



QUARTERLY

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW ZEALAND OUTDOOR INSTRUCTORS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE 100 JULY 2025

INSIDE

100 editions of NZOIA Quarterly!

Incident Sharing – Dave Brash

Qualification Update

Advocacy – Recreation Aotearoa

Muslim Women's Course

– Outward Bound

Kōrero o te tau – Matariki

MSC Update – Avalanche, Drinking Water

Waitaha Valley Hut Repairs

– Keith Riley

Profile – Castle Hill Outdoor Education Centre

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NZOIA Chief Executive Update

What a significant milestone for the NZOIA Quarterly Magazine to reach its 100th edition. It's an important signal that NZOIA has been around for a significant amount of time and is continuing to be an important part of New Zealand's outdoor landscape. It is also important for us to pause and acknowledge the crucial contributions that so many people have made to the NZOIA process over such a period of time.

While the changes in how NZOIA has operated and evolved over that time have been substantial, the process of changing and adapting must constantly continue. We are very aware of this and the NZOIA team have been working hard in recent times to modernise our information and communication systems. There is still so much more that is needed to be done in this area, but we have recently achieved some useful improvements in the way candidates and Assessors are able to access information. As well as continuing to improve the information sharing around assessments, we also want to have a much more visible presence across the outdoors community and increase interactions. This is one of our big objectives, so stay tuned for more on that.

There have also been continual changes and updates to various parts of the NZOIA syllabus. Kayak Leader now includes sit-on craft, River Rescue 1 is now open to multi water users, and Cave 1 now has a single rope technique endorsement. As well as these changes, NZOIA has been undertaking a process to standardise the written format of the different assessment disciplines so that our material is more consistent and standardised. There is also a review underway for Climbing Wall and Rock. As part of the process of updating and reviewing syllabi, we are increasingly incorporating elements of te ao Māori. To support this, we had a number of NZOIA representatives attend the Ngā Ara ki te Taiao Wānanga 2025 (The Paths to the Environment) in Motueka hosted by Whenua Iti Outdoors. Insights from that will be

cascaded to the NZOIA community and we thank Whenua Iti for hosting that important wānanga.

As we close out the 2024-25 financial year it's so great to see a significant increase in the numbers of NZOIA qualifications and NZOIA members. In 2024-25 the total number of NZOIA registered qualifications increased from 2,650 to 2,911. An increase of 8.15%. There were 578 NZOIA qualifications passed, which is up from 532 the previous year, and NZOIA members also increased from 1,447 to 1,533. These increases are great to see and is a strong indication that the outdoors sector in New Zealand is thriving. As an important part of this growth, NZOIA is also growing our funding partners. The last few months have seen four new funding partners supporting NZOIA. This includes Grassroots Central Trust, NZ Community Trust, the Lion Foundation, and Pub Charity Ltd. The growth of this funding support is critical for NZOIA to be able to continue to grow and evolve as needed to service the increasing requirements for our outdoor instructing and guiding community, and our big thanks go to our new funding partners.

Finally, something for all the outdoors sector to be aware of are upcoming changes to the NZ government's Resource Management Act. We don't yet know exactly what the final impact will be for NZOIA and other outdoors organisations. But potential changes to costs and concessions for accessing national parks and conservation areas will potentially have some significant impacts. NZOIA is continuing to liaise with Recreation Aotearoa to advocate and lobby for outcomes that we believe are in the best interests of NZOIA and the outdoors community in general, as well as obviously for the environment and whenua. We will continue to keep you all updated on this situation.

Peter Drew | NZOIA Chief Executive

100 EDITIONS OF THE QUARTERLY!!



Cast your mind back 28 years to December 1996...according to the first edition of the NZOIA Quarterly, Mark Jones and Sally Rowe had just tied the knot, Tim Wills became Chief Instructor at Adventure Specialties and Graham Charles left OPC to "seek his fortune (or at least kayak a lot!)" Yes, before the days of email and social media, the Quarterly even had its own gossip column called 'What's up & What's not?!'

Thinking back to the time when there were no emails or websites, correspondence with members was limited to phone calls and the post. At this time, the NZOIA newsletter got a makeover and was branded 'The Quarterly', introduced as a means of better communicating with members. My favourite line is "The newsletter will endeavor to keep you up to date with what the executive committee is doing on your behalf and where the association is heading. However, if you don't read the newsletter then we can hardly be blamed for not passing on the information!" (Oh, and the part that says "Ian was born at a very young age"... wasn't aware you could be born older?!)

The first edition was six pages long, formatted in three columns and posted out quarterly throughout the year. Reading through early editions, a lot has changed over the years (and maybe a few things that are still going round and round!) The Quarterly evolved in style and content, especially with the invention of digital cameras, which enabled the inclusion of more images, stretching it out to a 20-page magazine. I still have a stack of CD's in my office from when members used to send in their photos. Around 2011 the Quarterly sneakily changed to three editions a year, but the name still stuck (did you ever wonder why it was called the Quarterly?!) In 2022, following COVID, the rising publication costs, returned mail issues, environmental impact, and accessibility challenges led to a shift in production. The Quarterly became primarily digital, with only a small print run of hard copies being produced for new members, the odd staffroom table, and those who star on the cover of the Rolling Stone!

As we reflect on the history of the Quarterly, none of this would be possible without a passionate team. We are grateful to those who have voluntarily contributed articles over the years. And it wouldn't have made it to your letter box or inbox without previous editorial input from Sue Stevens, Jill Dalton, Steve Scott, Richard Dunn, Matt Cant, Ajah Gainfort and Garth Gulley. The biggest accolades go to Anne Johnston who has designed 50 editions of the Quarterly since 2009, and to our current dedicated editor, Jen Riley, who has edited a whopping 41 editions over the last 13 years. Ngā mihi nui!



So where to now for the Quarterly? 100 editions is an impressive feat! Will there be more? Definitely...but maybe in a different format. Communication has evolved dramatically since 1996, and over the next few months, we'll review what works, gather feedback from members, and explore interactive, engaging and accessible ways to continue sharing adventures, updates, news, insights, learnings and profiles. Watch this space! In the meantime, you can browse past editions on our [website](#).

Sonya Sutherland | NZOIA Business Manager



On Talbot's Ladder, looking across at the charismatic Homer Ridge, with the shaded north faces of Moir's Mate and Mate's Little Brother (upper right), looking down on the innocuous looking rock gardens of MacPherson Cirque far below.

INCIDENT SHARING: SLOW LEARNER

DAVE BRASH

I stepped onto the boulder. It instantly tipped and threw me off. What happened next was all over in less than a second. I was flying through the air, upside down, and could hear a grinding, roaring sound behind me. The sound told me two things: that the rock was big, and that it was coming for me. I had to move fast as soon as I hit the ground but couldn't spot my landing. Then I landed hard, and unable to move, wedged between two rocks. There was no getting away from the monster that was hunting me. The grinding noise stopped. Unable to believe it, I hadn't been crushed.

Incredibly, I felt relatively unhurt, but I had another issue. The rock was lodged over my lower right leg, and I was trapped. My body was wedged hard sideways, right side down, and I could only move my head and left arm. The second piece of outstanding luck was that I had clipped the PLB to my left pack strap. It was in about the only position where I could reach it. Don't drop it, don't drop it I said to myself as I set it off and waited.

After the initial euphoria at dodging the 'monster', and being able to set off the PLB, I realised my situation was not great. I was shaking with shock, I'd had a solid knock to the head, I was cold, and immobile in just shorts and a T-shirt. On top of that, I had to maintain muscular contraction to prevent slipping further down the slot, which would cause intolerable leverage on the trapped leg, maybe breaking it. This couldn't continue for an extended period. I was not even 100% certain I had set off the PLB correctly, as I couldn't access my glasses. Was it just in test mode?

The next two hours were painful and difficult, and I started imagining the sound of the MacPherson Cirque waterfall was a helicopter approaching. Eventually the chopper did come, and was able to land on the riverbed, not too far away. Before long, three strong guys were able to leverage the monster enough to release my foot, drag me out and long-line me out of there and back to Te Anau for a medical assessment. Thank you guys, seeing you was one of the best moments of my life. And I can tell you, lying on a beanbag outside Fat Duck with a pint of Panhead that afternoon felt pretty good too.

Lured by a big February high sitting over Fiordland, I was 20 minutes out from the Homer Tunnel, heading for the Homer Saddle and a couple of days of enticing danger walking. To the left of the saddle is the Homer Ridge commute to the stunning alpine rock routes on Moir's Mate, Mate's Little Brother, and Moir, a constant drawcard for me over the past 40 years. To the right is the exposed, beautiful scramble of Talbot's Ladder, key passage to many Darrans' adventures.

While lying trapped, I tried to occupy myself by counting how many times I'd been through this boulder field. It came to 41, but I missed a few, I think it's 46. And another thing, I like to think I'm an expert rockhopper. Growing up on the Taranaki coast, I loved nothing more than to run hard over the smooth, slippery, moving rocks in the tidal zone. The week before, I had walked the Ball Pass circuit for the first time, and in two days on tricky terrain had not put a foot wrong, not even close. For two days, I had focused on every step. I know that the consequences of even a small mistake in these environments are high for me. At 75, my agility and reaction time are less sharp, and osteoarthritis in the knees means that if a knee is merely over-flexed, I'll be lame.

So how did this happen? Well, as we all know, looking back we are wise.



The familiarity heuristic: 'the tendency to believe that our behaviour is correct to the extent that we have done it before', was the first of four heuristic traps proposed by Canadian researcher McCammon in a seminal study on the causes of avalanche accidents in 2002. Not only that, but he also found that 'familiarity with a slope tended

to negate the benefits of knowledge and experience'. Double whammy. I've long been aware of the operation and effects of heuristic traps - this study has been a bible for me. I know all this s**t - and still fell for it, literally. Slow learner. Well, I did one thing right - the PLB was in an accessible position.

Dave Brash

QUALIFICATION UPDATE



Photo Credit: Andy Thompson Photography

Cave Qualifications

The reviewed Cave 2 Scope and Syllabus has been approved by the NZOIA Technical Sub Committee (TSC) and can be found on the NZOIA website. An exciting new addition of a Single Rope Technique Endorsement to Cave 1 has been approved by the TSC. We are just waiting on permission from students featured in the cover photo to roll this out.

Kayak Leader

A ground breaking, new look Kayak Leader has taken into consideration industry needs and provided two craft options under the one Scope and Syllabus that can be assessed in conjunction. Kayak Leader requires the instructor/guide to be in a sit-in kayak with a spray deck. The Kayak Leader (sit-on) requires the instructor/guide to be on a sit-on kayak and having clients on sit-on kayaks only.

NZOIA has consistently received enquiries from a variety of outdoor providers for a qualification that didn't require the skills and knowledge needed for a sit-in kayak as this was beyond the scope of the work they were doing. This proved a barrier to volunteer groups, tourism operators and school teachers obtaining a qualification suitable for the scope and people they were working with. At the same time those currently using the Kayak Leader qualification as a stepping stone to Kayak 1 were keen to keep the sit-in skills and knowledge to make it valuable to them. In a stroke of a pen the existing Kayak Leader was adapted for both sets of end users.

The first two assessments with this new Scope and Syllabus have already been successfully run with Scouts Aotearoa and lots of learning came out of the process.

This will not affect those already holding Kayak Leader as their qualification will remain the same. Those successfully sitting a Kayak Leader assessment on a sit-on kayak will be registered with and have on their certificate, the "Kayak Leader (sit-on)".

River Rescue 1

With the same mindset of removing barriers and simplifying, the River Rescue review team achieved the unachievable!! The NZOIA/Whitewater NZ River Rescue 1 is now a multi craft training scope and syllabus. The course is designed for anyone

working or recreating in grade 2 white water including: kayakers, multisport kayakers, canoeists, pack rafters, stand up paddle boarders and sit on top kayakers. This training course is a prerequisite for NZOIA Kayak 1, NZOIA Multisport Kayak and NZOIA Canoe Guide and 1 assessment. The training course provides generic river rescue skills along with some craft specific skills.



Photo Credit: Keith Riley

Multisport Kayak is with the TSC for approval.

Rock and Wall

We have received a great response for the call out to join the Rock and Wall review. We are in the process of selecting a manageable number for the review team. It's exciting stuff with lots of passionate and knowledgeable people involved. Ben White will kick off with facilitating the Climbing Wall Supervisor and Monitor Lead Endorsement qualifications first.

Format and Consistency

The format and consistency template is in its final draft and will make it's first appearance during the Rock and Wall review. After this we will make any adjustments and then apply it to all the Scope and Syllabus in a one-off project.

Penny Holland | NZOIA Operations Manager

ADVOCACY: RECREATION AOTEAROA

SAM NEWTON



Kia ora koutou,

As you'll recall from my previous column (Issue 99, March 2025), the Department of Conservation (DOC) launched two significant discussion documents late last year, outlining proposals to modernise our conservation system: "Modernising Conservation Land Management" and "Exploring charging for access to some public conservation land". These consultations carry considerable implications for the outdoor sector, directly affecting many of you, our dedicated NZOIA members and outdoor professionals. I'm pleased to report that Recreation Aotearoa has now formally submitted its views on these critical proposals, advocating strongly on behalf of our members and the wider outdoor community.

Our submission on 'Modernising Conservation Land Management' highlighted the necessity for a balanced approach that champions both environmental protection and the continued provision of high-quality recreation experiences on public conservation land. We recognise, as DOC has, that the current concessions system is under strain, leading to frustrating delays and inefficiencies. To address this, Recreation Aotearoa urged DOC to streamline administrative processes and ensure that planning functions are adequately resourced. For our non-profit outdoor education providers – many of whom are integral to connecting rangatahi and other New Zealanders with nature – we called for inequities to be addressed by placing them in the proposed 'exempted activities' class of concessions, thereby reducing unnecessary administrative burden. Furthermore, we emphasised the importance of strengthening partnerships with iwi and hapū, ensuring their vital role in conservation management is both well-defined and effectively integrated into future frameworks.

Turning to the 'Exploring Access Charging' document, Recreation Aotearoa maintained a firm stance against any fees that would restrict New Zealanders' ability to access their own public lands. While we acknowledge DOC's financial challenges, which include the rising costs of maintaining the aging visitor network and preventing biodiversity decline, we stressed that access charges should genuinely be a last resort. Our position is that existing revenue tools, such as the International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL) and targeted facility charges (like hut or campsite fees), must be fully optimised before considering

broader access charges. In fact, the IVL has recently increased from \$35 to \$100 per person as of October 2024, aiming to raise \$62.5 million in 2023/24, split between tourism and conservation.

Should access fees still be deemed necessary, Recreation Aotearoa strongly advocates that any such charges should be borne by international visitors. Crucially, all revenue generated from these fees must be reinvested directly into the specific local conservation and visitor infrastructure where it was collected. This approach aligns with public expectations for transparency and accountability, ensuring that visitors can clearly see where their contributions are making a tangible difference. We highlighted that options exist to use differential pricing, as seen in the Great Walks, to improve access for New Zealanders, and that this would be consistent with the principle of New Zealanders contributing through their taxes.

These consultations are foundational for our sector. Any changes to access and concession rules will directly influence outdoor education providers, including many of you, our NZOIA members. We must ensure that any new systems are fair, equitable, and adequately recognise the immense spillover benefits that outdoor recreation and outdoor education provide to society – from improved physical and mental wellbeing to improved conservation outcomes. The economic viability of many outdoor education providers, reliant on access to public conservation land is at stake, making the concession system and potential access fees a direct concern for livelihoods.

Recreation Aotearoa remains committed to championing the rights of all New Zealanders to engage with the outdoors, while ensuring our precious conservation estate is managed sustainably for future generations. As the legislative process progresses, through Select Committee hearings for a Conservation Amendment Bill, there will be further opportunities for public input. I encourage you all to stay informed and engage where possible, as your collective voice is powerful in shaping these critical reforms.

Ngā mihi

Recreation
Aotearoa
Te Whai Oranga

Sam Newton | Advocacy Manager, Recreation Aotearoa

MUSLIM WOMEN'S OUTWARD BOUND COURSE

BAILEY STUBBS



Earlier this year, I had the privilege of instructing, alongside my co-instructor Abbey, a course that was a brave meeting of two wildly different cultures.

In a first for Outward Bound, 14 incredible Muslim wāhine, all former refugees, came together to take on an eight-day course. These ladies were small but mighty! Aged between late 30 and early 60s, originally from Afghanistan, Iran and Malaysia they now call Auckland home.

In their midst were a doctor, a nurse, a lawyer, several social workers, a chef, many mothers and hardworking community members. And they were rich! Rich with culture, their own stories, kindness, curiosity, bravery and inner strength.

The course was a collaboration between the [New Settlers Family and Community Trust \(NFACT\)](#), and [Outward Bound NZ](#). "NFACT is all about mental health, preventative health strategies, promoting leadership and empowerment. Outward Bound courses tick all those boxes," says NFACT CEO, Dr Fahima Saeid. Fahima and her friend Sue Petrie, a former Outward Bound instructor, came up with the idea. They were building on the enthusiasm of a group of NFACT supported women who have been walking together for fitness and friendship for the last 18 months.

Abbey and I went into the course with many unknowns about how accommodating for their religious and cultural needs would play out. What would it be like to swim separately from the rest of the school? Can we spend the whole day on the cutter and still accommodate prayer time? What clothes will they wear and what does that look like with helmets? The plan was to presume that we could make it work somehow and have them help us, to help them. This strategy worked a treat, shaping an Outward Bound

course to accommodate the needs of these ladies was barely an inconvenience.

During the week we delighted in two days of stormy sailing, high ropes, bush walking and solo, PT and painting, reflecting and journalling. The course culminated in a full day waka and tramping journey that began at sunrise and finished in time to squeeze in a swim before dinner. We did so much swimming. Despite most of the group being at the start of their swimming journey, they loved being in the water. We spent many an hour bobbing around the jetty in our lifejackets. Importantly, every small moment of downtime was an opportunity for a cup of tea and connecting.

We didn't have much in common in the way of language. Abbey and I pulled out all the tools; thumb-o-meter or 1 to 5 scales, makeshift sign language, lots of head shaking and nodding and



big reassuring smiles. Drawing and writing instructions were a theme. Patience with each other was important as was ensuring messages got disseminated through the group, with the help of those with stronger English. Everyone was safe, it felt like people could ask questions, and we could still facilitate some powerful sessions. They loved reflecting and talking about how activities transferred to their own lives, but sharing didn't have to happen in English. Our common language was laughter! I'm not sure that half the time we all knew what we were laughing at, but their joy and playfulness were contagious.

As with any student who passes through this place, the aim of the game was not for these ladies to fit into Outward Bound. Our job was to mould our process to meet them where they were at, to provide opportunities and thoughts to ponder so they could go back to their own lives with the growth that they wanted.

Our sense was that these wāhine walked away from their time in Anakiwa with an increased feeling of self-determination. This was echoed in some of their sentiments that were shared as the course wrapped up. They were proud to have done something for themselves, that their physical and emotional wellbeing was feeling strong, and that they had gained self-esteem. One thanked us for "helping her find the spark within herself". Another lady in her 60s and with very little English, shared some emotional thoughts that have stuck with me. Her whole life she has been told by the people who love her that she can't do things, or she has lived in an environment where it's not safe to do things by herself. She told this story in Dari, but it was clear that she was feeling free and empowered to take action in her life. She was going home feeling confident to go to the supermarket by herself and to learn to drive.

These wāhine moved around the school like a busy flock of tūi and indulged in opportunities like it was peak kōwhai season. They operated in harmony and shared and cared for others before themselves. Enthusiasm, warmth and eventually confidence radiated off them. The other hundred or so students who were at Anakiwa, doing their Outward Bound courses at the same time as this group, were inspired by them in so many ways.

For me, they embodied the importance of challenging the barriers that society places around us. I hope their brave adventure to Anakiwa can pave the way for many ākonga to follow in their footsteps and be a prompt to consider what perceived barriers might prevent people from other cultures and religions from reaping the benefits of outdoor education!

Bailey Stubbs | Kaiako, Outward Bound NZ

My passion for refugee and migrant communities – especially for women's leadership and empowerment – stems from my time in Afghanistan, where I served as a female doctor in a remote area with a population of around 60,000 for nearly five years. This was during the Taliban regime – a time when women and girls were denied the right to work, access education, participate in society, or even be seen in public. From the outside, life appeared bleak and hopeless.

Most women lived behind the high walls of their homes, confined to domestic roles – cooking, cleaning, raising children, and serving others in a deeply male-dominated environment. I was leading a "Mother and Child Health Clinic" supported by Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), which became a lifeline for many. It was the only place where women and girls were allowed to gather, as it was a fully fenced, women-only facility.

To an outsider, these women's lives may have seemed colourless and empty. But once I had the chance to engage with them in deeper, more meaningful conversations, I discovered something extraordinary: they were full of life, intelligence, resilience, and dreams for the future. They were resourceful, determined women – what they lacked was having strong role models who could believe in them, understand their cultural context, and create opportunities.

That experience transformed my life and shifted how I saw Afghan and refugee women. It inspired me to become an advocate and a voice for them and ultimately led me to establish the *Refugee Women Leadership Group* about 15 years ago.

Since then, we've faced many challenges, but we've also achieved so much together. One of those achievements was completing the eight-day Outward Bound Course – a milestone that reflects both our collective strength and the power of shared leadership.

Dr Fahima Saeid | CEO, New Settlers Family and Community Trust, and student on the course



KŌRERO O TE TAU

KARLLIE CLIFTON (NGĀPUHI, TE ATIWA)

Ngā mihi o te Tau Hou Māori

Though the peak of Matariki has passed and the stars have risen once more in the midwinter sky, their message continues to echo across the whenua. Matariki and Puanga mark the Māori New Year. A time for remembrance, reflection, and renewal, but their significance extends beyond a single morning. It's a season, a feeling, and a reminder to reconnect with each other, with the land, and with the rhythms that shape life in Aotearoa.

For those of us drawn to the outdoors, this is a powerful time to move through the landscape with intention. The hush of winter invites us to tread gently, to acknowledge the land that supports our adventures, and to slow down long enough to notice the beauty in stillness.

Even if you missed the first sighting of the stars, it's not too late to embrace what Matariki and Puanga stand for. Let this time be your reset, guided by the stars overhead and the land underfoot. Whether you're tramping through frost-covered valleys, camping under the crisp night sky, or simply gazing up from your backyard, take a moment to honour this season of renewal.

He mihi mahana mō te Tau Hou Māori ki a koe me tō whānau

Karllie Clifton (Ngāpuhi, Te Atiwa ki Waipounamu)

Ways to acknowledge the Māori New Year in the Outdoors

- **Plan a reflective hīkoi:** Take a walk to acknowledge the change in season. Use the time to remember loved ones, set intentions for the year ahead, or simply listen to the land.
- **Engage in restoration:** Plant a native tree, join a local conservation event, or help clean up a river or coastline.
- **Observe the moon and stars:** Learn the names and meanings of the stars in the Matariki cluster or other clusters and start following the Maramataka phases to time your outdoor activities.
- **Share stories:** Encourage intergenerational knowledge-sharing. Invite kaumātua (elders) or mana whenua to share their understanding of the seasons, land, and skies.

Useful Resources

<https://www.matariki.com> and <https://matariki.co.nz>

Download a free [Maramataka](#) (Māori Calendar) from Te Wananga o Aotearoa

Check out this Maramataka and Hauora App – [Ao Marama](#)

Our Kaupapa

Te Reo Māori

is a taonga that allows us to understand and interact with te ao Māori.

We will endeavor to include te reo Māori in all aspects of our communication.

Ako

is the reciprocity of the teaching and learning relationship.

We are committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning space for all.

Manaakitanga

is to uplift one's mana by showing respect, generosity and kindness.

We are committed to providing positive experiences for all, no matter the outcome.

Whakawhanaungatanga

is about relationships and connections which are created through shared experiences and working together.

We will make every effort to ensure there is a sense of belonging for all.

Kaitiakitanga

is the guardianship and protection of place.

This requires us all to nurture, preserve and enrich the environment in which we engage.

Pūkengatanga

is providing and growing expertise through the pursuit of excellence.

We will enhance skills by providing opportunities for everyone to progress.

Whakatauki – Māori Proverb

“Ko Puanga te kairūri i te tau tawhito, ko Matariki te kaihuaki i te tau hou.”

“Puanga draws the line to end one year, Matariki opens the door to the new year.”

Karakia

For Māori, karakia is a powerful method of communication with the Atua (gods/guardians) of Te Ao Māori (The Māori World). The human and Atua relationship is of great importance, as is the relationship with Te Taiao (the natural world) and tangata (people).

He Karakia mo Matariki – A karakia for Matariki

Ka hiki te pae o Matariki,

Ka ara ngā hihi o te tau hou,

Ka maumahara tātou ki te hunga kua wehe,

Ka whakanuia te taiao,

Ka whakatakotohia ngā wawata mō ngā rā e tū mai nei.

Haumi ē! Hui ē! Tāiki ē!

Matariki rises on the horizon,

The rays of the new year awaken,

We remember those who have passed,

We celebrate the environment,

We lay down our hopes for the days to come.

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MSC UPDATE:

- AVALANCHE TIP AND TERMS
- ADVENTURE VOICE – TREATING DRINKING WATER
- LOOKING AHEAD

Photo: Ned Riley and Eric Johnson collecting drinking water in Nelson Lakes National Park.

Kia ora NZOIA members,

Welcome to winter! At this time of the year, we're deep in a world of snow, so it's only natural to highlight some of our current winter-focused initiatives.



Avalanche Tips & Terms: From the Forecast to The Field

We're excited to release this free 23-part video series aimed at beginner and intermediate alpine enthusiasts, including skiers, snowboarders, mountaineers, alpine trampers and hunters. Developed with the generous support of the Tūpiki Trust, the series provides essential knowledge to help navigate New Zealand's dynamic and often challenging alpine terrain.

We filmed this series in the Arrowsmith Range near Methven with MSC Partnerships Advisor Alpine Bianca Bratton, and avalanche forecasters Jamie Robertson and Jim Young.

The inspiration for the series was born out of our world-first research into New Zealand's mountaineering culture and avalanche safety, Above and Beyond (2023).

The videos cover key topics, such as types of avalanches, using the NZ Avalanche Advisory, signs of snowpack instability, safe travel tips and rescue equipment essentials.

You can learn more at: avalanche.net.nz/education/avalanche-tips-and-terms and watch the videos on our YouTube channel at: youtube.com/@NZMountainSafetyCouncil.

Avalanche IQ Quiz

This winter, we're on a mission to boost Aotearoa's Avalanche IQ. We recently launched the Avalanche IQ quiz, designed to test and grow our backcountry community's knowledge— and the response has been fantastic!

The quiz is a great way to test your personal knowledge and identify the topics you need to brush up on. It's also a great tool to use if you're training others over winter.

Take the quiz at mountainsafety.outgrow.us/avalancheiq.

NZAA Public Observations

A reminder that if you're out and about through winter and spring to please submit your observations on avalanche.net.nz. Your avalanche and snowpack obs are super helpful for our forecasters and contribute to a great community culture of sharing information and conditions. Thanks!

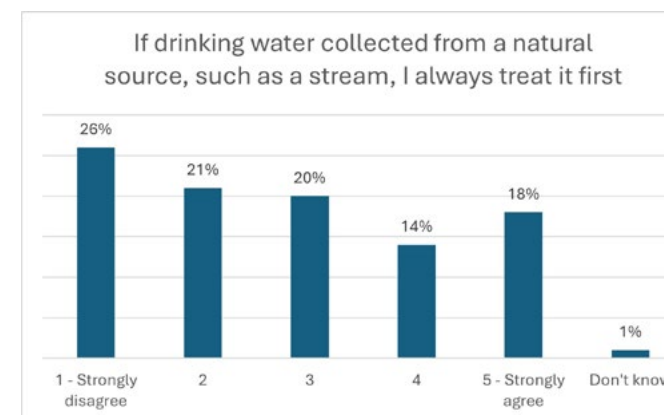
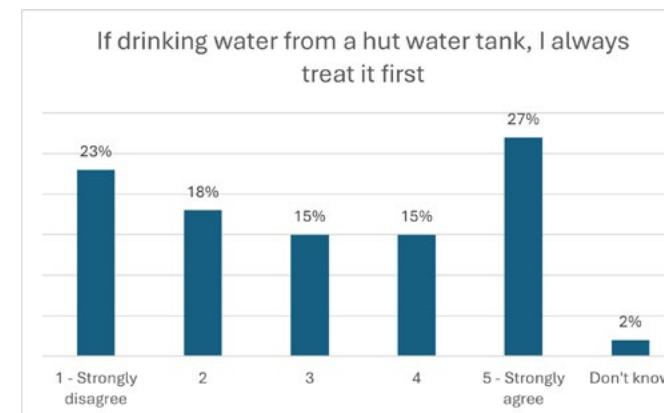


Adventure Voice: Treating Drinking Water

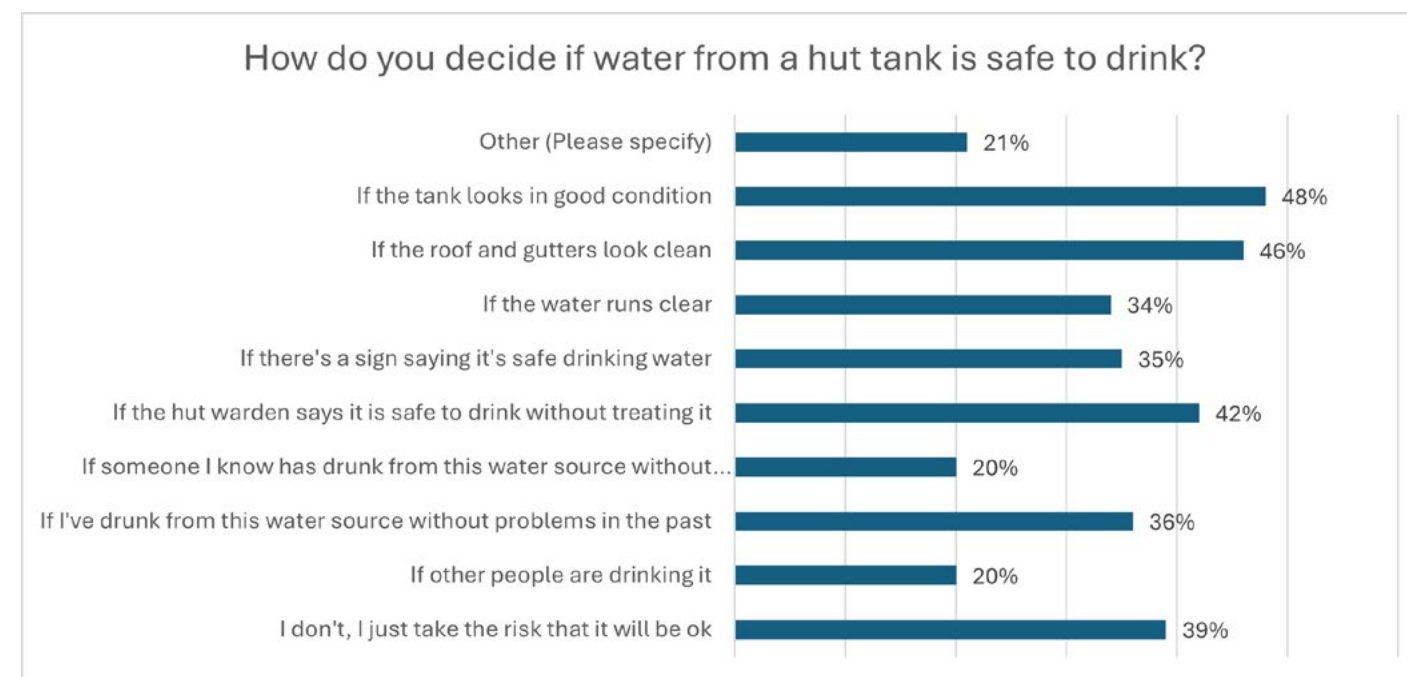
Earlier this year we asked our Adventure Voice research community about their habits when it comes to treating (or not) drinking water in the outdoors. We've all read the signs 'boil water' but is this something we actually do?

We had 1,630 respondents complete the survey and here's what they told us...

Interestingly, nearly a third don't treat hut drinking water first.



Of those people who indicated that they don't always treat hut drinking water before drinking it, we asked them how they decided if it was safe to drink.



If you're interested to learn more about this survey or see other findings from Adventure Voice, be sure to take a look at: mountainsafety.org.nz/explore/adventure-voice/community-findings.

Looking Ahead

This time of the year marks the start of a new business year, and with that comes new projects and initiatives. We've got some exciting things on the horizon. Here's a sneak peek at things that are most relevant for you...

- Brewster Track (Mt Aspiring NP/Wānaka) tramping safety video – out this spring
- River Safety campaign – out this spring
- Three new Mountain Stations (featuring cameras and a weather station) over the next three years to add to our Angelus site in Nelson Lakes National Park. These will be installed at three other sites across the South Island – more info coming soon
- Insights update – we're working on a major update to our popular data and insights publications – more info coming soon.

Until the next edition, stay safe out there and keep up the awesome work.

Nathan Watson | Mountain Safety Council – Operations Manager



WAITAHA VALLEY: HUT REPAIRS

KEITH RILEY



Photos provided by Keith Riley

Mo ngā awa te aroha, he waiaroha

For the love of rivers

A black dashed line or a blue wiggly one, on a topo map, the path of a trumper and the path of a paddler often run parallel, deviating only when the orange congestion of contour lines suggest 'there be gorges'.

Despite their shared space in the valley, the journeys couldn't be more varied. Wet vs dry, sitting vs standing, track vs river. The common ground in these valleys exists in the hut. Packs and boots or life jackets and helmets are left at the door. Inside we are all the same smelly, hungry travellers relieved to find shelter in a wild place.



A more recent phenomena in our remote valleys is the paddler. When we shelter in these remote huts, we ride off the back of 60 plus years of construction and maintenance that keep these historic buildings intact. In recognising our taxes and hut fees are not what keeps these huts standing, a group of Hokitika paddlers looked for opportunities to give back to the valleys. Following in the footsteps of deer cullers, trampers

and glaciologists, under the banner of Waitaha Awa Kaitiaki, we set about tackling the to do list attached to Ivory Lake hut and Moonbeam hut in the Waitaha Valley.

Our connection to this valley was already strong. Coined the Aoraki of NZ rivers, this valley has been the source of demanding whitewater adventures and measure of progress in adventure kayaking. A reason to be in the Waitaha that didn't involve being wet, tired and scared was almost a relief!

Turning a maintenance to do list on a remote hut, into a workable plan came with its challenges. Simple site inspections required ambitious adventures. Coordinating an available team, weather, access, tools, materials and time felt like aligning way too many stars.

Being patient and organised meant, when it did finally happen, it happened with style. Five well fed, coordinated people going hammer and tong, dawn till dusk can get a lot done on a small building. The satisfaction of visible progress is easily attained. The commitment to getting it done demanded creative problem solving and a good dose of bloody mindedness.

The most challenging repair was installing a sheet metal plate on the inside of the Moonbeam toilet. This essential repair was needed to deflect forward moving pee from the users legs and boots to the pit below. This installation involved dangling my entire torso into the bowl so both arms could be used to hammer fixtures in place.

The most physical repair was the calf burning climb humping Waitaha river gravel for the Moonbeam fireplace a hundred metres up the steep, rooty track.

The only incident was a chisel cut to Big Al's finger. This was managed by having an emergency medicine doctor momentarily relieved from his paint scraping duties to supervise the application of sutures.



The favourite final touch was reapplying the Moonbeam and Ivory Lake hut signs to the freshly painted doors.

The glory moment was paddling away from a freshly renovated Moonbeam hut with a kayak full of power tools and a day of world class white water in front of me.

Back country hut maintenance is as physical and satisfying as any whitewater descent, the comradery and shared purpose, the sense and appreciation of place. Provided the paint sticks and the screws hold, the impact of our endeavours will benefit others somewhat more than the successful running of rapids.



Being in the Waitaha Valley and having a hut as the primary focus was a vastly different experience to the usual focus of fluent movement. Arriving at night and leaving in the morning. Being stationary in the Waitaha created space to appreciate and enjoy the subtleties of the area, a different way to connect with the valley. Spending time in the Waitaha Valley feels like you a part of something significant, and, however brief it might be, it feels good to feel significant.

Keith Riley



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Congratulations

to the following members who recently gained NZOIA Qualifications!

Bush Leader	Courtney Dodunski, Scott McCulloch, Isaac Schanzer, Rachel Shallard, Adam Ramirez, Destiny Rever, Spencer Ing, Celia Woo, Ronaldo Aguilar, Charlie Doyle, Ted Ratcliff, Aisha May, Sean Day, Jamie Mercz, Kelcey Morrow, Liam Trevena, Adelle Tamblyn, Anastasiya Abremenko, Sani Vesanen, Lauren Jones
	Scouts – Shaun Brown, Joseph Nel, Hendrick Neethling, Jimmy Lyford, Kym Park, Nick Markwell, Grant Taylor
Bush Leader Overnight Endorsement	Ultimate Hikes – Campbell Jackson-Mee, Carter Imrie-Milne, Fin Barlow, Harry Wilson, Jacob Giles, Max Delaney, Mina Yamamoto, Nik Hueber, Rosemary Kemp, Sophie Davies, Tom Anderson
	Scouts – Shaun Brown, Joseph Nel, Hendrick Neethling, Jimmy Lyford, Kym Park, Nick Markwell, Grant Taylor
Bush 1	Lauren Alexander, Libby Clifton, Benjamin Pearce, Michael Pickner, Phoebe Davies-Martin, Kurt Stewart, Reuben Biggelaar, Neil Penniston, Richard Cross, Rowan Brooks, Ella Kohn-Taylor, Aqua Hughes, Hannah Bertschinger, Trevor Voyce, Jason Dockery, Luke Merrick, Jonah Dobson, William Coulden-Lavers
Bush 2	Philippa Rees, Neil Silverwood
Canyon Leader	Jonathan Lee
Canyon 1	Jason Walker, Craig Scott
Cave Leader	Scouts – Gareth Hall, Marcus Lawson, Nicolas Gulley, Anton Gulley
Cave 1	Rachel Shallard
Cave 2	Dave van de Gulik, James McLean
Climbing Wall Supervisor	Adele Green, Cara Hicks, Eli Catchatoor-Faber, Wanda Hopkinson
CWS – Monitor Lead Endorsement	Adele Green, Cara Hicks, Eli Catchatoor-Faber, Wanda Hopkinson
Kayak Leader	Niehana Mackay, Kat Ocallaghan, Corinne Maree Strickland, Kayla Pene, Cherie Goodley
	Scouts – Oliver Rathmill, Ray Watts, Jason Stossel, James Barriball, Jesse Loader, David McColl
Kayak 1	Maria Jaquiere, Dave Ryan, Jacob Wright, Andrew Talbot, Kyla Rayward, Kristel Leijten
Kayak 2	Shannon Mast, David Boden, Jono Smith
Mountain Bike 1	Lennard Mund, Kegan Ellmers, Stephen Teece, Steve Parker, Jay Johnson, Oscar Hadley
Abseil Leader	Derrick Newton, Sebastian Pietersen, Tony Church, Kegan Ellmers, Ian Fox, Kushla Siemonek, Karen Carmichael, Ethan Carmichael, Brendan Muir, Tara Hills, Leah Shallcrass, Nic Vanderschantz, Mark Cornaga, Anabella Silva, Mark Ashcroft, Daniel Martin
Rock Leader	Derrick Newton, Sebastian Pietersen, Tony Church, Ian Fox, Karen Carmichael, Ethan Carmichael, Brendan Muir, Sean Day, Jamie Mercz, Kelcey Morrow, Aisha May, Will Kunkel, Destiny Rever, Adam Ramirez, Spencer Ing, Celia Woo, Ronaldo Aguilar, Charlie Doyle, Ted Ratcliff, Liam Trevena, Adelle Tamblyn, Anastasiya Abremenko, Sani Vesanen, Lauren Jones, Tara Hills, Leah Shallcrass, Nic Vanderschantz, Mark Cornaga, Anabella Silva, Mark Ashcroft, Daniel Martin
Rock 1	Sam Vowles, Alexandra Dean, Kyle Jackways, Matt Robinson, Rebecca Blakeman, Kurt Stewart, Aqua Hughes, Jody Rawlinson, Amy Brown, Jamie Rice, Isaac Bayldon, Gabrielle Degagne, Juliet Frater, Michael Pickner, Ben Pearce, Grace Fleming, Charlotte Gordon, Rachel Shallard, Scott McCulloch, Athena Jones Collings, Jack Wilson, Alice Hall, Raphael Schuler, Anthony Wood
Rock 1 – Sport Climbing Endorsement	William Sinclair, Hilary Cave
Sport Climbing	Meisha Nicolson, Adam Ingram, Mathew Denys, Ben Moginie, Curdin Krummenacher
Rock 2	Ben Mitchell, Asher French
Sea Kayak Leader	Royce Morgan, Leo Kirkwood Jones, Michelle Aldersley, Thomas Wheeler, Jesse McNamara, Hazel Cameron, Alex Malcolm
Sea Kayak 1	William Coulden-Lavers, Cared Blackham, Whitney Frame



CASTLE HILL OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE: A PLACE TO BELONG, EXPLORE AND GROW

The Castle Hill Outdoor Education Centre is a wee gem tucked onto a sunny terrace in the Craigieburn Basin, just behind Castle Hill Village and surrounded by beech forest. Blink and you'll miss it as you wind your way over the alpine passes of SH73. Owned and operated by St Andrew's College (StAC), the Centre primarily serves Years 7–10 StAC students, though they occasionally welcome other schools on camp for a dose of alpine adventure.

Established in 1963 and built through the classic Kiwi combo of community grit and working bees, the founding aims from then-Rector Ian Galloway still guides the team today:

“To appreciate the outdoors, its challenges and opportunities for enjoyment; to assess its dangers and learn to act responsibly.

To gain confidence and courage in tackling and overcoming difficulties;

To learn something of the feeling of physical well-being that comes from bodily fitness, clean mountain air in your lungs and the healthy tiredness that comes from roughing it in the open air in such glorious surroundings.”

Rebuilt in 2008, the Alistair Sidey Mountain Lodge is now a purpose-built, fully equipped facility – ideal for school camps and also popular on weekends and holidays with wedding parties, family gatherings, and private groups. It's a warm, robust base that supports learning, connection, and big adventures just outside the door.

A programme with progression and purpose

After a pause during Covid, the programme is now back in full swing. A core team of four full-time instructors and an Operations Manager live and work year-round in the Craigieburns, with world-class biking, skiing, and tramping literally out the back door.

The StAC **Year 9 summer programme** is all about connection and belonging – bringing new students together at the start of their high school journey. During their four day camp, students will challenge themselves caving, rock climbing, and camp craft, culminating in an overnight raft journey down the spectacular Waimakariri River.

The StAC **Year 10 winter programme** dials up the challenge. Across five days, students hit the slopes on skis or boards, hike above the snowline to build snow shelters (with plenty of digging), and sleep in snow caves (conditions permitting). The programme weaves in campcraft, navigation, team challenges, and outdoor cooking – extending Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award skills for those working toward their badge.

Years 7 and 8 are all about discovery – developing bushcraft, self-management, and the simple joy of being outside. The emphasis is on fun, resilience, and sparking that initial curiosity about the natural world.

Many senior students return during their school holidays for **Duke of Edinburgh tramp and journey extensions**, taking on student leadership and mentor roles as their confidence grows.



Stewardship in action

All students staying in the lodge contribute to ongoing conservation mahi. From pulling wilding pines and broom to clearing stoat trap lines and learning about our wasp control programme, every group plays a part in caring for this alpine environment. Over time, and with repeated visits, students begin to develop a genuine sense of place – and responsibility for it.

Instructors who love the work

Castle Hill is a fantastic opportunity for instructors who want the magic blend of place, community, and meaningful work. Their full-time instructors require a Grade 2 Raft Guide award; casual instructors (often jumping in for Terms 2–4) typically hold or are working toward NZOIA Bush 1 and Rock qualifications (e.g. Abseil Leader or Rock 1). This is an excellent early-career role, with great PD, support and a wide range of responsibilities.

Instructors here get plenty of mileage – with weekly camps providing regular chances to refine technical skills, broaden the facilitation and group management toolkit, and grow genuine rapport with students. Working both independently and as part of a close-knit team is part of the rhythm.

With our June mountain weather variables, they take a brief pause in the programme – giving the team time to play locally or dash overseas before the snow season arrives.

Challenges and change

As with any outdoor programme, they adapt constantly. Snowlines are increasingly variable – some years they can dig snow caves behind the lodge; others, they're hiking to the tops of ski fields just to touch snow. And fire risk is top of mind – highlighted recently by a large local wildfire that caused significant ecological damage and was costly to control.

Despite the challenges, the Castle Hill Outdoor Centre remains a stronghold for place-based education. Supported by a school that genuinely values outdoor learning, the team is proud to offer a well-resourced, progressive programme in one of the country's most beautiful and dynamic alpine environments.

For instructors with heart, curiosity, and a love of big country – Castle Hill offers the chance to make a real impact, grow your skill set, and live in the kind of place most people only holiday in.

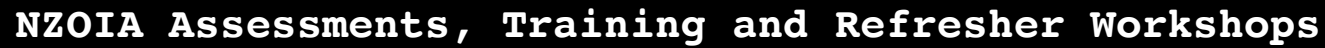
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E-Quarterly: colour, printed Quarterly: B/W



Avertisement	Format / Size	Cost
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Half-page advertisement: black & white, colour	vertical 90 mm wide x 273 mm high	\$150 + gst
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Course	Course fee (NZOIA Members) *
Refresher Workshops	\$230 (\$125 1/2 day)
Training Courses	\$480 (\$255 1 day)
Assessments	
Leader Assessments: Abseil Leader Bush Leader Canoe Leader Canyon Leader Cave Leader Kayak Leader Mountain Bike Leader Rock Leader Sea Kayak Leader Other Assessments: Artificial Whitewater Climbing Wall Supervisor (CWS) CWS: Monitor Lead Endorsement Single Rope Technique Endorsement	These assessments are run under the Free Range Assessment Model \$150 plus any Assessor fees and expenses. Please contact an Assessor directly via our website to arrange an assessment and their fee. You are required to be a Registered Member to attend a Free Range Assessment (or be listed under a NZOIA Affiliated or NZOIA Climbing Wall Membership).
1 Day Assessments (land based 1:4 ratio)	\$335
Single Rope Technique Endorsement Sport Climbing Endorsement	
1 Day Assessments (water based 1:3 ratio)	\$350
Canoe 1 Upgrade Sea Kayak – Instructor Endorsement Multisport Kayak Endorsement	
Overnight Assessment (Midday to Midday)	\$365
Overnight Endorsement	
2 Day Assessments (land based 1:4 ratio plus evening session)	\$655
Cave 1 Mountain Bike 1 Rock 1 Sport Climbing	
2 Day Assessments (water based 1:3 ratio)	\$665
Sea Kayak Guide	
2 Day Assessments (water based 1:3 ratio plus evening session)	\$705
Canoe Guide	
3 Day Assessments (land based 1:4 ratio plus evening session)	\$870
Bush 1 Canyon 1	
3 Day Assessments (water based and NZOIA 2 1:3 ratio)	\$905
Kayak 1 & 2 Multisport Kayak Sea Kayak 1 & 2 Mountain Bike 2	
3 Day Assessments (water based and NZOIA 2 1:3 ratio plus evening session)	\$925
Canoe 1 Bush 2 Cave 2 Canyon 2 Rock 2	
4 Day Assessments (1:4 ratio plus evening session) Alpine 1	\$1095
5 Day Assessments (NZOIA 2 1:3 ratio plus evening session) Alpine 2	\$1430

Booking for a NZOIA Assessment, Pre-assessment Training or Refresher Workshop

1. Go to www.nzoia.org.nz
2. It is highly recommended you attend a pre-assessment training course prior to applying for an assessment
3. Check out the Scope and Syllabus, if you are applying for an assessment then make sure you meet all the pre-requisites.
4. On the course calendar, find the event you want to apply for (you will need to be logged into your member profile) and select 'Apply'. Upload any prerequisites (i.e. your logbook, summary sheet, first aid certificate and any other required documentation to your application).
5. Applications close 6 weeks before the course date.
6. After the closing date we will confirm that the course will run.
7. If NZOIA cancels a course, you will receive a full refund/transfer of your fee.
8. If you withdraw before the closing date, you will receive a full refund of your fee. If you withdraw after the closing date of a course, the fee is non-refundable. It is transferable under exceptional circumstances (e.g. bereavement, medical reasons), medical certificates/other proof may be required. Contact admin@nzoia.org.nz for more details.

Details of courses run by NZOIA, pre-requisites and online payment are all available at:
www.nzoia.org.nz

It is possible to run assessments on other dates. You will need to give us a minimum of 3 months' notice, a minimum of 3 motivated candidates and the date of when you would like the course to be run.

All courses run by NZOIA are discounted for members and heavily subsidised by external funding.

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Contact the editor with your ideas and for guidelines: editor@nzoaia.org.nz



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Photo by Tom Hoyle.

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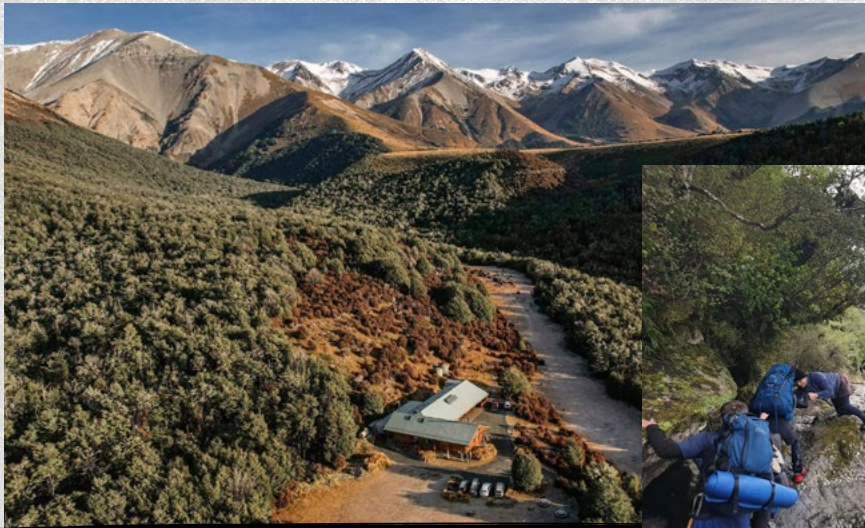


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PLANTING THE SEEDS OF ADVENTURE



Photos supplied by the St Andrew's College Castle Hill Outdoor Education Centre

Profiles of organisations are welcomed for the back page series "Planting the Seeds of Adventure". Contact editor@nzoia.org.nz



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