



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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

July 2026



Really getting down to it Photo by Nicola Guy

WAIKATO HUT

Your lodge on Mt Ruapehu
Tongariro National Park



www.wtc.org.nz



Macquarie Is cabbage
Photo by John McArthur

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Free to members
Member of: Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand Inc
Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association

BULLETIN No 887

July 2026

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Members: Ski:	Ashley Hoskin	

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Secretary:	Dorothy Cawdron	027 7424222
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Waikato Tramping Club account: 03 1555 0091625 02 (include the trip no.)

Club Night: Wednesday 5th August

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

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

Our guest speaker will be Assoc. Professor Chris Lusk. We walk through the forest often but don't stop to look at the trees very often do we? Chris is a lecturer in forest ecology at Waikato University so he'll teach us some things we didn't know about the podocarps – you know – rimu, matai, miro, kahikatea and totara.

Note this meeting is also the **closing date for entries into the photo competition.**

Start reviewing your superb pictures and which category they best fit, as well as giving each picture a title – which makes the image more interesting! Entry details can be found in the 'Snippets' section later in the bulletin

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

3249	10-12 Jul	E-F	Matariki at Waikato Hut	Allan Wickens
3250	19 July	M	Lake Okareka	Les Warren
3251	25/26 July	M/F	Snowcraft	Mike Peck
3252	2 Aug	E/M	Otanewainuku	Cathy Dickson
	5 Aug		CLUB NIGHT	Nicola Guy
3253	8/9 Aug	E/M	Pinnacles Hut	Peter Ayson
3254	16 Aug	M/F	Killarney Lakes loop	Mike Peck
3255	22/23 Aug	E/M	Ngatuhua Lodge (tbc)	Club captain
3256	29/30 Aug	M	Tongariro full moon	Mike Peck
	2 Sept		CLUB NIGHT Photo comp	Nicola Lye
3257	6 Sept	E/M	Neavesville	Judith Bogle
3258	11-13 Sept	E/M	Okahukura baiting	Selwyn & Dianne June
3259A	18-20 Sept	M/F	Ruapehu Summit	Mike Harris
3259B	19/20 Sept	E/M	Miranda Birds & bikes	Maddie Fiddes
3260	28 Sept	E/M	Taupiri Scientific reserve	Selwyn June
3261	3 / 4 Oct	M	Te Rereatukahia Hut	John Macarthur
3262	9-11 Oct	E/M	Okahukura baiting	Selwyn & Dianne June

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

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. PLB is recommended but the club does have some for members' use

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 conditions. PLB is recommended but the club does have some for members' use that you can pick up from Bivouac outdoor store.

Trip Descriptions

Trip 3249 Matariki long weekend at WTC Lodge 10-12 Jul

Matariki public holiday is on Friday 10 July this year. The Waikato Tramping Club will be spending the 3 days at our well-appointed Club Hut/Ski Lodge. The event will have exclusive use of the 32-bed facility.

If you need help on your Thursday arrival, please contact Selwyn 0274 978151.

On Matariki Day, we will celebrate with a sumptuous dinner in the evening, after participating in various walk-related activities that day. If the weather is suitable, and snow conditions allow, those who opt to explore the heights of the Maunga can do so, if they are proficient in snow and ice travel. The Sky Waka gondola can allow quick access to the mid-levels for those who prefer an easier day. Otherwise, there will be tramps/hikes on various walks from the skifield and Whakapapa Village. From experience, if the weather is fine, there will be a large crowd of mainly sightseers on this day.

Saturday will be like Friday and is a back-up day in the event of bad weather. Sunday will be similar but with the time constraint of hut clean-up and travel home. Over the weekend, there will be several films shown relating to Matariki and Tongariro National Park as well as mountain-related ones.

Thursday 9th. Anyone is welcome to travel down to Whakapapa at various times on this day. The main (hire) transport group will leave later in the day, arriving somewhere around 9.00-9.30 pm. On this evening, self-catering can be done using our large kitchen.

Friday 10th – as above. Breakfast will be available at a small cost. Please bring your own lunch food and snacks for while you are walking/climbing. Dinner will be provided, again at a modest cost per person.

Saturday 11th – as for Friday.

Sunday 12th – Breakfast only provided.

Leader Allan Wickens **Ph:** 027 9509546 **Grades :** E-M, & F (the climbers)

Email: *allanwickens@hotmail.com*.

Transport: private vehicles or hire van. The van will cost \$80-90 per person for members and \$85-95 pp for non-members (Note: this cost is dependent on fuel costs at the time).

Accommodation: Seniors \$40/night (members & non-members) \$15/ night for children under 16 years.

Hire gear: crampons and ice axes are available for hire. Contact Mike Peck (club captain) at Bivouac in Hamilton. You must have boots suitable for fitting crampons to properly.

Trip 3250

Lake Okareka

19 July

This walk goes around Lake Okareka, near Blue Lake in Rotorua. The track is a diverse 9km walk, ranging from easy to moderate terrain. It is approx. a 1hr 40 drive to our carpark.

The trip will start from Boyes Reserve with the first 40min following streets to the start of the Walkway. It is a well-graded track to Silver Beach taking about 1hr (allowing for some time in the wetlands). Soon after starting on the Walkway, we come to a boardwalk thru the wetlands. Here, there is a hide with many viewing windows to observe the large variety of water birds. We will probably stop at Silver Beach for lunch. From here to the Lake Okareka Campsite the track becomes more of a tramping track but still well-graded. From Silver Beach it is a short walk to a bridge across the Outlet. From the Outlet to the Campsite, the track becomes undulating while we sidle thru the bush section. Time on this section is about 1hr.

From Lake Okareka Campsite (and toilets) it is a 20min walk back to the Carpark on a well-graded walking track. We can add another 10min on this time on a side track to a viewing point across the Lake. Plenty of birdlife and birdsong to enjoy.

Walking time: Will be about 4hrs 30. This will allow time at the wetlands and breaks. We pass four toilets so this should cover any personal needs.

Leader Les Warren

Ph: 027 8644937

Grade: E

Email: warrenlb20172025@outlook.com

Transport: Senior member \$25-30

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3251

Snowcraft

25/26 July

Snowcraft - aimed at introducing you to the alpine environment, you will learn valuable skills to safely enjoy that experience.

The group will travel to Mount Ruapehu on Friday night and the basics of snowcraft will be taught the following day and Sunday. Trainees will be taught how to use crampons and ice axe, self-arrest, how to walk on icy slopes, navigation tips, basic avalanche awareness plus what to wear etc. This instruction will be done in areas close to the club Hut, but we will spend most of the day out, weather permitting. A full assessment will be done by the instructors of those learning the skills that are taught. If anyone is having difficulty, extra training will be given the next day where necessary. If the weather is too bad on Saturday, we will do instruction in our cosy lounge as far as practical. On Saturday evening, there will be a sumptuous meal in our large dining room.

Sunday's instruction depends on how much we managed to cover on Saturday. If all went well, we have a chance to try out our new-found skills by climbing to the crater or as far as the Alpine Club hut, the highest inhabited building on the maunga. We plan on being out for most of the day, returning to our lodge by about 2.00 pm at the latest to clean up and get back to Hamilton at a reasonable time.

Given good weather, by the end of the weekend you will understand the principles behind the rather complex concept of "Snowcraft". It takes a lot of practice and genuine understanding of what is real and perceived danger when entering the snow and ice heights of Ruapehu. Our leaders have been doing this sort of thing for years and yet they never fail to be fascinated by the world of snow and ice.

The departure time will be early Friday evening. Most will go in vans from our weekend departure point at Waikato University Gate One carpark. We can pick up others enroute (SH3 only via Te Awamutu and Te Kuiti please) and will be based in our large and comfortable Lodge Friday and Saturday nights. All meals will be provided.

A full list of gear will be provided on registration (get in early as you may miss out). Crampons and ice axes can be hired from the Club or Bivouac. Mike, who is the Manager of Bivouac in Hamilton, is the Principal Instructor and he can answer any queries you may have pre-course.

Please Note: To participate in this course, you must be a member of WTC.

Application details are on the Club website. Spaces for this course are limited, and a deposit is required to confirm your booking. You must also attend a gear evening

prior to the course. Held at Bivouac on a date to be determined this gives you a good chance to sort out your gear needs, especially footwear. Light-weight boots or shoes are a problem when it comes to wearing crampons for example.

The course cost/trainee represents excellent value when compared to identical courses both commercial and through other clubs.

Leader: Mike Peck

Ph: 021369256

Grade: M/F

Email: mikeypeck@yahoo.com

Accommodation/Transport/Food/Gear hire: tba

Trip 3252

Otanewainuku

2 Aug

These tracks are situated in the Otanewainuku Forest – south of Tauranga and Te Puke.

The loop track to the summit starts behind the shelter and is reasonably steep in parts, but the view from the top is worth the climb. Amazing fungi, old Kauri and other trees. Heaps of birds - robin, tui, silver eye, kereru and tomtit. The lookout tower constructed on the summit (640 metres) offers panoramic views from East Cape to Mount Tarawera and Rotorua, and across the Mamaku Plateau to Mount Ruapehu. Then return via loop to the Otanewainuku loop lookout track to carpark. This walk should take us about 1.5hrs return.

Otanewainuku Rimu loop: Walk among large rimu trees in Otanewainuku Forest.

This gently graded walk with some impressively large rimu trees is suitable for walking children - it's not suitable for strollers or wheelchairs. Time 1.5 return

Side trip - Whataroa Falls: For the slightly more agile a well-marked route branches off the Rimu Loop Walk after 15 minutes and undulates through the forest to the Whataroa Falls for a further hour. The waterfall is a popular swimming hole and picnic spot. Explore this lovely stream with cascades and pools before returning the same way to complete the other half of the loop. Time: 2hrs return without the waterfall walk. Total for the day: 4-5 hours

Leader: Cathy Dickson

Ph: 021 353561

Grade: E/M

Email: dicksoncatherine@xtra.co.nz

Transport: Senior member \$25-30

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3253

Pinnacles Hut

8/9Aug

On Saturday morning we will leave from gate one at the Waikato University at 8 am and make our way towards Thames and then up to the Kaueranga Forest Park.

Once there we start the tramp up the newly repaired track up to the hut (which according to DoC times takes approximately 3 hours), so a relatively easy trip.

If you want to bring along children or if you just want an easy weekend walk with some awesome views this could be the one. Once at the hut we can explore around the hut then later in the day walk up to the pinnacles, as, hopefully, it will be a fine clear night, and we can watch the sunset over Tauranga and the Western Bay. For those that are keen you may also rise early and repeat, except to view the sunrise.

The Hut is large and well equipped with a kitchen with gas stoves so no need to bring your own stove, large dining areas even a barbecue. The bunk rooms have enough nooks and crannies so you have some privacy.

On Sunday we can explore what we haven't seen on Saturday for example the old kauri dam then back down the way we came to the van and perhaps check out Thames and another couple of short walks or the beach. So, it's an easy trip where you don't have to take a tent or cooker just take some food, sleeping bag and nibbles.

Please **book a bunk in the hut first** via the DoC website and confirm that you've done so when you book the trip. Backcountry hut pass is valid at this time.

www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/coromandel/places/

Leader: Peter Ayson

Ph: 027 497077

Grade: E/M

Email: peter.ayson@yahoo.com

Transport: Senior Member \$65-75

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Accommodation: Make your hut booking before you book a place in the van.

Adult: \$30, Youth (5-17yrs): \$15, Infants (0-4): free.

Trip 3254

Killarney lakes loop

16 Aug

Starting on the Tuahu track off Wairakau Rd south of Te Aroha, we follow the track up through the pine forest and as it merges with the native forest, we had up a none marked trail that follows a spur all the way up to just south of Te Rereatukahia Hut. After a break there we follow the North South track and head to Motutapere Hut. From here we'll follow another trail that heads down to the Killarney Lakes and back to our departure point. There will be at least 6 hours walking.

Leader: Mike Peck

Ph: 021 369256

Grade: M/F

Email: mikeypeck@yahoo.com

Transport: Senior Member \$ \$30-35

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3255

Ngatuhua Lodge

22/23 Aug

This trip is yet to be confirmed as it is possible the Lodge is undergoing maintenance. Watch this space.

A relaxing weekend at Ngatuhua Lodge with plenty of activities for kids and some good tramps. Ngatuhua Lodge is a well setup educational camp located in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park on the other side of the Kaimais to the south-east of Tauranga. The lodge sleeps 50 and there is a camping area and a BBQ. It has its own hydro power scheme which is worth a look. There is a confidence course, kayaking in a canal, tubing and swimming in the river. And a night-time glow worm walk. Bush walks of varying lengths are planned to Te Rere i Oturu Falls, Ngatuhua Falls and the Opuiaki Ecological area where we might see kokako and kaka. There is also a short nature walk with interpretive panels. Have a look at the website: ngatuhua.org.nz/main-lodge-info/ for more facilities info.

Leader: Club Captain

Ph: 021 369256

Grade: E/M

Email: *mikeypeck@yahoo.com*

Transport: Senior Member \$65-75

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Accommodation: \$35/night

Trip 3256

Tongariro by full moon

29/30 Aug

This trip has been a much sought-after event but has yet to be achieved in its entirety. Weather has invariably been the limiting factor and will be the same for this trip. Previous descriptions have started with an arrival on the Saturday at Mangatepopo Hut and a short snooze, but we may decide to go down on Friday afternoon. As the day comes to an end an evening meal is eaten and tramping gear donned for the walk up to the saddle between Tongariro and Ngaruahoe. Another option would be to sidle up from the Hut to Mt. Tongariro by moonlight and thence down to the Tongariro Crossing track back to the Hut. You would need to have a good head torch (and spare batteries), and warm clothing, along with all the other usual gear. If you're up for this adventure, contact the club captain.

Leader: Club captain

Ph: 021 369256

Grade: M/F

Email: *mikeypeck@yahoo.com*

Transport: tba

Trip 3257

Neavesville

6 Sept

The Neavesville track, located near Tairua in the Coromandel Forest Park, is an historic 4WD and tramping route known for its gold mining history, including the Kirikiri Mine and battery. The trail involves a steady, 2-hour climb up a bush-lined forestry road before transitioning into a rougher, steep track to the old stampers, often taking around 5-6 hours total. Historic: The area features remnants of the old Neavesville town, stamper batteries, and kauri logging sites. The track offers glimpses of the Tairua River estuary and remnants of native forest.

Leader: Judith Bogle

Ph: 027 3810283

Grade: E/M

Email: *judith.bogle@outlook.com*

Transport: Senior Member \$30-35

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3258

Okahukura baiting

11-13 Sept

Come walk with us in the most beautiful native forest of our region and help look after it at the same time (and display the knowledge you will have learnt at the August club night). The Pirongia Restoration Society manages a pest control operation in the Okahukura Valley of North Pureora forest, primarily to protect a growing kokako population – but with great side effects for the other flora and fauna. Kiwi have been snapped on camera in the general area too so a night-time walk around the Waipapa loop track should be on your agenda also.

The Society covers the cost of the accommodation which has 5 bunkrooms, oodles of space for campervans, caravans and tents, a large dining room, well-appointed kitchen, shared shower facilities with hot & cold water, a drying room, and proper toilets. For the lodge you need to bring a sleeping bag & pillow, toilet gear, torch

for that night-time walk, water bottle, all the food you wish to eat but tea, coffee, milk and sugar will be supplied. For the field work you will need a weekend pack, parka, sturdy boots, and optional gardening gloves. A small pair of pliers can be useful when working at the bait stations.

Pack liners, Hi-vis vests, first aid kits, maps, and a PLB/team will also be supplied, along with the bait you will be carrying.

We meet on Friday evening at the Pureora Lions Lodge in time for the safety briefing at 7.45pm when you will be advised which lines you are to visit, and who your teammate will be. Newcomers are matched up with someone who has done this work before so no need to be scared. A bag of bait is placed in each bait station along your designated lines. Most teams get 2 lines to do on Saturday and if you finish these early you may be asked to do more if you think you could manage this. Finish time is set at 3.30-4pm by which time you should either be back at the base (which is 40 minutes' drive away from the accommodation) or at least on the roads leading to the base. The 'carrot' to get you there will be fruit juice, fruit, sweets, and home baking on offer. If you wish to contribute to this feast, please do.

Whatever lines we don't get to on Saturday will be visited on Sunday morning. The more people we have present on Saturday means the less likely we are to need to return to the field on Sunday.

The weekends' activity is weather dependent of course but to date we have not had to cancel or postpone it. Please be good so the weather gods are kind to us too.

The same process will take place over the weekend of October 9-11th but your pack will be much lighter.

Leader: Dianne & Selwyn June

Ph: 0274978151

Grade: E/M - M

Email: djune@xtra.co.nz

Ph: 07 8433066

Transport: Senior member: \$65-75

Senior non-member Senior rate+\$10

Mid-week Walks & Tramps

We have a walk or tramp on the 2nd Tuesday and 4th Wednesday of the month. The activities have proven to be as varied as the group is and the communication is via the Mid-week W & Ts Group page on WhatsApp. If you would like to be part of this communication, please download WhatsApp on your phone and text your request to Marion on 021 442 452.

Editorial

What fun getting the Kindred Soul Mates award has been and the 'investiture' will follow on September 16th after the Sept baiting round in Okahukura. Many thanks to you all for the good wishes sent our way.

Getting out there and enjoying the environment we look after is the best reward for everyone and I see by the trip programme that a couple of trips need leaders. The

one to Ngatuhua Lodge would be a superb one to lead and participate in. Having been there a few times myself, I can assure you that the area is well worth the time spent there. It is not an easily accessible area even though you can drive right to the front door. Many species of birds can be heard, there is a lovely rock scramble to view a waterfall, and the walk up to the Opuaki reserve is an easy walk via the te Rere i Oturu falls. If the kahikatea trees are fruiting you will be in for a marvellous sight of drunken tuis devouring the berries and being hardly able to fly. You should see & hear kokako all around you. Awe-inspiring to say the least.

And I'll bet the midweek walkers are enjoying getting out there on short walks in spite of the winter weather conditions – has winter actually started come to think of it as it has been remarkably warm for this time of year hasn't it?

Did you have your say about the Conservation Bill? Please think about the next 2 bills that are going through parliament about merging the Regional Council strategy with various councils (closes 15th July), and the National Conservation Policy Statement which closes on August 10th. We need to look after our special places

Dianne

Presidential blog

Hello Trampers,

This month's alpine tramp featured one thing above all else: snow. Lots of it. The track disappeared somewhere under 30 centimetres, leaving us to follow footprints that we sincerely hoped belonged to hikers and not confused sheep.

Pete stayed upright for most of the day, which everyone agreed was his finest achievement yet.

Gary offered a shortcut through the snow. Nobody followed him. Character growth.

By lunch, our sandwiches were frozen solid, Maggie's emergency chocolate had become emergency concrete, and Sandra declared the view was "worth it" through chattering teeth.

Victories:

Nobody lost a boot.

Nobody started an avalanche.

Gary wasn't allowed to navigate.

Next month: somewhere with less snow. Or at least visible ground. Ever onward,

Rupert

Waikato Hut

The 2026 winter season is underway at Whakapapa, with operations running from late May through to October and a renewed sense of stability following the transition to new long-term management. Waikato Ski Club members are well positioned to take advantage of on-mountain accommodation, offering convenient ski-in/ski-out access, a relaxed lodge environment, and excellent value for families and groups. Members are encouraged to book early, particularly for school holidays and key event weekends. www.whakapapa.com

A full calendar of activity is planned across the Maunga, including early-season Snowland experiences, mid-winter competitions such as the Rail Jam and regional champs, and spring highlights like the Adaptive Festival and Pond Skim. These events provide good opportunities to plan lodge stays, whether for participation or simply enjoying the atmosphere. Whakapapa continues to offer a well-rounded ski experience, with extensive terrain, strong beginner facilities, and increasing focus on family-friendly and first-time snow experiences. www.lovetaupo.com/en/discover/our-stories/whakapapa-ski-season-a-fresh-chapter-on-mount-ruapehu.

Looking ahead, seasonal forecasts indicate a transition toward El Niño conditions, with a variable start to winter followed by a higher likelihood of colder south-westerly weather patterns through July and August. This suggests improving snow conditions in the core winter period, making mid-season the best opportunity for consistent skiing. Overall, the combination of a full events programme, improving seasonal outlook, and the unique on-mountain lodge experience positions 2026 as an excellent year for members to make the most of the club. Hut bookings can be made using the sirvoy booking system. b9c5011ab7bb99eb.sirvoy.me.

All Club members can use the club code, SBENDS26, which is valid for the Winter 2026. The rest of the year the members code is SUMMER RATES. The access code for the Lodge is CZ2769.

The hut nightly rates are as follows;

Winter rates from 1st July 2026 to 30th October:

Members: Adult \$40 and Child \$25. Non-members Adult \$60 Child \$35

Summer rates valid for the rest of the year

Members: Adult \$30 and Child \$20. Non-members Adult \$35 Child \$25

Trip Reports

Trip 3242 Mangatāwhiri to Whangamarino Track 24 May

It was a clear day but not cold! Stunning weather for a day-walk along the Mangatāwhiri riverbank. All together we were 12 eager walkers including Dianne driving the van to pick us up at the other end.

We started the walk at the Te Araroa trail section, which we accessed on SH2 at the Mangatāwhiri River bridge. A path under the bridge took us onto a stop bank that follows the lower Mangatāwhiri River beside low-lying, polder-drained farmland. We then pass a swamp managed by Fish and Game and an impressive Archimedes screw used for draining the farmland. Unfortunately, Maddie took a photo of the people and totally missed the Archimedes Screw! Nearby is the site of the first battle of the Waikato War where British troops invaded the Waikato by crossing the Mangatāwhiri Stream in 1863. We cross under SH1 and do a short

road walk alongside the Waikato River to the Mercer service centre. We had lunch at the mercer service centre – some us didn't listen to instructions – so, some us was sitting at the café having coffee while the others were sitting outside enjoying the sun and views of the river.

The next section of the Trail started in Skeet Road, Mercer and followed the low ridges overlooking the motorway and Waikato River. Dianne kindly offered to drop us at the next session which was up a hill... but she had a real battle to turn the van around and eventually reversed down the hill with Selwyn's guidance. This part of the trail was shorter with great views of the Waikato River, but a little more challenging for some walkers. The grass was cut but loose strands were covering the paths which made it slippery to walk, especially if you have balancing difficulties. We walked past the site of Te Teoteo's pa and the earthworks of the Whangamarino Redoubt, built in 1863 by General Cameron. We re-joined the bus here. A total of 13.5 km.

It was a great day of relaxed strolling on the riverbank and some excitement going up and down the hillsides. The trail was well signposted and generally easy to walk. Great day to be out and about visiting places we have not seen before! Participants were: Selwyn J (leader), Jeanette B, Kathryn R, Zoe Q, Amanda C, Basim F, Annie X, Peter A, Maddie & John F, Annette W, Dianne J (driver).

Trip 3244

Maungatautari

7 Jun

The Waikato Tramping Club has an unwritten rule that the new guy must write the trip report. I'm not sure if this is official policy – or hidden somewhere in the fine print of the membership form – but here goes.

John McArthur led a group of 18 from the marae, up the northern slope of Maungatautari, before returning via an offtrack rocky outcrop. It was unusually mild day when we set out. Although it clouded over, it stayed dry and pleasantly warm throughout.

It became quickly apparent that this was John's 'patch.' Having worked many years as a volunteer at the sanctuary, he seemed to know every corner of the mountain. He identified birds by their song. He knew where to find tuatara. He checked traps as he walked and entertained us with stories about escaping kakapo. The questions came thick and fast - Would we hear kokako? Would John again try to fool the group by playing bird song on his phone?

Most of the group chose to walk up the tramping track to the summit. The group soon took over the summit clearing, where there were musings about the purpose of the antenna there.

While the route to the outcrop wasn't apparent from the main quad track and some bush bashing was required, the route followed an unused track and there were plenty of orange triangle markers to reassure us that we were heading in the right direction. There was a lively debate over which line to take to the outcrop, but all suggested

routes involved all-fours travel by using whatever means necessary.



The team at the top

Photo by John McArthur

The outcrop was well worth the effort. It had a distinctive reddish-brown colour, a reminder that we were standing on a composite volcano landform. We filled the “lower deck” of the outcrop and enjoyed a view over the northern Waikato. The more adventurous of the group clambered up the rockface to the “upper deck” and probably enjoyed an even better view.

Finding the best way down was more challenging. There was more quadruped action and even backside sliding in places. Leading from the front, John eventually found the old track by slipping and hitting his head on some old directional signage. Apart from a little blood, he was fine and back to telling stories after a brief search to find his hearing aid.

We made our way down the main quad bike track, where we waited until sunset to hear bird song and maybe kiwi. While we waited, there were many tall stories (many involved snoring), and repeated offers of ham sandwiches. Exactly how many ham sandwiches had Alan packed?

Head torches were turned to red mode, most of us (some exceptions!), did our best to listen quietly. We did hear kiwi and kaka (I think) – and the real thing and not just from John’s phone. It certainly sounded real, and it came from deep in the forest, beyond the range of John’s phone or a connected Bluetooth device.

All up, the trip was very enjoyable, and I am looking forward to the next one.

Trip 3246

Raglan Beach Walk

21 Jun

A small group of sturdy souls not daunted by the weather forecast set out from

Raglan township over the footbridge and along the beach. Birds seen feeding at low tide on the shore were Pied Stilts, South Island Pied Oystercatchers, gulls and a White-faced Heron. The weather was changeable and although it was invigorating in the high wind and heavy rain on a wild West Coast beach, we made the call to temporarily abandon our walk for a coffee until the weather improved so we wouldn't be wet and cold for the rest of the day. Walking back into town we discovered everyone else had the same idea as us and the cafes were crowded. We eventually found a bakery with a very cheerful Asian lady serving us and the best hot chips in Raglan. Once the weather improved, we set out on the Ngurunui Beach Loop Walk to enjoy a walk through regenerating bush, over stiles and across farmland where we were accosted by some very curious cows. We also saw three pukeko clambering around high on a pittosporum. Never seen that before. Returning to the carpark we then drove to the Te Toto Gorge lookout on Mt Karioi. We planned to walk the Te Toto Gorge track which none of us had walked before but the track we walked on for some distance was unmarked and more like a sheep track and we were not sure this was the Gorge track so we returned to the lookout to see if we could find another one. Having done some more research it may have been the right track after all but that will have to be for another day.

The Raglan beach and tracks were deserted on the day apart from the odd dog walker and it was definitely worth going on a rainy day to have the place to ourselves.

Thank you Peter A for leading the trip and for the good company of Allan W and his happy-to-brave-the-elements, eleven year old grandson Xavier. Kathryn R (scribe).



The windswept coast of Raglan

Photo by Kathryn Row

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*Never get so busy making a living that you forget to make a life*



## **Trip 3247**

## **Overnight in the Kaimai's**

**27/28 June**

A group of eight club members ventured into the nearby Kaimai Ranges for an overnight trip. The group included a couple of members new for overnight trips for a new experience.

The group were offered a choice of accommodation, to stay in the Te Whare Okioki Hut or, camp. Only three opted to camp. The Hut is fairly modern and sleeps 12 people, has a good wood fire and solar lighting- a luxury for many huts. There is a large semi-enclosed porch area with tables, sink and plugs for charging phones. There was ample grassed area for camping.

The trip started from the carpark at the end of Whakamarama Road with the initial plan to walk to the Hut via Ngamarama Track and North-South Track and, assess the time and conditions before deciding which way we would return on Sunday. Due to several days of rain prior to the trip, the track conditions reflected this – lots of muddy sections.



This is not the muddy part!

Photo by Les Warren

After a short stiff climb soon after starting, one group member called it a day due to a sore hip. Thank you Alicia and Mohamed for accompanying him back to the carpark, where he could camp. Alicia and Mohamed caught up with the rest of the group before our lunch stop at a track junction to some waterfalls (this track is not marked on the TOPO map).

Three members of the group visited the falls while the rest of us sat in the sun and had our lunch. An earlier Club trip to the Falls has a report in the May 26 Club Bulletin. After lunch we continued onto the Hut and arrived at 4.30pm with enough daylight to settle in and put up tents. It was about a 5hrs 30 day but, this included a long lunch break and side-trip to the waterfalls.

After a good night's sleep, we arose to a lovely fine morning. Following a good breakfast, we departed the Hut around 8.20am., and, having read that the DoC time back to the carpark via Leyland O'Brien Tramway track was 5hrs, we decided to return this way and complete a loop.

The track between the Hut and about 1km before the track junction with the Leyland O'Brien Tramway track, was slow going mainly due to tree roots. After the junction, it was much better and one was able to walk more freely. We did have several stream crossings, taking care crossing and choosing suitable places to cross. We left the Hut at 8.20am and arrived at the carpark at 2pm.

With the weather forecast for the weekend a few days out being for some scattered showers, we were in the end blessed with lovely fine weather – no rain. Another wonderful trip in lovely weather and it was not too cold overnight. The group was – Les (Leader & scribe), Alicia C, Jim S, Peter A, David S, Mohamed, Katy F and Desma B.

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### From the committee table:

**New Members:** Welcome to Catherine McDonald, Connie Potts, Andrea Hayes & Catherine Flannery, Tim Hunt, Maree Limpus, Jon Kalaugher, Olga Valdaeva, Qianyu Cao, Flynn Southey, Kellie Burr. May you enjoy many adventures with us.

**Resignations:** Nil

**Membership:** The club has 196 tramping members.

**From the club captain:** If you are **picking up a club PLB** from Bivouac please ensure the staff are aware that you are a club member as they get the device from a different box to those the business hires out to the general public – who have to pay.

**From the committee:** Trailer storage handy to Hamilton has been found. If you would like to use the trailer, please contact Allan Wickens (school caretaker) for details. [AllanWickens@hotmail.com](mailto:AllanWickens@hotmail.com) or phone/text 027 9509546 .

**From the bulletin distributor:** **FMC Concession cards** will be available at club nights, along with the latest issue of Backcountry magazine. Alternatively, if you receive a Bulletin by mail, you should get a card in the next issue; or contact us via [waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com](mailto:waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com) to arrange a pickup.

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### Snippets

➤ **WTC Annual Photo Competition.** Entries for our annual competition are **due on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2026**. Our dates align with the FMC photo competition so that winners from the WTC competition go on to the FMC competition, which is in September. Entries must be supplied before or on the closing date in digital form. The following categories are in alignment with those of FMC:

1. Above bushline with no human element
2. Above bushline with a human element

3. Below bushline with no human element
4. Below bushline with a human element
5. Historic
6. Native flora, fauna and fungi
7. Long exposure

We also have 2 WTC categories which are ineligible for the FMC competition:

8. Club Character - features a humorous subject which has a club context
9. International

Our photos will be judged by Nicola Lye and Annemarie Lamb, and results presented at the September Club Night. Entries are to be emailed to Jacqui Dick: [jacquimd@me.com](mailto:jacquimd@me.com) or given to Jacqui on a USB stick before or on 5<sup>th</sup> August.

**Please don't give them to the judges.**

### **Rules:**

A. The definition of a "human element" is flexible but the general intention is: Where the photo contains anything, other than as a very minor feature: people, a hut, a track sign/marker, bridge, ice axe and anything else that has been introduced by humans into the environment then we would define that as having "a Human element". But if a photo has what could be called a Human Element but that element is very small, inconsequential and not a feature in the photo then you could count it as "No Human Element".

B. The intention of the long exposure category is for photography of scenes that the naked eye cannot normally comprehend. These shots require a very long exposure and the use of a tripod. The category is intended for highly technical images of shots taken at night, (including star trails), or in extremely low light situations such as caves or canyons. The category is not intended for normal dusk/dawn photography, or images where a long exposure is used to 'blur' the image (such as flowing water, or movement of the subject).

C. Entries for the FMC aligned categories, apart from Historic, must be taken after 1 September 2024.

D. Definition of "historic": The intention for the historic category is for entrants to go back through club and individual archives to select "old photos" rather than "photos of old things". As an example, a recent photo of a hut built in the 1950's is not a 'historic' photo. However, a photo of the same hut taken in the 1960's certainly is a 'historic' photo. Photos for the historic category must be taken before 1 January 2024.

E. All photos, apart from the International Category, must be taken within New Zealand, which is defined as within our Exclusive Economic Zone. This includes the following islands: North, South, Stewart, Chatham, Kermadec, Sub-Antarctic.

F. Only **two entries per category** allowed.

G. Photos must be between 1MB and 5MB (if they go into the FMC competition, this is the size they have stipulated).

H. Removal or insertion of features not in the original image is not allowed.



**Note:** Please update your file name to reflect the title or to indicate there is no title, plus the category name e.g. “In the Wild – Above bushline with human element” or “No Title – Long Exposure”.

**It is advisable to title your photos as this adds to the interest of the photo.**

➤ Thanks from the Hamilton Tramping club. About 40 people attended the recent **tramping gear auction** hosted by the Hamilton Tramping Club in aid of the POET (Perry Outdoor Education Trust). There was a large amount of gear on offer as the result of your donations and tidy housekeeping at your place. When the final amount raised is known, the organisers will make it known.

➤ For those people who would like to indulge in a little further discovery Stephen Prendergast's **adventures in Africa** the full trip write up on a day-by-day basis is accessible on the findpenguins travel blog site.

<https://findpenguins.com/10otte7maep02/trip/joburg-to-nairobi>. If you want a video experience then the Wheels to Wander YouTube videos will provide that. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4keFS-rnJiM>

➤ Club member Les Warren has created a **YouTube channel** - Wilderness Hiking. Currently, the best way to view the videos is by the following search: Google search "Wilderness Hiking" and the channel address will show near the top of the page. Click on YouTube site, In the top "search box" type in "Back Valley Hut and Out", then look for this video with a "W in a purple circle, then click on this "W in a circle" which will take you to my Channel and showing five videos. Any nice feedback is welcome. Thanks, Les Warren.

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### *...from DoC.....*

➤ DoC **great walk and campsite bookings** opened on May 12<sup>th</sup>. To give everyone a fair go, opening dates for bookings were staggered across several days, opening at either 9.30am or 12pm on their respective days. DoC's upgraded online booking system, will again include a virtual queue to help manage peak demand and create a smoother experience for users. Waihohonu and Mangatepopo huts in Tongariro National Park can now be booked for winter adventures, with each operating as a serviced hut until the next Great Walk season begins.

➤ DoC will continue with **paid parking** at three sites in the South Island raising much needed revenue to better protect nature. The decision follows a seven-month long paid parking “pilot” which tested the revenue raising scheme at three popular sites – Punakaiki, Franz Josef and Aoraki/Mount Cook. Revenue from the scheme will be re-invested in New Zealand's most urgent biodiversity, cultural heritage and visitor network projects.

➤ DoC is working with the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), the Ministry

of Health and Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora as part of a One Health approach to prepare for the possible arrival of **H5N1** in New Zealand. Vaccination will begin with these five birds – kākāpō, takahē, tchūriwat'/tūturuatu/shore plover, kakī/black stilt and kākārīki karaka/orange-fronted parakeet. Please report groups of three or more sick or dead birds, marine mammals or other wildlife to the MPI exotic pest and disease hotline: 0800 80 99 66.

➤ **No rats!** – best news ever for rare kakakariki karaka. Recent monitoring results showing zero rats in the Hawdon valley in Arthur's Pass National Park is great news for a small kākārīki karaka/orange fronted parakeet population there. "5 years ago, there were zero kākārīki karaka there," says DoC's Kākārīki Karaka Recovery Programme lead, Wayne Beggs. "We have brought this population back from nothing. It's great news for the species and a real success story." The critically endangered manu is New Zealand's smallest and rarest parakeet with around 450-500 left, mainly in predator free sanctuaries like the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary in Nelson, or on islands like Blumine/Ōruawairua in Marlborough and Pukenui/Anchor Island in Fiordland. Twice declared extinct, then rediscovered, there are two wild populations of kākārīki karaka in Canterbury – in the Hawdon valley near Arthur's Pass and South Branch of the Hurunui River valley with current estimates of 50 to 60 birds in each valley. Since an aerial predator control operation in the Hawdon valley last December, the rats have been reduced to undetectable levels. The "nip it in the bud" operation aimed to reduce rat numbers prior to the beech mast or seeding this year avoiding the seed bounty causing rapid population growth. "It's worked and we're stoked. We now have 22 kākārīki karaka nests with no mammalian predation detected. That's a huge win for this valley," Wayne says. (*Ed comment: Former WTC club member Bev McGowan was a leader in pest control in the Hawden valley fore many years until she died in April*).

➤ A new route to Kahurangi National Park's **Asbestos Cottage** opened on June 20th, providing safe access to the popular hut. The new route was put in after sampling found unsafe levels of asbestos in the soil on the previous track and traces of asbestos in the hut. DoC Golden Bay Operations Manager Ross Trotter says the popular hut has been decontaminated, and areas of asbestos contamination around the hut have been remediated, so it's safe for people to visit again. A new route named Asbestos Cottage Track, running from Cobb Ridge to the cottage and on to Lower Junction Track, has also been marked so people have a safe way in that doesn't go past the old asbestos mine. "It starts from a different spot a bit further up, on Cobb Dam Road near the information shelter. The first 2.5 km undulates along the existing Cobb Ridge Route, enjoy views of Cobb Reservoir, until it reaches the intersection for the signage for the new route to Asbestos Cottage. "From this junction, the next 2 km is initially open tussock before descending into

native beech forest that leads you down to another intersection, with one direction leading to Asbestos Cottage and the other towards Lower Junction. "It's an advanced track with some steep and rough sections, suitable for well-equipped trampers and likely to take about 2 hours at an average walking pace.

➤ A new collaborative approach to **managing wild deer in Ruahine Forest Park** aims to reduce pressure on native forests while recognising the important role hunters and local communities play in caring for this special place. The newly finalised Ruahine Adaptive Wild Deer Management Plan (2025–2030) sets out a 5 year, evidence-based programme of work developed with iwi and supported by a locally representative advisory group. Monitoring shows deer numbers are above levels needed for forest recovery in parts of the park. DoC Manawātū Operations Manager Moana Smith-Dunlop says Ruahine Forest Park is highly valued for recreation, livelihoods and wellbeing, but its unique ecosystems are under increasing pressure. "In parts of Ruahine, high deer numbers are putting real pressure on forest regeneration. Monitoring shows we're not seeing those species coming through the understory. Over time, that changes the composition of the forest." Recreational hunting has long been part of the Ruahine, with hunters removing thousands of deer each year. Despite this effort, monitoring shows wild deer numbers remain too high in some areas, particularly where forest values are most at risk. Through a mix of organised management hunts, a commercial harvest trial, and targeted DoC led management, a further 951 deer were removed from the park alongside ongoing recreational hunting," says Mike Perry. DoC led management is focused on the high value north-west part of the park, while recreational and commercial hunting will continue to contribute across the wider landscape.

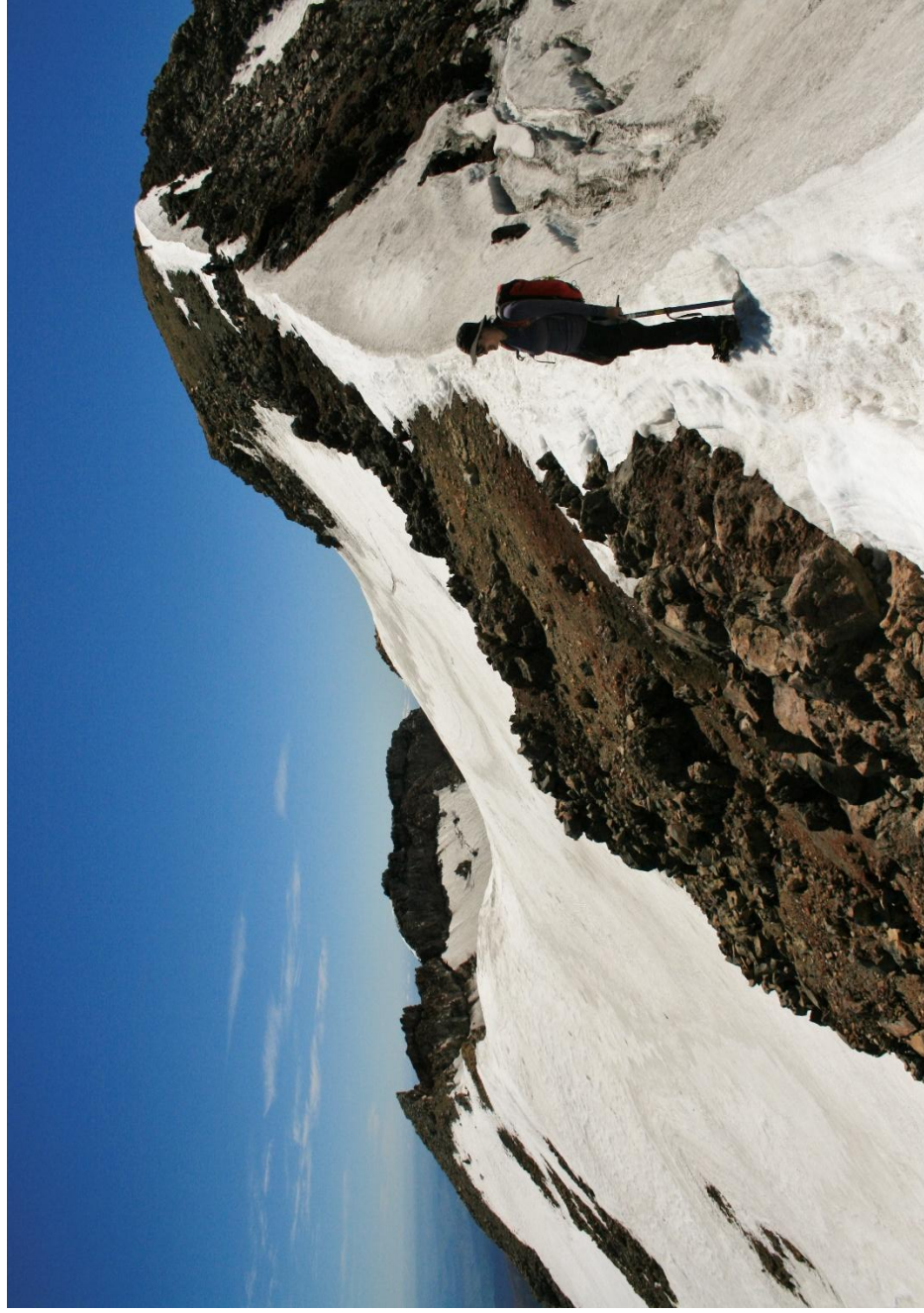
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## *FMC News*



### **Angeline Bivvy**

FMC has submitted on DoC's proposal to remove and gift the Evangeline Bivvy in Lake Sumner (Hora Kura) Forest Park to a third party following a 2023 landslide. While not opposed to a shelter on the Te Ara Pataka Track, FMC is calling on DoC to reinstate local recreation user group meetings to ensure outdoor recreation groups are consulted on decisions like this.



Coming down from Taharangi Photo by Allan Wickens



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