



# Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

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

PO Box 1217, Palmerston North

## Newsletter August 2023



Setting off early to avoid the heat in Samoa – Kings Birthday Trip 2023

Pic 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.

**10 August 2023**

**Interclub Quiz**

**PNTMC host**

Join in the fun against teams from MUAC and MTSC – will PNTMC be able to retain the Trevor Bissell Memoria Billy trophy for yet another year?

**31 August 2023**

**Club Photo Comp**

**Martin Lawrence**

Our annual club photo competition. Place-getters in each category will be entered in the Interclub Photo Competition hosted by MUAC this year on Tuesday 2 October 2023. See Notices for details.

## Upcoming Trips

**5 or 6 August 2023 Ruapehu Climbing FE/T Grant Christian 021 117 6921**

Best Weather Day, Sat or Sun. Climbing Te Heu Heu and Ruapehu Summit Plateau from Whakapapa. A steady climb via Pinnacle Ridge to the top of Ruapehu's second highest point, climb to the nearby Tukino peak and descend into the summit plateau before returning via The Dome, Glacier Knob and the Whakapapa ski field. Could take a rope if participants want some practice. Please contact Grant no later than the weekend before.

**5-6 August 2023 Lake Surprise Plus M Warren Wheeler 06 356 1998**

From Turoa carpark on Mt Ruapehu we will explore the Cleft Rock Fountain, Silica Rapids and Lake Surprise on one day and around to Blythe Hut the next. This is intended to be suitable for non-technical trampers without ice axe and crampons, depending on conditions. We will stay at our patron's chalet at Rangataua on Friday and Saturday night.

**12-13 August 2023 TBA**

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

**13 August 2023 Pukerua Bay-Paremata Loop E/M Anne Lawrence 06 357 1695**

We'll leave vehicles at Pukerua Bay and then head south. The first part of our route is known as the Wairaka Walkway. It hugs the coastline much of it on the beach - you feel miles away from civilisation - until we get to Plimmerton. From there we wend our way following a series of walkways back to Pukerua Bay. I think it is a lovely walk and can be done whatever the weather. It's relatively easy in that there are no serious hills, but it is longish, taking the full day.

**19 or 20 August 2023 Pinnacle Ridge – Ruapehu FE/T Grant Christian 021 117 6921**

Best Weather Day(Sat or Sun). An attempt at traversing the Pinnacles north of the Whakapapa ski field. Rope skills required. Climb the Great Pinnacle, abseil down to the gap leading to the Second Pinnacle, climb the Second Pinnacle and then the First. A challenging but interesting climb. Please contact Grant no later than the weekend before.

**20 August 2023 Rangihut E Doug Strachan 06 353 6526**

Family-friendly and scenic Ruahine day tramp that is ideal for beginners. Hopefully there will be some frozen white stuff scattered about but, if not, we'll find some at the Cheltenham Dairy on the way home. One time it took 2.5hrs for an easy ascent to the hut, and exactly 1.5hrs to come back down. Another time we were up in an hour 50 and down in 50 mins flat. Either way, it's not more than 4 hours tramping, so not too demanding. Leader will be trying not to aggravate his Achilles tendonitis, so won't be rushing. 9am start from Milverton Park.

**26-27 August 2023 Holdsworth-Jumbo Full Moon M/T Warren Wheeler 06 356 1998**

We will head up to Powell Hut for dinner and then carry on up to Mt Holdsworth and, if conditions allow, across to Jumbo Hut by the full moon. There should be plenty of snow so you will need ice axe and crampons (available for hire from the club gear custodian) Depart Milverton Park at 9.30am for coffee at Pukaha Mt Bruce on the way.

**27 August TBA**

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

**2-3 September 2023 Ringatoto - Ruapehu FE/T Grant Christian 021 117 6921**  
Walk to Rangipo Hut Friday night. Climb to Ringatoto via East Ridge on Saturday and return to Rangipo Hut. Return to vehicles on Sunday morning. Rope skills required. Ropes may or may not be needed on some of the steeper slopes. Please contact Grant no later than the weekend before.

**3 September 2023 A-Frame-Stanfield M Blair Petersen 027 600 4263**  
The plan is to start from the carpark at Tamaki West Rd, up to Traverse (A Frame) Hut, along the ridge and down to Stanfield Hut. From there it's back to the carpark via Holmes Ridge track. Meeting at Milverton Park (Victoria Ave) at 7.30am.

### ***Forthcoming Great Barrier Trip -- Expressions of Interest Wanted***

**28 Sept-3 Oct 2023 Great Barrier Island E/M Barry Scott 021 070 4848**  
Would you like to spend a few days walking some of the tracks of Aotea/Great Barrier Island along with seeing some of the other sights. Christine and I have a house there and are willing to host a group of 8 people for the period Thursday 28 Sept through to Tuesday 3 Oct (5 nights). Plan would be to enjoy Awana Bay (site of our house), do an overnight trip into Mt Heale Hut and summit Hirikimata (Mt Hobson), visit the hot pools and walk the Harataonga track. Specific plans will be decided closer to the dates to take into account the weather forecast for that period. There will be no charge for accommodation at our house but I would like to set aside a few hours one day for some native plant restoration work around the Awana estuary. Costs will include food, air travel from PN to Auckland return, Auckland to Great Barrier return (currently \$150 each way for voucher tickets I hold), rental for extra car that will be needed and fuel. House is totally off the grid but has good internet, plenty of solar power and water. If you are interested please let me know soon. Barry Scott. Tel: 0210704848 or email: [d.b.scott@massey.ac.nz](mailto:d.b.scott@massey.ac.nz)

#### **Trip Grading**

Trip grades depend on many factors, especially weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient tramper 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.

## Notices

### PNTMC Photo Competition 31 August 2023

Taken any good photos lately? Enter them in our annual photo competition and let our expert judge decide the best three images in each category - an audience vote (show of hands) will then determine first, second and third places. Placegetters in each category will be entered in the Interclub Photo Competition and the FMC Photo Competition.

Categories are:

- ABOVE BUSHLINE (With no Human Element)
- ABOVE BUSHLINE (With a Human Element)
- BELOW BUSHLINE (With no Human Element)
- BELOW BUSHLINE (With a Human Element)
- NATIVE FLORA & FAUNA
- LONG EXPOSURE
- OVERSEAS
- TOPICAL

Photo competition rules are consistent with those of FMC – winners of our competition are automatically entered into the FMC competition. Entries for all categories must be taken after 1 Jan 2022.

The definition of a “human element” is flexible but the general intention is: Where the photo contains as anything other than as a very minor feature: people, a hut, a track sign/marker, bridge, ice axe and anything else that has been introduced by humans into the environment, then we would define that as having “a Human Element”. But if a photo has what could be called a Human Element but that element is very small, inconsequential, and not a feature in the photo then you could count it as “No Human Element”.

Definition of “Long Exposure”: The intention of the long exposure category is for photography of scenes that the naked eye cannot normally comprehend. These shots would require a very long exposure and the use of a tripod. The category is intended for highly technical images of shots taken at night, (including star trails), or in extremely low light situations such as caves or canyons. The category is not intended for normal dusk/dawn photography, or images where a long PNTMC Newsletter August 2023

exposure is used to ‘blur’ the image (such as flowing water, or movement of the subject). This category is intended to encourage more entries, by separating such highly technical photos into their own category. We hope to get more participation from entrants who are not put off by the thought of having to compete with such highly technical photos.

Definition of “Topical”: People in tramping related activities.

PNTMC photo competition entries need to be given to Martin Lawrence via email or on a USB stick. Entries need to be with Martin on or before Friday 18 August 2023.

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### DOC News

#### Tawa Loop Track Upgrade

An upgrade to the track is planned for this summer’s work season; dates are tentative at this stage but likely to start April 2024. The work includes resurfacing the track and adding many culverts, which would remedy the poor track condition, especially those evident during the wet winter months. In the meantime, there is signage at the site and on the DOC website alerting visitors that the track is slippery, particularly when it is wet.

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### HUTS AND HIGH POINTS SCRABBLE CHALLENGE

#### Top 10 to date

Club Member	Scrabble	Bonus	TOTAL
Elly	256	41	297
Blair	127	140	267
Chris T	159	95	254
Janet	122	116	238
Ernie	106	126	232
Monika	101	100	201
Heather	91	71	162
Adam	98	29	127
Kirsten	67	60	127
Stephen	67	60	127

## Trip Reports

14 May 2023

Pinnacle Ridge

Report by Nicola Wallace

Six of us arrived to a busy carpark at Holdsworth road end on a chilly morning. After a look at the map board, we were off up the very easy (non-DOC) track following the true left bank of the Atiwhakatu Stream – no crossing the stream on the wooden bridge today. A variety of pest traps bordered the track. Soon we were looking down on signs of destruction from Cyclone Gabrielle – scoured out bank, and big trees lying bereft in the stream.



A long climb brought us up to Pinnacle high point (877m ASL) for lunch in the sun. This shrubby clearing is the only place where you get a view, and what a view it was. Powell Hut and Mt Holdsworth, a bit of snow up there, and a fantastic view north to Mitre Flats.

From here we climbed and descended for a long while, and I was amazed how well cleared and maintained the tracks were. It made for very enjoyable tramping. Who looked after the tracks so well? At some stage we came across a memorial to Ron Brown (1947 – 2021) who did just this. Clearly after his death someone has taken the job over.



We came across various beautiful hand painted signs at track intersections, before descending steeply to the Atiwhakatu Stream. It was only knee high at its deepest, so all good.



Atiwhakatu Hut was only 5 minutes away, and we stopped and emptied out boots, and chatted with the many trampers at the outside picnic table. It's a real crossroads.

From there it was a brisk 1 ¼ hour walk back to the carpark. By now it was cloudy, and night fell quickly. It was an exciting dark and wet drive back to PN.

We were: Warren, Richard, Monika, Nicola, Hamish, Sarah.

Ernie left his car at Opawe Roadend, watched over by big white bulls, and Blair drove us down to No.1 Line, where we set off under heavy cloud, and spits of rain just before 9am.. An hour or so later we arrived at the lookout, by jove it was chilly, so we carried on after adjusting clothing. It was no longer an official track, but so far so good, but soon after high point 1011m ASL the track became very overgrown. Ernie did a fantastic job on the front, at times having to stop to look carefully and decide where the track was. As for me, I kept falling over the obscured old leatherwood branches, and other concealed stuff, and also slipping on my arse as it was very muddy and slippery. At one stage we came to a fork in the track, but after some investigation, kept to the track marked with pink tape. A huge booster was Blair having the NZ Topo Map app on his phone, and the GPS telling us where we were, a huge motivator. As we neared the hut the track became defined again, and soon we emerged onto the main track, and in rain we arrived at the hut at about 1pm. No one else there, great.

The hut was very cold inside, and I wrapped my groundsheet round my lower half (over polypro leggings) and wore it like a lava lava to increase warmth. After changing clothes and eating, Ernie sawed up wood and got ready to have a fire later. There was only a limited quantity of wood that might burn, the wood was very damp. Later he spent ages persevering with the fire, and to his credit had a little fire going for a few hours. It was so cold that we all went to bed straight after tea, 6.30pm. It would be 12hrs in bed, apart from those inevitable trips outside during the night!

All night the wind blew and nearly all night the rain lashed the hut. This is what makes being in a hut so cosy (once you're in your sleeping bag), and enjoyable. I loved being in the hut. But a little part of me wondered how the Oruakeretaki Stream would be in the morning.



We were very lucky that by 8am the next morning it had stopped raining, but was still claggy.

It was a very muddy and greasy descent to the stream, the last part of the track being a dodgy little track over the rocks.

The Oruakeretaki Stream was a raging torrent, brown and white. It took some cajoling, and an arm pull out of the stream by Blair, when I couldn't get a grip, for me to be happy about carrying on, on this route. Thanks Blair! It was good to get out of the water and head off up the steep hill, as I was very wet up past my waist.

After a loooong climb, we arrived on the main Ruahine crossing track, and a sign saying "Kiritaki Hut 1-2 Hours". I don't think so, not for me anyway. Soon we reached Matanginui, 1074m ASL. Still claggy, no views but thankfully no rain. We all bagged the top before carrying on. On the way to Maharahara (1095m ASL) there was a very steep, gnarly rocky bit, but by hanging a left I got up OK. I wasn't warming up, and had to stop and put on leggings. Poor Ernie and Blair had to wait. No view from Maharahara either, so we headed down and soon stopped for a brief lunch.



Down from here, the bush was beautiful, the kereru looked very healthy, the sun was trying to come out, and we came to a wonderful view of the farmland, and more bush below us. It was our first view on the tramp, and we stopped and savoured it. Walking back through the farm, I found that my knees didn't want to bend anymore, so it was a stagger down the last hill, and it was very good to get back to the car with the bulls watching on. A quick drive back to No.1 Roadend, and afternoon tea at Warren & Robyn's and we headed back to PN.

It had been quite a hard trip for me with the track conditions, and I was very grateful to be with such positive and helpful tramping companions, who lifted me up without bagging me. Thanks!

We were: Ernie (trip leader), Blair, Nicola.

2 July 2023

A Billy Goat of a Track!

Report by Kim Vardon

*(Coppermine Road End > Coppermine Loop Track > Billy Goat Creek/Mangaatua Stream > Return)*

It was just the two of us venturing to Billy Goat Creek (Mangaatua Stream) via Coppermine Loop Track on this chilly, sunless, winter's morning! After the first few minutes we crossed the Coppermine Stream to reach the farmland track. The stream crossing was perfect for waking up the senses, and the steep walk over the farmland warmed us up in no time. We were rewarded with views across to the other side of the Coppermine Loop Track (good view of the slip) and greeted by several vocal paradise ducks.



I was pleased Verity was familiar with the farmland track as many of the track posts need a new coat of white paint to improve visibility. The track along the fence line to the wonky wooden sign was muddy and slippery in places due to recent rain. After approximately 30 mins walking up the farmland, we entered the shelter of the bush – it was a relief to be out of the biting wind!

The track to the top of the ridge was pleasant. We met a father and son at the junction (720m) who had ventured out early in the hope of stalking deer, but only sighted tracks.

We marvelled in the magic of the goblin forest that graced the saddle. However this was short lived as the track soon began a steep and slippery descent to Billy Goat Creek (320m over 0.5 km). In places the track was full of sludge which made it a tad treacherous underfoot. I managed a few impressive slides! We had a pleasant lunch break beside the creek, keeping shelter from the light rain.



Feeling rested and refuelled, it was much easier walking up the ridge to the saddle! We saw kereru and piwakawaka. Navigating down the muddy, slippery fence line required a fair amount of grit. Back on the farmland, we were greeted once again by biting wind - I was grateful for my warm layers and wind breaker.

What did I learn from my first tramp with PNTMC? That an Easy tramp has nothing to do with Gradient and everything to do with Duration! I should have known better, it was the Ruahine Ranges afterall!!



With many thanks to Verity for her great company and excellent track knowledge.

We were Kim Vardon (newbie) and Verity Elder (trip leader)



Forecast low cloud, gentle breeze, 1°C, 0.1mm precipitation....no views then, but scenic snow and ice a real possibility. Still, only two of us were keen to go and have a look. "Any trip is a good trip if it isn't raining at the carpark when you start and finish". So it was in good spirits that we headed off from Limestone Roadend for our 900m climb up to Toka trig 1519m. Coal Creek was up a bit, but no worries given the little rain about in the cloud. We carried on up the Deerford Track to our second crossing of Coal Creek, where we started up Knights Track. Here the scale of flood damage from Cyclone Gabrielle was evident by the previous mossy campsite now being a scoured out rock garden. Other storm damage was minimal with just the odd tree blown down across the track; easy to get around or over.

A dristy mizzle dampened progress upwards and I put my coat on, but as usual it was debateable whether I got wetter on the inside from sweating instead. More storm damage appeared higher up the ridge when we came across large longitudinal slip cracks in the middle of the track. It would be a long steep ride down into Coal Creek so we certainly didn't linger. Then the first patch of snow appeared, along with the first leatherwood bush, up with the mountain cedar and kaikawaka.



There was only a light covering of snow on the ground and the ice-covered leatherwood and tussock along the track were a delightful distraction. We put on more warm clothes and as we crested yet another false summit a bitterly cold breeze picked up. Fortunately we were only minutes from the signpost tarn at the top where we sheltered out of the wind and put our leggings and more warm gear on.



From here it was only a few more minutes up to the old trig site and dropped down off the top for lunch amongst the snow and ice covered tussock. We were soon chilling down even though the sun tried to poke through the clouds. I was a bit envious of Blair with his little thermos – a good idea for a cheery pick me up. Back in the bitter wind again we returned to the signpost tarn and quickly decided to go down Knights rather than along the exposed ridge and down Shorts Track - it would have been quite unpleasant in the cold cross wind. We made quick work of dropping down into the bush and

trying not to slip over too much. The slip cracks didn't seem to be any wider and the route seemed quite different looking down into the trees below instead of the trunks in front of your face going up.

We arrived back at the Coal Creek crossing to find it was up a bit more, even though there had been little rain; I guess snow melt would have contributed. We had taken just over 3 hours to Toka and 2 ½ to come back down, at the lower end of the posted DOC times. A good day out, with the drizzle holding off at the carpark again for our trip home. We were the intrepid Blair Petersen and Warren Wheeler.



## PNTMC Newsletter August 2023

- Upcoming Trips and Club Nights
- Club Photo Competition, Tawa Loop Update, Scrabble Challenge progress -
- Trip reports: Pinnacle Ridge Atiwhakatu, Kiritaki Hut to Maharahara, Billy Goat Track, Toka high point.

Send articles to

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

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*Get out and about with us!*

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