

beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North 4440 www.mtsc.org.nz <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>

Issue 3: April 2017



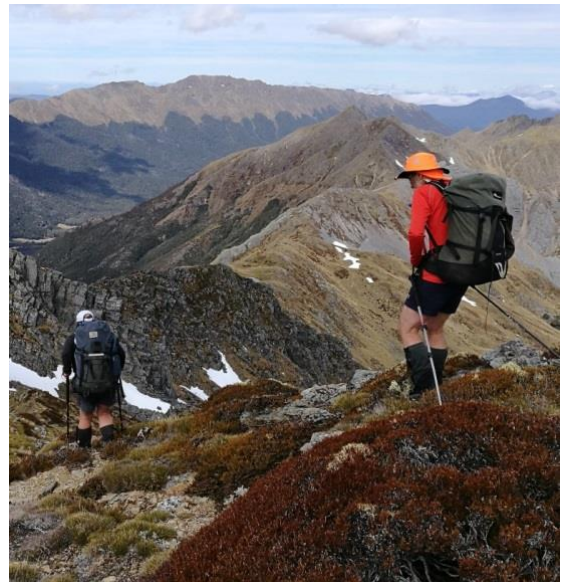
Club meetings are held on the 1st Tuesday of the month at the Rose City Aquatic Club Rooms, 50 Park Street, Palmerston North (next to the Lido). Meetings begin at 7.30pm.

Tuesday 4th April

Views of the Cobb Valley, Kahurangi National Park

Adam Match

Over an extended Labour Weekend 2016, a club trip circumnavigated, for the most part, the Cobb Valley. Starting from Sylvester Hut we travelled up the Lockett range to Fenella hut, then took two days to travel the little travelled (and sometimes frightening) Peel Range all the way to Balloon Hut. The tramp finished with an easy day out to the Sylvester Lakes track car park on the other side of the dam wall. We were extremely lucky with the weather; for the views we were afforded, navigational visibility, and the fact that the Peel Range really did require dry, low-wind weather. The good weather also allowed for lots of stunning photos. Come along to see a selection and hear the tale.



Tuesday 2nd May

What kills urban and rural wildlife?

Professor Brett Gartrell, Director Wildbase, Massey University



There is a drive in modern conservation efforts to bring wildlife into our cities and farms. However, living in these habitats brings new hazards for the wildlife involved. In this talk, Professor Brett Gartrell of Wildbase, Massey University will use cases from the Wildbase Hospital files to discuss causes of mortality for urban and rural wildlife that include our architecture, our pets, our building materials and our hunting culture. He will lead discussion on how we can engage the public in finding the solution to these issues, with a focus on the Wildbase Recovery facility under construction in the Esplanade Gardens.

REPORTS AND NOTICES

MTSC Chief Guide Report: Ken Mercer

chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz



On one of the few beautiful February days, following a kayak trip on the Rangitikei River, I went for a swim with a full pack. It was a safe place and I followed the recommended approach by unclipping my chest strap and loosening my hip belt. A pack, of course, provides about 40kg of buoyancy, much more than a life jacket.

Initially I was unstable, until I sunk down in the hip belt so it was around my chest. At that point I could maneuver using a synchronized backstroke, like sitting in an inflated inner tube. Of course that means traveling head first which is against my instincts but also recommended. It was a useful exercise.

There is a vast difference between a flooded mountain stream and a benign shingle river but if you are ever swept off your feet hang on to your pack. Of course, making the decision to not cross in the first place is very much better.

Track damage and closures in the Tararua Ranges

02 March 2017: Holdsworth to Totara Flats track closed

The Holdsworth to Totara Flats section of the track is closed until further notice as the Totara Creek Bridge has been undermined. The original Totara Creek track has been re-opened, marked and can be used instead.

20 February 2017: Gentle Annie Track, Mount Holdsworth Lookout and the Atiwhakatu track

Heavy rain has caused additional damage to existing slips and widened existing slips in the Mount Holdsworth area. Two bridges, the bridge on the Gentle Annie Track to the lookout and second side creek bridge after Donnelly's Flat heading to River Ridge track, have been closed due to water and tree damage. These streams can be crossed in safe flows.

20 February 2017: Waiohine Gorge Road end closure

The last 1km of the Waiohine Gorge Road is closed due to a slip (same as last time), parking is at the 'bus turn around car-park; the road can be walked from here.

Southern Rimutaka Aerial Bovine TB Control Operation

A 1080 operation on behalf of TBfree New Zealand is planned for 2017. The exact timing of the operation will be weather dependent. Current plans: part 1 (green) pre-feed application from late March with 1080 application after the 3rd April, part 2 (blue) pre-feed application from 1st May with 1080 application after the 8th May.

vector.SNI@ospri.co.nz

tbfree.co.nz



Wellington Conservation Management Strategy Draft

The draft Wellington 10 year CMS (conservation management strategy) which covers DOC land from the Ruahines to Cook Strait is available for submissions. Submissions close on Tuesday 4th April.

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/have-your-say/all-consultations/2016/draft-wellington-cms-consultation/>

Notes from the Ruahine User Group meeting (20th February)

DOC Hut/Shelter and track/road work: Hut and track work has been somewhat delayed this year due to the 'Summer' weather. Most huts have had a post-earthquake visit to ensure no structural damage. DOC has received positive feedback on the Rangi & Sunrise hut booking system (confidence of getting a bed); unbooked people can still stay but are not guaranteed a bed. There have been a good number of volunteers to warden at Sunrise but Rangi

needs more volunteer wardens (there are no wardens quarters at Rangī). If you are interested in doing this, please contact DOC Palmerston North. The trial was planned to run till the end of Easter but there have been requests to extend it out till ANZAC day. Track cutting has been carried out around Sentry Box and the hut tidied. The track between Comets and Shutes huts has been cut. The Mid-Pohangina track has been cut to the Centre Creek junction but with issues crossing the Piripiri Stream, this is yet to be completed. The tracks from Iron Gate to upper Oroua River, Irongate to Ngamoko Range, Irongate to Heritage Lodge, and Heritage Lodge to Tunupo have had a trim. Track work in the McKinnon/Crow/Kauwhatau area is planned, weather permitting. Work has been carried out on Takapari Road; the lower section belongs to the Council and is not reported to be in good condition. Kashmir road has had work done but has on-going issues and is reasonably good at the moment.

Volunteer Huts and Tracks: Ruahine Hut has been painted by Army volunteers who have also removed some of the snow break from nearby tracks. Diggers, Otukota and Waikamaka Huts have all had recent work done on them. There is a plan to do work on the wood burner flue in Standfield. There is a group interested in maintaining Aranga Hut and funds are available for the work that needs doing. There are funds available for the Kauwhatau Base but they are dependent on access being re-established. Plans for Toka Biv to alter in the same manner as Sparrowhawk Biv need approval from DOC as it is adding to, rather than just maintaining the existing structure. There has been good removal of snow break from tracks.

Access: Freedom camping is a growing issue that may impact on access to some places going forward. The legal paper road to the Makaroro River is not feasible as it goes over a cliff, so access is across private land. Please contact the landowner for permission (phone number available from DOC).

Biodiversity: Lots of volunteer work happening for Whio with lots of stoat catches in the middle/lower Ruahines; happily less in the Northern Ruahines. Dog surveys are being used to find ducks around the Colenso area and are planned for the Orua River. The new Longview – Leon Kinvig trap line has been put in. DOC are working with contractors to cull goats so please report any sightings of goats. Rat bait is available from DOC Palmerston North for volunteers to take into huts. Work is currently being carried out in the Northern Ruahines to remove Contorta and hoping to use Army volunteers to deal with the ones at the Kashmir Road End. There is monitoring work of Beech seeding and 'activity' measurement using tracking tunnels being carried out in the Northern Ruahines.

Notes from the Tararua Aorangi Rimutaka Huts Committee meeting (6th March)

Storm Damage: There was a localised intense storm at the end of February which caused some bridge and road damage (see closure information above).

Huts: The work on Cattle Ridge Hut is underway and hoping to be completed by the end of March. Arete Forks has been re-roofed. Nichols hut interior and toilet have been repainted, the water tank repaired and a new lid fitted. A temporary fix to the guttering, a new catch on the door so it will stay closed now and 3 big bags of rubbish removed. Work on Kapakapanui, Mid-Waiohine and Waiopahu is awaiting suitable weather. Looking into options for under floor insulation for Waiopahu. The agreement for work on Waiotaru Hut is almost completed and it is hoped to get work down this year. Mitre Flats has been restrained and the roof sprayed in preparation for painting which will happen when the weather co-operates. Tarn ridge is scheduled to be tidied up and the (very mouldy) mattress covers replaced.

Cattle Ridge Hut update ☺



Cattle Ridge Hut looking very sad before work was done

The builders finished almost all the work on Cattle Ridge hut on Thursday the 9th March. The hut is now completely revamped, insulated, double-glazed and extended in size (porch addition). It is now (possibly) the best hut in the range. Just the new log burner requires installing; as well as a memorial plaque to the late Tony Macklin, Wellington NZDA, who was instrumental in the recovery of this hut. Before it was relined some graffiti from Noel Fraser and Co., the builders of the original (from the summer of '60/'61.) was uncovered. Still, as far as I'm aware, the only 5-bunk "six-bunker" in the country.

UPCOMING TRIPS

April Wednesday Tramps			April Thursday Tramps		
Date	Leader	Phone	Date	Leader	Phone
5	Ian Brookes	358 7974	6	John & Gillian Thornley	356 9681
12	Leonie Lowndes	359 5005	13	Bryce & Raewyn Buddle	353 5163
19	Allan Rae	358 3962	20	Brian & Ruth Evans	323 7614
26	Anne West	357 5716	27	Chris Mercer	356 2635

April Weekend Trips				
Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
1 (Sat)	Jumbo-Holdsworth Streams	Fit	Jean Garman	021 176 0209
8 - 9	Aorangi Forest Park	Easy	Tim Swale	06 376 6556
22 - 23	Kime Hut	Medium	Ivan Rienks	021 705 412
25 (ANZAC)	Escarpment Walk	Easy/Medium	Adam Matich	022 358 8062
29 - 30	Roaring Stag Lodge	Easy	Mark Learmonth	355 9143

Trip Intentions: The email address for leaving trip intentions is intentions@mtsc.org.nz. Intentions sent to this address will not be acted upon UNLESS a party is reported overdue (e.g. by a family member, flatmate, friend, etc). The email is sent to several MTSC members. This information will be provided to LandsAR/RCC only if the party is reported overdue or a PLB is activated. The email should include: a list of participants and their contact details; a brief description of the intended route and possible alternative routes; starting point; start date; date/time due out; vehicle registration; and any other relevant details.

Saturday 1st April: Holdsworth-Jumbo Streams

Fit **Jean Garman** **021 176 0209** trampski.cave@gmail.com

If everything goes swimmingly, we will head up the Atiwhakatu track to Holdsworth Creek which we follow up to the tops before heading North towards Jumbo, then drop into the creek that drains to the East, which we will follow back down to the Atiwhakatu track. If the first stage takes longer than expected, we will come out via the East Holdsworth track or through Powell Hut and leave the other stream for another day.

8th – 9th April: Aorangi Forest Park

Easy **Tim Swale** **06 376 6556**

Unfortunately I have some old friends arriving from the UK on 8/9th April so I am unable to lead the Aorangi trip that weekend. If anyone is still keen please get in touch with me with a view to re-arranging it for the school holidays.

22nd – 23rd April: Kime Hut

Medium **Ivan Rienks** **021 705 412** trampski.cave@gmail.com

A classic Tararua tramp. From Otaki Forks it is a long climb up to the high altitude (1400m) Kime hut. Expect a cool night as the hut has no heating. If the weather is conducive we may also climb Mt Hector, which at 1529m is one of the highest peaks in the Tararuas. The next day it is almost all downhill, back the way we came.

Tuesday 25th April: Escarpment Walk

Easy/Medium **Adam Matich** **022 358 8062** adam.j.matich@gmail.com

This easy 2½ hour walk starts on Beach Rd, Paekakariki and ends at the Pukerua Bay shops on SH1 (www.teararoa.org.nz/userfiles/file/tracknotes/Paekakariki-Escarpment-Track.pdf). On a good day, there are great views out to the ocean. Hopefully it will be a good day. Once we make it to Pukerua Bay, we will catch the train or bus back to Paekakariki and find somewhere for lunch. So people should get home well in time for afternoon tea and a lie-down to recover from the rigours of the day.

29th – 30th April: Roaring Stag Lodge

Easy **Mark Learmonth** **355 9143**

As Mark is still recovering from hip replacement surgery it is unlikely this trip will run unless another leader is found. If you are interested please still contact Mark to see if there has been a volunteer replacement trip leader.

1st – 6th June: Abel Tasman Loop

Medium/Fit

Adam Matich

022358 8062

adam.j.matich@gmail.com

This extended Queen's Birthday weekend (6 days) is a trip covering both the coastal and inland sections of the Abel Tasman track system, starting and finishing at the Eastern end. Winter is a good time to do this tramp as there is generally no one there to fill up the huts, which is useful as we are not going to do our hut bookings until the last moment when we know what the weather will be doing. If people are not feeling energetic, they can come along and only do one half of the trip in that time and use transport services to get back to the start, or take a shortcut somewhere. I am going to book the ferry crossing late March and so need to know by then what sized vehicle I will be taking if people want to come.



4th – 6th February: Pouakai Circuit

Report: Linda Campbell

Photos: Linda Campbell & Tim Swale

What a weekend! It was amazing. The weather was stunning, the views were stunning, the company was stunning, the terrain was stunning and we got a bed both nights without resorting to our tents. Some others that arrived later in the day were not so lucky and some chose to tent out and both nights the huts were full.

We started off at North Egmont and to our surprise there was a man directing traffic. We were lucky to get the last park. It turns out North Egmont has become very popular on a nice day with people just visiting, people doing short walks, people climbing, people doing round the mountain, the Pouakai Crossing and the Pouakai Circuit.



We headed off after midday in beautifully clear skies and walked up to the round the mountain track and in time beneath the Dieffenbach Cliffs and across the Boomerang Slip before descending to the Ahukawakawa Swamp and Holly Hut. At one point on the track you can look down on the red water of Kokowai Stream which is caused by manganese oxide oozing from the earth. The walk to Holly Hut, a 32 bunk hut set beneath the Dome at the edge of the Swamp, is a 7.5km walk that takes between three and four hours. It has solar lighting but most of us were already asleep before it was dark enough and missed seeing it working. Once we arrived we quickly claimed a bunk room which had only two other sleeping bags on mattresses. Later we sat out on the deck and got a great

surprise when Kathy Corner and Murray from PNTMC appeared from the track leading to Bells Falls. Unknown to any of us both our clubs had the same trip the same weekend! And, strangely enough the two who had claimed the beds in the bunk room we were in were Kathy and Murray!

Next morning we took the side trip to Bells Falls. These are beautiful 31 metre falls about 40 minutes from the Hut. It was an absolutely clear, windless, hot day but the water in the stream was really cold! We returned to the hut for morning tea and were surprised at how many people were there doing a day trip on the 19 km Pouakai Crossing. This is a trip



that takes between 7.5 and 9.5 hours.

From Holly Hut we crossed the Ahukawakawa Swamp which was looking beautiful with its gold colours and then climbed steeply and steadily up the staircase which was rather hot work. There is boardwalk through the swamp to protect many plant species, some of which are unusual at this altitude and others that are found nowhere else in the world. There is a viewing platform in the swamp that is worth stopping at and a lovely curved bridge over Stony Stream.

We decided not to take the side trip to the Pouakai trig which was fortunate as it meant we got a bed. There was a large number of people at the top of the hill before the descent to Pouakai where the views were amazing. Once we had staked our claim on a bed and had afternoon tea, we headed back up the hill to admire the views and then walked down to the picturesque Pouakai Tarns. Along with Kathy and Murray, we had a lovely relaxing time waiting for perfect conditions to get a photo of the mountain reflected in the biggest tarn. We sat chatting and enjoying the scenery and company for quite some time before returning to the hut for dinner. The number and variety of insects was incredible but it was still a pleasure to sit out after dinner.



The final day of our walk saw us up and ready a bit earlier than the previous two days, as it is a 6-7 hour walk back to North Egmont and we wanted to enjoy our walk taking in the scenery as much as we could. The track took us back up the hill behind the hut and past the tarns before skirting around Maude Peak. There was then the long climb up onto Henry Peak (1220m). At the top there is a lookout and here we met up with Kathy and Murray, who had left half an hour before us, having a snack. From Henry we descended the Kaiuau Track stopping at the Kaiuau shelter for morning tea. This shelter was built as a safe place to wait for floodwaters to drop, although all of the major waterways have now been bridged. Later we stopped beside a stream for lunch before continuing on through lowland forest to the swing bridge across the Waiwhakaiho River. We decided to walk up the road to the car park where we had a bit of a wash and afternoon tea before our drive back. Many thanks to Linda Darbyshire, Christine Finnigan, Helen Peek and Tim Swale for such a fabulous weekend.

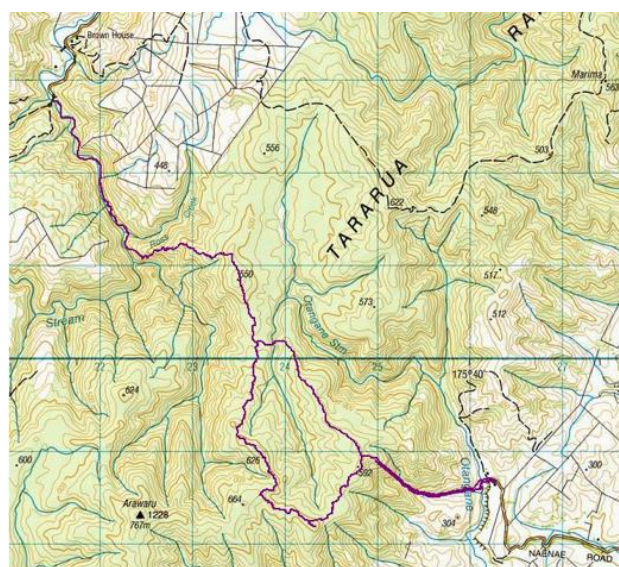
Wednesday 15th February: WWWs Cross the Divide via the NaeNae Track

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen, Judith, Bob & William

It is some years since the Wednesday Wilderness Wanderers have made a crossing of the ranges and the first time that the group has made a crossing so close to Palmerston North. For some time a group of volunteers led by the indomitable Ian Argyle, have been working on a track linking NaeNae Road, an unsealed road reached from the Tutaekara Road in the Wairarapa, with the recently opened Otangane (Nipple) and Sledge tracks. In part the new track follows a paper road and makes an interesting East-West crossing possible, see GPS plot and map below.

So it was that under the direction of trip leader Bev, thirty plus trampers assembled at the Summerhill car park and then travelled in convoy over the ranges to NaeNae Road. Here we liaised with Ian Argyle to be briefed on the challenges to be met on the new NaeNae track. At about 1.5km in length and a height gain of a little under 400m, he predicted that it would be slow going and in places very muddy. He was correct on both counts with all trampers taking at least an hour to reach the junction with the existing tracks. We were lucky to have a dry day after several such days; in wet



conditions the route would be very challenging especially the sections where vandals have recently damaged the track by removing steps.



Nice specimen of an anemone stinkhorn fungus (*Aseroe rubra*)

At the junction the faster group turned left to include Otangane in their tramp and the rest turned right following the track plot below. Both tracks and groups converged on the Hardings park Toetoe junction with its picnic table and signboard then to follow the Sledge track back to the Black Bridge and carpark.

With a 9am start, some were out by 2pm and all by 2:45pm. Maureen, one of our regular trampers subsequently emailed "What a great experience! Thanks to everyone that made it such a great day." This remark nicely encapsulated the day and the mood subsequently rounded out by coffee and cakes at the Rendezvous cafe at Summerhill.

Thanks to Trip Leader Bev and the drivers who dropped us off at NaeNae Road and picked us up at the Sledge Track car park. Also to Ian Argyle for his briefing and track work with his volunteers.



Muddy boots



Atop the nipple

Sunday 19th February: Atiwhakatu Gorge

Report: Tim Swale

Photos: Tim Swale

After a couple of days of heavy rain and a less than favourable weather forecast, the intended river trip down the Atiwhakatu Gorge was clearly in doubt. On arrival at the Holdsworth Road end, we had to drive around debris left on the road by floodwaters and were met by the ranger's wife who was warning trampers of the tracks closed by damaged bridges and tracks.



Lunchtime on rocky knob



Old track junction

The only track not closed and taped off was the Gentle Annie track. The decision was therefore made to follow the old overgrown Mount Holdsworth track up to the Rocky Lookout as marked on the Topo 50 map (as opposed to Docs viewing platform next to the track) The old track sticks to the spur and is easy enough to follow, although a bit damp with all the wet vegetation. Luckily it was a really warm day. After the old signpost at the junction with the Donnelly Flat track, the route is much clearer and we were soon at Rocky Lookout and enjoying a leisurely lunch in the sun.



A slip on the Gentle Annie track

Once refreshed, we were on our way again for the last couple of kilometres to Mountain House shelter. We soon hit the main track and moved quickly upwards past the Totara Flats turn off to Pig Flat where we had good views of Powell Hut. A short break was taken at the shelter before heading back down the Gentle Annie track. Considerable scouring was evident on the track with one small bridge completely swept away leaving a muddy mess to negotiate. However we were soon back at the bottom for a quick clean up in the river before heading home in the club van.

A very pleasant social trip with warm, sunny weather, despite a forecast that was predicting heavy showers. The gorge trip will just have to wait for another day. A big thank you to Ken for driving the van.

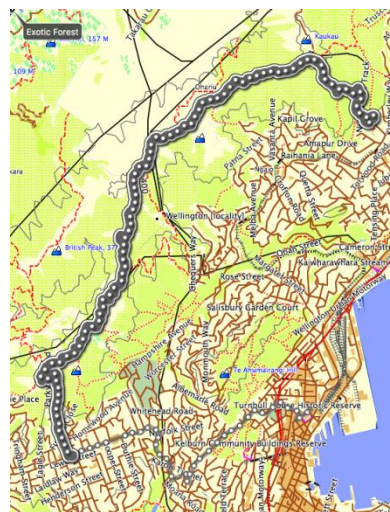
We were: Ken and Mary Mercer, Karen Tutt, Pak Lam Yu, Helen Peak, Wendy Davidson, Emily He, Ben and Tim Swale.

Wednesday 22th February: The Skyline Walkway - Wellington

Report: Robert Bruce

Photos: Robert Bruce

Twenty five pukka pilgrims exited Manawatu for Woodmancote Road, Khandallah. Ahead was Wellington's El Camino Skyline Walkway across the tops from Mt Kau Kau (446 m ASL) to Johnston's Hill in Karoriville a distance of 12 km plus.



First, we detoured to Gorsey Knob for a view over the homes, village, bowling & croquet greens of leafy Khandallahisthan - "abode of the gods". Then we sloped directly up to Kau Kau passing "BRUCE's Seat" before pausing and fortifying with shortbread + scran. Clag restricted our panoramic views to the horizon and beyond.

With a gritty, dry nor - wester propelling us along, we made rapid progress before lunch at 12:15 pm. We paused at Kilmister's home or what remained of this early settler's farmhouse - open plan living, al fresco dining, indoor outdoor flow but definitely needing some TLC.

Pushing on briskly past freshly shorn ewes and their abundance of tucker, we dropped off the ridge just south of Johnston's Hill onto Parkvale Road. When in Karoriville, we didn't have long to wait for a GO Wellington trolley charabanc. Gleefully, we flashed our Gold Cards and bounced off merrily into town. Alas, opposite the Botanic Gardens, the poles came off and couldn't be disentangled.



Undeterred and as intrepid as ever, we tramped the remaining couple of kilometres down past Parliament and the Cenotaph to the Railway Station. Meanwhile, crafty Gold Card flasher Bob Emeritus surged past having clambered aboard the following bus to greet us all at the Station with a coffee in his mitt.

Gold Card flashing continued when we caught the 3.02 pm METRO Link to Johnsonville. Above, we could see the ridgeline that we had just hoofed across. Our luck extended further when Café du Parc was open for our coffee + cake custom. On a glorious afternoon alongside the pool and in the warm shelter of the Khandallah bush, we indulged and reflected on another superb excursion to Wellington.



Thanks to drivers Chris, Rita, Peter & Margaret

23rd - 24th February: Pouakai Circuit

Report: Royce Mills

Photos: John Brock & Royce Mills

Occasionally the Thursday tramping group do an overnigher and a good weather forecast led us to choose to walk the Pouakai circuit in Egmont National Park. We were a group of eight and none of us had done this highly rated two-day tramp before. We departed Palmerston North at 7.30am and started tramping from the Kaiuauai car park on Egmont Road at 11.30 am. We enjoyed the shade of the bush along the way to Kaiuauai Shelter which took us 1½ hours, where we stopped for a late lunch. Ahead of us was the steady climb up to Henry Peak, hundreds of steps, not so bad in the bush, but when we emerged out of the bush in the heat of the early afternoon we were all suffering. (Henry is the new swear word). It was a relief to



Bridge on Ahukawakawa swamp

reach the lookout at the top and admire extensive views and enjoy a cooling breeze. Then it was steeply downhill, including down several vertical metal ladders. Tramping was easier once we approached Pouakai hut. We stopped at the Pouakai tarns, famous for photos of Mt Taranaki reflected in the water. The hut was reached at 5.30 pm. Its verandah is very well placed to relax in the sun and enjoy views looking down to New Plymouth and the coast. This popular hut was full, as it is day after day, mainly with overseas visitors, but all our group got a bed to sleep in. At night the city lights twinkled and the stars were amazing.



Pouakai Tarn

Off we set on day two at 8am, another perfect day, and getting warm already! Lots of photos were taken along the way as we experienced changing views of Mt Taranaki and the Ahukawakawa sphagnum moss swamp. Unfortunately one of our group slipped off the boardwalk into the swamp. To our shock she went up to her waist and couldn't feel the bottom. Her pack was taken off and it took three men to haul her out. We had no idea how deep and watery this swamp is. A welcome morning tea break was taken at Holly hut and then we followed the Round the Mountain side track until the junction with the Kokowai track, reached at midday. A steady downhill on the Kokowai track through pleasant shady bush took us back to our car park, reached at 3pm.

Two fine summer days, magnificent views and excellent company! This circuit deserves the accolades it is getting.

We were Suzanne Clark, Judy Swainson, Judith Tonson, Raewyn and Bryce Buddle, John Brock, Norman Cooper and Royce Mills.

Sunday 26th February: ~~Te Ekaou Stream~~ Porewa Stream

Report: Jean Garman

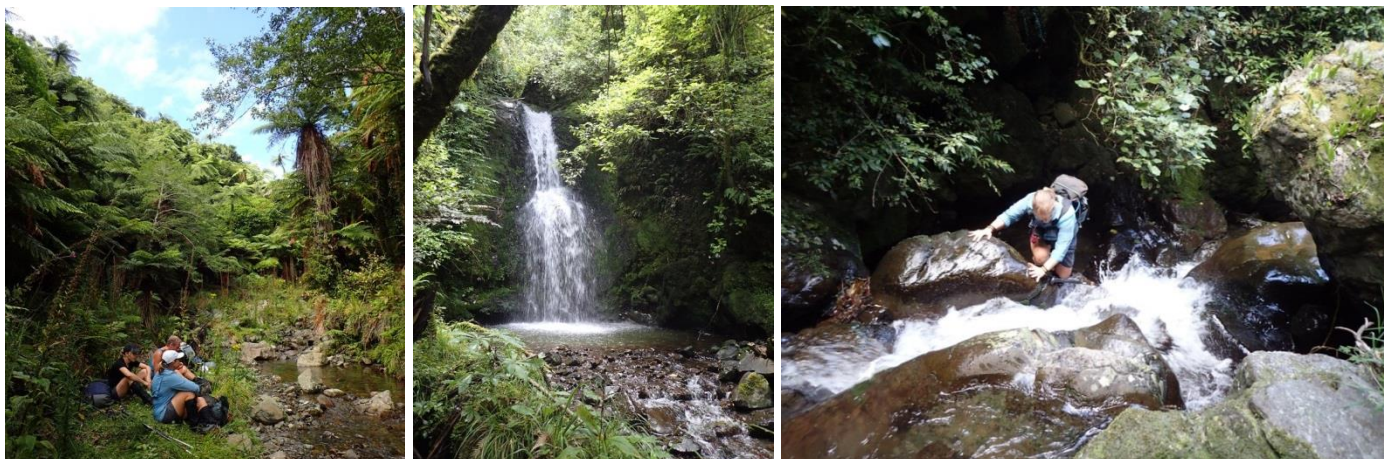
Photos: Adam, David & Jean

David was too slow to get permission for Te Ekaou Stream (one group per weekend) so we decided to try Porewa Stream just to the south instead. After meeting up in Ashurst we drove up the Eastern Pohangina to the road bridge, luckily there was some space off the road to park.



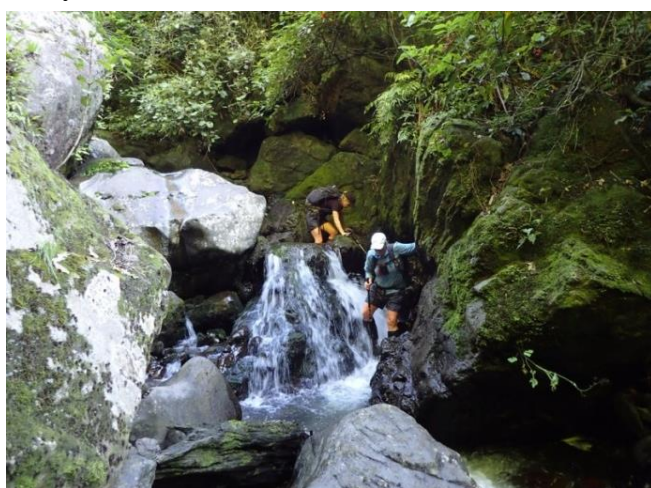
On dropping into the stream we found the dark rocks in the dark bush hard to see and very slippery (care was constantly required not to end up on your backside) so travel was not very pleasant and quite slow. After a while we broke out into the open for a stretch through farmland (permission required). This was easier but still had such hazards as barbed wire, electric fences, melodious bulls and patches of very long lumpy grass. We met up with and had a chat with the farmer who warned us that the South branch of the Porewa Stream had stinging nettles and waterfalls while the North branch was more pleasant. Unfortunately for us, by David's calculations the South branch was marginally bigger and therefore the main stream so that's where we went.

The farmer was correct but we (mostly) managed to avoid the nettle and did find ways around the waterfalls to reach a nice stretch of stream to wander up. Alas, the nice stretch didn't last that long before there were more waterfalls to detour around. When we reached the highest fork on the map, there was a leatherwood bush or two in evidence, so not being complete masochists, we left the stream here and climbed up onto the spur to the south.



Luckily for us (as time was rapidly slipping by) the spur was reasonable travel and only took a couple of hours to get back to lower in the stream. Along the way I lost an earring and Adam snapped the end off his

walking stick and lost his sunglasses. Where we re-joined the stream we were still within the Ruahine Park so there was a bit more than a couple of hours backtracking to get back to the car. An ‘interesting’ once in a life time experience - not quite a 10 hour day. David only has 9 named waterways left to go to go to collect the whole Ruahine set so Te Ekaou will happen on another day. We were David, Adam, Fiona and Jean.



Wednesday 1st March: WWWs alternative tramp – Pettifar, Gilchrist and Fern Tracks

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Judith

As Rod lead his heroic WWW trampers up and down the slopes in the vicinity of Longview, an alternative tramping group of eleven elite trampers met at the upper entrance to the Pettifar loop (near Opawe Road). With a 9.30am start, we tramped down the steps and onto the river terrace on a warm Summers day, ironically the first day of Autumn. As a backdrop to our exertions, there was a healthy level of birdsong, mainly Tuis. Morning tea was taken sitting on a log in the almost dry riverbed near the old camping ground. We then retraced our steps to re-join the main track and onwards to the Gilchrist loop where ripe blackberries were a treat.



Dappled light in the bush



Morning tea in the river bed

Although the 4WD track linking the Gilchrist and Pettifar tracks was in a churned, muddy state, the stream crossings were dry making progress easy. By noon, we had all made our way back up to the vehicles next to travel to the camping ground for sun shelter, lunch and the luxury of flush toilets! After lunch four trampers departed and the remainder made their way to the start of the Fern Walk to emerge at about 3.15pm with an accumulated distance covered of 14km. The track was mainly in good order with the recent provision of steps on the main climb, the bridging of the stream crossings and several sections of board walk. The afternoon birdsong was subdued compared with what we had experienced in the morning on the river terraces. We then travelled to the Herb Farm to take afternoon tea to round off a lovely, relaxed summer tramp performed as a reconnaissance for the forthcoming Manawatu Walking Festival.



Fern Walk lookout view

Thanks to drivers Lynn, Bernard & Bob.

Thursday 2nd March: Scandlyn Creek Loop

Report: Royce Mills

Photos: Royce Mills & John Brock

Our leader, David Grant, took us on a loop track in the Ruahines south of Rangiwahia hut, a route that most of us had never been on before. We drove in to the end of East Mangahua Road and started along a vehicle track through pine forest, close to Scandlyn Creek. After about 1km we crossed the stream and worked our way up a ridge following a faint foot track. Things became fairly overgrown as we entered the leatherwood zone but we were able to find our way through and emerge onto the tussock tops passing spot heights 1353m and 1372m. A beautiful, sunny warm day - we enjoyed extensive views of the Ruahine Range and looked over the Deadman's track ridge to see Rangiwahia hut on the horizon in the distance. We had lunch in a saddle before climbing to spot height 1434m to ensure that we picked the correct ridge to head downhill. Again this unmaintained track was quite overgrown but enough old tapes helped us pick our way through the leatherwood. Once in the forest, we admired the large numbers of tall mountain cedars. It took some map, compass and GPS work to find an unmarked faint foot track back down to Scandlyn Creek again. Once the creek was reached, all was well finding our way back to our vehicles. Cuts, blood, scratches and bruises were compared. There were seventeen in the group and it was a nine hour day, due to the slow going on the overgrown and unmaintained tracks. This was a great adventure in perfect weather, good to explore a new area and a loop walk is always a bonus. Thanks David.



*David Grant and Syd Easton on spot height 1434m
(Royce Mills)*



Negotiating leatherwood (John Brock)



All smiles - back in Scandlyn Creek (John Brock)

Wednesday 8th March: Herepai Hut

Report: John Ridge

Photos: William

The weather looked promising as we assembled at Memorial Park car park for our drive to the Eastern Tararua Forest Park, south west of Putara in the upper part of the Mangatainoka Valley. Best access being from Eketahuna - 20 km west, the second half being unsealed. It is a very pleasant drive.

We set off promptly at 8 o'clock to rendezvous at Eketahuna; we were travelling in the clubs van and three cars. At the final count our party consisted of twenty four trampers. Our destination was the hut, aiming to be there in time for lunch. We were all ready to go at half past nine. The more hardy among us deciding to take the more difficult climb up the less used Bottles Track, there were ten in this group. They



set off first with Dennis leading the way, he also had the task of locating the turn off which is not easily found. The main group set off at a more leisurely pace, these in turn made two smaller groups after crossing the first swing bridge.



Morning tea was taken at ten thirty soon after crossing the second swing bridge, a time to re-group and to give us strength for the steep climb ahead of us. The track is well defined and the bush is amazing with plenty of bird life for the observant trumper who cares to pause for a moment now and again. Also there are several look-out points from the ridge top. Once at the junction, it is easy going to the hut where we had lunch. It was warm and sunny if you could get out of the wind which some decided was a good option.

Dennis and his group arrived at the hut as we were leaving. They had a more difficult track and were pleased to sight the hut and have a chance to relax. Both groups descended on the same track. Care needed to be taken on the steep part as there are many roots and rocks to contend with. However most of it is easy going and returning to the car park was no rush and trampers took time to enjoy what proved to be a most enjoyable day.



On the way home we stopped for coffee and cake at the "Lazy Graze" cafe in Eketahuna. I can recommend the carrot cake. Thanks to Chris our van driver and to Bernard, Bill and Rod for their cars.

The third Manawatu Walking Festival (MWF) was held over the weekend of Friday 10th March

Report: Bob Hodgson

The MWF is one of many held around NZ. Walkers registered by event, this year over 200 registrations were received. The Festival was again organised by Frank Goldingham, the Palmerston North based editor/publisher of New Zealand Walking Magazine. Twelve walks were offered ranging in distance and difficulty from a tramp to Rangi Hut to a walk in Kitchener Park. The Festival is largely self-funding from registrations with assistance for publicity etc. received from the PN Mayors Fund and generous support from Horizons. The Festival is dependent on volunteers who act as hosts/guides and on some walks, commentary. Volunteers come from a range of groups including MTSC, PNTC, Striders, and Forest and Bird. I have acted as a lead host on two walks for each of the three years in which the festival has been held. This year for the fourth time, I led the Sunset Beach walk from the Foxton Surf Club to Himatangi and fish & chips. We were dropped off by bus at the Club and the bus then met us in Himatangi. For the third year we again had a rain free walk, this year in calm and sunny conditions. The forecast all week had been for heavy rain. The two other hosts on this walk were Denise and Coralie, both regular Wednesday Trampers. Again it was an enjoyable event, most walkers coped well and a few needed some encouragement. All participants completed the walk in two and a quarter hours. The F & C were good and welcome after the walk. By 8.30pm we were ready to depart but the bus was not. It failed to start, so 44 walkers plus hosts piled off the bus and we push started it to arrive in PN by 9.00pm!



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New Members

Prospective members must be nominated by a Proposer and a Seconder who are current MTSC members and have been so for at least one year. New memberships are confirmed at the next monthly committee meeting. Prospective members are encouraged to go on a club trip or attend a club night before joining. For further information or an application form please see the club website.

Club Equipment

Hire equipment: we have packs, 2 and 3 person tents, tent flies (small and large), snow mats, gas cookers, size 8 and 9 boots, billies, food dehydrator and two bivvy bags. Ice axes, crampons, and helmets are also available. We have two personal locator beacons (PLB) for which there is no charge. Contact the Gear Custodian: Peter Rawlins on (06) 356 7443.

Website www.mtsc.org.nz

This contains club information, photos, contact details and back issues of this newsletter, Beechleaves. The club website is maintained by Howard Nicholson (06) 357 6325 and is kindly hosted by **Inspire Net**, a locally based company.

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>

Accommodation at the MTSC lodge on Mount Ruapehu

The lodge is close to Iwikau Village, has power, heating, hot showers and is stocked with food. Members and their guests are welcome. For Lodge bookings email Liz and Hugh Wilde lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz or phone (06) 356 9450. To confirm your booking, payment must be made by cheque to 179 Cook St Palmerston North 4410, by cash in person or internet payment (please email to confirm before depositing) Westpac account number 03 1521 022035300.

	Members	Guests
Adult	\$35	\$50
Secondary School	\$28	\$43
Primary School	\$23	\$38
Pre-school (3-5 yo)	\$10	\$10

The Lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860.

Booking the MTSC Van

For bookings: Contact Ken Mercer (06) 356 7497. Cancellations should be made as soon as practicable to accommodate other potential users. A tent fly (in the passenger door) and a Personal Locator Beacon (in the glove box) are available for use free of charge on trips.