clearville (Carterton).

After days of hot 30 degree temps Saturday delivered a much cooler option with -3 degree wind chill temps forecast for the wettish Tararua tops! Why were we going Saturday??

We headed in about 8am from Holdsworth Road end perhaps a little late for the challenge ahead, making very good time along the easy 7km highway track to Atiwhakatu Hut. A short refuel stop and Richard powered on ahead up the steep unrelenting 800m climb to the newly strengthened Jumbo Hut, thankfully now reopened. Warren and Richard had other thoughts on just how well the new guy-line thingies were working, so a bit of engineering tinkering ensued from the boys, I hope DOC is pleased!

It was now cold with the heat-producing climb all but over, all clothing donned and off we set again. When questioning the team whether they wanted to continue I was delivered with incredulous looks of "why do you think we come this far to turn back now". At the least we had to get club competition points for a Jumbo Peak summit.

With photographic proof of Jumbo summit we continued on along the ridge for Angle Knob or at least thought that's where we were heading, thick clag necessitated a map and compass check confirming we were off course and heading into no-man's land.



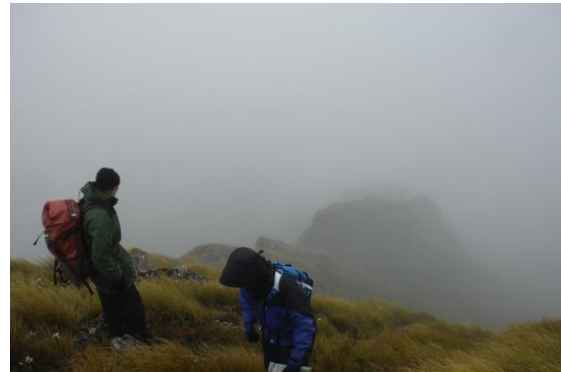
Heading along to Angle Knob. [WW]

With the excellent skills of Warren, we were soon righted and back on track. Partially clearing glimpses of the gorgeous Tararua tops rewarded our perseverance in continuing.

Time however had rushed on with it being 1.15pm when we were sheltering on the lee side of Angle Knob enjoying lunch, well mostly Warren's lunch, bless him, those beer sticks were delicious and in date!

Having been down to Shingle Knob before on a rare perfectly clear and windless tops day many years previously I remember the descent being rather gnarly and a three points of contact climb in places. Looking down through the fog it certainly appeared pretty steep.

Given the time of day, the weather, and the distance still left to reach the plane crash we decided to pull the pin and head out, this time with no incredulous looks.



In the cloud at Angle Knob 1510m. [WW]

Just as well, as we reached the car park at about 6pm. Being too lazy to cook we headed out for a nice meal. The boys went vintage machinering the next morning. Thanks Richard and Warren for a good trip – yet to be completed though!

Did You Know?

Boobook is Australian for Morepork

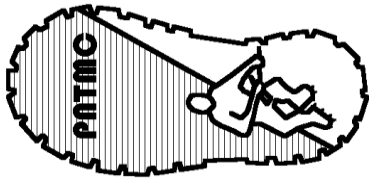
The southern boobook (*Ninox boobook*) is a species of owl native to mainland Australia, southern New Guinea, the island of Timor, and the Sunda Islands.

Described by John Latham in 1801, it was generally considered to be the same species (conspecific) as the morepork of New Zealand until 1999.

Its name is derived from its two-tone boobook call.

Eleven subspecies of the southern boobook are recognized, although there is evidence that four have calls and genetics distinctive enough to warrant separate species status.

Now that's fairly interesting...thanks Wikipedia.



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PNTMC Newsletter March 2018

What's inside this month?

- From the President - Spicy Pumpkin Scones Recipe
- Hut-hopping in the Hokitika Ranges
- Summer Tramping in the Ruahines
- Makaretu-Loop the Long Way
- Shingle Slip Plane Crash (almost)
- Did you Know - Boobook vs Morepork
- Coming trips and more

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20th of each month to Warren Wheeler the newsletter editor, via the club website <http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>.

Get out and about with us!

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