



# THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

**WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)**

PO Box 685, Hamilton 3240 • [www.wtc.org.nz](http://www.wtc.org.nz)

June 2019



Cabbage tree flowers photo by Amanda Collins

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

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Free to members

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

**BULLETIN No 806**

**June 2019**

### General Committee

(Contact details listed below)

<b>President:</b> Selwyn June	<b>Secretary:</b> Judith Bogle	<b>Treasurer:</b> Guy Domett		
<b>Members:</b> John McArthur (VP Tramp)	Stephen Prendergast (VP Ski)			
Stephen Phillips	Allan Wickens	Russell King	Stacey Thompson	Peter Lye
Doug Pagel	Mike Nightingale	minean@xtra.co.nz		8562394

### Tramping Subcommittee

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**Waikato Tramping Club account:** 03 1555 0091625 02 (& include the trip number)

## Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July

Winter has arrived! Our theme for July Club night will be making the most of our Alpine environment. We'll cover a number of snow and alpine activities. All things going to plan we'll have a keynote on Mountain Safety and avalanche risk from Avalanche NZ, with the support of Bivouac.

We might even manage a few Winter nibbles to warm up the night.

**Venue:** St Stephens Church Hall (corner of Ohaupo Road and Mahoe Street).

**Time:** Doors open at 7.00pm, meeting starts at 7.30pm

**Cost:** \$2

**Second club night: June 19<sup>th</sup>** there is an opportunity to visit Radix Nutrition in Horotiu from 7:30 pm onwards. We're always looking for options for good nutrition for our tramping trips and longer trips away. Radix Nutrition are a Hamilton based Nutrition company who specialise in performance and endurance foods, packaged as freeze-dried meals. Radix have offered us the opportunity to visit their facility, do some tasting and lead a discussion on food nutrition in the outdoors. They are a food sponsor to some pretty phenomenal journeys. <https://radixnutrition.com/radix-journal>

As part of the event they will provide a Radix single serve meal to take home. Book with Stephen Prendergast as spaces are limited.

**Third club night: Wednesday 26 June 5.30-7pm at Bivouac Outdoor store,** 311 Barton Street. An **introduction to the gear needed for WTC Snowcraft course.** While the emphasis is on Snowcraft, all club members welcome to attend. There will be some specials that will exceed the usual club discount, spot prizes and drinks and nibbles supplied by Bivouac. If you are on the Snowcraft course, bring your boots so you can practice fitting crampons.

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2019

2831	16 June	E/M	Waitomo area walks	Mike Peck
	19 June		Radix nutrition	Stephen Prendergast
2832	22/23 June	E/M	Miranda Hot springs	Selwyn June
	26 June		Winter at Bivouac	Mike Peck
	27 June		Reunion meeting	Dianne & Selwyn
2833	29/30 June	M	Snowcraft 1	Allan Wickens
2834	7 July	E/M	Karaka- Waiotahi	Selwyn June
2835	13/14 July	M	Kaimai working party	John McArthur
2836	19/20 July	M	Snowcraft 2	Allan Wickens
2837	28 July	M	Hakarimata – the whole lot	Jacob Hamill
2838	4 August	E/M	Waitawheta	Dave White

2839	11 August	M	Kaimais – DC3 crash	Tristan Brown
2840	17/18 Aug	M	Tongariro under a full moon	John McArthur
	21 August		South Is trip plans	Keith Robbins
2841	25 August	E/M	Tuahu track to Wairere falls	Merlyn Warren
2842	31 Aug/1 Sept	M	Winter tramp	Mike Peck
2843	14/15 Sept	E/M	Pureora baiting	Dianne & Selwyn June

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.

**Transport:** Juniors will be charged 50% of the senior non-members' rate.

### 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. DONT FORGET: You can book online from our website too**

Bookings and cancellations for all trips must be made by the Monday night prior. Any person withdrawing after this day without good reason will be charged the full cost of the trip. *Please give your landline when making a booking.*

**Departure Point:** Trips depart from the river end of London Street. Cars can be parked, facing the road, in the McCaw Lewis Chapman car park. 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.

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## Trip Descriptions

**Trip 2831** **Waitomo area walks** **16 Jun**

This Waitomo day trip will start at Appletree Rd and we'll head to the Tawarau Falls on the loop track. From here we will head onto Double Falls and then return back to the road end to complete the Loop track. DoC list it as a 5 ½ hour walk.

**Transport:** **Leader:** Mike Peck **Ph:** 021369256 **Grade:** E/M

**Email:** *Mikeypeck@yahoo.com*

**Transport:** Senior member \$25-30 Senior Non-member \$30-35

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**Trip 2832** **Miranda Hot springs/Hunuaas** **22/23 Jun**

**Leaving 8 am Sat morning. Book in early** for this trip please so we can to secure accommodation (otherwise it's camping). There are various options, see below.

Explore the Hunua ranges. On Saturday we'll walk a loop track in the Hunua Regional Park around the Wairoa Reservoir, using the Wairoa Loop Track. There has been intensive pest control here so expect plenty of birds. On Sunday it will be short walks in the Miranda Shorebird reserve, Waharau Regional Park and along a coastal part of the Kaiiau to Thames cycleway.

Accommodation is at Miranda Holiday Park where there is free access to their hot mineral pools.

**Leader:** Selwyn June **Ph:** 8433066 **Grade:** E/M

**Transport:** Senior member \$45-55 Senior Non-member \$50-60

**Accommodation:** Chalet (\$49.80 sleeping up to 5 people), Backpackers bunkroom (\$33.90) or camping (\$28.50).

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**Trip 2833** **Snowcraft** **29/30 Jun**

This is one of the most popular trips we run each year and for good reason. On a good day the trip to the crater of Ruapehu is a very rewarding experience, especially for those who find snow and ice to be an alien environment and more so in winter. Given reasonable weather, by the end of the week-end you will understand the principles behind the rather complex concept of "Snowcraft". Like anything else in life, it takes a lot of practice and a genuine understanding of what is real and perceived danger when entering into the snow and ice heights such as Ruapehu. Our leaders have been doing this sort of thing for many decades and yet they never fail to be fascinated by the world of snow and ice. The basics of snowcraft include: self-arrest, how to walk on icy slopes using crampons and ice axe (ropes not involved), how to navigate in such an environment, basic avalanche awareness and what to wear etc. The departure time will be early evening on Friday and we will be based at our very

comfortable Hut/Lodge over the week-end. Book your ice axe and crampons early as the club has a limited supply of these very necessary items for this weekend.

**Leader:** Allan Wickens **Email:** [allanwickens@hotmail.com](mailto:allanwickens@hotmail.com) **Grade:** M

**Transport:** Senior member \$50-65 Senior Non-member \$55-70

**Accommodation:** Senior member \$25 Senior Non-member \$30

**Crampons and Ice axe hire:** tba or it's BYO or hire them from other sources.

**Trip 2834** **Karaka-Waiotahi tracks** **7 Jul**

This trip begins in the township of Thames and follows the Waiotahi stream and passes an old mine shaft before we start a climb to gain height. This is an old pack track. At the top are great views of the Kaueranga Valley and a good spot for morning tea. Almost 2 hours later we will reach Karaka track (which leads to Crosbies Clearing), and head back down this to Thames. This part of the track is more bush-covered and has some wonderfully coloured rocks along it too. There will be some stream crossings required so be prepared for wet feet but as the tramp should take us 4.5 hours or so you won't have to 'suffer' too long.

**Leader:** Selwyn June **Ph:** 8433066 **Grade:** E/M

**Transport:** Senior member \$30-35 Senior Non-member \$35-40

**Trip 2835** **Kaimai Working Party** **13/14 Jul**

This is your chance to see the newest hut in the Kaimai range and help develop the tracks leading to it. The new Te Whare Okioki Hut now has its roof on and work is continuing on finishing it off. The Kaimai Ridgeway Trust is asking us to help in:

- Improving the track (both clearing and track improvements) from the Kaimai Summit through to the new hut
- Hut build support to improve the hut environs with tidy up of the area and Heli Pad
- Levelling out the area and getting grass seed germinated before winter.

This weekend work party gives us an opportunity to see the new hut and help the program develop the ridgeway track.

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

**Email:** [mcarthur@outlook.co.nz](mailto:mcarthur@outlook.co.nz)

**Transport:** Senior member \$ 45-55 Senior Non-member \$50-60

**Trip 2836** **Snowcraft 2** **19/20 Jul**

This trip will follow on from Snowcraft 1. You must have done the course held at the end of June, or have had previous experience. Friday night will probably be at Waikato hut. This winter tramp typically is the opportunity for you to put into practice all those skills you have learnt. Again, you may hire the equipment needed for the club or source your own supply. Our actual destination is not yet confirmed at present but it is guaranteed there will be snow and ice to 'play' on

and in. Maybe there will be a chance to build a snow cave and camp out for the night too. Watch this space for more information.

**Leader:** Allan Wickens **Email:** [allanwickens@hotmail.com](mailto:allanwickens@hotmail.com) **Grade:** M/F

**Transport:** Senior member \$50-65 Senior Non-member \$55-70

**Accommodation:** tba

**Crampons and ice axe hire:** TBA or it's BYO or hire them from other sources.

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**Trip 2837 Hakarimata – the whole lot 28 Jul**

We will be starting this track from the southern end off Waingaro Rd. From here it is approx. 2.5 hrs to the Hakarimatas summit (374m). We will then continue along the northern section to Parker Rd. The track is expected to take 7.5 hrs. On a fine day there are great views to the east and west of the ranges.

**Leader:** Jacob Hamill **Ph:** 0273513158 **Grade:** M

**Transport:** Senior member \$30-35 Senior Non-member \$35-40

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**Trip 2838 Waitawheta 4 Aug**

Want to go on an easy tramp with barely a hill along the way? This is the one. The trade-off is that there will be a couple or 2 or 3 stream crossings to ensure your feet get washed. However, don't let these put you off as there are also stiles and bridges to help you on your way. This is a great trip that allows you time and space to view the bush around you as you walk. You begin with a womble alongside a stream on flat farmland for about ½ an hour and then begin the bush section. Lunch time will definitely see you at the lovely hut. There is an interesting loop walk nearby around a heritage area telling you about the milling and mining history of the area.

This is a great trip for children 5 years and up, provided you are prepared to help them across those streams – fun for the children though!

**Leader:** Dave White **Ph:** 8491940 **Grade:** E/M

**Transport:** Senior member \$30-35 Senior Non-member \$35-40

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**Trip 2839 Kaimais – DC3 crash site 11 Aug**

The wreckage of DC-3 AYZ is high up on the Kaimai range. We'll start on Thompson's track on the western side, sidling our way up to the top of the range, with (hopefully) some awesome views of the Waikato. Dropping from the range top into a small gully, we then sharply ascend to the ridge top. This time (hopefully.) with amazing views of the Tauranga Harbour and BoP coast. A short bush bash will lead to a collection of wreckage including a wing and the under carriage. We return the same way. In the past, this has been around a 10 hour trip. Bookings either to the landline or vis the club website booking option

**Leader:** **Ph:** 07 8717722 **Grade:** E/M

**Transport:** Senior member \$30-35 Senior Non-member \$35-40

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Why is it that at reunions you feel younger than everyone else looks?



## South Island trips in 2020

Each year WTC organizes a selection of multi-day tramps to the South Island, during summer and autumn. And we are now looking for suggestions for these trips.

2020 trip planning evening with your dreams and we will see what can be done. Consider all grades from easy to superfit, any type of activity from tramping to cycling or packrafting or whatever tickles your fancy.

We'll meet at our usual venue, St Stephens church, on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August, starting at 7.30pm. There will be continuous refreshments (tea, coffee, biscuits) served.

The initial choices of trips will appear in the September bulletin though the programme may be subsequently modified if leaders can't be found or there is insufficient interest.

If you have any queries or comments please contact Keith Robbins, 0211207752.

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## Waikato Ski Club

Winter is making its' presence known and that also sees snow blanketing the slopes of Mt Ruapehu. All the signs are great for a repeat of last year's winter where the snow kept coming thick and fast. Early birds can get summer rates up to 1 July. With the upper mountain due to open on June 22nd you can be one of the early birds on the snow. This is the year of the gondola. After a whirlwind build the finishing touches are being applied in time for the opening of the Upper Mountain. In just one ride you'll go from the base right up to Knoll Ridge Cafe in an enclosed 10person cabin. This a ride you definitely want to catch.

This year members **winter rates** will be \$35 per night for adults and \$20 for under 18s. Non ski club members are \$60 / \$25 respectively. In just 2 weekends you'll be making savings when you join the ski club. So why not get in touch on our website - [www.waikatoskiclub.co.nz](http://www.waikatoskiclub.co.nz)

This year we've got mid-week club days, "ski the mountain with us" days and our Mates Rates packages where your mate can stay at members' rates.

Did you know that you can get to the crater lake from the Hut in 3.5 hours? For alpine explorers we're well placed to get an early morning start so you can tackle your first or your most adventurous mountain expedition. Catch the sunrise from Knoll Ridge or higher, camp out on Ruapehu for a night, or start your winter adventure on the Round the Mountain circuit.

Waikato Ski Club Lodge takes the 'Waikato Hut' tradition that next step.

### **We'll be your Mates!**

Having an experienced skier take you around the mountain is a real treat. You escape the crowds and ski some new trails and places. Look out for the Mountain Tour Days which will be suitable for both beginner and Intermediate

level skiers. When RAL stopped the Mountain Host programme last year it was a real shame for people who were progressing. So, we're bringing it back! Trust me this is fantastic thing to be joining in with. We'll also be working on backcountry options, for those who have the desire.

For you Alpine explorers the Lodge is the perfect base for a weekend traversing the mountain.

### **Mid-Week Club Skiing**

How do you deal with those long queues, packed slopes and busy mountain cafes? Ever wondered what happens once you master the blue runs - but not sure how to get onto the black one? You ski mid-week. During July and August we'll be having a couple of midweek club ski get togethers. We're working on dates and will advertise them via facebook and the website.

### **Mates Rates is back!**

You can bring a non-member at member rates. Your friends don't have to miss out on all the good stuff!

Now is a great time to join the Ski club and enjoy member rates and benefits. You can either upgrade your current Tramping membership to Combined or as a New Member join the Ski Club individually. Check the ski Website [www.waikatoskiclub.co.nz](http://www.waikatoskiclub.co.nz) . Look us up on facebook for updates and info.

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## **Editorial**

Sometimes one just has to be there to experience something special. We stayed at Waikato Hut over Queens' Birthday weekend and what a time it proved to be. Saturday afternoon arrival just on dark greeted us with some sleet near the Hut and a blustery snow-laden wind during the night. Sunday morning was just lovely but had to feel sorry for Selwyn blazing a trail back down to our car in the morning in (my) hip deep powder snow. Russell said our footprints were filled back up with snow an hour after we left the carpark. Back again in the evening to a biting cold headwind on our way to the Hut. BUT- Monday morning was one out of the book. Sunshine, gorgeous powder snow (and I'm no longer a skier but it was still lovely), clear sky. I just had to dawdle my way back down in easier conditions than the day before just to enjoy the whole atmosphere around me. Magic. I feel sorry for those who didn't get there that weekend.

If you are interested in being part of a team to organise the 70<sup>th</sup> club reunion read the snippets section. Many hands will make light and efficient work

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## **Presidents' Blog**

An interesting Club night last week. We heard about the work on Kaimai tracks, how Waikato Hut has been readied for the winter season; a few snippets about snowy Ruapehu and of course the trip programme: a good mix of trips to come, including the renowned and popular Snowcraft course. It is pleasing to see a

couple of newer members taking the initiative to lead trips. Stephen then took us on a length-of-NZ journey by bike, with observations on beautiful remote areas, southern friendliness, coping with the Waihou River bridge washout and how to set up pannier bags on a bike. A good turnout and a good number of new faces (hope you will join in the fun).

Alan Grant has been co-opted as an 'extra' onto Federated Mountain Club's Executive. He is well placed to be a link between upper North Island member clubs (none of the other Executive live north of Palmerston North) and FMC, as well as being able to use his organisational and tramping experiences for the good of the organisation. Congratulations Alan!

Selwyn June

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## Trip reports

### **Trip 2822**                      **..... not Pouakai but Ruapehu trip**                      **19-22 Apr**

This trip had originally intended to be one to Mount Egmont / Taranaki. More specifically, a long week-end circuit of the Pouakai Range. However, as the days before the trip had a foreboding of heavy rain, things were looking grim. But the weather forecast wasn't the only thing to consider. This being Easter and the school holidays meant the few huts in the area would be hopelessly over-crowded. None could be booked and camping out was an unpleasant alternative.

Rather than cancel, Allan suggested "why not go to Ruapehu instead". With our comfy lodge for a base who cares what the weather gods throw at us. Also, the expected rain event would take longer to get to Ruapehu, ensuring some fine weather at least.

So, at the last minute almost, we went to Whakapapa Friday afternoon getting there in daylight for a change. Also ensconced in the hut were Lesley and Alan who had just arrived before us, and Ashley who was down for a few days. The following day, all of the group started out for the crater, sans ice axe and crampons overall (as we didn't think we'd need them) but with a couple from the hut just in case. We made good time up to the NZ Alpine Club hut and from here, trod over a mixture of snow and rock for another two hours to the crater. The approach to Dome would have been a bit tricky in the preceding days, but on this day, everything was in our favour. Enough feet had covered the traverse over the Dome "bumps" to make it safe, which was just as well as there must have been about 200 people doing the same as us! For most of the group it was the first time to the crater and all agreed it is definitely a worthy objective. Of note to Allan was the very large crevasse that had opened up on the glacier south of Paretaitonga. Anyone who was climbing above and fell in would have had no show of getting out unless they were roped up (note: just prior to the following Queen's Birthday week-end, a woman fell 15 metres into a crevasse on the Whangaehu Glacier and although slightly injured, spent some hours in it before being rescued). It was quite cold at the crater, and after doing

a bit of snowcraft practice we were glad to get down to the warm rocks below. Throughout the day, the top part of Mount Taranaki stayed clear, seemingly mocking Allan's change of plans.

On the way down, we had a mini "search" for a pair of sun-glasses Mafalda (our Portuguese visitor) had left on a rock while resting not long after leaving our hut in the morning. The search was successful to her relief and it was an amazing find in such a terrain.



The group at Tama lakes

photo by Allan Wickens

The following day, most of the group went to Tama Lakes and had a pleasant walk. They arrived back to coffee at the Chateau just before the first of the wild weather arrived. As it turned out, Allan – courtesy of the Met Office, was right, as Taranaki experienced about 150-200 mill of rain that day.

We all spent a further night at our cosy hut, before making an early-ish start back to Hamilton in an attempt to beat the holiday traffic.

All-in-all a very pleasant alternative to what may well have been a very wet and problematically trip.

Those who went were: Allan Wickens (became leader for this trip & scribe), Damon C (originally down as leader for the Pouakai trip), Les W, Cathy D, Dale H, Merlyn W, Angie A and Mafalda Baptista

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Be careful about reading the fine print there's no way you're going to like it.

## Trip 2826

## Mt Te Aroha to Waiorongomai Valley

12 May

After all the doom with regards to the predicted weather on the trip over we arrived to a dry Te Aroha and a visible peak. Slowly but surely we headed off up the track with some lovely views out over the plains to the foothills on the other side, the weather to the south was not conducive to seeing any mountains this time. We arrived at the top to a fast-changing view, no view, view, no view



The bunker stop

photo by Sheryl Thomas



The swingbridge and tunnel

photo by Sheryl Thomas

some old tram lines, through a tunnel, over a swing- bridge and past numerous mine entrances and memorabilia. We had some light rain on and off for the last hour and, as we were hopping into the van, the weather deteriorated significantly. Ice cream stop and headed for home and a nice warm shower. Fabulous walk.

John W (leader), Lesley & Alan, Charlene & Theo, Kathy, Fiona, Les, & Sheryl

as the wind whipped the clouds across the sky in front of us. We stepped into the “bunker” and refueled. From here we started down towards

Waiorongomai, some of us taking the track, a few taking the road and meeting us at the junction. Lovely bush for most of our journey, although there wasn't much in the way of bird life.

We continued along the ridge with views out towards the plains and back over the other side to Katikati. Then started the descent down into the Waiorongomai valley itself and, valley itself and, once we were in the valley, we took the High Level Pack track which took us along

## **Famous Four go to Great Barrier (Aotea) Island**

**23-28 Apr**

aka: Lois R (leader), Maureen F, Ray H and Kim T.

Day 1: Early start, met in Hamilton at Maureen's at 0415, shuttled to Wynyard Wharf, no traffic, arrived 0600, quick bite at café nearby. Caught Sealink car ferry at 0800 to Great Barrier Island, most of us grabbed sleep, ate, watched the Island grow bigger and bigger! Arrived 1230, great weather for tramping. Beautiful harbour, glassy, lots of boats, only problem was Maureen's pole that was too high tech for her or us! Packs on, off to find the Kowhai Track to Medlands DoC campsite. Fairly easy up and down, 3.5 hrs. We soon realised there was a lack of birdsong... compared to normal mainland bush. Tents set up quickly in what we now know was our most posh camp. The highlight was a thick blanket of stars! We went in search of Ray who was exploring the beach, easy to spot his twin-coloured moving head-lamp. Three intrepid campers heard loud roaring during the night, Lois imagined it was deer or sea-lions... she got up early the next morning to find them. (GBI has no deer) It was likely excited cattle!

Day 2: Picked up at 0900 by Steve (highly recommend this dude) who regaled us with his interesting life story and history of the area, dropped us off to begin the Harataonga Coastal Walkway. We had wonderful views of the Okiwi Basin, Whangapoua Estuary and Rakitu Island, shaped like a low-flying duck.



Maureen and the Okiwi Basin

Photo taken by Kim

A very pretty walk and easy... took about 3 hrs. Steve told us the birdlife we expected probably disappeared due to the cats, rats and historical burning. Fantails often joined us and we heard some kereru, a few others were not identifiable. We arrived at the Harataonga DoC campsite with enough time and energy to set up tents amidst the mature trees, to head to the beach. Rain threatened then left us alone. It was unusual to see the brown teal ducks (Pateke) wandering around with mallards and black-faced sheep. Our beach walk was lovely and we explored both ends.



Dr Who? or Dr Hoare? at Harataonga

photo taken by Kim

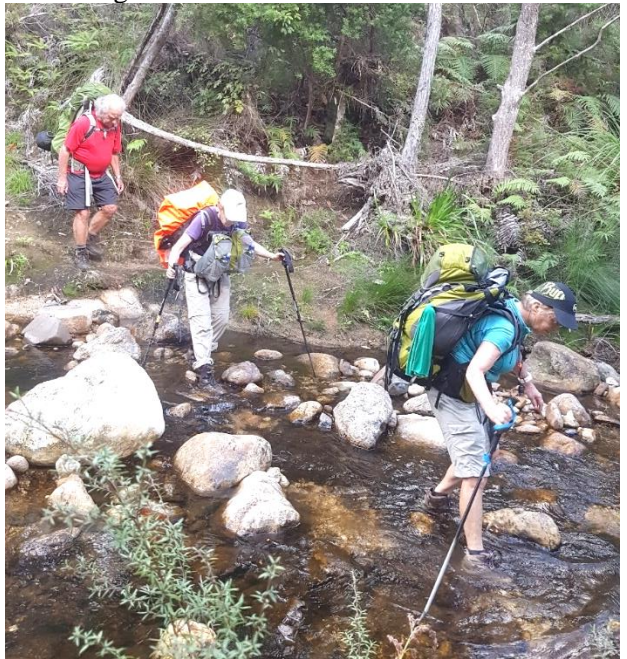
Volcanic rocks evident and sparkly white sand. Yachts were moored by a pretty island offshore. At dinner in our DoC shelter we met a Kiwi cabinet-maker from Wanganui making a very tasty-looking spag bol for his Spanish ballerina girlfriend - Nadia. She impressed us by having braved the cold showers on offer! Nadia Yanowsky is now part of the Royal NZ Ballet Company... she will be dancing in Black Swan, White Swan. Check it out all you ballet fans.

Day 3: Dewy tents packed up by 0800 ready for Steve to shuttle us to the Palmers Track, near Windy Canyon. He explained the plight and life style of the black petrel (Taiko), who only breed on Hauturu and Aotea Islands. Even the local fishing boaties have been educated and adapted their method of long line baiting to assist with their conservation. We set off (with details of where to find a black petrel chick in a burrow) between enormous sheer rock faces, with loads of stairs and majestic sweeping views. Steve had been watching this burrow for 12 years; alas, we missed it. We did see a DoazC cat trapper and many day walkers. The climb was gradual up and over a few hills towards Mt Hobson (621m). We saw the working horse left over from logging days and took about 3 hrs to reach the summit. The remaining Kauri and birdlife near the top were a treat. We had a cloudy view then downhill, more stairs, a blue mushroom and spectacular views of Mt Heale (510m). The big landslide next to our track was a reminder of a powerful storm in recent years. Lunch at 1230 was at the 20 bed Mt Heale hut, new and comfy with a great deck and views. We met an inspiring couple there who showed us their boat in the distance and said they were running a 22km loop! We took the South Fork Track to Kaiaraara Hut (28 bed) and all managed to fall over at least once on the way. Mostly

downhill but the track soon became the riverbed and we had to weave side to side many times to eventually reach the Forest Road Track. From there it wasn't far to reach our hut, about 10 mins and we arrived about 1630.

After drying tents and finding masses of people, (including the annoying retired Professor of Education). She was annoying until I mentioned Ray had a PhD in Physics.... he time travels backwards when he walks up hills! We ended up sitting outside, sharing photos and had a pleasant evening; despite the large mosquitos. Ray nearly got into his neighbour's sleeping bag during the night, trying to avoid getting into Maureen's. Lois and Kim had thin uncomfortable mattresses at each end of the top level, with the happy big mosquitos lined up on the ceiling.

Day 4: Most fellow trampers were up and gone early so we had a leisurely start at 0945. We took the Forest Road Track which was a long gradual climb, wide and easy. Our highlights were a quick trip to see a couple of magnificent mature Kauris and then further onwards, the Maungapiko Lookout (280m).



River crossing 101 with Ray, Lois and Maureen, Photo taken by Kim

This was a fun steep rugged climb with a lovely panorama to Little Barrier Island and giant rock formations in the east. Lunch was eaten on a picnic table in the bush and then we found Withey's Track. The promise of 3 river crossings was a lie! There must have been at least 20 but this time we managed to stay dry and enjoyed the beautiful bush scenery. After a snack, Ray warned us of the approaching steep 100m old haulage line and it was epic; though just a baby compared to the hills the following day. The other side was mostly a gentle downhill to Whangaparapara Harbour, arriving at 1600. The Green DoC campsite, next to an estuary with lovely mature pohutukawa trees was a welcome sight and we had it all to ourselves (well almost). Tents up, then 3 with energy and curiosity went to see the remnants of the old logging mill and



traction engine. That evening Ray discovered his 2 remaining dehy meals and some choccy biscuits were missing; stolen at the K hut when trustingly left in the kitchen overnight. He coped well with some donated chicken curry mixed with porridge instead. Just before tent time, Lois spotted a cat in the DoC shelter and rescued Ray's hanging bag of salami and tararua biscuits from more opportunistic scavenging. Nice save Lois.

Day 5: Up at 0600, departed The Green Campsite at 0745, heading for the Tramline Track. Detoured to the Kauri Falls, this would be a good place to have a wash next time. Easy-walking, gradual climb, made good time so our leader said we could have an hour to visit the Kaitoke Hot Springs (sign said 15mins).



Off to the Kaitoke Hot Springs,

Photo taken by Kim

3 enjoyed the hot soak, 1 took photos, Ray nailed the skinny dip, Mr Latvia reappeared and others we had met. Very pretty setting with a bath temperature "just nice" and "well worth it".



Little Lois gets her groove on,

Photo taken by Maureen

Headed back to the Tramline Track aware we would be meeting a couple of enormous slippery challenging inclines. Before this we encountered yet more water crossings and became experts with impressive monkey manoeuvres. A surprise for us was the beautiful Awana waterfall. Maureen was the only one who took a proper look!



Huge balls of pumice were a natural dam with deep inviting pools on either side. We had a quick rest before conquering the last mighty uphill. The dangerous inclines lived up to their reputation, some parts had trickling water, slime and mostly a clay or rocky base. Chains would have been helpful! It was easy to imagine Kauri logs being hauled up and over these steep tracks during the 1920's and 1930's. We arrived nearly an hour before our shuttle pickup on Aotea Road so had a cuppa, rest, soduku and change of gear. We arranged a quick visit to Claris to improve Ray's dinner options; and he bought us an ice-cream and yoghurt. Our final destination was Awana DoC Campsite, next to Awana Bay. Only one member was brave and desperate enough to have a cold outdoor shower whilst watching the sun setting over Hirakimata (Mt Hobson). Day 6: The dawn chorus is non-existent on Great Barrier, Kim got up and dressed at 0200 to check out the sunrise only to find a black starry night then set off again at 0600 to explore before breakfast. The others arrived after sunrise to check out the coastline and found a path up to Don and Helen's front yard. Amazing sweeping views. We packed up at leisure and met Steve at 1100. Near Claris he dropped Kim off (she hitch-hiked into the tiny town without trying to) where she enjoyed a delicious café lunch, visiting the art gallery, an interesting and scary museum and the airport. Lois, Maureen and Ray got dropped off at the entrance to the Kaitoke Hot Springs Track and managed to find a secret pool 50m higher up than the main pools. We reunited in Claris at 1335 outside The

Fat Puku Café and were then shuttled back through Tryphena to the Wharf by 1415. The Sealink car ferry was full this time with crying children & well-behaved dogs. Coromandel up close and a sunset over the mainland. No dolphins, just a few pies and a little wine. The spectacular Auckland harbour bridge and other landmarks were fully dressed in lights to meet us at 1930. Max found us and drove us back to Hamilton by 2130. Great trip, topped off with a trip to the Hoare house the next night for a beautiful meal, dessert and photo sharing, thanks Ray! We highly recommend visiting GBI, big skies, big hills and big mosquitos: Kim, Ray, Lois (wonderful leader) and Maureen.

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## **Trip 2828**

## **Hiwiroa**

**26 May**

The intrepid trampers were Leader John D, Driver Jacqui D, Kathy T, Margaret C, Les W, Alistair and Haley K (visiting from San Diego), Merlyn W, John W, Susan J, Pamela H (scribe) and Allan H.

One of our members called this trip the Fungi trip. The rainbow was not in the sky but was represented in the bush with various coloured fungi, which were beautiful and shiny. Many fungi posed for photos as we climbed the mountain. Jacqui saw her first “blue mushroom” and got a gorgeous photo of it.

We left Hamilton on a foggy damp morning and arrived at the Mamakus in similar weather. When we neared the start of our tramp John D our leader chatted to us in the van and also off and on throughout the day about what to expect on the tramp, which was really helpful. Before we started the tramp we had a conversation about PLBs and John D said “If I die here, just leave a fern over me and carry on”.

The first hour was undulating but fairly flat walking through regenerating forest. We saw some relics of the timber industry, and heard the occasional tui singing to accompany us. We knew our flat journey was finished when we got to the last DoC sign. John D gave us a quick lesson on how to do a stream crossing, which we used to cross the two streams. Now the journey up, up, up began. It took us about two and a half hours to navigate the beautiful rimus, pongas and various other natives to reach the top of Hiwiroa. Many of us had dirty hands from using roots to pull ourselves up and some of the shorter trampers had dirty bottoms when sliding over logs blocking the track. We reached the helipad at the top, donned some warm gear and sat down to a relaxed lunch break. The helipad became a backdrop for a professional photo of the intrepid group, taken by our famous photographer alias bus driver.

The trip down Hiwiroa was peaceful and beautiful through the mature bush. By the time we reached the stream, more bottoms had their fair share of dirt on them. Our long legged, tail end Charley, was John W, he was such a reassuring sight to see at the end of our line of trampers.

Many thanks to John D for efficiently leading our group and taking the opportunity to quietly teach us all some skills on the way. On the way back to Hamilton, it was again foggy! We were so grateful for Jacqui driving us, to and

from the Mamakus in the fog as well as tramping with us all day. A good challenge, a great day in the bush with interesting people.

**Trip 2830**

**Karioi traverse**

**9 June**



Rata flower

Photo by Sheryl Thomas

A party of nine set out on a gorgeous winter morning. The trip to the sea side of Karioi was quick and efficient. From here we started upwards through so scrubby bush for quite some time. so scrubby bush for quite some time.

The track was somewhat damp from the 40mls of rain we had earlier in track was somewhat damp from the 40mls of rain we had earlier in the week but not as muddy as it could have been.

Up and down the ridges with little spaces in the trees to glimpse the height we had gained and views out over the ocean and back towards Raglan. Chains and ladders made our trip a little more interesting. We made the lookout point by 11.15 and stopped to recharge our batteries and enjoy the amazing views out to the Raglan Harbour and across to our ultimate pinnacle. Alan departed back down the way we came so he could drive around and collect us on the other side – thanks Alan. We continued on up the peaks and down along the ridge passing flowering rata and the odd fungus along the way.

We made the high point just before one and stopped to have a bite to eat—deciding that the high point would be a little more sheltered from the cool winter breeze than the helipad around the corner. From here we negotiated a couple more ladders and then it was downhill most of the way with a couple of challenging pieces for those of us with shorter legs. Fabulous day out with amazing weather.

Damon (trip leader); Alan G (driver); Sharon; Anna; Blake; Merlyn; Les; Judith; Sheryl

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### **FITNESS WALK / FUN / FLAGSTAFF**

Every Tuesday morning we meet at Flagstaff Shopping Centre ready for a 7.30 start. We head north into the new subdivisions using the extensive pathways along the gully systems. Pace is fast but not so fast that you can't discuss the week's events. One hour later we're back near the start and toilets. If you need to get away, now's your chance. Usually we walk for another hour and return to the carpark by 9.30am. No need to book, just turn up, but if it's your first time please phone Colin on 849 4420 the night before so we know you are coming.

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### **From the committee table:**

**New members:** Jody Belbin and Sharon Sholl. Welcome to you both.

**Resignations:** Nil.

**Membership:** We have 148 tramping members.

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### ***Snippets from here 'n there....***

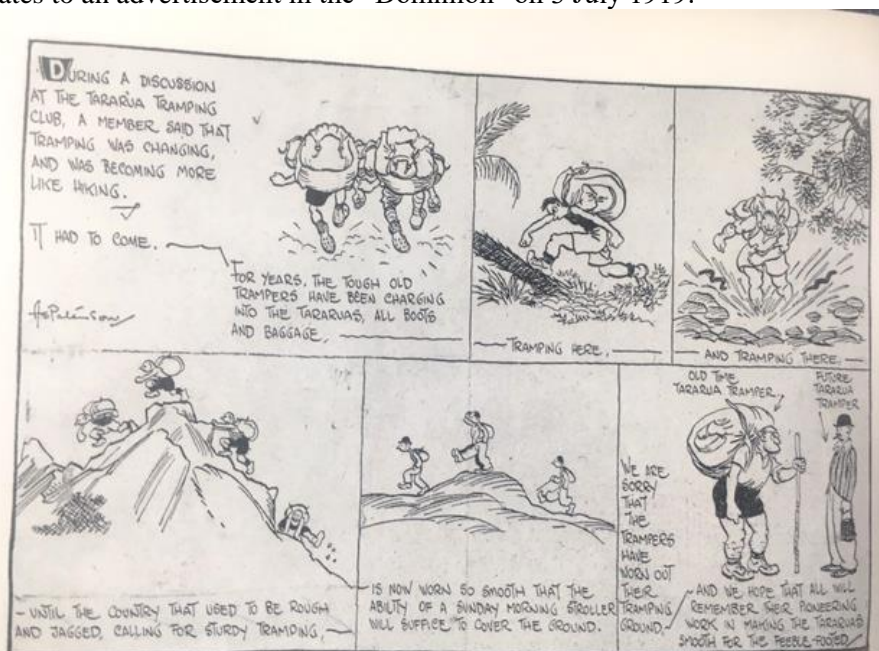
Want a laugh? Apologies to the member whom this concerns – they can probably work out who they are. This person rang the editor about submitting an item to the bulletin and was told to please send it in *word format* as that is the easiest to work with when setting out the layout of the material. Sure enough, it got sent in on time –handwritten *words* on a piece of paper and personal delivery by another member. I had to chuckle. Made the editors' day.

➤ As part of the centenary celebrations, the Tararua Tramping Club will be holding a commemorative tramp to Mt Kaukau on July 6th, the location of the clubs first outing back in 1919. For more information about the club and the tramp, please visit the Tararua Tramping Club website.

➤ 70<sup>th</sup> reunion planning time. Do you have any suggestions about how to celebrate this? So far we have an idea of a function at Waikato Hut too. Come and join us at our house at 58 Waterford Rd, Hamilton on Thursday 27th June at 7.30pm.

➤ As part of the Tararua tramping clubs' centenary, let us support their celebration by publishing the trip report for trip number 1:

This was the first trip of our newly formed "tramping club" and what a jolly affair it was. 12 hardy men reached the summit of Kaukau but unfortunately there was no view because of the cloud. And because of the cloud we were all in a bother as to where the route was from the summit. Not having a good map did not help our cause at all. We sat chatting a while before we began the descent. It looked steeper and rockier than we expected and it soon became evident that we were not en route for Khandallah. However, we continued downward and eventually emerged in Ohariu Valley then walked to the train in Johnsonville. Although we were all men in our group, we would like to encourage the "fairer sex" join us on future trips. Ladies are therefore invited to join our Club and attend the Sunday walks we propose to run in the greater Wellington area. (Editor's note: this is a fictional report on what was formally the very first tramping trip – ever! Allan Wickens has taken the liberty of using an extract from the book "Tararua – the story of a mountain range" written by Chris MacLean and has added some bits of his own making). For those who have the now highly sought after and out of print book, there is a chapter devoted to the start of tramping as we know it in 1919. The following extract from the book relates to an advertisement in the "Dominion" on 3 July 1919.



During the 1930s A. S. Paterson was a change. The ranges became known for their reputedly bad weather, muddy

### "PROPOSED TARARUA CLUB.

Those interested in the delightful tramping ground that exists between Greytown and Otaki, across the Tararua Range, are invited to attend a meeting at Messrs

*Alcock's Offices, Bakers Buildings, Featherston Street. TODAY (THURSDAY), 3 July at 5 pm.*

*Objects: Popularising the route, preservation of flora and fauna; expansion of existing huts and tracks; stimulating winter sports; election of officers etc.*

*W.H.FIELD F.W.VOSSELER -CONVENORS"*

Following on from the first trip ....

“Although no women were present at the inaugural meeting they were encouraged to join the club and go on Sunday walks. But, at first, they were excluded from the more adventurous expeditions that appeared on the club schedule the following year headed “Reasonably Strenuous Tramps – Gentlemen Only”. This exclusive male preserve did not, however, last long. The first of the strenuous tramps, from Waikanae to the top of Kapakapanui in the winter of 1921, was repeated a year later by a mixed party of 60, with two chaperones”

.....so it began.....

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

- A small slip during Wednesday (7<sup>th</sup> June) night's downpour caused a large rock to come smashing down onto the staircase of the Hakarimata track near the waterfall. DoC are requesting the track users not to move the rock themselves. (*Ed comment: By the time you read this it should be repaired*).
- In the New Plymouth District Court on June 7th, Gregory Buchanan was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. DoC's Director General Lou Sanson says he hopes this sentence will serve as a deterrent for others. Anti-social behaviour and threats against DoC staff have grown over the past year from people who oppose predator control using 1080 to protect our indigenous forests and wildlife. “The threats have moved beyond social media trolling to the targeting of vehicles, property and people. Staff and contractors have been followed, filmed, assaulted and threatened. “I totally respect the right of people to protest lawfully and peacefully,” he says. “But it's unacceptable for DoC staff to be threatened and fear for their lives while going about their important conservation work. My staff have the right to come home safely every day, emotionally, mentally and physically. Biodegradable 1080 is the best tool we currently have to knock down introduced rats, stoats and possums to give our native species breathing room to breed successfully. Without it, many of our precious native birds would become extinct within a few years,” Lou Sanson says.
- DoC has received several accounts of deer sightings within the Kōhī Point Scenic Reserve, with the most recent sighting by Departmental staff in May. (*Ed comment: This reserve is the one between the outlet of the Whakatane river and Ohope beach*). The unique coastal forest within Kōhī Point, and taonga species that inhabit the reserve are at risk. “Deer pose a significant and ongoing threat to

New Zealand's native forests and grassland ecosystems. They prevent the regeneration of plant species they eat, which causes significant changes to the structure and composition of native ecosystems," explains Biodiversity Ranger Cameron Houston. To prevent a deer population from becoming established DoC is acting quickly. A contractor employed by DoC will be using a firearm and a detector dog, which has had avian avoidance training, to ensure the local kiwi and weka population are not affected. The Ngā Tapuwae o Toi walkway will be closed between Kapu Te Rangi pā and the north-western end of Ōtarawairere Bay. Advanced notice signs have been placed at entrance points to the track, with additional track closure signage being installed on the day of the closure.

➤ Over the last two years, there have been six sightings of a lone male who reported throughout the Tararua Ranges from Smith Creek to the Upper Ruamahanga. These sightings have been confirmed by an eagle-eyed Norwegian trapper who captured images of the whio in the Upper Ruamahanga while visiting New Zealand in April. Before this, the last reported Tararua sighting was in the 1920s. Whio are found nowhere else in the world and are rarer than some species of kiwi. "The presence of this whio, in an area that hasn't had a population for several decades, is an exciting turn of events," says Andrew Glaser, leader of the Whio Recovery Group. "There are less than 3,000 birds in the whole of New Zealand, and less than 200 pairs in the lower North Island. This bird is probably from the Ruahine population. That he's moved out into this area suggests there's a growth population, which is an indication that conservation efforts are making a difference. The sightings in the last two years have also been all around this area in the Tararua, from Smith Creek tributary to the Upper Ruamahanga. So he's moving around a lot. This behaviour indicates that our single male is looking for a mate. Between April and July, whio start looking for a mate, find their match, and settle down. Once whio pair up they tend to remain in the area and are very territorial. Sadly, this male is unlikely to find a mate in the Tararua Ranges this breeding season. Males are more widely distributed than females, who don't move around very much. There are also more males than females in the dwindling population. However, the future could be brighter for this lone male looking for love. The Whio Recovery Group have identified the Tararua Ranges as a site where they would like to see whio re-established

➤ A recent survey in the Pongakawa Ecological Area has indicated a robust and healthy population of North Island kōkako. A total of 157 pairs and 13 single birds were recorded during the survey. Rotoehu Ecological Trust (RET) chairperson Sarah Orton said a 2013 survey indicated just 50 kōkako pairs, although the survey area was 600 ha smaller. "The survey team reported that most of the kōkako pairs had fledglings with them indicating that we're supporting a healthy and robust population."



➤ A small population of our rarest kiwi returned to their traditional West Coast home on 9 May after growing up on Mana Island in the lower North Island. 7 rowi, or Ōkārīto brown kiwi, were all wild-hatched on predator free Mana Island and are part of a kiwi kōhanga initiative. The initiative began in 2012, when juvenile rowi were transferred to Mana Island to establish a breeding population. The juveniles were selected for their genetic diversity, safeguarding the main rowi population, and have gone on to breed a second generation. A predator free island and Scientific Reserve, Mana Island was identified as the ideal sanctuary for a satellite population of rowi and kōhanga site. “Rowi were once widespread across the South Island and lower North Island. They haven’t been in the north for well over 100 years, so having chicks hatch on Mana Island – a habitat well suited to their species – was pretty special,” says Jack Mace, DoC Kapiti Wellington Operations Manager. “It’s exciting that we’ve reached a point where some of these rowi can be released on the mainland, while Mana Island continues to be home for a small population.” Rowi are the rarest of the five species of kiwi and, until recently, their mainland presence had been confined to the Ōkārīto Kiwi Sanctuary in Westland Tai Poutini. Late last year, as the rowi population grew and the Ōkārīto forest reached capacity, 27 rowi were transferred to a new site near Fox Glacier at Lake Gault. Ngāti Toa Rangatira Kaumātua gave a farewell karakia to the departing Mana Island rowi. They journeyed by helicopter and car to join the recently established population near Lake Gault in the Omoeroa Ranges. They were welcomed with a karakia from local iwi, celebrating their status as a Taonga species for Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio, a hapu of Ngāi Tahu. The seven birds were successfully released to join their whānau and will continue to be monitored. “We’re stoked to see some new birds for our Lake Gault population,” says Michael McMillan, DoC Franz Josef Senior Ranger Biodiversity. “There are now an estimated 650 rowi, and most of these are mainland populations. From 160 birds back in 1995, this is 20-plus years of effort by DoC rangers, iwi and community. Rowi were on the brink of extinction just a short while ago, and now their threat classification status has been downgraded from Nationally Critical to Nationally Vulnerable. That’s a real achievement.”

➤ Python skin handbags, crocodile watchstraps, and traditional medicines containing turtles have been seized in New Zealand as part of an international operation against the illegal trade in reptiles. Globally the operation, code named Operation Blizzard, has seen thousands of seizures and almost 200 suspects in illegal trade identified through coordinated sharing of information between participating countries. Targeting the criminals and networks behind the illegal global trade in reptiles, Operation Blizzard involved agencies from 22 countries and resulted in seizures ranging from live animals to high-end fashion products. The intelligence generated and shared with other countries has

resulting in the launch of investigations into the illegal holding, selling, and import and export of reptiles – including endangered native New Zealand geckos. “Our geckos can be quite popular pets overseas, because they are such a unique and rare species,” says DoC Principal Compliance Officer Dylan Swain.

➤ Paparoa Track and Pike29 Memorial track opening in 2019, this Great Walk crosses the Paparoa Range. It takes you through alpine tops, limestone karst landscapes and thriving rainforests, and provides breath-taking views. From the Paparoa Track, the Pike29 Memorial Track leads to the site of the former Pike River Mine. Bookings will open on Wednesday 12 June at 9:30 am, for trips from 1 December. For faster booking, ensure you've created an account beforehand and login before you start your booking.

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

➤ Congratulations to our esteemed former president on being co-opted onto the FMC executive. We shall look forward to a much greater feedback from Alan Grant and liaison with the organisation in future.

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Email your contributions to the editor by **Friday, June 7<sup>th</sup>** please.

Tongariro and Ngaruahoe at Queens' birthday weekend photo by Selwyn June





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