



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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

March 2021



A new satellite monitoring station in the Kaimanawas? Photo by Judith Bogle

WAIKATO HUT

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Tongariro National Park



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Allan Wickens

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Club night, Wednesday, 7th April
 The Waikato Tramping Club will hold its
2021 Annual General Meeting

An AGM booklet will be mailed to you in late March and will include an Agenda, annual reports, financials and budgets.

Written nominations for members of WTC's General Committee close on 17th March. The positions are President, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-presidents for Tramp and Ski as well as three representatives for each sub-committee. Nomination forms can be obtained from our secretary, Judith. Completed forms can be handed to Judith at club night, posted to Waikato Tramping Club, P O Box 685, Hamilton 3240, or scanned and emailed to *waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com*

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2021

2933	14 Mar	E/M	Ed Hillary Hope reserve	John Wilson
	20/21 Mar		Waikato Hut Workparty	Stephen Prendergast
2934	21 Mar	E/M	Bushcraft	Club Captain
2935	21-25 Mar	M/F	Kaimais - Sth to Nth	Rizal Razal
2936	28 Mar	M	Waiorongomai chasm	John McArthur
2937	2-5 Apr	M	Mt Hikurangi FULL	Allan Wickens
	7 Apr		AGM	Selwyn June
2938	11 Apr	E	Aviation mast	Merlyn Warren
2939	17/18 Apr	M	Whirinaki	Les Warren
2940	24-26 Apr	E/M	Egmont Nat. Park	Allan Wickens
2941		E	Cycling Hamilton	David Cumming
	8/9 May		70 th Reunion-Hamilton	Selwyn June
	15/16 May		70 th Reunion- Waikato Hut	Selwyn June
2942	16-22 May	M	Tararuas	Allan Wickens
2943	22/23 May	E/M	Crosbie Hut	Rizal Razak

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.

DONT FORGET: You can book online from our website too. 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 car park on the right at the end of the cul de sac. If in doubt contact your trip leader.

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

Day Trips: leave Sunday mornings at 8am sharp.

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

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

Minimum equipment required:

Day Trips: A thermal layer (polypropylene, polyester etc or wool), an insulating layer of fleece (polartec etc) or wool and a water/wind-proof parka outer shell. Shorts or longjohns/over-trousers in cool or wet weather. Torch and sunscreen. Boots or strong shoes. Lunch, snacks and water bottle. First aid kit.

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

Trip Descriptions

Trip 2933 Karamu Walkway / Ed Hillary Hope Reserve 14 Mar

This easy/medium tramp will start on the Raglan Road and traverse the Karamu Walkway almost to Old Mountain Road. Wide views over the Waikato basin can be had along this section, most of which is in farmland. We will then turn west and drop down a ridge into the Ed Hillary Hope Reserve, pick up the David Thom Loop Track and climb up to the airstrip, where we get nice views towards Karioi. The track takes us around and back down into the valley, a branch of the Mangakirikiri Stream, and we then take another track which will take us up the valley and finally up through bush to re-connect with the Karamu Walkway not far from where we started. The tramp is not a long one but there is a bit of up and down and rough travel.

Leader: John Wilson

Ph: 021 1682082

Grade: E/M

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member \$25-30

Waikato Hut Workparty

20/21 Mar

If you can help out with some painting, or general building experience our next working party is the place to be. One of our leaking windows is coming out and we're heading into the ceiling to see what is causing the sag in the dining area. If time permits, we might do some outside painting to touch up some of the exterior which has had a tough couple of seasons. This working party doesn't require a hut full of people, but would appreciate the contribution of building and construction savvy people.

Leader: Stephen Prendergast **Ph:** 021 466247 **Grade:** as hard as you wish

Transport: Private, or contact the leader to carpool.

Trip 2934

Bushcraft

21 Mar

Here is your chance to learn some useful tips about bush survival, navigation, good gear selections, get a taste of GPS usage and pick the brains of those who have many years of experience. It will be a busy day with lots happening under the tutelage of club members. This trip does not happen every year so take advantage of the opportunity while it's available. We will be in the bush on Mt. Pirongia .

Leader: Allan Wickens

Ph: 027 9509546

Grade: E/M

Email: *allanwickens@hotmail.com*

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member \$25-30

Trip 2935

Kaimai Full Length (South – North)

21-25 Mar

A five day, with a total distance of approximately 82km, tramp over the full length of the Kaimai Ranges, an area which the club has done in sections but rarely as a whole. We will start from the Southern Entrance off SH 29, with a target of reaching the “newest” hut on the range, Te Whare Okioki, for our first night. We will then continue our journey with overnight stops at Poupou stream and Te Rereatakahia hut. From Te Rereatakahia, we will then continue our journey north via the Old North-South Track, thru Pylon Peak, Waipapa Track and then Mangakino Pack Track, where we will spend the night at the Mangakino Shelter. The last day will be a long journey out at the Karangahake Gorge. Tent is required for the trip

Leader: Rizal Razak

Ph: 021 2676566

Grade: M/F

Email: *rizaraz@gmail.com*

Transport: This may involve private cars

Trip 2936

The Chasm and Waiorongomai

28 Mar

Way up there in them thar hills, there's a chasm! It's called the chasm because it is a chasm: - "a deep fissure in the earth's surface". It is part of a fault line running from Buck Rock along the northern side of the Waiorongomai Valley which is situated a few kilometres south of Te Aroha.

To get from the Waiorongomai carpark we will follow the upper track, possibly side tracking to the top of Buck rock, until the end of the old mining tramline and then on to the Mangakino pack track for a short while to just past Premier

creek. From there we will bush bash upwards, keeping close to the creek to where we should stumble onto (NOT INTO) the chasm. It is a gaping deep trench in the ground, quite amazing really and very interesting.

The return trip will most likely be back down via the May Queen incline and eventually to the bottom of the valley for an easy and pleasant stroll out to the carpark via the lower Waiorongomai track following closely beside the Waiorongomai Stream. Be prepared for a bit of bush bashing ...

Leader: John McArthur

Ph: 021 2889641

Grade: M

Email: *mcArthur@outlook.co.nz*

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: \$25-30

Trip 2937

Mt. Hikurangi

2-5 April

This trip is FULL. If you would like to be on a shortlist please book directly with Allan.

Leader: Allan Wickens

Ph: 027 950 9546

Grade : M

Email: *allanwickens@hotmail.com*

Cost: Senior member / Senior non-member tba (two nights backpacker level / 2 nights hut)

Trip 2938

Aviation Mast. Southern end Kaimai Range

11 Apr

Meet at London Street, 7.30am. Trip starts off Old Kaimai Road, Henderson tramline track to North South Track, go to Hurunui Hut. This is where we go on an old track and a bit of scanning to find our way out to the back of the masts, then along the ridge and come out on the Summit Track. Pick up the Henderson Tramline Track back to the vehicles. I have done this trip once and it will take 6-8hrs, depending on obstacles. Limit to 6-8 people because of the terrain.

Leader: Merlyn Warren

Ph: 0275249926

Grade: M

Email: *mylwarren@gmail.com*

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: \$25-30

Trip 2939

Moerangi Hut/Whirinaki

17/18 April

This trip will follow the Moerangi Track, which is a dual use track with mountain bikers, in the lovely Whirinaki Forest. The track is well-graded. I have walked a number of the tracks in this wonderful forest.

The plan is to drive to Minginui Friday night so we can have an early start Saturday morning. Walk from Okahu Road end to Moerangi Hut (9 bunks, but space to camp) via Skips Hut and Rogers Hut); 7hrs to Moerangi Hut. There is a very good chance to see whio (blue ducks) along the section to Rogers Hut and plenty of kiwi calls at nightfall around Moerangi Hut.

Sunday 9th – A easier day (in time) to the River Road Carpark (4-5hrs). The first couple of hours is a big climb up to the Moerangi Saddle at 955m (Moerangi Hut is at 500m) then it is mainly downhill / flat the rest of the way.

A good overnight trip for those looking at extending their challenge from day trips. However; you will need to be reasonably fit to carry overnight sleeping gear, food and cooking equipment, as well as suitable tramping gear.

By using the local shuttle services, the van driver can join in on the trip. If the van driver is not interested in joining us, then we will use the van for drop-off and pick-up. I have made preliminary enquiries for the shuttle service and accommodation and all is available for us at this stage.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 864 4937

Grade: M

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Transport: Shuttle from Minginui to start and finish points. Cost tba

If a van is used: Senior member \$50-75

Senior non-member: \$55-80

Accommodation: At Whirinaki Forest accommodation Friday 7th. Cost tba.

Trip 2940

Egmont National Park

24-26 April

Over this long weekend, we will look at doing a variety of tramping trips at Egmont National Park (Mount Taranaki). Initially we travel down to North Egmont where the plan is to stay Friday night at *The Camphouse*. This is an historic building clad in original corrugated iron from the time of the New Zealand/Maori Wars. From there, on Saturday, our group/s can do parts of the Round the Mountain walk, to the eastern and southern sides (Stratford Plateau and Dawson Falls) or north to Holly Hut and the Pouakais. Depending on the weather and the group/s wishes, pick-ups can be done at the end of each day and some re-positioning can be done as well. Sunday may be a repeat of Saturday, with further options for doing other tracks. This is a time to knock off a few of the tracks you've always wanted to do, without the worry of limited hut space as we can stay at *The Camphouse* each night, or you can book into/stay at huts at the end of each day yourself as well as camp.

This means the driver/s will be doing a fair bit of work over the weekend. Ideally, we will have enough participants to make it economical to have two vans. This means more flexibility in what we do. Otherwise, feel free to base yourselves at *The Camphouse* and do lots of short walking from there – as well as having a relaxing (easy level) weekend.

Please note: Bookings are essential well in advance for *The Camphouse*. The whole complex sleeps 34 people in 5 rooms (4 rooms have 8 bunks) and one room sleeps 2. It is largely self-contained with cooking gear, showers, and a communal lounge with heating. The cost is \$25 per night (child 5-17 \$10.) We are aiming to get two vans with around 20-22 people going on this trip.

NOTE: There is no intention to climb Mount Egmont/Taranaki over this weekend. As it is autumn, there may well be fresh snow on the heights. This is the most problematical time to climb as the mountain will also be quite icy with frozen scoria.

Leader: Allan Wickens

Ph: 027 950 9546

Grades: E-M

Email: allanwickens@hotmail.com

Accommodation: The cost at the Camphouse is \$25 per night (child 5-17yr \$10)

Transport: Senior member \$60-90

Senior non-member: \$65-95

Trip 2941 **Te Awa river ride** **2 May**
This is a cycle trip alongside the Waikato River from Hamilton to Ngaruawahia and return. A feature of the trip is the Perry Bridge. The trip is on off-road shared path and the cycling time is about 2.5 hours (return). There will be a coffee stop at Breaking Bread Café, Ngaruawahia. We will meet at 9:30am at the car park on Delamare Road, Saint Andrews. There is a limit to the number of participants on this trip, so please book early.
Leader: David Cumming **Ph:** 8397850 **Grade:** E
Email: *david.cumming@xtra.co.nz*
Transport: On yer bike.

Trip 2942 **Tararua Week** **16-22 May**
Starting on Sunday 16 May, this trip will cover a total of 7 days, with the focus on the Tararua Ranges. In the event of bad weather in the Tararuas, side trips may be done to other mountain areas in the Wairarapa, including the Haurangi and Remutaka Ranges. Flexibility will be the key, and planning will be dictated by the weather (for which the Tararuas are renowned). Given lengthy spells of fine weather, travel on the “tops” will be the main attraction and there are endless possibilities in the way of “crossings” interspersed with bush travel. There may also be day trips, using Masterton as a base. This is group dependent.
Important: You will need to be prepared for colder conditions. The aim is to stay in huts rather than camping (the Tararuas have one of the best concentrations of huts in our mountains).
Departure: Masterton on the morning of Sunday 16 May. The trip ends on Saturday 22 May to allow for return travel to Hamilton over the weekend.
Leader: Allan Wickens **Ph:** 027 950 9546 **Grade:** M
Email: *allanwickens@hotmail.com*
Transport: Provided in Wairarapa only, cost tba. Make your own way there and back. (in the hills, there will be hut/food/transport costs).

Trip 2943 **Crosbie Hut** **22/23 May**
We will be heading to Thames on Saturday morning. The track begins from Karaka Road end and follows Karaka Stream, passing historic mining tunnels driven into the hillside. The track summits a ridge, revealing views deep into the Coromandel forest to the south. We will then reach a rocky outcrop known as the red-rocks, dyed bright red by lichen and providing the best viewpoint of the trip. At the junction with Waiotahi track, we will turn right heading towards Crosbie Hut. Will take the same route down the next day.
As this is an on-line booking hut, you may need to book your bunk (10 bunks) or campsite (5 sites) on-line at <https://bookings.doc.govt.nz/Web/Default.aspx>, please do check with the trip leader.
Leader: Rizal Razak **Ph:** 021 267 6566 **Grade:** E/M
Email: *rizaraz@gmail.com*
Transport: Senior member \$50-75 Senior non-member: \$55-80

Editorial

What a busy time we are having! With so many down south enjoying the autumnal delights of the wonderful landscapes the rest of us are keeping the show running smoothly. Readyng everything for our AGM next month and then the 70th/71st reunion in May. Top marks to those who are putting their hands up to help.

I have been looking at the list of trips that went ahead in 2020 and you've not had the opportunity to read about them so some of you can expect a call from myself or the club captain to put your memory caps on and pen a few words for us all to read about the trip you were on. These reports make interesting reading and reference material when one looks back on them years after they took place so if you are asked to write a report for the bulletin please do so. The first of the 'chase-ups' is in this bulletin.

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### *Presidential Blog*

This is my last epistle as President. It has been an interesting rôle to have within the club, even if largely 'ceremonial'. I have attended meetings of both the ski and tramping committees and helped out when needed. The club has run smoothly over the past three years and the two committees have communicated well. Thanks to the club's constitution, the office of the president can only be held by one person for no more than three years! The retiring president then automatically becomes the Immediate Past president, presumably to pass on their wisdom and knowledge to the next incumbent.

The General Committee met recently, mainly to make preparations for the AGM in April. Several constitutional changes will be proposed: to allow the AGM to be in May as well as March or April (mainly to avoid the period when many are away in the South Island), and to give the President the status of an 'ex officio' member of club committees. These will be explained and debated at the AGM. The General Committee also decided to rescind the Waikato Hut Income Protection Policy, which was developed in 2012 with the aim of protecting the financial viability of the Hut in the event of it being unusable due to events such as volcanic eruptions or poor snow years. A dedicated fund of \$24,000 was established for this purpose. This decision gives the Ski subcommittee full access to these financial reserves to use as they see fit, such as improvements to the facilities.

Club committees meet at people's homes or, in the case of the tramping committee, at Tamahere School. Another venue was found recently for the general committee: Trust Waikato's flash new building in London Street. It is free too for community groups and meeting rooms of various sizes are available.

## *from the Ski Club...*

With winter approaching the first of the snow is likely in late June or early July. This is a great time for alpine trips, the mountain is less busy with skiers and the higher snowfall offers some great cramponing and peak bagging opportunities. There are 18 glaciers listed on Mt Ruapehu, the largest being Mangatoetoenui, Summit Plateau and Whangaehu. You could easily bag a few in a single weekend. Tahurangi (2,797 m), Te Heuheu (2,755 m) and Paretetaitonga (2,751 m) are all engaging peaks, for those adventurous enough to seek them out. The location of the Hut provides a great set off point after a Friday night arrival. With the **Snowcraft courses** already in the calendar for July I'm looking forward to a group of enthusiastic trampers who are looking to extend their skills and experience from the Hut. If it's going to be your first visit I hope you will find it as inspiring as I did more than 10 years ago.

We're already thinking about the upcoming season and how we'll navigate the COVID scenarios. It's important to remember the key messages we are getting from the Ministry of Health about being conscious of your well-being, keeping up the handwashing and observing good social gathering practices especially in inside spaces. Most importantly do not come to the Lodge if you are feeling unwell. Last year we capped occupancy at the Lodge on 20 people when outside of a previously established bubble. A similar approach will be implemented for this season if it is required. This means you should book your visit ahead of time to ensure availability.

The Club offers a special combined member rate to Tramping Club members and this is the best way to enjoy the seasonal rates and benefits of our winter Lodge experience. There are going to be few options for international travel again this year, which means you'll have more time to spend on the mountain with us. It's a great chance to do that with very few restrictions. Look forward to seeing you up there.

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### **Mid-week Walks & Tramps**

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

If you would like to be part of this communication please download WhatsApp on your phone & text your request to Sharon 021 458 525.

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### **Trip Reports**

**Trip 2888**

**Waihaha Hut**

**4/5 July**

The first overnight tramp after lockdown began with an early Saturday morning drive to the Waihora lagoon carpark near Tihoi. We opted to leave the lagoon

walk for the next day and set off toward the Hauhangaroa track. The first section had seen a lot of quad bikes (presumably hunters) but this soon gave way to a good well-formed track as we got into the forest that Pureora is known for - huge rimu, totara and kahikatea. After 2 hours we reached the Hauhangaroa track junction and opted to head toward Waihaha hut. John turned back to get the van and walk into Waihaha hut while the rest carried on. There were some steep gullies to drop into and climb out of and one stream crossing through great virgin forest. After 6 hours including a short stop for lunch, we reached Waihaha hut where John Mc was waiting for us with the fire blazing. There were hunters already in residence so 4 of us opted for tents for the night. Next morning, we set off along the Waihaha river back to the road and the van. We returned to the Waihora lagoon for much anticipated lunch and views of the lagoon only to find it completely dry - so much for the recent rain but the lagoon has no feeder streams and is only full of water after lots of rain. Great views of the forest anyhow before the return to Hamilton. Trampers; Steve C, Rupert C, Dale H, Les W, Barbara C, Beatrix M, Joanna G, Simon. driver John Mc

## Trip 2918

## Pinnacles

24 Jan



Photo by Allan Wickens

This tramp was originally to include a descent from Pinnacles Hut via the Billygoat Walk. People came from all over the region, including a vanload from Hamilton. Along with many other trampers going up and down, we made our way to the hut, via the standard track starting up Webb Creek. The odd shower came along but we largely stayed dry.

At the hut, several decided not to summit. Normally, the last section, from the hut to the top is best done in good weather with extended views all round.

However, on this occasion, we

felt the cloud that was swirling and around the peak and its approaches, made things a lot more atmospheric. We did manage to see a fair bit however, when the wind blew the misty cloud away. 18 of the group made it to the top. The remaining people, and some of those who went back to the hut early, went for a look at the old kauri dam below the Hut warden's place. The decision was then

made to return by the same track we climbed up on. No-one complained, as we were a bit behind time and the showers had undoubtedly made the Billygoat walk more slippery than normal. Three hours is normally needed for this track. Allan told the group we will do “just the Billygoat” next time and walk up it, instead of down.

At Thames, we all enjoyed a welcome ice-cream (had to be *Tip Top* of course!) and we then dispersed, some to Whangamata and others to Rotorua. This trip showed how geographically diversified our Club has become and people who once lived in Hamilton retain membership long after they move away.

Thanks to Jocelyn, our van driver.

Those who enjoyed this pleasant walk were:-

Allan Wickens (leader and scribe), Jocelyn W (Driver), Jane S, Alan and Pamela H, Lorraine H, Cherry and Jasmine Y, Nette L, Marianne L, Debbie and Dave W, Cathy D, Trish B, Lynette M, Sharon S, David H, Julie V, Angie A and Peter L.

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Trip 2920

Ruahines – Kawhatau base

6-8 Feb

On the Friday night we stayed in Taihape and then the next morning we drove to the start of the tramp which involved walking up the Kawhatau river for 4 hours. The water was low and the sun was shining. It was good conditions to learn and practice river crossings. To begin with there were the white limestone cliffs. Once we reached the base of where the Kawhatau hut was, we split into 2 groups. Five in each. Allan led a group including Judith B, Les W, Dale H, Tehnuka I while Selwyn J led Joanna G, Helen M, Faye G and Jocelyn W.

The first group which I was in tramped for another 5 hours to Crow hut. Firstly we went straight up 900m, having to scramble at the beginning mostly, using ropes to get up and avoiding ongaonga. Have to say several of us got stung, no one died, even though it is the only known native New Zealand plant to have killed a human being. At the beginning of the track there was a carriage that both Tehnuka and I had a ride in, with Allan kindly winching us to and from the middle of the gorge. As we climbed up and got closer to the top we had some nice views of the valley. Once at the top it was straight down to the hut, (600m down). We reached a waterfall which was 5 minutes before the hut. It was a really tidy cute hut, where we had to go down to the stream to get water. Both Les and I had forgot our hut shoes but there was a pair of gumboots we could use to go to the toilet with in the middle of the night.

Next day was another climb to the hilltops. To begin with again the initial climb was steep and Allan had brought a rope to help us get up this part. Closer to the top the path was narrow and pebbly, so needed to watch one's step. Would be rather dangerous if the wind was blowing because it is quite exposed and narrow, but we had a sunny day with a gentle breeze. When we got to the top it was difficult to find the start of the track across the tops. There was one wooden marker at the beginning of the track for the whole journey across the top. There were some beautiful tarns at the beginning. These were the best. There were

others on the way but not as nice. We walked across the tops, came across the sign for Colenso Station and then headed to Colenso peak where we met the other group. On our journey Allan managed to lose his phone which we spent a little while looking for. Luckily Les found it. But unbeknown to us the other trip leader Selwyn lost his phone as well.

We had lunch at the top of Colenso while the other group went off to go back to Kawhatau base. Which we carried on to later. There was a stream that many of us went down to for a swim. Also, that night we celebrated Jocelyn's birthday, she had brought fudge cake for us to share. The next day we walked down the river again to the van. All of us more confident about river crossing. Another beautiful day.

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### From the committee table:

**New members:** Welcome to Steve Dick, John Metcalfe, and Patricia Cunliffe.

**Resignations:** Russell Knipe & Sarah Patrick, Marion & Richard Francis

**Membership:** We have 194 tramping members this month.

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>It is with sadness that we have heard of the recent passing of Richard Drake.<br/>He joined the club in 1957 and left in 2013.</p> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

You will have been receiving your membership renewal notices. Should you decided to include a donation the club is a registered charity so donations are tax deductible. A club receipt will be issued for any donation and will include our Registered Charity No.

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Snippets from here 'n there

- ✓ **Recycling gas cannisters.** Take them to: GasPro, 134 Grey St., Ham East.
- ✓ **Recycling Lithium batteries.** Take them to: Grimmer Motors, 998 Heaphy Terrace, Claudelands, Hamilton East, opposite Vege King.
- ✓ **The Big Bike Film Night.** Tickets to this film evening at the Hamilton Lido Cinema on Thursday March 18 can be obtained from the website www.BigBikeFilmNight.nz. Come and share the best cycling short films from around the world. All sorts of bikes on all sorts of terrains. All good!
- ✓ The Mustelid (stoats etc) team from the Pirongia Restoration Society are seeking expressions of interest to help carry some stoat traps DOWN Mt. Pirongia. The aim is to have several traps helicoptered up to the top of a ridge somewhere near Ruapane and have fit and able people carry them down to specific sites on ridges. Some off-track walking may be necessary so compass skills could be useful. Planning is just getting underway but if you are keen to keep your fitness up and can carry 1 (or even 2!) traps down a ridge that may or

may not be marked in some places, please get in touch with Richard Still from May onwards.

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*from the Forest & Bird website*

Mohua love tall trees. But the small, insectivorous, yellow-headed birds don't tend to exist at low altitude, where the tallest trees are. That's because, up to a certain altitude, they have been eaten by all the rats. In a sense, mohua are already climate refugees.

"It's painfully obvious that there's a really strong relationship between rat abundance and altitude," says the Department of Conservation's Dr Graeme Elliott. He says it's highly likely that as the climate warms the "rat line" – above which the rodents are mostly absent – rats will move upslope, shrinking the currently cooler refuges where vulnerable species like mohua are still able to survive. A warming climate is also likely to lead to more megamast years, where the food provided by mass fruiting of beech trees leads to explosions of predator numbers. More warmth may also mean higher levels of rats between mast years where currently, in cold beech forest, the rodents are virtually absent.

For more information [www.forestandbird.org.nz/resources/warming-forests](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/resources/warming-forests)

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from the DoC website....

✓ DoC and NIWA are partnering to provide the latest technologies in weather forecasting services. Access to timely and accurate weather forecasting information is crucial for making informed decisions on safely undertaking activities on public conservation land and waters. The new DoC NIWA weather forecast website (available from 2 March) will host a number of benefits including tailored forecasts for National Parks and key DoC sites.

✓ The data shows COVID-19 has impacted visitor patterns across conservation areas with mixed results for busyness and visitor numbers overall down from the previous year. With many parts of New Zealand suffering from the loss of international visitors, it's been fantastic to see kiwis supporting the regions and tourism by getting out in record numbers.

Mangawhai Cliffs Walkway (Northland) – up 101%

Wharariki Beach and Te Waikoropupū Springs (Nelson/Tasman) – up 29%

Castlepoint Lighthouse (Wairarapa) – up 14%

Awaroa/Godley Head, Pilgrims Way, Christchurch – up 119%

Te Henga Walkway, Auckland – up 61%

Wairenga/Bridal Veil Falls, Hamilton – up 17%.

BUT: Milford Sound/Piopiotahi – down 72%

Franz Josef Glacier – down 66%

Hooker Valley Track – down 52%

Roy's Peak and Ben Lomond tracks – down 42% and 31% respectively.

There has been a 10% increase in bednight bookings for the Great Walks for the peak season, in comparison to last year.

✓ DoC's Director Heritage and Visitors, Steve Taylor says "We're confident our online hut booking system already ensures our most popular huts have an effective contact tracing system in place. However, we acknowledge that having QR codes clearly visible encourages people to follow. "DoC will be rolling out additional QR codes at Great Walks huts, along with serviced huts. Staff will also be displaying codes at toilets and shelters at high-use road ends."

✓ As part of DoC's ongoing nationwide Tiakina Ngā Manu programme, predator control was carried out at Pirongia Forest Park in September 2020, using aerially applied 1080 over 14,000 hectares. "Possum monitoring, before and after the control operation shows we've reduced the possums in the forest park, providing rata trees, *Dactylanthus*, kokakō and a multitude of other valuable New Zealand species the opportunity to thrive," says Biodiversity Ranger Cara Hansen. Possum monitoring was undertaken by an independent contractor using leg hold traps spread throughout the forest park in the weeks after the Tiakina Ngā Manu operation was completed. 240 traps were checked over three nights and no possums were caught. Monitoring at the same site, undertaken in January 2020, showed 5.4% of the traps had caught possums.

✓ Ten captive-raised juvenile kākārīki flew with Christchurch Helicopters into the Hurunui South Branch in Lake Sumner (Hoka Kura) Forest Park on recently, bolstering the wild population. They were released into the wild after spending 2 days acclimatising in an aviary. The budgie-sized birds were raised at The Isaac Conservation and Wildlife Trust (ICWT) facility in Christchurch, where a successful breeding programme has been running since December 2003. DoC field staff recently found 10 nests in the Hurunui South Branch, signalling a good breeding season is underway. More are expected to be tracked down and monitored in the coming months.

In the Poulter valley in Arthur's Pass National Park, six eggs have been retrieved from a nest and taken back to ICWT. These will enhance the captive breeding programme's genetic diversity as the father is thought to be a wild bird from the valley. Unfortunately, this comes after 17 chicks in the captive breeding programme died from heat stress during the unusually hot days last week, when temperatures climbed to 37 degrees Celsius.

In addition to those released, ICWT has another 20 chicks in nest boxes and 17 fledglings which survived the extreme temperatures and will boost the wild population in the future.

FMC website....

➤ In early March all Member Clubs will receive information related to membership renewal for 2021 and nominations for the Executive.

4. Stir continuously until heat decreases to a gentle simmer then stir periodically for 20-30mins
5. Serve with rice and fresh chopped coriander.

Tips:

1. Back Country Cuisine sell great dehydrated rice, perfect for tramping trips
2. Ayam is a good brand of coconut cream, available from Countdown
3. Recipe suitable for lamb, beef, chicken, venison, or fish

'Back to the Bush'

70th Anniversary Celebrations

8 - 9 May 2021

A weekend of activities for our delayed reunion. Meet up with your old tramping and skiing friends and present members. Have a look at old photos and relive past trips.

Events planned:

- Afternoon and evening dinner function on Saturday at Pirongia Forest Park Lodge. Accommodation available at the Lodge.
- 'Breakfast with the Birds' and Pirongia tramps on Sunday morning

15 - 16 May 2021 at Waikato Hut

Join us for a weekend at Waikato Hut on Mt Ruapehu. Enjoy a relaxed stay at our upgraded 'lodge' and a celebration dinner with traditional Hut fare. Gondola rides and mountain walks are also on offer.

Get in touch to register your interest in attending, and please pass this on to any past members you know.

Contact us: waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com

Phone: Dianne & Selwyn June 07 843 3066

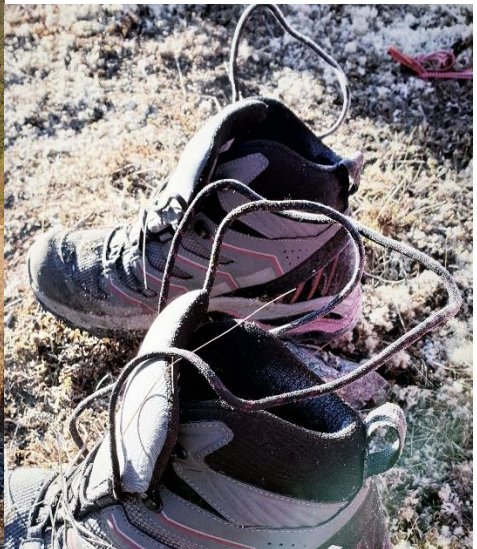


A hut day on Tapuaeenuku

photo by David Totman

A stiff... lower leg..... and ready for a quick getaway.

A chilly morning in the Kaimanawas photos by Lynette Morris



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