

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter February 2016



Mania Track lunch break, looking down the Pourangaki River to Ruapehu.

[Warren Wheeler]

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.

11 February

Navigation Know How

Warren Wheeler

A practical evening of hints and tips to keep you on track in the backcountry. Maps and compasses will be provided but feel free to bring your own GPS or compass as well.

25 February

Pacific Crest Trail

Glenn Pendergrast

Last year Glenn Pendergrast spent five months hiking the 4,300km PCT from Mexico to Canada, following the mountain spine through California-Oregon-Washington. This great adventure took him through 7 National Parks, 4 National Monuments, 5 State Parks, 25 National Forests and 48 Federal Wilderness Areas with a total elevation gain of 128,000m and a high point of over 4,000m in the Sierra Nevadas. Feeling tired already? Come along, sit back and learn all about it.

Upcoming Trips

6-8 February

Waitangi Weekend

Mt Owen (Kahurangi FP)

M/F

Annett Patzold

021 189 4647

We go up the Owen massif via Sunrise Peak, spend the night in one of the basins where there is water. The following day we go up to the summit and explore the rest of the massif, either spend another night up there at tarns at Sentinel Hill or make our way down to Granity Pass Hut. Third day is walking out. Transport either by car, if there is enough people, otherwise it will be possible to organise a shuttle that takes us to the southern start of the trip.

7 February

Beehive Creek

E/Family

Doug Strachan

353-6526

This Pohangina walkway, opened in 1983, is just 30km from P.N. My daughter is 10 now and has done this walk every year of her life, the first time in the womb. The creek is generally ankle-deep and sandy-bottomed, making this ideal for all, including families and first-time trampers. Kids like to jump in the deeper bits, so leaving a change of clothes in the car for them is advisable. No dogs allowed. It can still be a workout for anyone who wants to walk the road section (3km, 40mins) of the loop. The walk will be followed by lunch at a picnic spot across the road from the cars. Good social tramp, and you'll still have the afternoon free to mow the lawns. 9am start from Milverton Park.

13-14 February

Totara Flats

E/M

Michael Allerby

323-8563

Depart PN at 8.00am and head down through Masterton to the carpark at end of Mt Holdsworth Road. Wander along the Gentle Annie, then left on to the track following Totara Creek, across the bridge until we end up at the spacious Totara Fats Hut. Back out the same way on Sunday.

14 February

Iron Gates Gorge

M

Warren Wheeler

356-1998

Depart 8.00am. This is a classic summer river trip, ideal for beginners who want to have an adventure and get their feet wet. We will pass by Heritage Lodge and keep following the side track until we meet the Oroua River. After brunch and a swim in a nice pool we follow the river itself, criss-crossing back and forth until we reach the gorge itself. If everyone is keen

we will swim through the short length involved or return via the stoat trappers track.

20-21 February

Upper Makororo-Kylie Biv

M/F

Janet Wilson

329-4722

Something for everyone here – a shortish trip to Upper Makororo via Sentry Box and Parks Peak Hut or a longish one via Aranga and Kylie Biv. Sometime last year I helped add more DOC200 traps to the area and I am keen to see how they are getting on. These are usually serviced by the WTMC and I have offered to do the February rebait for them. Come along and visit an area we don't often get to. Lovely tops travel and great huts. We will depart Friday asap. Possibility of a 3 day trip – call me early and talk it over.

21 February

Ohingaiti Boulders

E/Family

Doug Strachan

353-6526

Depart 9am from Milverton Park for a 1.3 hour drive to the boulders carpark. Here there is an honesty box where you pay \$5 a head (children under 12 free) to access the giant balls. From the carpark we walk for half an hour down and across open farmland to a remnant of bush (about 150m x 50m in area), where there is a flush toilet and the scattered boulders. There's also a geocache somewhere amongst the boulders if anyone is into geocaching. We will spend about an hour exploring the boulders. Bring your togs as we will go home via the Ruahine Dress Circle, which is a pleasant swimming spot. Also bring footwear suitable for crossing a farm (poo, mud) and footwear to wear when swimming (a lot easier on the feet).

27 February

Makaretu Hut

M

Craig Allerby

323-7913

Depart 7.30am from PN. Starting at the Kashmir Roadend carpark, we head up the track to Longview Hut. From the hut we travel southwest along the tops and then descend to Makaretu Hut. Next day we travel down the Makaretu River to its north branch. We then head up the north branch to Awatere Hut. A track from the hut takes us back to the carpark over Moorcock Saddle. A good loop with some nice stream travel.

28 February

North Ohau

M

Richard Lockett

323-0948

Depart 8.00am. A good summer wet feet trip up to North Ohau Hut on the banks of the Ohau River North Branch, located behind Levin.

5-8 March
Ruahine Corner
Janet Wilson

M
329-4722

Some of you will remember taking part some years ago in the rebait of the traps in the Ruahine Corner - Te Potae - Colenso area.

This summer these traps are once again being serviced by volunteers. It is a fly in trip and probably a walk out. We plan to visit Ikawatea Forks – seldom visited by the club, as well as RC, Colenso, and Iron Bark Huts. I would like to do this over a relaxed 4 or 5 days – let me know if you are interested and we can talk over a plan. Fantastic opportunity to see that part of the Ruahines. Fly in places are limited so contact me early for this one.

6 March
Waiopahu Hut
Peter Darragh

M
353-0922

A pleasant walk up to the bushline in the Tararua Ranges behind Levin.

Trip Grading

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

Personal Locator Beacons – Free for trips

The club has purchased two PLBs for members' use. If you want to take one of these on a trip, contact Martin or Anne Lawrence on 357-1695. Note that this applies to any trip you are going on - it doesn't need to be a club trip.

Trip leaders

Complete the trip intentions form and leave with one of Overdue Trip Contacts or drop into 44 Dahlia St or email to pntmctrips@gmail.com with the

date and trip name in the subject line. 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:

Janet Wilson	329-4722
Martin and Anne Lawrence	357-1695
Malcolm Parker	357-5203

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20th of each month to Warren Wheeler, the newsletter editor, direct or via our web site <http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>

Notices

PNTMC Annual Awards

The following awards for members' achievements were announced at the EOY BBQ at Ashurst Domain on 10 December 2015.

Just Gremlin Award – Janet Wilson, her GPS had a flat battery just when she needed it to find Arete Biv in the clag.

Little Bo Peep Award – Terry Crippen, couldn't find two waiting members at Holdsworth Roadend, so went home anyway.

Out of Sight Award – Terry Crippen, took a slide on Chancellor out of sight of Ange.

Screw Loose Award – Janet Wilson, leaking gas cylinder from burner head screw loose.

No Back Chat Award – Terry Crippen and Ange Minto, fastest pack up for a helicopter back flight from Chancellor.

Not Enough Weetbix Award – Graham Peters, running out of energy and needing a rest only 10 minutes from Tarn Ridge Hut.

Nighty Night Award – Kathy Corner, for using her nightshirt to go out for dinner in Ohakune.

Head Down Award – Warren Wheeler, for hitting a tree across the Lake Dive Track while following close behind a slightly shorter Geoff.

Indomitable Snow Man Award – Nicholas Allen, for Mastering Mountains with MS, notably in the Himalayas.

Hillary High Five Award – Jubilee Committee (Dave Grant, Terry Crippen, Martin Lawrence, Doug Strachan, Peter Darragh), for excellence in organising the 50th Anniversary.

Golden Scroll Award – Doug Strachan, for excellence editing the Jubilee Book.

Deja View Award – Graham Peters (and other party members), who took an hour to realise they were heading back the way they had just come from Keretaki Hut.

Into the Wild Award – Raj Palanisamy, for getting out there tramping, most notably an epic trip to Waterfall Hut.

Tunupo Twins Award – Michael and Craig Allerby, for their frequent stoat checking trips up Tunupo, even in snow.

No More Double Bunking Award – Sue Pither, for sleeping in her car at the Jubilee.

Photographic Memory Award - Dave Grant, for finding the missing Club Photo Album at his home after all.

Mad Hatter's Award – Bruce van Brunt, for a newsletter feature article about his favourite hats.

Poster Boy Award – Martin Lawrence, for making the Tararua Hut Bagging poster.

Golden Spoon Best Iced Boot Award – Edith Leary, for the beautiful and delicious cake she made for the Jubilee.

And our most prestigious award:

Dave Hodges Award for Excellence in Pursuit of Forgetfulness – Warren Wheeler, forgot to turn up at the Navigation Club Night he was meant to be running.

And finally for the best newsletter article:

Tararua Trophy – Raj Palanisamy, for his Waterfall Hut Trip Report.

Congratulations to all the worthy recipients for 2015.

Wishing you many more adventures in 2016.

PNTMC Jubilee Book

Old Boots & Packs - The First 50 Years of the Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club (PNTMC) will interest and amuse mountain users, historians, photographers, hut baggers and tree huggers. Read about current and past members' exploits, which include climbing our highest peaks (sometimes with boots on the wrong feet) and powering a car on white spirits cooking fuel.



Order your copies directly from the editor Doug Strachan 353-6526 – get ready to put your feet up with this great read, all for only \$35.

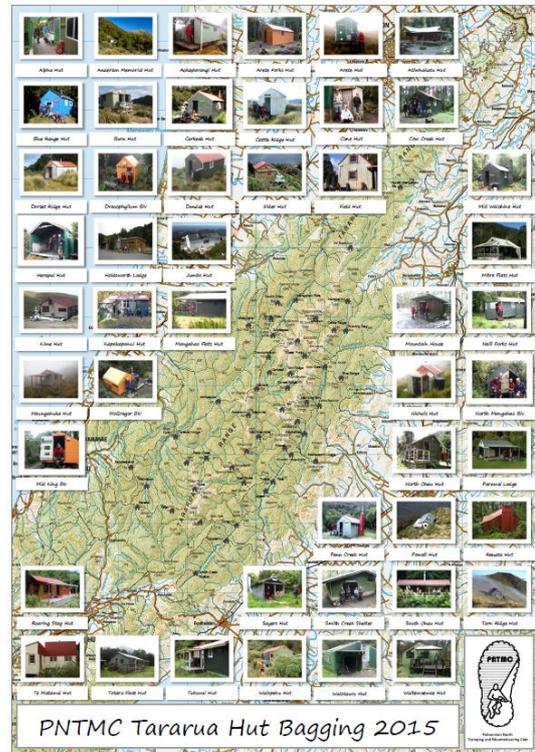
For Sale

Tararua Hut Bagging Posters

Size	Members	Non Members
A2	\$8	\$12
A1	\$16	\$24

Also available is a similar Ruahine Poster.

Contact Warren 356-1998.



For Sale, rigid mountaineering boots.

Lance Gray is selling his "Sportive Mountain" boots. Size European 45. Rigid shanks and in good condition \$50. Contact Terry (3563-588 or 027 643 3637) if interested. They are at Terry's place.

Also a big THANK YOU to Lance for donating his climbing gear to the club: technical hammer, helmet, harness ATC, carabineer, sling. Thanks Lance.

Samoa Winter Getaway

I am interested in going to Samoa to do a bit of cycling and kayaking at the end of June, anyone keen to join me? I plan to leave on June 25th for one week to 10 days. The reason I have chosen that date is it is the university break between semesters.

For more details contact Kathy Corner 356-8186 or 027-618-5722.

New Greenwich Meridian Trail

The Greenwich Meridian Trail is a new long-distance walk from Peacehaven in East Sussex to Sand le Mere in East Yorkshire. It follows the north-south line of the Prime Meridian. The total length is 273 miles (439 km) which is divided into four parts described in four separate guidebooks written by Graham and Hilda Heap.

Some of you may remember Graham and Hilda were active club members when they were in NZ back in 2002.

Find out more at
www.greenwichmeridiantrail.co.uk

Otaki Forks Road Closed

You may already be aware that the Otaki Forks Road has been closed due to a slip on Blue Bluff, 13km from SH1. The slip area is unstable with large cracks high above the road. Assessments are being carried out but the road is likely to be closed for a few months.

In the meantime, the Department of Conservation is looking at creating an alternative walking track to enable trampers to access Ōtaki Forks and Tatarua Forest Park.

Trip Reports



Lunch views towards Armstrong Saddle [WW]

17 January 2016 Sunrise/Waipawa Woody Lee

Warren picked me up shortly after 7.30 am on Sunday morning and we headed off towards Ongaonga. It was a warm and humid morning and was quite misty between Woodville and Dannevirke like a chilly winter morning.

When we arrived at the carpark we discovered that there was little space to park as there were already 13 cars there. We headed up the Sunrise Hut track and stopped by Triplex Hut, which was tidy and clean and then walked back onto the main track.

We met a couple of families who had stayed the previous night at the hut and enjoyed a beautiful sunrise that morning.

When we approached the hut, we found that one of the two toilets had the door gone and heaps of flies were flying around.

It was nice to get to the hut in time for lunch at mid-day. We found a grassy patch up behind

the hut and enjoyed the view out to Armstrong Saddle and the big slips.

We went around past Armstrong Saddle, taking a few photo stops to capture the alpine flowers.



Flowering hebes [Warren Wheeler]

At the Top Maropea sign we turned off to the left and followed the ridge to the lowest part, where we dropped off to sidle across to the steep scree. I felt scared when I stepped onto the scree but I soon discovered it was quite stable and the slip was not slippery. I eventually enjoyed running down the slip following Warren. It didn't take long to get to the bottom of the slip.



Enjoying the scree run [WW]



Easy travel in North Waipawa Stream [WW]

We followed the small north branch of the Waipawa Stream for about 50 minutes and then took a well deserved break at Waipawa Forks Hut before we made our way back down river to the car.

22-25 January 2016 (Not the) Te Hekenga Explorer Janet Wilson

Having missed out on my planned Pohangina River trip straight after Xmas, Graham, who had had to listen to my grumbling for 3 weeks, willingly altered his planned Te Hekenga Explorer to a much more pleasant and cooler river trip. We had work to do servicing the self setting stoat/rat traps, checking Ngamoko Hut and fixing the door catch at Mid-Pohangina Hut.

Richard Lockett and Jean Garman signed up early and the initial plan was to fly in on the Friday, weather permitting. The trap line has some limited funding for flights this summer. Our pilot wanted to go early in the morning so we camped at the Tamaki Road end Thursday night and met him at 5am. Sadly the cloud was down and the westerly was fairly strong so we abandoned the plan and drove back around to the western side.

It was a pleasant enough tramp in via Knights track though some of us hadn't done many over night tramps recently and the packs felt a bit heavy. Graham and Jean also had their rifles. We were at Leon Kinvig by 2pm.

After a break, 3 of us headed upstream to check the traps and hopefully spot some who and deer. We didn't see either. Got back to the hut around 7pm. Graham had headed down stream and saw a couple of deer but they saw him too.

Next day we walked downriver to Ngamoko, checking on the traps and looking for ducks. We found a family with 2 big well feathered ducklings about 1km downstream and a lone male duck further down. It's always lovely to visit Ngamoko - a shame more club members don't make the effort to get there. The hut is in really good condition and the paint still like new.

On Sunday we all went down to Mid Pohangina Hut and installed a reconditioned door latch to replace the faulty old one. Richard did a great job of "making do" without

quite the right tools! We even found a useful piece of steel plate amongst the junk outside.



Whio photo by Jean Garman

We returned to Ngamoko after lunch. Later in the afternoon, Richard and I explored the old track up Ngamoko Stream (aka Duck Pond Stream) and found quite a few old markers on the waterfall bypass track.

Jean, Graham and I then went and watched a slip downstream until nearly dark but saw no deer. We surprised a pair of ducks in the river just below the hut as we returned in near darkness.



Richard Working on the Mld Poh door

We returned via Shorts Track on Monday - great day on the tops but very hot as we got lower and it was lovely to reach Coal Creek and cool our feet.

Enjoying an extra long weekend were Graham Peters, Jean Garman, Richard Lockett and Janet Wilson (scribe).

Apologies to anyone who missed out on this trip - please call trip leaders early especially for long weekend trips

24 January 2016 Mania Track Anne Lawrence

It was going to be another stinking hot day – not great weather for walking up a hill so we debated changing the plan to a river walk but couldn't agree on where.

So we stuck with the original plan.

Mania track is a bit of a drive – and the road can seem a bit long, windy and dusty.

And, yes, it was a hot walk with barely a breath of wind all day even on the tops.

But this does have really good access to the Ruahine Forest Park with only a short, pleasant, well-marked walk over farmland to get into the forest.

And the forest is lovely.

And we had stunning views [see cover pic-Ed].

It is nice to look around and name ridges, rivers and peaks and to see if you can spot anyone at Rangiwahia hut.

After the hot slog, the ice cream at Cheltenham felt well earned.

We were Anne and Martin Lawrence, Warren Wheeler, and Kathy Corner.

31 January 2016 Wharite and Coppermine Creek Lizzy Kent

Arriving at Wharite this morning we were surprised to find it raining. We set off from the Palmerston North side of the gorge expecting fine warm weather!

The rain and relatively cooler air were appreciated as we headed up the hill.

We arrived at the trig just before noon, a late smoko for the guys scraping the butanol off the side of the building beside the mast. They were puzzled about our presence on such a day, pointing out they were being paid!

We had lunch in a sheltered spot close to their scaffolding, out of the rather chilly wind. Warren had carried watermelon up for us all to share.



Wharite trig in the view free clag [WW]

Back down at the track junction to the car park someone suggested we dander down the stream. It was a somewhat longer walk than the path, with several near swims along the way!

The trip was a good reminder about why we carry the things we do even though we don't usually need them!

We rounded off a very enjoyable day with coffee and cake/ pie at the Ashhurst Domain Café.

We were Warren Wheeler, Anne and Martin Lawrence, Blair Crosbie and Lizzy Kent.

29 November 2015 A Trip with an Adventurous Pair Raj Palanisamy

Nigel Barrett and Derek Sharp are one of the most adventurous pairs in the PNMTTC, both past and present, which is obviously true as the new Jubilee book (edited by Doug Strachan) has an adventurous picture of Derek filling a page. They both meet again after almost a year, as Nigel now lives in Timaru. After enjoying the 50th Jubilee celebration, having tramping to Rangi Hut and completing the Deadman's Loop with Nigel on the

previous day, I was not expecting to be invited by them for a trip to Mid Pohangina Hut on the Sunday as they might have lots to catch up on and to reminisce over past trips. To my surprise I was invited to join them in their trip. As one would have expected they planned a different track than the usual marked track. Derek being the navigator was so accurate to predict our movements that I was amazed a few times that he calculated the time we were to reach a particular spot based on our speed of our travel and the terrain; and his alarm went on the place he calculated to be on.

From the minute we diverted from the usual marked route we were bush bashing and the terrain was not that steep but it was steady climb adjacent the farm land along the fence line. The slope was filled with native trees here and there among the grass land. Surprisingly there are a few warning signs saying "cameras operating" and it was nice to know that one of the trees had a board with its Latin genus and species name of the tree. After steady straight line climbing for a few hundred metres we entered the bush and started bush bashing. It was a dense tree line to start with and then became scrubby. When we were walking along the dense forest we noticed an abandoned double tent fully set up with a sleeping bag still opened, but not folded as if someone had just woken up and had gone out. The interesting and curious prediction of Derek and Nigel was that the tent was set up for at least a month in the same place as the algal and fungal growth and fallen debris covered the roof of the tent. It was a big mystery for us to ponder on for some time!! Derek and Nigel had an elaborate discussion on how to avoid crossing the leatherwood area. Derek was saying that he had promised himself when he was here last time not to come again this side because of the experience he had getting through the leatherwood, but alas, he decided to return to this region again for Nigel, who wanted to visit that area as he had never been along the Piripiri Ridge.

We had our break to have a snack in an open clear area and started our travel towards the saddle. Derek mentioned that it can sometimes take an hour to cross 100 metres through the leatherwood, and it certainly felt that long! We thought the taller leatherwood might make progress a little faster, but it did not, as there are more branches underneath. So we had to crawl on our hands and knees and most of the time on our bellies as well. Being a small person myself it was easy for me compared with the other two tall figures. At

this point they both asked me if, after this experience, would I still be interested in tramping with them in the future. Why would I not? After growing old (I am referring to my age, as my tramping companions are 10 years younger than me) ***where do you get a chance to crawl on your belly in day to day life?*** In a sand pit in a children's playground?!.....I don't think so!!! This is the only chance for me to become a child again, to crawl on my belly without thinking what other people may think. I am sure most trampers would agree with me. For that reason, I told them that I would be more than happy to go with them again for sure.

After scrambling for almost two hours in the leatherwood we came to an area with different trees. There Derek spotted a new born fawn and he predicted it could be a day or two old. It was lying down in an awkward position as if it was injured and could not walk. Derek suggested that I could carry the fawn home and rescue it by feeding it with bottled milk. While Nigel took the photos Derek tried to move the fawn. With a screeching noise, it started walking to our relief!



Fawn under foot finally heading away

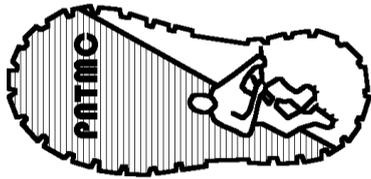
Probably the mother deer moved away after hearing our bush bashing racket leaving the new born fawn alone. Once we came out of the leatherwood, based on our travel time, we decided to drop the idea of going to Ngamoko Hut via the tops, so we started heading towards Mid Poh via the small stream heading directly down from the saddle to the Pohangina River. Ongaonga was everywhere and making us feel wakeful!!

When we reached the bottom of the stream which merged with a bigger stream to join the Pohangina River thereafter, Derek suggested two different routes based on his compass and map calculations. He asked me casually which one I would prefer. Having no clue at what to expect, I just naively told him to go via the

stream (which I had heard him saying was shorter than the other one!!). They both decided to do so as if I had made a wise decision, which I had not and I followed! That decision led us to climb a few steep ridges to avoid some waterfalls. Finally we came to the large beautiful Pohangina River that we crossed several times to go forward, towards the hut. Derek complained all the time that he was feeling hot, and knowing him I knew he wanted to have a swim in the river which was really tempting. We reached the hut around 4.30 pm and we all decided to have a swim, just under the small waterfall on the river in front of the hut. The water was freezing cold of course, so we could not stay in for long.

Back in the hut Nigel cooked a nice risotto with smoked chicken and cream, very tasty! After filling our rumbling tummies we were chatting for a while, mostly they both talked about their past trips (Tony Gates was the prime centre in their conversation most of the time) and went to sleep. Next morning we woke up at 6, and by the time we left the hut after breakfast it was almost 7 am. We started our journey towards the car park after packing our bags. Since it was a marked track we were walking fast. Birds were singing and the views were marvellous. We passed the track with lots of boulders covered in moss, looking like emerald balls. Derek pointed out the gorge and the swimming hole, where he was during his last trip. It was a beautiful spot for pictures but we missed the opportunity somehow! Lots of deer, they were just roaming around like cattle in the paddock. Lots of bird life too (such as grey warblers, shining cuckoos, tui, etc). I have learnt from Derek that tui have different notes that vary from region to region as I mistook its note to be a bellbird.

I must point out sadly that weeds are everywhere on the riverbed and on the ridges (buddleja, lupins, ragwort, nightshade etc.). Contorta pines have established really well with very mature trees, ready to spread their seeds year after year. I wonder how the forest may look in the future, hard to digest the fact of losing the native bush. After seeing these alien invasions we left the forest heavy hearted to climb the clay road uphill to reach the car park under the scorching sun. It was wonderful feeling to be in the bush again, but sad to part from my newly found friend Nigel who flew to Timaru that evening. Hopefully I may get more chances to be with this adventurous pair again.



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- Ruahine Trip Reports - Sunrise Hut Loop, Mania Track, Pohangina River, Wharite and Coppermine Creek
- A Trip with an Adventurous Pair
- Coming trips and more

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20th of each month to Warren Wheeler the newsletter editor, via the club website <http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>.

Get out and about with us!

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