



Resplendant Quetzal

Photo: Peter Smith

Please submit your **November 2024** H&V articles to the editor by **3rd November 2024**

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CLUB NIGHT PROGRAMME Starts 7:30 pm promptly



2 October : Hera Cook – What do we see when we look at the bush?

Many New Zealanders love the bush but, beyond finding it beautiful, we know little about the impact of human settlement on our forests and the swift changes currently taking place. This talk examines how Hera came to understand what she was seeing and learnt about forest dynamics, the impact of pest animals and the current situation. It suggests how we might encourage greater awareness among a wider audience and analyses the major obstacles standing in the way of doing so.

Hera trained as a historian in the UK and returned to New Zealand so she could go tramping and see her whanau. After 12 years as a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Public Health, Otago University of Wellington and a lot of tramping, she has started writing about the bush and related issues.

9 October : David Barnes – 16 years of Tararua trips - The North Island's (slightly larger) answer to the Silver Peaks

David Barnes put this presentation together for his other club in Dunedin, to give them an understanding of his new tramping territory. (Although he'd already had 5 Tararua trips before he moved here). This is our chance to see how a relative newcomer sees a place many of us have been visiting for ever.

16 October: Peter Smith & Trish Gardiner-Smith – Birding, wildlife and fauna in Costa Rica and the Cayman Islands.

In December of last year Peter and Trish revisited old haunts in Costa Rica before going on a self-drive birding tour. Afterwards they visited family in the Cayman Islands and looked at the wildlife there.

23 October : Dennis Page – Cheers Graeme! South Island hut bagging no 2 - third time lucky

On 9 March 2024, 9 HVTC members finally managed a ferry sailing south on their third attempt to undertake the final trip that was organised by the late Graeme Lythgoe as part of his highly acclaimed and long-running pre-Easter trips.

The first two attempts were stymied by Covid-19 in 2022 and then by diabolical ferry failures in 2023. With Graeme's unexpected passing after a short illness in February 2023, the remainder of the group were determined that Graeme's memory and his can-do sense of adventure should be honoured in the most appropriate way - that is, completing what Graeme had already initiated, planned and started back in late 2021. The honouring of Graeme's efforts were finally brought to a successful conclusion in March - albeit with a few additional modifications on the way...

Participant and substitute trip leader, Dennis Page, will show-case the trip's highlights and the places visited as the 'crew' availed themselves of every opportunity to salute Graeme in a South Island tour-de-force.

30 October : Lauren Vargo – Girls* on Ice

Girls* on Ice Aotearoa is the New Zealand branch of Inspiring Girls* Expeditions, an international organization that aims to inspire passion, participation, and empowerment for girls* in professions of art, science, and wilderness exploration. In January 2025, Girls* on Ice Aotearoa will have our second expedition. Science, art, and outdoor instructors will lead a team of 15 and 16 year old girls* to learn about Earth science on Mount Ruapehu, use art to observe the landscape, and engage in practical fieldwork.

Lauren is a scientist in the Antarctic Research Centre at Victoria University of Wellington. When she's not working on Girls* on Ice, she studies the impacts of climate change on snow and glaciers in New Zealand.

6 November : Monique Bon and Mathew Denys – Humboldt range and Darran Mountains and FMC scholarship application

Wellington Tramping & Mountaineering Club members Monique Bon and Mathew Denys will talk about their respective FMC Simon Bell Memorial Scholarship funded trips.

Monique led an Easter tenting expedition to the Humboldt Mountains which included evocatively named locations like Valley of the Trolls, Sugarloaf Pass, and the renown Lakes Harris and Wilson.

Mathew headed into the Darran Mountains with the intention of reaching spot point 2024 near Lake Turner, where they experienced exposed terrain, impressive waterfalls, and precarious campsites.

They will provide trip reports, plenty of photos, some take aways, and information regarding the FMC scholarships which are open for all HVTC members to apply for.



FORTHCOMING TRIPS



NOTES

Where there is no leader given for a trip, please email tripcoordinator@hvtc.org.nz to volunteer to lead a trip, either as shown or an alternative.

OCTOBER				
Tue 1		Hutt River Trail North of Belmont Domain		Doreen
		Hutt River Trail North of Belmont Domain		Debbie
5 - 6	T1+	Field Hut & Sheridan Creek		Chris, Jackie & Mel
	T2	Kime (Hut) 'Krusin'		Leader Required
Sun 6	D1			Leader Required
		Manual bike ride 2hrs - 9.30 from Avalon Park		Leena
Tue 8		Ride South from Burdan's Gate (Eastbourne)		Helen and Paul
		Ride South from Burdan's Gate (Eastbourne)		Russell
12 - 13	T1	Roaring Stag Hut		Leader Required
	T2	Cattle Ridge Hut		Leader Required
Sun 13	D1	Newlands Ramble		Tony and Jo
		Manual bike ride 2hrs - 9.30 from Avalon Park		Leena
Tue 15		County Lane Local Explore		Jackie
		County Lane further Afield		Andrew
18 - 20		Visit from Whanganui TC – day walks		Nick
Sat 19	D1	Baring Head		Maarten & Anja
Sun 20	D1	Northern Walkway		Nick
		Manual bike ride 2hrs - 9.30 from Avalon Park		Leena
Tue 22		Te Whiti Riser		Leader Required
		Te Whiti Riser – Wainui MTB		Debbie
26 - 28		Labour Weekend		
23 - 27	T1	St James Walkway		Ann H/Neil P
25 - 29	T2	West Coast - Toaroha circuit		Nick
Sun 27	D1	Kaitoke Ridge (there and back)		Clare Kelly
		Manual bike ride 2hrs - 9.30 from Avalon Park		Leena
Tue 29		Belmont RP		Leader Required
		Belmont RP		Debbie

NOVEMBER				
2 - 3	T1	New Members Walks Weekend TBC		
	T2			
Sun 3	D1	Cattle Ridge - Orongorongo		Mel / Marina(?)
	D1+	New Members Walk (with off-track)		Marina / (?)
		Manual bike ride 2hrs - 9.30 from Avalon Park		Leena
Tue 5		Totara Park - McCurdy's Castle		Leader Required
		Cannon Point – Clark Creek		Wil

FROM THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTORY DAY TRIPS FOR NEW PEOPLE ON 3 NOVEMBER Marina Skinner

We are running two introductory day trips for new people on Sunday 3 November.

Mel Stoneham will lead a grade 1 trip to Cattle Ridge and Andrew Robinson will lead a grade 1+ trip to Goat Stream – both in the Orongorongo Valley.

We'll do some promotion in the coming month.

The trips are a good way to attract new club members and I'd be really grateful to any members who can join the trips on 3 November.

Please let anyone interested in the club know about the upcoming trips.

Marina Skinner

President

FROM THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE

SPEAKERS SOUGHT FOR 2025 Graeme McVerry

First, thanks to Pamela Campbell for the magnificent job that she has done in organising the HVTC Wednesday night programme since 2020. Many of you may not be aware that Pamela follows up each speaker with an eloquent thank you note that I am sure makes every speaker feel that their effort is truly appreciated, a memento of their presentation.

The role of speaker organiser from the start of the new year now falls to me, Graeme McVerry. Pamela is not stepping away completely, as she will be taking over the weekly WOW! email reminders of what is coming up the following Wednesday. She will also be helping occasionally with thank you notes for the nights that I am unable to attend, as well as remaining on the Social Committee.

One of my first tasks in the role is to line up a programme of speakers for 2025, attempting to maintain Pamela's high standard. As well as talks about tramping and cycling trips, travel and the environment, some can cover other topics that may be of interest to our members. What about your own interests outside tramping, or other organisations with which you are involved? What about kayaking, pack-rafting, caving and paragliding, or ski-touring now that HVTC's activity in that has waned? Are there any training activities that you would like that can be accommodated on a Wednesday night?

Please contact me if you have a talk to offer or can suggest another speaker that you have come across, particularly if you have their contact details. Currently, virtually all dates in 2025 are available. Let me know dates that will suit you and those when you are unavailable.

Thank you.

Graeme McVerry graememcv2@xtra.co.nz 021 464349

Let's go from Speakers Sought to Speakers Sorted!

Graeme

UPCOMING EVENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS AT RUAPEHU LODGE

<i>In</i>	<i>Out</i>	<i>Event</i>	
Mon 30 Sept	Fri 04 Oct	October School Holiday week 1	<i>Contact Deb Ryan</i> debryan6011@gmail.com or 0212256368
Mon 07 Oct	Fri 11 Oct	October School Holiday week 2	<i>Contact Booking Officer (Sheldon Bruce)</i> 027 451 0415

Booking can be done by contacting the Booking Officer Sheldon Bruce by:

- Email to Ruapehubookings@hvtc.org.nz , or
- Phone to 027 451 0415 and leave a message if there is no reply.

Over the last couple of weeks the Whakapapa Skifield has received 65cm of much-needed snow. The snow has seriously rejuvenated the season and Happy Valley, Valley T-bar, Delta Chair and Knoll Ridge T-bar are now open and skiable. Now is the time to get up there and enjoy the snow and the lodge is ready and waiting for you. Please contact me on Ruapehubookings@hvtc.org.nz or 0274510415 if you wish to stay.

Since my last article the lodge has been used by a group of Whakapapa Ski and Snowboard Instructors organised and hosted by Laura Bruce and the Lodge 75th celebration was held in mid-September which was a fantastic event. Big thanks to the organisers and particularly Kate Brownsword and Alan Findlay, the chef.

So, get in touch with me and come up and enjoy some Whakapapa spring skiing.

Sheldon Bruce

Ruapehu Lodge Booking Officer

HISTORICAL ANECDOTES

Malcolm McLeod

In response to Kate Brownsword's request for club members to "contribute their memories", Malcolm submitted these two which we thought warranted wider circulation than the Lodge's memory book. Malcolm asks readers to "allow for memory lapses, exaggeration and casual bull shit, the stories are fundamentally true".

A QUIET SWIM IN THE LAKE.

I don't remember the date. But it was some time in the early fifties and a group of us newbies were up Ruapehu on a snow craft course which meant that we were practising cutting steps, negotiating cornices and self-arresting. It was a bright sunny day so decided that lunch at the crater would be a good idea, we found a large rock about 3 metres long jutting out into the lake, the flat top made it an excellent table. The lunch chat soon turned to the idea of swimming in the lake, good idea, so we stripped to our grundies and carefully waded out towards the end of the rock, the water got deeper and hotter until it reached waist deep, definitely the limit of our immersion. We then became aware of some giggling girls standing on the rock and watching (admiring) us, we encouraged them to join us which they said they would but on the other side of the rock. They then moved out of sight and stripped down to their underwear and immerse themselves in the water accompanied by encouragement from us and giggles from them

About this time the woman in charge of the girls puffed up and on to the rock. Looked at the pile of boys clothing then looked at the pile of girls' clothing and then has a fit', in a loud voice, she accused us of having no sense of decency and the girls to wait till I see your parents. A bit of overreacting I thought! We considered it prudent to remove ourselves, so avoiding mother hen's baleful eye, we dressed, waved and blew kisses to the girls and climbed Te Heu Heu.

Wet underwear is most uncomfortable.

So a group of us can, with a modicum of truth, say we have swum in the Crater Lake (with Girls)

Are there any older members that can remember this incident?

MY FIRST SEARCH AND RESCUE

The date was the 12 November 1954 and I had received a call to join a search and rescue team for a missing person presumed to be in the Maymorn ridge area. Damn! Tomorrow was Election Day, my first chance to cast a vote. I decided to go with the search and rescue, the orders were to meet at the Upper Hutt police station where I collected a pocket full of torch batteries and with other club members were driven to some logging road up in the Akatarawa's and dropped off. Fortunately, we were with Selwyn Muff, a person I thought was the fountain of all tramping knowledge, he pointed into the dark with his torch and said "that way", so off we set. Sometime later we came to a small clearing with a scattering of tents and an Army Bren-gun carrier, I never did find out what that was doing there. We were called over for a briefing, wow, a briefing, that's exciting, at the finish of the briefing, we were told that provision for voting was available over there at the big tent. I squelched over to the indicated tent and found a man dressed in standard tramping gear, that is muddy boots, shorts, bush shirt but wearing a policeman's helmet, he welcomed us in took down our details, handed us a form and told us to go behind the blanket

hanging from the tent top and cast our vote. So I cast my first general election vote at about 11PM Friday 12th November halfway up the Maymorn ridge by the light of a hissing Tilly lamp.

I don't remember the outcome of the search.

Malcolm

TRIP REPORTS

EAST AND WEST WHAKANUI

Sunday 8 September

Jackie West

It was a very sunny Sunny Grove with Kowhai and cherry blossom trees covered with flowers when eighteen Hutt Valleys departed at 9.30 am. After months of wet days and a heavy downpour over night the track was very muddy in places and there were numerous puddles in flatter spots. Emma who was nursing an injury turned back as planned before morning tea while the rest stopped at the McKerrow junction. As we were a large group we spread out down the track with a lucky few finding a spot with sun and a view.



Having walked for about an hour after morning tea we came to the turn off from the West Whakanui track. The link track between East and West Whakanui meant a gradual climb to point 711 before dropping down to the East Whakanui Track. Last year we found 6 dead rats in the traps on this track but this time the few I glanced at while passing were empty. We stopped for a regroup and several people complained that they were hungry so even though we were on a slope there was room under the trees to find a space to sit. Sharman wanted sun so Jim found some a short distance down the track.

Moving on after lunch we had been walking for fifteen minutes when much to my surprise we came to the West Whakanui Track. I had been so engrossed in Leanne's traveller's tales of sailing amongst the Greek Islands and adventures in Vancouver that I was not aware we were on the East Whakanui Track. When we returned to Sunny Grove at 2.30 it was as sunny as when we departed in the morning, so the photographers had their cameras out to photograph the flock of tui in the kowhai.

Sunday Trampers: Kate Livingston, Doreen Courtenay, Marilyn Sickels, Mike Priest, Jim Cousins, Heather Eskdale, Rob Buxton, Sharman Robinson, Jan Arts, Tanya Hatfield, Chris McMillian, Lex Grubner, Valray Climo, Leanne Asher, Zaw Lin Oo, Emma Dobbie and Chris and Jackie West leaders.

Jackie

EASTERN HUTT HUT HUT

SEPTEMBER 9TH (MONDAY GRADE 2 DAY TRIP)

Dave Hanley



Zaw, Lyneke (Wanganui TC guest) and I ventured into the once-prohibited and largely untracked water supply catchment of the Eastern Hutt river. From Kaitoke waterworks it's over the bloody hill and up river to Eastern Hutt hut hut. I'd guesstimated 9 hrs plus breaks for the round trip. It was nearly 11 hours at a comfortable but definitely not dawdling pace, including not overly long breaks, as the sun only broke through for a few minutes.

The Norbert creek track comes complete with a carpark and is very well marked, much nicer than plodding up the clay/gravel road. Sadly I'm not aware of a pleasant route climbing back out from the Eastern Hutt to Kaitoke. Hence my visits to the Eastern Hutt always culminate in a somewhat tiresome 300m plod back up the clay road after a longish day.

As per the topo map the route up the Eastern Hutt is over the bridge from the end of the clay road at Phillips stream. To avoid a (lovely/lively in summer) short gorge, the good

marked track soon climbs 170m over a spur and finishes back at a nice riverside clearing with a big sign. There is a route (probably barely marked) onto Quoin ridge from the top of this spur. The riverside clearing is the end of the marked track. From here the route is as one sees fit on low bush terraces, or on relatively smooth riverside stone beaches. If you find yourself climbing much above the river you've gone wrong. The true right has a good footpad for 1.5? km to the first small flat.

The river is quite small & not bouldery. She was running clear but up a tad from the normal winter flow, so we didn't cross frequently as the day was a bit cool. There is generous cutty grass on the banks, but the bush is quite nice and not swampy. Everyone did well off track and got good practice at picking the best route.

The Hutt hut hut lies just upriver from a largish grassy camp site/helipad on the true left (eastern) bank. It's in excellent condition with all new woodburner / 6 (4?) bunks / mattresses / paint. Given that overnight stays in the Eastern Hutt catchment are not allowed, it's the finest overnight emergency-only shelter you'll find. There is an entry in the log book that baldly states "XXX party staying overnight due to emergency"; next day "Out to Kaitoke - emergency over."

For the adventurous there are reasonable off-track routes to Alpha hut up the valley, via either a spur to the top of Quoin, or staying in bush at the head of the valley. From Kaitoke to Alpha hut I'd guesstimate 10.5 hours via several Quoin/Quoin ridge options, or 9 hours via the head of the valley. All are more interesting but 1-2 hours longer than via the Marchant ridge. See the "Tararua footprints" booklet online at the TTC website for route guides.

Dave

SERIES 1 OF HUT BAGGING TRIPS

ATIWHAKATU - 14 SEPTEMBER

Emma Dobbie and Debbie Labett.

Emma and Debbie lead a group of 8 from Mt Holdsworth Road end. This was the first of our Hut Bagging easy overnight trip series run by Emma Dobbie and Debbie Labett.

Set off 9.45am from the clubrooms. Our trusted driver Emma and I as front seat passenger. First stop was Clareville Bakery for coffee cake or croissant if one preferred. Our English visitors Richard and Merryn mentioned in their opinion, New Zealand has the best cakes and pastries, better than the French. After comfort stop back into the van, headed to Holdsworth via Chester Road for a change of scenery. Arrived at Holdsworth road end. Plenty of parks to choose from. Few back seat drivers suggested park here, wait no park there. I said to Emma you choose. We then distributed club gear to carry in. Sent message to Jackie West, SAR contact, with numbers and names of those on the trip being Emma Dobbie, Tanya Hatfield, Pam Smith, Doreen Courtenay, Mel Stoneham, Deb Labett, Richard and Merryn Polley. The conditions were light drizzle. Signed the intention book, off we went. It was fabulous to have a pack on my back, boots laced up ready to go.

My last tramping boot soles got sucked off in the mud on Doreens day trip. This was a great opportunity to try out my new Hi-tech boots. Enjoyed being in the bush, loved the swing bridges, flowing streams, waterfalls and baby rimu trees. Stopped on route for drink and snack. Took us under 3 hours to reach Atiwhakatu. Mel found a spot to pitch her tent. We claimed our bunks. Settled in with billys on the boil for hot drinks, had early happy hour. Played cards. Had a delicious Mexican style meal of tacos, gently toasted in the steel



pan, which I carried in. A choice of fillings, 3 shredded chicken flavours to choose from, lettuce, spring onion, chopped to perfection by Richard, grated carrots, avocado, baby tomatoes 🍅 🥑 tasty cheese melted into the warm tacos. Followed by steamed pudding and custard. We shared the Hut with a scout group who were so quiet, a man named James his 6 year old son Thomas, and their dog, plus a delightful Romanian group, 2 ladies and one of them had a 12-year-old son Alexandru, who was very polite. We offered him food as we had plenty. He was very excited and accepted.

Next morning we cleaned the Hutt, not the long drops. I must say they certainly need some TLC, especially the front one!! The walk out was very pleasant, big slip, we dropped down to river, which avoided the worst of it. Several muddy patches.

We stopped at Wild Oats Cafe on Sunday for coffee, then took detour due to the Carterton Daffodil Day festival. Some of us checked out the markets. A most enjoyable trip was had by all. Thanks for supporting us on our first Hutt bagging series.

Emma and Deb

MT REEVES RECONNAISSANCE

21-22 SEPTEMBER 2024

David Barnes

After failing to negotiate the reopening of access from Waiohine Valley Road to Mt Reeves (in my Herenga ā Nuku role), I've been encouraging DOC to "reopen" the alternate route from the bridge at Waiohine Gorge. I'd been up it previously, in 2016 on a TTC day trip, and didn't recall any issues. Although lost in the swirls of fading institutional memory, it appears that the removal of a three wire bridge over Coal Stream (some time pre-2016) was what led to it dropping off the list of official tracks. I decided to investigate.

Shortly after the gorge bridge, heading towards Cone Hut, a sign on the left announces that the track is not a DOC track and that "unmanaged hazards" exist. I marched on boldly. The track is easily followed, and Coal Stream is reached in a few minutes. There hadn't been much rain recently, and so the stream didn't present any problems. It would be a different proposition during or after rain. It wasn't obvious where the track went on the far bank, and I was a little surprised to encounter a marker where I made landfall, as I'd spotted a possible route further down stream. The track is initially steep and there's a fallen tree to grovel under. I was passed by a (much younger) trumper as I plodded up this bit. Eventually the gradient eases, and the track is very pleasant from here. It is clearly well used, and is marked with yellow (not orange) triangles and the old orange painted discs. There was evidence of some light track tidying recently, and later I met the responsible person coming down the hill.

At the point where the other track joins, there's a large old sign advising of the bridge removal. Orange markers on the other track are still obvious, with no indication that following them will lead to a point where there is no access. Shortly after, the bush gives way to low scrub, and there are good views of South Wairarapa and north to Mt Holdsworth. Further on, the view expands to show Neill-Winchcombe Ridge, the Dress Circle and Marchant Ridge. In this section, I came across the Billy Apple®-designed plaque that marks the geographical centre of the Zealandia continent. Increased traffic occasioned by publicity about the plaque was partly responsible for the landowner deciding to close the Waiohine Valley Road route.

From the summit of Mt Reeves, I was in new territory, as the 2016 day trip had headed along the ridge to join the Cone Hut track. I wasn't really looking forward to this bit, as there was a lot of height to lose over a short distance. But despite that, it was quite easy going, without the expected clambering down tree root ladders. Only the last bit, when Tutuwai Hut's red roof was in sight, was slow going.

After a convivial evening in the hut, I headed up-valley in light rain. Behind Cone Hut, rather than continuing straight up the hill, I took the left fork and the more pleasant climb to Cone Saddle. A nasty front came through as I wended my way upwards. From the saddle, the track back to the main track climbs gently. This bit was new to me and was the reason for the detour. Gotta join those dots! The rain stopped, to be replaced by a strong cold wind, and I was glad to be below the treeline.

Back on the track to the carpark, conditions were the usual mud across the top before the increasingly steep plummet as it drops 500 metres to complete a lovely circuit.

David

RUAPEHU LODGE 75 ANNIVERSARY

13-15 SEPTEMBER.

Kate Brownsword

We celebrated the 75th birthday of the club's Ruapehu lodge on 13-15 September.

While the weather and snow conditions weren't kind to us this year, it was still a chance to catch up and spend time with friends and fellow club members, and to enjoy being on the mountain and at the lodge.

Our celebration dinner on Saturday night included with mulled wine and roast venison, and the usual fabulous and legendary lodge hospitality. Our many many thanks go to our wonderful chef Alan Findlay.

The theme for the dinner was "Shades of Blue" and there was hotly contested gold headdress competition!

A 'memory book' of best memories of the lodge has been put together. Thankyou to all who contributed.

Kate



