

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter April 2014



Ready to leave Te Matawai Hut, the Tararuas

[Warren Wheeler]

Club Nights

All are welcome to our club nights. These 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.

10 April

Climate Change: Stormy Times Ahead

Dr. Kevin Tate

Dr Kevin Tate is a renowned expert on climate change and though retired from full time work at Landcare Research he is still involved in novel technologies for reducing methane emissions from dairy farms. Tonight he will explain why climate change poses a unique threat to all life on earth, and the need for urgent action to avert a crisis.

24 April

Ausangate Trail, Peru

Chris Saunders

In mid-2012, Chris visited Peru and Bolivia on an FMC tour. One of the highlights was a five-day trek reaching 5200 metres around the Ausangate massif in the Peruvian Andes.

Upcoming Trips

5-6 April

Keretaki Hut **E**
Chris Tuffley **359 2530**

An overnight trip to Keretaki Hut in the Southern Ruahines. A good track takes you up into real leatherwood country along the Maharahara crossing, then follow down a spur to Keretaki Hut. Great views.

6 April

Hardings Park 'Nipple' **M**
Dave Grant **328 7788**

Eastern side of Hardings Park. Come and join us as we follow the Sledge Track to the Platinum Mines junction then head east following bait lines, old hunters trails and a new route to reach "the Nipple", a prominent lookout on the eastern side of the NE Tararuas. Easy country, some great views. Leave Milverton 7.30am.

12-13 April

Wairarapa Mountain Bike **MTB**
Angela Minto **027 472 0660**

Classic Wairarapa mountain biking. There is the option of departing Palmerston North early Saturday morning or Friday night and staying at Angela's place in Masterton. On Saturday the trip we will head from Glendhu station to the Honeycomb Rocks track ending at Glenburn and returning. On Sunday we will be biking the Mikimiki track in the Tararuas, leaving from the Kiriwhakapapa Road end.

13 April

A-Frame - Stanfield **M**
Nicola Wallace **356 4516**

Unfortunately Nicola is unable to lead this trip, but she will pass on your name if you are keen to go. If anyone is interested in leading the trip (or an alternative) please mention this at club night.

18-21 April

Around Egmont **M**
Warren Wheeler **356 1998**

Depart 7.00am. Plan A is to start from Dawson Falls Visitor Centre and head around the mountain track in a clockwise direction. First day to Waiau Gorge Hut via the high level route, second to Kahui Hut, third to Holly Hut, fourth the high level track all the way back to Dawson Falls. Plan B would involve a longer second day to Holly Hut, then Maketawa Hut on Day 3. If rainy we may do a couple of overnight trips instead to Waiau Gorge and Pouakai Circuit.

25-27 April

Ngamoko and Mid-Pohangina **M**
Craig Allerby **323 7913**

PNTMC has now taken over the upkeep of Mid-Pohangina and Ngamoko Huts in the Southern Ruahine's Pohangina Valley. Help out by coming along and help out for our spring clean of the huts. We will be giving them a thorough clean inside and out. [Note change in trip leader].

3-4 May

Top Maroepa **M**
Thomas Robertson **022 075 0864**

Leaving 7.00 am. The plan is to head to North Block Road end then walk up to Sunrise Hut for lunch. Then head through Armstrong Saddle to the historic Top Maroepa Hut for the night. Weather permitting the next day we will head over Te Atuaoparapara, drop down to Waipawa Saddle then follow the stream to Waipawa Forks Hut then out.

4 May

Hardings Park: Baldy via Quartz Ridge **M**
Dave Grant **328 7788**

Another adventure into Hardings Park in the Northern Tararuas. Travelling to Baldy via Quartz Ridge.

Trip Grading

Trip grades depend on many factors, especially weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient trampster 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.

Gear for trips

Minimum gear for day trips is appropriate footwear, pack, lunch and snacks, waterproof jacket, overtrousers, gloves, warm hat, torch, toilet paper, matches or a lighter, sunblock, first aid kit, and a survival bag or space blanket. Each person needs to be equipped to survive overnight.

Personal Locator Beacons – Free for trips

The club has purchased two PLBs for members' use. If you want to take one of these on a trip, contact Martin or Anne Lawrence on 357-1695. Note that this applies to any trip you are going on - it doesn't need to be a club trip.

Trip leaders

Complete the trip intentions form and leave with one of Overdue Trip Contacts or drop into 44 Dahlia St or email to pntmctrips@gmail.com with the date and trip name in the subject line. If you are unable to run your trip as scheduled, advise a trip coordinator as soon as possible so that alternatives can be arranged.

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:

Janet Wilson	329-4722
Martin and Anne Lawrence	357-1695

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20th of each month to Thomas Robertson, the acting newsletter editor, direct or via our web site <http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>

Notices

Peak Bagging

The peak bagging competition closes on the day of the AGM, 27 March 2014. Points may be claimed for peaks bagged on the day of the AGM only if the claimant is present at the AGM. All points must be sent to Malcolm Parker before the AGM, or communicated to him at the AGM. An opportunity will be provided for club members to check their points at a later date. The results will be announced by Janet Wilson at the club night on 8 May.

Malcolm's email address:
mparker@slingshot.co.nz

Photos

Photos from the peak bagging competition are sought for the final presentation. If you have any photos which you think would be suitable please email these to Martin Lawrence.

Martin's email address:
martin.lawrence.nz@gmail.com

New Members

Welcome to our newest member:
Graeme Richards 353 6227

Graeme has been a welcome addition to a number of club trips, as well as an enthusiastic stoat line volunteer.

Trip Reports

22-23 February Te Matawai Hut Nicola Wallace

Cloud sat low over the Tararuas as we pulled into the Poads Rd carpark in Woody's van. There were about 7 vehicles there already, but a look in the intentions book showed no one else headed for Te Matawai Hut. Two lads waiting at the info board were going to North Ohau hut.

Very soon after setting off it was apparent that we were in for a hot, muggy walk. A pleasant walk along the track that follows the Ohau River brought us to the flat, open area above the river in about an hour, where we had morning tea, and Warren adjusted his new pack, which was proving to be less than comfortable. A very hot slog up the Gable End track followed, we were all pouring out sweat by the bucket load, and the total absence of wind hampered its evaporation. I was trying out a merino wool shirt for the first time, and felt comfortable in it though. I suggested that at 666m ASL, Mayo Knob was probably not a good place to stop for lunch, and we eventually lunched just before Gable End itself, a small knob just to the left of the track. Soon after, the humidity turned to rain, and at Richards Knob it was very wet.

Without further ado, we headed down the Dora Ridge track. This track was a little more rugged than Gable End. A long descent that seemed to go on forever took us down to Butcher Saddle, and after a sharp uphill, we arrived at the Yeates Track turnout. The sign here optimistically indicated it was only 30 minutes to Te Matawai Hut. The rain had stopped, but just before we reached the hut 40 minutes later, it started raining again in earnest.

We arrived at the right time, as the MTSC guys & girls had finished the work part of their work-party weekend, and had just laid out all the

food on the table. They had done a great job of cleaning all the mould off the mattresses, but being 100% humidity (raining), said mattresses refused to dry, and Warren's valiant effort to dry them with cleaning cloths was only partially successful.

We settled in, and for the most part a social afternoon and evening followed. As well as all the Palmy clubsters, there was a lone American guy, as well as an MTSC dog named Fred. The MTSC guys had so much food at tea time that they fed the American too.

I had never been to Te Matawai Hut before, and it's an unusual hut. A long, narrow bunkroom sleeps 18 on 2 Maori bunks. The main hut area is big, but lacks one of those handy wooden drying racks operated by cord and pulleys. So I slung my wet clothes up wherever I could.

Because I knew of a couple of snorers (not from our club), I decided to sleep on the veranda as long as Fred slept inside. Apparently he likes to stay warm in peoples' sleeping bags. I had a great night on the veranda, and awoke to more rain.

After breakfast, putting on the wet clothes wasn't too bad, another benefit of the wool shirt. Around 8am, just before we departed, it started raining harder than ever. The MTSC were spraying the woodstove with some special paint which was apparently toxic, but smelled nice, so we didn't go back in the hut.

We headed off along Dora Ridge on another wet day. (The MTSC people were going to do their own thing). But the rain highlighted some lovely things in the bush, including lots of hammock-like spider webs. Today we were going back by a longer route, via Waiopehu Hut.

After less than 2 hours we were back at Richard's Knob, then followed some interesting ups and downs, and the sighting of a young possum, before we came to the large Ralph Wood memorial on Twin Peak. After photos, we bagged the peak itself.

A little way down the hill, we came to what I assume is the original Ralph Wood memorial cross. It had stopped raining, but was misty, with no views. The next peak was Waiopehu, then after a small patch of bush, we arrived at Waiopehu Hut, where a lone possum trapper was just leaving to ply his trade.



Twin Peak Memorial Trig [Warren Wheeler]

After what seemed a long time we arrived at the Six Discs Track turnoff, and from here it was a little over an hour back to the carpark. Just as we emerged from the bush, we met the boys from North Ohau Hut.

It had been a good weekend, though some better weather would have enhanced the experience. But this is the Western side of the Tararuas! The first day had taken us about 6 hours, the second day, about 7 hours.

Many thanks to Woody and Warren for a great tramp, and Woody for the driving.

23 February Sunrise Hut Malcolm Parker

An early start for this trip as it is quite a drive over to the start of the track. We were expecting the weather to be reasonable - well it is still summer after all. We took our time to amble up the track to Sunrise, and enjoyed a chat about just about everything as we went. A couple of us were a bit nervous about how difficult the track was, so they were surprised at just how good it was. Not at all what they expected. I hope that means they'll join us on more trips in the future.

However, up past the turnoff the weather became quite interesting. It was still warm but the higher we went the windier it got. And it just got worse. And worse. We arrived at the hut quite early and it was blatantly obvious that we wouldn't be crossing the saddle today. So we enjoyed an early lunch and watched the cloud whipping past at a great rate of knots. And we quickly became aware of the reasons why the hut is anchored to the ground with such big guy ropes.

After lunch we did stick our head up over the crest to look at the saddle. Of course it was far

worse there than it had been at the hut. So it was off back down again. Just at the bottom we found the shortcut up to Triplex - thanks Richard - and had a quick look around before we decided to head off to the car before it rained. A very enjoyable trip. We were Malcolm, Richard, Karen and Catherine.

7-9 March Sawtooth Ridge Dave Grant

Its 11am on Saturday morning. The 7 of us are standing in sunshine on Tarn Ridge in the NE Ruahines leaning into the wind and looking across at the heavy wave of cloud rolling over the Sawtooth ridge. Will we won't we, will we won't we. The clag doesn't worry me Janet says, but she's worried about the wind. I want the cloud to clear. I think to myself, I haven't come this far to cross the Sawtooth for the first time in my life and not see anything. Everyone else hums and haas. We catch a glimpse through the cloud, of the flank of Ohuinga, the high point on the northern end of the Sawtooth, and isn't the wind starting to ease?? Yes. Our resolve strengthens. Yes, we are going to head off!!! We allow that if the wind is still too strong when we get to the top of Ohuinga we can turn back then.

We had left the Manawatu yesterday morning. Janet, Graham, Alastair, myself and Bruce (Janet and Graham's Border Collie) in one vehicle, and Craig and Michael in their car. After a brief coffee, pie and raspberry bun stop at the Hungry Stomach in Dannevirke we had met up with Margaret, waiting for us at Mill Road end above the Tukituki River. By this stage it was about 11am. Margaret, an intrepid nurse from Gisborne had read about the trip on our PNTMC website, and driven 4 hours to join us. How's that for keen!!

The weather was perfect as we hefted our packs and headed off down the track from the road end to the Tukituki River. Fine and sunny with a touch of autumn coolness in the air, and the forecast for Saturday and Sunday was the same. The plan was to walk upriver and climb Rosvalls Track on to Tarn Ridge. We would stay the night at Tarn Biv then up to Ohuinga the next morning, cross Sawtooth Ridge to Tiraha, then down to Howletts Hut for Saturday night. Sunday would see us head down Daphne Spur to Daphne Hut then down the Tukituki back to Mill Road end and home.

We made our way up the river along broad shingle beaches and higher terraces covered

in long grass, lupin and scrub, with occasional crossings as the river meandered from side to side. Water levels were low so the inside of my boots stayed pretty dry as we worked our way upstream. We passed the start of the track up to Hinerua Hut on the north bank of the river, marked with a large orange triangle, and spent a bit of time studying the scrubby hillside above figuring out which grassy ridge the Hinerua track followed.

As we made our way upstream the hills became fully clad in forest with rimu and kahikatea standing out above the canopy, the slopes climbing steeply away from the river. Close to the river toitoi, manuka and orange berried coprosma abounded with patches of kowhai dominating some of the old slip faces. Away in the distance we could see the even steeper faces of the high country as it rose, often scarred by shingle slides, to the bare rock and tussock of the tops.

We reached the bottom of Rosvalls Track, just past the second major stream on the right after starting up the river. A shady terrace there provided a great spot for lunch before we headed up the hill. Rosvalls is a well marked track climbing quite steeply and steadily some 800 m up a side ridge on to Black Ridge. This is a very scenic climb passing initially through bush dominated by red beech and podocarps. It grades into mountain beech with mountain cedar, and tantalising views out to the Tukituki valley, then scrub with much leatherwood. Finally it emerges about 2 hours later on to the tussock covered Black Ridge.

From Black Ridge on such clear day the views were magnificent in all directions. Across the tawny Hawkes Bay farmland and the Whakararas to the east, south down the Ruahine Ranges to the Pohangina Saddle, Otumore, and Tunupo. In the distance and to the west our objective - Sawtooth Ridge, stark and a bit foreboding, from Tiraha to Ohuinga. Following Black Ridge for 20 minutes we came to Tarn Biv tucked in against leatherwood in a little hollow on the eastern lee of the ridge. The biv only has room for 2 or 3, but the longdrop has the best view of the Hawkes Bay plains, sitting as it does tucked over the edge of the hollow, completely unimpeded by walls. Not so good in the rain or windy conditions. Alastair and Margaret drew the bivvy straws so the rest of us scouted around for places to pitch our tents. There was very limited level ground not affected by tussock clumps and small shrubs but we eventually found possies on the ridge above the bivvy, looking across to Sawtooth.

After tea we all sat along the edge of the ridge in the evening calm watching the sunset, then headed off to bed anticipating a great sleep and an exciting day tomorrow.



Camping on the tops. [Dave Grant]

However those that pitch tents on exposed ridges should not forget about wind. By 10.30pm a strong breeze was blowing from the west requiring tent pegs to be reset and guy ropes tightened. By 2.30am the wind was roaring through and Janet and Graham decided to break camp and shift down to a sheltered area up against the front of the bivvy. After some debate with myself and watching the huge flex of the single hoop tent pole with each gust of wind roaring through, I dropped the single pole of my tent before it broke, and spent the rest of the night flat under the fly holding down the excess fabric to stop it flapping itself to pieces. Somehow Craig and Michael in their Olympus managed to keep their tent on the ground and survive the night.

So it was a pretty dozy group of campers that gathered after daybreak to have breakfast the next morning. The sun rose to a clear sky over the Hawkes Bay but the wind was still very strong and a heavy bank of cloud hung along the whole of Sawtooth. A traverse of Sawtooth in this wind was not an option but seeing we had time to spare it was decided to sit around having the occasional hot drink and see if the weather would improve. After all, the weather forecast had been good!! Sure enough, about 10.30am someone said they thought the wind

might be easing a little. By 11 am it was decided to head north to Ohuinga and reassess the situation when we arrived there. By the time we stopped for lunch in the saddle below Ohuinga the wind had dropped to a breeze and the bank of cloud over the ridge had cleared. From the top of Ohuinga the landscape spread before us in all directions.

And then we were heading south along Sawtooth. This was a first for me. One off the bucket list so to speak. It was also a first for Margaret (who had been thwarted on previous attempts by weather), and Craig, Michael and Alastair said it was a first for them also.



Coming onto Sawtooth Ridge. [Dave Grant]

The Sawtooth Ridge has a bit of a reputation but we all completed the traverse without too much bother. The track follows the narrow ridgetop most of the way, in some places no more than a goat track along the crest, In the steepest sections of the ridge we sidled around through the tussock below the crest. And sure, the ground drops away as steep shingle slides on either side (don't look down now!!) but in other places tussock saddles and faces give the opportunity to drink in the amazing views. This was tramping at its most exhilarating. And Bruce didn't turn a hair. Mind you four legs and a lower centre of gravity gave him a bit of an advantage I'm sure.

It took a little over 2 hours for us to reach the summit of Tiraha at the southern end of Sawtooth. At this point Janet, Graham,



Looking across Sawtooth Ridge, the Ruahines.

[Dave Grant]

Michael and Craig decided it was too good an opportunity to miss bagging Taumateamakura, an easy 20 minutes away across the tussock to the west, and add to their PNTMC Peak Bagging competition points.

I decided that this old fellow had done enough, so headed to Howletts in the late afternoon sun, joined by Margaret and Alastair, who not being PNTMC members were not so interested in bagging any extra peaks on that day.

On reaching Howletts we found 3 people in residence with another 4 due from Longview. Going to be a bit crowded with our 7 so after a short break Alastair and I decided to head down Daphne Spur to Daphne Hut for the night, before it got dark.

Sunday dawned fine and Margaret arrived down from Howletts on her own about mid morning. We three carried on out down the Tukituki. Graham and Janet, Craig and Michael couldn't resist the temptation and after leaving Howletts bagged Taumatataua at the

end of Daphne Ridge before also heading down to the Tukituki. They caught us up around lunchtime and we all carried on downriver finally getting back to our vehicles mid afternoon before heading home.

What a fantastic weekend made perfect by the great weather. Thank you Janet for organising the trip. We were Janet, Graham, Craig, Michael, Margaret (Gisborne), Alastair and Dave (scribe) And don't forget Bruce.

1-2 March Hinerua/Smiths Stream Circuit Geoff Phillips

We started walking at 7.30 am leaving Janet's car at Mill road end after an enjoyable evening of fine hospitality at the Lund's home. It was really good to catch up with my old friends in Dannevirke. The skies were clear and we were in for a great day.

We climbed up out of the Tukitiki River and crossed some farmland to enter the bush. 2.5

hours later we arrived at Hinerua Hut, a delightful 4 bunker built the year I was born 1958. Hinerua sits at the base of a long spur running up to Broken Ridge. We had a cuppa in the sun and enjoyed the bird song around us. A bit reluctant to move on it was 45 minutes until we started out for the tops.



Hinerua Hut.

[Derek Sharp]

Janet and Mary found the spot from their winter trip where they had had lunch and then turned back due to the heavy snow and ice conditions. They were pleased for making that decision. As we walked on the ridge it only got steeper and narrower.

But today we were walking in perfect weather, making good time onto Paemutu 1682 metres; the vista of most of the Ruahine peaks was most impressive. After a lunch break by a small tarn we came off Paemutu. A cold breeze had picked up so it got us moving a bit faster.

We had to descend quite a long way passing by a large gendarme. To get around this house sized rock we had to go down a further 100 metres or so and then all the way up to trig A6G4 1715 metres. We felt cheated standing on this unnamed peak with its magnificent view it really did deserve a name.

Mary and Janet suggested we leave our packs and continue along the main range to bag another peak Rangiateatua 1704 metres. As

we went further north to Rangiateatua, Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe came into view from behind Mangaweka. From Rangiateatua we looked down on Waipawa Saddle and over to Three Johns and Te Aruaoparapara. 45 minutes later we were back with our packs and heading down the long spur towards Smith Stream Hut arriving there at 6.30pm. Quite a day!

With a good meal and lots of tea I was feeling alive once again and spent the rest of the evening enjoying some great company.

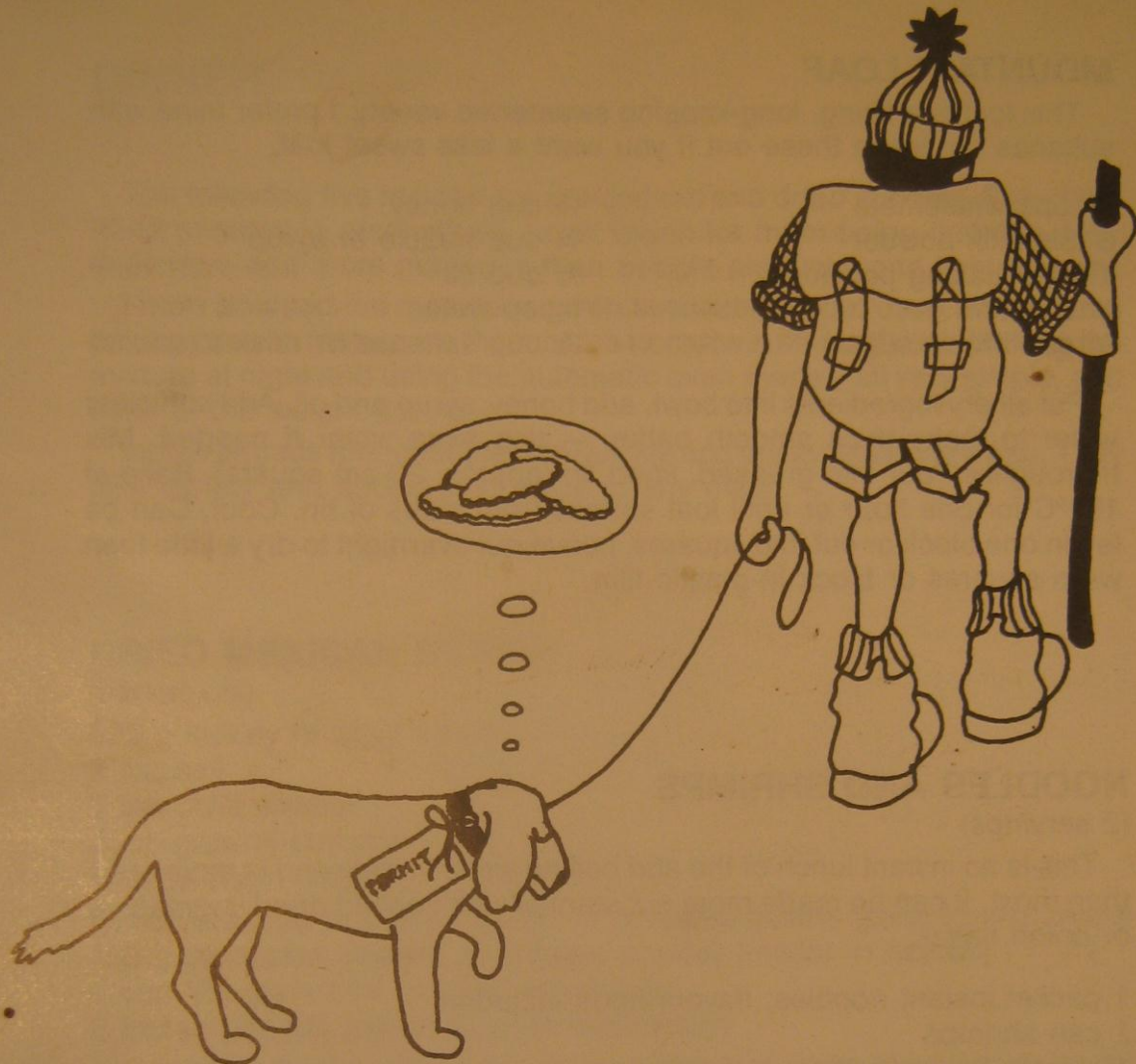
Janet was pleased with the condition of Smith Stream Hut. Two years earlier she and Warren had found it to be heavily rat infested; so they had cleaned out the hut; burning all the shredded paper used for nest building, scrubbed the mattresses, swept out the rat poo and let DOC know about its condition.

This time Janet carried in rat poison for the bait station under the hut. The rats have left Smith Stream Hut alone; DOC have patched the mattresses and replaced the fire place and chimney. The old hut is once again a welcome refuge.

The river was cold but low, an easy walk for 30 minutes. Sighting the triangle in a narrow gut we headed up. Someone in the hut book said it was the worst track they had been over! I made the bold statement that it wouldn't be the worst I had been on." So Janet wanted to know what that would have been. No answer, it was pretty bad. 2.5 hours later we were back at Hinerua Hut; a full circle.

After a cuppa in the sun and a chat to some hunters we headed back to the Tukitiki and up to the car.

Wow, what a great trip; sometime things just work out right. Thank you Mary and Janet. I hope you have just as much fun in Nepal.
Mary Lund, Janet Wilson and Geoff Phillips

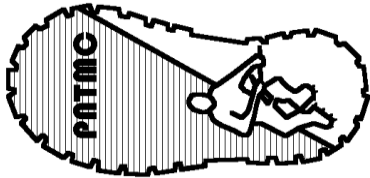


TARARUA BISCUITS

The following sturdy biscuits will keep indefinitely — they taste better with a smear of butter or peanut butter or honey or anything! If you have the dog along for your tramp (remember your permit) these will be a hit with him also.

- 1 cup flour
- ½ cup bran
- 1 cup wholemeal flour (finely ground)
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 110 grams butter
- 1 tbs golden syrup
- 1 tbs honey
- 1 egg

Melt butter, golden syrup, honey and brown sugar together. Cool. Add beaten egg and dry ingredients. Mix together. Roll out and cut into rounds, approximately 10mm thick or press into sponge roll tin. Bake at 160°C for 20 minutes. Cut into squares while warm if packed in tin.



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PNTMC Newsletter

April 2014

What's inside this month?

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- Coming trips and more

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20th of each month to Thomas Robertson
the acting newsletter editor, via the club website
<http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>.

Get out and about with us!

**Sender: PNTMC
PO Box 1217
Palmerston North**

PNTMC Contacts

President	Anne Lawrence	357 1695
Vice President	Warren Wheeler	356 1998
Secretary	Dave Grant	357 8269
Treasurer	Martin Lawrence	357 1695
Webmaster	Malcolm Parker	357 5203
Membership Enquires	Warren Wheeler	356 1998
	Eric Liu	359 2135
Gear Custodian	Mick Leyland	358 3183
Newsletter Editor	Tom Robertson	357 4023
Trip Co-ordinator	Janet Wilson	329 4722
Snowcraft Programme	Terry Crippen	356 3588