

Bushwalk Australia



Longer and Wilder

Volume No 22, April 2017

Bushwalk Australia Magazine
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"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



This is a photo of
of content, triumph
and sheer relief its
nearly over and a

hot shower awaits in 24 hours
from then! Sonya by Paul

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We would love you to be part
of the magazine, here is how to
contribute - [Writer's Guide](#).

The copy deadline for the
June 2017 edition is
30 April 2017.

Warning

Like all outdoor pursuits, the
activities described in this
publication may be dangerous.
Undertaking them may result in
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Please consider joining a walking
club or undertaking formal training
in other ways to ensure you are
well prepared for any activities you
are planning. Please report any
errors or omissions to the editor or
in the forum at BWA eMag.

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Curried mince and veggies &
Nachos (without the beans)

From the Editor

Autumn is here and we have another great edition that we're excited to share with you.

It is always great fun getting a sense of the adventures people are enjoying around this amazing country.

In this edition, you will share in the Bibbulmun Track adventure as Michelle Ryan invites us to help support this impressive long-distance track. We also get to enjoy a Western Arthurs adventure with our regular contributor Sonya Muhslimmer. Also we get to explore the stunning environment along the Green Gully Track with Craig Pearce.

If you're like me and enjoy walking bare feet you'll be interested in the review on Skinners - the socks you can walk in. We have an etiquette article to spark thinking about how we behave on and off track and an inspiring Australian Hiker's write up on why Tim Savage loves bushwalking. This and a lot more with some beautiful photos in Photo gallery to inspire you to get out there and have more fun exploring amazing places.

Happy walking
Matt :)



Matt McClelland (aka Wildwalks)
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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. The authors are mostly people I know through Bushwalk.com. I operate Bushwalk.com and 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.

Videos

The Appalachian Trail

National Geographic travels off the beaten track to discover the remote and often unknown corners of the [5-million-step journey](#).

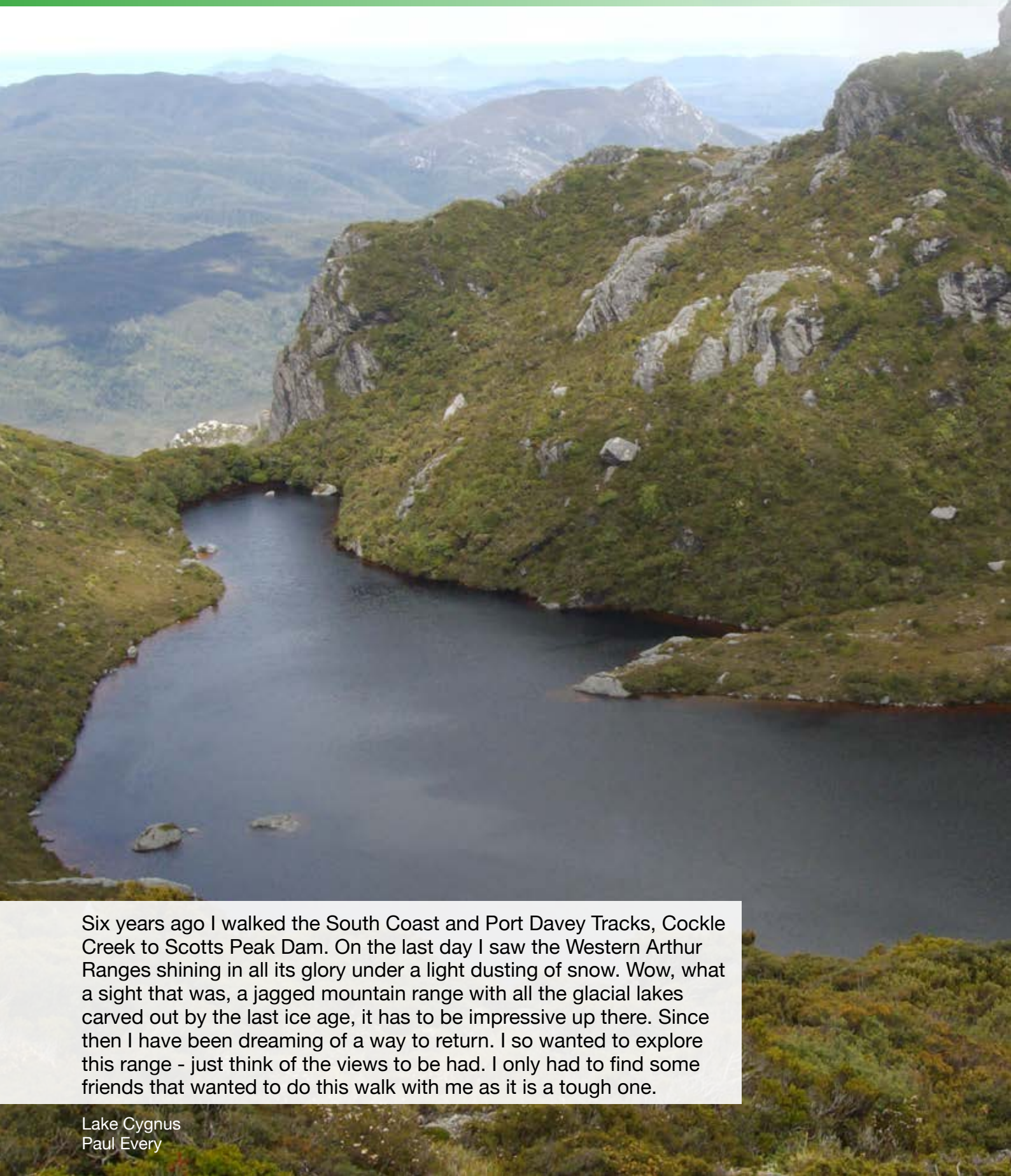


Kjerag in Norway

The [Norwegian nature at it's best](#), filmed with drone at Kjerag in South-Western Norway by Frank and Simen Haugom.



The Western Arthurs Tasmania With the Warties Sonya Muhlsimmer



Six years ago I walked the South Coast and Port Davey Tracks, Cockle Creek to Scotts Peak Dam. On the last day I saw the Western Arthur Ranges shining in all its glory under a light dusting of snow. Wow, what a sight that was, a jagged mountain range with all the glacial lakes carved out by the last ice age, it has to be impressive up there. Since then I have been dreaming of a way to return. I so wanted to explore this range - just think of the views to be had. I only had to find some friends that wanted to do this walk with me as it is a tough one.

Lake Cygnus
Paul Every

Well, it took a while but I got there. I got a team together and we will be known as “The Warties”. Thanks Paul. Great name, it has a real ring to it ... The Warties are Paul, Martin, Chris, Maj-Britt and me, Sonya. Flights were booked and everything else was organised. I even put in an order for the weather to be kind to us so at least we could complete the traverse, as the Western Arthurs are known for violent weather. Just have to wish for the best. Okay, off we go.

Day 1: Scotts Peak Dam to Junction Creek 8.4 kilometres, 4 hours

The Tasmanian Wilderness Experience bus company picked us up from Hobart airport, and after stopping in New Norfolk for coffee and last minute shopping, we arrived at Scotts Peak Dam around noon. After repacking and some snacks, walking began around 12.40pm. It was a perfect day, the sun was out, the views to the range were fantastic, spirits were high and we were all very excited. It was a relatively easy day's walking, apart from the 23 kilogram pack on my back and walking through the bog ... However, the bog was not that bad compared to when I was here last, but let's see what it will be like on the way back as it is all weather dependant. We had a few breaks, taking in the sights. This was not

going to be a trip where we rush to camp; this walk was going to be enjoying the sights and sounds of the area. Oh, and waiting for me to get up the hills ... Camp for the night was at Junction Creek, and as we were getting our bearings, looking at the map the sun set over the Western Arthurs. Oh wow, what a beautiful sight. The anticipation is rising. But, let's hope for good weather for the rest of the trip. Tonight's dinner is spaghetti bolognese.

Day 2: Junction Creek to Lake Cygnus 7.3 kilometres, 7.5 hours

The South West teased us on our first day with the perfect weather. It started drizzling during the night, we woke up to rain, and it drizzled and rained most of the day. We set off in the rain and walked along the buttongrass plains till we reached the bottom of Alpha Moraine. Martin's back was playing up and he decided it was best for him not to continue so he turned back. So after saying our farewells we started walking up Alpha Moraine. We trudged up, up, and up little further. We had a break in a cave and the clouds parted just enough so we could get a glimpse of the surrounds, a majestic sight

“ I even put in an order for the weather to be kind to us ...



The Warties - left to right Martin Kirk, Paul Every, Maj-Britt Engelhardt, Chris Riley and me, Sonya, in front

between the cloud breaks. Then I realised that my camera had fallen out of my jacket. It was found in a pool of water under a waterfall, so no more photos from me on this trip. What I found more annoying is that now I have to carry this dead weight for the whole trip.

After lunch we went onwards and upwards, scrambling over rocks to a

“The climb was 688 metres over two kilometres distance, steep.

saddle. The climb was 688 metres over two kilometres distance, steep. At the top the walking was a bit easier, phew. The track continued to a rocky outcrop, Mount Hesperus, and a little bit further the mist dissipated, with Lake Fortuna appearing. Also, on the other side of the ridge you could just see Lake Pluto, with the track continuing to another rocky outcrop Capella Crag. It was misty with a bit of drizzle but the rock formations looked quite dramatic peeking in and out of the clouds, so surreal. So far the track was easy to follow.

In less than a kilometre we were looking down a gully onto the welcoming sight of Lake Cygnus, home for the night. This camp site had a large platform that fits about six or so tents and a few smaller platforms, and one of those fancy toilets that you screw

the cap off, flip the lid down to sit on, then screw the lid back on when finished. It was not the nicest thing to use but it avoids a major problem. After squeezing our tents onto the main platform among other walkers, we were off to explore the area. The drizzle had stopped, the clouds had parted and a pristine lake with a rocky rim was in front of us, absolutely spectacular. On the bay there were quite a lot of different flowers and plants compacted in such a small area and all the shrubs looked twisted and beaten by the harsh climate. But more importantly there was a competition: who could skim a rock the furthest. Back at camp, another walker said a high pressure system was coming through, which means good weather is on its way, let's hope ... Lamb ragout for dinner.

“... there was a competition: who could skim a rock the furthest.

Day 3: Lake Cygnus to Lake Oberon 4.2 kilometres, 7 hours

There was a bit of cloud in the morning but no rain, a bonus. I was wondering if this was the high in the weather we were expecting. The track started up a steep hill out of the campsite, and the views were spectacular. Looking out over Lake Cygnus you could see for miles south-west over the dam. The



Scrambling out of Lake Oberon, en route to Mt Orion
Paul Every

clouds were parting, with a few stops to take photos, well not me - I just enjoyed the view ... The track was still easy to follow and easy walking but under Mount Hayes the track descended a steep gully with a bit of scrambling. At this section there were a few clouds about and the rock formations looked absolutely mystical again, peeking in and out of the clouds, and scrambling down in the cloud made it even feel more mystical. It was pretty special up there, such a wild and dramatic place. With or without the cloud, every minute the views and surroundings were immense. From here the track went down to a saddle, then small ups and downs and sidling along, pretty straightforward. A morning tea break was declared to check out the views on the ridge on either side as we thought we should see Lake Ceres from here. However, after looking at the map we discovered that we were looking down the wrong gully.

Just looking down these gullies and as far as we could see, the weather and views were spectacular. After

“It felt like there should be some Pterosaurs flying around or dinosaurs roaming the fields in the distance ...”

our break the track continued up then down and then it sidled around Procyon Peak, oh wow, the views here, the rock formations really take your breath away. Another quick break was declared with the views down to Lake Ceres. Square Lake was less than one kilometre away, and was declared a swim and lunch break. Seems like every set destination is only one kilometre away, but it's a matter of what is involved to get there that makes this walk tricky!

At Square Lake, Paul and Maj-Britt had a swim and Chris and I enjoyed sitting on a rock in the sun. It was a good, long break. Also, we were building up the stamina to walk up a really steep spur then down a really steep gully into Lake Oberon. The last leg of today's walk, only about one kilometre as the crow flies, is going to be tough. At the top of the spur on the saddle between Mount Orion and Mount Sirius the clouds came in and Square Lake disappeared, with the track descending a very rough and steep gully. There was some rock climbing and tricky scrambling getting down. But half way

“... after looking at the map we discovered that we were looking down the wrong gully.”

down the clouds parted and there it was, Lake Oberon in our sights. This tough little steep gully is absolutely beautiful with the amazing array of plants and rock formations; the views make it all worthwhile. It felt like there should be some Pterosaurs flying around or dinosaurs roaming the fields in the distance, it really felt like something out of this world. The camp site and toilet was hidden in the shrubs and there were a few smaller platforms available. Dumplings for dinner.

Day 4: Lake Oberon, declared rest day

This was a rest day. After the walk so far it was nice just to relax a bit and take in the atmosphere of this beautiful place. The next two days are the toughest and most challenging part of this walk so a fresh mind and rested body would not go astray. Lake Oberon is the place where some bushwalkers turn back. The scramble down makes some



Lake Oberon
Chris Riley

people lose a bit of confidence as they know it only gets tougher from here. It sure does ... Or the weather sets in for the worse and it would be too dangerous to continue as there are many more climbs and scrambles to come.

This day was also used as a reconnaissance trip and to take photos of the surrounding views as we would not have time or the energy to take photos scrambling up and down Mount Pegasus and Mount Capricorn. Mount Pegasus looked like a steep climb. We knew there was a scramble at the bottom with a pack haul through a hole in boulders, and that was just the start of the day. During the recce trip, a small tarn was found and the views were as far as the eye could see, over to Scotts Peak Dam (or SW coast) and yonder. Chris commented that you could probably see about 20 percent of Tasmania; he was probably right. Back at camp we had swims, played card games, ate lots of food, drank lots of tea and relaxed. It was not a bad spot at all for a rest day. Laksa for dinner tonight.

Day 5: New Years Eve, wet weather day

During the night there was a lot of rain. The alarm was set for 6am but when I looked out of the tent the visibility was, well, non-existent. After discussions, we decided that if the fog cleared by 10am we walk, and if not we stay: it was a hard day and we did not want to risk being caught in bad weather. Visibility was also an important factor in the next leg of the walk. John Chapman's track notes said: "At times the route is dangerous,

being poised above high cliffs, and it requires many climbs up and down steep gullies. It is advisable to have reasonable weather before leaving Lake Oberon".

“At 10am visibility was nil, and with showers ...

At 10am visibility was nil, and with showers about it meant another day at Lake Oberon.

Most of the day was spent in the tents, however in the early afternoon the clouds parted, somewhat, and we took advantage of this break in the weather to climb Mount Orion with Nicolas and a few other walkers. The climb out of Lake Oberon didn't seem as intimidating, especially without a heavy pack. As we walked up to the summit the clouds reappeared and engulfed us. But on the top the clouds parted just enough that we could see Square Lake.

Back at the tent I started preparing snacks for our New Year's Eve celebration. We feasted on a spread of falafels, hummus, olives, sun dried tomatoes, cheese, biscuits, salami, jerky and red wine then ended with some freeze dried strawberries, dried mangos, ginger nut biscuits, protein balls, chocolate and Baileys. Gee it was good! Then as the sun set we walked out to our favourite rock above the lake and lit sparkles and sent a wish to Martin, wherever he may be. The clouds parted and we could see so many stars (including the constellation Orion) standing out above the natural amphitheatre with its jagged peaks. Words cannot explain how spectacular this place is. An awesome New Year's Eve was had, definitely one to remember.



In the cloud at the top of Mt Orion
Nicholas Hall

Day 6: New Years Day, Lake Oberon to High Moor

4.3 kilometres, 8.5 hours

There was mist in the morning, but off we went, steeply up. I hauled my pack at the first tricky part and then continued up the hill. Near the summit of Mount Pegasus we hauled packs and climbed through the hole, and continued up. Then we went down a steep gully, across steep slopes then down another steep gully, sidling some more slopes. There were clouds about, but I saw a bit of Lake Uranus. Now in front of us was a scramble up to Mount Capricorn, through the drizzle, and only about 1.5 kilometres left for the day.

After the summit there was a down climb and more pack hauling, and then even more steep climbs down through mud only holding onto tree roots and bushes.

Interesting manoeuvres when you are short as there were some parts where I could not see, feel or reach anything. Alas, a small cave was found and we had a break. We were all tired, wet and cold at this stage and I was covered in mud. Chris hit his head standing up, he cupped his head, he

“Interesting manoeuvres when you are short as there were some parts where I could not see, feel or reach anything.”

was in a lot of pain and there was blood. My first thought was "is he okay?" and "how do we get rescued here on the side of a cliff?" We patched him up, gave him pain killers and luckily he was all right, phew. On we went again down through tree roots, bushes and some more steep muddy scrambles, then up and down and up and down again then up with a few scrambles in between. It felt like the track never ended and I kept thinking this must be like walking into Mordor ... Today's walk was very long and hard. At camp, other walkers helped get our tents up and put warm cups of soup into our hands. There was an open section for the platform which could fit around eight tents, and further away was the fancy toilet. Chicken soup for dinner.

Day 7: Wet weather day

Apparently during the night the temperature dropped to 4°C, and a resident rat had a ball trying to raid through tents, luckily not mine. Paul woke up with a hole gnawed through the side of his tent and other hikers said they got a visit too. The day did not warm up much either - it was cold and wet and there were no views about. Today was declared a communal tent day, even with the other walkers. We only got out of our tents if necessary. Honey soy and pork noodles for dinner.



Day 8: High Moor to Haven Lake 3.8 kilometres, 9 hours

We woke up to mist in the morning and a bit of drizzle. I don't think this high is coming through in the weather system, but, I guess the Western Arthurs is pretty unpredictable. You just have to take what it gives you, or gloss over photos on the internet. Only a few kilometres today, but, this was the toughest day so far. The track notes say "This route follows a very complex passage through the crags of the Beggary Bumps". I would say beggary was to kind of a word, however the word I would use to describe this section can't be posted here ...

The track goes up, down then up again then down again, but sometimes sidling on very steep slopes, literally on the side of a cliff. It was constantly meandering through tree roots, over slippery rocks or down very steep gullies. I lost count at six of the "Bumps" but apparently there are 16. I had to focus on my hands and feet, a lot of concentration; really the day was a blur. The track negotiated through the Tilted Chasm, then up to The Dragon and onwards to Mount Taurus with its many false summits. The rope came in handy for me in many sections, pack hauling and down climbing. This track just goes on and on. It was a cold day with mist and drizzle, we had some views, but not that much. Or was I just concentrating too hard?



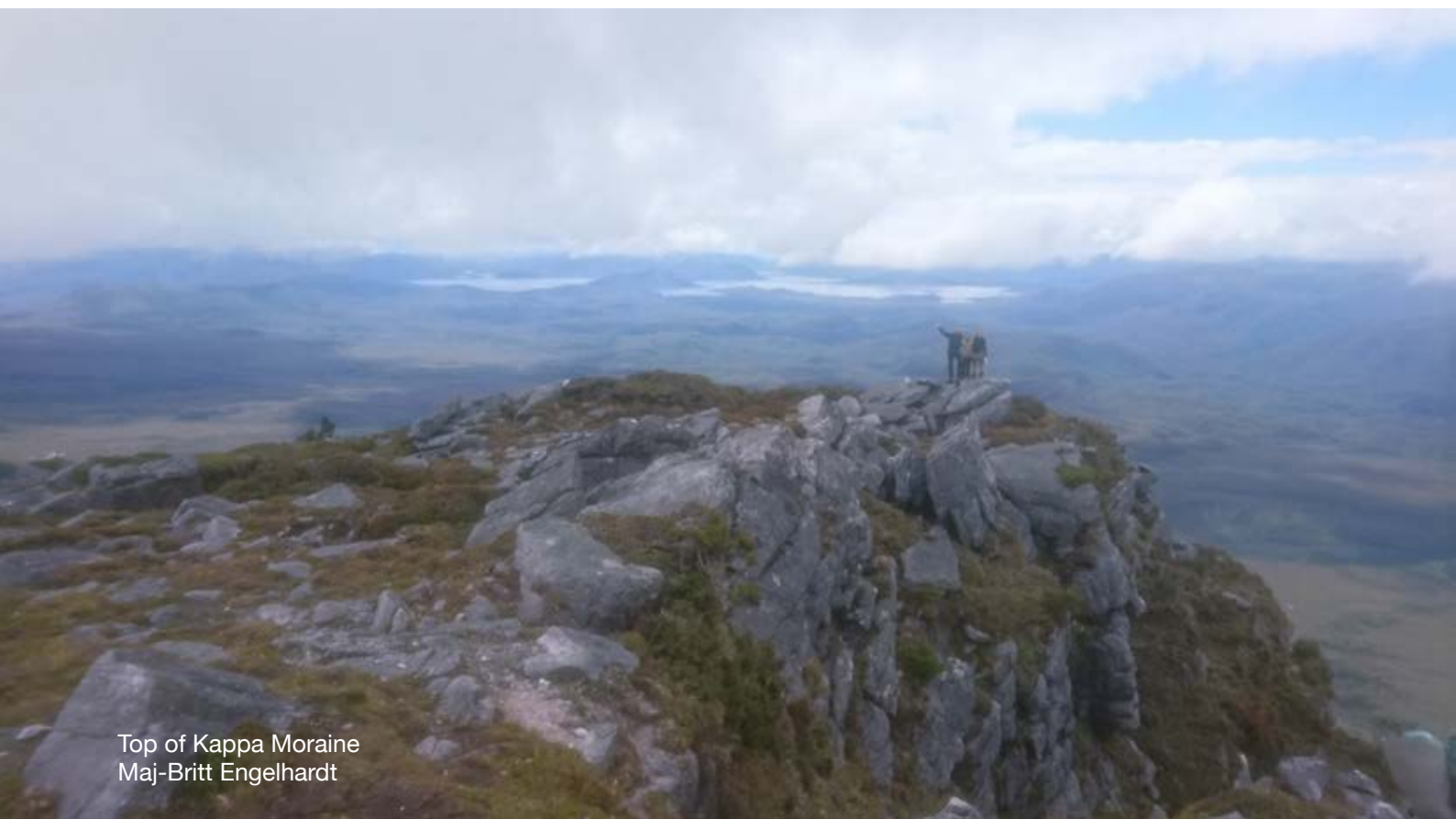
The Western Arthurs behind us now
Paul Every

Haven Lake was finally reached and lamb casserole was for dinner.

Day 9: Haven Lake to McKays Track 5.4 kilometres, 9.5 hours

Today was our last day on the range. It was filled with relief as we have made it this far without calamity, and melancholy as it is such a majestic place and you just want to keep exploring. The views are immense; they really take your breath away, when you get them ...

There was a bit of cloud about in the morning when we set off. The track leaving Haven Lake was a steep climb to a saddle, then down, then up again.



Top of Kappa Moraine
Maj-Britt Engelhardt



Promontory Lake in the background,
towards Eastern Arthurs
Nicholas Hall

Once the next saddle was reached, the clouds parted and the sun came out, this must be the high we were waiting for ... Standing on the rocks, and there in all its glory the Western Arthurs were behind us and the next steep descent down to Lake Sirona was in front of us.

This is why we do it, for the views, they were outstanding. The packs came off and we explored this area taking it all in. I think Maj-Britt and I had a teary moment together. Paul stood on a rock looking back at the Beggary Bumps yelling out expletives and Chris was gobsmacked by the views. I would say we were all a bit emotional, and very tired at this moment. The photos don't do it justice; you have to experience it for yourself.

“... and there in all its glory the Western Arthurs ...”

After the down climb to Lake Sirona our last rock scramble up was over Mount Scorpio which was easy to negotiate with all the cairns. There at the top we had another break looking down at Lake Juno, then another long break at the top of Kappa Moraine. Kappa Moraine descends 200 metres over 300 metres distance, in other words it is steep, and here we did our last scramble down.

Halfway down the moraine we took the shortcut track which reduces the distance to the McKays Track by five kilometres. I don't think it reduced the time by much, just the distance. The track dropped off after a while but it was not too hard to negotiate with a map, compass and GPS. Camp for the night was on the McKays Track in a soft and mossy forest and gnocchi was for dinner. It was our last night out.

Day 10: Two Mile Creek to Scotts Peak Dam

12 kilometres approximate, 6.5 hours

Apart from a bit of bog the track out was easy going. Maj-Britt ended up in a bog up to her thigh, and she is pretty tall. She was in feet first. We reached Scotts Peak Dam around 2.30pm with the bus waiting for us and it took us to our accommodation for the night (which is called Base Camp, situated in Glenfern managed by Tasmanian Wilderness Experience). Guess who was there? Martin! What a happy sight to see him again, and The Warties were reunited, a very happy ending. The next day we travelled back into Hobart.

Comments

A huge thank you to Nicholas, Chris, Paul and Maj-Britt for the use of your photos. This was a tough walk, not for the faint hearted but ever so rewarding. The track was easy to find most of the way, but there were a few sections where you have to stop, look around and think about where you're going. I nearly went down a very steep gully as I thought I saw a cairn and it looked like a track, it was a track to nowhere, I nearly got stuck. There are also many false summits. Be warned, there is a fair bit of rock climbing and scrambling involved. However, I feel quite content that I completed this walk. One day, I am sure I will return. Perhaps the Eastern Arthurs next?



Sonya's two favourite things in life are spending as much time outdoors as possible, and food. From a very early age her father had her out skiing (literally as soon as she could walk), camping, caving, and bushwalking. Sonya is a member of a bushwalking, adventure and canyon group. She has a BSc in Food Science, is also a qualified chef and has written a cook book with lots of nutritional advice designed especially for bushwalking. Her website is xtremegourmet.com.

Bibbulmun Track

Michelle Ryan



The Bibbulmun Track is one of Australia's best long-distance bushwalking tracks. It is in Western Australia starting in the beautiful town of Kalamunda and stretches 1000 kilometres south to the historical coastal town of Albany. This bush track finds itself winding through conservation parks, national parks, past reservoirs, through jarrah, marri, and wandoo forests, past mines and old historical timber towns. You will follow rivers, pass through farmlands, walk over huge granite boulders with views to die for of spectacular mist-covered valleys and the amazing south-west coastline.

Conspicuous Bay. The Bibb track marker symbol is called a Waugal.

As you can see this is a track with quite a variety of scenery to explore and it can be experienced in a variety of ways with the choice of doing day walks, multi-day walks or even walk the whole 1000 kilometres from one end to the other. There are guided tours available for either day walks or multi-day walks and for those who are happy to navigate on their own you can purchase maps and track books. There are campsites on the track, and companies that pick up and drop off on the track so one can sleep in the comfort of a hotel or motel.

A very brief history

The Bibbulmun Track came into being in the early 1970s. It was named in recognition of the local Aboriginal tribe, the Bibbulmun people, who would walk long distances through the bush for their ceremonial gatherings. The sign format is based on the Waugal serpent, which to the Aboriginal people means soul, spirit or breath. The Waugal is represented in black on a fluorescent yellow triangle sign that can be found along the track nailed to the trees for easy viewing. In 1979 the Bibbulmun only went as far as Northcliffe, and as part of the sesquicentennial celebrations of the founding of Western Australia the track was officially opened.

In 1994 the track was upgraded with huts and toilet facilities, initially made in the



workshops by minimal security prisoners. The inspiration for the upgrade of the track came from the world-famous Appalachian Trail, and the track was also then extended to Albany, making it the 1000 kilometres it is today.

If you would like to learn more about the history and the people behind the development of this wonderful track check out the [official website](#).



Sullivan Rock

Michelle's walk aka Fundraiser for the Bibbulmun Track Foundation

It was a wet, cold Western Australian winter in 2016, so I was told; I missed most of it as I was hiking through Norway and Scotland, where summers are usually cooler and wetter than our winters, but not this time. On my return, I saw that the wildflowers were loving it! WA had a fantastic season for them. As soon as I arrived home I was back out on my favourite track, the Bibbulmun Track, enjoying the wildflowers.

The Bibbulmun Track, or the Bibb as I call it, always feels like home. Having grown up in Kalamunda where the track starts, I spent my childhood running around the bush. Over the years I have walked a fair bit of the Bibb, mainly to train for long treks in other countries. This day looking at the wildflowers enjoying the Red-Tail Cockatoos flying and squawking overhead, it occurred to me, why have I never walked it end to end in one trip?

That was it, decision made, By the time I got home and told my husband I had already planned the whole trip, from when I was leaving, how long it will take, which direction I would go, everything! Now I'm on countdown till I leave!

“... I want to give back to the track and the wonderful volunteers

The plan is 53 days starting in April 2017 in Albany and making my way north to Kalamunda, finishing on 28 May. I want to celebrate this day not only because it is my last day on the track but I want to give back to the track and the wonderful volunteers that make it possible to have it here to enjoy. The [Bibbulmun fundraiser](#) seeks donations. You can join me on this day. Check [my website](#) to find out more.



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Michelle is Sydney born, Perth raised. Her childhood was spent exploring the Kalamunda bushlands in the Darling Range east of Perth, where her love of nature started. Michelle has had many jobs: hospitality, modelling, artist, art teacher and on a prawn trawler. Michelle is a travel writer and a seriously addicted hiker. She is married to fellow hiker addict Mark, and has three adult children. Michelle and Mark explore the world by walking in places like Norway, Alaska and Italy, to name a few. As she loves the peace and harmony of nature and having the feeling of freedom, Michelle prefers wilderness tracks. She has done quite a few solo: it grounds her.



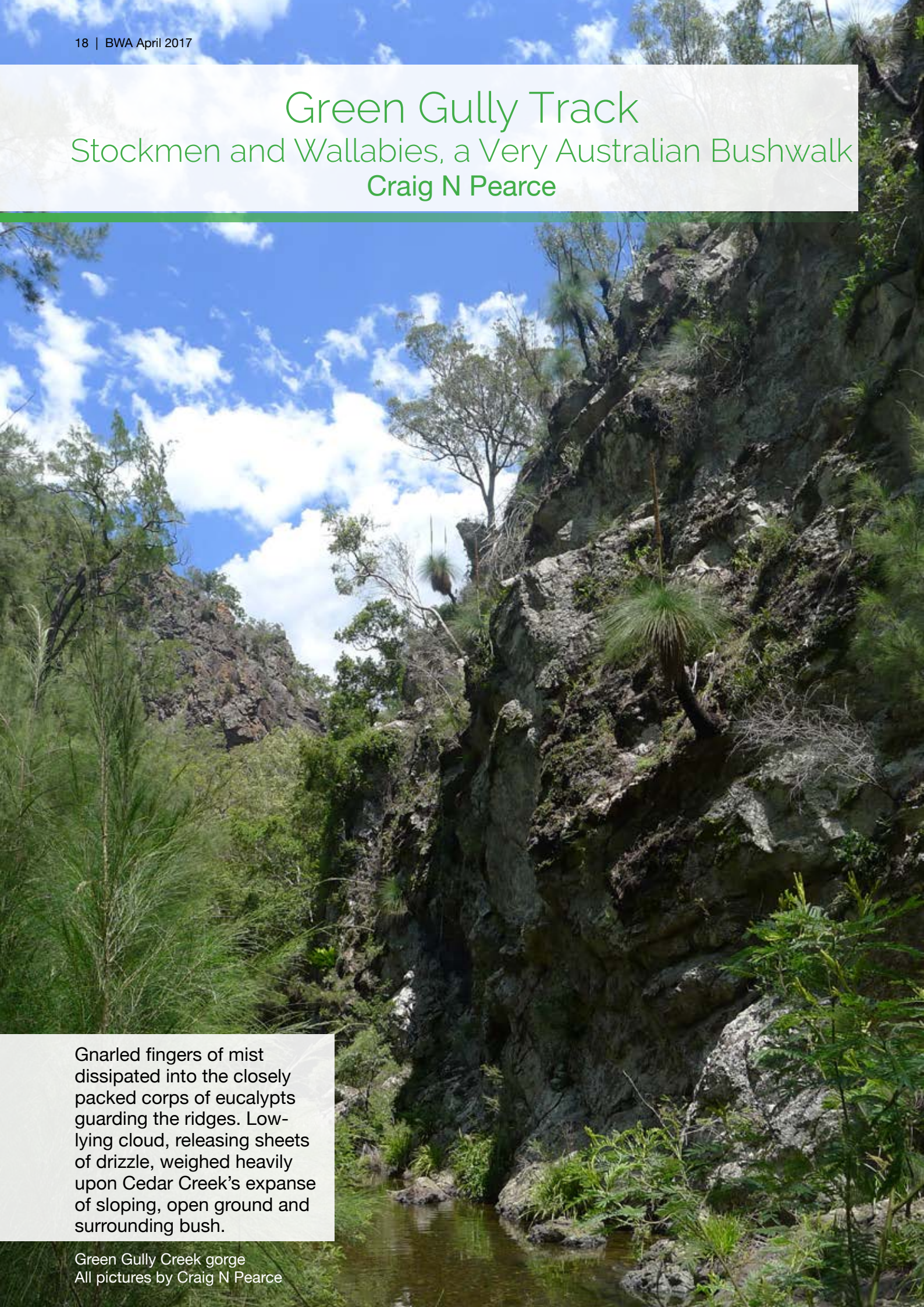
Paris and Jade exploring the Bibbulmun with their mum Michelle and me (Michelle)



Green Gully Track

Stockmen and Wallabies, a Very Australian Bushwalk

Craig N Pearce



Gnarled fingers of mist dissipated into the closely packed corps of eucalypts guarding the ridges. Low-lying cloud, releasing sheets of drizzle, weighed heavily upon Cedar Creek's expanse of sloping, open ground and surrounding bush.

Green Gully Creek gorge
All pictures by Craig N Pearce

Bodmin Moor is not what I was expecting the week before Christmas at the trackhead of Green Gully Track in NSW's Northern Tablelands' Oxley Wild Rivers National Park. And yet, five days later on our return, we were greeted with the same paradox, the same glut of alternately indolent and pugilistically inclined kangaroos, and the same all-pervading tranquillity and sense of isolation.

It's not uncommon, at this time of the year, for the area to be besieged by searing temperatures. For instance, within two days of my 13-year-old and I starting our trek, despite drinking large amounts of water, Lucifer's fork had impaled us – me especially – as I was smacked with a dose of sobering, nauseous dehydration.

Climate wasn't the only dimension of Green Gully Track (GGT) where diversity presented itself. But plenty of trekking experiences have diversity. What very few (none?) have in combination is:

- Such a deeply integrated approach to capturing a remote area's history of cattle grazing and the lives of its stockmen.
- For the three nights you are actually *en route*, accommodation is in refurbished stockmen's huts, each of them next to original, partly restored, stockyards. The huts feature bunks, water tanks, gas cookers and cooking and eating utensils – oases of convenience which saved considerable pack weight. There are plenty of historical stockmen's huts in Kosciuszko National Park and in the Victorian high country, but rarely are you actually encouraged to sleep in them, let alone creature comforts or offer exclusive booking rights.
- For the first night of arrival at the Cedar Creek trackhead, before trek departure the next day, and the night of arrival back at the trackhead at the walk's conclusion, the provision of refurbished or new accommodation that has everything the other huts have and a whole lot more, including hot showers and fridges (clearly, a trekkers' version of luxury ...) And get this, you can keep items (hint: beer) in the fridge for your return to trackhead accommodation to welcome you after notching up 65 very strenuous kilometres.



Green Gully Creek

- On three specific sections of the track – each about five kilometres – there are no deliberately created tracks. It is up to the navigator to ensure you stay on route. Having said that, all of these sections either have at least a faintly marked track on easy to discern ridges, or run next to (or in) a creek, so it doesn't take a lot of bush nous to stay “un-lost”.
- Some 3-5 kilometres, but more if you like, of the track actually being the creek itself – as in, you know, in the creek ... This is not a romantic track design flourish; it is dead set necessary to apply “track as creek” due to the surrounding terrain and vegetation. This is slow, slippery going and you can expect to give your delicate areas a rinse or two in the process. Plus, don't be surprised if there are unplanned for ... um ... bush baptisms. No matter if it is a cloud-free day, this is a section where a tough garbage bag to line your pack is de rigueur ... or suffer the soggy consequences.
- “Purchased” solitude. While solitude can occur fairly frequently in the bush, due to the booking system and staged departures of GGT, here it is actually guaranteed that for a minimum of four days you will only see who you want to see (and quite possibly for the starting and ending nights at Cedar Creek, too).

Opened to the trekking public in 2011, the four day GGT experience

is now one of Australia's iconic multi-day walks. Located in the traditional lands of the Thunghutti people and, mainly, within the Macleay Gorges wilderness area, the GGT's trackhead is situated about 45 minutes north of the Oxley Highway, between Wauchope and Walcha. Creating the trek was, without a doubt, a moment of pure NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) genius.

Oxley Wild Rivers National Park was established in 1986, but subsequently enlarged by further acquisitions such as the territory traversed by the GGT, includes the Apsley-Macleay River system and features the largest protected area of dry rainforest in

Australia. Its terrain is tough, full of gorges and steeply forested hills. Most of the track is within dry sclerophyll forest, with plenty of Silvertop Stringybark, New England Blackbutt, Sydney Blue Gum and White-topped Box, Forest Red Gum and Fuzzy Box. It is replete with many species of flora and fauna, much of which is listed as endangered or vulnerable.

“... the four day GGT experience is now one of Australia's iconic multi-day walks.”

A large part of the park, and the GGT-relevant section in particular, was reclaimed from cattle grazing. The history of this grazing, along with anecdotes and many other points of interest, is explained in information packs found at each night's accommodation.

Track by rumour, ridge and creek

The heart and soul of the trek are primarily contained within days two and three. That's when the unmarked track and creek-as-track experiences occur. You get a strong sense of these days towards the end of day one when you arrive at Birds Nest Hut. All of the accommodation is in spellbinding bush settings. But, for me, Birds Nest had that little bit of additional magic, making it all the harder to vacate the following morning.

Birds Nest is more closely cosseted by the bush than its peers; it takes centre stage in a natural amphitheatre. Like all the GGT huts, it's next to a creek. (I've never succeeded in shaking the love of a good creek out of my system. All huts being next to creeks, and also having the uber cool fully-creeked day three experience, made for a happy camper.) Here we were entertained with an intimate performance of birdlife, while the coolness, calm and creek were a mingled sensual susurrantion. The bush bastard flies – Mongol hordes residing at Green Gully and Colwells Huts – were negligible here, too, making it possible to make a stab at going all meditative beyond the protection of a screen door. Take mesh head nets to ward off the flies – the best \$3 you'll ever spend.

In the morning, it's hard to pull yourself away from the bucolic freshness of Birds Nest, yet pull yourself away you must, and as early as possible (6.30am in summer

“... Birds Nest had that little bit of additional magic ...”

being the smart move). This is to avoid the heat on the day's penultimate section, a slipping and sliding hurtle down the scree of a vertiginous, scantily-treed ridge, where the aforementioned heat and dehydration occurred.

You follow two spurs on day two, one going up, the other down. You initially weave your way through rocks and an invigoratingly scented forest of pines and eucalypts, to the walk's highest point, where waiting for us was a sleek, long and well fed red-bellied black snake, which eagle eye son spotted before I made the deadly step. From here you pick up a management trail, which due to its dishevelled state is more interesting than those on days one and four, as the bush presses closer, releasing its perfume into your face while the birds carol their seductive siren song, an asymmetric musical puzzle.

Along this section you'll find the walk's most spectacular – and certainly the least obstructed – views from lookouts such as Green Gully and The Rocks. They provide momentary respite before the imminent "Iago descent" (i.e. treacherous) to Brumby Pass.

The management trail warms you up for this: steep segments of travel by gravel. Securing reliable purchase is a heart palpitating mix of fun, terror, throw of the dice and strategy. I've not been a user of trekking poles previously,

but sharing a pair with my son provided a third point of contact to help with stability and prevent twisted knees or bruising backside landings. The same tool was a boon for the following day's creek stroll.

Wildwalking by/in/across ... water

Day three is pure Green Gully Creek – a bush creek daydreams are made of. You bookend the day with overgrown, barely used management trails running parallel to the creek, peppered by plenty of creek crossings. In the middle you're either using the creek as a trail or forging a path next to the creek. The latter is pretty low-level bush bashing, as overflowing creek water has quelled the vegetation.

The day is a rock and water double act: spires made of rock, bowls

carved out of rock faces, gorges, rock hurdles and rock slippery slides; cascades and pools to lay recumbent by, or in. A briefing from NPWS revealed most of the outcrops are metamorphosed sediments – sedimentary rocks laid down on the sea floor hundreds of millions of years ago, then uplifted and metamorphosed into slightly different compositions during times of volcanic activity, followed by the formation of the Great Dividing Range. The outcrops are formed when harder rocks of higher silica

“Day three is pure Green Gully Creek – a bush creek daydreams are made of.”



In the thick

content are left exposed when the softer beds erode away. Different rock colours are due to different chemical compositions.

Steep hillsides are punctuated by Klee-like eucalypts, ectomorphic, searching for succour in the earth and grasping at the sun, laden by inverted lung-clusters of leaves, dun-green umbrellas miserly in their shade offerings.

This is also prime Brush-tailed Rock wallaby sighting day, with plenty of colonies based near the gully. For us, it was also constellations of butterflies day; we were beset by kaleidoscopic milky ways, enhanced by an armada of zipping and levitating fluorescent dragonflies – the original drones.

Throughout the track, birdlife was prolific. Only some of the species I recognised, but among them were Glossy-black Cockatoos, King Parrots and rosellas of a particularly vivid aqua-blue hue I hadn't encountered before. One animal I didn't expect to come across deep in a national park was a small herd of cows, looking well fed indeed. NPWS tells me they persist in escaping their farmer's strictures, this being their third race to freedom in 12 months. The steepness of the ridges makes it difficult to remove them – a truck can't get to the area and in summer it's too hot to use horses to force them up

to their adjoining home property. There are limited amounts of wild/feral horses around, evidenced by their hoof prints, but they too are in the process of being removed.

NPWS recommend you bring a pair of trainers for this day so you have a dry pair of boots for day four. I would have been happier wearing boots. They would have protected me more against the sharp rocks I kept slipping against in the creek, and saved me weight and space. Walking in wet boots doesn't bother me, and if you tend to blister there's always foot taping.

Ups and downs: return on investment? Or net tangible assets after tracks

There is a downside to the track. All of day one and four of the walk are comprised entirely of very clear, wide, management trails. Additionally, you retrace about 10 kilometres of the same trail, hence doing it twice. To be honest, there is a bit of drudgery and monotony involved here.

However, plenty of beautiful moments do exist on these sections: views over Kunderang Brook Valley and beyond, where waves of hill lines swell up in the foreground, then melt into the pale distance, as well as over pockets of Gondwana relic dry rainforest; creek crossings; the first of the old stockyards, with their innovative bush engineering; and one of the trek's most



memorable moments – having climbed 600 metres over three hellish, torturous kilometres at the outset of day four, utterly drenched in sweat, the world's sweetest breeze – free but worth a million bucks – swung through the gullies, ghosted through our very skins and refreshed the engine for at least the beginnings of the next 14 kilometres.

But if the whole four days were management trails like this, all the walking, travel, time and logistics wouldn't be worth it. The magnificent return on investment provided by all of days two and three, though, and portions of days one and four, not to mention the time at Cedar Creek absolutely make Green Gully Track an experience 100% worth undertaking.

Footnote 1# – Just up the road on the Oxley Highway from the GGT turn off you'll find Tia Falls and Apsley Falls – don't miss them. Both are stunning for different reasons, the slate cliffs at Apsley and the seemingly infinite view down the gully from Tia being just two of them.

Footnote 2# – Depending on where you are coming from, try to use Thunderbolts Way to Walcha through Gloucester (and its extension, Bucketts Way, through Stroud). I've never been on this road before and the scenery you see is some of the most jaw-dropping you'll encounter – it's not a route I can recall seeing in those lists of best drives in Australia, but it should be one of the first pencilled in. Make sure you stop at Carson's Pioneer Lookout (another top tip from NPWS).



Early morning romanticism, bush-style

Photo Gallery



This shot was taken from Red Knoll Lookout on a beautiful evening after a day spent climbing the Sentinel Range and Mt Sprent. A pleasant breeze drew the clouds across what felt like the biggest, yellowest moon-rise I had ever seen, lighting up all of the Southwest Peaks. Something pretty special to sit and contemplate by oneself.



BWA Photo Competition



Other States

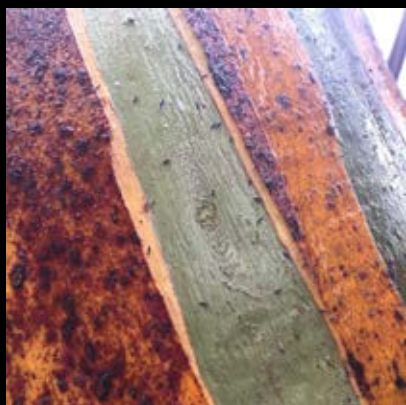
April 2016

WINNER



Sky Rise Apartments
Ben Trainor

Driving from Melbourne to Adelaide we took the scenic detour through the Grampians. To stretch the legs we walked up to the Pinnacle. You can start from Halls Gap but to save time we began at the Wonderland car park. The track makes its way through some impressive rock features where walls of rock line both sides of the track. This photo was taken from inside one of these features: the Grand Canyon. Closer to the top is the narrower Silent Street. It is a very popular route with good views from the Pinnacle.



In memory of Phil
Gary Hamann



Noble sentries
Brian Eglinton



Burleigh Head National
Park, Queensland
John Walker



Tasmania April 2016

WINNER



A little under the weather
North-north-west

Abel-bagging is not for the faint of heart, nor for those allergic to a little scrub, fog/rain/hail/snow/wind etc. Two and a half days of glorious weather on the way out to High Dome were followed by two days of yukkiness when it was Tramontane summit time. This was as good as it got. And the views from Tramontane? Ask someone else - I'll have to go back to find out.



Mist blown
Gayet



Wellington sunset
Cameron Semple



Lake Agnew
Brian Eglinton



Don't look up -
Three Capes Track
Beardless



Dune creatures
of the night
Andrew Smyth



Landscapes

April 2016

WINNER



Last of the sunrise
Gayet

The image was taken from a helicopter over the northern Tarkine area. I can't determine just where, but I was fortunate to get the last of the golden light across the low-lying cloud.



So that's why they call it
Plain of the mists...
North-north-west



Artillery view
Brian Eglinton



Mist in the Snow Gums
at Baw Baw
Gary Hamann



Near Campbells Crossing,
Gulguer Nature Reserve
John Walker



Tassie icons
Cameron Semple



Non-landscapes

April 2016

WINNER



Fractals meeting
Ben Trainor

This photo is of ferns along the Mavista Nature Walk in South Bruny Island, Tasmania. The previous week we went to an exhibition at the Tasmanian Art Gallery and Museum about patterns in nature. The exhibition introduced me to fractals: never-ending patterns which are self-similar across different scales. A fern is a fractal. The fronds repeat the pattern of the blade. This understanding gave me a greater appreciation of the beauty of ferns.



Twins
Gayet



Striated Pardalote
landsmith



Snow Gums on Mt Erica
Gary Hamann



Branigan Falls
Brian Eglinton



Fagus up close
Cameron Semple



Ouch!!
North-north-west



Other States May 2016

WINNER



Pierces Pass
Nick Morgan

This photo was taken whilst out climbing a 270 metre rock climbing route called "Bunny Bucket" high above the Grose Valley. If you look hard enough, you may even spot a couple of my mates climbing on another nearby route.



Second Falls
Brian Eglinton



Girraween sunset
landsmith



On Glenbrook Creek
John Walker



Last abseil
Jugglers Canyon
AJW Canyon2011



Tasmania May 2016

WINNER



First light above
a sea of fog
Geevesy



Huskisson River
North-north-west



Mount Rufus at sunrise
Danny Gelston



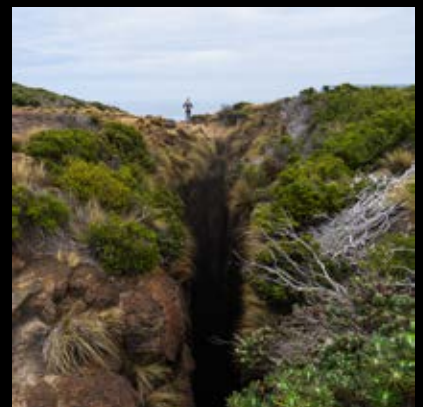
Mount Gould
from The Labyrinth
Teak



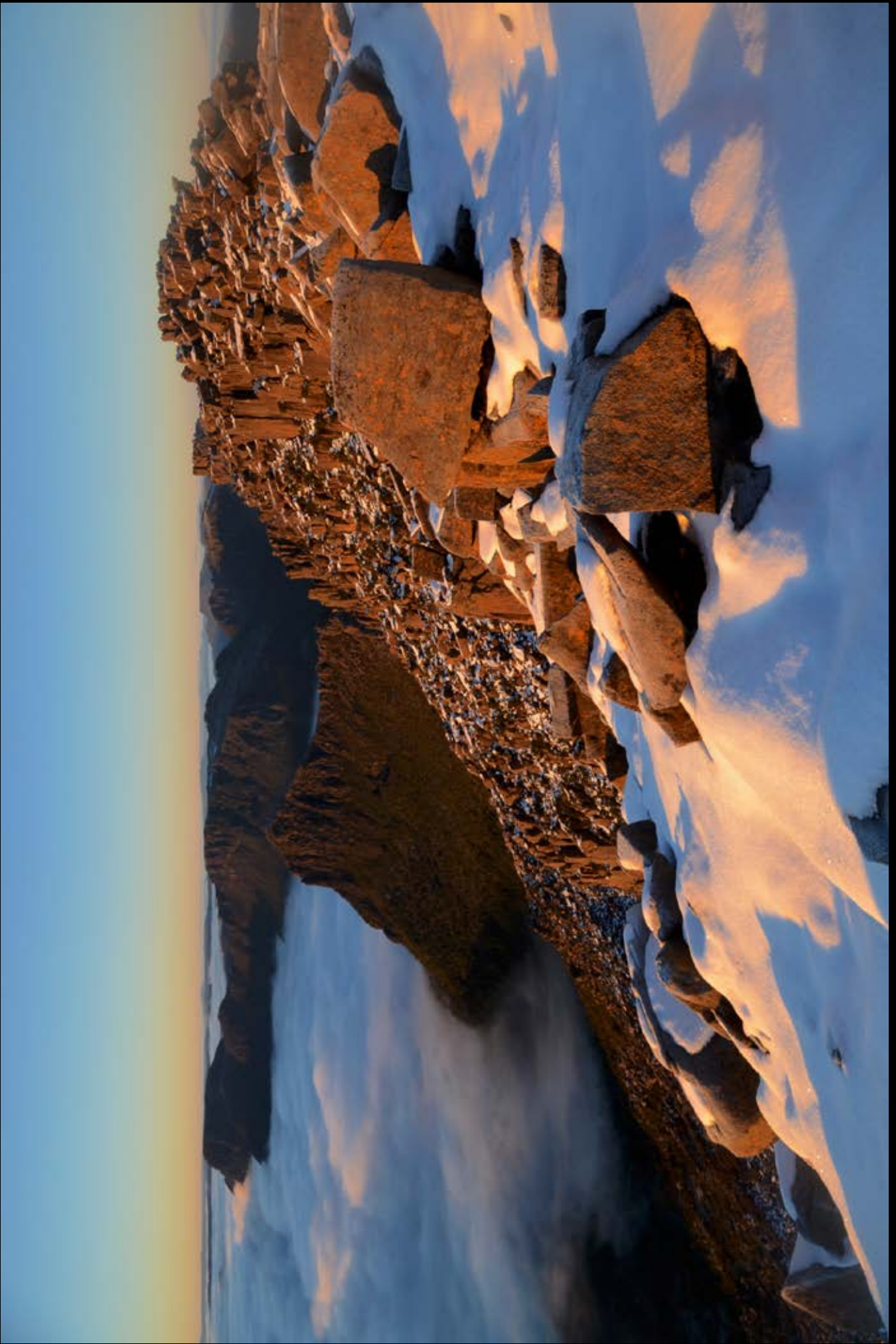
Mt Bobs
and an empty bowl
Andrew Smyth



Horseshoe Falls
Caedo12



The Blowhole
Cameron Semple



Landscapes

May 2016

WINNER



Rainbow at The Neck
Cameron Semple

The variable weather on this trip to Bruny Island added great drama to otherwise fairly stock-standard (but always beautiful) happy snaps. The frequency of rainbows appearing this day was so high I just had to wait for the next shower to arrive, get my shot, then retreat to the car before it hit.



Early morning
at Friendly Beaches
North-north-west



Arthur's in a bad mood
today...
Andrew Smyth



Staircase Falls
MickyB



Walls Cave
John Walker



Morialta Cliffs
Brian Eglinton



The granite unknown
landsmith



Non-landscapes

May 2016

WINNER



Shelter from the storm
North-north-west

Tarkine forests are special, and never more so than in fungus season. I was lucky enough to get in to Tiger Ridge for a few days at the height of the season, and was spoilt for choice as to where to point the camera. But this little pair were a standout.



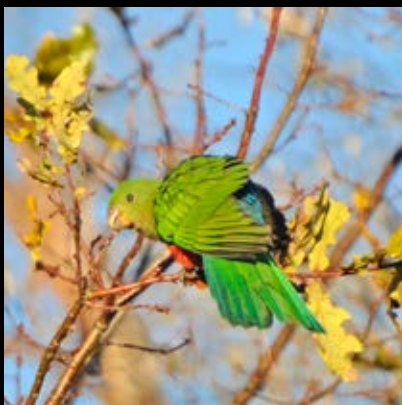
Milky Way rising above
The Cathedral, Mt Buffalo
Damian Diviny



Somewhere in
the Fire Swamp
Andrew Smyth



Refraction
Brian Eglinton



King parrot
landsmith



Yellow tail in flight
Cameron Semple



Royal fungi
John Walker



Skidders

The Socks You Can Walk In

Matt McClelland



Last year I ordered a pair of [Skidders](#) from a crowdfunding campaign. The best way I can describe them is that they are a sock/shoe thingy. Not all crowdfunded campaigns deliver on their hype, so I was sceptical. They delivered close on time, but I was still not sure they would be any good.

Skidders put to the test

Much of my misspent youth was spent barefoot, whether collecting melted tarmac when crossing roads in summer or wandering around the uni campus. Over the past decade shoes have become a more common part of my attire. I do miss that barefoot feeling at times, although my feet are now pretty soft.

When I saw **Skidders**, I was thinking they could be good alternative for shoes around camp. I usually don't bother carrying a second pair of shoes for the campsite or river crossings; the extra weight is just not worth it. If a walk is mostly dry then I will attempt to keep my shoes dry on river crossings, although if there are several river crossings or if there's wet weather I tend to just walk through. I generally walk in cheap runners most of the time and only use boots for alpine and desert walking. After a long day of walking I like to get the shoes off, but that has risks around camp.

My purchase scepticism

Online (and in real life) Skidders look like black socks with black softfall (little bits of rubber) stuck to the sole and around the edges. I had a few questions:

- Would the rubber stay on, how quickly would it fall off?
- Would the sock be firm enough to stop the Skidders rotating around your feet, especially on slopes?
- Would they wash easily and would they get stinky?
- Would they be firm enough to protect feet more than boots?
- Would they actually be comfortable to walk in?



The campaign suggested I should relax as the rubber is strong: you can even walk on glass. They said that these are great for running on and off path, that they are silver impregnated to stop the stink, that they are comfy and could be used as shoes. I figured for the \$US48 price tag (including delivery) that it was worth the risk.

“ I do miss that barefoot feeling at times ...

Unpacking

The Skidders came in the usual plastic envelope that most online purchases come in, very little waste, no fancy presentation, just the pair of Skidders and a black carry bag. The Skidders were joined with that annoying plastic tag that all socks seem to be joined with. I was happy that they did not go over the top with packaging.

Description

Skidders are a type of lightweight minimalist shoe, that look like a pair of socks. Although they look like socks, they are not, they are simple shoes. When I unpacked them my son said they look like a pair of socks that someone had used to walk through a puddle of rubber. I am sure this would insult the designers, but I can see my son's point. They are like a firm fitting black sock, with rubber sprayed on the outside bottom and sides. Your foot only touches the sock material and there is no rubber on the inside. The sock has antibacterial silver woven through and is very elastic. They roll up for packing, come in six sizes and weigh about 160 grams a pair depending on the size.

Fit

I think this was the thing that surprised me the most, I put them on and they felt really comfy. Like, really comfy. I walked around



indoors and they felt snug. I thought the rubber would feel weird, and I guess it is different, but comfy. It was like wearing slippers but not flip/flopping. They prevent you from sliding on slippery floors such as glossy tiles, polished floor boards, carpet, outdoor timber and concrete but don't stick as you walk.



Check Skinners video

Bushwalk in the wet

The real test I wanted to perform was how well they performed on a walk on a rocky and sandy track in the rain. So during

a heavy downpour I put on the Skinners and took off. Wow, they actually work. As with all minimalist shoes you do feel the surface, the rocks and sticks but most of the sharpness is removed. You do need to be more mindful of how you walk than with boots.

Water in my socks?

The soles of the Skinners are cited as being waterproof so you can wander along a wet surface and your feet stay dry. I am sceptical of the waterproof shoes idea - these just sound like buckets on your feet and more weight to carry when they fill up. This might actually be a handy feature to keep your feet dry around camp. I crossed a few creeks in the Skinners, and it was like walking in wetsuit booties, but after leaving the creek the bulk of the water "pumped" out in about 3-4 steps. The wrung out wet weight of the Skinners was 260 grams - more water retained than I would have liked. A dry weight of 180 grams.

“... during a heavy downpour I put on the Skinners and took off.”



Sand build up?

With ankle socks I sometimes get sand building up in the socks in both wet and dry conditions leading to foot abrasion. I was surprised that in my testing the Skinners did not seem to catch sand on the inside, I guess because of the more firm fit. I was also expecting the rough rubber sole to collect clay and become clogged, so I jumped in a few wet clay areas and the Skinners only retained a small amount on the surface. They performed better than my normal walking shoes.

Durability?

When washing my Skinners the first time I used a bag to collect the rubber bits that fell off - there were seven small pieces in total. In the second wash after heavy use there were none. It seems like a good idea to wash them first to minimise the amount of rubber left in the bush. All shoes do wear in the bush, the less we leave obviously the better. My early testing shows that the rubber is actually very stable and strong and the bits that fell off were just ones that did not stick as well during manufacturing. It is too early for me to make a call on longevity, but they do feel way sturdier than I was expecting.

Foot movement?

This was a big question for me, How can you walk in what are effectively socks with a rubberised outer and not slide about? Sometimes socks rotate a bit in my shoes, surely these will. Well, these fit really well, and are shaped to a left and right foot. The Skinners are nearly as firm as an ankle bandage. I walked up a wet sandstone rock on a 45 degree angle and was fine, better than my shoes. Forces along the length of the foot are fine. There is a small amount of turning when walking along a slope on the



edge of your foot, but again probably less than a shoe. They worked well with a small amount of rock hopping. It will be interesting to see how well they retain their elasticity over time but after the initial tests I am very happy.

With socks?

They say you can wear your Skinners with socks. Socks with socks? So I figured I should at least try it, I must admit it did not even occur to me. Well, thin socks work fine, but I am not sure why you would, maybe a bit of extra padding. Okay, so the next obvious thing to try was do they work as socks in shoes - answer is don't bother, it was just plain weird :)

Hot weather

Unfortunately I could not try the Skinners out on a hot day. I will be interested to see if there is an issue with the sole of my foot getting hot and sweating more than usual. The base of the Skinners are a reasonable insulator (handy in cooler weather), but since they are firm fitting I wonder if heat might build up a bit. I suspect this would only be an issue if running or walking longer distance. Although I could imagine some people walking in these all day, I do not plan to, so I am not too worried about this issue.

Impact

I am interested in the local and global environmental impact products can have. Skinners obviously use less material than most footwear to produce and the company suggests that unlike normal shoes there is very little waste. Skinners are also produced in Europe and although not immune to human exploitation it is much less likely to occur than in other countries that have few legal protections.

We do not really yet understand the impact of nanoparticle materials like the silver used to prevent bacterial growth. This is helpful in stopping the socks from getting stinky, but I am not sure of the impact it can have if it builds up in a natural environment. These types of materials are becoming more and more common. Similar concerns exist with

“ I walked up a wet sandstone rock on a 45 degree angle and was fine, better than my shoes.

the rubber beads that can break off from the Skinners. I suspect in a low dose the impact is negligible, but I can find little quality research in this area.

I think having soft sole footwear like this makes the walker more aware of where they are walking and less likely to have the same heavy impact that leather boots can have in delicate environments.

Leech attack

A few friendly leeches decided to hitch a ride on my Skinners. This was not in my test plan or even on my radar as a question, but I was curious to see how they reacted. Well, the leeches moved fine along the Skinners. I found it interesting that they were particularly hard to pull off the rubber. Leeches are always hard to pull off, but it felt much harder than normal. No idea what this means, if anything, but I was just intrigued. Also I was interested that whilst wearing Skinners I did not see one drop bear or hoop snake, perhaps the silver acts as a repellent - further testing required.

Cleaning

The Skinners can just go in your standard wash or be rinsed in water. The only real downside I have found so far is that they do soak up a lot of water and take a long time to dry. You can wring them down to about 260 grams easy enough. I found that putting a towel or cotton T-shirt in the Skinners and squeezing them will remove another 40 grams of more water, and the shirt will dry quicker than the footwear, this will reduce the amount of extra weight to carry if they get soaked.



Walking in minimal foot wear

I know it seems stupid to talk about how to walk, but I think it is worth a mention. There is some research in this area, although it's not really conclusive. When running in minimal footwear, using a forefoot strike makes sense to keep the shock from the heel, i.e., you run on the balls of your foot. This makes a lot of sense when leaning forward and running, or when rock hopping. When we walk our weight is much further back, and we do not lean forward in the same way. It seems that a gentle heel strike might make more sense when walking, but avoid loading the foot until you have rolled down onto the ball of your foot. This way you still anatomically have a better walking gait, but avoid the harsh strike of the heel as well as giving your body more time to react if you step on something that is sharp.

“... when walking with minimalist shoes ... your walking style will need to change a bit ...”

I guess the point is that when walking with minimalist shoes that your walking style will need to change a bit, this takes time to build. Do not start off on a long hike with minimalist shoes until you have built up good strength and gait. Learn more about walking in minimalist shoes at softstarshoes.com

More info on camp shoes

Now, this is a little embarrassing - when researching camp shoes for this article I found this thread that I had not seen before, looks like a really good bushwalking forum and website. Check out the thread for some [various solutions for the camp shoe](#).

Will I use them?

I am enjoying these and will use them more. I will see how they go in the longer term, but will definitely use them as around camp footwear. I envisage wearing them on shorter days or maybe on side trips. I would like to try doing more with them, like trying them on a canyon trip, but will carry Vollsies in case they do not work as well. In short, I am really happy with my purchase, I find them way more versatile than I expected, they seem to live up to the hype of the manufacturers. They are not cheap, so I am just hoping they last. You can check out their website here Skinners.cc/





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Etiquette

Helen Smith



Different cultures around the world have wildly different customs to others, and sometimes when people go travelling outside their own culture, they can go into cultural shock, a feeling of total confusion about how to behave. Some actions viewed as quite rude in Australia are highly complementary in another country. For example, in Japan it's standard practice to slurp when eating a bowl of noodles, whereas it's considered as pretty crude behaviour in Australia. This example highlights different cultural norms around the world.

Sub-cultures have customs, rituals and expectations that form the expected etiquette of that community and can vary in place and time. They are often ingrained and followed unconsciously. Etiquette guidelines strongly reflect their culture, and meeting these unspoken expectations may make a big difference to how easy it is to feel accepted by that community.

The Australian bushwalking community is a good example of an Australian sub-culture with its own unique etiquette. While bushwalking core etiquette ideas are similar, clubs and states have their own expectations and unique cultures. The point of this etiquette article is not to dictate a set of rules, but rather to provide guidelines. Etiquette isn't about being right or wrong, but rather it's about knowing what the expectations of that community are so that if people stray from the norm, they do so knowingly.

Bushwalking etiquette is broadly similar to the etiquette expected in other parts

“While bushwalking core etiquette ideas are similar, clubs and states have their own expectations and unique cultures.”

of Australian society where we meet new people, take part in a shared activity and, in doing so, maybe experience new challenges. Consideration, kindness and respect are shared across cultures, time and space, and the bushwalking community is no different. Bushwalking etiquette involves being considerate to others before, during and after the walk and includes people within the group as well as others on the track. Bushwalking etiquette is all about respecting how other people want to experience natural places and taking care of each other on the track.

While a walk is usually organised by a leader or a co-leader partnership, the success of the walk depends on every group member being well prepared, turning up with the right expectations and equipment, and being an inclusive, respectful and courteous participant. These ideas all highlight the point that an individual's actions may dramatically impact upon others, and this is the focus of this etiquette article.

Pre-walk etiquette

Bushwalking etiquette starts from the moment you begin choosing a trip right through until you're back home again. Here are some things to watch out for before starting the trip.

Choose a suitable trip

Understand the context of the trip (is it a long distance fast paced trip, or one with regular breaks). Some trips require a certain level of fitness and skill set too: make sure your expectations of yourself are realistic.

Introduce yourself to your leader beforehand

Bushwalking clubs are often run by volunteers who rely on their leaders to organise bushwalks. An introductory email or phone call can go a long way in forming a good relationship with your leader, who can keep a track of the sort of group they are leading. During that introduction, tell your leader your level of experience, skills and fitness, and alert them to any relevant medical conditions you have.

Keep the group small

It can be tempting to invite just one more person on trip, but the group size can easily get out of hand. Groups larger than 8-10 people are harder to manage and can quickly crowd the track. As a general rule, groups of up to eight people are preferred for wilderness areas, however, national parks may have different rules on group sizes, which varies with the region. Check with your leader before inviting another person.

Packing

Consider sharing group items such as first aid kits or tents to keep pack weight down. It can be nice to carry something yummy like a cake or pack of lollies to share on the track with others in the group. On longer walks or if it's likely that you will get wet or dirty, bring a spare change of clothes for the return journey home. At the very least, have a change of footwear. Carry enough money to contribute towards petrol costs.

Be on time

Don't keep your group waiting!

On-track etiquette

On-track etiquette extends beyond just those in your group and includes others that use the track and land managers.

Respect others in your group

Everyone has the right to enjoy a bushwalk just the way they like, and respecting other people's needs makes the trip enjoyable for everyone. A solid team of walkers not only makes it to the end of the track safely but also has an enjoyable and fun time. A group that trusts and respects each other are also in a better position to cope with the unexpected. Stick together, respect other's opinions, and work as a team.

Respect other users

On a narrow track it's courteous to step aside to let another bushwalking party going uphill through. Wait for a wider part of the track before overtaking slower parties going in the same direction. Bushwalkers often share tracks with vehicles, horses, mountain bike riders, families, campers, 4WD etc. Respect and make way for other users. If the track is wide, it's best not to have too many people walking beside each other.

Photography

Cameras are a great way of collecting memories along the track, but before snapping shots of others in the group, make sure to ask permission. Back home, obtain permission from all people in the pictures before posting on the internet. It may be an idea to ask about this when taking the picture.

Smoking

In all NSW national parks smoking is now banned and offenders are subject to on-the-spot fines. Smoking bans also apply to many other outdoor areas under the *Smoke-Free Environment Act 2000*. For example, within 10 metres of public children's play equipment or within a commercial eating area. Check the rules before lighting up.

The main thing with bushwalking etiquette is to respect others, be considerate of the needs of people in your group and other track users, and to have fun out there. Happy walking!

“A group that trusts and respects each other are also in a better position to cope with the unexpected.”



In the News

Three times better Lithium-Ion battery

One of the co-inventor of the lithium-ion battery, John Goodenough, [developed a new solid-state battery formula](#) that promises to hold three times more energy than li-on.

Tasmania Police are urging bushwalkers to carry PLBs

A German man with a medical condition was waiting [two days on the track to be rescued](#) because he had no way of communicating for help.

Historic huts in the Alps undergo restoration works

Parks Victoria is performing [restoration projects](#) at three historic huts located within the Alpine National Park and the southern alps in Gippsland.



Hard-working volunteers at Bindaree Hut
Parks Victoria

Next generation of hammock tents?

Hammock camping seems to be really picking up momentum with walkers around the world. In March we noticed a Kickstarter campaign for a [high-tension hammock style tent](#), in a similar vein to the Tensile tent series. These have the benefit of being used easily as a tent as well as being a more practical option for a two person hammock. On the downside they are much heavier, more expensive, require three much stronger trees (rather than two trees at a lower tension). It will be interesting to see the next big popular innovation in lightweight shelter options. Our guess is that this is not it - time will tell.



Bushwalk Australia Magazine

A New Home
Matt McClelland



Over the past three years, 21 editions of the digital Bushwalk Australia magazine have been published, with many contributions from the online community. BWA has become a treasure trove of great adventures, tips, ideas and articles that help improve our bushwalking experiences. It is now time for the magazine to have its own home.

Three Sisters in the Blue Mountains
Tero Hakala

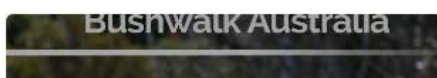
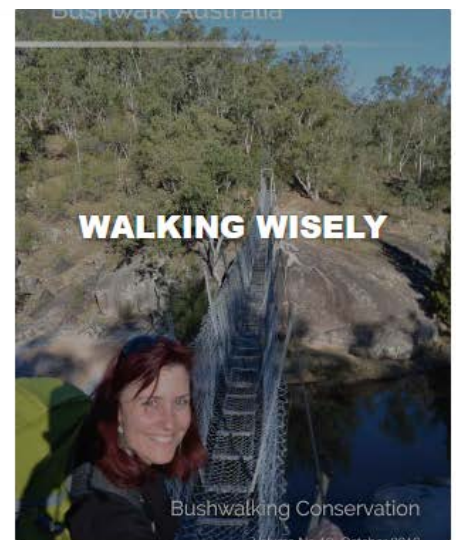
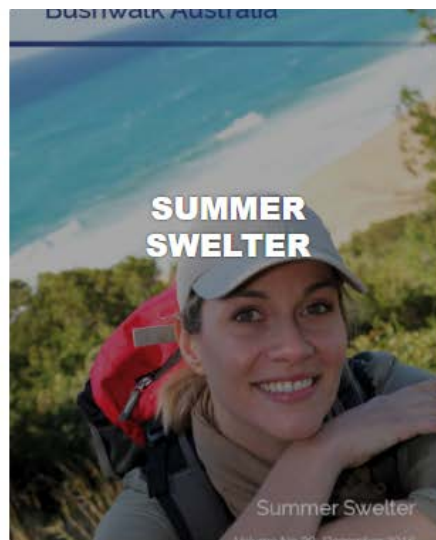
Bushwalk Australia has grown from our community at Bushwalk.com. Each edition has been and will continue to be published in PDF and ePub to make it easy to read and enjoy the flow of the articles. However, there are a few downsides to this format, including being hard to share single articles with people and sharing on social media. We have found ourselves digging through our back catalogue to find older articles we wanted to read again or share with others. It is a bit clunky.

After trying a few solutions we have gone for a fairly basic blog approach. We have created <http://magazine.bushwalk.com/>, to help our community dig deeper in the archive. In many ways it is simply another blog, and you can enjoy the articles in any order and share them with your friends.

A key part of the motivation for this is that we have found that each edition is very popular and people are downloading it at an ever increasing rate, but we notice the back catalogue is not been used very much. People want to access the content, but it is just too hard. The new website hopefully solves this problem. One thing we have not solved yet, but hopefully will later this year, is to make a really nice slideshow to showcase the amazing images from each of the photo competitions.

Anyway, check out the website, share some articles with friends you think will be interested and let us know what can be improved.

Happy Walking.
Matt



BUSHWALK AUSTRALIA

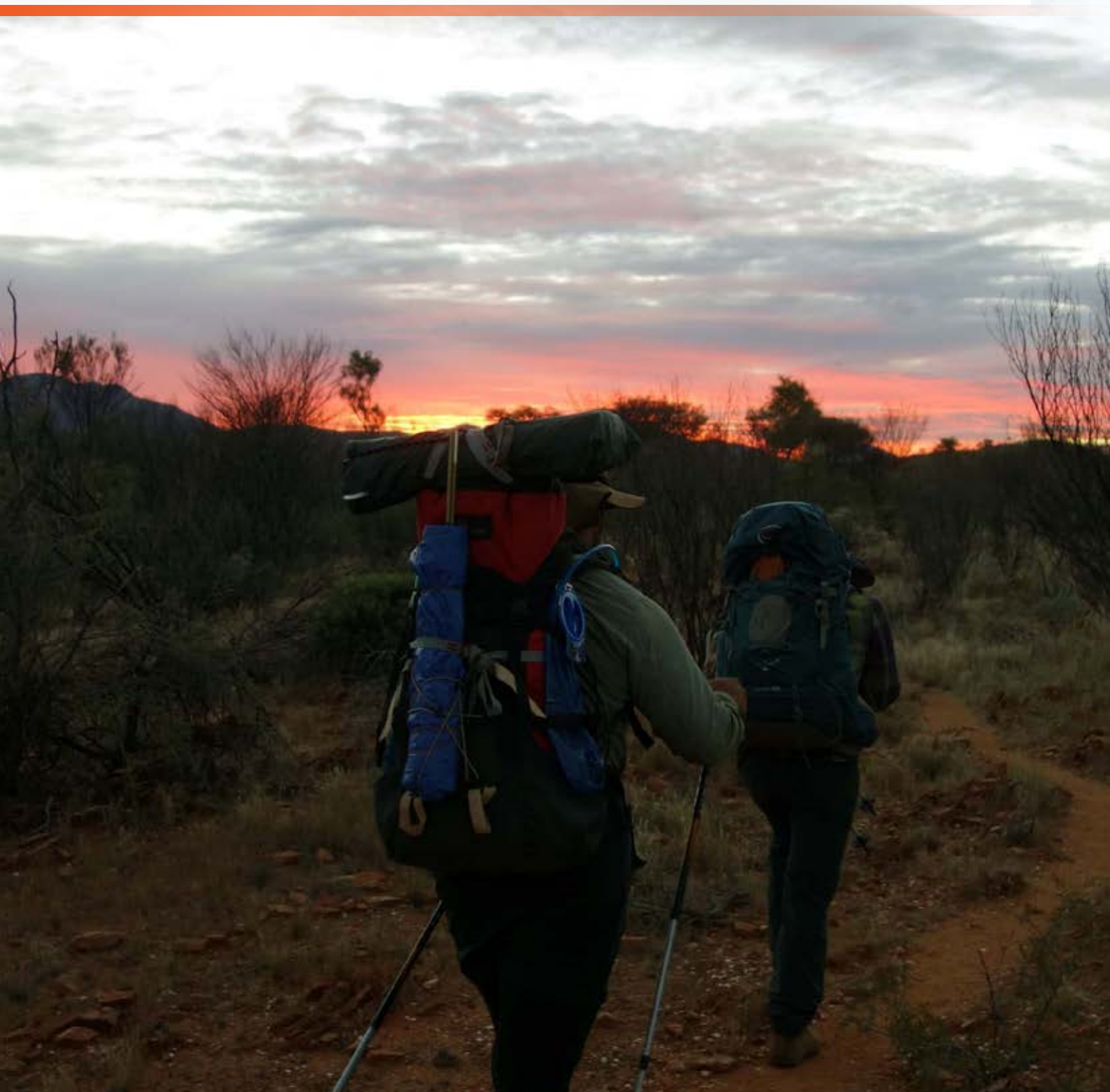


I still had a couple of kilometres to go as the sun slipped below the western horizon Kevin Moss



Why Do We Hike?

Tim Savage aka Australian Hiker



In writing this article I started with a clear picture in my mind about why I like to hike. I don't have to think too hard about why I enjoy hiking so much or about what drives me in life and why I do the things I do. Are other people that transparent in their motivations or is it just me? The following are just some of the reasons we hike. Some will have an affinity with them and others will think "What the ...?"

An early start to beat the heat, Larapinta Trail, 2016
Tim Savage

The obvious reason that many people hike is fitness. It doesn't matter how far you walk or for how long, you are improving your health at the same time. For many of us it is the opportunity to get out of the office and exercise muscles we don't use much of the week when sitting at a desk.

The Lancet is one of the world's oldest and best known general medical journals. A Lancet article found that sitting at least eight hours a day increases your chance of premature death by up to 60% and this is now considered as posing as great a threat to your health as smoking, and causing more deaths than obesity. The prevention? One hour of brisk walking or cycling a day, which can be spread over the day.

Weight loss is also another health benefit of hiking, particularly for males. While I may not be trying to lose weight when hiking, I will lose on average up to seven kilograms on a two-week hike. Females will usually not lose the same amount due to physiological differences but will still lose weight on long hikes.

“... you learn a lot about nature and a lot about yourself.”

For most of us hiking is very different from what we do in our day jobs. We are walking around, we are outside and we usually don't have computers and mobile phones beeping at us. On walks I carry a fair amount of technology for the blog and I enjoy going into areas with no phone and internet access. Between this blog and work, I spend about 10 hours a day online so it's nice to just get away.

In addition to health and fitness, for me exercise in any form is also about thinking time! As a result I like doing forms of exercise where I can go into autopilot, let my body do what it needs (left right, left right, repeat). I can devote part of my brain to doing what I need to do but this automation process also allows me to focus on other things. Most of my ideas for this blog, for work, for life in general occur when I am in this autopilot mode.

Another reason, at least from my perspective, is connecting to nature.

“Weight loss is also another health benefit of hiking, particularly for males.”

“I enjoy just being in nature and interacting with the environment.”



Photography, Switzerland, 2015
Gill Savage

I have had what can only be described as spiritual moments on three occasions during my life and all of these have been in the outdoors. I have done and seen some amazing things over my lifetime and I haven't finished yet. I enjoy just being in nature and interacting with the environment. I enjoy sunrises; I enjoy the play of light and shadow that creates new scenes even though I may have visited an area dozens of times before.

In recent years I have discovered night hiking and when the conditions are right I take this opportunity any time I can. By being in nature you get to see things that many people never experience; it's just plain life affirming.

Time with your significant other/best friend is also a reason that many people hike. You get to exercise all of the above and do it with the person with whom you have a strong connection. One of the strangest questions that we have ever been asked is "What do you talk about for so long?" We talk about everything and anything, we laugh, we argue and we talk about what we are seeing and

“... “bad” weather is not an obstacle but an opportunity.

experiencing. We live these memories long after a hike is over and it reaffirms that we weren't just imagining something because someone else was there.

When I hike with my wife I will usually follow behind and let her set the pace and focus on her boots, which is fine, until recently when she walked under a low tree branch which she cleared quite comfortably without having to dip her head; but I didn't. She couldn't work out why I was on the ground when she turned around, @#*&! After I recovered we did laugh!

Another reason for hiking is that you learn a lot about nature and a lot about yourself. You get to see things others don't see. You come to learn that there is a big wide world out there containing some pretty amazing things that has been hidden to you up to now. I like to take photographs and some of my best shots have happened at odd times or at times you would think had nothing to offer. I love taking wilderness photos just after a big storm and as result “bad” weather is not an obstacle but an opportunity.

“... I see myself as my biggest competition.



Hiking is a challenge. Obviously if you are fit, short hikes are usually easier physically but you still need to overcome the mental challenges. We need challenges in our life that take us outside of our comfort zone. The use it or lose it concept applies to your mental and physical self. This is where I get on my soapbox. People will often assume that because I or they are in the older age bracket that they can't keep up or won't be able to do something that a younger hiker can. This may or not be true. Ability has nothing to do with age and while I don't mend as quickly as I did 20 years ago if I injure myself, I have a great level of experience and know my own body and my own abilities. There are many 40 year+ hikers out there, doing some serious hiking. Don't let age restrict your dreams, just ease into it if you are starting late in life.



Tim on the Larapinta Trail, 2016
Gill Savage

While most people can relate to what I have written so far I'll now move into the realms of crazy, or at least that's how people look at me when I discuss some of my more extreme adventures and the reasons behind them.

I'm what can only be described as a type A personality; I'm competitive, outgoing and ambitious. I don't like being told that something can't be done. Thankfully this competitive streak is inward focused and I see myself as my biggest competition. I still intend to be hiking for the next thirty years at least and have some extreme through hikes planned that generate the crazy looks from friends and family. As an example of this extreme behaviour I decided to do a 54 kilometre hike on Christmas Eve. Partially just because and also as a way of determining my current abilities. In the short term for events like the 2017 Oxfam Trail Walker

which is about 100 kilometres in 48 hours and in the longer term for a series of through hikes of 650 kilometres+ that I have planned over the next six years.

I operate differently when I'm solo hiking, in fact I'm probably safer when I am hiking alone because I am very, very focused on my surroundings because I know there is a lot less margin for error when you are by yourself. I blogged and podcasted on this 54 kilometre hike to Mt Bimberi in the ACT in January 2017. It was the first long-distance solo hike I have done in a wilderness area and it was a very interesting feeling to know that there wasn't another living soul anywhere within 20 kilometres in any direction. For me this something that I will continue to do in conjunction with hiking as a couple.

So whatever the reason you hike, and whatever the distance, the important thing to remember is just to get out there.



Tim and Gill

The best way to describe Tim is obsessive. He's a compulsive planner; a compulsive walker has a love of learning, as well as a love of helping others to learn. For Tim walking is a way to connect with the world in an almost primal manner and he identifies most of his "spiritual" moments throughout his life as coming from time spent outdoors. He has a background in landscape architecture, horticulture and cultural heritage with a particular interest in how we engage with the environment. He has been a hiker on and off for over 40 years and enjoys walks ranging from a short walks to work through to multi-day hikes. In recent years he has become interested in long-distance and ultralight hiking and writes a [blog](#).

Lord Howe Island Stick Insect

Susan Lawler



If you haven't heard of the Lord Howe Island stick insect, you have missed out on one of the most remarkable conservation stories of the decade.

Lord Howe Island phasmid
Granitethighs

In January 2016 [it was announced](#) that breeding colonies of Australia's rarest insect will soon be established in zoos at San Diego, Toronto and Bristol. These new colonies will join those at the Melbourne Zoo and the Lord Howe Island Museum to ensure the future of this unique species.

The remarkable story of these stick insects (which are also called phasmids or land lobsters) started when rats escaped from a shipwreck in 1918 and proceeded to eat every last stick insect on Lord Howe Island. The species was thought to be extinct until a few live specimens were discovered on Balls Pyramid in 2001. The news headline in the Sydney Morning Herald at the time proclaimed: "Joy as ancient 'walking sausage' found alive."

This remote and almost inaccessible population was the key to survival for the phasmids, but presented enormous difficulties for scientists who wanted to study them. Eventually an expedition was arranged to collect live specimens, which had to be done at night when the insects are out of their burrows and active.

The story of the captive breeding program is almost heart-stopping with many twists and turns. The original pair held at the Melbourne Zoo were named Adam and Eve and because almost nothing was known of their lifestyle and habits, trial and error and careful observation were needed to provide them with appropriate care. At one point Eve nearly died but was revived when zookeeper Patrick Rohan carefully dropped a mixture of sugar, calcium and ground melaleuca leaves into her mouth.

Eve's first egg hatched on Threatened Species Day on 2003, and although this wasn't the end of the challenges facing Melbourne Zoo staff, it turned out to be the beginning of hope for the species' successful captive breeding program.

I became personally acquainted with these insects when the zoo allowed selected schools to hatch some eggs and one of the babies spent time at my house. A film of her

first steps and the story of our excitement was published [here](#) in 2012.

The Lord Howe stick insects start out small and green but grow up fat and black. They spend their days curled up together in burrows and head out at night to feed. Their story has caught the attention of [David Attenborough](#) and [Jane Goodall](#).

New books about Lord Howe Stick Insects

If you want to know all about the story of the Lord Howe Stick Insects, two recent books are ready for you to devour.

For adults, [Return of the Phasmid: Australia's rarest insect fights back from the brink of extinction](#), by Rick Wilkinson provides a comprehensive and fascinating summary of the history, geology and human drama involved in this story, complete with great photos and personal accounts. Anyone who wants to understand what it takes to bring a species back from the brink will find it great reading.

Additionally and delightfully, the invertebrate zookeeper Rohan Cleave has released a children's book, [Phasmid: Saving the Lord Howe Stick Insect](#), with lovely watercolour illustrations that bring phasmids to life for young hearts.

Soon these books will become important in a global context, as people in San Diego, Toronto and Bristol get to meet our very own "walking sausages".



Susan Lawler

Senior Lecturer, Department of Ecology, Environment and Evolution, La Trobe University

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 15 January 2016.

“... it turned out to be the beginning of hope for the species' successful captive breeding program.”

“Joy as ancient 'walking sausage' found alive.”

“If you want to know all about the story of the Lord Howe Stick Insects, two recent books are ready for you to devour.”

Freeze Dried 101

Sonya Muhlsimmer

We all know about those freeze dried meals at our favourite camping shops, right? So, have you ever wondered how the freeze drying process actually works and why are they so expensive? I'll keep this brief. Freeze drying is a process called sublimation, where a substance transitions from a solid phase (the product is frozen first) to a gas phase, without going through a liquid (water) phase. The process is to freeze the food first, then sublimating the ice to a water vapour then applying heat to remove the water vapour. Freeze dry food is expensive due to pre-treatment before freezing, freezing, primary drying then secondary drying. And it makes the food bomb proof - it lasts for years due to the extremely low water content. But, have you actually looked at the ingredients listed on the back of some of those freeze dried meals, or looked at the nutritional value? Well, sometimes it is best not to ... You are not doing yourself any favours there with the cost and lack of nutrition in some of those meals. Many freeze dried meals have fillers, preservatives and thickeners, which can be identified by the ingredients and numbers. Do you know what all those ingredients are? I do as I work in the food industry and know too much. So better prepare meals at home and enjoy a healthier option.

Curried Mince and Veggies

Shopping for a few freeze dried ingredients and making up your own meal is a good idea. Yes, the ingredients are still expensive but you can ensure you are not eating all those nasty numbers and, um well, just fillers. Some freeze dried meat and vegetables are available in camping shops, or even online, Here is a great one pot wonder dish that is ready in no time just using some freeze dried meat and vegetables, with some herbs and spices you may already have in your pantry at home.

At home preparation

Place all the ingredients in the allocated bag. Print out method at camp and keep with the bags.

Method in camp

Soak the contents of Bag 1 (Curry mix) in 1½ cups of water for 10 minutes. After the soaking time place the pot on the stove. Cook for about 5 to 6 minutes, stirring occasionally until the sauce has thickened.



Bag 1 (curry mix)

Freeze dried mince	½ cup	45 grams
Freeze dried beans	⅓ cup	5 grams
Freeze dried carrots	⅓ cup	5 grams
Freeze dried cauliflower	⅓ cup	5 grams
Coconut milk powder	2 Tbsp	20 grams
Fried shallots	1 Tbsp	6 grams
Curry powder	1 tsp	2 grams
Dried chives	1 tsp	1 gram
Stock powder	½ tsp	3 grams
Sugar	½ tsp	2 grams
Dried onion	⅛ tsp	1 gram
Dried garlic	⅛ tsp	1 gram
Ground chilli	Few pinches	
Salt, pepper	Few pinches	

Water

1½ cup for preparation

Bag 1 (vegetarian option)

Substitute mince with TVP

Nachos (Without the Beans)

This is a versatile dish as it can go with a side dish of corn chips (if you want to carry them in a sturdy container) and a small ration of cheese. You can also (carefully) carry an avocado to make “guacamole” for a topping. For the guacamole, carry a small container of a few tablespoons of sweet chilli sauce, smash up the avocado, add the sweet chilli sauce and mix through, easy hey! Also this mince dish can go with potato mash, cous cous, polenta or rice. Alone it has lots of flavour and is a great dish to make when the weather is getting cooler in the evenings. Also, it's a great dish to share with friends. Psst, get them to carry the corn chips and avocado!

At home preparation

Place all the ingredients in the allocated bag. Keep the tomato paste separately. Print out method at camp and keep with the bags.

Method at camp

Soak the contents of Bag 1 (Meat mix) in 1 cup of water for 10 minutes. After the soaking time, add the tomato paste, stir through and place on the stove. Cook for about 3 to 5 minutes, stirring occasionally until the water has evaporated and it is a thick meaty mix. Serve with your preference of sides and enjoy.



Bag 1 (meat mix)

Freeze dried mince	¾ cup	60 grams
Ground cumin	½ tsp	2 grams
Ground coriander	½ tsp	2 grams
Beef stock powder	½ tsp	3 grams
Dried onion	⅛ tsp	1 gram
Dried garlic	⅛ tsp	1 gram
Ground chilli	Few pinches	
Salt, pepper	Few pinches	

Water - 1 cup

Keep separate

Tomato paste	1 sachet	50 grams
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Bag 1 (vegetarian option)

Substitute mince with TVP



To read more about the author or find more delicious recipes check xtremegourmet.com

Magazines



Wild
158 issue

The 158 issue of *Wild* includes a Bay of Fires track notes as well as a collection of features covering international and domestic locations, bushwalking, fitness tips and much more.



AG Outdoor
Jan-Feb issue

We reveal six of the best Queensland outdoor destinations, offer an extensive adventure guide to the South Island of New Zealand, and tackle an epic rafting trip down the legendary

Snowy River here in Oz. We also tackle the spectacular Arkaba Walk in South Australia, and explore the best family 4WD trip in Oz - the spectacular Binns Track in the Northern Territory. We go bikepacking in Tropical North Queensland and Canada's British Columbia, and reveal the essential canoe kit you need for that family paddling adventure.



The Great Walks
Apr-May issue

- Exploring the Drakensberg mountain range in South Africa with steep valleys, varied weather and scary ladder climbs but the views are worth the effort



Outer Edge
51 issue

Read about the Inca Trail, Packrafting in Patagonia, Overlanding the Congo, Russia and much more.

- Tasmania's Maria Island with the winner of our competition sponsored by our good friends at Life's An Adventure
- Peru's iconic Inca Trail and Aysen, southern Chile's best kept secret
- Showcase of 24 autumn hiking products
- A new competition where you and a friend can win a three-day walking holiday in Noosa on Queensland's sunshine Coast.

Read more at greatwalks.com.au





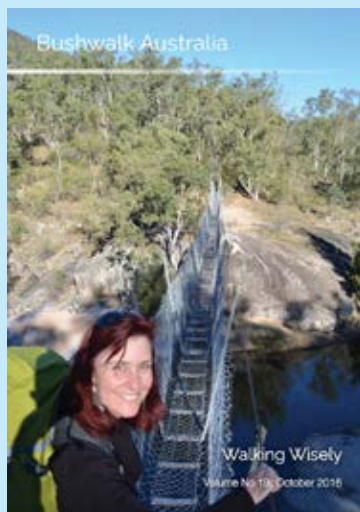
A World of Walking

- South West Tasmania Traverse
- Three Capes Track
- Australian Hiker
- Gaiters - a few advantages



Summer Swelter

- Desert Discovery Walk
- Conondale Range Great Walk
- Rewilding
- Sun Clothing



Walking Wisely

- Six Foot Track
- Melaleuca log book
- Choosing a GPS
- Water requirements



Bushwalking Conservation

- Australian Alps Walking Track
- High Horses: Kosciuszko NP
- Another shot at the GNW
- Mapping feral animals



Winter Walking

- Fig Tree Point
- Gear freak - footwear
- 10 Tips for Snowshoeing



Best of NSW

- Best walks of NSW
- Wolgan Gorge adventure
- S Shoalhaven Coast walk



Best of VIC

- Best walks of Victoria
- Wilsons Prom
- Aarn Pack review



Best of TAS

- Best walks of Tasmania
- Overland Track
- Rescue at Cradle



Best of SA

- Best walks of SA
- Friends of Heysen Trail
- Bungy Pump poles



Best of WA

- WA - a hike for everyone
- Forests and logging



Best of NT

- Best walks of NT
- Larapinta track



Best of QLD

- Best walks in Queensland
- Walking with insects



Best of ACT

- ACT's best walks
- Gardens of Stone



Keep Your Cool

- Total fire ban day
- Sports drink & electrolytes



Best of Australia

- Best walks in Australia
- Bushwalking blog



Winter Wanderings

- Dehydrating food
- Colong wilderness walk



Winter Edition

- 2 weeks in Fiordland
- Hypothermia



Autumn Edition

- Aboriginal rock art
- Bushwalking Tracks



Lifetime of Walking

- What is BWRS?
- Are you in a Club?



Walking in Summer

