



# Motueka Tramping Club

## Newsletter

April 2022

Email: [secretary.motuekatc@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.motuekatc@gmail.com)

Web site: [www.motuekatrampingclub.org](http://www.motuekatrampingclub.org)

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### Annual General Meeting 27 March 2022

#### The following club members were elected to the committee:

President: Heather Adams  
Secretary & VP Debbie Smith  
Treasurer Mike Tooker  
Committee Ann Giggs

#### Positions Outside the Committee:

Walks Programmers:  
Ann Giggs, Una McNair  
Beacon Holder: Mike Tooker  
Membership Officer and Newsletter  
Editor: Yvonne J

#### President's Prose

With the AGM over, a new year begins. We hope it will be a year of sunshine on the weekends, campsites free of sandflies and vermin, and an absence of blisters, slips and bike tyre punctures. But most of this is beyond our control.

Something that is within our control is what we do with our tramping club. It is a community club, and as such I hope to see it represent a wide range of people from the Motueka community (and others from nearby areas that feel inclined to join us). To this end, I would encourage everyone to think of someone they think would enjoy our company – family/families, friends young and old, mates in other clubs, workmates – and encourage them to visit our marvellous website:

<https://www.motuekatrampingclub.org/> to fill in a contact form or email a request to join to [secretary.motuekatc@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.motuekatc@gmail.com) whereby Yvonne J will help them through the membership process. Then come out on a walk with them.

Then there is the aspect of ensuring that the wide range of participants is catered for through a wide range of tramping and related activities. We have many walks covering several grades of 'fitness' available to us, and are going on bike rides, but I feel that a few more social/information gatherings would be a benefit too. So get back to me (via the email above) – what do you know, who do you know, where would you go to meet and chat about tramping adventures, botanising, best boots.....?

*Heather Adams*  
*MTC President*

## **Rob Bruinsma, as presented at AGM 5 April 2022.**

This will be my last President's report since Gerda and I are moving back to Europe. And of course, we will miss you and MTC, and we will miss New Zealand with its splendid nature, its opportunities for tramping and mountain biking and its climate. But we will get other things back and family will be closer.

Last year we had our issues with Covid, lockdowns and restrictions, but it wasn't too bad. It could have been much worse and now, as a result of our vaccination rates, we handle omicron pretty well in comparison to the normal influenza season. I assume this pandemic will soon be endemic and all will go back to normal. Until the next bug shows up! So, it is not likely that we will have to cancel trips because of covid in near future.

Our activities have been, more or less, as usual. In 2021 we did 19 single day trips, of which 5 had an alternative destination to that planned, and 9 single day trips were cancelled, mostly because of the weather. On these trips there was an average of 7 persons participating. We did 15 multi day trips, of which 3 were changed to either single day trip or alternative destination. 7 multi day trips were cancelled. About 6 persons were in average on those trips. One multi day trip needed 2 different groups on different days, because the group was too big for the hut. As you know we won't take more than half of the available bunks. Biking is gaining in popularity and seems to be a set activity in our yearly programme. It was a bit sad that our Christmas gathering only had 5 people. I think that the Motueka weather forecast put a lot of people off, but the weather on Rabbit Island seems to have been better.

As far as I know, this year we had only 1 person helicoptered out on a trip. I take the opportunity to emphasize that it is important to take the club beacon or beacons and NOT use your own. The search and rescue team will know that it concerns our tramping club, and they will gain information about the trip, numbers, etc from the contact person. It is OK to bring your own, if that is what you wish, but if needed use the club ones.

Whether it is because of Covid or as a result of our website, our membership numbers are rising. At the start of 2020 we had 55 members, in 2021 58 and in 2022 59. In a time where club membership is declining and, especially younger people are looking for more incidental company for activities through the internet, I believe that is a good result.

Although the website is providing all members every information they need to be a supportive member, the key activity in MTC is the work of the walks committee. I would like to thank both Yvonne's, Moppie and Gerda for their efforts to make a good programme and to organise leaders for the trips. We all have to realise that without leaders, we have no trip programme, and we have no club. So, please, raise your hand if the walks committee is asking for leaders!

Another "thank you" is going to Yvonne J. for her efforts making 3 newsletters a year (please send her your trip report as per after the trip!) and for Mike for keeping track of our beacons.

Thank you all for your lovely company in being a member of MTC. Stay well and see you in future.

Rob Bruinsma

Membership Fees are now due:  
'Earlybird' MTC subs: \$15 for seniors, \$20 for family members.  
Affiliation fee to FMC: \$18 per person.



Please pay by bank account: 03 1354 0255611 00 NBS Motueka.  
The above subs are discounted rates. A surcharge of \$3 applies if paid after May 31

New Club Members: We welcome Kathleen and Sally



## Trip Reports

### 15 January Flora/Cobb Crossover

It was another beautiful hot day when our team of six gathered at the Rec Centre at 8 am for a Saturday tramp up in the hills. Four were to do the easier Flora "downhill" start and the remaining two to begin at Asbestos cottage track, a short distance along the road past the power house by upper Takaka River. We swapped cars, Bob driving mine and I drove Yvonne J's.

#### The Flora Group

Bob, Judy, Marie and YJ set off at 8.45 am, at which time there was a considerable number of cars in the carpark.



more broadleaf trees.

We had lunch at Lower Junction, and just as we were packing up to leave, Brian and Birgit arrived from the Cobb end. We swapped keys, they settled down for lunch, and we continued on our way.

We enjoyed the coolness of the bush, stopping at Gridiron for morning tea. Judy explored a little as she had not been that way before.

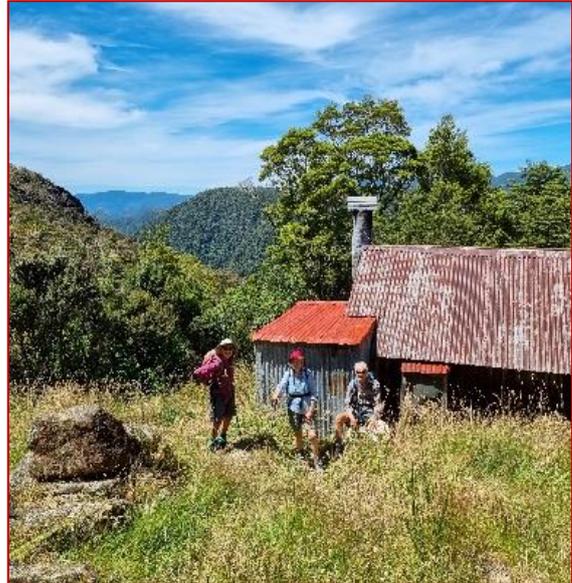
Turning off the main track, we headed for Upper Junction and then Lower Junction and Takaka River, enjoying the different bush type to that on the main track, ie



The bush opens up after this, and we were on open mineral belt country with very different plants, and with big views across to the old mine sites. There was some rata in flower in this section.



We arrived at Mr and Mrs Chaffey's old home in time for afternoon tea (Mrs Chaffey would have invited us in for tea we thought), had a look inside, tried out the easy chair and the bunks, neither of which would entice you to sit/sleep for too long.



There had been a few people staying there recently according to the hut book – into which we registered MTC's presence.

We had a long sit in the shade for afternoon tea, before traversing the old asbestos mine site and then finally back into the beech trees for the final journey to Cobb Road where our car was waiting for us.

We made our way back to Motueka, arriving about 6pm. A most enjoyable day. The Flora/Cobb crossing is such an interesting journey with its changes in terrain, varying flora, bits of history and a vast amount of devastation from previous mining activities. YJ

(Photos: Birgit, YJ, Judy)

### The Cobb Group



It didn't take long for Birgit and I to reach the asbestos mine. There appeared to be some noticeable new erosion on parts of the old road in. Here we had morning tea and broke up a couple of small soft rocks in our fingers to see the asbestos fibres within.

The following section up to the cottage is more exposed and also quite eroded in places now; thus a hot scramble up to the old house. Our route up and down took us to Broken Bridge where the others had just finished their lunch and were leaving. We remembered to swap car keys and sat by the river to enjoy our own lunch while the others crossed the bridge.

The long hike up Flora track gave us time to stop and look; there were plenty of fresh water drinking stops on the way. We passed several families either at or going to the rock shelters. We had another break at

Flora hut, keeping the busy weka at bay. It sneaked up under the table and pecked Birgit hard on the leg, but finding she wasn't edible, it left. The last half hour plod up to the saddle took us back at my car. I have always done this trip uphill but next time.....

A great day out though.

The team was Yvonne J, Judy, Bob, Marie, Birgit and me, Brian. (photos: Birgit, YJ, Judy)

## 21-22 January Nydia Bay



There were just three of us, Debbie, YH and YJ. We chose to walk from Duncan Bay, Tennyson Inlet and return the same way. We had absolutely beautiful calm sunny days, not a cloud in the sky, but it was hot. The journey initially follows Duncan Bay (wasp poison not yet being set but the buzz of wasps was in the air) for an hour, and then the uphill climb to Nydia Saddle at 360 metres. Fortunately we were well shaded on the steep up and down by beautiful old rimu, beech and nikau palms and plenty of white rata in flower, stopping for lunch just near the saddle.

The next section along and around Nydia Bay is

more open, taking nearly 2 hours. We visited the “new” Eddie the Longfin eel. He wasn't all that interested in our attempts to lure him to a suitable spot to photograph him (or her). Apparently the eels stay put in their habitat for about 80 years when they reach maturity (at which time they can weigh up to 40kg and measure 2 metres in length) and then they migrate to somewhere near Tonga where they spawn and die. The larvae then float back to New Zealand (but do they return to where their parent came from?) This information from NZ Forest and Bird website.



We were pleased to reach Nydia Lodge after about 6 hours. The wardens were in residence, along with their grandchildren, and another family – but there were plenty of spare bunk rooms, and the spacious common room and kitchen provided loads of room to safely negotiate other users. Apart from that, it was so hot we spent more time outdoors under the trees. The sandflies were reasonably kind.

Day 2 we returned the way we came, once again enjoying the blue calm water of Nydia and Duncan Bays, and the clear blue sky. The return journey was 36 km. It was exceptionally warm which necessitated a slight detour into Rai Valley for an icecream on the way home.

YJ (Photos: YJ)

## 6 February Tapawera Bike Ride – Cancelled due weather

## 14-15 February Wyllies Farmstead

### Day 1

We delayed our trip by 2 days due to the horrendous weather. There were four participants, Rob, Gerda, Judy and Moppie.

After coffee at Takaka (Wholemeal Cafe was very relaxed even although we were in the Red setting), we made our way over to Wyllies homestead. We prepared lunch and walked out of the front door onto farm tracks up to Lunar escarpment. It was a beautiful cloudless day with no wind. On the tops there were amazing rock formations with the vegetation growing nearly horizontal in places. We imagined many animal shapes.



It was a circular walk and we found an easier way down to the lower level. There was plenty of white rata in flower. This is a stunning walk on a good weather day. We had a pleasant evening at our accommodation. Moppie

### Day 2 Hilltop Walk

With no internet and limited phone coverage it was good to enjoy a few days not ruled by daily covid updates. However we couldn't escape completely as even our Hilltop Walk from the start of Farewell Spit began with a covid code to scan! We were blessed with a warm sunny day and almost no wind – ideal for our tramp across the hilltops.



Our first destination atop the Old Man Range looked dauntingly far away, but we arrived surprisingly quickly in time for morning tea near the trig point. Then it was on to Pillar Point with its rather disappointing lighthouse which we agreed must be the ugliest in New Zealand.

We made Cape Farewell in time for a rather late lunch and watched two tour buses arrive, so at least some operators are managing to make a living in these difficult times.





The next section over grassy Cape Farewell was probably the hardest due to its steepness and lack of footholds, so we were pleased to reach the summit and get our first glimpse of Wharariki Beach in the distance. As we got closer the views became ever more stunning.

Finally we emerged at the edge of the dunes with a great sense of achievement. We walked over to the caves to look for baby seals, but there were only a very few on this occasion. I would rate this as one of the best walks I have done in the area and as always count myself fortunate to live in such a great place.

Judy

(Photos: Judy)

**17-19 February Kahurangi Lighthouse – cancelled due complications!!**

**26 February Adele Island/Motuareronui**

Ten of us went on this trip. Moppie could not make it but Pete proved to be an excellent solo guide.

The Island was named by Dumont d’Urville after his wife Adele Pepin, having used her surname a bit further around the coast for another island. The island became a Scenic Reserve in 1895. It is covered with regenerating native forest with hakea, pines and gorse. And at least one fine display of the Easter Orchid.

At only 800 meters offshore it is sadly within swimming distance for stoats and is now regularly trapped by volunteers. We followed the trapline markers to guide us through the elevated circumnavigation we undertook. It is about 120 meters at the highest point. Adele is usually



enjoyed from the sea by boaties, fishers and kayakers so people beyond the beaches is a rarity.

On arrival at Marahau our first navigation challenge was to find the boat between the Aqua Taxi and the shop; but once achieved we were totally on it.

We had a very peaceful and quick trip across to the island. Only a few of us got wet feet getting to the beach. Then straight up, and up, and still more up, to a high point on the island. Following the trap lines we continued around to Stream Cove where we had a bit of food and watched six baby seals in a nursery pool keeping an eye out for the



parents a bit further around the coast, taking lots of photos. Back up to the trap line and then following Pete as he found the less difficult route through the bush around to a great lookout point, and then down and down to the beach.

Three of our group enjoyed a very cold swim, we had lunch and took the water taxi back to Apple Tree Bay. We walked on the Coastal Track to Tinline and then via the beach to the bridge leading into Marahau.

It was a great day, sunny enough to be comfortable, minimal wind on the land, although enough to give us an excellent kite surfing display as we approached Marahau. The water was cold but apparently bearable. There were even ice creams for some before heading home.

We did not see a lot of bird life on the day, clearly missing the advertised 'chorus of birdsong', although fantails, both black and pied, and robins joined our walk. Sadly no saddlebacks were sighted.

Yvonne H for Birgit, Brian, Joy, Janet, Kathy, Kathleen, Marie, Pete and Yvonne J. (Photos: YH, YJ)

6 March Not Dew Lakes, but

### 6 March Dun Mountain Walkway toward Coppermine Saddle

Horror of horrors - the track to Dew Lakes was closed due to forestry work. Nothing on the various website that we looked at suggested such a closure but we didn't look at one for Maitai Harvest Closures: [https://shape.nelson.govt.nz/harvesting\\_our\\_forests](https://shape.nelson.govt.nz/harvesting_our_forests). In our defence, when I checked the site after our walk, the information given would not have helped and in their defence logging has been happening in various parts since Sept 2021. We haven't been there often enough!

But ever flexible, we decided on a there and back, aka an up and down, on Dun Mountain Track towards Coppermine Saddle. It promised, and delivered, about 12km return, 450m of ascent, about 4 hours of walking, lots of chat and very pleasant surroundings. The lace patterns on the spillway from the dam were still there.

We got to see some of the very last gentians for the season amongst the scrubby ground cover



We also found new roads and a very smart new bridge courtesy of the forestry work, presumably giving a bit more access to walkers after the pines have gone.

Yvonne H for Ann, Birgit, Sally and leader Sonya L (she went straight onto the Roaring Lion following this trip).

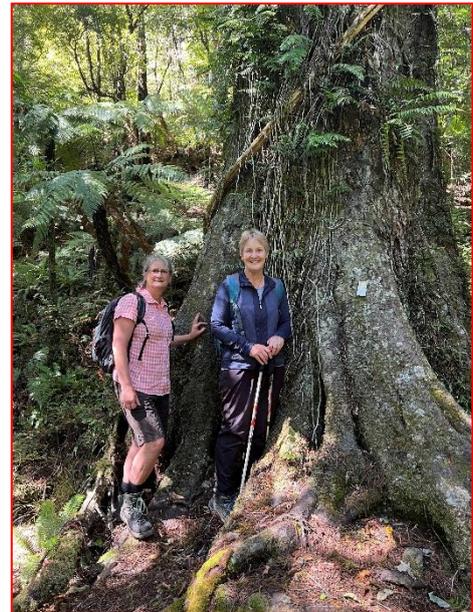
Yvonne H (Photo Yvonne H – *Gentiana stellata*)

### 13 March Maitai Caves

Three members did this enjoyable trip on a very fine day.

After last week's discovery of blocked tracks two of us were sure of access to the Maitai Caves and confidently parked at the toilets again. We crossed the bridge and walked, following good signage, firstly on 4WD track and then benched track into the bush, across Solanders Creek, and on a less well formed track to the cave. There were some fine old and very large trees and attractive stream areas on this walk.

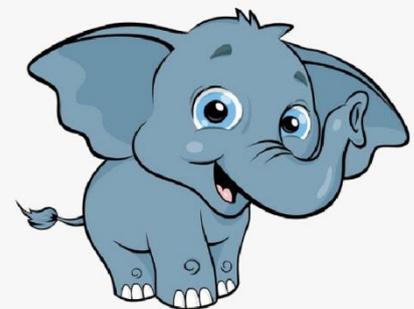
We lunched outside the cave entrance noting the muddiness of other cave explorers. When our time arrived to enter, we sort of squeezed through a not very big entrance and perched just inside, looking at the wetness of the fairly large cave. We decided that was enough cave experience for us for the day and that we would give exploring this cave and the smaller second chamber a miss. We exited, just a little muddy, and made our way back the way we had come, surprised at seeing quite a lot of things we had not noticed on the way in, and decided that there and back walks are OK - they still provide lots of interest and good conversation.



A large native tutu, in fine berry stage, caught our attention and elicited stories of its poisonous qualities - even to



killing elephants while they were walked over Takaka Hill as part of a travelling circus!! They, the elephants, were too heavy to be driven in trucks over the hill. Back home I hit the keys to check this tutu and elephant death story. My modern version of "research" could not confirm that it did happen to elephants on Takaka Hill BUT I did find out a lot about the tutin in the various parts of the plant and apparently the honey made from it; the deaths it caused to cattle and sheep but not horses and never rabbits, and indeed



stories of tutu and elephants, thus:

In 1869, an elephant visiting Otago for an exhibition was poisoned by tutu and died.

Seems like there is also an interesting connection to the naming of Elephant Rocks near Duntroon.

In 1956, an elephant travelling with the Bullen Brothers circus died after eating tutu while watering at the Mangawhero River - and was buried behind the railway houses at Ohakune Junction, just in case you need to know that.

AND two female Indian elephants, seen eating tutu while travelling in open-sided trucks in 1968 were injected with barbiturates and made full recoveries.

That must have been about the time elephants stopped travelling- at least to NZ.

Yvonne H for Kathleen and Sally (Photos: YH and Jumbo-land photography)

### 18-20 March St Arnaud – Cancelled due weather

## 27-29 March West Coast Wilderness Trail



At the end of March we were very lucky to have three beautiful days to bike the West Coast Wilderness Trail.

Ten of us started alongside the Grey River flood wall. The trail follows the coast south, tucked behind flax-lined sand dunes. After the Taramakau bridge the trail hops onto the historic Kumara Bush Tramway and goes through farmland and beautiful forest to Kumara. In Kumara we rented 2 cottages for the night and had a wonderful dinner at the Royal Theatre Hotel.



The second day we had a long ride up the hill through forest to Cowboy Paradise. Since the restaurant was closed we had our lunch on the slope with a beautiful view over the Arahura river. After lunch we followed a winding path down to the river to join the road climbing over Pyramid Hill and onto Lake Kaniere. After a short rest we continued our way to Hokitika by the historic Kaniere water race. The last bit along the road and the Hokitika river felt a bit long to us and I think we were all happy to reach our destination.

Day 3 was an easier ride, first crossing the Hokitika bridge with the Southern alps in view. The first part was through beautiful beech forest, along Mahinapua Creek and the Mananui tramlines. Some of us stopped along the track to take the short walk to Lake Mahinapua. After morning tea/coffee at the Treetop walkway cafe we followed the Ross rail line. After a picture at the finish we had a little look around before our transport back to Greymouth. All in all, three fantastic days!



Gerda for Rob B, Ann, Bill, Yvonne H, Laurie, Moppie, Peter, Judy, Bob . *(Photos: Judy)*

## 3 April Lodestone

## 9-11 April Linkwater Trip

### Day 1 Wandering the Wakamarina

Every good day walk begins with a strong round of coffee, and so it was that five club stalwarts descended on the Pelorus Cafe one sunny April Saturday morning .

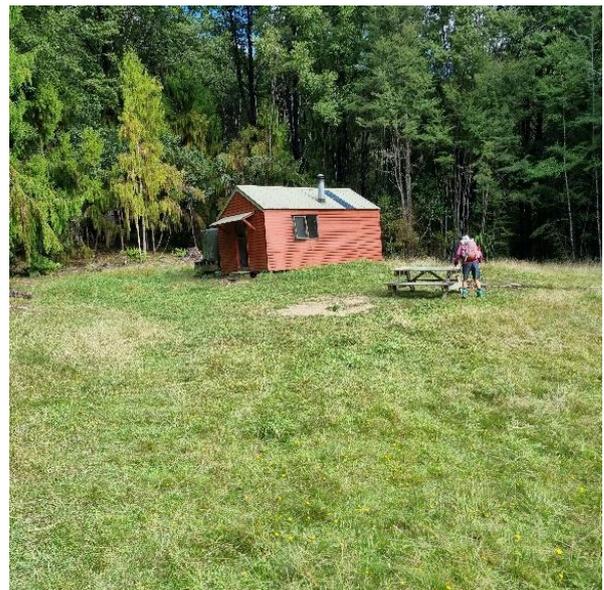
Many delicious muffins and cakes later we navigated the winding gravel to Butchers Road end. Warming to the late morning sun, we hoisted packs on shoulders. Minutes later we navigated our way past a pig hunter with a boar tied over the handlebar of his trail bike and his gang of hunting dogs with radio transmitters strapped to their backs.



Our route followed a well graded track traversing steep slopes high above the Wakamarina River, followed the line of an old bridle track or a mining water race. We paused occasionally to discuss the magnificent Kahikatea , the variety of native beech, or the age of Totara. Even lowly Coprosma were admired. Several gorged side streams were crossed. One rocky chasm was spanned by a steel framed bridge with an alarming bounce. A fenced off shaft hinted of the brief time that the Wakamarina was the richest goldfield in New Zealand. A curious steel boot heelplate, perhaps a track marker placed by an early miner, was found embedded in a Totara tree trunk.

We met a couple who had walked loop trail into the Doom Valley and noted this for future exploration.

Two hours in, we paused for a relaxed trackside lunch. Then it was onwards and gradually upwards for another hour before descending across a couple of ferny side streams to a sunny forest clearing and the 6 bunk Devil Creek Hut. A brief pause and logbook signed then a steady return pace took us back to our vehicle by 5.00pm and past the Trout Tavern, through Havelock to Smith Farm Camping Ground at Linkwater. Delicious warm muffins were offered as we booked in. Our hosts told us that club member Bob B had also booked for the weekend. A pleasant surprise.



Showered and changed, MTC homed in on the Queen Charlotte Tavern for a pub meal and beer. The bar was tense and blokey, focused on a telecast of a Super Rugby tussle between the Blues and the Chiefs. We chose to swap tall stories over fish of the day in the dining room. An after dinner pause in the carpark gave us a magnificent constellation sky show.

As we headed to bed or sleeping bag, even the odd aching or cramped muscle did not detract from a thoroughly enjoyable day.

### *Linkwater Weekend Quiz Question*

*As the Linkwater 2022 group climbed through sunlit forest to Trig Point K, party members recalled the childhood pleasures of reading Enid Blyton with her imagined characters: the controversial Noddy and Big Ears, the magical Faraway Tree, the crime busting Secret Seven, and the ageless Famous Five. Over lunch, drawing on a question in the English quiz show "The Chase", Rob challenged the group with this poser. Now it's your turn!*

*During the 1930s, Enid Blyton often invited guests to spend a weekend at her country home in the south of England. How did they play tennis?*

*Dressed as gnomes and pixies?  
Dressed as members of the Royal Family?  
In the nude?  
Answer:  
Ask anyone who was on the walk!*

Rob M

Day 2 Queen Charlotte Track, Anakiwa to Mistletoe Bay

The early autumn mist had cleared by the time we arrived at Anakiwa and another stunning sunny day was promised. Our fears of being taken out by crazy cyclists proved unfounded and we had the track largely to ourselves on the first leg to Davies Bay campsite. As we climbed the



track towards Te Mahia saddle, the views across the Grove Arm of Queen Charlotte Sound opened up and we reached the viewpoint at the top in time for lunch.

Here we met up with Yvonne J, who had driven the Kenepuru road to Te Mahia to allow us to do a crossover. The road is still hard to navigate in places following the storm in July 2021, and apparently still closed beyond Te Mahia.

Back at the campsite and once rested, we felt obliged to attempt the bush walk to the waterfalls at the back of the farm with the promise of spectacular glow-worms on the way back. Our host insisted this was not to be missed and supplied us with map and

torches to help us on our way.

After crossing several paddocks we entered the bush in the fading light and stumbled our way along an ill-formed track. Eventually we reached the waterfall (at least that's what the sign said!) but sadly hardly a trickle greeted us. Never mind – there was still the glow-worms to anticipate! As we retraced our steps in the near darkness we finally spotted the odd pinprick of light among the bush, but since it was impossible to negotiate the track without using our torches, the promised display was rather an anti-climax. We were all quite relieved when we found our way safely back to the campsite. Judy (Photos: Judy)

*(see end of Newsletter for info on NZ glow worms)*

Day 3 Trig K from Pelorus Bridge

We arrived in time for coffee (again) and had a most enjoyable walk to Trig K.



Trig K itself is pretty ordinary, a bare patch with weeds and views over where pine trees had been cut down, but the bush is very very nice, with a variety of trees – Totara, Matai, Miro, Kowhai, Rimu, Kahikatea, Beech and the beautiful Tawa which we tend not to see in Kahurangi.

The last bit of the track followed the Te Hoiere (Pelorus) River which was very pleasant indeed. The waterfalls were almost dry after such a long spell of dry weather.

The day ended back at the café for an icecream, and then it was home.

A very nice three days in the company of Judy, Marie, Rob, YH and with a surprise visit from Bob.

I was very pleased to get up the Wakamarina after several aborted attempts. Yvonne J

*(Photos: Judy, YJ - kereru is in a Tawa tree))*

### 17 April Cable Bay Crossover

The Cable Bay group had a pretty steep climb up,, but the day was beautiful and calm. We had morning tea at the top of the hill overlooking Cable Bay and the boulder bank and back to the western ranges.

We met up with the Glen group for lunch in the trees, and after a stop at the top of the airstrip made our way downhill via the road (in the interest of several knees) and made our way home. YJ

The Glen group climbed the steep track up from the beach at Glenduan, along the airstrip. We were pleased to have prospective members with us today, Robin and Kirsty.

We were Heather (leader) Ann, Rob M, Robin, Kirsty, Margaret, YJ, Lynda.

*(Photo: YJ)*



### 23-25 April Collingwood Base

Party: Heather, Kathy, Marie, Yvonne, Yvonne J, Judy, Rob.  
Leader: Ann

#### Day 1: Onekaka

And so it was, our party of eight headed into the blue over Takaka Hill, early one April Saturday morning. T'was ordained that our purpose was a walk to the Onekaka Iron Mine and Hydro dam. Thoughts of coffee at the Wholemeal Café were purged as our entourage of three 4WDs whistled through Takaka and negotiated a winding gravel road. Cars



parked, we scaled a locked gate and paced up the road to a small hydro power station in a sun warmed clearing. A snack pause allowed us to check the generating building with its Nissan hut style curved roof, and agree that the flat grassed area would be ideal for an MTC camping ground...

Across the stream and upwards our brave party strode, on a rough vehicle track. After a steep climb the track veered left at about 300m altitude. We contoured past disused cast iron water pipes and steel buckets used for



iron ore and dolomite mining between 1924 and 1935. Coal for the iron smelting was sourced from the West Coast and Collingwood.

Just before the road-end,

we found the hydro water storage dam. Built in 1929, the 30 m high dam is now moss covered with grey green pondage fringed by native forest regrowth. Naturalists in the party enjoyed range of native flora. A playful Fantail was cartwheeling a above the dam to a chorus of bellbirds and tuis.

Following lunch in the sun, we paced back to our cars then drove to the mouth of the Onekaka River, where the



ironworks and wharf were once sited.

Today the estuary shore has a string of holiday baches and is a haven for seabirds and hopeful fishermen.

We explored the beach, and returning to our cars, headed to the Collingwood Camping Ground for hot showers, drinks and nibbles.

Rob M (photos: Rob; YJ, Onekaka/Iron works historical photos - National Library via Rob)

## Day 2 Hilltop Walkway

The wild and windy night did not bode well for our planned walk along the Hilltop Walkway. With high hopes that it would die down as the day progressed, we set off from Farewell Spit and took the side trip to Fossil Point. Here we spent a good while examining the multi-layered cliffs and generally fossicking for interesting bits and pieces of shells and other creatures embedded in the mudstone.



After morning tea, we set off to climb the track up over the Old Man range. As the views opened up, so did our exposure to the wind, and by the time we reached the trig point on the summit some of our lighter members were struggling to stand up. It was obvious that conditions were becoming positively dangerous and none of us were unhappy when our leader made the call to turn back.



We eventually managed to find a sheltered spot for lunch tucked in the lee of bushes at the bottom of the track, much to the annoyance of a mob of sheep who clearly resented us blocking their route to fresh pastures.

With time to spare when we returned to Collingwood, some of us took the opportunity to visit the excellent little museum to learn about the major fires which totally destroyed the town on several occasions, and marvel at the eclectic mix of local artefacts. (Judy) *(Photos: Judy)*

## Day 3 Aorere Goldfields

The day started early for those of us who wanted to attend the dawn service at the Cenotaph. A real bonus of having to arise at 6am was a brilliant view of four planets in alignment with the moon which were visible just before dawn - quite spectacular, especially Jupiter and Venus (Mars and Saturn were a bit fainter). It was a lovely Anzac Day service at the Cenotaph with a good turnout and lots of families in attendance. There was some thoughtful story telling followed by laying of wreaths.

Everyone mucked in with a very efficient house clean and we left the house by around 8.30am.

We began following the road to the Heaphy Track, until turning onto the Devils' Boots Road which we followed to Aorere carpark. It was an easy track through regenerating bush with a slight uphill gradient. We were excited to find a mystery plant with pretty



white flowers until we subsequently saw it growing along most of the track! The soils were poor, indicated by the limited number of species and the cute little red sundews.

We found a nice sunny spot for morning tea with a comfortable bank to sit on. The track was really impressive as it had been built up at the side of a water race from the goldmining days and would have been constructed by manual labour and picks and shovels.

Shortly after this, we continued along the track to the caves. The first cave had a relatively small entrance but some magnificent unusual stalactites of the same variety seen at Rawhiti Caves, where the plants have interacted with the chemicals in the stalactites. The main cave, called the Ballroom, had a huge entrance way and some spectacular stalactites. It was possible to explore for quite a distance with our torches and Yvonne H and Kathy explored up to where you would need to crawl to go further. It was a very impressive cave!



Continuing along the track, we heard the occasional bellbird and were constantly entertained by fantails. Yvonne and Marie helped to educate us about the different beech species and several of us had a great fern bird experience. We had some great views down the valley and of the bay from this section of track.

We proceeded past the 4WD junction to the reservoir and decided to have lunch at a rocky high spot which had some views. From here was a short walk to the river, but we took the track which followed the lake edge back, retracing our steps to the junction. Kathy was keen for a swim but decided she might not be able to climb out of the reservoir after immersion! The reservoir was quite extensive but we did not see the dam.

We followed the 4WD track back to the cars. It would have been an interesting ride in a vehicle! Some parts were very narrow, others steep and very rutted with deep water at the side in places, not to mention bogs! We were all rewarded with some excellent views and thoroughly enjoyed the whole walk.

Our day was nearly done, but it was decided that it would not be complete without a stop off for an ice-cream at Takaka. We all agreed it was an excellent weekend with great weather, lots of fun, variety and great company. Many thanks to organiser Anne for a great weekend and to Ann, Yvonne J and Heather for driving us!

Kathy                    (Photos: Rob, YJ)

## Bits of history and bio-diversity:



Earina autumnalis or  
Easter orchid – Adele  
Island

### About Glow Worms: (From Te Ara website)

(Photo: Glow-worm snares >)

What is a glow-worm? None of the world's glow-worms are true worms. In the northern hemisphere the name is used for beetles that fly around at night with their tail-lights flashing.

In New Zealand and Australia, glow-worms are the larvae (maggots) of a special kind of fly known as a fungus gnat. Fungus gnats look rather like mosquitoes, and most feed on mushrooms and other fungi. However, a small group of fungus gnats are carnivores, and the worm-like larvae of these species use their glowing lights to attract small flying insects into a snare of sticky threads. One species, *Arachnocampa luminosa*, is found throughout New Zealand, and others occur in Australia.



Hundreds of *Arachnocampa* larvae may live side by side on a damp sheltered surface, such as the roof of a cave or an overhanging bank in the forest. Their lights resemble a star-filled night sky. Māori call them titiwai, which refers to lights reflected in water.

Beetle or fly? It was first thought that the only insects that glowed were beetles, such as the northern hemisphere fireflies. So people believed that New Zealand's glow-worms, too, were beetles. But in the 1880s, George Vernon Hudson took glow-worm larvae from the Wellington Botanic Garden and raised them in a tank. He showed that they had a pupa stage and then emerged as a special type of adult fly – known as a fungus gnat.

Habitat : Glow-worms need damp places, where the air is humid and still, to construct their snares. Caves and old mining tunnels are ideal. In the forest glow-worm snares are commonest on moist banks beside a stream or in a ravine.

Prey: Small midges are the usual prey of glow-worms, but all sorts of flying insects get trapped in the sticky snares, including mayflies, caddisflies and moths. Forest glow-worms may also trap spiders, plant hoppers and even millipedes. The glow-worm simply cuts free any prey that is too large, or unwanted.

Adult glow-worm flies are never caught in the snares – they are not attracted to the light, and even if they brush against the sticky threads they are strong enough to pull free.

Light display: The glow-worm's tail-light shines from an organ which is the equivalent of a human kidney. All insects have this organ but the glow-worm has a unique ability to produce a blue-green light from it. The chemical reaction that produces the light consumes a lot of oxygen. An airbag surrounds the light organ, providing it with oxygen and acting as a silvery reflector to concentrate the light.

A fungus gnat can glow at all stages of its life cycle (except as an egg), but the larva has the brightest light.

In caves the insects light up at any time of the day or night. Outdoor glow-worms start glowing shortly after dark and usually shine all night. Sometimes when a glow-worm is disturbed its light seems to go off suddenly. This is the larva slithering into a crevice, hiding its light. It actually takes several minutes for the larva to shut off the light.



Aerial Photo  
Onekaka 1935 via  
Rob M

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