



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

PO Box 685, Hamilton 3240 • www.wtc.org.nz

June 2022



Ascending Ruapehu Photo by Rizal Razak

WAIKATO HUT

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WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB

P. O. Box 685, Hamilton 3240 • www.wtc.org.nz

Free to members

Member of: Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand
Inc

Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association

BULLETIN No 838

June 2022

General Committee

(Contact details listed below)

President: Judith Bogle	027 3810283
Secretary: Dorothy Cawdron	027 7424222
Treasurer: Guy Domett treasurer@wtc.org.nz	027 2483008
Members: John McArthur (VP Tramp) Stephen Prendergast (VP Ski)	
Stephen Phillips Allan Wickens Lois Rowell Ashley Hoskin Mike Barker	
Mike Nightingale	8562394

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**Tramping Subcommittee**

**Tramping email:** [waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com](mailto:waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com)

|                                                                                                      |              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Chairperson:</b> John McArthur <a href="mailto:mcArthur@outlook.co.nz">mcArthur@outlook.co.nz</a> | 021 2889641  |
| <b>Club Captain:</b> Les Warren                                                                      | 027 864 4937 |
| <b>Membership:</b> Lois Rowell                                                                       | 027 2881148  |
| <b>Member:</b> Selwyn June                                                                           | 027 4978151  |
| Rupert Craggs                                                                                        | 027 6811926  |
| <b>Web &amp; Facebook:</b> Rizal Razak                                                               | 021 2676566  |
| <b>Transport:</b> Ashley Hoskin                                                                      | 027 4909545  |
| <b>Social convenor:</b> Jacqui Dick                                                                  | 021 1375201  |

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Ski Subcommittee

Ski email: waikatoski@gmail.com	Waikato Hut phone: 07 8923821
Chairperson: Stephen Prendergast	021 466247
Bookings: Stephen Prendergast	021 466247
Finance officer: Michael Barker	021 2463500
Members: Steve Phillips	021 1031436
Ashley Hoskin	027 4909545

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**Bulletin:** Lesley Kugeleijn      027 4942414  
**Editor & Club Librarian:** Dianne June      [djune@xtra.co.nz](mailto:djune@xtra.co.nz)      07 8433066  
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Waikato Tramping Club account: 03 1555 0091625 02 (include the trip no.)

Club night, Wednesday 1st June

Note change of venue for this evening

For the July club night we will be having more of a social get together since it is mid-winter. We will meet at The Cook Bar, 7 Cook Street, Hamilton East at 7pm. We will have a room to ourselves upstairs so will be able to run through the trip programme and notices plus get a good chance to socialise and have a drink (or two!).

For those of you who would like dinner there first (the menu looks really great!) we will meet at 6pm. Please email Jacqui Dick if you are keen for this so that she can book a table. jacquimd@me.com

Otherwise, we look forward to seeing you for the meeting

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2021/2022

3008	12 Jun	M	Mustelid luring on Pirongia tracks	Allan Wickens
3009	18/19 Jun		TBA	Les Warren
3010	24-26 Jun	M/fun	Ruapehu walks	Jacqui Dick
3011	3 Jul	E/M	Rotorua Walks	Selwyn June
3012	9/10 Jul	E/M	Whirinaki	Judith Bogle
3013	17 Jul	E/M	Natural bridge	John Davies
3014	23/24 Jul	M	Snowcraft 1	Jacqui Dick/Mike Peck
3015	31 Jul	M	Maungatautari traverse	Les Warren
3016	6-7 Aug	E/M	Tuahu track to Sapphire hot springs	Lois Rowell
3017	14 Aug	M	Pylon peak	Rizal Razak
3018	20/21 Jul	E/M	Taupo cycling & walking	Dianne June
3019	27/28 Jul	E	Trip leader training	Judith Bogle
3020	3 / 4 Sept	M/F	Snowcraft II	Jacqui Dick/ Mike Peck
3021	11 Sept	E/M	Botany at Te Kauri park	Selwyn June
3022	17/18 Sept		Waikaremoana	Judith Bogle
3023	24/25 Sept	F	East ridge Mt. Taranaki	Mike Peck
3024	2 Oct	M	Caving	Andrew Fredrickson/ Jacqui Dick

Don't let a lack of equipment deter you from coming on a trip. Talk to the trip leader - who may be able to assist with lending or sharing gear.

TIME and FITNESS GUIDELINES

E = Easy. Up to 4 hours per day, pace slower than E/M.

E/M = Easy/Medium. Up to 5-6 hours/day, pace slower than M.

M = Medium. Up to 6-7 hours/day, at standard walking pace.

M/F = Medium/Fit. Up to 7-8 hours/day, pace faster than M.

F = Fit. Over 8 hours/day, pace faster than M/F.

Note that factors such as party size, fitness, weather, terrain and leadership will influence actual times, so the above are estimates only.

Bookings and Cancellations: no later than the WEDNESDAY before the trip.

Any person withdrawing after this day without good reason will be charged the full cost of the trip.

Departure Point: Trips depart from the river end of London Street. Cars can be parked, facing the road, in the car park on the right at the end of the cul de sac. If in doubt contact your trip leader.

Weekend Trips: leave on Friday nights at 7pm sharp unless otherwise stated.

Day Trips: leave Sunday mornings at 8am sharp.

If someone is concerned because a trip is late back, contact:

1) Club Captain; 2) President; 3) committee member.

Minimum equipment required:

Day Trips: A thermal layer (polypropylene, polyester etc or wool), an insulating layer of fleece (polartec etc) or wool and a water/wind-proof parka outer shell.

Shorts or longjohns/over-trousers in cool or wet weather. Torch and sunscreen.

Boots or strong shoes. Lunch, snacks and water bottle. First aid kit.

Weekend Trips: The above plus pack with plastic liner bag, sleeping bag, tent, sleeping mat, cooker, billy, plate or bowl, spoon, food, spare dry clothes for evening, towel, toilet gear, light camp shoes. A water purifier can be useful. Plus, in extreme weather or country: additional warm top, over-trousers or woollen/fleece trousers, warm outdoor mittens or gloves, over-mitts, warm hat or balaclava, sunglasses. Ice axe and crampons for snow.

Trip Descriptions

REMEMBER: 2 clicks confirm your booking on the website

Trip 3008

Mustelid luring on Pirongia Tracks

12 June

This is now a day trip due to a lack of hut space or camping spots for an overnight trip. The plan is to do a tramp from the eastern side of Mt. Pirongia up the Wharauoa track to the junction with the Mahaukura track and back down to the Grey road shelter. Along the way you'll be removing some old bait (usually eggs) from the stoat traps and replacing it with new bait or longlife lures.

But first we'll drive to the Envirocentre in Pirongia township (the headquarters of the Pirongia Restoration Society) for a training session on what you will be asked

Then on to Whakarewarewa Forest on the outskirts of Rotorua city where we'll take the Tokorangi Pa Track (11.5 km, 3.5 hrs). Walking through stands of exotic trees including redwoods, Douglas fir and larch we reach the fortification trenches of an old pa at 500 metres above sea level with views of Mt Ngongotaha, Rotorua Lake and countryside. This is a loop track, parts of which we share with bikes. A hot swim may also be on the cards so bring your swimwear.

Leader: Selwyn June

Ph: 027 4978151

Grade: E/M

Transport: Senior member \$21-35

Senior non-member: \$26-40

Trip 3012

Whirinaki

9/10 June

This is an overnight trip to Whirinaki where we will be walking from Plateau Road to Pukahunui Road and staying at Upper Whirinaki Hut (this is 9 bunk bed hut). It is a 3 hour drive there and on the first day it is a short walk to the Upper Whirinaki Hut of 4km or we can do a loop 11 km, the first 7km being on an easy track. But there are several river crossings on the first day, so expect to get wet. Second day will be approximately 6 hour and 11km hike going up towards Upper Te Hoe Hut and at the top we will turn off back towards Pukahunui Road. Should be able to get a good view down the valley from the top.

Leader: Judith Bogle

Ph: 027 4978151

Grade: M

Transport: Senior member \$42-70

Senior non-member: \$52-80

Trip 3013

Natural bridge & Puketutu Pa

17 June

Mangapohue Natural Bridge is a highlight on the scenic drive from Waitomo Village to Marokopa. The 5 min track to the left is even pushchair-friendly and follows a boardwalk through an impressive limestone gorge that brings you underneath a natural bridge. The 17m high limestone arch, which spans the Mangapohue Stream, is all that remains of an ancient cave system. From here the track becomes stepped and passes under the bridge giving a superb view of the ceiling studded with stalactite-like formations and an excellent view back down the gorge. The track continues for about 15 min over farmland.

We will then endeavour to walk across the road and up through a pine forest and native bush to an old pa site. It is possible to see remnants of the pa while ascending the hill on which it is situated. This would be a good family trip.

Leader: John Davies

Ph: 027 4772209

Grade: E/M

Transport: Senior member \$21-35

Senior non-member: \$26-40

Trip 3014

Snowcraft Course No. 1

23/24th July

This is one of the most popular trips we run each year and for good reason. It is aimed at introducing you to the alpine environment in which you will learn valuable skills to safely enjoy it.

The basics of Snowcraft will be taught on Saturday including how to use crampons and ice axes, self-arrest, how to walk on icy slopes, navigation tips, basic avalanche awareness, plus what to wear etc.

On Sunday the aim is to offer a couple of options of day walks in which to practice what you have learnt. Options may include the summit of Ruapehu or up to the

Pinnacles lookout. This is very much weather dependent.

Given reasonable weather, by the end of the weekend you will understand the principles behind the rather complex concept of "Snowcraft". It takes a lot of practice and a genuine understanding of what is real and perceived danger when entering into the snow and ice heights such as Ruapehu. Our leaders have been doing this sort of thing for years and yet they never fail to be fascinated by the world of snow and ice.

The departure time will be early evening on Friday 22nd July. We will be based at our very comfortable and warm Hut on Mt Ruapehu for the weekend. All meals are provided.

A full list of gear will be provided. Crampons and ice axes can be hired from the club. If you have any questions email the leaders or visit Mike in the Bivouac store. To participate in this trip, you need to be a member of the club. Application details are on the club website

Leaders: Mike Peck

Ph: 021 369 256

Grade: M

Jacqui Dick

Ph: 021 1375201

Cost: Approximately \$200 – includes transport, food, and hut fees.

Registration: This needs to be done through the Waikato Tramping Club website. Spaces are limited so it is advisable to book in early. A deposit will be required to confirm your booking

Trip 3015

Maungatautari traverse

31 July

The plan is to start at the Northern Enclosure end, near the end of Hicks Road. We have to park in front of the Maungatautari Marae, and walk 5min to the end of Hicks Road and the start of the track.

Unfortunately, there are no toilets at the Marae. If you really need to go to toilet before starting, there are toilets on the way at Waipuke Park, that we can stop at. Otherwise, there are two toilets just inside the Northern Enclosure entrance (30 to 45min) from carpark. Need to bring own toilet paper.

From the end of Hicks Road, a well-formed path takes you up to the entrances.

Note: this is a new path which is undulating with a short (50m) steep climb to the entrances (and a short steep descent back down). It is about 20 to 40min thru the farmland to the entrances.

For the Traverse, we take the (second) Over the Mountain Track entrance gate.

From the entrance gate it is about 800m uphill on a good track before taking the "tramping" track up to Maungatautari (797m).

From Maungatautari, we continue along the tramping track to Pukeatua (753m).

This section has several steep ups and downs. From here, it is mainly downhill all the way to the carpark at the Southern Enclosure and Visitor Centre for a hot or cold drink and toilets.

Trip Options:

Option A – The Traverse. Allow 5 to 6hrs.

Option B – northern enclosure to Maungatautari and return. Allow around 3 -4hrs.

This option could return via the Wairere Traverse track, which is well graded and much easier walking.

Option C – Walk up to the Northern Enclosure and walk the track in the Enclosure, which takes about 40min or take a little longer to enjoy the day. In all, allow around 2hrs for this option.

Transport: Much will depend on numbers and whether we have enough for a van. If, taking cars, we will need to arrange things around leaving a car at the Southern Enclosure.

Leader: Les Warren **Ph:** 027 864 4937

Grade: E or M/F

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Transport: Senior member \$21-35

Senior non-member: \$26-40

Trip 3016

Tuahu track to Sapphire springs

6/7 Aug

This 5 hour, medium level trip starts at the carpark off Wairakau Road south of Te Aroha. There is approximately a 50 minute walk through forest access roads before meeting the bush-line. The track is a steady incline up to the Tuahu Saddle where there are lovely views of the Waikato, crossing the North-South Track before dropping down the eastern side of the Kaimais through native forest. The track ends at Hot Springs Road Katikati. There will be approximately a 1-2 km road walk to the Sapphire Springs Camp Ground where we can soak our weary bodies in the warm pools. Accommodation choices are tenting or cabins. Sunday we will return via the Te Rereatukahia Hut Track. It is a 3- 3.5 hour steady climb to the Hut where we will stop for lunch. We will then take the bait line shortcut down a ridge coming out near the forest roads back to the Wairakau Road carpark.

Leader: Lois Rowell

Ph: 027 2881148

Grade: E/M

Transport: Senior member \$42-70

Senior non-member: \$52-80

Trip 3017

Pylon Peak – Waiorongomai loop

14 Aug

The walk starts at the Old Battery in the valley via the low-level track. After crossing the Waiorongomai Stream, ascend approximately 660m up the ridge of the Pylon Peak Track and past some mining relics, the final approach to the ridge top is steep and out onto the top of the Kaimai Range at Pylon Peak. After reaching the top and eating our lunch with a beautiful view of the Waikato Plains, we will then go via the Old North South Track to break out onto the Waipapa track, proceed to the head of the valley, and return to the carpark via the Waiorongomai valley.

Leader: Rizal Razak

Ph: 021 2676566

Grade: M

Email: rizraz@gmail.com

Transport: Senior member \$21-35

Senior non-member: \$26-40

Editorial

Wise thought came from our social convenor at the last club night. She will not be seeking guest speakers while the attendance at the meetings continues to be so low.

So here's hoping that numbers attending continue to increase back to the levels we have seen in the past. The traffic light level is due to be reviewed later this month. Top marks must go to the trip leaders putting themselves out there providing opportunities to still enjoy the fresh air. And of course, praise must go to yourselves for adapting to the need for Covid protection while trying to lead a 'normal' life. There are some interesting options coming up in the programme for the rest of the year, so get out there and enjoy yourselves with renewed vigour. We've had plenty of time to assess our fitness, now is the time to test it. Even I am finding my fitness improving. I'm not necessarily going any faster but I'm getting better at it.

After all the adventures of recent months it's time for some more trip reports after the event please.

And having the club assist the Pirongia Restoration with their conservation work controlling stoat numbers on Mt. Pirongia shortly will be a marvellous contribution to our environment too. Well done and thanks to everyone. Dianne June

Presidential Blog

Winter is upon us. The Ski and tramping groups have been busy setting up trips and events for the Ski season and the rest of the year for tramping.

Keep an eye out on the programme and the changeable weather conditions.

Hopefully there is something there to pique your interest and the weather permits us to get out there.

Also, for next year's tramping trip programme- if there is anything that you would like to do, send an email to me or the club captain and we will look at putting it in next year's programme.

This month's quote:

"If there's one thing I've learned from hiking, it's that the early bird gets the face full of spider webs."

Happy adventures everyone.

Judith Bogle

from the Ski Club...

With the early blast of snow coming through it felt like the warmer autumn had been curtailed and winter looked set to provide its more normal temperatures and coverage.

As they say, snow in May will never stay. The rain from the latest low proved that all too obviously, and the trails are back to bare rock. Nothing to be distressed about because our reliable snowfall more usually arrives mid-July and nothing suggests that won't happen again this year.

In the meantime, there are a few events to look forward to. Jacquie's Matariki weekend events will be a great early winter gathering and series of activities, proving that there's never the wrong temperature, just more appropriate clothing required.

With the ski season proper following shortly thereafter, we will move to winter rates from June 19th. Winter rates reflect the more expensive running costs for the Hut with heaters and the fire running.

Winter rates: For non-ski club members that will mean \$60 pp/night. Ski club members pay \$35. It doesn't take too many trips before you cover the additional membership costs.

This year the best way to get your booking confirmed early is to join as a combined member. Non-members wishing to stay outside of WTC trips will only get confirmed bookings in the week prior.

With Snowcraft running towards the end of July you have plenty of good weekends to continue your snow-based activities after that initial training.

We'll have a programme of Ski club events in the next edition and on our facebook and web site during the month. This will also have a focus on the social side of Lodge life. Plenty of fun on a winter weekend.

With school bookings coming in over July and August the mid-week slots are starting to fill out. However, there are still good options in both months.

Once again bookings will run through our online booking system which you can access from the ski club web site. It's straightforward and provides a view of availability across the season.

If you need to discuss a booking, email is the best channel - as these conversations may require some investigation and don't work effectively over the phone.

The ski email is waikatoski@gmail.com. For more news and event dates refer to the facebook and website or search Waikato Ski Club using your favourite search engine.

Stephen Prendergast, Ski Team Leader

Mid-week Walks & Tramps

We are continuing with the current format, having a walk or tramp on the 2nd Tuesday and 4th Wednesday of the month. The activities have proven to be as varied as the group is and the communication via the Mid-week W & T s Group page on WhatsApp is working well.

If you would like to be part of this communication, please download WhatsApp on your phone & text your request to Isla on 021 209 6539.

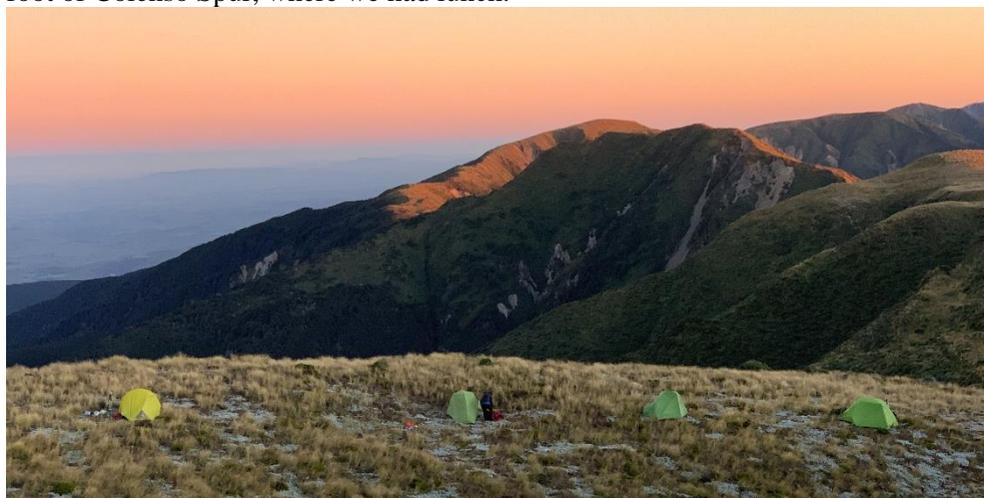
Trip Reports

Trip 3000 Colenso Spur-Barlow's Hut in Ruahines 15-17 Apr

The intention on starting out on this tramp, was to go via the Makororo River, up Colenso Spur, then south along the tops to Sparrowhawk Bivvy, before ending up where we started by taking the long ridge back down to the river. The weather gods had other ideas.

On Thursday night, after picking Dawn and Dale up en-route, we made our way to *Time Out at Titiokura*, on the Napier-Taupo Road. The following day (Good Friday), we drove through some lovely green scenery, to Tikokino and Wakarara

Road and the trail head at the historic mill site on the Makaroro River. In slightly frosty conditions, it took about two hours and 30-plus river crossings, to reach the foot of Colenso Spur, where we had lunch.



Frosty tops

photo by Allan Wickens



Colenso Spur was made famous after William Colenso (botanist, missionary, and explorer), first climbed it in 1847 accompanied by two Maori guides.

At the base of the spur, there is a small rocky step to climb up, leading up into the bush where a monument to his exploits sits. Starting off at 520m, there follows a 1000m climb up to Te Atua Mahuru Peak, our high point for the trip. The track starts out quite steep, relents for a while halfway to the bush-line, then steepens before opening out onto “the tops”. While we were resting a couple from a Wellington tramping club went past us. Allan and Paul knew of mutual acquaintances and conversed while walking uphill. By the time our group reached

the bush-line, we could see that the couple had become separated. Their intention was to head north to Kylie Bivvy for the night, before dropping down the western



photo by Dawn Angove

flanks to remote Lake Colenso. On Te Atua Mahuru, we took in much the same view that Colenso would have seen, with Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe prominent to the north. With no cloud around, we were able to take in much of what the Ruahines has to offer.

We arrived at our “campsite” at about 5.00 pm and at that point the weather was clear with a light wind. However, the enticing tarns that we had seen from Te Atua Mahuru turned out to be problematical. We had plenty of water, but the ground around the tarns was either too damp or exposed for good camping. We settled for sloping ground, that unfortunately also had a thin layer of edelweiss vegetation on it, making it difficult to place tent pegs in. No problem though. There was a good forecast, with no rain due, a full moon and winds no greater than about 20 kph. Wrong! Every hour over that evening the wind velocity went up by anywhere between 5-10 kph. By mid-night conditions were bearable but annoying with our tents flapping so much. Three hours later and things were getting more desperate. Allan ventured out a couple of times to see how the others were faring. Les had lost his fly sheet and was looking up at the stars through his mesh tent. Dale’s tent was flattened, and she had to share with Allan. Dawn was coping even though her tent was like a wild animal in the never-ending gusts.

By dawn, we’d had enough. Allan made the decision to turn back, rather than face a gruelling 3 to 4-hour bash along the tops (double the usual time due to the strong nor-wester.) After just over an hour, we were back on Te Atua Mahuru and heading

down the leeward side of the range. During the climb up Colenso Spur the day before, Dawn said she was glad we were going up and not down it. Sorry Dawn, but there we were. The section from Colenso Spur down to Barlow's Hut was not too difficult but we were pleased to arrive at the empty hut around 1.00 pm.



The tarn campsite in the distance

photo by Allan Wickens

Not long after, Paul, from the other group, arrived by himself. He said they had a dreadful night out. They did not make Kylie Bivvy and after their tent blew down, they were forced to wait out the night on the bush-line. His companion was following him down from the tops. After a while, he became concerned she had not arrived at the hut. He then made a sterling effort in climbing back up onto Colenso Spur, to the point where he last saw her, then down the entire ridge to the river, before coming back upstream to the hut. But there was no sign of her. Alarmed at this point, he walked out to the road-end, hoping that she had also gone out that way. That evening we were accompanied by an enjoyable bunch of fishers-come-deer hunters. One of them landed a hefty trout from one of the pools in the river. The following day, we walked out, the tops shrouded at times in cloud. With no sign of chopper activity, and no sign of their vehicle, we assumed things had worked out as he had hoped. Alas, that was not to be. Paul's companion came off Colenso Spur well before the turn-off to the hut. She ended up stuck in the next stream, up from where the hut is located, and spent a miserable night out in light

rain, with no shelter. A SAR helicopter located her in the creek around mid-day when they spotted her waving her bright-coloured sleeping mat. There's an obvious lesson here and no doubt anyone reading this account will conclude about the responsibility of "leaders and their parties".

On the way out down the Makaroro River, we had two sightings of whio (blue duck) and noticed that there were indeed some hefty trout in most of the pools. Although this trip didn't quite go to plan, we all enjoyed the shortened "long weekend", spiced up with a bit of drama and wildlife. Dawn A, Les W and Dale H accompanied the leader, Allan W (our scribe, who first went down Colenso Spur in 1985).

Trip 3003

Tarawera Hot Water Beach

7th May

The threat of rain and the promise of dinner and a pint at Hennessy's Irish Pub meant that the original 2-day trip was shortened to one. Jacqui was also our sole leader as Mike was resting up with a broken foot.

We carpooled to Rotorua, then along Tarawera Road and met at the Tarawera trail carpark at Te Wairoa, which is just before the buried village - a reminder of the 1886 Tarawera eruption's devastation for the local Maori tribes whose land the trail now passes through.

A heavy morning fog made the carpark entrance a little tricky for some to find on first and even third pass... but Jacqui was there to meet us, appearing from the fog next to the trailhead sign.

Jacqui and Ron, and Judith and Ross, had already launched their boats which Ron and Ross would skipper over to Hot Water Beach to meet us.

Hot Water Beach is at Te Rātā Bay on the southern shores of Lake Tarawera about 15 km from the trailhead. Amanda and David (on his first tramp after surgery on his shin) set off at a cracking pace through regenerating bush down towards the lake.

We stopped at Kōtukutuku Bay for a short break to regroup and admire the view from the beach.

The track continued through lakeside forest with its stands of large tree ferns to Te Hīnau Bay, where the relaxed pace walkers (Naomi, Nette, Jan, Hinemarie, Judith, Rupert and Chris) stopped for lunch, enjoying the beautiful scenery, and Chris even went for a swim.

We then climbed over a hill and down to Lake Tarawera Reserve where we met up with the rest of the group, and Ron and Ross, who had walked in from leaving their boats at Hot Water Beach.

Kat chased some runners up the last climb past the Rotomahana lookout point with magnificent views of the lake and then we descended to Te Rātā Bay and Hot Water Beach. The hot springs are under the sand at the lake edge providing a steamy lake surface and beach areas where you can burn your feet if you sink in the sand.

Amanda and David went across the bay to do the Lake Rotomahana Isthmus track with Maureen and Jim, who had also come over in their boat. The rest of us climbed onto Ron and Ross's boats and they took us back around to the hidden hot pool at Lake Tarawera Reserve.

After a soak in the shallow but pleasant temperature hot pool and a swim for some of us in the lake we took the boats back to the boat ramp. Once we had got the boats on their trailers, Ron and Ross drove us back to our cars at Te Wairoa and then we all drove to Hennessy's Irish Pub for a hearty dinner before heading back to Hamilton.

Scribe: Rupert Craggs

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**Trip 3004                      Karangahake/Dickey Flat/Dalys Clearing                      14/15 May**

On Saturday morning, we drove in two cars to Dickey Flat carpark. From here we did the Dubbo 96 track and up Mount Karangahake. We were aware of a DoC warning about trackwork being done on the Waitawheta Pipeline track, so had to do a "there and back walk" instead of the loop as planned.

Starting at 9.45 we crossed the new and substantial swing-bridge (2020) and climbed gently through nikau forest, before traversing the mainly level benched track high above the Waitawheta gorge. We counted about 5 small mine entrances on the way. On reaching the main track there was a short walk uphill to the unmarked and more direct route up Karangahake. This track is shown on *Topomaps* as starting at 290 metres and climbing up to the 520-metre contour, coming out east of the translating station. For the uninitiated, the track starts when a small grassy area is reached on the main track, on the left, followed by an incursion into low scrub with some gorse.



On the top with the clouds

all photos by Allan Wickens

The track is easy to follow, getting a bit steep and muddy near the high point. The last bit to the summit starts out with a bit of downhill followed by some steep uphill with good handholds. On the summit, we had excellent views all round and we were glad we had beaten the pending rain that was due.

By 3.30 we were back at Dickey Flat, where we camped that night. In line with previous camp-based trips to the upper South Island and lower North Island, we



had a marquee set up so we could dine in relative comfort, while the group pitched their tents nearby. It rained overnight and we packed up our wet tentage before doing the next walk planned for the weekend. After driving around to Franklin Road, we then did the loop track, taking in the Dalys Clearing track, to the hut and return via the Dean track.



This tramp took us just over 3 hours to complete and was done in humid conditions, light showers and interspersed with fine spells. On our return to the cars, we then drove to Paeroa where we enjoyed a fine lunch at *The Refinery*. This café/accommodation place was originally the National Bank Gold Refinery in 1914. The solid concrete walls and large beams reflect its origin, and the eclectic décor adds to its charm. Our happy bunch of campers were ; Allan W (leader and scribe), Les W, Nicola G, Cathy D and Vimu S.

## *From the committee table:*

**New members:** Leo Juby, Brodie Manson. Welcome to you both and may you enjoy many great experiences with the club in future.

**Membership:** We have 179 tramping members this month. 3 members have been struck off for non-payment of subscriptions. Your FMC cards will be coming to you soon.

**From the editor:** Do you have any gear you are willing to lend or sell to newcomers to the club? I was looking at the lovely new gear Mike showed us at club night and thought it might be time to put the word out there again. Setting oneself up to go into the outdoors well-prepared can be an expensive business so the ability to access spare/unused gear to even try out may be of use to the newcomers. Let's help them as much as we can. You can advise the editor of gear you have available and she will put a note in the bulletin. You hold on to the gear until someone expresses a need for it and she'll connect you with them.

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Snippets from here and there...

- There is a 1080drop planned by DoC Pureora within the period of August 1st to the end of November. An aerial drop of pre-feed will be carried out 2 weeks before the 1080-laced bait is dropped. The weather will play an integral role as to when any activity begins.
- Over the weekend of August 13/14th, the Pirongia Society is running a camp primarily to introduce a new group of University students to the conservation work the Society does in the Okahukura valley. Seasonal conditions dictate that the 'camp' will actually be at the Lions Lodge there. The aim is to visit another block of the valley and re-nail all the bait stations in it, learn how to do 5-minute bird counts (so start learning how to recognise bird calls if you can), and we'll put out some of the rat tunnels needed for pre-1080 drop rat monitoring. If we have time and the resources, we'll construct a fence around the dactylanthus plants near the lodge that are in danger of being uprooted by pigs. The seeds for the plants were scattered there some 12-15 years ago so having them succeed in growing is quite a triumph for the plants' survival. The weekend will be a BYO food & drink affair – more details closer to the day. If you enjoyed being part of the summer camp the Society ran in January you will have a good idea of what we are planning to do. Enquiries to Dianne and Selwyn June, 0274978151 or 8433066

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## *...from the DoC website...*

- Rare **native mistletoe** population discovered in the eastern Bay of Plenty. Threatened native mistletoe has been discovered in a corner of the Eastern Bay of Plenty where it has not previously been recorded.

NZ's three beech mistletoe species are semi-parasitic plants which host on native beech trees or tawheowheo. They are best known for their brilliant displays of red flowers in summer.



All are considered under threat largely as a result of sustained browsing by possums and the loss of native bird species which pollinate them.

DoC botanist Paul Cashmore said finding red mistletoe (*Peraxilla tetrapetala*) on the remote Motu Rd was a pleasant, if not totally unexpected, surprise when Rotorua Botanical Society members first discovered a plant in late 2019.

There had been no recorded sightings of any of the parasitic beech mistletoes in areas adjoining Motu Rd until this one large red mistletoe plant was seen overhanging the road on the northern side of Pāpāmoa Hill.

It was agreed that a further survey should be undertaken along rest of the Motu Rd in December and January when plants were flowering but it took until 2022 for it to happen.

Mr Cashmore said the first task was to relocate the initial plant found in 2019 and record its details including how healthy it was. After that, further plants were found either by looking for mature host tawheowheo trees and inspecting them with binoculars or by walking along the road looking for dropped red petals.

If red mistletoe plants were spotted, the tawheowheo trees were marked and the mistletoe plants' health was assessed. Mr Cashmore took two days to survey the entire length of Motu Rd from Meremere Hill Scenic Reserve to Motu township and found 25 red mistletoe plants, most of which were flowering, on 21 tawheowheo host trees.

Finding 25 red mistletoe plants on tawheowheo is a significant discovery as there are no known or historic red mistletoe records in the immediate area along Motu Rd. The nearest plants present would be those in Otamatuna to the west or Moanui and Matawai to the south. 23 out of 25 red mistletoe plants – that's 92% – showed evidence of dieback which generally recognises the past seasons' browsing intensity by possums. This shows that plants are under regular possum browsing pressure to some extent with only two plants free of dieback."

Mr Cashmore says the survey has demonstrated for the first time that not only is red mistletoe still present in and around the Motu-Urutawa forest, but that viable populations still exist in several places.

"It is important that these remnant populations are prevented from declining to extinction so, at very least, fur trapping needs to be encouraged in these areas.

“But ultimately this provides further justification for larger scale landscape pest control across this wider forest tract.” There is good evidence from elsewhere that large scale possum control operations will result in a relatively quick recovery of mistletoe health and recruitment if sufficient residual plants are still present in a block. Control of predators also contributes to mistletoe recovery through protection of bellbirds and tui which are its main pollinators.

### About Mistletoe

Beech mistletoe populations have drastically declined throughout NZ, especially in the North Island, with only remnant populations in isolated areas.

In the Bay of Plenty significant populations are found in Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne Conservation Park and parts of Te Urewera.

There are 9 native mistletoe species:

Three species are found mainly in beech forest:

- Red mistletoe (*Peraxilla tetrapetala*)
- Scarlet mistletoe (*P. colensoi*),
- Yellow mistletoe (*Alepis flavida*).

*(Ed comment: the red and yellow species can be found behind the Chateau when they are blooming in early January. On the trip in March 2019 to the Poulter valley in Arthur's Pass Nat. Park, we saw many red forms when coming down to the carpark from the Binser Saddle)*

Five species are in lowland forest and scrub:

- Small-flowered mistletoe (*Ileostylus micranthus*),
- White mistletoe (*Tupeia antarctica*)
- Three dwarf or leafless mistletoes (*Korthalsella salicornioides*, *K.lindsayi* and *K. clavata*)

*(Ed comment: The small-flowered species can be found at the junction of the loop track around Lake Rotopounamu)*

One species (*Trilepedia adamsii* or Adams's mistletoe) is presumed extinct - it was last seen in 1954.

### Threats

Native mistletoe populations have declined since the early 1900s mainly due to possums, vegetation clearance, and the decline in native bird species that act as pollinators and seed-dispersers.

Rats are also suspected of eating mistletoe, and insects damage them.

In the Bay of Plenty there are three species of beech mistletoe, one species of dwarf mistletoe and two species of green mistletoe currently known to be present.

### Where they're found

The two species of green mistletoe or piritā – *Ileostylus micranthus* and *Tupeia antarctica*, grow throughout New Zealand, but in the Bay of Plenty they are known almost exclusively in the Rotorua district.

There are only a few currently known sites elsewhere in the Bay of Plenty such as Te Puke. Locally, these species are found in regenerating shrubland, often in areas



*Ileostylus micranthus* with fruit



*Tupeia antarctica* with ripe fruit

with high light levels such as forest edges and road margins. Many of the populations are on private properties or in parks where possums may be less frequent.

In the Bay of Plenty, *Tupeia antarctica* grows mainly on fivefinger and tree lucerne host trees. *Ileostylus micranthus* occurs mainly on mahoe and kohuhu but also on a range of exotic host species including willows around the Rotorua lakes. Populations are scattered with each population generally being highly localized, with often a small number of plants present.

Beech mistletoes (known by various names including pirita) are found throughout parts of New Zealand, particularly in the South Island and are known for their masses of red or yellow-orange flowers in summer.



*Tupeia antarctica* growing on five-finger host

In the Bay of Plenty they are known from Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne Conservation Park, Te Urewera, the Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Park and Te Kopia Scenic Reserve (Paeroa Range). Here, the beech mistletoes occur on several species of native beech as well as tawheowheo. The dwarf mistletoes occur on kanuka, prostrate kanuka and manuka. They are most commonly known from near geothermal areas around the

Rotorua District and near Kawerau but also occur in coastal scrub near Whakatane. DoC has been undertaking ongoing surveys in various areas of the Bay of Plenty, especially around the Rotorua district and in Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne

Conservation Park to further determine the species, number and condition of mistletoe plants present.

Most of the population of green mistletoes in the Bay of Plenty occurs on private land. DoC has contacted all landowners with known mistletoe plants on their properties to inform them of the presence of these plants and to discuss options for management.

Ongoing advocacy has also been undertaken with other land managers and district and regional councils.

DoC has taken direct action to protect some green mistletoe populations by preventing possums from reaching and browsing plants by wrapping aluminium bands around host tree trunks.

At Lake Okareka near Rotorua, along the short loop at the end of Okareka Loop road, Forest and Bird and the Rotorua Botanical Society supported by DoC and Environment BoP have been working since 2002 to protect a regionally significant mistletoe population in Lake Tikitapu Scenic Reserve, also off the Okareka Loop road, by controlling plant and animal pest threats.

A national recovery plan has been published by DoC to coordinate conservation effort and ensure the long-term survival of mistletoes.

*(Ed comment: watch out for mistletoe plants during your tramping, note the location, and report any sightings to DoC).*

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.... *from the FMC website*

➤ Congratulations to Robin McNeill on being elected FMC President for the year 2022-2023. Robin is joining Vice-President Allan Brent in our organization's leadership team. Jan Finlayson is Immediate Past President ex officio.

➤ Over 1,500 books from the late Arnold Heine's unique collection will be sold. Mountaineering and exploration titles from across the globe feature strongly, with many out-of-print books on New Zealand's mountaineering history, tramping, hunting, geology, ecology, conservation and culture, as well as guidebooks. The auction will take place on Friday 17 June. 103 lots of rare books, on view from 5.30 pm; auction starting at 7.30 pm. A catalogue of the lots is available from the HVTC secretary. Absentee bids are accepted by e-mail until Wednesday 15 June.

Book sale: Saturday 18 June 2022, 9.30am onwards

All remaining books. These books will not be on view until 9.30 am on Saturday morning at the Hutt Valley Tramping Club rooms, Birch St Reserve, from Birch St, Waterloo, Lower Hutt.

A flyer about the book sale can be downloaded.

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Inside every older person is a younger person wondering what the heck happened



Checking out the huts in the Karangahake valley

photographer unknown



Whakapapanui stream

photo by Jocelyn Widmer



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