



# Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

## Newsletter May 2026

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

c/- Society of Friends, 227 College St, PN



Photo by Janet Wilson: Love our Huts – Mid Pohangina Hut.

### Club Nights

*Club nights are 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.*

#### **Thu 14th May**

#### **Costa Rica**

#### **Martin Lawrence**

In November last year Martin and Anne spent 2 weeks exploring Costa Rica. Martin took a ridiculous number of photos, but don't worry, he will only be showing a selection of the best including shots of Macaws, hummingbirds, orchids, sloths, frogs, tarantulas and scorpions.

#### **Thu 28th May**

#### **Kayaking Oz**

#### **Graeme Curwen**

Graeme will regale us with highlights of his time in Australia when he explored the backcountry on kayak trips.

### Upcoming Trips

#### **Sun 10th May Mountain House Loop *Easy-Medium***

**Kirstie Priddle**  
**027 779 0738**

A delightful and varied trip. From Holdsworth carpark we take the Gentle Annie track up to Mountain House shelter and look for the old Mountain House site. We make it a loopy trip by going down the ridge track to the Atiwhakatu Track and follow the stream back out.

### Sun 17th May A-frame and Stanfield Huts *Medium*

Anne Lawrence  
027 450 4212

We leave cars at Tamaki West Road end. The track climbs steeply up to A-frame Hut. We then follow Takapari Road until the turn-off to Stanfield Hut. This track climbs steeply (usually with a bit of slip and sliding) down to Stanfield. From there it's a short walk down the river and up to Holmes Ridge track which we follow back to the carpark. Expect mud, wet feet and a fairly strenuous day. Depart Milverton Park 7.30am.

### Sun 14th May Archey's Lookout Plus *Medium*

Nicola Wallace  
021 209 0720

This relatively easy Tararua walk behind Levin is part of the Te Araroa Trail. It follows an old logging haulway upstream and offers a delightful variety of bush, small stream crossings and views out from the Horowhenua Lookout, which is a short distance past Archey's Lookout. Depart 8.00am from Milerton Park.

### Sat 30th May - Mon 1st June Kings Birthday Coastal Classic *All*

Janet Wilson

To be confirmed. Watch this space.

Trips beyond May can be viewed on the club website '[trip card](#).'

**Trip Grading** - Trip grades depend on many factors, including 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		

**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, there is probably a good reason for the delay. If you are in any doubt, please phone Bruce van Brunt 06 328 4761 or Verity Elder 0212601885

## Notices

**60th Jubilee:** PNTMC Club is 60<sup>th</sup> years old this year and we are celebrating over Matariki weekend (9-11 July 2026). All past and present members are invited to come together at a mid-winter gathering to celebrate PNTMC's 60th.

**When:** Matariki Weekend 10-12 July 2026

**Where:** Camp Rangi Woods, Pohangina Valley

**Dress Code:** Boots and Bush Shirts

**Cost:** \$100 per person. This covers evening meals and bunk room accommodation for the 2 nights.

**Please pay to:** "Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club" 03-0726-0485393-00

Ensure you put your name and '60th' in the bank payment details.

Info is on our website: [60th Jubilee](#) and we will be adding info there as we finalise details. Any enquiries to [pntmci@gmail.com](mailto:pntmci@gmail.com) - **Key dates: Fri 10th July - Sun 12th July**

**Free to good home:** 2 pairs of tramping boots. Both are mens size 10 and are in good condition. Kindly donated by someone who no longer uses them – contact Anne Lawrence: 027 450 4212

**New PNTCM members:** Welcome to Chris Millar and family



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PNTMC is associated with **Federated Mountain Clubs** <http://fmc.org.nz/>

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### Beehive Creek – (28<sup>th</sup> March).

Report and photos by Doug Strachan

*Quick advert: I can recommend buying a canvas dog car seat cover to protect the car from wet, hair-shedding, sharp-nailed dogs. It's easy to unclip one end to accommodate a human in the back seat if necessary.*

In my car we had newcomers and agricultural economists Sana from Bukino Faso and Amina from Morocco, yours truly from NZ, and Skye the dog. My sister-in-law Helen in the other car was accompanied by Massey workers Mario, who is Chinese, and Brenda, who is Mexican. Our international group would meet Warren, who needs no introduction, at the Beehive Creek carpark.

The entrance to the carpark had a rut deep, enough to make us opt to use only one end of the entrance/exit crescent to get in and out. This limitation was also true for the entire Beehive Creek 'loop' walk, because we had to enter and leave the track from the same point (by the bridge), due to the farm section being 'temporarily' closed for farm upgrades.

While sucrose (table sugar) intake is not good for our blood sugar levels, there has been something of a tradition of the trip leader bringing along Buzz Bars to share on trips to Beehive Creek. On this occasion it was not optional for the trip leader to provide them because *somebody* put in the trip blurb that they would be provided. Poor leader had to make a special trip to the supermarket to get them! (Well, his wife did). But I did go to the trouble of putting them in the freezer overnight to make them hopefully a little bit chewy to eat, AND remembered to pack them the next morning. In addition, validating the walkway's name, several thousand construction workers had installed a beehive on the underside of the Beehive Creek bridge. Thank you Sweethearts.

The track started off a bit overgrown and featured some windfall after recent gales. Sometimes it was easier to stay in the creek rather than find the best route through vegetation. Sometimes our group would split, with some opting for the high road through plants and others the low road in the stream. Helen got pretty excited over a large ball of foam she encountered in the stream. She also admired an 'aerial' view of the top of a ponga that had been felled in a storm.

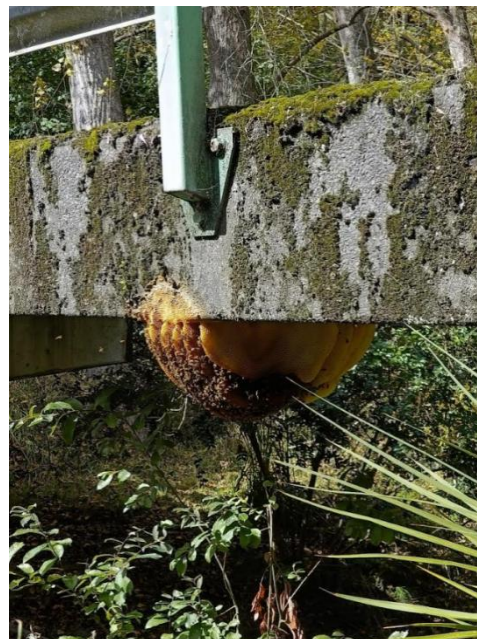


We introduced our overseas visitors to the likes of bushman's toilet paper, silver fern and onga onga. The first saving you if you get caught short, the second saving you by allowing you to blaze a trail if you get lost under moonlight, the third best given a wide berth, and don't mistake the third for the first.

Videos were taken of leaves snowing down from tall poplar trees. Another video opportunity emerged when people walked across jelly-like mud that quivered underfoot. After all of us had crossed, liquefaction was the result.

Our upstream progress came to an end when we reached the *permanent-looking* sign that says the farm section is closed for safety reasons while upgrades are occurring. Some of us are starting to get suspicious as to why these upgrades are taking years to complete. We used to walk the farm track anyway and it was just fine. We'd start with the potentially dusty road amble, climb over the farm hill with views, then out down the creek. The sign does say there is an easement across the land, so I don't think we can be kept out forever. One advantage of not doing the farm section was I could bring the dog, if nobody had any objections, and we were all dog people.

I told the newbies that it is impossible to get lost on this walk because you are boxed in on each side. However, when we got back to the cars, the dog failed to appear. Had she carried on down the stream? I called 'Skye' and a dog barked. Each time I called her name, there was a response. I went off on a wild goose chase, finding a dog at a farmhouse. Meanwhile, Skye returned



to the car in her own good time. Getting a bit old, when I told her to jump into the car, she just put her front legs in and waited for a boost. Getting a bit old, I still managed to lift her in without putting my back out.

Post-walk, we had lunch at a picnic spot nearby. The last thing I did before driving back was sneak up on the beehive to get a closer look and photograph their architectural accomplishment. Mercifully, the bees didn't launch a sting operation against me.

Apart from the dog's prank, it was a relaxing amble in peaceful surroundings.

We were Doug (leader), Sana, Amina, Mario, Brenda, Helen, Warren and Skye.

## **Easter Explorer – Coppermine Creek: an alternative – (3<sup>rd</sup> April).**

Report by Misa Yoshimura

Photos by Warren, Stella, Misa and Blair

A beautiful day for the start of the Easter weekend. Driving downhill on Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawātū Tararua Highway towards Woodville, a blanket of morning fog covered the distance. Shortly after we arrived at the carpark at the end of Coppermine Road (8.45am). On the right side of the track information board there is a red sign and gate. This is an interesting private campsite. We can see someone put lots of effort into making this.

Our leader Warren did a briefing with the map on the information board, then we found a track closed sign at the entrance of the track. Warren and Blair spoke and decided on an alternate route we could



explore. 5 ladies, including myself, didn't know what an adventure we will face at this moment (Wharite Track to the saddle and return).

Walking Coppermine track for about 15 minutes towards Wharite track junction, we found the track disappeared due to a large slip. Warren had looked around the area and found a place we could climb over. Blair and Shannen decided to go down to the river to meet us on the other side. Using big stretches of legs and arms, holding a rope with knots and tree roots to lift our body up, one by one we were safely across and back on the track, where we met Blair and Shannon. When we arrived at the entrance of Wharite Peak track, it looked steep climbing up, but easier than what we just climbed over.



Heading up the Wharite track, we walked over boggy ground under ferns and other covering plants; thistles and bush lawyer were scratching us. Warren spotted an Easter orchid flowering on a tree which has a lovely, sweet fragrance. The trees around us were getting shorter and we arrived at our lunch spot around 11.30am, about 680m (the car park was about 300m). Gentle breeze, blue sky and nice view.

After lunch, I tried to share easter chocolate with others but didn't realise the bag was open and I had accidentally spread easter eggs throughout the bush; I was doing an easter egg hunt by myself!

Warren's original plan was to go to the top of the ridge but decided to turn off the track for a bush bash to the creek at the saddle to make it shorter and hopefully easier (thanks Warren for your consideration). We followed Warren and turned right into a deer and hunter's trail, checking trees scratched by deer and deer droppings along the way. Warren said, 'be like a deer', but I was feeling more a monkey stretching arms to catch one tree to another to stop from sliding down the slope. We found a muddy patch on the ground where deer take a mud bath called *wallowing*.

After a few steep slopes down, we were at the creek and crossing this way and that way, many times. Our feet were wet, getting



tired, but we had a lot of laughs. Slippery rocks and tired legs made us easily slip into the water when we were crossing the creek. We stopped to repair a floppy boot sole and took a short break at 'the Forks' site where the miner's hut was and were

back to the car park about 3pm. It was quite a challenge but there were many things to learn and all of us were still smiling. We all deserved ice cream at the Woodville dairy shop.



We were Warren (leader), Blair, Shannen, Stella, Misa, June and Kat.

## Easter Explorer – Paekakariki Escarpment Walkway – (5<sup>th</sup> April).

Report and photos by Nicola Wallace

Three other keen walkers, Amina, Sana and Ernie, squeezed into my car at Milverton Park, and just after 9.35am we were parked in the Paekakariki railway station carpark, and heading off on our walk, North to South, which is the easiest way to do it. No trains were running, so we'd be getting the bus back to the station from Pukerua Bay.



The day was hot and sunny, and it was a sweaty walk up the steps to the lookout at about halfway, where we had morning tea. There's a defibrillator up here, and someone has forced the door of its cabinet open. The views were, as always on a sunny day, fantastic, the sea a deep turquoise and a few boats on the water, with Kapiti Island as the backdrop. The atmosphere wasn't quite clear enough to see any South Island mountains. Many others were out today, and we met a Swiss lady walking parts of Te Araroa.

This walk has improved immensely since Transmission Gully has opened, as now there is very little traffic noise. After relishing the excitement of the descent and the two swing bridges we lunched in the park just after Muri station (now disused), sharing the space with fantails and grey warblers. On arriving at Pukerua Bay station Amina and I had a go on the see-saw at the playground. It was fun!

We walked up to the main road to catch the bus, and just short of the bus stop, the bus pulled up, so we had a mad run to catch it, which we did. With no charge for the ride, we enjoyed ice creams at Waikanae with our money, before arriving back in PN at about 3.30pm. We all really enjoyed the walk, which I've done many times before, but was new for the others. Good weather is always a bonus.



We were Nicola (leader), Sana, Amina, and Ernie.



## Aruwaru Trig from Naenae Road – (19<sup>th</sup> April).

Report by Nicola Wallace

Photos by Nicolla Wallace and Martin Lawrence

After all the rain on Saturday night, I was wondering if this trip would go ahead. But Sunday morning dawned fine, so 4 of us left town at 7.30am and arrived at Naenae roadend to a sunny day. A month ago Anne, Martin and I had been to Aruwaru Trig from the Kahuterawa Valley, and I was interested to come in from this side, as I'd never been to Naenae Road before.



The Otangane Stream, crossed just after the start, was up to my knees but an easy crossing. After the short walk through the farm, we encountered lots of Ongaonga, flourishing in its usual habitat of mixed sun and shade. Martin got out his saw, and cleared the bits that encroached on the track. I've just read that Ongaonga is essential for the Red Admiral butterfly, the female butterfly only lays eggs on ongaonga, and its a food source for the caterpillars.



Soon we were climbing steeply up the Argyle Track (named after Ian Argyle), following and sometimes walking in a side stream. It was a pretty good track and even had steps in places. Two thirds of the way up a lookout gave a good view to the East, and the sight of a shoe nailed to a tree was repeated a few times on this track. 1.7km from the start we topped out at the Otangane loop track, turned left, and headed towards Pukenaenae, our morning tea stop. This track was very overgrown in places, as well as slippery after all the rain. Once out of the bush, we spotted a smallish deer, which quickly took cover in the horopito.



We squeezed in between the flaxes on Pukenaena's summit, a good place for a cuppa. We could see Aruwaru Trig from here, it didn't look very far away. Soon after, we were ascending towards the trig, and I was enjoying my favourite part of the walk, the well-defined goblin forest section that I'd done only a month ago. Trudging happily uphill, the trig suddenly appeared on my right, sooner than expected. Partly sunny and partly cloudy, we had a good lunch at 767m ASL, and Martin got out his Gorrilla Pod, attached it to the trig and took a group photo. From up here we saw Kapiti Island.



I admit that I was pretty slow on the overgrown and slippery bits of the track, so was relieved to hear that Anne was happy to return by the way we had come, rather than walk the entire Otangane loop. Otherwise, I would have taken absolutely ages!

It seemed a long way back through the overgrown sections. Emma pulled out ragwort as she went and, frequently unable to see where I was putting my feet, I'd stand on a slippery root or branch and go flying off in another direction. But the sun was shining, and along the way were good views to be enjoyed.

I had worn my old Asolo boots, which I was quite happy to flood in the river, but the soles are not grippy and descending on the Argyle track I had a couple of very sudden slip-overs which started to hurt. It was good to get down to the bottom, back to the Ongaonga, which I noticed had tiny green fruit forming. We arrived back at the car at 2.45pm. What would I do next time? I'd wait to hear that the track had been cleared, and I'd wear grippier boots! But I really enjoyed the day and appreciated that we were incredibly fortunate with the weather. An hour after I got home, it was raining, with thunder and lightning.

Thanks Anne, for leading this trip.

We were Anne (leader), Martin, Emma and Nicola.

## **Love Our Huts 2026 – (13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> December).**

Report by Janet Wilson

*\* apologies to Janet for missing this report in the April newsletter (editor: Verity Elder).*

Life get very busy Dec- Mid Feb so apologies for overlooking this trip report - it's a story with a wee bit of drama so hopefully worth waiting for.

Ruahine Whio Protectors service the Pohangina River traps twice a year and are fortunate to have funding from the Alan Rosoman Trust so a team can fly in. This time around all volunteers were PNTMC members and we took advantage of this to not only service the traps but also to help FMC with the "Love Our Huts" campaign. Ruahine Whio Protectors signed up to "Love" Leon Kinvig Hut and PNTMC signed up to "Love" Mid Pohangina Hut which is one of the huts the club has a maintenance agreement for.

We flew in ideal conditions on the Saturday morning to Leon Kinvig Hut. We quickly got organised and split in to 2 teams - Graham, Ernie and Janet headed up river to service 44 traps. Martin and Neil worked their way up the now redundant track from the old LKH site, east towards the Apiti track. They relocated the existing traps to the new track this branches off. The old track reaches the river downstream and not far from the new hut site. Martin and Neil then got stuck in cleaning the hut and working through the check list of tasks.



Meanwhile upstream, the traps all were serviced and a few who were spotted. We found a very appropriate sign has been installed at the old LKH site - see photo. The day dragged on as we headed home with the team slowing noticeably - unbeknownst to me, Graham had taken a tumble earlier in the day and banged his chest on a rock as he tripped forward. While not particularly painful at the time, it was obviously becoming annoying by late in the day and he had to admit to being in some discomfort. Nothing a bit of ibuprofen wouldn't fix.

It was a different story by next morning with Graham being in considerable pain, unable to raise his arms very far - let alone carry a pack down river. Hmm- this looked like a case for setting off our beacon and hoping for a quick trip out for Graham. We had a team discussion, and the reality of the situation was pointed out to Graham - that this would be a trip directly to PN hospital (not back to the comfort of our Apiti shed). Graham is not a fan of hospital visits and so was keen to try more pain killers - a search through all the first aid kits came up with a reasonable selection with limited dose instructions. He took a couple of the more *grunty* looking pills from Martins kit and settled down to see if they would take effect. Neil and Martin went off to install some new traps up the newly cut track to the west.

To cut this story short - the pills worked enough for Graham to get his pack back on and wander slowly and carefully down river, while the rest of us serviced the traps. We had a pleasant evening at Ngamoko Hut (with more painkillers) and some who spotted and on the Monday carried on servicing traps down to Mid Pohangina Hut.

Mid Pohangina is in very good condition after the recent renovations and there wasn't too much to do inside. We cleared vegetation etc. gave the toilet a good clean, chopped the pile of firewood, removed any rubbish and generally cleaned up. By Tuesday morning the wind had become quite strong, and we wondered if our helo pick up would arrive. It did - and the flight out was a bit more exciting than the flight in!

So to follow up - Graham kept away from the hospital, visited City doctors for an xray and a fracture of his sternum was discovered - which well explained the pain. He was his normal stoical self, vowing to be racing his motorbike again in 6 weeks - which he did.



We were Martin Lawrence, Ernie Cook, Neil Benton, Graham Peters and Janet Wilson (Leader and Scribe).





## PNTMC Newsletter

May 2026

- Upcoming Trips and Club Nights
- Notices

Trip Reports: Beehive Creek, Coppermine Creek –  
An Alternative, Paekakariki Escarpment Walkway  
Aruwaru Trig from Naenae Road  
Love Our Huts

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elderverity@gmail.com

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*Get out and about with us!*

### PNTMC Contacts

President	Anne Lawrence	027450412
Secretary	Robyn Wheeler	356-1998
Treasurer	Martin Lawrence	0274466287
Membership Enquiries	Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Gear Custodian	Peter Chamberlain	027 656 0161
Newsletter Editor	Verity Elder	elderverity@gmail.com
Trip Coordinator	Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Beginner Tramps	Verity Elder	020 260 1885

Send to PNTMC  
PO Box 1217  
Palmerston North