

Field Report
Wellington Botanical Society,
Great Barrier Island 30 Jan to 8 February 2008

Extract

43 people attended this camp which ran from 30 Jan to 8 February 2008.

Accommodation was at the Orama Christian Camp on Great Barrier Island. Some tented, some in cabins and others in the bunk rooms. Camp site and rooms are good.

Toilet amenities of good quality and handy to accommodation, would be a bit crowded for a larger group than we had.

The Orama Camp provided cooked dinners whilst Bot Soc catered breakfasts and lunches. Two course dinner was more than adequate and coffee and tea on tap all the time. Planning is necessary to get food for lunches and breakfasts to the island. Orama provided milk and bread from their store.

Transport was by the Great Barrier Island Travel. We contracted for pickup and return to arrival and departure points and for drop of and pick up for the more distant walks.

They were very obliging. They were unfazed on the one day when a party was late coming out of the bush, even setting up contingency arrangements for the late arrivals. Cooperation was helped by us fitting round their other commitments, helping to change bus tyres and providing drivers to reposition vehicles.

The following outlines the programme as originally proposed. [Blue font reports on what happened.](#)

Day	Trip	Transport arrangements
30 Jan	For those who arrive early in the day there is a track going north from Orama to Nimaru Bay. About a 100 m climb. About 2.5 km each way. This was used by several people as a short trip when they stayed at Orama for the day and had a few hours to spare. The proposed option of returning via Mt Heruheru (287m) and the road did not prove feasible. The mapped track does not seem to exist.	Start and finish walking from Orama
31 Jan	Orama to Port FitzRoy via Tree Peak (205 m) Then option of several walks from Port FitzRoy including: Bridle Track (Doc Tk 3) 15 minutes Warrens Track (Doc Tk 2) 1 hour return Old Lady Track (Doc Tk 1) but keep going east to meet the Karaka Bay Road. Return to Orama via Karaka Bay Road (about 2.5 km) Tree Peak appears to now be within the closed Reserve and no longer accessible. Main party walked the Telecom Track starting from behind the Shady Heights cabins and coming out on the Orama Road, then walked to the junction of the FitzRoy Road and down to Port FitzRoy via the Old Lady Track. They returned to Orama by the road. A good trip to get familiar with the local flora. Also allowed people to buy the goodies they had forgotten or could not bring to GBI because of weight restrictions on the flight.	Start and finish walking from Orama. Opportunity to shop at Port FitzRoy.
1 Feb	Mt Hobson 627m by the Palmers Track (DoC Tk 10) via Windy Canyon and return by the same route. Walk starts at about 300m. A longish day but good views. This trip was walked as planned. There was no time (or transport arranged) to walk through to the western coast.	Great Barrier Travel pick up from Orama 0830. Drop at the start of the Palmer Track at the summit of the Aotea Road (FitzRoy-Harataonga Road on some maps). Return about 1630 from drop off point.

<p>2 Feb</p>	<p>Kaitoke Hot Springs via Kaitoke Swamp from the Whangaparapara Road. (Doc Tk 14) 1 hour each way. Return the same way OR go north to the Tramline Track, go west to Forest Road 20, then south to the Whangaparapara Road (Around 4 hours).</p> <p>Three approaches taken by the party on this trip.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Dropped off at the start of the Tramline Track on Aotea Road and walked through to the Hot Springs then out to the Whangaparapara Road. A long trip with a lot of gulleys but possible in the time, including a quick dip in the hot springs. 2 Drop off on the Whangaparapara Road at Forest Road (20), then walk to the Tramline Track, then east to the Hot Springs and out to the Whangaparapara Road. A comfortable time for botany and a soak at the hot springs 3 Drop off on the Whangaparapara Road at the start of the Kaitoke Springs Track. This group walked to the Springs and some went on a little further before returning by the Springs Track 	<p>Great Barrier Travel pick up from Orama 0830. Drop off at the start of the track on the Whangaparapara Road. Return about 1630 from drop off point and from junction of the Forest Road 20 and Whangaparapara Road</p>
<p>3 Feb Note that this was originally planned for 4 Feb but was changed to fit with the needs of the transport providers)</p>	<p>Whangapoua Estuary. Start from the end of Mabeys Road and walk southish along the dunes then round the estuary. Most people did this first, going south to the estuary, exploring the dunes and swales on the way, then north along the beach to the graves from the shipwrecked SS Wairarapa. A relatively light day. A few souls started early and walked the Burrill route from Mabeys Road to Tataweka (526m). They had to keep moving to be back to the road at 4.30.</p>	<p>Great Barrier Travel pick up from Orama 0830. Drop off as far along Mabeys Road as the transport can get. Pick up to be determined. Probably at Okiwi, maybe on the Mabeys Road around 1600</p>
<p>4 Feb</p>	<p>Cooper's Castle (Doc Tk 4). 2.5 km road walk to the junction of Karaka Bay Road and Aotea Road (FitzRoy-Harataonga Road on some maps). (About 200m). Walk track to Coopers Castle Lookout (450 m) 3 hours. Most of the group did this as proposed. The walk back from the road junction along the ridge via the communication tower proved not feasible as the track beyond the tower could not be found. A few people (in particular the liverwort and lichen specialists) did the walk to Nimaru Bay with a side trip to BBQ Bay.</p>	<p>Start and finish walking from Orama</p>
<p>5 Feb</p>	<p>Mt Whangaparapara and Witheys Track. All start at sea level. Options here include: Mt Whangaparapara (Doc Tk 16) 302m. 1 hr 10 min. Witheys Track(Doc Tk 17) 1hr 15 min. or extend and return via the Pack Track (Doc Tk 15) Old Mill Track (Doc Tk 18). Or combine some or all of these. All these options were taken by groups of the party. One group tried to bush bash between the Whangaparapara peak and a track to the south. They found this very slow going, did not find the track and finished at the Mill Track on the shore line. Those who went back to the pick-up point early did the walk north on the Tramway Track to waterfall (30 min round trip)</p>	<p>Great Barrier Travel pick up from Orama 0830. Drop off at the start of the track on the Whangaparapara Road at the start of the Tram Line Track. Return about 1630 from drop off point</p>

<p>6 Feb</p> <p>John Ogden a possible contact</p>	<p>Awana Dunes back to Omata Road. "QEII Open Space Covenant, and DOC camp. Go out at low tide to see dabbling pateke/brown teal, NZ dotterel. Possibly swim in estuary, but not in sea. Pa site on peninsula, with interpretation (panel?) on other side of estuary. Some sand-binder plants. Some erosion. Half the party followed the above plan, exploring the wet lands and dunes adjacent to the DoC Camp Site and then crossing the river at low tide to explore the peninsular and climb to the Pa site. Knee deep for 2 hours either side of low tide. The others did the Harataonga Walkway from south to north. They made this in the time with a few stops along the way.</p>	<p>Great Barrier Travel pick up from Orama 0830. We will determine drop off and pick up points once we establish the location of these, relative to roads. Drop off at Harataonga camp site for those doing the Harataonga walkway and at the Awana camp site for those exploring the dunes, wet land and peninsular. Pick up was arranged for 3.30 for the Awana visitors.</p>
<p>7 Feb</p> <p>CW suggests a left before the hill starts for coastal forest and Loxoma cunninghamii</p>	<p>Remains of Kauri Dams and the South Fork Track (DoC Tk 11) Starting from the Forest Road 20 near the Kaiaraara Hut. The preserved kauri dam is about 1 hour 30 min. Another 1 hour 30 mins to the summit of Mt Hobson for the energetic. Return the same way. Another day when the groups split to go differing ways.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A few dropped at the junction of Port FitzRoy and Orama Roads and walked to Coopers Castle then down to the Kauri dam and out to the gate on Kaiaraara Bay Road. 2. Even fewer walked from the gate on the Kaiaraara Bay Road past the Kauri dams to Coopers Castle and down to the junction of Port FitzRoy and Orama Roads. 3. The main group walked from the gate to the dam and then back. Of these, several went on to look for the upper dam. This is noted on most maps but could not be found. 	<p>Great Barrier Travel pick up from Orama 0830. Drop off at the SW end of the Aotea Road (FitzRoy-Harataonga Road on some maps). Return about 1630 from drop off point. Actual drop was at a locked gate on the Kaiaraara Bay Road south from Port FitzRoy. We used one bus doing two runs at start and end of the day.</p>
<p>8 Feb</p> <p>Walking back along the road is quite good forest</p>	<p>This day we start for the mainland at varying times. Some flying, some on the ferry. The ferry leaves Tryphena at 7 pm People might like to go early in the day to Tryphena and take one of the walks around there, Near Okiwi airstrip there is a coastal walk going south. All seemed to get away on time although a puncture on the bus at 0745 had us worried for a while. The group leaving from Tryphena looked over the reserve next to the transport office after taking their time to drive south to Tryphena A few of the late leavers walked over to Nimaru Bay.</p>	<p>Great Barrier Travel pick up from Orama to get people to the airstrips and ferry. Times to be arranged once we get there. A mix of transport. Orama staff ran the first two groups to Okiwi air strip when bus got a puncture. The group leaving from Tryphena drove themselves, repositioning vans for the transport company). Great Barrier Travel ran a shuttle for those leaving from the Okiwi air strip.</p>
<p>Reserve</p>	<p>Tataweka on the Burrill Route starting from Mabeys Road 8 hour return to Tataweka 526m or drop off to Rangiwahakea Bay. This was done by a party of eight? on 3 February – (see above)</p>	