



## Walking in Summer

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Cover picture



Walking on Marley Beach  
(c) Tom Brennan  
<http://ozultimate.com>

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#### Warning

Like all outdoor pursuits, the activities described in this publication are dangerous. Undertaking them may result in loss, serious injury or death. The information in this publication is without any warranty on accuracy or completeness. There may be significant omissions and errors. People who are interested in walking in the areas concerned should make their own enquiries, and not rely fully on the information in this publication.

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Please consider joining a walking club or undertaking formal training in other ways to ensure you are well prepared for any activities you are planning. Please report any errors or omissions to the editor or in the forum at BWA eMag.

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I would like to start by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of this vast land on which we explore. I would like to pay my respects to their Elders, past and present and thank them for their stewardship of this great south land.

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# FROM THE EDITOR

Hi

Wow -- thank you. I am still shocked from the response from our first edition of this emag. I got a bunch of encouraging emails and kind posts. I got some great feedback and some helpful hints. The bit that really shocked me (positively) was the huge level of interest in the emag - we had over 40,000 copies downloaded over the last two months. I am so encouraged that people not only liked the emag but that they shared it with their friends. Thank you.

This edition has been fun to put together. Again a big thanks to those who wrote articles and have contributed images. It is so exciting to see bushwalkers so happy to spend so much time and effort to share their experiences with others. Thanks to Stephan for his help editing and improving the style. We have made some good improvements and know there is more to do in future editions -- ohh for more time in the day.

This edition focuses on Bushwalking in Summer. NSW had a shocking start to the bushfire season with a heat wave during spring, with bushfires destroying 200 homes and devastating communities. Large parts of the Blue Mountains and other native forests were also burnt in large, hot and fast moving fires. The articles in this edition focus on bushwalking in the context of hot weather and bushfire. I hope it is helpful and of interest. Please jump onto <http://bushwalk.com/forum/> to discuss these articles and share your thoughts and experiences.

The next edition I plan to focus on walking for all ages. We will look at the idea introducing children to nature, bushwalking in older age, walking with clubs and basically having fun in the outdoors for all. If you have something you want to contribute please send me an email.

I hope you enjoy the magazine and have a wonderful Christmas.

Happy summer walking, stay safe and have fun.

Matt McClelland (aka Wildwalks)

[matt@bushwalk.com](mailto:matt@bushwalk.com)



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Matt McClelland".

Declaration: The bushwalking community is a small world and paths often cross. To help improve transparency I thought it be helpful to list my associations within the outdoor community. I have personally approached the authors of the articles included in this edition and suggested the topics. These are people I know through bushwalk.com. I operate bushwalk.com and wildwalks.com as well as being the author of several walking guide books (published by Woodslane), I have also written for Great Walks. I contract part-time to National Parks Association NSW on an ongoing basis to coordinate their activities program. In the past I have had a partnership with NPWS NSW and have hosted advertising for Wild magazine. I have also partnered with a large number of other organisations in environmental campaigns and have a regular bushwalking segment on ABC regional radio. Obviously there is some advertising through the mag which the companies have also paid for.

I have probably forgotten something. If you are worried about transparency please either write to me or raise the issue on bushwalk.com.



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## SIX TIPS TO HELP KEEP BUSHWALK.COM A FRIENDLY PLACE

The greatest thing about bushwalk.com is the people. People who are willing to share, chat and help other walkers. It is this friendly interaction that builds trust, trust allows open interaction, this sharing then breeds a true sense of community. Here are six tips to help build the friendliness on our forum.

1) **Re-read your post before submitting.** Lazy writing makes for hard reading, remember your post will be read by a lot of people for many years, make it easy for them to read and keep it friendly. Assume that each post you write will be the first post a new visitor reads and ask yourself 'Does this post help build the view of bushwalkers in our community?'

2) **Seek first to understand.** Try to understand the vibe and don't get caught up in details. Instead of jumping in with comments like "you will die!!!!", ask a questions like - "Have you tried walking barefoot in snow on other trips?" You might find out that it was a bad idea or they forgot to say in the trip is planned for summer or maybe they are a very experienced bare foot snow runner.



3) **Be the hero and apply first aid.** If I break my leg in the bush I know you would drop your pack and grab your first aid kit. Bullying and nasty comments can do incredible damage to people. If you read a post that makes you cringe, then jump in and offer words of encouragement to the recipient quickly. Gently encourage the poster to edit their post, to make it friendly and helpful. If it is not quickly resolved then press the 'report post' button and the moderators will help.

4) **Avoid fast pace discussion.** Forums are not for live debate. If you find yourself hitting refresh and waiting for a response so you can jump back in - then the debate is probably about to get personal. Take a breath, log off and check back in tomorrow.

5) **An argument is not won.** I am not sure why people say they 'won' an argument, what did they win?? Who decided they 'won'? If they won, then they should be better off some how, right? The people who 'win' arguments are those who come out with a better understanding or with a new friend. The goal of our posts should be to make every reader a winner.

6) **Nothing new under the sun.** If you have been active on the forum for more than two years or so then you know the frustration of feeling like we are walking around in circles. New members come and want to have the same discussions and debates we finished years ago. It is great that people want to raise these issues, we learnt a lot from them and so should new members. It helps if newer members are mindful of this issue and search the forum for similar threads. It also helps if longer term members are aware of this and stick to threads that interest them and help new members learn through these debates.

7) **Be friendly and have fun.**



## 2 COASTAL WALKS

Australia's magnificent coastal walks





# WILDERNESS WALK

Pete Jessup (aka Mutley)

**When:** November 2012

**Length:** 80 kilometres

**Time:** Five days

**Grade:** Medium

**Maps used:** Vicmap Nadgee 8823-S and  
Mallacoota 8822-N 1:50,000. I also used

a one page map and information publication from Parks Victoria, called  
"Nadgee Howe Wilderness & Nadgee Nature Reserve. Oh, and of course,  
the trusty Garmin GPS (Garmin City Navigator Australian Topo V3), which showed some parts of the walk

I am fairly new to the world of bushwalking. I have completed the Overland  
Track in Tasmania a few times and have done the Great Ocean Walk,  
from Apollo Bay in Victoria. A new adventure was needed, after  
a typical Melbourne winter and I was looking for something  
more challenging than the Great Ocean Walk  
and maybe more remote.

Eastern Victoria / Southern New South Wales is a  
special place for me. My wife and I have spent many  
weeks in the area of Croajingalong National Park  
through to Eden. It is a remote and beautiful part of  
the eastern Australian coastline.

The Nadgee Howe Wilderness Walk spans two  
states, starting at the quaint coastal town of Mallaco-  
ota in Victoria and finishing in the Wonboyn area,  
NSW. The length of the walk varies but I covered  
about 80 kilometres in five days.

Walkers need to register with the NSW parks  
service, stating their intentions and returning the form

with payment of a small fee. Walkers should call the  
Merrimbula NPWS office for more information. There  
is a maximum group size of eight and a maximum of  
30 people on the walk at any one time.

I started the walk from Mallacoota, but it can be  
done in either direction. The trail begins from the  
eastern side of the Mallacoota Inlet mouth, and with  
the mouth open to the ocean at present, it can be  
dangerous to get there by boat, and wading the mouth  
is an absolute no-no, unless you also plan to visit New  
Zealand. The best option is to catch a boat to "Lake-  
view", a jetty near the old settlement, on the Eastern





shore of the lower lake. I used Simon Buckley, who has a quaint old lake boat. It's not the flashiest thing on the water, but it will get you there safely. Simon's minimum charge is \$80 for the 30 minute boat ride. His vessel would probably hold up to four passengers, but check with Simon for larger groups.

I left my car at Wonboyn, at the caravan park, (I asked permission from the owners beforehand), and organised a lift back to Mallacoota. There is a mini bus service available out of Mallacoota, but for one person, the price was exorbitant. So I called the Mallacoota pub a few weeks prior, offering \$100 for a ride back to town. A publican's mate was all too happy to help out, picking me up right on time, with a great trip back into town. This was much cheaper than the \$200 for the mini bus, but it wouldn't be an issue with large groups.

There is plenty of accommodation in Mallacoota. I chose the pub, which has motel-style rooms attached. Clean and reasonably priced (\$80 per / night) and a very short walk back to the room after some pre-walk drinks the night before. This little town is very friendly,

although the whole town knew my plans by the time I started the walk, calling me the Wonboyn Walker - what do you expect making your plans known to the public!

On the morning of the walk, Simon (the boat man) picked me up from the pub and soon I was standing on Lakeview Jetty, watching as his little vessel returned to town.

The walk begins by skirting the lake, through eucalypt, tea tree and open grassland, weaving it's way to the coast. Walkers pass the old Mallacoota settlement, now just a weathered shack shaded by somewhat out of place European trees.

Soon the beach appeared, where the walking became harder. Beach walking can be challenging, forever trying to follow the thin strip of firm sand, just above the waterline. Before attempting this, or any beach walk, make sure your boots and pack are as light as they can be. Every extra kilogram of weight is felt, as your foot endlessly sinks into the soft white sand, sapping strength to take the next step. It's like walking through glue and on this trip, I promised my-





self to get my pack weight down for the next adventure. The coastline was stunning, and very remote. You follow the ocean for a couple of hours, then turn hard left, over the dunes, to Lake Barracoota. I almost missed the turn - a small blue bucket is the only track marker. It's a good idea to use a GPS here, as the sandy trail to the lake is easily missed.

Lake Barracoota is the largest natural freshwater lake in Victoria and, bordered by truly impressive sand dunes. I spent a peaceful night on the shore of the lake, sheltered from the prevailing wind by the dunes. The water is fine to drink but reed beds need to be negotiated for a swim.

The next morning I set off for my second campsite, Lake Wau Wauka, via the beach. Passing the wreck of the SS Riverina (I originally thought it was a beached whale, with wave-generated water spurting through a rusty blow hole), and rounding Telegraph Point gave me a good view of Gabo Island. You can book accommodation here, but it didn't look too hospitable on this day, with a raging sea smashing its coastline. And its certainly not reachable from the coast, unless you

have a 50 horse power half cab pack raft.

It took about four hours of slogging through the sand to reach Lake Wau Wauka (did I really need to bring that coffee machine and why is my pack so heavy?). Approaching the western side of the lake, I followed it's shores around to a great little campsite, under some shady trees. A couple of marine buoys hang from a limb to mark the spot. The water is drinkable from the lake, but tastes a bit brackish. I used sterilising tablets as a precaution, as I did throughout the trip.

The view from the campsite looks over the lake and out to sea. It was well protected from the southerly wind. It's a pity the weather wasn't kinder, with a thick cloud cover and rain by late afternoon.

Day three - Off to Nadgee Lake, via Cape Howe. Another tough day of beach walking to Iron Prince Point, then I traversed sand dunes, which extended right down to the rocky shoreline. There were plenty of dog tracks and some tracks I think belonged to an emu or a giant flesh eating devil bird (vivid imagination after a few days by myself).





There is a need to be very careful here. The sand has obscured a coastline of large boulders and there are many open voids under the sand. My leg disappeared up to my groin on one occasion and there may be deeper holes out there. This area is just so remote. If you do hurt yourself, you had better hope the PLB's (Personal Locator Beacons) working. The only access apart from walking is by helicopter or a very risky boat ride.

Conference Point marks the border of Victoria and NSW. I stopped for the obligatory photo, then over more dunes to Cape Howe. After the cape there is a short beach walk, to a track leading away from the water. This track is not really obvious and looks like it goes nowhere. Just walk to the end of the beach and turn hard left and keep walking. Soon you will climb up over the dunes and down to Bunyip Hole. This was shown on the map as a water source but it looked ordinary - algal growth and very black. Drink at your own peril.

Turning north, I crossed Endeavor Moor. With stunning and amazingly varied coastal vegetation, the track was quite overgrown and hard going. In places and I had to literally force my way through narrow, green tunnels. The low cloud and sea fog added to the mystery and sense of stillness of the moor. I liked this place.

By lunchtime I had reached the thin spit which separates the ocean from Nadgee Lake. Still foggy, I made my way around the north - east edge of the lake, to a well defined and grassy campsite. Like the previous campsite, there was some bush furniture set up - makeshift bench seats from planks of timber and rocks. There was supposed to be a small water source near this camp, but I couldn't locate it. In the warmer months water may be a real challenge here and the camp would benefit from a small shelter and water tank. But the whole point of this walk is self-reliance, through an unspoiled wilderness area.

I decided to push onto Little Creek for the night. The track climbed up and away from Nadgee Lake and onto a heavily overgrown old vehicle access track. Called Nadgee Moor, it is an easy walk through coastal woodland. I happened to prove that a walking pole is not as strong as my forehead, as I tripped on a tree root and fell forward, head butting the now horizontal pole and snapping the aluminium right through. Would have made a great YouTube clip.

Just before reaching Nadgee Beach, I passed a

large tea tree-lined soak, which had sweet, clean but discolored water. I filled up here for the night at Little Creek.

From Nadgee Beach the track traverses Impressa Moor, much easier walking. At the point where the track enters the thicker eucalypt forest there is a very small track to the right. This is very easy to miss but is a good short-cut through to the four wheel drive track leading to Little Creek.

By mid-afternoon, I reached Little Creek and camped on a flat grassy section on the southern coast of the inlet. A really beautiful spot with great swimming and probably the best campsite of the trip. I later discovered the official campsite was on the other side of the inlet. The fish were rising and jumping as the light receded behind a thick cloud cover. Rain began to gently fall, increasing to a downpour, which lasted most of the night.

The next morning the rain had stopped and I waded the shallow inlet, heading for Merrica River. There was supposed to be a track leading up above the rock ledge but it was hard to find. Instead I headed upstream and scrambled around the base of the rocky point, to the official Little Creek campsite, which also featured timber bench seats. A 4 wheel drive track left the Western edge of the campsite, heading up the hill and towards Newtons Beach.

This section of the walk was quite diverse, with coastal scrub, tea tree stands, morphing to lush vine draped and heavily overgrown forest. Really beautiful.

Walkers are supposed to turn right, to Newtons Beach and a water source. Instead I continued along the dirt road and had to negotiate a 200 metre climb. Next time turn right. There was a good alternative water source at a creek crossing, however.

From Newtons Beach, the track climbs steeply up to Tumbledown Lookout. Lyrebirds were darting across the track everywhere, until I found the camera, then, nowhere to be seen. Typical of celebrities.





Reaching the Merrica Walking trail, I detoured downhill to a stream, for water. This took about 40 minutes return, but is an essential detour, as there is no fresh water at Merrica River.

Merrica River is a beautiful place. You can camp on the southern side in tea tree or across the river, where another furnished camp is located, complete with bush swing.

It rained all night. Very hard. I later learnt the area had 50 mm overnight. By morning though, the rain cleared long enough to pack up and start the climb back to the Merrica trail, which leads out to the ranger station.

This was, in my limited experience, one of the best walks I have done. The amazing range of flora and topography compressed into a five day walk is a wonderful experience and possibly unique in Australia. The dunes near Cape Howe have to be seen to be believed, tumbling right into the ocean.

#### Bonus tips:

An alternative route back to Wonboyn is to traverse the range north of Merrica River, up to the 161 metre crest, then NNW down to the Green-Glades Trail. This avoids having to backtrack and saves a few kilometres back to Wonboyn. I decided to take the long way back, by way of the ranger station and Newtons Road. In hindsight, I should have left the car at the ranger station and avoided eight kilometres of fairly boring dirt road walking.

Ticks can be a problem in this area and I later discovered I had picked up three of the little vampires. The few mozzies and flies weren't really a problem. In late summer water may be a real issue on this walk. If you are not a fan of beach walking, don't even consider this trip. But if you can keep your pack light and are not in a rush, the experience is one you will not quickly forget. The trip could be compressed into three nights, by missing Merrica River if time is tight. A GPS is a good idea for some of the trickier turnoffs and a PLB is essential. You are entering a wilderness area. Open fires are not permitted from December till March.

For the more adventurous, this walk can be combined with the Wilderness Coast walk from Cape Conran, near Marlo in Victoria, to Mallacoota.

#### More information can be found at:

<http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/nadgee-nature-reserve/nadgee-wilderness-walk/walking>

Merrimbula NPWS office (02) 6495 5000

Simon Buckley, the boat man (0408408094),

Pete Jessup, November 2012

Peter Jessup is from Eltham, Victoria and is an avid bush walker, who spends his time planning trips and his limited annual leave living them. He shares his life with his wife, Amanda and a very spoilt Brittany Spaniel, Bonnie.





# THE COAST TRACK

## Royal National Park – Track notes

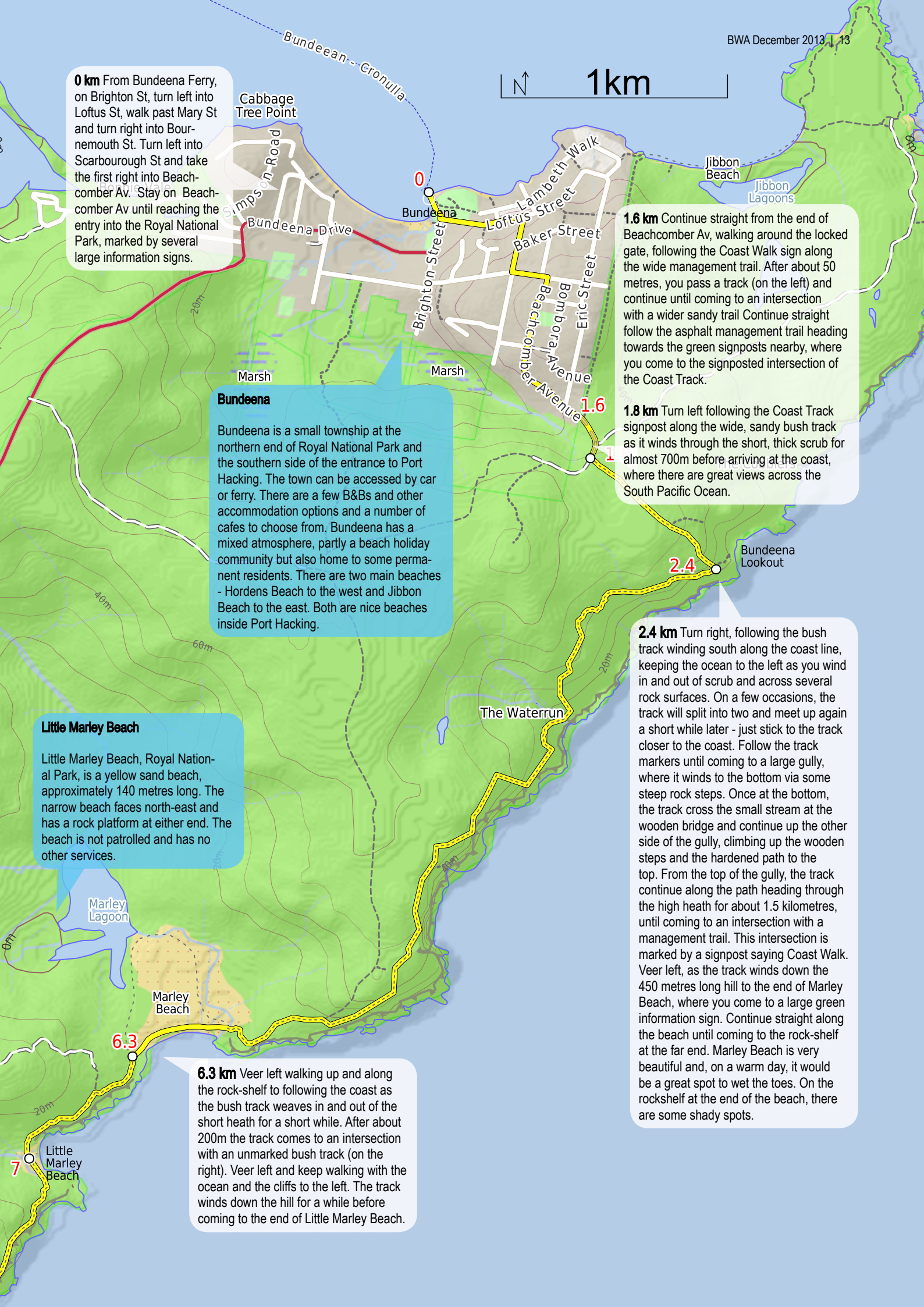
Matt McClelland (aka Wildwalks)

The Royal NP is a coastal park that sits on the southern end of Sydney. It became “National Park” in 1879, and is generally recognised as the world’s second oldest national park after Yellowstone in the USA. In 1955 it was re-named to Royal NP after the Queen Elizabeth II passed through the area on her 1954 visit.

The Coast Track is the park’s most famous track and is a great way to explore a variety of bushland along the coast. The walk follows the coast, heading south exploring beaches, rock pools and amazing views out to the ocean all the way from Bundeena to Otford. At the southern end of this walk you pass through a series of depression-era villages which add a very unique vibe to this walk.

<b>Grade:</b>	4/6 Hard
<b>Time:</b>	Two days (although it can be done in one day if you have a solid pace)
<b>Distance:</b>	27.4 kilometres one way
<b>Ascent / descent:</b>	1350 metres ascent / 1240 metres descent
<b>Conditions:</b>	Mostly exposed to sun, wind and rain
<b>Transport:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To the start: Catch a train to Cronulla then ferry to Bundeena. The small ferry runs about every hour.</li><li>• Back home: There is a train station at Otford, runs about every hour back to Sydney.</li><li>• If you drive there parking is free at each end of the walk, but there is a park entry fee for Royal NP for the Bundeena end.</li></ul>
<b>GPS of start:</b>	-34.0827, 151.1511
<b>GPS of end:</b>	-34.2108, 151.0056





**0 km** From Bundeena Ferry, on Brighton St, turn left into Loftus St, walk past Mary St and turn right into Bour-nemouth St. Turn left into Scarborough St and take the first right into Beach-comber Av. Stay on Beach-comber Av until reaching the entry into the Royal National Park, marked by several large information signs.

Cabbage Tree Point

Simpson Road

Bundeena Drive

Marsh

### Bundeena

Bundeena is a small township at the northern end of Royal National Park and the southern side of the entrance to Port Hacking. The town can be accessed by car or ferry. There are a few B&Bs and other accommodation options and a number of cafes to choose from. Bundeena has a mixed atmosphere, partly a beach holiday community but also home to some permanent residents. There are two main beaches - Hordens Beach to the west and Jibbon Beach to the east. Both are nice beaches inside Port Hacking.

### Little Marley Beach

Little Marley Beach, Royal National Park, is a yellow sand beach, approximately 140 metres long. The narrow beach faces north-east and has a rock platform at either end. The beach is not patrolled and has no other services.

Marley Lagoon

Marley Beach

6.3

**6.3 km** Veer left walking up and along the rock-shelf to following the coast as the bush track weaves in and out of the short heath for a short while. After about 200m the track comes to an intersection with an unmarked bush track (on the right). Veer left and keep walking with the ocean and the cliffs to the left. The track winds down the hill for a while before coming to the end of Little Marley Beach.

Little Marley Beach

7

1km

Bundeena

Brighton Street

Lambeth Walk

Loftus Street

Baker Street

Bombora Avenue

Beachcomber Avenue

Eric Street

**1.6 km** Continue straight from the end of Beachcomber Av, walking around the locked gate, following the Coast Walk sign along the wide management trail. After about 50 metres, you pass a track (on the left) and continue until coming to an intersection with a wider sandy trail. Continue straight follow the asphalt management trail heading towards the green signposts nearby, where you come to the signposted intersection of the Coast Track.

**1.8 km** Turn left following the Coast Track signpost along the wide, sandy bush track as it winds through the short, thick scrub for almost 700m before arriving at the coast, where there are great views across the South Pacific Ocean.

Bundeena Lookout

2.4

**2.4 km** Turn right, following the bush track winding south along the coast line, keeping the ocean to the left as you wind in and out of scrub and across several rock surfaces. On a few occasions, the track will split into two and meet up again a short while later - just stick to the track closer to the coast. Follow the track markers until coming to a large gully, where it winds to the bottom via some steep rock steps. Once at the bottom, the track cross the small stream at the wooden bridge and continue up the other side of the gully, climbing up the wooden steps and the hardened path to the top. From the top of the gully, the track continue along the path heading through the high heath for about 1.5 kilometres, until coming to an intersection with a management trail. This intersection is marked by a signpost saying Coast Walk. Veer left, as the track winds down the 450 metres long hill to the end of Marley Beach, where you come to a large green information sign. Continue straight along the beach until coming to the rock-shelf at the far end. Marley Beach is very beautiful and, on a warm day, it would be a great spot to wet the toes. On the rockshelf at the end of the beach, there are some shady spots.

The Waterrun



### Wattamolla Kiosk

The Wattamolla Kiosk in the Wattamolla Picnic Area provides basic supplies for day visitors. The kiosk does not keep strict hours and opens depending on weather and demand. It usually opens on weekends at around 10:30am and closes between 4 and 6pm. You can buy ice-creams, drinks and some hot food. For more information, call Audley Kiosk on (02) 9521 2240.

### Wattamolla Picnic Area

Wattamolla Picnic Area is found at the end of Wattamolla Road, about halfway along the coastline of Royal National Park. The area is blessed with a great beach, a lagoon and some wonderful creeks and rocks to explore. The small beach faces west and is tucked away in a deep bay. The lagoon sits behind the beach and is lined with sand on one side, and cliffs and rocks on the other shore. The picnic area has large open grassy areas, with some shade provided by trees and some picnic shelters. There is a small kiosk, toilets, electric BBQs and two car parks. There is water here, but needs to be treated before drinking. There is a gate on the road that is locked at night, the gate is open from 7am to 8:30pm.

### Wattamolla Dam

Wattamolla pool (or dam), Royal National Park, is a small water hole on Wattamolla Creek, above the lagoon. The pool is on the Coast Track near Wattamolla picnic area and offers a quiet spot for a dip and a rest. The pool is formed by a small, constructed sandstone dam and fed by a small waterfall above.

### Curracurrang Cove

Curracurrang Cove is a small cove about one kilometre SW of Wattamolla, on the coast of the Royal National Park. The cove faces east and is where Curracurrang Creek meets the ocean. The creek, the cove and the surrounding rocks provide great scenery, making this a relaxing place to stop and enjoy. There is evidence that Aboriginal people lived in this cove. There are a few middens in the area, some rock shelters and Curracurrang creek provides a near-permanent water supply. The cove was first occupied 7500 years ago and was used as a regular campsite by the Dharawal people.

### Eagle Rock Lookout

Eagle Rock lookout is an informal lookout marked by an information sign on the Coast track in the Royal National Park. The lookout is about half-way between Garie Beach and Wattamolla. Eagle rock is a piece of the cliff line that looks amazingly like the head of an eagle, with the eye and all. The lookout is about 150 metres west of the Eagle Rock on the other side of Carracurrang Creek. Eagle Rock is often used as an icon for the Royal National Park. Carracurrang Creek also forms a waterfall into the ocean nearby.

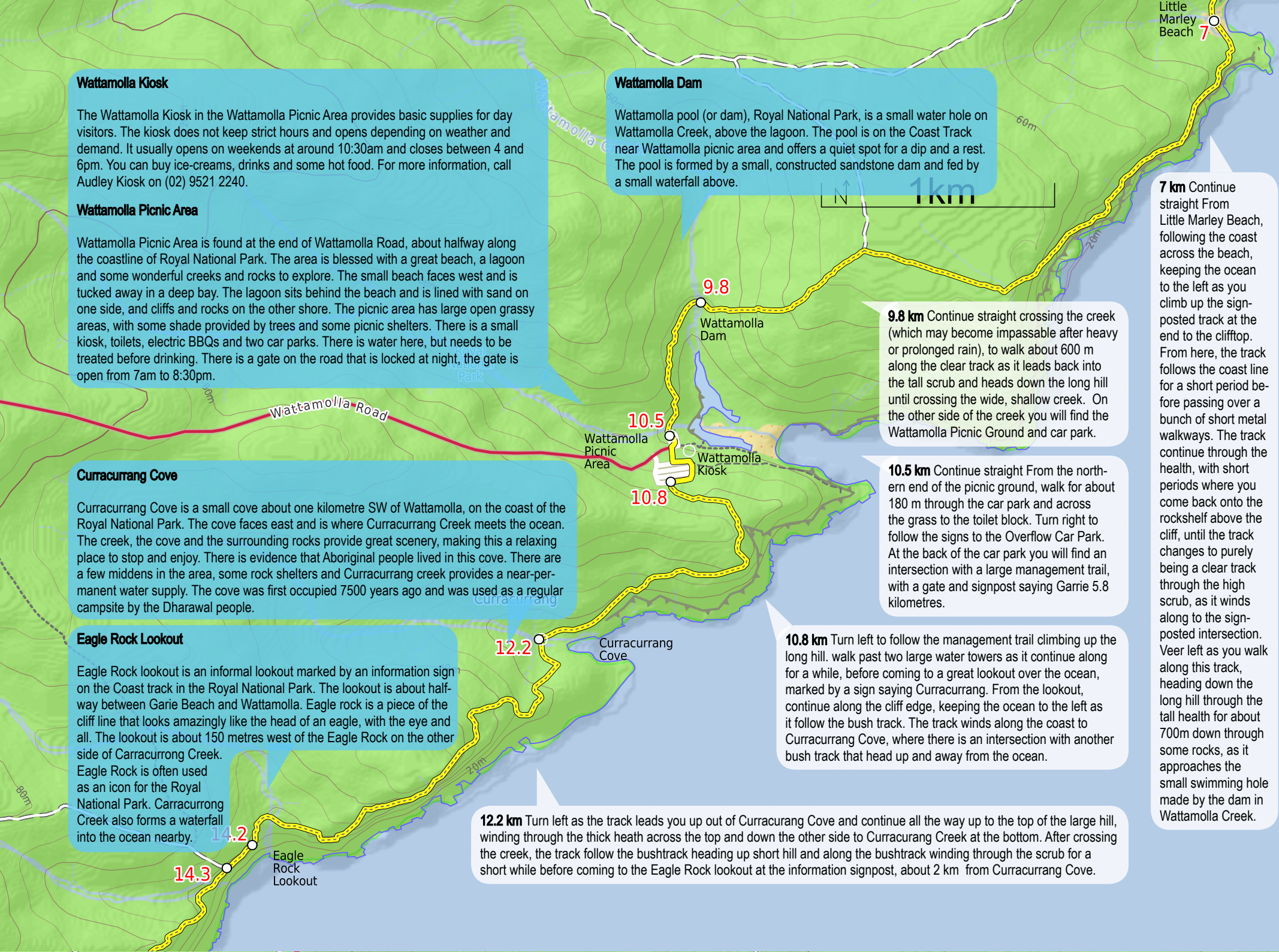
**9.8 km** Continue straight crossing the creek (which may become impassable after heavy or prolonged rain), to walk about 600 m along the clear track as it leads back into the tall scrub and heads down the long hill until crossing the wide, shallow creek. On the other side of the creek you will find the Wattamolla Picnic Ground and car park.

**10.5 km** Continue straight From the northern end of the picnic ground, walk for about 180 m through the car park and across the grass to the toilet block. Turn right to follow the signs to the Overflow Car Park. At the back of the car park you will find an intersection with a large management trail, with a gate and signpost saying Garrie 5.8 kilometres.

**10.8 km** Turn left to follow the management trail climbing up the long hill. walk past two large water towers as it continue along for a while, before coming to a great lookout over the ocean, marked by a sign saying Curracurrang. From the lookout, continue along the cliff edge, keeping the ocean to the left as it follow the bush track. The track winds along the coast to Curracurrang Cove, where there is an intersection with another bush track that head up and away from the ocean.

**12.2 km** Turn left as the track leads you up out of Curracurrang Cove and continue all the way up to the top of the large hill, winding through the thick heath across the top and down the other side to Curracurrang Creek at the bottom. After crossing the creek, the track follow the bushtrack heading up short hill and along the bushtrack winding through the scrub for a short while before coming to the Eagle Rock lookout at the information signpost, about 2 km from Curracurrang Cove.

**7 km** Continue straight From Little Marley Beach, following the coast across the beach, keeping the ocean to the left as you climb up the sign-posted track at the end to the clifftop. From here, the track follows the coast line for a short period before passing over a bunch of short metal walkways. The track continue through the health, with short periods where you come back onto the rockshelf above the cliff, until the track changes to purely being a clear track through the high scrub, as it winds along to the sign-posted intersection. Veer left as you walk along this track, heading down the long hill through the tall health for about 700m down through some rocks, as it approaches the small swimming hole made by the dam in Wattamolla Creek.





### North Era camping ground

North Era camping ground, Royal National Park, is a large dune area situated directly behind North Era Beach. This camping spot is popular with surfers, and it also has a toilet and a cleared area to pitch your tent. A maximum of 36 people (12 sites) can camp here, so there is plenty of room for everyone. Open fires are not permitted, you can carry a fuel stove for cooking. A camping permit is required from NPWS before arriving (Phone: (02) 9542 068). Water is often available from the creek (treat before drinking). If dry you can walk to Garie Beach for water, although the water here may also be dried up, during a dry period it is best to carry all your water with you.

### Garie Beach

Garie Beach, Royal National Park, is a large, south-east facing, yellow sand beach. The beach is backed by steep headlands and gullies. There is a large car park at the end of Garie Road for access to the beach. Garie Beach is popular for surfing, patrolled 9am-5pm from December to January. Facilities include toilets, kiosk, picnic tables, cold showers and Surf Life Saving Club. The water from the shower should be treated before drinking, this water comes from a tank should not be relied on.

### Garie Beach Lookout

Garie Beach Lookout is an unofficial lookout on the hill at the eastern end of Garie Beach. The lookout has no facilities and is simply a spot on the Coast track. The lookout provides great views looking southwest along the coast along Garie Beach, Royal National Park and down to Wollongong.

**14.2 km** Continue straight, keeping the ocean to your left as the track leads through the heath for about 150 m to intersection at the end of a management trail

**14.3 km** Continue straight walking along the track and the rockshelf, keeping the ocean on the left. For the next 2 km track leads through the scrub and across more sections of metal walkways until coming to an intersection with another track (on your right). Continue straight follow the track around the left-hand side of the Curra Moors car park sign, following the cliffs tops. After several hundred metres of high scrub, the track emerges out into the opening which has fantastic views of Garie Beach and the hills to the south.

**16.8 km** Continue straight along the track as it leads for 500 m to Garie Beach, winding down the long hill, descending the steep rock and wooden steps to the bottom of the hill where continue through the grassy clearing to the end of the beach.

**17.3 km** Walk along the beach for about 650 m to find the Garie Beach car park on your right. About half way across this beach walk you pass a track (on your right) that once lead up to a youth hostel that burnt to the ground at the end of 2010, shame it was a great place to overnight.

**18 km** From the Garie Beach car park, follow the sign to North Era, walking along the beach whilst keeping the ocean to your left. This track soon follows the base of the large grassy hill between the rocks and the ocean, to the Little Garie cabins and up past the Little Garie Community Hall. Continue straight past the hall heading steeply up the hill, with a series of wooden steps. From the top of the ridge, the track now leads down the other side to wind down into the clearing and the signposted North Era Bush Campground.



Looking down on Marley Beach from Marley Head



The surf at Marley Beach



Looking north back along the beaches



Looking at Garie Beach and the coast from the north



The cliffs from the southern headland of Marley Beach



Climbing up to the southern headland of Marley Beach



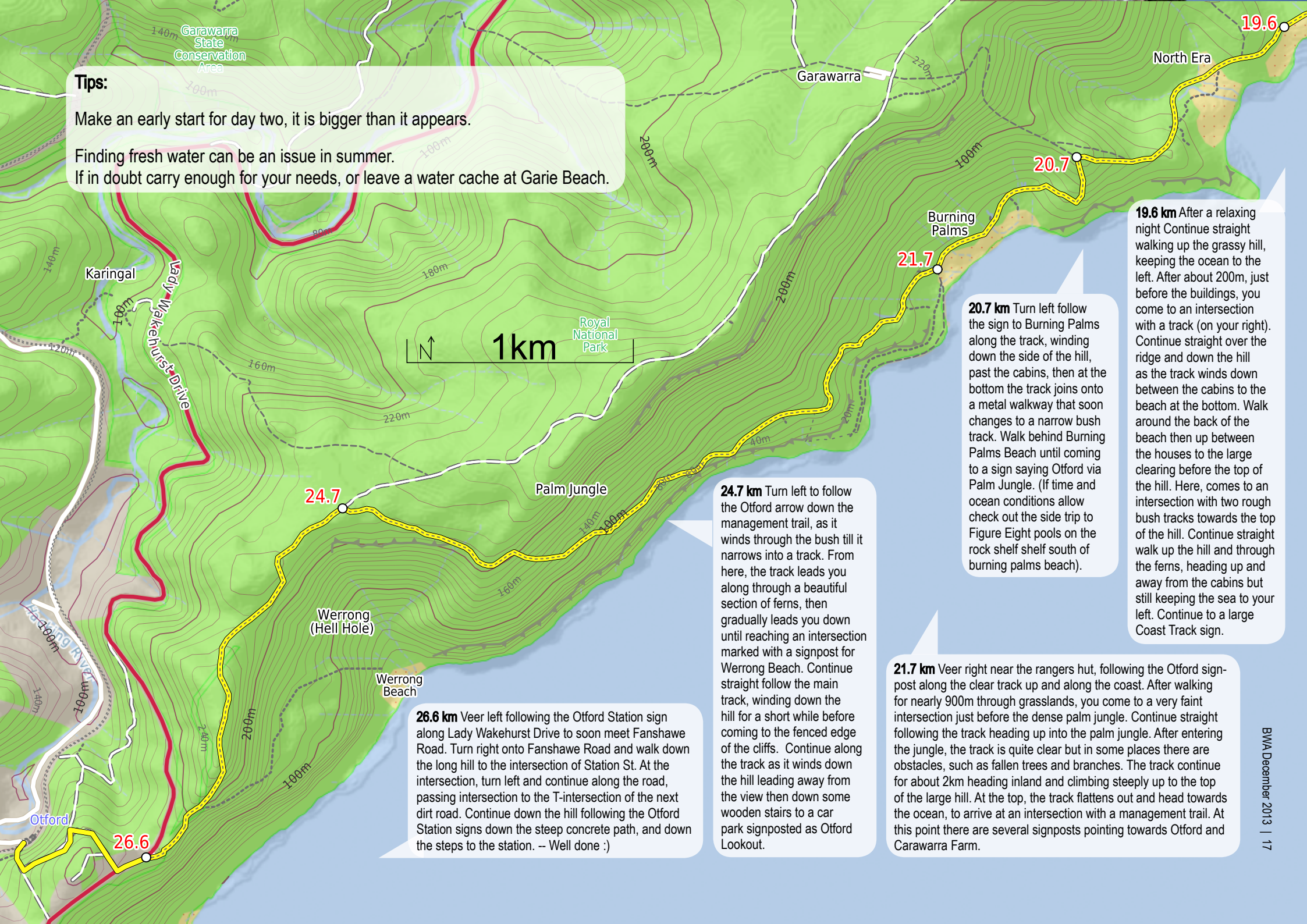


## Tips:

Make an early start for day two, it is bigger than it appears.

Finding fresh water can be an issue in summer.

If in doubt carry enough for your needs, or leave a water cache at Garie Beach.



**19.6 km** After a relaxing night Continue straight walking up the grassy hill, keeping the ocean to the left. After about 200m, just before the buildings, you come to an intersection with a track (on your right). Continue straight over the ridge and down the hill as the track winds down between the cabins to the beach at the bottom. Walk around the back of the beach then up between the houses to the large clearing before the top of the hill. Here, comes to an intersection with two rough bush tracks towards the top of the hill. Continue straight walk up the hill and through the ferns, heading up and away from the cabins but still keeping the sea to your left. Continue to a large Coast Track sign.

**20.7 km** Turn left follow the sign to Burning Palms along the track, winding down the side of the hill, past the cabins, then at the bottom the track joins onto a metal walkway that soon changes to a narrow bush track. Walk behind Burning Palms Beach until coming to a sign saying Otford via Palm Jungle. (If time and ocean conditions allow check out the side trip to Figure Eight pools on the rock shelf south of burning palms beach).

**24.7 km** Turn left to follow the Otford arrow down the management trail, as it winds through the bush till it narrows into a track. From here, the track leads you along through a beautiful section of ferns, then gradually leads you down until reaching an intersection marked with a signpost for Werrong Beach. Continue straight follow the main track, winding down the hill for a short while before coming to the fenced edge of the cliffs. Continue along the track as it winds down the hill leading away from the view then down some wooden stairs to a car park signposted as Otford Lookout.

**21.7 km** Veer right near the rangers hut, following the Otford signpost along the clear track up and along the coast. After walking for nearly 900m through grasslands, you come to a very faint intersection just before the dense palm jungle. Continue straight following the track heading up into the palm jungle. After entering the jungle, the track is quite clear but in some places there are obstacles, such as fallen trees and branches. The track continue for about 2km heading inland and climbing steeply up to the top of the large hill. At the top, the track flattens out and head towards the ocean, to arrive at an intersection with a management trail. At this point there are several signposts pointing towards Otford and Carawarra Farm.

**26.6 km** Veer left following the Otford Station sign along Lady Wakehurst Drive to soon meet Fanshawe Road. Turn right onto Fanshawe Road and walk down the long hill to the intersection of Station St. At the intersection, turn left and continue along the road, passing intersection to the T-intersection of the next dirt road. Continue down the hill following the Otford Station signs down the steep concrete path, and down the steps to the station. – Well done :)



# HEAT ILLNESS IN THE FIELD

Stuart Clark (All Aid First Aid)

*You and your party are struggling – it is oppressively hot on this exposed, rocky ridgeline, and the thought of the riverside campsite only one kilometre away down the spur is all that keeps your legs moving anymore. Your camelback tube suddenly runs dry, signaling the end of your water supply. You know there is a water tank at the campsite – and the river, the river. Without warning, the walker in front of you stumbles and falls forward landing heavily – he cries out in pain and rolls to his side gripping his shoulder. On assessing the walker you find his skin is sweaty and pale, and his breathing is short and fast – he has intense pain in the region of the right collarbone. He also tells you he feels dizzy, weak and nauseous...*

Heat illness presents when a person cannot cool her/himself enough to maintain a normal core temperature. Physical exertion, extremes of heat, poor fluid intake, fluid loss (e.g. sweating), low electrolyte balance and improper clothing are all likely triggers in a bushwalking context. Heat-related illnesses include heat rash, heat cramps, dizziness, fainting, heat exhaustion and most significantly, heat stroke which is life-threatening, particularly in a wilderness environment remote from medical services.





The most important lesson about heat illness applies to most injuries and illnesses in the field – “prevention is better than cure”. This of course seems obvious whilst reading this article, but when out on the trail in trying, hot conditions, this lesson is often out of focus – in the periphery...this is a truly dangerous situation, and heat illness is not the only risk at this time. Add factors such as falls leading to trauma and the exacerbation of existing medical conditions and the concoction in the remote area is extreme.

### Prevention of Heat-related Illnesses

- Keep up your fluids – drink water before, during and after physical exertion in the heat.
- Keep up your energy levels – eat regularly, ensuring you take in electrolytes and sodium.
- Protect yourself – wear a hat and lightweight breathable clothing and use sunscreen.
- Plan physical activity – ensure your trip is planned around the predicted conditions.
- The buddy system – watch out for each other, rest when someone needs to do so.

### Special note about fluid intake

Your body absorbs fluids best when you drink frequently and in small amounts. It also helps with fluid absorption if you drink while eating. Don't depend on feeling thirsty to tell you when to drink – thirst is a late response of the body to fluid depletion. A good indicator of proper fluid levels is urine output and color. Urine should be ‘copious and clear’. Dark urine generally means you are dehydrated.

### Signs and Symptoms of Heat-related Illnesses

- Heat rash – this is a skin irritation caused by excessive sweating – it looks like a red cluster of pimples or small blisters occurring on the neck, chest, groin and in bodily creases.
- Heat cramps – these include muscle pains or spasms, usually in the abdomen, arms or legs. Commonly related to strenuous activity in a hot environment resultant from depleted salt and water. These cramps may also be a symptom of heat exhaustion.
- Dizziness and fainting – heat-related dizziness and fainting results from reduced blood flow to the brain. Heat causes an increase in blood flow to the skin

and pooling of blood in the legs, which can lead to a sudden drop in blood pressure.

- Heat exhaustion – this is a serious condition that can develop into heat stroke. It occurs when excessive sweating in a hot environment reduces the body's fluid volume. Warning signs may include paleness and sweating, rapid heart rate and breathing, muscle cramps, headache, nausea and vomiting, dizziness or fainting.
- Heat stroke – this is a medical emergency and requires urgent attention. Heat stroke occurs when the core body temperature rises above 40.5°C and the body's internal systems start to fail. Most people will have profound central nervous system changes such as delirium, coma and seizures. The person may stagger, appear confused, have a fit or collapse and become unconscious. The symptoms of heat stroke may be the same as for heat exhaustion, but the skin may be dry with no sweating and the person's mental condition worsens.

### Treatment Principles for Heat-related Illnesses

- Assist the victim to rest, preferably in a cool, shaded area.
- Remove outer clothing.
- Wet skin with cool water or wet cloths.
- Give frequent, small sips of an oral hydration solution (water, salt, electrolytes).
- Gently stretch any cramped muscles.







**If heat stroke is suspected:**

- Commence urgent evacuation preparations.
- Remove clothing and wet the skin with water, fanning continuously.
- If possible, apply cool packs to the groin, armpits and neck.
- Do not give the person fluids to drink.
- Position the unconscious person on their side, clear their airway and monitor breathing.

*...Back on the trail, the fallen walker is now resting in the shade of a tree, his right arm in a well-secured sling. With shirt unbuttoned and cool packs in position, he has consumed the majority of the oral hydration solution your group has mixed for him and is recovering from what you assume was quite significant heat exhaustion. You decide that based on his continued recovery a slow walk down the spur to the river is achievable – from there you can organise a car to transport him to the medical centre for assessment.*

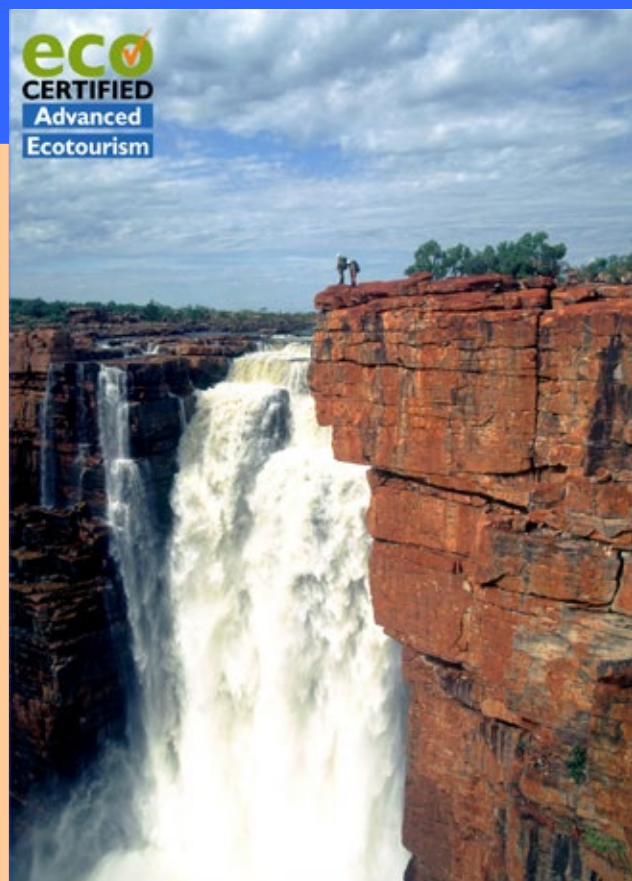
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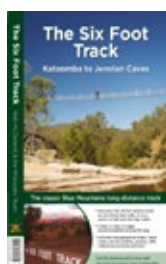
# SHARE YOUR SELFIE



From day one this magazine has been about you and now we'd like to bring it even closer. That's why we're starting a new selfie competition. We'd like your pictures taken in nature, having fun. Please send them to us by 20 January 2014. The best one will be published in the next edition which will come out on 1 February 2014. And the best thing - the winner will receive a book of her/his choice (see below).

Please send your selfies to [eva@wildwalks.com](mailto:eva@wildwalks.com).

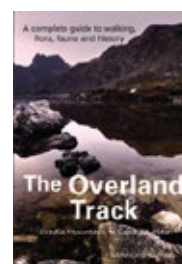
Fingers crossed that you're the one who'll be smiling on the pages of the next mag :)



← The Six Foot Track

Award :) (pick one)

The Overland Track →





# IS IT SAFE TO WALK?

Bushwalking and bushfires  
Matt McClelland (aka Wildwalks)





A bushfire is the stuff of nightmares. I doubt I could imagine anything more terrifying than having a bushfire bearing down on me on a hot and windy day. On such a day the fire front can throw hot embers many kilometres, starting new fires and causing the main fire to spread rapidly. The radiant heat from a fire like this would be so intense that even 100 metres away it can cause serious burns to your skin. There is no jumping in a creek or wombat hole to avoid this fire. The only way to be ensuring your survival is to be somewhere else. And then, on a day only halfway up the Fire Danger Rating scale, it can get very ugly out there.

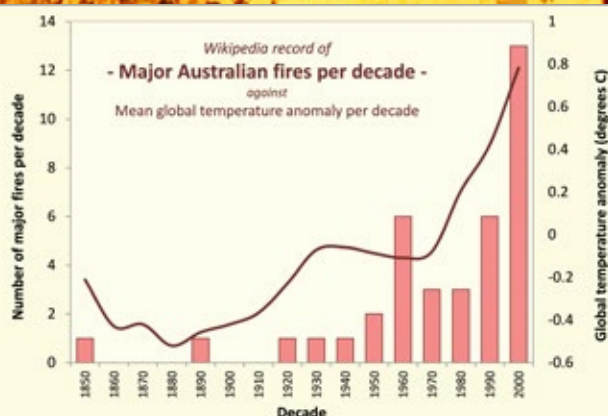
A large bushfire releases so much energy that it can create it's own weather system. Fires can create wind, clouds and even tornadoes (a pyro-tornadogenesis event) - like the one that destroyed homes and lives in Canberra.

Historically, Australia received occasional very bad bushfire seasons. In the past few decades we have seen more intense, fast moving and devastating bushfires than we imagined possible. It now seems that this is a pattern set to continue and get worse. Last year the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) predicted that "in south-eastern Australia, the frequency of days when extreme fire danger threatens will increase by up to 25 per cent by 2020, and up to 70 per cent by 2050."

As bushwalkers we love to get out and explore. It is very hard to call off a walk because of a potential risk - especially when there is no actual fire. This year we have been reminded that devastating fires can sneak up on communities. In Spring (October 2013) we saw around 200 homes destroyed and large areas of the Blue Mountains burnt. We need to be particularly mindful of bushfire risk in spring, summer and early autumn.

**So how do we make the decision to go or not go on a walk considering the bushfire risk?**

Each state has their own agency responsible for bushfire around Australia. In the past few years a consistent approach fire danger rating has been adopted across the country. In NSW the RFS is the lead agency on bushfires. So, by way of a starting point the RFS say that "Severe, Extreme and Catastrophic Fire Danger Ratings mean a fire will be unpredictable, uncontrollable and very fast moving. This means that you may have little or no warning about the threat of a bush fire." They also say for these days that "Leaving early is the safest option for your survival". The RFS also say that "a Total Fire Ban is declared for days when fires are likely to escape and be difficult to contain. This is caused by a combination of dry vegetation and hot, dry, windy weather." It would seem the context of their advice is for people living or working in Bushfire prone areas; how much more should we heed this advice in a nylon tent?



"The number of major fires per decade recorded on the Wikipedia... The line shows the global temperature anomaly, and the arrow marks the point when scientists first began warning that excessive fossil fuel use would warm the globe."  
Philip Zylstra

**What is a Bushfire danger rating?** It is a forecast of a potential fires behaviour, the difficulty of suppressing a fire, and the potential impact on the community should a bush fire occur on a particular day. The rating ranges from low-moderate for days where fires are likely to be slow moving and easy to control - to Catastrophic for those days where a fire will be unbelievably hot, fast-moving and uncontrollable (think Canberra 2003 and Victoria 2009).

**What is a Total Fire Ban day?** It is a day where open fires are banned by the RFS Commissioner. The ban is put in place to limit the number of fires that escape and threaten life, property and the environment, especially on days when it is very hot, dry and windy. This means that it is illegal to use portable camping stove on a bushwalk, including inside a tent.



Fire danger ratings and Total Fire bans are usually announced at about 5 pm the day before they come into effect. Some park managers will close track and trails during total fire bans. Park managers may not get closure information on their website for several hours after the announcement, if at all. Bushwalkers need to be proactive about our safety and chase the information when we need to make a decision, not leaving it up to chance.

It is safest to first assume you will cancel your walk on days of total fire ban as well as on severe, extreme or catastrophic fire danger rating. If you think it still safe to continue then chat with the park manager to see what they say, they may also think that the specific conditions means that the planned walk is still safe to go ahead. Fire Danger Rating regions cover a large area, therefore due to local conditions some sections may have a lower risk than the whole region - but it is important that we seek advice from the park managers who have a broader knowledge of the conditions, fuel loads and other activities in the park.

On days of Extreme or Catastrophic Fire Danger Ratings the weather conditions will be uncomfortable and the risk from fire will be very significant. I would recommend you postpone your walk even if the park remains open - it is just not worth the risk.

On longer multiday trips this obviously becomes more challenging. Carry non-cook meals and wa-

ter purification systems that do not require a stove. Always register your walking plan with local Police or NPWS office. If there is a significant risk of fire during your walk and it is possible to leave the walk early, then this is the safest option. If leaving bushfire-prone area is not possible then ensure you consider the safest areas for retreat and possible shelter from radiant heat. Stay alert to weather conditions and keep an eye out for any sign of fire. Check the local fire website if in mobile phone range or monitor local ABC radio stations for emergency broadcasts.

Phone for help or use your PLB if there is a threat of grave and imminent danger. Do not presume that rescue can make it in time. Rescue is challenging in high winds and when resources are stretched.

If you are in doubt play it safe: there are another 51 weekends in the year. Equally, don't let this scare you off - pick the days and have alternative activities planned during fire seasons. Wild places by their nature present risks, let's take them seriously but still enjoy these amazing places at the right times.

Matt McClelland

This article is adapted from an article Matt wrote for the NSW National Parks Association journal 'Nature NSW' December 2013.



# TOTAL FIRE BAN



## Helpful links

Please check weather, park closure, fire bans and fire danger rating before setting off for your walk. Each state and territory has different rules for what is allowed on a total fire ban. Please check your state fire agency and parks manager for local information.



## Weather forecasts - Australia wide

<http://www.bom.gov.au/>

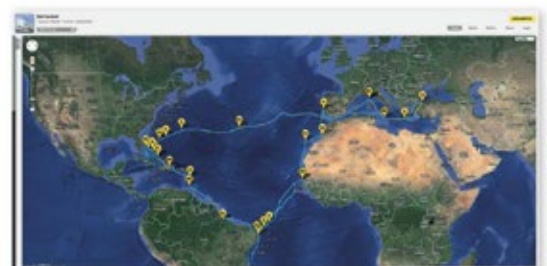
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## FIRE DANGER RATING table

FDR	Likely Fire Behaviour	Impact Potential	Your Action
<b>CATASTROPHIC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires will be uncontrollable, unpredictable and very fast moving. Highly aggressive flames extending high above trees and buildings.</li> <li>Thousands of embers will be violently blown around starting more fires up to 20 km ahead of the main fire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire can threaten suddenly, without warning and be incredibly hot and windy making it difficult to see, hear and breathe as the fire approaches.</li> <li>People in the path of the fire will almost certainly die, or be injured and significant numbers of homes and businesses destroyed or damaged.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that your survival is the primary consideration in any decision.</li> <li>The safest option is for you and your family to leave early, hours or the day before a fire occurs.</li> <li>Under no circumstances will it be safe to Stay and Defend.</li> <li>Ensure you stay well informed of current fire activity by monitoring local media and regularly checking for updates on the RFS website or Information Line.</li> </ul>
<b>EXTREME</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires will likely be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving with flames in the tree tops, and higher than roof tops.</li> <li>Thousands of embers will be blown around and into homes causing other fires to start and spread quickly up to 6 km ahead of the main fire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire can threaten suddenly, without warning and it will be very hot and windy making it difficult to see, hear and breathe as the fire approaches.</li> <li>There is a likelihood that people in the path of the fire will die, or be injured and many homes and businesses destroyed or damaged.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that your survival is the primary consideration in any decision.</li> <li>Leaving early (hours before) will always be the safest option for you and your family</li> <li>If your Bush Fire Survival Plan includes the decision to Stay and Defend, only do so if your home is well prepared, specifically designed and constructed for bush fire and you are currently capable of actively defending it.</li> <li>Stay well informed of current fire activity by monitoring local media and regularly checking for updates on the RFS website or Information Line.</li> </ul>
<b>SEVERE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires will likely be uncontrollable and fast moving with flames that may be higher than roof tops.</li> <li>Expect embers to be blown around and into homes causing other fires to start and spread up to 4 km ahead of the main fire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire can threaten suddenly, without warning and be very hot and windy which will make it increasingly difficult to see, hear and breathe as the fire approaches.</li> <li>There is a chance lives may be lost and people injured and expect that some homes and businesses will be destroyed or damaged.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that your survival is the primary consideration in any decision.</li> <li>Leaving early (hours before) is the safest option for you and your family.</li> <li>Follow your Bush Fire Survival Plan.</li> <li>If your Bush Fire Survival Plan includes the decision to Stay and Defend, only do so if your home is well prepared, and you are currently capable of actively defending it.</li> <li>Stay informed of current fire activity by monitoring local media and regularly checking for updates on the RFS website or Information Line.</li> </ul>
<b>VERY HIGH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires can be difficult to control and present a very real threat.</li> <li>Embers may be blown around homes causing other fires to occur up to 2 km ahead of the main fire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire can threaten suddenly, without warning and it may be hot and windy and it may become difficult to see, hear and breathe as the fire approaches.</li> <li>Loss of life or injury is unlikely though some homes and businesses may be damaged or destroyed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that your survival is the primary consideration in any decision.</li> <li>Be prepared to implement your Bush Fire Survival Plan.</li> <li>Stay informed of current fire activity by monitoring local media and regularly checking for updates on the RFS website or Information Line.</li> </ul>
<b>HIGH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires can be controlled but still present a threat.</li> <li>Embers may be blown ahead of the fire and around homes causing other fires to occur close to the main fire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire may threaten suddenly and without warning.</li> <li>Loss of life is highly unlikely and damage to homes and businesses limited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure your family, home and property is well prepared for the risk of bush fire.</li> <li>Review and practice your Bush Fire Survival Plan.</li> <li>Monitor local media for fire activity and regularly check the RFS website or Information Line.</li> </ul>
<b>LOW-MODERATE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires can be easily controlled but can still present a threat.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little or no risk to life or homes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure your family, home and property is well prepared for the risk of bush fire.</li> <li>Review and practise your Bush Fire Survival Plan.</li> <li>Refer to the RFS website or Information Line for changes in fire activity.</li> </ul>

For more information check

[http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/file\\_system/attachments/Attachment\\_FireDangerRating.pdf](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/file_system/attachments/Attachment_FireDangerRating.pdf)





A documentary directed by Laura Zusters on the 1957 Leura Fire.





# BURNT AGAIN!

Steve Alton

The fragility of our burnt landscape immediately after fire, and for as long as it takes for widespread rain, is often misunderstood. It is a dangerous place, with metre deep (or more) ash-pits, falling trees and branches, unstable rock surfaces. Once familiar routes may be hazardous, steps and stairs burnt or damaged, bridges gone, signposts incinerated. It is also a place where we can wonder at the fire-adapted evolutionary miracle that surrounds us.

The ashes of recent bushfires lie thick on the ground. Grotesque twisted stems protrude, and thick gum trees are silhouetted sharply against rocks blackened with soot. Here and there the fire has had such intensity that the ground itself has erupted. As what little moisture contained was explosively heated, released and vapourised. Some rock surfaces are exfoliated, destroying the hard exposed surface accreted over decades. Trees that have survived many fires (and the increase of regular burning contributes to this), may have extensive hollowed roots as well, some providing refuge for animals. These tunnels can burn underground in intense bushfires, so that eventually the tree will fall. It can take some time; regrowth can increase its lop-sided weight; and the tree will fall without warning a considerable time after fire. Similarly in the trees limbs, hollow branches are burnt out and already fallen, or left hanging as "widow makers"; waiting to fall in the slightest wind, or when rain increases the unsustainable weight. Most fire-fighting injuries are sustained in mop-up operations from these sometimes invisible weaknesses in trees.

When burnt our tough Australian bush is at its most vulnerable. Over thousands of hectares, animals have dispersed or suffered; vast insect populations have been wiped from the food chain, birds now desert the leafless trees, carnivores, after their initial feast on carcasses, will have to search further and further for food. Given time, things will improve, until then the burnt forest is in a very delicate state.

Within this chaos of charcoal and ash are dormant seeds, and the stumps and trunks of plants that have evolved strategies to survive. The eucalypt forest that covers the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage

Area is renowned for adaptation to bushfire over millennia. Only a few of the 100 or so gum trees that grow here have little or no resistance to fire. Thick insulating bark protects some trees, some revive by growing shoots from epicorms, (on the trunk and branches) lignotubers (modified stem or root at the soil surface or below) or rhizomes (roots well below ground level), even a spate of flowering of some plants can begin within weeks of the fire passing. Other species also have resistance or reliance on fire, or require heat, smoke or fertile ash-beds to regenerate. Acacia seeds require the intensity of fire to breach the hard woody shell of their seed, Banksia crack open thick follicles and release winged seed to float onto the bare ground, pink fannel-flowers *Actinotus forsythii* germinate profusely when soaked in bushfire smoke infused rain! Rain can be a blessing, but heavy rain will scour away the unprotected soil, washing soil, nutrients and seeds away, leaving bare unprotected areas.

Some species are killed by fire, but their seeds are not, and if enough time elapses between fires to grow again to maturity and set seed itself, the species will survive. Species decline from fire depends on the interval between fires. Burnt too often and some species will never return. Weed introduction at this vulnerable time can take a heavy toll, often out-competing native species. The time taken to fully revive the landscape must be measured in years or decades.

It all takes time.

During the fire much of the biomass is incinerated; nutrients like nitrogen (essential for green plant growth) are turned to gas and disappear in smoke, potash (essential to strong cellular development of plants) is found in abundance in the fine charcoal, and other essential elements are either concentrated or lost. Some of our plants, notably Acacias, have soil microbe associations in their roots that produce nitrogen and release it into the soil. Sometimes called pioneer plants, as they are often first to re-grow, these plants improve the soil and provide the cover essential for slower germinating plants to survive. Even in our sandy nutrient deficient soils, the mecha-



nisms to survive fire are subtle, complex and overall successful. Grass trees are stimulated by fire that completely destroys their long delicate leaves and their tall flower spikes appear a few months after fire. Fungus especially become more apparent across a range of habitats as there is little to hide the fruiting bodies from sight. Bright green ferns sprout from rock crevices, their tough roots protected by rock or buried deep in the soil. It could be some months before NPWS encourage visitors to return to burnt areas. (You can get all the info at [www.nswnationalparks.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nswnationalparks.nsw.gov.au)). Assessment of track infrastructure, and vigilance about dangerous trees near tracks and camping areas will be foremost, but it really widespread and gentle rain that restores the natural world. If you are visiting an area that has been recently burnt and re-opened to visitors, please keep to marked tracks. Don't damage

the track edges; many seedlings and sprouts will emerge if undisturbed. Keep out of burnt areas, trees will continue falling for a long time, there are still deep ash-pits where hollow stumps have burnt without a trace, and fragile soils that need your protection.

It's just the beginning of the fire season, and we have seen tragedy and loss across the villages of the Blue Mountains and elsewhere. Our landscape has evolved with fire as a component since time unremembered, and the natural regenerative processes resulting from what looks like annihilation proceed at their own pace.

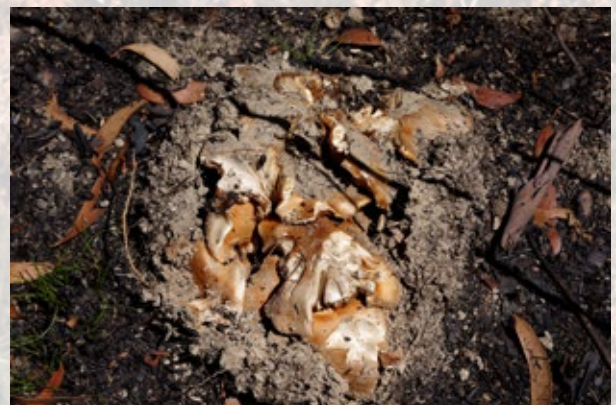
Keep safe and enjoy the renewal and revival of an ancient diverse and beautiful landscape.

Steve Alton

Steve has lived in the Blue Mountains for 25 years, exploring the landscape and sharing it with visitors from around Australia and the world. "I think the tradition of bushwalking was born here, in the way that bushwalkers respect the environment, and come back and enjoy it over and over: The Blue Mountains really is a natural wonderland made for bush-walking"

### News just in

Just before publishing this edition, Steve sent through this image of the fungus starting to emerge. You can see that some animals are already feeding on it - all along Hat Hill Road.





## Leave No Trace Australia For Summer:

# MINIMISE THE IMPACT OF FIRE

Sam Price - Rees



Minimising the impact of fires is one of the Leave No Trace programs key messages.

Australia is one of the most fire prone continents (Russell-Smith 2007). Although fire is a natural environmental variable over most of the country and plays a critical role in many ecosystems, fires that are carelessly or accidentally started can have devastating consequences, resulting in the critical loss of natural habitat, wildlife, property and human life. The four leading causes of bushfires are:

- 1) lightning strikes;
- 2) deliberate lighting – arson;
- 3) human carelessness, such as from discarded cigarette butts, escapes from campfires, backyard burning or BBQs;
- 4) accidents, such as vehicle fires (Davies 1997).

Although it is not possible to completely eradicate bushfires due to natural occurrences, we can significantly minimise the number of human-caused wildlife by increasing our awareness and changing our behaviour when taking part in outdoor activities.

Campfire escapes are much more common than we realise, and even when they turn into very significant, damaging, costly events, their causes are only accorded a passing reference.

“Some areas are simply not suitable for camp fires. Many alpine areas, places with peat or other organic soils, and most rainforest areas, have developed largely in the absence of fire. Such places can be very fire sensitive. For example many of Tasmania’s alpine pines, such as Pencil pines and King Billy pines, have

been destroyed by fire, and will never regenerate. Even in other areas firewood collection causes habitat destruction and can leave campsites denuded and ugly. The use of fuel stoves is our best safeguard against doing such damage to our beautiful bush.”

Wildfire burns thousands of square kilometres of bush each year in Australia. Large uncontrolled bushfires started unintentionally or accidentally during hot, dry windy periods can spread rapidly and have devastating outcomes. Some examples include:

- Over the holiday period in January this year more than 50 bushfires were started in the Boroondara, WA region from unattended campfires.
- St Mary’s, south-east of Launceston, Tasmania, January 2007 was deliberately lit. Over \$80 million was paid out for just the private assets destroyed.
- The 2005 Mitchell Plateau fire in the Kimberly burnt for six weeks, across a vast area and impacting wildlife and ecosystems that are already under pressure from enormous “threatening processes”.

In United States there was a massive fire in Yosemite National Park, August 2013. It was likely started by a hunter who allowed an illegal fire to escape.

Along with the destructive nature of wildfires, the natural appearance of many recreation areas has been compromised by the careless use of campfires and the demand for firewood. Campfires are beautiful by night. The enormous rings of soot-scarred rocks – overflowing with ashes, partly burned logs, food and rubbish – are unsightly by day. Surrounding areas get stripped of their natural beauty and vital habitats as every scrap of dry wood and sometimes live wood has been collected and torched. Rocks end up permanently blackened and removed from their ecological function as shelters for small creatures.

One of the easiest steps you can take to prevent fire impacts is to choose to use a fuel stove:

Some of us grew up with the tradition of campfires. But they are no longer essential for comfort or food



preparation. Many lasting impacts associated with campfires can be avoided by using lightweight stoves, fire pans, mound fires and other Leave No Trace techniques. Fuel stoves should be the preferred option. Consider alternatives for creating an ambient atmosphere such as using candles (if there is no fire ban).

**If you do choose to have a campfire,** the following need to be considered:

#### Check local regulations and conditions

- Check fire restrictions, regulations and permits for the area you plan to visit. Are you permitted to have a campfire? Is it a day of Total Fire Ban?
- Some areas may be “Fuel stove only” where it is prohibited to build a campfire
- Judge the wind, weather, location and wood availability and then decide whether it's safe and responsible to build a campfire
- *Never* leave your fire unattended – look after your fire constantly.

#### Always use existing fire rings – keep fires small

- Smaller fires will have less impact and are easier to manage
- Bring a fire pan or set aside time to build a mound fire in places where there are no fire rings or grates

#### Use dead and fallen wood

- Ask yourself if the wood you are using comes from a sustainable yield
- Don't snap branches off trees, either living or dead, because this scars them. Use only sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand
- Larger pieces of wood play an important and unique role in nutrition, water cycling, and soil productivity. They provide shelter for wildlife such as lizards and, while decaying, germination sites for many plant species. When near the ocean, use driftwood if it's available.
- Smaller firewood and wood that breaks easily will burn completely to ash, which makes the clean up easier. Half-burned logs present a disposal problem – and often a disagreeable sight for the next campsite visitor
- In natural areas, gather firewood on the way to your camp so that there is less impact on a particular

site and the area around your site retains a natural appearance.

#### Do not transport wood across country

- Transporting wood over long distances can spread seeds, weeds and other pests

#### Managing and cleaning-up of your campfire

- Bring a trowel or small shovel and a container for saturating the ashes with water.
- Saturate the ash with water, and stir the remains so that all the ash is exposed to water - make sure it's cool to the touch, and remove any rubbish
- Don't try to burn foil-lined packets, leftover food, or other rubbish that would have to be removed later
- Burn the wood completely to ash - stop feeding the fire, and give yourself an hour or more to add all the unburnt stick ends
- Scatter all the ashes widely with a small shovel or pot lid
- Restore the appearance of the fire site
- In popular areas, leave a single, small, clean rock ring centred in the campsite. Dismantle and clean up any extra fire rings. If a fire grate is present, don't build or use a rock ring. Leave the grate clean and ready for the next person. In remote natural areas, clean up thoroughly and disguise the fire site to make it appear as natural and untouched as possible.

Dr Sam Price-Rees

Leave No Trace Australia Education  
Training Program Manager  
Sam@LNT.org.au

#### References:

<http://www.lnt.org.au/>

Davies C (1997) Analysis of Fire Causes on or Threatening Public Land in Victoria. 1976/77-1995/96, Research Report No 49, Fire Management Branch, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Victoria, October.

Russell-Smith J, Yates CP, Whitehead PJ, Smith R, Craig R, Allan GE, Thackway R, Frakes I, et al. (2007) Bushfires 'down under': patterns and implications of contemporary Australian landscape burning. *International Journal of Wildland Fire* 16, 361–377. doi:10.1071/WF07018



# ACT LOCAL

“Gordonvale is an integral part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and, in my opinion, contributes to all four of the natural criteria for which the TWWHA was listed by UNESCO. At the time the TWWHA was listed it satisfied more criteria than any other property in the world.”

Peter Bosworth, Chair - TLC Conservation Science and Planning Council



# GORDONVALE SECURED FOR PERMANENT PROTECTION

Jane Hutchinson

The Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC) is a not-for-profit environmental organisation. We raise funds from the public to protect irreplaceable sites and ecosystems by buying and managing private land in Tasmania.

We have achieved an important conservation win by securing the wild and remote property of Gordonvale as a strategic addition to Tasmania's network of private protected areas. Gordonvale is our twelfth permanent reserve and a very important addition to the TLC's reserve portfolio.

Eleven of our reserves complement existing protected area, providing permanent refuge for a total of 51 threatened animal and plant species and 889 hectares of threatened vegetation communities through this acquisition system. The TLC currently has a network of twelve permanent reserves across Tasmania, protecting globally significant values on ecosystems ranging from estuarine wetlands, coastal woodlands and wet forests to high altitude grasslands and sphagnum peat lands.

The TLC acknowledges the Tasmanian Aborigines as the traditional owners of the land now known as 'Gordonvale'. It is the traditional home territory of the Pangerninghe clan of the Big River nation.

This small parcel of land is a place of global significance. When the opportunity arose to acquire the 80 hectare property, we knew instantly it fitted strategically into our overall, long-term conservation science goals.

The TLC has long identified Gordonvale as a World Heritage gem, one of only a few private properties included in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA), completely surrounded by the Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park. Securing Gordonvale for conservation makes a very important contribution to protecting the integrity of the TWWHA as a whole.

By acquiring the freehold title to Gordonvale and entering it into the National Reserve System, the TLC has ensured ongoing integrity of the TWWHA.

Gordonvale is flanked by the spectacular vistas of Great Dome and Wylds Craig. Vegetation at Gordonvale is predominantly buttongrass moorland with emergent shrubs, surrounded by patches of rainforest with elements of old-growth forest. This environment is habitat for some of Tasmania's iconic fauna, including the threatened Tasmanian devil and Tasmanian ground parrot.

We were presented with the opportunity to buy Gordonvale when the Polin Estate became available on the open market. Martin Polin bought 23 properties across Tasmania, including Gordonvale. He enlisted real estate agents to purchase remote wilderness properties that came onto the market in the 1980s and Gordonvale was the only one of his Tasmanian properties that he never set foot on.

When setting foot on the property now, it is clear that the site has strong cultural and heritage values. For 18 years it was the home of legendary Tasmanian, Ernie Bond. Its unique history of post-European settlement qualifies the property for registration in the Tasmanian Historic Archaeological Sites Catalogue. Though the remnants of Ernie's settlement have largely been reclaimed by vegetation, heritage values include ruins of the main house, office, bunk house, cement pad and bakery as well as remnants of floors and footings.

The incredible history of Ernie Bond's years at Gordonvale was brought into focus through people's accounts during our efforts to raise funds for this reserve. We heard some ripping yarns over a cup of tea about the enigmatic Ernie Bond, who shared his hospitality (including wallaby stew, homegrown vegetables and brew!) with bushwalkers passing through.

We have made some very special new connections over the past months with family members of Ernie Bond, bushwalkers and descendants of Gordonvale enthusiasts. They have generously shared diary excerpts, historical newspaper clippings, images and stories with us. These anecdotes have made the journey to protecting Gordonvale so much richer and some can be found on our website at [www.tasland.org.au](http://www.tasland.org.au).



The TLC's Conservation Science and Reserve Management teams confirmed the significance of the site through a property visit in 2012. Now that we have it safely secured, our team of conservation scientists will develop a Reserve Management plan for effective conservation management of Gordonvale. This means that every dollar raised is spent wisely on protecting the wonderful plants and animals that live on and around the property.

Because of its high altitude, responsible management of the property is critically important in light of the effects of climate change. This also means working collaboratively with our neighbours to protect the surrounding World Heritage Area.

In Hobart on 27 September 2013 the TLC celebrated the success story of Gordonvale with supporters and friends, including some of Ernie Bond's descendants.

Gordonvale is an important and inspiring place. It has opened up opportunities for engagement between the TLC and those with a special connection to Gor-

donvale and has affirmed the obvious link between the work of the TLC and the bushwalking community.

Thank you to all who joined our efforts to protect Gordonvale, forever. We hope to cross paths many more times.

If you want to find out more about the TLC, please call us on (02) 6225 1399 or go to [www.tasland.org.au](http://www.tasland.org.au)

Jane Hutchinson

Chief Executive Officer

Tasmanian Land Conservancy



L to R: Ernie Bond, Mrs Seager, Jeannette Cox, Mary Harrisson, Cecily Thwaites, Rhona Warren, Sheila Brough, Brian New, Ernie Bond Jnr, Emery Theirjung, sundry in shadow, Chris McDougall & old retainer – Bill Morgan



# MAGAZINES



Issue Nov-Dec 2013:

- Taking the high route in NZ's Douglas Range
- Through-hiking Te Araroa
- Kayaking Lake Taupo
- High-flow canyoning
- Tooma Huts track notes
- Tried & Tested: Boots

Coming soon: The Kimberley, Gammon Ranges, Vanuatu

Price: \$47.95 for one-year

Offer: Buy a gift subscription, get 6 months free for yourself (ends Dec 25th)

Subscribe Link: <http://www.wild.com.au/subscribe>



AG Outdoor Nov-Dec 2013 is on sale from November 6:

- Top 20 Summer Escapes - from trekking to sea kayaking
- Triple treat - Explore Tasmania than by bike, kayak or on foot
- Trunk trails - You jump on board this mountain bike tour of Botswana!
- Ultra mad - a trail running torture test as athletes cross the island's rugged terrain over two days. An amazing event.
- Patriotic duty - most memorable walking trails the world has to offer.
- The Mourn march - walking to the top of 15 peaks within 12 hours
- Treasure island - Samoa - packed with adventure activities.
- Behind the brand: Patagonia - Read all about this iconic adventure brand's amazing history and its incredible commitment to our planet's environment.
- Gear Tests - detailed reviews on a wide range of outdoor equipment.
- Outdoor in focus - Learn foolproof camera techniques from award-winning adventure photographer Bill Hatcher.

For even more adventure, see [www.agoutdoor.com](http://www.agoutdoor.com) or Facebook:

Australian Geographic Outdoor.



The Great Walks Dec-Jan issue showcases

- The country's best summer walking trails. Destinations include South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula, Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, Kangaroo Valley in NSW and Rottnest Island, just off Perth.
- We then cross the ditch to do some of the Lord of the Rings walks, just in time for the new Hobbit film.
- Our Christmas gift guide showcases the best outdoor gear you could get a loved one - or buy for yourself!
- We also look at overnight hiking gear for three budgets
- Head to the Sunshine State to attend the Great Queensland Bushwalk.

Check out more on: <http://www.greatwalks.com.au/>



# PHOTO GALLERY





# BWA Photo Competition

"No man has the right to dictate what other men should perceive, create or produce, but all should be encouraged to reveal themselves, their perceptions and emotions, and to build confidence in the creative spirit."

Ansel Adams 1902-1984





# Other States

## December 2012

### WINNER



Taranaki emerges  
Tom Brennan

Tom is a Sydney-based bushwalker and canyoner, who mostly enjoys off-track and exploratory canyoning in the depths of Wollemi. While he takes a lot of photos on these trips, they don't tend to be that conducive to lugging an SLR and several lenses around. It's nice to occasionally do something a little easier, and take the opportunity to do some "serious" photography.

Taranaki is impressive by day, but with a bit of moonlight and snow on top it really stands out. This shot was taken around 10:30pm at night, just as the last light of sunset was fading and the stars were emerging. I wasn't as dedicated as the other photographer I was with - he was out until midnight!

Canon 650D, 10-22mm lens, f/3.5, 30s, ISO800, 10mm



Storming Bimberi  
North-north-west



So this is Christmas, and what  
have you done? (walked to  
Blue Lake actually!)  
Ian Smith



Royston Head  
Brian Eglinton



A refreshing summer spot be-  
low retreating Numantia Falls  
John Walker



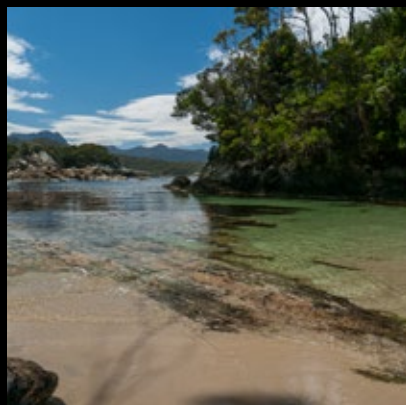




# Tasmania

## December 2012

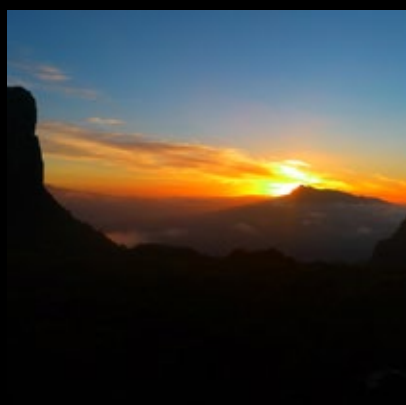
### WINNER



Paradise Found  
Dan Broun

Dan Broun is a filmmaker based in Hobart, as a keen bushwalker and enthusiastic amateur landscape photographer he has more than enough subject matter on his doorstep for more than one lifetime. Dan enjoys all environments while walking from the coast to the mountains, any natural environment inspires him to take more images and explore more of Tasmania.

This image was taken on a filming trip to the far south coast of Tasmania. Transport was via an old Huon Pine abalone boat that left Dover at 3am, the conditions were remarkable as the old boat chugged around SE Cape the sun rose over the rarest of conditions. Taking in the views of Precipitous Bluff, Federation Peak and The Ironbounds from the water was a true privilege. Filming was done at Little Deadmans Bay and once complete a 30-odd minute walk bought the small party to this remarkable cove that not only provides this stunning view but also a cave containing ancient artwork. A day that will last with Dan forever.



Sunrise over Mount Weld  
Doogs



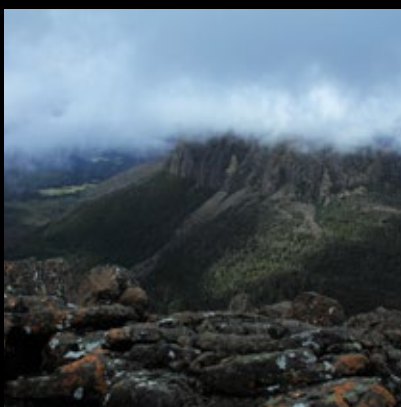
First Light Lake Ball  
Tigercat



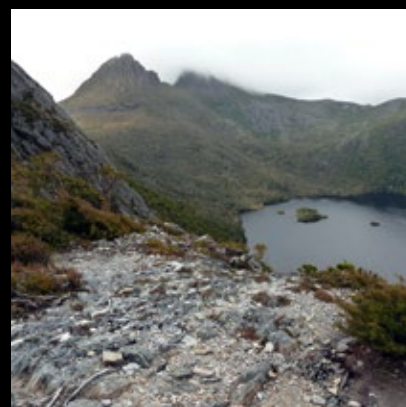
Descending to Dove Lake  
Louise Fairfax



Hiding in a Wild Rivers Forest  
Peter Grant



A brief lifting of cloud,  
Castle Crag  
North-north-west



The Little Horn  
ILUVSWTAS







# Landscapes

## December 2012

### WINNER



The mountain under the stars  
Tom Brennan

Tom is a Sydney-based bushwalker and canyoner, who mostly enjoys off-track and exploratory canyoning in the depths of Wollemi. While he takes a lot of photos on these trips, they don't tend to be that conducive to lugging an SLR and several lenses around. It's nice to occasionally do something a little easier, and take the opportunity to do some "serious" photography.



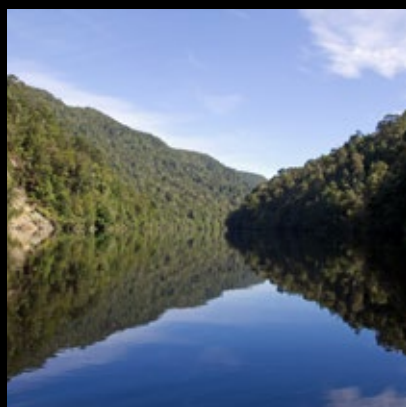
Scorapia and Anne  
Doogs



Innes coastal stack  
Brian Eglinton



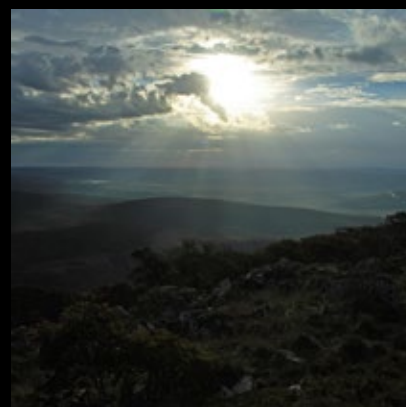
From the Sea  
Dan Broun



Gordon River Reflections  
Peter Grant



Marriotts Falls  
John Walker



Breakthrough  
North-north-west







# Non-landscapes

## December 2012

### WINNER



Tasmanian forest giants,  
*Eucalyptus regnans*  
John Walker

John is a Sydney-based middle-aged latecomer to bushwalking, having grown up in a family with zero interest in the outdoors. Marrying into similar circumstances John was originally coaxed into the activity by his youngest son Andrew (now an adult). John has been a keen walker for about twelve years as well as a distance runner and road/MTB cyclist in the Sydney region but he endeavours to travel further afield as often as possible.

John has often been impressed by *Eucalyptus regnans*, said to be the tallest flowering plants on earth, having appreciated larger examples both here and in the nearby Styx Valley on previous occasions. On the Tall Trees side loop John noticed the way the light fell on the trees when he looked up on this summer afternoon, which emphasised their scale and majesty. It was also a good opportunity to try and improve his photography skills with a recently acquired micro four thirds format camera.



Beetle Got The Blues  
Peter Grant



Brown cuckoo-dove -  
*Macropygia amboinensis*  
Ian Smith



Last picture on  
a found camera.....  
Doogs



Mugging for the Camera  
North-north-west



Unusual Fungi  
Marco D'Alessandro



Ice colours, Mt Willard (USA)  
Iain D'Amico







# Other States

## January 2013

### WINNER



Moonee Beach nature reserve  
Louise Fairfax

Louise Fairfax (aka Naturelover) has had a variety of roles in life, but perhaps her two best known are as an academic at several different universities, and as Australia's champion mountain runner, with many top world placings. She has also competed for Australia at Orienteering, Triathlon, Duathlon and stair racing. Bushwalking and photography have both been hobbies that began in high school and have lasted for life.

"The photo at Moonie Reserve was taken on the occasion of my god-daughter's wedding. She wanted to be married in a beautiful, wild setting. I had sussed out the photographic possibilities the night before, set my alarm for the next morning and got exactly what I wanted. That day - later - a cyclone blew in, and we had the best fun ever running in monster winds, watching the full might and fury of the ocean beneath us as we traversed the various headlands."



Whaleback Rock - Uloola  
Track, Royal NP NSW  
John Walker



Sluice Box Falls in  
the Budawangs  
Mandy Creighton



Eagle Gorge campsite -  
Kalbarri  
Nicholas Clark



The Aussie Gum  
Brian Eglinton



Reflections  
Wayno







# Tasmania

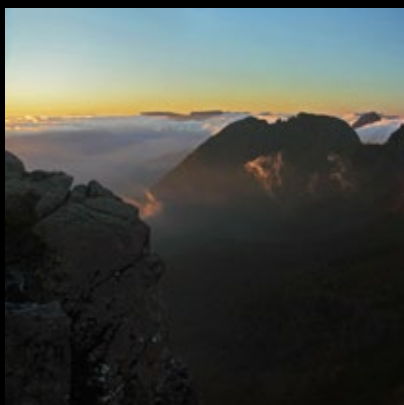
## January 2013

### WINNER

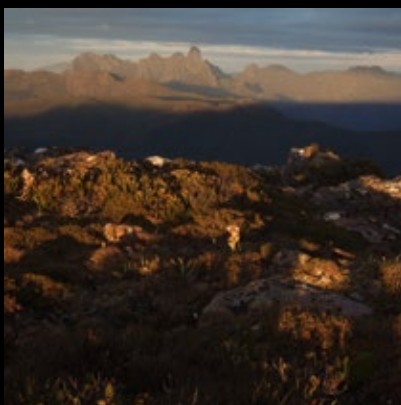


Smokey sunset skies on the  
Prince Of Wales.  
ILUVSWTAS

Mark and the team were on a walk reputed to be the hardest off track walk in Australia, The Prince of Wales range. Hot temperatures and raging bushfires set the scene here on day seven when the skies were alive with colour.



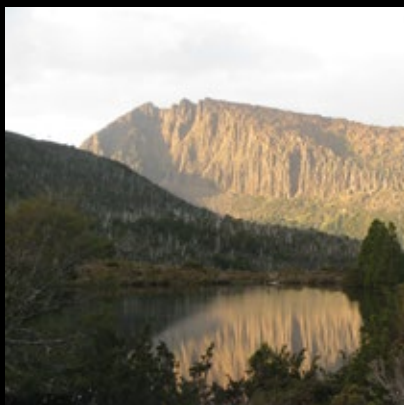
A Massif Morning  
North-north-west



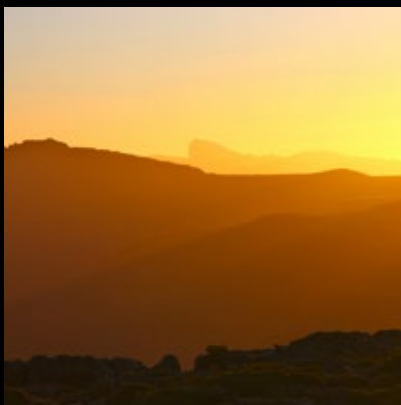
Morning Light on Federation  
Marco D'Alessandro



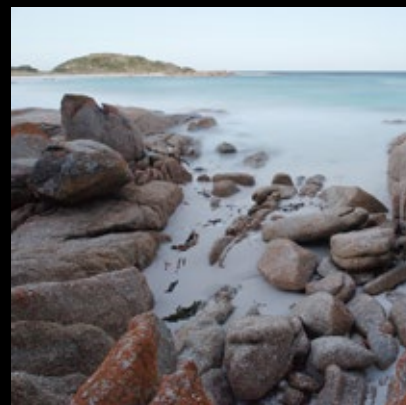
Dracophyllum Milliganii  
on the Tyndalls  
Tigercat



Mt Pelion West  
Roger



Sunset over Frenchman's  
Louise Fairfax



The Gardens  
Nicholas Clark







# Landscapes

## January 2013

### WINNER



Desert coast - West Oz  
Nicholas Clark

Nicholas Clark (aka Nickthetasmatic) lives in the Tamar Valley, and has a fondness for bodyboarding and the odd alpine traverse.

This shot was taken after a day scouring the Kalbarri coastline in search of waves. The tail-end of WA's infamous sea-breeze was whipping up a frenzy and my tripod had to be buried in the soft sand to keep it still, with a five-stop ND filter keeping everything smooth.



Traversing a knife edged ridge  
on the Prince Of Wales Range  
ILUVSWTAS



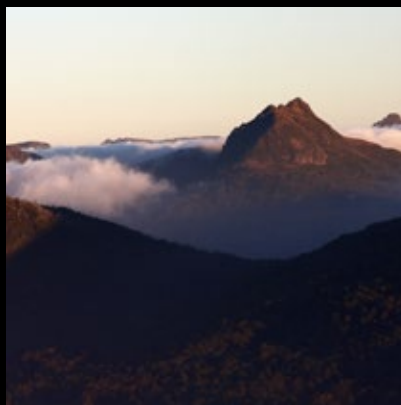
Approaching Diamond Peak  
(Prince of Wales Range)  
MJD



Curtain of light  
Tom Brennan



Morning Colours,  
South West Tasmania  
Marco D'Alessandro

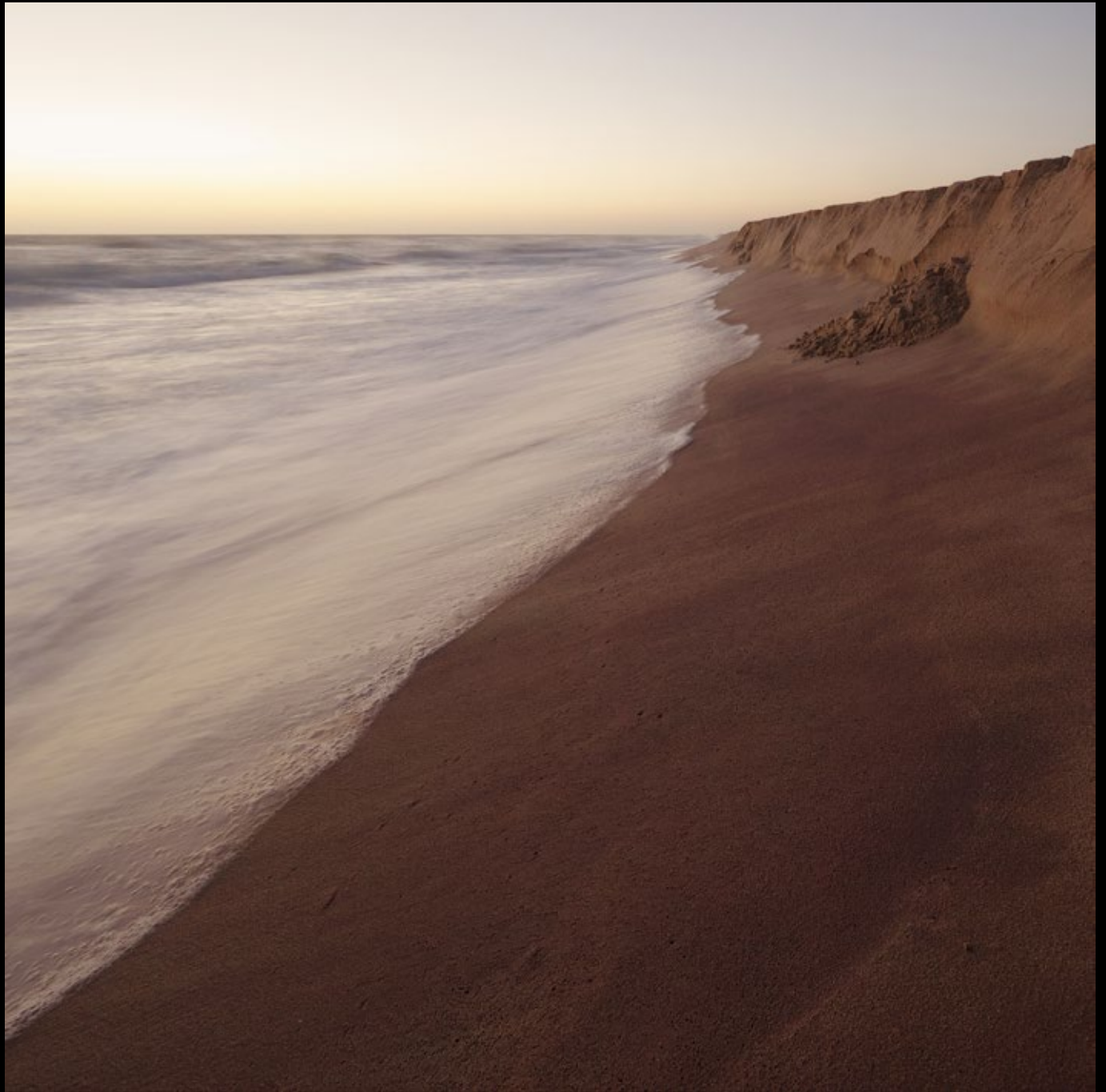


The Acropolis, sunrise  
Louise Fairfax



Sunset Over Sea  
Dan Broun







# Non-landscapes

## January 2013

WINNER



*Eucalyptus coccifera*  
Louise Fairfax

Louise now lives in Tasmania (having moved there to enable better bushwalking), and researches and writes from home. She has a bushwalking blog found at [natureloverswalks.blogspot.com](http://natureloverswalks.blogspot.com) and is currently writing a book.

"I went to Mt Field that autumn specifically to photograph the beautiful fagus (which I did). However, right at the start, by Lake Dobson, this *E. coccifera* just called out to me. I admired its form and the colours enhanced by the mist. It seems the voters did too. On this occasion the wonderful fagus played second fiddle to a Eucalypt."



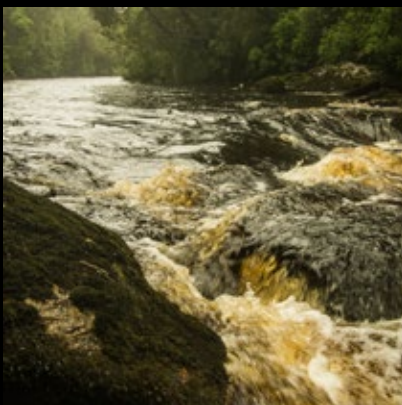
Who are you calling a Daisy?  
I bet you humans couldn't  
survive a winter here  
ILUVSWTAS



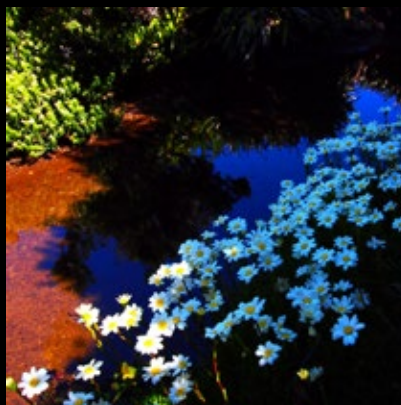
Huon Pine Detail  
Dan Broun



Irises by the Shores of  
Lake Sydney  
Marco D'Alessandro



The Denison and we need to  
be on the other side.  
MJD



Alpine Daisies below Arthur  
Tarn - Hartz Mountains NP  
John Walker



Time to part  
Brian Eglinton







## E-WALKING

Have you ever just heard the name of something, or seen a single image, and really wanted that thing? I heard that a new teacher at my school was taking her class bushwalking: they were going to walk in the Grose River Valley and camp in a tent by a stream, and I was filled with the most terrible longing to be allowed to do that too. Just the very mention of it had me yearning to be there. I was not in her class, but so great was my longing that I persuaded the girls who went to take me there in a repeat edition. My new great hobby was born.





# NATURELOVERSWALKS

by Louise Fairfax

<http://natureloverswalks.blogspot.com/>

In an airline's magazine I saw a single image of a girl orienteering, running through the bush wild and free as a native animal, and I wanted to do that sport. A second great hobby and a whole sporting career was born.

I don't leave home to go to the bush: I come home. That is where I belong.

I am a person who likes to interact with nature, not just stare at it from the safety of a vehicle. As an athlete I was once driven through the Rockies and felt unmoved by them, as they were objects out there. I craved to be let out of the car and walk in them so that distance between me and them could be removed. For when I walk or run through nature, a relationship with that environment is established, often with a very

strong bond, and I want to express that in words or pictures.

It is thanks to my daughters, however, that I have a blogsite. They love my photographs and stories about the bush; my first born gave me the initial impetus, and my second born set it all up for me. I was away.

I have done a fair bit of research into the history of Australian bushwalking, and have concentrated in both my doctoral and post-doc research on our changing relationship to nature on the cusp of modernity (around 1800), examining in particular the works of Goethe and Blake as reflectors and catalysts of the changes in attitude during that era. I was well aware of the role that literature, paintings and photography played in alerting people to a beauty out there that





they may not have been aware of and, more importantly, a beauty that it is vitally important to save while we still have a chance. Paintings by Eugene von Guerard and Eccleston Du Faur helped make Australians more comfortable with a beauty that was to be found here rather than in the “mother country”. As wilderness photographers, Peter Dombrovskis and Olegas Truchanas have been instrumental in making the beauty that is worth saving in Tasmania evident to the wider public who don’t necessarily have the capability or knowledge required to reach our more remote places. Whilst not for a moment placing myself anywhere near these greats (I stand on a stone at lake level while they sit on Olympus), I nonetheless hope that my photos and some of my stories capture not just the grand adventure that is bushwalking, but also the beauty that is to be found in our wilderness areas. My photos are not so much depictions of mountain X or peak Y, but of the splendour of nature.

Quite separate from that (ie, my relationship with nature and a desire to depict it in photos and words), is my project that the blog also records, adventitiously as it were. I will never get to bag all the Tasmanian Abels or to collect all the peak baggers’ points. I don’t believe it’s possible (although I never say ‘never’). So, my immediate rather more conservative project is to climb as many peaks as I can, and to have at least one decent photo and a story connected to every peak I summit. That is a secondary motor for the blog.

(In addition, if anyone wants information on a mountain I have climbed, they can and do contact me for more help, and I give it. This is often done in the forum of Bushwalk Australia).

I’ve only been blogging about two months (most entries have been backdated to when they occurred). In a short space of time, I’ve garnered readers from every continent except Africa, and from a large number of nations spread across the other continents. I have no idea how these people have found me, for, as I’m a new blogger, Google doesn’t automatically call me up (although nowadays you only have to get half my address right to find me). I don’t have contact with any of these people, and yet my optimistic self says that whoever they are, they’re enjoying it or otherwise they wouldn’t be there, and they’re being made aware of the stunning beauty that is to be found on this earth in general, and in the Tassie wilderness in particular – the predominant (but not exclusive) subject of my blogs. I hope when you visit my site you can share in my sense of wonder.





# BUSHWALK.COM CALENDAR 2014



This is a short story on a failed project. I will call it a learning experience and hope I get it right next year. It was still a bit of fun and worth a try.

For the past few years we have done some wonderful print on demand calendars based on photos from our photo comps. People loved these but they are very expensive so not a great number were bought.

We had this great idea of coming up with something new. We designed and printed a 400 page sticky note pad (A6 sized). Each day had a full colour photo from the photo comp and the day's date. It looks beautiful. Each day you tear off one page and stick it on your wall. Each day your wall fills with stunning images of places you would rather (like to) be.

The printing of a well ordered sticky notepad with unique pages seems to be a new idea and technically challenging. After doing a test print run the printers contacted me to say the job would take much longer than expected. There was no way to have them ready for Christmas or even early January. It was fun to give it a try and I think we will give it a shot again next year, but this time start much earlier. Fingers crossed for next year.

Matt :)

# 2014





## GEAR FREAK

OK, so you've got your next bushwalking trip organised, you've decided on the route, got your food dehydrated and meals planned, gear lists done and your backpack is going to be full as a goog. Now you need to consider what you're going to do about drinking water. This will be determined by a number of factors.



# WATER PURIFICATION

## How long is your trip going to be?

If it's only a day walk, most people will probably just carry the day's supply with them from their home drinking source (unless it's really hot and they'll need more water than is easily carried). If it's overnight or several days, then you'll need to source water on the track.

## Is there water available on the track that is drinkable?

If there are treated water points along the way, taps etc in urban fringe bushwalking tracks, or you go via a town or village, then this isn't going to be an issue. Just fill up!

## Are there water sources available that will need to have water treated?

This is usually the case for most bushwalking destinations. Many websites say that drinking water needs

to be carried into popular campsites, even when water is often available. Chat with walkers who have been recently about current water levels. When trip planning you'll need to work out where you may get water from, is it going to be available at that time of the year, what is the likelihood of it being contaminated etc. Guidebooks, track notes and local information from online forums may help you to determine this. Water sources that run off from urban built up areas or farming country are unlikely to be safe to drink untreated. Campsites may have pit toilets that drain into water points, people may not have followed the recommendations to defecate more than 100 metres away from a creek, there may be dead animals in the water source. Some people elect not to treat water at all, eg unspoiled remote walking areas, especially alpine locations.

## How much will you need to carry?

This is a tricky question, and has many determining factors. Most people would probably carry about three



## SODIS - The worlds simplest solar water disinfection system?

Solar Disinfection (SODIS), is a method of disinfecting water using only sunlight and plastic PET bottles. SODIS is a free and effective method for decentralized water treatment, usually applied at the household level and is recommended by the World Health Organization as a viable method for household water treatment and safe storage.



Use clean PET bottles



Fill bottles with water, and close the cap



Expose bottles to direct sunlight for at least 6 hours (or for two days under very cloudy conditions)



Store water in the SODIS bottles



Drink SODIS water directly from the bottles, or from clean cups



litres for a day's walking in a temperate environment. Cooking may require more. If it's hot and exposed and you're in tough terrain you'd need to increase this amount. If it's a wetter environment with plenty of water refill spots then you can carry a lot less - maybe only a couple of 600 ml plastic containers.

Remember every one litre of water is an additional one kilogram of weight - and for the lightweight walkers out there - there is no way to dehydrate water!

### What will you carry your water in?

Hydration packs are a bladder that is situated inside the pack against your back behind the harness system (or hang between the mesh back and your back as in the new Macpac Tasman 45) - and are typically two - three litres capacity. They have a rubbery tubing and a mouth-piece which means you can access water in small amounts by sipping as you go along. It may be hard to assess how much water you drink (and therefore require for a trip) with this method.



Caro Ryan Lotsafreshair.com

Traditionally water has been carried in metal Sigg type bottles, or wide mouthed plastic Nalgene type bottles, but these tend to be bulky and heavy, and when empty, can't be compressed down. These days it's often good to carry the water in the clear collapsible plastic containers such as those made by Platypus and Evernew (this latter brand needs to be sourced from overseas though). They have a lot of sizes ranging from 600 ml up to several litres. You can visualise the water, they are light, and they collapse down well when small. Recycled bottled water containers and wider mouthed Gatorade type bottles are popular - light, cheap, replaceable. Some others like to carry larger amounts in wine cask bladders (I'd worry they may burst!)

### How will you make your water suitable to drink?

I'll go into a bit more detail here. Firstly, what nasties do we need to worry about that are in water? How do we deal with these?

Some things in water are *physical* or *dissolved substances*.

Floating leaves, sticks, mud etc will need to be grossly filtered out by passing the water through a handkerchief or bandanna or coffee filter paper or a commercial prefilter such as those made by Steripen. Tannins are the dissolved products from timber that turn the water brown and give it a strong taste. Some water may have a higher mineral content with dissolved salts that may change the taste, like brackish water. Fertilisers may be present in water from farm runoff. Water may be contaminated from heavy metals from mining activity. Some water purification methods don't remove these, those with activated charcoal filters may remove some.

*Living contaminants* are the ones we're often concerned about avoiding. They will most commonly cause problems such as diarrhoea, but can also affect other organs such as the liver. Many trips have been spoiled by a funny tummy.

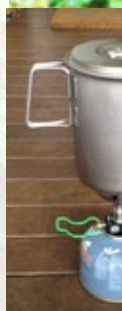
- Viruses such as rotavirus and hepatitis. These are very small and some filters may not remove them.
- Bacteria such as E.Coli, cholera and salmonella are found in the gastrointestinal tract of people and animals and are a common contaminant. They can cause diarrhoea and dysentery, and also systemic (body-wide) effects in some cases. Boiling filtering and chlorine will deal with them.
- Protozoa such as Giardia and Cryptosporidia are enteric organisms of people and animals that have a complex lifecycle, cause diarrhoea and can be difficult to eliminate from the body.
- Nematodes such as schistosomes can not only enter your body via drinking water, but also via skin penetration eg by swimming, these are more of a problem overseas in places like Africa and Asia.

### WATER TREATMENT METHODS:

Boiling, chemical inactivation, filtering and ultraviolet (UV) sterilisation are the main methods I'll outline. E coli and giardia are the most common 'bugs' we tend to worry about

#### Boiling

Boiling has long been used to make water safe to drink. Boiled water does, however, make the water taste 'flat' afterwards, and some people may like to add something like Staminade or Tang or Gatorade





powder afterwards. It's cheap and easy and kills both E coli and giardia.

Boiling - you need to have a rolling boil for one minute, and three minutes if above 2000 metre altitude. The longer time is needed because the boiling point is diminished below 100 degrees Celsius the higher the altitude.

### Chemical Inactivation

NB dirty water will need to be filtered first by some method, as organic substances present in water will inactivate many chemical treatments.

#### Household bleach

Usually 6% sodium hypochlorite

Use the plain stuff, not lemon scented or whatever!

2 drops per litre water (the yanks use 1/4 table spoon per gallon)

4 drops if cloudy

Allow to stand 30 minutes before drinking

NB 20 drops = 1 ml, therefore 1 drop = 0.05 ml (Ask your friendly local veterinarian for a 1 ml syringe)

#### Tincture of Iodine



Often carried in a first aid kit as a disinfectant for wounds

2% formulation

5 drops per litre

10 drops per litre if cloudy

Allow to stand for 30 minutes before drinking

Also available are Coghlan's iodine tablets.

Kills giardia more readily than crypto. Will kill E coli. Disadvantage - horrible smell!

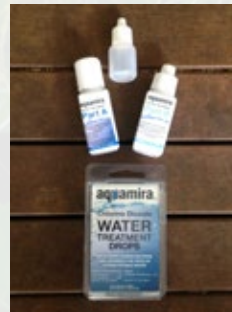
#### Chlorine dioxide tablets



Eg, Katadyn Micropur tablets are effective against viruses, bacteria (30 minutes), but less effective against crypto and giardia (2 hours).

Good as they are small and light, may leave a smell and taste though. Main disadvantage is the time delay between treating and drinking.

### Aquamira drops



Made by McNett. More widely available overseas, but some shops in Australia now stock them. These have become popular recently due to them being small and easily packable. Negligible smell and taste. You can also decant a

small amount out to take with you as needed.

They are a stabilised form of chlorine dioxide in bottle A and an activator in bottle B. You mix seven drops of part A with seven drops of part B. Wait five minutes for the colour change to green/yellow, then add this to litre of water and wait 15-30 minutes. The mix remains stable for about a day before you need to make up a new lot.

### UV radiation

#### Steripen products



The name sounds a bit scary, but it's a safe way to purify water! They are small handheld units that operate electronically to produce ultraviolet light that will sterilize a litre of water in one minute. The probe is placed into the neck of a bottle and a light is observed to indicate when the process has been completed. You need a wide mouthed bottle to do this as they don't fit in a small opening.

They are effective at killing viruses, bacteria and protozoa. A prefilter is recommended for murky water.

They are light and compact, but some people have noted they don't always work in humid environments, and they do require batteries or a method of charging. CR123 batteries are not always widely available, but some can operate off rechargeable lithium batteries, or a USB port via a solar charger. Here's an overview of the various models available: <http://www.steripen.com/products/>



## Filtration



These have pores down to 0.3 micrometres in size, to filter out bacteria and protozoa. They do not filter out viruses, which are much smaller than this. They

can block up, so there needs to be maintenance involving cleaning and backfiltering to maintain their effectiveness. A prefilter to get rid of the obvious large stuff is advised to prolong your device's life. It's good to be able to collect water in a collapsible bucket (like those Sea to Summit make from sil nylon) or one of the collapsible larger Platypus water tanks and let it settle out first, and just filter the top portion. Some of these may be bulky in size in comparison to other water purification methods.

**Katadyn** make various brands of filters for bush-walkers:

<http://www.katadyn.com/en/katadyn-products/products/katadynshopconnect/katadyn-wasserfilter/>

### Sawyer Filtration System



The Sawyer Squeeze Filter System has become popular recently as they are compact and can be integrated into your in pack's in-line hydration system with some available modifications as well as being used alone.

A mini version has recently come on the market which will be popular.

They utilise a filter unit that is attached onto a collapsible bag filled with collected water. The bag is squeezed (hence the name) and the water passes through the filter into another



attached collection bag, or bottle or cup. It's able to be drunk immediately. Some other types of bags

such as the Evernew brand are compatible, Platypus are not.

<http://www.sawyer.com/water.html>

### Seychelle Water Filtration Products



These are a UK company that produces many types of filters for military uses, international aid etc.

Products suitable for bush-walkers include the filter bottles, inline filters, filter straws and the larger gravity filter bags.

<http://store.seychelle.com/>

### Lifestraw Filters

These are particularly good as they are very small and compact and water can be drunk directly from the source. used often by aid agencies but lots of applications in the bush.

<http://www.lifestraw.com.au/page/lifestraw-personal/default.asp>

### Overview

Some considerations to avoid getting sick from contaminated water:

- Always assume water is contaminated if there are towns, industry, farms or mines upstream
- Clear water doesn't necessarily mean safe water - microscopic hidden nasties can lurk in very clean looking water
- Avoid water downstream from popular campsites
- Defecate more than 100 metres away from water sources
- Practice good hand washing hygiene after going to the loo and before eating - clean your hands first, then disinfect
- Collect water, prefilter and stand first for best results
- Follow manufacturer's directions with mixing and time before it's able to be drunk



- Maintenance of filters is needed for optimum use
- Best to bring a backup - 'stuff happens' - things break, get lost, don't work
- Some people never treat their water and never get sick! Others have more sensitive tummies that easily get upset. Anyone with concurrent health problems should always treat water.

#### What do I use?

I'll either use a Sawyer Squeeze filter into Evernew collapsible bottles and 600 ml plastic recyclable bottles, or a Steripen (the one with the USB charger, as I have a solar charger I take on longer trips). With the Steripen I collect water with a small paper cup and tip

it into a wide mouthed soft nalgene bottle, and use the steriliser pen.

We do have a larger Seychelle gravity bag for when the kids come along and we need more water for cooking and cleaning.

I do however always take backup - usually Micro-pur tablets, but I have just recently purchased some Aquamira drops to have a play around with

#### Remember!

If you come into a 'wet camp' (ie one with a water source) and there is still water in your drink bottles - you miscalculated!



Michelle Dore is a 47-year-old veterinarian who lives on the outskirts of Sydney with her bushwalking hubby and two kids who enjoy Scouts, Ventures, abseiling and caving. They're lucky to have the Nattai National Park, the Blue Mountains National Parks and Morton National Park to the south all within easy distance for some great adventures.



## 3 NON COOK MEALS



The evening meal is more than just nutrition. There is comfort in preparing the food and chatting with fellow walkers. It is a chance to debrief and reflect on the day, a chance to be still and feel at home in the wilderness.

On a warm evening a non-cook meal is refreshing and still a great way to wind down from the day.

There are also those days, where you stumble into camp late, feeling - well, tired - and the idea of firing up the stove seems a hassle compared to just crawling into the sleeping bag.

During a total fire ban the risk of a bushfire starting and becoming out of control quickly is very real. For this reason using a camping stove is illegal in some states during TOBANS.

Another great reason for no cook meals is that you can lighten your pack by leaving the stove, fuel and other cooking gear at home.

Share your ideas and suggestions here [[Yummiest - No cook meals](#)]



## COUSCOUS SALAD

In your local cafe you pay a premium for a yummy couscous salad - It is an easy, yummy and light weight meal out in the bush.



You will need to pack:

- 100 grams CousCous (common instant eg San Remo)
- 20 grams of dried peas
- A small (~80 grams) tin of flavoured tuna or chicken

In camp place the couscous and peas in a bowl and pour in enough clean water to cover. Let it rest for about 15 minutes. The peas will still be crunchy, I like crunchy peas - but if you don't, pre-soak the peas for about 20 minutes. Now fluff the couscous using a fork then add your tin of meat. Now sit back and enjoy.

Tips:

- I find this a large meal, I would generally find 80 grams of couscous plenty.
- Much of the flavour comes from the tin, I like more subtle flavours.
- If you prefer lighter, I am happy substituting the tin for a bit of salami...
- Add the couscous and peas to a snaplock bag at home. You can prepare and eat from the bag.
- Add some bonus spices, salt and pepper to flavour as you wish.
- Some salad foods like corn and capsican can dehydrate well and be a nice addition.
- This also works well as a lunch on longer walks.
- Try it at home first.



## WRAPS

Okay, I know this is a lunch thing, but it works well as a evening dinner as well. You can have it as simple as peanut butter, or get a little more adventurous with salami and cheese. Maybe carry a container of antipasto (which also dehydrates well). Instead of traditional bread spreads you can also try dips, same as for the nachos. My friends give me a hard time for this but I like salami, cheese and honey - the salty and sweet work well together. I keep telling my friends not to bag it till you try it :)





## NACHOS

This is really just corn chips and dip. Lightweight, tasty, a surprising amount of energy and a nice treat.

For short walks you may want to carry a fresh dip, otherwise most dips from the supermarket dehydrate easily. Once dehydrated, powder it in a blender (thanks for the tip Mark F). Rehydrates quickly with water and a stir, a splash of oil helps liven it up a bit more.

I tried this on a three day walk, out of curiosity. It was nice to just curl up in my hammock munch on the chips whilst enjoying the nearby creek. I followed it up with a bit of scroggin for desert.

### Other Ideas?

Here are a few other ideas that are worth a try, experiment and see what works for you:

- Instant Rice (cooked, then dehydrated rice - rehydrated in cool water in a few minutes)
- Freeze dried meals -- but add some extra flavouring
- Cold soup - with some bread
- There are lots of heavier options with tinned mince, sausages, spaghetti etc
- Carry some dried fruit (mango & apple) to munch on as a dessert.

### Stoves in Total Fire Bans

During the warmer months Total Fire Bans (TOBANs) will be declared on hot, dry and / or windy days. The rules vary across the country as to what cooking equipment can be used. It is safe to say that campfires are banned during a TOBAN. In NSW the RFS says "Portable gas / electric BBQs are banned in NSW State Forests, National Parks or Regional Parks on Total Fire Ban days"(ref [http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/dsp\\_content.cfm?cat\\_id=1110](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/dsp_content.cfm?cat_id=1110)) ie you can't use camping stoves on bushwalks. In Tassie "Bushwalkers are therefore advised that the only cooking appliance that can be used on Total Fire Ban days are LPG (Butane or Propane) cookers or stoves providing that they are clear of any flammable material for a distance of one metre. Subject to Environmental Regulations & Local Government By-Laws & any restrictions in parks & reserves." ie no method, other than liquid fuel or solid fuel stoves. Keep up to date with the latest rules and fire conditions for the area you are walking in. If you are out of communications and unsure, assume there is a total fire ban declared on hot or warm windy days.









# BUSHWALKING BOOKS

## THE OVERLAND BOOK by Warwick Sprawson

<http://www.overlandguide.com/>  
Printed 2010  
280 grams  
368 x 512 mm  
\$19.95

The Overland Track is Australia's best known bushwalk, for good reason. The walk starts at Cradle Mountain and takes around a week to walk to Lake St Clair, in the heart of Tasmania. The book is subtitled "a complete guide to walking, flora, fauna and history" - although I am cheeky in suggesting that no book could be a complete guide to all these things, I must say Warwick takes a good stab at it. If you are interested in botany then this is the perfect guide book, the track notes detail the vegetation you are walking through and points out significant plants along the way. There is also a significant section dedicated to birds, three snakes and some mammals. You will find colour maps (100 metre contour interval) scattered through the notes and a handy larger waterproof fold out map at the back of the book.

The history section explores the geology as well as the role of Australian Aboriginal people and early Europeans. The book provides very practical help with information on getting to the track, packing lists, walking times and much more. Warwick has squeezed a lot in this book including a good scattering of photos.

Buy Now - available from the author's website or from the Bushwalk shop

A complete guide to walking,  
flora, fauna and history

## The Overland Track

Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair

WARWICK SPRAWSON

PART FIVE — The Track

### TRACK NOTES

#### HOW TO USE THESE NOTES

The track notes are arranged in the most common hut-to-hut sequence, for example Windermere Hut to New Pelion Hut is given as one section, New Pelion Hut to Kia Ora Hut as another. A boxed 'snapshot' at the start of each section contains a summary of the day's walk. Sidetrips, which also begin with a snapshot, are shown in shaded text, as is the alternative start from Dove Lake car park.

The track notes are designed to be read before hikers embark on each section, so as to be aware of the challenges and features of the day's walk. The notes make reference to plants along the track, both as points of interest and as landmarks.

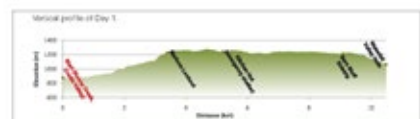
**Flora** in bold type can be found in the flora section. **Fauna** in bold type can be found in the fauna section. Learning a few of these species will add an extra dimension to your understanding and enjoyment of the track. All plants and animals in this book are arranged from smallest to largest, so if you see something new you'll know roughly where to look for it. Also in bold are areas that make particularly good spots for a break.

'Views' are often referred to, which can be exasperating when the track is shrouded in cloud or fog (as it often is) — but if the weather is clear you'll have some guide to the peaks and valleys you're looking at.



Map: Overlooking to north the Annapurna in the snow-chilly haze on late back.

THE OVERLAND TRACK — Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair

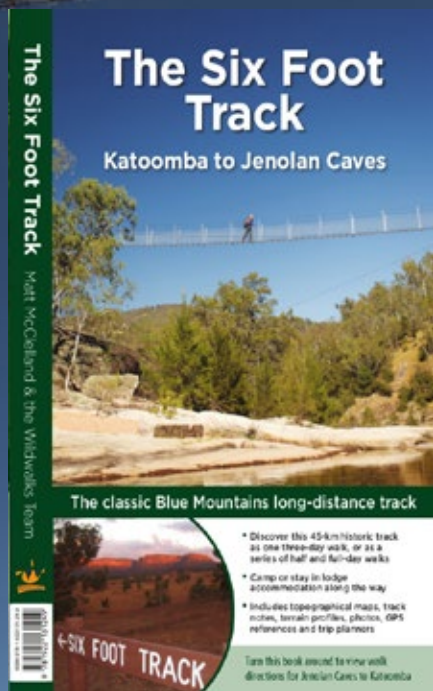




# SIX FOOT TRACK

by Matt McClelland & the Wildwalks Team

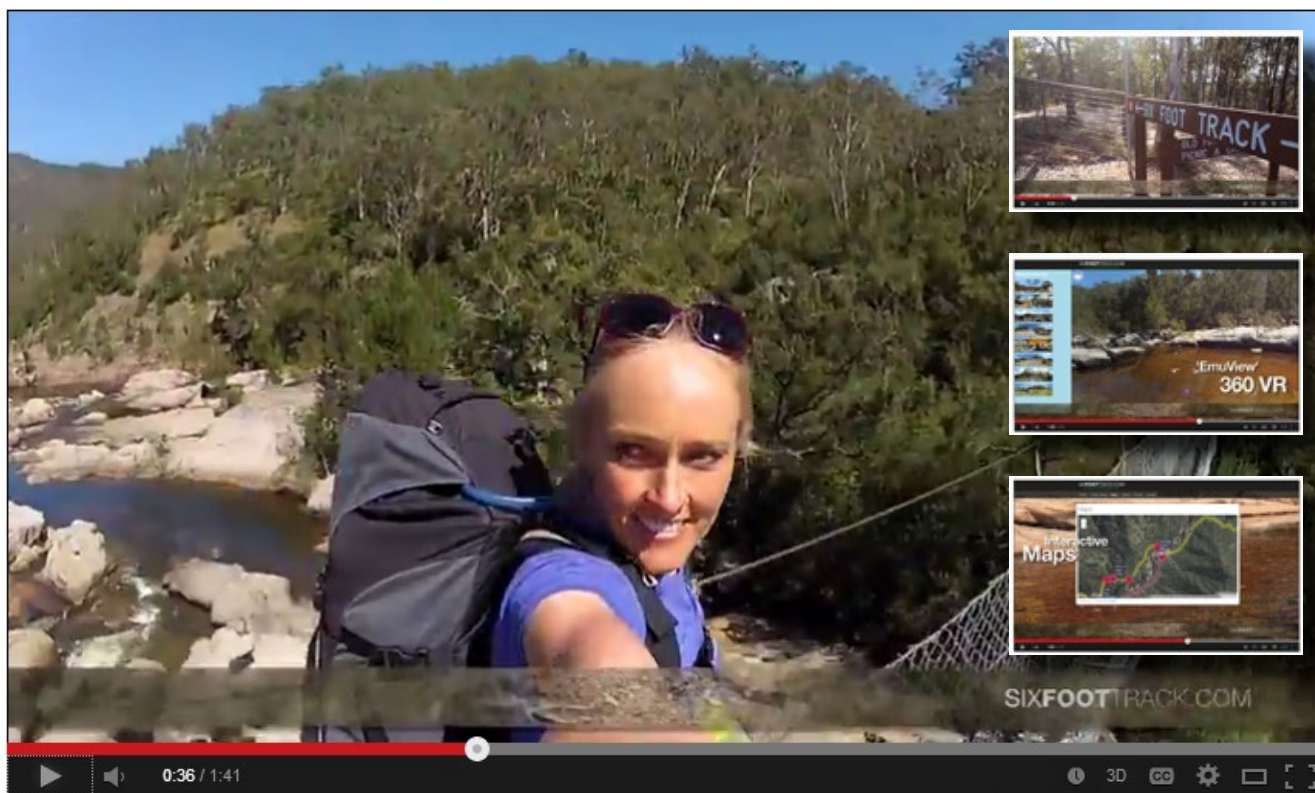
\$19.95



Okay since I wrote the book it seems silly to try to write a review. The Six Foot Track is most likely NSW most popular overnight walk. It is a historic track that links Katoomba to Jenolan Caves.

The book and the website were created as an experiment by Wildwalks (me), Geoffmallo (Geoff) and lotsafreshair (Caro) in an attempt to develop what 'best practise' might look like for a very popular overnight walk. Check out this teaser video, have play with the website and let us know how we can make it better. On the website make sure you check out the videos, maps and emuview. I reckon the book would make a great Christmas present for people in NSW :)

<http://www.sixfoottrack.com>







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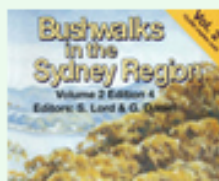


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