



Wildlife seen in the Kawekas.

Photo: Kirsten Reid

Please submit your **September 2026** H&V articles to the editor by **30th August 2026**

HVTC Postal Address: PO Box 30-883, Lower Hutt:

Clubrooms: Birch Street Reserve, Birch Street, Waterloo

Internet: <http://www.hvtc.org.nz> E-mail: info@hvtc.org.nz

President: Ann Hayman 021 229 9901

Secretary: Marina Skinner 021 792 260

Trip Coordinator: Mel Stoneham 027 361 3423

Treasurer: Leanne Asher 021 070 4195

Editor H&V : Bruce Miller 027 563 5966 the-bruce@xtra.co.nz



CLUB NIGHT PROGRAMME

Starts 7:30 pm promptly



5 August : Michael Flyger – Melling Transport project, Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi
Michael is the Communications and Engagement Lead for the Alliance delivering the SH2 Melling Transport Improvements, as part of the wider Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi programme. He started his career as a radio journalist in 2000, and since then has over 20 years' experience across the public service and in civil construction and infrastructure. Outside of work, he enjoys golf, cooking, reading, playing guitar, and watching his beloved Tottenham stagger towards another mediocre result. His tramping exploits started and ended on Mt Holdsworth during 4th Form Camp in 1994.

12 August : Mark Prebble - Walking in the Flinders Range and elsewhere in Aus
Fifty years ago Mark was a mountaineer and alpine guide at Mt Cook - but that was then. He's older now. More recently he has investigated the pleasures to be found at lower altitudes, including the hills and coastlines of Australia. Last year he and his wife Chris joined a guided walking tour in the Flinders Range. His talk will focus on that trip, but will also cover day walks across Australia, including, views, flowers, crocodiles, eucalypts, spiders, road trains, wallabies, rocks, waterfalls, snakes and rural pubs. He believes that walking in Aus is just the same as walking in NZ, except for the bits that are different.

19 August : Robert Tristram – Te Araroa Southland to Glendhu Bay
Over the summer of 2025-26, Robert and Carolyn walked the Te Araroa South Island and the top of the North Island. Tonight Robert will be presenting an area that isn't visited often by the club; the Southland section of the Te Araroa from Bluff to Queenstown, a diverse section of beaches, small sections of roads, farm tracks and back country tracks, with a small diversion/side quest through the Greenstone-Caples. Robert will be back on 9 September to talk about the northern most section of Te Araroa, from Auckland Airport to Cape Reinga.

19 August: Sales Table
The Sales Table was well-supported in July – thanks to those who contributed items for sale and those who purchased them. It is back tonight with sales starting at 7 o'clock. It seems that the way to a trumper's pocket is food, with baking, fruit and vegetables, jams and relishes all proving popular. Books and clean tramping gear and clothing in good condition are also welcome. Remember to collect any of your items that are unsold at the end of the evening.

26 August : HVTC Photo Competition
The 2026 HVTC Photo Competition has been judged by experienced tramping photographer Sam Harrison. Come along and view the entries, hear Sam's comments, and learn his selections of winners and place-getters across the various categories. The evening will conclude with presentation of the trophies.

2 September : Jonty Crane – Mongolia
Jonty had just arrived in Mongolia when I asked him for his blurb for this trip, so watch for details in your *What's on Wednesday* e-mail nearer the time and in September's Hills and Valleys. Needless to say, Jonty will give a brilliant talk with stunning photographs.



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.

August				
7 – 9 Aug	T1	Stanfield Hut, Ruahine FP	Van	Andrew Robinson
	T2			
Sun 9 Aug	D1	Boulder Hill		Doreen Courtenay
		Bike ride 2hrs - 9.30 from Avalon Park		Leena Stowell
14 – 16 Aug	T1			
	T2			
Sun 16	D1	Te Whiti Riser-Wainui Hill or Pt Howard		Heather Eskdale
		Bike ride 2hrs - 9.30 from Avalon Park		Leena Stowell
21 – 23 Aug	T1+	Mitre Flats	Van	Kirsten Reid
	T2			
Sun 23	D1	Norbet Creek Loop		Clare Kelly
		Bike ride 2hrs - 9.30 from Avalon Park		Leena Stowell
Tues 25		Moonlight Walk: TBA		
28 – 30 Aug	T1			
	T2			
27 – 29 Aug	T3	Moonlight Southern Crossing	Van	Andrew Robinson
Sun 30	D1	Cattle Ridge		Jackie West
		Bike ride 2hrs - 9.30 from Avalon Park		Leena Stowell
September				
4 – 6 Sep	T1			
	T2			
Sun 6	D1	Southern Walkway		Heather Eskdale
		Bike ride 2hrs - 9.30 from Avalon Park		Leena Stowell

AGM UPDATE

At our annual general meeting on Wednesday 29 July, we elected a new President, Ann Hayman. Ann has been on the General Committee for the past two years and is a long-time member of the club.

After four years as President, Marina Skinner stood down and is now the Secretary.

In other changes, Mel Stoneham is the new Trip Coordinator and Bob Deller is the Transport Officer. Sarah Spencer has joined the General Committee.

Doreen Courtenay stepped down as Vice-President and remains on the General Committee. Retiring members of the General Committee are Emma Dobbie as Secretary, Dennis Page as Trip Coordinator, Doc Watson as Transport Officer, and Jim Cousins as a committee member.

In changes on the Social Committee, Pamela Campbell stood down and Anja van Kesteren and Charlie Noakes joined.

Ruapehu Committee membership was unchanged.

Incoming committees

President	Ann Hayman	
Vice-President		
Secretary	Marina Skinner	
Treasurer	Leanne Asher	
Trip Co-ordinator	Mel Stonham	
Transport Officer	Bob Deller	
General Committee (6)	Lex Grubner	Sarah Spencer
	Debbie Labett	Chris McMillan
	Doreen Courtenay	
Vice-President Ruapehu	Kate Brownsword	
Ruapehu Secretary	Bruce Miller	
Ruapehu Treasurer	John Simes	
Ruapehu Committee (8)	Sheldon Bruce	Alison Newbald
	Ian McIlraith	Robert Thompson
	Brendan Quirke	
Social Committee (8)	Anja van Kestern	William Liao
	Charlie Noakes	Graeme McVerry
	Sharman Robinson	Marilyn Sickels
	Valray Climo	Ruth Crawford

President's awards

Four members received President's awards for their significant contributions to the club:

- **Pamela Campbell** – for her 15 years on the Social Committee, her organisation of club night speakers, and for leading club trips over many years.
- **John Simes** – for his strong financial management of the Ruapehu lodge as Ruapehu Treasurer for 12 years and for his conservation leadership for the club.
- **Lenna Stowell** – for initiating and leading Sunday bike rides virtually every week since September 2023.
- **Doc Watson** – for his diligence and care of our club vehicles over many years, for introducing club drivers to the new minibus, and for his maintenance of our clubrooms and gear.

Other topics

The General Committee recommended that membership subscriptions remain the same for the 2027-28 financial year. Printing and postage fees will need to be increased to reflect rising costs. This affects a limited number of members since most people receive Hills and Valleys by email and collect Backcountry magazines.

The General Committee has set a delegation of up to \$42,250 to the Ruapehu Committee for the 2026-27 financial year.

Both actions were needed because of requirements in our new Constitution.

UPCOMING EVENTS

THE SALES TABLE : 19 August.



See above

COMING UP AT RUAPEHU LODGE

Kate Brownsword



The club lodge is running a “uni students and young professionals” fortnight, Mon 24 Aug to Fri 4 Sept. As you know, this is a great time of year to be on the mountain!

We are doing a special rate of \$60/night for full time students who are not HVTC members for those dates. Normally \$75/night for student non members. It's \$50/night for student members.

To book, please contact booking officer Alison Newbald on ruapehubookings@hvtc.org.nz

Following the young things, we have the Spring Ski Week, Mon 7 to Fri 11 Sept. For information and bookings, please contact Rachel Bruce on rals.bruce@xtra.co.nz or 027 486 8961.

ADDITIONAL EVENTS			
Mon 21 Sept	Fri 25 Sept	October School Holiday Week 1	Contact Booking Officer (Alison Newbald) ruapehubookings@hvtc.org.nz
Mon 28 Sept	Fri 2 Oct	October School Holiday Week 2	Contact Booking Officer (Alison Newbald) ruapehubookings@hvtc.org.nz

Of course the lodge is open throughout the winter season, so please, come up and enjoy the mountain and our lodge's famous views and hospitality, even if you are not a skier. Enjoy some good company with the option of walks and gondola rides! Whole week or just a couple of nights.

Contact booking officer Alison Newbald on ruapehubbookings@hvtc.org.nz for availability and to book.

Hope to see you up there!



ATTENTION : MINIBUS INFORMATION FOR TRIP LEADERS & DRIVERS

Ann Hayman

The Transport Subcommittee has completed a "Minibus Information for Trip Leaders & Drivers" document. It is on the home page of our HVTc web, in the dark green section, near the bottom.

https://hvtc.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/Downloads_1/Minibus_information_TripLeaders_and_Drivers30_06_26.pdf

It contains answers to many of the questions drivers and trip leaders may have about the minibus such as booking, getting drivers, fares, keys, garage information, refuelling with diesel, and checks and actions pre, during and after the trip. A hard copy will be available soon in the glove box of the minibus, and with Transport Officer Doc in the gear room.

Ann

CLUB WALKIE TALKIE HOLDERS

Lex Grubner



The Club UHF handheld CB radios (walkie talkies) now have a carry holster allowing them to be conveniently attached to a belt, pack strap or a carabiner. Field use feedback requested a means of being able to securely attach them to a pack/clothing so they can be easily used without fear of being dropped and lost. A suitable sized holster made by Twin Needle in Christchurch is now included with the radios available from the gear room.

Lex

TRIP REPORTS

ECCLESFIELD/SILVERSTREAM CIRCUIT

28th June 2026

Jackie West



The days before the tramp were cold, wet and miserable with the forecast for Sunday being morning showers becoming fine later. During the week a few people said they would come but by Saturday most had a change of mind so on Sunday morning having had no rain in Silverstream since Saturday I sent out another email to inform trampers that the weather in Silverstream was much better than Lower Hutt. This resulted in one positive response.

An intrepid group of four set off from Chichester Drive taking the track that heads straight up through the bush. We stopped for morning tea at an open area where pine trees had been felled several years ago. The track from the trig at 155m down to the reservoir is down through the gorse and pampas grass that

have grown up since the fire in January 2022 so we first took the track to Chatsworth Road through a pleasant stand of native bush. When we reached the reservoir we had a chat to a woman from Ahipara who is in the army and like us came to admire the view up the valley to the Tararua Range.

We made our way back to the junction and turned towards Ecclesfield Reserve. Soon after climbing over the stile, we came to the four fallen beech trees that were victims of February's storm and had fallen over the track. In the four months since the storm walkers had formed a route round the fallen trees. Once in Ecclesfield we walked on well-formed and maintained tracks. The Reserve since 1965 has been owned by Forest and Bird and because the other three were unaware of this we went down to the main entrance on Whitemans Road to read the information board. We then walked up to the seat at the lookout for lunch where we observed that the view from the lookout is gradually being blocked by growth from the trees.

The sidle track from Ecclesfield to the Track from Chichester Drive was as I expected the wettest I had experienced with several of the little side creeks having water flowing instead of the usual trickle and at one spot the sound of running water could be heard. We returned to our vehicles in

under four hours probably due to having only four people, the smallest group I have led on this tramp although we did have frequent short stops so Leanne could add to her collection of fungi photos. But the timing was excellent as when we reached the cars it started to rain.

Thanks to Leanne Asher, Jim Cousins and Doreen Courtney for joining me.

Jackie

EASTERN KAWEKAS : Matariki weekend 2026

Andrew Robinson

On account of the weather the plans for the Matariki weekend trip in the eastern Kawekas went through multiple iterations before we set off from the clubrooms on Thursday morning. We left in wind and rain but both gradually abated. We had morning tea at Shannon then when we got to Dannevirke we went shopping at New World. Takeaways weren't an option at the accommodation I had found for us only the day before so Lex, Doc and I went for a couple of in-store cook-in-the-tray pizzas at Lex's suggestion. Janine and Kirsten already had their dinners sorted.

We arrived at William Hartree Memorial Lodge at 3:30. It's a handy 30 kilometres from the Mangatutu Hots Springs campsite which was where I had originally planned to start from. It's a Department of Conservation owned 10-bunk lodge built in 1966. We had sole occupancy so everyone got a bottom bunk. It has hot water, showers, a stove, heat pump and woodburner so it was a luxurious way to start a tramp. After delicious pizza for tea we played cards then got an early night.

The rivers and streams had been discoloured right through Hawke's Bay on our drive up which meant in all probability the fords before the hot springs would be uncrossable on Friday. That meant we would instead head for the slightly closer Makahu Saddle and do a day trip from there and hopefully try for the hot springs and further on Saturday. Because the lodge wasn't available Friday night the plan was to spend the night at Makahu Saddle, hopefully at the hut, otherwise camping at the nearby campsite. Accordingly we packed day packs.

Ten minutes from the lodge when we got to the turnoff to Makahu Saddle the road was open while the road to the hot springs was closed so we'd made the right decision. Doc did a great job of driving us on the gravel road which was quite steep in places. When we reached the car park it was a surprise to see two other vehicles there. One had brought two young local hunters out for a day walk and I got some useful information from one of them which made me decide not to do my preferred option for a day walk up to Kaweka J. I then did the two-minute walk to Makahu Saddle hut and it turned out the other vehicle belonged to some people already in the hut. They had the fire going and were planning on spending a few days there. I went back to the car park to see what camping spots I could find. The designated camping spot was flooded so things weren't looking promising. Next option was to do Black Birch biv as a day trip so we drove about three kilometres back down the road to the Littles Clearing carpark. Somewhere along the line Kirsten suggested spending the night at Black Birch biv which I had been mulling over as an option. It would mean doing a complete repack but everyone was happy with the suggestion as probably our best option and three of them hadn't spent a night in a two-person biv before. Although it was drizzling it was supposed to clear up and it was only an hour and a half walk. When we set off the others who were ahead of me tried to make it a bit longer by taking the wrong branch at a signposted fork. I didn't see them take the wrong turn because I had stopped to adjust my waist belt. When I started to suspect the others might have taken the wrong branch I went back to the forks. I couldn't tell from footprints which way the others had gone and was just wondering what to do when Lex turned up. The others had been wondering where I had got to so had stopped, which

was good of them. In fact they had been on a loop track which would have taken them back to the junction in about fifteen minutes had they carried on. That might have confused them.

The track to the biv was most un-Kaweka-like in that there were no big hills and there was significant mud. Unfortunately there was also a significant amount of the ever-encroaching pine trees. Another unusual feature for the Kawekas was large puddles of water on the track though not unexpected given the large amount of recent rain in the area. Despite the detour at the beginning we reached the biv in the signposted hour and a half.

I decided the best option was to find somewhere to pitch my tent where we could stash all our gear while we were in the biv. Doc had his one-person tent which he was going to use so he and I went looking for tent sites. I was going to use a flat spot reasonably close to the biv when I remembered other occasions I had pitched my tent on the deck of a hut. A decent-sized deck had recently been added to the biv and it was just big enough for the tent so that's where I pitched it.

With not much else to do all of us except Janine went for a walk. Three quarters of an hour took us to the far end of Black Birch Range then we headed back. When we got back to the biv it was time to start getting ready for an early tea. While Doc was chopping up the veggies there was an excited exclamation from Kirsten – it was snowing. Tea was over and done with by about 6 o'clock then beds were organised in the biv. Four of us arranged lengthwise fitted in comfortably enough. I was the last one in at 6:40. I had to get up after a while to put some more layers on which was not surprising given the temperature was about zero degrees but I did warm up as the biv warmed up with the body heat of the four occupants and in fact I had to take a layer or two off later.



I was first up the next morning at about 7 o'clock. There had been more snow overnight and the tent was lightly coated. There was no wind, so it didn't feel all that cold.

We got away at a leisurely half past nine and quarter of an hour later unexpectedly encountered more trampers. Actually, given the number of people we'd met it wasn't that much of a surprise. A group of five from Whanganui had camped in the pine trees with a fire for warmth. They had been to the biv the previous day when we were out for our walk but on seeing the tent but no one about hadn't looked in the biv where they probably would have met Janine.

We got back to the car park in an hour and twenty minutes where we met another hunter. He told us the road to the hot springs was open which I had my doubts about, but I was happy to go along with Lex's suggestion that we have a look anyway. It would fill in a bit more of the day before heading for home a day early which we had all agreed on.

Twenty minutes after leaving the car park we were back at the junction where sure enough it said the road to the hot pools was closed. Presuming the road was still open as far as the fords a few kilometres from the hot springs I decided it would be worth going as far as that anyway. Twenty minutes down the road we came to a ford that I had forgotten about (there are in fact three fords on the way to the hot springs) and it was definitely not crossable. There was an unfortunate trumper stuck on the other side with his vehicle. He had gone in a couple of days previously, probably deciding to take his chances, because the rain had been in the forecast for several days.

We headed for home with a stop for lunch at a bush reserve just before the junction. Next stop was for fuel in Taradale then it was all the way back to Lower Hutt with just a brief stop in Shannon.

On reflection it was probably not the best choice of destination for the time of year, particularly given the wet weather, but an enjoyable time was had by all nevertheless. It certainly helped having good accommodation on Thursday night and the snow added some novelty.

I'll have to have another go in warmer weather to give people a fuller appreciation of the delights of the Kawekas.

Trip members: Doc Watson, Janine Foon, Lex Grubner, Kirsten Reid, Andrew Robinson (leader).

Andrew

WAINUIOMATA WATER COLLECTION AREA

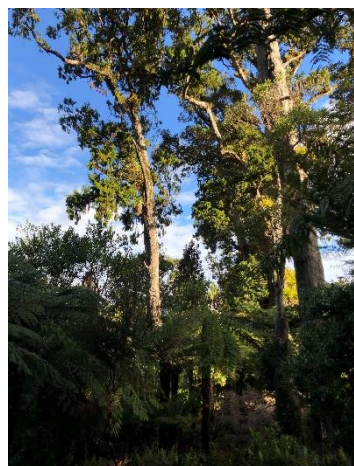
19 July 2026

Leanne Asher

Meeting at Woburn Station, we make our way over to Wainuiomata for the annual water collection area walk led by Nick.

Upon reaching the first gate, cars lined up ready to go through, suddenly reverse lights are going on. Oops the code for the gate did not work! Change of plan, cars parked we will now walk around 3km on the road up to the operations centre.

A chilly morning with the sun in our eyes we set off wandering up the road. Thankfully the codes for the gate near the operations centre open and off we charge for the first river crossing. Easily navigated the feed did not get drenched.



We set of the road track along side the Wainuiomata river walking until we reach the turn in point where we head in on well-marked tracks under a canopy that has been untouched.

We find ourselves regularly crossing the river – feet are now wet! A stop for morning tea and we are off again, following the track to the junction where we take the west branch continuing along until it is time to start the climb up.

Again, the track is well marked but did require some navigation as we make our way around fallen trees. In one instance if you did not place your foot in the right place, you found yourself straddled on the tree with one leg hanging in mid-air and the other dangling on the other side wondering how you were going to get yourself back standing.

We all made our way up the hill in our own pace. Upon arriving at the top, the old combination code for the locked gate struck again!

Nick went up and over the gate with ease. Kate showed her agility as she went over next. A few of us heard the 'snap' as the rusty trap mounted on the side post was triggered as her foot brushed past.



Leanne and Jim found a spot further along the fence line that although the same height was a little easier to get over and did not have any traps that needed to be considered.

Meanwhile, while we were doing this Nick was sorting the code and managed to get a response before anyone else needed to clamber over the fence.

There was still a bit of climbing to do as we headed along the fire break track to reach our lunch stop. Everyone took the opportunity to find a comfortable spot to have some lunch in the sun.

After lunch we split into two groups as one of our guests had shoes that did not like what they had been put through so had to be bound up with tape and string in an effort to get the shoes through the journey home! Thanks to Russell for looking after the rear guard.



We came down Long Ridge. It was a pleasant walk along the ridge before the final descent. Again, a well-marked track with some navigation around downed trees. Only one river crossing before exiting out on the road track where we again followed along the Wainuiomata River to the operation centre.

We did notice that the pest eradication is an ongoing mission with a number of the traps on trees having been set off by rats.

After the last river crossing, we made our way down the road down the road to the cars. As we neared one of the gates, Jim decided to go rouge at one gate having noticed that the fence didn't go that far in and he could take a detour that had him on the other side while we waited for the gate to be unlocked.



Back at the cars, while we all prepared for the journey home, Nick took a car up to the operation centre to pick up Russell, Doreen, Anna and Kylie who were at the centre awaiting his arrival.

Our thanks to Nick for leading us on the annual tramp into the water collection area.

Participants: Nick, Kate, William, Anna, Anne, Neil, Raewyn, Doreen, Jim, Russell, Dave, and Leanne. Guests – Anna and Kylie.

Leanne



A PUZZLE

Pat and John Tristram



Who knows where this toilet is? It is not far from an old parking area / car park in the Tararuas. First correct entry to Pat and John Tristram (patjohntristram@xtra.co.nz) will receive a chocolate fish, presented at a Club night. It may have had a door when you last used it.

Pat & John

The views expressed in the articles in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Hutt Valley Tramping Club. Any queries or comments should be directed to the writer of the article. Contributions to the Hills & Valleys are welcomed and encouraged but all are accepted on the understanding that the Editor has the authority to make minor changes if deemed necessary, refer back to the contributor for amendment, or return the contribution for amendment by the Writer.