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# Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

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

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

## Newsletter June 2011

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*An early start to winter: tarn near the Hay Paddock at the foot of Mt Owen, Kahurangi National Park  
Photo by Martin Lawrence on the pre-Easter trip – see inside for the trip report*

### Club Nights

All are welcome to our club nights. These are held at 7:45pm on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North.

#### 9 June

##### **Wildlife CSI, with Kelly Buckle**

Wildlife CSI will be an overview of the role of wildlife forensics in the managements and protection of New Zealand's native species. Kelly will be reviewing the role of forensic investigation as well as specific case examples, with an emphasis on conservation.

#### 30 June

##### **Around Anapurna, with Eric Liu**

Annapurna circuit is one of the most famous trekking routes in Nepal. The altitude ranges from 800 metres at start, up to 5400 metres at the highest pass. Eric will talk about his recent trip there, and other adventures in Nepal. Some amazing scenery and photos.

## Upcoming Trips

### 4- 6 June (Queen's Birthday Weekend)

**Janet's Coastal Classic** M  
**Janet Wilson** 329 4722

This year we are visiting Tora (North Island East Coast) and staying at their summer accommodation at Greentops Quarters. Depart PN on Friday morning. En route, visit the mushroom factory. Plenty of walking on the farm and along the coast and some mountain biking. Looks like a great spot for fishing too. This promises to be a pleasantly social weekend at an interesting location.

### 5 June

**Zekes Hut, Hihitahi** E/ M  
**Peter Wiles** 358 6894

Zekes is a cosy wee bush hut between Taihape and Waiouru. There is a good track there, and good views of Mt Ruapehu from the trig. The trip should kick off about 7.00 am on Sunday.

### 11- 12 June

**Kaweka Forest Park** E/ M  
**Geoff Beaumont** 354 4929

A pleasant stroll to McIntosh Hut, with it's excellent fire box and sunny location. Plenty to explore up here. Kiwis often screech at night outside the hut.

### 12 June

**Moorcock-Longview Loop**  
**Dave Grant** 357 8269

This is one of our traditional tramping spots. Mostly open tussock, so great views of Southern Hawkes Bay and much of the Ruahines.

### 18- 19 June

**Castlepoint Mid Winter Weekend** All  
**Jennifer Kitchen** 323 6694

Great accommodation has been arranged for this winter's weekend at the beach. Some good walks to the lighthouse, Castle Rock, and the beach itself.

### 25 June

**Coppermine** E/ M  
**Warren Wheeler** 356 1998

Depart 8.00am. Coppermine Creek is in the southern Ruahine Forest Park on the Woodville side. A pleasant stroll along a historic pack track above the creek brings us to the old Magazine tunnel with its resident cave wetas. A little further on a big slip can then be crossed to see the old mine site, although the tunnel entrance has been covered over for safety reasons. Back along the track we turn off onto the Loop Track and up through the podocarp forest and out to the edge of the farmland for great views over the Tararua District. Follow the poled route back through the

paddocks down to the carpark. A classic easy trip and close to town.

### 26 June

**Wellington skyline walk** M  
**Anne Lawrence** 357 1695

Anne will show you some of the many excellent trails available around Wellington. Possibly some cafes on the itinerary too.

### 3 July

**Holdsworth Stream & Waterfall** F  
**Terry Crippen** 027 643 3637

A chance to find the 50 m high elusive Holdsworth Waterfall; heading up Holdsworth Stream, finding the waterfall, then exiting somewhere (with a bit of a bush bash) on the Tararua tops past Powell Hut. Could be COLD. Might need ice axe. Depart 6am.

#### 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
Medium (M):	5-6 hrs
Fit (F):	about 8 hrs
Fitness Essential (FE):	over 8 hrs

Other grades:

Technical skills (T)
Instructional (I)

#### Trip participants

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

#### Gear for trips

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

#### Trip leaders

Complete the trip intentions form and leave with one of Overdue Trip Contacts or drop into 44 Dahlia St. If you are unable to run your trip as scheduled, advise a trip coordinator as soon as possible so that alternatives can be arranged.

#### Overdue Trips

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

Mick Leyland	358-3183
Martin and Anne Lawrence	357-1695

## Notices

### PNTMC membership subscriptions

Subs are now due.

Full Subscription	\$35.00
	\$45.00 (family)
e subscription	\$25.00
	\$35.00 (family)

Payment can be either handed in at a club night, posted to Martin Lawrence, Treasurer, PNTMC, PO Box 1217, PN, or via the internet to PNTMC's account 03-0726-0485393-00. If you use the latter, please make sure you include your name with the transfer so it is clear whose sub it is, and email Martin ([dahlia44@xtra.co.nz](mailto:dahlia44@xtra.co.nz)) to let him know you have paid.

FMC membership is one of the many benefits of your sub. PNTMC therefore needs prompt payment to notify FMC of membership numbers, and obtain their FMC card for each member.

### New Trip Card July- December 2011

Janet Wilson and the PNTMC committee are preparing the next PNTMC trip card for the period July-December 2011. Look out for this in the July Newsletter.

### SNOWCRAFT PROGRAMME 2011

Our snowcraft programme gets underway at the end of July. It has two aims:

Firstly, to equip you with the necessary skills for safe tramping in snow, be it on winter trips, or summer trips above the snowline.

Secondly, to pass on the fundamental skills of mountaineering. The programme consists of three separate days up Ruapehu a fortnight apart, and a midweek evening session prior to the Ruapehu days. A progressive approach is used, with Snowcraft 1 assuming little or no previous snow experience and SC 2 and 3 building on the previous levels. Most participants enrol in the complete programme, while others just in part depending on their previous experience or ambitions. NOTE: this year we are running Snowcraft as day trips, to give us more flexibility by making use of the best weather and keeping costs down.

SC1 evening Wednesday 27th July. day either 30th or 31st July.	SC1
SC2 evening Wednesday 10th August. day either 13th or 14th August	SC2
SC3 evening Wednesday 24th August. day either 27th or 28th August	SC3

Fees cover weeknight venues, transport, group gear hire, and instruction: \$40 for PNTMC members, \$50 for non-members for each of SC1, SC2, SC3. Individual gear hire, if needed, is an additional cost for non Club members.

Pass the word round to friends you may think are interested. Open to Club members and members of the public.

For further info; visit the Snowcraft link at [www.pntmc.org.nz](http://www.pntmc.org.nz) or contact Bruce van Brunt 328-4761 or Terry Crippen 027 643 36 37.

Applications close Thursday 14th July.

### FMC Conference 2011: Forever Wild? - Conservation Lands in the 21st Century.

Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand invites you to their 80th Anniversary Conference, entitled "*Forever Wild? Our Conservation Lands in the 21st Century.*" This conference is for all those who have an interest in public conservation land, for work or play, and will be held at Te Papa in Wellington on 11-12 June. Hear from experts, policy-makers, politicians, recreation and conservation leaders, and those who enjoy our wild lands. Discuss what you think the future for conservation land should look like. Go to <http://www.fmc.org.nz/conference> for more information.

### FMC Youtube Video Competition.

The inaugural FMC Youtube Video Competition begins this year. Members and Individual Supporters can use their talent to showcase tramping and mountaineering in New Zealand. Details on the various categories and how to enter can be found via the FMC website:

<http://www.fmc.org.nz/services-to-clubs/Videocomp/>

The closing date is 31 September 2011. For inspiration, go to <http://www.youtube.com> and search for "Tramping."

### New Editions of Topo50 Maps covering Ruahine Ranges (BK 36, BL 36) available.

Trampers using the new Topo50 maps that cover the Ruahine Ranges (Sheets BK 36 & BL 36) may have been aware of some errors and omissions in the first editions that were not present in the superseded NZMS 260 series. LINZ advises that corrected copies of the printed versions should be available in shops at the end of this month and that digital versions with corrections are now available on their website (<http://www.linz.govt.nz/topography/index.aspx>).

## Outdoor Pursuits Centre, Tongariro Winter Skills Courses

For those wanting to improve their winter mountaineering skills this season, OPC Tongariro is offering Avalanche Awareness and Intermediate Mountaineering Courses (multiday) from late July into September 2011. For more details and how to enrol go to:

<http://www.opc.org.nz/mountain.php>

## Living Legends

Living Legends is a community conservation initiative planting native vegetation in chosen locations throughout New Zealand during September and October 2011. On Saturday 1 October, Living Legends will aim to plant 5000 native trees in the Manawatu Gorge Scenic Reserve. If you are interested in volunteering to assist, then please register online, and refer

[www.livinglegends.co.nz](http://www.livinglegends.co.nz)

## Trip Reports

### Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month to Tony Gates, the newsletter editor, at [kiwi@leatherwood.co.nz](mailto:kiwi@leatherwood.co.nz), or via <http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>

**3 April 2011**

### Waipawa Saddle – Waikamaka Hut Report and photo by Peter Wiles

Woody and I left Palmy at 6.30, however, there had been a slight hitch – in the daylight saving adjustment the previous evening Woody made a slight mistake – he put his watch forward an hour instead of back an hour. Consequently he was ready a little ahead of time – about 2 hours actually!

From the Sunrise-Triplex carpark we took the Sunrise Hut track to the Waipawa turnoff and then descended into the bed of the Waipawa River. The weather was good and the going was good (initially). After a morning tea stop part-way up the Waipawa the going got a bit more because in recent years much vegetation (mainly Tutu) has grown up on the shingle terraces and is now difficult or very wetting to get through after rain or heavy dew. Consequently we did a section of bolder hopping in the stream bed. The going improved and we made rapid progress up to the track and up to the Saddle. Unlike the Manawatu Gorge earlier on, there was a

reasonable breeze on the Saddle, so we headed down to Waikamaka Hut. We arrived at the hut at noon and enjoyed lunch in some sun and the shelter of the beech forest.



*Woody on the track below Waipawa Saddle.*

It was easy going for the descent down the valley. We called in at Waipawa Hut/Chalet – again no one around. Then we continued down the riverbed through the gorge to reach the road. A short walk along the road, returned us to the car for a great day in the hills.

Peter Wiles and Woody Lee

### **10 April 2011** **Blue Range Hut** Report and photo by Woody Lee

On a fine autumn morning seven of us comfortably packed into my van and then we introduced each other before heading off, as many of us had only just met. Upon arrival at the camping ground on the Kiriwhakapapa Roadend there were some campers on the ground and a large group of young trampers gearing up for their navigation course. The group were from Hutt Valley Tramping Club and split into small groups with leaders. Each trumper carried a full backpack and laminated map. It was pleasant to see such a big group of youth there.

At the beginning of the track I gave a brief talk about the route and approximate travel time because most of us had not been to the hut. Two were new to the NZ forest and more detailed info about the surrounding area followed by Warren using his old tattered topo map.

When we were on the narrow steep track for 30 minutes, I suddenly felt a sharp pinch on my right leg just above the gaiter and I initially guessed it could be a prickle. Shortly after that, another one on the left leg!! What was going on with my legs? Then I saw a wasp flying around me. I felt

frustrated not knowing what to do with the nasty wasp but it soon flew away. Warren was at the back at the time and looked around the track then found a wasp nest. It was a very unusual incident on a cold morning and the sting sites were very itchy and sore.



*Enjoying lunch in the sun at Blue Range Hut.*

Fortunately I had insect bite cream and applied to the reddish swollen spots. The reddish sting sites lasted a few days and caused on/off itching.

We talked about several topics and one of them was a fairy tale - Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Amy started the story "we are seven so we could name each of the seven dwarfs; Grumpy, Sleepy, Doc, Happy, Bashful, Dopey and who else? Anyway we could not recall the last dwarf's name (...can you?).

Just before midday we arrived at the hut and sat on the grass in the sun. It was a perfect spot for lunch rather than sitting on the picnic table in the shade. We all had a relaxed lunch with hot drinks as I brought my gas cooker. On the way home we stopped at the Pukaha Mt Bruce for afternoon tea. We were Laura de Jong, Gert-Jan Koffeman (from the Netherlands), Amy Overington, Lu Zhang, Mike Fletcher, Warren Wheeler and Woody Lee

**15 – 19 April 2011 (Pre-Easter trip)  
Kahurangi- Granity Pass- Mt Owen  
Report: Anne Lawrence  
Photos: Martin Lawrence**

Our group of five was a mixed bag – there was Janet who knows the Mt Owen area well and seemed able to find her way round almost by instinct. Terry, the official trip leader, was on his second visit to the area and as usual he was able to add a geological perspective to the trip.

Martin and I had both been to other parts of Kahurangi but had only looked at Mt Owen from

afar. This was Woody's second 'long' tramp and he was keen to learn all he could.

On Saturday afternoon we met up in Nelson and headed off in Terry's vehicle, leaving Graham to talk motorbikes and caving with his mates. We had planned to spend this first night at the road end but the weather was decidedly damp and the forecast suggested an early start the next day would be pointless. So, instead, we spent the night in a cabin at the Tapawera motor camp which in addition to sheltering us was also providing a few Cantabrians with refuge from the tremors.

So it wasn't till later on Sunday that we actually headed off from Courthouse Flat. The rain held off for our walk up to Granity Pass Hut – this was good as it enabled us to really enjoy the walk. There are two tracks up the first hill. We chose the 'easy' one which allowed us to take a brief side trip to see the Blue Creek resurgence, which was spouting water a few meters up. The route involves a bit of a slog up a decent hill, then into open grassland interspersed with clumps of forest before hitting the pass and heading down the giant staircase. The forest here is really varied with lots of dracophyllum and quite a bit of bird life. The last part of the track follows a dry creek bed – except after all the rain it was a creek in full flow so there was a bit of a challenge in keeping the boots dry.

The new Granity Pass Hut (sign on the door gives altitude as 1220m) is well built with double glazed windows and a good wide deck – it is nestled near the foot of Mt Bell and looks out towards Mt Owen in one direction and Billy's Knob in the other. We discovered that its reputation for being a chilly place is well-justified and with no options for heating the hut, we were all snuggled into our sleeping bags by 8pm.



*Mt Owen limestone landscape*

On Monday morning, we woke to a winter wonderland- over an inch of snow on the ground and still falling. We decided not to tackle any mountains while there was so much snow and

ice around, and instead explored the Hay Paddock and nearby tarns. We circumnavigated Sentinel Hill, and headed back past the hut to Granity Pass from where we had a good view of the snow covered Lookout Range. There was some debate as to whether we should pitch our tents up by the tarns as originally planned but there was so much snow and the wind was biting cold so we opted for the relative cosiness of the Hut instead.

Tuesday was a clear, frosty morning. With warnings about being careful of ice, we headed off to Mt Owen. This involves a lovely walk up through a karst field – this marble is fantastic stuff to walk on with its chasms, unexpected holes, sharp edges and a few big stretches. Much of the way there is a well worn path (the area has become much more popular since the filming for Lord of the Rings).



*Mt Owen summit*

From the top there were wonderful views in all directions with Mt Kendall and Patriarch standing out prominently. Mt Owen has a comfortable flat top but the biting southerly limited the amount of time we felt like spending exploring up there. After a bit of a look around, we went off exploring – there was talk of finding the Owen Ice Cave but it proved elusive and we settled on finding a warm spot for lunch! We spent the rest of the afternoon wandering over the karst, gradually heading back to the Hut finding a relatively easy way down off the marble.

By Wednesday morning the snow was well melted but with cloud blowing over obscuring the tops, we decided not to climb either Mt Bell or Billy's knob instead going for an explore on rock closer to the Hut. It was good to be on the rock with no ice or snow to worry about. We investigated a rock bivvy that had been a summer home away from home for a group of cavers in recent past and Janet lead us on a search for the Granity Pass cave – this proved to be a deep scary-looking abyss that I didn't want to get too close to! Back to clean up the hut and squeeze everything back into our packs before

heading back to Courthouse Flat. To my surprise the creek bed was quite dry for our return trip and it seemed to take no time at all before we were back amongst the dracophyllum. The call of a kea seemed to signal farewell to the high places as we headed for the pass. We made good time up the Giant's staircase, pausing at the top long enough for a photo.

After a pleasant lunch looking out to Mt Patriarch we headed back down the hill. This time we decided to go down the 'hard' track – it certainly would have been a hard track to come up particularly in the summer as it is an open ridge—even going down, we were all pretty warm by the time we reached the river at the bottom. And what a welcome we got at Courthouse Flat – lots of midges, keen to taste blood swarmed around us as we took off our boots and loaded the car. Then it was back to Nelson for a pleasant meal out with Graham and friends.

It was great to have Janet to introduce us to some of her favourite spots, Terry to share his knowledge about the geology of the area and Woody to introduce us to different foods such as tofu balls and his home-made electrolyte solution and protein bars. All in all, a thoroughly enjoyable tramp to a unique part of NZ which I would be keen to re-visit.

*We were: Terry Crippen, Janet Wilson, Woody Lee, Martin and Anne Lawrence*

### **30th April - 1st May**

#### **Cattle Ridge Hut**

**Report by Michael Allerby, photo Woody Lee**

After the bad weather earlier in the week, we were not sure what the weekend would bring. The long range forecast was showing gusty south easterlies and Woody was also concerned about the level that the stream before Roaring Stag Hut might be at. No cause for alarm though, as Saturday turned out a brilliant day for tramping with calm sunny blue skies.

Arriving at the car park we quickly chucked on the boots and pack and got going, moving along at a good steady pace with a few stops for a snack and drink\_ especially on the steep climb up to the Herapai Hut turn off. The track was a bit muddy in a few places but these were easily sidled. Crossing the stream was easily achieved with a rock hop although Woody's speedy attempt ended with a bit of a dance before he regained his balance.

Stopping for lunch at Roaring Stag Lodge we were greeted by some annoying wasps

eventually retreated indoors. Pity because it was nice out on the deck soaking up the warm sun rays instead of being in a cold hut.

With lunch out of the way, it was time to tackle the climb up to Cattle Ridge Hut that Craig had warned me about. We travelled across quite a long swing bridge, which takes you over the Ruamahanga River and on to the start of a good uphill climb. Our progress was going well until we came across a large rimu, which had fallen over the track taking other trees in its path. We headed up around looking for the track and orange markers. After a bit of searching Woody spotted a marker up in the distance and we found the track again.

After a 2 hour slog from Roaring Stag Hut we finally reached Cattle Ridge Hut (a roomy 5 bunker) which is sitting amongst tussock and alpine shrubs. It was good to get the pack off and sort out our gear. With some daylight hours left, Woody suggested we take a short trip up cattle ridge, where he pointed out the track Peter Wiles and himself had come down from Dundas Hut on a previous trip. The weather was perfect for taking in the views of the surrounding peaks and river valley below. One peak was already covered in a fresh dumping of snow, from the cold front that had recently passed through.



At Cattle Ridge Hut

Outside that night a star studded sky blanketed the hut with the distance glow from Masterton's street lights. It made for a peaceful night, which with cables anchoring the hut, is a clue that this is not always the case.

We awoke to low cloud shrouding the hut and a cold breeze with a bit of bite. Woody soon warmed us up with a breakfast of hot noodles and kimchi. It was time to head down and upon reaching the Ruamahanga River Woody took us on a detour to view some camping spots Warren had shown him. Leaving Roaring Stag Hut with plenty of time on our hands, we had a leisurely

walk back to the car park photographing fungi along the way and chatting about various subjects.

*We were Woody Lee (leader) and Michael Allerby.*

## Poetry Corner

### Colenso's Mug By Trevor Crabtree, 1975

High in the Ruahines  
Off a steep and narrow trail  
Two thousand feet above a stream  
Lies waiting, Colenso's Grail.

Waiting for eager, thirsting lips  
To drink from it once more-  
To taste again to cold, clear spring  
Like wine, from the mountains core.

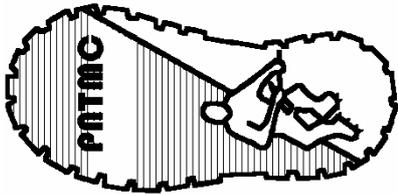
Silver mug, with silver chain  
Fastened to a log  
Tapu to all Maori tribes  
Caressed by morning fog.

Very few have heard of this  
Fewer yet have seen  
But thanks to my friends Vic and Ian  
It's one place I have been.

Leave your dreary fireside  
Come walking where I know  
Up the Makarora  
Where Colenso used to go.

Climb the Ruahines  
Work up a raging thirst  
And if you find Colenso's mug  
Remember- he drinks first.

*Printed with thanks to the (late) author. Trevor Crabtree was a Ruahine/ Kaweka/ Urewera deer hunter, poet, and story teller, who wrote a book "buy me a beer and I'll tell you some lies". He died in 2007. Poem copyright owners were not able to be located.*



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## **PNTMC Newsletter**

**June 2011**

### *What's inside this month?*

- *Upcoming trips and club events*
- *Snowcraft Course is Coming*
- *FMC notices and more*
- *Recent Trip Reports Waipawa Saddle,  
Blue Range Hut, Cattle Ridge, Mt Owen*
- *Bush Poetry – Colenso's Mug*

### **Articles for the newsletter**

Send by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month to Tony Gates,  
the newsletter editor, via the club website

**Get out and about with us!**

### **PNTMC Contacts**

President	Anne Lawrence	357 1695
Vice President	Warren Wheeler	356 1998
Secretary	Dave Grant	357 8269
Treasurer	Martin Lawrence	357 1695
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Snowcraft Programme	Terry Crippen	356 3588

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