



Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

www.pntmc.org.nz

PO Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter September 2024



Roping up to practice glacier travel – Alpine Skills 2, Turoa, Ruapehu.

Pic: Grant Christian

Club Nights

Club nights are generally held on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Quakers Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North. Doors open 7.15pm for meeting start at 7.30pm. All welcome.

12 September 2024

Aotea Great Barrier Island

Barry Scott

Aotea/Great Barrier has a diverse and beautiful landscape, from beaches to sheltered bays, steep forest-covered hills, and two of the most outstanding estuaries in the Auckland Region. It is a perfect spot for adventures with family and friends who enjoy tramping and exploring as well as an ocean at your doorstep for kayaking, boating or fishing. Barry has been a part-time resident on the island since 2018 and will share with you why he thinks this is such a special place.

26 September 2024

Interclub Photo Competition

This year PNTMC hosts the annual competition between MUAC, MTSC and PNTMC. Come along and enjoy the crème de la crème of local club pics.

Upcoming Trips

1 September 2024 Deerford/Knights Track M Robert van Bentum 027 491 1205

A long day hike (8hrs +) starting at the end of Limestone Road climbing steeply via the left side of the Deerford Loop and Knights Track to the tops of the Ngamoko Range at 1,500m. If the weather is kind and there is time we will walk south along the range and back via Shorts Track or return the way we came. Depart Milverton Park slightly earlier at 7am to get back before dark.

8 September 2024 Billy Goat Track E Verity Elder 021 260 1885

We make our way up the farmland from the Coppermine Creek Road end and into the bush. We then drop down to Billy Goat Creek and Managaatua Stream, a steep 350m descent with some delightful mossy sections. Return via the same route.

14-15 September 2024 Applied Tramping M Janet Wilson 06 329 4722

Applied tramping = social trapping trip. Destination TBA. If interested, please get in touch with Janet early in the week as plans can be very flexible so a weekend trip may become a day trip or vice versa. You can contact via the landline or 027 341 8945.

15 September 2024 Coppermine Loop E Peter Darragh 022 613 4180

A lovely loop walk in the southern Ruahines, north of Woodville. Follows the sidle track up the Coppermine Stream, crosses the stream before heading up then out to the farm land for panoramic views and the walk back down to the carpark. We may do a side trip to the Coppermine if keen.

21-22 September 2024 Howletts Hut M/F Anne Lawrence 06 357 1695

Howlett's is a really nice hut to spend the night in. There are options for getting there. One plan is to head in on the track from Kashmir Road via Daphne Hut. There is a short spell in the river, and then a steep grunt up Daphne Spur and along the ridge to Howlett's Hut. An alternative plan is to go in from Longview Hut. This involves a climb to the tops near Longview Hut, summit Otumore, then traverse north to Daphne Ridge and Howlett's Hut.

22 September 2024 Foxton Foxtrot E Robyn Wheeler 06 356 1998

Meet at Milverton 0800, walk around sites of interest in Foxton Beach, history of the river, a day at the beach. Home by 3pm.

26 September 2024 Fern Walk E Robyn Wheeler 06 356 1998

A Thursday morning walk (0900 to 1200) followed by cup of tea at Robyn's place (Awahou South Road).

28 September 2024 Toe Toe Loop M David Soong 021 722 358

This regular Saturday Toe Toe Loop walk usually departs from the Summerhill New World car park at 8am. Please text David before Friday to check if the walk is on and for further details.

29 September 2024 Ross Peak E/M Warren Wheeler 06 356 1998

Reprogrammed from June. This local trig point up in the leatherwood of the Ruahine Ranges is the next named peak north of Wharite. Access is from the end of No.2 Line, off Pohangina East Road. It is an easy 3 hours up a well cleared track to the summit where we will enjoy grand views on a good day. Return the same way. Depart Milverton Park 8.00am

5 October 2024 **Toe Toe Loop** **M** **David Soong** **021 722 358**

This regular Saturday Toe Toe Loop walk usually departs from the Summerhill New World car park at 8am. Please text David before Friday to check if the walk is on and for further details.

6 October 2024 **Ngauruhoe** **M/T** **Warren Wheeler** **06 356 1998**

Our annual anniversary trip of the 1996 Grandstand View Ruapehu erupting, we will zig zag up the west face to the crater. Crampons and ice axe essential. Depart PN 6.00am. We could do this as an overnight trip with some additional exploring if there is sufficient interest.

12-13 October 2024 **Cattle Creek** **M** **Blair Petersen** **027 600 4263**

Join me as I complete my quest to bag all of the livestock-related huts - that's Cow Creek, Cattle Creek, Cattle Ridge and Roaring Stag.

Trip participants

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

Overdue Trips

If a club trip is late returning, please do not worry as there is probably a good reason for the delay.

If you are in any doubt, please phone Martin Lawrence 027 446 6287 or Bruce van Brunt 06 328 4761

Go to [PNTMC Trip Planning](#) for more details including Trip Grading and Gear required.

Notices

Love our Huts



FMC is calling on clubs to support their Love our Hut's campaign. The first part of the campaign runs throughout November with a plan to give every public hut in Aotearoa a spring clean and do a simple health check on its use and status. PNTMC committee aim to focus mostly on huts in the Ruahines. So far we have club trips scheduled to MacKinnon, Crow, Iron Gate, Mid-Pohangina, Ngamoko and Rangī as well as Taranaki's Symes Hut. We are keen to add to this list and are keen for members to help. Visit [Love Our Huts Campaign Page](#) for details. Everyone interested is also invited to be part of our [Love Our Huts Facebook Group](#).

Ruahine Whio Protectors Fundraising Calendar 2025



Help support our local Ruahine Conservation effort. Thanks to club member Anthony Behrens for the production and to those who contributed their lovely photos. Calendars once again \$20.00 Available from Janet at club nights or email jwilson@inspire.net.nz



Interclub Quiz 3 September 2024

MTSC are the hosts this year for another fun evening of tramping-related trivia as they try to win back the coveted “Battered Billy” from PNTMC (Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club). We also expect teams from MUAC (Massey University Alpine Club) so come along and help us to defend the honour of our club! Teams of 4 to 8 people, nibbles at each table and lots of prizes. No need to pre-enter, just turn up and get a table of friends together. Doors open at 7pm and the quiz kicks off promptly at 7-30pm at Rose City Aquatic Club (right hand side of the Lido Pool Complex), Park Road, PN.

New Members

Welcome to Kim Varden. We wish you happy tramping with us.

Trip Reports

6 - 7 July 2024

Alpine Skills

Report: Grant Christian

We had six students, three instructors and one observer attend the course

This year the format of the course changed a little with no weekday session. We all got together at the Waikato Ski Lodge at Whakapapa which we had to ourselves, apart from our custodian. The lodge was ideal for our needs and meant we were ideally situated for getting out on to the mountain. Friday night was a chance to make sure that everybody could fit crampons.

The number of attendees was down on previous years with three coming from Palmerston North and three from Auckland and Hamilton.



The weather was good but the snow was sparse. We walked up the mountain a little and found some small patches of snow to demonstrate and practice skills. After we headed a bit further up and across the mountain and past the abandoned Downhill Ski Club building we found a big enough patch of snow to practice self-arresting and walking on steeper slopes.



Crampon practice

On Sunday we headed up the valley beside The Pinnacles. Once again we had good weather. More snow was found where we could consolidate skills introduced the previous day. The further up the valley we went the more important it became to practice good crampon technique as the slope steepened and was icy in places. We eventually reached the waterfall where we had to clamber over a steep rocky section to get past. We found some great slopes for practising self-arresting and walking on hard snow and ice below the upper Pinnacles.



Probing for "avalanche victim"

A contribution from Cheryl Hindle, our observer, who has previously done Snowcraft with us and been on a few trips with me.

'Day 2 of Snowcraft One was a crisp, blue sky day with a bit of wind that came and went. We crunched our way away from the Waikato Ski Lodge and headed over to Broken Leg Gully at the bottom of the Pinnacles Ridge. Our goal was to head up the gully and see if we could get past the waterfall. We got to practice and consolidate the skills we had learnt the previous day and kicked steps up the snow slope until it got a little bit icier and we put on crampons and continued on our way. What a difference crampons make to how secure you feel traversing snow slopes. Our way past the waterfall was blocked by some rocky bluffs but Cam managed to find a way through that involved a bit of mixed rock and ice climbing, learning how to use our front points to get a foot hold. This was probably not what was expected from a Snowcraft One course! Once above the waterfall we spent more time practicing self-arresting and did some exercises with our avalanche transceivers. We returned to base following the Sky Waka.'

Staying up on the mountain was great as we were right up in the snow (or lack of it). And we also got to see some pretty awesome sunsets.'

Course participants were Callum Taylor, Corwin Broekhuizen, Thomas Sun, Denver Britto, Danica Jacinto and Jeremy Stuart.

Our instructors were Grant Christian, Chris Rayner with assistance from Cam Raupi. Observing and getting some practice was Cheryl Hindle.

20-21 July 2024

Alpine Skills – Ropes & Anchors

Report: Grant Christian et al

For the second Alpine Skills trip we had eight students and four instructors, which gave us an ideal ratio.

People joining us this year were Tom O'Sullivan from Palmerston North. Tom had done the course with us last year but hadn't had time to practice and wanted to refresh his skills. Iris Seegelken and Lennart Junge, also Palmerston North residents, are here from Germany for a year. Lennart works at the hospital with Tom. Denver Britto from Hamilton did the previous course with us and was back for more. Alysha Candy, Jacqui Bond and Cheryl Hindle had all done courses with us in previous years at different times and all come from Rotorua.

I found a house in Ohakune that sleeps 16 so there was room for the whole group to be together. This made things easier to organise and meant we had room inside to teach some skills. This proved to be very useful in the wet weather.

On Saturday morning we handed out gear and then showed people knots, how to attach to an anchor, how to belay and tying up for glacier travel. The roomy living area meant we could do all this indoors. In the afternoon the rain stopped and we went to the Turoa ski field area to practice some skills. It was a long walk before we encountered some snow patches. The snow still hadn't arrived in any quantity and we made the best of what we had.

Sunday morning the weather was good and we headed back up the mountain. We walked until we found a little snow where we practiced roping up for glacier travel and walking around imaginary crevasses. Fortunately, glacier rescues were not necessary. Further up we were able to demonstrate anchors and a snow bollard and then the students got some practice building anchors. The weather deteriorated after lunch and we headed back to the house.

Contributions from some participants:

Alysha – "Fantastic weekend validating the money spent on fancy wet weather gear. We spend our weekend between the house in Ohakune going over theory and on the mountain putting that theory into practice. The rainy/snowy conditions didn't put us off! Attempting to prussic up a vertical rope, general brushing up on skills, dinners out with the group, and getting to know the enthusiastic bunch on the trip were my highlights."

Jacqui – "It was an excellent trip in spite of the weather.

Though I had done the training last year and been on a few trips last winter, I learnt a lot from our training course. I especially liked testing out the snow anchors. Firstly we looked at the strength of snow stakes in a T slot, top clip and mid clip position, then we tested out the strength of the snow bollard. Firstly it was unbreakable and then we reduced and reduced its size until it pulled through. An important point to note was that this was the strength of this equipment with THESE snow conditions.



On another day ... well”

Tom – “I returned for another year of alpine skills having dipped my toes with Snowcraft 1+2 a year ago. Being the only Palmy native this year I set off with a ute laden with the group’s gear. We arrived late Friday and soon I found my hands tying knots that they knew were familiar but my brain did not! The weather didn't play game which meant more practice and revision before the break in the weather came. The instructors did a great job getting through lot of content when we did get on the mountain. I feel a lot more confident with glacier travel, belaying and snow anchors. They've given us a great base to build on and I'm hoping to learn more and more on the follow up trips. Sunday evening it was back to Palmy with a car load of wet club gear to dry out (and of course more knot practice!)”

Our instructors were Grant Christian, Chris Rayner, Malcolm Leary and Cam Raupi.

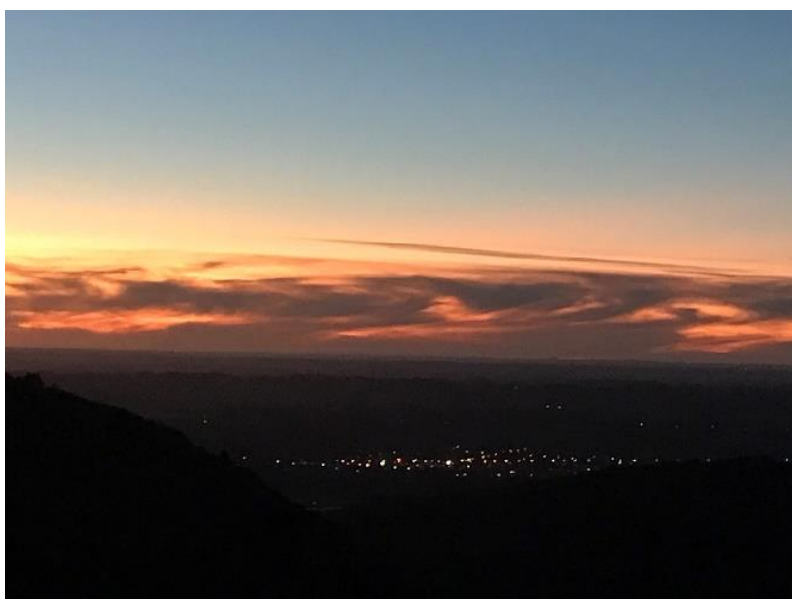


Ready to go.

We departed Milverton Park at 3.30 pm in Kim's trusty Toyota. The afternoon was still and clear, showing promise for the evening. We left 30 mins earlier than originally scheduled with the intent to reach Sentinel Lookout whilst the sun was still setting. There were a few cars at the Ballance Rd carpark, so we anticipated meeting other walkers. I told Verity I was hopeful of spotting a ruru.



The track took us steadily uphill for a solid 90 mins – there was no risk of being cold on this Winter's evening! We heard a smattering of bird song – riroriro, tui, piwakawaka, the swish of the kereru in flight. The constant whoosh of the turbines kept us company along with the occasional creak of trees rubbing against each other.



The well graded track eventually plateaued. We took a left turn to the wind farm lookout where we were treated to a beautiful sunset. We pondered about having supper here, but I was keen to forge ahead to Sentinel Lookout where we had enjoyed supper last year. We were not disappointed – we caught the final 10 minutes of the sun setting and marvelled at the distant twinkling lights in Feilding. We put on warm layers and ate with haste to avoid getting cold. I remarked to Verity that if we repeated this walk in 12 months' time, our view would

include the lights of cars travelling the new highway.

It was now 6 pm and properly dark! We donned our hats and gloves and turned on our head lamps. I was excited about the nocturnal return walk and the possibility of seeing a ruru. We took the track down to the old gorge road, walking alongside the gurgling stream. We heard one or two ruru but alas, we didn't see one.

Verity did spot a mouse!

We reached the roadside within 45 mins. We were rewarded with a magnificent night sky. My imagination went wild as we walked along the neglected old Gorge Rd. What if boy racers arrived? Where could we escape to? Thankfully all was peaceful and calm. My trusty Toyota was the only vehicle parked.

As we drove back, we reflected on this year's night walk compared with the previous year's. Last year's was held 2 months later, in October, on a moonlit night so head lamps were not necessary. We concluded both walks had their merits. For me, I really enjoyed the experience of walking in the dark using a head lamp. It was nice to arrive home not much after 8 pm and enjoy a hot cup of tea. I'll be back to do this walk again next year. Thanks Verity!

We were Verity (leader) and Kim.



11 August 2024

Maharahara Crossing

Report by Blair Petersen

After meeting at Milverton Park, we split into two groups – Robert, Jeff and Marty starting from Kumeti roadend and Callum, Anne and Blair starting from Opawe Road.

Low cloud on the ranges behind and north of Ashhurst promised a wet start, but by the time we got to the carpark it had lifted.

The usual mud was negotiated along the fence line, but we were soon out of this and up the hill. Follow the fence line to where it kinks to the right, the poled route goes left and up the steep hill to another fence line at the top of the ridge. Follow this to the bush line and the entry to the forest park.

Heading up to Maharahara Peak we had a few views from the usual clearings but were soon into the cloud. After scrambling up those last very steep sections, we were at the peak in just over 2 hours – time for a snack.

From there the track continues to the east, up and down several highpoints and saddles, past Matanginui peak. We met the other group just before the turn-off to Kiritaki Hut. Lunch was had, car keys handed over and off again.

Past the turnoff the track is getting pretty overgrown with the leatherwood growing back. This doesn't last long and we soon came to a flatter spur that had been cleared recently - easy walking, with improving views as we dropped altitude. A steep section down to the Mangapuaka Stream and 30 minutes along the riverbed to the other car at the Kumeti roadend.

Our group decided that we'd taken the best route (eastwards, rather than westwards), as we'd got the worst section up to Maharahara out of the way first.

An ice-cream at Ashhurst and coffee back at Anne and Marty's topped-off a fun day.

Note from the editor: The Westward group agreed that the Eastward group had got the better part of the deal – their descent down Maharahara was muddy and slippery. But all agreed that doing a crossing really added to the day. There is something special about meeting the other group and swapping keys and stories. Despite lack of views everyone enjoyed the day.



Two of the eastward group before they got into clag

17 August 2024

Social Trapping

Report by Janet Wilson

A group of 5 headed in towards Iron Gate Hut with 4 objectives – to service the traps, to train a new trapper, to find a missing trap and to check out the start of the proposed bypass around the slip which is currently “closing” the track. The forecast wasn't encouraging but everyone was very keen to go.

We did some trap training at Alice Nash Hut and Verity was soon using the traps safely. We went as far as the slip (approximately halfway to Iron Gates Hut) then spent some time exploring the start of the new route before heading for home after lunch. Callum did well, spotting the missing trap down a bank just as we were about to give up. Catch numbers were very low with only 3 rats and 1 weasel removed from the traps. The forecast rain started just before we got back to the shed for a well-earned afternoon tea.

Thanks to the team for taking on the flexi approach to the day – we were once again working around the wintery weather forecast.



We were Verity, Monika, Callum, Graham and Janet (leader/scribe).

25 August 2024

Rangiwahia Hut – the first wave

Report by Arlo Young

On Sunday me, Gran, Grandad and Blair went to Rangiwahia hut. It took us 1h and 40mins to get there. It was a tough battle against the wind. We had some fun on the way up, we had our lunch there and looked out over the cliff and then headed down.

On the way there was a tree that had fallen down onto the track. At first I thought that the track was gone but it was on the other side. It took us 1h and 32mins to get back. We finished the trip with an ice cream and a drink.



Arlo tests out the old seat by the latest slip



Arlo found a log that looked like a crocodile



25 August 2024

Rangiwahia Hut – the second wave

Report by Doug Strachan

It was a bit odd that nobody wanted to come on the tramp to Rangiwahia. Eventually, Martin phoned after his initial attempts had been thwarted because the phone number on the website was incorrect, which Anne promptly fixed. Blair had encountered the same problem. He went in the Lawrence's car to Rangiwahia, and I didn't leave till 10am because I was waiting for Minami to arrive on a flight from Christchurch. She and I reached the Rangiwahia carpark at 11:20am and there were already 3 cars in the lower carpark, so pretty busy. On our way up, we met the rest of our party coming down. It was a funny way for me to lead a tramp – leading from the rear and passing the front coming the other way.

At the hut, we met a departing army guy who left behind quite a lot of Australian army rations, which he said were made in Palmerston North, for anyone to take. Probably he carried the weight up for training and to not waste the goods. Some of the rations looked to be a bit dubious in terms of the date, but trampers are used to finding food in the bottom of their packs well beyond its best before date, so no
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worries. The contents included canned cheese, sachets of bread, spaghetti bolognese, and heaps of other stuff.

Despite all the parked cars below, we only shared the hut with a couple from Waitarere, until Janet and Graham, Malcolm, and Richard turned up. PNTMC members sure get out and about. Minami and I had finished our sandwiches, tomato soup with Mealmates, and hot chocolate, and were about to head down, so left them to examine the rations.

Minami got some driving practise in by taking the wheel for the return journey to PN. On the way, she mentioned “intellectual conversations” via “discussions and debating”. The talking Heads CD was playing quite loud and I thought she said something about “baked beans”. I turned the volume down and, upon realising what she had actually said, I stated that that made more sense because it would be hard to have an intellectual discussion about baked beans. She questioned that statement and we began to have quite an intellectual conversation about soy beans in tomato sauce, such as the high fibre content and rich assortment of amino acids.

It was a trip with stuff all over the place - numbers, PNTMC members, army rations, baked bean facts – but there wasn’t a snowball’s chance in hell of finding any snow.

Martin, Anne, Arlo and Blair, who arrived in the first wave, will give their account. We were, in the second wave: Minami and Doug Strachan

IRON BARK HUT RENOVATION - APRIL 2024

Report by Elly Arnst

Iron Bark had been on the maintenance list for a while with known weathertightness issues - in desperate need of a reroof.

We’d been keen to do a different hut renovation project, but it wasn’t available in this funding round and the money was sitting there for Iron Bark, all the project needed was volunteers. “Needs a new roof, a paint job and a new woodshed,” was the initial description we received. Sounded pretty doable.

So in early April 2024, a group of six volunteers from Whanganui Land Search and Rescue (including two builders) flew in to tackle a much longer list of tasks, including reroofing, reflashing windows, replacing rotten weatherboards, replacing gable ends and baseboards, new box corners and scribes, replacing a couple of piles, fixing and painting the toilet, reroofing the meatsafe, clearing vegetation, and building a woodshed.



Delayed by weather, we arrived at lunchtime on Friday to be greeted by a damp hut reeking of rats. It was in much worse condition than we'd anticipated. The project felt daunting, but we had prioritised and allocated tasks, so got stuck into it. As the roof and the weatherboards came off the rat poo, dead rats, and a live nest were removed. We sent an inReach message to a seventh member walking in to "please bring LOTS of rat bait", which we subsequently doused the hut with.

The team worked hard and consistently over the four days, each bringing our own areas of expertise to the project, meaning we were able to complete all the tasks given (plus a couple of extra ones). Having two builders in the team enabled us to achieve all the building work set out. A group of four hunters turned up on the third day and lent a hand with the woodshed construction. It turned out they were all builders too!

The weather was absolutely perfect once we arrived on site and really the entire project could not have gone better. We left the site feeling really proud of what we had achieved and keen to tackle another renovation project in the future.

We hope that others (humans, not rodents) will be able to enjoy this hut for years to come.



The hardworking crew were: Tim Price, Sam Stephens, Shayne Wainhouse, Merilea Wainhouse, Tim Harrex, Matt Bailey & Elly Arnst (+ Tucker & Izzy of course!).



Before



After



PNTMC Newsletter September 2024

- Upcoming Trips and Club Nights
- Notices: PNTMC Photo Competition, Interclub Quiz and Photo Comp
- Trip Reports: Alpine Skills 1 and 2, Manawatu Gorge by Moonlight, Maharahara Xing
- Iron Bark Hut Restoration April 2024.

Send articles to

the newsletter editor at pntmci@gmail.com

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<https://tinyurl.com/pntmcfacbook>

Get out and about with us!

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