



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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

October 2018



In memory of Paul McClennan – with Robyn – at Ananui Falls Photo by Dianne June

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WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB

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

Free to members

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

BULLETIN No 798

October 2018

General Committee

(Contact details listed below)

President: Selwyn June	Secretary: Lois Rowell	Treasurer: John Grace
Members: John McArthur (VP tramp)	Mary Reed (VP Ski)	Stephen Phillips
Allan Wickens	Russell King	Stacey Thompson
Mike Nightingale	minean@xtra.co.nz	Doug Pagel
		8562394

Tramping Subcommittee

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

CLUB NIGHT: Wednesday 7th November

Last Winter Stu & Hine headed to Colorado, home of the 14-ers (3000m ranges) for some of the world's most desired mountain biking, and craft beer. Classics like Monarch Crest, Colorado trail, and the meccas of red dirt - Sedona and Moab. Stunning places, wonderfully scenic and full of snakes.

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

Time: Doors open at 7.30pm, programme starts at 8pm.

Cost: \$2

Social: It's time for another film evening and the Haines will be hosting the evening at their house, 11 Alison St, on the 9th of November, starting at 1830hrs. Bring your own drinks, meat to BBQ, and a salad to share. Dessert and tea or coffee will happen at half-time. Contact phone number 8395932 Cost: \$20

Social: A date has been set for the clubs' annual **Christmas party** – December 15th. Further details to follow next month but book the date in your diary now.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2018

2789	20-22 Oct	M	Pureora (Hauhungaroa Range)	Ashley Hoskin
2790	28 Oct	E	Bushcraft	Allan Wickens
2791	3-4 Nov	M/F	Ruapehu Traverse	Allan Wickens
	9 Nov		Film evening	Graham & Andrea Haines
2792	11 Nov	M	Kopu Hikuai Road to Motutapere	Judith Bogle
2793	18 Nov	M	Pirongia	John McArthur
2794	24-25 Nov	M	Devious Tongariro Crossing	Allan Wickens & John Wilson
	15 Dec		Christmas party	Stephen Prendergast

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: Note that juniors participating on a trip 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.

Trip Descriptions

Trip 2789 **Walking among the giants of Pureora** **20-22 Oct**

Southern Hauhungaroa Range, Pureora Forest Park.

Day 1 We take a 6.5 km trek up the western side of this range, steep to start with, until we meet the Motere trig around 950m. There are views into the King country to admire. We will stay in the 6 bunk hut, so take your tents as we won't be guaranteed bunks on a long weekend.

Day 2 we head toward the Waihaha hut, where we stay for the night. We descend down to the Waihaha River and head along the river and soon enter into the valley of the Giants, the enormous trees of the Waihaha ecological area. We will take the opportunity to lie on our backs and look up into the tight canopy of these enormous trees, between 500 and 1000 years of age. There is also abundant bird life in this area.

Day 3 we head out 9.5km to the road end on the western bay road. There is a view of lake Taupo, also a view of the mountains on our way out. This is an easy track, an elevation change of only 100m.

Leader: Ashley Hoskin

Phone: 0274 909545

Grade: M

Email: ashley.hosking@icloud.com

Transport: Senior member: \$ 60-75

Senior Non-member: \$ 65-80

Trip 2790

Bushcraft

28 Oct

This course is an annual event that every aspiring trumper and new member should attend. Along with our River Crossing course (held in February) and our two Snowcraft courses held in winter, the Bushcraft course will give you a good grounding for a future of tramping.

We will hold the course in the bush at the end of Grey's Road, Mount Pirongia. Topics covered include map-reading, navigation, emergency shelters, basic first aid and basic river crossing principles. Our leaders have a wealth of experience in tramping and they are keen to pass on some of their experience to you. As the Mountain Safety Council no longer runs such courses, outdoor clubs around the country have taken over this role. You will need to have tramping gear suitable for a day trip, along with lunch. This will be an easy day physically but will be more demanding mentally as the day will contain plenty to think about.

Leader: Allan Wickens

Phone: 027 950 9546

Grade: E

Email: allanwickens@hotmail.com (preferred contact for bookings)

Transport: Senior Member: \$20-25

Senior Non member: \$25-30

Trip 2791

Ruapehu Traverse

3 / 4 Nov

We will travel to Ohakune Friday night and stay at a back-packers. On Saturday morning we travel up the Turoa Road. From here, we have 2 alternative trips that depend on weather and snow conditions. The first is to walk down into the Mangaturuturu Valley, and from the head of the valley traverse up through the cliffs to where the old Mangaturuturu Emergency Shelter used to be (long since gone). Then there is a very nice traverse to Paretaitonga Saddle and over to Whakapapa Skifield. We may climb "Pare" en-route. The second alternative starts by climbing up to the top of the T Bars and either climbing Tahurangi (the main peak) and/or doing a high traverse around to the Mangaturuturu Emergency Shelter site with the rest of the route as already mentioned. We spend Saturday night at our Lodge. PLEASE NOTE: You must have done at least Snowcraft 1 to go on this trip as the use of crampons and ice axe is required. On Sunday, we will look at doing something else in the area or use it as a contingency day in the event of bad weather on Saturday.

Leader: Allan Wickens

Phone: 027 950 9546

Grade: M/F

Email: allanwickens@hotmail.com (preferred contact for bookings)

Transport: Senior member \$ 45-55

Senior Non-member \$ 50-60

Accommodation: Backpackers: tba

Waikato Hut fees: Senior/junior member \$25/15, Senior/junior non-member \$30/21.

Gear hire: Crampon etc available to hire from WTC.

Trip 2792

Kopu-Hikuai to Motutapere

11 Nov

Hihi Route – we will go from the Kopu-Hikuai road via the Kaitarakihi Summit-Motutapere 829m and then coming out at the visitors centre in the Kauaeranga valley. There will climbing of chains and a rough track so be prepared. Up Kaitarakihi there is an old post box, the view is on the way up to this summit but hopefully from Kaitarakihi to Motutapere along the ridge we will be able to see

the Coromandel coast. This will be a long day so be prepared.

Leader: Judith Bogle **Phone:** 027 3810283 or 07 8240825

Grade: M

Email: judith.bogle@outlook.com

Transport: Senior member: \$ 20-30

Senior Non-member: \$ 25-35

Trip 2793

Pirongia

18 Nov

Well, what to do on Pirongia? So many opportunities for a day's tramping.

How about we go up the Tahuanui Track from Kaniwhaniwha to the top, have lunch there or at the hut, then down the Tirohanga track and come out at Corcoran Road? I haven't been up the Tahuanui track for many years but memory tells me it is long and has a gentle gradient. The ridge allows for some views out to the north east, and the bush was very nice.

The Tahuanui track is part of Te Araroa Trail so we will probably have company along the way, and will see how the track has stood up to that level of foot traffic. We will go on to the Pirongia peak and then (if time permits) the hut for those of you who have not seen it. Then back to the van at Corcoran Road along the most popular track on the mountain. Be prepared for mud, and there are some parts of the track where monkey skills are helpful. All good fun and the weather will be great!

If there is another track that you would prefer to walk - let me know, I'm open to suggestions. (*Ed comment: Don't forget to upload the kokako app from the Pirongia Restoration Society's website to your mobile phone to record when and where you find kokako*).

Leader: John McArthur

Phone: 8564394

Grade: M

Transport: Senior members: \$ 20-25

Senior Non-member: \$ 25-30

Trip 2794

Devious Tongariro Crossing

24/25 Nov

Here is a different Tongariro Crossing, taking two days and camping in the moonscape of Oturere. We will start at Mangatepopo and head up Tongariro's west ridge to then follow a visible fault line around to North Crater. Crossing Central Crater we'll drop into Oturere to find our remote camp. On Sunday we will pass Oturere Hut and climb up to a saddle to access the upper Mangahouhounui, heart of the wilderness zone.

Skirting high around the large basin of the Mangahouhounui we will cross another saddle and drop down to have a closer look at Te Maari Craters, still smoking after their 2012 eruptions. From the craters we will follow eruption debris down and connect with the Tongariro Alpine Crossing Track to finish shortly after at Ketetahi carpark.

You will need warm and waterproof clothing, warm sleeping bag, tent, food, cooker etc.

Grade: M/F

Leaders: John Wilson **Ph:** 8536464 jnjlwilnz@gmail.com (preferred contact)

Allan Wickens

Email: allanwickens@hotmail.com

Transport: Senior member: \$ 45-55

Senior Non-member: \$ 50-60

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## South Island Summer adventures 2019

Our recent trip planning meeting for South Island adventures gave us a handful of very exciting prospects to work on for the summer of 2019. The island will be covered quite well, and the fitness levels required range from Easy/Medium with a variety of tramping opportunities in the Cobb Valley to medium fitness trips to Arthurs Pass and Nelson Lakes. We couldn't do without a couple of Fit trips and a revisit to Mark's Flat by John Davies & Co, and a trip into the Canterbury High Country should satisfy that energy level. There are some preliminary trips planned for the Tararua ranges too so Watch This Space! and Get Fit!

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### Waikato Ski Club

The ski season is just about over but there is still time to make it before the end of the ski season, which is Labour Day the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, with cheaper summer rates, which also means tramping members get summer rates. Fancy a bit of skiing or some walking in the snow, there is still plenty of snow left to walk, play or ski in.

After Labour weekend you can still book the lodge but you need to contact the booking officer on [waikatoski@gmail.com](mailto:waikatoski@gmail.com). We don't have a custodian during the summer and you need to follow a simple stepwise process to open and close the lodge. See the rates below.

#### Ski Races

The ski club ski races were held last month. It was a tightly contested slalom race round the poles on turtle run, on a lovely day.

#### Prize winners

|                  |                             |                                      |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Under 9's        | Joshua Entwisle Phillips    | - 30.69 secs                         |
| runner up        | Olivia Davis - Gorrie       | - 33.44                              |
| Under 13's       | Shontal Tunnicliffe         | - 22.37 (and fastest female overall) |
| runner up        | Charlotte Entwisle-Phillips | - 24.09                              |
| Under 18's       | Megan Tunnicliffe           | - 23.47                              |
| runner up        | Julian Davies-Gorrie        | - 23.91                              |
| Intermediate     | Stephen Prendergast         | - 26.85                              |
| runner up        | Heather Gorrie              | - 27.72                              |
| Mens' open       | Stephen Phillips            | - 20.56                              |
| runner Up        | Steve Tunnicliffe           | - 23.75                              |
| Ladies open      | Mary Reed                   | - 24.19                              |
| Snowboard trophy | Whare Akuhata               | - 47.22                              |

Egg beater trophy for the best crash Leigh Tunnicliffe

Thanks to all who look part, and those who helped time keep and be marshals. We had a good race, and then lots of yummy pizza for dinner afterwards.



Trophy winners presentation time

Photo by Stephen Prendergast

### **Summer rates for the rest of ski season**

Spring is here, there is still a lot of snow left, and the weather looks pretty good over the next week or so.

For the rest of the ski season we are changing to the cheaper summer rates, so you can enjoy the spring skiing, and bring friends at reduced rates, and tramping members gets summer members rates, so you can come and enjoy the snow, whether that be skiing, tramping or just playing or relaxing. .

This means from now until end of the summer rates are

Adult members \$25 per night, Child members \$15 per night

Adult non members \$30 per night, Child non members \$21 per night.

Plus a one night minimum stay. Just book in as normal, and new rates will apply.

We are hoping to break 1600 bunk nights this year, would love you to stay and help with our goal. (don't worry if you have already booked the discount will be applied too)

Not available with any other offer i.e. you can't have mates' rates with it - this is already cheaper.



At the end of the day it's tucker time

Photo by Stephen Prendergast

### **Mates rates offer for 2018**

Do you want to bring a friend for a night or two to the Hut? This season you can bring a friend at "mates rates". This is limited to 2 nights per member and the same membership category. E.g. An adult ski member can bring a adult for 2 nights at members' rates during the season, or a child ski member can bring a child for 2 nights at members' rates. The member must be staying with the non member. Perfect to take friends during school holidays or a weekend. To get the deal you can either book through the booking officer, or if it is a last minute booking and you can't contact the booking officer we can credit your account with the difference to spend later in the season. (We are still carrying on with the additional deal we had last year that if a non member joins after staying up to 2 nights we give the 2 nights at members' rates)

Weekend booking conditions – last minute availability stay Sat night only. If there is last minute availability you can stay Saturday night only, with conditions. If there are still spaces for Saturday night in the lodge, on the Thursday before (i.e. 2 nights before) you can book Saturday night only. The charges for a Saturday night only stay will be \$45 for adult members and \$30 for child members and is non refundable. Please contact the booking officer if you wish to take advantage of this offer.

Membership deal - If you or friends have been a non member after staying at the lodge and join the club, we give you members' rates for up to 2 nights you have stayed as a non member. The difference between members and non-members rates for up to 2 nights will be credited to your account.

## **Editorial**

It was during a social evening with other club members recently that the question was asked as to who was the club president. Seems no-one reads the first page if one is a longstanding member. So this month I have listed the general committee members at the top of the page. Thank you for that member pointing out something I had never actually thought about - I know who you all are without needing to refer to the front page. Do you know who the President is?

In case you don't already know, Selwyn & I and a few of you have been helping the Pirongia Restoration Society with their pest control operation in the Pureora Forest. The first spring session for 2018 took place in mid-September and was very successful – 57 people filled every bait station. And by the time you read this, the refill will be taking place. But some time during the summer we are thinking about going into the area again to do some track maintenance. This is a time when your pack will only have your lunch, drink, a pair of secateurs and perhaps some loppers. All good fun on a fine day. If you would like to help, contact me. No dates have been set yet. Did you also know that you, as an individual, can hire a PLB from the Central North Island Mountain Radio Service? It is based in Rotorua so you need to plan ahead if you wish to have a device couriered to you. Cost is \$10/day and well worth the convenience. For \$8/day you can have a PLB and a radio.

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## **Presidents' Blog**

Mike Peck's talk at our last club night illustrated the more adventurous side of tramping; slow and difficult gorge travel mountain pass crossings in the remote wilderness of south Westland. Most of our tramping programme may not be as challenging, but still meet our need for a bit of adventure away from the trappings of civilisation. The 2019 South Island trip programme is taking shape with a full range of planned trips from easy valley travel to 'real' mountains. Be in, plan your South Island holiday now.

On the Whakapapa ski field two important issues are being dealt with by the Ski Club: (i) a proposal by Ruapehu Alpine Lifts, the private company holding the ski field concession, to build their own electricity infrastructure for supplying club huts/lodges as well as their own operations; and (ii) a scheme to upgrade the waste water treatment plant servicing Whakapapa village, the ski field and huts. Both developments have major financial implications for our club and have required a lot of consideration by the ski committee.

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## **Trip reports**

### **Trip 2783**

### **Piraunui Track**

**Sept 9<sup>th</sup>**

Fabulous weather for a spring tramp. We started just off the Kopu-Hikuai road and headed along the ridge, descending gently into the valley. This was an easy walk with lots of different stands of trees- nikau, ponga, rimu, and kanuka to name a few. Birds

could be heard from time to time and there were some lovely views out over the bush clad hills of the Coromandel. Some interesting slippery paths down into the mini creeks and then scrambling up the other side. A couple of waterfalls just to keep things interesting. Once we reached the end of the track where the river was too swift and too high for us to cross we stopped, had some lunch in the sunshine, and then retraced our footsteps. It was lovely to see the new growth on the plants and to start spotting some fungi. Trip leader Judith B, led Poi, Jocelyn, Helen, Isla, Sharon, Ray, Cameron, Sheryl, and 2 others who are nameless at present – will be revealed next month



This is where you go and some spare footwear to get there with! Photo by Sheryl Thomas

**Trip 2785**                      **Waitawheta – that wasn't**                      **23 Sept**  
John McArthur, Peter Lye and his two kids did a day trip up Maungatautari reserve. The kids did a bit of bush bashing and really enjoyed themselves.  
Trip participants as above. Scribe Peter L.

**Trip 2786**                      **The Eastern Explorer cycle trip**                      **29 Sept**  
The day dawned dry and mostly sunny, great weather for a bike ride, ..... and for a fun run, as we would discover later as we and thousands of runners crossed and shared paths several times through the morning. Seven keen cyclists turned up at the starting point, but Jan had to retire homewards in search of a bike mechanic to fix a problem with her back brake. David P arrived well warmed up after already cycling half the circuit from home to meet the rest of us, and Rose was excited, keen to try her new E bike.  
After a briefing from leader David C as to where we were going and wondering if we'd see any runners participating in the Hamilton Fun Run that day (probably not we surmised), we saddled up and headed north on Wairere Drive. It was a delightful ride on wide concrete paths, over a few road intersections and under a few tunnels. Before

long we were at the Resolution Drive roundabout and tunnel, and found ourselves giving way to a steady stream of half marathoners using the same tunnel. From there it was up Resolution Drive, and into Borman Drive, shouting encouragement to the runners as we pedalled by. Especially Rose whose feet were hardly spinning with her E assist.

Borman Road area was an eye opener to most of us as we cycled through all the new housing development, the new Radius retirement home, the multi storied primary school being built and the new million dollar playground, which was being very well used. David P lives in this area so he was able to explain a few aspects. Then we went around a low but impressive stormwater lake, down to Endeavour Rd and through a park surrounded by many 5km and 10km runners towards Flagstaff shops. We resisted cycling through the runners' finish line, and focused more on finding the café and ordering coffees and sustenance.

It took a while to budge some from the café but eventually we were on our way, saying goodbye to David P who headed to his nearby home, having completed the circuit already. The rest of us went over the river using the waste water bridge, through some nice streets of Pukete and back over the Pukete Bridge to link with Wairere drive again. Forty five minutes later all 5 of us were back at the start point, having enjoyed some good exercise, seen a lot more of Hamilton's growth suburbs and caught up with each other's news and views. It was a very pleasant 4 hour excursion. And much easier than running 😊. Thanks David for organizing and leading.

Participants were David C (leader), David P, Ian F, Annette, Rose and Alan (scribe).



Have a look at the club facebook site for more pictures and comments.

### **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 Margaret on 8536921 or Colin on 849 4420 the night before so we know you are coming.

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From the committee table:

New Members: Merlyn & Les Warren, Les Warren, Dale Hollands, Damon Crawford. Welcome to you all and may you enjoy many trips with the club. Welcome back to Tristan Brown.

Resignations: Nil

Membership: We now have 190 tramping members.

From the tramping chairman: Hi fellow WTC trampers. We have been running some pretty good summer programmes down in the South Island for several summers now, and they keep getting better and better with respect to places visited and mode of "tramping" (including cycle trips of course). (I recognize that this is a fine tradition from many years ago, but recent years have perhaps 'flourished').

It's time to get your thinking caps on and tell us what you would like to do in the South in the summer of '19.

The basis of the programmes is "I'd like to lead a tramp into" so ideally, we are looking for tramping trips that you would be comfortable leading. But don't let that leader role hold you back, suggest some trips you would like to do and that may stimulate someone to step forward to lead.

Similarly - cycling, kayaking or some other form of energetic trip into our fabulous countryside is on the table.

And so is the southern North Island - some ideas are hatching here.

From the transport Coordinator: After 5 years in the role Alan Grant is stepping down at the 2019 AGM next April. So the Club is looking for someone to take over this role. If someone volunteers now Alan can spend the next 6 months working alongside them training them into the role

The Transport Coordinator (TC) role involves planning van, bus and driver options for upcoming club trips, and providing trip costings. After getting an updated trip list from the Club Captain, the TC books vans with CCR, emails out to the club's 15-20 approved drivers seeking drivers for trips and booking both in.

In the week preceding each trip the TC liaises with the Trip leader to confirm that a van is needed. If numbers are less the Leader arranges to use private cars. The TC provides a per person transport cost for each option based on numbers

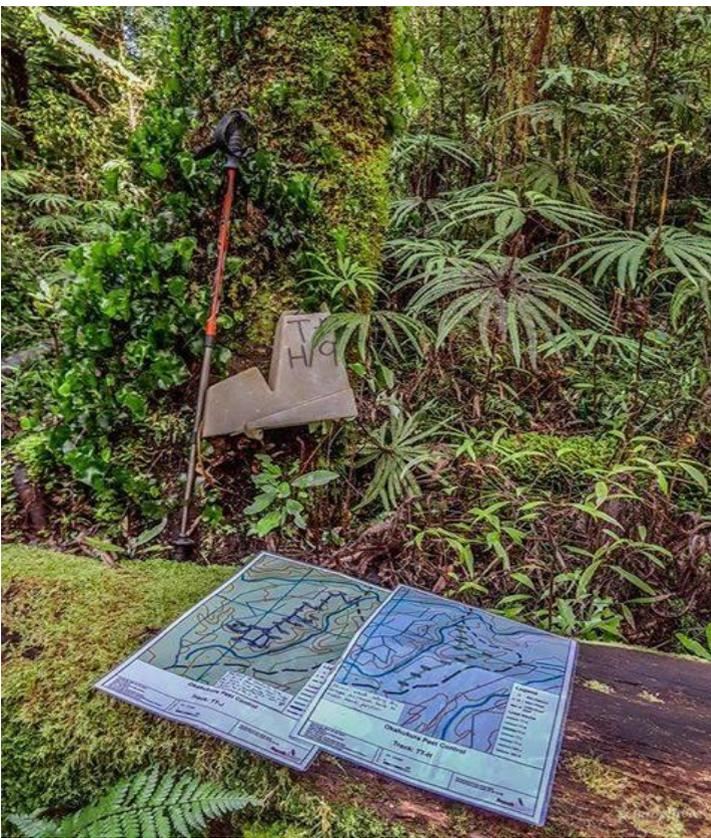
So it is 2 hours planning every 6-8 weeks, and half an hour per week ahead of each trip. All is done by email these days. Skills needed, to be organized and able to plan in advance. Please call Alan to discuss the role and answer any queries. 0274 501 530

Snippets from here 'n there....

➤ **Friends of 42 Traverse.** A new community group called Friends of 42 Traverse has been formed to maintain the three DoC recognised tracks within Tongariro Forest Conservation Area. The group is a collective of 4WD clubs, hunters and other recreational users. DoC is keen to help 4WD drivers understand how important the winter closure to 4WD vehicles is. The main 42 Traverse Track is open to these

vehicles. With softer soils, winter track damage can set back track maintenance. The tracks are also used by Biodiversity Rangers to track kiwi and whio/blue duck in the forest.

- The pest control operation by the Kakepuke Mountain Conservation Group has begun on Kakepuku mountain and will be in place until January 31st, 2019. There are traps in situ as well as toxin being used. Diphaceneone, RatAbate paste, and Pindone will be in bait stations, and Feratox (cholecalciferol) strikers will be nailed to trees. Warning signs have been erected at the carpark and lookout. Contact Chris Monk 021 2433721 if you have any queries or concerns.
- Before you visit Mt Pirongia from now on, check out the Pirongia Restoration website and download the kokako app to your mobile phone. When you hear or see a kokako you can use the app to record your GPS location and a message is sent to the app provider to advise the Society of the location. If you can spot the bands, make a note of them – left leg first, band closest to the body, then the lower band (i.e. top to bottom) and then the same for the right leg.
- From a recent article in the newspaper: the Chilean Government has launched the world's longest hiking trail. 2700km cross the Patagonian wilderness to Cape Horn. It was made possible by a donation of vast tracts of land owned by the founder of NorthFace clothing. Anyone keen for a walk?
- Project Tongariro need your help as a marshall. On Saturday December 1st the Goat adventure run takes place; on Saturday 26th January it is the Tussock traverse; and on Saturday 23rd March it is time for the Ring of Fire event on Mount Ruapehu. These events are a REALLY good way to support Project Tongariro - and get out and about and enjoy our National park. We provide marshalls for these events and in return for your services on the Saturday, you get a wonderful weekend away including accommodation for Friday and Saturday nights, a lunch and a dinner and good company! First Aid and Tramping experience is a must. Email kiri@tongariro.org.nz if you are interested.
- Dear Editor: A few weeks ago we attended a Pureora Baiting weekend run by the Pirongia Restoration Society.



This is an initiative run in conjunction with the release of Kokako on Mt Pirongia. It involved filling rat bait stations over a 1000 hectare area, on marked bait runs. The aim is to reduce pest numbers and enable the endangered Kokako to which in turn has enabled the translocation and release of Kokako back onto Mt Pirongia.

A work in progress

Photo by Dan Nuttapol

Rats are one of their main predators and the project, which has been running for 4 years now, is making a huge difference with rat counts dropping significantly. The bird life in this area is wonderful to see and to hear.

The weekend was attended by over 50 volunteers and was extremely well run. DoC and the local 4WD group assisted in getting us to the remote locations to begin our baiting. It was an awesome weekend and everyone involved got a real sense of satisfaction from the fact we were making a difference to an absolutely pristine part of NZ's native bush and birdlife.

We worked in pairs and it was a delight, as the people who volunteer come from such varied backgrounds and are usually passionate about something you know nothing about, but have a few hours to learn.

It would be great if the tramping club could get in behind and support this project and incorporate it into our programme. There are only 3 baiting weekends each year. A track maintenance weekend is being worked on. This could run alongside a day tramp in the area if we organised it in advance as sometimes the work is completed in one day.

We had a wonderful time, it was a rare opportunity to tramp through native forest, some of it previously logged but in full recovery, thanks to pest control. The bait runs

are clearly marked but there are no formed tracks, so you really feel in amongst nature. In pairs or threes and off track it is quite different to being in a larger group on formed tracks.

Volunteer projects like this are vital to the preservation of our unique flora and fauna and really help make a difference to our tramping experiences.

Jacqui and Amanda

➤ **Time to regulate Tongariro Crossing?** Editorial by Craig Cooper in *Hawke's Bay Today*, 5 Oct 2018. "The death of a trumper on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing will cause many New Zealanders to pause and reflect on the 19km challenge. A 53-year-old man's body was found on Mount Tongariro yesterday morning, after four men set out at 8am on hiking from Ketetahi to Mangatepopo. They were not dressed appropriately for the conditions, searchers say. Only three of the men survived, after the group split up two hours into the hike, and the weather deteriorated into blizzard-like conditions. Mostly in summer, people safely make the crossing every day, woefully underprepared. Having tackled the crossing as part of a well prepared group of four, we saw a couple with a toddler; there may even have been a baby in a backpack. Most people wore running shoes, some wore leather office type shoes. A few looked like they had stepped off a tour bus in downtown Auckland to shop at Prada or David Jones. Trampers? No, tourists. The ignorance of people on the mountain was astounding. Some did not seem to comprehend the fitness, clothing or provisions required. It is human nature to take risks and we are a so-called outdoor nation that hates restrictive environmental regulation that targets humans. But if workplace regulations exist to avoid injury and death, why are places of recreation not more heavily regulated to safeguard against poor judgement? The unpalatable prospect of less freedom in the outdoors, and more rules and regulations seems to be the only solution to stopping people dying on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing".

➤ New concept for kiwi conservation using Maungatautari. Michelle Impey, executive director of *Kiwis for Kiwi*: "We have changed the way we're doing things in order to make the most of opportunities offered by Maungatautari and other fenced sanctuaries. Using *Operation Nest Egg*, chicks hatched from wild-collected eggs will be incubated in captivity and released into existing predator free habitats where they can breed in a safe environment. Once these new populations have grown near to capacity, we can then relocate some of the offspring to start new families in other places. By increasing the supply chain and getting these kohanga kiwi sites to capacity more quickly, we can now do in five to ten years what would have taken 50 years or more. Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari has an estimated carrying capacity of 690 pairs of kiwi and when it reaches half capacity, around 325 pairs, kiwi will be moved off the mountain to begin populations in other predator-controlled areas. Source: Sanctuary Mountain newsletter Sept 2018.

➤ The Department of Conservation has increasingly been receiving reports if people removing the plant Bracket Fungus from locations around the country including Pirongia. Our compliance team will be launching an investigation and are asking for your help, if you see anyone removing the fungus (or anything else) please contact me

and gather as much information as possible. Thank you, Cara Hansen, DoC, 027 877 7799.

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



Diggers Hut in Makawakawa Stream (Ruahine Range) was recently swept away after a landslide diverted the stream through the original hut site. While the hut appeared to be of solid build, it goes without saying it's out of use.

➤ At the end of March 2018, FMC was made aware of the fact that 3 bivvies had been flown into and installed within the boundaries of the Adams Wilderness Area, and that rough tracks had been cut to assist predator control operations. The bivvies are temporary structures, and will be removed once the operation is completed. No date for their removal has been set so far. The operation is scheduled to run for two years. The bivvies are locked, and are not available for use by trampers.

All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism

Next Month: Email your contributions to the editor by **Friday, 9th November.**

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