



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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

December 2023



A cool refuge in summer Pphoto by Annemarie Lamb

Member of: Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand Inc
Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association

WAIKATO HUT

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Tongariro National Park



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Amanda Collins

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Free to members

Member of: Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand Inc
Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association

BULLETIN No 856

December 2023

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 Jacqui Dick	
	Mike Barker Selwyn June	

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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 8644937 |
| <b>Membership:</b>      | Jocelyn Widmer                                                                   | 027 8664795 |
| <b>Member:</b>          | Selwyn June                                                                      | 027 4978151 |
|                         | Rupert Craggs                                                                    | 027 6811926 |
| <b>Transport:</b>       | Allan Wickens                                                                    | 027 9509546 |
| <b>Social convenor:</b> | Jacqui Dick                                                                      | 021 1375201 |

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Ski Subcommittee

Ski email: waikatoski@gmail.com

Chairperson:	Stephen Prendergast	021 466247
Ski VP:	Stephen Phillips	021 1031436
Bookings:	Stephen Prendergast	021 466247
Finance officer:	Michael Barker	021 2463500
Members:	Ashley Hoskin	027 4909545

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|                                     |                                                                    |             |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Bulletin:</b>                    | Lesley Kuggeleijn                                                  | 027 4942414 |
| <b>Editor &amp; Club Librarian:</b> | Dianne June <a href="mailto:djune@xtra.co.nz">djune@xtra.co.nz</a> | 07 8433066  |

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

Club Night, Wednesday 7th February

We are hoping to have a fresh-water ecologist as guest speaker so watch this space- more details next month,

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2023 - 2024

	9 Dec		Xmas party at the Bogles'	Judith Bogle/ Jacqui Dick
3096	16 or 17 Dec	M/F	Mountain madness	John McArthur
3097	28 Dec- 6 Jan	F	Dusky Track	Paul Quinn
3098	6-20 Jan	E to F	Everything Kahurangi	Allan Wickens
3099	14 Jan		Kaniwhaniwha & Nikau walk	Jacqui Dick
3100	19-21 Jan	E	Kawhia Camp & kayak	Theresa O'Leary
3101 A&B	25-29 Jan		Colenso Hut/ Ruahine corner	Les Warren / Mike Peck
3102	3-6 Feb		Kawekas- Manson	Les Warren
3103	11 Feb			Club captain
3104	18 Feb		Blue Bull falls	Theresa O'Leary
3105	23-25 Feb		Cascade Hut	Peter Ayson
	24 Feb- 2 Mar	M	Routeburn & Greenstone tracks	Madeleine Fiddes
3106	24 Feb-8 Mar	E-F	Wilkin River & lakes	Lois Rowell/ Helen Mitchell
3107	25 Feb - ?	M	Paparoa Track	John Wilson
3108	3 Mar		Hauraki cycle trail	Mike Peck
3109	9/10 Mar			
3110	10-15Mar	F	McArthur Craggs & onward	John McArthur
3111	10-17 Mar			Club captain
3112	18-21 Mar	M	Red Hills, Richmond range	Les Warren
3113	23-28 Mar	F	Leathem Conservation area	Les Warren

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: Weekend trips depart from the Gate 1 at Waikato University. Park closer to other vehicles as this area is security monitored. Leave on Friday nights at 7pm sharp unless otherwise stated. **Day** trips depart from London St at the river end- park on the roadside. Leave Sunday mornings at 8am sharp.

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

1) Club Captain; 2) President; 3) a 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 long-johns/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: Click 'SUBMIT' to confirm your booking on the website

Trip 3096

Mountain Madness

16 or 17 Dec

This is a spontaneous sort of day out - if the weather packs in we will give it away. 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). We are back to climbing Maungatautari from the north and you can do the loop (Quad bike track and old tramping track) if you wish.

Whatever - it will be a full day!!!

Be in! - the car(s) leave Hamilton 6am. We normally do Pirongia up and back before lunch. And we get back late - that's why they call it the Longest Day.

Leader: John McArthur

Ph: 021 2889641

Grade: VF

Email: mcarthur@outlook.co.nz

Transport: Private vehicles

Trip 3097**Dusky Track****28 Dec-06 Jan**

THIS TRIP IS FULL.

Leader: Paul Quinn**Ph:** 021 833 521**Grade:** F**Transport:** You'll have to get yourself to Te Anau, Trips and Tramps shuttle and boat to the start and end of the track.**Trip 3098****Everything Kahurangi****6 Jan-20 Jan**

If you have ever wanted to visit and explore the vast reaches of Kahurangi National Park, this trip should satisfy a great deal of what avid trampers would like to do in this area. Kahurangi is the second largest of our National Parks covering an area of over 450,000 hectares. It was created in 1996 after existing as a Forest Park prior to that year. The name Kahurangi means “*treasured possession*” and the wonderfully diverse natural and recreational values reflects this description perfectly.

This trip will be vehicle-based with comfortable camping facilities. We leave Hamilton on Saturday 6 January and drive to Wellington where we will stay the night at a campground or similar. We'll have time to do the Paekakariki Walkway or do a short walk in Wellington to relax after the long drive that day. On Sunday, we have a leisurely start and then catch the 1.00 pm sailing to Picton. From there, we will drive 2-3 hours to a trailhead at Kahurangi.

Over the following 11 days (8-18 January) the aim is to do as many day/half-day/short walks with the odd overnighter as we can fit in. If you *Google* “*Best Trails in Kahurangi National Park (All Trails website)*” they have 88 different walks to do. Some include sections of the Heaphy Track which are beyond the scope of this trip. However, the descriptions do include popular walks such as Mount Arthur, Mount Owen Leslie-Karamea and so on. Walks range from easy to hard and cater for all levels. Once the group is formed, we will decide on a plan involving tramps throughout the park. Most will be trailhead based and either circular with the van picking up a group at another point, or in and out. There is scope for an overnight tramp or two if people wish. Using our mobile base, we can cover the full range of the Park from the Takaka area around to Karamea. The last two days (19-20 January) will be spent travelling back to Hamilton.

This trip is timed to start on the weekend where most Kiwis finish their Xmas-New Year holiday. Recent experience with our vehicle-based trips in the top half of the South Island has shown that campsites empty considerably after this time. Looking ahead while we are travelling, we may look at other accommodation options if the weather is bad.

IMPORTANT: Please indicate early to the leader if you would like to do all or part of this trip. The ferry and van have been booked well ahead of time. At the time this blurb was written, the trip number is not known. You can indicate your intention to participate by sending an email to the leader. There is scope to join at various stages in the overall trip.

Leader: Allan Wickens**Ph:** 027 9509546**Grades:** E to F**Email:** allanwickens@hotmail.com

Trip 3101A**Colenso Hut****25-29 Jan**

FMC announced that access to the north-western Ruahine Ranges thru Mokai Station has been re-instated from 24th December 2022. Great news for those Clubs such as ours and save the long journey to the Hawkes Bay for access. I believe the last time our Club used the Mokai access was in 1989.

Thursday 25: Travel to Taihape and stay at either Gretna hotel of backpackers, Drive Hamilton to Taihape (4hrs). Stay either at Gretna Hotel or Backpackers in Taihape.

Friday 26: Mokai Road End to Otukota Hut. Drive to Mokai Road End (40min). Walk – Ascend thru Mokai Station to the Mokai-Patea Range tops, follow the tops south for a short way before descending to Otukota Hut (6 beds) (allow around 5hrs). The last 30/45min is very steep. Excellent views along the tops if the weather is kind. We must, follow the designated / agreed poled route thru Mokai Station.

Saturday 27: Otukota Hut to Colenso Hut. Walk to Colenso Hut (8 beds) via Puketaramea (1338m) and Unknown Campsite (7-9hrs). Depending on the track condition, this will be a long day. Hopefully time will allow us to visit Colenso Lake, or we can visit next morning on way out. Not found any current information on this section so today will be “winging it”.

Sunday 28: Colenso Hut to Iron Bark Hu. Walk from Colenso Hut to Iron Bark Hut (6 beds) (4-5hrs). A short day after yesterday's long day. Tomorrow will be another long day.

Monday 29: Iron Bark Hut to Mokai Road End. Walk out to the Mokai Road End carpark. Unfortunately, we cannot use a 'short-cut' from Iron Bark Hut straight up and over the Tops as there is no agreement with Mokai Station.

From Iron Bark Hut, there are new track changes to Otukota Hut which is much shorter (and quicker) than the old track which still shows on the Topo maps. It will still be a long day back out to the carpark.

This trip will be a fit trip but aimed at a “slower fit trip”. One needs to be fit as there will be a lot of steep ascending and descending and some stream crossing (hopefully low level). A few days could well be longer days than we normally do. Times are based on what I can find from DoC websites or track times on Notice Board at Mokai Carpark – we may take a bit less time. A lot will depend on the group dynamics and the weather. As the Huts only have 6 to 8 beds, it is highly recommended that we take tents.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 8644937.

Grade: F but slower

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Trip 3101B**Ruahine Corner****26-29 Jan**

My plan is to depart the Mokai carpark at the same time as the Colenso group and walk through to Colenso Hut for Friday night. Saturday, we tramp to Ruahine Corner Hut via the Potae Mangatera track. Sunday is RCH to Ironbark Hut via Ohutu Ridge where we'll meet the other group and walk out together on Monday.

Leader: Mike Peck

Ph: 021 369 256

Grade: F

Email: mikeypeck@yahoo.com

Transport: Senior member \$88

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3102

Kawekas- Manson Country

3-6 Feb

I have offered to Lead this trip as Allan has had to pull out. This trip will be a fit trip (at a slower pace than a fitter trip). If, there is a Leader keen to do a fitter trip, please contact me. Also, if there is a Leader keen to base themselves at the Cameron Road campsite and do day trips or a couple of overnight trips, also contact me.

Friday 2nd: Travel to Cameron Road Campsite. It is 5hrs (plus a short stop) to Cameron Road Campsite.

Saturday 3rd: After a short drive to The Lakes Carpark, we walk to the Kiwi Mouth Hut via Kuripapango (6 – 7hrs).

Sunday 4th: Today we walk to Otutu Hut via Manson Hut – In ‘Manson Country’ (6 – 8hrs)

Monday 5th: Today we walk to Back Ridge Hut via Rocks Ahead Hut (8-9hrs)

Tuesday 06: Walk out to The Lakes Carpark via Kaweka J and Studholme Saddle Hut (7-9hrs).

One needs to be fit as there will be a lot of steep ascending and descending, and some stream crossing (hopefully low level). NOTE: Most days could well be longer days than we normally do. A lot will depend on the group dynamics and the weather.

As the Huts only have 6 or less beds, it is highly recommended that we take tents.

Leader: Les Warren

Phone: 027 8644937.

Grade: F but slower

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Transport: Senior member \$88

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3104

Blue Bull falls

18 Feb

In Jan 2022 a few WTC members joined John & Jean Wilson leading a venture to re-visit these falls – they had been there many years before. We loved the stream walk and having wet feet on a hot day but had to turn around before we found the falls. Let’s see if we can find them this time.

The highest waterfall in Pirongia Forest Park is in the headwaters of Blue Bull Stream. We will walk up from Kaniwhaniwha carpark. Perhaps this time we will go up the Bell Track, use compass bearings to drop down to the stream, explore & enjoy the falls, then walk out along the stream – 2 k’s approx.

Leader: Theresa O’Leary

Ph: 027 416 2633_

Grade: M/F

Email: theresa.oleary.eme@gmail.com

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Wanted to buy: A sleeping bag suitable for a teenaged boy. Does not have to be top quality but good condition please. 3 seasons/compact. Ph: Helen 021404945

Trip 3105**Cascade Hut****23-25 Feb**

This is a classic Kaimanawa trip. We will **leave Hamilton early on Friday morning** and drive to the end of Clements Mill Road to start the tramp at the swing bridge crossing over the Hinemaiaia Stream along a gentle stroll through the forest. After approximately 50 minutes we will come to the confluence and the track takes a serious turn with a 460m climb to the highest point of the trip of 1240 meters. Then after one more down and up we drop to the Tauranga-Taupo river cross the Cascade stream and the hut (6 bunk). Approximately 7/8 hours.

Next day we will go to the 12 bunk Oamaru Hut from the Cascade via the Kaipoi Track which is approximately 18.7; km and will take 5-6 hours. Day 3 will see us cross the Oamaru river twice and up through the forest and a gate into Poronui station. Hopefully 4 to 5 hours we will be out. I can promise you wet feet river swims and incredible scenery. Tents necessary.

Leader: Peter Ayson**Ph:** 0274 797 077**Grade:** M/F**Email:** *peter.ayson@yahoo.com***Transport:** Senior member \$67

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Routeburn & Greenstone tracks**24 Feb-2 Mar**

We are starting the Routeburn Track Saturday 24Feb - First night - Routeburn Falls Hut, 2nd night 25th Feb - Lake Mackenzie Hut. Walk out 26th Feb. We are planning to stay in Te Anau for 2 nights then start Greenstone Track over 3 nights and 4 days. McKellar hut to Deerstalker hut to Greenstone hut to car park.

Note: these huts require prior booking with DoC

Leader: Madeleine Fiddes**Ph:** 021 2273560**Grade:** M**Email:** *madeleine@actrix.co.nz***Transport:** Private arrangements.**Trip 3106 Wilkin River-Lakes Diana, Lucidus & Castalia****24 Feb-8 Mar**

Fly into Queenstown 27th and travel to Makarora for flight to Jumboland the following day. From Top Forks Hut we will explore Lakes Dianna, Lucidus and Castalia. The weather will dictate how many nights we stay at Top Forks. From there we walk back out to Kerin Forks Hut cross the river (preferably by boat) and walk to Siberia Hut. From there it is a day trip up to Lake Crucible. We expect to take the jet boat back to Makarora on the afternoon of 3rd or 4th March. All participants will need to bring a tent and sleeping mat. Possible day trips are planned for the remaining days or others can return to Queenstown.

Leaders: Lois Rowell & Helen Mitchell **Ph:** 027 288 1148 or 021 523494**Emails:** *loiserowell@gmail.com* or *hmitchie@hotmail.co.nz***Grades:** E to F**Cost:** Private arrangements**Trip 3107****Paparoa Track****starting 25 Feb**

If you haven't already booked your accommodation, then you are too late.

Leaders: Jean & John Wilson**Ph:** 021 266 8600

Ed comment: keep an ear out for SI kokako- they may have been heard in this area.

Trip 3108**Hauraki cycle trail****3 Mar**

Meet in Te Aroha at the old railway station. Cycle towards Paeroa and then on towards Waihi for lunch at Falls Retreat or Waihi township. Return the same way. Distance is about 30-35km each way on mostly flat terrain. You will need a headlamp for the tunnel section in the Karangahake Gorge. It's a comfortable ride with about two hours biking each way to Falls retreat.

Leader: Mike Peck**Ph:** 021 369256**Grade:** M**Email:** mikeypeck@yahoo.com**Transport:** Private vehicles**Trip 3110****McArthur Craggs & onward****10-15 Mar**

We will get to Hokitika to start us off and shuttle to the bridge across the Arahura river bright and early. From there, a 6-7 hour tramp up to the Lower Olderog Biv (2 sleeping benches, no mattresses). This is close to the bush-line, and we break up to open tops to gain the McArthur Craggs, top of the McArthur Range at 1432m.

Here we have options:

a) the short traverse across Mt Kerr and down to either the West Coast Wilderness trail (cycle trail) or out north along the Wainihinihi river to the main road.

b) (preferred) so as not to waste the altitude, we would traverse the ridge to Top Olderog Biv (again just 2 berth) and on to Mt Olsen (1603m), the Tara Tama range, turn right over Dunn Saddle, Mt Edelweiss, Newton Saddle and down to Dunns Creek Hut. Then we can walk out the Taipo River to the main road, or

c) we could go up and over the Kelly Range staying at Carroll Hut (looks nice on the map). This gets us down into the Otira valley and the main road.

More planning and timing to be done, but small team and camping required.

Leader: John McArthur**Ph:** 021 2889641**Grade:** F**Email:** mcarthur@outlook.co.nz**Trip 3112****Red Hills, Richmond Ranges****18 -21 Mar**

Departure and End: St Arnaud. I am treating this 4 or 5-day trip as a warm-up for my Bounds Circuit Trip that will follow.

Day 1: Start walking from Six Creek Carpark to Red Hills Hut (2hrs).

Day 2: Walk to Hunters Hut via Porters Creek Hut (7hrs).

Day 3: Walk about 1km north on poled track then follow a stream up to the ridgeline near Pt 1374 OR, we can follow the poled track all the way to Pt 1374 via Mt Ellis. Then, continue along the ridgeline to Red Hill and descend to a tarn and camp for the night. If the availability of water is difficult, we may need to drop down to the upper valley of the Motueka River Right Branch to camp.

Day 4: From either camp site from last night, we make our way down the ridgeline to an area called The Plateau, and head for Red Hills Hut and possible onto the Carpark. If the going is slow, we can use the option of staying at Red Hills Hut for the night and walking out the next morning (only 2hrs).

The attraction of the Red Hills is the "ultramafic" geology. This means there is an abundance of minerals, including iron, magnesium, copper and chrome, which give

the rocks brilliant colours, particularly reds and oranges. Due to the toxic nature of the soils for tree growth, much of the area is covered in scrub and tussock.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 8644937

Grade: M

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Accommodation: Mixture of camping and huts

Trip 3113 Bounds Circuit, Leatham Conservation Area 23- 28 Mar

Departure and End: St Arnaud. To get to our start point, we travel towards Blenheim for a few km's to Leatham Road then follow Leatham Road to the end.

Day 1: We follow Leatham River south to Boundary Stream. Then follow Boundary Stream for about 4km, cross the stream and ascend spur following a fence line to ridgeline. From here, we follow a ridgeline and poled route to Hidden Hut (8 to 9hrs).

Day 2: Follow a poled route past Turkey's Nest to Gosling Hut (8 to 10hrs).

Day 3: Follow Gosling Stream down to the Waihopai River then follow a farm track south to Blue Mountain Hut (8hrs and a less stressful day for our bodies).

Day 4: Head up the Waihopai River to the Waterfall Stream then, follow Waterfall Stream all the way up to a tarn where we camp for the night (8hrs).

Day 5: Ascend north of the tarn to ridgeline then follow it to the upper section of Boundary Stream. Continue down Boundary Stream to Pt 807 where we will camp for our last night.

Day 6: Continue down Boundary Stream and the Leatham River to our carpark. Most of this area is exposed to the elements with little bush. Will need to be prepared for hot weather tramping. Please note that times are only an estimate based on some blog reports I found.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 8644937

Grade: F

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Accommodation: Mixture of camping and huts. Huts are not big. A plus to tramping in this area is that not many people visit this area.

Mid-week Walks & Tramps

We have 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 is via the Mid-week W & Ts Group page on WhatsApp. If you would like to be part of this communication, please download WhatsApp on your phone and text your request to Isla on 021 209 6539.

Kayakers unite

Who is interested in kayak trips? Perhaps a bit similar to the 'Tramping on Bikes' trips.

Some for a single day trip, some with overnight camping. Some where you might hire a kayak when we get there, many where we will each need to have one and bring it. How this came about – thanks to Jacqui Dick, 14 of us had a great Raglan windy kayak recently. That got me thinking about more fun on the water, and how we might do that together.

I am putting my hand up to be the initiator of a WhatsApp group where we could all suggest impromptu trips – i.e. ‘Looks fine this weekend, anyone keen to meet at Raglan’. I would also be ok with getting a few WTC trips underway if we have members who will benefit. I own 3 tents, small, medium and large (would fit 8+ tramping mattresses) that could become a base camp at a lake for instance.

If you are interested and would like to join in, please email me your permission theresa.oleary.eme@gmail.com to add you and your mobile phone number into a WhatsApp ‘WTC on water’ group and that will get us off to a beginning. And do send suggestions for trips, and how you personally might help get this group off to a great start. Theresa O’Leary

Summer programme for Tongariro National Park

Mahi Aroha, presented by Project Tongariro and DoC, offers a range of nature-based experiences for the whole family - with bookings open now for January's programme of events.

- 2nd Jan Whangaehu lahar volcanic floods walk
- 4th Jan Waihaha wilding conifer control working bee in the western bay area
- 5th Jan Waihohonu hut area tramp & surroundings
- 8th Jan Turoa SE basin flora walk
- 9th Jan Te Matapuna wetland wander
- 10th Jan Toddler time at Taupo Library & Kaikawaka villa historic heritage walk
- 11th Jan Mt Tihia tramp
- 11 & 18th Jan Ohinetonga bat evening
- 12th Jan Te Porere redoubt cultural visit
- 13 & 14th Jan Kiwi & who aversion training in Taupo & Turangi,
- 13 & 20th Jan Kiwi aversion training in Raetihi/Owhango region
- 15th Jan Opepe Historic reserve hikoi – great for kids.
- 15th Jan Paengaroa plant picnic
- 17th Jan Old coach road historic heritage walk
- 18th Jan Waipahihi botanical gardens walk
- 19th Jan Historical cycle tour of Taupo lakefront
- 19th Jan Okupata caves – morning & afternoon trips
- 20 & 21st Jan Kaipo river swing bridge heli-hike with the Sika foundation (2 trips)
- 20th Jan Nature art watercolouring session in Turangi
- 22 & 23rd Jan Wairakei Golf course kiwi burrow visits
- 25 Jan Motutere Top 10 holiday park trap building
- 27 Jan Kaimanawa Alpine adventures heli-hike along a new MTB track

Visit the Project Tongariro website for more details & bookings:

Tongariro.org.nz/mahi-aroha.

Editorial

What a lineup we have coming up! Amazing. Time to get out and make good use of whatever summer we are blessed with given that last summer wasn't so good.

I would like to offer very special thanks to the club members for your help and stepping up to the plate when we did a baiting round in Pureora in October. It is such a comforting thought to know that there are some super people in this club. And to know that many of you are so keen to participate in the Pureora pest control operation on a regular basis. You're truly gems. Thanks to Les and John McA for thinking to include these trips sort of in the trip programme. Great conservation contribution.

Presidential Blog

I hope everyone has had a great tramping and skiing year. I'd like to thank the Ski and Tramping committee for their input and hard work throughout the year. Without them we would not have as vibrant a club as we do. I know things are hard with the Ski side of things with the uncertainty that is happening, but I am sure we will get through it. Also, I'd like to thank Dianne and Selwyn with the continuous work on the bulletin and Pureora baiting. Another person to thank is Roger for his continued support at club night with our cups of tea. Without people like Roger and their contribution the club would not be what it is.

Christmas is upon us and so is the Christmas Party. It will be held out at Scotsman Valley on Saturday the 9th December. I promise plenty of lights and Christmas decorations. If you wish to stay overnight, you can - there is plenty of space to put up your tent and we can organise a Christmas breakfast as well. We will have games rain or shine and if there is anything you would like to do please bring along because I am sure we can accommodate. Details will be sent out by Jacqui while I am away down south leading a trip. So please RSVP to Jacqui, I am grateful she is sorting things out for me.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy new year.

The final Quote for this year:

"What the caterpillar calls the end, the rest of the world calls a butterfly." Lao Tzu.

Trip Reports

Trip 3081

Tasmania – walls of Jerusalem

28 Sept -1 Oct

Our final adventure to Tasmania was 4-days in the Walls of Jerusalem National Park. As there are no huts on this trip, it was all camping.

Thursday 28 September

Our Shuttle picked us up at 0845 for the short drive to our carpark, which was our drop-off and pickup point as we were walking a circuit. Arrived at the here at 1035 and started on our journey at 11am. Our destination was Dixon Kingdom Campsite. Soon after starting we began ascending to the top of the ridge. We stopped for a snack break at Trappers Hut, an old Hut that can be used as emergency shelter. While purchasing some items from an Outdoor Store in Launceston, a shop assistant suggested we try an off-track track up a valley to a campsite on the track to Mount Jerusalem. Possums were well-known to be a problem at the designated

campsite. We did opt to try this suggested route but, unknown to us there were two obvious tracks behind the Hut and, unfortunately after some bush-bashing (which Sally did not enjoy) we quickly changed our plan and returned to the Hut. So, it was back on the main track, which was well identified, and we continued on our way. After some further climbing we reached an area called the “Solomon’s Jewels” an area of many lakes of various sizes. As we continued, we reached the first designated campsite on this track, Wild Dog Creek Campsite. The campsites are basic with wooden platforms for tents, taps for water, and toilets.

From this Campsite it was a short easy climb up thru Herods Gate to a long valley with high mountains and walls surrounding us – hence area called the Walls of Jerusalem. It was an easy walk for about an hour before another short climb to Damascus Gate, with Solomons Throne on one side and The Temple on the other side. We continued down to Dixons Kingdom Campsite hut, and towards Mt Jerusalem to investigate the suggested campsite. By now the weather was getting windy and cooler and, after Judith checked out what was thought to be the campsites, she ruled this out as not suitable. So, unfortunately, we had no choice to head back to the main campsite. We arrived at 6pm, a long 7hr day and having lost probably 2hrs during the day. Everyone was very tired. As it was getting dark, we all pitched our tents on the tent platforms.

The majority of the tent sites on the Overland Track and main sites in the Walls of Jerusalem, are now on platforms to protect the ground and vegetation. These platforms can cater for two small tents and include a number of chains and hooks to link with the tent ropes and hooks. The Dixons Kingdom Campsite also had a large chest that can be used to store your food and smelly items and thus keep the possums away from your tent. I don’t think we had any problems with possums on this trip.

I had planned on us spending two nights at Dixons Kingdom Campsite and do day trips.

Friday 29 September

After breakfast, we departed at 0835 for a day trip up Mt Jerusalem.

We returned back to the Campsite for lunch at 1115, a nice 2hr 45m excursion. It was a good easy track to follow with many lovely lakes on a plateau before the final gradual climb to the top. We had excellent 365° views at the top but, it was very windy so, we found a sheltered spot to have a snack. After lunch, some of us opted for another short walk to visit the Pool of Bethesda and climb the Temple.

Saturday 30 September

As today’s walk was expected to be a short one of around 3hrs, we happily decided to leave a little later and departed at 9am for Lake Adelaide Campsite, a popular campsite for many hikers in this area. The track was quite rough when walking alongside Lake Ball but we arrived at our Campsite at 1135. There were no platforms (yet) here so, we had lovely grass ground to sleep on. After setting up our tents the afternoon was spent relaxing in-between scattered showers.

Sunday 01 October

Today was our final day on the track for the trip. Today was an estimated 4hr walk back to the carpark and our pickup, which we scheduled for 3pm as a safe-guard for any delays.

After breakfast and packing up, we departed at 0910 and arrived at the carpark at 1250. The track was muddy in a number of sections plus we had our wettest day of our trip-today.

We arrived back at Launceston around 4.30pm. After a nice hot shower and a change of clothes, we went out for dinner. So, ended our Tasmanian adventure. The Walls of Jerusalem team was – Les Warren, Jim Scott, Judith Bogle, Ying Schick and Sally Tan.

Some Trip Information

- We stayed at the Launceston Backpackers each time we were in town. Place was comfortable and warm and clean. Only negative was the Office hours – 3 to 6pm.
- I used Outdoor Tasmania shuttle company. Very good to deal with much helpful advice. They can also supply any gas but, just as easy to buy from the Outdoor Stores in Launceston.
- Popular Outdoor Stores we used were Paddy Pallin and Aspire. Both have a wide selection of gear and food. The plus for Paddy Pallin was that they were happy to take our empty gas cannisters. A great help.
- By starting before 01 October, we avoided paying the AUS\$200 per person Overland Track fee.
- You still need to buy a Parks & Wildlife Fee (AUS\$89.50) which gives you access to all National Parks for two months.

The Group

The group worked well together which greatly helped with an enjoyable trip. We had daily group discussions, usually in the evenings and mornings on what we would do each day. Unfortunately, the weather did play a part in us not able to do some side trips but, this did not deter us from enjoying our days on the track.

Miranda Seabird Coast

20-22 Nov



It was our time of the year to get together for a few days of adventure and this year we went to Miranda. The main attraction being the Seabird Coast. Most of us



View from the Hunua walk

both photos by Val Jones.

assembled at the Pukorokoro Centre for a very interesting hour with our host Chelsea who explained about the three different types of birds who frequent the area. How clever the dotterel are flying between NZ and Alaska non-stop. It is estimated that around 6000 birds inhabit the Miranda shell banks.

From the committee table:

New members: We welcome Jilliene Beale, and welcome back David Hintz.

Resignations: None

Membership: The club has 191 tramping members.

...from the DoC website...

➤ **Predator control and community** – a dream team for Coromandel kiwi introduction. Brown kiwi are thriving in Eastern Coromandel as sustained predator control by DoC and the local community pays off for the threatened birds. Surveying of kiwi in the area between Tairua and Hot Water Beach has shown a 10% increase from 2015 to 2020. Numbers are expected to continue to increase following the recent distribution of biodegradable 1080 bait pellets at Whenuakite which will provide further protection to kiwi from stoats. Whenuakite Kiwi Care Group spokesperson Janice Hinds says the area’s kiwi benefit from a combined predator control approach. “We have an amazing crew of landowners who contribute to on-ground predator control covering 3,500 hectares. Then, every 3-4 years DoC and Waikato Regional Council apply 1080 bait – cleaning up the possums destroying the canopy, and the trap-shy rats and mustelids we miss. The difference is extraordinary.” Coromandel has a long history of environmental protection and conservation work, much of it focused on species found in its expansive forests. DoC Biodiversity Ranger Leon Pickering says vulnerable brown kiwi are a particular focus of the aerial predator control programme. “We know that kiwi chicks are especially at risk – with up to 95% loss of chicks being killed by predators in some locations.

Sustained predator control, a paired system like this, means around 60% of the chicks make it to adulthood.”

Monitoring has shown the recent aerial 1080 operation in Whenuakite managed to reduce rodents to an undetectable level. Stoats have also been controlled, at a rate of 90-100% on average, through secondary poisoning as they feed on rodent carcasses.

While kiwi are more active at night, Janice says during the day there are further signs of the biodiversity gains from the programme. “We’ve seen flocks of kererū – up to 250 at a time, and the tomtits are spreading up from the South, we’ve seen pōhutukawa trees flower for the first time in a lifetime.”

Leon says the support of the community has been critical to achieving this success. “We’ve had landowners coming across kiwi in their backyards – they’re seeing the results – more and more are coming to us and asking to be involved.” Whenuakite Kiwi Care Group is in it for the long haul. “Dad (Arthur Hinds 1946-2017) was involved from the early days, and now it’s a family thing – we just got our 2½ yr old grandson some tramping boots, that’s some succession planning!”, says Janice. “We would like to thank Save the Kiwi and Waikato Regional Council for their financial support to keep our work going.”

Whenuakite kiwi, and the whole forest ecosystem around them, are in good hands.

➤ DoC is investigating new monitoring solutions for the Waikato **kākāpō population** after the trial has shown some kākāpō continue to be highly active. Following a review of bird activity, DoC, Ngāi Tahu and Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari made the call to temporarily decrease the population at the Waikato fenced sanctuary from ten to seven birds while they develop a less labour-intensive monitoring solution.

The decision comes after the allure of the fence has proven too strong for some of the famously curious parrots, with three finding a way over it in the past two months. One kākāpō, Motupohue, who was part of the first cohort transferred in July, found his way out twice in quick succession, suggesting a behavioural component. He was relocated back to a southern predator-free island last week, along with Manawanui and Kanawera, who have not breached the fence but created a high monitoring workload by spending a lot of time near it.

DoC Operations Manager for Kākāpō Deidre Vercoe says departures from the fenced sanctuary were an expected challenge of the trial, and four in six weeks has meant an increase in monitoring was needed at a time where monitoring was expected to be significantly decreasing. Reducing the population means staff can keep closer tabs on the nocturnal, ground-dwelling parrots while still preserving the integrity of the trial. “The kākāpō wear transmitters and are regularly monitored by rangers, but there are some limitations with the technology - tracking their exact whereabouts can be very labour intensive and is made more difficult by terrain and weather.”

The manu are otherwise doing well within the sanctuary, Deidre says.

“All kākāpō are in good condition, passing their health checks and exploring their new territory. It’s just that some of them are very interested in the fence. It could be an age thing, or a behavioural thing; we just don’t know yet. But that is the purpose of a trial – to prepare, watch, learn and adapt as needed and taking risks is part of that.”

Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Kākāpō Species Representative Tāne Davis says Ngāi Tahu has worked closely with ngā iwi ki Maungatautari who jointly made the decision to return the three kākāpō to their kāinga (home) in Fiordland. “Our curious taonga will always test us. We have learnt a lot since the manu were first released on Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari in July and I know they will continue to teach us more as they adapt to life on the mainland. These learnings are crucial if we want kākāpō to thrive within our communities and backyards in the decades to come.”



Using vegetation remains the leading theory for how the kākāpō are departing the sanctuary. Vegetation was cleared before the transfer and is ongoing.

The trial is reinforcing why we should never underestimate a kākāpō,

Deidre says Kākāpō are flightless and are excellent climbers that can use their wings to “parachute” from treetops. The average canopy height at Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari is higher than in the southern islands; taller trees mean greater “parachuting” distances. Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari General Manager Helen Somerville says their ranger team have done an outstanding job with both monitoring the birds and vegetation clearing.

“We are learning just how clever these manu are. By now we expected the hands-on monitoring to have begun to reduce, however this hasn’t been possible, and the team is traversing our incredible sanctuary every day checking on bird locations, and this method is simply not sustainable.”

Deidre says having kākāpō in a fenced sanctuary has never been done before.

“With the southern predator-free islands reaching capacity, it is vital to investigate alternative habitats ahead of future breeding seasons, so we continue to be committed to this trial.

“One of our ultimate goals is to have large numbers of kākāpō exploring their former range – wild and free, and places like Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari are an important steppingstone for kākāpō in the meantime.”

“As with any trial there is always an element of risk, but to secure their future, we need to push the boundaries. Kākāpō have come back from the very brink of extinction to a population of just under 250 birds, but without new, safe, predator-free habitat, we won’t be able to help them continue to grow.”

➤ **Geckos** returned to wild as court case culminates. 3 protected native geckos have been returned to the wild after years in illegal captivity. The release of the lizards in the Southern Alps came just a few days before the man responsible for their long stint in unpermitted captivity appeared for sentencing in the Palmerston North District Court. Halcombe man Richard Brosnan faced 2 representative charges under the Wildlife Act relating to the unauthorised holding of 63 geckos and skinks – from 11 different species – and the case taken by DoC culminated today when he was fined \$7000. The fine will be paid to DoC. The majority of the animals DoC seized have been rehomed with authorised keepers across the country, as they couldn't be released to the wild after being held in captivity for a long time.

Matt Davis, DoC Principal Investigations Officer, says DoC became aware of Brosnan's unauthorised keeping and trading of the animals through a series of Facebook posts. In November 2022, DoC executed a search warrant at a residential address where Brosnan was living, and discovered several cages in which he was keeping the animals. In an interview with DoC investigators, Brosnan claimed he had been authorised to keep lizards by the Wildlife Service – a government entity which ceased to exist after the creation of DoC in 1987. However, he couldn't provide a copy of the permit, and DoC staff could not find any record of it despite extensive efforts searching archives.



Grand skink

had in captivity. “Mr Brosnan knew from his previous experience what his obligations and responsibilities were – and he continued keeping lizards despite not holding the relevant permit. For DoC, that is unacceptable, and it motivated us to take action which has led to today's court hearing – an outcome which could've been avoided.”

DoC's investigation resulted in good information about where the 3 West Coast green geckos (*Naultinus tuberculatus*) had come from, and how long they had been in captivity, so they were able to be returned to their natural habitat. The effort to recover the 3 geckos returned to the South Island was supported by Wildbase (Massey University), where staff played a crucial role in care for the animals, including surgery to remove infertile eggs from the West Coast green gecko.

Matt says DoC had authorised Brosnan to keep Grand and Otago skinks, but those authorisations expired in 2013 and 2016. He did not apply to renew them, and when DoC investigated in 2022, he was not authorised to keep any of the 11 species he

Air New Zealand supported the release of the geckos by flying them south from Palmerston North to Christchurch for the translocation.

➤ Possible west Coast wallaby sightings. Two possible sightings of wallaby north of Haast are concerning says DoC. Wallabies are an unwelcome introduced pest in New Zealand, threatening the environment, biodiversity, and economy in Canterbury, North Otago and Bay of Plenty-Waikato. South Westland Operations Manager Wayne Costello says there have been 2 reported wallaby sightings on the West Coast in recent months. Both were made by people travelling SH 6 south of Knights Point. “These are the first serious wallaby sightings we’ve had on the Coast. It’s a concern as wallabies are capable of causing significant environmental damage. In native forests they eat seedlings and graze the understory, changing the structure of the forest, which destroys the homes and food of our native wildlife.” The most recent report was made by someone who had experience with wallabies in Australia, he says. “The community is key to preventing wallabies establishing a foothold on the West Coast. As wallabies are nocturnal, we want anyone travelling at night in the Knights Point area to keep an eye out and report any sightings. The most common wallaby in the South Island, the Bennett’s wallaby, stands up to 80cm tall and weighs 14kg to 20kg. Their droppings are about 20mm long and tend to be pear-shaped, although this can vary. More information is available online at MPI. Wayne Costello says the only way wallabies could have got to the Coast is by people bringing them in. It’s illegal to have, hold, move or transport wallabies without a permit. Anyone who breaches this law can face up to five years in prison and/or be fined up to \$100,000.

Any sightings or signs of wallabies anywhere in Aotearoa New Zealand should be reported to Biosecurity New Zealand. This can be done online at the website: *Report wallaby*. Wallabies can breed and spread quickly. Without action, it is estimated pest wallabies could inhabit up to one-third of Aotearoa New Zealand within 50 years.

.....
...from the FMC website....

➤ Fire alarms in huts. FMC has been working with DoC regarding their recent direction to install fire alarms in all huts with 6 bunks or over. FMC believes DoC have incorrectly interpreted the relevant legislation, and that this costly rollout is unnecessary and will not meaningfully improve the safety of people staying in backcountry huts. Furthermore, we are concerned at the lack of consultation with clubs and organisations which own huts situated on public conservation land and are affected by the change. FMC have requested DOC put a pause on the work until they have clarified the legality of the rollout, and until a proper consultation has been completed. The department has indicated they are currently completing a review of the decision and we are expecting a more comprehensive response from them within the next couple of weeks,

➤ Updated outdoor Access maps. Herenga aa Nuku Aotearoa (Outdoor Access Commission) produces digital maps that show publicly accessible outdoor access. Their GIS team have recently updated these maps and added new functions for outdoor recreationists to use. The maps are a free public service. They display public access areas, hunting and fishing locations, property information, hydro parcels, tracks and trails.

As trampers, climbers and other recreationalists, you can use the maps to plan out a new or short route to areas that you might not have visited previously, draw it online using the drawing and export tools, download. Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa (Outdoor Access Commission) produces **digital maps** that show publicly accessible outdoor access. Their GIS Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa (Outdoor Access Commission) produces **digital maps** that show publicly accessible outdoor access. Their GIS team have recently updated these maps and added new functions for outdoor recreationists to use.

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As trampers, climbers and other recreationalists, you can use the maps to plan out a new or short route to areas that you might not have visited previously, draw it online using the drawing and export tools, download the GPX file and either upload it to the Pocket Maps app or to your own GPS device.

Contact **Stephen Day** at website: Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa for information about the maps and / or if you are interested in a short presentation to your club

Photo competition

The Overall champion picture last month featured Russell Lambs' chasm picture – it was the best in the 'Below the bushline/no human element category'.

The **best overall was that of Kat Rowe's** which appeared on the cover of the November bulletin. My apologies to both the photographers and the judges



Untitled

Photo by Charlotte Entwisle-Phillips



Untitled

Photo by David Totman

Untitled

Photo by Kat Rowe



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