

Bushwalk Australia

A scenic landscape photograph of a mountain peak. In the foreground, a stack of rocks forms a cairn on a rocky ridge. Below the cairn, a small, vibrant red rock pool is nestled in the crevices of the rocks. The background shows a vast, hazy landscape with rolling hills, small blue lakes, and distant mountain ranges under a clear blue sky with some light clouds.

Awesome Adventures

Volume 36, August 2019

Bushwalk Australia Magazine
An electronic magazine for
<http://bushwalk.com>
Volume 35, June 2019

**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



Looking to Ossa
Dan Broun

Editor
Matt McClelland
matt@bushwalk.com

Design manager
Eva Gomišček
eva@wildwalks.com

Sub-editor
Stephen Lake
stephen@bushwalk.com

Please send any articles,
suggestions or advertising
enquires to Eva.

BWA Advisory Panel
North-north-west
Mark Fowler
Brian Eglinton

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

The copy deadline for the
October 2019 edition is
31 August 2019.

Warning
Like all outdoor pursuits, the
activities described in this
publication may be 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.

6

McMillans Track, Victoria
[A lesser known cousin of AAWT](#)

12

Island Lagoon
[A blind walk across
a vast salt lake](#)

20

Franklin River
[Rafting in Tasmania](#)

32

Photo Gallery
[Splendid imagery](#)

50

Long-Distance Walking
Tracks in Australia
How we can make them better

56

Geoscience Australia
Printed maps to cease

58

Listening to Nature
We are not the only organisms
that use sound to communicate

62

Breakfast, Don't Skip It
Why is breakfast so important

From the Editor

Hi,

I hope this edition of Bushwalk Australia finds you well.

This edition snuck up on me, busy life. I really enjoyed this edition and trust you will too. I especially enjoyed the privilege of getting to chat online with Nick to hear of his amazing adventure across a salt lake.

David guides us on the McMillans Track and also helps us explore what we can do to make long-distance walking tracks even better.

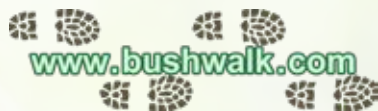
Richard takes us down the mighty Franklin River as we reflect on how precious wild places are and how easily they can be lost.

There is so much more in this edition, including how breakfast can make your next bushwalk even better. Grab a hot chocolate, curl up and enjoy a good read.

Happy walking
Matt :)



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. 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.

Video

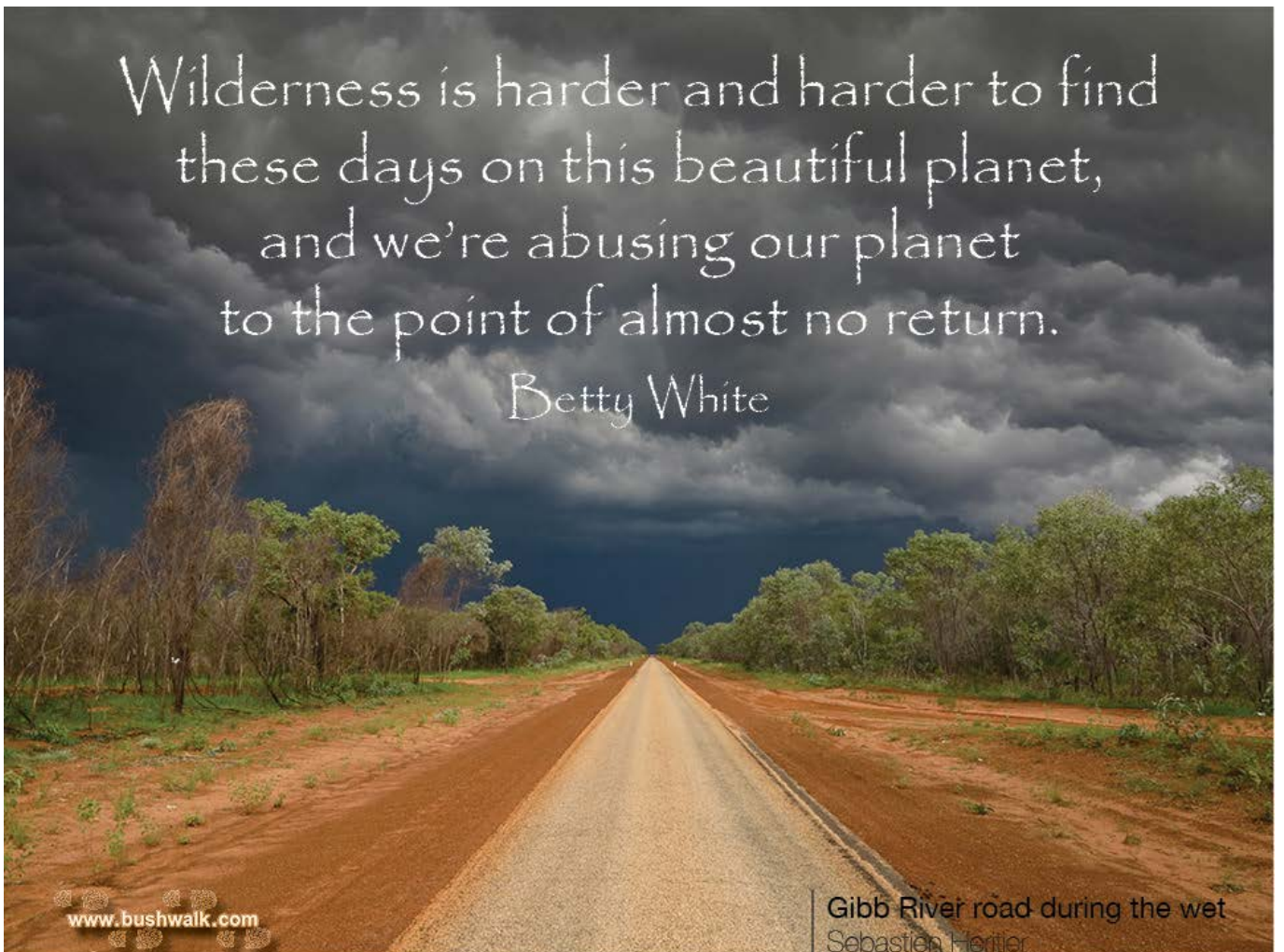
Thorsborne Trail, Hinchinbrook Island National Park, Queensland

The 32 kilometre [Thorsborne Trail](#), along Hinchinbrook Island's east coast is not a graded or hardened walking track and, in some areas, is rough and difficult to traverse. It is managed under the minimal impact bushwalking and no-trace camping ethics.



Wilderness is harder and harder to find
these days on this beautiful planet,
and we're abusing our planet
to the point of almost no return.

Betty White



McMillans Track

Victoria

David Bell



McMillans Track is a lesser known cousin of the Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT). But combined with some spectacular scenery and the sheer remoteness of much of the track, McMillans may be less walked but it is a gem of a track in the Gippsland high country. More people should walk it.

McMillans Track marker
All uncredited pictures by David Bell

So, who was McMillan?

Angus McMillan was an explorer and pastoralist in the Gippsland region from the late 1830s. He has a controversial legacy due to his clashes with Aboriginal people. However, in 1864 he was called out of semi-retirement to cut a track linking various Gippsland goldfield settlements.

Once the gold ran out, the track fell into disuse and became overgrown. However, from the 1960s members of the Ben Cruachan Walking Club (BCWC) began to investigate, document and mark what they thought was an accurate alignment of the original McMillans Track and began maintaining it. With the assistance of the Victorian Government this track alignment was brought up to a standard where it was officially re-opened in 1988.

The present track runs for 220 kilometres from Woods Point, south-east of Mansfield, to Cobungra, west of Omeo. Thanks to the ongoing efforts of the BCWC and various land management agencies, the track remains walkable, although sections of it are hard to follow and require remote area navigation skills.

“... track runs for 220 kilometres from Woods Point, south-east of Mansfield, to Cobungra, west of Omeo.

The big adventure begins

A party of six from Sydney Bush Walkers and The Bush Club left Cobungra on 16 November 2018 to undertake a 14 day walk to Woods Point. We had two food and water drops near Arbuckle Junction and Mount Shillinglaw.

The first day was a short and cruisy walk into Black Sallee campsite. The second day was more challenging involving a very steep descent along an old fire trail down the Mayford Spur, across the Dargo River and an equally steep ascent up Treasure Spur to reach our campsite next to Lankey Plain Hut (1550 metres) on the Dargo High Plains.

The original McMillans route took walkers along the Dargo High Plains Road for 25 kilometres or so but we avoided a road bash by following some more recent track



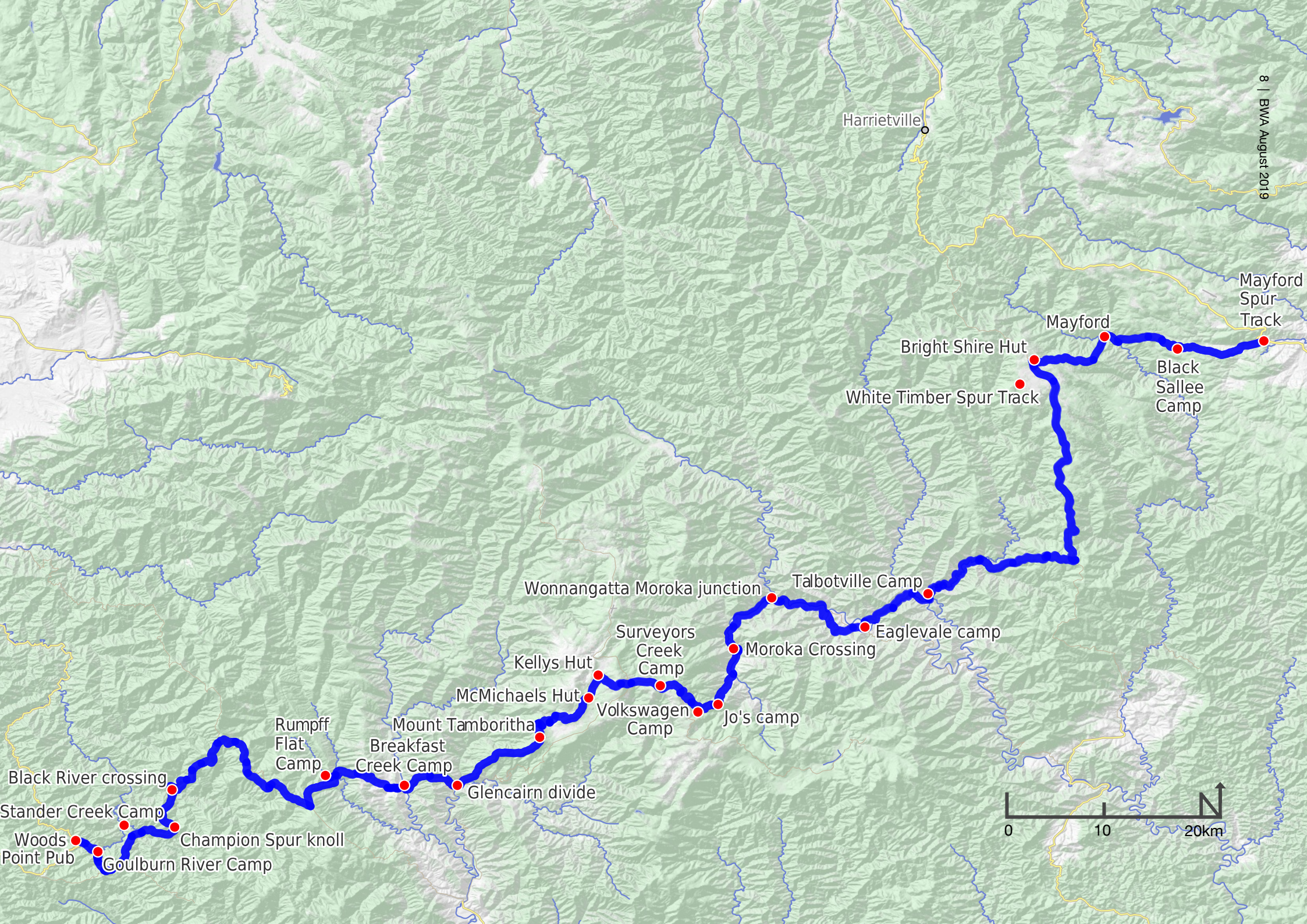
A steep climb up Treasure Spur

markers across country to meet up with the White Timber Track. This alternative route to the road is relatively easy to follow though navigational checks were required in places. This route took us down to the junction of Thirty Mile and Twenty-Five Mile Creeks. Here we set up camp at a really beautiful but rather cramped site. It also afforded the first of many opportunities to cool off in a creek.

The next section of the walk follows about 10 kilometres of what eventually becomes the Crooked River and had a reputation for being unwalkable due to the amount of regrowth on the track. However, recent work by volunteers has markedly improved the track and we encountered no difficulties. We eventually reached a campsite near the old gold mining settlement of Stonewall.



Crossing the fast flowing Macalister River in pairs



Harrietville

Mayford Spur Track

Mayford

Bright Shire Hut

White Timber Spur Track

Black Sallee Camp

Wonnangatta Moroka junction

Talbotville Camp

Eaglevale camp

Moroka Crossing

Surveyors Creek Camp

Kellys Hut

Volkswagen Camp

McMichaels Hut

Jo's camp

Mount Tamboritha

Breakfast Creek Camp

Rumpff Flat Camp

Glencairn divide

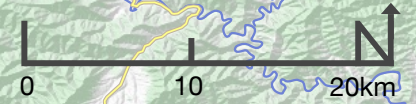
Champion Spur knoll

Woods Point Pub

Black River crossing

Stander Creek Camp

Goulburn River Camp



The track then followed the Crooked River including over 25 river crossings as we meandered along a vehicle track. This took us to Talbotville, another old gold mining settlement of some note, and then onto the Wongungarra River for the next campsite.

Leaving the Wongungarra we had another steep ascent and descent over the Cynthia Range to reach the Wonnangatta River which we crossed on a suspension bridge. We then headed up the river with glimpses of Snowy Bluff to another terrific campsite just below the junction of the Wonnangatta and Moroka Rivers.



Taking a break on the Moroka River near the Playboy Creek junction

The next day was quite tough as we turned up the Moroka River and attempted to follow the track markers. After passing through the beautiful Moroka Glen the track took us away from the river. McMillans original line tended to keep high above the river and we followed some old track markers to a saddle about 500 metres up. Here another marker directed us to descend but the markers disappeared as did any semblance of a track. We decided to return to the river and stayed there criss-crossing it as we headed upstream. We also had one of several snake encounters, this time a red-bellied black curled up in the sun which declined to move away. So we did instead! Our camp was at the foot of an old fire trail and we settled in before rain arrived.

The following day was marked by a big ascent, initially up Playboy Creek and then to Beths Saddle. After a short side trip to Beths Peak (1125 metres) we reached the start of the old D4 track to our first food drop at "Volkswagen" camp just below the Moroka

Road. The weather began to deteriorate just in time for happy hour which rapidly became happy ten minutes as with shivering hands we gulped down the red wine and retired to our tents. We subsequently learnt that the weather was worse than we experienced, with snow and wind at higher elevations. We were lucky to be camped on a sheltered side of the range.

Leaving Volkswagen, we ascended Mount Arbuckle (1581 metres) and descended through some beautiful alpine meadows to Kellys Hut. Our next camp was on Shaw Creek, a tributary of the Macalister River, and where we were able to get a fire going. The track then ascended to Mount Tamboritha (1509 metres). There was a rare sighting of a kangaroo or wallaby on the ascent. Again, the wildflowers were spectacular. After the obligatory photos by the summit cairn we descended steeply along a long and narrow spur to Breakfast Creek, a tributary of the Wellington River.



Descending Mount Tamboritha

After pausing by the plaque marking the 1988 reopening of the McMillans Track, the next day's walking combined with the track to The Crinoline (Mount Ligar). However, we bypassed The Crinoline (leave for another day) to steeply descend along a faint footpad to the Macalister River. We lost any sign of track trackers near the river but crossed the river in the right place anyway. This was the deepest and widest of our crossings but we got across without incident. Some more ascending and descending through farmland took us to a gate marked "Private Property No Trespassing". The sign is not obvious

to those travelling west but will confuse walkers heading east. Some more climbing and descending took us to Rumpff Flat, an enormous camping area which we had to ourselves.

The following day took us up the notorious McMillan Spur which for steepness rivals the earlier Mayford Spur. This reaches the Jamieson-Licola Road and after a road bash and diversion past Mt Shillinglaw (1301 metres) we reached our second food and water drop just off the Jamieson-Licola Road, and near where McMillans joins the AAWT. This time the weather was kinder and we had a proper happy hour.

On the home run now and our next descent took us to the Black River. This also marked our departure from the catchments of the rivers flowing to the Gippsland coast to the catchments of rivers flowing into the Murray. Sections of the track down to the Black



Solving the world's problems at our second food and water drop

River were in poor condition, mainly fallen timber and regrowth, though re-marking by the volunteers helped a lot. The Black River campsite was too cramped for five tents so we set up a dry camp about 500 metres south of the river on a small saddle below a rocky knob. Not ideal but so be it. The Black River camp was also the only time we heard wild dogs (about an hour before dawn).

Leaving Black River took us over the ridge and down to Standen Creek (a tributary of the Goulburn and an old goldfield settlement) and our last camp. The track has been recently cleared and is well marked. We got



End of the walk at Woods Point
Karen Darby

in early for a wash in the creek. We also met up with the only bushwalker we encountered in two weeks, aiming to complete McMillans solo in six days. Indeed, we found out later that he did. As far as can be determined this is the quickest completion of McMillans.

We reached Woods Point around lunch time the following day, 30 November, after another stiff climb, this time to Johnson Hill.

All in all, McMillans was in better shape than expected, largely due to the efforts of the maintenance teams. It is still a tough walk but well worth the effort.

Information

Ben Cruachan Walking Club has [track notes](#). [Biography](#) of Angus McMillan.

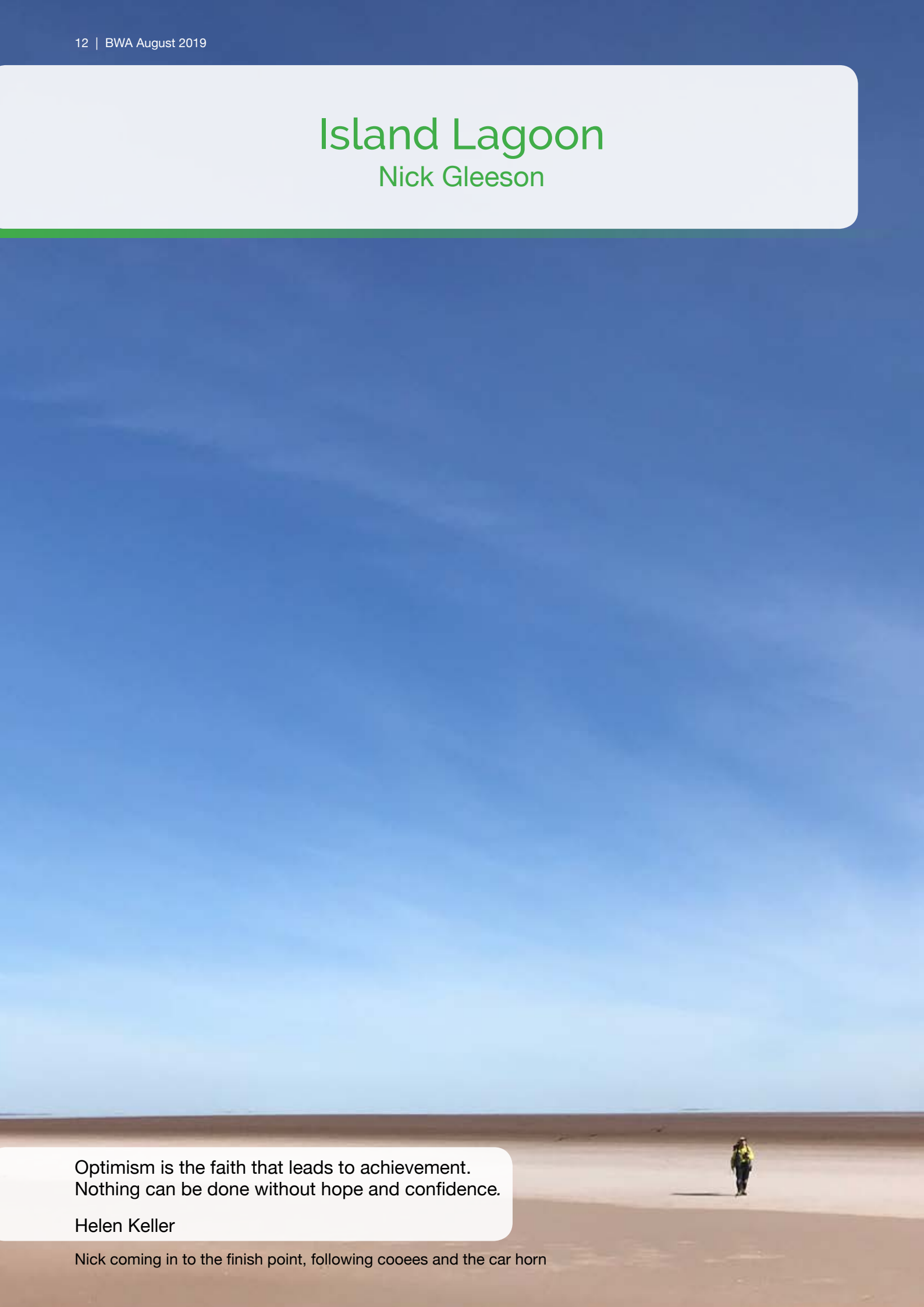


David has been bushwalking most of his adult life. He loves the outdoors, in particular long-distance walks. There are places that are remote and wild and it is a privilege to be able to visit them. He recently decided to write more about these places, hopefully encouraging others to also visit them or, if not, to at least enjoy reading about these places. He is a member of three bushwalking clubs and is involved in several campaigns to protect our national parks.



Island Lagoon

Nick Gleeson



Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement.
Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.

Helen Keller

Nick coming in to the finish point, following cooees and the car horn

It is the third and final day of my solo crossing of Island Lagoon, a vast salt lake in the heart of South Australia and my home for the last three days. If all goes well, I will find more solid land and sand dunes beyond the lake.

I will have achieved my personal goal of navigating and enjoying the solitude of a vast desert environment. Completely alone for the first time in my life.

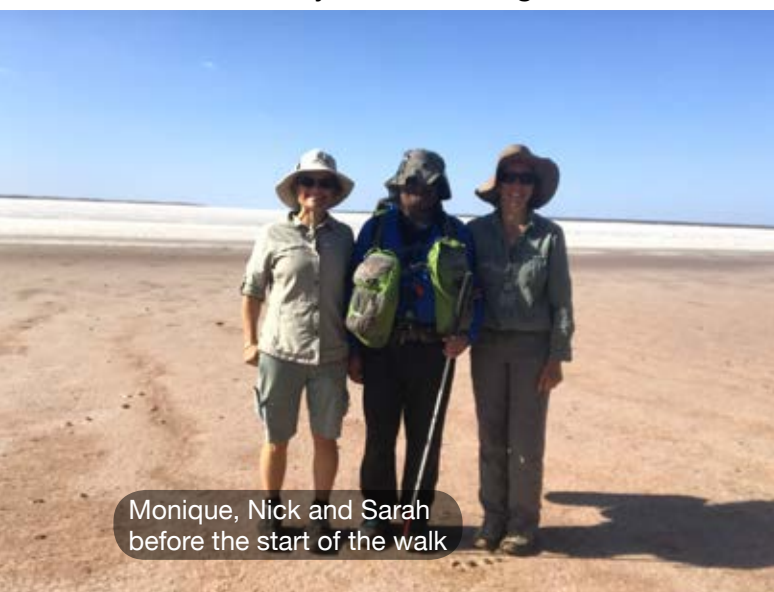
I roll up my sleeping mat, brushing sand away from its surface, feeling each side, trying to keep it even. I hear Sarah's voice in my head, "Nice, keep rolling, doing well, stay even". I tuck the mat into the two loops on the outside of my heavy green backpack. Sarah's constant reminder to "Check everything is secured properly" stays in my mind as I systematically pack. Sarah is one of my two wonderful support crew. She was part of my Simpson Desert trek in 2015. I respect her and appreciate her advice. I am deliberate and methodical ensuring everything is placed in the right spot so that I do not leave anything behind. Carefully, I pack my water bottles, toiletries, medical bag, food supply, clothing, radios and place the black lanyard, which holds the two compasses, around my neck. They bump into each other as if they are announcing, "We're ready, we are going to make it". Everything is packed, with the exception of my sleeping bag. It's more than a sleeping bag, as it stores all of the other bags in numerous places that are easy for me to find. I pause, as it is not my favourite task. I grab it by the feet and start pushing the air out of it. It protests with a whoosh, finding its own voice. "Settle down," it says. "You slept with me and now you're crushing me."

I start shoving it into its sack. Pushing, turning, pushing, turning and finally with one big shove it is contained. I quickly pull the string before it unravels like my mind the moment I thought the storm would defeat me and my attempt to cross the lake. Perhaps the first blind person to do it solo. A dumping of 20 millimetres threatened to put an end to my dream.

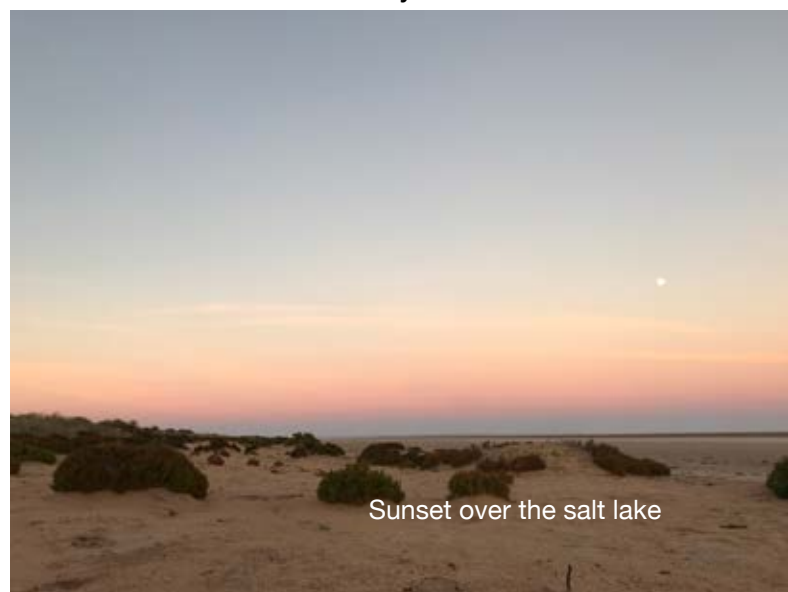


Nick heading towards The Narrows

The nights alone in the desert are everything I craved, a kind of silence where you hear imaginary noises just to feel alive and part of the universe. No noisy neighbours and none of that awful deodorised air freshener of dull hotel rooms. Instead I sleep on a comfortable, five-star, powder-soft bed of sand. It's as if my bedroom door is open wide inviting the world in. I feel that I am literally a tiny spot, in this vast desert that has existed for millions of years. I listen to my heart, my breathing and sigh heavy and loud with appreciation for life, family and friends who have helped me get here. I lie on my back and I feel as if it is very dark but for all I



Monique, Nick and Sarah before the start of the walk



Sunset over the salt lake

know there may well be a sky full of shining, twinkling and shooting stars, but I see pitch black. I feel totally safe, cradled in the arms of a land that means no harm, despite its harsh environment. On the last night on Island Lagoon I had climbed into my sleeping bag at 5pm, totally exhausted. The sun was hot and shining on my back as I forced myself to drink from my bottle, to make up for the water I had not drunk during the day. In my somewhat confused, dehydrated brain, I hear Monique's words, "You need to drink lots, Honey." Along with Sarah, she has been an absolute angel, a modern day, Aussie Mary Poppins. She has always loved the outdoors and I discover that whenever the wind changes Monique will take off and land feet first into another adventure. Her journey has taken her across deserts, into rarely visited Australian outback and a recent adventure on a fishing boat with four men.

After the water and a small meal of a boiled egg, tasty cheese and salad, I quickly fell into an exhausted sleep. But soon I awake, force myself to drink more water, in the silence, feeling an occasional slight breeze moving

across my uncovered face. Its voice is telling me, nothing stands still and life will move on. Wide awake, I take out my one luxury item, the one thing I was prepared to carry despite its extra weight. My iPhone. Lodged inside a clip bag to protect it from the grains of sand. I'm out of range but I don't want to speak to anyone. Instead I listen to my favourite book. I double tap the play button and smile as I read Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*. Did Dickens ever dream that his audible book would be read in the desert wilderness of Australia? As Pip, the main character, is looking at the notorious Newgate prison, the lost souls within, trapped like an insect in a web, I hit the pause button and call out, thank you. I am so fortunate to have so much freedom and there are no walls within a hundred kilometres.

Later as I try again to sleep I think of the tremendous descriptions Sarah and Monique have provided for me so I can see the desert, the vast landscape, the bones of a dead kangaroo that seemed to be digging in vain for water and succumbs to death. We came across several other sad sandy roo graves.



Sarah writes about the navigation

The technology was fairly tricky to resolve for this trip, so it's an interesting field to cover for those who may be exploring similar ideas. We ended up with Nick learning to use two compasses and change the batteries in the voice one. We had UHF radio comms between all of us.

We had a SPOT tracker on Nick which was automatically pinging each 10 minutes. Nick had to learn how to turn it on and off, as it



Audio and braille compasses

needed resetting each 24 hours. There were no voice or audio prompts to guide him with this device. We could only see his location from this with internet/phone reception, which I had at the finish but nowhere else. We had a satellite phone to communicate with the team back at home.

We each also had Garmin radios with GPS chips in them with which we could see each other's locations. This was ideal and worked beautifully at close range so that we could track Nick directly in the field, but we had some trouble at longer distances. Monique was on the lake with Nick guiding him where necessary, however we decided that she should be close enough to give him radio instructions where necessary and be able to respond to an emergency, but not so close that it compromised his independence. Nick had to learn how to use all of these devices including turning them on/off to be able to preserve battery life for the three days.

Nick also learnt how to use a GoPro and got some [wonderful footage](#) of himself.



Nick on the salt lake

On the final morning, I slowly stand up as it takes an effort with my ageing and sore knees. I grab my backpack and exhale audibly as I lift it onto my back, swinging my left arm through the strap, followed by my right arm. It is a new pack and although I have carried it for three days and looked at it in detail with Sarah, it is still quite a challenge to ensure I position it properly on my back. Tightening straps, sliding zips and fastening clips across my lower, mid and upper torso. Finally, it's done. The weight is becoming part of my body. I am about to start my last walk and I pause. I tilt my head back and, as if I can see, look into the sky. I thank those in my life that have had such an enormous impact and who enabled me to live these glorious fifty years - almost to the day of the accident that took my sight when I was seven years old.

“Fifty years of absolute adventure.”

I had several sessions with a psychologist prior to coming to Island Lagoon. This was offered to me as an option and although, at first, I was reluctant, I agreed, as I wanted to see if it actually made a difference. It did. On day two, when I was faced with the enormous challenge, with varying levels of water on the lake, I was able to apply my learning. It is the only time I feel afraid. I hear her words, “Breathe in, breathe out”, I focus on what I am thinking and where I am standing. I have been walking five hours without taking my heavy backpack off. I

have been eating some nuts and dried fruit, however, I was concentrating on the world about me and forgot to drink. The wind was blowing quite strongly from right to left. The sand was mostly mushy and then conditions deteriorated suddenly and the water was almost at my knee. I radioed Monique for a location update, “Nick, do not panic. The tracking device is not working.” My heart sank as she continued, “We are sorting it out. I think you should keep heading north-east. Over”.

Next thing I hear a plane above me and I'm annoyed. Frustrated, as it seems to be circling me and trying to make radio contact. I am confused and dehydrated and definitely not in the mood to be interviewed by anyone. I yell out to the wind, “Go away, leave me alone”. Monique is on the radio again, “Nick, great news. The plane above you is Rob, the Station Manager, he can see you and he is tilting the wings of his plane, so that I can see the direction you need to go. Head north, to find dryer sand”. I apologise to the wind and the desert, calling “Sorry. Thank you”.

It is 20 minutes later that I am back into mushy sand and feeling happier with a new goal to find the island that sits on the lake, as this will be my sleeping spot. It takes many chats with my lifeline, Monique, lots of reassurance and praise before I finally can collapse to the sand, having walked without a stop for over seven hours.

On my final morning I am reluctant to start out. I feel the gentle breeze upon me, I feel the warming chill of a cold night and a



Nick with his gear prior to the trip



Sarah's camp near the start. Nick's camps would be similar but with no fire

solitary bird is somewhere in the far distance. I say aloud, "Thank you all for loving me, for caring and being willing to encourage me in my journey". I am slow to start because I sense this could well be my last major adventure. Fifty years of absolute adventure. Adventures that include Paralympic running, long distance running, stair racing, mountain climbing, team sports like international blind competitive cricket and goal ball (an indoor Paralympic sport for vision impaired athletes) and desert and river crossings. I hold both compasses above my heart. Slowly, smiling, then almost laughing, I take the Braille compass in my left hand. Braille has been part of my life almost from the day the retina tore away behind my eyes. I feel I owe it to Louis Braille, the man who created the code, to use the Braille compass before taking my first steps to the next chapter in my life. I repeat the words Louis used over two hundred years ago: "Braille is knowledge, and knowledge is power".

“Braille is knowledge, and knowledge is power.”

I am facing north-east. I turn slightly right and the compass is now showing east. I look down, I look up and finally, I look straight ahead at my future and start the walk home.

The ground is firm and everything seems well enough, however, 57 years of life has taught me to be prepared for change. My left foot slips and I plunge my white cane into the sand to regain balance. The ground is very slippery. I am concentrating on my balance, focusing on my compass direction and wondering if I will hear the voices I heard (in the wind) yesterday.

The radio crackles alive in my front left backpack pocket. "Hi Nick, it is Sarah. You are heading in the correct direction. Monique is in deeper water to the south, so, we think you should veer north-east to avoid deeper water." I smile and head slightly more north. "Nick, we are all so very proud of you," she said. It is almost impossible to say in words my appreciation to Sarah and Monique, who have supported me in the desert. They are using all their incredible knowledge and their amazing outdoor skills to help me find the lake edge.

I feel as if I am powering along quite quickly and this is confirmed by Sarah in her next radio contact. "Nick, you are moving quite quickly, covering the ground very fast." Shortly afterwards, I sink into deeper wet sand and my speed slows. I am now working much harder. Bang, I kick a "ridge". A ridge is a wind formed accumulation of sand which often forms repeating, horizontal lines in a certain area. The ridge is about ten centimetres, maybe five or six inches high and collapses under my feet. It does come as a bit of a surprise as the rest of the desert floor is quite flat. The radio is chirping again, "Nick, you are drifting south". The water is above my ankles. "Keep a north-east line." I answer, okay and turn my body slightly left.

I am reminded by Sarah not to drift south and to drink more water. The previous day I had experienced dehydration due to my own stupidity and fortunately, Monique kept reminding me, calmly stopping me and saying, "Now, take the bottle from your pack and drink. Take the bag of nuts and mixed fruit and eat."



Nick and Sarah at the finish

I walk on.

Several hours pass and I have moved through dry, slippery and very deep muddy surfaces. I smile as I move, push and urge myself on as I know, this is symbolic of life. I just need to keep moving.

Suddenly, the voices have gone and it is the Land Cruiser horn, bellowing its welcome to me. I rush forward, an involuntary reaction to joy, before steadying. I remove my fly net that has covered my face and the sun glasses that have protected my eyes from the flying sand. I show my smile and call out aloud, "Thank you to all those who have helped me and to the desert for its comfort."

I walk on.

The horn is getting closer and that familiar tinge of sadness mixed with joy is welling inside me. I want it to end, I don't want it to end. I smile. I can hear my heart beating against my rib cage and know this is a very special ending to an extraordinary solo,

desert adventure. The horn is replaced by the "cooee" by two beautiful women waiting for me. Naturally my smile broadens. I breathe in deeply and feel my human frailty, my connection with life carrying me on to them.

Finally, I am walking on firmer ground. I know I am off the lake because I am brushing against small shrubs and grass. Sarah and Monique are hugging me. We are all laughing and relieved. I remove the wall of concentration that has been necessary over the last three days. I almost fall into the fold up chair and I cannot believe how comfortable it feels. Later, I ask Sarah, how I looked when I walked off the desert lake.

"You looked strong, independent and capable." Similar words my mother used when I headed off to the local shops with my cane, walking alone for the first time since my accident. "There was also a sense of satisfaction that you had done it and a look of relief that as a team we were all safe and happy."



Island Lagoon footprints. The hill is Nedlebutanyie, the island refuge that enabled Nick to complete his crossing after rain flooded the lake. It is where Nick spent his last night.

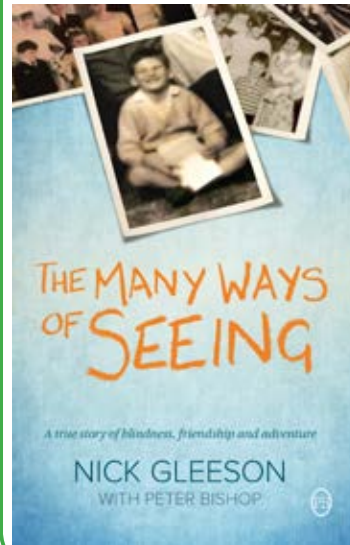
Readers, I am no hero, not that different to you. Just someone who, in the words of my friend and fellow adventurer, Lucas Trihey, gives life “a red-hot go”.



Nick after finishing



Nick lives in Sydney. He went blind at age seven when a supermarket door hit him on the head causing a retinal detachment. Nick completed a BA, quite difficult without modern technology. His great passion has always been sport and adventure, with many achievements, including to Africa's highest mountain, Kilimanjaro and reaching 6000 metres on Mount Everest. Nick



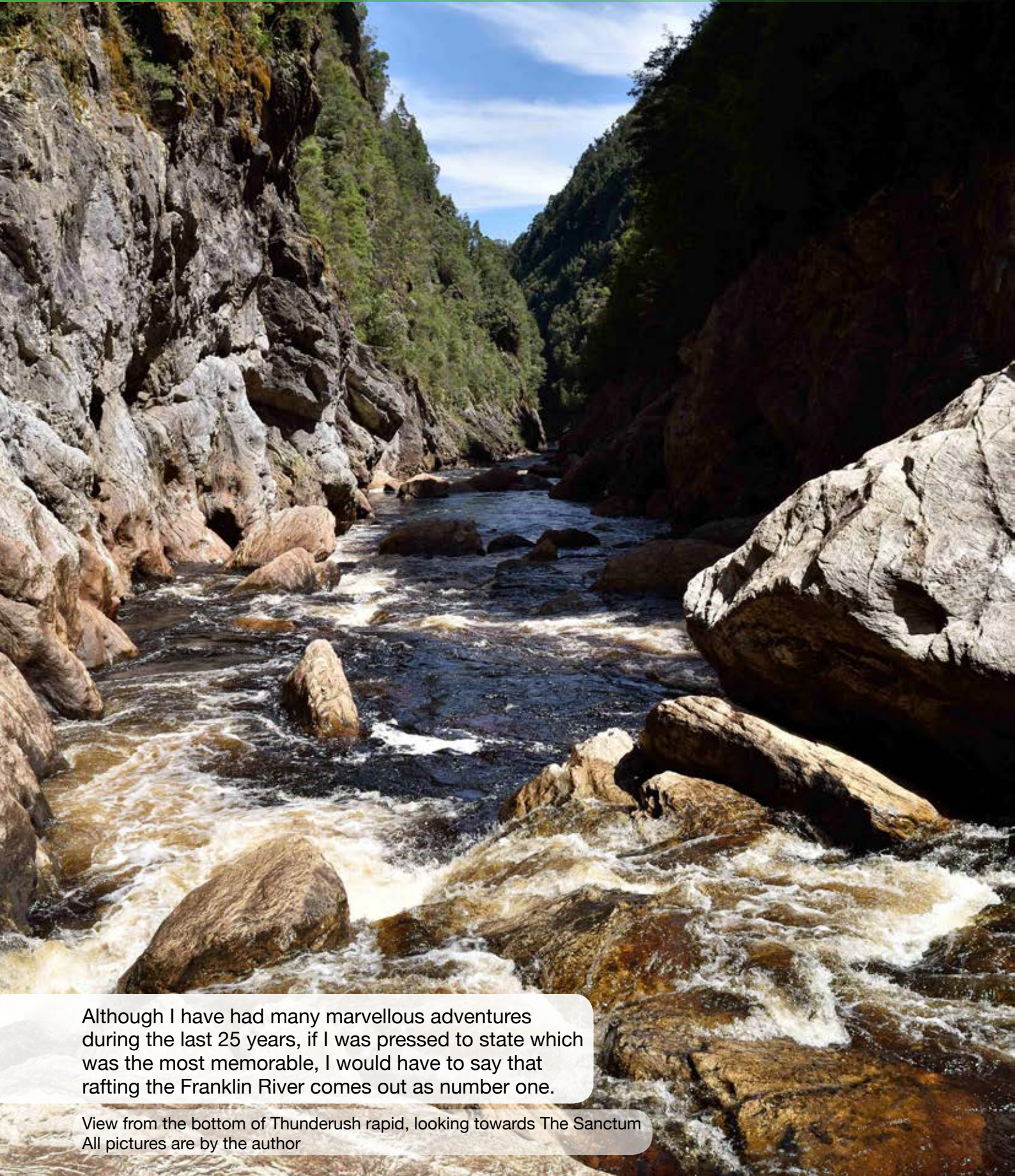
enjoys his work as a motivator, mentor, educator and leadership facilitator, and as ambassadors for the Australia Day Council, Ability Links NSW and the Living Life My Way Program. He has written a book *The Many Ways of Seeing* and has a website.



If you spend time alone in the wilderness, you get
very attuned to living things.
George Dyson

Franklin River Tasmania

Richard Fare



Although I have had many marvellous adventures during the last 25 years, if I was pressed to state which was the most memorable, I would have to say that rafting the Franklin River comes out as number one.

View from the bottom of Thunderush rapid, looking towards The Sanctum
All pictures are by the author

I had originally intended to do this trip to mark my fortieth birthday however, life intervened for several years and it wasn't until January 2017 that it moved from my bucket list into reality, when I finally stumped up the money to join a commercial trip. Although advertised as 10 days, you actually spend 7.5 days rafting, as half a day is spent getting to the start from Hobart, there is a scheduled rest day along the way and the last day is spent on a yacht cruising back to Strahan and returning by bus to Hobart.

Although I have included just a few photos in the text to give you a small taste, you can click on the links to see the rest of the photos, which are a mix of action and scenic shots taken on the go with a waterproof compact camera, as well as others with a more scenic emphasis, taken with a DSLR during some of the stops and at camp.

Days 1 and 2: Collingwood River to Irenabyss

As has more than once been the case when I've booked an important adventure, I fell quite ill with the flu shortly before I caught the red eye flight from Perth. I took some tablets to stop my runny nose, but this proved to be a major mistake, as the tablets caused

insomnia on my arrival in Hobart, not helped by the human nightlife parading noisily until almost dawn, right past my CBD hostel window. So I was in pretty poor shape, very sick with flu and having hardly slept in nearly three days, when we loaded the rafts and set off down the Collingwood River.

On the plus side there had been good rain two days before, so the river was at an ideal level as we easily floated down the Collingwood, gradually gaining confidence in how we paddled as a team and steered the heavy rafts. I found the Collingwood River to be surprisingly pretty.

I had expected it to be lined with scrub, but instead it was surrounded by beautiful rainforest

“... there had been good rain two days before ...”

and the tea-tree that lined the banks was flowering prettily in white. After some small, easy rapids we then did a larger drop and not long after that, we arrived at the confluence with the Franklin River, where we pulled ashore for a snack break, to stretch our legs and to admire the view of the narrow canyon upstream that the Franklin had just emerged from. The upper and middle Franklin pictures are [here](#).

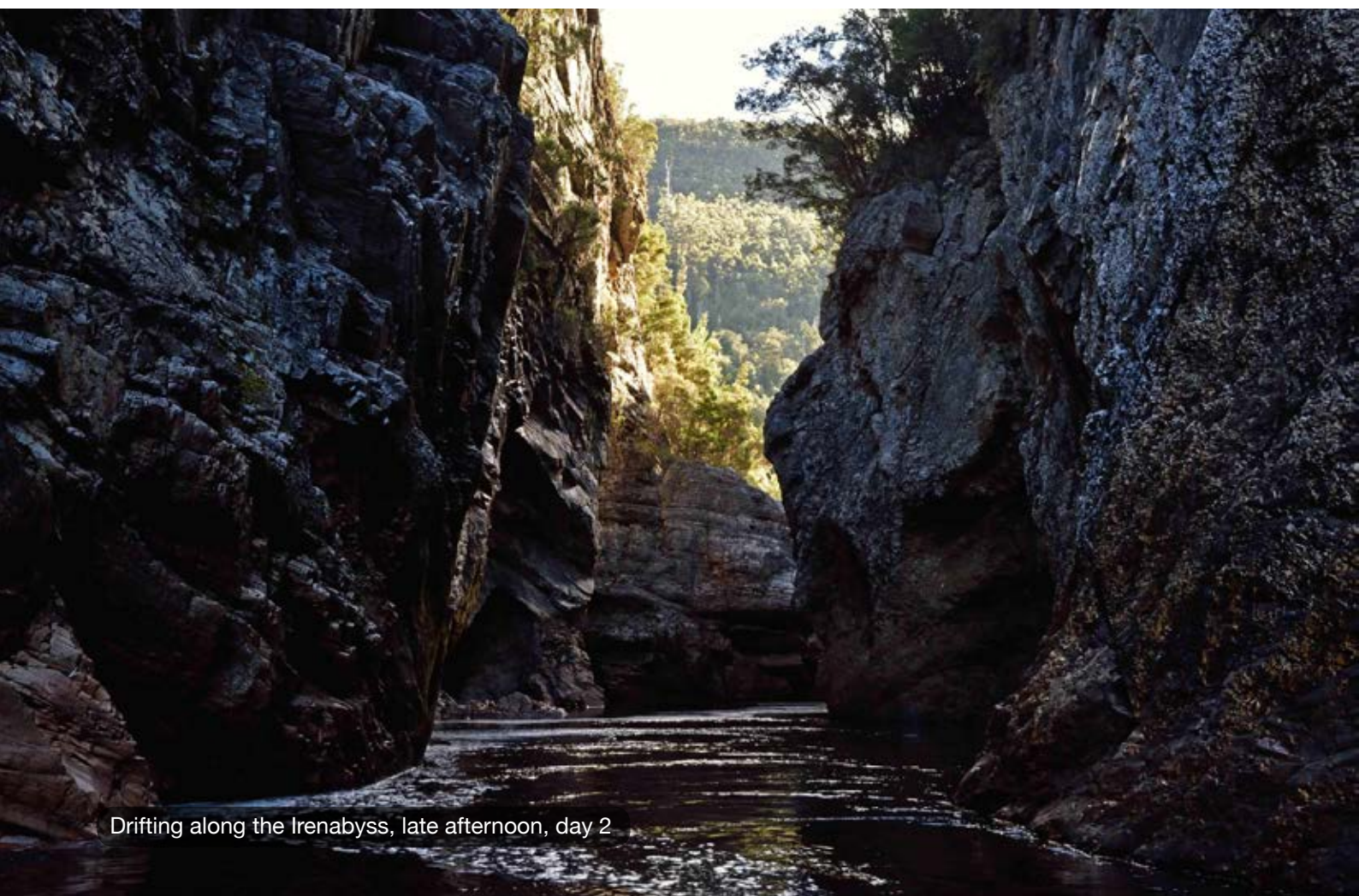


Morning at Corruscades rapid, day 1

On the normal trip schedule we would be spending the night camped here, however with the good water level we had made quick time (only an hour) so we voted unanimously to continue onward and piled back into the two rafts. The rest of the afternoon was mainly long stretches of flat water, mixed with occasional rapids, as we made our way down the narrow valley, which again was lined with beautiful forest and flowering tea-tree. Boulder Brace was a fun rapid to bounce through and the tall, overhanging quartzite cliffs of Angel Rain Cavern were impressive to float alongside. Soon after, we came to the first portage at the Log Jam. A large log has blocked the river here and a beautiful tall, slim waterfall showers gently into the river alongside it, making it a quite lovely spot. The rafts were heaved over the log and we were soon off again through more long stretches of flat water and minor rapids. The next portage was at Nasty Notch, where we piled out and with ropes hauled the rafts past a large rock and a very nasty looking hole that you'd definitely not want to be swept into. Not far downstream from there, we entered Descension Gorge, and after our guide briefly stopped to scout the way ahead, it was then a fast, exciting slide

through the rapids before we dropped over a final ledge into the suddenly tranquil slot of the Irenabyss. It was wonderful to slowly float for about 200 metres between the sheer cliff walls before we exited left and pulled into our camp for the night. I was still sick as a dog, but it had been a wonderful introduction to white water rafting.

Being so ill and sleep deprived I opted to skip breakfast, slept in and spent the next day enjoying the serenity at Irenabyss Campsite. It was a bit inclement in the morning, so the party that had earlier set off to climb Frenchmans Cap returned, having turned back due to the low cloud and biting cold wind. Fortunately that was no problem for myself, as I've climbed the Cap several times over the years. The sun came out in the afternoon and it was lovely to just sit atop the cliffs and watch the ever changing patterns of foam slowly drift along the Irenabyss; looking like works of modern art etched on the dark tannin-stained water. The others read books or chatted and then a few of us ended the day by paddling back up along the length of the Irenabyss to take a few photos and enjoy the atmosphere of this remarkable chasm for a final time.



Drifting along the Irenabyss, late afternoon, day 2

Day 3: Irenabyss to The Crankle

It was cloudy but fine, and like the remainder of the trip, we had a leisurely breakfast and didn't hit the water until mid-morning. As we were doing the trip across 10 days, there was no need to hurry along the river. I definitely recommend spending the extra money so that you can enjoy the more relaxed schedule.

The river valley remained narrow, with scrub visible higher up the steep valley walls, but with the river remaining lined by rainforest and flowering tea-tree. The day's paddling was a mix of long flat stretches, some faster flowing sections where we could just drift along, as well as the occasional sets of short, easy rapids. By this stage I was slightly disappointed that there weren't more adrenaline thrills to be had, but the beautiful scenery more than made up for it. The long stretch of cliffs known as the Walls of Jericho were a highlight, as was paddling around the major bend in the river known as the Crankle (so named for the way it twists and turns through every direction of the compass). At the end of the Crankle we pulled ashore at a small sandy beach that was to be our camp for the night. Later on, after dinner our senior guide would start amusing and tormenting us with guessing mind games ... but that is another story.

Day 4: The Crankle to Corruscades

After some overnight rain and morning showers, day four was mainly a fine mixture of cloud and sunshine. The river remained narrow, with a reasonable current, so it was an easy paddle to our next stop, which was the impressive Blushrock Falls. This is the tallest waterfall along the Franklin River and it plunges in three stages down the valley wall. We all climbed to the top of the first stage and a few did the steeper bit to the top of the second stage. After a snack, it was back into the rafts and soon enough we entered the start of the Great Ravine. This had been the section of the trip that I had most been looking forward to and it didn't disappoint. As we entered the gorge we dropped through Side Slip rapid into a long quiet pool, with Oriel Rock looming ahead at the end of it. This marked the site of The Churn, the first of the four rapids in the Great Ravine that need to be portaged.

So far I had been a bit underwhelmed by the rapids, but The Churn marked a serious step upwards in danger and had to be scouted. We piled out and climbed to a high rock to assess the situation. In the months before the trip started, I had wondered whether we would have to unload and deflate and carry the large rafts around the more serious rapids. I was still pretty sick, so I was rather



Afternoon at Serenity Sound, day 4

relieved when it turns out that it was possible to simply pull with ropes or manhandle the large, heavily loaded rafts along the rapids, rather than have to carry them around them on the portage trails. So the two guides, with the assistance of two of the more experienced passengers, did the portage as I watched on and then made my way along the portage track to The Churn campsite to meet them.

It took about an hour to complete the portage, followed by a long lunch break, as we stopped to watch a group of pack rafters who had arrived at The Churn just behind us. Back into the rafts we immediately floated into the tall vault of the aptly named Serenity Sound. This is one of the most beautiful places I have ever been, with luxuriant forest covering the high, steep walls of the Great Ravine. As we gently paddled in the sunshine along the length of this quiet, serene reach of the river we were quite dwarfed by the immensity of our surroundings. We pulled ashore just before the Corruscades, which is a, large, long rapid that tumbles across and between a multitude of huge slabs. The views either way from the top of the Corruscades are tremendously scenic and I couldn't imagine a more perfect place to spend the night camped in the rainforest. Some glow worms near the campsite made it even more perfect, looking like stars twinkling in the dark. It had been a fabulous day. The Great Ravine pictures are [here](#).

“... Serenity Sound. This is one of the most beautiful places I have ever been ...

Day 5: Corruscades to Rafters Basin

This was to be our second and final day in the Great Ravine. I awoke early to the atmospheric sight of the tops of the Great Ravine covered in mist which slowly burnt away to reveal a cloudless blue sky. Powered by sunshine, the valley walls seemed to sing with energy and my words are completely inadequate to describe the glory of the place.

Our guides paddled the rafts alone through the upper part of the Corruscades, meeting us half way down. We manhandled the rafts over another drop and then piled back in to paddle the lower, easier part

of the Corruscades. The final sideways-angled drop through the Faucet was thrilling and then we floated into the calm waters of Transcendence Reach. Within minutes we pulled ashore at the entrance to Livingstone Cut. Here the Livingstone Rivulet passes through a tall, overhanging slot into the Franklin. The rivulet is covered with treacherously slippery rocks, but our guide assured us it would be worth the risk to explore what lay ahead. A waterfall seemingly blocked our path, but our guide rigged a rope and we climbed past it. There were more pools and chasms ahead to be traversed, before the group was eventually blocked from going any further. The people that went the full distance had big smiles on their faces as they returned.

Transcendence Reach again proved to be aptly named, and we quietly paddled our way in the sunshine along the gently winding ravine. I wish I could have taken more photos here, but I felt too guilty whenever I briefly put the paddle down and left the others to do the work. On flat water, if there's not much current, the heavy rafts are surprisingly hard work.

Transcendence Reach is longer than Serenity Sound and it is equally if not more beautiful. Eventually we could hear a roar ahead and pulled ashore, where the path ahead was blocked by a chaotic stretch of huge rocks. This was the start of Thunderush Rapid. The pack rafters were taking lunch, so we had lunch as well, since their service raft was blocking our portage. The plan was to first pull with ropes and then later manhandle our rafts along the length of Thunderush. The plan was a success for the first raft however, the second raft became stuck on rocks and it took our guides quite a while to eventually free it, only for it to soon get stuck again. Our senior guide had no choice but to bravely swim across above the top of the rapid and then walk downstream to free the raft. Then later on, after more manhandling, the raft suddenly flipped on top of him at the very end of the rapid, which showed the importance of always wearing your helmet.

Some small rapids immediately below Thunderush were easily navigated, then we were into the short, peaceful stretch

of The Sanctum. Cirrus clouds had earlier passed overhead when we had lunch, and sure enough it turned overcast and gloomy as we reached the final rapid called The Cauldron. Here the river is blocked by several enormous slabs of rock, but the water level was low enough to permit the raft to be manhandled along the right side of the rapid. As this is the spot where a river guide had been drowned several years before, I was quite happy to leave the manhandling to the guides and three of the other male passengers. I watched them get the first raft through and then I set off along the portage track high above the river. On reaching the cliffs further along the river bank, I looked back upstream and was rather surprised to see that all had not gone to plan with the second raft. It was stuck upside down in the water. After several more goes, the stranded group seemed to be signalling for help, so I went ahead to find the senior guide at the earlier raft. He didn't think there was much he could do about it, but he borrowed a kayak from a group of kayakers he had come across, and

“It was stuck upside down in the water.”

then paddled his way up the lower part of the rapid to shout some instructions. Soon after, another raft arrived and together they were able to flip the raft back upright and we were good to go again. The moral of the day's story is that even the experts can come undone on this river.

Below The Cauldron we paddled easily along the last quiet stretch known as Deliverance Reach. The mood seemed as subdued as the now increasingly grey skies overhead. We passed the Masterpiece Alcove and then after drifting past a tall, thin rock rib known as The Biscuit, the Great Ravine suddenly ended, as we entered the broad pool known as Rafter's Basin. Our senior guide left us to set up camp and start dinner, as he left to have a chat with the other groups camped nearby. I suspect he also felt that he'd done quite enough to fix the misadventures of the day that had befallen the other guide! There are plenty of good sheltered campsites at Rafter's Basin, so having safely completed the traverse of the Great Ravine, we settled in early for the night.

“... even the experts can come undone on this river.”

Day 6: Rafter's Basin to Newland Cascades

The rain arrived during the night. Half of us passengers were bushwalkers, so we were happily snug and dry in our tents. The remainder of the group had chosen not to bring tents, and were instead sleeping under a large tarp, so they had a much less comfortable night. The rain continued in the morning but stopped just before we set off, so thankfully the remainder of the day was fine but heavily overcast.

After crossing the shallow rapid at the end of Rafter's Basin, the valley walls quickly closed in again and there was noticeably more current now. We'd had a very late start, and didn't have far to go today, so we took our time drifting and slowly paddling down the valley, which was clad as always in beautiful forest, with the mist still covering the upper parts of the valley walls. On passing the Mountt McCall haulageway, I reflected on what a debt we owe to the Franklin campaigners, as the second dam that had been planned for this site would have



The Sanctum, day 5

completely obliterated everything that had been such a treat for the eyes and my other senses during the last few days.

The river again was mainly flat water, with the occasional easy rapid, but then as we traversed Propsting Gorge we came to the more serious rapid of Ol' Three Tiers. The guides paddled the rafts alone through the rapid. This was because the water slams the rafts into a big rock on the right river bank; so it's definitely not a spot where you'd want your passengers to be thrown overboard. Further downstream, we pulled ashore at Ganymede's Pool to scout the The Trojans. Though this is a two metre drop, there were no unexpected snags or nasty stoppers, and the water level was safe enough for us to paddle over the sudden, clean drop. A bit more paddling through the winding gorge took us to the roar of the Pig Trough rapid. Two kayakers have been trapped and drowned here, so most of us hopped out and walked along the bank to nearby Rock Island Bend, while our guides and a few passengers used ropes to pull the rafts along this short but very dangerous rapid.

Rock Island Bend is every bit as beautiful in real life, as it looks in the famous photo taken by Peter Dombrovskis. The photo was crucial in showing exactly why the Gordon below Franklin Dam had to be stopped, and what we all stood to lose forever if it went

“... it's definitely not a spot where you'd want your passengers to be thrown overboard.”

ahead. I could hardly believe that I was really standing there. We didn't stop long at Rock Island Bend because we were a day ahead of schedule and could return by foot the following day. Just after the river turned left past the famous rock, was the start of the longer, multi-tiered Newland Cascades rapid. As us novices were now fairly competent on the paddles we shot the rapid without needing to stop and scout it, anticipating and quickly obeying the commands of our river guides. A final, larger drop and then we pulled ashore into Newland Cascades camp site. The overhanging sandstone cliffs were to be our home for the next two nights. We were a day ahead of schedule and had decided to spend a full rest day here, rather than the alternative option of splitting the remainder of the trip into three shorter sections, instead of the normal two. Rock Island Bend and Newland Cascades pictures are [here](#).

Day 7: Rock Island Bend (revisited)

Newland Cascades is a beautiful spot for a lay day, particularly if it is raining, as the overhang of the cliffs provides plenty of shelter and spots to hang out any wet gear to dry. The opposite bank of the river is mostly covered by rainforest and there is a beautiful, wisp like waterfall that trickles over the adjacent cliff of Shower Cliff Cavern. It is also a great opportunity to rerun the Newland Cascades if you wish.

Instead I spent most of my rest day back at Rock Island Bend, which can be reached by foot on an exceptionally steep track where it bypasses the island. The morning was



Newland Cascades, day 6

showery, but it was nice to admire the Pig Trough Falls, which fall attractively in two stages through the rainforest, before spilling across the sandstone shelf that provides that famous view of Rock Island Bend itself. I returned to the camp for lunch, then two of the other passengers joined me on a final visit to Rock Island Bend. The sun had come out and we sat there for a couple of hours, transfixed by the beauty of the place; the Rock boldly standing in defiance of the river, the swirling patterns of foam from the adjacent Pig Trough rapid sweeping past and around the bend, the forest standing proudly on the steep slopes, the sandstone cliffs rising upwards, the largely hidden waterfall as a gorgeous side dish. It was a real privilege to be able to see the place in so many different moods of weather.

“It was a real privilege to be able to see the place ...

The guides and the rest of the passengers remained at Newland Cascades, some ran the rapid again, some went for a swim, several read their books, three indulged in a spot of rock climbing. Regardless of how it was spent, everyone agreed it was a great place to spend some extra time.

Day 8: The lower Franklin River

Day eight was glorious and sunny. Although we had a fair way to travel today, it was still late morning before we hit the water. A short paddle took us through the easy lower part of Newland Cascades and then suddenly the character of the landscape and the river totally changes. We had left the quartzite and sandstone gorge country, and found ourselves travelling along a wide, largely flat valley. The river became much wider and slow moving as it gently meandered along through the mixed rainforest. Some low, grey limestone cliffs soon appeared and we popped ashore with torches to explore part of the narrow Proina Cave in search of cave spiders.

On returning to the rafts we found our guides had tied them together in single file. This helps decrease the drag, for apart from when we are going through rapids, the rafts will be tied together and we'll be paddling in alternating shifts of 15 minutes each per raft crew. At first I wondered about this, but after a few stints it became clear that it was a better arrangement, so that everyone aboard did their fair share of the paddling, after having a rest to enjoy the scenery slowly passing by. There was little current,



Rock Island Bend, day 7

making for a long afternoon of paddling, but the beauty of the forest and the intermittent stretches of limestone cliffs more than made up for the greater physical effort. As we reached Flat Island, the tall cliffs of the Elliot Range came into view, and the range would remain our companion as the Franklin River began its long, winding journey around it.

Eventually we reached Blackmans Bend for a very late lunch at a lovely campsite in a beautiful, mature forest that has some lovely, large myrtle trees. A short distance further downstream we pulled ashore again at Kuti Kina Cave. This cave was one of the major reasons the Franklin River was included in the World Heritage area, thanks to the discovery of numerous artifacts from human occupation in the last Ice Age. The mind finds it difficult to grasp just how long ago it really was that this place was the site of Aboriginal Ice Age camps.

“This cave was one of the major reasons the Franklin River was included in the World Heritage area, thanks to the discovery of numerous artifacts from human occupation in the last Ice Age.”

And of how different the weather and the vegetation and the landscape would have been back then.

Back into the rafts again, but it was only briefly, as just a short distance downstream we set up camp on a sandbank in the middle of the river, alongside a shingle rapid with a good end-on view of the Elliot Range. It was a marvellous spot to spend our last night on the Franklin River and I awoke in the middle of the night for a spot of stargazing. One of our American passengers couldn't get over how Orions Belt appeared upside down to him. Having never travelled north of the equator, it gave me cause to reflect on how surprising the night sky will no doubt look to myself, when one day I eventually travel to the opposite side of the world. The Lower Franklin pictures [here](#).

Day 9: The lower Franklin River to Sir John Falls

After some early valley fog, the rest of us awoke to another lovely sunny morning. After a late breakfast we disconnected the rafts, for only a short distance ahead was Double Fall, the low drops of about a metre each proving an easy enough obstacle.



Lower Franklin River near Kuti Kina Cave, day 8

Back in tandem we paddled onward to Big Fall Beach, which is a sand bank opposite a curved line of limestone cliffs, making a good spot for a snack break. It was further to Big Fall from there than I expected, but we pulled ashore there and clambered onto the deeply potholed limestone bank for a close look at the fall. The single drop is only 1.5-2 metres, but I knew well that the stopper wave at the foot of the falls is deceptively powerful. On a previous sea kayaking trip up the Gordon and lower Franklin, I had seen it effortlessly flip and barrel roll a large commercial raft. Our guides pulled the rafts using a rope over the dangerous drop without incident and hopped aboard for the short paddle to the much taller cliffs of Galleon Bluff. Pengana Cave is found within the cliff, having been carved in part by a narrow stream which flows through the large main chamber. Further upstream the stream has carved a narrow chasm known as The Lost World, which was well worth exploring.

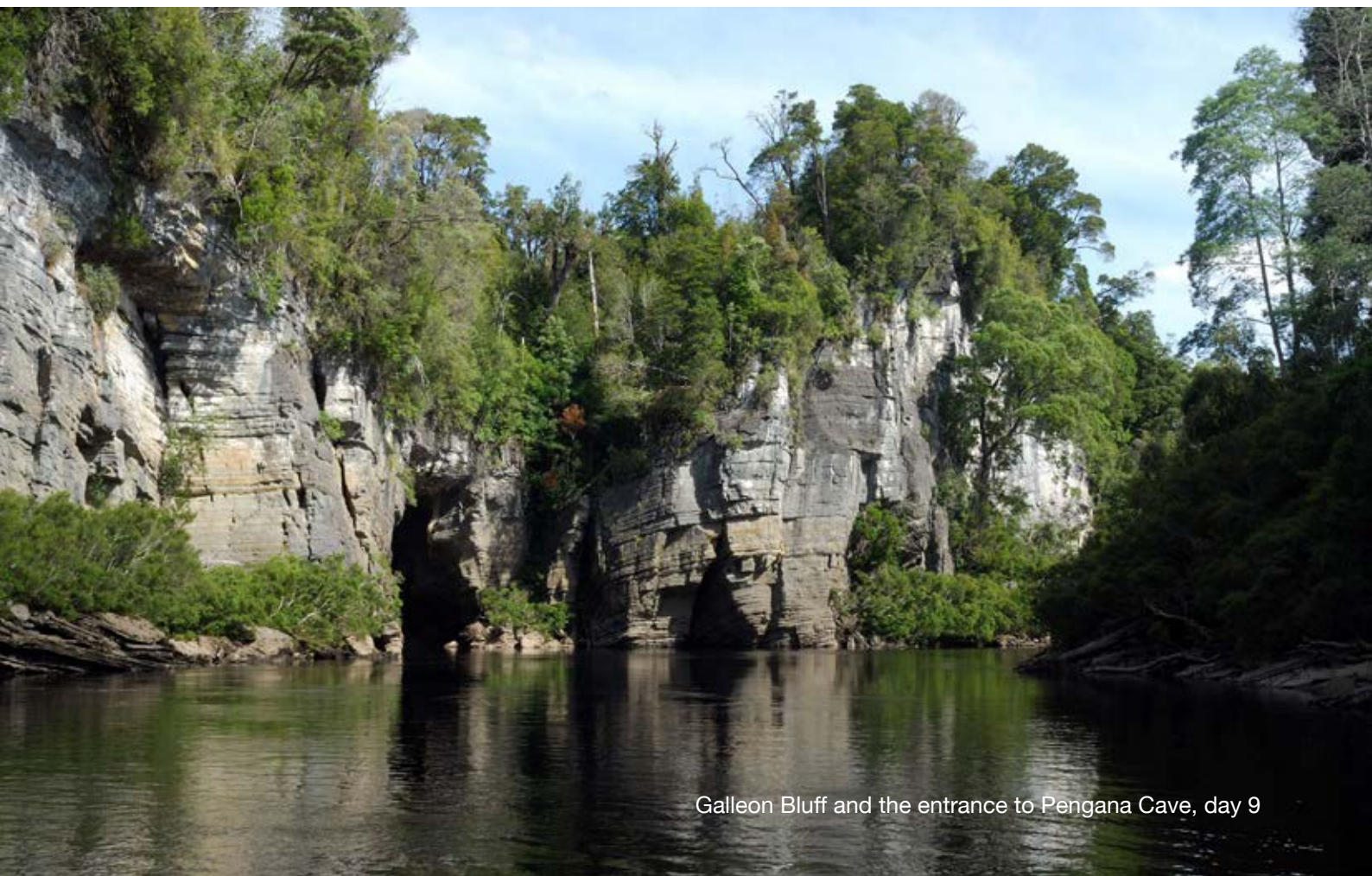
We spent a few hours here, then continued downstream and paused from paddling, to slowly drift past Verandah Cliffs. I was rather

“The Verandah Cliffs have a very special atmosphere.”

surprised the guides decided not to stop here, but no matter, as I was back in familiar territory and had previously spent several nights camped here. The Verandah Cliffs have a very special atmosphere.

The remainder of the Franklin River was flat water, with only a few gentle shingle rapids and eventually we reached Pyramid Island, where the Franklin River joins into the Gordon River. Although I knew full well just how much colder the waters of the Gordon River are, I reluctantly gave into peer group pressure, and took part in the allegedly traditional swim that marks the end of the traverse of the Franklin. Then for a bit of fun we all manned the paddles and tried to tow one of the teenagers behind us, body surfing style.

We entered the Gordon Gorge and swept past the site of the outlawed Gordon below Franklin Dam, pausing to reflect on just how fortunate we were, that people power triumphed here instead of the vested interests that care for little other than the size of their wallets. It was getting late in the now very overcast afternoon, and we were getting weary from paddling the joined rafts, so it was a slow slog along the length of the



Galleon Bluff and the entrance to Pengana Cave, day 9

deep, flat water of the otherwise beautiful gorge. Eventually we rounded a final gradual bend and pulled ashore at the jetty at Sir John Falls, which marked the end of our rafting journey. An hour or so later the yacht Stormbreaker appeared, which was to be our lift the following morning. The captain provided some bottles of champagne and we toasted to our guides and to the end of our wonderful rafting adventure.

Day 10: Return to Strahan and Hobart

It rained heavily overnight and we were woken shortly before dawn to break camp and climb aboard the Stormbreaker, where we had breakfast as the yacht slowly motored down the wide, deep, peaceful Gordon River. Unfortunately the rain and wind meant that the famous still reflections of the rainforest in the river were not to be ours today, but I've seen that many times before and the river remains beautiful and almost other worldly in bad weather anyhow. After breakfast I ended up falling asleep on a bunk as we neared the start of Macquarie Harbour. I only woke as we pulled into the wharf at Strahan, where the guides played rock, paper, scissors to decide who would

have to empty the heavy toilet (poo) bag into the rubbish skip. It was only on this last day that I was finally free of the flu.

Taking a commercial trip along the Franklin River is not a cheap experience. But it was worth every single bit of the \$3000 charged. In return I experienced 10 days of 360 degree beauty, learnt some new skills, met some nice people, and had the occasional adrenaline rush (though I still think most of the Franklin River is pretty tame so far as rapids go). The guides were entertaining and the food was great. You certainly won't lose any weight on a guided trip!!

“It will take something pretty extraordinary to knock this journey off its place atop my list of favourite adventures ...

It will take something pretty extraordinary to knock this journey off its place atop my list of favourite adventures and I sincerely hope that many of you reading this, will someday get the chance to see it for yourself. Until then, I hope you enjoy the (many) photos in the links. After he completed his first trip down the Franklin River, Peter Dombrovskis



Verandah Cliffs, day 9

said that the journey had exceeded all of his expectations and that the Franklin River had affected him more deeply than any other place he'd experienced in Tasmania. Now I totally understand why he felt that way, and I'm already looking forward to doing the trip again. Here are some additional photos of rafting the Franklin River, [part 1](#) and [part 2](#).

Richard is from Western Australia and is a keen bushwalker and amateur photographer. Since 1990 he has explored many Tasmanian national parks and reserves. He usually bushwalks alone and in recent years he has completed many journeys of one to two weeks duration into the more remote, rarely visited parts of the wilderness. After rafting the Franklin River, Richard was inspired to take up pack rafting and he has made pack raft trips along the Denison, Gordon and Jane Rivers, and has visited the Gordon Splits. He finds that with each visit there is always something new and enchanting about the beauty of the Tasmanian wilderness.

The Franklin River blockade

The Franklin River goes through a wild remote part of south-west Tasmania. In the early 1980s the Tasmanian government planned to dam the Franklin, and met huge resistance. On 14 December 1982 protests began in earnest. Led by Bob Brown and the Tasmanian Wilderness Society the Franklin was blockaded at Warners Landing, with about 2500 people present until March 1983.

"All up, some 6000 people registered to help, nearly 1500 protectors of the wilderness were arrested and 600 went in paddy wagons across the island, overnight, to Risdon Prison." Bob Brown.

Peter Dombrovskis' iconic (and for once that word is justified) photo of [Rock Island Bend](#), was published in newspapers all over Australia and internationally. It was the first, and possibly the most effective, use of photography in a major conservation campaign.

On 5 March 1983, Labor won the federal election with Bob Hawke as Prime Minister. His government immediately introduced regulations under the *National Parks and*

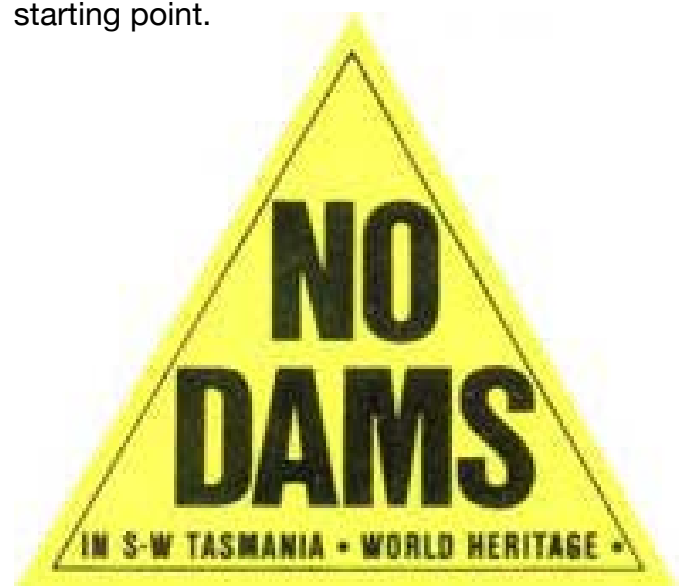
Wildlife Conservation Act 1975 and passed the *World Heritage Properties Conservation Act 1983* that protected the Franklin River, which had been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in December 1982. The Tasmanian government continued to attempt to build the dam.

To make the dam work stop, in May 1983 the federal government took the Tasmanian Government to the High Court, arguing that federal laws applied to state contexts when they were upholding the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. The court ruled 4-3 in favour of the federal government, and the Tasmanian Government abandoned the Franklin Dam. It was very close.

The Franklin was a turning point for Australian conservation. The Tasmanian Wilderness Society became The Wilderness Society. Bob Brown was elected to the Australian Senate. The Greens became a national political party. The slogan "No Dams" is perhaps one of the most enduring in Australian political history. The other one is "It's Time" from the 1972 Whitlam campaign. Conservation was not mainstream but it would be. Today, climate change is making conservation much more visible, increasingly including the finance pages and media.

Stephen Lake

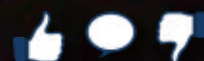
There are many references to the Franklin River campaign. [The Conversation](#) is a good starting point.



A No Dams sticker



Photo Gallery



Winter late afternoon over Narrowneck
John Walker

Competition: Landscape June 2013

BWA Photo Competition



Landscapes August 2018

WINNER



Sunrise from the
ABC Range
Brian Eglinton

As a photographer, the best light of the day is around sunrise and sunset.

But sometimes it comes with a price. In this case, an early rise to push up a very steep slope to one of the serrated peaks of the ABC Range in the Flinders Ranges.

The reward? A grandstand view of the sweep of the adjacent Heysen Range as it runs south and south-east to form the high walls of Wilpena Pound.

Along this rock wall is the Sawtooth and Saint Marys Peak, the highest in the Flinders.



Wine for breakfast?
Bogholesbuckethats



Winterreise
North-north-west



Mt Ossa
ILUVSWTAS



The big dry
John Walker



Brooding
Tom Brennan



Non-landscapes

August 2018

WINNER



Do you have a point?
Brian Eglinton

I love echidnas, but getting a good photo takes a bit of patience.

Alert to the slightest noise or vibration, they normally dig in, projecting nothing but a pin cushion to the observer.

But with poor eyesight - they will eventually emerge and carry on till the noise of the camera shutter has them balling up again.

This fellow was wandering in Bunyeroo Gorge in the Flinders Ranges.



Just looking
North-north-west



Struck gold
Bogholesbuckethats



A fallen giant
John Walker



The hungry wombat
ILUVSWTAS



Ice bush
Tom Brennan



Tasmania August 2018

WINNER



A frozen backbone
Bogholesbuckethats



Winter can be alright
ILUVSWTAS



There's always less snow
on the other side of the lake
North-north-west



Other States August 2018

WINNER



Moonrise at the Rock
Tom Brennan

The moon is just rising in the early evening behind Pulpit Rock in the Blue Mountains.



The Bunkers
Brian Eglinton



In lean times
John Walker



Landscapes

September 2018

WINNER



Going, going ...
Tom Brennan

The sun just squeezes out a few rays between low cloud lighting up the cliffs of the Grose Valley.



Colourful coast
Bogholesbuckethats



Fading embers of the day
John Walker



Non-landscapes September 2018

WINNER



The octopus
Tom Brennan

This creature lurks on the Amphitheatre Track near Leura, ready to trap unwary photographers.



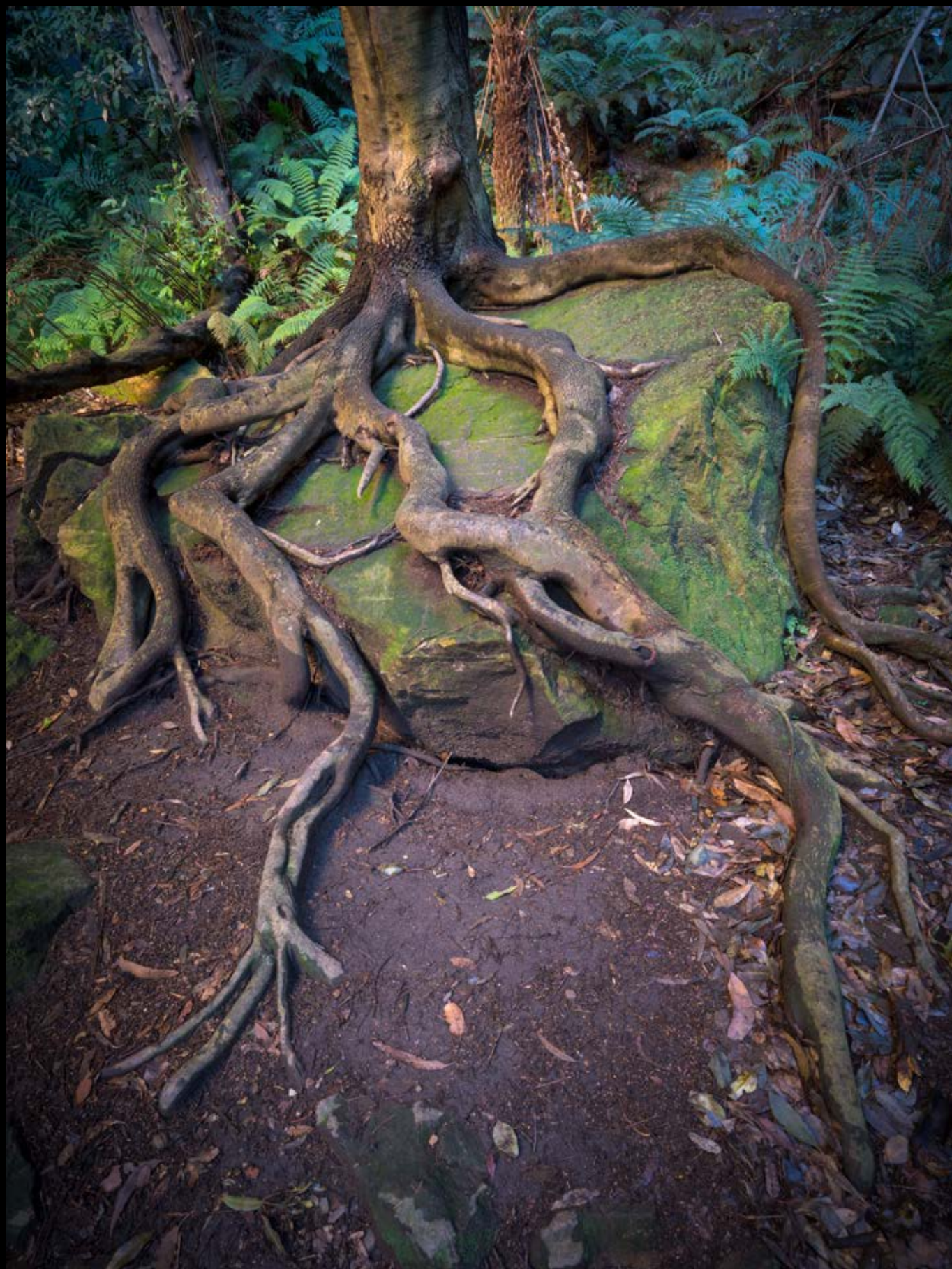
Damsel, not in distress
landsmith



Window into the past
Bogholesbuckethats



It's getting really low
John Walker



Tasmania September 2018

WINNER



Tangled mess
Bogholesbuckethats

A mossy surprise on the Tasman Peninsula.



Maria Island sunrise
ILUVSWTAS



Other States September 2018

WINNER



Sunrise on a spring morning from the lookout at Kanangra Walls.

Clouds over Cloudmaker
Tom Brennan



Standing guard
John Walker



Afterburn
landsmith



Long-Distance Walking Tracks in Australia How We Can Make Them Better

David Bell



In the last few years I have walked over 2000 kilometres on some of Australia's long-distance tracks. These include tracks in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, Northern Territory and the ACT. My walking experience in Western Australia is confined to off-track walking in the Kimberley and I have not undertaken a long-distance walk in Tasmania. I have also completed long-distance walks in New Zealand, Italy, Japan and Scotland.

Traversing the Crosscut Saw, Alpine NP along the Australian Alps Walking Track
All pictures by David Bell

So I have accumulated a fair bit of experience with long-distance walking and I feel somewhat qualified to offer a few suggestions as to how to make long-distance tracks a better experience for the walker.

Why do I feel that improvements are needed? Well because I have a real sense that the future of some of these long-distance tracks is under threat. This is not from any deliberate intention to close them down or make them unwalkable, but rather just from benign neglect or an unwillingness to commit sufficient resources to properly maintain them. Also, park agencies are often starved of funds with too many competing priorities, sometimes driven by political direction rather than on merits.

Part of the problem is that, in Australia at least, we lack a long-standing culture of independent long-distance walking. It is not something that Australians do and

those that do it are regarded as eccentrics or oddballs. Other countries seem to do it better and there is more recognition that long-distance walking is a legitimate and worthy recreational activity to undertake.

But that is just my opinion. Readers are welcome to disagree. So firstly, some definitions.

Long-distance tracks may be defined as anything over 80 kilometres in length, that is, a track that takes at least 3-4 days to complete. These tracks cannot be done in a weekend, at least by those of average fitness. Long-distance tracks include

- the very long such as the Heysen Trail (1200 kilometres or so);
- long such as the Australian Alps Walking Track (650 kilometres); and
- not so long such as the K'gari (Fraser Island) Great Walk (90 kilometres).

My remarks in this article are also primarily directed at what I call the independent, do it yourself walker. Or the “end to ender” or the “through walker”, people who carry their own gear and food and navigate without the assistance of a guide.

I am aware that many long-distance Australian walks permit commercial groups. However, I am not primarily addressing their needs although I do recognise that some of the issues I raise below are also relevant to the commercial sector.

So what follows below are my top eleven topics that track managers or owners should address. In my view they would make the track experience of end to enders, through walkers or independent walkers (whatever you want to call them) more fulfilling, more straightforward, more enjoyable, more viable and, above all, safer.

They are not listed in any priority order. Readers can decide themselves which topics are more important for them. I expect there will be other topics which I have left out here. Let the conversation begin!

1 Understand who are the intended users of the track

If it is the intention that a track will cater for a variety of walkers then the needs of these walkers need to be understood. A day walker will have different needs to the multi-day or end to ender. One of the chief differences is that day walkers can carry their water in. Longer-distance walkers do not have that luxury. They have to find water along the way, which may be a problem in drier areas.

2 Establishing and maintaining campsites

Some walkers like to camp in the bush with zero or minimal facilities, and good for them. While I like bush camps, many tracks, especially those that carry a fair bit of foot traffic, need formal campsites. In some places these need a water supply such as a tank. Some places may also require a toilet. Circumstances will vary with each track.



Closed campsites are a problem for the long-distance walker

“... I have a real sense that the future of some of these long-distance tracks is under threat.”

Finding a place to camp may also be a problem for tracks with a mix of public and private land. Land ownership may change and a new property owner may be hostile to walkers crossing their land. Not everyone has the capacity (or inclination) to walk 35 or 40 kilometres in a single day and the closure of a campsite presents yet another hurdle to the long-distance walker.

“Not everyone has the capacity (or inclination) to walk 35 or 40 kilometres in a single day ...

Consequently, track managers need to be more diligent in replacing closed campsites with new ones. The ideal for a long-distance track should be a campsite with access to potable water every 20-25 kilometres or so.

3 All tracks need friends – literally

Tracks need the support of government agencies. No question about this. However, tracks also need the support of volunteers to assist in planning and maintaining tracks. For example, the McMillans Track in Victoria would not exist without the volunteer efforts of the Ben Cruachan Walking Club to bring the track back into existence and to help with its ongoing maintenance. Similarly, the Friends of the Heysen Trail in South Australia perform a critical role.



Reporting track maintenance issues such as fallen timber needs to be simple

My experience is that where a track lacks a friends group, then the standard of the track is diminished. This is particularly apparent in NSW where there appears to be less of a volunteer culture in maintaining long-distance tracks than in other states.

Here are some links to Friends groups. Not all are represented here and it is worth exploring the various state-based bushwalking organisations to find further links to clubs and volunteering opportunities. Start with the [Bushwalking Australia website](#).

- [Friends of the Heysen Trail](#)
- [Friends of the Cape to Cape Track](#)
- [Friends of the Great South West Walk](#)
- [Bibbulman Track Foundation](#)

4 You can't manage if you don't measure

It never ceases to amaze me how little information we have on who is doing long-distance walking. Walker registers do exist but they are not always present and by no means are they sufficiently common to adequately record usage. There appears to be little use of the internet or social media to track numbers or intentions in relation to tracks. Every track should have a web page and the capacity to interact with it. This includes making it easy for walkers to report problems with tracks such as missing markers or changes in track conditions.

The [Bushwalk.com forum](#) is a useful place to post information and questions about tracks and it includes several discussion threads about long-distance tracks such as the AAWT. This forum style could be used for the webpages of specific tracks and the administrators of these sites should enhance their capability to host discussion threads.

5 Integrate tracks into local economies

My last long-distance walk lasted three weeks and involved two rest days, one week apart. The party was small (three people) but I calculated that the party spent nearly \$1000 collectively in those two locations on accommodation, meals, food re-supply and replacement equipment items. Yet my experience is that local tourism bodies are largely ignorant of the economic benefits of the long-distance tracks that pass through their areas. There may be a map or two in the information centre but the staff usually know little if anything about the tracks.

Local councils, tourism bodies and business chambers should do more to incorporate long-distance tracks into their economic development strategies and other marketing initiatives.

6 Promotion to increase these economies

If properly promoted, these tracks could also make a small but important contribution to local economies. People involved in tourism marketing, transport and hospitality should have an awareness of local tracks, who the users of these tracks are and what types of services they are interested in.

One further point is that where a track crosses a main road, then erect a sign to indicate the track crossing. Apart from the safety considerations, it also advertises the track to passing drivers. One of the best examples I've seen is where the Great North Walk in NSW crosses the old Pacific Highway at Charlestown. There is a great big sign saying 'Great North Walk'. Hard to miss.



Road crossing - Great North Walk, NSW

7 End to end walkers don't only go in the one direction

Track way marking and information sources should not assume that walkers will only be going in one direction. There is no excuse for having only one marker on a post or gate. Walkers coming the other way will miss it. Similarly, guidebooks should consider walkers going in different directions. The book by Chapman et al on the Australian Alps Walking Track does a good job in presenting information for walkers either heading north or south.

8 Walker safety is important

My personal gripe is with roads. I never appreciate being forced to walk along a bitumen winding road with a missing or narrow shoulder. In wet or foggy conditions, it can be dangerous. If track planners have no alternative to a road then at the very least, they should install a shoulder to walk along.



Roads like this in the Adelaide Hills with missing or narrow shoulders are dangerous

9 Someone needs to "own" the track

It can very frustrating to come across some problem with a track (missing track marker or obstacle such as fallen timber) and then spend a lot of time trying to find out where the problem should be reported. Many tracks cross multiple jurisdictions and, in some cases, they lack an "owner", someone who can be the first port of call to report a problem.

Government departments and agencies can be very difficult to navigate. Reporting a problem would also be made easier if the track web page had an entry point to communicate this information. But many track web pages do not have this facility.

“Reporting a problem would also be made easier if the track web page had an entry point to communicate this information.”

10 Have proper beginnings and endings

Starting and finishing a long-distance walk is a moment to celebrate (or commiserate). There should be a marker where people can assemble and take photos. Track heads should reflect the task completed or the task ahead, irrespective of the direction travelled or to be taken.

Unfortunately, some Australian tracks have a distinctly underwhelming appearance where they begin or end. The best example of a track finish I have seen is where the West Highland Way finishes (at least for most walkers) at Fort William in Scotland. The statue of the weary walker rubbing his foot is a magnet for people to linger and celebrate. We need similar installations here.

“... some Australian tracks have a distinctly underwhelming appearance where they begin or end.



Statue of weary walker, West Highland Way, Scotland

Yes, I realise a sculpture can be expensive but some sort of installation (even a plaque) is better than nothing. Installations can also provide information about the history of the track and, if interesting enough, installations can also generate publicity via social media.

11 Bushwalkers are usually friendly – engage with them

It would be great if government agencies responsible for tracks regularly engaged with the bushwalking community about the management of long-distance tracks.

By community I mainly mean clubs and their state-based federations or associations. This communication would not just be about the management of existing tracks but could also include proposals for new tracks or extending existing ones.

“It would be great if government agencies responsible for tracks regularly engaged with the bushwalking community ...

So those are my 11 topics. I have probably forgotten others but this is a start. Let us hope it leads to a better future for our long-distance walking tracks.

Reference

John Chapman, Monica Chapman and John Siseman 2009 *Australian Alps Walking Track* 4th Edition.



David has been bushwalking most of his adult life. He loves the outdoors, in particular long-distance walks. There are places that are remote and wild and it is a privilege to be able to visit them. He recently decided to write more about these places, hopefully encouraging others to also visit them or, if not, to at least enjoy reading about these places. He is a member of three bushwalking clubs and is involved in several campaigns to protect our national parks.



In the News

Dove Lake development

Parks and Wildlife Service are [proceeding with the plans](#) for the new \$4.5 million Dove Lake Viewing Shelter. Joining the [Bushwalk.com forum discussion](#) on the topic.

Two hours a week in nature

This is [the least amount of time](#) a person should spent in nature to increase their health and happiness, according to the new study, published in [Scientific Reports](#).

Glider habitat being destroyed

Two years after the greater glider was officialy listed as threatened in Victoria, more than 600 hectares of its habitat [has been logged](#) in Victoria.

Order of Australia Medal to Andrew D'Arcy Macqueen



Congratulations to [Andrew \(Andy\) D'Arcy Macqueen](#) for being awarded Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for service to conservation and the environment. A now renowned bushwalker, writer, conservationist, wilderness explorer, bushcarer and environmental campaigner has written [five books](#) about the wild places and people of the Blue Mountains and has been a quiet activist for the bush for decades.

Photo source: bmnature.info/culture-literature-andy-macqueen.shtml

Rare Australian sandalwood trees

Rare Australian sandalwood trees that are more than 200 years old are now [dying in South Australia's](#) outback.

Australia's national parks are reaching an environmental tipping point

National parks are in a poor condition due to state and federal [funding cuts](#).

Planting trees may pause climate change

A [new research](#) shows that there's [enough suitable unused land](#) on the globe for reforestation to store around 205 gigatonnes of carbon.



The Razorback and Mount Feathertop, Victorian Alps
Adwo

Geoscience Australia Printed Maps to Cease

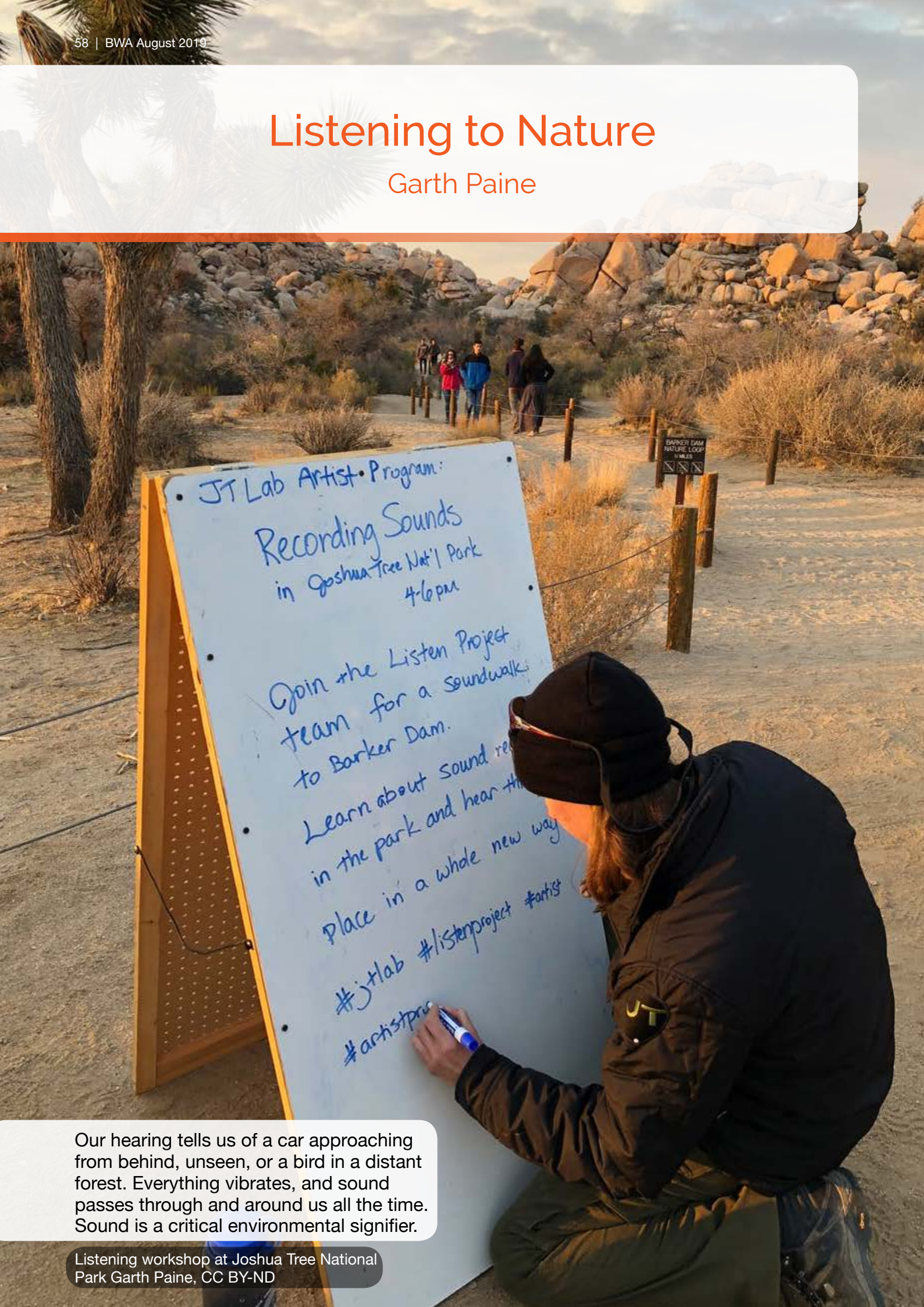
Stephen Lake



With a number of name changes, [Geoscience Australia](#) (GA) has produced maps for over 100 years. There is a [history](#) of this online.

Listening to Nature

Garth Paine

A person wearing a black jacket and a black cap with a yellow 'JT' logo is kneeling in a desert landscape, writing on a whiteboard. The whiteboard is on a wooden A-frame stand. The background shows a dirt path leading into a desert with Joshua trees and rocky hills. A group of people is walking away on the path. A sign on the path reads 'BARKER DAM NATURE LOOP 1 MILE'. The whiteboard text is as follows:

• JT Lab Artist Program:
Recording Sounds
in Joshua Tree Nat'l Park
4-6pm

• Join the Listen Project
team for a Soundwalk
to Barker Dam.
Learn about sound recording
in the park and hear the
place in a whole new way

• #jtlab #listenproject #artist
#artistpro

Our hearing tells us of a car approaching from behind, unseen, or a bird in a distant forest. Everything vibrates, and sound passes through and around us all the time. Sound is a critical environmental signifier.

Listening workshop at Joshua Tree National Park Garth Paine, CC BY-ND

Increasingly, we are learning that humans and animals are not the only organisms that use sound to communicate. So do [plants](#) and [forests](#). Plants detect vibrations in a frequency-selective manner, using this “hearing” sense to find water by sending out acoustic emissions and to communicate threats.

We also know that clear verbal communication is critical, but is easily degraded by extraneous sounds, otherwise known as “[noise](#).” Noise is more than an irritant. It also [threatens our health](#). Average city sounds levels of 60 decibels have been shown to [increase blood pressure and heart rate and induce stress](#), with sustained higher amplitudes causing cumulative hearing loss. If this is true for humans, then it might also be true for animals and even plants.

Conservation research puts a heavy emphasis on sight – think of the inspiring vista, or the rare species caught on film with camera traps – but sound is also a critical element of natural systems. I study [digital sound and interactive media](#) and co-direct Arizona State University’s [Acoustic Ecology Lab](#). We use sound to advance environmental awareness and stewardship, and provide critical tools for deeper consideration of sound in nature preserves, urban and industrial design.



Arizona State University professor Garth Paine explains the power of listening as a way to experience the natural world.

Sound as a sign of environmental change

Sound is a powerful indicator of environmental degradation and an effective tool for developing more sustainable ecosystems. We often [hear changes in the environment](#), such as shifts in [bird calls](#), before we see them. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO) has recently formed a [sound charter](#) to promote awareness of sound as a critical signifier in environmental health and urban planning.

I have spent decades making field recordings in which I create a setup before dawn or dusk, then lie on the ground listening for several uninterrupted hours. These projects have taught me how the density of the air changes as the sun rises or sets, how animal behavior shifts as a result, and how all of these things are intricately linked.

“Plants detect vibrations in a frequency-selective manner, using this “hearing” sense to find water ...

For example, sound travels further through denser material, such as cold air, than through warm summer air. Other factors, such as changes in a forest’s foliage density from spring to fall, also change a site’s reverberation characteristics. Exploring these qualities has led me to think about how perceptual measures of sound inform our understanding of environmental health, opening a new angle of inquiry around psychoacoustic properties of environmental sound.



Altering sound environments affects survival

To engage the public and scientific communities in this research, the Acoustic Ecology Lab embarked in 2014 on a large-scale, crowd-sourced project teaching [listening skills](#) and [sound recording techniques](#) to communities adjacent to national parks and national monuments in the southwestern United States. After completing a listening and field recording workshop, community members volunteer to record at fixed locations in the parks every month, building a large collection of [sound captures](#) that is both a joy to listen to and a rich source of data for [scientific analysis](#).

Imagine how climate change could affect environments’ sonic signatures. Reduced plant density will change the balance

between [absorptive surfaces](#), such as leaves, and reflective surfaces such as rocks and buildings. This will increase reverberation and make sound environments more harsh. And we can capture it by making repeated sound recordings at research sites.

In settings where sound [reverberates for a long time](#), such as a [cathedral](#), it can become tiring to carry on a conversation as echoes interfere.

Increasing reverberation could have a similar effect in natural settings. Native species could struggle to hear mating calls. Predators could have difficulty detecting prey. Such impacts could spur populations to relocate, even if an area still offers plentiful food and shelter. In short, the sonic properties of environments are crucial to survival.

Listening can also promote stewardship. We use the recordings that our volunteers produce to create musical works, composed

using only the sounds of the environment, which are performed in the communities that made the recordings. These events are a wonderful tool for mobilizing people around the issue of climate change impacts.

Mapping sound and weather characteristics

I also lead a research project called [EcoSonic](#), which asks whether psychoacoustic properties of environmental sound correlate with weather conditions. If they do, we want to know whether we can use models or regular sound recordings to predict long-term impacts of climate change on the acoustic properties of environments.

This work draws on [psychoacoustics](#) – the point where sound meets the brain. Psychoacoustics is applied in research on speech perception, [hearing loss](#) and [tinnitus](#), or ringing in the ears, and in [industrial design](#). Until now, however, it has not been applied broadly to environmental sound quality.

We use psychoacoustic analysis to assess qualitative measures of sound, such as loudness, roughness and brightness. By

“Increasing reverberation could have a similar effect in natural settings. Native species could struggle to hear mating calls.”



Listening at dusk to the changing soundscape in Joshua Tree National Park
Garth Paine, CC BY-ND

measuring the number of unique signals at a specific location, we can create an Acoustic Diversity Index for that place. Then we use machine learning – training a machine to make predictions based on past data – to model the correlation between local weather data and the Acoustic Diversity Index.

Our initial tests show a positive, statistically significant relationship between acoustic diversity and cloud cover, wind speed and temperature, meaning that as these variables increase, acoustic diversity does too. We also are finding an inverse, statistically significant relationship between acoustic diversity and dewpoint and visibility: As these factors increase, acoustic diversity decreases.

Sounding futures: Art, science and community

Sound quality is critical to our everyday experience of the world and our well-being. Research at the Acoustic Ecology Lab is driven from the arts and based on sensed experience of being present, listening, feeling the density of the air, hearing clarity of sound and perceiving variations in animal behavior.

Without the arts we would not be asking these perceptual questions. Without science we would not have sophisticated tools to undertake this analysis and build predictive models. And without neighboring communities we would not have data, local observations or historical knowledge of patterns of change.

All humans have the capacity to pause, listen and recognize the diversity and quality of sound in any given space. Through more active listening, each of us can find a different connection to the environments we inhabit.



Garth Paine

Associate Professor of Digital Sound and Interactive Media, Arizona State 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 21 December 2018.

Wilderness is harder and harder to find
these days on this beautiful planet,
and we're abusing our planet
to the point of almost no return.
Betty White

Breakfast, Don't Skip It

Sonya Muhlsimmer



Are you one of those people that just like to get up in the morning and go? Do you eat something, or skip breakfast altogether? Did you know breakfast is the most important meal of the day? Too right it is. Breakfast should be eaten within two hours of waking, as it balances your blood sugar and jump-starts your metabolism, so if you find it hard to eat first thing or it is not convenient, you have two hours to get the benefit of eating breakfast. When I say breakfast, I am not talking about those processed, sugary breakfast cereals - stay away from them, I mean one or more of wholesome cereals, muesli, oats, fruit, yoghurt - plain, natural or Greek as it contains no sugar - and good quality bread. No, not white sliced bread, I mean wholegrain or even wholemeal bread. Wholegrain bread has the whole grain, closest to its natural state and has a low Glycemic Index (GI), which is good. Wholemeal has milled grain, so the grains have been ground and this bread has a slightly higher GI as the grains have been milled. These types of breakfasts are full of carbohydrates and those essential minerals and vitamins your body needs as well.

GI, what is that I hear you say. The [Glycemic Index Foundation](#) says that GI is a relative ranking of carbohydrate in foods according to how they affect blood glucose levels. So basically, when you eat foods that contain carbs, your blood glucose levels rise and fall according to the GI of that food. Low GI foods, that is foods with a GI of 55 or under are easily absorbed, and once absorbed, the blood sugars are used as energy over about two hours. Some low GI foods are fruit, pasta, grainy bread and oats, and they generally contain more vitamins and minerals. Foods with a GI of 70 or over are digested quickly and some examples of foods are potatoes, white bread and short-grain rice.

Important facts

Before I get into some important stuff, I want to share with you a few facts that I found in the [International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science](#). Volume 8, July 2017, *Breakfast: The most important meal of the day?*

“British children under 10 years of age are currently consuming more than 50% of the recommended daily allowance of sugar at breakfast in the form of sugary cereals, drinks, and spreads. Many parents were unsure as to what makes up a healthy breakfast for their children. Specifically, 84%

of parents whose children were found to be consuming more than 50% of their daily recommended dose of sugar before school started, actually considered that their child’s breakfast was healthy.”

Highly processed breakfast cereals are usually bulked up with sugar. By the way, there are over 60 different names of sugar, including corn syrup, rice syrup, dextrose, sorbitol, maltose, and ethyl maltol. If you know what you are looking for you can see this on the ingredients list. Not all 60 are in one packet of course. All ingredients listed on a food packet go in descending order, so the first ingredient is the main ingredient whereas the last ingredient is the least added so it is easily seen what ingredient, and roughly how much of this ingredient, makes up the food. There is no real way to see what percentage of the ingredient goes in – that is Intellectual Property stuff. In highly processed breakfast cereals, sugar is often listed as the second or third ingredient. These cereals contain way too much sugar, and would contain a very low amount, if any, of essential minerals and vitamins. After eating these sugary cereals, the body experiences a blood sugar spike, a glucose build up, and an even bigger crash in the blood sugar levels which leaves you

“By the way, there are over 60 different names of sugar ...





GLYCEMIC INDEX

WHAT IS GI?



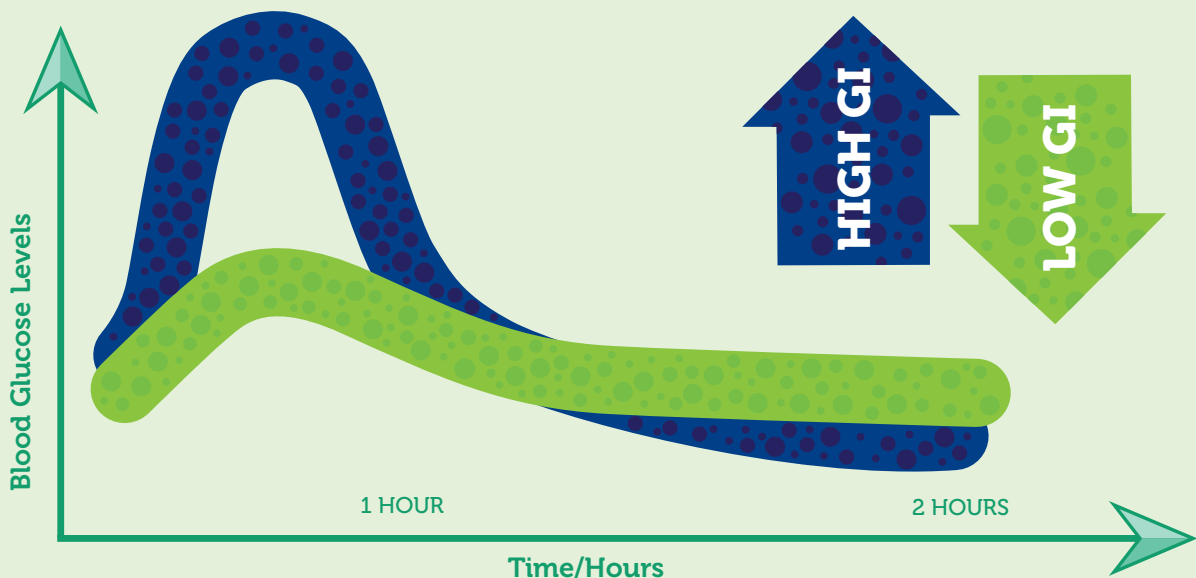
The GI measures how **carbs** affect your **blood glucose levels**, helping you choose foods for **good health**



High GI carbs cause blood glucose levels to

Low GI carbs are digested and released slowly for **sustained energy**

spike and then crash



You need **carbs** as they break down into glucose in your body providing **fuel** for most organs * our brain * muscles during exercise



WWW.GISYMBOL.COM

feeling more lethargic and hungry in a couple of hours. You will probably crave to have another snack and if you get into this pattern you can create a vicious cycle of overeating. Just think of those struggling kids in school, the poor little things.

The government, food and health industries have been working on a few systems to help clarify the health rating in foods. First it was with a traffic light system. Green is good, orange is OK and red is high in sugar, but there were problems with that system. All

fruit is high in fructose, a natural sugar but fruit contains a lot of minerals and vitamins so fruit would not be as bad for you as the traffic light system indicates. To say the least, the traffic light system is a bit dubious and could send the wrong message about some healthy foods. Instead of this the [Health Star Rating system](#) is slowly taking shape, ½ star unhealthy to five stars very healthy. This is a voluntary system by the food industries and it is due for a formal review in 2019, so let's see what comes of that. For now we have to rely on [Nutritional Information Panels](#) on the side of every packet to tell you how good the food is, if you can understand it or not is another thing.

But wait, there's more from the journal ...
 "A 27% increase in coronary heart disease amongst North American men who regularly failed to eat a meal at the start of the day has been documented." So there alone is a good reason for you men to um, man up if I can say, and eat some breakfast.

Why is breakfast so important?

Breakfast has a meaning to break the night's fast, and the word breakfast was thought to be introduced in the middle ages. So why is this meal so important, what are the benefits and why shouldn't you skip it?

Breakfast improves your metabolism by restoring the energy lost after the overnight fasting. Although your metabolism slows down at night, it does not stop. Your body constantly pumps blood, you continue to breathe, and the brain never stops, it is constantly using energy. In fact, your brain takes up 20% of your energy. When you don't eat for a long time, such as overnight or over six to eight hours, you are literally starving your body of energy, and the energy you have in reserves stored in the muscle tissue and liver, actually known as glycogen, is used as a buffer to keep your

“Breakfast has a meaning to break the night's fast ...

“When you don't eat for a long time ... you are literally starving your body of energy ...

body functioning. Breakfast kick starts your day and gets the energy levels up to where they need to be for you to function fully throughout the day.

Breakfast improves memory and concentration. As the brain uses 20% of the body's energy source, you have to feed the brain. Now there is some food for thought ... The brain's preferred energy source comes from complex carbohydrates, which has a low GI. So when you eat a healthy breakfast the glucose is slowly released which constantly feeds your brain instead of a big sugar spike with a crash soon afterwards.

Have you ever hit the wall?

Now as we all go the extra mile and use a lot of energy, especially on a multi-day hike carrying that heavy rucksack, did you know that long-distance hikers, skiers, cyclists or even marathon runners experience glycogen depletion? You know that feeling that you have hit the wall and you are completely stuffed, yes that feeling. That means you have used up all that blood sugar, the glycogen in your stores and you need a fix of carbs to reset the system. This will happen a lot quicker if you skip breakfast or if you have a not so healthy breakfast like those sugary processed cereals.

The good types of breakfast are porridge or muesli with yoghurt or fruit, wholegrain, or wholemeal bread with nut paste, wholegrain cereals, fruit or vegetable smoothies, eggs, avocado, spinach or fried mushrooms and banana bread.

The final notes from the Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science is "According to the latest evidence, we should all be aiming to consume around 15–25% of our daily energy intake at breakfast (i.e., 2000 kilojoules for women and 2500 kilojoules for men); The general advice from the health experts is to eat a substantial well-balanced breakfast, one that delivers its energy slowly over the course of the morning"

There you have it, that is why breakfast is important and we should not skip it. Now go and get some good stuff into your bowl.



Bushwalk Australia

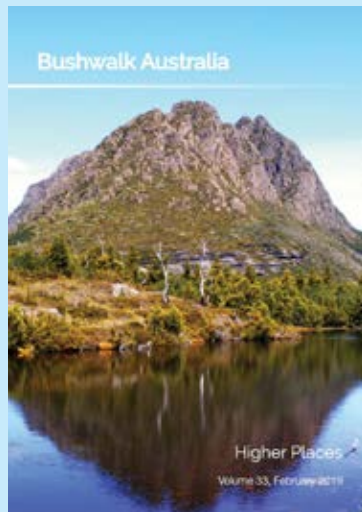


Bushwalk Australia

Going the Distance
Volume 34, April 2018

Ambling Adventures

- > Mount Wills to Mount Bogong
- > Hume & Hovell Walking Track
- > Walk of Wonders
- > Energy needs



Bushwalk Australia

Higher Places
Volume 33, February 2018

Higher Places

- > Australian Alps Walking Track
- > Tassie Winter Trip
- > Our High Country Lore
- > Vegan Food

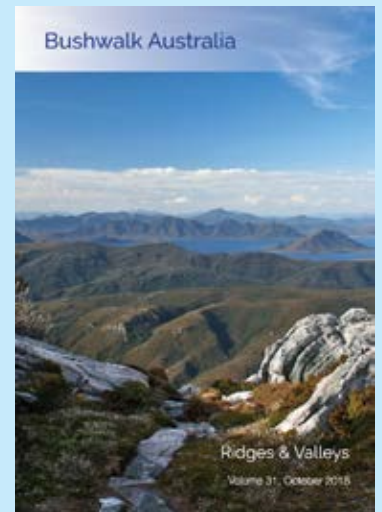


Bushwalk Australia

Peak Promenade
Volume 34, October 2018

Peak Promenade

- > Pindars Peak, Southern Ranges
- > Cordilleras in Peru
- > Brothers Point, Scotland
- > Staying hydrated on bushwalks



Bushwalk Australia

Ridges & Valleys
Volume 31, October 2018

Ridges & Valleys

- > Buffalo, The Bluff and Mt McDonald
- > Skiing with the Bobs
- > Dehydrated meals for your trip



Bushwalk Australia

Ambling Adventures
Volume 30, August 2018

Ambling Adventures

- > An Abel challenge
- > Pack hauling
- > Sleeping mats

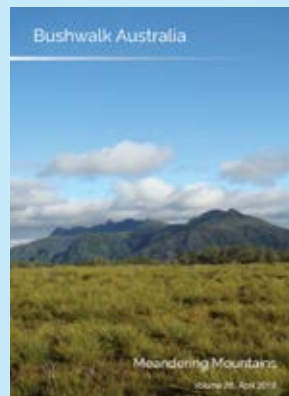


Bushwalk Australia

Act Now
Volume 29, June 2018

Act Now

- > Viking Circuit
- > A blogger's journey
- > Overland Track

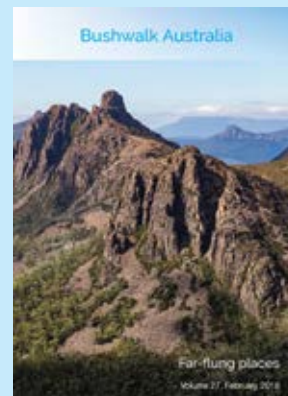


Bushwalk Australia

Meandering Mountains
Volume 28, April 2018

Meandering Mountains

- > D'Alton Peaks, Grampians
- > Three mighty peaks
- > Sleeping bags

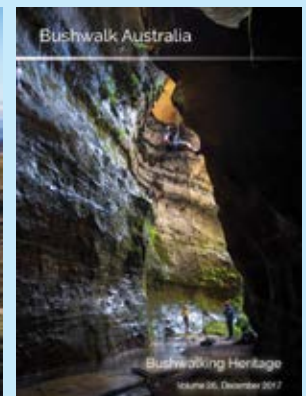


Bushwalk Australia

Far-flung places
Volume 27, February 2018

Wandering the World

- > 10 reasons to hike the PCT
- > The Spires via Holley Basin
- > From hiker to Globewalker



Bushwalk Australia

Bushwalking Heritage
Volume 26, December 2017

Bushwalking Heritage

- > Kidmans Hut Walk
- > Conquering the Giant
- > Dam madness



Bushwalk Australia

Discover & Explore
Volume 25, August 2017

Discover & Explore

- > The Great River Walk
- > Mount Triglav, Slovenia



Bushwalk Australia

Wandering the World
Volume 24, June 2017

Wandering the World

- > 10 reasons to Hike The PCT
- > The Spires via Holley Basin

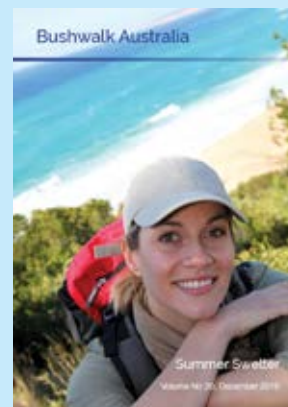


Bushwalk Australia

Longer and Wilder
Volume 23, April 2017

Longer and Wilder

- > The Western Arthurs
- > Bibbulmun Track

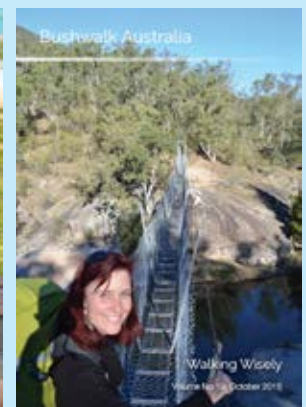


Bushwalk Australia

Summer Swelter
Volume 22, December 2016

Summer Swelter

- > Desert Discovery Walk
- > Sun clothing



Bushwalk Australia

Walking Wisely
Volume 21, October 2016

Walking Wisely

- > Six Foot Track
- > Choosing a GPS