



Winter edition

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Bushwalk Australia Magazine  
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Volume 11, June 2015

**"We acknowledge the  
Traditional Owners of this  
vast land which we explore.  
We pay our respects to their  
Elders, past and present,  
and thank them for their  
stewardship of this great  
south land."**

Cover picture



Caro Ryan  
Lotsafreshair  
on Mt Sonder  
for Sunrise

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The copy deadline for BWA  
August 2015 is 1 July 2015.

#### 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. The publisher, editor, authors or any other entity or person will not be held responsible for any loss, injury, claim or liability of any kind resulting from people using information in this publication. 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.

4

Letter from  
the Editor

5

Two videos  
[Walk in the woods](#)  
& [Lace lock tip](#)

6

Bushwalking conference NSW 2015  
[is coming up, read about it](#)

8

Best walks of Northern Territory  
[Read about Australia's](#)  
"adveNTure" territory

20

Kakadu  
Bushwalking on Aboriginal land  
[by Sally Barnes, Director of National Parks](#)

24

It's easy to go bush  
in the Northern Territory  
[by Ministers Gary Higgins and Bess Price](#)

28

Larapinta trail  
[by Caro Ryan](#)  
[Lotsafreshair.com](http://Lotsafreshair.com)



34

## A taste of Jatbula Trail

[Track notes by Lizzy](#)

38

## Central Australian Bushwalkers

[Learn about the club](#)

42

## Photo gallery

[Enjoy the beauty](#)

60

## Trees that bite

[Stinging trees 101](#)

68

## Rescue: Inside and Out

[Be prepared](#)

74

## The Ergon rescue: A bushwalker's perspective

[What would you do?](#)

78

## A view from the air

[The Police side of a rescue](#)

66

## Dehydrated treats

[Mash potato patties  
& Tuna frittata](#)

65

## How we made the Bushwalk.com tag

[It's finally here](#)



# FROM THE EDITOR

I hope that the last few months has treated you well and that you have enjoyed some great adventures.

It has been a privilege producing this edition. As part of our state by state tour of Australia we focus on the Northern Territory. I have been struck by the ancient landscape and culture that underpins this stunning area. I have had the joy of exploring some of these walks and there is something about this landscape that touched my soul.

The best of walks article is based on the survey results from our community of readers and then wonderfully curated by Michael Giacometti, Central Australian Bushwalkers. In the second half of the magazine we explore some of the complex issues around wilderness rescues. You will also find some other great tips, tricks and yummy food ideas.

I am sitting here writing this, wondering “why am I sitting here and not walking in the NT?”

Next edition we are off to Western Australia, so please help by completing this survey for the best walks in WA (please click on the image below).

Happy walking

Matt :)

## Bushwalk Australia Best Walks in WA

Over the next few pages I will ask you to list your favorite day and overnight (multiday) walks in the WA. If you only want to list one walk that is okay but you can include up to 6 (3 day walks and 3 multiday).  
Let's start with the state you live in now.

Matt McClelland (aka Wildwalks)  
matt@bushwalk.com



## Declaration

The bushwalking community is a small world and paths often cross. To improve transparency I thought it would be helpful to list my associations within the outdoor community. In many cases I approached the authors of the articles included in this edition and suggested the topics. The opinions stated in articles are those of the authors and not of those involved in the production of this edition. These are mostly people I know through [Bushwalk.com](http://Bushwalk.com). I operate [Bushwalk.com](http://Bushwalk.com) and [Wildwalks.com](http://Wildwalks.com) and have written 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. 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. There is some commercial advertising through the magazine. I have probably forgotten something - if you are worried about transparency please either write to me or raise the issue on [Bushwalk.com](http://Bushwalk.com).



# VIDEOS

Bill Bryson decides it would be great idea to undertake a trek along the 2100-plus-mile Appalachian Trail with old high school buddy Katz in this Sundance 2015 entry. Before too long the two estranged chums discover the hike through 14 states from Georgia to Maine is going to be an uphill struggle. Literally and figuratively. Premiere 3 September 2015.



A tip from Illumiseen: How to prevent running shoe blisters with a “heel lock” or “lace lock”. To see it follow this link [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com).





# BUSHWALKING CONFERENCE

## NSW 2015

Matt McClelland aka Wildwalks

Do you like the idea of meeting like-minded people? How about chatting with land managers about your needs as a bushwalker? What about sharing tips and some great walks?



Three Sisters in Blue Mountains in Australia



I'm working with the National Parks Association of NSW to organise the first Bushwalking Conference for Sydney. At present we are chasing funding but are feeling excited about the possibilities.

As you know, bushwalking is a key pursuit that helps our community discover and build a relationship with nature. I hope that the bushwalking community can take this opportunity to work with land managers to further improve NSW bushwalking experiences.

### What is the plan?

The conference will probably run over a Friday and a Saturday towards the end of 2015, aiming to serve two main core groups of people (land managers and bushwalkers). It will be a forum to explore best practices and to participate in discussions that will improve the quality of walking experiences in NSW. The Friday is planned to work mainly with land managers who host bushwalking. The Saturday will focus on people who enjoy bushwalking. There will be speakers, breakout sessions, posters, videos, demonstrations and time to chat.

We can discuss ideas about protecting places, making walking more accessible to more people, improving access to maps and information about bushwalking, and share

visions for new walking experiences whilst also learning about new gear and skills. It is hoped that the conference will become a regular event.

### How can you help?

The enthusiasm from bushwalkers and land managers about the conference is most heartening. It would be a great help if you completed the survey below (click on the image), as the results will help set the themes that best suit the interests of most people.



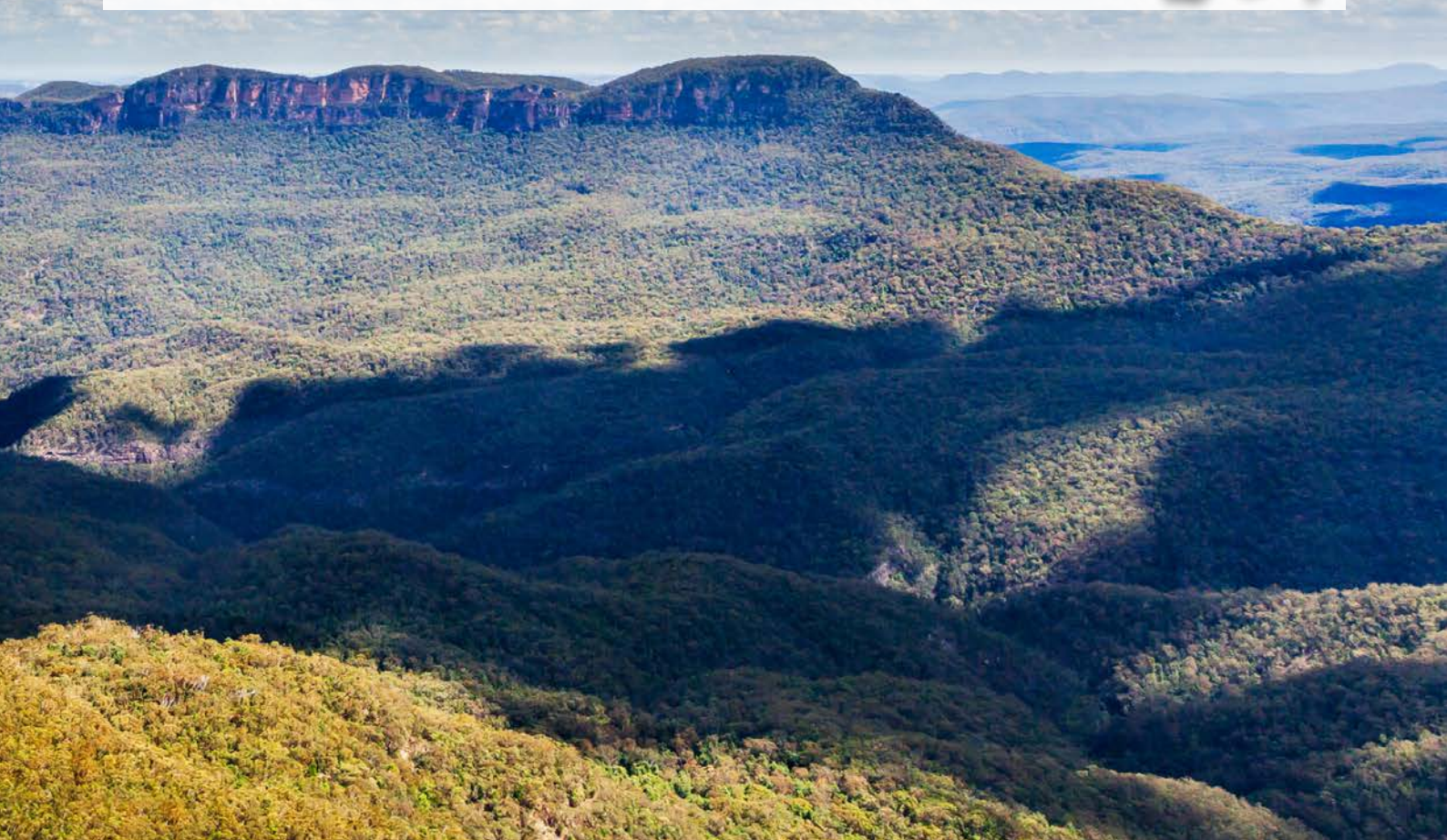
### Bushwalking Conference 2015

The National Parks Association of NSW is exploring the idea of running a Bushwalking Conference in Sydney towards the end of 2015. The plan is to have one day (a Friday) to attract land managers and the second day (a Saturday) designed for people who like bushwalking. Participants can register to encourage conversations and share ideas to help improve bushwalking experiences in NSW. We would appreciate your thoughts and ideas to help establish a theme and direction that is relevant as many people as possible. Thanks for your time.

If you have any questions or suggestions please include them on the survey. I have been encouraged by the wonderful responses that have already come in. August BWA will have an update regarding the conference.

Happy walking and I hope to see you there.

Matt :)





# BEST WALKS OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Michael Giacometti



Bushwalking in the Northern Territory is a tale of geographical opposites - wet defined by rainfall and water, and dry by the lack of it. The tropical Top End has wet and dry seasons, humidity, permanent rivers, waterfalls, swimming holes, and of course, saltwater crocodiles. In sharp contrast, the semi-arid and sub-tropical rangelands, gorges and deserts of the Red Centre have scorching summers, sub-zero winters, and low and unreliable rainfall. Both regions share a rich and on-going Indigenous culture and presence in land management. Despite some seasonal restrictions, many walks can be done at any time of the year. The signature walks of the two regions are the Jatbula Trail and Larapinta Trail.



The Northern Territory is promoted as Australia's "adveNTure" territory. With barely one percent of the nation's population (and half of them living in Darwin) occupying 17 percent of the land mass, there is plenty of scope for adventure. However, land tenure in the Territory is unlike the rest of Australia. Most of the Territory is either Aboriginal freehold land or leased for pastoral purposes, with only four percent reserved in national parks and conservation reserves, far less than the 14 percent of Victoria in nature reserves according to a 2002 Geoscience Australia report. The landforms protected in Territory parks and reserves are breathtaking, and the walking is superb.

The best guidebook for walking in the Territory is [John and Lyn Daly's \*Take a walk in Northern Territory's National Parks\*](#) which covers all walking tracks in the Top End through to the Centre. Catherine Lawson profiled a selection of ten "Top Territory Day Walks" in [Wild](#) 115 (2010).

The Top End has a cyclonic wet season (November to April), a dry season (May to September) and the maddening build-up (October) to the next wet. Many access roads close during the wet and do not re-open until May or June. Track and road status and conditions can be found on the NT Parks & Wildlife website.

About two hour's drive south-west of Darwin, Litchfield National Park provides a good introduction to the Top End. There are several short walks leading to excellent plunge pools below waterfalls such as Tolmer Falls, Tjaynera Falls and Wangi Falls. For those wanting more, the Tabletop Track (50 kilometres, three days) circuit links several of the park's features.

The World Heritage listed Kakadu National Park covers almost 20,000 square kilometres of wetlands, river plains and sandstone escarpment country in western Arnhem Land. It is home to about one-third of Australia's bird species, around 2000 species of flora, and more importantly, houses

“The landforms protected in Territory parks and reserves are breathtaking, and the walking is superb.”

thousands of Aboriginal rock art sites that are up to 20,000 years old. There are easy walks to stunning rock art galleries at Ubirr and Nourlangie, and the long and hard Barrk walk to two of Kakadu's most significant art sites. There are many overnight walking options for experienced walkers, but permits are required and should be requested months in advance. These untracked routes explore Barramundi Creek, Motor Car and Kurundie Creeks, Koolpin Gorge to Twin Falls, and more. Willis's Walkabouts are experts at running guided pack-carrying adventures to remote areas within Kakadu.

Nitmiluk National Park near Katherine is Jawoyn country and is home to Katherine Gorge and the Jatbula Trail. The gorge is divided into 13 distinct gorges which can be explored by canoe or on foot as day walks, or overnight (permit required). The popularity of the Jatbula Trail has increased in recent years. Permits are required and numbers at each campsite are strictly limited so apply early. The walking is fairly easy, mainly through open savannah, with brilliant campsites located close to running water.

The tropical savannah reserves are less frequented and have several interesting short walks. For those travelling between Katherine and Kununurra (to or from the Kimberley), the Judburra/Gregory National Park has palm trees and rock art on the Nawulbinbin Circuit, and excellent views from the lookout on the Escarpment Walk. Adjoining the Western Australian border, Keep River National Park feels like the Kimberley with boab trees, rock art, and beehive-like rock outcrops. The short Gurrandalng (Brolga) and longer Jarnem Loop walks are both scenic, and both have a good camp ground nearby.

In the Gulf country near Borroloola, Limmen National Park features dramatic sandstone pinnacles that resemble a crumbling lost city, and there is good camping nearby at Butterfly Falls. Closer to Borroloola is the small Caranbirini Conservation Reserve, whose Jagududgu Circuit follows a Dreaming trail through diverse vegetation and rock stacks.

The reserves of the Centre are large, offer great variety, and are world renowned.



Although walking is generally possible all year, the most comfortable months are from April to September.

Tjoritja/West MacDonnell National Park contains the 12-stage Larapinta Trail, one of the best long-distance trails in Australia. No permits are required to walk the Trail, but groups larger than eight should register their plans with NT Parks & Wildlife. The Trail is well signposted and can be done in single or multi-day sections, or end-to-end in 12 to 18 days. There are water tanks and information boards at every section head, and there are several camping shelters with gas hotplates en route, but not at every campsite. The best and most rugged stages traverse the Chewings Range (stages 3, 4 and 5) with steep and rocky ascents and descents. Other highlights include Mt Sonder (stage 12), Counts Point lookout (stage 8), and a camp within Hugh Gorge at the junction. Most independent walkers start at Redbank Gorge and walk back to Alice Springs, collecting food drops placed on the way out. In my view the walk is best started in Alice Springs, walking with the morning sun on your back, and finishing with the climb of Mt Sonder.

Several trekking companies run walking tours of the Larapinta Trail, including Trek Larapinta and World Expeditions.

East of Alice Springs are several small reserves that contain good walking.

The Ridgetop walk from Trephina Gorge to John Hayes Rockhole provides great views over the evocatively named Mordor Pound, and a creek bed descent past the Chain of Ponds in Trephina Gorge Nature Park. At N'Dhala Gorge Conservation Reserve, a short walk leads to thousands of petroglyphs carved into the rock surfaces by Eastern Arrernte people thousands of years ago.

“... the most comfortable months are from April to September

The main feature of Finke Gorge National Park is the many waterholes along the 60 kilometre long gorge carved by the 100 million year old Finke River, the longest river of the Centre. The park also contains relict rainforest flora, including the Red Cabbage Palm in the aptly named Palm Valley. The Mparra Track and Mpulungkinya Walk traverse this unique sandstone area.



Pool above 17 Mile Falls, Jatbula Trail, Nitmiluk National Park  
by Michael Giacometti



Further west are the rugged ranges, gorges and waterholes in the George Gill Range, with Kings Canyon being the best known. The Rim Walk can be walked year round, but walkers must start before 9 am if the forecast temperature exceeds 35° C. It is, deservedly, one of the best walks in Australia. For those with more time, the two day Giles Track traverses the sandstone plateau to end at Kathleen Springs waterhole.

Australia's most iconic natural landmark forms half of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. Anangu traditional owners request visitors not to

climb Uluru as it contravenes their cultural practices and beliefs. Instead, the Base Walk that circumnavigates the monolith gives the walker a true measure of its significance. The best walk in the park is among the spectacular conglomerate domes of the Valley of the Winds at Kata Tjuta. As is the case at Watarrka, track closures occur during days exceeding 35° C.

“... the Base Walk that circumnavigates the monolith gives the walker a true measure of its significance

Deep within the red parallel sand ridges of the Simpson Desert are several rock towers, one which became a prominent landmark for early explorers. In 1860, John McDouall Stuart named the “locomotive engine” shaped formation Chambers Pillar which is the feature of the eponymous Historical Reserve.

Those wanting to explore the Simpson Desert more should consider a camel-supported trek to Birdsville.

So come to the Territory and choose your adventure.

More information:

NT Parks & Wildlife

[parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au/parks](http://parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au/parks)

Kakadu National Park

[parksaustralia.gov.au/kakadu/index.html](http://parksaustralia.gov.au/kakadu/index.html)

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park

[parksaustralia.gov.au/uluru/index.html](http://parksaustralia.gov.au/uluru/index.html)

Larapinta Trail

[larapintatrail.com.au](http://larapintatrail.com.au)



Chewings Range and Hugh Gorge from Brinkley Bluff, Larapinta Trail, West MacDonnell National Park  
by Michael Giacometti



# Northern Territory

## Valley of the Winds (Kata Tjuta NP)

7.4 km, 4 hours, [parksaustralia.gov.au](http://parksaustralia.gov.au)



Scramble around the base of the feature - beautiful location! Nature's power and beauty. The sacredness of the area, the extraordinary colours of the rock and sky, the privilege of being allowed by the custodians to enter this area.

## Uluru Base Walk (Kata Tjuta NP)

10 km, 3.5 hours, [parksaustralia.gov.au](http://parksaustralia.gov.au)



Awesomeness of the huge rock! It is really quite impressive walking, very flat, but still impressive because of the differences in lighting and textures on the rock itself and the surrounds.

The 9km walk around the base of Uluru is an immersive walk where the scenery is constantly changing. It is like being in a vast sculpture park where the features tower over you. Sheer walls, hollowed out grottos, amazing rock flaking and patterns and the lovely waterhole carved out of the glorious rock. Look out for the birdlife as well. The NT has an enormous number of species.

Surprising variety in scenery as you walk around Uluru. I've done this walk about 3 times now, each time in a different season and each time had a different perception of the place. Well provided interpretative signage explaining aboriginal traditions for area and whether certain sections are for men or women business.



# Northern Territory

## Mt Sonder (West MacDonnell NP)

15.8 km, 6 hours, [larapintatrail.com.au/](http://larapintatrail.com.au/)

The Western end of the Larapinta, the last high point on the track, with stunning views back along the MacDonnell Ranges, and south over the Heavitree Range. Rock formations, light vegetation, and the opalescent colours of the Centre.



## Ubirr

1 km circuit, 1 hour, [parksaustralia.gov.au/](http://parksaustralia.gov.au/)

Views over the wetlands and the best easily accessible site for Aboriginal rock paintings. Best done with a local guide who can explain what you're looking at and what it all means. Beautiful sunset views.



Ascending west ridge of Ormiston with Mt Sonder in background,  
West MacDonnell Range South Ridge track by Michael Giacometti



# Northern Territory

## Ormiston Gorge and Pound (West MacDonnell NP)

11.1 km circuit, 3-4 hours, [parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au/](http://parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au/)

The grandeur and color of Ormiston in the early morning light, with the walls reflected in the still pools is very special. It is then a walk out along Ormiston Creek along a string of waterholes to Bowmans Gap. Following the main creek coming in on the right leads to a very dramatic and sharp V-shaped valley where you scramble over the small falls and inclines to get a view into the main waterfall face. Return via Ormiston Creek but complete the normal pound loop track.



The scenery! Coming from east coast Australia and doing most our hiking there, the West MacDonnell Ranges is so different in every way to anything we have ever hiked. Many people do the short walk just up the Gorge or to the lookout,. But I highly recommend adding the pound to the walk for a bit more of a challenge and some spectacular scenery, especially as you come into the gorge from the pound. People get put off doing the pound / gorge circuit because you have to 'wade' through some water. When we were there in August 2014 it was just up to our belly button for a short section. So just slip off your shoes for the short wade across. The air is so dry at that time of year your shorts will dry in no time!

## Kings Canyon (Watarrka NP)

6 km circuit, 4 hours, [parksaustralia.gov.au](http://parksaustralia.gov.au)

The sheer wall of the canyon is majestic, but the walk through the domes was unexpected and intriguing. Descending into the walled Garden of Eden adds to the variety of the walk.





# Northern Territory

## Larapinta Trail

Different sections 9.1-28.6km, different sections 4-12 hours, [larapintatrail.com.au/](http://larapintatrail.com.au/)  
Larapinta is famous as an overnight walk but many sections can be done as day trips. See article on [page 28](#). Isolation, length, beauty.



## Mt Razorback (West MacDonnell NP)

29 km return, 11 hrs 15 mins, [mntviews.blogspot.com.au/](http://mntviews.blogspot.com.au/)

We passed through an amazing 3 km gorge ... see photos in the URL.



## Nanguluwurr Rock Art (Kakadu NP)

4 km return, [parksaustralia.gov.au/](http://parksaustralia.gov.au/)

See stunning culturally significant art work and landscape.



## Little Nourlangie (Kakadu NP)

1.5 km circuit, 1 hour, [environment.gov.au/](http://environment.gov.au/)

Easy to do in an hour or so, great view and very ancient "dynamic" rock art. A dip in a rock pool is also possible.





A woman wearing a green bucket hat and a light blue button-down shirt is sitting on a large, reddish-brown rock. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. Behind her, a waterfall cascades over dark, layered rock formations. The water is white and frothy as it falls. The surrounding area is rocky with some green vegetation on the upper slopes.

## Northern Territory

### Gunlom Lookout Walk (Kakadu NP)

1 km return, Take a Walk book



Short steep climb to top of falls. Great views and a series of clear rock pools for swimming

### Kathleen Springs (West MacDonnell NP)

2.6 km, 1.5 hrs, [macdonnellranges.com/](http://macdonnellranges.com/)



Its a beautiful walk along the range from Kathleen Springs to Kings Canyon. It has very few people and gives an amazing view of the surrounding area.

### Walkers Creek trail (Litchfield NP)

3.6 km return, 2 hrs, [litchfieldnationalpark.com/](http://litchfieldnationalpark.com/)



Lovely walk beside the creek away from the clouds. Plenty of swimming holes to cool off in.



## Northern territory

### Larapinta Trail

223 km one way, 14-17 days, [larapintatrail.com.au/](http://larapintatrail.com.au/)

Ridges, gullies, views, rock formations, wildlife. One of Australia's top three longer walks. A must-do for serious walkers. Being able to do food drops in dingo proof enclosures was excellent saved us from carrying huge loads.

The Larapinta is a long walk over harsh desert country. A key highlight is camping out on the top of Brinkley Bluff to watch the sunrise and sunsets. There are numerous other highlights - such as exploring through the Stanley Chasm area, climbing to Counts Point and Mt Sonder, and Ormiston and Redbank Gorges. This can be done in smaller sections.

The track is pretty well marked and the camp spots obvious to find and well maintained. The time I did this trip (back in 2010) we had the track to ourselves, conditions were good (end of wet/start of dry season). Accessible from Alice Springs.

Mt Sonder in background, Larapinta Trail,  
West MacDonnell National Park by Michael Giacometti



# Northern territory

## Jatbula Trail (Nitmiluk NP)

62 km one way, 5-6 days, [parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au](http://parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au)

The gift from the custodians of the walk. The beauty of the waterfalls, cascades, swimming holes and the flowers/vegetation. The unspoilt nature, the silence under magical night skies. The remoteness.

Beautiful, each camp has cascades or waterfall to swim in. Very enjoyable, not at all difficult.

Short daily section, good track, easy walking. If the Larapinta's too hard, this is for you.



## Northern territory

### Mt Zeil to Redbank Gorge (West MacDonnell NP)

21 km, 2 days, [mntviews.blogspot.com/](http://mntviews.blogspot.com/)

Untracked and relatively unvisited, although admittedly not totally wild (there are fences, livestock and feral mammals around). Great views from the summit. I loved the fact that you can pretty much navigate it by site.

### Mt Giles Track (West MacDonnell NP)

30.6 km return, 2-3 days, [parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au/](http://parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au/)

Rock formations, sand dunes, wildlife. An easy two day (or long single day) one-way trip, or three days return. A very different look at the Centre compared to Uluru and the MacDonnells.



# KAKADU - BUSHWALKING ON ABORIGINAL LAND

Sally Barnes, Director of National Parks

Kakadu is unforgettable. Bushwalking takes you through a living cultural landscape of lush rainforests and massive ancient escarpments. Enjoy astonishing views over floodplains and wetlands, accompanied by iconic birds and animals, and reflect on the many thousands of years that Aboriginal people have called Kakadu home.





Kakadu is also a living cultural landscape. Generations of Aboriginal people – called Bininj in the north and Mungguy in the south - have lived in Kakadu, and cared for it, for many thousands of years. More than 50,000 years of continuous history whispers through the monsoon forests and across the woodlands. During the creation time, important ancestral beings journeyed across the landscape, creating the features and landforms, and the plants, animals and people. Bininj/Mungguy's connection to the land is one of the reasons the park is on the World Heritage list.

### [The land and its living culture](#)

About 500 Aboriginal people live throughout Kakadu. Their ancestors moved around the park according to the seasons, using temporary dwellings such as stringybark and paperbark shelters near billabongs, wet season huts built on stilts on the floodplains, and rock shelters in the stone country. The park is their home, and contains hunting grounds, ceremonial sites and burial sites. There are also more than 5,000 art sites in Kakadu, depicting the creation ancestors, the changing landscapes and European contact.

Experiencing Bininj/Mungguy culture while visiting the park adds incredible spiritual depth to an already breathtaking landscape. Kakadu stands at an astounding 20,000 square kilometres covering six main landforms and habitats, home to hundreds of species of plants and animals, many found nowhere else in the world.

Bushwalking in Kakadu is an experience that quite literally cannot be had anywhere else in the world.

### [Escape from it all, on a multi-day walk](#)

Bushwalking is a major drawcard for visitors to Kakadu. There are about 40 short day walks, plus a variety of multi-day walking routes away from marked trails. A multi-day walk in Kakadu is a special experience, reminiscent of an ancient, nomadic lifestyle – sleeping beneath the stars, waking with birdsong and the sunrise, camping beside freshwater pools.

Multi-day walks in Kakadu require a permit issued on behalf of the traditional owners. It is Bininj/Mungguy's cultural responsibility – bestowed upon them by the creation ancestors – to care for the land and everything on it. When you're bushwalking through Kakadu, Bininj/Mungguy feel responsible for your safety.

Multi-day bushwalkers submit GPS coordinates of their planned route, plotted on a topographical map, so we know where to look if someone needs help. This also allows the park and its Aboriginal owners to make sure the planned paths respect any important cultural sites along the way.

At the moment, most of the people doing multi-day walks in Kakadu are experienced bushwalkers - often people who know the area or are guided by commercial bushwalking operators. We want to build on that, making sure you can find good advice on Kakadu's multi-day walks even if you've never been to the park before.

### [A new bushwalking strategy for Kakadu](#)

Kakadu is finalising a bushwalking strategy, designed to create great new experiences that appeal to visitors and celebrate the rich culture of Kakadu's Aboriginal owners. The strategy will ensure multi-day bushwalking routes respect important cultural sites, and it will identify opportunities for traditional owners to build tour-guiding businesses, telling their stories about their land.

The strategy contains some really exciting ideas. We're going to assess the possibility of making the Jim Jim Falls to Twin Falls route the first "Kakadu Bushwalk", and investigate a new and iconic overnight bushwalk from Kakadu to nearby Nitmuluk National Park. In the south of Kakadu, Jawoyn traditional owners are keen to consider other innovative new business opportunities. "Heli-touring" is also a possibility, allowing access to walks during the wet season when driving tracks are flooded.

The strategy is also designed to improve short day walks via interpretive ranger



programs, signage and better walking tracks, including making walks more accessible to those with mobility difficulties. We'll be increasing the number of easy access walks, and making access to Ubirr, Nourlangie and Yellow Water easier. We're also sprucing up popular visitor sites with picnic tables, shelters, seating and camping facilities.

As always, we take our lead from the traditional owners of the park, relying on vital cultural knowledge, and developing new tourism opportunities for the people who have owned the land for many, many generations.

### Respecting culture is the only way

The foundation for bushwalking in Kakadu will always be respect – for the Aboriginal owners, for Kakadu's multifaceted environments, and for the visitors that come to connect with this beautiful place.

In some places the existing multi-day walking routes may be adapted so visitors don't accidentally intrude on cultural sites. There are some really special cultural sites in the Gubara area and traditional owners have requested that cultural assessments occur in

this area, specifically at Mt Brockman, above Gubara. A cultural heritage assessment is a way for the traditional owners to map where sensitive sites are, so they can show us the best paths for multi-day walks. This won't have any impact on the day walk tracks in the area, such as the Gubara Pools Walk. It only impacts the unmarked GPS routes for multi-day hikes.

Mirarr, the traditional owners of the Gubara area, want people to enjoy their country and they're big supporters of tourism and bushwalking. It's been a long time since cultural heritage assessments have occurred and the new generation of traditional owners need to work with their elders to make decisions for the future. We're working together on this so that both traditional owners and visitors have certainty.

This direction reflects the deep respect that most bushwalkers have for country and culture. It would be madness to degrade cultural sites and that's not what anyone wants - we can offer world-class experiences and respect traditional lands. That win-win is what Kakadu's joint management system is built on.



Learning about rock art, Ubirr, East Alligator  
Credit: Parks Australia



We look forward to a bright future for bushwalking in Kakadu, with new experiences that are rewarding for walkers and traditional owners alike. It will take time to realise our aspirations, and build on the

great foundation of activities that exist in the park today. We walk towards that future together, respecting Bininj/Mungguy and the living cultural landscape that is Kakadu.



Sally Barnes  
Director of National Parks  
Parks Australia

Sally has worked in environment protection and cultural heritage management for more than 20 years. She has been Director of National Parks for the Australian Government since February 2014. As the head of [Parks Australia](#), she helps manage six national parks - including Kakadu, Uluru-Kata Tjuta and Booderee which are managed in partnership with their traditional owners – and the Australian National Botanic Gardens. Previously, she was Chief Executive of the Office of Environment and Heritage in New South Wales. She is passionate about Australia's landscape and marine environments and opportunities to work with traditional owners and local communities on sustainable use and visitor experiences.





# IT'S EASY TO GO BUSH IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

From NT Ministers Gary Higgins and Bess Price

It's easy to go bush in the Northern Territory. An hour or two by road from many towns there's numerous bushwalks, from the majestically iconic to the small, tucked away, subtle trail.



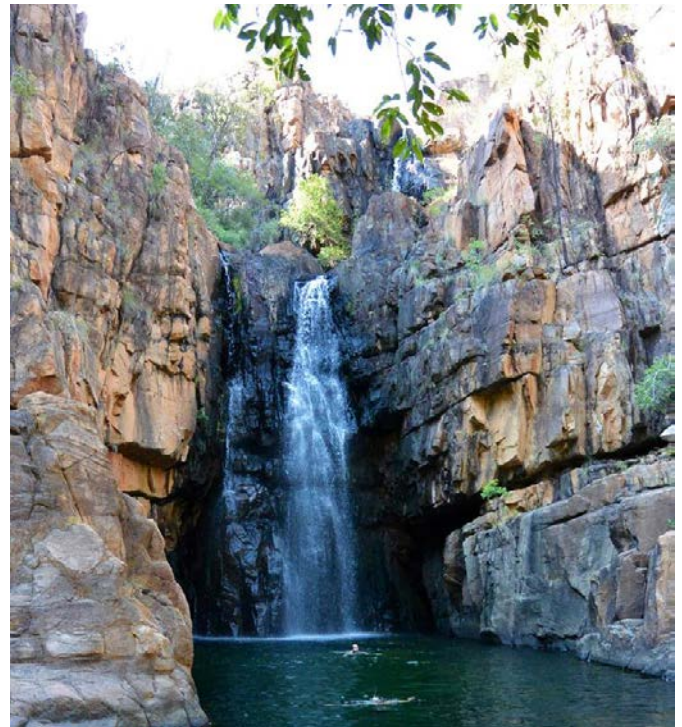




Ormiston walk courtesy of the NT Government

Gary Higgins is the Northern Territory Minister for the Environment and Minister for Sport and Recreation. He's serious about good access to decent walking trails. A lot of work has been and is being done to balance the growing demand and the preservation of the NT native ecosystems.

Mr Higgins recognises bushwalking as a popular recreation and one which is encouraged across the NT. He said, "It is also a key tourism group for the Territory with national research showing that visitors to the NT are more likely to participate in nature-based tourism activities than visitors to other states in Australia. We are also keen to ensure our natural treasures remain for future generations to explore and appreciate. With that in mind, the NT Government preserves natural assets through sustainable upgrades in our parks." He said that bushwalking also helped raise awareness of the areas.



Southern Rockhole, Nitmiluk courtesy of the NT Gov Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Minister Bess Price said that the Parks and Wildlife Commission NT manages 90 parks and reserves covering about 3.5 percent of the Territory's land area. Mrs Price said, "These include very popular parks such as Top End parks Litchfield and Nitmiluk, and Central Australia parks Watarrka and the West MacDonnell Ranges."

Mrs Price said, "Today's park visitors expect much richer experiences in nature, seeking to reconnect with the environment on a personal level. The Territory has beautiful



Ellery Creek

Photo courtesy of the NT Government





Larapinta Trail courtesy of the NT Government  
natural assets on the doorsteps of residents, providing locals and visitors with beach and bushland in the heart of suburban Darwin as well as an variety of landforms away from town.”



Larapinta Trail courtesy of the NT Government

“Territorians love getting outdoors and being active, so supporting this lifestyle is a NT Government priority.

“Litchfield is a popular destination and we’ve recently allocated \$10.43 million to enhance facilities across the park which will add to the visitor experience. Increased use of national parks delivers regional economic benefits, as well as more visitor awareness and an understanding of park values, ultimately contributing to long-term conservation efforts.”

As well Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta, popular Northern Territory trails include Giles



Larapinta Trail  
Photo courtesy of the NT Government



Track, Jatbula Trail, Larapinta Trail, Ormiston Gorge and Tabletop Track (in Litchfield National Park).

Walk recommendations include the following.

The Ormiston Pound Walk. This was recently listed number one in the Top 10 for Australia/ New Zealand day walks in Australian Geographic Outdoor magazine.

Watarrka Rim Walk, a must-do for all visitors to Central Australia who have a reasonable level of fitness.

Mt Sonder. This is section 12 of the Larapinta Trail, and is also a walk in its own right. The views from the fourth highest peak in the NT are worth the 16 kilometre round trip.

Mt Giles. This off-track walk in the West MacDonnell National Park should only be undertaken by experienced bushwalkers. It's 2-3 days return from Ormiston Gorge.

The Ridge Top Walk at Trephina Gorge is a little known but a great one day walk.

The Arankaia/Mpulungkinya circuit walks at Palm Valley, Finke Gorge National Park.

Both Ministers said safety was also a paramount message for those visiting the Territory's national parks.

They recommended bushwalkers take heed of the tips issued by local bushwalking groups as well as NT Parks and Wildlife – [parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au](http://parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au).



### **Minister Bess Price**

Bess Price is the NT Minister for Parks and Wildlife.

Mrs Price is a Warlpiri woman, born in the Tanami Desert, Central Australia. She became a mother at the age of 13. After years of domestic violence, aged 18 she left the father of the child and studied to become a teacher. Mrs Price has a Bachelor of Applied Science in Aboriginal Community Management and Development from Curtin University.

She has an extensive working history prior to being elected to the NT Parliament in 2012. She is on the Advisory Panel to reduce violence against women.

Mrs Price lives with her husband David in Alice Springs.



### **Minister Gary Higgins**

Gary Higgins is the NT Minister for Sport and Recreation, and the Environment. He moved to the Northern Territory in 1986 and was employed by the NT Public Service.

At Daly River he was involved with community organisations and activities such as NT Emergency Services, the Wangamatty Land Care and the Daly River Management Advisory Committee. He was the Chairman of the Katherine Regional Tourism Association for three years prior to its amalgamation with Darwin.

In the last few years he held a number of senior Public Service positions. He was elected to the NT Parliament in 2012.

Mr Higgins lives with his wife Rhonda in rural Darwin.



# LARAPINTA TRAIL

Caro Ryan Lotsafreshair.com

When I think about the reasons why a bushwalker would want to spend time on the Larapinta Trail (or Lari as some locals call it), being in a place that is fundamentally different in so many ways to the usual Aussie mountain range or coastal bushwalking locations is top of the list.





As Australians, we are brought up with images of what tourism marketing execs believe are the visual icons of our country. You know them all. Red dirt, blue skies, Harbour Bridge, Kangaroos, Uluru, white sand beaches and the odd “big” thing, like a sheep, banana or pineapple.

Considering that around 85% of us live around the coastal edges of our great lug of a continent, it is surprising how ingrained those outback images are on our psyche.

I have to admit that this is one of the things that drew me to the Larapinta Trail. Even though I haven't felt the red dirt between my toes, I thought that as an Australian, this is something that I wanted (needed?) to do. I wanted to feel that red sand run through my fingers and see that big sky for myself.

I wanted to travel to the centre of Australia, the mysterious and mythical outback, to sleep on the ground, drink from the streams, pour out my sweat on its dry earth and bury myself within it. I was able to do all of this and more.

As a member of Sydney Bush Walkers Club, I'd had my name down to complete the full Larapinta Trail (as an independent trip) over 14 days in July 2014. It was one of those long-term planning trips that you look forward to for ages. Spreadsheets to handle

the meal planning, transfers, food drops and other logistics. We were pumped. However, as with long-term plans and working for yourself, sometimes the promise of paying your bills has to give way to holiday plans, so unfortunately, I had to pull out a week prior to the trip for the comfort of knowing I could eat for another month!

“They were having a ball.

Back in wintery Sydney, I watched the warm, red, ochre dirt contrast against a deep blue sky in the Facebook pics of my friends as they found one of the few bits of mobile phone coverage (Telstra) for the track, on the top of Brinkley Bluff. They were having a ball.

You can understand my excitement then, when I got an email from a commercial guiding company, [Trek Larapinta](#) the following week offering me to come on one of their six day Larapinta Highlights trips and write [a review for my blog](#). Yay... I was going somewhere different!

As a fan of bushwalking clubs, taking part in independent trips, it was always going to be a bit of a change to step over into a commercially led trip. It was an eye opener in many ways and more enjoyable than I thought possible in others.

Our first stop was the NT Tourism's icon of Standley Chasm. It's just one of those



Hiker beyond Innalunga Pass, Larapinta Trail



places you've seen many times on Instagram and photographs, but perhaps other than recognising it as NT, may not have known exactly where it was. You'll find it as the end of section 3, start of 4 on the trail.

For ease, the trail is divided into sections 12, with 1 being at the far eastern end of the trail at the Telegraph Station (four kilometres from the centre of Alice Springs) finishing with section 12 in the west which includes Mt Sonder.

There are many different ways to tackle the trail, and I use that word instead of the ubiquitous Australian "track" as Larapinta Trail is its official name.

If you want to walk it end-to-end, think about which direction you'd like to go. Do you want to walk towards civilisation and into Alice Springs? Or would you prefer to see your holiday walking away from connectivity, electricity and domesticity. There are no rules (or permits) around how you approach it, but obviously you'll also need to consider logistics and transfers before you answer that question.

There is excellent information available on a number of websites, including the [official Northern Territory Government site](#) (the trail is

managed by Parks Northern Territory) and the unofficial (but looks official) site, [larapintatrail.com.au](http://larapintatrail.com.au).

But to consider walking it all at once takes not only a lot of planning, but also time off work, as generally people will do it in 14-17 days. That is, unless you want to [run it](#) or if you're like [Chris Macaskill-Hants](#) who ran the entire length of the track in 2014 in a cracking pace of 61.5 hours. I can only imagine what his feet felt like at the end. Then again, maybe they had no feeling in them at all. Another way of spending time in this timeless place would be to consider volunteering to help with the maintenance and care of it. Check out [friendsofthelarapintatrail.org.au/](http://friendsofthelarapintatrail.org.au/) for that voluntouring option!

One of the best things about the trail is that due to clever design and placement of trailheads it's possible to walk it in various sections over a number of years. Bushwalking friends of mine often make an annual pilgrimage to the Territory to complete 4-5 sections each year. They consider it such an easy thing to organise and it means they only need to take a few days off work, yet come back relaxed and refreshed from the disconnect they experience.

Because I was taking part in a highlights version of the walk, every day we were

“...ran the entire length of the track in 2014 in a cracking pace of 61.5 hours...”



Ormiston Gorge, Swimming Hole and beach



driven to a different trailhead to complete a section and were picked up at the end. The benefits of this type of trip were that if time is very limited (and you don't see yourself coming back to the NT to experience more of the trail) seeing the key places in that time is guaranteed, as well as hearing key information from knowledgeable guides about the area's geographical and anthropological history.

Nights were spent in our beautiful semi-permanent campsite on a dry river bed. The camp is there only for the dry season and is removed at the beginning of wet season.

“...it's possible to walk it in various sections over a number of years.

I really surprised myself with how much I grew to love this spot over the week and even now, six months later, I find my memories of the Larapinta Trail are not only about grand views and vast endless skies, but also of this little home away from home. It showed me that yet another of my normal bushwalking traits, walking from A to B via C and having a journey, always moving on, could be challenged and proved that having an alternate experience... could be enjoyable.

I'm a big believer in not seeing there as only being one way of engaging with nature and wild places. Sure, we all have the way that

works for us, but I know of some people that get a bit judgey about those who choose to take commercial trips as being somehow less of an authentic experience. The fact is, there is no right or wrong and I hope that the thing we'd all agree on though, is that simply getting out there is what's important.

So whether you choose to link up with a guide (tell them they're amazing by the way and offer to help where possible) or go it alone, I recommend the Larapinta Trail for keen walkers looking for dramatic landscapes, a change of scenery, or needing convincing of the uniqueness and wonder of our incredible continent.

You can [see videos of my trip on my Youtube channel](#).

### Reasons to walk the Larapinta Trail

- It's different to anything else the majority of Aussie bushwalkers are used to. Different plants, trees, animals, flowers.
- It's logistically easy to plan with good information for independent walkers and multiple trail heads, drinking water and campsites.
- If you don't want to do the planning and spreadsheets, there's a variety of commercial operators who run different length trips. (I recommend Trek Larapinta).





- You can hop on - hop off the trail at various points with pre-arranged transfers.
- It's a great place to fall off the grid and disconnect from life for a couple of weeks.
- You can meet a diverse bunch of hikers from all over the world.
- At night, the stars, satellites and shooting stars are incredible.
- If you don't like extended walks, you can make it a project and return each year to do three-four days until you've finished it.
- Incredible swimming holes - just be prepared for them to be icy!

#### Things to consider

- The best time of year is June-early September. I did it in early September and the temperatures were getting up around 34°C days.



Larapinta Trail Marker



- Given the dry conditions, you need to carefully plan your drinking water supplies and be prepared to drink more than you normally would.
  - Don't forget you need cash on the track for entrance fees to some private areas like Standley Chasm or for a well-deserved ice-cream (or shower) at Ormiston Gorge.
  - Alice Springs is a unique outback place (people tend to either love it or hate it), but if you need a good night's sleep,
- away from potentially noisy night time revellers, consider staying further out of town.
- If you're not a regular bushwalker, doing some training with a weighted pack before the trip will help you have a more enjoyable time on the trail and of course, ensure that your shoes are worn in.
  - Avoid white towels for drying off after your first shower at the end. :)



Caro grew up in a Sydney family that never went camping or on outdoors adventures. It was somewhat of a surprise to discover hiking and outdoor adventures in her mid-20s, and it fast became somewhat of an obsession that totally changed her life. She regularly leads trips for the Sydney Bush Walkers Club and is a Search Manager and passionate volunteer with the Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad. To encourage people to get into hiking and the outdoors, Caro started [Lotsafreshair blog](#) and [YouTube channel](#), with inspiring imagery and stories and advice in a supportive friendly style. She's keen to share her knowledge and stories with others – hoping that they'll catch the bug too! Caro is a TV Producer/Director/Editor.

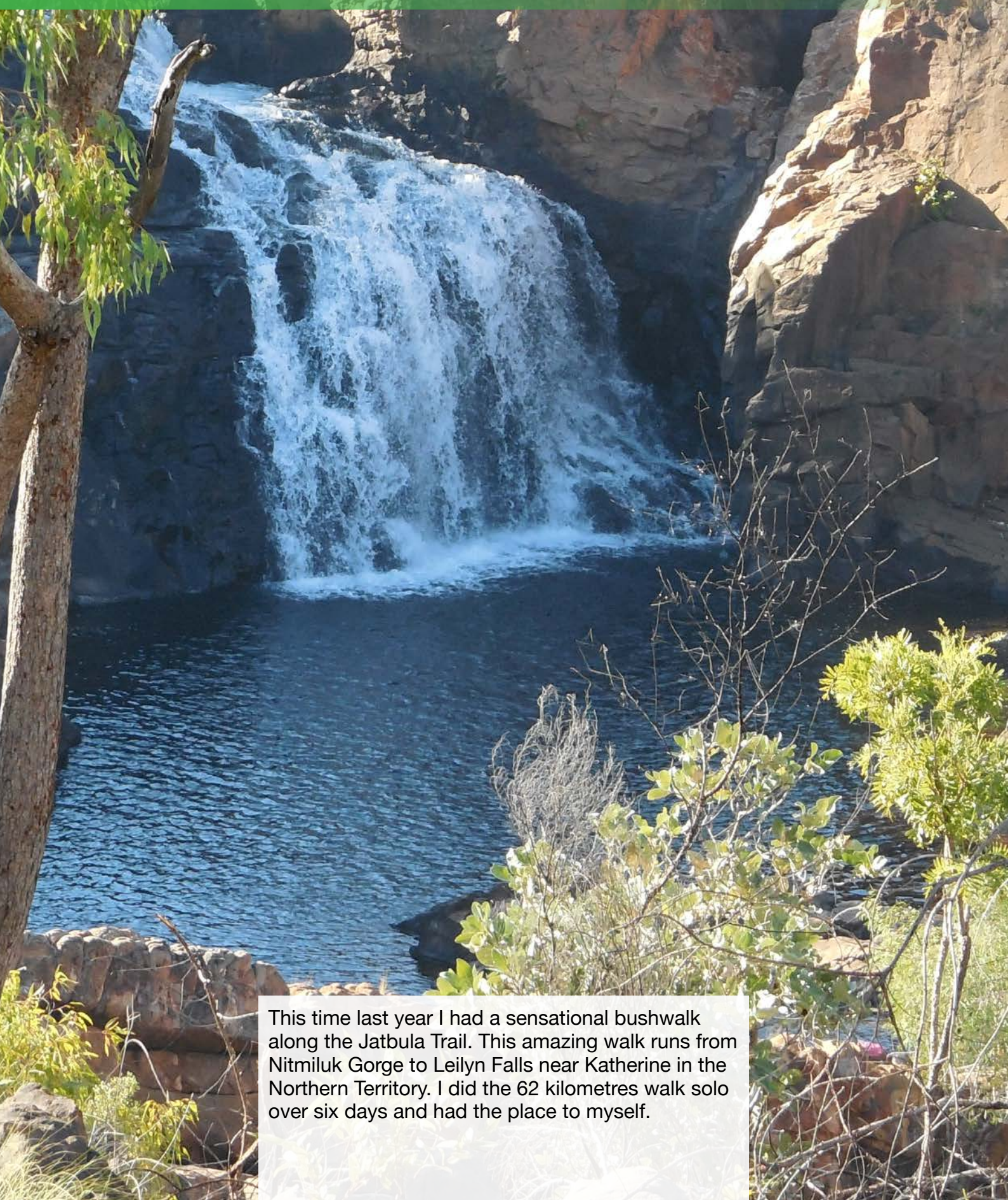


Hiking Boots, Counts Point, Larapinta Trail



# A TASTE OF JATBULA TRAIL

Liz Rode aka Lizzy



This time last year I had a sensational bushwalk along the Jatbula Trail. This amazing walk runs from Nitmiluk Gorge to Leilyn Falls near Katherine in the Northern Territory. I did the 62 kilometres walk solo over six days and had the place to myself.



After finishing my packraft trip up Nitmilik Gorge, I quickly rearranged my gear then grabbed a lift across the river to the start of the walk.

I started at 12.30 pm, and it was hot! I was pleased to arrive at the Northern Rockhole to cool off. The falls aren't flowing but I was pretty happy nonetheless. After a bit of a break I headed off to the first night's camp at Bibblecombe Cascades. I managed another refreshing dip and guess what - no one else about, except a little bandicoot that night.



Northern Rockhole

In the morning cool on day two I headed for Crystal Falls. The day heated up quickly as I followed the little blue triangular markers, guiding the way as the trail took me through long grass, rocky area and along the escarpment. At one point I came to a rocky outcrop with a small cave and some Jawoyn rock paintings.



Jawoyn rock paintings

The cascades at Crystal Falls were a welcome relief, to the heat, and a spa



Cascades at Crystal Falls

bath was first on the agenda. It was at this campsite that I saw the only other bushwalkers on the Jatbula. They had stayed an extra day and were returning to the start because one of their group was sick.

The next day I continued on to the spectacular 17 Mile Falls and roughly the halfway point. On the way I ducked down into The Ampitheatre, a spot the local Indigenous people used to visit and that has some interesting rock art.



17 Mile Falls



Rock art at the Ampitheatre



Day four, to Sandy Camp. This was another cracker of a camp spot with a big lovely swimming hole and a sandy beach to camp on.



Sandy Camp

The second last day went to a camp at Sweetwater Pool which is only about five kilometres from the end. I preferred another night out on the trail than among the crowds at a commercial campground and I couldn't get a lift until the following afternoon. At around lunchtime the place was a bit busy with people doing the day walk to Sweetwater but all of a sudden they all disappeared. Once again I had the place to myself for another refreshing dip.



Sweetwater Pool

The final day on the Jatbula was a quick walk to Leilyn (Edith Falls) where I had a nice morning bath in the upper pools - once again all to myself! I then spent the next few hours lazing around the lower pool while waiting for my transfer with Gecko Tours back to the gorge.

Most days the walk was about 10-15km which could be completed in the mornings, starting early to beat the afternoon heat in the mid 30's. The trail was relatively flat but had a few short climbs and descents.

The trail was usually well marked with blue triangles but on occasion these could be hard to spot and the trail was often overgrown with long grasses- I would sing to myself "going on a lion hunt, I'm not scared!". The trail ranged from rocky river beds, long grasses, sandy paths, and even mud! The waterholes at the end of each day were certainly the highlight.

The Jatbula must be [booked](#) in advance which can be quite difficult to do - even though there was no one else on the trail at the time I did it! They take a maximum of 15 bushwalkers per day. It costs the princely sum of \$3.30 per night for national park fees and the ferry across the river at the start is \$7.

I feel privileged to have been able to visit such an amazing part of this country - it certainly is a special spot!



This was Lizzy's 40 birthday escape (well that was her excuse anyway!). She's married with two kids, lives in the Illawarra (NSW), is a nurse, has been bushwalking since and camping since cadets in high school. She has recently become addicted to packrafting. That was her first time to the Northern Territory but she'll be back. :)





At Sandy Camp



# Bushwalking Club Profile: CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN BUSHWALKERS

Club President Michael Giacometti

Based in Alice Springs, Northern Territory, the Central Australian Bushwalkers formed in 1982, seven years before the first stage of the Larapinta Trail was opened (and 20 years before all stages of the Trail were constructed). The club has about 45 members, some of whom have more than 20 year's experience walking in the Centre. Club walks are every Sunday – even in summer – and many walks use the world-renowned Larapinta Trail as a basis for off-track adventures in the semi-arid rangelands of the “West Macs”. Visitors are most welcome on our walks.



Ormiston Pound spinifex, West MacDonnell Range  
by Michael Giacometti



After an hour of gentle climbing, we stop on a narrow rocky ridge overlooking Ormiston Pound in Tjoritja (pronounced choor-it-ja) or West MacDonnell National Park, about 135 kilometres west of Alice Springs.

The ridge was once an ancient sea bed, a blanket of fine sand laid down grain by grain until it was 800 metres thick. Much later, still hundreds of millions of years ago, the compressed layers of sand were pressure-cooked into quartzite, hard and grey, then upthrust, exposed and tilted at all angles. The aged rocks are now covered with a patina of rust, the distinctive cayenne pepper orange-red colour of the escarpment.

I never tire of bushwalking in this place. I return many times a year, in all seasons. Why? The landscape of Central Australia speaks in “long time”. It is ancient, yet alive, and though in many ways changeless, always in some way different.

With no forest cover, the landscape tempts the eye and the thigh of the walker to roam further. The grand gestures — the peaks and

gorges — provide the initial lure, but after time, the walker seeks out the places that are implied or suggested in the landscape. To reach these places, one must traverse or intersect invisibly with the Dreaming paths of Indigenous creator beings who manifested the landscape and whose energy still resides therein.

Despite the advantages of the open terrain, other difficulties

arise. The ground is overwhelmingly rocky and uneven, tough on boots and feet. The arid air parches the skin and throat. The intense sun burns even in winter, and the overwhelming blue sky both dominates and expands the landscape.

We descend from the ridge and enter the pound by a narrow gap beside a dry waterfall. From there we have many options. We can follow the red track markers of the Ormiston Pound Walk (one of the best day walks in Australia) or the winding creek

“...the landscape tempts the eye and the thigh of the walker to roam further.”





from waterhole to waterhole into the red-and-purple depths of Ormiston Gorge. We can high-step north through spinifex to the waterholes of Bowmans Gap. Or we can go east, between the Heavitree Range and the eastern branch of Ormiston Creek, to close upon the base of Mt Giles and the plentiful springs of the Chewings Range.

The Heavitree and Chewings Ranges form part of the MacDonnell Range which extends east to west for over 500 kilometres and is roughly centred on Alice Springs. Within these ranges are most of the highest peaks in Australia west of the Great Divide, including the highest, Mount Zeil (1531 metres), Mount Giles (fourth highest, 1389 metres) and Mount Razorback (sixth, 1274 metres) all within a 30 kilometre radius of Mount Sonder (fifth, 1380 metres). The sunrise from Mount Sonder is a fitting climax of the 223 kilometre, 12 stage Larapinta Trail, which snakes its way west from Alice Springs.

Bushwalking in Central Australia is unique and there are many walks that should be on every bushwalker's bucket list. First and foremost is the Larapinta Trail which can be done in single or multi-day stages,

or completely, end to end. There are also excellent day walks at Palm Valley, Kings Canyon and Uluru–Kata Tjuta. The best of these are the Kings Canyon Rim Walk and overnight Giles Track at Watarrka National Park, and the Valley of the Winds at Kata Tjuta. Another good walking track is the ridgetop traverse from Trepina Gorge to John Hayes Rockhole in the East Macs, one hour's drive east of Alice Springs.

The scope of bushwalking in the Centre extends far beyond these signposted tracks. Much of the Centre's best bushwalking uses the Larapinta Trail as an access pad to launch off-track adventures into the complex of hidden gorges, chasms, springs and seemingly inaccessible

“...a summer favourite (even on a 40 degree Celsius day)...

peaks of the West Macs. The experienced and self-reliant walker will find many rewards in extended Chewings Range walks, such as were featured in *Wild* (issues 96, 100, 116, 119), or deciphering the routes of colonial explorers to Brinkley Bluff or the Central Mount.



Gorge, West MacDonnell Range  
by Darren Schiller



There are off-track rambles in the rugged sandstone of the James and Krichauff Ranges, the mining areas around Arltunga and Ruby Gap in the East Macs, and the high peaks of the Harts Range. After big rains, dry gullies quickly transform into cascades, and it is possible to paddle the large ephemeral channels of the Hugh and Finke Rivers, one could suppose, all the way into the Simpson Desert.

The region's most popular walk climbs an eroded path to Mount Gillen which overlooks Alice Springs, and walkers can continue east across the ridge to Heavitree Gap, or west to Honeymoon Gap. And finally, a summer favourite (even on a 40 degree Celsius day), is the two hour ridge-crossing loop walk from Ellery Big Hole that culminates in a chilly 300 metre swim and pack float across the waterhole.

So come walking with us! Gaiters and a spirit of adventure required.

See our website and bushwalking program at [centralaustralianbushwalkers.com](http://centralaustralianbushwalkers.com).



Michael Giacometti has lived in Central Australia for ten years, and has been president of the Central Australian Bushwalkers for the past four years. He has worked as an outdoor educator and guide, and contributes to *Wild*. In 2008 he walked solo and unsupported across the Simpson Desert from Bedourie to Old Andado via Geosurveys Hill (450 kilometres in 24 days), completing the first (and only) east to west traverse of the Simpson Desert.



Boggy Hole, Finke Gorge  
by Peter Nowak



# PHOTO GALLERY



The Monoliths, Jim Jim Creek, Kakadu NP  
Tom Brennan

Competition: Australia June 2011



# BWA Photo Competition

Climb up on  
some hill at sunrise.  
Everybody  
needs  
perspective  
once in a while, and  
you'll find it there.

Robb Sagendorph





# Other States

## June 2014

WINNER



Tiny mushies  
Cams

This photo was taken on a wet weekend at Lamington National Park with an old Leica lens and a new Sony A7 camera. The lens was inherited from my grandmother, and with the A7 this is an excellent combination of old and new.



Angel Gabriel Capraro  
Reserve  
landsmith



Waitpinga Cliffs  
Brian Eglinton



Sturt Gorge after rain  
Beardless



Waterfall in a hole  
John Walker



Never, Never Creek  
Lorraine







# Tasmania

## June 2014

### WINNER



Sunset on Lion Rock,  
South East Cape,  
Tasmania  
Wilkography

Lion Rock is situated on the remote South East Cape of Tasmania. The walk in to the area is quite easy and very beautiful as with most of Tasmania, there is a good camping area with facilities very close by.

I try to do a lot of bushwalking with my brother Sam because it adds a greater depth of enjoyment. With everybody having busy lives sometimes it's hard to catch up and time slips by without you realizing. I try to organise two-three trips a year with Sam to different locations so that we can experience them and have the ability to spend time together, as brothers, without the interference from the outside world. There is the realization that we are creating memories that will be enjoyed for years to come and this is why I love photography so much, it motivates me to do things which are so important but get over looked.

This photo is memorable for me because of the memory of the trip and the enjoyment we found in exploring the area together. I would highlight recommend the walk in there and hope to return and complete the whole South Cape walk which is a lot further and usually completed by flying to Melaluca and then walking home over five-seven days.



Lake Herbert  
Dan Broun



A proud west coast  
sentinal  
ILUVSWTAS



A nice perch  
Doogs



Mt Owen  
Louise Fairfax



The Acropolis  
from Lake Cyane  
Peter Grant







# Landscapes

## June 2014

WINNER



Late night fogbow  
Doogs

I took this photo from the top of The Needles in South West Tasmania. I had planned to take some moonlit photos overlooking Upper Florentine valley to appreciate its wilderness values. This was taken two weeks before the World Heritage Committee meeting in Doha when the Abbott government was attempting to have large areas of protected delisted and opened up for logging. I got a little lucky and captured this fogbow created by the moonlight. A very special evening, I knew then that the forest would be saved.



Barn Bluff  
from a misty Pelion Plain  
Henry West



West coast Tasmania  
Dan Broun



Promised land Bellingen  
Lorraine



Lion Rock, South Cape,  
Tasmania  
Wilkography



Keep on lunchin'  
in the free world  
ILUVSWTAS



How green was my valley  
Brian Eglinton







# Non-landscapes

## June 2014

WINNER



Chilly on top  
Louise Fairfax

This photo was taken on the summit of a solo climb in Tasmania (Mt King William I). I was skating on the rocks at the top - unfortunately without the shoes designed for that activity. However, the beauty of the icy world far surpassed the perceived (or actual) dangers. In fact, I loved it so much I came down, got myself a hot chocolate in the valley ("civilisation") and went and climbed another mountain. That one was so cold that it snap froze in the late afternoon. I was later told it had been minus 15 up there.



Still standing  
Doogs



The Twin Towers  
ILUVSWTAS



So beautiful, so ugly  
Cameron Semple



Shooting rock  
Dan Broun



Almost there -  
early morning near  
the Grampians  
Icefest



Creek Crossing  
Brian Eglinton







# Other States

## July 2014

WINNER



Crepuscular radiant glow  
Icefest

After a tempestuous white trudge to Seamans Hut the day before, I woke up the next morning to this incredible crepuscular vista.



And so the day ends  
Brian Eglinton



Below Red Rock Falls -  
John Walker

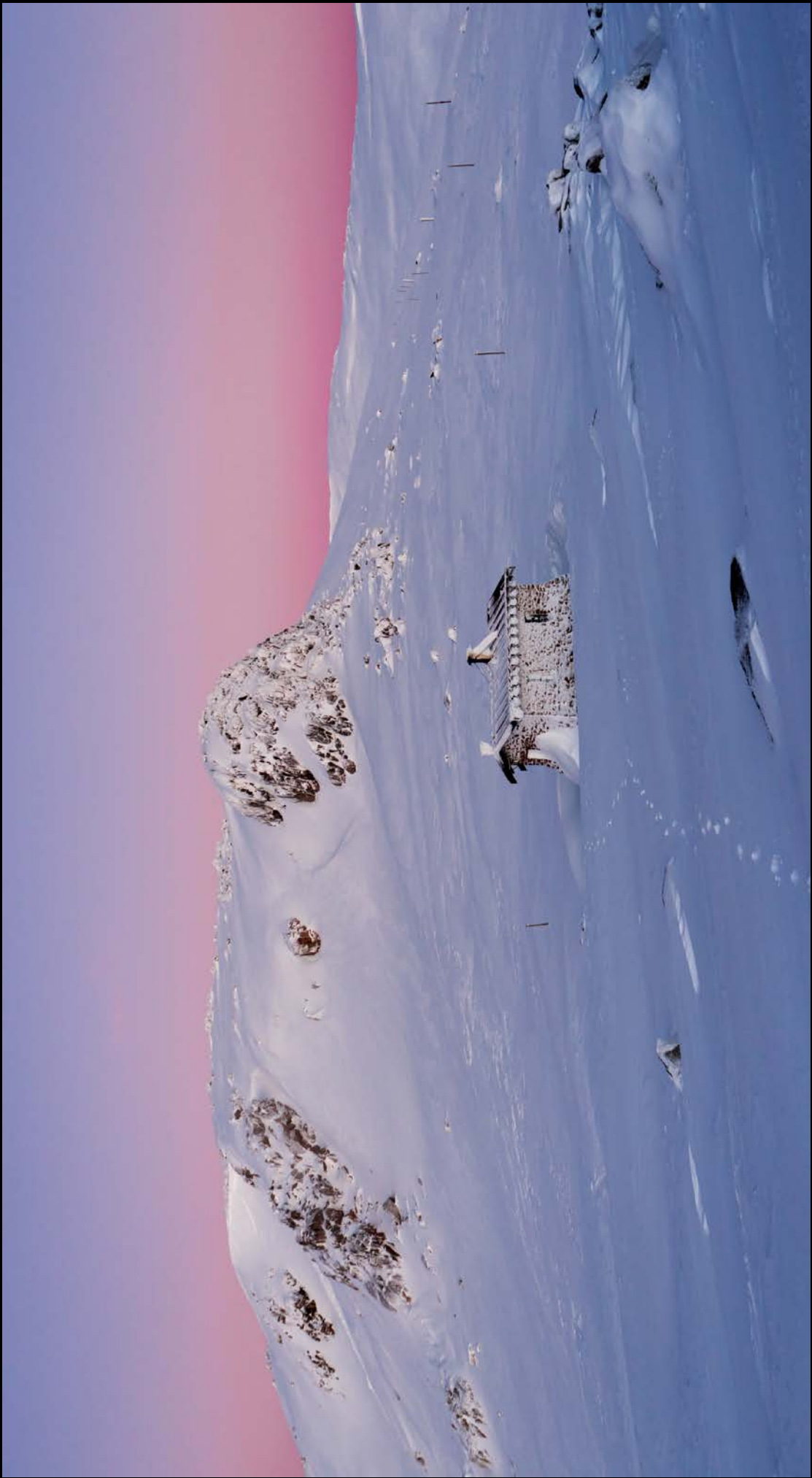


New England wilderness  
Awildland



On golden pond  
landsmith







# Tasmania July 2014

WINNER



Winter on the Overland  
TigerCat

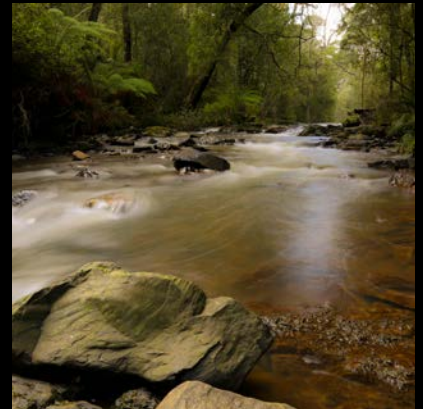
Barn Bluff in snow, taken at the beginning of winter en route to Waterfall Valley Hut, the first hut on the Overland Track.



Shootin' Schouten  
North-north-west



Shells, sand and sky  
Doogs



A misty moment  
on Second River  
Reuben Brimfield

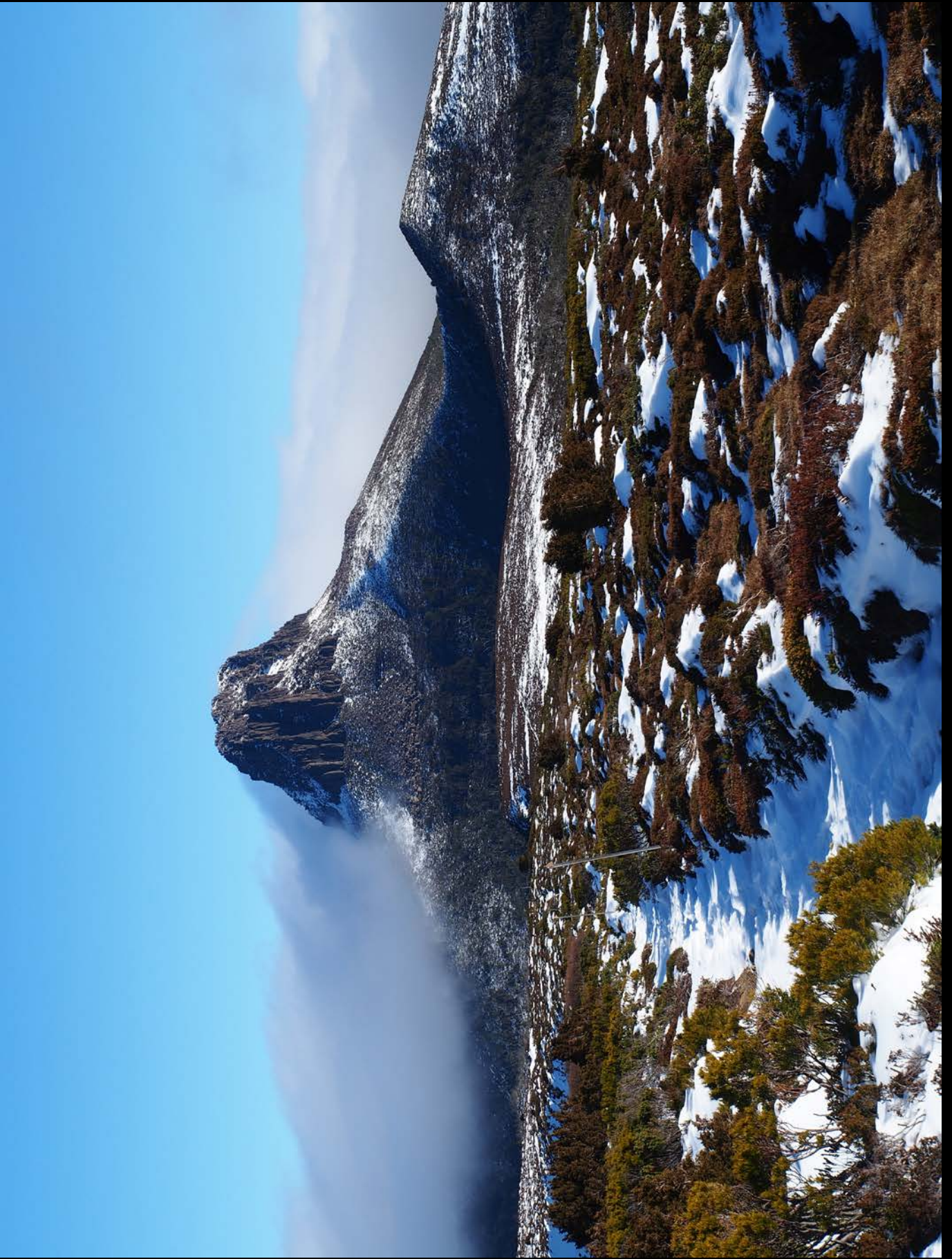


Late afternoon on Maria  
Graham51



By banks of shady fern  
Louise Fairfax







# Landscapes

## July 2014

WINNER



A hazardous viewpoint  
North-north-west

Off track at Freycinet, camping just below the summit on Dove, amongst the windblown and water-sculpted granite boulders. Dawn is my favourite time of day, and there are worse places to watch the sun rise and wake the earth than Tassie's east coast. Frozen fingers are nothing when you have a view like that.



Maria  
Graham51



Afternoon Delight  
Icefest



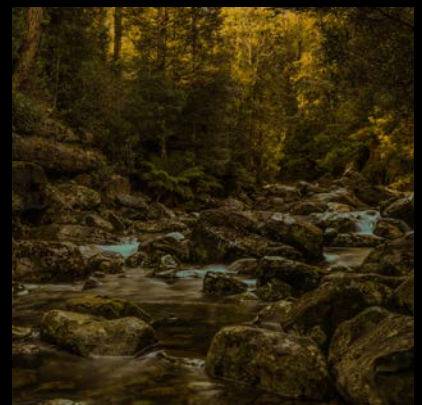
Gleniffer Falls  
landsmith



Little and Big Marley  
Andrew Smith



Ardens Outlook  
Brian Eglinton



The road ends here  
Reuben Brimfield







# Non-landscapes

## July 2014

### WINNER



Slow traveller  
Brian Eglinton

The Heysen Trail in SA covers an enormous distance ranging from vibrant coastal beaches and headlands south of Adelaide, all the way north to the semi desert of the Northern Flinders Ranges. These northern parts are best walked in winter, and we had experienced a refreshingly wet start to the year. So the vegetation was lush and green in our walk near the Dutchman's Stern. It probably helped that it was also raining on and off during the walk, but that added to the sense that this was a very special experience in this part of the world. It is still a long walk though, and in striding it out, it is easy to miss some very special small things. As it was, we had all passed the rock in the creek bed before my wife called us back to check out the colour of the snail. We were so taken with it, we dropped the packs and dug around for a snack while waiting for it to emerge and proceed on its slide over the rocky bed. I have never seen the like of it before, and it was the only one we saw on the walk. It's the kind of experience that makes such walks very special.



Trametes versicolor  
landsmith



Early morning  
Cradle Valley  
TigerCat



As you wish  
Icefest



Winter colour  
Louise Fairfax



Winter wombat  
wanderings  
Doogs



A rock with character  
John Walker







# TREES THAT BITE

Matt McClelland aka Wildwalks

Image by Rainer Wunderlich

Technically these plants “sting” - they can’t “bite” as they don’t have a mouth. This interesting fact seemed to be lost on my friend back in Scouts after she squatted to pee on a nettle. Ouch. Some 25 years later I wince when I think of her pain and my unsuccessful effort to console her.



We are pretty familiar with insects and animals that bite and sting. The plant world also has a few unfriendly ways of arranging protection, with some making you itchy whilst others can leave you in pain for months. Soft-skinned walkers beware. It seems that Australia can boast that we have the most [painful plant](#), somehow this makes me a little proud.

### How bad is the sting?

[Poisonous plants of Australia](#) by Selwyn Everist (1974) has 684 pages - a lot of poisonous plants. At page 515 he says, "If the leaves or the twigs make direct contact with the skin, the hollow, silica-tipped hairs penetrate and there is at first a slight itch, followed in a few seconds by a severe prickling effect which quickly becomes intense pain of a complex nature. The pain is described ... as composed of a background of tingling on which is superimposed an intermittent stabbing pain with sharp radiations passing in all directions."

He goes on to say the pain lasts for around eight hours (maybe 30 hours). The pain then

can continue to recur for more than two months. More recent [research](#) cited by the ABC suggests that the "The pain comes immediately after touching the plant, and it gradually increases to a peak after about 20-30 minutes". On top of this, it seems that some people can be [allergic to the sting](#) and suffer [life-threatening anaphylactic shock](#), although deaths are very very rare.

### How do these plants sting?

The leaves and some branches and fruits are covered in tiny hairs, hollow silica needles. They look soft and furry - but do not pat them: they are effectively glass hypodermic needles. The hairs range in length from 0.2 to 2 millimetres.

“...The pain comes immediately after touching the plant...”

It seems that the pain is not just because of the needles but due to the fact they carry a neurotoxin. According to an [ABC article](#) "One scientist, Oelrichs, purified the poison and injected himself with it and suffered intense pain. He proved that the toxin, not the silicon hairs, caused the pain. If you have stabbed yourself with the



Dendrocnide photinophylla branchlet  
by Mark Marathon





Image by Rainer Wunderlich

**Gympie-gympie  
(Dendrocnide moroides)**

Common names	stinging bush, gympie stinger, mulberry-leaved stinger, gympie gympie, gympie, stinger or moonlighter
Tree height	around 2 metres
Leaf size	large vaguely heart shaped leaves (about the size of your hand)
Link on Wiki	<a href="#">Gympie-gympie</a>



Image by Norbert Fischer

**Giant stinging tree  
(Dendrocnide excelsa)**

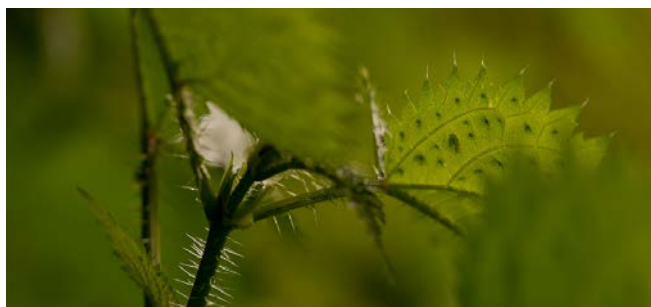
Common names	Australian nettle tree, fibrewood, gimpi gimpi, giant stinging tree, gympie
Tree height	over 30 metres high
Leaf size	leaves are large and heart shaped with serrated edges, however unlike the D. moroides, the D. excelsa's leaves join the stalk at the notch between the overlapping lobes
Link on Wiki	<a href="#">Giant stinging tree</a>
Location	found in rainforests in NSW and southern QLD



Image by Mark Marathon

**Shiny leaf stinging tree  
(Dendrocnide photinophylla)**

Common names	fibrewood, small-leaved nettle, mulberry-leaved stinging tree, and gympie
Tree height	similar to the Giant stinging tree, but much narrower, up to 20 metres
Leaf size	leaves are glossy on the upper surface, long and narrow shaped (6-12 centimetres long) with wavy or sometimes toothed margins
Link on Wiki	<a href="#">Shiny leaf stinging tree</a>
Location	found in rainforests on the east coast of Australia between Sydney to Cooktown



Dendrocnide sinuata by Kalyanvarma

**Atherton Tableland stinger  
(Dendrocnide cordata)**

Common names	gympie, stinger
Tree height	up to 4 metres
Leaf size	heart shape leaves but with a broad notch at the base which is inserted the leaf stalk
Location	found on the Atherton Tablelands



hairs, you can release the neurotoxin from the hairs by heating or cooling your skin, or just touching it. This neurotoxin is very stable. Experiments have been done with hairs that were collected nearly a century ago, and they can still cause pain.”

This article goes on to point out two interesting facts. Firstly, that the tree seems to have no effect on most Australian native animals. Secondly, and more interestingly I think, is that the plant does not seem to do any actual damage to your body. Unlike the venom from a snake or spider that causes damage to your body in many ways, this toxin seems to “just” cause pain. However, if I was to mention this interesting fact to a victim in the midst of their pain I suspect that my body may get damaged.

### How do you recognise stinging trees?

These trees are generally found in rainforest on the eastern parts of Australia. See the breakout boxes for more information about key specific species which range from tall trees to shorter shrubs. If you are unsure, keep clear of plants with heart-shaped leaves with saw-toothed margins that look furry. There are of course other stinging plants like the ground-hugging nettles that occur in many different environments not covered by this article.

“...keep clear of plants with heart-shaped leaves with saw-toothed margins that look furry.”

### Protective clothing

When walking in some areas, body armour could help :), but since the trees generally grow in warmer areas this has limited practical application. Long thick pants, a shirt and a hat can help protect from brushing against the leaves. Wearing thick gardening gloves will also reduce the risk of getting stung if your hands grab a leaf or branch. Just be aware though that the clothes and gloves may collect needles whilst you are walking – so be mindful of this when removing and handling the clothing.

### First Aid

Always work through the standard DRSABCD protocol. Avoid anyone else getting stung. The [federal government healthdirect website](#) suggest that you follow these four points:

1. The most important thing is that you do not rub the area, as this can break off the hairs and make them very difficult to remove,
2. Remove visible hairs with tweezers,
3. Apply and remove adhesive tape or hair-removal wax strip to the area to remove the finer hairs, and
4. Do not scratch or rub the area, this may cause the hairs to penetrate deeper into the skin.

The rationale is to remove the hairs without disturbing them. Remove the visible hairs manually and then remove the remaining smaller hairs using the same process as depilatory hair waxing using a product like “Waxezze”, or tape.

The use of pain relieving medication may also help reduce the symptoms. There is also a [suggestion](#) that applying a dilute solution of hydrochloric acid soaked in a cloth on the affected area will help neutralise the proteins. This is reported to be very painful for around 5-10 minutes. The research base for it is very limited, and I strongly suggest that you speak with your doctor before trying this or before adding **any** hydrochloric acid to your first aid kit.

So let’s not allow these plants stop us from heading bush. Avoid the need for first aid by learning to spot these plants and giving them the respect they deserve. They are part of the Australian native ecosystem and deserve their space. Oh, and I almost forgot, make sure you always have enough toilet paper so there is no risk of grabbing a leaf from one of these trees by [mistake](#).

### More info

[healthdirect.gov.au/stinging-plants](http://healthdirect.gov.au/stinging-plants)

An older video on stinging trees [youtube.com](#).





# ICKY INSECTS ARE ACTUALLY TASTY TREATS THAT ARE GOOD FOR YOU

Chris Forbes-Ewan

In the early 1980s, I was a member of a team of nutritionists who analysed bush food samples sent by “The Bush Tucker Man” (Major Les Hiddins) from northern Australia to the Defence Nutrition laboratory in Tasmania.

The foods had been identified by Aborigines as being edible, and therefore of potential interest to Defence as survival foods if Australia was ever invaded and troops were cut off from normal supply lines.





Among the many foods Les sent for analysis were several insects, including the witchetty grub, honey ant, scale insects and lerps. We found that these foods were generally of high nutritional value.

Witchetty grubs, for instance, are an ideal survival food, being rich in protein (15% by weight), fat (20%) and energy (~1170 kilojoules per 100 grams). Witchetty grubs are also valuable sources of vitamin B1 and the essential minerals potassium, magnesium and zinc.

### Swarming deliciousness

It's clear that insects played an important role in feeding hundreds (perhaps even thousands) of generations of Australian Aborigines. They have also figured prominently in the nutrition of human populations in many other parts of the world, and continue to do so.

One estimate is that:

approximately 1500–2000 species of insects and other invertebrates are consumed by 3000 ethnic groups across 113 countries in Asia, Australia, and Central and South America.

A recent report by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that insects form part of the traditional diets of two billion people (nearly 30% of the world's population).

Globally, the most commonly consumed insects are beetles (31% of the total insects consumed), caterpillars (18%) and bees, wasps and ants (14%). Other commonly eaten insects include grasshoppers, locusts, crickets and cicadas. Termites, dragonflies and flies are not commonly used for human food (but are still eaten in small quantities).

The FAO report also notes that edible insects are shunned in most developed Western nations because they are regarded as being a nuisance to people (think mosquitoes and house flies) or pests that interfere with the production of crops and animals used as human food.

But this is only one side of the story — insects are a potential source of food at

low cost (in terms of money and impact on the environment), they assist with food production (through pollination of important food plants, for instance), and play vital environmental roles.

As also pointed in the FAO report, arable land is already scarce, oceans are being over-fished, and climate change may impact adversely on food production. Unless we join the many traditional societies who make good use of insects as a food source, we may struggle to feed the additional two billion people [expected to inhabit the planet](#) by 2050.

### Changing bad habits

Much of the information in the FAO report is not new. For example, in 2009, a prominent Australian researcher in this area, [Alan Yen pointed out](#) that people in developed societies derive much of their food from unsustainable practices, such as growing grain to feed beef cattle and over-exploiting the ocean's fisheries.

Yen also noted that protein malnutrition is already common in many parts of the world. And he claims that, because they are animals, insects constitute a source of higher quality protein for humans than we can obtain from plants.

Another advantage of insects as a food source is that they're very efficient converters of feed into body mass. While cattle have variable "[feed conversion rates](#)" that range somewhere between five and 20 kilograms of feed needed for each kilogram of weight gain, according to the FAO report, crickets require only two kilograms of feed for each kilogram of weight gain.

Currently, nearly all insects consumed by people are harvested from the wild; insect farming is still rare, but it's becoming more common. The FAO report states that cricket farming is taking place in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand and Vietnam.

Industrial scale production is also on the horizon, with several companies "in various stages of start-up for rearing mass quantities of insects such as black soldier flies".

“...the most commonly consumed insects are beetles, caterpillars, bees, wasps and ants



### Crawling to a brighter future

So are we ready to embrace insects as a mainstream food?

Well, you know that a food has a bright future in Australia when it's mentioned in a magazine such as *Gourmet Traveller*. The May 2013 issue of this harbinger of food trends rates insects as one of the 100 hot items in world cuisine.

It also states that chic eateries in Sydney are now offering insect-based menu items, such as the “stir-fried crickets” and “ni hao mealworm cakes” available at Billy Kwong (Kylie Kwong’s restaurant). Meanwhile, El Topo, a Mexican restaurant in Bondi offers “crisp crickets with chilli and garlic” as a bar snack.

It appears that the use of insects as a source of food for humans has not only a long history, but also a bright future.

### A parting anecdote

In 1985, I attended a bush foods seminar that included a cooking demonstration by a leading Sydney chef. One of the foods he

prepared was “witchetty grub cappuccino”.

It consisted of witchetty grubs blended with milk, and sprinkled with wattle seeds. Surprisingly, at least to me, it had a pleasant, slightly nutty taste.

It’s nearly 30 years since I last enjoyed eating an insect-based food. I think I’m ready to eat insects again if they are prepared in appetising ways.

Are you also ready to join the two billion people who make use of this environmentally-friendly and nutritious food source?



#### Chris Forbes-Ewan

Senior Nutritionist at Defence Science and Technology Organisation

The article was first published in [The conversation](#) (an independent source of news and views, sourced from the academic and research community and delivered direct to the public) on 10 June 2013.





# IN THE NEWS

## Does DEET desolve synthetics?

Be careful when using DEET while wearing breathable fabrics. Read more here [sectionhiker.com](http://sectionhiker.com).

## Help map Wombats in your local area

WomSAT is a new resource for communities to record sightings of wombats across the country. Australia's unique wombats are in crisis - their numbers are declining and your help is needed to protect them by recording where you see wombats and their burrows in your local area.

Recording wombat sightings is very easy. Find out more here [womsat.org.au](http://womsat.org.au).

## A great Spark



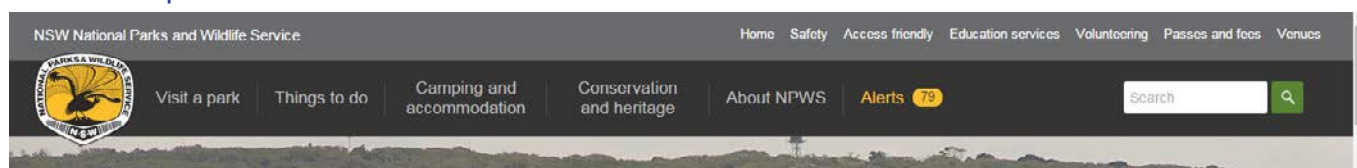
The folks at the CSIRO have developed an amazing tool and sharing it with the community. Spark is a computer framework that allows you to simulate prescribed burns and predict bushfires. You need to be a bit of a nerd to get this thing running, but in the right hands it will help land managers better care for our parks and help keep us safer in summer. Read more or download the tool [research.csiro.au/spark/](http://research.csiro.au/spark/).

## Taking Biosecurity seriously in Australia

The federal Senate received a final committee report confirming the serious deficiencies in protecting Australia from invasive pests and diseases impacting the environment. The report was supported by all committee members – Labor, Liberal and the Greens. The inquiry called for a national priority list of pests and diseases of concern, more resources for reducing the impact of invasive species on the environment and measures to address invasive ornamental fish, marine biofouling and illegal internet seed sales. It is a big task but great to see it been taken more seriously.

Invasive Species Council [invasives.org.au/](http://invasives.org.au/).

## NPWS requests feedback on their new website



I met with the NPWS digital team to chat with them about their latest website. They are really keen to get feedback from the community. Please check out NPWS new website [nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/](http://nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/). If you find any errors, omission or you want to make a suggestion, please fill out this form [survey.environment.nsw.gov.au/](http://survey.environment.nsw.gov.au/).





# RESCUE: INSIDE AND OUT

Stephen Lake



Bushwalkers set out in the expectation that they will return as they started and not need rescuing. But accidents or illness can happen to anyone, regardless of preparation, gear, experience, fitness, weather or any other factor. This article discusses safety considerations and rescues.



Glossary	
AMSA	Australian Maritime Safety Authority, national search and rescue authority
BWRS	Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad, from NSW, made up of bushwalking volunteers
GPS	Global Positioning System, allows the user to see the location and navigate
PLB	Personal Locator Beacon, a small emergency signalling device carried by bushwalkers and others. Similar to an EPIRB
Satphone	A mobile phone that links to a satellite, not a tower
SPOT	A tracking device with short text sending messaging and GPS. SPOT cannot receive messages. Similar to a two-way satellite tracker. There are other devices in the link at the end of this article
SAR	Search and Rescue, usually police, or an entity affiliated with the police

### Plan the walk

Except for the shortest and easiest of walks, planning is essential. The longer the walk the more time is needed planning, with more detail. You can decide at 8 am on sunny Sunday that the day is too beautiful to waste at home. It takes a short time to pack and leave for a day trip. If the walk is for a week then there is more planning of route, food and gear.

“It’s best not to walk outside your comfort zone.”

Consider these points for all bushwalks:

- having adequate fitness, gear, experience, skills and judgement for the trip,
- travelling with a minimum number of four people,
- leaving clear written and electronic information about the walk with a responsible person,
- not relying unduly on technology such as GPSs, mobile phones and PLBs,

- being prepared to wait out bad conditions or turn back, and
- on most trips, carry a PLB.

The best way to learn is to start slowly, most probably with day trips. Accumulate a little gear. Then try base camps. Progress through easy pack carrying trips to harder ones, maybe off-track. On the way you will learn from others about different ways to do things, and adopt that which suits you. It’s best not to walk outside your comfort zone. If you like day walks, then fine, participate, enjoy. Quite often there is no one best way – it’s a matter of opinion.

The last stage for most people is the hardest and for many it’s the most satisfying – leading. It’s easy to follow the leader in trackless bush. But try it at the front: map, compass and a wall of green; see the change. Years later you may be ready for a greater challenge: solo off-track walking.

### Technology

One of the biggest recent bushwalking technological developments has been Personal Locator Beacons. PLBs are very small and weigh under 150 grams, allowing the user to call for help from almost everywhere on earth. PLBs cost about \$350 and batteries last about seven years. PLBs can be hired. Carry a PLB if you are going anywhere that is at all remote or out of mobile phone coverage, including bushwalking highways such as the Overland and Milford Tracks.

GPS-enabled PLBs are preferred. If your PLB has been deployed correctly, search and rescue authorities will receive your GPS location via satellite quickly, generally within 20 minutes to an accuracy of 120 metres. Note that there are many occasions when the signal is not received for some time and even more instances when an encoded GPS location is not received for a period, or at all. PLBs that are not GPS-enabled take longer to determine an approximate position, 90 minutes to five hours. All PLBs sold in Australia are GPS-enabled.

It’s important to note that as well as providing a position, a PLB has a homing frequency and a strobe light that a rescue party in the air or on the ground can track.



Senior Constable Josh Peach, Tasmania Police Marine and Rescue Division says, “I cannot stress enough the benefit of these features.” Many aircraft have the ability to monitor the 121.5 MHz frequency as a matter of course.

Mobile phones may work from areas that carriers say are outside their coverage. If you can find high ground, attempt to make a call. I’ve seen walkers using mobile phones on Mount Jagungal in NSW and just below the gully on Solomons Throne in the Walls of Jerusalem, Tasmania. I’ve also seen reception in areas where the mobile phone shows no signal Satphones, SPOT, and other devices are available. These devices have varying functions and also provide SAR with a position, but they don’t have a homing frequency/signal, and many don’t have strobe lights either.

Unless you have the means to recharge a battery or a spare battery, it may be wise to take the battery out of mobile phones and other devices. Even when switched off, devices can drain a battery.

Do not rely unduly on technology. Josh says, “You can never replace a good paper map, the knowledge of how to navigate by using it map to ground, and a compass. There are no batteries to go flat and there is far less chance of a map and a compass suffering technical difficulties.” This is excellent advice. One concern is that undue reliance on technology will entice people into wild places that they would not otherwise visit.

GPSs can assist in difficult terrain and weather, and can be very useful when advising SAR of your location. However, always check this on the map.

That said, some mobile phones are very clever, and if the owner is familiar with the technology it’s possible to give rescuers more information. Josh says, “We have had several successful searches where the lost person is not necessarily a bushwalker but very phone savvy and sends us coordinates or a screen shot of their position on Google Earth so we could work out where to look. We have also talked people through

downloading the [Emergency+ app](#) which gives a lat/long of your position.” Learning how to do this can save a life.

An SMS may succeed where a voice call may not, but you cannot SMS 000. Also, if one mobile phone does not work, there may be a mobile in the party with a different carriers. By dialling 000 your phone can use any available network, so if your phone is with Optus and there is no service it will use Telstra if is available. For example, a Telstra mobile may not work but Optus does. Caro Ryan, Search Manager, BWRS, says, “If in doubt, I always carry a backup Telstra pre-paid SIM (even though I’m on Optus), as different wild areas prefer different carriers.” This may allow you to let your friends know you are running late.

### Running late

If you are just running behind schedule, attempt to make a phone call to assure your contact that all is well. If a helicopter approaches and all is well, stand with your hands on your head. The ground to air symbol LL may be too hard to make.

### Injured

You are hours or days from help and a party member cannot continue. What to do? Until recently a party member would have to walk out for help. Modern technology has changed that.

If phoning for help, rescuers should be advised about:

- the location – state, general area, grid reference (NSW, Kosciuszko National Park, south of Jagungal, Geehi River, 258943)
- number of casualties (one)
- nature of the injury (twisted ankle, possible fracture, moderate to extreme pain, stable)
- weather (overcast, limited visibility, blustery)
- suggested landing spot (north of river, fairly flat but windy)

It may help to have this written down prior to calling.

“You can never replace a good paper map...”

“An SMS may succeed where a voice call may not.”



## Should a PLB be activated?

From the AMSA website

"If two-way communications are not available, then a distress beacon should be activated in situations of grave and imminent danger. This equates to when you feel you are facing a life-threatening situation. This is a personal decision that is different for everybody."

“...don't use a beacon as your first option: it should be the last

If in doubt, apply a term used in legal circles, the reasonable person test: what would a reasonable person do? To allow the evacuation team to triage their jobs, always try to use some other way to call for help. If you have significant concern for someone's welfare and no other reasonable way of calling for help, then consider using your PLB.

Sergeant Dallas Atkinson of the Blue Mountains Police Rescue, NSW Police Force, says, "Whilst you may not die from the broken ankle, you cannot exactly stay there forever! The same goes if you are hopelessly lost in a remote area, with no apparent means of self-helping or calling for help."

Err on the side of caution. Dallas says, "The biggest point I would like to make is, don't use a beacon as your first option: it should be the last. If you are in the bush and need help (lost or injured), you have no other reliable way of communicating your need to the outside world, and your situation is such that if you don't use the PLB you may die or cause/risk further significant injury to yourself, then push the button!"

This view is supported by Caro, who says, "When it comes to when to use a PLB or not, the bottom line is that it should be the last resort, not the first one. It sounds silly, but in a panic people can sometimes forget to try their mobiles first, or move to higher ground to get coverage, or try sending an SMS. Alternatively, you should also never hesitate to activate a PLB if you need help and there's no other means of communication. Never take the risk of further injury to yourself or becoming further lost."

“Once you've pressed the button, stay put and wait for help to arrive.

I share the above opinions. Most PLB activations are for evacuation, often with medical assistance.





When rescuers want to decide between two needs or if to fly in marginal weather, if the PLB is the only contact they have no detailed information to act on. Hence, if at all reasonably possible it's important to phone, contact or walk out. They may still send the chopper, and can triage with more and better information. A two way sat pager allows detailed contact via texting, but may be too much cost and weight for many people. If there is a need for evacuation or outside medical attention, then consider activating the PLB. I can't see a rescue service getting upset if a PLB is activated in good faith. Maybe the next generation of PLBs will have the ability to send a level of urgency. For now, think about other options such as waiting, climbing a high peak for a phone call, or limping back to the road.



Source: Victoria Police Image Library

### Leave PLBs on and stay in one place

PLBs work almost anywhere, including under a thick canopy and in bad weather. PLBs work by sending a signal to a satellite so a clear view of the sky is desired. Once the PLB is activated, do not deactivate it until help arrives on the ground, and stay in one place. The helicopter flying overhead does not mean you have been seen. Caro says, "Once you've pressed the button, stay put and wait for help to arrive."

Josh says, "Quite often we are tracking the signal or we may have seen you but cannot winch in that location. Frequently we will have to find a suitable winch location, which may be some distance away. In this instance the ground crew can use a tracker to navigate their way to you on the ground." Josh says that "There is nothing worse than looking for an overdue walker for two days

when they could have activated their PLB and actually saved time and money. I had a bloke recently who kept turning it on and off to save the battery ... and moving after every activation!"

### Mirror and whistle

If you don't have a PLB or are otherwise unable to contact help, you may be able



to use a mirror such as that on the more sophisticated compasses. A CD will also work, and has a sighting hole. If the sun is shining hold the mirror close to one eye and line up the tips of the fingers on the other hand with the aircraft you are trying to attract. Move the mirror so that the reflection goes over your fingertips, and keep it moving. From the air this will be seen as a flash. Once the aircraft seems to be approaching you stop flashing; pilots may be blinded. Whistles and shouting may allow rescue teams on the ground to locate you.

### Night rescue

It may be that you activate PLB or call for help and a helicopter approaches your position at night. If so and you have the means, create a light from a fire, torch, strobe or even a mobile phone screen. Sometimes searches will be at night as helicopter night vision platforms can penetrate the canopy. It may not be possible to evacuate at night, so be patient. If the helicopter circles your location it's probable that you have been found. Wait for daylight for the return.

Positioning a PLB on a space blanket is a good idea as space blankets are easy to spot from the air and amplify the strobe light at night.

AMSA advises that "A growing issue has developed from people in distress shining their torches directly into the helicopter. This can cause rescuers to become temporarily



blinded and consequently losing visual reference.” Using strobe lights and camera flashes can help attract the attention of aircraft. Once you have their attention make that sure lights are switched off or are directed away from aircraft to avoid interference with the rescuers’ vision.

### Landing

There are visual signals that can be made from the ground to the air. Many will not be viable in the bush, and you should use just the human body to attract attention and assist the aircraft to land.

### Ground to air signals

V	Assistance required
X	Medical assistance required
N	No
Y	Yes
→	Proceeding in this direction
F	Food and water required

For gesture ground to air signals follow this link [survivalcampingstore.com](http://survivalcampingstore.com).

The best place for a helicopter to land is flat, horizontal, big and out of the wind. Reality check: you may not get much choice. If so, try to find a place where the PLB can be activated that meets some of the preceding. The aircrew will make the assessment about suitability for landing, and you can assist them. Make sure that packs, hats, walking poles, and tents are secure. The down draft will be significant, so face away from and well back on the upwind side until the rotors stop. Ensure that the casualty’s face is covered. In nearly all cases aircrew will approach you, so stay put. Do not approach the helicopter unless aircrew wave you in. If approaching, do so from the front of the helicopter, the 10 to 2 clock positions.

The helicopter may shut down while the casualty is loaded. Maybe not. There will usually be room for the casualty’s pack, but not for the entire party.

### Summary

The bush can be magic, with experiences that can be very hard to adequately convey to those that do not venture there. How do you describe the exhilaration of climbing a

peak in fine weather, or a colourful sunrise as you are buffeted by a cold wind, or the laughter of friends in a remote glade? The bush can also be unforgiving - people die. With the right preparation, gear, fitness, stamina, mental approach and leadership the risks are greatly reduced. Knowing when to turn back, use a pre-arranged escape route, stay where you are and in a worst-case situation when to call for help vastly reduces the risks. Ensuring that you have the necessary attributes before venturing into wild and remote places means that you have a much better chance of enjoying the trip and coming home safely.

### Links

Distress Beacons website  
[amsa.gov.au/beacons](http://amsa.gov.au/beacons)

NATSAR Council  
[natsar.amsa.gov.au](http://natsar.amsa.gov.au)

BWA February 2014, page 50, Wilderness communications, lots of other great devices  
[BWA201402.pdf](http://BWA201402.pdf)

Think Before You Trek website  
[trek.nsw.gov.au](http://trek.nsw.gov.au)

PLB hire  
[bushwalkingblog.com.au/plb-hire/](http://bushwalkingblog.com.au/plb-hire/)

PLBs can be bought from many stores. It is crucial that PLBs are Australian specific so take great care if buying online or from overseas to ensure they will work well or at all in Australia.

Many thanks to NNW, Josh, Dallas, AMSA, Caro and the Victoria Police for their contributions and assistance. As always, Matt and Eva gave good advice and editorial support. Responsibility for accuracy is with the author.



Stephen has been bushwalking for many years. He has been on formal and informal rescues in the bush, on snow, on cliffs and in bigger mountains.

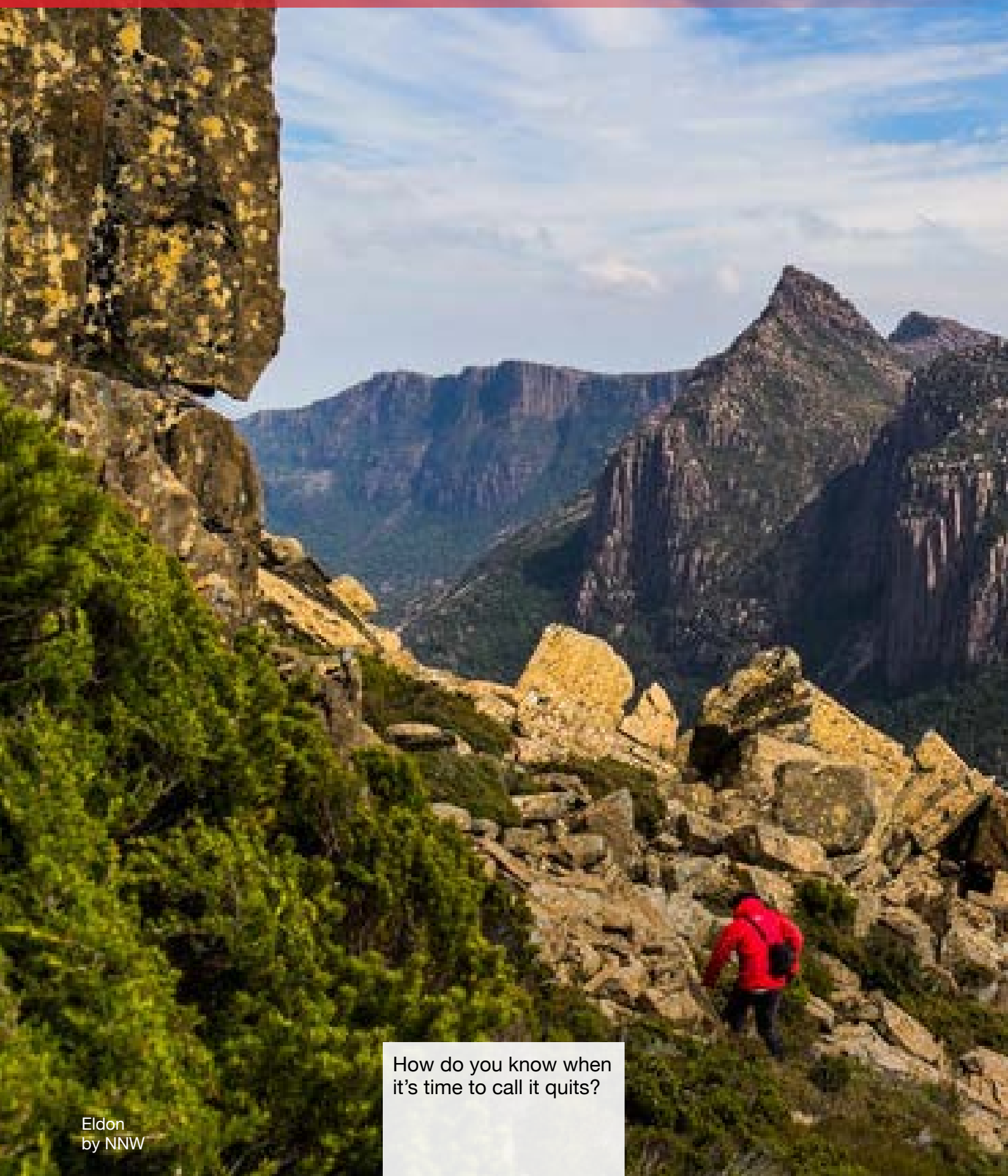




# THE ERGON RESCUE

## A bushwalker's perspective

Lee aka NNW



How do you know when  
it's time to call it quits?



Sometimes it isn't your call; you may be too ill or too badly injured to be able to make the decision. But when you're conscious and lucid only you can really know how badly you've been hurt, or how sick you are, and you have to try to be fair, rational and objective. It doesn't really sound easy and, as I've recently found out, it's even harder than it sounds.

I usually walk alone. In all my solo explorations over the years I've gotten myself into - and out of - some rather sticky situations. That's both good and bad: confidence is useful; over-confidence can be dangerous. Then I was invited to join a small group in an untracked area in Tasmania's Eldon Range which I've long wanted to see but was dubious about visiting alone ...

The first two days went according to plan in terms of where we started and finished, although we were slow. The third was a tent-bound washout. Fourth was a late start and far too late finish in appalling conditions. Fifth was glorious. Sixth started well, in ordinary but acceptable weather; then I trod on a loose rock and landed on the left knee, which is a little weak. Bruised, but not badly, I continued.

It's always risky to try to keep up to someone else's pace. Climbing through a bit of low horizontal woody scrub, a foot got tangled and down I went, the leg doubled up under me with all my weight (and the pack's) on that bent knee. Getting up again was difficult.

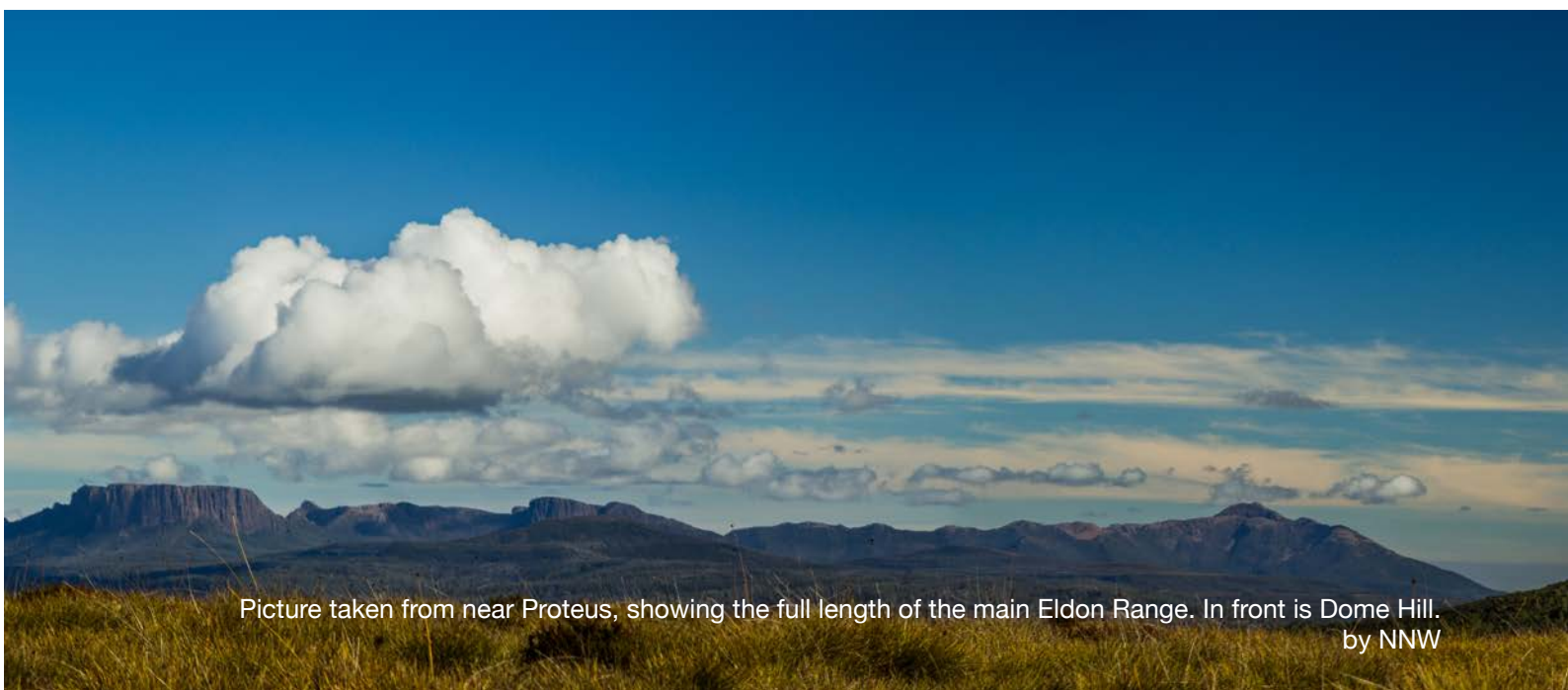
Agonising. Even without taking a step I knew I was in trouble. Said nothing (printable) until I'd had a chance to think it through.

Soon after this we dropped our packs for a side-trip, with a steep boulder scramble and an easy amble across alpine meadows. But by the time we reached that summit, with me a distant last, I knew I wouldn't be walking out with the others. I spent the entire time juggling possibilities and could come up with only one practical solution that was really fair: set off the PLB and fly out.

The downside to stoicism: my companions didn't realise how bad the problem was when I told them I was opting out. And that was fair enough, it's not like it was, in itself, all that major an injury. They persuaded me (admittedly, it didn't take a lot of persuasion) to continue down from the ridge to the next base camp, even took some of my gear to make the load lighter. Their suggestion was to camp for the night and re-assess in the morning. But I'd had trouble with that knee before, and knew that once I stopped moving it would stiffen and swell so much it wouldn't be usable. A minimum of three days off it completely and 10 to 15 days working back into normal use was the rule. It was at least three days cross-country to get out from where we were, including river crossings, bogs, scrub, boulders and mountains, and every step of that descent confirmed that I wouldn't be up to it.

“...confidence is useful; over-confidence can be dangerous.”

“It was probably the hardest decision of my bushwalking career...”



Picture taken from near Proteus, showing the full length of the main Eldon Range. In front is Dome Hill.  
by NNW



It was probably the hardest decision of my bushwalking career, but the only practical option. I'd thought about it long and hard from the moment I was back on my feet. All other choices would have involved all three of us abandoning gear and hoping to make it out, and with more bad weather on the way that was neither sensible nor safe.\*



So, while the boys were pitching their tents and cooking dinner, I activated the beacon and sat back to wait for the chopper.

What else could we have done? Well, we did get a phone signal up on Eldon Bluff, and could have contacted the Police directly. We tried to get onto my official AMSA contact to inform him of what was about to happen but, like pretty well everyone I knew, he was out walking somewhere, so we just left a message. And at this stage, the other pair simply did not understand how bad the leg was. I'd managed to climb up there. I was still moving around; limping, but mobile. Short of falling down and writhing around in pretended agony, I doubt I could have convinced them of the seriousness of the injury. And I didn't want to finish the walk on that note; desperately wanted the inevitable not to be so, so I didn't press the point as hard as I might have. In hindsight, that was an error.

It was the descent that finally convinced all three of us that a helicopter evacuation was essential. They saw how much I struggled, and I could feel the knee getting worse

with almost every step. But you can't get a phone signal down there, only up on the high ridges. The only way to call for help was with the beacon, unless one of the others climbed back up Eldon Bluff, or we made it to Lake Ewart and they went up Castle Mountain from there and phoned. But the Bluff was a good three hour climb from there (unladen), with Castle further off, so it was far too late to try that evening. And then you have to remember the weather forecast ...

“They saw how much I struggled..”

For the future, I'm back to walking solo. That might sound counter-intuitive, but for me it makes more sense. No intended slur on the boys, but it's safer to stick to my own slug-like pace and find my own routes. Without the self-imposed pressure of trying to keep up with our leader, I wouldn't have fallen in the first place. From now on, no matter how slow I am, I don't intend to take a step without due care.

I'm writing this with that leg propped up on the desk and the knee strapped, under an icepack. My walking companions are still out there. I'd love to be with them but, looking back - looking at that knee - I know I did the right thing. Ego and enthusiasm can only get you so far. Sometimes you just have to admit that circumstances have beaten you.

Still, I'll be back. Unfinished business, you know ...

\*The SAR helicopter was grounded the next day due to severe weather conditions.

NNW is from Tasmania, and describes herself as “shortish, female and crazy.” She has extensive Australian and overseas bushwalking and outdoor experience, starting with the old Lake Pedder aged 13. For the Peakbaggers, she is on 450 points, with 27 Abels left to climb. NNW has had her photographs published extensively in BWA, including the 2015 calendar.









# A VIEW FROM THE AIR

## The Police side of a rescue

Senior Constable Josh Peach,  
Tasmania Police Marine and Rescue Division

On 15 January 2015 I was on duty with Senior Constable Christopher Williams when we became aware of two German adventurers who were attempting to walk north up the New River to Federation Peak. I distinctly remember raising both eyebrows when Chris filled me in on the details. The area is arguably the most isolated place in the state, the terrain is rugged, and vegetation as thick as it gets. To exacerbate our concerns, Tasmania was experiencing record rainfalls. The last I had heard of this trip being attempted was when I winched out three enthusiastic men in 2009 after they set off a beacon.





The alarm was raised from Germany when the wife of one of the two men phoned stating that she had not heard from her husband for several days. The men had a SPOT device and had been sending an okay message each day, which included their position. The wife had not received a message for several days and was understandably concerned.

### The good news

- The trip was very well planned, itinerary provided to police SAR, and there were two men.
- They had a SPOT device and we subsequently had a last known position (albeit four days old) which fitted in with the itinerary.
- They had advised their wives not to phone for help unless several days had passed without hearing from them, indicating they were not the type to panic.
- They were described as exceptionally fit and well prepared.

### The bad news

- For some reason there had been no SPOT message. Was it device malfunction, was it a physical injury, misadventure etc?
- The terrain they were believed to be in was challenging and hazardous to say the least.
- Tasmania was experiencing record rainfall for January.
- The New River rises rapidly.

Technically the men were not overdue, but because of the lack of communication via the SPOT device, hazardous terrain, and the high rainfall, the decision was then made by the officer in charge of the Marine and Rescue Division to go in the helicopter and attempt to find them. Really, the only other choice we had was to do nothing.

“We were both pretty gobsmacked at how far they had made it...”



Josh by the the winch cable by Sergeant Matt Drumm

Chris and I took off in the helicopter with a pilot and paramedic. We were sceptical that we would find the Germans. The New River was flooded for hundreds of metres past the banks at the northern end of New River Lagoon and quite frankly the circumstances did not look good. Surprisingly, we spotted the men on a flat rock next to the river just north of the New River Gorge. They were not waving frantically for help but were obviously taking a keen interest in the helicopter hovering above. We were both pretty gobsmacked at how far they had made it under the circumstances. I was the winch operator and a decision was made by all the crew to winch Chris to the ground. The brief was for him not to disconnect from the wire under any circumstances as it was a tricky location, deep in a gorge, with a winch height of about 40 metres. If they wanted rescuing it was going to be hook up and go.



Mersey River rescue, Josh Peach collection

After less than one minute on the ground Chris gave me a big thumbs up indicating for me to winch him back in. Chris then told



me the men asked why we had been looking for them and stated they wanted to continue with their journey. They had been sending a message home every day but clearly the terrain, canopy, and cloud was preventing the SPOT signal getting out. No harm done, and at least we knew they were okay.

The wives were relieved, and I was quietly confident that the men

“... were forced into the forest due to the rising water...”

would make it out after seeing what they had already accomplished. That was until two days later when I received a phone call from AMSA stating that the distress function of the SPOT device had been activated by the men. Back we went in the helicopter, this time with Rescue Crewman Constable Drew Oakden. We flew to the scene which was slightly further north and located the men in thick low-lying scrub. The men were ready to go. The tent fly was waving and packed away almost immediately when they knew we had seen them. I winched Drew to the ground, and both men were winched in. It was the middle of summer and I could not feel my fingers!

Both men were uninjured but the rain and cold had taken its toll on them. I listened to their explanation and could not help but feel for them. They had done their research, planning the trip for several years and had chosen January due to the normally low

rainfall. They also explained how they had planned to wade the river but were forced into the forest due to the rising water and were making progress at the rate of 400 metres per day during 8-10 hours of crawling!

Finally I feel it is important to note that the first question these men asked me when we landed was “How do we donate to the helicopter service?” I do not know if or how much they actually donated but they were very clearly appreciative.



Josh has been an aircrewman and rescue crewman/swimmer since 2009 with over 900 flight hours. In this time he has conducted over 100 operational winches. He has received two Commissioner of Police Commendations for rescues performed and has also been awarded a National Bravery Medal by the Governor General.



Near Precipitous Bluff, SW Tasmania  
Josh Peach collection



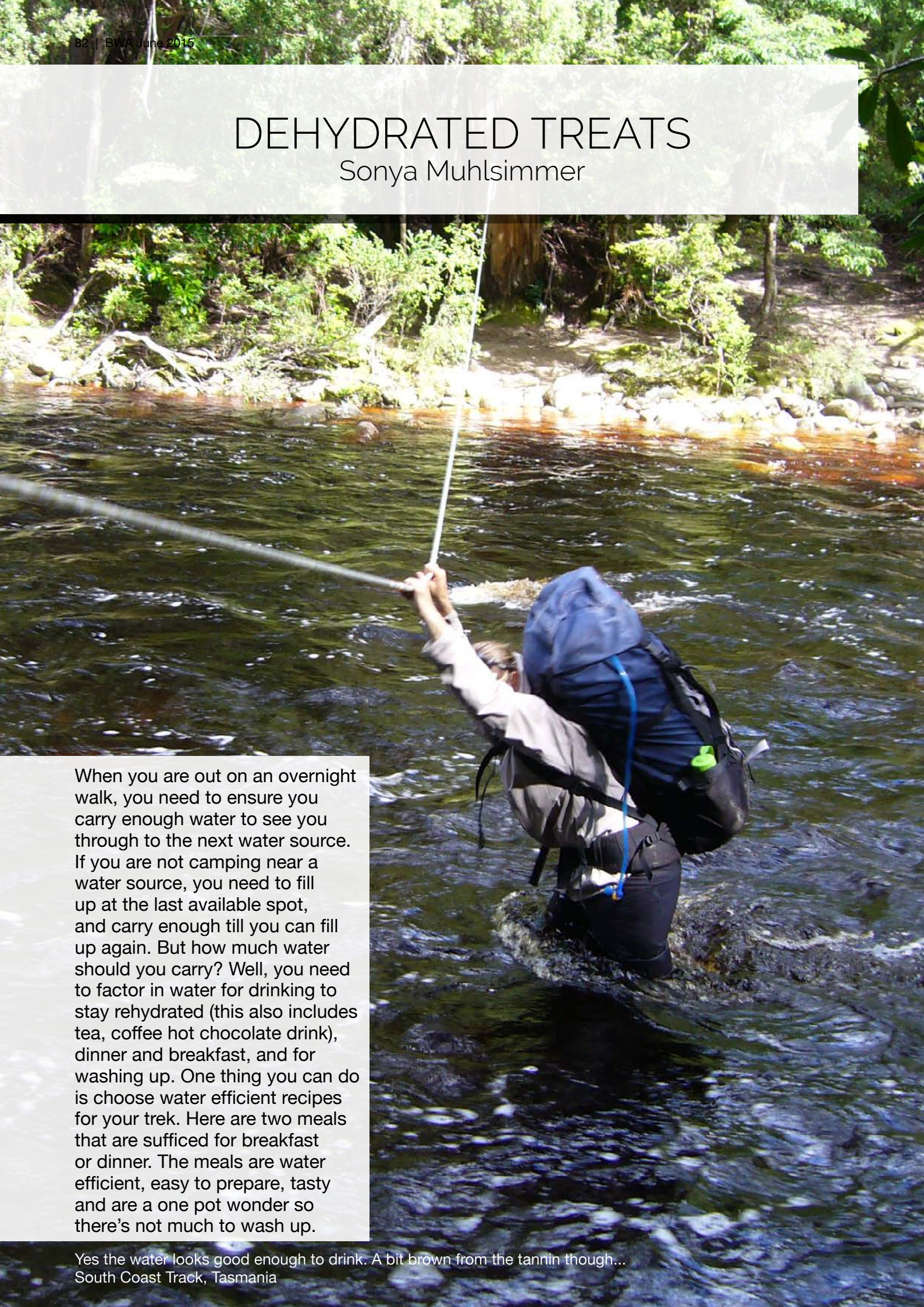


Read more at  
[greatwalks.com.au/](http://greatwalks.com.au/).



# DEHYDRATED TREATS

Sonya Muhlsimmer

A hiker with a large blue backpack is crossing a river by a rope. The hiker is wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. The river water is dark and brownish, with some white foam from the rope. The background shows a lush green forest with trees and rocks.

When you are out on an overnight walk, you need to ensure you carry enough water to see you through to the next water source. If you are not camping near a water source, you need to fill up at the last available spot, and carry enough till you can fill up again. But how much water should you carry? Well, you need to factor in water for drinking to stay rehydrated (this also includes tea, coffee hot chocolate drink), dinner and breakfast, and for washing up. One thing you can do is choose water efficient recipes for your trek. Here are two meals that are sufficed for breakfast or dinner. The meals are water efficient, easy to prepare, tasty and are a one pot wonder so there's not much to wash up.

Yes the water looks good enough to drink. A bit brown from the tannin though...  
South Coast Track, Tasmania



# Mash potato patties

Crispy on the outside and soft in the middle, these potato patties are a delight. They are simple to make and cook in a only few minutes. Have them for breakfast or even for dinner. The energy for a serve is substantial; one serve has over 2500 kJ and will keep you going for a while. A dinner suggestion: spruce them up a bit with some sweet chilli sauce, or even serve them with cous cous salad.

## At home

Label the bag and place all ingredients into the allocated bag and container. Copy or print out Method at camp and keep together with the bag.

## Method at camp

### *For the vegetarian option:*

In a cup, soak the TVP mince in  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of water for a minimum of 10 minutes then follow the steps to make the patties.

### *For the patties:*

In a bowl add the contents of the bag (pattie mix), slowly add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water and mix through to make a thick paste. Add the tuna (or rehydrated TVP mince) and mix through. Pat the mix down in a bowl and cut into quarters, then roll into patties. Add two Tbsp of olive oil into a hot pan and add the patties. Cook for about 2 to 3 minutes on both sides until golden brown and serve.

## Hints and tips

Makes about four patties.



## Bag (pattie mix)

Instant mash potato	1/2 cup	50 grams
Breadcrumbs	1 1/2 Tbsp	10.5 grams
Grated parmesan	2 Tbsp	20 grams
Egg powder	1/2 Tbsp	12 grams
Milk powder	1 Tbsp	10 grams
Dried chives	1/2 tsp	0.5 grams
Lemon pepper	1/2 tsp	2 grams
Mustard powder	1/4 tsp	1 gram
Dried onion	1/8 tsp	0.5 gram
Dried garlic	1/8 tsp	0.5 gram
Salt, pepper	few pinches	

## Keep separate

Tuna pouch (in water)	1 pouch	100 grams
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## Container

Olive oil	2 Tbsp	30 grams
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**Water** -  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup



# Tuna frittata

Frittata is an egg-based dish. Technically, this dish is not a real frittata, as a frittata is finished in the oven and should look like a quiche, and not scrambled egg. However in the bush when we are camping, it is not entirely about what the dish looks like. It is about how much water we are rationed to, ease of preparation, and for me, taste and nutritional value. This dish has about 2000 kJ, thus a well-balanced meal.



## At home

Label the bag and place all ingredients into the allocated bag. Copy or print out Method at camp and keep together with the bag.

## Method at camp

Place the contents of Bag 1 (vegetable mix) in a pot, add 1 cup of water and soak for a minimum of 10 minutes. In the meantime, put the contents of Bag two (egg mix) into a bowl. When the vegetables are rehydrated slowly drain the water from this pot into the bowl with the egg mix, stirring constantly so no lumps remain in the paste, leaving the vegetables in the pot. Add the egg mixture to the pot over the vegetables. Stir through and place the pot over a low heat stirring occasionally. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes until the egg starts to coagulate, then stir constantly for another 2 to 3 minutes until the egg mix is set. Stir in the tuna pouch and the sun dried tomato, heat through for another 1 or 2 minutes. Serve.

## Hints and tips

Make sure you use tuna in oil, this adds flavour and energy. Also if you have spare cheese in your ration add some as well, but note the nutritional value will change with any variation.

### Bag 1 (vegetable mix)

Dried mushrooms	1/4 cup	3.5 grams
Dried peas	1 Tbsp	11 grams
Dried corn	1 Tbsp	4 grams
Fried shallots	1 Tbsp	6 grams

### Bag 2 (egg mix)

Egg powder	4 Tbsp	32 grams
Milk powder	2 Tbsp	20 grams
Grated parmesan	1½ Tbsp	15 grams
Sweet paprika	½ tsp	1 gram
Dried onion	1/8 tsp	0.5 gram
Dried garlic	1/8 tsp	0.5 gram
Dried parsley	½ tsp	0.5 gram
Ground chilli	few pinches	
Salt, pepper	few pinches	

### Keep separate

Sun dried tomato	3 each	15 grams
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### Keep separate

Tuna sachet (in oil)	1 pack	100 grams
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**Water** - 1 cup

*Vegetarian option*

### Bag 1

Substitute TVP mince for tuna	1/4 cup	20 grams
Pumpkin seeds	1 Tbsp	11 grams

### Bag 2

Vegetable stock	1 tsp	6 grams
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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## 27th Annual NavShield - Great Club Navigation Training Opportunity! 4 & 5 July 2015

The NSW Emergency Services Wilderness Navigation Shield (NavShield), is an overnight event where teams attempt to gain as many points as possible by finding their way on foot, through unfamiliar wilderness terrain to pre-marked checkpoints. The course covers an area of 80 to 100 square kilometres and only traditional map and compass techniques are permitted. The course is set by a team of skilled navigators from the Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (the oldest land search and rescue unit in Australia) - the official Search & Rescue arm of [Bushwalking NSW](#).



The course will be set in a secret location (approximately 2 hours of Sydney) and will take place on the first weekend of July 2015. Encompassing the finest traditions and character of bushwalking, NavShield is an opportunity to get back to basics and work on important navigation skills, without the use of GPS. Now is the time to organise and motivate your teams to take part in this great event! For all details and registration, visit [Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad](#).

## The Gardens of Stone: *In Focus* Photographic Competition 3 June - 28 July 2015



Competition will give photographers a rare experience of capturing some of the best of this region through a camera lens. Whether you are a professional, non-professional, or junior photographer, all participants will discover a wonderland and have a chance to exhibit photographs in an exhibition at a prestigious venue in Sydney. The competition starts on 3 June 2015. The weekend day walks for registered competitors will be conducted 20-21 June, 27-28 June, 4-5 July, and 11-12 July 2015. The competition entries due date is 28 July 2015. To find out more, and register for the competition or "Visit the Gardens" guided photography walks, visit [colongwilderness.org.au](http://colongwilderness.org.au).

## Let us know of upcoming events relevant to bushwalkers

**Upcoming events**

Hi, we know there are many events happening all around Australia. If there's an event relevant to bushwalkers you'd like to be published in our magazine, please fill out this form and we'll try to include it in the next edition. Thank you.

\* Required

Name of the event \*

If there's a bushwalking event you think we should now about, please fill out the form by clicking the image on the left. Thank you.





# HOW WE MADE THE BUSHWALK.COM TAG

Gaber Gomiscek



It all started on the Bushwalk.com forum when Strider opened the can of worms with “How do you know if another bushwalker is a member of this forum? Was any kind of identifying mark adopted in the past? Wouldn’t it be good to know who’s who when bumping into people out on the tracks?” So a fun debate started.



There were different ideas, including badges; T-shirts (that we already have in the [bushwalk.com/shop](http://bushwalk.com/shop)); a small flag-type logo we could hang off a tent (that's an interesting one); a 7-10 centimetre green triangle with the forum logo; a small cloth patch to sew on a pack, and a printed tag. How about a clip whistle or a yellow plastic self-attaching loop-style dog tag? All are very interesting ideas.



There were a few more suggestions with a colourful debate that somehow just didn't want to end. There were comments and ideas one after another, sometimes quite funny. I had a nice laugh.

After bouncing around some good ideas we hit the "backpack tag" concept - great. Matt (aka Wildwalks) made a prototype and the group refined the idea. The prototype was the size of a credit card snapped long ways, a laminated piece of paper cut by hand.

So the wheels started rolling, eventually. What? Is it really more than a year? Matt finally got to it by asking Eva to come up with a design based on the ideas. We sent the design to a few companies and finally found a place that can make them at an okay price. To make them affordable the tags are double sided. One side will be branded Bushwalk.com, and the other Wildwalks - this way you can choose which side to show - and Wildwalks feels like he can then justify the set-up costs :)

Hope you like them! They are done now and are available through the [bushwalk.com/shop](http://bushwalk.com/shop) (they cost a few dollars - postage is the killer, sorry). Now when you are on the track you can choose to be spotted as a Bushwalk.com member - or alternatively you can grab a pen and tweak your own tag to hide from people as suggested in the thread :)

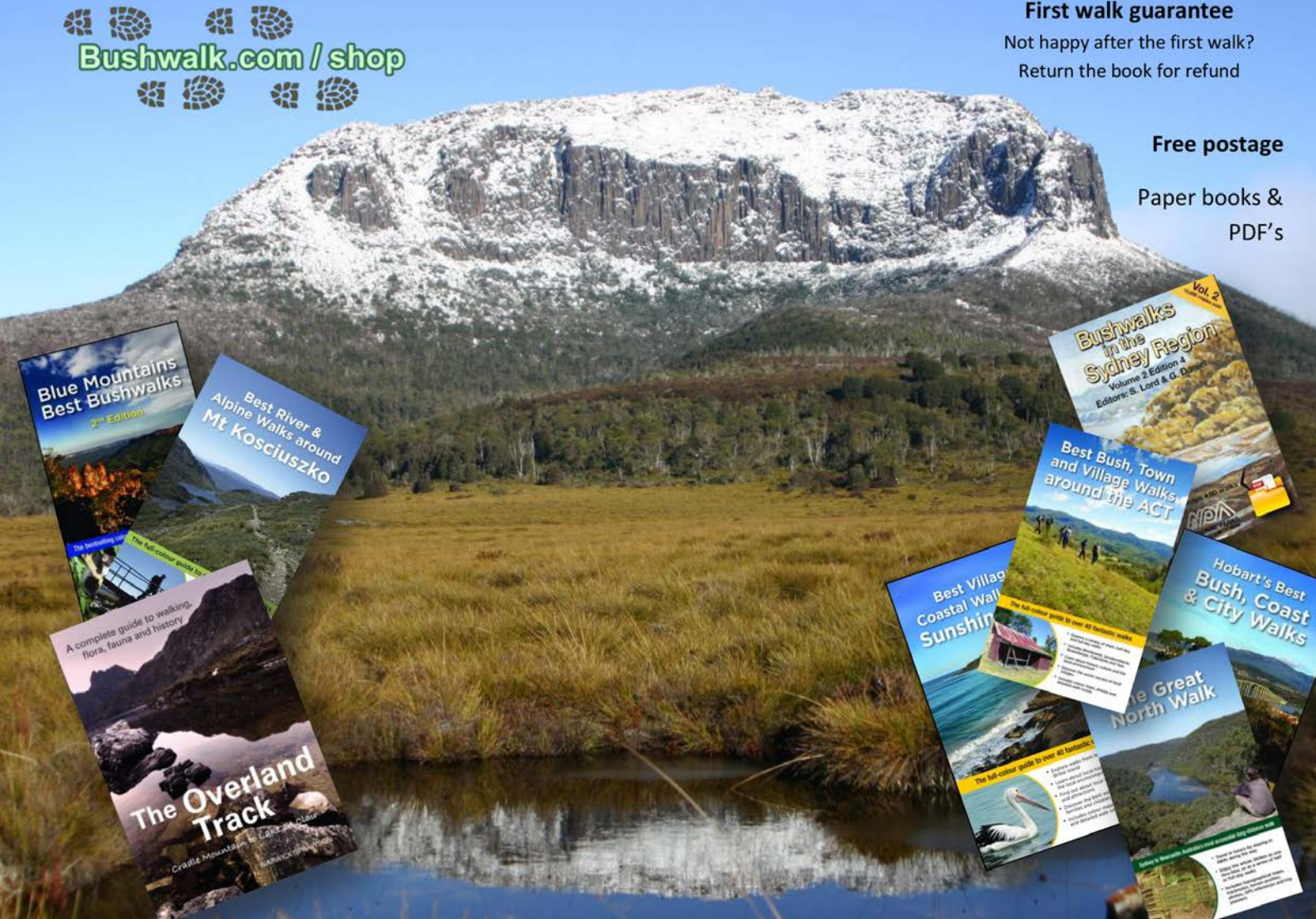
The important thing is that you are out there walking - with or without a tag. Either way if you see me with my tag - please say "Hi".



Tag prototype







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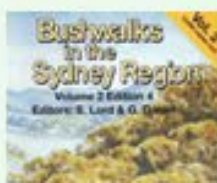


SA



WA

**New Products For November**



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0 items

**Reviews**

There are currently no product reviews