



Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

www.pntmc.org.nz

PO Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter October 2022



A fine winter day on Mount Holdsworth, Tararua Forest Park – report inside.

Pic by Warren Wheeler

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.

13 October 2022

Wildbase Recovery

Anthony Braddock

Central Energy Trust Wildbase Recovery is a community-based centre that provides world-class care for sick and injured native wildlife. Located in the Victoria Esplanade, it rehabilitates birds that have received veterinary treatment at Massey University's Wildbase Hospital, then releases them back into the wild. The centre is open to the public and supported by a team of volunteers.

27 October 2022

Backcountry Emergency Comms

Graeme Richards

Graeme is a radio comms volunteer for Search and Rescue in the local area. He will enlighten us on what to take into the backcountry for emergency communications and the latest systems being used in Search and Rescue operations.

Upcoming Trips

1-2 October 2022 Ngauruhoe Plus M/T Warren Wheeler 06 356 1998

Our traditional celebration of the Grandstand View day-trip in 1996 that coincided with an eruption of Ruapehu. We plan to climb up the snowfield on the west side of Ngauruhoe, circle the crater rim and descend the north side. Options on the other day will depend on weather and interest, but Plan A is an easy explore of the lower Turoa slopes of Ruapehu. We will Stay at Sue's place in Rangitaua, leaving PN on Friday evening preferably.

2 October 2022 Stanfield Hut E Woody Lee 0210 444 552

An easy tramp to the eastern side of the Ruahines. We will start from Tamaki West Rd and follow the Holmes Ridge track and an unmarked riverbed route to the hut. After lunch we return the same way. We will leave from Milverton Park at 7.30am.

8 October 2022 Beach Walk M Janet Wilson 06 329 4722

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 South 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 Kapiti District's icons – the Waikanae River, an estuary and scientific reserve, Kapiti Island in full view from the beach, Queen Elizabeth Park, and the distinctive cafes and local art outlets in Paraparaumu, Raumati and Paekakariki.”

8 or 9 October 2022 Paretetaitonga F/T Grant Christian 021 117 6921

Best weather day. A climb of Paretetaitonga peak from Turoa, for a more gradual ascent of one of the highest peaks on the summit of Ruapehu.

15-16 October 2022 Waiopehu Hut E/M Ernie Cook 027 303 1363

A pleasant overnight trip to this standard hut in Northern Tararuas. Depart Milverton park at 7:30 a.m. Follow the Waiopehu Track to the standard Waiopehu Hut for the night. Return the next day via Gable End Ridge. Please contact Ernie no later than the Wednesday evening prior.

16 October 2022 Bushy Park E Sally Hewson 06 357 0990

We will leave at 9am from Milverton Park. Bushy Park is about 25 minutes north of Whanganui. It is a Historic Homestead in a pocket of bush, surrounded by a predator free fence. There are a few easy bush tracks to explore at your leisure, while keeping an eye out for stitch birds and saddlebacks. Refreshments are available at the homestead.

22-24 October 2022 Dundas Loop M Roy Rolston 027 476 7188

Plan A for this Labour Day Weekend into the Tararuas starts with a 2-3 hour walk up to the newly renovated Herepai Hut on Friday evening. Saturday is up along the tops to Dundas Hut. Sunday is a big day heading further south along the range, curling around over Bannister and Waingawa peaks before heading northward to Cattle Ridge Hut for the night. Monday return to Putara Road end via Roaring Stag Lodge. If weather is unsuitable to travel on the tops Sunday, we will take the direct track from Dundas Hut down and up to Cattle Ridge Hut. Plan B options include tramping in the opposite direction or an alternative low level destination if forecast weather conditions up high are unsuitable. It's been a long time dream of mine to travel along the tops and stay at

Dundas Hut as I grew up nearby looking up at those peaks but never managed to stand on top of them. If you wish to join me to make this happen that will be great.

23 October 2022 Labour Day Weekend Day Trip TBA

Trip leader required for this day trip at Labour Weekend. If keen, contact Warren 06 356 1998.

29-30 October 2022 TBA

Trip leader required for this overnight trip. If keen, contact Warren 06 356 1998.

30 October 2022 Waitahinga Birding E Kirsten Olsen 027 354 6010

This trip prioritises listening and looking for birds. Waitahinga Reserve has a mixture of pine forest and native forest, just a little further out from Whanganui than Bushy Park. We might see or hear Long-tailed Cuckoo, Shining Cuckoo, Whitehead, Tomtit, North Island Robin and maybe Rifleman. Depart Milverton Park 7:30am.

5-6 November 2022 Hidden Lake E Warren Wheeler 06 356 1998

This unique spot in the western Tararuas near Roaring Stag Hut is barely discernable on topo maps. There is a nice fly camping spot there to relax and enjoy or we could stay at Roaring Stag Hut. Depart Milverton Park at 7.30am. NB – an option if it suits people better, is to do this as a Medium-Fit day trip.

6 November 2022 Roaring Stag M Anne Lawrence 06 357 1695

Roaring Stag is a really nice hut but we're only there for lunch on this trip. It's a good walk in from Putara Road end to the hut for lunch, then return the same way. Leave from Milverton Park at 7.30am.

Trip Grading

Trip grades depend on many factors, especially weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient trampler 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 Kathryn Knightbridge and family, as well as Chris Rayner, one of our Snowcraft Instructors.

Notices

Sad News - Susan Cade Tragic Death

It is with great sadness that we note the passing of the former club member Susan Cade. Susan, who moved to Lower Hutt, is remembered by members as active in tramping, paddling and many other outdoor activities. She was active in our club around the late 1970's and was secretary in 1979. Susan was among five who died in the tragic boat accident off Kaikoura on 10 September 2022. She is described as "an adventurous spirit who loved gardening and the outdoors" in an RNZ article about the tragedy.

Wild Ruahine Calendar 2023

The Ruahine Whio Protection Trust is again selling a beautiful 'Wild Ruahine' calendar for 2023. This has been made possible by club member, whio protector and designer Anthony Behrens (Swampthing) who has donated his time and expertise and some of his images. All photos are local in or near the Ruahines and many are taken by club members. Proceeds from the sale of these calendars goes towards the work of helping protect the Ruahine Whio from predators so they may survive and thrive. Cost is \$20. Janet will have them at club nights or email jwilson@inspire.net.nz to order yours – numbers are limited.



Trip Reports

2 July 2022

Kiritaki Traverse

Report by Roy Rolston, Pic by Monika Coles

Monika's trip to Kiritaki Hut was listed as an overnight but also as a possible day trip starting from the road end on No.1 Line returning the same way or via the Maharahara Track to exit at Kumeti Road near Dannevirke, making it a crossing, all depending on interest. Monika and I kept in contact and with a week in hand she said she had a very keen guy contact her after he found the trip advertised on the club website. Monika was sure she knew this guy from a recent potential Tinder date that didn't come to anything. Playing it along he was organized to join us. At the eleventh hour, Monika made a decision to take on a one-day epic crossing which meant getting a vehicle to the end of Kumeti Road. Together, Monika and I got the crazy idea done by 9 on Friday night and that left just a short time to pack a day bag ready for an early 7am start.

From Milverton our Tinder guy, Daryl, drove us out to the end of No 1 Line which is a road end that turns off the Pohangina East Road, ending right on the Ruahine Forest Park boundary. As it was my first time here, I was surprised to see a well-appointed parking area with a DOC noticeboard and even a decent long drop toilet. We got going around 8am making our way up a well-defined track to a point at the top where the track parted left and right. With no signage and in foggy conditions we worked out we needed to go left to pick up the route to Kiritaki Hut. The way to the right we could see on Monika's phone map that it was a route along the ridge to Ross Peak. While recent track clearing was evident to this point, that ended from here on.

The old track ahead was still fairly well marked and straight forward to follow but with it overgrown somewhat, some route finding was necessary in places. With the weather clearing but cool we made our way along the ridge to a point where we could see the hut ahead.



Picking up the hut track was like turning on to a highway and in no time we made it to the hut arriving around 12.45 for a welcome lunch stop almost an hour later than Monika had scheduled.

Getting inside out of the cool wind for us all was the first port of call. After a quick scan around it was obvious the hut was in poor shape and looking pretty rough especially the fireplace area. A Back Country Trust upgrade planned in a few months will be surely welcomed. Sergeant Monika was mindful of the time and the hours ahead to get out to Kumeti Road before dark so she got us up and going again with a stiff call to action after only what it seemed a short half hour rest. With a nap out of the question I gulped down the last of my hot milo, and put my boots back on.

Meanwhile the weather had cleared quite well before we finally got going again around 1.30pm but there was still a cool wind, so bracing the elements again was a bit of a shock to the system. Soon though we dropped into the low scrub then bush descending down steeply to a creek bed. The

same creek I believe a fellow member was rescued from not long ago (*that would be Ernie – Ed*). We then had to follow the gnarly creek upstream for a bit before picking up the very steep track up on the opposite bank to meet the Maharahara Track highpoint. The stiff climb was a gut buster for all of us and we were sure glad we were only carrying day packs this time.

Up and on the clear ridge the warming afternoon sun was out and we could see the high point turnoff ahead. Daryl found out his fitness wasn't as good as he thought and we saw him struggle as he started to hit the wall. I was worried that maybe we might have pushed the limit a little too much for a first time outing with the club so we stopped, took stock and shared our reserve of high energy gels and snacks.

Another quick stop to refuel again very near our turnoff set us up for the home run down the Maharahara Track. None of us had done this part of the track before and with the time getting on, we figured we had a bit over an hour of daylight left, thus cutting it fine to get out before dark. Energized and optimistic Daryl took the lead and set off at a brisk pace. Soon we were off the exposed tops and down in the warmer bush following a well-formed track down a leading ridge.

Then further down I was surprised to see the track headed left off the ridge and descended steeply to a stream below. In fading light we were forced to don our headlights before reaching the stream which made for tricky route finding but we made it down ok. It was completely dark when we made our way down the stream but luckily Daryl was familiar with this part as he had walked up the stream from the road end before, but was not successful in finding the start of the Maharahara Track that climbed up from it.

As we made our way down the stream it was only just a matter of finding the exit track to the car park. That he did with no problem which was very helpful and we found Monika's car just metres nearby around 6:10pm which was a welcome sight. By then we were all pretty hungry so on the way back we called into the Woodville Fish shop for a feed. The long day ended after we retraced our path back to our starting point to retrieve Daryl's car then it was back home to Palmy.

From my point of view the unconventional crossing of the Ruahine's in a day was quite an adventure given that it was just 11 days after the shortest day and while we didn't quite make it out before dark as planned it worked out in the end. All in all it was a very satisfying achievement.

We were: Monika Coles, Roy Rolston and Daryl Bastin.

14 August 2022

Mount Holdsworth

**Report by Brendon Corner
Pics by Warren Wheeler**

After meeting at Milverton on a cool but clear morning, we had the promise of a beautiful day up in the snow. We drove through to the Holdsworth camping area where we geared up. We started our climb up to Powell Hut and found ourselves peeling off layers as it was warmer than anticipated. We had a short break at Rocky Knob and then continued our climb. The track conditions were good so we made fairly quick progress. I learnt a few new plants from Warren, these being broadleaf and kamahi. We had another break at Mountain Shelter before our final climb to the hut.



It was from this point onwards that we started to encounter some snow and ice. I found it really quite beautiful how the snow fringed the trees as we passed through them. Some of the staircases on this section were a little bit treacherous with the ice on them.

We had our lunch stop at Powell Hut with a nice view over the Wairarapa. Although the hut is technically closed due to storm damage, many people were nonetheless having their lunch inside.



We then started our journey to the summit. We still had reasonably good visibility as we went along the tops but there was some cloud coming in.

All of us except for Robyn made it to the summit where we took a few photos and enjoyed the splendor of the tops. There was a bit of wind as we made our way down but it wasn't too bad.

The final descent from the hut to the carpark was fairly easy going and we made it back just as we were starting to lose some light.

It was a lovely day with favorable conditions and pleasant company. Thanks to Warren for organizing and all those who came.

We were Brendon, Warren, Robyn, Caitlan, Rachel and David.

14 August 2022

RNZAF Plane Crash Site

Report by Woody Lee

A number of trampers gathered at Milverton Park early Sunday morning due to two trips on the same day. Four of us set out in Monika's car shortly after 7am and we waved to the Mt Holdsworth group heading to the eastern Tararuas. Roy kindly handed over a printout of the Aviation Safety Network to give us the plane crash information.

On Thursday 20 Nov 1941 AIRSPEED OXFORD 1245 left Ohakea AFB at 10:45 to perform a training mission and the twin engine aircraft hit a mountain slope due to poor weather conditions.

In April 1943 the remains of the aircraft were discovered in hill country near Maunganui Peak and the bodies of two pilots were recovered.

We arrived at Maungakotukutuku Road end, south of Waikanae at 9am but we couldn't drive through the stream as the access was blocked by the chains. We got out of the car and wandered around the stream to find out the crossing route.

Roy wanted to find a shallow spot in his gumboots (smart idea!) but he ended up getting wet feet. We managed to jump off the bank and landed on the other side of the stream.

The track is gradually steep to an open area at 620m and we turned left before the highest point of Maunganui 708m. It is not a maintained track and we relied on Roy and Monika's navigation skills to locate the crash site on the downhill. Roy finally spotted some of the airplane parts at 1pm. After lunch we searched and found more airplane debris on the slope and took photos of them.



When we got back to the junction we discussed our return route and then we agreed to take a loop track to the car park. It was a bonus to see an entire view of the Kapiti Island from the Maunganui lookout but we mistakenly went into the dense bush from there. We ended up bush bashing for half an hour and then found a ribbon when we came back to the lookout.

It was easy going downhill to the stream and we crossed the stream to get to the road just before 6pm

We were Monika, Jin, Woody and Roy (leader).

27-28 August 2022

Totara Flats Hut

Report by Nicola Wallace

We were optimistic for fair weather, as the forecast was for showers, but on arrival at Holdsworth road end it was raining steadily, and this would continue. According to the Holdsworth Lodge book there was no one else heading to Totara Flats, so maybe it would be a quiet weekend. Anyway, I had my brand new Stoney Creek Shelter in my pack if the hut got packed.

Water ran down the track in the manner of a small stream, and the view from The Rocky Lookout was of mist, mist and more rain. It was the first time I'd never seen Powell and Jumbo huts from this lookout. By the time we stopped for lunch near the high point of the "new" track, we were all wet through, but not cold. As Verity said so aptly "I feel as if I've been swimming". Ernie kept us all cheery with tangy offerings of Jet Planes (lime...yum).

After crossing the beautiful new swingbridge installed in 2021, we arrived at the hut at 2.30pm, exactly five hours after leaving the car. This new bridge has many tethers, and will be much nicer to cross when the wind rips down the Waiohine River. No wind today, only a rainbow. Near the hut we all collected some firewood. There was only one other person at the hut. The best part was, the rain had stopped and sunlight threatened to emerge.

Ernie got straight in to getting a fire going. Verity accompanied me on a walk to look at the Totara Flats. With not a totara in sight, how did they get that name? I have always loved the openness of these flats and have enjoyed past camping there.

Ernie and new arrivals had a roaring fire going when we got back. By 5pm the hut was almost full, and I decided to bail, and set up my shelter nearby. Previously I've always used my tarp, but the shelter (which uses a pole) is closed in at one end, and has heaps of space and headroom. A little heavier than the tarp, but much better! I was serenaded by moreporks instead of snorers, and had a good sleep.



There was much good cheer at the hut the next morning, with groups taking photos for each other. I got to use an instant camera, a modern version of the old Polaroid camera, which prints out a photo which develops in a few minutes.

The morning was very warm and muggy, I sweated heaps ascending the first big climb. Glad it wasn't raining though. Ernie suggested we return via Mountain House shelter and the Atiwhakatu track, and this we did. Lunch at Mountain House was a chilly affair, our fingers were numb after only about 20 minutes. Huge uprooted trees lay right next to the shelter, very lucky that they hadn't demolished it.

We all enjoyed the descent on the River Ridge track, then the flat walk out. The flatness was a good rest for the legs after all the up and downhills.

Thanks Ernie for leading this trip, and to Verity for driving us there and back.

We were: Ernie Cook (leader), Verity Elder, Woody Lee, Nicola Wallace.

11 September 2022

Rangiwahia Scenic Reserves

Report by Graham Peters

Having known 4th generation Rangiwahian Steve Bielski for some time and heard him waxing lyrical about the Rangiwahia Reserves, it was an opportunity not to be missed when Janet organised this trip. The fact that Steve had agreed to be the tour guide was a bonus.



Google Maps (bless it) caused some confusion to some, but eventually everyone arrived in Rangiwahia and we headed off to the smaller Kaikawaka Reserve by the cemetery. Quite a small reserve but remarkable for the large number and size of tree fuschias. Worth visiting for these alone. Back at the carpark of the 53ha Rangiwahia Reserve for a quick morning tea before heading off.

Being a tramping club we opted for the whole monty – in the Reserve track and then around the Reserve Lookout track back to Mangoiira

St. As with Malcolm's farm walks, having a knowledgeable local guide is the icing on the cake.

This reserve was put aside by the first settlers for a water supply area for the potentially large town so presumably this is virgin bush. Certainly you can't help but be impressed by the size of the trees. As seems to be the case these days, predator control seems to be left to the locals with extensive trapping in the reserve and deer control on the surrounding farmland. Again the locals have done a fantastic job with tree identification signs. These are all along the track repeated many times so by the end of it you should definitely be able to identify a hinau or a matai, tell a totara from a kahikatea. The Red Beech Cafe proved a suitable place for lunch before heading back to Mangoira Road via the Black Maire.



"Dragon" in Rangī Reserve

Pic by Janet Wilson

Back at the cars it was off to the Mangahua Wetlands after a brief stop to look down into the Ian McKean Pinetum. The wetlands were constructed in 1997 by local farmer Mike Bourke. This proved an ideal spot for afternoon tea and even a bit of a paddle for some in the kayaks there before heading home.



Much thanks due to Steve, and it's worth having a look at the Iron Gates website run by Steve's wife Mary. <https://www.irongates.co.nz>

On the trip were Trish and Jo Eder, Monika Coles. Adele and her son Mike, Mario and Brenda, Janet and myself with Bruce dog and of course guide Steve.

Four of us filled Caitlan's car and duly arrived at The Pines carpark to find just one other vehicle parked there...good chance of a bed then. Looking up at the Tararua Ranges we could see that there was very little snow left on the tops so the ice axe stayed in the boot and there were regrets about not bringing lighter tramping boots. If in doubt bring both alpine and tramping boots and decide at the carpark...Next time.

It was a lovely fine day, with a similar forecast for both days, so we looked forward to a lazy afternoon at Mitre Flats Hut ready for a longer day up Mitre Peak and back out on Sunday. The walk started nicely with the scenic walk for 40 minutes along the farm access road above the crystal clear Waingawa River. On reaching the edge of the farm land we entered the bush and started gently climbing along the sidle track to Mitre Flats. This track has a well deserved reputation for lots of little ups and downs, with slippery tree roots underfoot that stiff soled boots didn't make any easier. We were somewhat surprised after about half an hour to learn that we were almost half way, but the easy farm section made this deceptive and it took almost 3 hours more to reach the hut – 4 hours in total.



There was another couple at the hut and they headed off up the Mitre track at about 2pm. A bit late we thought, but they turned back at 4pm at the first "false summit" above the bushline, getting back on dark. During the afternoon a solo trumper passed through on her way out from Arete Forks Hut – a good day's work! – and she told us about a few windfalls a couple of hundred metres up that slowed her down a bit and required some care to stay on track.

We settled in, snoozed or read out in the sun, collected firewood and emptied soaking wet firewood from one of the large bags that had been dropped by helicopter. Warren used the axe to split it and stacked it in the woodshed. There were numerous comments in the log book about the wet wood that DOC had provided. At least we managed to get the fire going nicely for a comfortable stay.

There were no further arrivals – a bit surprising given the forecast – and after a pleasant evening enjoying Warren's birthday treats, we set off after breakfast, just before 8.00am.



The track up was a bit hard to follow in places but the treefalls were easy enough to get around and we reached the bushline soon after 9.30am to a cool wind and cloud on the tops. Woody and Robyn opted for a more Medium day and decided to return to the hut while the "Fit" pair of Caitlan and Warren carried on after donning warm gear.

Fortunately the wind dropped soon afterwards and the cloud lifted after traversing Peggy Peak on to Mitre itself. It had taken 20 minutes longer than the 3 hours expected – old age creeping in...sigh.

After an early lunch enjoying the views north and east, we headed back down just before midday, meeting a group of four not-so-young runners on their way to the top.



It took us about an hour to drop back down to the bushline and another hour or so to the hut.

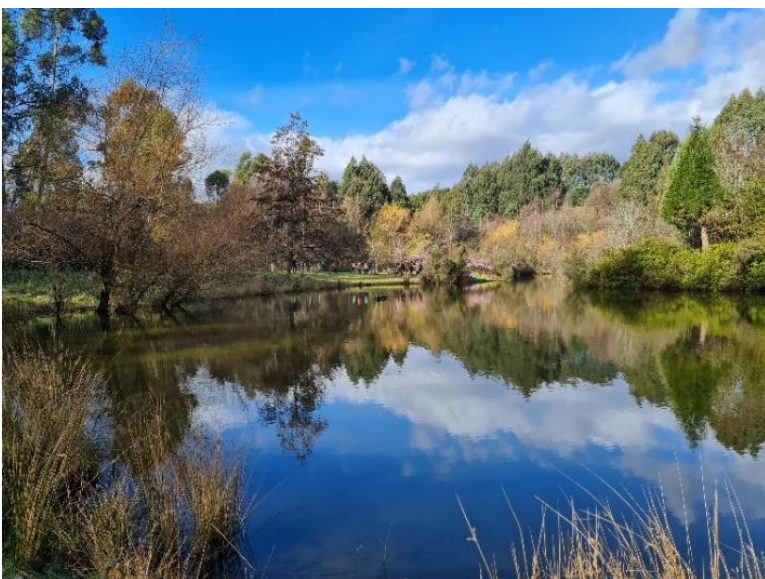
The other two had already cleaned up and set off from the hut about 20 minutes before we arrived. We caught up with them after about an hour to find Robyn bravely nursing herself along after falling on her knee on the way down to the hut.

A cool soak in the river seemed to have helped reduce swelling so progress was steady, but we were all getting tired and it still took a little longer getting out than going in....not only because of the sore

knee....there seemed to be a lot more ups than we remembered and we had forgotten how far the final leg along the farm access road out was.

On the drive home it was good to stop at a dairy on the outskirts of Masterton for a well deserved treat – pie anyone? We were Woody Lee, Caitlan Lipsham (driver), Robyn Boocock and Warren Wheeler (leader).

Mangahaia Wetlands at Rangiwahia



Pic by Monika Coles

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST Tramping is BIG in Denmark



Pic by Stephen Legg



PNTMC Newsletter October 2022

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