

ProGuides Newsletter

24 March 2026



From the Committee

Welcome to our March newsletter. During our last meeting in February, we were discussing matters such as membership approval processes, how a possible mentorship can look like and a lot more. We will keep you in the loop. Read also about the latest developments in our industry, how tourism has recovered and what challenges might lie ahead, which tracks are open and upcoming families. And, last but not least, we are excited that we can add a number of new members to our association. Enjoy the read!

Upcoming Events



Parnell Tour

Interested in a walking tour through one of the oldest parts of Auckland? Sharron Hickman and David Hill have created another inspiring famil. It **starts on 29 March at 2pm at Kinder House, 2 Ayr Street** in Parnell. The tour includes Old St. Mary's Church, Hulme Court, the Library, New Holy Trinity to name just a few. If you are interested, please get in touch with [Sharron](#). Also on offer is an inspection of the Rose Park Hotel in Gladstone Road, from 12.30 to 1.00 pm. Please let Sharron know if you interested in the pre-tour.

Affiliate Members Aotearoa Mega-Famil

We are preparing a road tour for our new Affiliate Members, to take place in the off-season. We are working on the details and we would like to see many of the senior members of the Association volunteer to assist, whether it is sharing their knowledge, driving for a day or two, facilitating contacts with local operators or from an operational perspective. Please contact [Angela](#) if you would like to help. Thanks

AGM in Oamaru

We are well underway with preparations for the 2026 AGM, the dates and venue have been booked: **19 Sept at the Brydone Oamaru**. We will also have access to rooms at a reduced rate at the Brydone Hotel, **so please let us know** if you would like to stay there and we will take care of it. The AGM content is still a work in progress, but it will cover topics that are essential to us all... more to be revealed in due course.

Industry Trade Shows

New Zealand's largest international **business event, TRENZ**, will be held at the New Zealand International Convention Centre from 19 to 21 of May. It brings hundreds of international travel buyers together to meet with the country's tourism operators. [Check out a video clip of the new Centre.](#)

The hospitality sector hosts a **conference in Rotorua** on June 23 and 24, 2026. It aims to bring together operators, leaders, innovators and change-makers to explore "what is next for our industry". [More infos here.](#)

From our Industry



Tourism Update

International tourism continues to make a positive impact on New Zealand's economy according to Stats NZ. Its expenditure has **increased by 7 percent to NZ\$ 18.1 billion**. Total tourism expenditure increased 3.3 percent (\$1.49 billion) to \$46.6 billion in the March 2025 year. However, the **crisis in Middle East affects** the tourism industry here. Emirates, Qatar and Etihad are currently operating limited flights in the region. While Flight Centre is working through a minimal number of cancellations, Intrepid Travel has seen a spike in bookings to New Zealand.

Mentors Wanted

In order to help our aspiring tour guides, we need mentors to provide guidance, support and knowledge. Their role is to empower the lesser experienced guides, advise them and share their experience. Do you think you have what is needed, [please contact ProGuides](#).

Navigating a Crisis

Extreme weather and disruption are now a regular part of doing business in tourism - from floods and road closures to cancelled services and fast-moving online commentary. In these moments, knowing what to say, who to communicate with, and how to respond publicly can be challenging, particularly when information is limited and pressure is high. [This webinar explores](#) how you can circumvent these challenging situations.

Geological History explained

New Zealand has a geological history of millions of years. The physical New Zealand we see today is the combined result of all of this history. [Click here for an E-Book](#), which will guide the interested traveller – armchair and actual – through that history.

DOC Matters



Rates Review

Committee member Brian Farrant has informed us that the Department of Conservation has reviewed the rates applied for using the PG concession. The new rates for next year will be \$15 per client per day, or \$7.50 per client for half a day, or \$2 per client for up to one hour. These

new rates are 200-300% higher than our existing rates, a significant increase, which needs to be allowed for in quoting for tours next season.

Have your Say

DOC is encouraging the public to have their say on a proposed amendment to the Te Pēwhairangi (Bay of Islands) Marine Mammal Sanctuary. **Public consultation runs from 2–30 March 2026** following a review by DOC and Ngā Hapū o Pēwhairangi Marine Mammal Protection Advisory Committee Rōpū on the effectiveness of the current Sanctuary rules.

Refreshing Huts

Over 6 days, 16 Backcountry Trust Aotearoa/New Zealand volunteers worked alongside our volunteers and staff with support from Dulux New Zealand and Skywork Helicopters Ltd, to refresh Mt Heale hut and Kaiaraara hut. The work was undertaken in December 2025, to be ready for a busy summer. **Click here for a video** of the maintenance project.

Notes from the Road

Whangamōmona calls

Pukekohe couple Tony and Rachael Massey are the new owners of the famous Whangamōmona Hotel and will be running its **114-year-old pub** from this month on.



Track Rerouted

A section of the Motatapu Track has been rerouted to avoid a large, slow-moving slip, **DOC says**. The track, a historic route linking Wānaka and Arrowtown, is part of the Te Araroa Trail.



Whangamata Experience

A long-term goal to return the ancient tuatara to predator-free islands off the coast of Whangamatā has inspired the launch of a **new guided eco-tourism experience**.



Welcoming new Members



Daniel Putz

(German, English) Daniel has been living in New Zealand for over nine years and offers an authentic Kiwi experience as well as an understanding of Māori heritage. His background as a chef adds a unique dimension to his tours. [Click here for his profile.](#)



Ayla Graf

(German, English) Ayla immigrated to New Zealand 36 years ago, developed a love for the outdoors and learned a lot about the flora and fauna of her new homeland. [Click here for her profile.](#)



Simon Lemaire

(French, English, Spanish)

Simon was born in France and has degrees in Tour Guiding and History. He came to New Zealand in 2020 and is based in Queenstown, where he founded Alento Tours. [Click here for his profile.](#)

Last words

Aspiring scribbler? Feeling strongly about a topic and wanting to share with the rest of us? Please do volunteer to write articles for the newsletter. Our editor Doris does a great job compiling stories from various sources, and we welcome everyone's input, as long as it is informative and based on reliable sources.

ProGuides New Zealand.

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