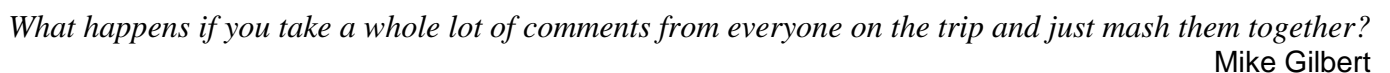




December 2011 – January 2012



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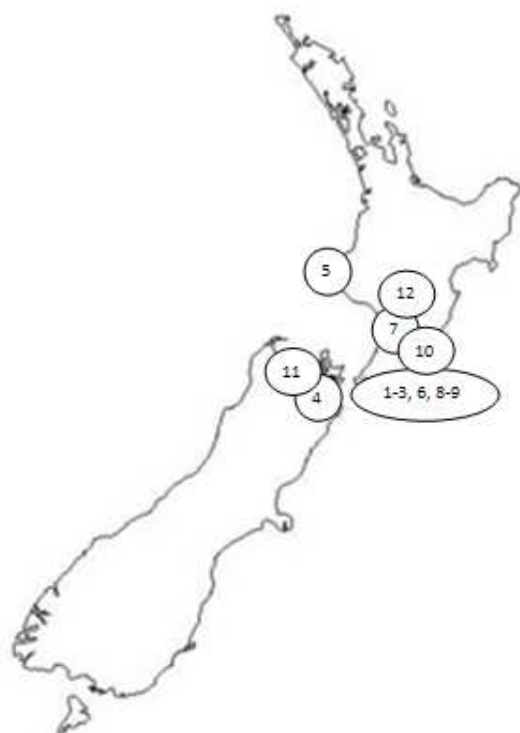
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The Nature of Things

Sharron Came, President



With the year drawing to a close many of you will be putting the finishing touches to your holiday tramping plans. The summer trip schedule will be out soon and hopefully there are a few trips therein that pique your interest. Big thanks to Amanda and Richard for putting the schedule together and to everyone who committed to lead a trip. It bears repeating that without trip leaders we would cease to have a tramping club. If you want to help out with Bushcraft course in March 2012 get in touch with Amanda at chiefguide@wtmc.org.nz

Of course we need members too, to go on the trips! Our annual new member night is coming up on Wednesday 22 February. This is the evening when we throw the doors open and welcome people new to Wellington, or tramping, or both and try to interest them in signing up for some trips with a view to eventually joining the club. If you have any friends, work colleagues or family that might be interested don't forget to bring them along. If you are interested in promoting the night or helping out on the night let Megan know at promotions@wtmc.org.nz

Shortly Helen will be sending you a message asking you to renew your membership and probably somewhere in this newsletter there is information about the revised membership criteria and membership types. Keeping our membership data base up to date, organising mail outs of newsletters and journals etc is pretty time consuming. Big thanks to Helen for quietly, patiently and methodically working through these tasks. Next year we are keen to find ways to further stream line membership stuff to reduce the work load of the Membership Officer, cut costs and reduce the amount of paper we create. If you have any ideas Helen would love to hear from you at membership@wtmc.org.nz

If you are looking for a summer bach (okay crib if you are from the Mainland) the Club Lodge is worth considering. The Lodge tends to be underutilised in summer despite the cheap rates, great weather and the huge variety of things you can do when based at Ruapehu. Contact Brian at wtmc.lodge@xtra.co.nz. Anyone can use the lodge as long as one person in your party is a club member or you know a member who will vouch for you. Amelia White has been doing lots of work behind the scenes coming up with ideas on what you can do at the lodge. We hope to have that material available on the club website early in 2012. If you are interested in helping out with lodge related stuff we are keen to hear from you. We are looking for someone to take on the Committee role of Lodge Convenor and every year we like to train up a few more people in the running of the lodge to replenish our pool of lodge leaders available to run the lodge when we get group bookings. If you are interested please get in touch.

The year end is traditionally a time for thinking about what you want to achieve in the next 12 months and making resolutions. I'm really keen to get some more of the right kind of people involved in the administration of the club. For me, and the rest of the Committee I suspect, 2011 has been a bit of a slog. To be quite blunt, without more volunteers helping

out with running the club and unless we figure out more efficient ways of operating to reduce workloads we will go the way of the Kakapo and then the Moa.

Upshot is I'm looking for a few more energetic, practical, efficient, innovative types who are good at getting things done to come onto the Committee. While much can be achieved from the sidelines we need a strong committee to drive administrative change and really build the club up and keep it going for future generations. There is a perception out there that being on the Committee involves abandoning your exciting fun filled life in favour of sitting round at boring meetings all evening debating the size of pin heads. Not on my watch.

I would like to thank the current Committee for pretending to read all my emails, all their hard work, support and good humour during the year, it is very much appreciated. To everyone who is part of the WTMC community, I wish you an awesome holiday and hope to see you down at the pub for a few Xmas drinks on either the 14th or the 21st of December, preferably both. Wherever you are over the holiday period, may your weather windows be big enough to accommodate your plans. I look forward to working with you in 2012 which I very much hope will not be the year of the Kakapo.

Track Talk

Amanda Wells, Chief Guide



While Christmas is looming, today I am focused on the slightly closer deadline of the WTMC Summer trip schedule. Between now and you reading this newsletter, it will have been semi-miraculously filled and the wrestle with Microsoft Office won. I hope! Thanks to everyone who's put their hand up to lead a trip, including a couple of newbie leaders. One highlight of the past handful of schedules has been doing away with 'leader required's nearly entirely. The flipside is that more trips have been cancelled so you sometimes feel like we're in the doldrums. But when Steve Kohler, our statistics maestro, ran the latest numbers, this year is tracking just ahead of 2010 – which was a vast improvement on the nadir that was 2009. We're still down on the peak of activity around 2005 but there is definitely no need for despair.

One way to prevent bad weather bleeding punters from your trip on a Thursday and Friday is to enforce our policies around payment. You'll find that if people have parted with cold, hard cash, they are less likely to be put off by a little rain or wind. Don't be afraid to require payment to confirm a place on the trip: 10 days before for a North Island trip, and 17 days before for a South Island trip. If you are a punter, please make leaders' lives easier by paying before the deadline. And remember that the most interesting tramping experiences generally don't involve perfect weather...

If you are leading a trip and need to cancel it, please do let me know. I can pass that on to the transport officer, emergency contacts coordinator and newsletter editor so they don't hassle you.

I think it was last month that I wrote about gear and how frustrating it is to find problems with club gear when you're out in the hills. If you are leading a trip and see a punter attaching a fly to the outside of their pack, please stop them. Flies are not bombproof and need to be packed away from pointy forms of harm. We all have an interest in taking good care of our expensive collective gear. Please help inculcate this culture into those new to the club.

We're looking to run a Bushcraft course next year, probably 3-4 March and will be on the hunt for instructors. You don't need to be an outdoor survival expert, just someone who can introduce others to the basics of tramping. Many people are keen to get out in the hills but don't know a fly from a gaiter, and you might enjoy teaching them.

I haven't headed off on any tramps since I wrote my last newsletter column, which feels very odd but will be remedied later today. Training for the Goat and planning a couple of summer epics has been keeping me busy. I hope you all have time to get out into the hills in the next couple of months and remember that special joy of longer trips. Not so joyful when you get weather like many of us experienced down south last Christmas, but still worth it!

Merry Christmas and happy tramping

Membership

Helen Law, Membership officer



1. This month we welcome Debbie Buck as a Senior member. Congratulations.

2. During the last few months, we have been reviewing our Membership policy. After considering feedback and comments received, the following are modified/ simplified:

- applications for Senior or Junior membership now requires 2 overnight tramping trips with the club;
- Friends of the Club, where previously a Senior member, can automatically re-apply as a Senior without having to complete the 2 qualifying tramping trips again.
- Associate (partner of a member) automatically become a Couple member with their partner after 10 years of Associate membership with the club;
- Family membership to be renamed as Child/ Children, that is for child/ children under the age of 18 years who has at least one parent or guardian who is a member.

For full details, please refer to the updated club policy on our website. Thank you those who sent me your thoughts and comments. We hope you welcome these changes too.

3. Within a week or two, you will receive 2012/2013 membership renewal invoice via email, or by post if you don't have an email address.

Note that your subscription gives you priority lodge bookings, journal, gear hire, FMC levy, FMC discount card (in June) and membership rates to the great number and variety of trips the club runs. The subscription is still kept at a very low rate due to the huge amount of work contributed by a relatively small number of volunteers that keep the club running smoothly. This year we have reviewed our membership subscription rates and minor adjustments have been made to be in-line with the price structure of other tramping clubs.

The 2012/2013 renewal rates, before discount, are as follows. Once again, we have included prompt payment discount if you pay before **1st February 2012**. Please refer to your invoice for detail.

1. Senior	\$ 62
2. Couple	\$ 85
3. Veteran	\$ 52
4. Veteran Couple	\$ 76
5. Associate/ Child/children/ Friends of the Club/ Junior	\$ 38

If you do not get your invoice by Christmas or if you have any queries regarding membership, please do not hesitate to contact me membership@wtmc.org.nz

Merry Christmas, enjoy the holiday break and see you in 2012!

WTMC photo competition

Donna Maher and Jenny Beaumont, Social convenors



We have set the date for our annual photo competition: Wednesday 7th March 2012. We'll be asking for entries in early February (we'll confirm a date soon) – so don't forget to take your camera out and about with you over the summer holidays!

We have aligned our categories with that of the FMC photo competition so that we can enter our winning photos into the FMC competition (unless winners ask us not to). The categories:

- Above bush line
- Below bush line
- Hut and camp life
- Native flora and fauna**
- Outdoor landscape**

** no people in these photos please

Please note:

- No more than 2 entries per category per person
- Photos should have been taken since 1 January 2010.
- If you are into digital manipulation, please restrict it to cropping, sharpening and tonal/exposure adjustments.
- Photos should be as high as resolution as possible (up to 5MB) and submitted as .jpg files.
- Please label your photos with the category_your name_number (1 or 2 if it's the second entry for that category): e.g. above bush_BeaumontJ_1

Entries should be handed to Jenny or Donna (or another willing committee member!) on a Wednesday night on a CD or flash drive, or can be posted in to us at WTMC PO Box 5068, Wellington.

Any questions please email us at social@wtmc.org.nz

Club nights

Donna Maher and Jenny Beaumont, Social convenors



The club will be open from 7.30pm – 8pm on the 21st December for gear pick-up and returns only. For those interested, we will wander down to a local pub for pre-Christmas drinks at 8pm.

The club rooms will be closed on the 28th December and 4th Jan for the Christmas Break.

We will open again on the 11th January 2012 for gear pick-up and returns only (open from 7.30pm – 8pm only)

We're always looking for speakers so please let us know if you have a trip you'd like to tell us about.

Happy Christmas and Happy Tramping from the social team!

Lodge update

Sue Walsh, Ruapehu Lodge convenor



Merry Christmas to all the users of the lodge! We hope you had an enjoyable experience at the lodge over winter. We strongly encourage you to consider the lodge as summer destination too. If you're not used to the seeing the mountain in its summer glory you will be pleasantly surprised. There's heaps to do for all ages: walking, tramping, climbing, mountain biking, lazing on the deck..... and fantastic photographic opportunities. DoC run a summer programme too which is worth checking out.

We've had to do a few minor repairs since the end of the ski season including fixing some wobbly legs on chairs in the lounge area. Just a reminder that we need the furniture to last a while so would appreciate care being taken when the chairs are moved around and that, tempting as it is, the chairs are not used for jumping practice.

A modest summer work programme is planned to double glaze all the remaining single glazed windows and to stop the draught that comes out of the vent in the kitchen.

Don't forget to contact Lodge Bookings to book your weekend away.

Have a wonderful Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

WTMC Annual Journal 2011 – stories needed

Tony Gazley (soon-to-be Journal editor)



Do you have an interesting story to tell? Have you been on an interesting trip in the last year and took amazing photographs to match?

Send your story and photographs to journal@wtmc.org.nz for inclusion in the next WTMC journal.

Deadline for submissions is 25 February 2012.

Newsletter competition

Newsletter editor, Sarah Young



Are you a budding artist? Do you know anyone who is?

Every month I publish my favourite photo from the articles submitted to the front cover. I'd like to change that and print an eye catching, self explanatory illustration on the front cover; if someone saw the newsletter on your screen or printed out on the table, the front cover would draw them to it, make them want to read it and find out more about the club.

Could you create the front cover?

Remember when creating your design that the newsletter gets printed in black and white, A5 size and also as a pdf on the club website.

Please send entries to newsletter@wtmc.org.nz by Friday 27 January 2012. The winner will be published on the next newsletter front cover.

Trip reports

Korokoro Dam

Sunday 30 October, Family trip, Belmont Regional Park (map #1)

Richard Lyth

A group of 16 set out in good weather for the popular Cornish St to Korokoro Dam walk, a 3 hour return trip. The track follows Korokoro stream all the way to the dam, which was built in 1903 to supply Petone. Remnants of the water pipeline remain.

Our group had a good number of children, most under 5. Our first stop was in a sunny patch by the stream. This was enjoyed by all the kids, who threw the entire contents of a small beach into the water. We moved on from here, following the track which ambles along the stream. At times the track climbed a little, which must of been tiring for little legs. This is a popular route, so there were many pauses to let mountain bikers, runners and dogs past our group. During this leg some of our group had to return to the car park; when we all re-grouped at Baked Bean Corner our number was half.

We pushed on for the dam, where, like the morning tea stop, play was a higher priority than eating for our young trampers. The kids enjoyed feeding the ducks, and watching three ducklings on the lake. There was no sign of the rain that had been forecast, in fact quite the opposite. Our return to the car park required a full repertoire of distractions and magic jelly beans. One or two kids even got carried some of the way. We were back at the car park by 3.30pm, 5 ½ hours after setting off.



Gusthav, Carlee, Amelia



Watching ducks by the lake

Rimutaka Incline MTB

13 November, MTB Easy Medium, Rimutaka Incline, Wellington (map #2) Snaiet Shalav
Punters: Mark and Amelia White, David Ryley, David Moginie, Snaiet Shalav



Dave M, Amelia, Mark, Dave R, Snaiet

Mark and Amelia did an excellent job of arranging perfect weather for this lovely excursion over the Rimutaka Incline and down the other side to Cross Creek. The ride up is fairly cruisy, even for a rider with no stamina like me.

We stopped at the summit to ponder about life in general and have lunch. I was convinced my bike was heavy to ride and first aid was administered by the two Daves, pumping up the tyres and suggesting I turn off the suspension. I felt like I had a completely new bike but had to immediately let air out and switch suspension back on for the bumpy ride downhill.

It must have been a hard life for those early pioneers who built the track and maintained the trains. I am grateful for their efforts which have left us with the rail trail. We took our time reading the sign posts and admiring the views which were beautiful, despite being largely scrub in a lot of directions.

Despite knowing we would need a torch, I think there was one working torch among us and fortunately that person was in front of me for the long, cold ride through the summit tunnel. The two Daves said they cycled down Siberian gully, which I would like to have seen. I reckon they dismounted like the rest of us as instructed by the signs. On second thoughts, the wild Canadian may have ridden down.

At Cross Creek, someone had left markers in stones and a message that 2.2km remained. Moving the decimal point rock was very tempting.



I was delighted to be able to stop for photos. The last time I did this trip privately, we were concerned about catching the train in Featherston. Consequently we took very few photos of the incline and lots of the train platform in Featherston (where we arrived 3 hours early). The only downer of the day is that an unfortunate family will have returned to the car park to find their car broken into. This was a sobering reminder not to leave enticing items in a car at a road end.

5 November, Family, Paua Hut, Rimutaka Forest Park (map #3)	Mike Gilbert
Punters: Mike, Angela, Toby, Beth, Taylor, Carly, Christian, Constanze, Gustav, Moritz, Rowena, Erika, Mary, Rex, Tim, Max, Richard, Hamish, Nick, Marg, Iona, Charlie	

[illegible]

There were so many favourite parts:

- fireworks
- having left over pudding for breakfast
- everyone gathered round the bonfire
- roasting marshmallows and damper
- fireworks display and sparklers
- sleeping in the tent
- jelly beans
- the company
- kids being busy mucking around
- having a blast building dams
- playing “families”
- counting bridges
- my kids being exhausted enough to sleep in a tent!!
- my kids really enjoyed the river crossing
- singing songs (badly and loudly)
- the swing
- the scenery and weather
- Gustav’s admiration of Taylor (who was playing very hard to get!)
- Carly (2.5 yrs) walking almost all the way in and all the way out and announcing to those behind her “follow me mateys” in her best pirate voice
- the kids all taking turns in the buggy racing over the midway bridge (fun with baby buggies!)
- watching the boys make the dam in the river
- everyone helping each other out with carrying gear, pushing (and carrying!!) the buggy, carrying kids over water
- weather forecast coming true
- I can bring my 3 year old next time
- the fire, dam building and fireworks. I am fairly sure even some kids enjoyed it (not just the dads)
- sleeping in til 7.30!
- the dinner and dessert – there was plenty and it tasted mighty good
- that all the kids seemed happy to be around anyone – I saw little of Hamish when we were walking, he had a great time walking up ahead at his own pace.
- we had a great time, thanks all for a neat weekend
- it was a constant cute-fest with pirate-Carly demanding I'M THE MATEY
- I'm still stunned that Beth made it both there and back with that buggy and didn't once collapse with exhaustion.
- it was the first time I've ever seen bread baked on the end of a stick and over a fire
- I realised the true and never-ending power of jellybeans
- I also realised how a simple game of 'Hide the Hat' could keep kids enthused for quite some time
- basically, the weather rocked, the company rocked and my back held its temper.



Rintoul Hut

4-6 November, Medium Fit, Richmond Range (map #4)

Mike Phethean

Punters: Sharron Came, David Jewel and Mike Phethean



The Richmond Range is seldom visited by the club, possibly as there are few good round trips. I had visited Rintoul before when doing the Richmond alpine route so knew it was good country.

The choice of route was a problem, as to do a round trip meant we would miss the 7pm ferry and turn the trip into FE (Flipping Exhausting). Wisely we decided to visit Rintoul and come back over Old Man tops.

The ferry was late and the road end not the best. Many thanks to Megan for

driving us there. It then started snowing quite thickly and so it was a charge down to Lake Chalice. We took 20 minutes and thankfully no one was there. This meant we could share the hut with the medium group with no drama (2 on mattresses on the floor.) It was 2am!

We didn't make a very early start but we were out of the hut by 9am. We followed round Lake Chalice down the pleasant Goulter valley until the turn off for Old Man Hut. We sidled the river and then headed up the ridge to Old Man Hut for lunch. We were doing well on the timing.

Leaving a fond welcome message in the hut book for the mediums we headed up the ridge. The lack of sleep started to take its toll and the pace dropped a bit. Between the false summit and Mt Rintoul there is a gnarly ridge with a 250m drop. This is best described as interesting in normal conditions but a few inches of snow made it far more slippery.

We carefully drooped down and then headed up the easier slopes to Mt Rintoul. The drop from here to the hut lacked the joyous scree of my last visit but the route was still fast so we arrived at 5pm.



A fellow called Jim was also wandering through; he was glad of our company but more importantly that we had spare matches. A good brew and dinner put a glow on our faces which was good because the southerly meant it was getting cold outside. We did have some sparklers but we were all asleep before dark so were no use.

The next day was an early rise at 5am; we realized that to make the van at 3pm it was going to be another long day. We retraced our steps and with the snow being better in the reverse direction, we made it back 3 minutes earlier than the agreed time. We did contemplate the Old Man route but felt it would be too icy. Talking to the other group it probably would have been better.

We did notice an old route up Mt Patriarch from Mid Goulter Hut: sometime we'll make a proper round trip of it!

Better luck next time

Nov 11-13, ALP 1 MF, Mt Taranaki (map #5)

Sharron Came

Punters: Tony Gazley, Katy Glenie, Ian Harrison (photos),
WeiMin Ren, Dmitiri Alkhimov, Sharron Came

Dear Mt Taranaki,

Such a tease! Forever sitting aloof and proud on the western side of the North Island, often half hidden behind mist and cloud, giving off strong hints of, but seldom revealing, your full splendour. We were hoping we might get lucky this time. Mid-week the forecast looked promising. By Friday night I could hardly bear to look at the isobars of shattered dreams. It's tough when the wiggly lines don't wiggle where you want them to!

It takes more than a few wiggly lines and a bad reputation to put us off though. Undeterred and in good spirits we strode up the staircase track to Kapuni Lodge Friday night. The unfamiliar conditions were confusing. We encountered a mild, calm evening lit up by a full moon. Where were the howling gales and torrential rain that normally rebuff all comers? Your elegant profile dominated the night sky. Your snow-capped shoulders looked very fine.

Oh don't you hate it when you misinterpret the signals! We should have just kept walking on Friday night, all the way to the top! Saturday morning we awoke to clag and rain. No sign of you anywhere Taranaki and therefore no need to hurry. But already some of the party were getting bored and it was not yet 9am. Already Dmitiri and I were getting thrashed at cards. Visions of caged monkeys running riot in the zoo flashed before me. Would we have to tie them up and give them a light tap on the head with the ice hammer to subdue them? Fortunately Tony saved the day by escorting the young and the restless on a round trip to Lake Dive.

Free of the effervescence and the hustle and bustle of hyper active alpinists, secure in the knowledge the circuit takes at least 4-5 hours, the old and tired settled in for some quality napping. We kept the ice hammer close so we could lightly tap each other when we

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needed to wake up enough to snack. Late afternoon a dishevelled and dripping wet version of the young and the restless returned. They looked to be less energetic than when they had left although it soon became obvious their card playing was as sharp as ever. The weather looked much the same - unsuitable for anything but a walk inside a cloud. Dinner was consumed with some enthusiasm, the highlight being Katy's gluten free chocolate cake. A true taste sensation, thanks Katy!

Sunday the weather was supposed to clear so, despite still not getting so much as a glimpse of you we headed up just in case. But true to form Taranaki, you proved elusive. At first we had no rain, then drizzle arrived followed by a southerly breeze, pretty tame by your usual standards but cool nonetheless. 500m above Kapuni Lodge, at Syme Hut we were philosophical as we read of the splendid views of you on offer on Friday. Swallowing hard we made the decision that the promise of experiencing your charming company could lure us only so far in the thick cloud and strengthening southerly. Summiting would have to wait for another day.

See ya next time.

Big thanks to Steve for coming along to help drive the van, Tony for co-leading the trip.



Dmitiri disappearing into the Taranaki sunshine.



The long retreat from Syme to the carpark.



Sharron, Katy and WeiMin heading up to Syme Hut, WeiMin carrying his camera rugby style



Tony in Kapuni Lodge.

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Hawkins Hill to Red Rocks

26 November, Medium day trip, Wellington (map #6)

Marie Henderson

Punters: John Harrison, Brian, David Collett, Marie Henderson



This day trip in the southern coast area has some interesting variation and views, despite the lack of natural setting: you pass above the southern landfill and it is almost all on 4wd tracks. As we set out it was looking like it might rain, but luckily there was no wind; travelling the ridge line to the coast is less fun in high wind. To get some better exercise we started from Owhiro road instead of the turbine, having then to climb Hawkins hill via the tip track.

Everyone on the trip had a camera, and some had pretty fancy ones, but this had not been listed as a photography trip. But taking photos kept us to a nice pace and made us take an interest in the views and surroundings that you'd miss if only walking.

After the climb we went along the track to the bunkers out on the coast. The bunkers are quite interesting to have a look around. I enjoyed it as I had not been out that way before, so got to cover some new ground, and it was a good place for an early lunch taking in the views. From the bunkers there is a marked track to follow down a small creek and out to the coast, this added a good bit of variety to the trip as it was the only part not on 4wd tracks. The track comes out in a bach's wood heap; it would be hard to find going the other way if you didn't know where to look!



The walk round the coast back to the Red Rocks car park (where we had dropped another car to save any road walking) was also interesting with a variety of oddish people out: the winner for me was the guy carrying two kids (one front and rear backpack style) and jogging! The kids didn't seem to mind.

Then it finally did start to rain, but only when we got back to the car. Great timing! There had been little wind the entire trip, but it was still good not to get totally wet. Definitely a neat trip to do local to Wellington and the views would be excellent on a fine day.

Mitre Flats Hut – a first time tramping club experience

7-9 October, Easy, Tararua Forest Park (map #7)

Helen Armstrong

Punters: Helen Armstrong, Deborah Stoebe, Anita Sua, Pete Blaxter, Tony Gazley (leader)

As a first timer I thought I'd arrive nice and early so I got to the station around 07:30. Great!: enough time to get a nice big coffee. I wasn't sure where I was going but used my initiative and headed towards the group standing next to the mini bus with the large packs.

Everyone introduced themselves on the way out of Wellington; Tony, Anita, Pete, Deborah and myself. Tony was obviously a very experienced leader so I knew we were in good hands. We had a nice chat on the way over the Rimutakas. The weather looked very promising on the way with only a small amount of cloud over the hills. I began to regret getting a large coffee.

There were little sniggers of amusement in the van as we had turned off the road some time ago and appeared to be driving rather a long way down a farm track. I was wondering if I was going to be required to walk at any point. But hey this was an easy medium tramp after all! The medium group reportedly had to walk in from the road.



On the way through the forest we got little glimpses of the mountain range and the bird song was lovely. The weather deteriorated during the morning but we were sheltered under the canopy. I was a bit surprised at how tough the terrain was (although I had been warned the previous Wednesday). Tree roots, fallen trees, fallen trees, waterfalls and steep slopes provided a new obstacle every few metres. It was certainly different from most UK footpaths I'd been on and there were no "flat bits".

Nether-the-less we attacked the route with gusto and arrived much earlier than anticipated. In fact we went at such a pace that it was decided that the tramp would be retrospectively upgraded to a medium (unofficially of course).

We arrived at the hut around 2pm just in time for the rain to start hammering down. I felt lucky to have escaped the rain; the medium group, also staying at the lodge, were not so lucky. When the weather abated we went out to look for firewood which provided entertainment for about 45 minutes or so. I enjoyed cooking the evening meal as it reminded me of previous guiding and territorial army camping trips where one had to be very creative with 2 pots. The other group very kindly gave us some oil as I didn't think I

could manage the sautéing of vegetables in water as the recipe stipulated (isn't that boiling?!). We were ribbed a bit by the others for our generous use of cheese in the meal but we all thought it tasted good. I stupidly forgot a plate and fork; luckily there was a plastic veg box and a spare spoon up for grabs. I was really impressed by the effort made to eat a decent dinner whilst in the middle of nowhere, inspired even.



I was mortified to find 2 huge black spiders hanging in the loo so I was unable to make use of the facilities, I just couldn't do it. Luckily we were only there one night! The hut began to get rather full as more people poured in from the hills, fortunately there was enough room for everyone with Pete in his tent and Tony al fresco. Sleeping was a bit of a worry for me surrounded by so many people in one room but I slept surprisingly well. We fell asleep to the gentle murmurings of the medium group speculating as to why we were so exhausted after our wee stroll.

Morning brought a new challenge. "Just get up when you want" said Tony, "we don't need to be out early". What I didn't know was, if you didn't get out your bag early to get changed, it started getting light and then everyone could see you! When a large beam of sunlight cascaded in I thought, yeah too late now. I'm sure no one was remotely interested but never the less I'm not used to getting dressed in front of 20 strangers so I attempted to keep my dignity intact by squirming around trying to get dressed in my sleeping bag which must have looked rather silly. A lesson learned there.

It was a largely uneventful trip out of the forest, the foliage was lush and fresh from rain and the track a bit slippery; I enjoyed my first tramping face-plant mid morning but after that it was plane sailing to the end. The view of the greenish river far below on the latter portion of the track was very impressive and we all enjoyed the sunshine as we left the trees behind.

Lessons learned:

1. I will do more trips with the tramping club; the people are lovely
2. Always get up early
3. Conquer fear of spiders ASAP.
4. Remember all your kit
5. Scroggin makes an inadequate lunch, especially 2 days in a row.

City to sea day walk

29 October 2011, Easy Medium, Wellington (map #8)

Pete Gent

Punters: Martyn, Grant, Brian, Taj, Shelly,
Jeoy, Maren, Antia & Pete (trip leader)

We assembled bright and early on a slightly overcast Saturday morning in late October, by the Cenotaph at the end of Lambton Quay and wandered up to Bowen Street Cemetery for the official start almost managing to lose half the group before we even got to the information board describing the route ahead.

After a minor history lesson, we walked across the motorway, through the upper part of the cemetery, with views across into Thorndon, and climbed through the Botanical Gardens spotting some duckings on the way through The Dell. At the cable car photos and a comfort break were taken, allowing the group to savour the view of harbour for couple of minutes.

Dropping down from cable car look out, we skirted around the back of Victoria University, through a cemetery; it's amazing what you find behind the student union, around the back of Able Smith Street towards Aro Street!

Out of Aro Valley, having stopped for a coffee, and into Tanera community gardens which are hidden from the road but have a great view of the city. We crossed over the road to Central Park. The track wound its way through the lower sections of the park. We took a 15 minute detour to the 3 way zip slide, sadly no one had the bright idea at the time to have a zip slide race. After this brief stop, we continued onwards and upwards and the rain decided to make a proper appearance.

Crossing the Brooklyn Hill Road with the group, I did feel like a mother hen making sure everyone crossed safely and didn't connect with the passing traffic on their way to up into Brooklyn. Sliding past the Malaysian Embassy and down lots of steps into Prince of Wales Park, we were taken on a minor detour around a broken foot path. Taking this detour resulted in us making a further unofficial detour on to a local road for a couple of minutes. Thankfully the error of our ways (for most of the group at least) was swiftly realised and we found the track around another clump of bushes.

Losing a wee bit of altitude, we arrived at Scottish Athletic HQ (minus 1 punter who had gone on ahead and decided to disappear for a wee while) in mid morning.

Climbing out of the low point by Scottish Athletic in Mcallister park, we continued on our merry way up to the cricket pitch at the reservation, across a couple of roads and through a playground, with no play unfortunately.

Lunch was taken by the golf course above the main fairways which presented views across to the 5 holes that are on the other side of the valley by the national hockey centre and down towards the sea. With the sun shining, sunscreen and hats were the order of the day; a pleasant change to the rain.

Post lunch time, we climbed through more gorse and eventually reached Tawa Ridge and some pirates* at the trig point from where views east into Island Bay and westwards towards the southern landfill and Happy Valley were enjoyed. Dodging the large water tank and taking in a serious number of steps we completed the grand traverse of Tawa Ridge.

We sauntered though the back streets of Island Bay, with the locals out pottering around on a Saturday afternoon, and through Oku Street Reserve which gave us our last views of the Island and Island Bay. We wended our way down through some more back streets which took us across Wellington City Council's tsunami line and to the sea side. We achieved our goal mid afternoon, with more than enough time for an ice cream at the dairy before returning to the city on the bright yellow bus.

*might not have been really proper blood curdling pirates, but pirates none the less

Pencarrow Lakes mountain bike trip

19 November 2011, EM MTB, Wellington region (map #9)

Maarten Ruiter



Image taken from: <http://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Parks-and-Recreation/East-Harbour/East-Harbour-Parangarau-Lakes-Area.pdf>



We all met at 9am in the car park at the end of Muritai Road, Eastbourne, on a lovely Saturday morning.

Most people got there a little early to make last minute adjustments to their bike and meet the group. When all 8 riders (Pete, Maarten, Wayne, Jarard, Dave, Anna, Snaiet, and Natascha) were present Pete, our trip leader, showed us the map and made a plan. Pete said the wind was a southerly, but this could change later in the day; not sure if everyone realised that it meant that it could be head wind there and back!

We were all keen and set off at a quick pace, and were soon all spread out. Lucky the front group waited at some point to keep everyone together.

After about 30 min (7 kms), we got to the Pencarrow Lighthouse so we knew the entrance to the lakes was not far around the corner.

At the entrance to the lakes, Pete tried to get a consensus as to whether we should go to the Old Lighthouse on the hill first or after we had been around the lakes. The vote was close, but Pete thought we should do it first, so uphill it was!



All 8 of us started the ride by Lake Kohangapiripiri on a gravel track, which soon turned into long grass. This surprised me. It was only a slight incline for 10min then, when it got a bit steeper, 5 of us biked on for another 5min to get to the old lighthouse, which stands at 98m above sea level.

We took in the fantastic views and posed for a picture or two, then made our way down. It was a great downhill run to where we had left 3 of our team.

After a little backtracking we picked up the "round the lake" track. It started OK but after 3 min there was a steep little 50m uphill to greet us. From here the track was downhill and flat for quite a while, through trees, grass and on board walks over the marshy swamps.

Again the front group waited for everyone to catch up before proceeding. This hill climb was long but not terribly steep rising to 108m. For some of the riders, the uphill was getting a bit much, so at this point 5 decided to take the short route straight down the hill back to the gravel road by the sea. The three “hard core” riders (Pete, Natascha and Maarten) decided to carry on and go around Lake Kohangatera as well. Before we left, we challenged the others we would beat them back to the car park.



It looked like we only needed to go up a short distance to the highest point of the ride, from 108m to 145m, but we ended up having to go all the way down the hill and up the other side which was long grass – this was tough. It was so tough we walked up more than half of the hill. Once at the top, the 360 degree views were amazing. Knowing were at the highest point, not only were we enjoying the view, we were also looking forwards to the downhill!

It only took a few minutes to get down the bottom, and from here the track around the lake was flat. It only took the 3 of us 15min to get back to the gravel road by the sea.

Luckily the wind hadn't changed direction, so we had the southerlies in our backs to push us back to the car park (only taking 15min) beating all but 1 of the earlier group back! To cap off a great day, a few laughs were had and some stories told over a coffee and cake in Days Bay.

Totara Flats family tramp

19-20 November 2011, Family, Tararua Forest Park (map #10)

Kelvin Thiele

Punters: Blaire Williams, Joy William, Christian Hoerning, Gustav Hoerning, Gary Scott, Jamie Scott, Kelvin Thiele, Bradley Thiele, Cam Thiele, Mike Pratt, Alex Pratt, Zoe Pratt, Paige

So what is it that children like most about tramping? A sense of adventure? Staying in a cool hut? Enjoying nature? Nah – it seems it is the one time in their lives that their parents let them eat whatever yummy food they like.

Our trip to Totara Flats was no different.

Our group kept growing and growing, with more friends and friends of friends signing up. By the time we left we had 5 dads and 8 kids. The children ranged in age from 4 to 12.

The tramp to Totara flats is signposted as 4 hours. With young kids, you usually allow 1½ times as long. Those tree roots that adults easily step over seem to require mountain climbing when you have short legs. So we set off from Waiohine road end about 10:30am – plenty of time for lots of breaks.

The two 4 year olds on this trip, Bradley and Gustav, had done short overnight tramps before (like to the Orongarongas). This was their chance to graduate into “real” tramps. They were fantastic, as were the older kids who were fantastic encouragement.

We made it (about 5:30pm). That’s right: a 7 hour tramp. Not bad for kids aye?

Kids just love staying in huts. It is amazing how much reaching a hut is a motivation for them. I guess it’s an oasis in the bush, full of comfort and yummy food. There goes that food again. Word had got out that for dessert tonight we would be having Gary Surprise. We had no idea what that would involve; it was Gary’s little secret. But the anticipation... this was going to be good. And boy – it sure was. I could give you details about what it was made from, but I won’t.

The other group in the hut had ice cream and ice-cold beer. They were PHD students doing some study of the leaves eaten by possums. They had dry ice, helicoptered in for freezing the leaves, and their ice cream. I told you, it is all about the food.

After dinner we all went down to the river for a bonfire and marshmallows (food again). For the dads this was the easiest ever bonfire, with the kids being super efficient wood collectors. I have never seen such a big supply of marshmallows before. A great time was had by all.

Next day we set off for the Holdsworth Road end. This is a similar distance, but this time with a 600m climb. Yep, more tree roots.

One of our group had a weekend house on the road out to Holdsworth, so we were met at the end and taken back for, yes, even more food.



Gary Scott, Jamie Scott, Christian Hoerning, Gustav Hoerning, Alex Pratt, Paige, Cam Thiele, Bradley Thiele, Jov Williams



Alex Pratt, Gary Scott, Jamie Scott, Christian Hoerning, Paige, Kelvin Thiele, Cam Thiele, Gustav Hoerning, Zoe Pratt, Bradley Thiele, Mike Pratt

Nelson mountain bike trip

25-27 November 2011, MTB, Wakamarina, Nelson area (map #11)

Nicole Hoy

Punters: Anna Lambrechtsen, Dave Riley Nicole Hoy

On Friday November 25th, two Canucks and a Kiwi assembled together for the first time in the parking lot of the Interislander. Their mission: to “sail to the other side” and do some mountain biking in the Nelson area.

Anna had decided to take an open-ended approach to the cycling itinerary: after a fine feed of some of the onboard cafeteria’s finest, but before sea-sicknesses had a chance to strike, a copy of the Kennett Brothers bible was tossed onto the table with the invitation “so ... where do you want to ride?”

Spoiled for choice, the three were challenged to find rides that would satisfy Anna and Dave’s need for some downhill speed, but at the same time not terrify Nicole. After much deliberation it was decided that Saturday would be spent checking out the rumoured-to-be newly revamped “Dun Mountain Trail”.

It wasn’t until they read the flash new signage at the start of the trail that the trio realized just what an appropriate choice they had made. The trail met all of the requirements: at 38km in length it would provide a whole day’s entertainment. It’s a circuit, so that made transportation straight forward. The trail follows the line of an old railway, so no one was going to bust a gut getting to the 878m Coppermine Saddle. And after the saddle it was all downhill and the descent to the Maitai Dam was billed to be “one of the most flowing pieces of single track around”. With the added promise of “amazing landscape” and “breathtaking scenery” the three eagerly began their ride. The ride did not disappoint. More details, some photos (none of us brought a camera!), and some lovely maps can be found at: <http://www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz/dun-mountain-trail>

On Sunday, Anna left the trail decision to a friend of hers who is now living in Nelson. After Saturday’s five hour epic, the 2 hour return ride he chose was just what the doctor ordered. The start of the ride was 30 minutes south of Nelson and then along the Aniseed Valley Road. The single track followed the Hackett stream, running up into the valley. It crossed a couple swing bridges, winding its way through typical Nelson native bush. A side track afforded a viewing of Whispering Falls and then it was on to Hackett Hut. More track information and some photos are available at

http://www.onyourbike.co.nz/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=42&Itemid=34

The second best mountain range for tramping

21-24 October 2011, MF, Ruahine Corner, Ruahines (map #12)

Mike McGavin

Punters: Anna Lambrechtsen, Dave Riley Nicole Hoy



What better way to spend the long Labour weekend of the 2011 Rugby World Cup Final than isolated in the second best mountain range for tramping in the world? I certainly couldn't think of a better way: it was easy to wing my way back to New Zealand and head into the Ruahines! I stapled myself to a club trip being organised by Illona, with some personal goals being to bag more DoC asset numbers, and to keep my tramping gear sparkly clean for getting back into Australia.

Over three days we'd loop around through the high point of Piopio (1437m), Ruahine Corner Hut, and Ikawetea Forks Hut, and back to where we began. The route follows the circumference of some private Maori settlement land at the northern end of the range. It's mostly conservation land, despite some being outside the official Ruahine Forest Park boundary. We saw no signs to indicate as such, but found later that we weren't certain if the entire route remains on public land, although the Walking Access Mapping System (WAMS) suggests there's a marked DoC route across the sliver of private land at the northern end. Best to check with DoC to be certain in future, though.

We arrived at Masters Shelter, roughly west of Hastings, around 11pm having obtained several litres of flavoured tap water from Carterton because the shelter has no drinkable water. It seems Masters Shelter has no DoC asset number ... a demoralising beginning. Light drizzle settled, and when we left at 8am for the 800 metre climb up Golden Crown Ridge the morning provided a general greyness. Not too murky, though, to obscure the dampened scenes of the surrounding landscape with its reds and browns and greens of the



dracophyllums and tussocks into which we were entering. I was relieved to discover that 10 months in the generally flat city of Melbourne hadn't crippled me too much to reach the top. (Even searching quite hard in Melbourne, the only up-hill I could find on a daily basis was an inconvenient fire escape stairwell!)

It took 2 hours to reach the upstairs level of the Ruahines, from where it's often possible to skittle in all directions with little undulation. I bagged my first asset number for the long weekend at the track junction at the top; DoC signs are a common place to find asset numbers. From this 1300 metre elevation we shifted from an up-hill grind into a coastly roll along the tops. Nobody else took much interest as I bagged more DoC numbers when we ignored a route left south towards Parks Peak, and our first main stop (for lunch) was Aranga Hut. It's an old Forestry Service hut, now in private hands (as part of various settlement deals), though there's nothing on the hut to indicate this. Sadly with the new arrangement it's fallen into serious disrepair, with vandalism and holes in the wall, and the mattresses that remain are disgusting. We hid from the drizzle for lunch, but nobody wanted to put anything on the floor. I found more water from the tank, despite most of the gutter that feeds it being busted, but only after checking there were no dead possums, snakes or crocodiles on the roof.

Being resigned to finding no asset tags at Aranga as a non-DoC structure, I nearly missed the number on the back of the nearby sign that pointed towards Kylie Biv. The sign had a digit which recurred 3 times in a row. It was a 5!



Fun fact: Did you know that the chance of spotting a DoC asset number that includes three identical digits side-by-side is approximately $1/25$? You could search for an entire weekend and not find such an asset number! The chance of finding three fives side-by-side is about $3/1,000$. Three zeroes side-by-side is much more likely than any other digit, assuming DoC will never make use of that 6th significant figure.

We followed the generally flat plateaus in the muted shallow ridges of the northern Ruahines, passing nearly indistinguishable high points and saddles, eventually to the 1437m high point of our weekend (Piopio) to see a sprinkling of leatherwood. It occurred to visit Kylie Biv and escape likely overnight rain, or even press on to Ruahine Corner, but we decided to stick with the more predictable camping option after an assessment of how people were feeling. At the next significant tarn, we created a small campsite for ourselves on the tops at about 1420 metres.

At least, we *tried* to create a small campsite. Illona and Kevin found the pole of their borrowed club Huntech fly was snapped, and I discovered that the pole of my own borrowed club Huntech fly was missing the knob thingee that lets it fit through the eyelet on the fly, and that the fly itself was missing a couple of the plastic attachments for pegging it to the ground. Fortunately we were able to improvise for the rest despite the non-ideal conditions. (*Please check and report these things before you return them to the gear room. Broken gear makes a happy tramper saaad! It could also become seriously bad on occasion.*)

Two of the three flies had been set up with a low profile, which is what you get when people are too awesome to bring walking poles, and this made it difficult to slide in and out of a 30 cm gap without disrupting the pegs and getting horribly muddy... not consistent with my goal of remaining clean. The two happy couples chattered away, and I acted anti-socially in my own enclosed kingdom. After some awkward manoeuvring we had a yummy dinner that evening, thanks to Illona's arrangement of a vegetarian quinoa and pomegranate molasses. I thought about sliding out and offering to do some dishes, but



before I was able I heard neighbouring Illona volunteer Kevin for the task.

Speaking for myself, I learned much about the aerodynamics of Huntech flies that night, with this being the first time I've set one up in reasonable wind without some kind of shelter (like lots of trees). We'd set them up facing with the backs directly into the light southerly wind as is manufactory recommended so the air would flow over them, hoping everything would clear up overnight for a brilliantly still

and clear Sunday. I woke about midnight to the angry melody of a fly rattling noisily in the light southerly as an aerofoil effect sucked the fly upwards, mildly disturbing because I wasn't sure how well I'd pegged and tied down the corners against that sort of pulling. By 2am the sucking effect was gone, and instead the wind just pounded an already low profile and sopping wet fly straight down onto my bivy bag. Instead of a light southerly, it turned

out that there was now a moderately stronger northerly, and therefore the flies were facing completely the wrong way. Some time afterwards I heard Richard a few metres away “heroically” re-hammering pegs. The memory is a blur but I think in concern for destroying my own fly’s fragile structure with a reckless act like crawling outside, I tried to help him out by making conversation instead. I don’t think he offered much chatter in return.

Night became another murky morning that remained consistent with the day before, albeit windier. I scraped together a cold breakfast, donned decent storm gear, packed everything except my groundsheet and fly, and sat crumpled inside the cramped arch of a cocoon that was slowly deteriorating as it was pressed heavily from above, waiting until Illona, Kevin,



Amanda and Richard had done the same. Sliding out was a muddy activity, again not conducive to keeping my gear sparkling clean, but once outside it was clear that the wind wasn’t as bad as it’d felt. Amanda and Richard had had similar issues to myself overnight, and without bivy bags they now had a couple of damp sleeping bags. Fortunately there’d now be a whole day to figure out that problem.

We left just before 8am, continuing to a mushy plateau

of tarns before turning more north-west-wards to find a couple of signs that confirmed our way towards Ruahine Corner; the sign half-buried in a leatherwood bush wasn’t in DoC’s database. The route took us through more dracophyllum and eventually a fern-covered landscape, and by 11am we climbed to the big plateau where one can find several more DoC asset numbers including the one with a well-loved hut attached.

Ruahine Corner Hut had a couple of hunters down from Auckland. They’d flown in a few days earlier but, as is often the way, had preferred to sit inside the hut with the cosy fire than actually spend any time outdoors. The hut is a cute standard forestry service box, though earlier this year some helpful DoC employees have dressed it in a deck and veranda to fit the latest fashion trends. Supposedly *most* people fly in, and there’s an airstrip outside, but judging by the time we made in a group it’d be very accessible by foot with a long day of reasonable fitness and not much stopping, certainly from Masters Shelter. We exchanged greetings, I photographed the hut’s number inside the door, we stopped for lunch, and they gave us some loose directions towards a warratah-marked route through the clouds and tussock to the 1234m trig across the plateau.

This is the furthest north I've been in the range. It feels different from the southern end which (whilst still allowing one to cruise around the tops all day) has sharper and narrower ridges. In contrast, some of the ridges we'd already encountered here are a good 500m wide on top. The maps don't show many close contours around the plateau north of Ruahine Corner, but there's still a landscape to circumvent.

We pushed through tussock, first to the furthest 1234m trig (there are two 1234m spot-heights), then along the tops of the bluffs to 1206m, under which we sat snacking for a short time as some rare sunshine desperately tried to break through the clouds. The bluffs shown on the maps aren't all big cliffs so much as a series of overhanging rocks, which provide several places where it's possible to scamper down with no technical skills. Illona had good information about a trapping line from spot-height 1206 down to Ikawetea Forks Hut, and not far inside the bush-line we located a horizontal line of orange markers which looks to be for catching people no matter where they slip in as long as it's roughly below that point. It leads to the top of a descending trapping line that's been marked to death with pink tape nearly all the way down the spur towards Ikawetea Forks Hut. We followed it to a little gully just west of the hut, and dropped to Ikawetea Stream on a steep route. This led to our first significant river encounter of the long weekend, with the hut somewhere on the far side. Not knowing exactly where to look, Kevin and I checked up-stream slightly, and discovered a messy steep route that could be uncomfortably scaled with the help of overhanging tree roots. From there we found Ikawetea Forks Hut, and also the much more sensible route we could have used had we followed the river in the other direction.

Nobody was home at Ikawetea Forks (DoC Asset 43453), but a couple of hunters had left things. We had no idea if they'd be back that evening or not, but simply arriving was a relief because Amanda wasn't feeling well (and hadn't been for the whole trip), and Illona had copped a rock on the back of her leg during the last steep drop towards the river. It was when all our gear was spread outside, trying to dry with limited success under the cool shallow sun, that I was down at the river and looked up from frustratingly scraping the mud from my un-sparkly gaiters and saw the two hunters stumbling awkwardly through thigh-deep water. I waved and smiled, trying not to give an impression that they'd have a full hut tonight. They'd been away for three days, were due to fly out the next day, and (so they said) had successfully crawled back with 50+ kg packs full of meat. As a 7-bunk hut, there was enough mattress-space inside even with the five of us. The two chaps were locals from Hawkes Bay, and were happily chatty enough for us to learn more about local routes. They tried to pass themselves off as vegetarians when Illona's curry-laksa meal came out. I snuck down to the river a few times that evening. It's a nice place. My turn for dishes.

We woke on Monday morning and evidently the world hadn't realised that *this* Monday was a holiday, because the sun was finally visibly rising. Keen on not getting home too late, we were away soon after 7am, waved goodbye to the hunting chaps, hopped across the river, and began the second 800m climb of the long weekend, though it's really only steep for about the first 500 metres and then it shallows out before the final upward jump. 2.5 hours into the day, having emerged from the bush-line underneath the mighty Tauwharepokoru, a famous 1403 metre peak of the Ruahines, we stopped in the morning sunshine for a few minutes, relaxed in the make-shift tussock-laden couches, and gazed north-west toward

the lesser snow-sodden hillocks of Tongariro National Park.

From here it'd be a straightforward walk around the circumference of the tops. The route is mostly well marked with a combination of waratahs, foot-trails and 4WD tracks, though it could be exposed on a windy day. We were momentarily lost when trying to follow waratahs early-on, I think in the sludgy muddy area around Ikawetea (which we later discovered is private land, albeit seemingly with a DoC route marked through it according to the WAMS). Only one climb along this section is notable, which is about 100m upwards towards spot-height 1314 shortly before returning to the top of Golden Crown Ridge, and we arrived at that junction about 6.5 hours into the day, leaving nothing but a 90 minute jaunt back to where we'd begun, and bringing Labour Weekend to an end. Another 16 distinct asset numbers independently documented. Not a bad jaunt for the second best mountain range for tramping, and I couldn't think of a better way to have spent the time.

I completely forgot to wash the mud off my boots as I passed the farm-tainted stream at the end of the day, and the muddy boots left me with a tougher scrubbing job later that night. For better or worse, it seems you have to push Australian biosecurity agents from Victoria beyond the point of irritation to get them to look at your gear, and I lost the argument.

Other news, notes and reminders

Help save the Tauherenikau Valley

John Rhodes (South Wairarapa TC)

About ten years ago a trumper noticed exotic Spanish heath (*Erica lusitanica*) at Slip Stream in the Tauherenikau Valley. Spanish heath infests open areas and kanuka shrubland, and can out-compete kanuka. If unchecked, it may permanently alter the character and ecosystem of the valley and spread into other Tararua valleys. We must stop it.

Since 2008, DOC has run four volunteer weekends, based at Tutuwai Hut, to contain the spread of this pest plant and progressively eliminate it. Volunteers have concentrated on the Slip Stream area and have also found and eliminated a few plants at the mouth of Tutuwai Stream, forestalling the advance of heath towards the Cone flats.

Limited person-power has prevented work on known heath infestations between Slip Stream and Smith Creek, while the true right bank of the Tauherenikau has received only limited attention.

DOC needs help to pull out small heath plants, cut larger plants and swab the stumps with herbicide gel. The project needs long-term commitment as seedlings keep appearing.



Nigel Boniface of Masterton Tramping Club deals to a heath plant at Slip Stream.

In November 2011, volunteers also tackled a *Buddleia* infestation at Slip Stream which threatened to invade the main valley. Stream beds in the Rimutaka Forest Park are choked with *Buddleia*, which must not be allowed to colonise the Tararuas.

Clubs have been associated with the upper Tauherenikau Valley since 1917, when the Greytown Mount Hector Track Committee built its Tauherenikau Hut near the mouth of Reeves Stream. In 1946 the Tararua Tramping Club completed Cone Hut which is still in use. Many beginning trampers make their first trips in the valley and camp on its delightful flats. We must now help DoC control Spanish heath to preserve the upper Tauherenikau for new generations of trampers.

The next Tauherenikau volunteer weekend is scheduled for 24-25 March 2012.

Refer to the DOC website: <http://www.doc.govt.nz/getting-involved/volunteer-join-or-start-a-project/volunteer/volunteer-programme-by-region/wairarapa/tauharenikau-spanish-heath-control/> or contact Phil Brady: pjbrady@doc.govt.nz or 06-377-0700.

WTMC would love your help

We are looking for volunteers to help us ...

... on Wednesday club nights with:

- staffing the door/answering punter questions about the club
- club gear room duty
- occasional slideshows
- tea making
- running the evening

... with outdoor activities:

- leading trips
- club contact person for trips

and are always keen to know of people who have specialist skills such as:

- accounting
- marketing/promotion
- communications
- secretarial
- web design
- programming
- navigation
- first aid/medical

If you'd like to volunteer with any of the above, please contact membership@wtmc.org.nz

Congratulations to Amanda and Megan for running The Goat!

The Goat (<http://www.thegoat.co.nz/>) is an exhilarating adventure run from Whakapapa to Turoa Ski Fields on the Round the Mountain track, traversing the western slopes of Mount Ruapehu. The 21 kilometre course has over 1000 metres of vertical ascent and covers a whole bunch of amazing terrain. It is a demanding yet achievable run that is widely acclaimed as one of New Zealand's premier off road running events.

Megan Banks completed the run in 3 hrs 46 mins, followed closely behind by Amanda Wells who finished in 3hrs 57mins. Congratulations to them both! A fantastic achievement.

Big thanks go to their valiant supporters Ian Harrison and Richard Lardner !



Megan and Amanda at the finish line

Deadline for submissions to the February 2012 WTMC newsletter: Friday 27 January 2012

The views expressed in the articles in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club. Any queries or comments should be directed to the writer of the article. The editor of the newsletter reserves the right to edit and publish articles.

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