



WILDERNESS LODGE™ ARTHUR'S PASS

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2008 WILDERNESS DISCOVERY WEEKS IN THE HEART OF THE SOUTHERN ALPS AT WILDERNESS LODGE ARTHUR'S PASS

OPTIONAL DATES (Please express your 1st/2nd preference)

Week 1 Thursday 10th April 2008 to Tuesday 15 April 2008
Week 2 Thursday 16 October 2008 to Tuesday 21 October 2008

PROGRAMME

DAY ONE:

WILDERNESS WEEK MEETING PLACE FOR DEPARTURE

9.00am **Either 9am** at the Commodore Airport Hotel Memorial Ave, Christchurch (for those overnight or resident in Christchurch).

9.30am **Or 9.30am** our white Toyota Minibus will be outside the **International Arrivals Terminal Christchurch Airport** (for those flying into Christchurch that morning).

Mobile phone contact 027 229 0444

10.00am – 12.30pm Drive across the Canterbury Plains on Highway 73 to Springfield.
Kowhai Bush Private Reserve We walk amongst Canterbury foothills Black Beech and Kahikatea forest, a rare remnant of native forest that once extended out onto the Canterbury Plains. This forest is exceptionally rich in Bellbirds. We enjoy morning tea/coffee in this forest. We drive from Kowhai Bush back to Springfield and drive over Porters Pass via the Rewi Alley Memorial Park.

12.30pm – 2.30pm **“Lunch in the Tussocks”** At Porters Pass we enter the 22,000 hectare **Korowai-Torlesse Tussockland Park**. We explore some of the tallest red tussocks in Canterbury. We then travel around Lake Lyndon to the Acheron Valley and have lunch by a lovely stream amongst Matagouri (wild irishman), mountain daisies and tussock grassland. We explore the red tussock and short tussock grasslands of the new park and look for special scree plants amongst a stream, beech forest and classic dry land shrublands. We then drive west to Arthur's Pass National Park.

3.00pm – 4.00pm Arrive at the **Hawdon Valley** for birdwatching in the red and mountain beech forest. We look for the endangered **Orange Fronted Parakeet, South Island robin** and **mohua/yellowhead**. We then continue west 20 minutes to **Wilderness Lodge Arthur's Pass**. Check in to your Lodge room where there is a welcome and afternoon refreshment. We outline the remainder of the week to you.

5.00pm – 6.30pm **High Country Sheep Station Discovery Tour** Join our Cora Lynn Station Manager to help muster sheep with Border Collie sheepdogs. We will teach you how to blade shear a woolly sheep in our shearing shed and look at the different grades of super-fine merino wool and feed our tame rams. A good chance to explore a large farm and learn about High Country life.

7.00pm **Social time Cora Lynn Lounge. “An Introduction to Merino Wool”** We look at the range of natural fibres from yak, camel, alpaca, coarse wools and super fine merino. We learn how to spin and weave the wool and look at a range of fashion items that use merino.

7.30pm **Dinner Mt Rolleston Restaurant**

DAY TWO:

- 7.30am – 8.30am** – **Birds and Special Plants of the Mountain Beech Forest** Explore the forests that surround the Wilderness Lodge with our naturalist guides on an easy walk with great views. Look for rifleman, New Zealand's smallest bird, bellbird, falcon, tomtit and creeper. Search for beech seedlings and rare mistletoe, discover the beech forest invading the surrounding shrublands and learn about Maori and European sheep farmers who pioneered this area. This is a great walk to become familiar with the Waimakariri Valley.
- 8.30am – 9.30am** – **Breakfast Mt Rolleston Restaurant**
- 9.30am – 3.30pm** – **McKay Moa Forest Discovery and Broad Stream Gorge** A special trip across the Broad Stream footbridge to see rare riverbed plants, 'inside-out' shrubs that have evolved to resist browsing by giant Moa birds, now extinct. We also look at the vegetation of Broad Stream Gorge. This is a high valley, home to huge numbers of bellbirds as well as wild pigs. There are superb views of the Upper Waimakariri Valley, the Lodge and the rivers, so take your camera. We will make our way slowly through the forest botanising amongst the tremendous variety of plants in this valley. A special feature of this walk is that we will explore 4 special plant communities
- Canterbury Dry Riverbed** *Raoulia haastii*, *Raoulia tenuicaulis*, *Raoulia australis* are all in the "vegetable sheep" family. *Geranium microphyllum*, *Epilobium brunnescens* are all plants uniquely adapted to the driest and most extreme conditions in the New Zealand Southern Alps.
 - Canterbury Dry Rocky Bluffs** A really unusual group of plants live here on dry rocky bluffs. These include the very special "rock garden" plants *Helichrysum intermedium* and the endangered *Helichrysum dimorphum* as well as a range of *Hebe* and *Olearia* species.
 - "Moa Forest"** Close by is this strange shrubland of inside-out plants adapted to browsing giant Moa birds (now extinct). There are 20 species from a great range of genera; *Coprosma*, *Aristotelia*, *Pittosporum*, *Discaria*, *Melicytus*, *Carmichaelia*, *Corokia*.
 - Mountain Beech on Dry Lands** The beech forest here is growing in a very dry, rocky landscape yet is remarkably healthy with massive beech regeneration now occurring after 8 years of stock exclusion. We will enjoy a picnic lunch beside the cascades of McKay Stream. You have the choice of a harder or an easier route back to the Lodge. The easier route is down through "Moa forest" on a grassy path. The harder route is up through beech forest and over and down Wild Boar Hill with magnificent views of the Upper Waimakariri Valley.
- 4.30pm – 6.30pm** – **Native Plant Identification Session**
To relax at the end of a busy day in the field, we spend the late afternoon looking at the variety of alpine, forest and shrubland plants and identifying these from a range of reference text books. We will prepare a small herbarium with the goal of identifying at least 50 common native species by the end of the week in our own herbarium.
- 7.00pm** – **Social Time in the Cora Lynn Lounge**
- 7.30pm** – **Dinner Mt Rolleston Restaurant**

DAY THREE:

- 7.30am – 8.30am** – **Birds and Special Plants of the Mountain Beech Forest** Another opportunity to explore the forests that surround the Wilderness Lodge with our naturalist guides on an easy walk with great views. Look for rifleman, New Zealand's smallest bird, bellbird, falcon, tomtit and creeper. Search for beech seedlings and rare mistletoe and discover the beech forest invading the surrounding shrublands and learn about Maori and European sheep farmers who pioneered this area. This is a great walk to become familiar with the Waimakariri Valley. Each morning you will see different birds from the previous morning.
- 8.30am – 9.30am** – **Breakfast Mt Rolleston Restaurant**
- 9.30am – 4.00pm** – **Limestone Castles, Easy Canoeing, Rare Plants and Desert Landscapes – A guided high country discovery of the dry lands east of the Lodge**
Journey to the driest landscapes of the high country shaped by glaciers and water into amazing limestone overhangs, outcrops, caves and streams inhabited by some of New Zealand's rarest plants. We travel down valley and walk up a gentle hill on Cora Lynn station for grand mountain views. We visit the Craigieburn Forest Park for a forest walk and for lunch and continue east to Cave Stream and Castle Hill where we explore an area of great significance to the early Maori and the site of the earliest European settlement of the upper Waimakariri. We will walk for 1 – 2 hours amongst amazing shaped limestone. We then explore in our safe, stable canoes lovely Lake Pearson to look for Crested Grebe, Scaup, Paradise Ducks and other

wetland birds. **Walk Standard:** Easy Walking and 40 km driving each way **Time:** 6.5 hours. On this trip we will spend 45 minutes clearing weed Contorta Pine from a special *Dracophyllum* shrubland using loppers and by hand.

5.00pm – 6.30pm – **Tussocks, Thorn forests, Wetlands and Waterbirds... A Wilderness Wander** A guided walk out into the vast wilderness of the Waimakariri River Valley and the Cora Lynn wetlands – home to wrybill, black fronted tern, Oystercatcher and Banded Dotterill.

7.30pm **Dinner Mt Rolleston Restaurant**

10.00pm (if fine) **The Night Sky and Southern Cross Walk** An easy walk after dinner to see the beautiful southern night sky. We will look for planets and use our telescope to look at the craters of the moon if it is out.

DAY FOUR:

7am – 8.30am – **Lake Sarah Special Canoe Trip** A special dawn trip 18 km away at the Eastern end of the Lodge Farm. This lovely lake is fringed by raupo and is home to a range of waterbirds including rare Crested Grebes. This is a magnificent place to watch and photograph the sunrise.

8.30am – 9.30am – **Breakfast Mt Rolleston Restaurant**

9.30am – 4.30pm – **Arthur's Pass Alpine Discovery Walk** A special guided programme involving travel – 24 km from the Lodge over the historic Maori Greenstone trail (now Arthur's Pass) to the sub-alpine summit of the pass. We explore the wetlands, tarns and alpine herbfields of the Southern Alps on a guided walk into the Upper Bealey Valley and descend into strange beech forests and grass tree (*Dracophyllum*) forests. We explore river gorges and waterfalls near the Bealey Glacier and look for kea, pipit, black mountain butterflies and alpine grasshoppers. The alpine herbfields are full of giant buttercups, mountain daisies (*Celmisia*), senecios (*Brachyglottis*) and orchids. We will also see the world's smallest pine, pygmy pine and ancient cedars. Bring your camera. Excellent alpine views, alpine/subalpine plants and alpine wildlife. **Walk Standard:** Easy – Moderate Walk **Distance:** 6 km walking **Time:** 7 hours of relaxed easy walking with lots of botanising, photo stops, waterfalls, lunch, morning tea and rests.

4.30pm **Relaxed afternoon tea** at the Wilderness Lodge and time to work on herbariums and bird lists or to rest and relax.

6.30pm – 7.30pm – **Across the Great Divide.... A High Country History** Colourful stories of the farming pioneers of Arthur's Pass and Cora Lynn Station. Discover photos and historic books and gain a perspective on early Maori greenstone trails and food gathering in the area. Gather in the lounge before dinner.

7.30pm **Dinner Mt Rolleston Restaurant**

DAY FIVE:

7.30am – 8.30am – **Breakfast Mt Rolleston Restaurant**

9.00am – 3.30pm – **West Coast Rainforest and Lake Canoeing** We drive over Arthur's Pass. We stop on the summit of the Pass for botanising amongst the tarns and herbfields. We drive down the magnificent Otira Gorge and explore rimu rainforest at Kelly's Creek to discover orchids, tree ferns, giant fuchsia, pigeon and tui. We continue on to lovely Lake Poerua and canoe across the lake across the Alpine Fault through a floating forest of ancient kahikatea trees to forested granite islands for lunch. We are surrounded by a jungle of pristine rainforest. On our return to the shore we explore Mine Creek to look at a great variety of schist, quartz and learn about the continental plate collision point which runs through this valley. We return to the Wilderness Lodge via an historic hotel that dates from the stage coach days and visit lovely Wesley Falls. **Activity Standard:** Easy – Moderate **Walk/Canoe Distance:** 5 km

Special Features of this trip.

- We look at the smallest podocarp trees in the world on the Arthur's Pass summit then look at the tallest podocarp trees (Kahikatea) at Lake Poerua.
- The trip is suitable for all ages and fitness levels. If you do not want an easy canoe you can walk.
- We visit the Cockayne Nature Walk commemorating the 1929 initiator of Arthur's Pass National Park, Leonard Cockayne.
- We enjoy a classic old West Coast pub.

- We will see abundant forest birds, tui, pigeon, parakeet and possibly kaka.
- We visit some of New Zealand's healthiest fuchsia and rata trees.

5.00am – 6.30pm – **High Country Sheep Station Discovery Tour** Another opportunity to join our Cora Lynn Station Manager to help muster sheep with Border Collie sheepdogs. We will teach you how to blade shear a woolly sheep in our shearing shed and learn about different types of super-fine merino wool and feed our tame rams. A good chance to explore a large farm and learn about High Country life.

6.30pm – 7.30pm – **New Zealand Wine Regions and Different Wines... a Tasting and Appreciation** A special activity with a difference. Join our cellar master for a journey of discovery of the main wine growing areas of New Zealand and then taste a range of wines to sample differences in regions, varieties and quality of wine. We will sample sauvignon blancs, chardonnays, pinot noirs and some specialty wines and find out how to choose the best wines for your cellar or your next restaurant meal. Come along and have fun!

7.30pm **Dinner Mt Rolleston Restaurant**

DAY SIX:

8.00am – 9.00am – **Breakfast Mt Rolleston Restaurant**

9.00am – 9.30am – **Pack our bags and farewell to the Wilderness Lodge**

9.30am **Arthur's Pass National Park endangered birds, Craigieburn Conservation Park Mistletoe Discovery and Craigieburn Range 4 Wheel Drive exploration to discover high alpine grasslands and scree plants**
This special tour again visits the Hawdon Valley of Arthur's Pass National Park. Here we look amongst the red and mountain beech forest for another chance to see endangered orange fronted parakeet, South Island robin and mohua/yellowhead. We then drive south past Lake Pearson to the Craigieburn Conservation Park. We explore the dragon's teeth (*Dracophyllum*) and *Hebe* shrubland where Wilderness Lodge is maintaining a programme of removing *Pinus contorta* to save the native shrubland. We enter the Broken River red tussock grasslands and walk amongst a savannah of beech and tussock. We then climb by 4WD nearly 1,000 metres high up onto the Craigieburn Range for superb views of the Waimakariri Basin. On the high scree slopes we will look at strange scree plants; vegetable sheep, penwiper plants, scree chickweed and a variety of mountain daisies. We will also look for the scree weta that freeze when they hibernate here in winter and look out for alpine gecko. We enjoy lunch high on this mountain range. The trip features plants of the dry eastern high country, great views and many photo opportunities. We will also look for special riverbed birds. **Travel distance:** 37km (20miles) in an air-conditioned vehicle en route to Christchurch.

3.00pm **Farewell to the High Country at the Korowai-Torlesse Tussockland Park**

3.00am – 4.00pm – **Drive to the Canterbury Plains and Christchurch Airport** via Porters Pass and Highway 73

Note:

1. Our naturalist guides are trained to give greatest emphasis to your safety and comfort. However we expressly disclaim any liability for any injury, damage, loss or delay incurred during the Wilderness Week tours.
2. This programme will be altered to accommodate weather conditions and the fitness level and any special interests of the group.
3. All walks are carried out either on our own property or on Conservation Land under our Canterbury Conservation Department Guiding Concession. CA 15048 GUI.
4. Passenger transport is carried out under our Passenger Service Licence PSL 222871