



Newsletter September to December 2023

Email: secretary.motuekatc@gmail.com

Website: motuekatrampingclub.org

President's Prose

What's in a name?

When I was at primary school I learned a few place names and songs in te reo Maori (we just called it Maori back then) in a study unit once a year, but there wasn't the culture of taking te reo usage seriously. Even when my children went to primary school, although there was more availability - weekly or fortnightly sessions - it still wasn't treated respectfully or used commonly. My te reo journey really started when I was a Playcentre Supervisor and learning/using te reo was encouraged, although I still only managed basic words, children's songs by rote and greetings, and never grasped grammar and sentences (an earlier foray into the German language was the same). But I have endeavoured to learn the names of some native fauna and flora in te reo and thus my journey continues.

Along the Summit Road in Christchurch where I grew up are/were the rest houses Sign of the Takahe, Kiwi, Bellbird, (and Packhorse apparently). Of the three with bird names, pick the odd one out. Why was it not Sign of the Korimako? We all seem familiar and comfortable with kaka, kea and kakariki. To me, a tui has always been a tui, but it also has the English name Parson Bird. On our walk to Clouston's Mine, we came across NZ stinging nettle or ongaonga - but which should I call it? Will others know what I mean? What if I call an eel a tuna - that's confusing too! Actually, no problem. It is more acceptable now to use the Maori words - I am thankful because I find te reo gentler and more melodic than English. If you use a name I don't know, thanks; I will attempt to learn it from you and I am happy to share the names I know. I like that there are so many things we can learn from each other in our tramping club and that we feel comfortable sharing our knowledge and being who we are. As a parting thought I wonder what - if we could understand each other - the birds would say their name was?

Committee



President: Heather Adams

Vice President: Debbie Smith

Secretary: Debbie Smith

Treasurer: Mike Tooker

Membership Officer: Kathy Chandler

Committee Member: Ann Giggs

New Members

A big welcome to

Helen O'Kane

Sophie Vickerman

Trip Reports



Awapoto Hut

3-4 September 2023

Leader and photographer: Alan



We headed off with a fresh southerly and the sun trying to break through. Thankfully the rain held off until after our return.

From the Canaan Downs up to Evans Ridge and along the track was in fair condition. Beyond the Wainui hut turnoff however things are pretty rough with a lot of fallen trees, overgrowth, and boggy spots. I would have serious reservations about tackling that part of the track in strong winds or wet.

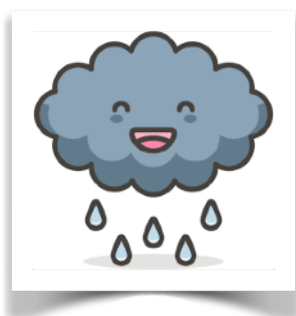
The hut was lovely and warm and has fabulous views of Farewell Spit all the way around to Nelson. The long drop has a view down into Awaroa Inlet and you can sit there like royalty with the world at your feet.

There were plenty of Wekas, some bush robins, kaka, and even a couple of Whio as well as plenty of birdsong. We also witnessed a robin taking on a giant worm.

A lovely night away.

Trip report: Alan

Trampers: Alan, Ann, Maggie, Sonya L



Cloustone Mine

10 September

Postponed to 12 November
because of rain.



Pelorus Tramp: Searching for Tawa

17-19 September 2023

Leader and photographer: Maggie



And so what about tawa? The DoC sign at the beginning of the tramp stated that this was an area with many tawa trees. This led to much discussion during the tramp as to what was and was not a tawa tree. We think that we finally agreed on the second day when we came upon a grove of many large tawa trees. The smaller trees seemed to be easier to identify. Day one started with a lovely easy walk along the beautiful Pelorus River to Emerald Pool. All agreed that this would be a fantastic swimming place - in the summer. Here we met a lone Frenchman with a huge pack with lots of gear slung onto the outside. He is probably one the first of the season Te Araroa South Bound walkers.

Continuing on, the track moved away up from the river through healthy looking beech trees, but there were still plenty of great views of the river with its amazing varied water colours and rocks.

The cosy six bunk Captain hut was empty that night so we all got a bunk, except Lynne who chose to use her little tent. Several of us had a refreshing swim in the river, the water temperature being much warmer than expected. There was plenty of firewood to be found along the river banks for feeding the stove. As had been forecast, we felt a few big wind gusts and some rain during the night.



The second day was an early start with the first part being a generally easier track than the first day. Just before reaching Middy hut, we passed the turn off to Fell hut. All agreed that this route was NOT going to be on the walks planning list any time soon. We reached Middy hut at 10:00 where we had a long one- hour stop to allow swimming, brew-up, sleep in the sun etc. However, the wind on the river made it very unattractive for the swimmers so we just lazed around trying to find a nice sunny sheltered place out of the wind.

Soon after crossing the swing bridge, we left the river and started heading uphill, almost immediately passing the turn off to Roebuck hut (the actual route of the Pelorus Track). According to the DoC website, this route has many windfalls at present.

The track continued upwards for the rest of the day, with many gusts of wind roaring through. We heard a tree crash down in the distance, fortunately nothing near us. We had some small windfalls but nothing major to cross.

Rocks hut was a pleasant sight after a long afternoon walking uphill. Of course, the flush toilets, one with and one without an outlook, were a noted feature. There were fantastic views of the Richmond Range from the hut: Mt Richmond, Johnstone Peak, Mt Fishtail and others. We shared the hut with an intrepid trumper from Marlborough who had just come down from Fell hut (using the chain ladder). He shared very useful information on huts, tracks and gear. All most interesting.



Day three - we all knew that this was the 'easy day'. After a quick side trip up to the lookout near Rocks hut, we set off at a good pace to Dun Saddle. From there it was a quick hop across to Coppermine Saddle where we joined the Dun Mountain/ Coppermine bike trail. Windy Point unusually was quite calm and we got great views over Tasman Bay and the mountains to the west. After another leisurely lunch at Third House, we sauntered down to the Brook Waimarama Sanctuary to wait for our ride home.

Thanks a lot to our three drivers: Pete, Brian and Judith.

Trip Report; Maggie

Trampers: Alan, Kathy, Lynne, Maggie, Sonya and Yvonne.





Holyoake Track

24 September 2023

Leader: Lynne



A simple tramp today but very enjoyable. We went along the Abel Tasman track and then up towards Holyoake Clearing. A new person today, Helen, came all the way from the other side of Nelson. I hope she joins us again. (She did, and is now a member.) The track up the hill was a bit slippery but not too bad and dried out during the day. There was a slip part way up but this has had work done to it so it is now easier to get up the far side of it. Lunch on the track and then we turned back despite not getting to Holyoake Clearing. Back down to

Tinline Campsite for afternoon tea and a swim for one.

Trampers were: Alan, Ann, Heather, Helen, John, Lynne, Maggie, Marie, Sonia C and Yvonne H.

Trip report: John

Photographer: Can't remember, sorry.



Keith Holyoake





Brook Sanctuary

1 October 2023

Leader: Ann

Photos: Kari



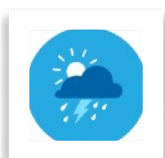
We were early birds arriving at the Sanctuary but the gate was not locked. After signing in and getting our instructions off we went in cool sunshine but were soon in the cool shade of the lovely bush. The track at the start was very easy and we made good progress alongside the river until the track got quite narrow and after crossing the stream for the first time, uphill we went steeply zigzagging most of the way to the top. There were many tuis and bellbirds singing to us along the way. There were lots of ups and downs and many river crossings. We came across the "picnic" table but didn't stop as the cups were not very usable. So onto the big table but it was too early for lunch so continued on along by the river which was crossed numerous times through lovely bush with lots of big pungas and a few big trees. We stopped for lunch beside the track before admiring the twins - a large rimu and large matai before descending back down to the start of the track. After a look around the visitor centre and saying hello to Graham the gecko, we had a look at the dam, discussed the fish ladder then headed home. Thanks to all for an enjoyable day out on a not too strenuous walk.

Trip report: Ann

Trampers: Ann, Brian, John, Kari, Lynne, Marie and Sonia C



Time for tea



Wangapeka 8-11 October.

Postponed because of bad forecast.



Bushline Hut

19-20 October 2023

Leader: Ann

Photos: Ann



This trip was delayed from earlier in the week due to an inclement weather forecast but we certainly got beautiful sunny warm weather later in the week. The trip started with a coffee stop at St Arnaud store before going up to the carpark and starting off up Paddy's track to the hut. It was a cruisy climb with lots of stops especially under the trees by a stream. Lunch was had at the hut and then off up Robert Ridge as far as the ski huts enjoying incredible views in every direction and listening to the musical pole. Late afternoon on returning to the hut we found it over full with a tent pitched as well. So much for only six booked in when I looked the night before but alas people had booked at the last minute and two had not booked at all - two young ones were loaned sleeping pads and slept on the floor. Next morning after a slow start we returned to the cars via Pinchgut and sat by the lake for lunch and of course a swim for one. A compulsory icecream was had before heading home. Thanks to Yvonne H and Kathy for joining me on a pleasant trip.



Trip Report: Ann

Trampers: Ann, Kathy and Yvonne H





Red Hills Hut

22 October 2023

Leader: Yvonne H



Photo: Ann

We started at Six Mile Car Park off Wairau Valley Highway 63 near St Arnaud. The track is a shared track for bikers and walkers and is essentially an old four-wheel drive track pretty much straight up a gradual incline which gets less gradual for the last kilometre.

The DOC sign offers an in time of 1½ to 3 hours for the 7km one way. We took just over 2 hours to reach the six bunk, double glazed, newish hut (built in 2010) in a very sunny position with great views into the tussock valley towards Gordon's Knob. There is no internal heating in the hut but a summer sleepover would be pleasant.

The hut is on the route of the Te Araroa Trail but walkers generally are not there until January and most stay in or around other huts in the area. It is also on the edge of the Dun Mountain Mineral Belt and part of the Maitland Ridge MTB circuit.

After lunch we did a short walk up the hill behind the hut but did not investigate the old 4WD track to the tussock area with rock cairns to mark the route, said to be 4 to 6 kms walk for about 1hr 30mins, which overlooks an area known as The Plateau. We did walk for a short time into the valley in front of the hut until it got very boggy and quite hard going. We walked down the 4WD track back down to the cars.

There is also a track from Red Hills Hut (the Maitland Ridge Track) which joins to the 4WD road track that leads to Beeby's Hut. With a bit of car shuffling this could be a good circuit trip, perhaps with a night at either Red Hut or Beeby's.

Trip Report: Ann

Trampers: Ann, Brian, Marie, Moppie, Sonia C and Yvonne H.





D'Urville Track

29 October to 2 November 2023

Leader and photos: Sonya L



We're off - 9.30am boat trip up lake Rotoroa with Dudley to D'Urville hut - beautiful clear morning and always spectacular up Nelson Lakes area to see the mountains adorned with speckled snow. The track up to Morgan hut is not maintained, none of the tracks in the valley are. There were times when we lost the track and had to hunt around for markers but generally it's fairly obvious even though you are at times pushing through tall astelia, flax or toi toi, we found our way. Parts of the track have been eroded into the river and doc has done a quick fix roughly cutting a new part of the track (watch out for stumps!). The D'Urville river was up and flowing swiftly, the turquoise water rushed by us and all through the trip we had the noise of water flowing over rocks. We noticed that the track is quite well trodden even though there weren't huge numbers of entries in the hut books, hunters no doubt. Not much birdlife in the valley and a few Canadian geese. We got to the hut about 3.30 having set off at 8.30. Had a few stops along the way. Morgans hut sits in a large pastured area near to the river. It's a cozy hut sleeping 10. Early to bed and up at 6am out the door at 7.30am, with hut cleaner than we found it, to walk to George Lyon hut. The track to George Lyon is stunning, we had the roaring river on our left, high craggy mountains above us on either side, to the right being Mole Tops and flourishing lush forest around us. Very rumpty track with a lot of undulating up and down, over trees, rocks



or finding a way to keep your feet dry and mud free when crossing creeks that interrupt your path. So many mosses and lichens in many shades of green, as we got further up the valley the rocks turned into sizes of ships, creating gorgy channels for the water to thunder down in masses of white foam, very stunning. One section of the track went skyward and we came to an alpine like area with masses of tanekaha trees (celery pine), a thick carpet of moss under our feet. Finally though it happened that we had to cross a deep creek and all got wet feet, the start of stinky boots! Closer to the hut there was an area where the river had sliced off the land and made a large island. The trees in its wake were thrown around like matches dropped from a box, they lay dying and trying to obstruct the path of the thundering turquoise water. We got to the hut about 12.30 just in time for lunch and cuppa and a swim for the water addicts. George Lyon Hut is the last of the unmodified National Parks big hut built in the early 1970s and renamed to remember the contribution of the first Park Ranger to the development of the huts and park in general. It's a bit unusual as there are two separate self-contained rooms, each with its own bunks and benches, although there is just one firebox, but the hut was warm and set well beside the river. The thunder box is shared not only by humans but also a pesky possum, that none of us were keen to visit at night. The arvo was a leisurely one, including knitting, yoga on the lawn and kindle reading. Next morning we set off early again as we wanted to get up to D'urville biv, an 8 hour day tramp. It took us an hour to get to the Moss Pass bridge, then 4 hours up to the biv. The track gets more steep, rumpty and obscure, the valley seems to close up like a zip making it more gorgy. The rocks in the river area turn into bigger ships and the pummelling water has carved out caves at the sides of the gorge in places, making good spots for taniwhas to lurk. The creeks that flow down from the tops, run over the track and seep in places helping bright lime green sphagnum moss carpet the way. The bogs get boggy and more tricky to negotiate your way, all part of the fun and challenge to get to the biv. as parts of the track disappear underneath more tanekaha trees, matagouri and beech. the seedlings tower above you, so it was head down and push through, quite hot work as it was surprisingly warm in the valley.



More rock falls of dry creek beds to cross. getting tired the closer we got to the biv, finally arriving and finding it tucked in the bush near a huge rock slide. We were glad to see it. The biv could definitely use a spruce up, the mattress had mould and around the windows there was mould. It was either a swim in crystal clear pool or lunch, and a freshly brewed cuppa. After a bit of a rest, it was turn around time and we headed back to the G.L. hut. a wonderful scenic day enjoyed by all. We were pleased to make it to the biv considering the challenging route (on topo maps it is dots not dashes) and the time to do it. In the morning we headed back to Morgan hut and shared it with two young Swiss trout fishermen. Our walk out the final day was finished by rain. At D'urville hut we enjoyed lunch and a cuppa. Dudley, our water taxi man, came and got us for an early boat ride back to base. Everyone enjoyed the D'urville and mostly we had it to ourselves.

Trip report: Sonya

Trampers: Alan, Helen, John, Lynne and Sonya





North Branch of the Graham

3 November 2023

Leader: Moppie



Photo; Moppie

On Ann's recommendation we took the three cars up the Graham valley North road to the end . This was a huge plus as it saved us 6 km of road walking. As a result had an early morning tea at the sheds before walking up the valley which opened out below Mt Crusader.. Then, it was a steady zig zag climb of 600m to the top of the hill. It seemed quite relentless but we were rewarded at the top by magnificent views of Tasman Bay, the Nelson Lakes area as well as the Arthur range.

We carried along the very undulating ridge to the new house/bach site overlooking the Arthur range where we had lunch. Ann kept an eye on the bags whilst the rest of the party went and had a look at the other potential house site.

The weather was cloudy so it was perfect walking conditions.

On the return trip downhill we got wonderful views of the valleys where the bush is returning to the very steep slopes .We did not see much livestock for the large area we covered .

It was an excellent day and thanks to the team of Ann, Brian, Heather, John, Judy, Kathleen, Lynne, Moppie and Pete.

Trip Report: Moppie



Photo: Judy





Clouston's Mine

12 November 2023

Leader: Heather



Photo Heather

This weekend's sub-alpine weather forecast was the same as the previous weekend - "expect strong, cold winds and possibly a shower". Last weekend turned out relatively calm and fine and I was a little overdressed for the occasion but this weekend was cold and blustery. We started our adventure by donning extra layers at the Flora carpark and again a little beyond that. Hooray for preparedness! The beech forest afforded us shelter along the way, and walking uphill once we left the main track warmed us up but our windproof jackets stayed on or at hand most of the day.

We were pleased to see a couple of families with young children using the Flora Hut for the weekend, and Friends of Flora vehicles were positioned strategically along the track. The car park was full. It has been many years since I walked up to Clouston's Mine. I was therefore pleased to have Brian alongside to point out places of interest, such as where to leave the track at blue marker 19 to go to the old miners camp and on down the Gridiron Creek, and also to lead the willing into the mine tunnel itself to view the wetas and surrounds.

In typical Spring fashion the bush was alive with birdsong, although several in the party remember the days before predator trapping when it was all quiet. We heard kaka (and heard the sound of trees rubbing together in the wind which was similar to kaka) and kea and were visited at our lunch stop by a pair of kakariki. On the way out there was a particular weka who could not get the idea that it could leave the track to let us through. I waited for a while for it to go about its day so it casually fossicked on the track in front of me; when I finally made a move forward it trotted along the track in front of us - very comical. Although I am heartened by the birds, my current passion is for butterflies, so we stopped to investigate patches of ongaonga along the track, looking for caterpillars. Alas we could find none, but at one patch we were entertained by 2-3 fast-paced Red Admirals flitting around. Sometimes it's the little things that count. We had an interesting day, in a forest full of wonderful things.

Heather Adams on behalf of Anne, Brian, John, Kathleen, Lynne, Marie and Yvonne H .





Nelson Lakes

26-29 November 2023

Leader: Sonya



According to the wilderness magazine, Hopeless Hut was presumably named after Mt Hopeless, which has a formidable appearance, rising in craggy magnificence from the Travers Valley. Hopeless Creek and Hopeless Hut take their names from that mountain.

The hut itself was built by the NZ Alpine Club and opened by Sir Edmund Hillary in 1967. It is a warm cozy old hut that has a wooden interior and great views from the windows. It's about 21k from Coldwater hut.

We started our tramp with takeaway coffees and cake from the Alpine Hotel, can recommend the GF brownie. boarded the water taxi about 9.45 and off we went on a bluebird day taking the main Travers track to the Hopeless Hut turn off. The main track being easy to follow, even with some tree fall and a slight detour, we took our time and enjoyed the views and the quietness and headed up Travers valley. Once you turn off from the main Travers track to Hopeless Hut, the scenery gets better and better. The track parallels the Hopeless river, which is on the right as you go up the valley. It had a fast flow. The track has a gentle gradient up towards the hut that sits at 1030m. As we walked closer to the hut, the mountains seemed to come right down close to the track, with their long scree skirts near to where we were walking, no vegetation just scree. We arrived to a clean, tidy and well-used hut and all to ourselves for the two nights.



Day two we walked up the cirque valley to the head where a waterfall cascaded down the sheer rock face from high up on the saddle, the track continuing up beside the waterfall went up a large, exposed scree slope. Once up on the tops one could walk across the tarn dotted terrain towards Angelus hut. We only walked up to the waterfall. From Hopeless hut we had walked through a beech forest and then came out to the scree and rock terrain. The ever-present sound of waterfalls around us, the whole time we stayed there. What a stunning place to explore, the wind bringing us the smell of alpine flowers. The views around us of waterfalls and small patches of snow in crags high above us. It was a warm day, and we could see the heat shimmering off all the rocks and scree. The only markers on the track were cairns, which take a while to find as they are camouflaged amongst all the scree. We found alpine flowers and tree shaped black lichens adorning boulders and rocks. We had morning tea beside the waterfall and looked out to the valley and mountains beyond. Kathy and Sonya had a swim under the waterfall and Ann and Yvonne relaxed and enjoyed the views. We walked back down the valley to the hut for lunch. That afternoon was spent by some exploring and some relaxing. When reading the hut book that night we were surprised by how many people stay in the hut, either coming up to stay there or lots

coming over from Angelus. There are no places near the hut to camp, only further up the valley away from the hut, but there is a secret room past the wood stack downstairs that is perfectly fine to sleep in if the hut is full. It looked like it had just had a new coat of paint and it was a well sealed room. The walk out on day three started early, with misty clouds and a bit rainy and cold, but that just brings out the colours and smells of the forest that you travel through, and the birds seem to sing more, so it adds a special and different experience to a walk. We made good time and got to Coldwater hut early.

Out came the billy so a cuppa could be had and a relax before being picked up by Hamish. The good thing about staying two nights in one place is you can explore more, it's less rushed and a more relaxing way to spend a couple of nights.

Highly recommend the not so hopeless hut!

Trip report: Sonya

Trampers: Ann, Kathy, Sonya and Yvonne

Photos (not the one of Ed): Sonya





Fenella Hut

7-9 December 2023

Leader: Ann



The tramp to Fenella hut is along the lovely Cobb Valley giving good views of the mountain ranges ahead and the valley behind. A stop at Chaffey's hut for refreshment and then continuing on towards Tent Camp. Both places have been kept in good condition and of such historic importance. Then on further up the valley to the hut and a well earned swim in the pool as it had been a hot day.

A tramp up to Waingaro Saddle was challenging in places but worth it for the great views especially towards Kakapo Peak which will be saved for another day. After another swim, we walked along the top of the ridge to check out how to get to Xenicus and beyond. The Cobb lake like the Cobb dam was the lowest any of us had seen, especially a worry at this time of year. The final day was a cruisy walk out on yet another beautiful sunny warm day and of course a swim was had by one participant. We spotted some red cinnabar moths; black mountain butterflies, redpoll, bell birds, tui, robins, warblers, pipits, riflemen and heard a kea.

There were bulbinella flowering well, lots of native white orchids, gentians just starting to come into flower, green hooded orchids, geranium sessiliflorum, native violets, celmisia but the most flowers were meadows of buttercups.

Two different fungi were found; the first is like an orange strawberry on beech trees - *cyttaria gunnii*. The second was a black fungus and yellow inside in a mass of small round individual blobs like grapes. I have not been able to find a name for this one but it could be of the *rosellinia* family.

Thank you to Sonya L, Marie and Yvonne H for joining me on this lovely walk which we all enjoyed.



Trip report: Ann
Trampers: Ann, Marie, Sonya L and Yvonne H
Photos: Sonya



Canaan

A little bit of History, by Jim of the Motueka 50 Plus Walking Group

1877

Maori had no need to wander far from their coastal bases. There was more than enough food to be had from the sea and the coastal bush. The coastal alluvial soils were ideal for food gardens. There were large trees close at hand that were suitable for waka. In the case of the Takaka Hill area, the possible presence of Taniwha roaring their displeasure from deep underground made sure that they did not stray far from their coastal enclaves.

However the influence of the European settlers and their quest for gold led to a well known Maori landowner from Wainui, Paramena Haereiti, and a mate, being tempted into gold prospecting up the Wainui River. They stumbled onto a basin that contained a large area of grassland and on their return to Wainui they 'promised' their pakeha friends - the Manson and Packard families - that there was grazing land in the interior. It became known as 'the promised land' and after several expeditions trying to locate this 'promised land' it was eventually the Pattie brothers, Tom and Robert, who found it in 1877. They scrambled up an as yet unnamed peak and there was 'the promised land' spread out below them.

The name 'Canaan' appears throughout the Bible as an area associated with the 'Promised Land'. In the Old Testament, Moses climbed Mt Nesbos in the Pisgah Mountains and viewed the 'promised' land of Canaan. The peak that the Pattie brothers climbed was named by the Government Surveyor, William Murray, as Pisgah Hill and the grassland basin that they looked down on was named Canaan Downs. Pisgah Hill is directly north-west from Wainui Saddle. Murray also named the peak north of Pisgah Hill as Murray Peak - no biblical connection here just a bit of colonial arrogance.

2004

Canaan Downs Farm at the end of Canaan Road was an example of an 'enclave' - a privately owned block of land, surrounded by National Park. These 'enclaves' were usually intensively grazed with the inevitable trespassing of grazing animals onto National Park land. Lowland forest within these enclaves was vulnerable to the chainsaw. Wetlands next to protected reserves were also vulnerable.

In 2004 this 758 hectare enclave, Canaan Downs Farm, was put on the market with the first option being given to the Government to purchase it for conservation purposes. The farm was divided into 6 blocks, each with its own title. At this time there was huge demand for rural 'natural' land in Nelson and Golden Bay. The danger of it being purchased by developers for housing or for use inappropriate for land next to a National Park was very apparent.

The Government made the decision to buy, at a cost of 1.8 million dollars, to ensure, among other things, access to Harwoods Hole.

The purchase meant the farm added to the diversity of native birds in the national park and preserved important bush communities that had become adaptable to the marble and limestone environment. The presence of the endangered powelliphanta (giant land snails) was enhanced by the increase in trapping that resulted from the 758 hectares being added to Abel Tasman National Park.

Cont. on next page

A little bit of Geology – (With apologies to our Rock Hounds.)

Although it might not be immediately apparent in the general lie of the land, the granite bedrock which occupies most of the surface area of Abel Tasman National Park is replaced by a much more ancient belt of marble on the western fringes. It is this marble which has weathered into the striking outcrops seen on the Takaka Hill and which forms the steep fault scarp on the eastern flank of the Takaka Valley.

Away to the south the same marble belt continues across Mt Arthur and Mt Owen - over 90 kilometres of generally steep mountain country containing many dramatic surfaces, as well as the deepest cave systems in New Zealand.

In the immediate Canaan area the contact between marble and granite is just north of the Canaan Downs Car Park where the marble spreads in a wedge westward to Harwoods Hole. This marble was formed about 500 million years ago, originally as limestone which has over time been subjected to great pressure and heat and transformed into marble. In contrast the granite of the park - known as Separation Point Granite - is much younger and was intruded as cooling masses of molten rock beneath the marble crust 115 million years ago, during the long period of mountain-building.

Over time there are remarkable processes which have created, in both marble and limestone, the strange and often wonderful landforms known as 'karst'. The most common features of all karst landscapes is that they occur in rocks that not only erode but also slowly, over millennia, dissolve in water; limestone and marble are water-soluble rocks and karst landscapes most often occur where these rock types are found.

To today's observer the Canaan landscape seems to be like any other colonial attempt to hack an isolated pastoral existence out of the bush clad hills. However, large conical depressions, most obvious where the forest cover has been cleared away, pock mark the landscape. Sizable streams suddenly disappear into dark cavernous wells, which Heaphy postulated 'might be traced to underground rivers'. And not all grey shadowy shapes are bleached old tree stumps, but some are actually weird fluted contortions of sharp grey rock known as 'karren'. The karren outcrops are a typically bizarre expression of the way erosional processes can work on soluble rocks. In fact many of the most striking karst features of the Canaan region occur beneath the ground. What is happening on the surface is being duplicated underground where the wonderful ways of water and gravity are carving out a complex system of underground plumbing and drainage. From Canaan the streams drain underground into the Takaka River, from south of Canaan Saddle they link by 'secret' passages to the north branch of the Riwaka River - the Resurgence.

Many thanks to Jim.



The Magpies

When Tom and Elizabeth took the farm
The bracken made their bed
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said

Tom's hand was strong to the plough
and Elizabeth's lips were red
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said

Year in year out they worked
while the pines grew overhead
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said

But all the beautiful crops soon went
to the mortgage man instead
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said

Elizabeth is dead now (it's long ago)
Old Tom's gone light in the head
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said

The farm's still there. Mortgage corporations
couldn't give it away
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies say.



Toaroha Saddle Biv

*West Coast
December 2020*