



Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

www.pntmc.org.nz

PO Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter February 2025



Botanising for alpine flowers up past Rangiwahia Hut, Ruahine Forest Park.

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.

13 February 2025

Navigation Know How

Warren Wheeler

For beginners and experienced, there is always more to learn and tips to pass on. Map and compasses will be provided but feel free to bring your own and any other GPS etc..

27 February 2025

Beginners Map Reading

Verity Elder & Warren Wheeler

Map reading and orientation exercises at the Quakers Hall. 7.30pm. An opportunity to revise the skills covered in 'Navigation know How' on February 13th club night and the map reading and orientation introduction on the Fern Walk (Beginner Tramp February 9th).

Upcoming Trips

31 Jan – 2 February 2025 Tenting at Tutuwai M Ernie Cook 027 303 1363

Depart Palmerston North at 7:00 a.m. and driving to Waiohine Gorge Road road-end. May return via Reeves and the centre of New Zealand. Possibly arrive at hut early enough to secure bunks for those who prefer. Day trip to cross Block 16 track up to Marchant Ridge off my to do list. Please contact Ernie Cook 0273031363 no later than the Monday previous.

2 February 2025 Sunrise Hut M Jo O'Halloran 0274 171 140

POSTPONED to 1 March. This popular track is the "jewel in the crown" for the Hawkes Bay region. A well graded track climbs up through mixed beech forest to the hut on the bushline. A further 15 minutes takes us to Armstrong Saddle for views west to Ruapehu. Depart Milverton Park at 7.30am.

7-12 February 2025 Travers-Sabine Circuit M David Soong 021 722 358

Waitangi Long Weekend trip. Travers-Sabine Circuit over five nights including a side trip to Blue Lake. This 80km+ tramp is in the heart of the Nelson Lakes National Park.

9 February 2025 Beginner Tramp #1: Fern Walk E Verity Elder 021 260 1885

This loop walk moves through original podocarp forest, including giant lowland tōtara, mataī and kahikatea as old as 1000 years, and up to 68 species of fern (hence its name). An easy, close to home introduction to tramping, this trip includes a short, in-situ introduction to map reading and orientation. Depart Milverton Park at 8.00am.

15 February 2025 Beehive Creek E/Family Doug Strachan 06 353 6526

Our traditional family day trip for this time of year. Enjoy the Pohangina countryside and splashing down the small cool stream.

16 February 2025 Iron Gates Gorge M Warren Wheeler 06 356 1998

A classic river trip to enjoy the Oroua River. We first take the sidle track past Alice Nash Memorial Lodge and after a refreshing dip at the river we head off to zig zag back and forth downstream to Iron Gates Gorge. If keen we will take the short swim through the gorge before returning to the cars. Depart Milverton Park at 8.00am.

21-23 February 2025 Mid King Biv & Beyond M Ernie Cook 027 303 1363

A seldom visited hut in the Tararuas on the bushline below the Three Kings. Day trip to knock off the three Kings. May return to Mitre Flats Hut via the Baldy Track. Tarn Ridge Hut or Dorset Ridge Hut probably require an extra day. Depart Palmerston North at 7:00 a.m. Please contact Ernie by the Sunday evening previous.

23 February 2025 Beginner Tramp #2 Atiwhakatu M Verity Elder 021 260 1885

The track to Atiwhakatu Hut, from Holdsworth carpark in the Tararua Ranges behind Masterton, covers a wide range of track experience from boardwalks, to an assortment of bridges (including swing bridges), over undulating terrain up the Atiwhakatu valley. Return via the same track. Depart Milverton Park 7.30am.

28-29 February 2025 Te Matawai-Mangahao M Blair Petersen 027 600 4263

This is a combined trip with MTSC and is a repeat of the same trip from April last year. At the time I thought that 2024 was the 50th anniversary of Te Matawai Hut, but since then it appears that it might be this year instead. The plan is to start from Poads Rd and go into Te Matawai Hut for the first night (weather-permitting, via the Ohau River and South Ohau Hut), the second night at

Mangahao Flats Hut and out via the Mangahao to the top Mangahao reservoir. Transport to be confirmed, but hoping to use the MTSC mini-bus.

1 March 2025 Sunrise Hut E/M Jo O'Halloran 0274 171 140

Postponed from 2 February this Saturday trip is to a popular track that is the "jewel in the crown" for the Hawkes Bay region. A well graded track climbs up through mixed beech forest to the hut on the bushline. A further 15 minutes takes us to Armstrong Saddle for views west to Ruapehu. Depart Milverton Park at 7.30am.

2 March 2025 Ohau Gorge E/M Warren Wheeler 06 356 1998

This delightful section of the Ohau Gorge in the western Tararuas behind Levin offers those feeling a little adventurous an opportunity for a couple of hours of nice rock-hopping, wading and even some pool swimming. We start with an easy hour walk along the track from Poads Roadend carpark above the Ohau River, with views down into the gorge as we go, then down the river itself to exit just past the old town water intake. We then rejoin the track back to the roadend. Yes, you will get wet feet! Depart Milverton Park at 7.30am.

7-9 March 2025 Waikuku Lodge Aorangi E/M Janet Wilson 027 341 8945

Has PNTMC ever visited this hut? A chance to visit one of our lesser-known huts in the Aorangi Range – east of Martinborough and around on the northern side of the more frequently visited Haurangi Range. The lodge sleeps 30, comes at a very reasonable cost (depending on numbers) and you can drive to it! From there you can do a day trip to Sutherland Hut – now who has been there? Sounds like there are great views and plenty to do/explore from the lodge. I have booked the sole occupancy lodge for 2 nights but happy if there is a group who just want to come for the Saturday/Sunday. Non-tramping partners welcome too as there will be plenty of room.

9 March 2025 Beginner Tramp #3 Rangī Hut E/M Verity Elder 021 260 1885

The Rangiwahia Hut Track begins at 800m in the carpark and climbs to 1300m above sea level for, on a clear day, fantastic views of the wider Rangitikei area and Mount Ruapehu. We will aim for early lunch at Rangiwahia Hut with the option, for those keen, to continue onto the tops and the Whanahuia Range. Return via the same track. Depart Milverton Park 7.30am.

Trip Grading

Trip grades depend on many factors, especially weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient trampler should expect to do the trips in the following times:

Easy (E):	3-4 hrs	Other Grades:
Medium (M):	5-6 hrs	Family (Fam)
Fit (F):	about 8 hrs	Technical skills (T)
Fitness Essential (FE):	over 8 hrs	Inst (Instruction)

BWD = Best weather day of a weekend

Trip participants

Contact the leader, preferably 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 027 446 6287 or Bruce van Brunt 06 328 4761.

Notices

Beginner Tramps 2025

Our programme involves a graduated series of tramps and workshops. Suitable for youth and above, those who've never tramped through to those who want to get back into tramping, our aim is to introduce you to tramping gradually.

The trip series begins with an easy low-land bush walk and progresses to exploring the tops of the Ruahine and Tararua Ranges. We walk as a group and at a pace to suit everyone on the day. Along the way you can participate in workshops and learn from our more experienced club members.

The next series of Beginner Tramps will start in February 2025.

All trips depart from Milverton Park at 7:30am. We carpool to reduce carbon footprint, petrol share will be included in trip information (cash on the day to the driver). For more information see [PNTMC trip planning](#).

For further information, phone Verity 021 260 188 or email pntmci@gmail.com or check out our trip programme for dates.

Our Huts Maintenance

Looks like the work on Ngamoko will be around the weekend of 15-16 March with a 2nd choice of the following weekend 22-23 March with days possible either side of those weekends.

I would like to see the interior of Mid Poh painted at the same time so that may well be on week days.

Anyone keen to help please contact Janet 06 329 4722 or 027 341 8945.

What's in my Pack?

In 2025 we welcome a new edition to our club newsletter: *What's in my pack?*

Whether it is for comfort, safety or function, we all have it; gear we swear by and can't live without when out in the backcountry. 'What's in my pack' is an opportunity for us to share our

stories, tips and advice on the gear we carry in our packs when tramping.

Choose from the 5 categories below and write a short paragraph about the item or gear. Include a bit of history or an example of it in use, and a photo (in action is best) if available.

To add an extra layer of fun, for every entry to the newsletter, go into the draw to win a voucher from local outdoor store of your choosing.

Enter all 5 categories and go into the draw an extra 5 times. The draw will be made Winter Solstice, 2025 June 21st). Entries will be published in the newsletter throughout 2025.

Email entries to: elderverity@gmail.com

Categories:

Two for one – Every milligram on our back counts, which is why some gear earns its place for its dual, or even multipurpose function.

Secondhand – From merino gems, to vintage Swannndri and spare tent pegs, you never know what might be found in a secondhand store.

Repair job – in a 'throw away' society, taking a moment to repair your favorite gear can help save the planet and your wallet.

DIY – whether it is hand-made, self-made, custom-made or kit-set, gear that we make ourselves can have added value and satisfaction.

Can't live without – that one item you always pack.

For starters, here is the Editor's WINMP

1. Folded sheet of plastic (lunch sit-upon, groundsheet, emergency shelter)
2. Second hand shorts and shirt.
3. Patched pack and bush shirt.
4. Cap with own-design embroidered patch (not self-made per se, but).
5. Waterproof camera, Swiss army knife, first aid/self help kit.

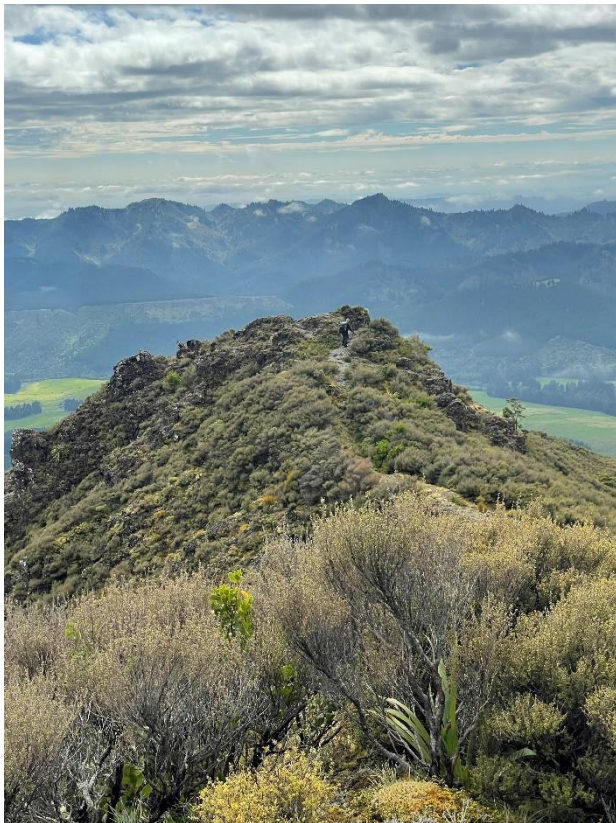
Trip Reports

29 November – 1 December 2024 Parks Peak Hut Plus

**Report by Ernie Cook
Pics by Neil Benton**

As Neil was the only one showing any interest in a couple of lazy nights at Parks Peak Hut I arranged to pick him up in Woodville from where we travelled to Mangleton Road via Gwavas Road. Along the way we passed the Doc sign indicating Masters Shelter. We gazed longingly up at Golden Crown Ridge rising behind the shelter. An adventure for another time.

We parked up at the road end to Sentry Box Hut which was soon reached. We had a bite to eat, adjusted our gear and began the reasonably steep climb which begins just behind the hut - 700 metres up to the ridge. The track was quite dry under foot and we enjoyed good footing.



Rocky Knoll offers a good view point and the opportunity to have morning tea. It is conveniently located about half-way between the road end and the ridge. The gradient eases a bit before getting steeper for the last push to the ridge.

We had lunch at the track junction and wandered along the ridge to Parks Peak Hut which we found to be deserted. We settled in and Neil lit the fire to air our sweat infused clothing. It soon began to rain lightly which was forecast and expected to continue well into the following day.

A visit to the toilet just after four A.M. revealed a clear and star filled sky but that was just an aberration and the misty rain was back in the morning.

We had a leisurely breakfast and set off for Upper Makaroro Hut wearing our wet weather gear. We checked and cleared the traps as we went, finding a weasel and a couple of rats. We had an early lunch at the hut then began the climb back up the hill to Parks Peak Hut.

Upper Makaroro Hut had recently been shown some love by a couple from Hawke's Bay.

As we neared the top of the climb Ernie grabbed a couple of good sticks of fire-wood which he proceeded to saw up at the hut using the new saw recently delivered by Monika in her capacity as a DOC employee. Thanks Monika!

We spent the remainder of the afternoon relaxing in the hut. Ernie doing some number puzzles he had brought from the week-end Post and Neil contenting himself with some puzzles from the previous day's Manawatu Standard. We again had the hut to ourselves for the evening.

Sunday morning dawned dry and we set off back along the ridge to the track junction. Part way along some-one has deposited a seat from which it is possible to look out towards No Mans Hut and beyond.



No trip here is complete without the obligatory excursion to Pohatuhaha Trig. We deposited our packs at the track and continued along the ridge for about 700 metres. The trig. is a short distance off the track and affords excellent views out over the bush and Mangleton Road farmland.

We returned to the track junction, donned our packs and made our way down to Rocky Knoll where Ernie put on his spikes for the steep descent to the hut. They were quite useful but Neil reported no issues with his footing. We again signed the Hut Book and noted that a family had been in on the Saturday evening and shown the hut some love.

Thanks Neil, for your company. We were Neil and Ernie who wrote this trip report.

5-8 December 2024 Mid-Poh - Ngamoko “Love Our Huts” PLUS Trapping Report by Ernie Cook

Five of us embarked the helicopter at Pohangina Base DOC facility.

Two disembarked at Mid- Pohangina Hut, one at Ngamoko Hut and two at the new Leon Kinvig Hut site.

The two who got off at Mid-Pohangina Hut serviced the traps in that vicinity, loved the hut and made their way up to Ngamoko Hut servicing traps as they went.

The two who got off at the new Leon Kinvig Hut serviced the traps up towards Top Gorge Hut. They then camped at the old Leon Kinvig Hut site and travelled down to Ngamoko Hut the next day servicing traps as they went.

After all over-nighting at Ngamoko Hut we showed the hut some love in the morning and helicoptered back to the DOC Pohangina Base facility.

We were Richard, Neil, Graham, Malcolm and Ernie. ***No pics, but you get the picture – great effort. Ed.***

A group of 8 keen trampers set out on this botanical exploration trip to Rangi Hut. The weather was overcast, no clear view of Mt Ruapehu or Ngauruhoe to be had, with cool temperatures and occasional light rain.

Throughout the tramp, we observed a variety of alpine flora, including the green hooded orchid and other delicate alpine flowers. Warren had a botanical book given to him by his mother (may have been a little out of date) to help identify the flora. Spaniards (*Aciphylla*) were seen along the track, some leaning over requiring occasional vigilance to avoid their sharp spikes.



Green hooded orchid



Eyebrights



Spiky grass Spaniards



Mountain daisy



Leatherwood

One of the highlights of the trip was the Fairy Pool, near the hut - where crystal-clear water flowed beautifully into the pool.

We had lunch at Rangi Hut, which was unoccupied at the time but had hosted several overnight visitors. Quite a few children with parents on the track. After lunch, we took a short walk towards Mangahua, continuing our search for identifiable plant species.

After a rewarding day of botanising and tramping, we returned to Apiti pub, where we enjoyed hot chips and a beer, arriving back in Palmerston North early in the evening.

All in all, a very enjoyable tramp.

Participants: Jo, Lawrence, Robyn, Warren (trip leader), Bronwyn, Catherine, Trish, and Blair.

More pics on page 9 – can you identify these sub-alpine plants?
Even our guide book failed us at times.

Our Wellington Anniversary Weekend trip. A willing team of trappers headed into Triangle Hut on the Friday, taking advantage of a good forecast to go in via Rangi Hut and get over the tops before the forecast strong easterlies arrived.

We lugged reasonable loads over the hill so everyone was ready to put their feet up when we arrived.

The plan for the next 3 days was pretty flexible with an option to camp..

We awoke to a good morning and headed up the river to service 20 traps and to have a good look around. First stop was the always interesting slot gorge not far from the hut - luckily you can bypass this as the upstream log jam waterfall was not climbable. We didn't see any whio but there was plenty of duck sign (poo) around.

Back to the hut for lunch then an excursion down river to service more traps. A single male whio got a surprise to see us and flew away downstream. We went back to Triangle for a 2nd night - lovely.



Triangle Hut has had a recent makeover and looks great with a new roof and colour scheme. It has a new long drop too. Thanks to BCT and all those who helped with that job.

On Sunday we went down to Iron Gate Hut via the bypass track. More traps to service and some markers to add in to the trap network on the Mangahua route. Good team work saw us at the hut by 3pm. Surprisingly there was no one else at the hut.

On Monday we awoke to another beautiful fine day so decided to carry on down the river, exiting at the Oroua Camp site. The river down from Iron Gate is a lovely walk at low flows, especially the lower section. Nice to see a pair of whio.

A great trip - Social Trapping at its best. Lots of work achieved at a relaxed pace (apart from the rather heavy carry in). The team was Ernie, Neil, Graham and Janet (organiser and scribe)

More Botanising at Rangiwahia



Pics by Warren Wheeler



Can you identify these plants?



PNTMC Newsletter February 2025

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- Trip Reports: Parks Peak Plus, Mid-Poh- Ngamoko Trapping plus Love Our Huts, Rangi Botanising, Social Trappers to Triangle Hut

Send articles to

the newsletter editor at pntmci@gmail.com



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