

South Wairarapa Tramping Club

Newsletter for May 2025

www.swtc.org.nz

Club night:

Tuesday 13 May 7.30 pm

Cookes' house, 57 Wood Street

Speaker: John Glover on his trip to Sri Lanka

Supper: (tea towel, milk and biscuits) Bruce & Mary Lambert
Supper box is kept in the store cupboard at Studio 73

For the next two meetings the roster is:

June: David & Kay Bowie

July: Billy Adair

AGM to be held 10 June at the Cookes' house

Trip List

2025

Date	Destination	Trip Coordinator	Phone	Fitness
3.5	Pākuratahi–Kaitoke loop walk	Ian Montgomerie	304 9252	
10.5 *	Otari-Wilton's Bush guided walk with Kathy Omblor	John Rhodes rhodesja@xtra.co.nz		
18.5	(Sunday, combined trip with Masterton TC) Lower Tauwharenikau Gorge track, leader Nathan Ball.	John Rhodes rhodesja@xtra.co.nz		
24.5				
31.5	Rewa bush reserve with Julia Ryan	Juliet and Ed Cooke	304 9497	

Two invitations from Masterton Tramping Club

1. David Barnes of Te Herenga a Nuku / the Outdoor Access Commission will speak at Masterton Tramping Club on Wednesday 7 May, and SWTC members are welcome to attend. The meeting is at 7.30 p.m. at the Wairarapa Community Centre, 41 Perry St. Masterton.
2. MTC will hold its mid-winter dinner on 9 July at the Carterton Golf Club, and say, 'We would like to cordially invite the members of SWTC to join us. The cost will be \$40 per head. Further details and menu will be sent nearer the date.'

***An experience not to be missed**

Guided walk with Kathy Ombler at Ōtari-Wiltons Bush, 10 May (joint trip with Masterton TC)

Ōtari-Wiltons Bush is a six-star garden of international significance. It includes New Zealand's only botanic garden dedicated solely to native plants, and 100 hectares of mature native forest more than 100 years into regeneration, along with seven hectares of original podocarp/northern rātā forest. A legacy of vision and foresight, from botanists (in particular Dr Leonard Cockayne), farmers (Job Wilton), gardeners, curators, conservationists and community volunteers has helped make this the special place it is today.

On this trip we will explore Ōtari's gardens collections and some of the 12 kilometres of forest trails. Our three-hour circuit will take us high above Ōtari-Wilton's Bush to the Skyline Ridge, where in good weather there are great views of Wellington Harbour, Cook Strait, the Tararua Ranges and Kaikoura mountains. There will be good spots for snacks and lunch.

Our guide will be Kathy Ombler, a keen tramper and outdoor writer who has been a volunteer trapper in Ōtari for more than ten years, and is a Trustee of the Ōtari-Wilton's Bush Trust. Kathy will talk about Ōtari's rich heritage and introduce us to some of the rarest native plants, oldest trees, diversity of forests and amazing birdlife that all make up Ōtari-Wilton's Bush.

Please bring a koha to contribute to the conservation and educational work of the trust. We suggest \$10 per person.

To minimise emissions, we will travel by car to Upper Hutt, then train and bus to Ōtari, arriving 10.12 a.m.

Contact John Rhodes, rhodesja@xtra.co.nz (preferred) or 06 304 9095

Trips for June

Three of our regular trip coordinators are out of action with injuries, and we need trips for 14, 21 and 28 June.

If you can help or have a suggestion, please email it to me at rhodesja@xtra.co.nz

Thank you. John Rhodes

If you wish to go on a trip, please let the organiser know by the Thursday prior.

Trip Gradings

The letters are an indication of how tough it will be.

E **Easy.** Completely flat, no hills, 2 – 3 hours.

M **Moderate fitness.** Some hills, well formed tracks. 4-6 hours walk per day.

F **More fitness.** Steep hills, challenging tracks. May go off tracks. 6 – 8 hours walk per day.

Leaders: Please remember if you are unable to lead your trip it is your responsibility to find a replacement leader / trip.

Trip Reports

SMITH CREEK WATERFALL, 19 APRIL

Combined trip with Masterton TC

On a perfect, warm autumn day four trampers and a dog walked from the Pākuratahi car park over Puffer Saddle and down the main track towards Smith Creek. At the 370-metre contour we picked up a well-marked informal sidle track to which we had been alerted by a TTC informant. This took us to a point in the east branch of the creek, about 300 metres up-valley from the confluence. After morning tea we continued, with mostly easy travel—apart from one high sidle and a boulder clamber where the trip coordinator needed help—to the waterfall, which we reached 4 hours after starting.

A quick scout around identified a possible but dubious exit, and lunch was taken in the somewhat comforting knowledge that down-valley retreat might be avoided.

The oblique rightward scramble out from the waterfall involved desperate gymnastic moves, prayer, dependence on small trees, the restoration of the coordinator's dignity by leading it and relief upon reaching less vertiginous terrain. Ascent of a spur to the ridge top at 640 metres brought us to the informal ridge track that links the power line road to Puffer Saddle. This we followed to the saddle, whence we retraced part of our inward route before diverting onto the old, original Puffer Track which we happily descended to Kiwi Ranch.

The trip took almost 7½ hours.

Phil Brown (MTC), Izzie (MTC Canine Division), Stuart Hammond (SWTC), Josh Oakly (MTC) and John Rhodes (SWTC & MTC)







