



Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

www.pntmc.org.nz

PO Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter July 2022



Enjoying the Queens Birthday sunshine on Moutohora Whale Island.

Pic: Janet Wilson

Club Nights

Club nights are generally held on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Quakers Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North. Doors open 7.15pm for meeting start at 7.30pm. All welcome.

14 July 2022

Safety in the Mountains

Warren Wheeler

Back to basics – how to safely enjoy tramping in the mountains. Homework optional is to have a look through your FMC Safety in the Mountains booklet. The main focus will be on hypothermia, via the classic short film “Such a Stupid Way to Die”(1971). Members are invited to share cautionary tales from their own backcountry trips over the years.

28 July 2022

Weather to Go

Elly Arnst

Trying to decide if the weather is good enough to go on your trip, but not sure where to look? Instead of being surprised, come along and find out what resources are available and how to use them to plan trips that chase the best weather.

Upcoming Trips

2-3 July 2022 Kiritaki Hut E/M Monika Coles 0273 085 055

This hut in the lower Ruahines is due for an upgrade later in the year, but is still a cosy spot. We will go up the forest track from the end of No.1 Line, off the Pohangina Valley East Road, and along a ridge track through the leatherwood belt to the hut. Either return the same way or carry on to the Maharahara track and exit at Kumeti Roadend. This could also be done as a M/F day trip depending on interest.

3 July 2022 North Range Road Sunrise E Warren Wheeler 356 1998

Feeling like something a little crazy to ward off the winter blues? Rise and shine with the winter sun on an easy stroll amongst the windmills on the skyline east of Palmerston North. Leave Milverton Park at 6.00am.

9-10 July 2022 Snowcraft 1 T/Inst Dieter Stalman 027 450 9460

Registration required ASAP. See Notices and our PNTMC website for more details. Note: you need to attend the pre-course briefing on Wednesday 6 July.

10 July 2022 Beach Walk M Janet Wilson 329 4722

Depart Milverton Park 7.30am. We have been following the coast South of the Manawatu River for a number of years now on what has become my annual Beach Walk. This year we will pick up where we ended last time and start on the southern side of the Waikanae River. We will follow the coast to Paekakariki. We may choose to go from Sth to North if the wind is a southerly. Logistics/transport will depend on how many people want to come – we may be able to use the trains to get back to the start of the walk.

This is the Kapiti section of the Te Araroa trail – and the trail notes are copied here:

“An easy day’s walking after the rigours of Tararua tramping! The trail is virtually level walking for the whole 22km, taking in some of the Kāpiti District’s icons – the Waikanae River, an estuary and scientific reserve, Kāpiti Island in full view from the beach, Queen Elizabeth Park, and the distinctive cafes and local art outlets in Paraparaumu, Raumati and Paekākāriki.”

16-17 July 2022 Powell Hut E/M Doug Strachan 363 6526

Hopefully there will be some snow to enjoy up high on this Tararua trip and, once we have settled into the palatial hut, conditions will allow us to carry on for another 45 minutes or so up to the summit of Mt Holdsworth, one of the highest peaks in the ranges. Depart PN 7.30am.

17 July 2022 Levin Trig E Woody Lee 0210 444 552

Close to Palmy and a popular local walk to stretch the legs and enjoy the views. Depart 8.00am Milverton Park.

23-24 July 2022 Snowcraft 2 T/Inst Dieter Stalman 027 450 9460

Registration required ASAP. See Notices and our PNTMC website for more details. Note: Snowcraft 1 is a pre-requisite (unless matched by previous equivalent experience). Also, you need to attend the pre-course briefing on 20 July.

23 July 2022 (Sat) TA Turitea Valley-Greens Road E/M Dave Grant 021 684 050

Explore a local section of the Te Araroa Trail, up the Turitea Valley along the stream walkway with views out from up on Greens Road. Depart Milverton Park at 8.00am.

24 July 2022 Atene Skyline Walkway E/M Anne Lawrence 357 1695

The Atene Skyline Track is a very accessible walk in the Whanganui National Park. It's about 30 minutes drive from Whanganui on the Whanganui River Road. We'll leave vehicles at the up-river end and walk the loop in a clockwise direction. The track starts in a lowland forest then climbs to the Atene Lookout (260 m) and then the Atene Shelter, providing a toilet and water, is at the halfway point of the track. The highest point of the track – Taumata Trig (572 m) is 15-20 minutes after leaving the Atene Shelter. From Taumata Trig and the next high point (489 m) the track winds around the edge of sandstone bluffs and then descends steeply for about 2 km back down to the Whanganui River Road. From here it's a short walk back to where we left the vehicles. Leave Milverton Park 7.30am.

30-31 July 2022 TBA

Either a day trip on Saturday or overnight trip. Leader wanted, please contact Warren or Janet and we will post it on the website and email members.

31 July 2022 Branch Road Walkway E Janet Wilson 329 4722

An easy social walk for a winter's day. Come along and enjoy some scenic views of the beautiful Pohangina Valley as we climb steadily up to Ridge Road. We will return the same way. Lunch back at my Pohangina house near the start of the walkway. – or visit the local "County Fayre" cafe and gallery for scones. Depart Milverton Park 8.00am.

Trip Grading

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

Easy (E):	3-4 hrs	Other Grades:
Medium (M):	5-6 hrs	Family (Fam)
Fit (F):	about 8 hrs	Technical skills (T)
Fitness Essential (FE):	over 8 hrs	Inst (Instruction)

BWD = Best weather day of a weekend

Trip participants

Contact the leader at least 3 days in advance. Trips usually 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, over-trousers, 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.

Overdue Trips

If a club trip is late returning, please do not worry as there is probably a good reason for the delay. If you are in any doubt, please phone Martin Lawrence 357 1695 or Graeme Richards 021 149 8267.

New Members

Welcome to Sean Pannifer, Blair Petersen, Brendon Corner and Mike Thorogood.

Notices



Our Snowcraft Courses are now programmed to be held over three weekends on Ruapehu.

Each course is a prerequisite for the next unless you already have sufficient skills.

Enrol for just SC1, refresh with SC2/SC3 or do all three.

9-10 July - SC1 - basic alpine skills;
23-24 July - SC2 - climbing skills using ropes;
6-7 August - SC3 - consolidate climbing skills

SC1 cost: \$115 for PNTMC members, \$125 for non-members.

SC2 cost: \$140 for PNTMC members, \$150 for non-members.

SC3 cost: \$140 for PNTMC members, \$150 for non-members.

Each weekend is preceded by a Wednesday briefing session at Quakers Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North.

More details on our website.

To register please contact Dieter Stalman 027 450 9460.

Trip Reports

22 May 2022

Maharahara

Report by Ella Parkinson

I had been repeatedly checking the weather forecast in the two days prior to the trip, as it was not looking particularly pleasant. However, a few of us were still keen so a small group left in one car from Milverton at 8am. At the Opawe Road carpark, we met up with Janet, making us a group of 5. It was a bit cold, but we barely had any rain the whole trip which was a pleasant surprise! We walked for about 30 minutes across the farmland to meet the bush edge, where Janet pointed out the few remains of the old Opawe hut.

The track into the bush starts gently, then gets pretty steep in places. We had a morning tea break around 10:30am then carried on. The bush started to open up, which brought a fresh breeze that was a bit gusty in places. We made it to the Maharahara highpoint just before midday. Even with the cloud cover limiting the views, it was a cool spot. However, it was very cold so we stayed long enough to take a few group photos, then started walking back down to find a more sheltered lunch spot.



After lunch, we took our time coming back down the track. We made it back to the carpark at the

very early time of 2:15pm. I really enjoyed the trip and meeting a couple more club members. Thanks to everyone for coming out in spite of the weather!

Trip participants were Caitlin Lipsham, Ernie Cook, Roy Rolston, Janet Wilson, and Ella Parkinson.



It had been about 2 years since I'd been to this hut, and hearing that it had been 'done up' I was curious to see what it was like now. Plus, this is a tramp I've always enjoyed, for the pretty bush and nice hut setting. The interesting but gnarly track is part of the deal.

We left the car, at The Pines at about 9.30am on a bright sunny cloudless day. Before the bush we met a Duke of Ed group of 6 girls plus shadow from PNGHS. With bedrolls and other stuff strapped to their packs, they were clearly planning to camp on the flats, just like I was.

We arrived at the hut at about 1.30pm. It looked flash in its new coat of paint. No one else was at the hut, but 2 sleeping bags lay on bunks, their owners probably summiting Mitre. The air was chilly, and Ernie immediately started getting a fire going, Verity going in search of kindling. I slunk off to check out the camping spots, to get a good one before the girls arrived. I chose a very flat site, on dirt (not grassy), partially sheltered by beech trees.



Back at the hut, Ernie was persevering with the fire, but all the wood was damp. He soon had smoke coming out the chimney, and soon after, more trampers arrived. They kept coming and coming... The two Mitre summiters returned, having run out of time to summit. I felt better and better about sleeping under my fly, as the hut filled up. The girls had arrived a little earlier, and some had set up tents, others planned to sleep on the deck (but ended up in the hut because of the cold). Their shadow was a very competent bushman who I had a good chat to after tea.

Amid happy giggling and some screaming from the Duke of Eds, Monika, Dieter, Roy and Blair arrived at about 7pm, after a long day's tramping. Others in the hut squeezed up to make room for them, and I left a very warm and full hut for the cold and peace of my tarp, with only the sound of the Waingawa River.

It was quite a cold night, and I was fine sleeping on my side, but cold lying on my back. Every time I got up I stared up at the masses of stars. In the morning there was some crunchy grass, a light frost. It was another cold, clear day.

Dieter had twisted his knee the day before and wasn't going to hurry, and I was ready early, so Dieter and I left at 9am, and with me in the front it was a slow but chatty walk back. Dieter introduced me to fresh supplejack shoots, which I didn't know you could eat, and which tasted like peas fresh out of the pod.

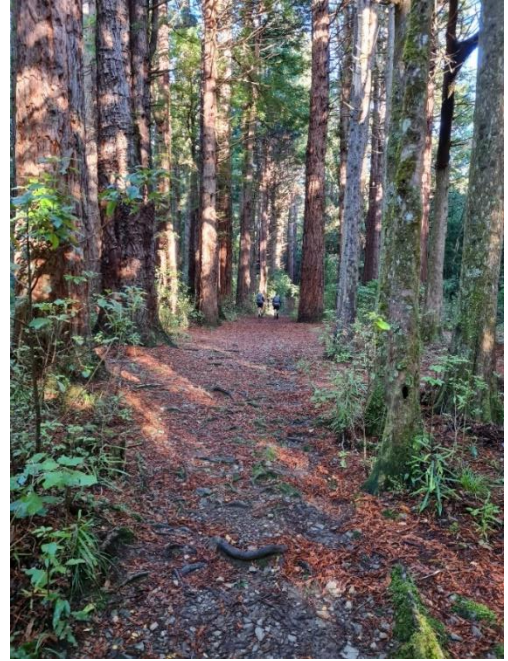
The others caught us up about 2/3 of the way back, and lunch was called. From there it didn't seem far till we met up with Annmaree, Ernie's wife, who'd come in for a walk on the farm track to meet us. Back at the cars, Annmaree had a flask and gave us all tea, which was a really nice end to a very enjoyable tramp.

We were Ernie (trip leader), Verity, Nicola.

In the few days leading up to Roy's scheduled trip to check out the re-vamped Stanfield Hut, it started to be clear that there were not going to be any takers and Roy began to think about putting together a more challenging overnight trip and combining it with Ernie's trip to Mitre Flats Hut. There were a few of us interested and discussions began about what route to take. After much consideration about weather, logistics and the available daylight over the almost-winter short days, we all settled on an early start from Kiriwhakapapa Campsite, going up to Blue Range Hut junction, down to Cow Creek Hut and from there to Mitre Flats Hut to meet Ernie's party, stay the night and walk out with Ernie's group the next day via Barra Track to The Pines car park.

Saturday morning started well, weather was good and everything was going to plan. We left the carpark at 9am. It was a pleasant walk up to the Blue Range Hut junction. Once you cross the small wooden bridge, it always feels so majestic. In comparison to the tall redwood trees all around you, everyone looks so tiny.

As we passed the big rimu tree, situated at a tight bend, not far from the start, we started to talk about the big hole inside the tree and how you can crawl all the way into it and that there is room for more than one person to fit in and you can even stand up in it if you don't mind all the spiders and wildlife living within the tree. Then we found out, that Blair and Dieter have not done this walk before and that they have not been inside the tree yet. So of course, it was a must do. And this is why it is so good hiking with the club. Knowledge is passed on. If me and Roy had not gone with Michelle and Warren on the



Beginner's Tramp to Blue Range Hut last year, we would have not known about this hidden secret.

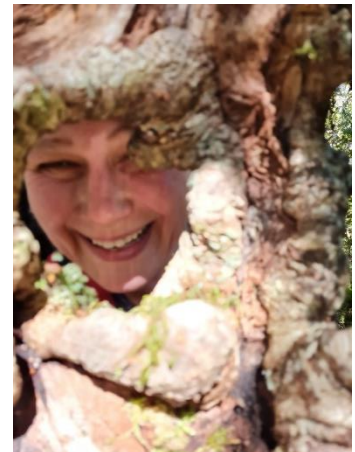
We reached the Blue Range Hut junction 2 hours after we set off, same as what the sign at the beginning of the track said. If we were to go by the sign times again, then we had 3 hours to get to Cow Creek Hut from there. The sign time was spot on.

The walk to Cow Creek Hut was on a nice track, lined mainly with beech trees, so it was lovely and soft under foot. It was nice easy going with couple

of great viewing spots and goblin like forest on the way.

We also had a lot of fun with the various holes we could see in the trees. I had not seen so many holy trees on any other track before. Some were big oval shapes, some heart shaped, some round, all making great photo and video opportunities.

Cow Creek Hut is a standard, smallish S70 type six bunk hut enclosed in a bush surroundings. It has a high bench seat opposite the entrance. The bench is getting a bit overgrown around it, so some of us opted sitting on the entrance floor instead, but it is a nice view of the hut from the bench and





it served well to rest our packs on there. The hut was originally painted orange when it was built in 1960. Later it was painted green and now it has a nice fresh orange paint coat again.

By the time we left Cow Creek Hut it was 2:30pm. There was no sign with indicative time at Cow Creek Hut side, but going by the DOC website, it should take 3½ hours to reach Mitre Flats Hut. We got our torches out and got them ready at the top of our packs. At this time of year, it starts to get dark about 5pm. The Waingawa River Track, same as most tracks that follow a river, was up and

down, up and down and more up and down. It has a quite few stream crossings, hence the up and down, but the weather was pretty dry leading up to the weekend, so all, the river and stream levels, were quite low and easy to cross. Well, except one towards the end, where I could not see another safe way for me to cross and ended up with wet boots.

The track started well, easy going, quite boring actually and we all thought, hmmm 3 and half hours of this, but it was good walking and I thought good to get this section out of the way today and if we need to walk in the dark, we wouldn't be missing much as it will be much of the same all the way. Well, it ended up not boring and it ended up an hour longer. As nicely it started, all of a sudden there was no more track. We had quite a few times where the track goes nicely and then it just disappears. Either due to a windfall, a slip, or for no apparent reason at all. A lot of the time is spent route finding. Then you find the route, it's well defined, you get going, thinking, great, good track, covering some ground and gaining time and then it stops again and you find yourself scrambling through another slip or bush bashing trying to find the track again. It went like this for quite some time. By 5 o'clock it started to get dark. We got our torches out of our packs, but it was said to try keep going without any assisting light for as long as we can and see how our eyes adjust. I lasted about half an hour. By 5:30pm I couldn't see anything and had to put my torch light on. Even though it became easier to walk again, it was still slower walking by torch light.

In case you are now wondering, hmmm that is a long way for one day, there is a nice big campsite by the river about an hour after you leave Cow Creek Hut (see pic). Might be an option for someone who wants to do the same trip, but don't fancy walking all the way to Mitre Flats.



By the time we got to Mitre Flats, it was 7pm. We were walking an hour and half by torch light. Some for the first time. It was dark and as we approached the hut we could hear children running around and yelling at each other. Some people in our party started to make noises back to them; not sure if it

was in an attempt to try and communicate or to scare them. It started to be clear that it was going to be busy night in the hut. As we approached the hut even closer, but still in forest, we came across a tent on the left side of the track. We went to check it out and talk to the guy and when he saw us, he asked: "Are you Roy?" It turns out, that Ernie had been coming out onto the track and yelling "Roy! Are you there?" So, by now, everyone knew that Roy is due to come and everyone was waiting for Roy to arrive.

The hut was busy, and a lot of kids doing The Duke of Edinburgh were there, but they mostly opted to stay the night outside. We were ready to sleep on the hut floor, but a few young people made room for us and we all had a bed for the night. Well, except Roy. He ended up on a half-size bed space on the top bunk, where he squeezed his air mattress into. There was a lot of anticipation about snorers, but I had my earplugs in and had one of the best sleeps in a hut that I had in a long time.



In the morning, we were not rushing. We only had about a 4-hour walk out to the cars ahead of us. We all had a nice breakfast and there was even enough time for me to read out loud Roy's trip report from the last newsletter about the TA section from Levin to Otaki Forks. After that, we started to get ready while exploring around the hut and taking photos. This one is of Roy pointing to the newly done roof on the Mitre Flats Hut. We've also noticed, that we were not the only ones who took 4 ½ hours from Cow Creek to Mitre Flats. The sign time of 3 ½ hours is still there, but a 4 ½ hr sticker has been added.

Nice and easy 5 hour walk out to The Pines/Waingawa Road End. We took our time and kept enjoying being in the bush as long as we could.

Roy left his car at Ernie's house on the Saturday morning and Ernie's wife, Annmaree, kindly drove Roy's car to The Pines for us and took the opportunity to have a walk too. We met up with her just as we were leaving the forest and getting onto the 4wheel-drive track. Back at the carpark, she had also brought for us hot drinks and biscuits.

We were: Roy Rolston, Dieter Stalman, Blair Peterson, Monika Coles.



4-6 June 2022 Queens Birthday Coastal Classic - Ohope

Report by Janet Wilson

Organising this year's trip was made so easy by Robyn who very kindly allowed us to all stay at her Ohope Beach home, so I'll start this off by saying a really big and appreciative **THANKYOU** to Robyn for her generosity. We couldn't have asked for a better place for our big group of 13.

We all gathered there on the Friday and for those who got there early enough there was time for a bike ride or walk on the beach then fish and chips or oysters for tea from the Ohiwa oyster farm just down the road. The jigsaw was started.

Saturday



Our weather-dependant trip to Moutohora (Whale) Island was confirmed at 8am. Departure point is at Port Whakatane where the check in is combined with a very nice cafe. We were all aboard and away at 10am, sharing the trip with a couple of smaller groups. It's about a 15 minutes ride to the island, made interesting by having to cross the bar at the harbour entrance. The sun was shining and the sea calm enough.

We had a look around the coast for seals before disembarking on the beach - no jetty here - you need to time your jump from the boat steps to the beach if you want to keep your feet dry. We had a guide who pointed out all the interesting sites and took us on a walk to a viewing site on the cliff tops. Then we went



down to the beach for lunch and to try our luck digging (spades provided) for hot water. The tide was in, which made it harder, but keen ones found enough hot water to soak their feet in. The highlight of this trip for me was the number of tieke (saddlebacks) present. Reintroduced in 1999 to this Wildlife Management Reserve, they are obviously thriving. We were back in Whakatane by 2pm.

Next stop was "Warren Park" to visit the Butterfly Trees - an amazing spectacle of overwintering monarch butterfly's hanging in clusters from branches - you really had to be there to fully appreciate this. We then did a

quick trip to the supermarket before heading back to put the roast on, play games, go for a bike ride, walk on the beach or work on the jig3saw. A very enjoyable evening followed.

Sunday

Robyn led most of us on a walk around the Toi Loop - an 18 km circuit from Ohope to Whakatane and back. We went in a clockwise direction so the morning was spent meandering through coastal forest on a good pathway. Due to a slightly later than ideal departure we walked quite fast and by the time we got to Whakatane we were all well ready for lunch. The ideal cafe didn't materialise so for most of us it was takeaway pies from the bakery. Yvonne came to meet us, bringing Llew and Jenny who joined the walking team on the way back. Jo and Lawrence took advantage of a ride back to Ohope with Yvonne.



The return route was around the coast on scenic high paths, which eventually led us back down to Ohope beach.

Then it was back home for more games, reading, puzzles and pizza night.

Monday

Several people had to be somewhere else so left early Monday morning, leaving seven of the group to stay another day/night. Robyn's collection of water craft - 2 single sea kayaks and a Canadian canoe looked appealing if only we could get them to the harbour - 10 minutes walk away. What followed was an impressive bit of problem-solving team-work. We got the canoe on to its little 2 wheeled trolley only to discover flat tyres and a squeaky wheel that fell off while still in the driveway. The kayaks were heavy and far too long to go in the van. We got there in the end and the lovely paddle at high tide in the Ohiwa harbour was well worth the effort. Warren and Graham took the kayaks and Sally, Robyn and Janet the canoe for a trip around an island to the oyster farm to meet up with Yvonne for lunch, only to be told to go away as they were shut! Richard went for yet another bike ride! Big black clouds gathered during the afternoon and by evening it was raining hard. Tuesday morning the remaining folk left leaving Robyn and Warren to peace and quiet.

We were Robyn, Warren, Jo, Lawrence, Yvonne, Sally, Richard, Llew, Jenny, Martin, Anne, Graham and Janet (organiser and scribe).

Only being an occasional trumper, I found the middle day of a long weekend to be ideal for a day tramp, with time to relax and do normal weekend activities either side.

Blue Range Hut is located in Tararua Forest Park, not far from Pūkaha National Wildlife Centre.

On the drive there we were enveloped by thick fog as soon as we got over the Pahiatua Track, with the temperature steadily dropping. However, it was sunny enough by the time we arrived at the start of the tramp.

Beginning as an easy walk through redwoods and across a small stream, the track soon began to climb up a muddy slope through the bush. The gradient was enough to feel like a good day of exercise, without being too strenuous for those of us who are irregular trampers!

The track remained under bush cover the whole way, which would make this a good option for summer hiking too.



Some highlights of the forest included a large twisted rimu and a goblin forest of lichen-covered trees.



About two hours of walking brought us to the brightly painted Blue Range Hut, with views out to the mountain-tops and a handy visual guide attached to the picnic table to identify the peaks.



After lunch it was time to descend the way we had come. Surprisingly none of us slipped over in the steep muddy section, and all ended up relatively mud-free and presentable enough to stop at the Pūkaha National Wildlife Centre café on the way home.

Thanks to Woody for leading a fun trip and inviting some of us non-members along!

Participants were Ria, Duncan, Amy, Shakti, Advait (Neil), Shana, Brendon and Woody (trip leader).

"A classic Ruahine tramp to the lovely Iron Gate Hut. This trip is suitable for beginner overnight trampers and I am happy to tramp in at a pace that suits everyone...."

With the week-end being one of the seven in fifteen that I am not rostered to work I was always going to be keen to support this trip. While the weather might not have been that enticing, I was very surprised and some-what disappointed to learn that aside from one other member of the Club I was the only one putting my hand up. The other member eventually decided not to come on the trip. Here was an ideal opportunity for new and newer members to participate in a cruisy overnight trip to a pleasant destination at a leisurely pace. Perhaps there were other commitments on this week-end.

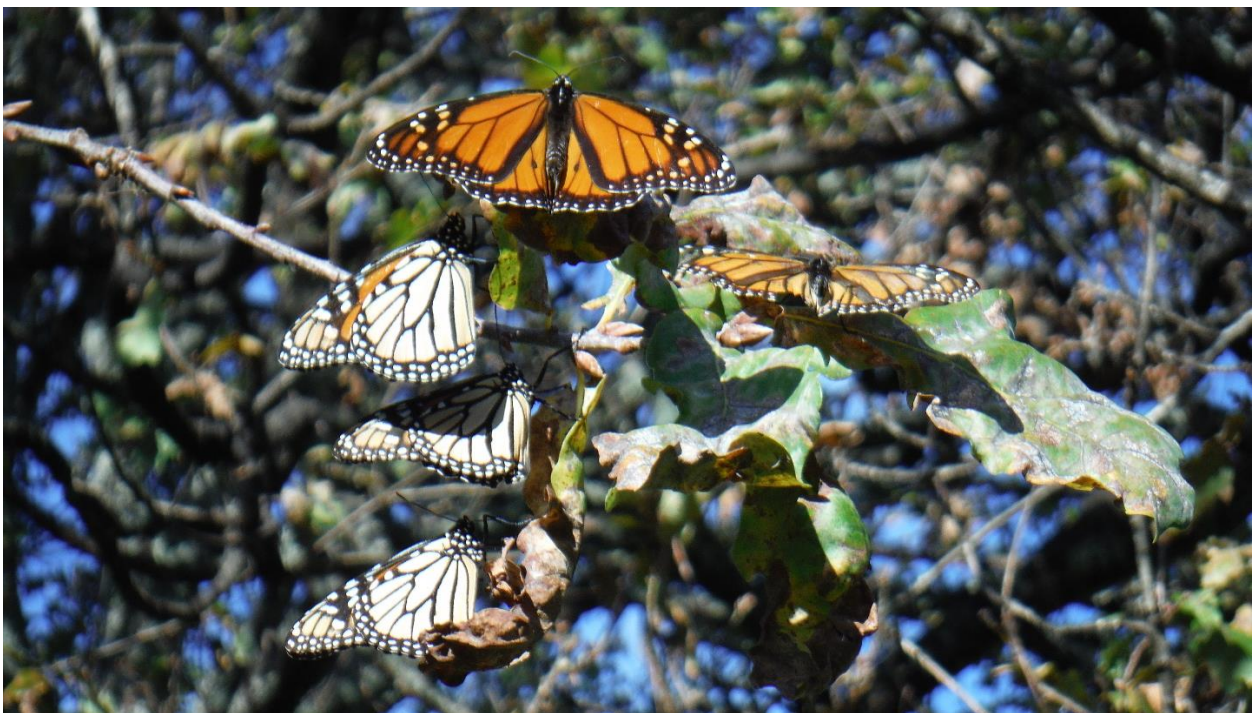
For me, a tramp in inclement weather, is better than no tramp.

I duly arrived at the Northern Estate [of Janet and Graham - Ed.] on Friday evening and was suitably welcomed. The weather forecast seemed to be better for Saturday than Sunday one moment and vice-versa the next. There was some rain Friday evening and also during the night.

Saturday morning the call was made and unanimously agreed that a day trip was the best option with no-one wanting to be caught on the wrong side of Tunupo Stream should forecast rain arrive and be heavier than anticipated. This meant I had to "rewind my spring" as I was now going to be nearly walking in one day what I had calibrated to do over two days. We set off to Alice Nash Memorial Hut where we left Graham to begin rebaiting traps whilst Janet and I travelled on to Tunupo Stream. Here I began rebaiting traps whilst Janet sped off to Iron Gate Hut to rebait the traps around the hut and work her way back towards me. Once we reconnected it was just a matter of retracing our steps to the point where Graham had reached and returning to the Northern Estate not much after 4 o'clock.

Sunday morning saw us complete the rebaiting of traps around the near end of the track. One stoat and several rats were removed from the traps during the exercise. So whilst the traps were successfully rebaited the objective of catering for some newer Club members on an easy overnight tramp was left incomplete.

Trip participants were Graham Peters, Bruce Dog, Janet Wilson (leader) and Ernie Cook.



LAST PICTURE SHOW - Monarch butterflies wintering over in Warren Park, Whakatane
Pic: Warren Wheeler



PNTMC Newsletter July 2022

- Snowcraft Courses – Register Now
- Trip reports: Maharahara High Point, Queens Birthday Coastal Classic-Ohope, Blue Range Hut, Mitre Flats Hut Easy, Mitre Flats via Cow Creek, Iron Gates Rebaiting
- Last Picture Show – Monarchs Wintering Over

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