

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 6: July 2018



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 3rd July – Skiing in Japan

We're quite lucky living in Palmerston North with our ski mountain an easy drive away and relaxed on-mountain accommodation in our lodge. However, skiers can be fussy and Ruapehu isn't known for dry powder snow, particularly in our summer. This Club night will feature the Rawlins Studio video of a group of 9 MTSC members getting a powder fix in Japan.

Tuesday August 7th – Photo competition – Howie Nicholson

Categories

ABOVE BUSHLINE (With no Human Element) - Predominantly alpine scenery in NZ, above bushline, e.g. rock and snow, tussock, etc., no people or man-made objects

ABOVE BUSHLINE (With a Human Element) - Same as above, may include people or man-made objects

BELOW BUSHLINE (With no Human Element) - Predominantly bush, scrub, lowland to sub-alpine areas, no people or man-made objects

BELOW BUSHLINE (With a Human Element) - Same as above, may include people or man-made objects

HISTORIC - Photos taken prior to 1 January 2016, of historic interest

NATIVE FLORA and FAUNA - NZ flora and fauna

Tuesday September 4th - Inter-club Quiz run by MTSC

Bob Hodgson is the genial quiz master { He will try very hard to be genial}

Sections may include questions related to: Hut bagging, Sir Ed, bird identification, native trees and shrubs, NZ geography, anatomy and first aid, & NZ celebrity spotting.

Sugary rewards for the winners and tail enders.

Thursday Sept 27th – Inter-club photo competition run by PNTMC

REPORTS AND NOTICES

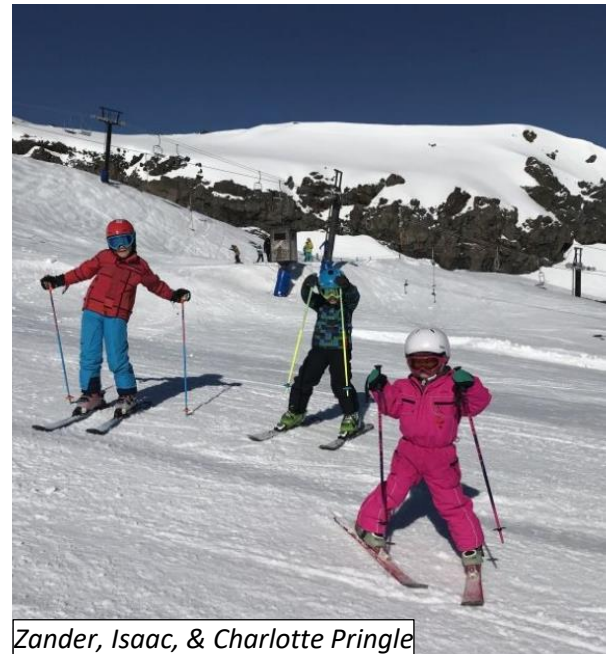
MTSC President: Rob Pringle

president@mtsc.org.nz



First of all I would like to thank John Beech for his work during his time as president. Over the last three years the club has grown in both membership and financial position. Without John's leadership, and the work of the committee, we wouldn't be in the place we are today. John continues his work with the FMC Executive and Trust and will provide the club with regular insight about what they are up to. John continues to sit on the committee as Immediate Past President.

By way of introduction, I've done the majority of my growing up in the Manawatu, spending time wandering around both the Ruahines and Tararuas, with some short stints spent down south, up north, and some a little further afield. I've enjoyed being a Tramping club member for some years now after being introduced to the club via my father at an Intermediate school ski trip. I've been lucky to have had the opportunity to rub shoulders with a number of fine trampers, climbers, and skiers over the years, all of whom have left an indelible mark on my life as I continue to engage with the outdoors. I've assisted with various projects at the ski lodge over the years, lending a hand where able. I now share the privilege (alongside Jess) of raising our children, introducing them to the outdoors, and showing them what club life has to offer. I am very proud of the fact that all of my small people are skiing independently outside of Happy Valley, our youngest - Charlotte - accomplishing this feat at only three and a half years of age. They too now have the opportunity to rub shoulders with some very fine outdoors people.



Zander, Isaac, & Charlotte Pringle

It is, in my view, an exciting time to be a member of MTSC, I think you for the opportunity and trust that is placed in my selection as President and shall endeavour to do as good a job as my predecessors

At the time of writing this, particular enthusiasm is given to the works that are going on at the ski field. If any are keen to read up on these, the infrastructure development plans for both Turoa and Whakapapa are up on the Mt Ruapehu website. Highlights include new gondolas, replacement high speed, high capacity lifts, and additional buildings / eating facilities. A little closer to home is the interaction of the tramping side of the MTSC membership, a robust (well established) and influential group who raised some good suggestions at the AGM. I'm pleased to report, conversations have been ongoing, and even some action has been taken. We have committed to the purchase of three 2-way radios to assist with the communications during club trips. The finer details of where to get hold of them and where best to use them are still to be worked out, but keep an eye out in the newsletter for additional information about them. There is continued discussion about the possible replacement of the MTSC club van – watch this space for updates.

For all the trampers out there I admire your tenacity and fortitude to continue walking and exploring week after week despite the onset of winter proper. For all the skiers out there, I know the enthusiasm to get on the mountain is high. We continue to watch the developments on the mountain unfold as RAL too embark on an exiting time of development with the license renewals now behind them. On signing off for this month, I'd like to pay tribute to the unspoken heroes of MTSC. You know who you are: the people who collect intentions lists, mark off trips as safely returning, taking phone calls, answering questions, pointing people in the right direction, undertaking pest control, and generally promoting the club. Without you the club would not be half of what it is. Keep up the good work – till next time.

Rob



We've just returned from a lovely walk which took our group of 8 through the gorge and back again. Although the heavy overnight rain had left the track with a few muddy patches, gaiters weren't really necessary. Occasional flurries of chill wind through the trees reminded us it was winter and, at the toilet stop, the turbine blades were just vanishing overhead into the mist.

Of course we carried raincoats but I also had my tent fly. While it would have been handy if it had been raining during lunch, a fly can be used in an emergency situation to keep a patient warm in a similar fashion to the way children play with a parachute and get under it. The idea is for everyone to sit facing each other then drape the fly overhead, pulling the edge behind and sitting on it. Not only does it stop the wind completely but the humidity rises inside so it is much warmer. Tim Swale often carries a purpose built emergency shelter called a Bothy bag which works on a similar principle. If you don't have our own then a club fly is stored in the van.

RESCUE BEACONS

American made Personal Locator Beacons (model ACR 375) which were bought new by NZ by Rescue Beacon Hire Ltd for a Government Department, and are still virtually new, are now available at discounts of a \$280 to \$314. They have a "512 Chip" which, upon activation, makes them report to the NZ Rescue Co-ordination Centre (SAR co-ordinators) in Lower Hutt. If the Club orders ten beacons or more then each will cost \$249 per Beacon plus \$25 freight per shipment to Main Centres in NZ. Further information is available at:

<http://www.rescuebeaconhire.co.nz/ex-lease-beacon-purchase.html>

For a review of PLBs see <http://www.gpsaustralia.net/>

If you are interested in ordering a rescue beacon, please contact Rob Pringle on rob.pringle@mxtarr.co.nz or phone 0274 262 176 by 30 June.

SKI GEAR FOR SALE or FREE

Alpine gear: Boots (size 10), skis, poles

Nordic gear: Boots, skis, poles (almost unused)

Ski clothing

Contact Rocky phone 354 1134 or 021 066 1512

The Walking Access Mapping System

by Merv Matthews

When the Walking Access Commission first produced their Walking Access Mapping System (WAMS) it was welcomed by trampers and other outdoor users. It used the standard LINZ Topo maps from which one could switch to the latest high-definition aerial photography, thereby allowing the terrain for a particular area to be studied. Additional map layers included unformed legal roads not shown on standard Topo maps and which could be used for access to the Ranges. The *Drawing Tool* allowed waypoints and tracks to be drawn on the maps, then downloaded as GPX files for use on mapping programs such as FreshMap, Maptoaster, Garmin Mapsource etc.

Since July 2016 a complete revamp of the website has been gradually taking place with more layers of information added to suit the needs of other users. However, certain features have either disappeared or are now accessed differently. The biggest loss is that of the grid lines on the Topo maps, making them less useful for navigation. There is no intention to replace them, presumably because so few people have objected. (Perhaps I was the only one who complained.)

The display of NZTM coordinates at the bottom of the screen has also been removed. This feature was useful for displaying the coordinates of, say, a hut or other destination by using the mouse and pointer. The displayed numbers

could then be used to create a waypoint in your GPS receiver. It was also useful in finding the locations where the 1km grid lines used to be, thereby allowing waypoints to be created at 1km intervals along the top and down one side of the map. However, coordinates can still be obtained in a roundabout way by switching to the **Outdoor Access Map** then choosing the *More* icon then *Locate*.

To load the current version just Google "WAMS" and select "Walking Access Mapping System". There are five different maps, each containing additional layers and sub-layers which may be checked/unchecked as needed. The map normally used by trampers would be **Tracks and Trails**, so click on that one. You may switch maps at any time by clicking on the left of the three icons at top right of the screen. Now choose from four different **Basemaps** by clicking on the centre icon at top right; the most useful would be *NZ Topographic* or *NZ Imagery*. Once loaded you can click and drag the map to the location you want to view, or zoom in or out. Note that when using NZ Imagery you are able to zoom in for a real closeup view at a progressively sharper resolution, but if you switch back to the Topo map you will get a blank screen. You need to zoom out a little to redisplay the map.

Down the left side of the screen are five icons – pass the pointer over them to see their titles. Select the *Layers List* icon to see what extra information is available for that map and make your choices. Some will already be checked. Access sub-layers by clicking the drop-down arrow to the left of the layer name. Click the double arrow at the bottom to slide the list out of view. If the map becomes too cluttered with information just uncheck the offending layers or sub-layers and they will disappear.

The downloading of tracks and waypoints has shifted from the *Drawing Tool* to the *Sketch to GPS tool*. This tool allows you to draw a track or place a point which can then be exported to a KMZ, GPX or Txt file. The default is 'KMZ' which is used by Google Earth, so you will now need to change this to 'GPX' before downloading to your PC, and thence to your GPS receiver or mapping program.

You might like to check whether your house or outbuildings are encroaching on your neighbour's boundary by choosing the *Property Information Map* plus the *NZ Imagery* basemap and zooming down to your property. Click anywhere within your property to get a green border and detailed information about your allotment. Some survey lines may not necessarily be accurate due to the age of the survey data, but this is rare. An example can be seen in the upper reaches of Scotts Road where the survey lines are consistently offset about 20m from the physical road showing in the aerial image. At one point a woolshed appears to be located on the surveyed road.

If you get frustrated with the complexity of the expanded system you could always go back to the opening screen and select 'WAMS Help'. Surprisingly it is really very helpful.

About the middle of this year, Walking Access will be launching a new website which will bring together four existing sites - walkingaccess.govt.nz, WAMS, *Both Sides of the Fence* and *Follow the Kiwi Way* - under one roof for the first time. Take a look at "Follow the Kiwi Way" – it already has a link to WAMS.

We welcome Chris Burnett, Sarah Olson and family, Richard Rollins and family, Joseph Thevenard, Karl Taylor van der Plas and family, Michael Blaschke, Margaret Mathieson, James O'Dowd, Jeffrey Yee and family and Tomas Mclean to the club.



July Wednesday Tramps			July Thursday Tramps		
4	Marion Beadle	323 3246	5	John Doolan	355 2100
11	Denise & Chris Brunskill	354 2511	12	Christine Scott	354 0510
18	Rita Hodson	323 5491	19	Royce Mills	355 8556
25	Coralie / Evan Davies	357 6288	26	John Brock	329 4834

July Weekend Trips				
14-15	Beginners' Ski Weekend	Easy	Ken Mercer	027 364 6475
21-22	South Ohau Hut	Medium	Dave Mitchell	329 2803
28-29	Waihohonu Hut	Easy	Garry Grayson	027 269 5934
28-29	Ski Improvement Weekend	All	Peter Bowker	022 061 7461

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 Land SAR/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.

14th-15th July Beginners' Ski Weekend

Ken Mercer

Easy

027 364 6475

This is a good opportunity for budding skiers to get together, enjoy company at the lodge, and learn how to handle long slippery feet. Please encourage your friends to give it a go!

21st-22nd July South Ohau Hut

Dave Mitchell

Medium

329 2803

If the river level is low we will try going to South Ohau hut via the river; it takes about 3 hours. Otherwise we will have to come up Gable end ridge and drop down on the Yeates 500 track. A quick visit to Te Matawai, to see what it's like now, is an option. This will be a medium trip to a good hut we don't usually stay at. Importantly there is a good fireplace.

28th-29th July Waihohonu Hut

Garry Grayson

Easy

027 269 5934

Come join us for the easiest overnighiter you'll ever find!

A very short walk from the carpark on the Desert Road takes you to Waihohonu Hut, (aka 'The Ruapehu Palace'). Weather (Snow) permitting we'll take a leisurely drive to this carpark, wander in to the hut, get settled, then spend an afternoon relaxing, tucking into various tasty food and refreshments followed by dinner for the knockout blow! No other exercise is required on this trip!

28th-29th July Ski Improvement Weekend

Peter Bowker

All

022 061 7461

Not an "instructional" weekend so much as a shared endeavour. Based on various Youtube clips and books we will try out some drills and exercises. We will also try videoing ourselves and match against the "7 deadly sins" of carving and consider useful drills to work on individual issues. It might be useful to consider and discuss differences between 'carving skis' and fatter skis used in backcountry skiing and different techniques which might be required.

Early Notice:

19th-22th Oct Northern Kaimai Range

Adam Matich

Medium

022 358-8062

No one from down this area ever goes to the Kaimais, so this is your chance, unless you organise a trip yourself. The area we are going to is NW of Tauranga, viz. west of Katikati, so we will travel part way and stay somewhere (probably Rotorua) on Friday night. The two huts we are staying at are Waitawheta Hut on Saturday night and Daly's Clearing Hut, somewhat to the north, on Sunday night. Waitawheta Hut will have to be booked months ahead if you want to be assured of a bed.

We start off on the eastern side at Woodland Road, follow Wairoa Stream Track, touch on Lindemann's Loop Track, steam through Wairoa Shelter, and then travel NW along Upper Waitawheta Track, from the intersection, to Waitawheta Hut for the night. On day two we head west on Waipapa Track towards Te Aroha and north on Mangakino Pack Track to Daly's Clearing Hut for the night. This is a fair distance. Then on day three we head east to eventually drop onto Waitengae Stm Track and through to Woodlands Road.

If you don't want to commit early to hut bookings, there is nothing stopping you taking your chances on there being space at Waitawheta Hut rather closer to the weekend. Apparently there is also space available for camping.

The Kaimais have quite a history of gold mining, and so some of the tracks (but not all) are on defunct tramways which means fast, easy travel. As a result the distances involved don't always have to be daunting. In certain areas of the northern Kaimais there are relics of the mining era, so it is not just a walk in the bush. There will be other things to see. Have a look at the DoC propaganda. (<https://www.doc.govt.nz/Documents/parks-and-recreation/tracks-and-walks/bay-of-plenty/kaimai-to-coast-brochure.pdf>)



6th May Rangipo

Report: Adam Matich

Photo: Adam Matich

Rain and high river levels put paid to the advertised trip, but a weather window allowed us to go to Rangipo Hut on the Sunday. It took us a little under two hours (each way) from the Tukino ski field road. There is no snow up there yet and so travel was easy. Fortunately, the bridge across the Whangaehu River has been replaced, by a shiny new one, so we didn't get our feet wet. Rangipo Hut has had some work done as well; a new floor and some bunk-space removed from the main room, hopefully to make room for more seating as it is a bit tight.

We were Mark Learmonth, Garry Grayson, and Adam Matich.



Thursday 17th May: Tunupo

Report: John Thornley

Ten of us headed uphill in unpromising weather conditions, hoping that Mt Tunupo was 'still there'. Above the signposts and on the pinnacle final ridge, the mist was low, the winter blasts cold and the rains had become sleet. The leading group wisely turned around, and we all hunched down in the grasses, behind sheltering rocks, and ate lunch. The lower slopes have shown great recovery after the storm, over a decade ago, brought down mature trees and left tracks littered with broken limbs. Now the ferns and moss have regrown and the ridge track offers native bush as beautiful as any section in the lower Ruahine Range. As always, looking back on the day, as we warm up the bodies in shower and bath, it was another good day. But not a day for photographs!

26th - 27th May Tutuwai Hut

Report: Garry Grayson

Photos: Garry Grayson

The week leading up to 26th & 27th was dogged by daily rain and occasional thunder storms which unfortunately forced a rethink of the planned Maropea Forks trip due to unfavourable river conditions yet again. So by Thursday it was obvious that an alternative was required and several options were tossed in the hat, the lucky draw being Tutuwai Hut. Adam, Dave and I departed PNth 7:30ish, collected Jenny en route through Pahiatua and made our way to Walls Whare. Of course, this included the mandatory bakery stop in Carterton. The road end parking area is currently unavailable due to road repairs meaning a couple of km walk from a roadside park at the barrier chain to reach the Waiohine footbridge.

Our aim was to complete a full circuit of the loop tracks leading to Tutuwai and out. Anti-clockwise direction was chosen meaning a steady climb to point 682 first up, then the descent to Cone Hut for a lunch stop in about 2½ hrs. From here it was a very easy and scenic wander along the Tauherenikau Track, some beaut' camping spots passed along the way, had us at Tutuwai Hut at a slightly embarrassing time of 2:00pm. Now, had I been on my own, I would have made a coffee, put my feet up and enjoyed the lovely sun drenched deck space for the remainder of the afternoon. However, this was never an option due to certain others among us craving for more exercise, ie, firewood

gathering. After an hour or so of gathering, sawing and splitting, a reasonable stack of wood was evident under the deck seating set for drying. A fully deserved drinks and snacks break was then taken.



As seems to be the case nowadays, many of these huts are very popular in weekends so we were expecting a constant stream of people to arrive as the day wore on. True to form, there were small groups arriving, some just passing through on day trips, others for the night, with a total of 11 overnights all up, not too bad as it turned out. One of the last groups to arrive announced they had seen a group of 20 coming to this hut and that there was another 20 en route from another direction. We looked at each other in disbelief wondering if they were expecting bunk space! It turned out that they were all from an Outdoor Ed' Centre in Wellington and were all 'decked out' for camping on the river terraces below the hut.

Eventually a 'tent city' was established below us, bonfire lit and a few hours of teenager screams and yells echoed through the evening until it seemed exhaustion finally caught up. The forecast 'low' snow levels never eventuated but early Sunday morning rain meant a slog up the steep climb from the hut to Mt Reeves in rain coats. Branching NNE off onto the non-maintained track after Mt Reeves soon put us back at Walls Whare footbridge finishing the loop and another shortish day of 4hrs.



Due to temperatures of the day not really favouring 'icecreams', it was back to the same Carterton Bakery for an extended lunch break then home.

Our team was Jenny, Dave, Adam and Garry.

Sunday 27th May Palmerston North Walks

Report: Linda Campbell

Clad in rain gear and with a couple of umbrellas up six of us started our walk at the walkway entrance on Ruahine Street. Before long the rain had stopped and the umbrellas were closed. It was not the originally planned walk but, with the Manawatu Striders marathon event using the Riverside walk way, it made sense to start at the Mangaone Stream and to join the Riverside walkway a bit later. It was a really lovely walk as well as a very social walk. Coming around near the race course the decision was made to stop by at Alla's home for morning tea. From there we went to the walkway and heading for the café at the Esplanade. While having lunch the rain returned but, fortunately for us, by the time we were back walking the skies had cleared. We finished our walk back on Ruahine Street about four kilometres from where we started and got a lift back to pick up our vehicles. Tim, Ken, Mary, Alla, Helen and I enjoyed our walk and I recommend it for a bit of exercise if you are not wanting to go too far from home.

Wednesday 30th May Trampers Do Battle with Battle Hill

Report: Ian Brookes

Photos: Ian Brookes

On Wednesday May 30th, 29 Wednesday trampers (including two guests – one a refugee from the Thursday group) drove over the Paekakariki Hill Road to the Battle Hill Farm Forest Park. The original planned rendezvous at the junction with SH1 was not possible, due to a lack of off-road parking space, but everyone made it safely to the final destination.

The initial objective was the Transmission Gully - Puketiro Loop which is reached via an impressive and presumably costly underpass beneath the Transmission Gully roadworks, and then through a paddock of kale to the start of the climb. From there, a four-wheel drive track climbs steadily through a pine forest for about an hour, although part of the way up there is a welcoming glade with seats, that proved a perfect place for morning tea.



Through the kale paddock



The climb through the pines



Morning tea

At the top of the climb, the forest gives way to open country and by following the yellow markers, leads to a lookout which gives great views of the Pauatahanui Inlet and Mana Island. Unfortunately, the group at the back (The Breakaways) missed the markers and headed off into the Akatarawa Forest. They only realised their mistake when they reached a locked gate – otherwise they could have made Upper Hutt!



The view from the lookout



The Breakaways



Learning about the 1846 battle

The main group descended through more pines, returning to the farm building for lunch and then had a choice of the many tracks across the farm park. The majority followed the Summit Loop (Orange markers) which led to the battle site where, in 1846, 300 Ngāti Toa warriors held off government forces for a week before retreating. The track then leads to the Battle Hill Summit (251 metres a.s.l.) and returns through a very attractive patch of bush. They arrived back at the cars, just in time to meet the Breakaways finally having completed the loop. Refreshments were taken in Paekakariki before returning home. Many thanks to the drivers – Chris (van), Raewyn, Anne R and Rod.

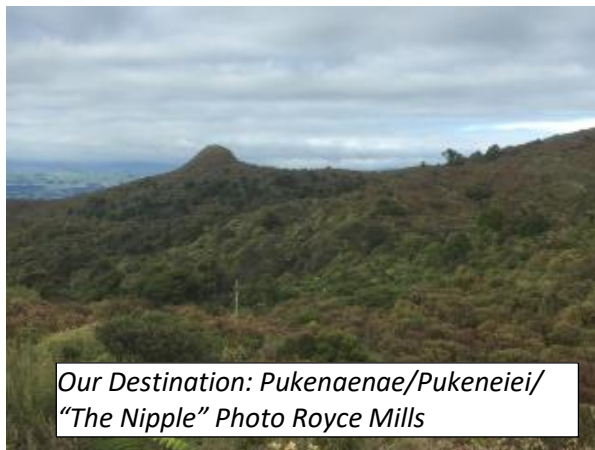
Ian Brookes (Tramp Leader)

Thursday 31st May 2018 Sledge track and Otangane loop.

Report: Royce Mills

The last day of May turned out to be a perfect day to be in the hills. The weather was calm, sunny and cool. Twenty- one of us set off, nineteen with the aim of walking the Otangane loop. Another three chose to go only part of the way.

From the Sledge track car park we set off at 8am and headed up through Hardings Park to a morning tea stop at a clearing near the sign indicating the start of the Otangane Loop (“3 hours, 6.5km”). We headed anti-clockwise around the loop track and reached the signpost pointing to “Pukenaenae” (also spelt Pukeneiei, and colloquially known by trampers as “The Nipple”). On the high point (623m) we sat as best we could amongst the dense vegetation and had an early lunch, enjoying the warm sunshine and the views looking east.



Our Destination: Pukenaenae/Pukeneiei/ “The Nipple” Photo Royce Mills

Along the way Merv Matthews placed a new sign to show the turn off to the track to Aruwaru (formerly Arawaru) trig.



Photo: William Laing



Lunch in sun on top Photo: Royce Mills

The Otangane Loop track is well formed with very little mud and is very well signposted. It deserves more visitors. Once this plateau is reached the terrain is remarkably level and good views are to be had of the extensive tops here. The Otangane Loop track can also be accessed from the relatively new track that starts at Naenae Road on the

Pahiatua side of the Tararua Range.

We completed the loop and retraced our steps back to the car park. Although close to Palmerston North it is a solid day’s tramp of 15km and it took us about seven hours. Six in the group finished by coming out via the swing bridge, the Arapuke track and the Back Track to add even more exercise.

Thanks to our leader Suzanne Clark for an excellent day in the outdoors.

2nd-4th June Ranigoto Range

Report: Adam Matich

Our destination was Wildlife Hut which is 20 minutes walk from Owawenga Road, ESE of Te Kuiti. This road degenerates into a 2WD gravel road a considerable distance before the hut turnoff. Two and a half kilometres after the turnoff there is a locked gate (BF34 1337 5128) and somewhere around there the road becomes the Owawenga track; all named after an eponymous stream. The hut is reasonably tidy, has 4 bunks with mattresses of variable quality, and a good wood burner but no axe and a crappy saw. Given the short distance from the car (or if you have a proper 4WD), take your own, and some firewood. There are rats in the ceiling, but as rats go, they were well behaved and did not cause us to lose any sleep or food, or to spend time standing on furniture.

Wildlife Hut is in the Cowan Wildlife Refuge (Cowan Block) and thus is also known as Cowan Block Hut. Owawenga Track runs north into the Rangitoto Station Reserve (Native Forest Restoration Trust) and to the east of that is the far northern Pureora Forest Park which contains the Mangatutu Ecological Area. So three ecological areas for the price of

one. It is in the latter ecological area that there are rather considerable efforts to prop up the north island kokako population.



Friendly stream in the Mangatutu Ecological Area

As we arrived around midday there was time for an afternoon walk up to Rangitoto Trig (3.5 hrs all up). This was easy travel on old logging tracks and then the southern arm of Waimahora Road, which probably only still exists because it is a service road up to two cell-phone towers. The forest down off the sides of the logging track looked like good forest to wander in; open with not much understory.

On day two, just past the locked gate we headed up the ex-vehicle track to Baldy (pt 855). The first third of this (heading NE) was a bit manky. A little overgrown, including some blackberry. But once we started climbing SE the track became very civilised.

At the change in direction from heading NE to SE there is a track (not on the topo maps) that heads north to the air strip. The track all the way to Baldy was very well marked. It was once we were on Baldy that things got a bit stressful. It was a bit cold and windy up there, and the track markers stopped on the summit at a sign pointing right to Punga, which we weren't interested in at all. We phuffed



around in the cold for half an hour trying to find our way back onto the ex-vehicle track, which is not at all obvious above the bush-line.

Eventually, with the help of the GPS, we discovered that our way back into the bush was only a little bit east of where we climbed out of it and once in the bush the track was again very obvious. Going to

the "Punga" sign on the summit was unnecessary and misleading, unless one wanted to go to Punga. Five minutes later we were heading north on the Ranginui Trig Road and, not long after, we found the Red Triangle track. The northern



Easy well marked tracks in the Mangatutu Ecol. Area

end of this track has a different name. We didn't know this at the time and so phuffed around some more before deciding this was where we wanted to go. This track drops into the catchment of the Mangatutu Stream (Mangatutu Ecological Area) and is where all the serious kokako wrangling happens in the far north Pureora FP. The Red Triangle track runs down to a loop track, and a branch then heads South back up to Ranginui Peak. We took the other branch to head NNE, and then climb up onto the Ranginui Trig Road near the northern end of the airstrip.

The forest down in the ecological area was excellent. It was very open with little understory, gentle terrain, and some very large trees which are a terrible waste of firewood. In particular, there was a huge kahikatea, just 1 minute off the track, which would keep a family warm for decades. The tracks are very well marked, but you need to pay attention as there are lots of trap and bait lines and one of two subsidiary tracks. None of the tracks in this area are on the topo maps, which is a shame as it is a very nice area. All we had to go on was a mud-map

(<https://www.nfrt.org.nz/reserves/rangitoto-station-walking-tracks/>) which does not show all of the tracks either.

Once we climbed back above the bushline, we followed an ex-farm track to the road where we had the option of taking the airstrip track back to the car or following the road. The weather was changing and we had doubts about the quality of the track south of the airstrip, so we opted for the road. This proved fortuitous as we passed through the Rangitoto Station homestead area where we had a look through the woolshed, which is used by four different tramping clubs and is a great building for their purposes. The rain had started by now, so we hot-footed it south along the road to the car and fortunately only got damp.

On day three we packed up and headed to Waitomo for an easy little walk on the Waitomo Walkway. We weren't impressed, but the loop walk from the Ruakuri Cave car park was rather good. This easy walk took us through a couple of small tunnels and had views into a large tunnel with a stream flowing through. Much more interesting

We were Mark Learmonth and Adam Matich

Wednesday 6th June

Bold Wednesday Trampers Defy Intimidating Weather Forecast to Tramp Pohangina Loops

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos Maureen, Plots and stats William.

Twenty three **bold** trampers gathered at the Opawe Road end of the Pettifar Track for a tramp briefing and an 8.45 am start. The weather forecasted was for cool and falling temperatures and heavy showers later in the day. Although the tracks were muddy in places they were relatively easy going. For most trampers morning tea was taken on the river bank at about location (2) on the map.

The river was in low winter flow and the anticipated challenging stream crossings of a previous visit non events. The bush was damp and lovely and the specimen kahikatea and totara a joy to behold. We tramped around both the Pettifar and Gilchrist Loops then some chose to tramp the extra km to the camp site while the majority travelled in the vehicles for lunch at about 11.30am.

By soon after noon we had travelled to the start of the Fern Walk (8). This track was in good order and as we tramped the temperature fell to about 8 degrees and although the skies darkened the promised rain held off. We enjoyed the contrasting vegetation, the ferns, the fungus, and the specimen kahikatea, rimu, and martai. By 1.35pm we were all safely out in light and increasing rain.

We all tramped at least 12.5km and some used as much as 2848kcal. With this in mind we made our way to the Herb Farm Cafe where we were made most welcome.

Thanks to drivers Bev,Rita,Arthur,Bob and Chris(Van).



Trampers briefed by trip leader Bob



Trampers praying that briefing will come to an end!



Three Loops Tramped, Linked by a Vehicle Ride after Lunch at the Camp Site

Wednesday 13th June: Ohau River and Six Discs

Reporter/TripLeader: Jill Faulkner.

Photos: Maureen & William

It took a little longer than usual to rendezvous at the agreed location, that is, Poads Road near Levin. With the Opiki Road closed, our detour took us close to the flood gates, where we could (carefully!) watch the swollen Manawatu River.

Luckily our Six Discs Tramp was under a gap in the clouds and only light rain fell all day. It made the black of the supplejack stand out and green leaves glisten and gleam. The nikau palms towered high above. We negotiated the lower muddy track, keeping the roaring Ohau River often in our ears or eyes. The smaller Blackwater Stream was

crossed by the suspension bridge. Most of the 25 hardy trampers returned the same way, while the advanced group completed the 9.9km loop, coming back along the steeper Waiopehu Track. All were safely out by 2.15pm.

Many thanks to van driver, Chris, and to Marion, Rod, Richard and Arthur for driving and taking their cars. We moved on to Shannon for refreshments.

Thanks to everyone for their enthusiasm for the great outdoors.

Crossing the paddocks to the park entrance



Fungi



Dennis opens his lunch

Clear felled but far from beautiful





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Committee 2018 - 2019

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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 021 054 2560. 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	The lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860.
Adult	\$37	\$52	
Secondary School	\$30	\$45	
Primary School	\$25	\$40	
Pre-school (3-5 yo)	\$12	\$12	

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.