



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 883

March 2026

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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 8th April, 2026

Note: the meeting is being held in the second week of the month

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

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

Brenda Crook will be talking about her recent Hollyford track trip.

Social film evening; This is a great time to enjoy convivial company, a variety of dishes and some relaxing entertainment. Meet at the Haines' place, 11 Alison St Hamilton on Friday March 27th, at 6.30pm. BYO a dish to share, your meat to BBQ and your refreshment. You will be able to cook your meat, eat your first course, watch half the movie, have dessert and coffee/tea at halftime, and watch the rest of the movie. All for the small cost of \$20/person. This sum goes towards covering the costs of the supper, and the balance is put towards fundraising for Waikato Hut. Value for money indeed. Any more questions? Ask Graham or Andrea, **ph** 0274 822830 or **email:** grhaines1946@gmail.com

Trip Planning meeting: Got good idea? Want to go somewhere in particular? Want to take your mates to somewhere special? Come along to St. Peter's Cathedral on Wednesday 22nd April for a trip planning meeting and join in the compilation of the trip programme for the following 6 months. The meeting will start about 7.30pm but check with the club captain too.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2026

	12 & 14 Mar	M	Navigation course	Belinda Cooper
3229	9/10 Mar	M/F	Brewster Glacier	Cancelled
3230	15 Mar	E/M	Mangorewa track	Club captain
3231	20-22 Mar	E/M	Waikato hut walks	Judith Bogle
3232	22-28 Mar	M/F	Gillespies Pass circuit	David Totman
	27 Mar		Film evening	Graham & Andrea Haines
3233	29 Mar	M	Pudding Falls / Salvation Hut	Les Warren
3234	3-6 Apr	M	Tama Lakes circuit	Les Warren
3235	3-6 Apr	M	Whangarei Falls	Allan Wickens
3236	12 Apr	E/M	Otanewainuku photography	Nicola Lye
3237	17-19 Apr	E	Whirinaki loop	Les Warren
	22 Apr		Trip planning	Club captain
3238	25-27 Apr	M	42 Traverse	Maddie Fiddes
	6 May		AGM	Rupert Craggs
3239	3 May	M	Coffee at Crosbies Hut	Mike Peck
3240	9/10 May		Waimana loop	John McArthur
3241	17 May	M	Cossey Massey loop track, Hunuas	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

Navigation course

12 & 14 Mar

The online safety briefing will take place on Thursday 12th March from 7-9pm, and then followed by the practical part on Sat 14th March, 8am -approx. 4pm, in Waiorongomai Valley, Kaimais.

This course is designed to provide participants with some knowledge and skills to be able to navigate using a map and ground features on well-marked tracks as well as in a simple off-track environment. Maps and compasses provided.

Please contact the leader for the online registration form and cost

Leader: Belinda Cooper

Email: waikatoadmin@outdoortraining.nz

Transport: Private vehicles

Trip 3230**Mangorewa Track****15 Mar**

Just 20km north of Rotorua lies one of the Bay of Plenty's quieter gems — the Mangorewa Track. If you like your tramps green, peaceful, and accompanied by the sound of a river beside you all day, this one's for you. The track follows the Mangorewa River upstream through gorgeous podocarp forest. Think towering rimu and tawa, nikau palms and ferns. Tūi provide the soundtrack, kererū swoop about, and fantails may escort us for sections. Underfoot, expect variety. There are well-formed sections, but also roots, uneven patches, and several stream crossings to keep things interesting. Wet feet are likely so bring dry socks and shoes.

The river is the star of the track: clear pools, little waterfalls, and swimming holes (bring a swimsuit if it's a hot day). The track climbs gently as we head deeper into the valley, with steady elevation gain rather than anything brutal. Depending on river levels, we will either complete the loop track by walking down the Mangorewa Stream or we can return the way we came if the river is too high. It's not technically hard, but the terrain may be muddy and slippery. Distance:

Approximately 9 km return, Time: 6 hours (depending on pace and river levels)

Leaders: Lynette Morriss

Ph: 0210734519

Grade: M

Cathy Dickson

Ph: 021353561

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10.

Trip 3231**Waikato Hut****20-22 Mar**

This trip will be day walks from our Base, Waikato Hut and be treated as a social trip. We will choose 2 from the following depending on preferences and weather.

Trips we are looking at include:

- Saddle Cone & Gull Colony via Meads Wall
- Ridge Track/Wairere Stream/Taranaki Falls to Whakapapa Village (loop)
- Lake Surprise (and maybe to Mangaturuturu Hut)
- Whakapapanui & Silica Rapids tracks or a loop out of Mangahuia Campsite.
- Okupata Caves.
- Old Blyth Track.
- Waihohonu Hut and towards Rangipo Hut and return from SH1.
- Horopito track to Mangaturuturu Hut (and possibly onto Iwikau Village).

Transport – We will use private vehicles. What vehicles we take and who travels with whom will be discussed further closer to the trip with those who have registered.

Departure – Plan on driving down on Friday late-afternoon / early-evening.

Catering – Self-catering. Everyone to bring their own food and drink (breakfasts/lunches/dinners/snacks). Bring nibbles to share in the evenings.

Leader: Judith Bogle

Ph: 0273810283

Grade: E to M

Email: *Judith.bogle@outlook.com*

Trip & accommodation costs: tba

sole use. However, the group will be limited to 10 initially and if numbers exceed that, we'll look at getting an additional place to stay. The accommodation is at Regent Residential House (look it up to see what amenities there are), at a cost of \$180 per person for the three nights. The plan is to drive to Whangarei on Good Friday morning, leaving time to do some walking in the afternoon. Over Saturday-Sunday, we'll look at doing walks at Bream Head and Whangarei Heads. We will allow time to head a bit further north to Whananaki (on the east coast about an hour from Whangarei) to explore this area as well. The sea temperature should be good so bring your bathers as there is a nice walk on offer – the 6-hour return Whananaki Coastal Walkway. On Monday morning, we'll head back home, possibly by the Kaipara Coast Highway (there's a 12km circular walk that starts and finishes at historic Mataia Homestead). The programme overall will depend on what the group would like to do. Most walks will be graded easy-medium overall. You'll need to register early to guarantee a spot in this trip.

Leader: Allan Wickens

Ph: 027 9509546

Grade: E/M

Email: allanwickens@hotmail.com

Accommodation: \$180/person for 3 nights

Transport: Senior member \$90-110

Senior non-member: members rate +\$10

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 2.5-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 and don’t have a tripod. I also have some polarisers of different diameters. If you would like to try one, let me know what diameter your lens is and I’ll see if I have one that would fit. Here are a couple of photos from our recent recce (fungi photo taken with phone).

Leader: Nicola Lye

Ph: 027 4213458

Grade: E

Email: nicolahlye@gmail.com

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3237

Mangamate Loop Track, Whirinaki Forest

17- 19 Apr

This track is a 3-day/2-nights trip starting and finishing at the River Road Carpark. The Whirinaki Forest is truly a lovely forest to explore and one is guaranteed to see whio. Nights will be at huts but, a tent would be recommended or, at least a

sleeping mat, as these Huts can be popular.

Day 1 - Early departure from Hamilton (time to be decided) to Carpark. Walk River Road Carpark to Central Whirinaki Hut (25 beds), 5hrs. We pass Vern's Shelter. It is a well graded track to the Hut following the Whirinaki River.

Day 2 - Central Whirinaki Hut to Mangamate Hut (9 beds), 4hrs. The track is still a good tramping track but not as well graded as day one. There will be some river crossing.

Day 3 - Mangamate Hut to River Road Carpark, 4hrs. The first few hours is mainly crossing/walking down the Mangamate River - hopefully the level is nice and low! If the river level is low, this is a nice River to follow (have done it in the past). Apart from day 1 being a long day due to the travelling, the next two days are comfortable days of around 4hrs.

NOTE: This trip will be dependant on any rainy weather prior to the trip as the Mangamate River will be unsuitable to walk and cross thru.

This trip departs Hamilton on Friday 17 April 26, early morning.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 8644937

Grade: M

Email: warrenlb20172025@outlook.com

Transport: tba

Accommodation: Hut Fees tba

Trip 3238

42 Traverse

25-27 Apr

The 42 Traverse is a challenging track best suited to experienced, well-equipped people. It leads through fantastic native forest and the awesome Canyon valley.

There are superb views back to the volcanoes of Tongariro National Park.

The route is an old logging road that gets its name from the original 'State Forest 42'. More details next month.

Leader: Maddie Fiddes

Ph: 021 2273560

Grade: M-M/F

Email: madeleine@actrix.co.nz

Transport: tba

Accommodation: tba -perhaps at Waikato Hut on the night of Friday 24th.

Trip 3239

Coffee at Crosbies Hut

3 May

This a day trip to Crosbies Hut for some coffee tasting. We'll take the Whangaiterenga track which is near the Pinnacles carpark. If we have a willing driver it can be turned into a through trip exiting down the Waiomu track, otherwise it's up and back the same way. There will be 3 different types of coffee making on display using different beans from different brands. Bring something sweet or savory to complement the coffee that can be shared. This a medium trip that may be very muddy in places.

Leader : Mike Peck

Ph: 021 369 256

Grade: M

Email: mikeypeck@yahoo.com

Transport: tba depending on whether we need a van or using private transport

Trip 3241 **Cossey Massey Loop Track, Hunua Ranges.** **17 May**

I have recently walked this track and is a good 3hrs or maybe a bit more with breaks. The start/finish is at the Hunua Falls Carpark and one can go in either direction. Either way, there is some ascending involved on well graded tracks.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 864 4937

Grade: E/M

Email: warrenlb20172025@outlook.com

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Editorial

Don't forget the change of date for the next meeting – a week later than usual.

Many thanks to all those who have made their donation payments to the club for the gear they acquired from the 'sales table' last month. A few more items were added to the table this month and eagerly taken away. See the snippets column for what will happen to the leftover items.

There are however, several copies of the Wilderness magazine and mini-brochures produced by DoC for many walks and places of interest across the country still available. If you're contemplating a trip somewhere, please get in touch and I'll see whether we have the brochure..

On the trip programme I note that, of late, some trips have been cancelled for various reasons and nothing has been substituted. If you have an idea for a destination please let the club captain, webmaster and myself know in plenty of time so we can include it in the programme in a timely manner so that you capture many participants. And don't forget to come along to the trip planning meeting. It is always good to contribute to upcoming plans.

And my humble apology for the accidental repetition of script for the Hope Arm trip report last month.

Presidential blog

Hello fellow trampers

Fresh off our river misadventure (where Maggie sat down *involuntarily* and Tom briefly achieved flight), we decided to go somewhere less wet and more... vertical.

Mount Softstep. A name that lied. We began the ascent full of hope, snacks, and Tom's new "Anti-Eel Altitude Stick," which he claimed would protect us from "mountain eels." We let him have this.

Trip Highlights:

- Tessa's summit playlist, which swung wildly between serene flutes and what sounded like competitive yodelling.
- A kea that stole my hat and, frankly, wore it better.
- A lookout so beautiful we momentarily forgot we were suffering.

Trip Challenges:

- The Switchback Spiral, which convinced us we were climbing in circles. Possibly because we were.
- Maggie and Tom's heated negotiation over the last apricot bar. A treaty was signed. It was broken within minutes.
- Tessa announcing "just around the corner" approximately 14 times. Only accurate once.

At the summit, we celebrated like true champions: Tom planted his Anti-Eel Stick, Maggie lay down and declared herself “at one with the sky,” and Tessa performed a victory twirl that nearly became a victory tumble.

Losses:

- One apricot bar (snack treason)
- My hat (kea coup)
- Our collective dignity (ongoing)

Victories:

- We reached the top
- No one fell off the mountain
- Zero altitude eels detected
- Maggie achieved spiritual union with the sky

Next month: the coast. Because it’s time to let the ocean judge us.

Ever onward,

Rupert

Waikato Hut

The summer rates have started (adult \$25, child \$15) and the lodge bookings are still available to anyone interested. This is a great place to chill out (or not) over a weekend. Why not take a group of family and friends up to our home away from home or take part in the couple of organised trips coming up?

Trip Reports

Trip 3222

Arthur’s Pass

31 Jan-7 Feb

Tramp A : Hawdon Hut to Lake Mavis , 2 nights 3 days.

8 of us from the club had an ambitious tramp planned in the Arthur’s Pass National Park. Flying down on the Saturday morning, a weather forecast predicating heavy rain forced us to split the planned trip into 2 separate tramps. We picked up the rental car and then some gas and drove to the Hawdon Valley Campsite. Departing at 4pm , we walked up the Hawdon River for 3 hours to camp amongst the trees just past Hawdon Hut. (all photos by Mike Peck/Kat Rowe)



Sunday was going to be a big day, heading away at 7:30 we tramped up and over

Walker Pass and followed a creek up towards Tarn Col.

The descent off Tarn Col was steep and we scouted around for the right route and dropped down to Taruahuna Pass. Our original plan was to be back here the following day and head to Otehake Hut after camping at Lake Mavis but the weather meant it was a one way trip only.

We ascended towards the ridge due north/east of Mt Oates. It was cairned in places and was a steady climb with a few scree scrambles.





The final section was the most challenging and I was glad we weren't descending this section the following day as planned. Once on the top, in glorious weather, we headed to the highpoint overlooking Lake Mavis.

Our first glimpse of Lake Mavis was stunning, we lingered for photos and just sat there in awe of the scene.



From the ridgeline it was about a 30min descent down to the Lake and finding the best place to camp we set up tents and relaxed for the evening.

The following morning and true to the weather forecast, it was overcast with a cold wind. We packed up quickly and headed down to Goat Pass Hut and had breakfast.



The walk out to Greyneys Shelter was 4 hours, this being the route of the Coast to Coast adventure race scheduled for a few weeks time. We picked up the cars and headed to Greymouth for 2 nights and the planning of tramp B.

On the tramp were ; Kat, Mike H, Dot L, Anneke, Alicia, Miles, Sarah S, and Mike P – trip leader and scribe.



Plan B: This trip became an event of 2 halves due to inclement weather causing the need for a CHANGE OF PLAN.



After hunkering down at Greymouth where we saw out the miserable rain and winds, the decision was made to cut our losses for the first tramp and focus on a new and exciting 4-day option thus filling the time nicely to the Sunday and our

flight back to Hamilton. Having 2 cars meant that we didn't have to find a loop tramp and could park a car at the spot where we would exit in 4 day's time.

On our first day, after doing the car drop off, the 7 of us had a leisurely start tramping the 4 hours up to Carroll Hut. Alicia initially wasn't going to continue with the trip, but we were pleased to see her have a change of heart and come after



all, driving out from Christchurch to meet up with us again. It was a beautiful day at 1200m ASL and we took the opportunity to go exploring in the afternoon. A tarn seething with tadpoles made an interesting side trip for us as did the great views from Kellys Hill (1408m).

A lively game of 500 made for a memorable night in the hut. Tramping without a game in the evening is just not the same, so we were lucky to have had a full pack of cards at the hut waiting for our use.



The following day we continued along the tops and then the rather steep way down to Dillon Hut on the Taipo River. Both Mikes (Mike P and Mike H) had satellite accessibility on their phones. They tested it thoroughly - weather information access, phone calls and texts were a piece of cake.



It worked a treat and I, for one, will be looking at using this in future tramps especially venturing out alone or in unknown areas.

After a brief pause for a cuppa at the well-appointed Dillon Hut, we pressed on. A cable way traversed the fast flowing and noisy Taipo River and deposited us on the true left bank to continue our way up the riverbank.



Our destination was the Mid Taipo Hut, a small but quaint hut nestled in an open area not far from the river which had been our constant companion all afternoon. It was early evening by the time we had got there. Three tents were erected and the

rest of our group slept in the hut. I snaffled one of the spare bunk mattresses, it fitted snugly into my tent and I had the best nights sleep of our trip thus far. We moved an old table from the foyer to the hut interior and my cards partner, Mike H and I tried to make up for our loss in 500 that we had suffered the night before. We were only partly successful. A brilliant solo performance by Mike H gave us a win but I had to concede that Mike P and his partner Miles were the better players – on this trip.

An early start the next day saw us up and away by 6.40am. We had an interesting day ahead of us. Sarah and I were excited by the opportunity to find and enjoy the hot pool that mooched out from the hillside near Julia Hut. We were there about 10am, dropped our gear, picked up the shovels that were conveniently left at the hut and went searching for it. We came upon the small and rather uninspiring hot pool after a short walk. Everything we had been told about them by a couple of trampers we had met earlier, coming from the other direction, was sadly true. Small, shallow and too hot to sit in even if you could have fitted in it. We found a warm spot on the river bank and had a quick and unsatisfactory dip there - just for the photo.



It started to rain as we were heading up the steep and at times tricky to follow track up to Harman Pass. The weather closed in and visibility dropped. Kat climbed the steep and narrow path like a mountain goat and we tried our best to keep up and not lose sight of her. Unfortunately as we neared the top of the pass, it was very clear that our carefully thought out plan to camp the night at Ariels Tarn, at the top was not going to happen. We made the easy decision to continue down the pass, following the Taipoiti River to Carrington Hut. It was a challenging descent, steep,

rocky and involved several crossings to find a good route over the rocky riverbank.



I was grateful to Miles for being my river assistant and we crossed together with the river deep and fast flowing. We eventually arrived at Carrington Hut. With it being Waitangi Weekend, it was fully booked. We put up our tents over 12 hours after leaving the Mid Taipo Hut.



We were wet and tired but were grateful to at least have somewhere warm and dry to prepare and eat our dinner before heading to our tents for a well-earned nights' sleep. The next day dawned warm with clear skies. We were a day too soon to have The next day dawned warm with clear skies. We were a day too soon to have had a clear night on the Harman Pass and the views that would have accompanied it. So it goes with tramping and the fickleness of the weather goddess. We made our way along

the Waimakariri River valley, a km wide in parts.



It was a long and uninspiring exit for what was a superb and at times challenging tramp. The river, sluggish and shallow, underfoot the trail stony and uneven. We found the car safely parked where it had been left and, on our trip back to Christchurch, enjoyed a pie from the famous Sheffield Pie Shop.

What a privilege it is to tramp with like-minded people, enjoying the beauty of our back country. I will be the first to sign up to another epic adventure - when I get over this one.....

Trampers were: Mike H, Sarah S, Miles R, Mike P, Alicia C, Kat R, Dot L - scribe

Trip 3219

South Coast Loop

29 Jan-1 Feb

For me personally, this trip ended up as one a bit too much for the body. I had dealt with my two previous South Island trips on this 2026 tour alright, as they were 4 or 5 day trips with a lighter pack. Also, another major factor for this trip that had a bearing for me, was the weather – mainly rain and wind.

We kept a regular eye on the weather forecast from 10 days out and several days prior to departure date (29 January 26), the forecast was for some real heavy rain around the 02 February 26. Myself and Dale discussed the situation and decided to change the direction from South Coast track first to, over the Hump Range to Teal Bay Hut, first. This way, we thought we would reach Waitutu Hut when the heavy rain came in and that we would be at a nice Hut if we had to stay put for a day.

So, it was easy enough to make this change however, up until a couple of days of our departure, we had not paid much attention to the wind speed and gusts on the open Tops (naughty). When we did focus on the wind conditions a couple of days out, the forecast showed that the average wind speed would be between 30 and 38kph and, wind gusts between 75 and 91kph! Damn; if we had paid just as much

attention to the wind conditions, we probably would have changed back to our original direction. A good learning curve for the future.

Another subsequent lesson was to remind us to research any water sources available on the track. There was no water source on our way to the open Tops (will explain a bit more, below).

The day prior to our departure, we travelled to Rarakau Lodge for the night and to get an early start the next morning. The Lodge and Carpark is at the start of the Hump Ridge Track and South Coast Track – nice and handy. The carpark is nice and safe to leave your car while on the track. Staff at the Lodge were friendly and helpful. After our final packing I weighed my pack and it weighed around 15kg, with some water. So, not bad for a 7 to 8 day trip, I thought!

The 29 January 2026 duly arrived and we set off at 0730 into the unknown that lay ahead of us. Our first 2hrs had us reach the turn-off to Teal Bay Hut. The track was generally good with a mixture of tramping tracks, 4WD vehicle tracks and some beach walking.

After a short break at the track junction we ascended gradually on a logging road to just past Pt 228, where we started on the proper tramping track. We had a short break here before continuing the more serious ascending. I think it was around 1120 when we got to this point (3hrs 50 from the carpark). Then the “unknown track conditions” hit us. The further we ascended to the open Tops, the track became very slow due to mostly being mud or marshy.



View towards the tops from semi-open area.

Photo by Les Warren

After a long while, we came upon a nice semi-open flat area where one can camp

(near Pt 787). I had read in another club trip report that they camped somewhere just down off the open Tops on their trip – this was probably the spot. At one point on our ascending, a younger solo hiker flew past us on his way to Teal Bay Hut. So, listening to the strong winds in the trees above us, we continued our slow ascent to the open Tops, and continuous mud. Once we reached the semi-open tops (about 3.30pm), the strong winds became more apparent. About where the 800m contour line touches the dotted route on the map, we found a little shelter out of most of the wind and looked around (rather Dale kindly did) for any water – no luck. It was now about 3.30pm at this point (8hrs from the carpark and well into the DoC time of 10hrs to Teal Bay Hut). There obviously was no shelter for tents but we were very low on water. After assessing the situation which was to ascend 160m to the Hump (1067m) and an open tops walk of about 2km until we dropped down into bush again. It was decided that we would walk back down to the campsite we passed on the way up, for the night. myself was mainly concerned in walking along the tops with these strong winds, then so was Dale.



View back towards Te Waewae Bay.

Photo by Les Warren

We headed back down after a short break, but it was still slow going thru the mud and marsh. I think we arrived at the campsite around 4.30/5pm. A long 9hr day. During a cursory look around the campsite, I spotted a large container full of water, most likely rainwater. Wow! how lucky we were to find this as this fixed our water

problems. Yes, we did treat the water with purification tablets (2/L as extra precaution) and boiled for hot drinks etc.

After setting up my tent, I had a hot soup and some snacks – was not feeling that hungry to cook a hot meal. Next, I jumped into my tent and setup my sleep system, had some more snacks and went to bed around 6.30pm, quite buggered.

The wind gradually died down a lot during the night and we woke to a nice day. I did not feel hungry during the night and after my usual breakfast and coffee, we packed up and set off back down to the South Coast Track. Dale and I discussed our options once we got to the Coast, on our way down.

We left camp at 8am and arrived at the South Coast track at 12pm (4 slow hours). Our earlier discussion was to walk to Port Craig School Hut for the night. I would stay here for a night or two.

However, once at the South Coast track, for me, I would be looking at another 3 or 4hrs to Port Craig then, the thought of another 6 to 7hrs back to the carpark a day or two later. I therefore felt more comfortable with only a 2hr walk back to the carpark.

Dale and I discussed this and she was keen to visit the Slaughterburn Hut so, it was decided that she would do this and I head back to Rarakau Lodge. With her being younger and much fitter than myself, this was achievable for her. It was decided that I would come back and pick her up on the 5th February and take her back to Te Anau so she could get the shuttle back to Queenstown.

I spent the night at Rarakau Lodge then travelled to Riverton for 5 nights. I could see that there were things to explore around Riverton such as historical sites and there were several walks I can do.

For Dale, unfortunately she did not make it to Slaughterburn Hut, as the expected rain hit when she reached Waitutu Hut, so stayed here an extra night before returning to the carpark.

In Summary

- Need to not take on any more tough 6-day plus trips and look at less physical 3 to 5 day trips and carry a lighter pack. There are plenty of day, overnight and shorter multi-day trips I can do.
- Need to ensure more research on weather (rain AND wind), track conditions, availability of water is done on future trips.
- I have done a video, albeit short, of the first day, with some added after-trip comments but, need to edit this first before posting on my Youtube channel.
- A future trip in the area may look like – Start/Finish Lake Hauroko Carpark; D1, Jetboat down to Waitutu Lodge and walk to Waitutu Hut (Lodge and Hut are not, close to each other). D2, Waitutu Hut to Slaughterburn Hut (a short 3hr day). D3, Slaughterburn Hut to Lake Poteriteri Hut via ridgeline along the east side of Lake Poteriteri (would be a long day but could avoid camping). D4, Lake Poteriteri Hut to Teal Bay Hut (another long day). D5, Teal Hut out to Lake Hauroko

Carpark. Something to think about.

Les Warren

Trip 3225

Te Tapui Loop at Mangakawa

22 Feb

This was the inaugural trip with the WTC for many of the group, so it was fair to say there was a little bit of trepidation around what lay ahead. We met at the carpark at the start of the track on Piakonui Road at 10am and it was soon obvious that this group was going to spend as much time chatting as tramping 😊



There were 9 of us in total and our intrepid leader (Allan) wasted no time in getting on with introductions and putting everyone at ease.

The track was a loop and toted as a 1 hour up and 2-3 hour back journey, if you took the steeper path to the top, and the less steep path back. Thus, this is how we approached the task. The journey up was “pinchy” in parts, but the bush was lush and wonderful. The track well marked and maintained. The final 10-15min push to the top seemed to lessen the chatting and had everyone concentrating on the task at hand, finally emerging to the tower at the top at an elevation of 495m.

Unfortunately, some of the foliage has grown so tall that views towards the West were somewhat restricted, but the vista to the East across the Kaimai Ranges and Firth of Thames was delightful and we were blessed with a fine day.

After a short bite to eat, a drink and more chatting, we set off on the longer but less steep track down. Again, the track was well marked and although rooty in places quite doable.

We made it back to the carpark in just under 3 hours walking for the 8.5km distance, so the DoC markers were pretty spot on for our walking pace.

It was lovely to meet new people with like-minded interests and I'm sure that most

of us will be looking for that next venture.

From the committee table:

New Member: Welcome to Sarah Smith

Resignations: Theresa O’Leary, Paul Mounsey, Christine Curtis, Merlyn Warren, Wendy Hughes, and Trish Bond.

Membership: The club has 197 tramping members

From the committee:

We may have found a home to park our trailer but we still need somewhere to store our archives. Can anyone help or got a good suggestion? Please contact the editor.

Snippets

➤ **Tramping Gear Auction.** In 2022 the Hamilton Tramping Club held a successful auction of used tramping related gear and made \$1200 for the Perry Outdoor Education Trust - aka POET. POET is about enabling accessible outdoor education programs in Waikato schools. <https://poet.org.nz/> Therefore, the **Hamilton Tramping Club** invites the **Waikato, Wanderers and Breakaway Tramping Clubs and the Monday Bush Trampers** to donate any surplus tramping gear and clothes to our upcoming **Tramping Gear Auction** — and on the day come along, bring any prospective trampers you know and join the fun! *After all, one person’s junk is another person’s treasure!*

📍 **Where:** Purdie Hall, The Link Community Centre, 4 Te Aroha St, Hamilton

🕒 **When:** Saturday 20 June 2026, 10am

👤 **Who:** Trampers and would-be trampers alike

🛒 **What:** Any tramping gear or clothing you no longer need

💚 **Why:** Our first auction was a great success — we raised **\$1,200** for the *Perry Outdoor Education Trust (POET)* and had a fantastic day!

All donated goods will become the property of the auction. Any unsold items will be donated to **POET** or another worthy organisation (such as the **Scouts** or **Guides**).

So please, **hold onto your unwanted tramping gear** until closer to the date — we’ll be in touch with details about drop-off. It’s the perfect chance to clear out your wardrobe, update your gear, and support a great cause!

Lorna Gribble, **Ph:021122 9703**

...from DoC.....

➤ The **first kākāpō breeding season in 4 years** is officially began on December 29th. Since 1995 Ngai Tahu and DoC’s recovery programme have rebuilt the population from just 51 birds (31 males & 20 females) through 12 breeding

seasons, to 252 in 2022. Kakapo are the only lek-breeding parrot in the world – males gather together in a communal area, called a lek, to display to females. The males spend months preparing ‘track & bowl’ systems (networks of paths and depressions that help resonate sound) where they perform booming and changing courtship calls. These nightly displays to attract the females can last for weeks or even months. After mating the female takes on all the parenting duties. There are 3 breeding populations: on Whenua Hou/Codfish Island near Stewart Island, with Pukenui/Anchor Island and Te Kāhaku/Chalky Island in Fiordland. As of early March 2026, over a dozen chicks have hatched, with roughly 200 eggs laid (over 70 fertile) and high hopes for a record-breaking year for the now 237-strong population

➤ A deceased **Māui or Hector’s dolphin** found washed up on a remote Waikato coastline is being necropsied to try and learn more about threats to the species. The 2 sub-species of dolphin look so similar they can't be identified without a genetic test - but based on the location it's likely to be a critically endangered Māui dolphin. At the last survey there were just an estimated 48 - 64 individuals left. The juvenile dolphin, which washed up near Port Waikato, was reported to DoC on the morning of Thursday 26 February, after a member of the public came across it on Wednesday afternoon. With the help of the local landowner, DoC staff collected the dolphin and sent it to Massey University for a necropsy to try and understand what has happened to it. A DNA sample will be sent to the University of Auckland to determine if it was a Māui or Hector's dolphin. Remains will be returned to Ngāa Iwi o Te Puaha o Waikato at a later date. The dolphin was gifted the name Māui Pōtiki from mana whenua, derived from the karakia Pai Mārire. DoC recently started its 5-yearly Māui dolphin population survey. Real time reports of sightings, especially off the west coast of the North Island from Maunganui Bluff to Whanganui, help the field teams understand where dolphins have been seen and improve the survey's results. Sightings can be reported using the SeaSpotter app, through the emergency hotline 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468) or via our online form: Marine mammal sighting form.

➤ Visitors to the southern parts of **Coromandel Forest Park**, and landowners of adjacent properties are being urged to report deer sightings as an eradication operation gets underway. Coromandel has traditionally been deer-free and is not a recreational hunting area. However, aerial surveillance in 2025 revealed a deer herd. Regional director Tinaka Mearns commented that deer damage native forests by feeding on the plants, trees, and seedlings which has a flow-on impact to the resilience of the forest and land stability. The animals are a suspected vector to kauri disease also. People going about usual activities such as farming or pig hunting can shoot any deer they see in the Forest Park or on adjacent land (with

permission), if safe to do so. DoC would welcome information on these types of deer encounters or removal.

➤ A **company providing visitor transport** to and from the Tongariro Alpine Crossing has had its' concession **suspended** for 2 weeks after ignoring a Hazardous weather Warning. In early February the tourism operator transported more than 100 visitors over multiple bus trips to the track despite the warning. This action breached the terms of the concession agreement. Hazardous Weather Advisories are issued by NIWA and can be triggered by high wind speeds, low temperatures, heavy rainfall, and snow. Visitors will assume that if a shuttle operator is willing to drop them off then the conditions are safe to walk in and the operators have a duty of care to the visitors. The suspension lasts from 9-22nd March.

➤ Sections of some **tracks across Pirongia Forest Park** may be closed for several weeks while visitor safety and track repairs are planned. Pirongia was struck by intense rainfall on 13/14th February and several DoC assets on the maunga were flooded or damaged. Only the Tirohanga and Hihikiwi tracks remain to be checked but several tracks were affected by surface flooding, debris, and treefalls to address. It is hoped the tracks will be re-opened by the end of March. The Bell track, Mahaukura track Mangakaraa nature walk and Tahuani tracks were severely impacted with multiple slips, destroyed structures, and some areas where they have been washed away. *(Ed comment: The Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society is planning some pest control restoration efforts to be undertaken once DoC gives permission to access the tracks. If you would like to volunteer for this work please contact the volunteer coordinator Mhirangi Waatiti at: volunteer_coordinator@mtpirongia.org.nz.*

➤ A section of the **Motatapu track** is the historic route between Wanaka and Arrowtown is part of the Te Araroa trail has been damaged by a 400m slip between Highland Creek Hut and Roses Hut, and is at risk of becoming larger during storm events. The slow-moving slip has necessitated a 350m re-routing of the track across 180m of elevation.

➤ **6 jewelled geckos**, classified as 'At risk, declining', have been repatriated to NZ this month in a transnational case involving potential illegal smuggling of a rare and threatened taonga species. These geckos are native to the SE of the South Island and are a striking bright green with diamond-shaped patches or stripes. They grow up to 8cm in length but the tail doubles their length. 14 geckos were discovered by dutch wildlife authorities as part of Operation Thunder in 2023 and were not legally exported. Investigations into the person found with the 2 male & 4 female geckos is continuing. The geckos will be in quarantine for 60 days before being moved to a new permanent home.



➤ An assessment of the **Whangamarino wetland** at Meremere has confirmed decades of ecological decline with recent events making things worse. The wetland spans 7000ha of swamps, fens, and peat bogs and is one of New Zealand's 7 sites recognised globally for its' ecological significance under the international RAMSAR convention on wetlands. Poor water quality led to fish and bird deaths in 2022-23 and were triggered by very low oxygen levels and a botulism outbreak following floods and extensive input of contaminants and organic matter into the wetland. The human-induced fire in October 2024 was another setback. The report identifies a concerning decline in water quality, indigenous wetland habitat, the australasian bittern/Matuku population, and cultural values recognised by mana whenua. The Waikato Regional Council is leading the development of an action plan to respond to the decline and will prioritise actions to improve the health of nearby Lake Waikare which feeds into the wetland, and Whangamarino itself by address the full system, hydrology, land use, water quality, biodiversity cultural values, and community connection.

DoC also has work underway to control pest plant species at the site to reduce the spread of willow, golden dodder (*Cuscuta*), and royal fern. *(Ed comment: The Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society undertakes a fundraising programme to assist DoC staff with the planting in the area and it is hoped to begin the 2026 effort over the weekend of May 9 & 10th. If you would like to join in with this worthwhile activity please contact Dianne & Selwyn June, 027497815 or djune@xtra.co.nz)*

FMC News

➤ **Nominations** are now open for the volunteer FMC Executive for the next two-year term — and we're inviting you to help shape FMC's future. Serving on the Executive is a practical and meaningful way to protect access to our wild places and strengthen the national voice for non-commercial outdoor recreation. It is challenging, collaborative, and genuinely rewarding work. We're particularly keen to hear about people with experience in policy, planning, law, governance, stakeholder engagement, marketing and communications, finance, or administration — as well as those with a strong commitment to recreational advocacy. If someone comes to mind — whether from your club or among our individual supporters — please encourage them to consider standing. The FMC Executive is a working, part-time volunteer committee. It meets four times a year for full-day Saturday meetings, along with additional online or face-to-face meetings as needed. All costs are covered. The work is varied and important - and new members help share the workload while bringing fresh perspective and energy. To learn more about what's involved, please have a look at FAQs for prospective Executive members or contact the Executive Officer at eo@fmc.org.nz.

Nominations open on 1 March 2026 and close on 12 April 2026. Nominations must be submitted using the form on the website and emailed to eo@fmc.org.nz. If nominations exceed available positions, an election will be held and we'll provide details of the voting process.

We look forward to receiving your considered nomination(s).

Ngā mihi nui, Sophie Tucker, Executive Officer Operations. FMC

➤ **Get your own limited edition LOH T-shirt!** These organic cotton T-shirts come in mens' and womens' sizes, and feature this season's unique Love Our Huts logo. **Sales close on 15th March**, so nab a limited edition LOH t-shirt. \$20 from each shirt is kindly donated to FMC! Thanks to WildLab for helping us out and providing the t-shirts at below cost, allowing buyers to further support FMC's work!

➤ It took 4 attempts, but bad weather couldn't stop Robb Kloss from giving some love to a remote hut in the Ruahine Range. "It's a wonderful spot amongst the unique Ruahine country," he said. "The hut itself was pretty grimy. We dug out all the weeds, cleaned all the mattresses and benches, and scrubbed the loo. We also spent half a day dealing with rubbish. This is my second time participating in Love Our Huts. It's a fantastic initiative and allows us to give something back to these wilderness places that give us so much."

Manawatū has reached a major milestone in the national **Love Our Huts campaign**, with 3/4 of its backcountry huts now cleaned by volunteers in the



national **Love Our Huts** campaign. Hundreds of outdoor enthusiasts have travelled to more than 500 remote backcountry huts across the country in an effort to keep Aotearoa's hut network the envy of the world, part of a campaign run by FMC. Palmerston North outdoorsman Kloss spent 2 days cleaning Ruahine Corner Hut after reaching the site on his fourth attempt following severe weather delays.



A picture on Stewart Island, possibly taken by Peter Ayson