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## PNTMC NEWS

www.pntmc.org.nz

17 April 2020

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Covid-19 alert level 4 means that all club meetings and trips are suspended until further notice. This PNTMC NEWS replaces the newsletter until further notice.

This issue has some great contributions from a number of club members.

Please send anything you would like included to Anne Lawrence ([anne.lawrence.nz@gmail.com](mailto:anne.lawrence.nz@gmail.com))

### News about the lockdown

#### What do we know about Level 3?

We don't yet know when we will be moving out of level 4. But we do know more about what we will be able to do under level 3. Details are at <https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-system/alert-level-3/>

***You can do activities that are local, which you can do safely, and which do not involve interacting with other people, or equipment touched by other people. Tramping is ok for day walks on easy trails, same for mountain biking if you are experienced and know the trail. You must stay local. You can drive to a nearby area to go for a walk or run. You should drive as short a distance as you can, and still do the activity, for example a beach 45 minutes away. Please be aware of maintaining two metres distance from other people.***

For a summary of each of the alert levels go to

<https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/tables/COVID-19-alert-levels-detailed.pdf>

#### Huts won't be opening anytime soon...

DOC says huts will likely remain closed until New Zealand is at Alert Level One. But there is some good news for hut pass holders - DOC Hut tickets can be used at later dates and Backcountry Hut Passes can be extended. As hut tickets are not dated, tickets already purchased are not eligible for a refund but can be used at a later date. People who have purchased Backcountry Hut Passes are eligible for extensions on their pass. Passes will be extended by the length of time that huts remain closed. For example, if an annual pass had 3 months until expiry from 23 March 2020 (the date backcountry huts closed), you can request a new expiry date of 3 months from the date that the huts are opened again.

To access the extension, you will need to take your pass into a DOC Visitor Centre, where you will be issued with a new pass with an extended expiry date. This will only be possible once the COVID-19 Alert Level has reduced and Visitor Centres have reopened.

For more info go to <https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/issues/covid-19/>

### Things you CAN do during the lockdown

#### Watch a movie

- My French Film Festival has over 50 films online. You can watch the short films for free. <https://www.myfrenchfilmfestival.com/>



- Banff Film Festival tour is cancelled but movies are all online for free.  
<https://adventureblog.net/2020/03/banff-film-festival-cancels-tour-offers-movies-online-for-free.html>



- *Go Further South: An Epic 12-hour Virtual Journey to Antarctica's Ross Sea*  
If you missed watching Slow TV documentary *Go Further South* over Easter, or want to relive the magic, you can now watch it online on Prime TV Catch Up and Sky Go.

More movie recommendations from Warren:

- Ghostbusters (1984)
- Mars Attacks (1996)
- Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom (1984)
- Touching the Void (2003)
- The Andromeda Strain (1971)
- Carry on Doctor (1968)
- Saturday Night Fever (1977)
- Wild (2014)
- Fury (2014)
- Off the Edge (1976)

### Read Adventure magazine

The theme of the April issue of the Adventure magazine is survival. You can read it online for free as the print issue was unable to be printed. There are some hair-raising stories and an article about the White Island Eruption.

<https://www.yumpu.com/s/9OGZoxSyX2BV1phD>



### Improve your tramping balance

We all know the importance of balance, especially over difficult terrain. The latest Wilderness has an article by Megan Sety on one of the best ways to improve your balance: standing on one leg while barefoot. Megan explains that when you do this, you wobble and that wobbling uses the muscles in your calf, ankle and foot to maintain balance. Strengthen those and you'll improve your balance overall and decrease the risk of ankle strains and sprains when on the track. In the article she describes some fun ways to practise balancing on one foot.

<https://www.wildernessmag.co.nz/best-way-improve-tramping-balance/>



**Wilderness**



### Admire or create some art

Terry Coburn (a PNTMC member some years ago) has been working on his lockdown skills – he has produced this picture and was happy to share it in this NEWS. If you are interested in buying this, contact Terry on 0226386761 or [trrycbrn@gmail.com](mailto:trrycbrn@gmail.com)



### Take in a bit of culture

- Visit the Getty. They have over 350 books that can be downloaded and read for free. They also have art podcasts and links to art-making YouTubes and Art History talks <https://blogs.getty.edu/iris/explore-getty-art-resources-closed-coronavirus/>
- Tour the Vatican museums follow the link below into Museums, turn right at Virtual Tours and enter the world of the Sistine Chapel, Raphael's Rooms, and Chiaramonti museum. [http://www.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani/en.html#nav\\_explore](http://www.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani/en.html#nav_explore)
- DigitalNZ has opened the virtual doors to Landfall Online, Play it Strange (original songs and arrangements by young Kiwi musicians) and over 5,000 clips and videos from NZ on Screen, most recently a film trailer for David White's This Town and last year's full length online documentary *NZ Wars – Stories of Waitara*. <https://digitalnz.org/>
- The Auckland Writers Festival and Word Christchurch have posted podcasts and interviews with speakers including Arundhati Roy, Markus Zucaks, Antony Beevor, Vincent O'Malley, Shayne Carter, Philip Hoare and Val McDermid. <http://www.writersfestival.co.nz/>  
<https://wordchristchurch.co.nz/>
- Lynn Freeman of Radio New Zealand has collected some great suggestions for things to do during Lockdown including going walkabout inside your bubble. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/stories/2018742028/it-s-a-wrap-arts-you-can-access-online>
- FutureLearn's Big Day In [https://wordpress-info.futurelearn.com/info/blog/futurelearns-big-day-in?utm\\_campaign=fl\\_april\\_2020&utm\\_medium=futurelearn\\_organic\\_email&utm\\_source=newsletter\\_broadcast&utm\\_term=200410\\_ADH\\_0030\\_GENERAL&utm\\_content=copy](https://wordpress-info.futurelearn.com/info/blog/futurelearns-big-day-in?utm_campaign=fl_april_2020&utm_medium=futurelearn_organic_email&utm_source=newsletter_broadcast&utm_term=200410_ADH_0030_GENERAL&utm_content=copy)
- 50 Free Things You Can Do During Lockdown [https://wordpress-info.futurelearn.com/info/blog/50-free-things-you-can-do-during-lockdown?utm\\_campaign=fl\\_april\\_2020&utm\\_medium=futurelearn\\_organic\\_email&utm\\_source=newsletter\\_broadcast&utm\\_term=200410\\_ADH\\_0030\\_GENERAL&utm\\_content=copy](https://wordpress-info.futurelearn.com/info/blog/50-free-things-you-can-do-during-lockdown?utm_campaign=fl_april_2020&utm_medium=futurelearn_organic_email&utm_source=newsletter_broadcast&utm_term=200410_ADH_0030_GENERAL&utm_content=copy)



### Backcountry projects

DOC has asked the Ruahine Users Group (RUG) for a list of priority backcountry projects/work which could be completed in the next 1-2 years. This is part of the shift to the backcountry post-Covid19.

There is a fairly short time frame for giving input so please get thinking. Here are some ideas from Bruce van Brunt to get you started:

1. Recut the track to Takapari peak and the lost track down to the Cattle Cr saddle above Stanfield hut.
2. Recut and improve access to Piripiri biv. There is certainly improvement here for the route off the Toka tops, as well as the "new" route from the mid Poh track.
3. Recut the bush/scrub section of track along the tops between Aranga and Kylie biv
4. Re-establish the old track (recently opened up again by the stoat trappers) from the tops near Aranga down to the Makaroro River.
5. Build a bridge across the Pohangina to improve access to mid Poh hut. This is not a cheap project, but it is important. Mid Poh is the only hut on this river where you can really be trapped by a high river. All other huts have some escape route that does not use the river.
6. Open up the track that joined up with the Holmes ridge in the Stanfield hut area. This is a quick way to get from the leatherwood tops of Takapari Rd down to the river.
7. Improve the bit of the "up and over" track from Triangle hut to Iron Gates.

These are just some initial thinking from Bruce. If you want to comment on these or make other suggestions, get in touch with Janet Wilson.

### **Facts and Figures from Club Huts and High Places Challenge**

Grant Christian thought it would be interesting to do an analysis of the points he gained in the recent Club Challenge. Here is what he found.

- Most Points on one trip. Herepai - Bannister circuit - 26 points
- Most points in one day. Otaki Forks to Mt Hector, south along range to Aston Peak and down to Renata Hut. - 18 points
- Points gained by driving or on a short walk. Longest walk included was to Parawai Hut - 15.5
- Longest Trip - 3 days.
- Number of days activity recorded - 29 days
- No. of repeat visits - 4 - visited Herepai Hut and Herepai, Ruapae and East Peaks twice.
- Highest Peak - Mt Ruapehu - Tahurangi - 2797m
- Furthest location - Top Hut in Oteake Conservation Park - Otago (Four Wheel Drive Trip)
- Where most points earned. Tararuas.

It would be interesting to compare results for other people for these categories. If you work out your own results, send them in and we can publish them in the next NEWS.

### **Quick 10 Quiz**

Thanks to Warren for producing another quiz. Answers at the end of this NEWS.

1. Is it lines of latitude or longitude that pass through the north and south poles?
2. Since Easter the full moon has been waning. Is it getting darker on the left or right?
3. How many legs does a tripod have?
4. How many legs does a cicada have?
5. What word can precede pack, pick and storm?
6. What direction do winds circulate around a high pressure weather system in the southern hemisphere, clockwise or anti-clockwise?
7. How many wheel studs does a 1976 Renault 12 car have?
8. What colour are the ropes of the climbing tower in Milverton Park?
9. What is the mountain range between the Hollyford River valley and Milford Sound?
10. Name the six huts in the Waingawa River catchment of Tararua Forest Park.

## Mana Island in the news

*This article from the Guardian was a nice follow up to our club trip to Mana Island.*

### Endangered New Zealand bird sent to safety offshore despite Covid-19 lockdown

A rare New Zealand bird has been evacuated to a remote island despite the strict coronavirus lockdown, with the high-risk mission “essential” to the survival of the species, conservationists say. Despite stringent lockdown orders in place country-wide, as New Zealand battles Covid-19, five juvenile shore plovers – or *tūturuatu* – were flown from captivity in Christchurch to the remote, predator-free Mana Island off the coast of Wellington on Saturday. The birds caught a near-empty Air New Zealand flight for the 450km journey, taking up full rows, and being monitored by cabin crew who have few human passengers to attend anymore.

DoC ranger Nick Fisenzidis has remained as caretaker and manager on Mana Island with his family, and they are all self-isolating together, as well as caring for the local animals. The plover will be fed by Fisenzidis to help acclimatise them to their new home, before being released in a few days.

*Nick Fisenzidis and son Theo check on a New Zealand shore plover during their transfer to the predator-free island of Mana*

*Photograph: Department of Conservation, New Zealand*



## Trip reports

### Norway in the time of Corona

#### Report and Pics: Kristina Mattson, our Foreign Correspondent in Sweden

My friend Herco from Holland and I had planned to go skiing from hut to hut (backpacking) in the Norwegian mountains for 10 days in the middle of March. As time of departure approached, we were following all Corona news closely but there was no info saying it would not be possible. So, we decided that the mountains, far from all the worries of an outside world in turmoil, would be a great place to get away from it all.

We met in Lillehammer where we stayed overnight in a hotel. Next morning breakfast was “different”. The usual Norwegian breakfast buffet was gone and instead we got a little plastic bag each with breakfast. We had decided to go up the mountain by the ski lift gondola to start at 900 metres. When we arrived at Hafjell skiplace, it was closed, as from this very morning. No gondola. Now, 900 meters climbing, with a 16 kilo backpack, is a tough start to add to the 25 kilometres skiing measured from the intended starting point. We were saved by a bus going to Pellestova hotel up at the top.



The day was after all wonderful. Minus five, a clear blue sky and perfect snow.

- Let's have a hotel coffee before we leave, I, the coffee addict said.
  - We have hot water and Nescafe, was Hercos response.
- I gave him a dark look and we went inside.

No hotel coffee. The café was closed and the entire hotel would close in the afternoon.

- All tourist hotels in Norway will be closed after today, the man informed us.

We looked at each other. The buffet dinner and hot shower planned for nights number four and eight were obviously off. But no worries. We're hard stuff and the little huts will be fine for us.

So we set off. It was a wonderful day. Lovely conditions, they couldn't have been better. With all the people out skiing, dogs, children, the lot, and the wonderful weather it was hard to take in that something was wrong.

After 25 kilometres we got to the first hut Djupslia, sitting in deep snow. There was already a couple from Oslo in the hut so it was nice and warm, the fire going and the smell of coffee meeting us as we opened the inner door. We checked each other out, no coughing, and smiled.

Later, when we had got ourselves organized and eaten, Herco got his mobile out to check the latest info. Deep silence. He was very concentrated. Moving between different websites. They all said the same – so it was real – even though it seemed surreal.

- I have to be out of Norway by Sunday evening (this was Friday evening), Herco said. (Swedes were at this stage still acceptable – but that changed two days later).



The information also said that all Norwegians should leave their mountain cabins and go home to their permanent addresses. The army would be sent out to check the private cabins and send people home.

It took some time to take in. Could we pretend we didn't know? Not really. And what problems would we meet further on? We decided to turn back. The nice couple in the cabin offered to take us to Lillehammer in their car as the bus from Pellestova hotel down to Lillehammer would most likely not run when the hotel was closed.

So next morning we went along with them, 22 kilometres to a car park. As the day before, the sun was shining from a clear blue sky. To start with we were alone with the snow and the silence. As we got closer to Lillehammer the tracks were full of long-legged Norwegians and short-legged Norwegians, old and young and barking Norwegians (dogs). But today, the feeling that behind all this, something was seriously wrong was deeper in us.



Well, something was wrong, something quite touchable. The car didn't start. The driver had forgotten to turn off the lights, so the battery was flat. Norwegians don't have start cables in their cars for some reason (Swedes always do) but a lady in a rusty car turned out to be our saviour. Or so we thought. The car still didn't start. So, the helping service had to be called and turned up an hour later (we were out in the boonies after all). Still it didn't start – modern cars have a type of blocker to prevent theft – that turned out to prevent more than theft.

We were now offered a lift from another couple with a car in the car park, a lift we gratefully accepted. They lived outside Lillehammer but took us all the way to our hotel.

In the evening we were the only guests at the Pizzeria. The sad owner gave us all sorts of little extra snacks before and after the pizza with the result that we were unable to accept the kind offer of a waffle at the hotel. The use of cash had been banned in entire Norway.

The next day we headed south by train. We were the only passengers in the train carriage we were in, and the conductor didn't want to look at (possibly touch) our tickets. It was such a relief to cross the Swedish border and be home in my own country. I got off at Gothenburg station where everything felt quite normal. Shops open, people everywhere, what a difference.

Herco could not travel through Denmark as planned, since non-Danes were not allowed in. But he found an overnight ferry from Malmoe to Germany and then it was a short way to Holland. He sent a relieved message when he was across his border.

A different holiday. A lot shorter than planned. But what really stays in my memory is all the nice and friendly people we met and who helped us. We will be back. The mountains will call next winter again.



## **Easter Nightmare, 2020**

**Report: Doug Strachan**

They told us not to venture out during lockdown. Fellow trampers will understand how hard I found it to comply with such a request. This is a story of Good Friday turning bad.

I knew exactly where I was, but that's little consolation if you are immobilised and your communication device is out of reach. The more I struggled to extricate myself, the deeper I sank into the soft substrate beneath me. If I was still here by nightfall, my body temperature would drop and dehydration (I was already starting to feel thirsty) would be a problem.

As all attempts to lurch free were proving futile, I would have to sit it out and hope for eventual rescue. At one point I heard a helicopter overhead but I knew they were obviously not looking for me because nobody had any inkling that I was in difficulty, and visual contact was impossible anyway given the dense canopy overhead.

I took stock of my provisions. One packet of Chit Chat biscuits and half a cake of Whittaker's chocolate left, but nothing to drink. I calculated that I could survive where I was a while longer if I rationed this food but that was easier said than done and before I knew it, I was staring at empty packets. Now what?

I knew that if I didn't extract myself from this situation, my condition would deteriorate. I just needed someone to take my hand and haul me up out of this entrapment but, clearly, I was on my own. And no PLB. I shouted myself hoarse, but still no help came. I began to lose hope. Feelings of helplessness and resignation were now harder to suppress and continued to chip away at the optimism, and confidence in my own resourcefulness, that had previously buoyed up my spirits. I'd have to figure a way to get out of this harrowing predicament all on my own, or wait who knows how long for someone to chance upon me.

I dozed in and out of consciousness and then began to chuckle, quite inappropriately given the situation, but I had suddenly remembered I had a part packet of Lifesavers in my shirt pocket. Never has a product been more aptly named. The little sweets were a godsend and I extracted every ounce of energy from each one, even from the holes. I felt reinvigorated. A new determination grew into a steely resolve. It was now or never!

There was nothing for it, mustering all my strength, I leaned forward, and by bracing my legs and pushing down with both arms simultaneously with all my might, I finally managed to get my arse up out of the armchair! I went to the toilet, then replenished my food supplies in the kitchen, and quenched my thirst. I headed north, but the route was blocked by a wall of, well, wall, so I had to take a detour, only to find I was going in circles as I recognised the landmarks in front of me – the TV and armchair. I sat down in the armchair to reappraise the situation...



## **Easter 2020 in the Pyrenees**

**Report and pics: Catherine Jackson**

I went on a 4 day Easter virtual tramp through the Catalan Pyrenees looking at internet photos & videos while using a walking machine. The photo is of Easter Bunnies in a tent set up in my bedroom!





## Eating in Lockdown

### German Beer Bread (recipe adapted by Martin Lawrence)

This did turn out to be a particularly tasty loaf, and real good 'crumb' as they say.

#### Ingredients

- 5g fresh yeast (I used some sourdough rye starter + some powdered yeast – probably should have stuck with just the sourdough but wasn't brave enough)
- 1 tablespoon of malt extract (molasses seemed to work well)
- 1 tablespoon of honey
- 330ml of dark malty beer
- 400g white flour
- 100g rye flour
- 100g wholemeal flour
- 1½ teaspoon salt
- 25g butter
- 2 tablespoons of beer for brushing (I forgot about this so had to drink what was remaining in the 500ml bottle!)
- Cracked rye or wheat for brushing – didn't do this either as we don't have either of these.



#### Method

Add yeast, malt extract, honey to a jug and stir.

Mix flours and salt in a large bowl and rub in butter. Make a well in the centre and pour in the yeast liquid. Stir to mix and start kneading. Knead for 10 minutes, adding more flour if too sticky, more beer if too dry.

Cover bowl and leave in a cool place for 6 to 8 hours or overnight in the fridge.

Turn out onto a floured surface, punch down and shape nicely. Place loaf into baking sheet (I placed the dough into a banneton).

Rise for 1-4 hours depending on the initial temperature of the dough and preheat the oven to 200 C.

Bake for 35 minutes.

## Answers to Quick 10 Quiz

1. Longitude; 2. Left; 3. Three; 4. Six; 5. Ice; 6. Anti-clockwise; 7. 12; 8. Green; 9. Darran Mountains; 10. Mid King, Mitre Flats, Cow Creek, Arete Biv, Arete Forks, Tarn Ridge.