



Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

www.pntmc.org.nz

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

Newsletter October 2025



Photo by Kirstie Priddle: 'Armstrong Saddle'.

Club Nights

Club nights are 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.

Tues 7th October

Photo Competition

Tuesday night 7.30pm at the MTSC club-night venue Aquatic Club Rooms, Lido Complex, Park Road, PN.

Thu 9th October

Taranaki Tragedy

John Salisbury

It is twelve years since the death of two climbers on Mt Taranaki caught out in bad weather near the summit. John will focus on what he learned as part of the NZAC group involved, especially the importance of proper preparation and decision-making when undertaking climbs on the mountain.

Thu 30th October

Gear Auction / Bring and Buy Sale Night

Warren Wheeler

Clean out your cupboards and shed and bring your unwanted but well-loved gear to sell to a good home. Items will be sold at your set price or best offer. No refunds or returns... until our next Sale Night!

Upcoming Trips

Sat 4th October Moonlight Gorge Walk *Easy*

Verity Elder
021 260 1885

Following the Gorge Walk track from the Woodville end we make our way to Centennial Lookout in the last hour(s) of daylight. We return via the Balance Bridge Road (a short section of the old gorge road). Bring supper instead of lunch and don't forget your headlamp. Depart from Milverton Park at 4pm. Contact Verity no later than Friday 5pm.

Sun 5th October Ngauruhoe *FT*

Warren Wheeler
06 356 1998

Anniversary of Grandstand View trip in 1996 when Ruapehu had an eruption event. We will climb up the west side to the crater and back down the north side. Alpine start from PN at 6.00am. Alternatively leave Saturday afternoon to stay overnight depending on interest. Crampons and ice axe required - can be hired from the gear custodian.

Sun 12th October Coppermine Magazine Loop *Easy-Medium*

Nicola Wallace
021 209 0720

Just 15 minutes north of Woodville in the Ruahine Forest Park this pleasant bush walk has some creek crossings and takes us to the old magazine shaft and old coppermine site. We will return via the loop track that climbs up and out to the farmland for expansive views to the east. Depart Milverton Park at 8.00am.

Sat 18th October - Sun 19th October YTTY Hut *Medium*

Richard Lockett 06
323 0948

Walk the world-famous Te Araroa Trail, or at least this part in the Tararuas, from Otaki Forks to Waitewaewae Hut. Lots of variety including old logging relics, flowering clematis, a long swing bridge, lush rainforest, glorious mud, nice big hut. Return the same way. Depart Milverton Park 7.30am.

Sat 25th October - Mon 27th October Labour Weekend *TBA*

Warren Wheeler
06 356 1998

TBA. Please let Warren know if you would like to lead an overnight or a day trip over Labour Weekend. Otherwise, enjoy the long weekend!

Trips beyond October can be viewed on the club website [‘trip card.’](#)

Trip Grading - Trip grades depend on many factors, including weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient trapper 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
BWD = Best weather day of a weekend	

Other Grades:
- Family (Fam)
- Technical skills (T)
- Inst (Instruction)

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, there is probably a good reason for the delay. If you are in any doubt, please phone Bruce van Brunt 06 328 4761 or Verity Elder 0212601885

Notices

Ruahine Whio Protection Trust Annual Fundraiser

The Ruahine Whio Protection Trust's annual fundraiser "Wild Ruahine" 2026 calendar is once again available - get in early as they may sell out before xmas. Calendars are still \$20.00 +p&p, they make a great locally produced xmas present and the funds raised support the local hard working volunteer effort in the Ruahine Ranges to protect the Whio or Whistling Blue Duck. Many of the volunteers are PNTMC members, photos are all donated, and the production is by club member Anthony Behrens. Calendars are printed in Masterton. Available at club nights from Janet Wilson. They can be mailed out at \$5.50 for up to 3 calendars.



Inter Club Quiz

PNTMC entered two teams in this year's inter club quiz. One team won, the other came second! 1st prize was donated by MUAC, a very generous 1 free night for the winning team and other PNTMC club members at the MUAC Hut on Mt Ruapehu, Turoa. Date TBC. Thank you to MUAC for hosting.

Servery window fixed!

PNTMC and committee member Graeme Curwen fixed the sliding door to the servery window in the Quaker Hall! A generous and thoughtful good deed. Kia Kaha Graeme!



PNTMC is associated with **Federated Mountain Clubs** <http://fmx.org.nz/>

Trip Reports

Atiwhakatu Hut – (2nd August).

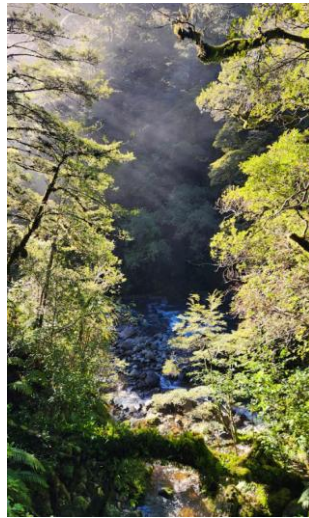
Report and Photos by Camille Penny

The morning of August 2nd was chilly as we set out from Palmy, with low fog and fresh frost on the ground along the whole drive to the trailhead. We were all glad for our extra layers and were motivated to keep a brisk pace from the starting. The sun was shining, and the morning was beautiful, with all the shades of green popping out fresh and bright. We had fun identifying many of the ferns and trees. Before long we came to the first swing bridge, and a first ever for me as I hadn't been on one before! Fun and maybe a little scary at first! :)

The track was easy and well maintained, and before we knew it, we were at Atiwhakatu Hut. Woody had the foresight to let us know he was bringing his billy stove, so we all got a treat of a hot drink to warm us up with our lunches. It was a quick lunch break as it was a bit too cold to be hanging around in the shade, so once our hot drinks were done, we packed up and started the return.



With the sun overhead, the light coming through the forest was beautifully dappled and serene. We made our way across the bridges and back to the carpark in short order. We got to see some Takahē at the Pūkaha National Wildlife Centre where we stopped for a hot chocolate on the way home.



We were Woody Lee (trip leader), Camille Penny and Anja Scholz.

Snowballs at Rangī – (24th August).

Report by Laurin Benedict

Photo by a friendly stranger and Laurin Benedict

With the weather god blessing us with perfect skies and a mild temperature, we set off on a beautiful drive, an hour and a half from Palmerston North, toward the Rangiwahia Hut track. Our group, Conan, Kim, Kat, Grant, Mathew, June, Kirsty, Laurin, and Swarnima, was led by Doug as we began the hike up the hills towards the snow-capped peaks.



The uphill trail was scenic, with trees casting just the right amount of shade and a crisp chill in the air that kept us from overheating as we walked. Along the way, we got to know each other better. In fact, June realised she already had a connection—she knew Doug's wife, Maho, from her Zumba classes. With the skies clear, we were rewarded with sweeping views of Ruapehu, Taranaki, and the wind farm towers spinning in the distance.

At the halfway point, the sound of rushing water drew us to a spectacular bridge

stretched across a waterfall. The view was so breathtaking that Kim declared it would be the perfect spot for a wedding—especially for a couple that loved hiking.

As we pushed toward the top, fresh snowmelt trickled down the slopes, and the last section of the trail became icy and challenging. But our effort was rewarded: at the summit, we were greeted with stunning views of snow-draped mountains. Grant and Mathew fired up a cooktop, and soon we were all sipping hot cocoa while soaking in the scenery.

Laughter soon filled the air as snowball fights broke out. It turned into a fitting Father's Day tribute of sorts, with both dads, Doug and Grant, becoming the prime targets. At the hut, we met members of the

Massey University Alpine Club, a lively group of students, and even a playful dog named Flopsy, who won everyone's heart.



The descent was slippery in parts, but we came down buzzing with energy. Back at the trailhead, we piled into the cars and began the drive home, stopping for ice cream before saying our goodbyes.

It was a day of adventure, laughter, and shared memories—made even more special by the perfect weather and wonderful company.

We were Doug Strachan (trip leader), Conan, Kim, Kat, Grant, Mathew, June, Kirsty, Laurin, and Swarnima.

Waitarere Beach Walk – (30th August).

Report by Janet Wilson

Photos by Janet Wilson and Martin Lawrence

It's always good to go for a beach walk on a late winter's day, especially when the hills are shrouded in clouds and the wind is blowing strongly.

The weather forecast was indeed not promising for the Sunday walk. After way too much studying of the various forecasts we can now all access, I changed to the plan to Saturday to hopefully miss the worst of it. As it turned out the weather on the day at the beach was largely clear blue sky, with a cool wind from the North. We chose to avoid walking into the wind by walking north through the forest to the Manawatu River mouth, with the plan to walk back down the beach with a nice helpful tail wind.



After one false start we found the correct path from near the shops leading to the forest trails. Navigating with maps on phones, we took the easy forest road as the most direct line to the river. From my point of view this was possibly not the best choice; since I was last there, a number of years ago now, much logging and replanting has occurred, so instead of walking through tall trees along shady paths, much of the forest road is now wide open to the sun and wind. It was surprisingly exposed and warm. The gravel surface is rather unpleasant too, especially in tramping boots.

Once we neared the river, we were back in old forest and had to navigate through some coastal scrub before hitting the beach. We were right on the river mouth with the tide well in, surprisingly high given it was at least a couple of hours before high tide. This made it difficult to walk back down the beach from

where we were, so we headed back through the scrub. We eventually settled on taking the forest road that ran south and closest to the beach, with the aim of finding a way back to the beach for lunch. This road was deteriorated from recently logging; eventually we stopped for lunch in a less than perfect spot, wondering where to go next.



I do have memories from the past of Waitarere forest walks taking much longer and I wasn't that keen on making this day too long. We did a bit of scratchy, scrubby direction sampling at this point, eventually settling on a reasonable deer trail that took us towards the beach. It wasn't too long until we were back in extensive coastal scrub on a well-formed quad bike trail that meandered along near the forest edge. We found a way on to the beach and walked back south near the high tide line. There was a good tail wind, but it still seemed a very long walk. Martin and Anne had taken a different (and faster) route to avoid the

scrub, and we met up with them again further down the beach. Kirsten and Camille did some worthwhile beach cleaning by removing a large amount of nylon fishing line.

Some of the group hadn't been to the south side of the river mouth before, it was Camille's first trip to the NZ coast, and it was nice to share the experience with them. We finished the day with ice creams from the beach store.

We were Kirsten, Steven, Martin, Anne, Camille, Richard and Janet (leader and scribe).



Platinum Mines Via Toe Toe Loop Hut – (14th September).

Report by Blair Petersen

Photos by Blair Petersen and Nicola Wallace

When I spotted this trip on the card, I was instantly intrigued; I'd been keen to explore the Platinum Mines for a while. The previous day's wild winds and cold snap had us bracing for rough conditions, but we were pleasantly surprised by the warm sun and a gentle breeze. A perfect day for tramping.

We began at the Kahuterawa Road carpark, following Sledge Track to the swing bridge. From there, we tackled "the elevator," a steep, stepped climb to reach Toe Toe Junction. It's a great spot for morning tea, with expansive views over the valley and wind farm.



Continuing anticlockwise on the Toe Toe Loop, we reached the Platinum Mines circuit. These mines were hand-dug by Hungarian-born Alexander Menesdorffer between 1875 and 1927. Of four specimens he submitted for assay in Melbourne, three showed traces of platinum, and one was deemed 'satisfactory'. Despite the excitement, no commercial mining ever followed.

We explored all five mines—two horizontal shafts (wet feet guaranteed) and three vertical shafts accessed via ladders. It felt like stepping back in time, imagining Menesdorffer working these tunnels by hand. A real highlight of the trip.



Lunch was a relaxed affair in the sunshine, with sweeping views westward over the wind farm. From there, we completed the Toe Toe Loop and retraced our steps, mud and all, back down to Sledge Track and the carpark.

Other options in the area include going around the Otangane loop, or further on to the peak at Aruwaru & back to Sledge track, or even a crossing via the Argyle track to the eastern side exiting at Naenae Rd.

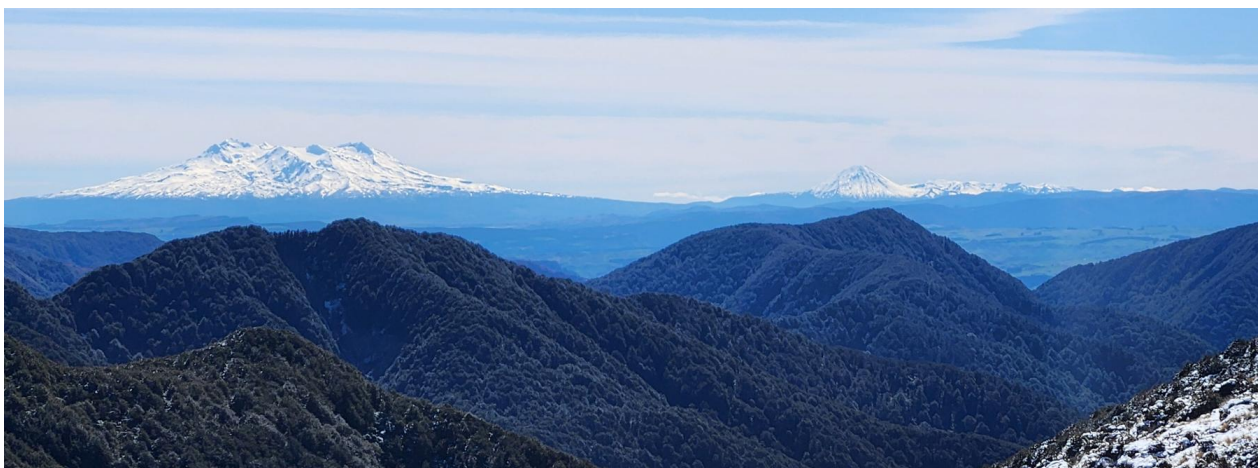
We were Nicola Wallace (leader), Blair Petersen and Adam.

Sunrise Hut – (20th September).

Report and Photos by Camille Penny

The school holidays on this same weekend meant that this trip turned from an overnight into a day trip. We managed to squeeze into Blair's car and made good time to the trailhead, arriving just a bit after 9am. It was a beautiful sunny morning with the ranges highlighted by a fresh snowfall from the night before.

We headed off through the pasture to the beginning of the track and began our ascent. The going was steady, and we were all ready to shed a layer by 'smoko' time. We passed a few people coming down from their overnight at Sunrise, saying that it had snowed about 3" overnight! We kept zig-zagging our way up with the tantalizing views every so often peeking out through the trees. There was some evidence of the recent snowfall as we got higher, as there were patches of melting snow still in the shady spots, but most of it had melted away already.



One last bend and there we were up at the Hut! And what a gorgeous view! Just a little wind on the top and crisp sunshine! We enjoyed lunch in the sunshine and then headed over to the saddle for a bonus view of Mt Ruapehu and Mt Ngauruhoe!! The walk to the saddle was a bit soggy and the fresh snow lent for some fun throwing snowballs...until Blair got one in the ear (sorry about that!). Undeterred, the focus moved to building snowmen and snow sculptures to highlight the view. We eventually decided the day was slipping away and it was time to head back down. A bit of chocolate for the return trip and we were all ready to head down.



We were fortunate with the weather all day with sun and hardly any wind. The track was beautifully maintained despite a warning for a downed tree. There was plenty of trail left to skirt the slip left by the tree, so no problem there. The downhill portion flew by, and we were back to the car a little after 4pm. A stop in Dannevirke for ice cream and we were back in Palmy by dinnertime.

We were Warren Wheeler (leader), Blair Petersen, Camille Penny, Woody Lee, Kirstie Priddle.

What's in My Pack


'What's in my pack' 2025 continues throughout the Spring season. Entries are accepted right up until the day before the end of year club BBQ in early December. What fun story, or top tip do have to share? No word limit, write a short punchy list or a lengthy story... completely up to you..... email entries to elderverity@gmail.com

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



PNTMC Newsletter

October 2025

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- Notices
- Trip Reports: Atiwhakatu Hut, Snowballs at Rangī, Waitarere Beach Walk, Platinum Mines Via Toe Toe Loop Hut, Sunrise Hut.
- What's in my pack?

Send articles to

the newsletter editor at elderverity@gmail.com



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<https://tinyurl.com/pntmcfacbook>

Get out and about with us!

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