

# beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North 4440 [www.mtsc.nz](http://www.mtsc.nz) <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>

Issue 1. February, 2021



Club meetings are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month at the Rose City Aquatic Club Rooms, 50 Park Street, Palmerston North (next to the Lido). Meetings begin at 7.30pm.

## 7.30pm Tuesday 2 February, 2021: Walking Te Araroa by Clare Veltman



Clare left Cape Reinga on 23 September 2018 and reached Bluff on 4 February 2019, travelling solo. She mostly followed Te Araroa except when she couldn't and nothing dramatic happened, though a couple of times it could have. Clare will talk about what she carried, what she ate, and what she saw. You can live it up by asking her questions.

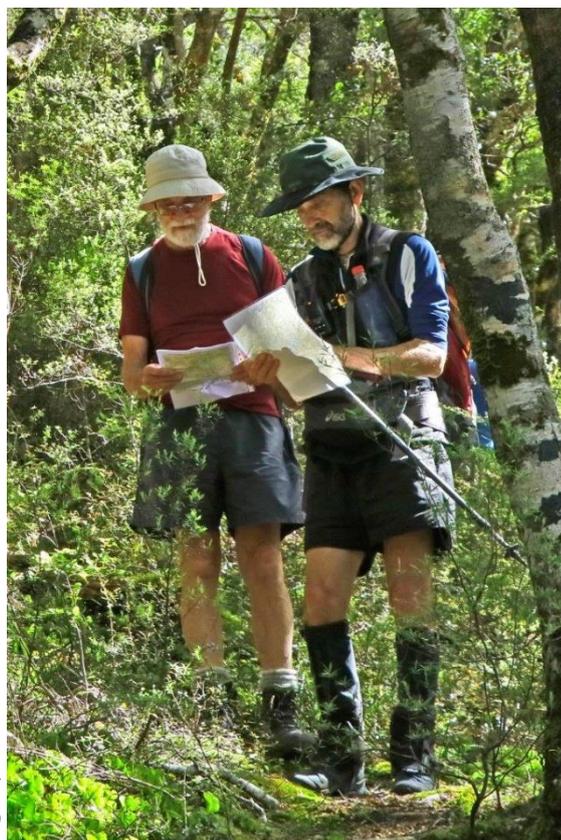
## 7.30pm Tuesday 2 March, 2021: Summer snippets coordinated by Peter Rawlins

## 7.30 pm Tuesday 6 April, 2021: South Island Tramps

In February, Ken, Mary, Tim and Linda plan to walk a number of South Island tramps. They will share their adventures with you at our April club night.

## 7.30 pm Tuesday 4 May, 2021: Great Barrier Island by Christine and Barry Scott

Barry will talk about land conservation and Christine will cover walks and things to do.



*Now where are we? by John Brock  
Mt Reeves trip 3 December, 2020*

# REPORTS AND NOTICES

## MTSC President: Rob Pringle

[president@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:president@mtsc.org.nz)

Welcome to the start of 2021. I trust that you all had a very merry festive season, spending time with family and friends, and that the start of 21 has been good to you so far. I was blessed to have some relaxing time off with the family and friends enjoying some camping and other activities around parts of the country I had previously not explored. Although, while I type this, the weather has decided to show us some cooler temperatures and precipitation, it has encouraged the gardens and lawn to grow, and everything is looking a little bit greener., There is hopefully going to still be plenty of summer left to get out and enjoy the back yard. If you haven't done so already, I'd encourage you to get out and make the most of the long weekends that are coming up. Remember that the Lodge at Ruapehu makes for a fantastic base from which to begin your journeys, with sky waka access to the Knoll Ridge Café being available through until the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May (when it will transition for Winter use). The waka makes a great beginning to any journey on the mountain – just keep in mind the volcanic alert levels presently!

It's been great seeing a few of the pictures that have been shared around socially of the places that people have been visiting. Don't forget that if you'd like to share news of your trip, or advertise an upcoming trip, feel free to get in touch with the Newsletter Editor [editor@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:editor@mtsc.org.nz) and/or the Facebook editors at [facebook@mtsc.nz](https://www.facebook.com/mtsc.nz) so we can get these loaded up onto the club website.

As usual, stay safe out there, and keep having all of the adventures.

## Minibus Custodian: Ken Mercer

[minibus@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:minibus@mtsc.org.nz)

*A new look for the new year:* Richard Lander is one of our skilled photographers and we can thank him for the

artwork which we now have on the minibus. Not only is it informative but it illustrates the diversity of our club and looks great too. Another improvement, added by Mary and me, is a sun blocker for the windscreen. As well as preventing sun damage it will stop the frost forming in the winter. There are two hooks on the inside and the sides are held securely by the closed doors.



## Treasurer Wanted

Our current treasurer, Ewen Cameron, plans to step down from the position on 31 March, 2021 due to other commitments, so the club is in need of a volunteer willing to take on this role. Some knowledge of accounting would be very useful and experience with Xero, an accounting software package, would also be an advantage but not essential. If you are willing to take on this task please contact Rob Pringle at [president@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:president@mtsc.org.nz) or on 020 426 2176. *Note: All club committee positions are up for election at the AGM in May 2021, including that of President (when Rob will have completed his term of three years).*

## Sunrise Hut Track Closure

Sunrise hut and Track will be closed from 8<sup>th</sup> February to 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 due to a major track upgrade. Surrounding huts in the area will remain open but access will be closed via the Sunrise track.

*Message from Ed, Ruahine Users Group*



February Wednesday Tramps			February Thursday Tramps		
03	Anne West	357 5716	04	Wayne Lincoln	D 021 068 5237
10	Robbie Green	0223982205	11	John & Gillian Thornley	356 9681
17	John Salisbury	380 0117	18	John Brock	329 4834
24	Evan Davies	357 6288	25	Carolyn Brodie	027 358 6037

**Trip Intentions:** The email address for leaving trip intentions is [intentions@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:intentions@mtsc.org.nz). Intentions sent to this address will not be acted upon UNLESS a party is reported overdue (e.g. by a family member, flatmate, friend, etc). The email is sent to several MTSC members. This information will be provided to Land SAR/RCC only if the party is reported overdue or a MTSC-owned PLB is activated. The email should include: a list of participants and their contact details; a brief description of the intended route and possible alternative routes; starting point; start date; date/time due out; vehicle registration; and any other relevant details.

*We welcome the following, previously family, now adult members to the club: Amanda Jolly, Elizabeth Jolly and Antony Jolly.*



*Kiritaki Hut Trip by John Brock  
26 November, 2020*

# TRIP REPORTS



## Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2020: Waitarere Alternative

Trip Leader and Reporter: Christine Finnigan

Photographer: William Laing

With rain forecast, but not yet falling, we headed up Mangahao Rd. Our intended destination for the day was Harris Creek, in from the Mangahao top dam. We all met at the Slalom carpark. Rain had started falling so, after considerable deliberation, we decided to abandon a trip into the depths of the Tararua's and head for Waitarere beach forest. This provided a safe, sheltered walk, along the beach for 30mins before we entered the pines and



heading towards the Manawatu river mouth. We stopped for lunch at the end of unlogged trees. Most elected to return via the beach, while five of us walked back through the trees all the way to Waitarere Beach Rd (exiting past the old fire station). The forest is interesting as it has remnants of coastal wetlands amongst the trees and dune country out to the sea.

Although mostly flat, we still managed to put 18+km under

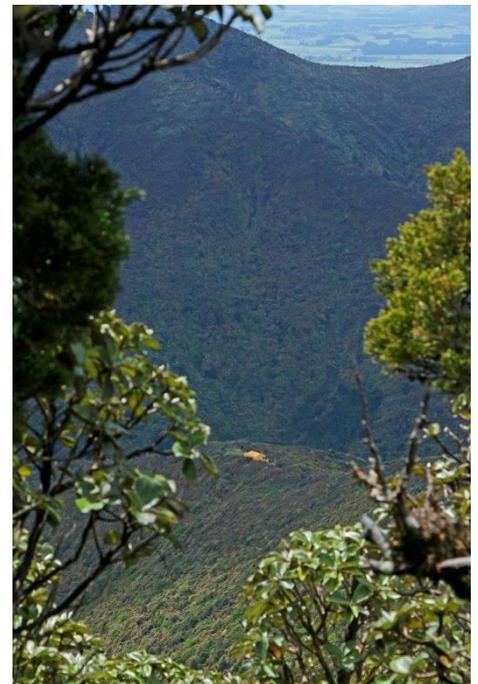
our belts. Follow up refreshments were provided by Lewis farms. Some enjoyed strawberries, asparagus and even a mini tour of the packhouse. Thanks Ken! Thank you to everyone for your patience and willingness to go with the change of plan! Thanks to our van driver, Ken, Ewen for suggesting an excellent alternative, and to the other experienced trampers who helped make the safe call to change plans.

### Good Leading By Christine

*A doggerel by Bob Hodgson*

On a wet November day at the Shannon Slalom car park,  
And as the sky darkened, and the stormy winds did blow,  
Trip leader Christine consulted with her attendant MTSC elders.  
Taking her leadership role to heart, she spoke these wise words.  
"Informed by fingers in the air, weather-radar and intuition of the best kind  
We shall avoid a night out on the banks of the swollen Harris Creek  
Not to mention the formidable and excessively wet and windy ranges."  
And so it was.

Then upspoke the venerable Ewen "Let us to the Waiterere Forest go,  
To tramp through the storm with the kindly shelter of trees in the dunes,  
We will aim to view the mouth of the mighty Manawatu,  
Perhaps we shall glimpse Bev's new abode rising from the ruins of the old."  
And so it was, and after lunch in the dunes in a dry spell,  
Some tramped the beach; others chose to pioneer an alternative forest route,  
By mid-afternoon we converged on the Lewis Farms complex,  
Here we marvelled at the Ken Mercer-made, mechanised asparagus grader,  
Drank coffee, made purchases of strawberries & fresh asparagus,  
We later heard of trampers spending a night in the open at Harris creek.  
And mentally applauded the wise decisions made.



*Kiritaki Hut by John Brock  
26 November, 2020*

## Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2020: Te Apiti Track

Trip Leader and Reporter: William Laing

It was raining. Constant heavy rain, with wind. And we were planning to walk the Apiti Track out from Norsewood, a very exposed climb before you got to the bush. And there was a heavy rain warning for the Ruahines. So, after alerting the Fielding crowd to meet us at Memorial Park, we discussed the options and decided to walk the Te Apiti track along the gorge. At least that was in bush, somewhat sheltered from the continuous (not continual) rain. The three cars and the van met up at the car park and those not in rainwear immediately put it on. There were two new trampers included in our group of 21, Margaret and Sandy, and their club induction was trial by rain.

Most of us walked the full length of the track over both hills, with a misty view over the river. The bush looked lovely in the rain, all wet and glistening. The track was generally in good condition, with little mud. We all met up for lunch at the Balance end, quickly snatching lunch in the shelters there. Note that we had not really stopped for morning tea because of the persistent rain so everyone was hungry. We then set off back to the car park, along the Gorge Road, over the Balance Bridge and to the Upper Gorge Bridge, where the majority of us strode back into the bush while a smaller party followed the road back to the car park.

What I found remarkable was how quickly we reached our destinations, driven by the pleasant conversations and discussions of the trampers. In spite of the rain, people enjoyed the tramp (at least to my eyes) and the exercise opportunity in an inclement day. You can go tramping in foul weather for ducks as long as you chose your route and are willing to change your mind about the first choice. The Gorge is an excellent facility for the Manawatu and we are lucky to have it. After most of us quickly changed in the car park (this reporter stayed dampish, wool does keep you warm) and drove to the Herb Farm for coffee and sometimes cake. Then home for a hot shower and warm clothes.

Thanks to the van drive (Ken Mercer) and drivers (Bill Milham, Rod McKenzie and Jenny Williamson). Thanks to Mary and Ken for cleaning the van. No photographs, at least by this reporter, since it was too wet, my fingers too cold and wet to open the phone.

## Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2020: No 1 Line to Kiritaki Hut

Trip Leader, Reporter and Photographer: Tony Evans

With dodgy weather forecasts in the days leading up to the tramp it was pleasantly surprising to set out with only high cloud and some patches of blue sky; mild with no wind. Nine keen trampers left the van at 8.20am and made good time up the steep and sometimes slippery track to the lookout for morning tea.

From there on the track is officially unmaintained but, thanks to Jean and Jenny and other unknown benefactors who have been cutting and adding more markers to the track, it is now easy to follow. We continued on enjoying the easier gradient in spite of a few steep sections, when we passed the second high point and the hut came into view, we stopped for a conference. Six trampers decided they were happy to see the hut and ate their lunch there while 3 continued on to the hut for lunch. About halfway back the promised showers of rain arrived and we continued on with the 2 groups meeting up again at the lookout and on down the even more slippery track back to the carpark arriving 7 and a quarter hours after we had left.



## Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2020: Towards Panatewaewae from Waikawa Reserve off North Manakau Road.

Trip Leader and Reporter: Ewen Cameron

After an interesting start, involving: pushing some freedom campers out of the grassed area at the Waikawa reserve; ferrying three minibus loads of trampers to the first gate; losing more than half the group who not only missed the start of the track, but went on to investigate the old carpark beyond the slip at the end of North Manakau road; the last, now first, of the group headed up the Panatewaewae ridge track. The radios were very helpful in getting the "investigative" group back on track. Once the track start was pointed out, the main part of the group were set off in the right direction.



Morning tea was enjoyed in the regenerating bush on the old road that is the Panatewaewae ridge track. Although the work done by Kapiti mountain bikers in clearing the track was appreciated, some recent windfalls provided clambering, headbanging and tripping opportunities. Most of the group reached the clearing near what is shown as a 527m hill on the map, but which Bob believes to be 506m by his GPS, by 11:30am and headed off through the pine trees to approach the big downhill before the marked track ends and the route continues up past the 427m hill towards Panatewaewae (728m on map). The track was a little muddy in places and there

were a few big bog holes to cross along the way. As we'd had a delayed start, nobody got as far towards Panatewaewae as we might have wished before turning round to head home.

One group enjoyed lunch in the sun on the grass in the clearing near the contested 527 m high point. Although the pine trees to the West block some of the view, we got a great view of the sea and of, what I now find to be, Lake Papaitonga and the land south-west of Levin. Once lunch on the hill was finished and various groups who had gone further returned, the whole party of 33 headed down back for the first gate and a ride or walk to the Waikawa reserve where our cars were parked. At a couple of places where there were openings in the bush, we got good views of the big country to the East. However, the focus was on getting out. We were all back at the carpark by 2:30pm and at a cafe, by 3pm for refreshments. Most of the group enjoyed a nice day on a track few had been on before.

Thanks to Robbie for driving the minibus: car drivers Anne, Catherine, Cheryl, Christine, Marion & Robyn. Thanks to Cheryl for the photo montage. Welcome to new member, Stewart.

### **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2020: Mt Reeves circuit**

Trip Leader and Reporter: Royce Mills

Photographer: John Brock

Fifteen trampers set off from Palmerston North in rain and wind, but with a better forecast for our destination. It brightened up after we crossed the Pahiatua Track and headed south to Carterton. It was blowing a gale though and we appreciated Ken's safe driving in difficult conditions. The drive up Waiohine Gorge road is rough towards the end, and the wind was blowing very strongly down the valley. Again Ken did well to negotiate these conditions to get us safely to the car park.

We started tramping at 9:50 am and crossed the long swing bridge to start our tramp. Thankfully it was much calmer there so were no problems with wind on the swing bridge. We headed up the track to Cone hut and took a morning tea stop along the way. After about 1 1/2 hours we turned off the track and took an unmapped route along the ridge to Mt Reeves. There was a faint trail and old markers to follow and I had a gpx file from a previous exploration of this route. It was good to have several pairs of eyes keeping a lookout for the track and markers. We had been in attractive forest all morning until breaking out into open scrub at Mt Reeves. Here a

late lunch was taken and excellent and extensive views were enjoyed, both across the Wairarapa and looking back into the Tararuas. The distinctive Tararua peaks stood out, and also Mt Hector. After lunch we headed downhill through open vegetation and sunshine to reach the plaque marking the centre of NZ's continental shelf - an impressive piece of



art and science it is too. Successfully finding a geocache here had been one of my goals for this tramp!

Our track then took us down a very long gentle spur towards Coal Stream and then a steep adventurous drop into Coal Stream itself. Soon after we were back at the car park. We all agreed that our tramp of 7 hours 15 minutes (including all stops) had been a long day but it had been a most enjoyable circuit, new to many of us. Thanks also to Syd for driving us home and to car driver Alistair Hall.



### **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2020: Waikanae River**

Trip Leader, Photographer and Reporter: Rod McKenzie

From River Mouth to Old State Highway Bridge – 5.5k one way. A large group of 34 walkers were greeted by light drizzle on arrival at the Waikanae River mouth car park. As the party prepared to walk the drizzle eased and stayed away for about 2 hrs only thickening again as walkers returned to the car park. The river was full and moving fast but not overflowing following the rain on previous days. There is a well-formed walking/cycle track on both sides of the river. Both tracks are surrounded by recent well-maintained plantings of low native trees. There are now four bridges spanning the water; first from the mouth is at the Otaihangā Domain around 1 k up stream, the second is at the Expressway a further 1 k, the third is a suspension bridge a further 2 k up near the Jim Cooke Reserve, the fourth the old main road bridge is a further 1.5 k on. Therefore, there are several options for the length of a walk up and down the river. Two thirds of the group choose to turn at the suspension bridge while the remainder of the group walked the complete distance up and down. All returned to the car park around mid-day.

After a quick change from damp clothes all the party headed to “McKenzies’ Hut” to enjoy a sumptuous lunch provided by the group members. After a pleasant hour or so of eating and chatting all headed back to Palmerston North. Thanks to Ewen for driving the minibus and Richard, Robyn, Peter, Ken, Marion, and Anne for taking their cars.

### **Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2020: Totara Flats Hut**

Trip Leader: William Laing

Photographers: Gary and Alistair

I proposed this trip to Syd as the last official trip of the year, and he thought it would be possible but difficult to make it on a day trip. So, in my briefing, I gave 1245h as the turn-around time, everybody back by 1600h.

With a full van, I did not reckon with the keenness of the majority of the group to make it to the hut. We set off soon after 0900h, up the Gentle Annie at full speed for morning tea at the cross roads. At that point 11 of us continued down the hill, while one decided to walk on to the Mountain House Shelter with a radio. The track down was the original rather gnarly track, streaming with water (in spite of there being no rain at this stage; in actual fact it was sunny at times), with lots of steep rocky places but not too much mud (it had been washed off by the streaming water). When we joined the new track one trumper was heard to exclaim "a hill climb, goodie". (That's that little bump on the profile).

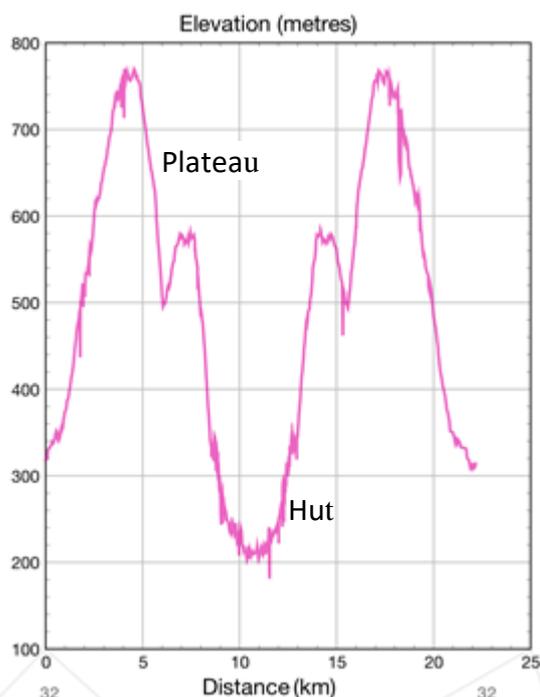


Eight trampers continued down the new track after the plateau, another steep descent across a couple of bridges and two raging streams along to a swing bridge crossing the Waiohine river. That last bridge was rather dilapidated, with the netting walls separating from the floor and one trampers' leg slipped through the gap and she was trapped until her grandson nobly went to her rescue. Well done Roman!

Eight trampers reached the hut before or around 1300h, ate a hurried lunch, and then set off for the return climb to the top of the Gentle Annie. I had suggested it would be quicker on the ascent on the rough track, but this did not prove to be the case. Very gentle rain set in on the climb, cooling us and making the bush sparkle. We made it back to the car park at about 1700h and drove home by 1930h.

A demanding tramp, 22 k long, 1200m of climbing and taking almost 8 hours. This is a record in my cell phone recordings. But people appeared to enjoy the bush and felt a sense of accomplishment in doing a demanding day tramp to Totara Flats Hut.

Thanks to Syd for driving the van and Gary and Alistair for photos.

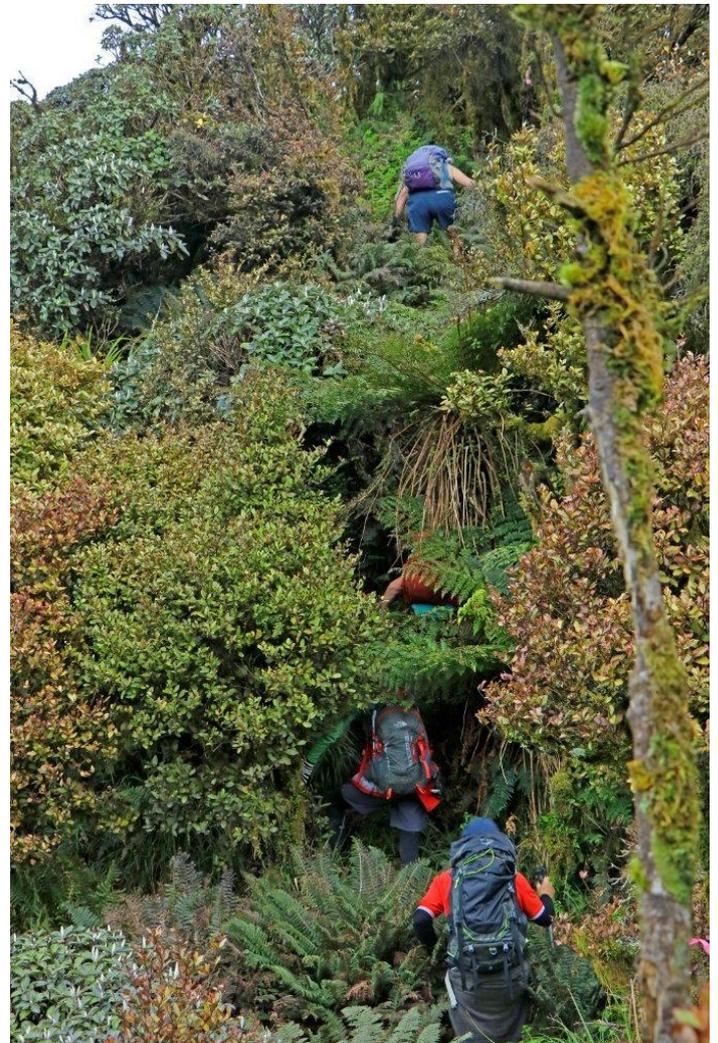
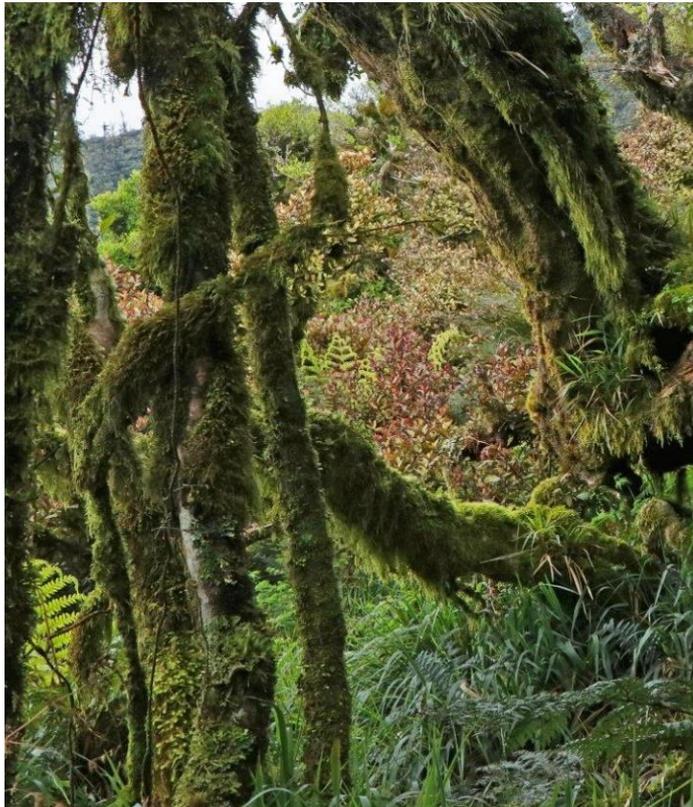


Profile showing 1200 meter total climb there and back and a 22k distance. That makes an average ~10% gradient while climbing, but places were much steeper.



Totara Flats Hut

*Kiritaki Hut Trip by John Brock  
26 November, 2020*



### **Tickets for Sale**

Hut tickets can be purchased from Howard Nicholson at club nights. \$5/ticket for adults and \$2.50 for youth (11-17 years). Information about Back Country Passes, valid for 6 or 12 months, as well as the use of hut tickets is available on the [DOC web site](#).



## Contact Details

Postal Address: MTSC, P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North

### Committee 2020 - 2021

President	Rob Pringle	<a href="mailto:president@mtsc.org.nz">president@mtsc.org.nz</a>	020 426 2176
Secretary	Tim Swale	<a href="mailto:secretary@mtsc.org.nz">secretary@mtsc.org.nz</a>	06 376 6556
Treasurer	Ewen Cameron	<a href="mailto:treasurer@mtsc.org.nz">treasurer@mtsc.org.nz</a>	022 0341180
Chief Guide	Ken Mercer	<a href="mailto:chief_guide@mtsc.org.nz">chief_guide@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 364 6475
Membership	Sue Nicholson	<a href="mailto:membership@mtsc.org.nz">membership@mtsc.org.nz</a>	06 357 6325
Newsletter Editor	Mary Mercer	<a href="mailto:editor@mtsc.org.nz">editor@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 372 5375
Lodge Manager	John Lyttle	<a href="mailto:lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz">lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 433 6307
Mini-Bus Manager	Ken Mercer	<a href="mailto:minibus@mtsc.org.nz">minibus@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 364 6475

**General Committee:** William Laing, Richard Lander, Howard Nicholson, Peter Rawlins

### Appointees

Lodge Bookings	Hugh & Liz Wilde	<a href="mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz">lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz</a>	021 054 2560
Gear Custodian	Peter Rawlins	<a href="mailto:gear@mtsc.org.nz">gear@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 678 0747
Ski Captain	Howard Nicholson	<a href="mailto:ski@mtsc.org.nz">ski@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 294 1941
Social Convenor	Linda Campbell	<a href="mailto:social@mtsc.org.nz">social@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 333 4493
Wednesday Trips	Bev Akers	<a href="mailto:bevakers@xtra.co.nz">bevakers@xtra.co.nz</a>	06 325 8879
Thursday Trips	Syd Easton	<a href="mailto:eastonps@inspire.net.nz">eastonps@inspire.net.nz</a>	06 356 7462
Facebook	Ivan Rienks, Rob Pringle, Karen Tutt, Howard Nicholson <a href="mailto:facebook@mtsc.org.nz">facebook@mtsc.org.nz</a>		

### New Members

Prospective members must be nominated by a Proposer and a Secunder who are current MTSC members and have been so for at least one year. New memberships are confirmed at the next monthly committee meeting. Prospective members are encouraged to go on a club trip or attend a club night before joining. For further information or an application form please see the club website.

### Club Equipment

Hire equipment: we have packs, 2 and 3 person tents, tent flies (small and large), snow mats, gas cookers, size 8 and 9 boots, billies and two bivvy bags. Ice axes, crampons, and helmets are also available. We have two personal locator beacons (PLB) for which there is no charge. Contact the Gear Custodian: Peter Rawlins on (06) 356 7443.

### Website [www.mtsc.org.nz](http://www.mtsc.org.nz)

This contains club information, photos, contact details and back issues of this newsletter, Beechleaves. The club website is maintained by Howard Nicholson (06) 357 6325 and is kindly hosted by **Inspire Net**, a locally based company.

### Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>

### Accommodation at the MTSC lodge on Mount Ruapehu

The lodge is close to Iwikau Village, has power, heating, hot showers and is stocked with food. Members and their guests are welcome. For Lodge bookings email Liz and Hugh Wilde [lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz) or phone 021 054 2560. To confirm your booking, payment must be made by internet payment (please email to confirm before depositing) Westpac account number 03 1521 022035300 or by cash to 179 Cook St Palmerston North 4410 in person.

	Members	Guests	The lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860.
Adult	\$40	\$58	
Secondary School	\$32	\$48	
Primary School	\$26	\$42	
Pre-school (3-5 yo)	\$13	\$13	

**Booking the MTSC Van:** For bookings: Contact Ken Mercer 027 364 6475. Cancellations should be made as soon as practicable to accommodate other potential users. A tent fly (in the passenger door) and a Personal Locator Beacon (in the glove box) are available for use free of charge on trips.