



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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

December 2025



Omaru Falls photo by Nicola Lye

WAIKATO HUT

Your lodge on Mt Ruapehu
Tongariro National Park



www.wtc.org.nz



Rangiora flowers by
Lesley Kuggeleijn

PLEASE SUPPORT ALL OUR CLUB SPONSORS

FOR ALL YOUR OUTDOOR NEEDS

Travel Packs • Sleeping Bags • Tramping Clothes • Tents
Boots - Tramping & Trekking • Tramping Accessories • Drink Systems

Stockists of:

- Earth Sea Sky
- Aarn Packs
- Camelbak
- Deuter
- One Planet
- Smartwool Socks
- Leki Poles

BOOTS:

- Merrell
- Meindl
- Vasque
- Keen

221a Victoria Street, Hamilton

Phone 07-839 5681

Fax 07-839 5846

shop@trekntravel.co.nz





Official Bulletin of
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 880

December 2025

General Committee

President:	Rupert Craggs	027 6811926
Secretary:	Dorothy Cawdron	027 7424222
Treasurer:	Guy Domett	027 2483008
Members:	Judith Bogle (VP Tramp) Ashley Hoskin (VP Ski)	
Members: Tramp:	Allan Wickens Selwyn June	Mike Peck
Members: Ski:	Stephen Phillips Mary Reed	David Macdonald

Tramping Subcommittee

Tramping email: waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com

Chairperson:	Judith Bogle	027 3810283
Secretary:	Dorothy Cawdron	027 7424222
Club Captain:	Mike Peck	021 369256
Membership:	Jocelyn Widmer	027 8664795
Member:	Selwyn June	027 4978151
Transport:	Allan Wickens	027 9509546
Social convenor:	David Totman	021 868720

Ski Subcommittee

Ski email: waikatoski@gmail.com

Chairperson:	Ashley Hoskin	027 4909545
Secretary:	Dorothy Cawdron	027 7424222
Ski VP:	Stephen Phillips	021 1031436
Bookings:	Ashley Hoskin	027 4909545
Finance officer:	Michael Barker	021 2463500

Facebook:	Jacqui Dick	021 1375201
Administrator	Lynette Morris	waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com
Website:	Kat Rowe	wtcwebmanager@gmail.com
Bulletin:	Lesley Kuggeleijn	027 4942414
Editor & Club Librarian:	Dianne June	djune@xtra.co.nz 07 8433066

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

Club Night: Wednesday 4th February, 2026

We meet at St. Peter's Cathedral in Victoria St.

Door opens at 7.00pm, and the meeting starts at 7.30pm.

Watch this space next month for more information.

Social activity: The last club night of the year was a real treat. David & Jo presented a selection of pictures of their event-rich month-long trip to Nepal in October & November. Planning for the trip was interrupted when John D tore his achilles tendon so Kim P took his place. Thanks went to their travel organiser for accommodating this change as it was important during the walking. After some hectic moving around Kathmandu off they went towards the Tsum valley. But severe weather seems to have followed them - over 500 others were evacuated from the mountains. David and his harem of 4 ladies were able to walk for some distance but at one point Kim fell about 10m off the side of a narrow path and 'hurt' her arm. This meant she was somewhat incapacitated so when it came to crossing a swiftly flowing stream things got difficult. A night under a rock bivvy and less water in the stream enabled getting Kim to a nearby village which had no suitable site for an evacuation so saw the team walking a further couple of hours to the next village for her to be choppered out for medical care. It was ascertained that she had broken her arm. After some good medical care and more time spent in Kathmandu she eventually headed home earlier than the rest of the team, who continued on to another region - wait for the trip report. But the club night ended with a wonderful selection of cakes, biscuits, and savouries for supper. Thankyou to all those who contributed to the feast. Yummy

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2025/2026

	11 & 13 Dec		River safety course	Belinda Cooper
3212	13 Dec	lazy	Christmas party	Judith Bogle
	14 Dec	E/M	Post party walk	Judith Bogle
3214	20/21 Dec		Wairere stream /Pinnacles (Ruapehu)	Cancelled
3215	11 Jan	E	Waitawheta tramway	Jacqui Dick
3216	18 Jan	E	Homunga/Orokawa bay	Selwyn June
3217	15-18 Jan	M/F	Mt Titiroa	Les Waren
3218	21-25 Jan	M/F	Monowai Hut	Les Warren
3219	29 Jan-1 Feb	F	South coast, Southland	Les Warren
3220	20-25 Jan	M/F	Kaimanawas	Mike Peck
3221	1 Feb	M	Hillary Hope Reserve	John Wilson
3222	31 Jan-6 Feb	M/F	Arthurs Pass	Mike Peck
3223	5-8 Feb	M/F	Opunake/Pouakai circuit	Peter Lye
3224	14 Feb	E/M	Mangorewa (BOP)	Maddie Fiddes

3225	22 Feb	E/M	Mt. Hiwiroa	Allan Wickens
3226	27 Feb-1 Mar	M/F	Syme Hut/Mt Taranaki	Mike Peck
3227	8 Mar	E/M	Hapuakohe	Club Captain
3228	1-7 Mar	M	Greenstone-Caples	Peter Ayson
3229		M/F	Brewster Glacier	John McArthur
3232	22-27 Mar		Gillespies Pass circuit	David Totman
3233	29 Mar	M	Pudding Falls / Salvation Hut	Les Warren
3234	3-6 Apr	M	Tama Lakes circuit	Les Warren

Don't let a lack of equipment deter you from coming on a trip. Talk to the trip leader – who may be able to assist with lending or sharing gear.

TIME and FITNESS GUIDELINES

E = Easy.	Up to 4 hours per day, pace slower than E/M.
E/M = Easy/Medium.	Up to 5-6 hours/day, pace slower than M.
M = Medium.	Up to 6-7 hours/day, at standard walking pace.
M/F = Medium/Fit.	Up to 7-8 hours/day, pace faster than M.
F = Fit.	Over 8 hours/day, pace faster than M/F.

Note that factors such as party size, fitness, weather, terrain and leadership will influence actual times, so the above are estimates only.

Bookings and Cancellations: no later than the **TUESDAY** before the trip. Any person withdrawing after this day without good reason will be charged the full cost of the trip.

Departure Point: Weekend trips depart from the Gate 1 at Waikato University. Park closer to other vehicles as this area is security monitored. Leave on Friday nights at 7pm sharp unless otherwise stated. Day trips depart from London St at the river end- park on the roadside. Leave Sunday mornings at 8am sharp. If someone is concerned because a trip is **late back**, contact: 1. Club Captain; 2) President; 3) a committee member.

Minimum equipment required:

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

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

Trip Descriptions

River Safety Course

11 & 13th Dec

DO YOU REALLY NEED TO CROSS THAT RIVER?

Tramping where there are river crossings?

This one-day course is designed for hikers, Te Araroa Trail walkers, teachers and leaders working in outdoor settings – in fact, anyone who will be tramping and doing activities near water. Rivers are one of the greatest hazards in the New Zealand outdoors so learn how to read a river (basic hydrology), when not to cross and where to cross and how to safely cross (solo and in groups). You do not need to be a confident swimmer to do this course. There will be a short weekday evening on-line meeting in preparation for the practical in the weekend.

Online safety briefing: Thurs 11 Dec, 7-8pm (link will be sent)

Practical: Sat 13th Dec, 9am - approx. 1.30pm, Kauaranga Valley, near Thames,

For registration and more information contact: waikatoadmin@outdoortraining.nz

Christmas Party

Saturday 13th Dec

The Christmas party will be held from 4pm Saturday at 336 Scotsman Vally Road. Bring a plate to share. There will be a BBQ for any meat you wish to bring along to cook (sausages provided). Also good to sit around and keep warm. It would be appreciated if you bring your own plate/ knife and fork for food. Don't forget a deckchair. Also let me know if anyone is interested in doing games.

Trip 3212

Post party walkabout

Sunday 14th Dec

If you wish to stay overnight, there is plenty of camping space and we can have breakfast together. Plus if anyone wants a jaunt around Mangakawa the next day we can do this. It will take about 3hrs, 20 minutes and starting time will be 10am at Judith's place. Please let me know if you are going to stay overnight or just come for the evening.

Leader : Judith Bogle

Ph: 027 3810283

Grade: slothful

Email: judith.bogle@outlook.com

Transport: Private vehicles but do consider carpooling where possible

Trip 3215

Waitawheta Tramway Track

11 Jan, 2026

We will start the new year off with a lovely walk that is perfect for hot days as will be in the bush following a river all day. We will be retracing the Waitawheta Tramway upriver into the heart of old kauri country to reach the site of the historic Waitawheta sawmill next to Waitawheta Hut.

This track starts by crossing private farmland before entering the Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Park. After 1 hr, the track crosses a large suspension bridge and passes a replica log bogie (tram cart). We continue from here along the tramline through the spectacular Waitawheta Gorge to the hut. This is a tranquil, leafy, hike with gorge views, suspension bridges, swimming holes, replica logging tram cart, and other abandoned relics to be seen along the way.

We will have a shared picnic lunch at the hut before retuning the same way. 18km return so will take the full day as we will also include a swimming stop.

Leader: Jacqui Dick

Ph: 021 260 8149

Grade: E/M

Email: jacquimd@me.com

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3216

Orokawa bay

18 Jan

This trip was first led by Reg Smith, a founding member of the club, in February 1952. (*Ed comment: I tried to dig out the trip report for this bulletin but no report was written – oh dear*).

From the end of Ngatitangata Road we will walk down to a beach at Homanga Bay for a short break, then along the top of coastal cliffs to Orokawa Bay where we'll have lunch under the shade of spreading pohutukawa. There are great views out to Mayor Island/Tuhua and White Island along the way. The last part of the walk is over the hill to Waihi Beach, with time for a swim and ice cream before heading back to Hamilton. A fairly easy 8.5 km walk on a good track with a few steep sections.

Leader: Selwyn June

Ph: 027 978151

Grade: E/M

Email: selwynjune@xtra.co.nz

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3217

Mt. Titiroa

15-18 Jan

Summary: This trip will start and finish from Te Anau. We travel to Manapouri and walk to Hope Arm Hut before climbing Mt Titiroa (1715m). There will be quite a bit of ascending. This trip will be a mixture of huts and camping (with no facilities).

Departure / Return: We depart & return from Te Anau. You must **arrive in Te Anau on the 14 January** and be ready to depart early next morning. Each person is to make their own arrangements in getting to Te Anau. Te Anau is easy to get to by flying into Queenstown and getting the Tracknet Shuttle to Te Anau.

Accommodation / Transport to Track: This will be sorted closer to the time.

Proposed Itinerary: The itinerary will be finalized closer to the trip and will need to be flexible with the weather at the time. The idea is to get to Hope Arm Hut or Garnock Burn on the first day. From Garnock Burn the rest of the trip is mainly ascending Mt Titiroa with the plan to camp at a tarn below Mt Titiroa. Next day we will ascend to Mt Titiroa and, if time permits, we could explore the area and a number of tarns we can check out. The next day we will head back to Hope Arm Hut and catch the ferry.

Note: This trip will be weather dependent and dictate what we end up doing. A more detailed trip programme will be sent to those who register.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 864 4937

Grade: MF

Email: warrenlb20172025@outlook.com

Trip costs: tba

Trip 3218

Monowai Hut, Southland

21-25 Jan

Summary: This trip will start and finish from Te Anau. We travel to Monowai Carpark and walk to Monowai Hut via Green Lake.

Departure / Return: We depart & return from Te Anau. You must **arrive in Te Anau**

on the 20 January 26 and be ready to depart early next morning. Each person is to make their own arrangements in getting to Te Anau. Te Anau is easy to get to by flying into Queenstown and getting the Tracknet Shuttle to Te Anau.

Accommodation Te Anau / Transport to Track: Will advise closer to the time.

Proposed Trip Itinerary: The plan is to start and finish at the same point to make transport easier to manage. With this in mind, day 1 will walk from Borland Road to Green Lake Hut. Day 2 walk to Clark Hut. Day 3 walk to Monowai Hut. Day 4 walk back to Green Lake Hut. Day 5 return to carpark and Te Anau. **Note: 2 of the huts are small (4 beds) so recommend that tents be taken.** Further trip details will be sent to those who register

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 864 4937

Grade: M/F

Email: warrenlb20172025@outlook.com

Trip costs: tba

Trip 3219

South coast loop

29 Jan-7 or 10 Feb

Summary: This will be a tough long trip which the weather will dictate what we end up doing from the proposed itinerary below. The plan is to walk most of the Coast Track but complete a loop via Lakes Poteriteri and Hauroko. Once the group is known we can discuss to include option to include a rest day.

Departure / Return: We depart from Te Anau and the return place to be decided. You **must arrive in Te Anau on the 28 January** and be ready to depart early next day. Each person is to make their own arrangements in getting to Te Anau. Te Anau is easy to get to by flying into Queenstown and getting the Tracknet Shuttle to Te Anau.

Accommodation: Accommodation prior to and after the trip to be advised. Transport to/from the track to be sorted.

Proposed Trip Itinerary: Day prior to start we will look at travelling to Tuatapere and stay the night to give us an early start the next day. Day 1 to Port Craig School Hut. Day 2 to Wairaurahiri Hut. Day three to Waitutu Hut. Option: Overnight trip to Westies Cave Hut (2 days). Back at Waitutu Hut we head north off-track to Lake Poteriteri Hut, where we join tracks again. From Waitutu Hut we follow a DoC trapline to Slaughterburn Hut but, from this Hut to Lake Poteriteri Hut there is no track but we follow a ridgeline. Waitutu Hut to Lake Poteriteri Hut we will allow 2 to 3 days. From Lake Poteriteri Hut we follow a track to Teal Bay Hut on the edge of Lake Hauroko. Then we follow a track back to the Carpark.

Note: Although this trip is 8 or up to 12 days long, we need to build in a couple of days for weather and look at doing a couple of “short” days to give our bodies a rest. Tents will need to be taken. Those doing this trip will need to be flexible with time-frames as there will be no guarantee how long this trip will take and for one to reach them returning home. Further trip details will be sent to those who register.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 864 4937

Grade: M/F

Email: warrenlb20172025@outlook.com

Trip costs: tba

If money doesn't grow on trees, how come banks have branches?

Trip 3220**Kaimanawas****23-26 Jan**

The Auckland Anniversary Kaimanawa tramp is a fit trip with two 8+ hour days tramping. There are two plans and the decision of which one to take will be made depending on driver availability and the amount of rainfall in the preceding days. We depart Friday evening 5.30pm and return Monday late afternoon.

Trip 1 is to stay at the Urchin Campsite on the Friday night and to start on the Urchin Track Saturday morning. We'll head up the Waipakahi river to camp near the Hut. Day 2 is to follow the Middle range track up past Thunderbolt to camp near Motutere. Day 3 is the walk out to Urchin to complete a loop circuit.

Trip 2 requires a driver who can drop us at the Southern Access walkway to tramp along the northern edge of the army camp. We follow the track right through to the confluence of the Makomiko stream and Otamateanui stream where we camp for the night. Day 2 is to head for the tops via points 1272 and 1271 and head north to reach Thunderbolt. We'll camp at a known spot near Motutere. Day 3 is the walk out to the Urchin carpark. Both trips require a tent as well be camping all 3 nights.

Leader: Mike Peck**Ph:** 021 369256**Grade:** M/F**Email:** *mikeypeck@yahoo.com***Trip costs:** tba**Trip 3221****Hillary-Hope reserve****1 Feb**

The starting point will be at Four brothers Reserve near the top of the Raglan Deviation. We will follow the Karamu Walkway for about a kilometre with great views over the Waikato, and then drop down into the bush of Hillary Hope Reserve on the Hope Loop Track. Near the bottom we will join the Mangakiriri Loop Track and climb back up (some people!) and, you guessed it, follow this loop all the way down again. We will then take the David Thom Loop Track up to the airstrip for views to Karioi and Raglan Harbour. The loop takes us down to the Hope Loop Track, which we will follow around to the north to link up with Four Brothers Reserve again. The first two tracks in particular are quite steep. There is native bush and recent planting of former farmland by the Native Forest Restoration Trust, which owns the reserve. All in all it makes for a pleasant day out.

Leader: John Wilson**Ph:** 021 168 2082**Grade:** M**Email:** *jnjwilnz@gmail.com***Transport:** Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3222**Arthurs Pass****31 Jan- 6 Feb**

A 7 day tramp starting Saturday 31 Jan with a short walk into Hawdon Hut. Day 2 is to continue onwards over Walker Pass and Taruahuna Pass to camp at Lake Mavis. Day 3 is Lake Mavis to Otehake Hut. Day 4 will be a challenging day, making our way along the Otehake River Route to camp at the natural hot springs. Day 5 will be a long day, making our way along the Taranakau river to the Minchin Pass Route to Lake Minchin. Day 6 is following the Poulter river to the Andrews Valley Track to camp at Hallelujah Flat. Day 7 is a three hour walk out to the road end.

Leader: Mike Peck

Ph: 021 369256

Grade: M/F

Email: mikeypeck@yahoo.com

Trip costs: tba

Trip 3223

Opunake/Pouakai Circuit

5-8 Feb

We will travel to Opunake on Thursday evening and stay at our bach in Opunake. There are two bunk rooms available with a queen and single bunk in each room. There is also space to put up a tent. You are welcome to use the bach facilities. We will start the Pouakai Crossing from North Egmont and head clockwise. The track climbs up to a lookout, then sidles along the mountain and passes the towering lava columns of the Dieffenbach Cliffs. The track descends to Holly Hut and crosses the Ahukawakawa swamp before climbing to the Pouakai Range. We will be staying at the new Pouakai Hut on Friday night (NB this had to be changed from previous plan) The second day, we will return to North Egmont via the lower track, passing the famous Pouakai Tarns and through lowland forest. We will spend another night at Opunake and enjoy the local walks on Sunday before returning back to Hamilton. A pre-requisite to registering for this trip is booking your accommodation at Pouakai Hut for the night of Friday 6th February. Get in quick, before accommodation is fully booked, it is running out fast. Trip number will be limited to 10.

Leader: Peter Lye

Ph: 0212265072

Grade: M/F

Email: nicolahlye@gmail.com **Trip cost:** tba

Trip 3226

Syme Hut

27 Feb – 1 Mar

Driving down to Friday night to stay at the Camphouse near the North Egmont visitor centre. Saturday will be a traverse around the eastern side of Taranaki to Dawson Falls and then up to Syme Hut. Sunday will be a climb to the summit of Taranaki and traverse over to the Northern Summit Route and back to the Camphouse.

Leader: Mike Peck

Ph: 021 369256

Grade: M/F

Email: mikeypeck@yahoo.com

Trip costs: tba

Trip 3228

Greenstone-Caples out over the Routeburn

1-7 Mar

This plan was given to me by a person who has done the route at least 3 times and it seems a good option, so we will do it anticlockwise as this means no steep hills.

Start on Sunday

1. Lower Caples about 4-5 hours. Easy track on flat.
2. Deer stalkers 3-4 hours (Ex DoC hut) Easy track on flat.
3. Mc Kellar 4-5 hours. This goes to saddle. Gentle climb but steep drop to Greenstone track.
4. 5. Deer stalkers 3-4 hours. Easy track on flat Greenstone Hut 4-5 hours. Easy track on flat
6. Road end. 4-5 hours.

You could decide to stay at Mc Kellar an extra night. This would allow a side trip to the Routeburn track and where Howden Hut originally was.

That takes about 2 hours with another hour to the lookout. A nice round trip 5-6 hour

walk with no pack. Alternatively for the fitter members a side trip to McKenzie hut. A round trip of about 8-10 hours with no pack. Deerstalkers were charging approximately \$40 per night. Key will have to be collected at Small Planet Queenstown. The deer stalkers have a website (www.southerlakesnzdz.org.nz or www.planmywalk.nz) and some bunks have already been booked. Both huts were good when we last stayed about 5/6 yrs ago with gas cookers and equipped kitchens I already have three people confirmed so if you are thinking about coming, act fast as numbers will be limited. This route may be fine-tuned.

Leader: Peter Ayson

Ph: 0274 797 077

Grade: M

Email: peter.ayson@yahoo.com **Trip costs:** tba

Trip 3229

Brewster Glacier

9/10 Mar

The plan is to leave Wanaka early on March 9th and drive to the carpark at the base of the climb, at the Fantail Falls carpark. This carpark fills rapidly and it will be best to arrive super early.

We then cross the Haast River and start a very steady ascent to the Brewster Hut. This is 1000m climb from 450m to 1450m altitude and at about 1250m you break out of the bush and awake to the amazing mountain scenery around you. About the first thing you see is the dunny, but it's miles ahead and you can keep that in mind as your target as you climb up through tussock hill country.

The hut is well placed for amazing views to the high peaks around. The plan is to stay at the hut on the 9th March, and it is bookable so we will need to keep an eye on the bookings and jump in. You should book a bunk in the hut for the night of 9th March before registering.

After lunch at the hut, and dropping most gear on our bunks, we head up about 300m altitude and 3km of high country tussock and then rock scrambling to get to the glacier. It's something of a classic big ice face with cave and surging water - or it was 3 years ago - we may have to walk further. Once we have thrown ice at each other we can head back to the hut.

I'm looking forward to the Kea concert at the hut in the evening - last time there must have been 30 kea playing and doing their best to steal anything on the deck of the hut - a real joy to watch. Next day we retreat down the track to our car(s) and Wanaka.

Leader: John McArthur

Ph: 021 2889641

Grade: F

Email: mcArthur@outlook.co.nz

Transport: TBA, from Queenstown Airport

Mapping: kml and gpx track files available

Trip 3236

Otanewainuku photography

12 Apr

This will primarily be a photography trip, with Whataroa Falls our destination in Otanewainuku Forest. This is a small forest south of Tauranga and is well known for its prolific fungi. We will head in via the Rimu Loop Walk and take the side trip to the picturesque Whataroa Falls. We can also spend time photographing fungi. This is roughly a 3-hour return trip, excluding the time we spend taking photos.

Ideally you will have a camera with “Manual Mode”, a tripod, and a lens that is 24mm or less (for the waterfall), and a macro lens, if you have one, for fungi. A polariser makes a big difference in forest/waterfall photography, so bring that along if you have one. I have a couple of tripods that I am happy to lend out if you have a camera but don't have a tripod and would like to try your hand photographing the waterfall or fungi.

Leader: Nicola Lye

Ph: 027 4213458

Grade: E

Email: nicolahlye@gmail.com

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Editorial



The cooks at the film night - Colin J, Graham H, & John W

Photo by Val Jones

The last film evening for the year at the Haines' proved to be very informative for the few people who attended and those who didn't come missed a lovely convivial get-together. Jean & John had been to Bhutan in the past so I enjoyed browsing the photo album of their trip before watching the movie set in that enigmatical country. The movie had a great twist to it too. This is a fundraising evening for Waikato Hut and it is a pity more of you don't come along for the socializing, great food, and entertainment.

After an entertaining club night 'in Nepal' I'm looking forward to our next social event at Scotsman Valley road for our annual Christmas party. This is conducted in true Judith style- very laid back! But not so far back that you can't sit in your deckchair (BYO) to eat your BBQed meat or partake of the always varied salads. Once you've had your fill of food and frolics playing the games, and are feeling a bit weary, then you can truly lay back and relax for the night. This social lark is what we're all about at this time of year isn't it?

I note a few rearrangements of trip leaders and trips from the previous bulletin but we're flexible aren't we? Maybe not the bones and muscles but in our brains we are. It was a pity that the planned guest speaker for November couldn't attend to limber us up for the summer but rest assured we will try to arrange it for a meeting next year.

May you all have a happy time over the festive season in the company of people you like to be with, and be doing things you really like doing – like tramping. As I write this it is 28 degrees outside so some water activity ought to be on the programme too but please do it safely. Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Dianne

~~~~~  
*Our President has gone AWOL so no blog from him this month*

### *Ski report*

The mountain has closed for skiing and so has the lodge for winter. The summer rates have started (adult \$25, child \$15) and the lodge bookings are still available to anyone interested.

~~~~~  

Trip Reports

Trip 3206

more Tukino reports....

25-27 Oct

Tukino Bluffs and Waterfalls, Saturday

I led this option to explore the area to the north of Tukino, which, you'll be surprised to hear, has lots of bluffs and waterfalls. Our group of eleven first inspected the falls directly above the lodges, then headed down the valley. One or two folk, spotting a patch of snow above us, wanted to throw snowballs, while some of us climbed up to a shoulder below some bluffs, to look down on a stream falling from a narrow rock chute to then tumble out to the right. We regrouped and walked around to see where that stream fell again, but at right angles to the top falls. We continued down the valley, with a few then electing to return back up to the lodges. The main group went on further. I was puzzled by a band of vegetation shown on the map and by a line of bluffs above us. A quick GPS check revealed vegetation didn't exist and the bluffs were not on the map. That was why we had overshot the way to another waterfall that I think is spring-fed. We returned to Tukino, viewing a few more waterfalls and bluffs along the way.

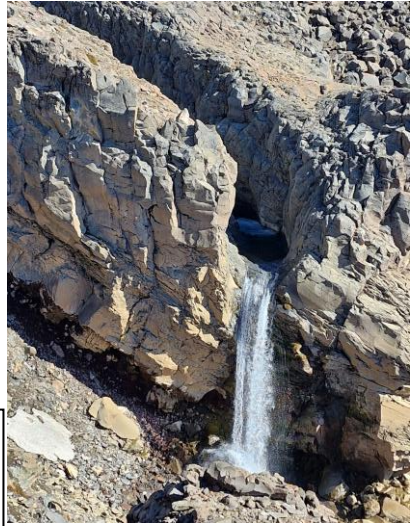
Rangipo Hut, Sunday

This option also had eleven on it and we followed the same route down the ridge that the previous day's group had. The wind picked up and we were grateful for the few sheltered spots. The deck of the Rangipo Hut was calm and sunny, an ideal place for lunch. On our return, the thought of battling up the ridge directly into the wind did not appeal, so we carried on around the mountain Tukino road and walked up that, and when two vehicles appeared to give us a lift, we gratefully clambered in. John Wilson



Johns'
waterfalls

← →



.... and
Dianne's
views went
from this↓



..... to this!



..... can you see the snowflakes in this pic?

photos by Dianne June

Trip 3207

Hakarimatas

2nd Nov



The photogenic team members

We had a sunny day for going over the Hakarimatas, first climbing up from the Waingaro end, to carry on to Parker road. Lunch was had at the fire break, enjoying the nice day again. Pleasantly it was not as muddy as it has been at the Parker end.

Allan kindly dropped us off and picked us up at the other end. Attendees: Peter R, Alicia C, Jacob H, Kevin B, Cathy D and leader Judith B.



The photogenic team members
photos by Alicia Carthew

Life is partly what we make it and partly what is made by the friends we choose –
Tennessee Williams

Trip 3028

Motutapu Island

8/9 Nov

This weekend's adventure took eight enthusiastic trampers to Motutapu Island — a 178-million-year-old landmass and one of the Hauraki Gulf's true elders. This ancient beauty has seen it all: early Māori settlement, extravagant Victorian picnic parties (up to 14,000 Aucklanders per day in summer!), a working farm, and then a stint as a WWII base. These days it's linked to the baby of the gulf, Rangitoto (a youngster at around 600 years old), by a causeway. Thanks to the world's largest island pest-eradication programme, Motutapu is now a thriving haven for native birds... and, temporarily, for us.

Saturday — Caffeine, Croissants & Comedy

Our esteemed trip leader Les had the logistics humming like a DoC long-drop. We departed Hamilton at precisely 6:30am because that's how Les rolls.

The first essential waypoint? Wild Bean Café. Coffee and sweet treats were compulsory (club rules... probably). Miraculously, we still had spare time at the wharf, so we treated ourselves to another round of coffee and light-as-air almond croissants that levitated out of the cabinet.

The boat ride to Motutapu was smooth, thanks in no small part to the skipper's terrifying guard dog — a black spaniel whose main weapons were soulful eyes and an aggressive need for pats.

A wet landing followed, notable for the *absence* of any dropped packs — a victory worth celebrating. Our accommodation was a cosy stone cottage with three bedrooms, just right for eight hikers and a selection of nocturnal wildlife.

Five minutes after arrival, Pete declared Bea “legless” — not from drink, but from quickly converting her hiking pants to shorts. The tone for the weekend was set.

Exploring the Island

We trekked across rolling farmland to Billy Goat Point and the Wetlands Track, where we explored gun emplacements, bunkers and tunnels — a reminder of the island's wartime past. It was a scorcher of a day, and by the time we returned, the ocean was irresistible. Swimsuits were optional; dignity, apparently, negotiable.

Aperitifs overlooking the sea followed, then a beach wander in search of little blue penguins. Rumour has it one emerged for a dip — Kevin swears he saw it — but as most of us missed the moment, we're still not convinced.

Dinner was a classic kiwi BBQ, except for Judith, who chose a wholesome alcohol-free wholegrain feast... resulting in some *less* wholesome aromas on Sunday.

Night Noises

Everyone drifted off contentedly, except for Bea, who fled the snoring and shifted to another room — only to discover that little blue penguins are the *only* nocturnal penguin. Their midnight racket kept her awake, proving Kevin's earlier sighting may not have been an hallucination after all.

Sunday — Ducks, Rubbish Rescues & PJ Regrets

We set off at 8am along the Motutapu Track, pausing at Reid Homestead to enjoy the

serene waterfront — and a charming family of paradise ducks. Mum, dad and three ducklings waddled along the beach before launching into the ocean the moment Bea approached on her self-appointed rubbish patrol.

Speaking of which, Bea collected all sorts of seaside debris, which she then cheerfully handed over to Kevin (who did *not* volunteer) to carry. His highlight was a waterlogged 2011 Rugby World Cup football — a rare relic indeed.

A final climb to the trig rewarded us with stunning views over the Hauraki Gulf.

Back at the cottage, we squeezed in one last swim before cleaning up, packing gear, and catching our boat back to Okahu Wharf — conveniently located next to a waterfront bar serving cold adult beverages and hot salty chips.

One of us, having forgotten to pack togs, ended up with nothing dry to wear home except her pyjamas. No one would have noticed... had she not mentioned it.

Naturally, she will never live it down. Nonetheless, it was a weekend to remember. A fabulous, sunny, laughter-filled escape enjoyed by: Les (Leader), Allan, Kevin, Peter, Jim, Judith, Bea and Lynette. See the pictures inside the back cover.

Trip 3211

Kaimanawa

28/29 Nov

Eleven hut seekers, plus one renegade penguin, at Sika Lodge.

Who needs Dora when you've got Scout Steve and his trusty buddy Garmin to find three hunter huts.

At 'Stumble Inn' we were warmly welcomed by Shrek, Donkey and a bonus donkey, the rifle wielding stoner. Calm down Steve.

Bambi called to say hello from over yonder.

Bea balanced stones to make a cairn by the river.

Hut 2 was lost and never found.

Never mind, Kaimanawa unfurled her treasures, spring green fronds, falling leaf confetti, and colourful native 'funghis' (in human form too).

Les's Sun God blessed us with warmth and sunrays through the treetops, and on, through afternoon drinks.

A shared buffet was enjoyed by all, with compliments to chef aka Scout Steve for his sliced venison hor d'oeuvres and lamb curry.

Peter the Penguins' birthday was celebrated with chocolate cake, proudly sponsored by New World.

Day 2

A leisurely walk following Scout Steve to 'Just' another hut.

All enjoyed majestic red beeches, and the Kaimanawa Wall.

Who needs Formula 1 sound effects when you've got Jim backfiring Steve's lamb curry.

Disney credits go to Director Les, 2IC chef and Scout Steve, newbies Kay and Andrew, plus Jean and John, Bea, Kathryn, Kevin, Peter, Jim, and Wendy (scribe & photographer).



From the committee table:

New Members: Welcome to Sarah Crow and Kathryn Row

Resignations: Nil

Membership: The club has 204 tramping members. Have you claimed your FMC membership card yet? Please contact Lesley or John McArthur.

From the committee:

This search for a new home for our records is now somewhat urgent. Over many years Colin Jones has allowed the club to use his storage space for our archived papers, gear and materials. He is now relinquishing this space so we have to move all our gear too. Does anyone have some space they could allow the club to use please? The main requirement is that the space be watertight, and if possible, have some form of shelving but this could be supplied by the club if needed. Contact: Dianne 07 8433066 or email djune@xtra.co.nz

Snippets

➤ Your editor has an unused Torpedo 7 cooking pot for use in the outdoors which would make a great Christmas gift for the right person. She also has an old-fashioned Garmin Trex20 GPS device. Is anyone interested in owning this? Ph 07 8433066.

➤ Want to camp out in Okahukura valley, and help with some track and bait station maintenance while enjoying a beautiful forest and listening to kookako? Dianne & Selwyn are considering finishing off the track & bait station maintenance that wasn't completed at the end of winter. There is also a washout we need to attend to by filling some sandbags and putting them in place to prevent further damage to our access track. We will have the use of the LUV to get us to and from the campsite to the working area. It will be a case of BYO everything you need for the time you are there, including tools such as a hammer, pruning saw if you have one, secateurs, screwdrivers (Phillips & square-drive). We can have the LUV from Dec 26th to Jan 6th but won't be there for that whole time. If you can spare a few days or a week and would like to refresh your hearing of the kōkako, this might be fun. Get in touch with us: ph 0274 978151 or djune@xtra.co.nz.

➤ If you would like to support the Pirongia Restoration Society's work how about thinking of purchasing a 2026 calendar for \$25. It comes with an envelope if so desired. Contact Dianne or Selwyn for more info. Some will be available at the Christmas party.

➤ Recently your editor made contact with the friend of a foundation member of the club – Peter Dosser. He had accumulated a bundle of topographical maps as well as a hand-drawn map of the Waiorongomai/Waitawheta area. Peter died a wee while ago but his wife Carol wanted these maps to come back to the club and this has happened. They will be available to peruse at the February club night.

➤ The search for the south Island kōkako. Over the past 3 months or so to the end of October, the SI kōkako charitable Trust received 8 new reports of possible encounters. As usual, they range from 'Possible' to "sorry, not this time". The favourite at this stage is one from the **Old Ghost Road**, from late July. While the bird wasn't seen, the experts think there's a good chance a SI kōkako was heard. That was about 1.75km south of Mokihinui Forks Hut, and then last month, another report from further south of Lyall Saddle Hut was received. If the OGR is on your agenda in the coming months, please try to keep ears and eyes open for sight or sound of a South Island kōkako and record anything that might be the bird! Many people have reported how wonderful the bird life is at the **Kerr Bay Campsite, St Arnaud**, at the top of Lake Rotoiti. Last month, this report came from the campsite: "Saw a large all grey bird glide west to east over the clearing of the campsite into the woods. I have been travelling New Zealand trying to see all of the NZ birds and haven't seen any other bird like this. I saw the bird gliding and not really flapping as it went across the clearing. It was grey all over and had a noticeably darker tail with wings which seemed rounded in shape. Sadly I didn't manage to see if it had coloured wattles as it disappeared into the trees." Don and Suzie, a couple of volunteers based near Nelson, headed straight down to check the area out. They found some response to their call playback but nothing definite. Still, they felt the responses were interesting and the

site shouldn't be written off. The local trapping group will be keeping their ears and eyes open and if you'll be enjoying all that Lake Rotoiti has to offer, please do the same! There have been a few other reports further down Lake Rotoiti. When someone is familiar with the bush and native birds, their reports often give more clues and more confidence. When someone is familiar with NI kōkako, that's better still, and that was the case for a report of calls and a startled bird at the Butchers Flat end of the **Wakamarina Track in the Richmond Ranges**. On the way in and out again, mother and daughter heard familiar kōkako calls in the same area. On the way out, in that location, they also startled a bird, which flew over them, just above the canopy. They just had a brief glimpse of a silhouette, but believed the bird to be bigger than a tui. The tracks in this area may be less used than the OGR and tracks around Lake Rotoiti, but if you'll be going there - you know what to do!

There was another reported encounter in the Nelson Lakes National Park. This was from a year ago on the **Blue Lake Track, between Waterfall Yulia and West Sabine Hut** heading north. The encounter reporter hadn't felt it was worth sharing as they didn't have photos or recordings. They then learned about and wanted to acknowledge the great work of all those doing predator control in the area, prompting their report to us. The sound heard was reported to be a full, rounded sound, similar to but longer than that of a bellbird. They then saw a bird that appeared larger than a bellbird fly off up the valley, with a determined flight - not swooping like a tui, nor did it have white at its throat. Please do send forward your reports when you believe you may have seen or heard a South Island kōkako. The experts can review the details you provide, perhaps ask some questions, and perhaps follow it up with a visit themselves. Thank you! Those are the best reports for sharing - from the lovely and very accessible Kerr Bay campsite to some less accessible sites. Wherever you're heading off to this spring, summer and autumn, across South and Stewart Islands, for a short walk, a multi day tramp, a bike trip or occasionally from your car, if there is native bush, probably with long-standing predator control, there may still be a SI kōkako out there. Your help is needed to confirm that there is, so these birds can be protected and conserved. Contact: Inger (SIKCT) info@southislandkokako.org. There is a \$10,000 reward for any confirmed sighting of this elusive bird.

....from DoC.....

The Department of Conservation has added 45 huts and campsites to the national **booking system**. Bookings opened on 2 December for stays starting from 5 December.

The newly bookable huts included favourites like Fenella Hut in Golden Bay and Rangipo Hut in Tongariro National Park, while the expanded list of campsites featured coastal spots such as Nikau Cove in the Marlborough Sounds and Teetotal Campsite in Nelson Lakes. The cost of staying at these sites would not change.

Newly bookable huts:

Turangi/Tongariro: Boyd, Blyth, Mangachuehu, Mangaturuturu, Rangipo and Whakapapahti hut.

Canterbury: Carrington, Casey, Edwards and Hawdon huts.

Fiordland: Port Craig School hut, Demon Trail hut, Hidden Falls hut, Lake Alabaster hut, Hokuri hut, Martins Bay hut and McKerrow Island hut.

Golden Bay/Motueka: Fenella hut, Sylvester hut, Balloon hut, Salisbury Lodge, Mt Arthur hut.

➤ Waimata Gemstone Bay **track reinstatement** commencing. Visitors will soon be able to enjoy a walk to one of Coromandel's most picturesque beaches, with construction of the track to Waimata Gemstone Bay starting on December 8th. The construction team will be onsite all week, and then back on 19 January to complete the work. The stairs were extensively damaged by the extreme weather events of summer 2023, which also resulted in the closure of other tracks around the wider Mautohe Cathedral Cove area on Coromandel's east coast. The track has a special role for marine reserve education use.

DoC's Coromandel Operations Manager Nick Kelly says the old stairs down to the beach were ripped from their foundations and twisted during the weather event which closed the reserve. "There's always going to be a risk of storm surges at this site, so we've relocated the stairs, and the design and construction will be done in a way which ensures impacts are minimised and the stairs can be relatively easily replaced," Nick says. "There will also be a new section of track taking visitors away from a part of the reserve where we have a known landslide risk."

Waimata Gemstone Bay is part of Te Whanganui-o-Hei Marine Reserve. The reserve protects a wide range of habitats from sandy flats to rocky reefs, offering great snorkelling and diving. Visitors to the reserve can also enjoy swimming, kayaking and the fascinating coastal geology. The Te Whanganui o Hei Marine Reserve Trust organises education programmes for local school children to visit site and learn about marine and coastal species and conservation. The bay also offers land-based access to snorkelling - which makes it very affordable as a day trip for visitors and locals. In September, more than 300 native trees were planted at Waimata Gemstone as part of a collaborative effort under Destination Hauraki Coromandel's Good For Your Soul initiative. The track to nearby Stingray Bay will not be reinstated, but the bay can be accessed by boat. Visitors planning this should check tides, weather and sea conditions before making the trip.

➤ Smuggler caught green-handed with **rare native gecko**. A south Korean citizen has been sentenced to 14 months in prison for purchasing and intending to export 10 jewelled geckos. He was caught in an undercover sting. These geckos are only found in NZ and are classified as 'at risk – declining'. Adults can reach 155-170cm and can live for over 20 years. The species are found in pockets of Canterbury, Otago, and

Southland. They're often transported over long time periods and estimates suggest up to 80-90% die before they are sold or delivered to buyers. You can help by reporting suspicious behaviour you see when out naturing by calling the 24-hr emergency hotline DOCHOT (0800 362468), or emailing wildlifecrime@doc.govt.nz

➤ **Lone feral cat** that destroyed tern colony caught. A year after a single feral cat destroyed a large black-fronted tern colony on Canterbury's Waiau toa/Clarence river, it has finally been caught. The tomcat reached a large island in the river, where the birds were nesting, killing and eating several adult birds, chicks and eggs, disturbing the colony and causing almost all 95 nests to be abandoned. Recently contractors caught 11 feral cats, including the 6kg individual responsible for the attack last year. It took 3 days of luring before the long stride and distinctive prints showed that the offender had been caught. The principal ranger for South Marlborough says that, apart from a flooding event in late October which disrupted early nesting, a successful breeding season has gone ahead. This area is an important habitat for the terns, and there are at least 12 colonies nesting on the braided river this year.

➤ **Takahē nest success** in Upper Whakatipu. The Upper Whakatipu gets another takahē tick of approval, with the nationally vulnerable birds nesting in both the Greenstone and Rees valleys. The first chicks of the season have started hatching in the Greenstone Valley, while the recently released Rees Valley population has started laying eggs. A DoC project leader said that for a long time, the only place takahē could be found in the wild was the remote Murchison Mountains in Fiordland, with most takahē otherwise living in predator free sanctuaries and offshore islands. Now, more than half of all takahē live across four wild sites. The Greenstone population, released onto Ngāi Tahu tribal property Greenstone Station in 2023, successfully raised chicks that summer, but not in 2024. The Rees Valley takahē are younger and less experienced, so may not be as successful at raising chicks this year. However, the presence of fertile eggs so soon after their release is an exciting first step towards a self-sustaining population. If you see a banded takahē, take a photo or make a note of the coloured leg bands. People can report sightings to takaherecovery@doc.govt.nz

➤ **Wairere Falls** between a rock and a good place. The closure of Wairere Falls Track to address significant safety risks is also an opportunity for DoC to give the popular track a makeover. The track has been closed since 13 July due to high levels of rockfall activity and ongoing instability. The closure provides the opportunity to make the track safe, replace a bridge, lookout platforms, steps, and barriers. A DoC ranger says instability in the gorge area poses a risk of severe or life-threatening injury. One particularly large boulder, 3 meters wide, is set to break loose at any time. When it goes, it's likely to take out the stairs and anyone on them.

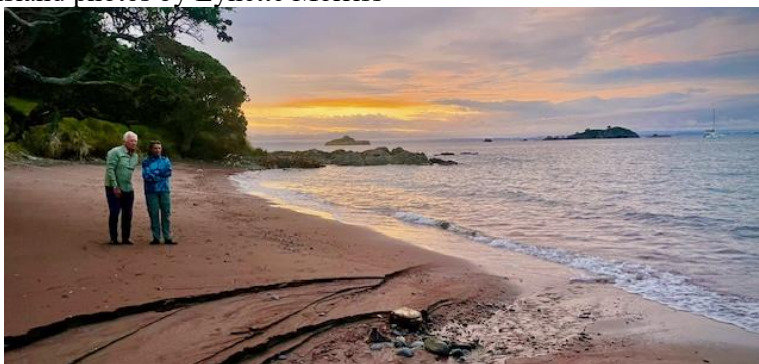


Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
from your editor & distribution team






Motutapu island photos by Lynette Morriss




bivouac/outdoor
COMMITTED TO ADVENTURE


we ARE tramping



15% OFF RRP*
for Waikato Tramping Club

.....

 **311 Barton St
Hamilton
07 839 4206**

www.bivouac.co.nz 

.....

* Not to be used in conjunction with any other discount, special or offer.
Excludes electronics, hut tickets & gift cards.



Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

P.O. Box 685, Hamilton 3240