



# Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

[www.pntmc.org.nz](http://www.pntmc.org.nz)

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

## Newsletter February 2010

### Club Nights

Club nights are held at 7:45pm on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North. All welcome! Please sign the visitor's book at the door.

#### 11 February

##### Navigation Evening with Warren Wheeler

A fun introduction to the esoteric art of navigation using map and compass, common sense and interactive play. Where am I, what am I doing, why am here? These and other questions will be revealed, and some useful answers as well. Bring your favourite map and compass and a torch if you have them and, if you must, your fancy high tech GPS for us to scoff at as well.

#### 25 February

##### Rock climbing at Mt Arapiles

##### Chris Tuffley

Gum trees and kangaroos, colourful raucous birds, dusty red roads and towering orange cliffs overlooking an expansive plain: Mt Arapiles is another world, and a rock climber's paradise. Come and see pictures from a five day trip there last October.

### Upcoming Trips

#### Trip Grading

Trip grades depend on many factors, especially weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient trumper should expect to do the trips in the following times:

Easy (E):	3-4 hrs
Medium (M):	5-6 hrs
Fit (F):	about 8 hrs
Fitness Essential (FE):	over 8 hrs
Other grades:	Technical skills (T) Instructional (I)

#### Trip participants

Contact the leader at least 3 days in advance. Trips leave from Milverton Park. A charge for transport will be collected on the day.

#### Trip leaders

Please advise a trip coordinator, as soon as possible, if you will be unable to run your trip as scheduled. This is so that alternatives can be arranged, put in the newsletter, or passed on at club night.

#### Overdue Trips

If a club trip is late returning, please do not worry unduly as there is probably a good reason for the delay. If you are in any doubt, please phone one of the Overdue Trip Contacts:

Mick Leyland	358-3183
Terry Crippen	356-3588
Janet Wilson	329-4722

#### 6-7 February

##### Upper Otaki

M/F

##### Tony Gates

357 7439

If a true tramping paradise existed, then it would most likely be in the Upper Otaki. The area is a bit difficult to get to, but has gorgeous beech forest and river flats, and usually, not many people. We hope to go in to Waitewaiwai Hut, then up river to camp. Someone suggested that fresh trout might be on the menu. We may be able to exit out the Waikawa or Ohau, depending on transport arrangements. Depart PN Friday evening.

#### 7 February

##### Iron Gates Gorge

M

##### Warren Wheeler

356 1998

Depart 8.45am. This classic river trip is ideal for a warm sunny day. We take the sidle track past the new Heritage Lodge for an hour or so to reach our brunch spot at the Oroua River by the Tunipo campsite, a great place for a refreshing dip. We then rockhop downriver, criss-crossing the shallow flow numerous times and after a couple of hours reach the gorge. Here we can either pack float and swim through or detour up and around before making our way back to the cars above. A fun day out for family and friends.

#### 13-14 February

##### Mt Holdsworth Champagne Brunch

E/M

##### Warren Wheeler

356 1998

Celebrate Valentine's Day in style on top of Mt Holdsworth in the eastern Tararua Ranges. Enjoy a romantic sunset and overnight stay at palatial Powell Hut (3 hours) or embrace the romance on a medium

day trip on Sunday. Either way, give Warren a call to discuss your preference.

#### 14 February

##### Warati

**John Feeney 354 2940**

This is one of those must do trips for Palmerston North folk! Come and enjoy this interesting tramp close to Palmerston North. Starting at the back of Woodville, we take the track from Coppermine Creek and head up to the Wharite .. and the TV Transmitter. A good walk up a decent hill with a variety of vegetation and some well earned views around the Manawatu on a clear day.

#### 20-21 February

##### Howletts-Longview

**M**

**Grant Christian 354 5843**

Meet at Milverton Park at 10 am and travel to near Kashmir road-end. We will climb up the side of a spur and then down the spur to the north branch of the Tukituki river. We then travel a short distance up the river to Daphne Hut. From the hut there is a steep climb up Daphne Spur to Daphne Ridge and from the bush line it is a short distance along the ridge to Howletts Hut. Great views from the hut if the weather is right. On the second day we head along the tops, to Otumore (1519 m). From there we drop down through Pohangina saddle and visit Longview Hut for lunch before continuing on down the spur to the car park.

#### 21 February

##### Mania- Rangi Circuit

**M/F**

**Dave Grant 357 8269**

The Mania track heads into the Ruahines between Rangiwahia and Pourangaki. You climb up through some impressive beech forest to look down a massive slip into the Pari stream before carrying on to the top of the Whanahuia Range. Turning southwards will lead along the tussock tops down to Mangahuia, Rangiwahia and thence down to Renfrew road end. A reasonable distance to cover (about 14 km) and some transport connections to organise (like getting my wife to agree to come and pick us up from Renfrew road end) but well worth the effort. We will leave from Milverton Park at 7.00am.

#### 27-28 February

##### Cattle Ridge

**M/F**

**Peter Wiles 358 6894**

Contact Peter for details of this classic trip.

#### 27 February (Saturday)

##### Rock Climbing TNP

**M/T**

**Terry Crippen 356 3588**

**027 643 3637**

A chance to do some warm summer rock climbing in TNP, either at Mangatepopo or somewhere on Ruapehu. Note that this isn't an instruction day, but most of us will be learners. Then if you want you can

stay overnight and go on the Whakapapaiti tramp on the Sunday. Contact Terry for departure time.

#### 28 February

##### Whakapapaiti Hut

**E/M**

**Trevor King 356 4557**

Contact Trevor for details of this trip.

#### 6-7 March

##### Waihona Gorge

**F,T**

**Tony Gates 357 7439**

This is a true Tararua Classic, traversing a great Tararua gorge on inner tubes, and seeing some fantastic country. Definitely fitness essential, with a touch of craziness needed. Nick over Mt Holdsworth late Friday or very early Saturday, squeeze into wet suits, all gear in dry bags, pump the tubes, and then a combination of floating and tramping downriver to Hector Forks. We will probably make it to Totara Flats by mid morning Sunday, then continue on down to the Waihona Gorge road end. Come prepared! Contact Tony for full details.

#### 7 March

##### Blue Range Hut

**E/M**

**Woody Lee 357 2390**

We drive to the Kiriwhakapapa Road between Mt Bruce and Masterton and walk toward the Blue Range Hut in the eastern Tararua Forest Park. Despite the fairly steep hill at the beginning of the track, this is a delightful trip. Expect to have lunch at the hut before returning the same way. Depart 8am from Milverton Park.

#### March 21 Keretaki Hut combo with MTSC E/M

**Terry Crippen 3563-588, 027 643 3637**

Close to P North in the SE Ruahines, this is a nice hut to visit giving good views. We will do a bit of a loop, wandering up the Oruakeretaki Stream, before scrambling up the spur. A chance to meet some of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing club. Contact Terry for departure time.

#### Pre Easter trip - Advance notice

**27 March - 1 April (approx dates)**

**Mt Kendall, Kahurangi National Park M/F**

**Terry Crippen 356 3588**

**027 643 3637**

Mt Kendall (1762m) is a prominent infrequently climbed peak above the Karamea river. We plan to chopper into Karamea bend, head up valley to near Trevor Carter Hut, climb Kendall, then exit via the Wangapeka in time for people to go on their Easter trips. Contact Terry well in advance for details.

#### Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month to Anne Lawrence, the newsletter editor, via the club website

: <http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>

## Notices

### A note from FMC

The Ohakune Mountain Road will be closed to all vehicles and trampers on foot from 18/1/2010 to 28/2/2010. The closure will be at the bridge at the 9km point and is so that this bridge can be replaced. The Round the Mountain Track can still be used provided you enter/exit at other points. Contact DoC Ohakune 063850010 or the Ohakune Info Centre 06 385 8427 for more details.

### PNTMC Annual Awards

The EOY BBQ at Ashhurst Domain once again provided the occasion for Vice-President Warren Wheeler to present the Annual Awards.

**Mama Mia Award** – Mick Leyland for mistaking his mother's ashes for a courier pack of FMC journals.

**Smokefree BBQ Award** – Warren Wheeler for omitting to ensure at least one BBQ at the Horseshoe Bend New Year BBQ.

**Couch Potato Award** – Peter Wiles for the comfy use of mattresses at Rangi Hut during the Lost Shoes in Snow Incident.

**Sticky Moment Award** – Peter Darragh for drilling his walking pole to stop it collapsing but not from pulling apart.

**Breeze Up Award** – Richard Lockett for no shorts over his long johns.

**Just Gremlin Award** – Anne Lawrence for “just” tossing her ice axe across a deep-cut icy stream and having it bounce in.

**Bees Knees Award** – Michael Allerby for overtraining for the Te Atuaoparapara trip.

**Tin-o-Cocoa Award** – Dave Grant for not realising he had missed his turnoff until reaching Tikokino.

**Many Happy Returns Award** – Woody Lee for twice missing out on the through trip to Makahika to move the car around for the others.

**Left Right Out Award** – Anne Lawrence for bringing two left running shoes for Queens Birthday Trip.

**Not Little Lucifer Award** – Peter Wiles for fuelling his cooker with turps instead of white spirits.

**Dave Hodges Award for Excellence in Pursuit of Forgetfulness** – and the Nominations are: Woody Lee for the missing gas canister, Anne Lawrence for leaving the food bag behind in the car at the ferry terminal, Martin Lawrence for forgettable moments on Tongariro - leaving his pack behind after fitting his crampons, leaving his camera with neck strap at the hut, leaving ice axe “lost” in the boot of the car. And the Winner of our most prestigious award for 2009 is....Martin Lawrence!!!

**Tararua Trophy Award for Best Newsletter Article** – Logan Westwood for his Snowcraft3 and McKinnon Hut Trip Reports.

Congratulations to all recipients.

## Trip Reports

### Beehive Creek

29 November

Report: Doug Strachan

What does a watch mean to you? Is it an accessory, a status symbol or what? Do you have an ecologically friendly solar watch, an unpretentious watch, a glamorous watch? This was one topic of conversation as we wandered along the road and then up the farm track. Your attitude to your chronometer reflects your attitude to your partner. I can't imagine life without my watch. Maho has one reliable timepiece. Minami and Conan don't have watches yet, which is just as well as they'd probably go for something Mickey Mouse or Goofy. Warren sees a watch as “the tyranny of time.” He doesn't like to be controlled. Catherine keeps hers sequestered in her backpack, and it was telling that her husband stayed at home. We started to psychoanalyse people who use the sun to tell the time, or wear G-Shock watches. Then there was the story of the guy who slept with his watch near his testicles, and we speculated that if he wore an old watch with iridescent radium on the dial, he might have sterilized himself. Lazy trips without boulders and tree roots to contend with allow one to explore conversation topics to their full extent. The Beehive Creek walkway is such a walk, and it's impossible to get lost, so you can let your mind and mouth wander.

Green, yellow-tipped, ‘crayons’ mark the route. Conan named the poles with conical tops “crayons,” while those with roof-shaped tops were “crayon houses.”



Along the route we spotted a hare, many sheep, two black goats, and Minami sat on a log that “looked like a dinosaur but wasn't. It was sticks.” She collected sheep wool and poplar seeds. Why? Because they were fluffy. She also collected red iron-bearing rocks and some coal-like material. Why? For her elements collection. She is going through a stage of asking “Why?” about everything. Why? Because Y is a crooked letter and W isn't much better.

The entire walk can be done in, according to my trusty reserved-for-tramping watch (Hmmm), 4hrs and 10mins (at a dawdle) and two Buzz Bars each.

After the walk, we had lunch at the picnic area across from the car park, where Warren related the story of the packet of BBQ Shapes he discovered in a drawer and shared at a recent gathering. Comments about the taste prompted a look at the best-before date: 1997 (Awards Committee take note!).

Sunday's summery, perfect weather will be long remembered, particularly as it was sandwiched between two dull, rainy days.

Ice creams in Ashhurst. The kids, sound asleep, missed out again.

OK, go ask your loved ones what a watch means to them, but don't wind them up too far.

*We were: Katherine Farquhar, Warren Wheeler, Maho & Doug & Minami (4yrs) & Conan (2yrs) Strachan*

## Herepai – the Hut and the Peak

**6 December**

**Report: Nicola Wallace**

**Photo: Daniel Peterson**

This trip was originally titled "Herepai or Mitre Flats Hut" but as the eight of us passed through Eketahuna, Warren decided Herepai it was to be. It was a tough call, with low cloud obscuring the local tops, and the odd spot of rain.

We were quite a multinational bunch, with three from America, one from Scotland, another from China, another from Korea, and two from NZ.

It was heavily overcast and chilly at the Putara Road end. Before the first swingbridge, we were met with a wide, boggy area. Going round the outside proved to be a bad idea on my part. As Warren pointed out, it's best to stay on the track and take advantage of any bedrock beneath.

Travis bypassed the first swingbridge in favour of wading through the river to wash his muddied boots, and Daisy was a little hesitant at what was probably her first swingbridge crossing ever. Soon we were all across, and on our way.

Isobel and I were very keen to stretch out short legs fully, and we gradually pulled ahead, along the flat-to-undulating track to the second swingbridge. A brief stop was made here, as we came across two MTSCers with a group of Duke of Edinburgh students who'd stayed Saturday night in Herepai hut. Then up the steep slog to the Roaring Stag – Herepai

track intersection. Conditions were very pleasant, warm but not hot, overcast, but with a little sun breaking through occasionally.

At the intersection sign post (newly pinked with fluoro spraypaint, indicating stoat trapping perhaps?) we were met by a cheery Wellington trio who'd overnighted at Roaring Stag Lodge, so it was photos all round. As our club fellows hadn't yet arrived, Isobel and I elected to carry on to the hut and get a head start on lunch. While we were laying a stick arrow on the ground, a friendly unaccompanied dog stuck his nose into affairs, and followed us a short way down the Herepai track.



After stopping to admire the fantastic view of Ruapae Stream, Isobel and I arrived at Herepai Hut at 11.40am, with the others arriving soon after. We lunched on the front verandah, where the sun shone occasionally, and the wind blew in strong, unpredictable gusts. Looking up at the hill above the hut, the leatherwood appeared to be very white, in contrast to the other greenery. Warren said it was the white backs of the new, still curled up leaves. I got to see this for myself when after lunch, we headed up the steep climb to the tussocky tops.

Originally the plan was to just go up top, but the cloud was still way above us so we kept going and going.....then Herepai Peak looked close, and strong though the gusts were, none of us had been blown off yet. So we kept going and soon stood atop Herepai, at 1125m above sea level. There was a rusting memorial cross to a Stan Evans on the peak. We spent about ten minutes up here. It was chilly, windy, and the occasional bit of cloud drifted through, but there were good views in all directions. Warren ordered us to have a celebratory drink. After a short lie down in the tussock (which was very comfortable and gave good wind shelter), it was time to head down.

After a steep and cautious descent, we arrived back at the hut for a short break, and were soon on our way out. By now it was raining a little. We chose to bypass the Bottles track, and return on the main track, the way we'd come in. The long downhill from the track intersection was a killer on everyone's legs, and we were all relieved to reach the swingbridge, and

rest the legs once over it. Here Warren administered jellybeans to all.

A brisk forty minute walk, then back through the bog (which was even boggier by now, as it was still raining), and we arrived back at the van at about 4.30pm. And, finally, a café stop in Eketahuna, where thankfully they had comfy chairs to ease stiff and weary bodies ended a wonderful visit to this part of the Wairarapa.

Many thanks to Woody for driving, and getting his van dirty for us, and to Warren for his very congenial leadership, and for getting the best out of us on a challenging but very enjoyable tramp.

*We were: Warren Wheeler, Daniel Petersen (from Maryland, USA), Daisy Bai (ex China), Travis and Teniah Howell (from Alaska, USA), Woody Lee, Isobel Holdaway, and Nicola Wallace.*

## **Mitre Peak,**

**December 4- 5- 6.**

**Report and photos: Tony Gates**

Long summer days can give you more tramping options. Terrible weather before and during our trip limited our plans somewhat, with rivers running a wee bit high, and typical Tararua mist and wind on the tops. At least we had huts, tracks, and bridges to allow the three of us to complete plans of a good Tararua tramp.

The friday evening tramp passed in a sweaty haze. Robert experienced his first Tararua tramp as we rushed into Mitre Flats hut in two and a half hours. We chased the daylight -as well as a few piggies on the track. A cosy hut.



A very windy day on Mitre Peak

Our big day on Saturday began in a relaxed manner, as we waited for the weather to clear. It certainly started well, and as forecast, was pretty sunnie for a while. We plodded and sweated up the track to Mitre Peak, eventually entering clag and rain on Peggies

Peak. It wasn't too bad past Mitre Peak when the rain and mist eased as we splashed on. There is some great country up there in the high central Tararua, with vast easy tussock basins dotted with a few rocky crags, and often dropping away steeply into leatherwood and beech forest. Our trail was relatively easy and well worn over Girdlestone, but needed a few compass checks where the ridge kinked. The steep and somewhat craggy descent past the Dorset Ridge turnoff put us at our destination, Tarn Ridge Hut, by mid afternoon. We didn't really feel like continuing after a good six hour tramp. The mist cleared just before dark, revealing lovely scenes along Dorset, Carkeek, Tarn, Bannister, and Table Ridges.



Tarn Ridge Hut

Sunday morning displayed more of the real Tararuas, with thick mist hiding those lovely views. Waiting for a clearance could have taken several days, so we plodded back the way we had come, along the known and well worn route. Indistinct trails such as those over the Kings would have been difficult and time consuming, and in places more exposed. We did suffer high winds, particularly on the summit of Mitre, but were by then in the clear, marvelling at the dark clouds rolling over the Kings. The long descent went surprisingly easily, so soon we were laying out our damp jackets on the Mitre Flats Hut porch. After a good break, we continued on out, this time enjoying a few views up onto the Baldy- Jumbo area, and down to the Waingawa river. Remarkably, Grant found his compass hanging on a trackside branch. It had fallen from his pocket Friday evening while he performed a rather gymnastic manoeuvre over a fallen log. From the car, we could see more dark clouds over the high Tararua peaks.

*We were Robert Sauer, Grant Christian, and Tony Gates.*

## Blyth Hut Report

28 November

**Report:** Fiona Donald

**Photos:** Daniel Peterson

On 28 November the Tongariro Crossing trip was cancelled, due to poor weather, and the trip was converted to Blyth Hut. During the previous week, there had been strong interest in the Tongariro trip and it was pleasing to see 11 people were interested; however some had to drop out and finally, at the end of the week, it was only John who still wanted to go on a tramp. Daniel was also interested in going and we three set off on a cool Saturday morning from Palmerston North. As we neared Ohakune, most of Mt Ruapehu was clagged in cloud.

We stopped for photographs and food at Ohakune then John drove up to the upper car-park, along Mountain Road. It was still fine-patches of blue sky, a cool wind and the car's temperature thingee was 12 degrees.



At first, the track was comfortable underfoot; shortly after starting to walk we stepped on a classic Department of Conservation (DOC) wooden bridge. Daniel remarked on how clear the water is here (unlike American rivers) and then we continued on our way up (almost a highway) to the waterfall. We met several people along the way and some of them had large parks.

Almost immediately after the waterfall, there was a drastic change in track conditions which made us wonder whether we were on the correct route. Suddenly, we had to cross the boulder filled stream and pick a path – looking for the orange discs tacked on the trees; we crossed the stream a couple of times and thankfully, none of us got wet feet.

DOC has made a good job of putting in two board walks; one board walk isn't sheltered but when we crossed it, the first time, it was relatively calm as we walked towards Blyth Hut. There are areas along this track where you can get majestic views and large boulders – Daniel was happy to get a few photos of these features. After a number of steps up and down then climbing up a sturdy set of stairs – we emerged to find a very well appointed 18 bed hut.



Here was where I discovered I had forgotten my water bottle – I am usually very well organised to not let this happen - but fortunately Daniel had a spare drink. From the sheltered verandah, we ate lunch and watched the wind blow the misty rain across the valley; now, the afternoon was very cold. The wind was very chilly and while we walked back, there was no chance for conversation, until we were back in the trees.

In contrast to the morning's walk along the unsheltered part of the board-walk – we were now in danger of being blown off. Also the wind whipped the rain into our faces until our skin stung – a very unpleasant experience. It didn't take long then we were back at the car and the rain poured down. The thought of a hot drink was very appealing to me but when we got to Ohakune, the sun was shining and it was a balmy 15 degrees. We didn't stay in Ohakune because John needed to get back to P.N.

We stopped at Utiku at the Wool Company store so that Daniel could see what possum fur and merino wool fabric looked like then the rain started at Hunterville and it continued to rain all the way back to Palmerston North.

We had an enjoyable time. It was Daniel's first experience of walking in the New Zealand bush.

*We were John Feeney, Daniel Peterson and Fiona Donald.*

## Rangi

12-13 December

**Report and photo:** Tina Bishop

A heavy rain warning had me wondering if the trip should go ahead especially since none of us had been to this hut before – but we went anyway. The rain warning was correct but we managed to get kitted up and be on our way up the track before raincoats were needed. It wasn't until we had travelled the slip detour that we realised it was the detour! By this time it was very, very wet with Nicola powering away at the front and three of us puffing a bit behind while

Holly, in her excitement ran the track twice over (oh to have four legs). We arrived at the empty hut in two hours, all very drenched and ready for lunch and a quiet afternoon.



Two very wet, cold and tired hunters arrived from triangle hut with all their gear saturated due to no pack liners, mmm??? They ate, warmed up then decided to carry on home. A party of seven arrived doing the Duke of Edinburgh – one of them being Nicolas work mate.

We had a cosy night by the heater, except for Holly who of course slept out on the veranda in the cold wind and rain as we all know dogs are not allowed in the huts – Jennifer must have imagined the nice fluffy hot water bottle she felt in the night. Weather permitting we planned to return via Deadmans track but we woke to heavy cloud so stuck to the Rangī track.

On the way down we managed to see all the stunning sights that we had missed the day before. Back at the car park by 10.45am it was an early home by lunch time.

*An all girl tramp we were Tina and Holly Bishop, Jennifer Kitchen, Liping Ding and Nicola Wallace.*

## **Mikimiki**

**January 10**

**Report (in free verse) by Fiona Donald**

We, three, left Palmerston North on a grey, grey day  
and as we drove over Mount Bruce  
There was the blue, blue sky of the Wairarapa.

It was windy in the car-park but we weren't put off  
and we walked along leaf filled trails with our  
footsteps softly scuffing through the leaves.

Around bends, over roots, along moss covered trees,  
across streams,  
winding up a ridge – we climbed and missed the  
summit...it was only

When we were part-way down the other side that I  
noticed we have gone past the usual spot to sit down,  
relax and converse.

Lunch was not at the usual place, in the old nursery of  
trees – it looked spooky

So we searched for another place– out of the wind.

It was a gusty wind and finally we sat, beside the  
track, nearest to the last bridge  
for a bite to eat

The wind was chilly and it was a very short break  
(sorry Li Ping for rushing you)

We slowly walked back looking for wood pigeons  
and other wild-life  
and enjoying the varying shades of the green, green  
bush.

The drive home over the Pahiatua Track had added  
interest:

Lots of gusty cross-winds along the straights  
And the occasional police vehicle lying in wait for a  
speeding driver

We, three, arrived back in Palmerston North to a grey,  
grey day.

*We were Andrew Ashby, Li Ping Ding and Fiona Donald.*

## **Rimutaka incline pedal and plod**

**13 January**

**Report and Photos: Richard Lockett**

A good muster of two walkers and eight bikers assembled to travel on the old railway formation over the Rimutaka Range between Cross Creek and Kaitoke. On arrival at the car park on Cross Creek road our suspicions were confirmed as to the wind, strong and gusty but it always is over the incline.

The walkers, Isobel Holdaway and Warren Wheeler, set off as the biking group, comprising Anne and Martin Lawrence, Cathy Corner, Sally Hewson, Murray Gifford, Woody Lee, David Scammell and Richard Lockett, reassembled wheels to their bikes etc before they too headed off along the two kms of single track to the old Cross Creek railway yards and the start of the 1 in 14 grade to summit 8 kms along the rail formation. As height was gained so was wind speed and with eddies coming off the ridges wind direction was changeable which made for some interesting moments just before dropping down to cross the stream at the Siberia Curve, struggling with a head wind before being lifted from behind and blown about 5 metres up hill and then back to a head wind.

A total of four tunnels are encountered across this old formation with the longest being the Summit tunnel - 500 metres long and so dark you can't see your hands on the handle bars. I like to cycle through without a

torch as it's quite an odd experience trying to balance without a visual reference - which is all good until you discover other cyclists coming in the opposite direction also with no torch. Fortunately, no collisions took place. Morning tea in the shelter at Summit before the downhill head wind ride to the Kaitoke road end, a brief stop and the uphill tail wind ride back to summit with lunch consumed at a sheltered spot before reaching the top.



This was Woody's first off-road cycling trip and he thought it was pretty good especially the downhill stuff, tried to follow me down the steep drop in the Siberia stream, fell off, no damage. Took off like the wind on the final 1 in 14 descent back to Cross Creek with me in hot pursuit with first aid kit for when he fell off; I didn't catch him and he didn't fall off. The only incident was David puncturing a tube on the downhill into Cross Creek.

A re-group and look around the old locomotive depot at the Creek before the final two km's of undulating rocky single track back to the car park - ideal mountain bike terrain.

Isobel and Warren were waiting at the cars having braved the wind up to Summit and back and, with some showers of rain arriving, it was off to Featherston for coffee and cake.

Thanks all for a good day out.

## **Blackwater Stream**

**17 January**

**Report: Warren Wheeler**

This Fit trip took the two of us 9 hours - a good day out in lovely weather with only a few spots of drizzle rolling in from the east. From Poads Rd carpark to Waiopahu Hut took 3 and half hours (signposted as 5 hours from the bush edge).

The track was a bit boggy in places from recent wet weather but generally easy, if not for the steady (never-ending!) uphill that tested fitness levels after

the Christmas-New Year break. Nevertheless we enjoyed being in the bushy shade, with occasional expansive views to Lake Horowhenua and the tip of Egmont. Closer to hand we spotted a long-tailed cuckoo and a bellbird at the hut. As we gained altitude the tawa and kamahi forest, with some large rimu trees and climbing rata gave way as usual to some beech then leatherwood just before the large hut.

After lunch on the verandah we backtracked a few hundred metres to a likely sidetrack through the leatherwood, which lead to a reasonably easy grovel into the open beech forest and a gully leading nicely down to the Blackwater Stream thanks to deer and possum tracks to guide us - 50 minutes.

The stream was pretty easy open going - a rock-hop mostly with the occasional easier terrace and deer tracks here and there. Towards the bottom end there are some nice gorge sections with small waterfalls from unmarked streams making for picturesque travel and eventually wet socks (but dry knees) - 3 hours to the Ohau River (including stops for strawberries and cucumber sandwiches).

An old dazzle mark directed us to the short track leading up from the confluence to the old site of the Ohau Biv-Hut and the main track back to the road end, over the swing bridge above Blackwater Stream (high enough amongst the trees that we had missed passing under it). It took us another hour to reach the car, leaving the option of going down the Ohau River for another time. This was an enjoyable trip into an area we seldom visit, thanks to the company of Arved Schwemer who assures me his expectations were exceeded for the trip itself, but were below expectations in terms of the number of party members (!).

## **Manawatu Gorge Walk**

**17 January**

**Report dictated by Minami Strachan (4 years old)**

There were many cobwebs in a spooky hole in a tree. I looked inside there and it was too yukky. I liked swinging on the vine hanging down, but I didn't like the spooky hole.

We found a crocodile [shaped] tree and many signs - tree signs.

It was a little bit rainy and a little bit sunny.

We sat on a bench and we ate chippies and biscuits and lollies. We could see windmills.

There was a curvy [loop] track. We went on one side and they comed on the other side. There were bridges

and steps. They went up and down and up and down. There was a house [shelter] at the end of the track.

*We were: Duncan & Sandra Hedderley, Maho & Doug & Minami (4yrs) & Conan (2yrs) Strachan, Heidi the dog.*

*Note: The kids walked all the way, completing the trip in 5½ hrs.*

## Franz- Fox

17 January, 2000

Terry Crippen

What you do when stuck in high alpine huts due to severe storms? You get creative – here is the evidence!



### "SUMMER CLIMB"

(To the tune of Summer Wine).

Based on "Winter Climb" from Terry's A.U.T.C. days.

When you were young and bold and so much in your prime,

You had a strong desire to do a summer climb.  
Saved all your money till the rents were in arrears,  
Went down to A.G.L. to buy you all the gears.

Oh Oh Summer Climb

Chouard axe, some snargs, a 50 metre rope,  
A Stubi hammer for to bomb the steepest slope.  
A light weight parker and a pair of shinny boots,  
Are just the gears for climbing warm summer routes.

Oh Oh Summer Climb

Flew into Pioneer west of the main divide  
And there you festered 30 days and 30 nights  
The hut was full, with people sleeping on the floor,  
The wind and snow kept on knocking at the door.

Oh Oh Summer Climb

Over here Centennial had plenty room to spare,  
And of course our food was better fare.  
We'd done some climbs in weather really not so bad,  
While over there, Pioneer People were going mad.

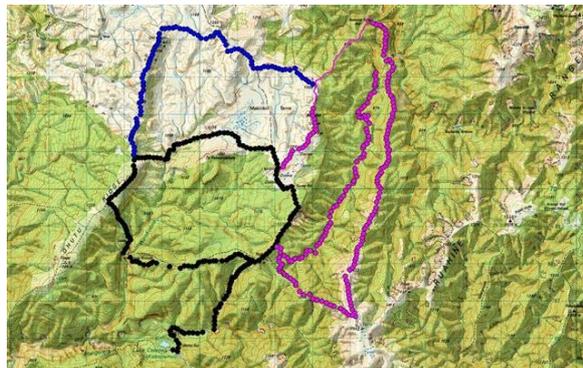
Oh Oh Summer Climb

Composed in desperation of 5 days of being hut-bound in Centennial Hut. Sung over the hut radio at midnight to fellow climbers in Pioneer Hut, also hut bound in the same storm, - some of whom got no climbs done due to the weather and were going a bit bonkers, in a very over crowded Pioneer hut. At least we had plenty of room in Centennial hut to move about and exercise to keep warm!

## Of Interest

### DOC stoat programme

The latest extension to the stoatlines - along Ohutu Ridge to the north of Ruahine Corner Hut in the tussock - was set up in March and has been operating properly since June (see map). This trap line is entirely on Aorangi Awarua Trust land and they have been enjoying checking it every month. Back in August they had a rare find in a trap - a stoat in its white winter coat!

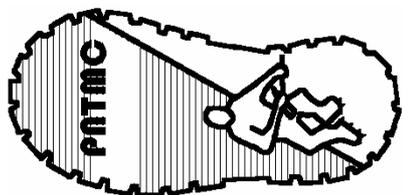


During November, surveys for kiwi and whio were carried out with impressive results. The kiwi survey was done by a Bay of Plenty Polytech class and a total of 29 birds were heard (including 8-10 pairs). This will be an underestimate of the true number of birds, and higher than we expected, making this an exciting result. Most of the birds were heard in the Ikawetea Stream catchment, luckily for them, right in amongst the traplines. Operation Nest Egg is still ticking along also, slowly but surely adding to this population.

Perhaps even more exciting than the kiwi results, was the number of whio found by Pohangina ranger Nobby and Mark Caskey from Taranaki with his specially trained whio dog. Nobby, Mark and Snoopy searched the Mangatera, Waiokotore and Ikawetea catchments and located a total of 45 adult whio and 34 ducklings - far more than we ever imagined were out there. All the more reason to keep killing stoats!

Although still too early to tell exactly what effect the stoatlines are having on bird numbers in the NW Ruahines, fuelled by the great survey results of this season, DOC has begun planning further extensions. Total number of stoats caught so far is now at about 250 and for rats about 500.

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## **PNTMC Newsletter**

### **February 2010**

#### *What's inside this month?*

- *Upcoming trips and club events*
- *Reports on recent trips and events including the annual awards*

#### **Articles for the newsletter**

end by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month to Anne Lawrence,  
the newsletter editor, via the club website  
<http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>.

**Get out and about with us!**  
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