



Newsletter

January 2019

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From our President:

Welcome to 2019.

A review of the trips for the last quarter of 2018 shows that we managed to get in the majority of the trips we had planned. Numbers were as low as two, but we did get a turn out of 13 on Gentle Annie trip and 4 to 6 is a good average. Thanks to all those who led a trip and for those who took part.

It was great to see so many members at the Christmas lunch at Neudorf Winery; a great setting, sheltered from wind, sun and rain (if required), excellent food and wine, and within biking distance for quite a few. A great catch-up for us all. And very little organising! Could become a regular spot!

The first quarter of the new year started with a pleasant walk around Mt Arthur and Flora huts after almost flying off the ridge trying to get up Mt Arthur. We hope the summer list has something for all members to consider (even if just remembering past trips to the destinations) and that the weather might be “cooperative”.

Yvonne J, assisted by Yvonne H, Muriel and Wendy, has been leading the charge to get Motueka Tramping Club past Newsletters sorted and saved. I am sure Yvonne J will find ways to share some of the gems we have found in the old records, in this year’s newsletters. (see below)

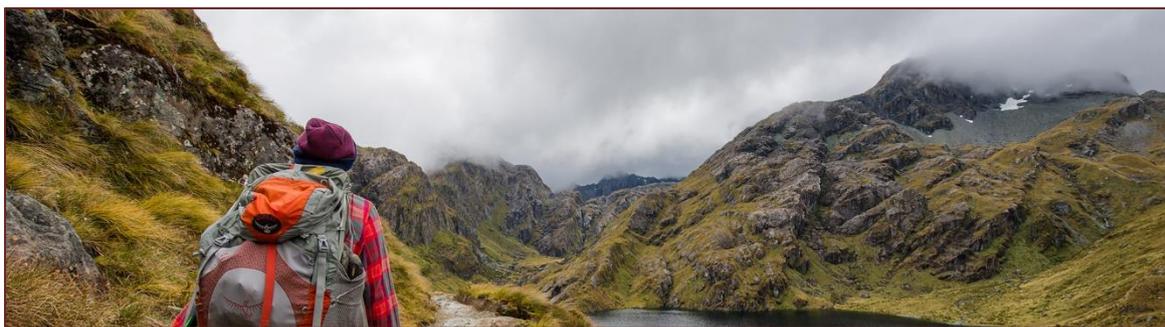
I look forward to seeing you on the tracks.

Yvonne Hope

Stories from the Past:

In January 1983, 15 Motueka Tramping Club members walked Milford Track. Earlier documents describe the planning of this event and the costs involved. Unfortunately the names of the people aren’t mentioned – except we know Alistair was there.

The Milford Track – a poem by Alistair Cumming



**We’ve come a long way to walk the Milford Track,
fifteen Motueka trampers and each with a pack.
It’s been an easy first day with lunch on the way
we couldn’t have had a more pleasant day.
The lake was a mirror, reflections galore
and we know there is more beauty and scenery in store.
The sandflies attacked us all with great joy,
our swims in the river were mildly “Oh boy”!**

So it's off in the morning to head on our way
for it's sure to be another great day.

From the Clinton hut we wandered along,
hearing waterfalls and birds in song.
It wasn't long until we found Hidden Lake,
up to here the track is a piece of cake.
A friendly kea kept us amused on the way,
and when we reached Pompolona we decided to stay.
So we lunched there in style while we rested a while.
From here, the mountains closed in like canyon walls
as from their tops cascaded waterfalls.
T'was in the heat of the day that we tramped on our way
to Mintaro Hut for a swim and a play.

We're here, we're here, hoorah, hooray,
we made it over Mackinnon Pass today.
The going was rough but we saw it through,
one can hardly attempt to describe the view.
We stopped at the cairn and got quite a fright
as we saw where the cliff dropped out of sight.
The wind it blew and cut us through
as we made our way to the hut for a brew.
The keas were curious at our intrusion
while we marvelled at mountain flowers in profusion.
The Sutherland Falls were today the highlight
and those who went swimming there, had added delight.
At Dumping Hut we have ended the day
with the grandest swim along the way.

Next day the skies were clear and the morning bright.
We saw Mackay Falls which were a beautiful sight.
In turns we clambered into Bell Rock so hollow –
a peculiar place, where we all decided to follow.
At Boatshed we came upon a very posh loo,
formica walls and one flushed it too.
Beside Lake Ida we walked along
talking awhile but later in song.
The Golden Gate Falls we saw on the way
by the time we reached Doughboy there was no time to stay.
We made it to Sandfly Point about three,
a little weary but happy were we.
We knew our walk on the Milford had come to an end
As we waited for the launch to come round the bend.

Committee Stuff

The club is seeking new committee members, and, in particular, a new president and secretary.

The committee meets 5-6 times per year, so the commitment is not great.

Please contact incumbent secretary (Muriel) or president (Yvonne H) if you would care to nominate yourself – or someone else – having asked them first, of course.

Trip reports



Croesus Track 22 – 25 September

Sorry I missed the last newsletter with this report. The editor joked that we were probably still drying out at the time of publication and there was a bit of that.



New member Margaret, me, and Laurie as logistics support, started the trip staying the night at Formerly the Blackball Hilton. Chrissy, who stayed along the road at Ikamatua, joined us next morning. We did our bit to stay local, and it was a good opportunity to check out Blackball and talk to the local retailers about their

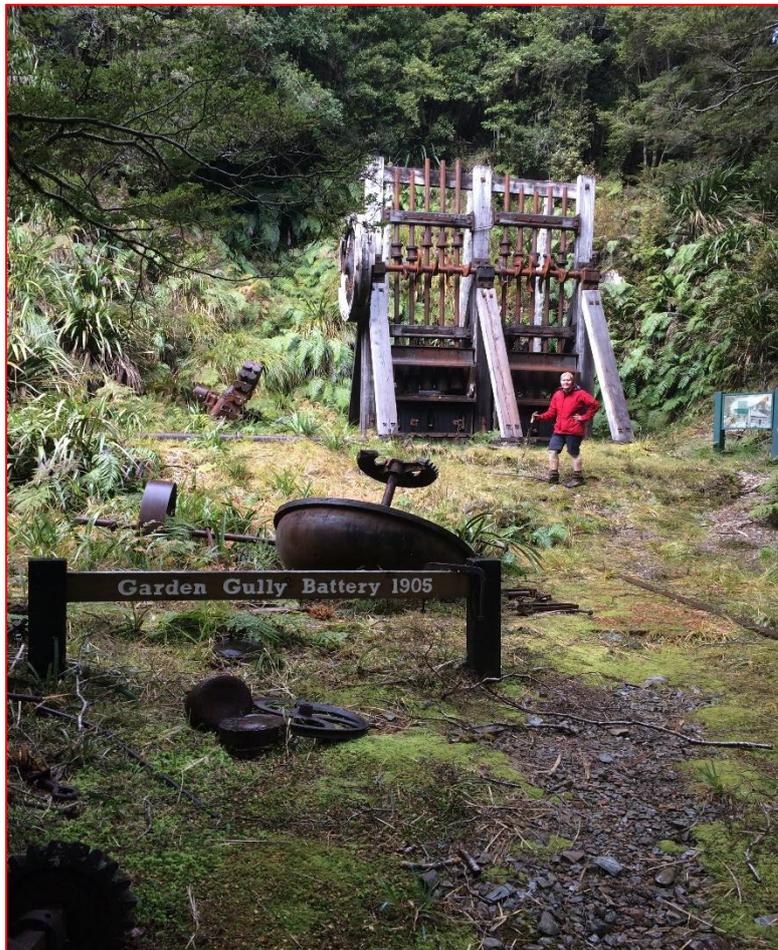
expectations of the new Great Walk coming to their town. The "Formerly" was a great base and the chef excellent.

The DOC office at Punakaiki had told me that there had been a bit more interest in the Croesus Track since publicity about the new Paparoa Great Walk and Pike 29 Memorial Track. Major parts of the track and the huts have been completed. We decided to go in on Sunday rather than earlier in the weekend to help deal with this possibility, and it turned out to be an excellent contingency. We called into the DOC office on the way through to pick up the Topo map. We found the tiny track was split between two maps - so please borrow them if you ever do this track. The people in the DOC office were most

welcoming and helpful. One of the officers even did her Sunday afternoon walk up from Barrytown. So on the way down we met a woman, whom we vaguely recognised, saying “we thought we might see you about here”.

The Track went from Great Walk standard to unmaintained poled route across the tops and serious storm damage on the way down to an easy zig-zag to the finish.

On the well maintained old tramway track to Ces Clark Hut we met three groups of people and learned that at the 16 bed Ces Clark Hut, 21 people slept in the hut, three in the historic Top Hut (with the old sacking bunks) and one person outside. This included Tramping Club members from Christchurch, a group of Irish builders from Christchurch, 3 European tourists and one American. The American (who had spent the night outside) was asleep in the hut when we arrived and after a short but informative chat in the evening, slept until we left in the morning. We were pleased with our Sunday night stay; just 3 of us and the sleeping American.



On the way up we visited the Garden Gully hut and battery, both of which are in very good condition and definitely worth a visit. Ces Clark is a bit different from the traditional backcountry hut and has windows looking over the Grey River. There was a large moon and clear sky so great night views. There was building and ground work happening around the hut which had been tunnelled underneath, presumably an upgrade for increased usage.

The new track from Ces Clark to the turnoff down to Barrytown was a pristine “Great Walk” track with level, hard, broken rock surface and perfectly

placed rocks across the track to allow the water flow. I have never seen such perfection in rock placement on a track but this is the first new track of this level I have been on, and pre a full rainy season!

As soon as we turned off to Barrytown we were back to reality. A deep, water filled route across the tussock tops with the mist coming in such that we had to seek out the not easily visible next pole before moving on. A missed direction on the flanks of Mount

Ryall did have us circling for about ten minutes - which seemed a really long time. The sleet, thunder and lightning came in as we slogged across, but was just a reminder of what could be, and stopped after only a few minutes, then back to the drizzly wetting rain. The track within the bush down to Barrytown was very damaged and slippery at the beginning requiring us to crawl under some very large windfalls. We then met a well benched zig-zag surrounded with nikau to the bottom. Logistics were perfectly timed and Laurie met us part way up the zig zag track.

The hot showers we were fantasizing about at Barrytown were under reconstruction - for the new Great Walk, so we wiped ourselves dry, changed clothes, drank not so great coffee and returned home feeling very satisfied with our trip.

Yvonne H

(Photos: YH)

5-7 October Gentle Annie

For the weekend, we stayed at Gentle Annie accommodation, adjacent to the beautiful Mokihinui River, just before going over the hill to Karamea. We were in three locations – River House, Rata Lodge and the camp ground. An unplanned (though highly likely) stop was made at Murchison for coffee, continuing on to Westport to regroup, and then head north. The plan for that afternoon was to walk Charming Creek walkway, but the weather was damp and thus we went up to Denniston Plateau. Because of the conditions prevailing, we did get a better feeling for what it must have been like for workers and their families living high above the west coast and its prevailing wind and weather pattern.



We all had a wander around in the drizzle, reading the panels (the more times you read them, the more you can appreciate the lives of the Denniston community and the conditions they both endured and enjoyed). We drove around looking at the old townships, and recorded two tracks for future visits.

After unloading cars, having cups of tea and meeting up with our two camping members Petra and Jan, the beach walk was enjoyed – by which time it was happy hour at River Lodge.

Ann and Yvonne H were sharing a very important birthday (with a 0 in it) and thus we had birthday cake complete with (a number of) candles.



There are lovely views from River Lodge over the bar of Mokihinui River, the hills and sweeping lawns of Gentle Annie.

Saturday
dawned fine and calm and perfect for Old Ghost Road. Laurie set off on his bike with a spraying of gravel, whilst the rest walked at varying speeds, with varying



group sizes, but remained together until lunch time and turn-around time when a few went a bit further up the track. The river views were stunning, the track in very good condition, and two of the lower down streams had been bridged since last visit – meaning no wet feet. Clematis, bush lawyer in full flower, other plants were



photographed, wondered about, and forgotten about. Bit early for the orchids, but we searched them out just the same.

Dinner that night was at Mokihinui Tavern – a very jolly place on that particular night (though I think it might be pretty jolly most nights). A high table and high stools were set up for our group in the midst of the mayhem – largely consisting of many local dogs who enjoyed meeting up with one another and frolicked around the room, one sporting a red flashing party band around its neck. Also we were entertained by a male only 21st birthday event. Much loud banter, terrible jokes, and a dreadful rendition of “happy birthday”. This appeared to be a fancy dress occasion, but we

couldn't work out whether it was an “Hawaiian” evening or a pyjama party. Sore heads next morning, I bet. Food was a by-product of the evening, but the cook did a splendid job serving up 13 meals at the same time from her small kitchen.

Sunday, thanks to Debbie and her skill at logistical planning, we managed to get the right cars and the right people to both ends of Charming Creek walkway. There was a hiccup or two, not to be mentioned in this report. All people and cars ended up at Ngakawau where, to our delight, there was a coffee cart manned (lady'd) by local farmers.



Quite a breeze was blowing, so we discarded the lunch on the beach option, and leaned our backs against a Chorus work hut, to eat our lunch in the sun and warm. From there on, it was a case of heading for home – stopping for icecreams (and toilet) at Murchison.

A very enjoyable long weekend. Lots of fun, chatter, planning future trips to the west coast, with two decent walking events, and one historical meander.

Thanks to Yvonne H, Laurie, Moppie, Ian, Bill, Ann, Wendy, Petra, Jan, Debbie, Birgit and Judy for making the weekend so successful and enjoyable. Yvonne J (scribe and leader)

(photos: Laurie and YJ)

13-14 October Kings Hut – replaced with Lakehead Hut

There were just the three of us – a very happy, chatty party – Yvonne J (leader), Ann and Ken – all of whom like to tell and hear a good yarn. We chatted our way up the lake, and chatted our way down the



lake. Very pleasant indeed, Ken introducing us to many new topics that hadn't seen the light of day on tramping club trips before. Thank you Ken. We learned a lot from you about all sorts of stuff we didn't previously know we wanted to know!



We got an early start from Kerr Bay and enjoyed a leisurely walk along the very nice track alongside the lake. Had lunch at the hut, put our boots back on and headed further up Travers Valley for a few hours, before reluctantly turning back. A nice number of people at the hut, some fellow Kiwi's (well, Ann is a Kiwi) which made for interesting discussions.

As we walked in, we met a chap heading to St Arnaud, who advised us he had left his stuff at the hut and would return. And indeed he did, about 5pm, clutching two bottles of beer and something else he had left in his car. He repacked his pack, and headed off to John Tait and/or camping site further up the valley.

Day 2, we just sauntered back to St Arnaud, taking an incredibly long time to get there. Must have broken some sort of record for slowness.

A very pleasant weekend. Thank you companions. Yvonne J (photos: Yvonne J)

28 October Canaan to Wainui Hut Circuit

We had an excellent turn out for this trip. Barbara, Birgit, Dave, Helen, Ken, Muriel, Yvonne H, Yvonne J and a prospective member, Judy. It was great weather after some not so good stuff.



We did the circuit in the opposite direction than usual, taking Moa Park track via Pages Saddle to Wainui

Saddle and to Wainui hut. After lunch at the hut, we split into two groups, with Muriel and Judy returning the same way as we came, and the rest of us taking the link track to the Evans Ridge track and back to Canaan.

The larger group took a bit longer than expected which meant Muriel and Judy had some quality talking time back at the cars.



The bird life was not spectacular but we did get well sung to by bellbirds and heard kaka around us several times.

We saw a couple of live Powelliphanta and although not as active as those on some Utube clips, they hopefully survived with Dave's careful moving to a safer place off the track.

We worked at identifying the variety of beech using BRAHAMS as a first level memory aid....Black, Red, and Hard, and Mountain, Silver. I still have work to do in remembering the rhymes and alliterations for the identification at the next level. I think Silver is - small leaves and serrated edges!!! The cedars and especially the neinei (dracophyllum) were in abundance.

Yvonne H

(Photos: Snail YJ; Hillside Ken)

7-8-9 November Kahurangi Lighthouse

This didn't happen due to varying circumstances including a not totally acceptable tide.

7-8 November Salisbury Lodge – No takers

18 November Conical Hill

We haven't done this trip for a while, and last time we had some difficulty finding the start and we had to walk in the snow.

So Muriel, a prospective member, Carol, and I did a recce to ensure we could find the way in and avoid snow this time round. There had been recent

new forestry work and part of the forestry road was dried mud with deep tracks and a high middle part where the logging trucks had forged their way through. Even the Isuzu just made it, so high wheeled vehicles only was noted on our instructions for future trips. We did a range of diversions to clarify our required route, cleared the large orange marker at the





final turn off and found the tiny marker pronouncing Conical Hill. Our main purpose done we walked only an hour or so up and down.

Helen and I were the only starters for the actual walk and there was no trouble finding the start and the muddy road had totally re-shaped with the recent heavy rain, re-set and was very easy for any vehicle to manage. We now have good directions written down and several people who know the way, should we wish to do it again.

The day was fine with some mist in the distant hills and the first 800 meters is a bit of a slog up to the snowline ridge at about 1170m. This part is tree covered and getting Helen to tell me about the plants kept the pace sorted. Helen pointed

out the “curly leaved” dracophyllum which I had not been conscious of seeing before - *Dracophyllum elegantissimum* see http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.aspx?ID=2111 And as often happens on our walks, we discussed the *Pseudopanax* and Helen reports she did a process of elimination and this was the only one that matched up in any way to what we saw. http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.aspx?ID=1200

The views of the surrounding mountains were great from this point on, and about another 45 mins on, a ridge line walk got us to the top of Conical Hill, an open, alpine area with large rock formations. We could also see similar formations on surrounding hills. It would have been another 45mins to a second highpoint and more big granite rocks, but we decided to do that next time.

The drive time from Motueka to the start is an hour and a half, we walked about three hours up and about two hours down. The track is well formed and well marked.

Yvonne H

(Photo: YvonneH)

23-24-25 November Whanganui Inlet

Cancelled due inclement weather

2 December Beeby's Knob

Cancelled – no takers and bad weather forecast



7-8-9 December Fenella Hut –
Cobb Road still closed. But replaced
with -

9 December – Takaka Hill Walkway – orchid hunt

This was a last minute offer to
members, sadly ignored by most, but
five of us enjoyed a leisurely stroll
through and amongst limestone and
bush. Yes, we only did half the track,
but it was done thoroughly – not a plant
was missed, considerable numbers of
Powelliphanta shells were encountered
(? why) and green hooded orchids
(*Pterostylis oliverii*) galore. It was a
time of plenty on the walkway.



The green hooded orchids were of the
variety that grows only in association with
limestone, there were Iris (*Libertia ixioides*)
- and a few things as yet unidentified.

A very pleasant botanizing day out with
orchid specialist Jean (thanks to Jean for
plant names), ably assisted by John, Judy,
Yvonne J and largely unassisted by Ian.
Thank you Ian, though, for your tolerance –
but I did warn you!

Yvonne J

(Photos YJ)

PS See following section for more on
Powelliphanta

16 December Christmas Function at Neudorf



The lunch went off well with 10 people biking out to Neudorf and 8 more taking more traditional transport and the food.

Neudorf was a great setting, their wine was very good and the food was delicious. An enjoyable time was had by all.



(Photos: Laurie)

6 January Mt Arthur Alpine Flowers



Well, we didn't get far enough above Arthur Hut to see the flowers – in fact we only just made it to the first cairn above the hut, and at great risk of being blown away. I was a bit behind the others, and when I poked my head above the ridge, the

rest were hunkered down behind rocks and giving me every indication we weren't going anywhere. That was great, as I had no intention of going further anyway.

Metservice was forecasting average wind speeds of 60km, with no let up all day. Thus, persuaded to arise from their hunkered down positions of relative calm, we turned back

and headed down the Dog Box corner track to Flora hut. Flora hut was relatively sheltered, so we abandoned all our warm gear and sat in the shade for an early lunch.



Back at the cars, four of us went along Thorpes Ridge, following the traplines of I line. Lovely bit of bush, and startlingly different to that along Flora track – which is pretty much denuded of undergrowth.

Windswept participants for the day were Gerda, Rob, Serene, Phil, Una, Yvonne H and me, Yvonne J.

(Photos: Gerda – wonderful photo of clouds)

13 - 14 January Sawcut Gorge – cancelled due earthquake damage. Replaced with

12 January Watering Cove

Well once again plans needed to be changed for what was going to be an overnight trip to Sawcut Gorge, south of Blenheim and west of Ward.

The track into Sawcut had been damaged in the Kaikoura earthquake and Isolation Hut was shut, so new plans were necessary.

As there was only myself, Wendy, and Gerda we decided to go for a day walk in the Abel Tasman. Firstly it was going to be to Coquille Bay have lunch and return. Then as time went by we decided to walk further and ended up having a morning tea stop at Akersten Bay and a refreshing swim for Gerda and Debbie.

Then it was on to Watering Cove for a lunch stop and another swim.

It was a beautiful day, Abel Tasman was at its best with aquamarine blue water, a cool shaded track and lots of activity on and off the water. Everyone was out enjoying what the track has to offer.

We returned to Marahau , home by 5pm and a well earned rest.

Debbie

19 January Lake Peel – Cancelled due to gale force winds

Bits of history and bio-diversity:

Editor seeks contributions to this new section

(the silence has been deafening up to now)

As we have several references to Powelliphanta in this newsletter, you might like to visit DoC website: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/invertebrates/powelliphanta-snails/>

Some “quick facts” from above website are:

Powelliphanta snails are carnivores. They particularly like earthworms, and suck them up through their mouth just like we eat spaghetti. They are also known to eat slugs.

The largest species is *Powelliphanta superba prouseorum*, found in Kahurangi National Park and measuring about 9 cm across. These are the sumo wrestlers of the snail world, weighing in at 90 g, or the equivalent of a tui!



The genus was named after Dr A.W.B. Powell, a former scientist at Auckland Museum who studied the snails during the 1930s and 1940s.

Powelliphanta snails used to be known as Paryphanta snails, until the 1970s. Now, Paryphanta refers only to kauri snails, which live north of Auckland.

Powelliphanta snails are hermaphrodites, meaning they possess both male and female reproductive organs and therefore can mate with any other adult Powelliphanta.

Powelliphanta snails lay about 5-10 large eggs a year. Each egg is up to 12 mm long, pearly pink and hard-shelled - just like a small bird's egg!

It is estimated that Powelliphanta snails can live up to 20 years. In snail terms, that is an incredibly long life span!

Ken has contributed this information on the Maitai, following our walk there last spring.

“Both images are info from 'Project Maitai' - 'Nelson City Council' sign beside Maitai Valley Walkway just down-stream from Pipeline Bridge, where we dropped down to Maitai Walkway after leisurely lunch at Tantragee Saddle.”

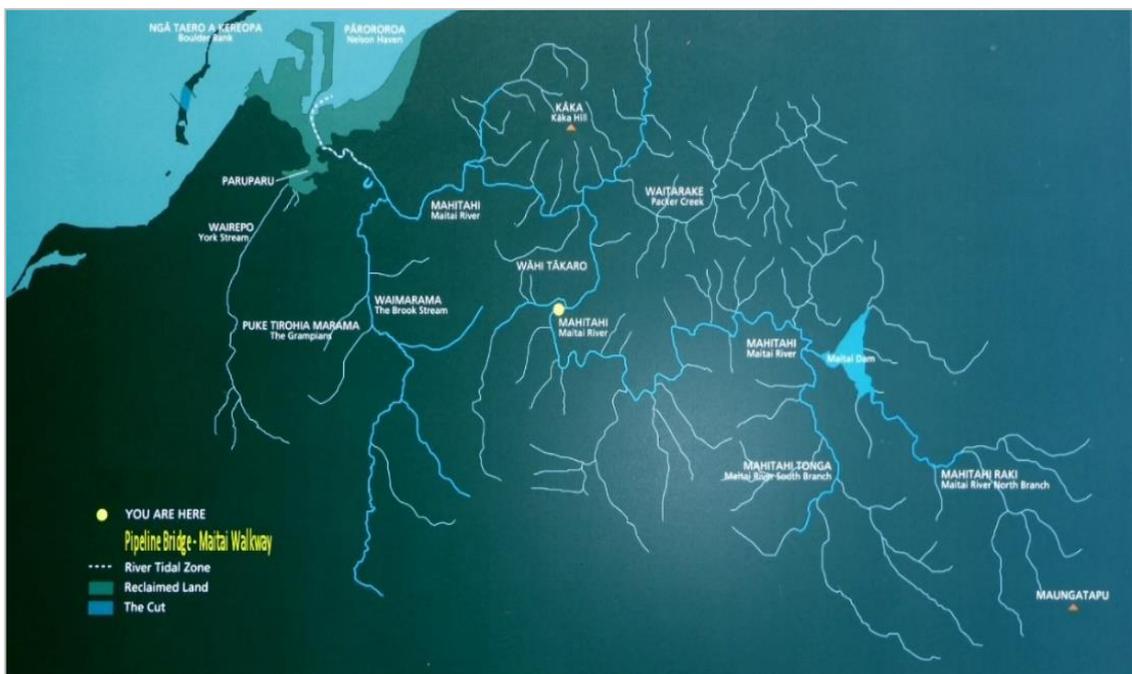
Tipuna Awa/Ancestral River

Māori call the river by several names – Maitai, Mahitahi or Maitahi. It is the river most Wakatū/Nelson Māori use in their mihi/introductory speech as their tipuna awa, or ancestral river.

Many Te Tau Ihu/Top of the South iwi have cultural, spiritual, historical, and traditional associations with Maitai/Mahitahi/Maitahi. Tuna/eel are a Māori taonga/treasure.

The river, its tributaries, the Paruparu estuary and Nelson Haven/Pārororoa was a traditional mahingakai/food source. Salt and freshwater fisheries thrived, including pātiki/flounder, tāmure/snapper and tuna/eel. Forests lined the river, providing habitat for birds, and harakeke/flax was abundant. The diversity of plant and animal life, between the mountains and the sea, was appreciated for rongoa/medicines.

The Maitai/Mahitahi/Maitahi was also an important trade and travel route connecting Nelson and Marlborough. The river gave access to the pakohe/argillite quarries of the upper reaches of the river and the mountains of the Bryant Range/Maungatapu.





Waireia stenopetala (Arthurs Pass, December 2018)

Newsletter Editor: Yvonne J (yvonnejay@xtra.co.nz) who thanks scribes for their written contributions and photographers for lovely photos