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# Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

[www.pntmc.org.nz](http://www.pntmc.org.nz)

PO Box 1217, Palmerston North

## Newsletter May 2023

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*Coppermine Loop explorers.*

*Pic by Sonu Sharma*

### 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.*

**11 May 2023**

**Life as a New DOC Ranger**

**Monika Coles**

Monika will put together few photos from her last six months as a new DOC Heritage and Visitor Ranger. It will involve exciting things like flying in the helicopter, relocating toilets, assessing damage caused by Cyclone Gabrielle and everything in between. If time and availability allows, there might be a special guest coming along with Monika. Come and hear about what she has been up to and what her new role involves..

**25 May 2023**

**Brutally Beautiful – Sahara Marathon**

**Hazel Harrison**

In 2021 Hazel completed the Marathon des Sables. Come along and hear about her experience. The MdS is the stuff of legends – a truly gruelling multi-stage adventure in one of the world's most inhospitable environments, the Sahara Desert. It is indisputably the Toughest Footrace on Earth. Physically, it is six days' running over 250 kms (156 miles) across endless sand dunes, rocky jebels and white-hot salt plains, carrying what you need to survive on your back. Mentally, it is the ultimate challenge – an experience like no other in the world.

## Upcoming Trips

**6-7 May 2023      Pohangina River      M      Janet Wilson      06 329 4722**

An extended Pohangina River trip for a few days in the area above Leon Kinvig Hut. Dates may be extended to get extra days of good weather. A good chance to check out the flood damage and help out with the stoat traps protecting the whio ducks.

**7 May 2023      Beginner Tramp #4      M      Robyn Boocock      06 356 1998**

Join us on this, our fourth beginners tramp. We will be going up to Wharite trig at the south end of the Ruahine Range. Expect a short stream detour around a slip that has closed the Coppermine Track, steep bits and easy bits, with slippery muddy sections of track through the leatherwood along the ridge to Wharite trig and transmission tower. A nice local adventure with great views over the windfarms and beyond. Depart Milverton Park at 8.00am.

**13-14 May 2023      Cattle Creek Hut      M      Ernie Cook      027 303 1363**

Spend the night at the eight bunk Cattle Creek Hut. Travel clockwise one way and anti-clockwise the other. Visit Standfield Hut and also A-Frame Hut on Takapari Road. Leave Milverton Park at 7:30 a.m. Contact Ernie no later than Wednesday please.

**14 May 2023      Pinnacle Ridge      E/M      Warren Wheeler      06 356 1998**

This relatively easy loop walk in the eastern Tararuas starts at Holdsworth Roadend, behind Masterton, and heads up to Pinnacle high point, which is just on the bush line and offers views across to Mt Holdsworth and out over Wairarapa. We then follow a well marked track along the ridge to a junction down to Atiwhakatu Hut for lunch. Back to the carpark along the easy Atiwhakatu Track. Depart Milverton Park 7.30am.

**20-21 May 2023      Iron Gates Hut      E/M      Janet Wilson      027 341 8945**

This trip may go somewhere else as the Iron Gates Hut track is closed due to large slips. Access up the Oroua River is possible but would be weather dependent. Give Janet a call to discuss plans.

**21 May 2023      TBA**

If anyone wants to lead a day trip this weekend please phone Warren 06 356 1998. Keep an eye out for any trip details on our website.

**27 May 2023      Zip into Zekes      M      Blair Petersen      027 600 4263**

Interested in some easy Scrabble points? Join me on a day trip to Zekes Hut. 10 points for the Z, plus bonuses for a club trip & winter, plus great views of Mt Ruapehu (fingers-crossed). I haven't been there before, so its new territory for me. I'm intending to leave Palmerston North at 7.00am, to get us to the hut for lunch. Call or text if you're interested.

**28 May 2023      Gentle Annie Loop      E/M      Warren Wheeler      06 356 1998**

This is another relatively easy loop walk exploring from Holdsworth Carpark. The well marked track first leads up to Holdsworth Lookout then carries on up through the forest to emerge on the old Gentle Annie track, which we will follow back down until emerging on the current Gentle Annie track and back to the cars. Depart Milverton Park at 7.45am.

**2-16 June 2023      Kings Birthday - Kick Back in Samoa      Janet Wilson      06 329 4722**

If you are going on this "Coastal Classic", our first one overseas, you should know all about it and be booked already. This South Seas Adventure includes cycling around Upolu, snorkling and climbing Mt Silisili on Savaii. Late bookings may be possible (but unlikely).

4 June 2023

TBA

If anyone wants to lead a day trip this Kings Birthday Weekend please phone Warren 06 356 1998. Keep an eye out for any trip details on our website.

### 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 new family members Tom O'Sullivan and Kate Nicholas. We trust you enjoy getting out and about with us.

## Notices



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

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

SC1 is ideal for trampers who want more confidence when venturing into alpine areas, while SC2 is for more technical mountaineering.

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### Snowcraft Programme 2023

**8-9 July - SC1** - basic alpine skills;

**22-23 July - SC2** - climbing skills using ropes;

To consolidate climbing skills, instead of a specific SC3 weekend in August, there will be instructional trips programmed after SC2.

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

**SC2 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 on 027 450 9460.

## DOC NEWS – Fee Increases

From 1 July 2023 the cost of staying at huts will increase by \$5 to \$10.

Hut tickets will now expire one year after date of purchase instead of having an indefinite life.

Annual Hut Pass will increase \$16 (approx. 11%) to \$160, so with 30% FMC Discount Card it will be \$112. [NB- with the increased hut fees it is actually better value as fewer huts are needed to break even.]

Small increases (typically \$1) will also apply to sole occupancy accommodation such as Holdsworth Lodge and DOC Pohangina Base as well as to cabins such as at Whakapapa Holiday Park

Some of the main changes in our area are listed below. Full details of all pricing increases can be found at <https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/online-bookings/prices/>

Hut	Old Price	New Price
Standard Hut	\$5 adult/ \$2.50 child	\$10 adult/ \$5.00 child
Serviced Hut	\$15 adult/ \$7.50 child	\$25 adult/ \$12.50 child
Weekend Pricing Atiwhakatu Hut	Saturday: \$10 adult Sunday – Friday: \$5 adult	Saturday: \$15 adult Sunday – Friday: \$10 adult
Weekend Pricing Powell Hut Sunrise Hut	Saturday: \$20 adult Sunday – Friday: \$15 adult	Saturday: \$30 adult Sunday – Friday: \$25 adult
<b>Annual Hut Pass</b>	\$144 adult / \$72 child	\$160 per adult / \$80 child

## Trip Reports

11 March 2023

Arapuke Loop

Report and pics: Woody Lee

On a day of perfect weather a small group of us set out for Arapuke Loop track at 8am. It was a short drive from Milverton Park to the Kahuterawa Road end and we were soon ready to set off for the day. We started walking on the Sledge Track and while following the river along, Richard pointed out an unfinished new MTB track on the other side of the stream.



We had a quick break before crossing the suspension bridge. After a steep climb up, Richard led us to the unfinished section. This new section was connected to the Arapuke (= pathway in the hills) track. It was morning tea time so we sat at the picnic table on Checkpoint Charlie track.

After a long break we took a left turn from Eastern Block Rd to complete the loop. There were many mountain bikers around the Scott Road carpark. We returned down Back Track, part of the Te Araroa Trail, and over Black Bridge to complete our circuit. A good day for six trampers.

We were Richard, Michael, Robert, Roy, Sally and Woody (leader)

**19 March 2023**

**Coppermine Track**

**Report by Sonu Sharma**

Trip Members: Warren Wheeler (leader), Blair, John, Damon, Sonu, Roy, Sally, Bolin, Keshu, Cao, Rob, Robyn, Woody.

We started the Coppermine Track from the Coppermine Road end. It is a very popular walk through lowland forest, however the recent cyclone had caused many slips. The track was still doable via the detour which is definitely not for the faint hearted. Detour around the slip meant several stream crossings until we were back on the original track.

The track was muddy and quite narrow in places but not too bad. We passed The Forks which was used as a work and accommodation base during the mining times. After many bush bashing, stream crossings and stone hopping we finally reached the entrance of the old Magazine. Some of us went inside to have a better look and also to see some wetas.



We then went up for another 10 minutes to the old Coppermine site, although some of us backed off from stepping across a small slip just before getting there.

Returning along the old track instead of back down the stream made for quick progress until we reached an old slip that had left the track very narrow and heavily overgrown and required care to push through – at least we couldn't see the big drop down.

Back at the Coppermine Loop junction we hopped across the stream again and then began the real challenging (well, not for everyone, but some) uphill climb which seemed quite endless.

At some point on a flat spot near the top we had lunch. After lunch we continued the climb up to flatter ground and out to the edge of the bush with wide views overlooking the pastureland spread out below, before beginning our descent downhill.

It was quite muddy and slippery at places along the fenceline track. The last 30 minutes were lovely overall as we had some beautiful weather and a gradual walk down the pastures.

Finally reached the carpark and on our way back stopped at Ashhurst Dairy to enjoy a much-deserved ice cream. Over all, a very beautiful day of hiking with amazing group of people.

Nineteen people joined the club's Beginner Tramp along the Mangatainoka River to Herepai Hut on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April. The weather was warm, with a fair bit of rain on the way up, light wind at the top, and sun on the way down. Most of the group stopped at the hut, while a small group ventured onwards towards Herapai high point, but decided to turn back as the weather was not favourable.



After I'd volunteered to write this report, I quizzed people travelling in my car for how they'd sum up the trip - "Wet" was a common theme, but also "beautiful" and giving "a great sense of achievement." Personal highlights included: looking down from a viewpoint as a rainbow arched across the valley; spotting vividly-coloured fungus of different shapes and sizes; and inhaling the scent of white orchids growing close to the track.

There were several interesting challenges on the way. Swing bridges are always fun and there were two of these (recently upgraded with new wire). A large slip, fallen trees, and the swollen river provided opportunities for problem solving as we found ways to scramble up, down and around. There was mud – plenty of it – and that grunty uphill / downhill stretch, with twisted tree roots providing handrails and mini steps.

This is my first trip report, and only my second or (third?) time tramping with the club. Thanks so

much to Anne and others for organizing the Beginner series, which encourages people like me to get out and give tramping a go! Number three in this year's Beginner series was an enjoyable experience with great company. I can't wait for the next one.



*Lots of fungi to spot – it must be autumn*



I had previously done the Fern Walk but had not done the Gilchrist and Pettifar Loop tracks, thus decided to go for this walk. Roy, Monika, Damon, Sally and I started from Milverton Park and went to meet up with Warren and Robyn at their old farmhouse in Pohangina Valley, from where it was a short drive up the road.

It was a beautiful day and as we prepared for the walk at the Gilchrist-Pettifar Loops carpark we could hear tui and other birds singing in the trees.

A few minutes into the Gilchrist Loop Track and we came across damage due to the recent cyclone. We could clearly see the areas and level where the flood water reached - in places it had been shoulder height up the trees.



Since the track near the river was damaged it meant there were no clear markers to guide you through (this would explain why the tracks were "Closed"). But who bothers about markers when you have Warren with you!! We all did a bit of bush-bashing and made our way through and over the flood debris. A simple walk had been turned into a mini adventure with us trying to climb over the trunks and branches of trees. The forest here is full of big kahikatea and totara trees and we spotted some tui and fantails too.



Along the way we did stop at some scenic spots to view the beautiful river and its bank and the backdrop of the valley. Warren led us to a nice little spot by the river where we sat on a big log to have lunch. Couldn't have asked for a better spot or day for lunch with friends out in nature.

After lunch we continued our walk. When we reached a point where one track lead back to the carpark while the other carried on around the river to Camp Rangī Woods and the Totara Reserve campsites (or so Warren thought). We decided that Warren and Damon would go to get the cars and we would all meet up at the washed out bridge over the Pohangina River.

Monika, Robyn, Roy, Sally and I went on a short adventure where we alternated between walking out on the road and on short trails in the forest. While we were juggling between the road and the forest Warren and Damon had a hard time trying to locate us. Finally, we reached the camping area and walked to the washed-out bridge where we all had a short break, where Damon and Warren finally found us.

Here we were also joined by Robyn and Sally's friend who had come out for a drive. It was decided that some of us would explore some more and do the Fern Walk, while Robyn and Sally left to go home with their friend. Surprisingly, the walk was not muddy at all except in a few places.



We stopped to view a mighty rata tree and took time to take some photographs. Finally, at 3pm we were heading back to the old farmhouse for a cuppa and the best muffins I have ever eaten. We also met the six ducks and some of us even got some duck eggs to take home! A big thanks to Warren and Robyn for not just organising the walk but also for their warm hospitality. It made the whole experience memorable for me.

Trip participants were Warren (leader), Robyn, Roy, Monika, Sally, Damon, Sonu.

**16 April 2023**

**Farm Walk**

**Report by Warren Wheeler**

Eleven of us travelled from Palmy to meet up in Hunterville at 8.15am with our leader Malcolm Leary and Chris Rayner from Marton. Half an hour later we reached our starting point on Watershed Road and were soon nice and warm as we headed up the farm track to the ridge line and our first views of the rugged back paddocks of Otairi Station.





It was a beautiful clear day and we had great views as far as Mt Taranaki peeping above the horizon to the west and Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe much closer to the north. It was bit breezy so Malcolm led us down into the valley, past some mustering yards and down to our lunch stop near the Otairi shearer's quarters., which is located in the middle of the farm but still some 10km from the main station buildings on the Turakina Valley Road.

We burned off some of our lunch on the steep climb back up onto the south ridgeline of the valley we had just come down. Here we found that the neighbouring property has been planted in pine forest....more appropriate for the sandstone country there instead of the papa country (mudstone) in Otairi, which is well suited to grazing. Far in the distance we could see how far we had to go along the ridge back to where we had started from...at least it was fairly easy going, with just a few little ups and downs. Weariness-filled we ticked off a little over 20km back at the cars, just on sunset.

Thanks to Otairi Station for allowing us onto their property and to Malcolm Leary for his local knowledge and to his wife Edith for the delicious burgers she had ready for us back at their farm house.

On this trip we had ten PNTMC members - Malcolm Leary (leader), Blair Petersen, Heather Knox, Roy Rolston, Sally Hewson, Sonu Sharma, Jo & Lawrence O'Halloran, Robyn Boocock & Warren Wheeler, Chris Rayner, and non-members Bolin, Fanny, and Sophie.

**29 April 2023**

**Arawaru**

**Report by Heather Knox**

After Warren announced at club night on 27 April that he would no longer be able to lead the scheduled Sunday trip to North Ohau Hut, Michelle, Graeme and I got together to discuss what we might do on the weekend. We were 50:50 about doing the planned trip involving lots of river travel and, spurred on by the Scrabble Challenge, I was keen to go to a high point or hut. Michelle offered to get back to us with some options the next day, and by mid-Friday we'd agreed to go to Arawaru, at 767m the high point off the Otangane Loop at the Sledge Track. Graeme and I hadn't been there before. Plus, as the closest tramp-able named high point with the shortest drive from town, it felt like a win:win.

We left a sunny and still Sledge Track car park just after 8am, headed up to the swing bridge and soon after that we came to a sign pointing to the Arawaru Loop, with the Trig marked as 3.8km away. Michelle mentioned that the sign hadn't been there the last time she did this track and that on that trip she'd mainly been following ribbons. The track isn't marked on the topo map (yet). We headed over a small stream and then began to play "spot the orange marker" up the hill. The track was surprisingly dry, given my previous experiences of getting higher up in this area, and disappointingly quite fungi-free. There's a lot of varieties on the gorge track currently, so I was expecting to see more here.



Chatting away and keeping my eyes peeled for interesting fungi meant that I definitely wasn't playing the orange marker game particularly well at the start! It quickly became apparent that it was easy to lose the

way and close attention was required to catch that next flash of orange. Every so often we'd have to stop, back track a bit and all scan around to try to spot the next marker in the distance. After a while of heading up, we reached a look out (high point 624m) and stopped to take in the views and have a snack. From here, we could see the trig still some way in the distance.



Off again, through the leatherwood and long grass, we arrived at Arawaru around midday. We'd been happily talking and I for one was surprised that 4 hours had passed. There were great views from the trig and we enjoyed a leisurely lunch in the sunshine, with hot drinks provided by Graeme. After leaving a PNTMC-related painted rock on the trig point, and taking a photo to prove we'd been there, we headed off down the "proper" track (marked on the topo map).



We were back in the leatherwood again and then went through a vibrant mossy section. There were a few more types of fungi up here, with the most eye-catching being patches of "blue pouch fungus" (*Clavogaster virescens* – as checked in my field guide!)



On reaching the Otangane Loop track we all agreed to turn right and do the loop anti-clockwise to check out Pukenaenae (“the nipple”) as well. Though this isn’t marked on the map as a high point (no matter how hard we looked!) The track was quite overgrown and we had to untangle ourselves from the bush lawyer every so often, but the going was good and there were expansive views of the new wind farm.



Once around the Otangane Loop we reached Toetoe Junction and descended down into the more familiar boggy patches at the top of the Sledge Track. We stopped at the lookout points on the way back to take a look at where we’d been and play “spot the trig”, then trooped along the Sledge Track as dusk set in.

The stars were starting to come out as we arrived back at the car park at around 6pm, 10 hours after we’d left it. I’m still not quite sure where all the time went! A very enjoyable day with great company and an excellent adventure not too far from home.

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### More than summit views - Fungal Foray on Tunupo Ridge

Pics by Danny Greenblatt





## PNTMC Newsletter May 2023

- Upcoming Trips and Club Nights
- Snowcraft Coming – enrol now
- DOC increases hut fees
- Trip reports: Arapuke Loop, Beginners Tramp #3 to Herepai, Totara Reserve Explorer, Coppermine Creek Explorer, Otairi Farm Walk, Arawaru Loop.

Send articles to

the newsletter editor at [pntmci@gmail.com](mailto:pntmci@gmail.com)



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