



Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

www.pntmc.org.nz

c/- Society of Friends, 227 College St, PN

Newsletter June 2025



Struggling with the wind up to Longview Hut, Ruahine Forest Park

Pic by Martin Lawrence

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 June 2025

Ruahine Kiwi

Robert

Gibb

Robert Gibb is the new project lead for Environment Network Manawatu, tasked with running the visionary Ruahine Kiwi Project.

26 June 2025

Atlasing the Ruahines

Chris

Tuffley

During the 2019-2024 NZ Bird Atlas, Chris gave himself the job of making sure there was good data coverage in the Ruahine Ranges. This turned out to be fantastic motivation for lots of great

trips, and he walked many of the major track, ridge and river routes in the range with a camera and microphone, counting and photographing birds and recording their songs. Come along and see the sights and hear the sounds of the Ruahine, and find out just where in the range you might hear a robin or see a fernbird.

Upcoming Trips

30 May-2 June 2025 Kings Birthday Kawhia (aka The Raglan Road Trip)
All Janet Wilson 06 329 4722

The 2025 “Coastal Classic” trip will be heading to Kawhia. The harbour looks beautiful and there are hot pools to be dug out on the coast, fishing and kayaking. Mount Pirongia is not that far away for tramping and there are bound to be other interesting local walks. Depending on interest, we will stay at one of the camping grounds/cabin or possibly a bach. We will drive up the back roads via Marokopa and return via Raglan. If you think you might be interested in this extended holiday weekend trip then let Janet know asap so a plan can be made and suitable accommodation can be booked nice and early.

7 June 2025 Herepai Hut E/M Woody Lee 021 444 552

Saturday trip. A trip into the eastern Tararuas behind Eketahuna. We will walk up from the Putara Road end and climb steadily up the hill after the second swing bridge then getting to the hut through lovely bush. Depart Milverton Park 7.30am.

15 June 2025 Hemi Matenga Kohekohe Hunt M Nicola Wallace 021 209 0720

Hemi Matenga Reserve rises behind Waikanae with a loop track taking us steeply up though the coastal forest to big rimu on the ridge then along to a lookout over the coast and Kapiti Island. Dropping down we will finish at the bottom with the short Kohekohe Loop track then back through the streets to the start. Ice creams to follow. Depart Milverton Park 7.45am.

20-22 June 2025 Matariki Long Weekend All
TBA

To be confirmed. Expect a social weekend away before winter bites.

22 June 2025

28-29 June 2025 Tahupo or Puteora Hut M Chris Parker 027 341 0091

Puteore Hut, along with Tahupo Hut, is on the only remaining track between the Matemateaonga Walkway and the Waitotara River Valley Road.

Trip Grading

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

Easy (E):	3-4 hrs	Other Grades:
Medium (M):	5-6 hrs	Family (Fam)
Fit (F):	about 8 hrs	Technical skills (T)
Fitness Essential (FE):	over 8 hrs	Inst (Instruction)

BWD = Best weather day of a weekend

Gear for trips

Minimum gear for day trips is appropriate footwear, pack, lunch and snacks, waterproof jacket, over-trousers, 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.

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.

Trip Reports

24-27 April 2025

High Hopes

Report by Ernie Cook; Pics by Blair

Petersen

The aim of this trip was to visit seven of the ten highest peaks in the Tararuas and a couple of previously un-visited huts. The number of new peaks and huts would vary for each of the participants. We departed Palmerston North at 11:00 a.m. on the Thursday to get ahead of the expected long Anzac week-end crowds. We were optimistic of a very promising weather fore-cast. There were six or seven cars already parked up at the Pines road end when we arrived so we were relieved to have twelve people coming towards us as we walked into Mitre Flats Hut. Sure enough we were able to secure bunks though Murray was happy to sleep out on the verandah.

We got up at six am and had break-fast hoping to be away at about seven am. We disturbed a couple asleep on the floor who had travelled up from Wellington and walked all the way in in the dark arriving at about eleven thirty pm. We were soon into our approximately 1150 metre climb. Initially in the bush before breaking out into the open and sighting Peggys Peak our first peak. A couple of young fellas from Palmerston North on a day trip to Mitre had passed us in the bush and we met them just below Peggys on their way back. We met another couple who had been helicoptered to the top of Mitre.

From Peggys, Mitre is just a stone's throw and we were soon basking in the warm sun and glorious views in all directions having our lunch. I sent a text which failed to go but I was able to ring Ann-maree and leave a message. Murray had a conversation with some-one. Later on I would be able to send and receive a text from Mid-King Bivvy while Murray enjoyed another phone call.

We picked our way down the North side of Mitre. The descent was a good bit more challenging than the ascent had been. A long gradually rising ridge had us on top of Brockett before a slight descent and then another rising ridge took us to the top of Girdlestone. Here we met one of the late arrivals from Wellington who had gone up to Mid-King Bivvy in the morning and was now headed for Cow Creek Hut via Table Ridge. Her companion had not been able to travel beyond Mid-King.

It was quite a long descent from Girdlestone on to Tarn Ridge and then we had a couple of up and downs over several high rocky out crops. Ernie had been suffering from some cramp due to the warm conditions, so having been to Tarn Ridge Hut previously, it was decided that he would head off towards Dorset Ridge Hut while Blair and Murray continued along to Tarn Ridge Hut to bag it and top up water bladders. Blair had previously spotted Dorset Ridge Hut from Peggys.

The route to Dorset involves a descent to a large tarn and then a series of rising climbs to the Dorset Ridge Hut turn off. Sight of the hut is lost while traversing these climbs. I made the mistake of dropping down too soon and sidling across. A couple of cairns and a sighted warratah on top of a ridge had me looking down at the Hut. The warratahs stop after about three and then hut fever kicks in and you head downhill making a bee-line for the hut. Blair and Murray would later do the same thing although they did stay high until the sign-post to the Hut below. It was easier the following morning following the newly cut track from the Hut up to beneath the first warratah. Thanks to Derrick for the cut track and the warratahs. Dorset Ridge Hut has recently had an up-grade with the GWBN working with the Back Country Trust. They spent seven days there, six and a half of which were either drizzly or wet. The hut was certainly warm when I arrived with the newly installed double-glazed windows. New cladding, painting and woodshed had the hut looking really good. Thanks Back Country and GWBN. Murray couldn't get much joy out of lighting the fire but at 1100 metres we didn't feel as cold as we thought we might have.

Another six am start and we set about retracing our footsteps of the previous day back to a very intimidating looking Tarn Ridge and Girdlestone. The weather was a bit cloudy with our intended direction of travel sometimes obscured. The views out west were very clear and we tried to identify some of the higher peaks. Down from Girdlestone we soon stopped and put on coats to break the strong cold wind. The initial part of the ridge is rocky outcrops and we had to climb down and sidle below a couple of these how-ever we were soon back on tussock and dragging our-selves along, down and eventually on-to the top of Adkin. I was willing the next rise to be North King but that was just self-delusion and North King was a long way off. By the time we crested North King, fifth high point, I had decided that the notion of dropping our packs at



Mid-King and scooting along to bag South King was not practical. It would have meant climbing Mid-King twice as the sign to Mid-King Bivvy is on the crest. With this decided, we enjoyed our lunch on Mid-King, sixth high point.

The track down to the bush-line from Mid-King was quite good to follow through the leatherwood, though quite slippery under foot. We were expecting to see a large orange triangle at the bush edge but settled for orange tape instead. If we had looked more carefully entering the bush we would have seen the next day's track downhill to our left. Luckily, Blair was good to enough to come back from the Bivvy and scout for the track. I had already decided that we would overnight at the Bivvy and was grateful of Blair's and Murray's agreement. The Bivvy has two mattresses and one bunk. There was not enough room on the floor for a mattress and air mat side by side so Ernie had two

mattresses on the bunk and Blair and Murray laid their air mattresses side by side on the floor.

We had tea early and could have been in bed by five pm. Four people had stayed at the Bivvy on the Friday night.

We just got up and left on the Sunday morning deciding to have breakfast at Mitre Flats Hut. We climbed back up to the bush edge and set off downhill. It was quite a good ground trail though pretty much un-marked. We followed it easily enough for an hour and then stopped for a break. Shortly after we missed the ground trail and began heading blindly downhill. We knew that the trail curved to the right near the bottom, but we ended up travelling to the right a long way too early. I'll take the blame! We ended up in Baldy Creek; not lost because we knew where we were, but not where we wanted to be. We inched our way down the creek, travelling in the creek and alternating on either bank. We eventually struck the marked track on the true right of South Mitre Stream and after another very reluctant, on my part, up-hill we reached the bridge over South Mitre, and soon Mitre Flats Hut where we cooked up our porridge and enjoyed a leisurely breakfast.

We packed up and headed back out the Barra Track in quite warm weather. Nearing the road end we heard that a young woman's car had been broken into and the ignition absolutely wrecked. Our weekend quickly turned sour when we discovered that the same thing had happened to Blair's car though in his case they had smashed the driver's window and not damaged the ignition to the same extent but despite valiant efforts by Murray we were unable to start the car. A very kind neighbour agreed that we could park the car safely on his property. Terribly disappointing to see the damage that these mongrels do just for the sake of stealing a car to take for a joy-ride. A phone call to Ann-maree and she came to collect us and we liaised with Blair's son in Pahiatua.

Thanks for assuming the role of leadership Blair, and thanks Murray for your company and hut light. We were Blair, Murray and Ernie scribe.

11 May 2025

Wharite

Report by Anne Lawrence

There were 11 of us: Neil (trip leader), Brenda, Mario, Jacob, Janet, Graham, Lawrence, Jo, Emma, Martin and me.

It was a lovely morning, sun shining and no wind, when we set off from Milverton Park. Wharite is home to the main television and FM radio transmitter for Palmy and the wider Manawatu and we could see it standing proud on the skyline as we headed out of the city.

We met Janet and Graham at the Coppermine Creek road end. So long since I had been there, I was surprised to see a toilet at the carpark. Very civilised. And the track is very civilised to start with – a fairly flat, well-benched track. But then you get to a slip that has taken the track out. No problem as there is a fairly well-marked detour. It involves going down to Coppermine creek and zigzagging back and forth across it before heading back up to the track. Not long before you come to another detour sign and repeat the zigzagging across the stream. Most of us waded through but two in our group were inexperienced trampers. They tried to keep their feet dry and, somewhat inevitably, there was a slip resulting in very wet clothes for Mario.

After the junction with the Coppermine Creek loop, the track climbs fairly stiffly. Although the day was still sunny, the forest kept us from getting too hot as we climbed. The track flattens out a little once it starts following the ridge. The track was not particularly easy to follow – it hadn't

been cleared for some time and it was muddy, so not easy going. Mario slipped and went over on his ankle. It didn't look good so we decided he should have a rest then he and Neil would head slowly back.

The rest of us carried on. There are a few ups and downs to negotiate and people's phones started pinging as we got closer to Wharite. There was a cold wind up here and I was pleased Mario had gone back. His wet clothing could have been a real problem with the wind chill. We needed to look for sheltered spot to stop in. We found one in sight of the aerial and at this stage the vote was to have lunch and not go on any further. We donned hats and jackets and hunkered down out of the wind. It was nice to have the sun still shining.

After lunch we headed on down. Janet and I caught up with Neil and Mario who was making slow but steady progress down towards Coppermine Creek. We checked out the second slip and found it safely passable. So we waited at the junction for the rest of the group so we could all cross the slip. At this point we discovered that the sole on Martin's left boot had almost totally parted ways with his boot. The gaiter strap was doing a grand job of holding the sole on but it must have been a bit odd to walk with. However, he made it back to the carpark – and his leather boots had kept his feet dry even wading through the creek with the flapping sole! He was looking forward to changing out of his boots and into the pair of sandals for the drive home... until he discovered that the pair was actually 2 left sandals!

The newer trampers found the track challenging. Mario's ankle seemed to have held up – he didn't hobble when he got back out of the car. Brenda has done a few tramps with the club before and said this was the hardest tramp she had done - she was definitely pleased to be back at the car. It was the first tramp Jacob had done with the club and he said he was pleased he had come.

All in all it was an enjoyable day out - and an award-winning day for Martin!

16-17 May 2025

HOWLETTS HUT Plan B

Report by Nicola

Wallace

LONGVIEW AND AWATERE HUTS

Trip Leader: Anne Lawrence

Five of us left town at noon on Friday. Thanks to not stopping on the way, we arrived at Kashmir Roadend in 2 hours. Kashmir Road, by the way, is in superb condition, having been restored by the forestry people. The day was sunny, with a bit of a breeze, and I was very happy that we'd have plenty of daylight to get up to Longview Hut and enjoy the evening. The plan was to go to Howletts Hut the next day, and out on Sunday via Daphne Hut.

We climbed in sunshine, but before the rocky outcrop not quite half way up, the track (and hence us) became more exposed, and the wind became much, much stronger, seemingly a Westerly but blowing from different directions too. Getting around the outcrop saw me hanging onto the rock, and edging round a few inches at a time. Letting go of the rock to rejoin the track was difficult, as I struggled to stay upright. We continued upwards, spreading out as we all struggled in the ferocious wind. I got blown over several times, despite my best efforts to spread my feet wide, and hold my poles wide apart for stability. Walking on the windward side of the track was essential, to maximise any shelter, and also to avoid being blown over the side.

Any break from the wind lasted for only a few metres before we copped it again. By now it was cloudy and very chilly.

Then we reached the top. Getting blown over yet again, I couldn't stand up as the side wind was an absolute gale. Anne was there too, wanting to help me out of the tussock, but I dragged myself out, and the only way for us to proceed up here was on hands and knees. This worked well, but was hard on the knees in shorts. Small stones were blowing around. As soon as the track dipped down towards the hut, we could stand and walk again. Nearly at the hut now. Suddenly I got a massive shove from behind, and my legs tottered down the last hill at high speed, trying to keep up with my body being shoved by the wind.

It was such a relief to get to the hut. I turned on the outside tap to wash the blood off my knees, and the water came out sideways! Soon we were all there, Neil got a fire going and it was soon very cosy. Martin looked at the forecast, the wind was due to reduce on Saturday, but the mood became sombre as we knew we might not be going to Howletts Hut.

It was about 10 years since I'd been to Longview Hut, and it was looking good. The annex part of the hut was partly closed in with clearlite plastic at the front. Neil and Woody had brought newspapers, and we got engrossed in crosswords and code crackers, and the time passed quickly.

That night we were treated to a beautiful moon rise, huge and orange the moon rose really quickly. The view down was lovely, the lights of the towns and farms, and I even spotted a car's headlights. Here we were in a hut getting battered by the ceaseless wind, looking down on the people in another world.

The wind continued to blow strong, with the hut clanking and shaking all night. I had mixed emotions: on one hand it was cosy in the hut, on the other hand I wasn't looking forward to facing that wind tomorrow, even if we went down.

In the morning there was no doubt, we wouldn't be going to Howletts Hut. We could see patches of fog in Hawkes Bay, so it must be calm down the bottom. From the hut veranda I saw a hunter and dog on the track, coming up the hill. Neil cut some kindling and we left the hut at 8am. The wind was still as ferocious as the day before, but this time I just managed to avoid going on hands and knees over the top, and once we got down the hill a bit it was more sheltered than yesterday. We enjoyed quite a pleasant descent to the carpark, which we reached before 10am. Almost no wind down here.

As it was still early and the weather was good, we all decided to pay a visit to Awatere Hut for lunch. We unloaded unneeded stuff into the car, then took off. We reached it in just under an hour, after a pleasant ridge walk and long descent to the Makaretu River. This hut is looking very good, it is now a six-bunker, and has been beautifully wood lined inside and the outside painted. It has an open fire, and a really nice mantelpiece and shelves. I lunched at the picnic table by the hut, while the others ate in the sun by the river.

We arrived back at the car before 1pm, and after a stop in Dannevirke, arrived back in PN at about 3pm, 27 hours after we had left. Many thanks to Martin for driving us to Kashmir Roadend, and Anne for driving us all the way back again. Thanks to everyone for their pleasant company. Howletts Hut will still be there for next time.

We were: Anne, Martin, Neil, Woody, Nicola.





What's in My Pack

It's a mystery to me!

By Graham Peters

Janet always wonders why my pack is heavier than hers - it's a mystery to me. Anyway, a couple of things I always have in my pack are as follows:

DIY - As we have motorcycles that still haven't graduated to tubeless tyres we always have old inner tubes. We cut rings off them to make strong rubber bands that have many uses - around your sleeping mat or anything else to keep in a tight bundle. I always have a chunk of it in the sidepocket as a firelighter.

Two for one - Duct tape. I wind a few metres off the roll onto a piece of small diameter plastic and bung it in my 1st aid kit. This has been used for emergency pack repairs. As yet I haven't used it to hold together any gaping wounds but you could I suppose.

Can't live without - Being a mapoholic I always have a map and compass but so should everyone. 95% of the time I always have my binoculars (possibly why my pack is a bit heavier). If I don't take them I usually end up pissed off if I don't have them. The corollary of that of course is that often they're just a dead weight.

Can't live without it – at least, don't leave home without it!

By Anne Lawrence

April's Fool Day – what a day to pick to do the Tongariro Crossing! I was joining in the walk with a school trip that my 11-year-old grandson, Arlo, was doing as part of his school camp. He'd had a choice of school camps and opted for the one that included the Crossing. A true tramper he didn't even look at the other possibilities when he discovered the Crossing was an option (I thought that overnighting at Wellington Zoo would have been tempting, but not for him).

But first I had to decide what to pack. Given my day pack sits in the garage ready to go, this was more a decision of what not to take. I'm going on a school trip and the weather forecast is really good. But it is the mountain so I wasn't about to discard my warm layer, jacket, or my woolly hat. But did I really need my PLB? My emergency bivvy bag? My full first aid kit? Ah well, they were already in the pack, so it seemed easier just to leave everything there.

Marty dropped me at the Mangetepopo road end. He stayed to see us off then drove to the Ketetahi car park and walked the Crossing in the opposite direction to meet up with us.

So there we were at Mangetepopo car park. Amongst the hordes of others setting out was our group: 31 kids, 2 teachers, 3 mums, 5 dads and one grandmother. We were greeted and sent on our way: 'Enjoy yourselves'.

And most of us did. We had perfect weather – fine, not too hot, not glary so the colours were beautiful. It's years since I have done the Crossing, and I was once again impressed by the beauty of the landscape.



But by our first break, one kid was noticeably hobbling – his gait resembled a cowboy after too long in the saddle. The problem? Chaffing. It started the previous day when they went round Lake Rotopounamu and stopped for a dip in the lake. The 45-minute walk back to the car with wet, sandy shorts was not comfortable. Another 45 minutes of walking along the Tongariro Track and he was even more uncomfortable. Not looking promising at the start of a day's walk.

Teachers and parents searched their packs for something to help – the best they had was paw paw cream. Then I remembered that hidden in my first aid kit was a tube of Gurney Goo. And to think I was considering leaving my first aid kit behind! Gurney Goo had proved something of a miracle cure for a fellow trampers afflicted with chaffing at the start of a 24 day trip in Australia. So I dug it out of my pack, praised its merits and passed it to the dad of the afflicted boy. By this stage his son (George) was willing to try anything, even something called Gurney Goo! He went behind a convenient rock for privacy and applied the Goo to the sore parts. And he appeared with a smile. No more hobbling. And he was a happy chap for the rest of the tramp.

The rest of the day was uneventful. We were about half way down the scoria slope from Red Crater when we met Marty. The first part of his walk had been very pleasant, but as the morning drew on, he met increasing numbers of people and I think he was a bit over all the 'hello', 'guten tag', etc.

At the finish George was still walking comfortably as he came over and thanked me for the Goo.



The next day I texted the lead teacher to say how much I had enjoyed going on such a well-organised trip. His response: 'Thanks for the anti chaffe cream. Saved George's walk'.

Gurney Goo is amazing – I won't leave home without it.



What's in my pack?

PNTMC 2025

Whether it is for comfort, safety or function, we all have it; gear we swear by and can't live without when out in the backcountry. 'What's in my pack' is an opportunity for us to share our stories, tips and advice on the gear we carry in our packs when tramping

Choose from the 5 categories below and write a short story or explanation about the item or gear. Include a bit of history or an example of it in use, and a photo (in action is best) if available.



Categories:

Two for one – Every milligram on our back counts, which is why some gear earns its place for its dual, or even multipurpose function.

Second-hand – From merino gems, to vintage Swandri and spare tent pegs, you never know what might be found in a second-hand store.

Repair job – in a 'throw away' society, taking a moment to repair your favourite gear can help save the planet and your wallet.

DIY – whether it is hand-made, self-made, custom-made or kit-set, gear that we make ourselves can have added value and satisfaction.

Can't live without – that one item you always pack.

For every entry, go into the draw to win a \$50 voucher from a local outdoor store of your choosing. Enter all 5 categories and go into the draw an extra 5 times. Draw made at the end of the year club BBQ.

email entries to: elderverity@gmail.com

Sender: PNTMC
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Palmerston North

PNTMC
Newsletter
June 2025

- Upcoming Trips and Club Nights

-  Trip Reports:

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