



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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

November 2022

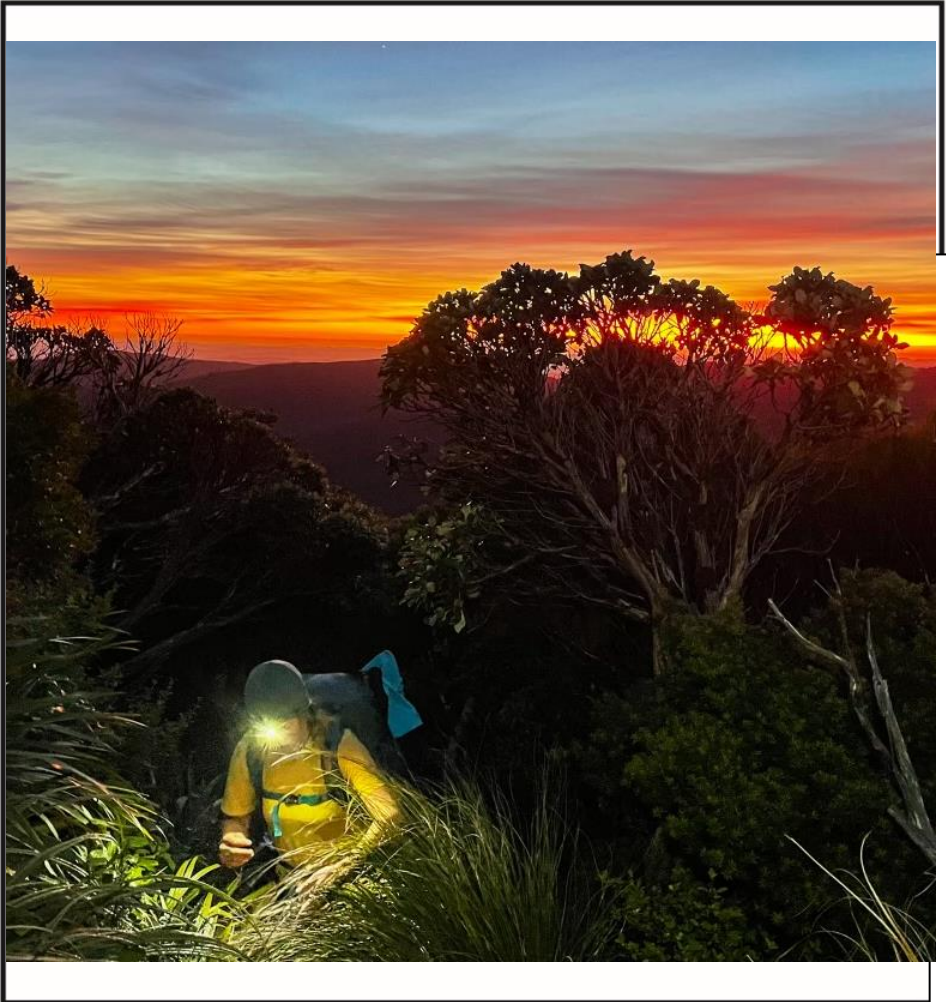


photo by Mike Peck
S-K crossing of Tararuas
3rd place in 2022 below bushline, human element category

WAIKATO HUT

Your lodge on Mt Ruapehu
Tongariro National Park



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Dancing Creek dam
by John McArthur



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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 843

November 2022

General Committee

(Contact details listed below)

President: Judith Bogle	027 3810283			
Secretary: Dorothy Cawdron	027 7424222			
Treasurer: Guy Domett	027 2483008			
Members: John McArthur (VP Tramp)	Stephen Prendergast (VP Ski)			
Stephen Phillips	Allan Wickens	Lois Rowell	Ashley Hoskin	Mike Barker
Selwyn June				0274 978151

Tramping Subcommittee

Tramping email: waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com

Chairperson: John McArthur	mcArthur@outlook.co.nz	021 2889641
Club Captain: Les Warren		027 8644937
Membership: Lois Rowell	loiserowell@gmail.com	027 2881148
Member: Selwyn June		027 4978151
	Rupert Craggs	027 6811926
Web & Facebook: Rizal Razak		021 2676566
Transport: Ashley Hoskin	ashley.hoskin@icloud.com	027 4909545
Social convenor: Jacqui Dick		021 1375201

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

Bulletin:	Lesley Kuggeleijn	027 4942414
Editor & Club Librarian: Dianne June	djune@xtra.co.nz	07 8433066

Waikato Tramping Club account: 03 1555 0091625 02 (include the trip no.)

Club night, Wednesday 7th December

Climate change – what does it mean for New Zealand and You!

Club member Rupert Craggs from NIWA will present the latest thinking on climate change in NZ from our NIWA chief climate scientist, Dr Andrew Tait.

The talk will cover:

- Evidence of climate change in NZ
- Climate change projections and impacts for NZ
- What are some climate change adaptation options
 - Resources to help you adapt

Social Activity: It's time for another movie and get together at the Haines' place, 11 Alison St, Hamilton. On Friday 18th November come along at 6pm for a BBQ and movie, bring a plate to share, your own meat to cook and liquid to drink, and \$20. This is a fundraising event for Waikato Hut that you will definitely enjoy. You can contact Graham on 0274 822 830 or email grhaines1946@gmail.com if you have any questions.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2021/2022

3030	7-11 Nov	M/F	Kaimai traverse	Cancelled
3031	13 Nov	E	Photography – waterfall specials	Nicola Guy
	18 Nov		Film evening	Graham Haines
3032	20 Nov	E/M	Volunteer mine	Rizal Razak
3033	25-27 Nov	E/M/F	Bream Head	Les Warren
3034	3 Dec		Christmas dinner	Jacqui & Ron Dick
3035	4 Dec	E	Kakepuku, Yarndleys' bush & L. Ngaroto	Club captain
3036	12-23 Dec	F	Rakiura northern circuit	Judith Bogle
3037A	10 Dec	MF	Okataina western circuit	Mike Peck
3037 B	10 Dec	E/M	Okataina giant ratas	John McArthur
	7 Dec		CLUB NIGHT	
3038	17 or 18 Dec	F	Mountain Madness	John McArthur
3039	28 Dec-4 Jan	F	Travers-Sabine	Judith Bogle
3040	8 Jan	vE	Cambridge walks	Rizal Razak
3041	14/15 Jan		?	?
3042	18 Jan		Picnic in the Gardens	Dianne June

3043	22 Jan	MF	King St & Horsemans' track	John Wilson
3044	28-30 Jan	MF	Cascade to Te Iringa	Steve Dick
3045	4-6 Feb		Fletcher Bay to Stony Bay	Club captain
3046	12 Feb	M	Hiwiroa	Club captain
3047	16-21 Feb	F	Mt. Earnslaw	Rupert Craggs
3048	17/18 Feb	EM	Ngatuhua Lodge	Nicola Guy
3049	19-25 Feb	various	Exploring the Lewis Pass	Les Warren
3051	27 Feb -3 Mar		Canterbury Glaciers	John McArthur

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 to confirm your booking on the website

Trip 3030 **Kaimai Traverse** **7-11 Nov**
This trip has been cancelled.

Trip 3031 **Photography** **13 Nov**
This trip is for those who want to learn how to photograph waterfalls. You will need to have a camera with “Manual Mode”, a tripod, and a lens that is 24mm or less. We will have a training night on Thursday 10th Nov to make sure everyone is comfortable with camera settings and getting their camera set up on a tripod. We will leave at 8am from London Street and head to Tawarau Falls in Waitomo. We will be taking private cars for this trip and have approx. 30min walking along the road to the start of the track. This is an easy walk with a steep drop down to the waterfall (a chain is in place to aid the descent). The area is picturesque with limestone features and follows the Tawarau River. The track usually takes me about 3 hours return, but expect to be in the bush for about 5 hours by the time we take photos and have lunch. There are three stream crossings which can rise rapidly, so be prepared for a change to our plans if we’ve had heavy rain. Due to the nature of this trip, being more of a ‘teaching’ tramp, it will be limited to 4 photographers.

Leader: Nicola Guy **Ph:** 027 421 3458 **Grade:** E
Transport: Private cars. Cost tba

Trip 3032 **Volunteer Mine** **20 Nov**
Another old gold mining area in the Coromandel hills to the north of Paeroa. We were supposed to do the track last November, but due to Covid restriction, the trip was cancelled.

The start of the walk will depend on how muddy the road is on the day of the trip. After crossing the foot bridge, rather than taking the Maratoto to Golden Cross Track, we will turn left, pass a clearing. We will then cross a stream, start climbing a ridge to the top of the hill, which we will then descent to the mines site and waterfall. We will also pass a Kauri Grove with a few Giant Kauris on the way down to the mines.

With fine views of Marototo Rock, Waipahake and Wires Track areas, the tramp is graded as Medium with a total trip time of approximately six (6) hours.

Leader: Rizal Razak **Ph:** 021 2676566 **Grade:** M
Email: rizraz@gmail.com
Transport: Senior member \$21-35 Senior non-member: \$26-40

**Of all the paths you take in life, make sure a few of them
are dirt.” – John Muir**

Trip 3033**Bream Head****25-27 Nov**

This trip is being organised by the 'Tramper of the Year' 2021.

For those interested in a trip to an area the club does not often visit.

Please contact the leader ASAP as he needs to know rough numbers for booking accommodation and, also, what is your preferred accommodation. The plan is to leave Hamilton early Friday morning and arrive at our accommodation in Whangarei around lunch-time. In the afternoon we will do a short walk.

Saturday – The main trip will do the Te Whara Track (5-6hrs) for those interested. There will also be several shorter easy tracks for others to do. Saturday night – group dinner.

Sunday – Either do a morning walk around Whangarei before heading home or I am looking at doing something on the way home. More details to come.

Leader: Les Warren

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Transport & Accommodation costs tba

Trip 3034**Christmas Party****3rd or 4th Dec**

(weather will dictate the date)



This will be held at Ron and Jacqui Dick's place (i.e, self-drive) and is an outdoor event. Address is 179 McGregor Road, Ngahinapouri. We will have a marquee up, braziers, music and dressed-up goats! (You can be a goat too if you wish). It will be a pot luck dinner so there is no charge for the event or requirement to register. Just turn up anytime from 4.30pm. We will notify everyone of the selected date a few days prior, by email, once the weather forecast has been checked.

BYO plate of food to share, a fold-out chair, your own plates & utensils, drinks, warm clothes etc. Looking forward to a really great evening! The Tramper of the Year will be announced at this evening. Plus other awards given out such as Mountain Madness Certificates and photography prizes.

Any questions **email** jacquimd@me.com or **ph** 021 1375 201.

Trip 3035 **Takepuku, Yarndleys' bush & L. Ngaroto** **4 Dec**

This day trip will definitely be a womble as it takes place on the day after the Christmas party. We may be able to leave slightly later than 8am but that will be up to the trip leader. There are great views from the platform at the top of Mt.

Takepuku and if you are lucky you may even see a few karearea flying around – the Hovers lived nearby and raised the chicks in this area. Yarndley's bush is a small stand of kahikatea that is original, and L. Ngaroto is a good example of a Waikato peat lake that has diverse waterfowl on it.

Leader: Club captain **Ph:** 027 8644937 **Grade:** E/M

Transport: Senior member \$21-35 Senior non-member: \$26-40

Trip 3036 **Rakiura northern Circuit** **12-23 Dec**

This will be the full northern circuit of Stewart Island for 12 days. The plan is to get food dropped off halfway to reduce the load. We will need to take tents. This will be wet so make sure you use old boots. Also, everyone will need to make their own way to the meeting point in Invercargill.

Leader: Judith Bogle **Ph:** 027 3810283 **Grade:** F

Email: *judith.bogle@outlook.com*

Transport & Accommodation: Private arrangements

Trip 3037A **Okataina Western walkway** **Saturday, 10 Dec**

A day tramp along the Okataina Western walkway near Rotorua. Total length is 22.5km and has an estimated walking time of 7 hours. We will depart Hamilton at 7.30am and drive to Te Ruato bay at Lake Rotoiti and tramp south to Millar Rd near Lake Okareka. We have confirmed a driver for the trip. A stop in Rotorua afterwards for dinner.

Leader: Mike Peck **Ph:** 021 369 256 **Grade:** F

Transport: Senior member \$21-35 Senior non-member: \$26-40

Trip 3037B **Okataina giant ratas** **Saturday, 10 Dec**

This trip will be run at the same time as The Okataina western walkway and leaves Hamilton at 7.30in too. There are some large rata off the main eastern Okataina walkway and we will visit at least 2. A little past these we will see the Phantom - a giant tree with a squat trunk. From here it is back to the starting point and we travel around to L. Okareka to pick the other group up.

Leader: John McArthur **Ph:** 021 2889641 **Grade:** E/M

Transport: Senior member \$21-35 Senior non-member: \$26-40

Trip 3038 **Mountain Madness** **17 or 18 Dec**

This is a spontaneous sort of day out - if the weather packs in we will give it away (or wait in a pub for the weather to clear, right!). The plan is to see how many of the Waikato mountains we can climb in one day - the longest day of the year. Previous years we have done Pirongia, Maungatautari and Te Aroha, and found this sequence was manageable (provided you eat and drink enough to keep you going).

There have been calls for a change to which mountains to do... I'll look at alternatives so watch this space. Whatever - it will be a full day!!!
Be in! - the car(s) leave Hamilton early 6am. Last year we did Pirongia up and back before lunch. And we get back late - that's why they call it the Longest Day. This year will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the first Captain's Challenge! 2012 four members attempted the triple peak epic, rained off Maungatautari - saturated! Will celebrate on the top of Te Aroha this year!!! Be there!

Leader: John McArthur

Ph: 021 2889641

Grade: FF

Email: mcarthur@outlook.co.nz

Transport: Private cars.

Trip 3039 Travers Sabine pass and Moss pass 28 Dec – 4 Jan

We will start at the Coldwater Hut and finish at the D'Urville. Therefore, we will go up the west side of the Travers Sabine and visit a couple of side tracks and stay at these huts (Hopeless and Cupola Hut. Then go over the Travers Sabine pass. The plan is to have a shorter day the next day so we can visit Lake Constantine. Then we will go over the Moss pass and out the D'Urville track to be picked up by boat at the D'Urville Hut. We will need tents due to being that time of year with many people around.

Leader: Judith Bogle

Email: *judith.bogle@outlook.com*

Grade: F

Transport: Private arrangements

Trip 3040 Cambridge walks 8 Jan

An easy easy walk to start the year, we will explore the not so hidden short tracks around Cambridge, waterfalls and observe the locals on their Sunday routines. We could either start or end with the "new" Te Awa Waikato River cycling trail, near the Velodrome to Hooker Road section.

No tramping boots required, a pair of running or walking shoes will be sufficient.

Leader: Rizal Razak

Ph: 021 267 6566

Grade: very E

Email: *rizrak@gmail.com*

Transport: Senior member \$21-35

Senior non-member: \$26-40

Trip 3042 Picnic in the gardens 18 Jan

This is a very relaxed evening where we meet at the band rotunda in Hamilton Gardens – near the kids' playground and enjoy your choice of food for dinner. Get there between 5.30 & 6pm and enjoy a social time together over takeaways or salad and sausage or whatever you would like to munch on. It is BYO everything from seating to food & drink.

No bookings required but, if you have any questions, please get hold of us.

Leaders: Dianne & Selwyn June

Ph: 8433066

Grade: NIL

Trip 3043 King Street and Horseman's Tracks, Te Aroha 22 Jan

The lower slopes of Te Aroha Mountain above the southern part of the township used to be farmed by the Shanley family. Bush-clad once more, the old farm tracks have been re-opened by locals and we will walk a circuit involving some steep

climbing and descending. We will then take to the summit track and climb to Whakapipi Lookout for great views. Carrying on a little further we will turn off onto Horseman's track and descend into the Tutumangao Stream, which has a rather nice waterfall. We finish at the Domain.

Leader: John Wilson **Ph:** 0211682082 **Grade:** M/F due to steep gradients
Transport: Senior member \$21-35 Senior non-member: \$26-40

Trip 3044 **Cascade to Te Iringa** **28-30 Jan**

This Auckland Anniversary trip will be quite different from our usual long weekend trips. One – we will base ourselves at the Clements Mill Road ‘Clearing Campsite’, where there are plenty of good ideal campsites.

Two - Each day will include one or two walks along unmarked tracks and some wonderful places to visit, that are not on the NZ Topo maps. The general plan at this stage is for people to arrive on the Friday.

Base Camp – The beauty of a base camp is that you can bring more home comforts, food and drink and, not worry about lugging it with you. We can or should be able to park vehicles right at our campsite.

The Walk Grades will range between E/M and /F between 2hrs to 6hrs (depending on what walks we can fit in).

Transport situation is yet to be finalized, and will depend on numbers registering. It would be ideal that we have at least two or three vehicles, as some walks may need to have drop-off and pick-up points.

Leader: Steve Dick **Ph:** 0274 880 793 **Grade:** variable
Les Warren **Ph:** 027 8644937

Transport: Senior member: \$77-128 Senior non-member: \$87-138

Trip 3045 **Fletcher Bay to Stony Bay** **4-6 Feb**

We will camp at Fletcher Bay, Leaving on Saturday morning. Once we have set up camp we can explore the area around the bay, go fishing or swimming. Sunday we can spend the day walking around the coast to Stony bay and back. There are great views for the track and an opportunity to swim at a beach at the halfway point. This is definitely a weekend to enjoy some beach time. A walk up to Mt. Moehau may be possible also.

The campground has toilet and shower facilities. Please notify the club captain early so that a booking for the campsites can be made ASAP.

Leader: Les Warren **Ph:** 027 8644937 **Grade:** E/M

Transport: Senior member: \$77-128 Senior non-member: \$87-138

Campground fee: \$15/night/adult. \$7.50.night/under 18yr old.

Trip 3048 **Ngatuhua Lodge** **12/13 Feb**

A relaxing weekend at Ngatuhua Lodge with plenty of activities for kids and some good tramps. Ngatuhua Lodge is a well setup educational camp located in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park on the other side of the Kaimais to the south- east of Tauranga. The lodge sleeps 50 and there is a camping area and a BBQ. It has its own hydro power scheme which is worth a look. There is a confidence course,

kayaking in a canal, tubing and swimming in the river. And a night-time glow worm walk. Bush walks of varying lengths are planned to Te Rere I Oturu Falls, Whio Falls and Ngatuhua Falls.. There is also a short nature walk with interpretive panels.

Leader: Nicola Guy

Ph: 027 421 3458

Grade: E-M

Accommodation: \$50/person

Transport: Senior member \$45-75

Senior non-member: \$50-80

Summary of South Island Descriptions

Mount Earnslaw (Pikirakatahi) East Peak. Second highest summit in Mt Aspiring National Park (2830m). Participants must be confident with the use of crampons and ice axe.

Day 1: Start of Rees track to Earnslaw hut (3 bunks). From Rees valley track trailhead follow dirt road that passes through grazing land and small tributary creeks along the Rees (7 km) crossing the river several times. Once on the actual track from the dirt road and have crossed the Rees for the first time either:

Walk up onto the right side hills to avoid the bog (really wet) and sidle almost all the way to 25 mile creek where the ground again dries out.

Cross the bridge over 25 Mile Creek, and cross the Rees River (knee deep) in the vicinity of Twenty-Five Mile Hut close to Lennox Falls.

Zigzagging up through beach forest to Earnslaw hut or climb out of the beech forest on Kea basin track to the grassy slopes of Kea Basin just beyond tree line at 1000 m where there are two rock bivouacs (30 min further)

Day 2: To Esquilant Bivouac Hut (2150m) (6 bunks). The track is marked by cairns above Kea Basin as you climb through alpine grasslands towards ice fields of the Birley Glacier. From the Birley glacier climb towards Wrights Col (Ice axe and crampons required).

Day 3: Climb Mt Earnslaw ascending the Birley Glacier and through Wright Col (2-3 hrs). Find the rock cairns marking route through the gully to the summit. Drop back down to Earnslaw Hut.

Day 4. Walk out to Rees track carpark

Day 5: Spare Wet weather day.

Leader: Rupert Craggs

Ph: 027 681 1926

Grade: F

Email rupert.craggs@niwa.co.nz

Transport: Private arrangements

Exploring the Lewis Pass Area:

Planned Dates: Sunday 19 February to Saturday 25 February 2023 (tbc).

Trip: The idea is to base ourselves at Boyle Village and do day trips. If the weather is good we could consider doing a couple of overnight trips, camping on the tops. There are a variety of tracks we can explore, varying between easy to fit (no fit- fit though). Most trips will be around the moderate to fit level but, there are

ample options to do your own easier walks. Probably an ideal trip to the South Island to a wonderful area to visit new places / terrain and extend your interest in tramping without worries about carrying too much gear. Exploring the tops around the area is a wonderful experience.

Tracks available: – Lewis Tops, Lake Daniell, Mt Faust on the Libretto Range, Nina Valley, Hope Valley, Magdallen Valley, Klondyke Spur and Valley Loop, Mons Sex Millia, and others, including short easy walks.

Transport: Depending on the group, this is yet to be decided. A use of a van and drivers would be useful or may need to use hire cars / van.

Anyone interested in this trip, please contact me before Christmas 2022.

I will need to have an idea on numbers so as to make a booking at Boyle Village as soon as possible. There are Backpackers accommodation (which I prefer) or camping available. Once I know numbers, I will send out a more detailed programme.

Leader: Les Warren **Email:** warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Canterbury Glaciers: Meeting in Tekapo 26th February

27th Feb: shuttle, then walk up to Godley Hut. This is about an 18km river bed walk, slowly rising and with interesting views (that don't change much for 18km). This walk includes a stop at the smallest 6 berth hut you will ever see - the Red Stag.

28th Feb, 1st and 2nd Mar: three days of exploring the views around this area, including climbing the ridge behind the hut towards Mt D'Archaic, crossing the glacial river to the base of the Maud Glacier, tramping over to the Eade Memorial Hut (v small) and climbing Mt Panorama for views of the surrounding glaciers.

3rd March - walk out and pick up for Tekapo.

Much will depend on weather and river flows from the glacial lakes.

Possibility of staying longer, and / or getting 4WD delivery to near Godley hut so we can spend extra time up there will depend on who signs up and local contacts. Further details will follow. Numbers will be limited to max of 6 due to hut sizes.

Leader: John McArthur **Ph:** 021 2889641

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## *Editorial*

What a great nights' entertainment we had. Who would think that our own gallery of pictures could be so interesting? Family Phillips continued their fascination with beach scenes, long exposures, and artistic composition while Jacqui was really into the bird life, along with John McA. The kea was not our 'Bird of the year' but it sure made its' presence felt – 8 of the 19 entries in the native flora and fauna section were of kea. As Nicola noted, we may not agree with the judges' choices but with so many great pictures, I'm glad it wasn't my dilemma.

And the committee is looking for a transport officer. Can you help out? There are plenty of people with experience who can help you get a handle on the

task – you don't have to do the driving – just ensure the rest of us have something to drive and of the right configuration.

With the liquidation of RAL operations on Mt. Ruapehu we will have to do some thinking about how we operate there and will rely heavily on the ski committee to keep tabs on developments – they are changing quickly. If you can assist the ski committee please contact the ski chairperson sooner rather than later. Our Hut/Lodge on Mt. Ruapehu is a valuable asset that we certainly don't want to lose. On that note – why not plan to spend a few days there over the summer? It is a super base and I've even been there on January 4<sup>th</sup> in 6 inches of snow. Go prepared for anything!

Dianne June

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### *Presidential Blog*

At the moment the top topic is the removal of the Huts from Te Urewera. Is this a sign of times of what is going to happen through New Zealand or is it localised? Many of these huts are considered derelict but as you know many of these non-up-to-standard huts have provided shelter in times of bad weather. Under the Te Urewera Act the Te Hoe is supposed to provide recreational opportunities but this does not mean they have to provide huts. There is the connection between the Ngāi Tūhoe and their homeland but there is also the cultural importance between the New Zealand population in general and their connection to the outdoors including hunting and tramping and just being able to experience the outdoors for the future generation.

At least 15 huts have already been removed and has been done without consultation including the neighbouring iwi Te Urewera who it affects . There are plans to replace huts and provide “fit-for-purpose” shelters (but this has not been outlined). Even within the Ngāi Tūhoe there is disagreement and a protest has been led by Tūhoe kaumātua. Is this our future, that a few can decide what our cultural heritage will be?

Judith Bogle

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Hiking and happiness go hand in hand or foot in boot.

– Diane Spicer

### *from the Ski Club...*

The 2022 ski season ended with its' own Halloween-esque moment as a Voluntary Administrator was appointed to the ski field company, RAL. We need a phoenix like moment. There's a lot of work underway to resurrect a new company so that a viable business providing summer and winter recreation can run in 2023, and for many years after as well. It would certainly be a different experience if there was no commercial ski operation in future.

We're now on **Summer rates** of \$25/\$15 for adults/children. This time of year is a great chance to get up onto the mountains making the most of longer days and

settling weather. Consider the more invigorating crater trips, or Tongariro Crossing, a fast out and back to Waihohonu, or Round the mountain, all based from Waikato Hut.

There are plenty of easier trips and the option to just stay close by and enjoy the outlook and scenery if you want a break from your usual routine. With the Lodge in summer mode there are easy to follow checklists for opening and closing up as you arrive and depart.

We'll be working on some maintenance in early 2023 so keep a look out for requests for assistance as we go through our annual maintain and restock working parties. It is always great to see a range of people coming along to help out.

If you would like to get down to the Lodge and have some ideas of activities you would like to undertake or even lead then get in touch (*waikatoski@gmail.com*) to discuss.

Ski club Committee & Stephen Prendergast

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### Mid-week Walks & Tramps

We are continuing with the current format, having a walk or tramp on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday and 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

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## Trip Reports

### Trip 3025

### Kauaeranga to Rangihau

8/9 Oct

A good keen team of 10 drove over to the Kauaeranga valley on a nice but cool day. The car park was FULL. We readied ourselves for the climb up to The Pinnacles hut and got away about 10.30, some with considerable muttering of lack of fitness, 'first tramp of the season' etc. The tramp to the hut went well, feeling the pain of the first tramp with a pack on the back for this season, and happy to get to the hut, with a little light rain. The track and hut were pretty busy, with a good number of day trippers and some families returning from overnighing.

A group of three went off to do the Pinnacles while the main group went to view the Dancing Camp dam.

Amanda's report for this diversion: As I have not walked in this area before, John W was kind enough to pander to my wish to go up to the Pinnacles platform. Sandra, John and I set off up to the Pinnacles at a fair tilt, aware that we would be 2 hours behind the rest of the group arriving at our campsite. The track has some relatively new gravel-filled timber steps, then more, then some more. The final scramble has some large boulders with some solid metal rungs fixed into boulders over the tricky bits. Only one rung was visibly missing! There were many people on the track, in both directions.

We reached the platform, had great views out to the Firth Of Thames, Tairua and Mercury Bay. Once back at Pinnacles Hut we visited Dancing Camp Dam to witness the different dam method, with planks hinged at the top. And then on to meet the others.....

So then the fun began. It's not a difficult track from the junction close to the Pinnacles hut down to the river, but the clay was a slippery as a greased piglet and keeping one's footing was a challenge. The bush was best described as a bit low and scruffy, some of which could be caused by the line of pylons we were close to. There was some scenic viewing of the hills and valleys before descending to the river bank and the camp. It was "cosy" or "cramped" but we all fitted the available flat spots and there was a nice cooking spot above the river. An interesting variety of tipple came out for the evening chat - no campfire.



Time for sustenance

Photo by John McArthur



Matters on a grand scale

Photo by John McArthur

Sunday started with a bit of a river bash downstream to the sight of a very large Kauri dam. John shared his reminiscences of the area and this dam, which he first visited in 1968, and talked of the bits that appear to have fallen off since. We then struck off north up the hill through similar bush until we got out into open flat / rolling country out to the road end. The vegetation was low shrub which may have been the result of fire some time back, and we followed the powerline maintenance track for much of the way.

Sandra had walked up a good way to meet us and we then drove to the Coroglen for an ice-cream, and trip home.

Sunday started with a bit of a river bash downstream to the sight of a very large Kauri dam. John shared his reminiscences of the area and this dam, which he first visited in 1968, and talked of the bits that appear to have fallen off since.

A great weekend out - many thanks to John W for leading, Sandra S for driving and Julia, Jim, Amanda, Piet, Maureen, Les, Lois and John for great company on a great weekend.

**Trip 3028**

**Wairere Falls and Little Wairere Falls**

**30 Oct**



An intrepid band of six set off from Hamilton keen to face the challenge of Wairere Falls, despite the rather dire weather forecast. On arrival at the carpark, we found that in contrast to the usual numbers, there were only four other lots of people there. A dogwalker returning to her car stated that it had been a “cleansing experience”, which sounded very inspirational to us. She departed dressed in a towel! We were relieved that there was no need to link arms as we made

The only waterfall picture he managed to get Photo by Peter Ayson





The driest we were all day through the floodwaters to the toilet. Amanda's thoughts of NZ's need for more stormwater engineers were confirmed. Not a lot can be said about the very wet conditions on the track and there was substantially more water over the falls than the last time we were there.

At times we had to skirt around flooded or muddy sections and it certainly was a trip requiring agility of thought. It was good to finally see the little waterfall and we were able to eat our lunch in relatively comfortable surroundings. True to John's promise, this was definitely a trip which offered more. Rain remained constant throughout the day but we all enjoyed the opportunity to be in the outdoors – the weather doesn't have to be good for comradeship and a great time! While this is a true and accurate record of the trip, we could perhaps have used good sense to bail out in torrential rain at the carpark, retreat to a Morrinsville café and then walk the riverside trail before heading home.

Intrepid trampers/sloshers were Amanda, Trish, Peter, Jim, Jean (scribe) and John (our leader and superb group decision mediator).

~~~~~  
From the committee table:

New members/Resignations: None

Membership: We have 191 tramping members this month.

From the tramping chairman: Wanted – Transport Officer

In order to have a great tramping club, active every week with great adventures enjoyed by all, we need members prepared to help organise this. Now that we are coming out of the confused Covid time we need to get our tramping programme back operating as efficiently as prior to Covid. This includes having our transport capability ensuring we can take a full team to the road end, and bring them back safely. Ashley has done a wonderful job for five years but is moving on to other

interests and we now need a new Transport Officer to organise the transport requirements for all trips.

If you wish to discuss the role, please chat to John on 021 2889641 (email mcarthur@outlook.co.nz)

Similarly, if you wish to offer yourself as a recognised WTC Driver (free trips to tramps), call John.

If you wish to help by becoming a Trip Leader, chat to Les 027 8644937.

~~~~~  
*Snippets from here and there...*

✓ A big tick for the judges in our **annual photo competition**. They had to work hard – 108 entries! Nicola Guy and John Wilson clocked up a fair few kms between Hamilton and Cambridge as they conferred and whittled the number of top photos down to just 3 place getters.

Nicola reported: Overall some fantastic photos. 108 were entered into the competition and John and I had a hard time whittling them down, at first to about 7 in each category and then to the place getters. Remember that these are just our opinions, you may not agree with them.

Nicola noted that it did not seem to make much difference whether the photo was taken using a phone or a camera. The quality was darned good. John recommended that he would encourage us to give all our entries a title as it helps everyone to understand what you were aiming to capture.

Nevertheless, the pictures provided some real ‘ooh and aah’ sounds, ‘I wanna go there’, and ‘where on earth is that place’ moments.

We extend our grateful thanks to our 2 judges for their sterling effort. We are also certain that Jacqui was pleased to be able to be an entrant in the competition this time too. 😊

The winning entries will be submitted to FMC for their 2023 competition. Best of luck to you all. (*Ed comment: I'll endeavour to include some entries in the bulletin over the next few months*).

✓ Recent news on **Ruapehu skifields**: \$4m bailout for Ruapehu Alpine Lifts Skifield operator Ruapehu Alpine Lifts has received a \$4 million rescue package - with help from the government - as it tries to make it to the next ski season. RAL is \$9 million dollars in debt and is in voluntary administration. The liquidator said the \$4 million would help RAL to keep staff on over summer, to prepare the mountain for the winter season. "There's an awful lot of maintenance that needs to go on over that period," he said. It would also buy "breathing space" needed for the administrators to come up restructure plans, he said.

The liquidator, John Fisk said he hadn't "actively sought" interest from other skifield operators but it had received enquiries. The skifields won't be handed back to RAL in its current state. "There's just too much debt in the company," he said. "What's clear is that the vehicle that has been operating the mountain to date

is not viable in the future. What we need to do is get the operation into a new vehicle that's recapitalised and meets the needs for future operation." Meanwhile, there's still a \$5 million funding gap to bridge to keep RAL going until snow returns next year. Some of the 14,000 people who own lifetime passes to the two ski fields, believe they could be the solution. The Ruapehu shareholders and Life Pass Holders group has been surveying members to see who would chip in money to keep the ski fields open. Spokesperson Sam Clarkson said the answer was "a clear yes, from a large number of life pass holders." He also hoped to see the Sky Waka gondola in full swing over summer, to cash in on the international tourism market. "The Sky Waka has not had a chance to stretch its legs yet. Since it was built, we haven't actually had a summer with open borders, no restrictions. It would be a shame not to show what it's worth," he said. John Fisk said before Christmas there would be a "watershed" meeting of creditors. They would be presented with a restructure plan for RAL and asked whether to accept it, or if they wanted to enter into liquidation.

From Radio NZ, 1 November 2022

✓ At the last club night we had a brief talk from Etienne de Villiers who is doing a social anthropology degree at Otago University. His topic is **Walking and talking: Exploring social connection via the chronotypes of tramping, among the older adults in the Waikato.** (*Ed comment: by 'old' he means anyone over 55 years of age!!!*). Looking at those at the club night this would mean most of us are eligible candidates. An outline of his brief was circulated on September 30<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to be part of this survey. Please contact Etienne directly [devet032@student.otago.ac.nz](mailto:devet032@student.otago.ac.nz). Results of his study will be made available to participants.

**Inside every older person is a younger person wondering what the hell happened. Cora Harvey Armstrong**

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



Juvenile Kauri grove in Northland Photo by Doc

➤ **New rules to protect Kauri.** Kauri are a taonga of Aotearoa. These ‘ecosystem engineers’ live for over 600 years, creating habitats and homes for native flora and fauna. Kauri trees are under threat from Kauri dieback, a disease caused by a fungus-like pathogen, *Phytophthora agathidicida*, PA for short. It can be spread through just a single speck of soil. To preserve kauri for generations to come, ten new rules have been introduced (from 02 August 2022) as part of the National Pest Management Plan. If you are visiting kauri lands, you need to follow the new regulations. This means everyone must:

- clean all visible soil/organic matter off all items that may encounter the forest floor before you enter or leave the forest
- use a hygiene station if there is one provided before entering and leaving the kauri forest area

➤ **Visitor Insights** 2021/2022 DoC has released its annual snapshot of where people went across conservation areas, who is visiting and the quality of their experience. Some of the findings (from between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022) include:

Visitor activity remains far below pre-pandemic levels (2018/19).

Milford Sound/Piopiotaahi – down 86%,

Punakaiki Pancake Rocks and Blowholes – down 85%,

Franz Josef Glacier – down 83%.

DoC’s visitor facilities were well used over the last year, despite the border restrictions and domestic travel impacts from COVID-19 being in the community. Approximately 164,000 people camped at bookable DoC campsites (down 3% on the previous year), 73,000 people stayed at bookable DoC huts (down 4%) and 72,700 people experienced a Great Walk (down 21%). Around four out of five New Zealanders reported having a good or exceptionally good experience. Looking ahead, strong demand for Great Walks continues in 2022/23. Bookings from New Zealanders have fallen slightly to 82% (down 8%) and international visitors make up 18% of total bookings for 2022/23.

➤ **Hector’s dolphin in Northland for the first time in 100 years.** ‘What is likely is the same dolphin was first sighted in Whangarei in early September, then Whangaroa Harbour the following week and in mid-October at Mangonui Harbour in the boating channel near the Mangonui wharf. It was observed from 9.30 am to 3 pm in the area,’ says DoC Far North Operations Manager Meirene Hardy-Birch. ‘This is an exciting sighting, so we are asking if locals and visitors see the dolphin, to steer clear allow the dolphin to enjoy the environment without hindrance or harassment.’

Following the sightings, DoC organised a marine survey team to observe the dolphin and collect samples for monitoring. Unfortunately, the survey team were unable to locate the dolphin. If you see a Hector’s dolphin in any location in New Zealand please report it to 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468). Reports to DOC help build knowledge and understanding of the species.

Hector's dolphins are unique and easy to identify - they are grey and white, with black markings with a distinctive black rounded fin, shaped like Mickey Mouse's ear. "If the dolphin has a rounded fin, call it in," is DoC's reminder message to the public on reporting on the species.

Hector's dolphins were once found along the coast of most of the South Island as well as parts of the North Island. Today, Hector's dolphins live in different sub-populations around the South Island. The Māui dolphin, a subspecies of the Hector's dolphin, is found on the west coast of the North Island, mainly between Taranaki and Kaipara Harbour. Hector's dolphins are only occasionally seen around the lower North Island, with several sightings scattered up the North Island east coast as far as Auckland.

➤ Over 1300 people from around the world have applied to be the **new Biodiversity Supervisor** in Haast.

➤ The **first Haast tokoeka chick** of the 2022-23 season has hatched with Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio naming it Inanga. Haast tokoeka are one of our rarest kiwi with a population of about 550 birds. The chick was born in September in the Haast Kiwi Sanctuary where most Haast tokoeka are found.

➤ **Subantarctic seal rare visitor** to Tasman Bay. A rare visitor to our shores, a subantarctic fur seal, that turned up at Ruby Bay in Tasman in a skinny state, is being cared for by a local vet to regain weight before being released back to sea. The seal weighed only about 7 kilograms when it was found on the Ruby Bay walkway on 16 September. It has now reached nearly 14 kilograms, being fed seafood supplied by Sealord, and the aim is to get it to at least 15 kilograms. Subantarctic fur seals are "cousins" of our native kekeno/New Zealand fur seals. They are typically found on offshore islands throughout the subantarctic region and they occasionally turn up in New Zealand.

DoC ranger Dirk de Vries says the male juvenile seal was likely very emaciated from using a lot of energy to make the tough, long journey here. "It's heartening to see the recovery of the subantarctic fur seal under the vet's care and we're very grateful for the support she provides in rehabilitating injured or sick native wildlife. We also thank Sealord for providing fish for the seal. It's planned to release the seal back into the sea once it's gained enough weight. We hope it may find its way to its subantarctic home though we can't be sure but helping it back to a healthy condition gives it a chance to do so."

The vet says the seal had been named Ruben for being found at Ruby Bay and she thanked local people who had kept it safe while waiting for DoC rangers to arrive. "Ruben is progressing well which means he is displaying more and more of his normal behaviour and self-protection instincts. This can be challenging at times and requires protective clothing but it is a very good sign. Sealord's support is greatly appreciated and Ruben agrees with the choice of fish they are supplying him."

Sealord organised a ‘menu’ of fish suitable for Ruben, from which the best option was selected – southern blue whiting – a small, whole fish that could be easily defrosted and best represents what Ruben would catch in the wild. The Sealord quality manager says the company is always happy to help and has previously supported veerinary efforts to rehabilitate penguins and two New Zealand fur seals. “Sealord’s company vision is all about doing right by our whānau and the environment, so it’s great to be able to provide support like this wherever we can.” DoC is asking people to report sightings of subantarctic fur seals so more can be learnt about their visits to our shores, including on numbers that come here. Last year there were several sightings of subantarctic fur seals including in Hawkes Bay, Whangamata and in Auckland.

Though subantarctic fur seals appear similar to New Zealand fur seals there are some obvious differences to distinguish the two species.

The subantarctic fur seal has a blunter/shorter nose and creamy-coloured fur on the throat and underside. New Zealand fur seals appear grey or brown and much more uniform in colour, while the subantarctic variety has very two-tone colouration with the distinctive pale cream underneath.

Sightings of what look to be subantarctic fur seals can be reported by emailing [marinemammals@doc.govt.nz](mailto:marinemammals@doc.govt.nz). People spotting them are asked to take and provide photos of it from different angles.



Subantarctic seal



NZ Fur seal

~~~~~  
.....*from the FMC website*.....

➤ Do you know of, or are you, a keen young tramper who would like some financial assistance to undertake an expedition? – with or without mentor support? If so, take a look at the FMC website under the scholarships heading. Although the next round closes on November 15th it may give potential applicants time to plan something for the next funding round.

➤ FMC is in discussions with the DoC and Tuhoe group about plans to remove huts and shelters in Te Urewera . If you are planning to visit the area, it may be useful to contact the nearest DoC office for up-to-date information. Iwi have advised that Tawhiwhi hut, Waikare Junction Hut will be used for temporary kaimahi accommodation, while Te Wairoa/Rogers Hut, Tataweka hut, and Te Totara Hut are under the historic classification. All the huts on the Great Walk will remain open for the time being. Maraunui base hut is used for staff accommodation and is open but up for consideration. All the others are closed and destined for removal.

~~~~~

*If you want to make everyone happy, don't be a leader  
..... sell ice cream!*

*As we know by looking at the trip participants at the end of the day.*

~~~~~

Native Flora & Fauna photo competition entries



Picking feathers by Stephen Phillips



Mushrooms by Lynette Morris



Please note that in the interests of space the photos have been cropped

Delicate Beauty by Annemarie Lamb

THE
WINNER

Karearea

Photo by Jacqui
Dick



What are you thinking? Photo by John McArthur

Above the bushline – no human element



Untitled by Kat Rowe

Untitled by Lynette Morris





Routeburn Creek by Stephen Phillips



Untitled by Kat Rowe

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