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The weather conditions in Hawkes Bay mean that many types of atmospheric energy are available to boost the glider upwards including:

1. Ridge lift - this is basically when the wind blows up the side of a hill.

2. Thermal lift - this is air heated on the ground breaking away and rising into the sky. This lift can go to over 10,000ft in ideal conditions before the bubble of hot air cools and creates the fluffy summery clouds.

3. Wave lift - normally caused by westerly winds from the Tasman Sea reaching the ranges that run down the centre of New Zealand. With suitable conditions, the wind lifts over the ranges and then comes down the other side and bounces off the ground and repeats this movement causing a "standing wave" much like large waves in a river flowing over the rocks. Clouds often form along the lines of lift with higher level wave shown by "lenticulars." Pilots in Hawkes Bay have climbed to over 33,000ft in these waves.

4. Convergence lift - this is where two air masses meet. This normally occurs with sea breezes meeting other air masses. In a sea breeze front, cold air from the sea meets the warmer air from the land and energy and altitude can be gained by flying along this intersection as if it were a ridge of land. Convergences may occur over considerable distances and so may permit virtually straight flight while climbing.

To learn more about these and the "air pockets" you fly through in powered aircraft, come and join the gliding club.

While soaring flights are weather dependent, once you have experienced one, you will want to join us.

Further details about the club and learning to glide are on the gliding club website at http://www.glidinghbw.co.nz/