



*PTC Monthly  
Newsletter  
April 2019*

<b>PTC</b>	Affiliate of Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc)
<b>Postal Address</b>	The Secretary, PTC, PO Box 13 258, City East , Christchurch 8141
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<b>Facebook name</b>	Peninsula Tramping Club Christchurch
<b>Correspondence</b>	All correspondence to the Secretary, including change of contact details

#### Executive Committee

President	Diane Mellish	337 5530	Editor	Raymond Ford	351 9496
Vice-President	Gary Huish	332 7020	Quartermaster	Brian Smith	355 9945
Vice-President	Kevin Hughes	332 6281	Social Events	Maureen Thompson	021 2665778
Treasurer	Mike Bourke	332 7097		Margot Bowden	332 7020
Trip Planner	Kerry Moore	359 5069	Committee	Keith McQuillan	384 6164
Secretary	Merv Meredith	322 7239			



<b>New Member Enquiries:</b>	Stan Wilder	260 2340	Contact Stan to request an info-pack. You will also receive three complimentary newsletters
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#### Our Club

The PTC consists of people of all ages who tramp for recreation. Regular trips are organised, ranging from 'easy' to 'hard', day trips to long weekends. Various instruction courses run each year to improve members' skills for back-country tramping. In addition to a monthly club meeting, a variety of social events are held.

#### CLUB NIGHTS

Club Nights are held on the **second Tuesday** of each month at the **Baptist Church Hall, 286 Oxford Terrace (corner of Madras St. and Oxford Terrace)** at 7.45 pm. Doors open 7.30pm.

<b>Tuesday, 9 April</b> 	<b>Focus on Japan</b> A description of outdoor activities by PTC members in Japan; a country with a fascinating history and outstanding scenery. Geoff Korver will talk about tramping trips, Pat McIntosh will tell us about cycling expeditions, and Gavin Chalk will describe his skiing experiences. <i>Supper Duty:</i> Wendy Wallace & Peter Umbers
<b>Tuesday, 14 May</b> 	<b>African Adventures</b> Chris Leaver and Graham Townsend will describe a number of their adventures in Africa. These include Ruwenzori hiking in Uganda, plus wildlife viewing in central Tanzania and Botswana's Okavango delta.

## SOCIAL EVENTS

<b>5.30 pm, Wednesday, 10 April</b>	<p><b>Yoga and dinner.</b></p> <p>Enjoy a relaxing yoga class at the re-built Hare Krishna centre at 83 Bealey Ave. The class starts at 5.30pm. It is suitable for men and women. Rock climbers often attend to improve their balance!</p> <p>If you like, you can park near 30A Peacock St and walk from Maureen's place at 5.15pm. Mats are provided or bring your own. You can do as much or as little as you like. No pressure. Give it a go, and you'll feel wonderful afterwards. The class lasts 1hr 15 mins, followed by dinner. Just \$20 which includes a delicious vegetarian meal afterwards in the yoga room.</p> <p>Names to Maureen Thompson 021 2665778 or <a href="mailto:mothompson1212@gmail.com">mothompson1212@gmail.com</a> by Sunday 7 April.</p>
<b>Wednesday 22 May</b>	<p><b>Escape from the Room to earn Dessert at Maureen's place</b></p> <p>Escape rooms are filled with intriguing puzzles, and decorated with unique themes and props. The Dark Wizard (a new room) or the Indiana Jungle. Work as a team to solve the puzzles in an hour. Each puzzle leads to another one like a treasure hunt. There are several rooms to choose from, so if you have done it before, you can try a new one. You aren't actually locked in the room so it is not claustrophobic. See <a href="https://escapeartists.nz/">https://escapeartists.nz/</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>6.50 pm:</b> Meet at Escape Artists, 2/25 Churchill St, Christchurch. It's an office block near the Fitzgerald/Bealey intersection. Ten minute briefing.</li> <li>• <b>7 pm:</b> Enter the escape rooms in teams of 4 – 6. The organisers give you clues if you get stuck, so you won't miss dessert. It will take one hour.</li> <li>• <b>8.15 pm:</b> Drive a short distance to Maureen's house 30A Peacock St for coffee/tea/hot chocolate and dessert, e.g. Sticky date, lemon delicious</li> </ul> <p>Costs: \$25 for the Escape room (Possibly \$22 if we have enough people). Plus \$5 for dessert.</p> <p>Bookings by Wednesday 15 May to Maureen Thompson <a href="mailto:mothompson1212@gmail.com">mothompson1212@gmail.com</a> or 021 266 5778.</p>

## NOTES

### ***President's notes***

Hi everyone. I am still on a high from my successful ascent of Mt Tapuae-O-Uenuku last weekend with 9 other club members. Perfect balmy autumn weather, and great company made it such a pleasant adventure.

Thanks to members for your feedback on the submission forms. It was discussed at our recent executive meeting, and we are acting on many of your suggestions. Just to clarify, it is quite ok for members to send Raymond a short ad to include in Footnotes if you wish to sell any tramping gear you no longer use. No photos, just text. You can bring the gear to the next club night to show prospective buyers. We do not accept advertising from commercial enterprises though.

And one final thing, PLEASE EMAIL THE TRIP LEADER IF YOU ARE BOOKING ON A TRIP even if you have told them over the phone or in person. Otherwise the leader may forget and unintentionally leave you off the list.

See you at Trip Planning on the 16th April. ☺

**Diane**

### ***The April night sky***

After sunset, reddish Mars is low in the west, with the bright constellation Orion above it. The bright stars Sirius and Canopus are still high in the sky; Sirius slightly northwards and Canopus almost overhead. Towards the south, the Southern Cross and the two pointers, Alpha and Beta Centauri, rise higher into the evening sky

as April and May go by. Alpha is the closest naked eye star, just 4.3 light years away; while Beta, which is really much the brighter of the two, seems fainter because it's many hundreds of light years distant.

Later in the evening, bright Jupiter rises in the east; four of its moons are sometimes just visible in binoculars, and a fascinating sight as they constantly change position relative to the planet. Saturn rises an hour or so after Jupiter, followed into the pre-dawn sky by bright Venus, and then by much fainter, reddish Mercury.

New moon is 5<sup>th</sup> April, first quarter is on 13<sup>th</sup>, full moon on 19<sup>th</sup>, and last quarter on 27<sup>th</sup>.

For anyone with a genuine interest in astronomy, the NASA website *Astronomy Picture of the Day* <https://apod.nasa.gov/apod/> has a new image, with a simple explanation, every day.

Graham Townsend

## Membership

The Club welcomes back rejoining member - Carolyn Catt, and accepts with regret the resignations of: Ken Lefever, Janine Osborne, Ian Beale, Roger and Pauline Hill.

**Deadline for the May newsletter:** Friday, 3 May 2019 – please send newsletter items to Raymond Ford: [fordrm@snap.net.nz](mailto:fordrm@snap.net.nz)

**Next Committee Meeting:** Tuesday, 30 April 2019.

## Trip Photos:

The Club maintains a gallery of photographs on its website. Keeping this up to date allows people to see what recent trips the Club has undertaken. Can trip leaders send or nominate someone to send some photographs from each trip to Kevin Hughes, [ptc@nivek.co.nz](mailto:ptc@nivek.co.nz), so we can keep this record current?

## FORTHCOMING TRIPS

### Day Trips

Depart from and return to a convenient point on the side of town nearest to the destination. Non-members are asked to phone the trip leader in advance. If you doubt your suitability for a day-trip, or if the weather is turning bad, contact the trip leader beforehand. A phone inquiry does not oblige you to go on the trip.

### Weekend Trips

May leave on a Friday night (usually for base camps) or Saturday morning. Please book with the trip leader by the closing date. Be certain you want to go on the trip when booking, as it is not fair on the leader to withdraw after the closing date (good excuses excepted). Numbers on some weekend trips are limited, so book promptly.

### Bike Trips

The Club has a mountain biking section –'Fat Tyre Fanatics', who head out on casual day trips throughout the year. For details about club biking trips, contact Chris Leaver 03 322 6445, or [newptc75@gmail.com](mailto:newptc75@gmail.com).

<b>6 Apr</b> <b><u>Saturday</u></b> <b>*</b>	<b>Mt Oxford—Ashley Saddle—Middle Bridge</b> <a href="https://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32803/Mount-Oxford/Canterbury">https://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32803/Mount-Oxford/Canterbury</a> A <b>moderate</b> crossover variant of the old Mt Oxford climb. Some people could go part-way and return the same way. <b>Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St</b>	<b>Kerry Moore 359 5069</b>  <b>Approx Cost \$18</b>
<b>13-14 Apr</b>  <b>**</b>	<b>Taipo River—Kelly Range circuit</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32246/Dillon-Hut/West-Coast">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32246/Dillon-Hut/West-Coast</a> A crossing of the Kelly Range, past Carroll Hut and a series of mountain tarns. Staying at the modern Dillons Hut by the Taipo River. <b>List closes 6 April</b>	<b>Dan Pryce 356 1962</b>

**14 Apr** **Knowles Top** **Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
**Sun** <http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32853/Knowles-Top/Canterbury>  
**\*** Easy trip up a ridge off the Glen Tui Rd, with good views of Ashley Gorge, plains and coast.  
**Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St** **Approx Cost \$11**

**7pm, 16 Apr** **TRIP PLANNING MEETING - 2019-20 PROGRAMME**  
**Tuesday** Bring your trip suggestions to the meeting at Sue and Stan Wilder's place, 54 Warden St., Richmond. If you can't attend, please give your trip ideas to Kerry 359 5069, or a committee person.

**19-22 Apr** **Gorgy Creek Tarn** **Diane Mellish 027 413 6468**  
**Easter** <https://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32124/Gorgy-Creek/West-Coast>  
**\*\*\*\*** A moderate trip to camp at this high 1470m gem in APNP. Day 1 will be up the Waimakariri River to spend a night at Carrington Hut. Gorgy Creek is near Campbell Pass. We will explore the tops around the tarn and the Bijleveld Col area.  
**List closes Fri 12 April**

**19-22 Apr** **Fox Glacier Base Camp** **Names to Heather Hughes 332 6281**  
**Easter** <http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz26528/Fox-Glacier/West-Coast>  
**\*\*\*\*** Plenty to do in this area—Mt Fox, Lk Matheson, Gillespies Beach and lots of short walks  
**List closes 6 April**

**19-28 Apr** **Serpentine Hut--Frisco Hut et al** **Liz Stephenson 027 633 2038**  
**Easter** <http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz31059/Frisco-Hut/West-Coast>  
**\*\*\*\*\*** Up the Hokitika River to bag huts on the way including Serpentine, Frisco, Bluff, Sir Robert, then out via the Toaroha River ticking off Toaroha Saddle biv, top Toaroha Hut, Crystal Biv. Maybe a side trip to Mungo Hut if time allows  
**\*\*\*\*\***  
**List closes Sat 6 April**

**21 Apr** **Stan Helms--Uruman Tracks** **Helen Harkness 384 2890**  
**Sun** <https://www.bankspeninsulawalks.co.nz/lyttelton-walks/>  
**\*** From Lyttelton we go up to the crater rim on the Major Hornbrook Track, along to or below Mt Pleasant, past the gun emplacements then down Uruman Track to our starting point in Lyttelton. For this easy-moderate walk you can take the Number 28 Bus to Lyttelton. See web address for timetables  
**Meet 9am Cnr Canterbury & London streets, Lyttelton**

**25 Apr** **Port Hills Mystery Trip** **Bruce Cameron 022 188 5905**  
**Anzac Day** <https://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz29934/Otamahua%2fQuail-Island/Canterbury>  
**\*** An easy, Port Hills trip  
**Meet 9am South Chch Library, Colombo St**

**27-28 Apr** **Camp Creek Hut** **Gary Huish 332 7020**  
**\*\*** <http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32475/Camp-Creek-Hut/West-Coast>  
 An easy-moderate visit to this former research hut in Westland bush. Take soap, It features an outdoor bath.  
**List closes 21 April**

28 Apr Sun *	<b>Peak Hill</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz31193/Peak-Hill/Canterbury">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz31193/Peak-Hill/Canterbury</a> Easy-moderate climb in open country up a 1240m hill with superb views of Lake Coleridge on one side and the Rakaia River on the other. The upper slopes of Peak Hill have recently become Crown Land, with public access from the Algidus Road, thanks to tenure review of the pastoral lease property. Check out this excellent new public facility. <b>Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd</b>	<b>Alison Maccoll 322 8540</b> <b>Approx Cost \$17</b>
4-5 May **	<b>Kirwans Hut</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz35972/Kirwans-Hut/West-Coast">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz35972/Kirwans-Hut/West-Coast</a> Easy-moderate tramp up a well graded old miners' pack track in Victoria Forest Park near Reefton. A 900m slow climb through the forest to this comfortable hut near the bush edge with great views. Optional side-trip to tussock-topped Kirwans Hill. <b>List closes 28 April</b>	<b>Jillian Fulcher 351 4189</b>
4-9 May *****	<b>Caples—Routeburn</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/trck129217/Caples-Track/Otago">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/trck129217/Caples-Track/Otago</a> Moderate. The Routeburn is one of NZ's world famous walking tracks, timed out of season so normal hut fees apply. Starting on the Caples simplifies transport. <b>List closes 21 April</b>	<b>Raymond Ford 022 318 0872</b> <b>fordrm@snap.net.nz</b>
4 May Saturday *	<b>Lyttelton to Pony Point</b> <a href="http://www.mapmywalk.com/nz/christchurch-canterbury/cass-bay-to-lyttelton-route-436457">http://www.mapmywalk.com/nz/christchurch-canterbury/cass-bay-to-lyttelton-route-436457</a> An easy walk from Lyttelton to Magazine Bay, Corsair Bay, Cass Bay and Pony Point. Go early and visit the produce market <b>Meet 10am at Lyttelton Library, London St</b>	<b>Mary McKeown 358 7717</b>
11-12 May **	<b>Lake Clearwater base</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz27978/Lake-Clearwater/Canterbury">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz27978/Lake-Clearwater/Canterbury</a> Base camping at this site with plenty of options--Mounts Harper, Guy, Sunday, Potts, or just lazing around. <b>List closes 28 April</b>	<b>Keith McQuillan 384 6164</b>
12 May Sun *	<b>Five Gully Stream—Mt Storm</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32981/Mount-Storm/Canterbury">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32981/Mount-Storm/Canterbury</a> A moderate climb of this 1254m peak from near Mt Pember homestead. A choice of spurs mean we can make a circuit of it. <b>Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St</b>	<b>Kerry Moore 359 5069</b> <b>Approx Cost \$14</b>
18-19 May **	<b>Mount Somers Walkway</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/trck129509/Mount-Somers-Walkway/Canterbury">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/trck129509/Mount-Somers-Walkway/Canterbury</a> A moderate walkway hike in fascinating volcanic terrain, from Woolshed Creek to the Staveley end. <b>List closes 12 May</b>	

19 May Sun *	<b>Mount Somers</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/trck129509/Mount-Somers-Walkway/Canterbury">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/trck129509/Mount-Somers-Walkway/Canterbury</a> Moderate climb of this 1687m extinct volcano from the Sharplin Falls end. <b>Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd</b>	<b>Gary Huish 332 7020</b>  <b>Approx Cost \$19</b>
25-26 May  **	<b>Black Hill Hut</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32973/Black-Hill-Hut/Canterbury">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32973/Black-Hill-Hut/Canterbury</a> Moderate trip to this hut in Oxford Forest. A Sunday morning side trip to Chest Peak is an option while less energetic people could be content with a walk to the top of 1300m Black Hill for the view. <b>List closes 19 May</b>	<b>Leader pending</b>
26 May Sun *	<b>Charing Cross</b> <a href="https://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz34388/Charing-Cross/Canterbury">https://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz34388/Charing-Cross/Canterbury</a> Easy-moderate tramp on farm tracks to this 999m peak in the Tekoa Range inland from Culverden. <b>Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St</b>	<b>Leader pending</b>  <b>Approx Cost \$17</b>
1-3 Jun Queens Birthday Wknd ***	<b>Nina—Boscawen--Lake Christabel</b> <a href="https://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz35190/Mount-Boscawen/West-Coast">https://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz35190/Mount-Boscawen/West-Coast</a> A moderate circuit up the Nina Rr to Nina Biv then over Boscawen Saddle to Lake Christabel Hut. Day three goes to the highway via Rough Creek. <b>List closes 26 May</b>	<b>Leader pending</b>
2 Jun Sun *	<b>Doctors Hills</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz33577/Doctors-Hills/Canterbury">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz33577/Doctors-Hills/Canterbury</a> Named because a local doctor used to wander here. This easy trip inland from Waikari gives views of Pyramid Valley and Moa Swamp. <b>Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St</b>	<b>Leader pending</b>  <b>Approx Cost \$14</b>
8-9 Jun  **	<b>Broken River Hut</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32665/Broken-River-Hut/Canterbury">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32665/Broken-River-Hut/Canterbury</a> An easy walk on Flock Hill Station along Winding Creek to this hut beside Broken River. <b>List closes 2 June</b>	<b>Leader pending</b>
9 Jun Sun *	<b>Purple Hill</b> <a href="https://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32881/Purple-Hill/Canterbury">https://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32881/Purple-Hill/Canterbury</a> A moderate climb of this 1680m peak above Lake Pearson with superb views around Castle Hill Basin. <b>Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd</b>	<b>Leader pending</b>  <b>Approx Cost \$17</b>
15-18 Jun  ****	<b>Welcome Flat Hot Springs</b> <a href="http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz26154/Welcome-Flat/West-Coast">http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz26154/Welcome-Flat/West-Coast</a> An easy-moderate walk to this popular large hut in Westland beside the famous hot pools. <b>List closes 2 June</b>	<b>Diane Mellish 027 413 6468</b> <b>mellishdiane@gmail.com</b>



## Sylvia 'surely not in the cloud again' Tops - 9 – 10 March 2019

The first time I did this trip was in Nov 2010 with Dan Pryce. The details then were:-Leave town 7.00am to be walking from the Deerstalkers Hut at 9.30am. Turn off the Nina track to cross the Nina River and follow all day up the spur on the true right, from east to west. The 'new' as in 2008 Devil's Den Bivvy is right on Devilskin Saddle whereas the old bivvy used to be in the bush a little way down Blind Stream.

Both the spur on the way up and the bivvy, would give a great view in all directions on a clear day. I say would, because Dan and I saw the inside of the cloud all day and kept saying, 'wouldn't this be great on a fine day'. But we enjoyed our stay in the new bivvy, plus the easy walk out down the Nina on the Sunday was in sunny weather.

So I scheduled it again in March 2017 and cancelled it when bad weather was forecast. So THIS time, the odds were for fine weather and great views. The forecast was OK a few days beforehand, and Markus and I were happy to go. Vesna emailed that they had been there the previous week in brilliant weather, and provided the latest route info. But 24 hours beforehand, a front moved down across the island. We still went.

Leaving Markus' place by 7.30am, we drove in cloud almost to the Deerstalkers Hut before blue sky started to appear. Walking by 10.00am, accompanied by a large party from Hurunui School, a check at the intentions book suggested there could be two hunters at the two person bivvy. Hope not, but Plan B was always to continue on to the old bivvy site and camp, if that happened. Leaving our school group at the turn off, we dropped down to the Nina River, noting that, as Vesna had said, it is now a well marked route all the way to the bushline.

The sun didn't last. We stopped at the bushline at 12.50pm; it was a pleasant place for lunch. It didn't take much climbing after lunch to ascend in to the cloud. I hadn't taken the GPS as originally it was going to be fine, so we were soon in to some serious map and compass work and the day kept rolling by, in a similar fashion to the 2010 trip! Also toward the western end, I again had navigation trouble with 1662m! The drop off to the norwest is not obvious in cloud. And in dense cloud now getting wettish, it was worse trying to guess when to circle down when approaching 1625m. As it happened, we emerged on to the route toward

Blind Stream about 300m down from the saddle.

6.30pm. And there was a cigarette in a hand hanging out the bivvy window. Our two young hunters were there. Welcoming, but the hut stunk of tobacco and continuing on to the shelter of the old bivvy site was always going to be our best option. Markus was keen to trial his modified one man tent, so I had bought my Minaret with the tent

stripped out. At the biv site we set

up in the damp and worked our way through a rather late dinner. However, dinner had its highlight. I had bought fancy almond biscuits as a 'dessert', but Markus had packed a surprise 'mystery' dessert which he



Figure 1 Merv descending ridge before Pt 1625. Photo courtesy of Markus Kaufmann

said would go fine with the biscuits. It did indeed. Packed in a double skin stainless pottle – a plentiful supply of ice cream, still nicely frozen!

Sunday was a much shorter walk out down the Nina River. Up at 7.00am and walking at 8.30am we dropped down Blind Stream to the now deserted Nina Hut at 10.30am. Our two hunter friends caught us up while we were still there. Crossing the Nina swingbridge a couple of hours later we stopped shortly afterwards at a tiny gorge for a pleasant lunch and walked out to the road in hazy sunshine by 2.30pm. Well; a second time in cloud. Navigating in cloud solely with map and compass was satisfying, but it would still be more so to do the trip with a great view either side. A third attempt? Maybe.

We were: **Markus Kaufmann and Merv Meredith.** 🏔️ MM.

## Feeding the Wasps – Sat 22 March

In late summer, wasps stop feeding on sugar, such as honey dew and seek protein. That's where operation 'Wasp Wipeout' enters the scene. VESPEX, developed in Nelson gives them what they want plus a dose of fipronil™ insecticide which they carry back to their nests—wipeout! The great benefit of a protein-based bait is that bees aren't drawn to it.

Hunters and trampers were reporting wasp attacks along the Pinchgut track. After getting three stings in February on a PTC walk to Pinchgut Hut, I started to take an interest in wasp control. On this March Saturday, Peter Umbers and I volunteered to go and serve up some vengeance. Peter had been stung recently on a club trip in Nelson Lakes NP so was keen to get even.

With VESPEX, bait stations, cordless drill and screws we attached 70 "feeders" to trees along the track to Pinchgut Hut. After 30 minutes at the hut we headed back to the car, heartened to see wasps showing interest in this blue-green bait. To me it has minimal odour. We were relieved to emerge from the area unstung though hunters and trampers that day weren't so lucky. Bait is usually only left out for 7 or 8 days and we are very keen to know how much bait has been taken.

**Peter Umbers & Kerry Moore.** 🏔️ KM

More information can be found at:

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/wasp-wipeout/87865462/the-weapon-to-wipe-out-wasps-the-story-of-vespex--wasp-wipeout>





## The Tors Tour – Sunday 23 March 2019

Stan Wilder agreed to lead this trip many months before the event, but damaged his heel a week before the Sunday. A sympathetic Trish Falkner agreed to stand in for Stan, and by 0900, 14 of us turned up at the Mt Vernon car-park to do “Stan’s” circuit. The loop goes part-way up the Mt Vernon Valley Track, climbs off-track to cross the Rapaki Track, then crosses Avoca Valley to reach the spur between Avoca and Horatane valleys. Climbing to the road we walked east along the Crater Rim Track to The Tors for lunch at Point 453. We had a fine view of Cass Bay and Lyttelton Harbour. Some took the official Crater Rim Track west to the Terry McCashin Memorial seat and others took a higher rocky route. Above the Mt Vernon Valley Track, we could watch rock climbers on the vertical columnar basalts of Witch Hill.



Figure 2. The party at Terry McCashin Memorial Seat. Photo courtesy of Trish Faulkner Hill.

A little climb on the flanks of 462m then a descent to the Mt Vernon Farm Track, and we were on our way back to the cars with fewer than 14 people.

Some had taken a short-cut back to the start-point and we even had two join us (Mike and Sue) for lunch so could almost say we had sixteen trampers on the walk. Helen had been telling us about a small band of women she’s walked with in the past who’d been labelled ‘The Spice Girls’ because they always tramped in their Sunday-best outfits. On the Summit Road, we met them and indeed they were dressed to the nines and well coiffured.

Many thanks to Trish for leading and telling us about the local history. We hope Stan makes a rapid recovery.

We were: **Trish Faulkner (leader), Pat McIntosh, Wendy McCaughan, Helen Harkness, Dan Pryce, Ian and Diane Roxburgh, Hank Boer, Carolyn Catt, John Robinson, Jeff Chandler, Joy Schroeder, SP Wang, Sue Britain, Mike Bourke, Kerry Moore.** 🏔️ KM

## Ella Range, Nelson Range National Park - 8-11 March 2019

“They generally attack the fourth person in line”. Sonja was over from Australia, and had been regaling us with stories about snakes, leeches, ticks and March flies. We countered with tales of wasp attacks and sand-fly swarms, but our wasp warning sounded a bit feeble in response.

The NZ weather had already played its part with the 2018 Lake Unknown trip being rescheduled and still unknown in 2019, after an adverse southern forecast. Plans B and C were discussed before deciding on a traverse of the Ella Range between the D’Urville and Matakaitaki Rivers. Lunch in Murchison was followed by



packs on at the start of the Mole Track opposite Matakī Lodge. The first farm track section was accompanied by the sound of wasps in the trees. This diminished when we re-joined the river and found significant flood debris, few markers and a boulder bash up the middle. The marked track between two tributaries was a welcome sight and we gained height quickly to reach the delightful Mole Hut at 1200m. Realising that we had only completed half the height gain to the Mole Tops was a shock, and some weary bodies reached the top about 5pm to a fantastic vista of tarns and tussock.



Figure 3. Looking south along the Ella Range to Mt Ella. Photo courtesy of Raymond Ford

Clouds over Nelson Lakes delayed the sunrise, but our weather window treated us to much photographed tarn reflections. We could see people and tents in the next large basin, but we were intent on staying high on the ridge. Gradually the ridge narrowed and following it was not an option. We tried traversing high but finally dropped east to avoid rocky ramparts. Peak 1785 was bypassed before we regained the ridge towards the 1871m

Mt Watson. Basin traverses became the theme as spires on the range finished in bluffs and the green rolling Mole Tops were a distant memory. It was still early when we reached the first of two large tarns under Peak 1916, but the cloud was lowering and camping seemed like a good idea. The onset of rain at 4pm dispelled any ideas of a swim. Sonja's curry warmed us that night as Peter described, "it was even hot when it was cold".

Low cloud the next morning created some discussion over routes. Navigation though the increasingly jagged



Figure 4 Raymond and Sonja climbing up from the second campsite. Photo courtesy of Gary Huish

landscape in low visibility would not be easy and we were opposite an old track down to the Matakī Base Hut. Doug and Gary opted for caution and descent while Raymond and Sonja wanted to continue. It must have been Peter's deciding vote or the clearing weather that tilted the decision, and we were off for more adventure. The peaks on the range ahead appeared and disappeared in the mist, but Mt Ella itself remained hidden. Dropping east or west into the basins and climbing up the other side proved easier than traversing. The decision not to

climb the last 1.5km to Mt Ella was made and we crossed the

last ridge before a long descent into the McKeller Stream. At last beech forest and greenery! The marked



track was overgrown but reasonable. Finally easier going, then disaster. A wasp nest right on the track at about 1140m. Raymond and Doug passed without noticing, Sonja got through but Peter was fourth in line and was enveloped in an enraged swarm. He ran forward, Sonja was in the way and both were being stung. Gary bailed. Finally quiet resumed, antihistamine was administered and down we continued. The track faded as we reached the flatter areas. Regrowth obscured markers and foot trail got harder to follow. "Lost markers" became a common call, people searched left and right, then "found marker" and we continued. At last the Matakītiki river flats, camp, swim, dinner...and sandflies!

The last day down the Matakītiki River was an anti-climax to some extent. A total of 15km, 10km on track and 5km on road back to the car, taking just over three hours to mirror two days travel along the tops. Stopping meant feeding the sandflies so it was head down and out.

The trampers were: **Raymond Ford, Doug Foster, Sonja Risa (leader), Peter Umbers and Gary Huish.** 🏔️ GH

## Mt Tapuae-o-Uenuku 22 -25 March 2019

At 2,885 metres, Tapuae-o-Uenuku ('footsteps of the rainbow') oversees Marlborough from the heart of the Inland Kaikoura Range. Its bulk prompted Captain Cook, who first named it Mt Odin after the Norse god, to then nickname it 'The Watcher', because it was visible for days as he sailed down the South Island's east coast.

Our party of 10 took in its changing profile as we drove through Seddon and headed up the Awatere valley in post-equinox evening light on a Friday. By the time, we stopped at the 'Camden Cookshop', owned by Camden Station, for sleep and preparation for an early start up the Hodder River, it was cloaked by night.



*Figure 5. Party on the scree slopes below the summit ridge. Photo courtesy of Raymond Ford*

Watchers - stewards - abound in this special place; the Camden Crown pastoral lease includes much of the land below the peak, the owners of Mt Gladstone welcome recreationists on their tracks downstream of the unavoidable plunge into the Hodder, and the Marlborough Tramping Club offers shelter from the storm in its huts under the mountain. These are long-time, bedded-in relationships; the place feels owned.

With Saturday morning, came the Hodder and its legendary 80-ish crossings. At our moment in time, the water was shallow and warm, and we arrived at the Hodder huts in the late afternoon sun feeling relaxed and in time to korero with the day's summiteers, who had started returning. Di's fantastic pasta dinner, including an actual roux, completed a beautiful day.

A Tapuae-o-Uenuku trip, it seems, is a game of quid pro quos. For us, payback for the Hodder's early-autumn ease was going to be the exacting nature of the mountain's bald scree (in winter, cramponing to the summit is the reward for the cold hours in the river).



*Figure 6. A happy party on the summit of Mt Tapuae-o-Uenuku. Photo courtesy of Raymond Ford*

In the end, even the scree was a delight. Tapuae-o-Uenuku's volcanic whakapapa was clearly legible as we traversed it on the Sunday: Cretaceous greywackes, gabbro, a multitude of minerals (Government platinum mining plans were dropped five years ago). Conversation, picnics, and the sound of high scree moving under feet marked our way to an extraordinary summit.

Ascending, southern and western hills quietly revealed themselves, but the scene from the peak came suddenly. Only repeat climbs could prepare you; it takes your breath away. With a step, the Pacific Ocean, the Clarence valley, and the lower North Island appeared.

We lingered on the summit. It was that sort of day; we revelled in it. Pictures were taken; brief summit phone coverage hastily taken advantage of. Then we exited via a scree run suitable for two, not 10 (Di's black-and-blue digit was the only casualty), meeting up with our ascent route shortly after.

The metres fell away as we rejoined the world of plants and small creatures, and a few conversations, picnics, and dozes-in-the-sun later, we arrived at the MTC's huts, by now quiet with weekend busy-ness over. The remarkable dinner-for-ten that Sue conjured up would have been something special at home; in the hills, it was magic.

Monday's descent through the Hodder's twists and drops was easy as a nor'wester built up, coffee in Seddon was thought of, where we enthusiastically greeted by Sue Barker( Johnston), and the chance to look again at the earthquake-changed Kaikoura coast came back to mind.

\* Information for trmpers/climbers: unformed legal roads almost to the saddle between Mt Alarm (2,877 metres) and Mitre Peak (2,691 metres) allow access up the Hodder River and into the scenic reserve that covers the big Inland Kaikoura tops including those two and Tapuae-o-Uenuku.

The party was: **Sue Piercey, Liz Stephenson, Diane Mellish, Aarn Tate, Sonja Risa, Jan Finlayson, Gary Huish, Raymond Ford (leader), Angela Grigg, Calum McIntosh ...🌲.JF**