

Bushwalk Australia



Bushwalking Anew

Volume 41, June 2020

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Volume 41, June 2020

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.



Three Capes Track near Port Arthur in Tasmania
Blue Planet Studio

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

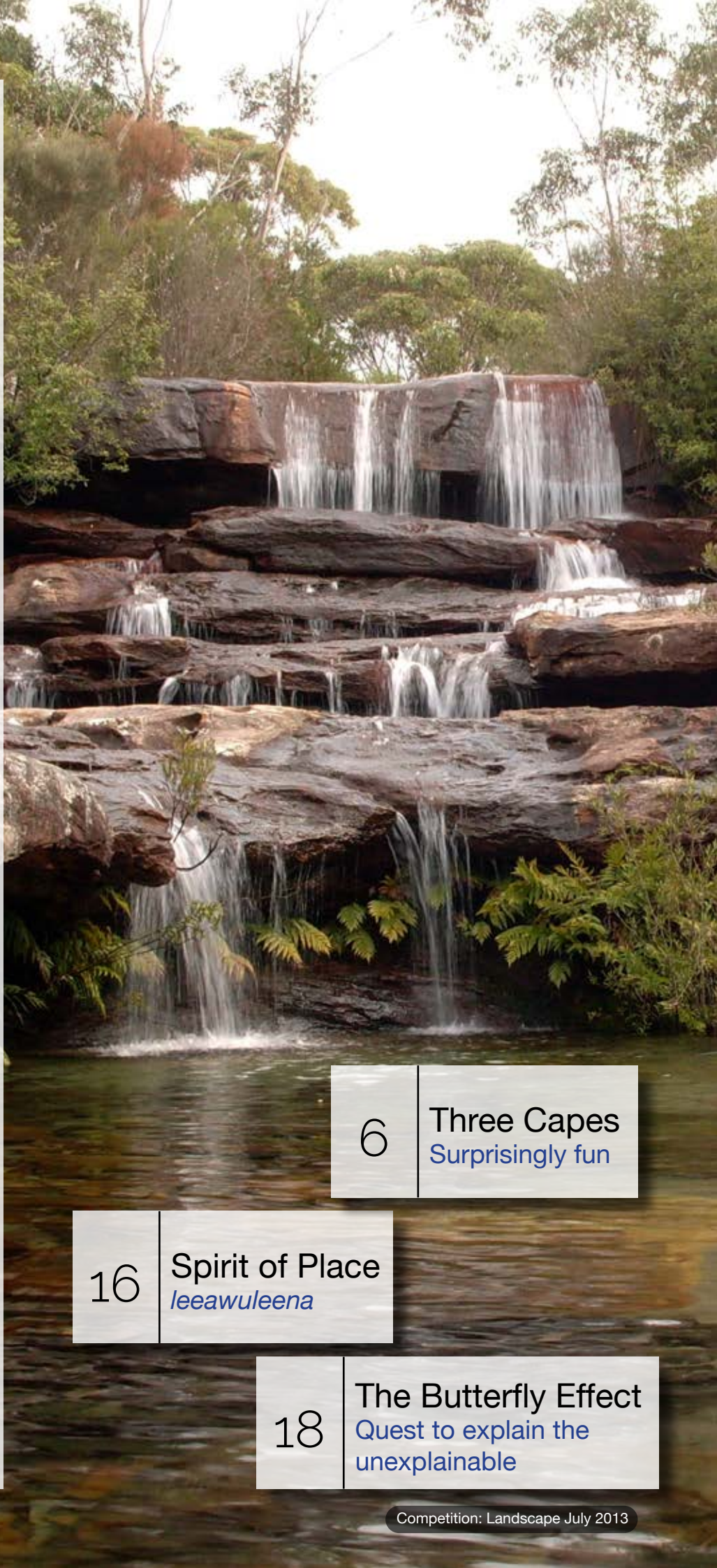
The copy deadline for the August 2020 edition is 30 June 2020.

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.

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



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From the Editor

Hi

I hope this edition finds you well and ready to head back out bush.

The last six months have certainly been memorable with crisis after crisis gripping the nation and the world. As disruptive as it has been it seems Australia has generally managed things very well and that many of us will be able to safely return to most of our regular routines over the coming months, albeit it with a different twist.

States and territories are relaxing restrictions and lots of people are or will soon be able to get back out on day and overnight walks again. Many areas have seen massive increases in the number of people on day walks, ironically making physical distancing in the bush harder than before, but it does seem that most walkers are good at allowing people to pass with a good gap.

This edition, join me on the Three Capes, then we can get to know *leeawulinah* better, hang out with butterflies in Oxley Wild Rivers NP, check out our amazing photographers then re-think the first aid kit and water. We finish off with some delicious trail snacks from Sonya and Stephen's poetic tribute to bushwalking in alpine areas.

Happy walking
Matt :)



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Declaration

The bushwalking community is a small world and paths often cross. To improve transparency I thought it would be helpful to list my associations within the outdoor community. In many cases I approached the authors of the articles included in this edition and suggested the topics. The opinions stated in articles are those of the authors and not of those involved in the production of this edition. The authors are mostly people I know through Bushwalk.com. I operate Bushwalk.com and Wildwalks.com and have written several walking guide books, published by Woodslane, I have also written for Great Walks. I contract part time to National Parks Association NSW on an ongoing basis to coordinate their activities program. I have had a partnership with NPWS NSW and have hosted advertising for *Wild* magazine. I have also partnered with a large number of other organisations in environmental campaigns and have a regular bushwalking segment on ABC regional radio. There is some commercial advertising through the magazine. I have probably forgotten something - if you are worried about transparency please either write to me or raise the issue on Bushwalk.com.

Video

Wilderness solo survival

The video describes surviving in North American wilderness. It's not Australia, but some lessons can still be learned.



Three Capes Surprisingly Fun

Matt McClelland

This is not the type of walk I would normally do; I guess I was Three Capes curious though. A spot became available while I was in Tassie, so I thought I should give it a go. I loved it, way more than I expected.

Looking towards Cape Pillar 2 kilometres north-east of Retakunna
All pictures by Matt McClelland

The Three Capes walk has been controversial among bushwalkers for many good reasons. I do not like the idea of having public land closed to people unwilling or unable to pay the large extra exclusive use fees. There are many concerns around this style of walk on public land; we have spoken about them and we should continue to raise these concerns. However, it is clear that this is a very popular walk with booking numbers very high, so I wanted to join in and get a sense of what the experience was like.

Overview of the walk

The walk starts from historic Port Arthur, in the south-east corner of Tasmania, with a boat ride to the start of the track at Denmans Cove. The walk is 48 kilometres long, taking three nights and four days to complete, visiting the spectacular Cape Pillar and Cape Hauy.

The accommodation is in shared rooms, luxurious by bushwalking standards and quaint by general community standards. There is a toilet block in a separate building (the second night has two outdoor showers) and there are shared kitchen and dining rooms. The buildings are well set up for either sitting outdoors or indoors and you can be as social or introverted as you like (but you will need to share a room). The kitchen areas are well equipped with stoves, sinks, pots, pans and cooking utensils. There are also LED lighting and 5 volt USB charging ports in the common room.

Okay, let me get this out of the way, this just bugs me and I need to get over it. The walk is called “Three Capes” but it only visits two capes. The third cape is Cape Raoul, not part of the formal walk, but part of the original plan. You can do the day walk to Cape Raoul before or after the main walk. The current walk is a good route and four days is plenty for most people. So the name “Three Capes” is just weird.

“The walk is called “Three Capes” but it only visits two capes.

Booking

This walk is very popular in the warmer months and needs to be booked at [Three Capes Track](#) well in advance for the 48 places a day, especially for larger groups or if you want a specific day. People do cancel and the odd place becomes available last minute. As I finished the Overland Track I checked the website and noticed a spot available only few days later, giving me enough time to walk up the Arm River before resupplying and heading down to Port Arthur. So if you are in the area and don't have a booking, keep an eye out - you might be lucky enough to get a place.

It ain't cheap: \$500 for an adult and \$400 for kids and concessions. For a family, this adds up very quickly, but it does provide a unique experience that I felt was well worth the money. The fee includes the boat ride, accommodation (including kitchen



Seats have names, and this one is called *Where the 'ell are we?!*, looking at Cape Raoul.

facilities), track upkeep and a ranger at each cabin. More importantly, it provides a safe and achievable multi-day walking trip for people who do not have the experience, fitness or gear to do other multi-day

“... it provides a safe and achievable multi-day walking trip for people who do not have the experience ...

walks. This means you can walk at your own pace, and do not need to rely on a guide for setting a pace. I am not a guided walk kind of guy; I know some people love them and that is great.

The walk will cost you much more than the booking fee - there are travel costs, food and possible gear if you are not already an overnight walker. I met a bunch of people on the track who had travelled to Tassie just for the walk, with a few days either side as a buffer, spending several thousand dollars for the experience - and they loved it.

Preparing and packing

For an experienced bushwalker, this is an easy prep and pack job – it feels weird having a half-empty pack though. For first-timers to the overnight walking thing, the better you prepare the more you will enjoy the walking.

You do not need a tent, sleeping pad or cooking equipment. You do need a sleeping bag, pillow, food, eating utensils and washing up gear as well as the standard stuff like clothes, rain jacket, first aid kit etc. When you book you get a full packing list.

The packing information from the Parks and Wildlife Service is generally helpful but lacks a few things. Mainly it recommends people carry freeze-dried meals. The kitchen facilities are very good and there are much better meal options that can add to the overall experience. On my trip at least half the people were eating freeze-dried meals, and not enjoying them. Also, about half had very poorly packed and poorly fitting



Crevice on Cape Pillar



Fern trees north-east of Retakunna

Sunset over Port Arthur and Cape Raoul from Surveyors Hut

packs, making walking very uncomfortable. I became the pack fitting guy, which was a fun way to get to know people better, but it seems to be such a common issue that if resolved would improve the experience for so many people.

Since I had just spent 12 days on track before heading down to the Three Capes, I was pleased to get my laundry done (thanks Karen) and spent 30 minutes at Colesworth getting my meals organised. Sated tandoori chicken on coconut rice, cheese tortellini with vegies/tomato-based sauce then chicken risotto for my last night. My pack total weight was under 10 kilograms and I massively over-catered, but plenty of people were happy to help finish off my leftovers.

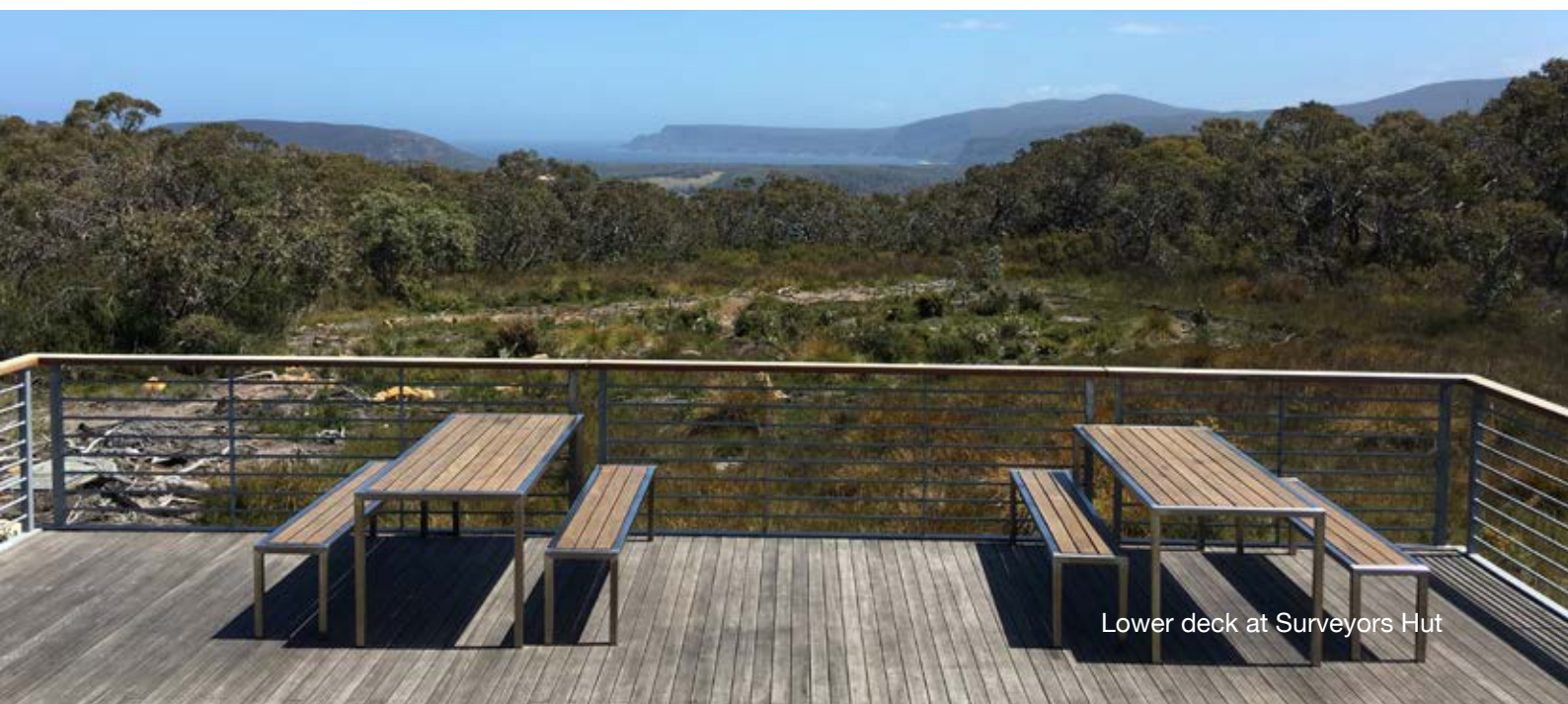
To be or not to be social, that is the question

I love meeting new people on track. Most walking I do is solo but in the evening I enjoy hearing other people's stories and seeing how they are travelling. Most of the time on this walk I was walking solo, making an effort to slow my pace, otherwise it would be too easy to be at camp by lunch. Some people were up walking just after sunrise to maximise that alone time.

I carried extra snack food to encourage an evening happy hour. A big packet of chips, a wheel of cheese (frozen at the start), crackers, and quince paste each day added about a kilogram to my pack. This is pretty normal for me, usually having popcorn or something to share to get conversations started. After meeting a few people I set up on a picnic table and invited them to join me, encouraging others to join in as we go. Over the next few days, people started to scrape together a few extra bits and it became a lovely small community. The stories that came out were great and the collective wisdom supportive of those struggling on track. This may then transition into a game of cards, a stroll for sunset or just finish up.

“I carried extra snack food to encourage an evening happy hour.”

Other things might get you more excited such as photography, writing, exercise, sleeping, or maybe vlogging. The point is - be prepared. This walk gives you the time and pack space to immerse yourself into things that you might not get the chance to on other walks.



Lower deck at Surveyors Hut

Facilities

Bedrooms

The rooms sleep either four or eight people on single bunk beds. There are no couples rooms, so it's not the best walk for a romantic getaway. The rooms are allocated before the walk, and if you are in room five on the first night you are in room five for the next two nights with the same people. If you want to bunk with another group booking on the same day, make it clear in the notes. The parks staff do their best to keep groups together and match people well.

“ The parks staff do their best to keep groups together and match people well.

The rooms are basic but comfortable, and each bunk has a vinyl-covered mattress. There are pegs outside undercover to hang up wet clothes. There is no lighting, but a sealed window as well as a door, with an optional screen door gives light.

Kitchen

The kitchens are very well set up: normal kitchen gas cooktops, plenty of pots, pans, cooktop kettles, and cooking utensils, including chopping knives and chopping boards. There are no ovens. The sinks have a pump tap and plugs so you can add hot

water from the stove for washing up. There is handwashing and washing up detergent, and scrubbers - but you are best to bring your own small tea towel. There are BBQs in the alcove areas.

On my trip people did well keeping the place clean and there there was a lot of positive sharing with people heating water for others as well as sharing of spices and other ingredients. Most people were good at washing up and keeping the areas clean.

The water comes from rainwater tanks. Most people seemed to drink it directly, and some people treated it. You will also find the USB charging station in the kitchen to share with other walkers.

Common rooms

There are one or two separate common rooms next to the kitchens. There are picnic-style tables for eating, playing cards or reading. In warm dry weather, many people used the outside tables or just sat on the steps. There are also sunbathing-style beach chairs for those one or two sunny Tassie days.

The common rooms have maps, books and board games for sharing. My experience was that family groups seemed to spend most of their time using the common rooms.



Kitchen at Surveyors Hut

Toilet blocks

Each of the accommodation areas has a separate toilet block with four pit toilets. These are a short walk away and also have hand washing basins and mirrors outside each toilet cubical.

There are also undercover clotheslines with drying pegs. If your clothes get wet wring them out, then wring with a microfibre tea towel to remove most of the water to give them a chance of drying out fully.

Munro (night two) has two outdoor bucket showers. They are shielded with corrugated iron walls and no roof. You fill a bucket with hot water then add that hot water to the shower bucket and hoist it up. The shower lasts about five minutes. This is a nice novelty for a walk and works well.

Just one point for the less agile who get up for toileting during the night. At Surveyors (night one) and Retakunna (night three), the toilets are about a 50 metre walk from the rooms. Weirdly, at Munro (night two), the toilets are a 170 metres (340 metres return) walk. One person on the walk I was on struggled with this and we discussed other ways of emptying bladders overnight and disposing of it the next day. There a bunch of privacy and dignity issues around supporting

walkers with continence issues, many of whom would otherwise be attracted to this style of walk. Also, there are only toilets at the three cabins (there are few campsites near Munro with toilets, but close-ish to the cabins). So if you have continence issues you will need to plan for this.

Track condition

The track is very (like ridiculously) well constructed. There is a significant amount of boardwalk between stone steps, very little erosion and the track is well maintained. The route is beautifully designed, bringing you very close to cliff edges, with no fences. There are about 10 significant hills (around 100 metres vertical climb each), and one (Mount Fortescue) over 200 metres climb on the walk, so people not used to walking would enjoy the walk much more if they do some training with packs beforehand. The walk is accessible to most people with average fitness and agility.

There are very few signs, with most of the wayfinding being very obvious - it really is well designed. The only time you will scratch your head is leaving the cabins in the morning - the track is weirdly designed to make it look like you walk back the way you came, so check your map or with the ranger about which way to go.



Shower bucket
at Munro Hut



Well formed track leading past *Dear Eliza* seat

Rangers

Each cabin has a ranger. The ranger makes sure that everyone arrives safely and can help people who are struggling. They do a briefing each night, varying in quality from awesome to okayish. One ranger got enough people very excited about wildflower spotting so that about 25 of us spent the next hour roaming around to identify the local flowers - it was fun. On day three one of my fellow walkers injured her ankle, and we discovered that the ranger had a freezer with ice packs. Ask the rangers if you need anything; they were really good. During the day the rangers do cleaning and track maintenance

Interpretation on track

I am not one to stop and read interpretive signs (interp) on track. I usually take a photo thinking I will read it later, and usually don't. My wife stops and reads every sign. Generally speaking, I think the way they organised interp on this walk was very clever. Each walker is provided with a copy of *Encounters on the Edge* and most of the interp is in the booklet, which is your guide for the walk. *Encounters* gives you a good introduction to the walk, maps and a series of interp stories for each section of the walk. It is a well produced colourful booklet. It would be nice to have an online version to read before you leave home, but they give you this paper copy as you check in at the start.

There are minimal signs along the walk, which works well. The booklet provides some information on navigation but is mostly about getting a sense of the area and history.

My only real bugbear is the very little information about the traditional owners the Pydarerme people. The Pydarerme people are acknowledged but very few stories are told of their life or the plight of the people following the arrive/invasion of Europeans. Some of the accommodation cabins are

named using Pydarerme names for animals of the area, which is a nice touch, but so much more could be done.

Now I have that off my chest, the interp system is unique and clever. There is a series of 27 seats spread along the walk, each with a very corny name, and the corniness works well. Each seat has a short story attached to it that you read from your booklet.

Most stories focus on the life



Love in the Woods seat

of European prisoners during the 1800s or on the geology/ecology of the region. The stories are short and interesting. Since I am clearly not much of a reader, I loved it when I came across a group of people at the seat where one person was reading the story out loud - it was a cool vibe. I think a series of short podcasts to listen to as I walked, or the night before each section would have worked better for me. I must say that way more people engaged with the interp system than I see on other walks.

Oh, and one more whinge. The booklet has a pretty good map and terrain profile. For some very confusing reason, the key features marked on the maps are the interp seats but on the terrain profile, the labels are for natural features. These natural features are not signposted on the track. The terrain profile would give most visitors the best sense of progress if labelled with the seat names. It was surprising how many people had no idea how far they had walked most days. Many people ended up walking faster than necessary, worried they were walking too slow, and getting into camp way earlier than they hoped. Some simple progress-based navigation aids would help non-bushwalkers.



Day by day overview

Day 1 - Denmans Cove to Surveyors, 4 kilometres, flat, 2 hours

You meet the Three Capes office area at the Port Arthur Visitor Information Centre 90 minutes before your boat departure time. For me, that meant getting there by 10 am. Aim to get there as early as you can (or get the later boat), leave your pack at the check-in and take the time to explore Port Arthur before jumping on your boat.

I was sceptical of the boat ride as it just seemed weird to me, but it worked. You jump on board and stow your pack under a seat then put on a big poncho to deal with sea spray. They take you on an one-hour tour giving you some background to the geology of the area. If the swell is low then they duck out of the heads and give you a sense of the terrain for the next few days, including a view out to Tasman Island and Cape Pillar.

The boat then lands on the Denmans Cove beach and you exit via a lowered ramp at the bow. The staff on the boat managed to get everyone onto the beach with dry boots.



Boat arrival at Denmans Cove

It is a gently undulating walk to Surveyors Cove, where I had lunch on the bouldery beach. From here the track climbs to Surveyors, a four kilometres walk for day one. This day took me less than two hours including a long lunch trying to take it as slow as I could.

I ran into a couple whom I met on the Overland Track only a few days before. This was fun and I got to meet a few fellow walkers.

Day 2 - Surveyors to Munro, 11 kilometres, undulating, 4-4.5 hours

The walk to Munro on day two is quite easy. There are a few climbs and a bunch of seats to stop and enjoy. There are some good clifftop views, but my favourite spot was the “cloud forest”, a unique microclimate wet forest at the top of the cliffs. After climbing out of the ferny forest you come to an area rich with fungus, mosses, lichens and other rainforest plants that seem so out of place compared to what we had walked through so far.



Moss in Cloud Forest

Munro is a large accommodation area, with a spectacular lookout platform and larger single kitchen. Ohh and the shower. I did not feel I needed one (although fellow walkers may have disagreed and were just polite), so I had a shower for the novelty factor and it was nice to freshen up.



Surveyors Hut



Munro Hut

Day 3 - Munro to Retakunna, 19 kilometres, 1300 cumulative metres ascent, 6-7 hours

A unique day. You pack up and leave your main pack in a purpose-built shed out the back, do the return walk to Cape Pillar and back to Munro with a daypack (and lunch), about 15.5 kilometres return. Then with your full pack you walk 3.5 kilometres to Retakunna, mostly retracing the last few kilometres from day two.



Cape Huay

I enjoyed this day more than I expected. I am not a big fan of return walks, but with a day pack and all the time in the world to just wander it was lovely. All the action happens towards the tip of the cape, with some really nice clifftop views, with special views over The Blade and The Chasm. As well as seeing Tasman Island from a bunch of different angles as you work your way along to the cape. On this section of the walk you will see

some day walkers and a few other overnight walkers not part of your group of 48. As you head back through Munro and on to Retakunna, you will likely see some walkers in the next group of 48.

I think this was my favourite evening. I had really enjoyed getting to know a few different people. One of my new friends had injured her ankle so there was a bit of fussing around to help her and her family get sorted. They would have worked it out, but seemed to appreciate the help. Before dinner we enjoyed our happy hour with some delightful imaginative extra additions from people's scroggins and the like. Our last night together was a chance to hear more about people's adventures, and trepidations of climbing "Mount Fortescue" tomorrow.

Day 4 - Retakunna, Fortescue Bay 14 kilometres, 450 cumulative metres ascent, 6-7 hours

Start early and take your time. Mount Fortescue is the biggest climb, but your pack is light and there is no rush. At the intersection with Cape Huay you can drop your main pack and wander out to the cape. Some people decided not to go, but it is really worth it. There were many more day walkers on this section of the track, and most people we had seen so far had been in our party of 48 and a few more adventurous walkers.

“Some people decided not to go, but it is really worth it.”

Cape Huay is all about cliff edge views and amazing ocean vistas.

With the walk back to my pack and then on to Fortescue Bay I was two minds. I wanted to finish and get on with my next walk (heading back into the Cradle area for a few days) but I had also really enjoyed this area and these people I had gotten to know. To my delight when we got to Fortescue Bay there was a shelter dedicated for people



Retakunna Hut

finishing the Three Capes walk. It was a lovely final meeting of the people I had walked with for the last four days, with a refreshing swim at the beach before catching the booked bus back to Port Arthur.

I must say the boat at the start and the bus at the end, as well as the guaranteed bed each night was a really nice feature of this walk. Logistically it was the easiest four day walk I have ever done.



View towards Cape Pillar from the coast north-east of Retakunna

Who is this walk good for?

As I walked this track I was often thinking about who really would benefit from this walk. The mix of people on my little cross-section were mostly older people and families. Then there were a few singles and a few couples. Most of the people had some

experience walking many years ago and were keen to get back on track but without full packs. A reasonable number had never done any overnight walks. It was very cool to see family groups on the track.

For more experienced bushwalkers I would generally recommend doing the “[Free Capes](#)” version where you take all your own gear and stop at well-established campsites.

Who is this walk ideal for?

- For bushwalkers to take their non-bushwalking family.
- For older but fairly agile people who enjoy walking.
- For families with 10-year-old plus kids.
- If you have younger kids and want to do the walk it is very achievable, there are even a few cots available.
- Anyone wanting to try overnight bushwalking, but not quite ready, especially if you do not have walking buddies or just like luxuries.

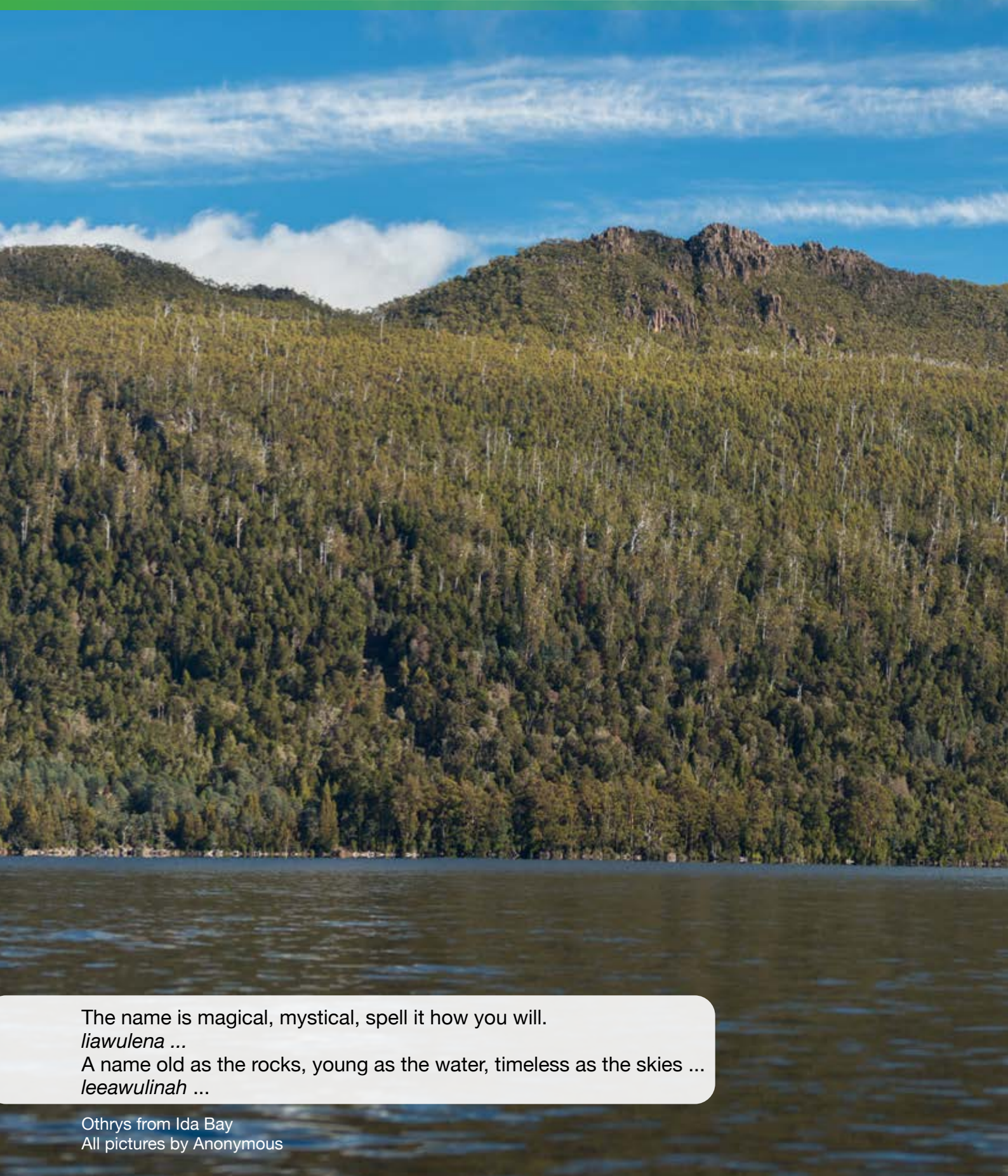
I was thinking about what would bring me back here. I doubt I would pull this off, but I really like the idea of booking out the track fully for my 50th birthday and seeing if I can get a bunch of friends to join in for a four days adventure. Travelling to Tassie with all the extra costs involved will probably mean I can't make that happen, but let me dream :)



Fortescue Bay

Spirit of Place: *leeawuleena*

Anonymous



The name is magical, mystical, spell it how you will.

liawulena ...

A name old as the rocks, young as the water, timeless as the skies ...

leeawulinah ...

Othrys from Ida Bay

All pictures by Anonymous

These days they translate it as “Sleeping Water” but I first knew her as “The Dreaming Lake”; so she is, and so she does - sleeps and dreams our lives away, day by day, season to season, year after year ...

There are places made by weather, their changes an echo of passing phenomena, of wind and rain and sun and cloud; and there are places that stand aloof from it, sufficient unto themselves, always what they are and what they will be with no regard for the world beyond.

No so with this lake, this water, this place of dreams. *leawulina* makes the weather, it is her dreams that make it. It is those dreams that call up the winds to howl through and over the surrounding mountains, that bring the freezing, frozen snow and hail; dreams of darkness and solitude that pull the clouds down low and thick and grey upon sullen waters; dreams of warmth and brightness that speak to the clouds and part them to let the sun shine clear and strong. Placid dreams that glass the water; angry dreams that throw it wildly on the rocky shores, that shift the earth and bring the rocks and trees all tumbling down, bring thunder to shiver the hills and the burning flash of lightning to strike them; gentle dreams of birdsong and spring flowers and bubbling little creeks;

foolish dreams, with little gusting breaths of breeze as music for the heedless ripples and waves to dance to; sad and wistful dreams of softly weeping pale mists.

Times there are when her sleep has dreams almost of madness, change and change and change about, from heat to cold, from breathless stillness to raging gale and back, not known or knowable. Times when her dreams - if you open yourself to them, to her - will drive you off; leave you shivering in fear and confusion, not knowing whence comes the fear, nor why. Times, too, when those dreams will beckon you close, loving and loved, an embrace for all, kind and soft and welcoming.

And there are nights - oh yes, it is always at night, these dreams; dark, still nights, windless nights - when the sleep is disturbed, when she rolls and shifts and stirs restlessly in her stony, silty bed - awhile no longer truly asleep - and dreams ... dreams, perhaps, of the day when she will wake into this world and all that we have made of it ...
... *leeawuleena* ...

leeawuleena is an old Aboriginal name for what we call Lake St Clair.



From Fergys Paddock east to Pumphouse Point

The Butterfly Effect

Chris Armstrong

A five day walk in 2018 turns into a quest to explain the unexplainable.

The rugged depths of Tia Gorge
All photos by Craig Fardell

I'm lying on a cool rock in a shady, rainforest gully and there are butterflies in the air – a constant stream of them, zooming overhead, all disappearing downstream as more arrive from upstream. After half an hour, the butterflies become so numerous and persistent I decide to try to count them.

I ask my partner Craig to time 30 seconds on his watch. I count butterflies that fly directly over my prone body. At times, it is impossible to keep up with the sheer numbers. But, in 30 seconds I count 40 butterflies.

As I watch, one catches in a spider web and is quickly bundled up in silk as the rest of the swarm continue on their erratic way. I am mesmerised by this crowd of beauty in what is a remarkably remote, anonymous part of the country. Craig and I are on a five day wilderness adventure, exploring a remote section of the Apsley River, deep in the 120,000 hectares of Oxley Wild Rivers National Park in NSW. It is day two

but, because of a summer heat wave, we stopped walking at 12:30 pm and wandered into this cool grotto, tucked off the main river. As we entered, an endangered brush-tailed rock wallaby scampered quickly into the depths of the hills. But the butterflies are the main surprise. All of them are the same; golden brown with a spot pattern on each wing.

To beat the heat, we stay in the gully for three hours. All the while, the butterflies continue unabated. I do the basic maths - 40 butterflies, 30 seconds, 3 hours. At least 14,400 butterflies pass over my head. My estimate is grossly conservative, as the entire gully is full of them and they are still coming, even as we leave.

I am no lepidopterist but I realise we are witnessing something special. What I don't know, until more than six months later, is just how rare these hours are.



The walk

As I drag my hot, tired body out of that cool gorge, my main focus is simply surviving the walk. The country and the weather have thrown us huge challenges. There are no tracks to follow and the terrain is rugged. It has turned hotter than expected; too hot to sleep in the tent at night. Instead, we bed down in the open air, lying in our underwear as live bait for mosquitoes. Each night I wake many times, fretful with bites. Each morning the alarm goes off at 5 am. To beat the heat, we are walking by 6:30 am. It is a gruelling regime and one we follow for the entire five days. By lunch each day, exposed river stones and bed-rock are too hot to rest on. At the end of one day I write in my journal: "Can't do anything, just sit and swim, and stare. We hardly talk."

It is, however, undeniably beautiful country. We clamber through mini-gorges, pass small cascades and are refreshed by deep, cool swimming holes. On our last night, the campsite is as idyllic as it gets — nestled at the junction of the Tia and Apsley Rivers beside a two metre stepped cascade replete with water slide and more rock wallabies. We even finally get a reprieve from the heat — a

night still too hot for tent or sleeping bags until I wake at midnight and southwards, downstream, I see lightning. Above me, the stars are lovely and I wish upon them for relief and at some stage, fall asleep again. I wake twice more - each time clouds appear above, lightning continues. I sleep again. I wake again. This time, I feel rain drops. Groggy with fatigue, I call out to Craig. It is nearly midnight as we fumble with the tent. Blinding lightning is followed by a great crash of thunder. Rain pelts down. The tent is up. I grab rocks to hold each corner. Craig grabs our packs and dives in under the tent fly. The lightning and thunder is formidable and the whole melee lasts an hour. Once the worst of it passes, we do a better job of pitching the tent, crawl back inside, put on dry clothes and sleep — immediately and deeply until the alarm goes off at 5 am. Then we begin climbing out to the farmland above. It is a stunning finish to a tumultuous few days. Cloud rises out of the river valley as we skirt Tia Gorge and arrive back at our car.

Yet none of it beats the memory of lying in that shady gully — the cool rocks beneath my hot skin, the green rainforest canopy, the butterflies.



Apsley River at the junction with Tia Gorge

What did we see?

On returning home, I gush about them to anyone who will listen; giving long, impassioned descriptions of the sheer numbers on that magical afternoon. I also spend fruitless hours online, hoping to find information about similar gatherings of butterflies in Australia. I contact the local University of New England for a more professional, informed understanding of what we witnessed. The university refers me to butterfly enthusiasts, Carol and Trevor Deane in Dorrig.

Craig and I drive to the Deane's conservation property on the edge of the plateau. It is a beautiful block of land surrounded by rainforest and rich in butterfly food plants. Sitting on their back deck, with cups of tea and biscuits at hand, we relate our story in more detail. They ask simple straightforward questions that I can barely answer. My lack of observational skills is appalling. I am embarrassed.

Did we get any photos? Well no, the butterflies were small and agile and Craig only had a wide-angle lens. I explain how my attention was drawn to the butterflies when I saw one caught in a spider's web. Trevor asks: did you get the wings out of the web for identification? I never thought of doing that. He explains how it would be helpful if we could pinpoint the particular butterfly and he hands me his butterfly field guide. It is packed with a bewildering range of gold brown butterflies with distinctive spot patterns. Just one small spot can mean a different species. We struggle to choose any of them.*

The pair describe what we saw as a butterfly migration, a phenomenon they say is not well understood and rarely studied. Perhaps

the most famous migrating butterfly is the Monarch butterfly in North America — which leaves its late summer breeding grounds in north-eastern U.S. and Canada and travels over 4500 kilometres to reach overwintering grounds on the west coast of California or mountainous sites in Central Mexico. The butterflies return north the following spring to mate and lay their eggs.

There are over a dozen Australian butterflies known to migrate including the Caper White Butterfly (*Belenois java*), Lemon Migrant (*Catopsilia pomona*) and the Painted Lady (*Vanessa kershawi*). The Painted Lady in New South Wales has been known to migrate on a front that extends for about 580 kilometres inland from the coast. This migration can continue for up to eight weeks, with the main movement being in a south to south-westerly direction. In 1889, they were reported to migrate in such great numbers that they blackened the sky. Trains were unable to get traction because so many butterflies were resting on the tracks. [Such mass migrations have not been reported for some time.](#)

Scientists are also yet to discover if two way migrations do also occur in Australia. Butterflies are tricky things to follow. Consequently, when it comes to butterfly migrations, there are many unknowns. Trevor and Carol explain that sightings like ours could be at the start, the middle or the end of a migration. They could be migrating for food or moving for temperature.

“What triggers them to “wait” and band together and then commence a mass flight in a particular direction I don't believe is understood,” Trevor said. “It would be nice to study migration but you need a lot of time and resources. A drone in your back pocket would be handy.”



Common Brown

Butterflies at risk

The sheer lack of information on Australian butterflies and their movements is one of science's greatest challenges. In the Atlas of Living Australia - a digital, open access database of Australian plants and animals - there are currently less than 250,000 sighting records for butterflies, compared to 40 million for birds. Yet, there are about 440 butterfly species in Australia. Eight are currently listed as threatened but as many as 38 are potentially under threat of extinction.

Carol and Trevor, as expert citizen scientists, are part of a conservation team studying two of Australia's most endangered species, the Australian Fritillary Butterfly and the Southern Pink Underwing Moth. The moth is found from Bellingen Shire north to southern Queensland. The Fritillary butterfly is also local, found in open swampy coastal areas where the larval food plant Arrowhead Violet (*Viola betonicifolia*) occurs. It is known from a few widespread localities between Port Macquarie and Gympie, but populations have declined dramatically and unfortunately, there have been no confirmed sightings since 2001.

"It has never been a common butterfly. Both have also been seriously affected by habitat alteration since white settlement. We have almost got to the end of that because I think the Fritillary is probably extinct," Trevor says. "It is just so fruitless. You've got to wait for somebody, like you, walking out there, who sees it."

Learning how to see

Unfortunately, we now know the problem with that strategy. I have quickly learnt that "seeing" is one thing but "observing" is quite another. In his seminal work *Arctic Dreams*, the American nature writer Barry Lopez writes: "It not only takes a long time of watching the animal before you can say what it is doing; it takes a long time to learn how to watch."

I say to Carol and Trevor, that I would love to go back to our gully at the same time next year, hoping we might see it all again and do a better job of witnessing. But, again, migrations of Australian butterfly species are not so well known or predictable.

"There is nothing to say it wouldn't happen but migrations appear random," Trevor explains. "Maybe at times there is one in successive years but you may be waiting 8, 10, 15 years."

Despite us showing ourselves to be flawed observers, Carol and Trevor are generous with their time and knowledge. They celebrate our butterfly experience with us with Carol giving a genuine, simple summary of the importance of it all, saying finally: "But, what a lovely thing to witness."

*From our description, and historic records of migrations, the pair think the most likely species we saw was either the Meadow Argus or the Painted Lady. Using their field guide, our memory of colour and shape we felt the butterflies most resembled the Meadow Argus.

You can help

Just this year, the Australian National University launched a new butterflies app, aimed at encouraging people to record sightings. The app is free to download and includes a field guide with basic information about how to identify every species of butterfly in Australia. See [Butterflies Australia](#).



Chris and Craig are a bit like butterflies - they wander around the Australian bush, migrating to where the walking is good. They blog about their adventures at [Awildland](#). Carol and Trevor Deane curate a fabulous butterfly website [Butterflies of a Dorrig garden](#).

In the News

Feral horse decision, Federal Court

On 8 May 2020 the Federal Court ruled that feral horses can be removed from the Victorian high country. That day [The Conversation](#), [Sydney Morning Herald](#) and [ABC news](#) reported the decision.

On 25 May there was [an update](#) of an article about Phil Maguire saving horses.

Every debate has at least two sides and the brumbies/feral horses in national parks is one that brings out a lot of passion. Often people are debating two very different issues around the same topic, so there is no real debate going on. This article helps highlight the core issues on the two main sides of the debate, it can be helpful to empathise and understand the other side when looking at policy. There is also a whole movement around [Compassionate Conservation](#) that is helpful in this debate.

Rescuers fed up over selfie-seekers

A lot of [accidents in the bush](#) happen because people put themselves at risk for a perfect selfie.

Affected by bushfire smoke

The [Black Summer bushfires](#) have killed many and left consequences on 80% of the population.

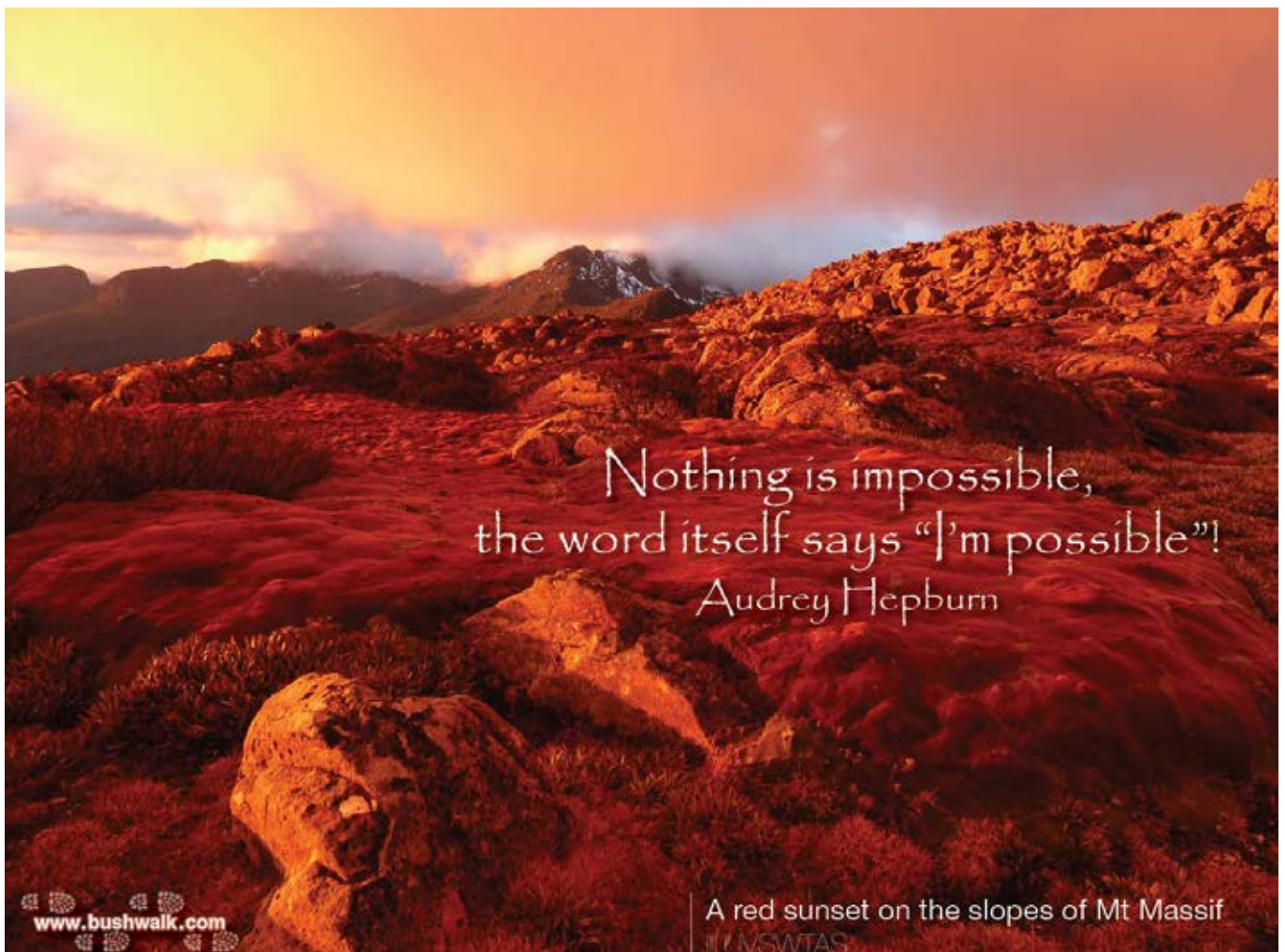
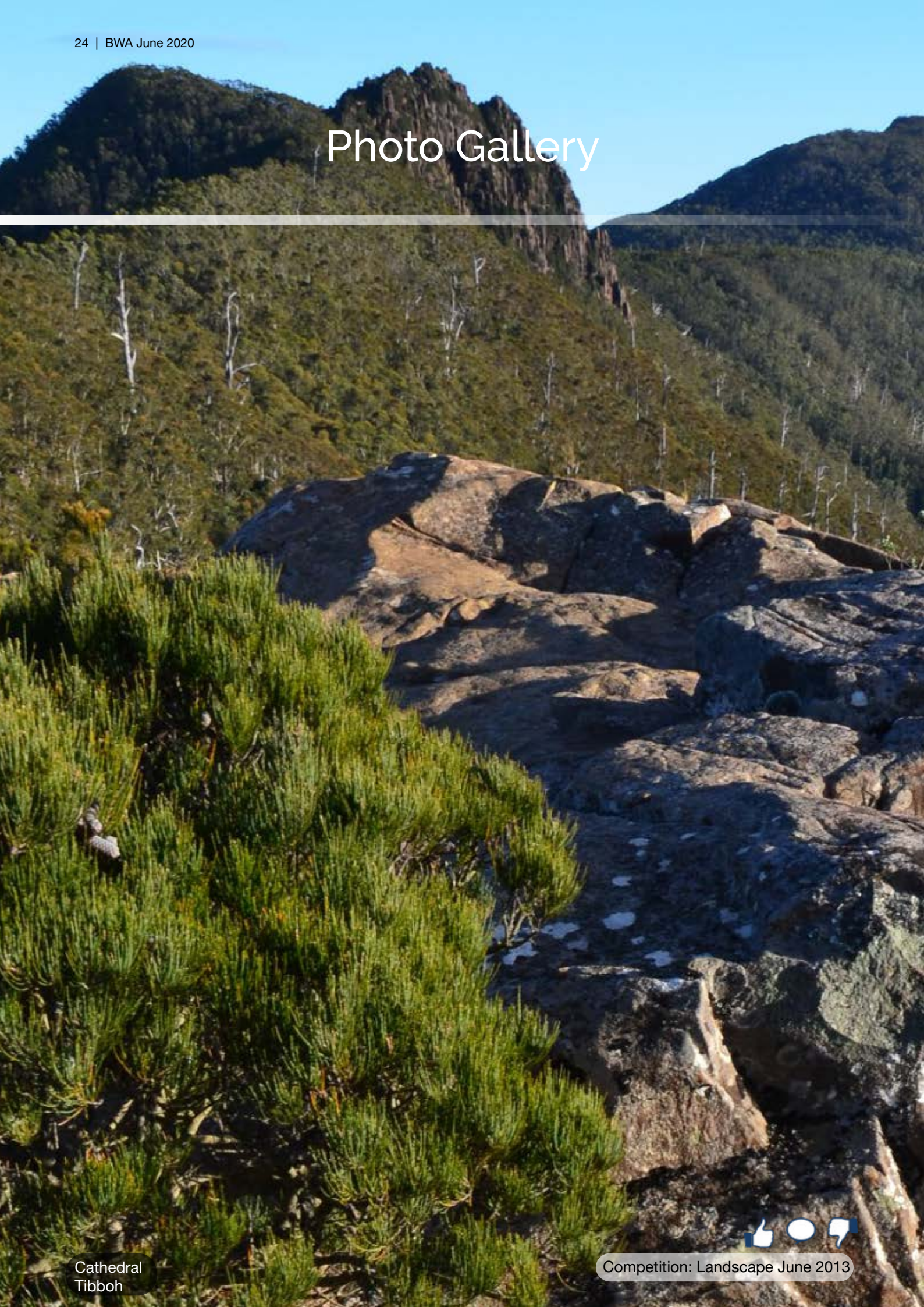


Photo Gallery



Cathedral
Tibboh

Competition: Landscape June 2013



BWA Photo Competition



Landscapes

June 2019

WINNER



The inspiring Nattai
John Walker

I've been to numerous places in the Nattai region over many years but had never visited Ahearns Lookout, the destination associated with this photo. This view of the Nattai Valley was taken from an informal lookout 500 metres away. I had been past the side track to Ahearns many times but somehow going there eluded me for years. I've always found these Nattai trips inspirational as visitation is usually sparse and there are no significant facilities in most places. It is just peaceful self-reliant solitude, nature and often spectacular scenery like this.

There is some sadness to writing this as this area was extensively damaged by the catastrophic 2019-20 bushfires. I know that the track in to this lookout now looks nothing like it was on a chilly but pleasant Sunday in June 2019. And the landscape in view now bears massive scars. Not too far away many houses were lost as the Green Wattle Creek inferno took on a life of its own, eventually reaching the upper Blue Mountains and linking with other fires to form a more or less contiguous conflagration that engulfed much of the Greater Sydney Region. But the bush is resilient. I have yet to revisit the Nattai on foot but a recent report on Bushwalk.com revealed that recovery is already well underway. I look forward to returning and seeing that for myself in the near future.



Ice to see you
ILUVSWTAS



Platypus playground
Bogholesbuckethats



West of Cradle
North-north-west



A traverse of sleeping
Buddha
Osik



Cloud sea
of the Capertee
Tom Brennan



Above Ellenborough Falls
landsmith



Non-landscapes June 2019

WINNER



Fungi with a twist
landsmith



Inversion
North-north-west



Billy with a view
John Walker



Patient Kingfisher
Bogholesbuckethats



He went that way
Brian Eglinton



Early winter
native Heather
Vagrom



Tasmania June 2019

WINNER



Hiding in the clouds
ILUVSWTAS

After the coldest night recorded in Tasmania in many years the scene at Mount Field was pretty special. As long as you didn't stand still for more than 10 seconds.



Where it all began
Bogholesbuckethats



The not-so-big freeze
North-north-west



Other States

June 2019

WINNER



Final light in Mirima
Osik

Living in Kununurra the opportunities for off-track trail running were endless if you didn't mind the odd bit of scrambling or scrub. 10 minutes from home and I caught the last light after a day at work ... magical!



Flight
landsmith



Dawn from the Divide
Tom Brennan



Golden afternoon
Bogholesbuckethats



Jellore beckons
John Walker



View out to Spencer Gulf
Brian Eglinton



Landscapes July 2019

WINNER



Grampians National Park,
Victoria
Max Holt

The Grampians is always a special spot and and somewhere I try to get to as often as possible. This photo was taken on a beautiful winter's day, as I was hiking up to the Major Mitchell Plateau, where rolling clouds and morning sun set the scene for a truly spectacular view.



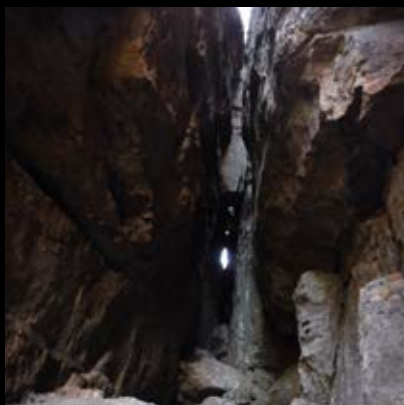
Anyone for a swim?
North-north-west



Reflecting on Mayo
Brian Eglinton



Gorgeous!
Lizzy



Light at the end
of the tunnel
AJW Canyon2011



Inversion
John Walker



Non-landscapes

July 2019

WINNER



Frozen
North-north-west

Natural patterns have always fascinated me, and those made by ice especially. Add a little sedge above and below and its a recipe for hours of innocent fun.



Nature's texture
Lorraine Parker



Greetings
Brian Eglinton



Fuchsia Heath
(*Epacris longiflora*)
John Walker



They found a bridge
Vagrom



Tasmania July 2019

WINNER



It was easier going up...
North-north-west

Clumner Bluff had been knocked of years ago, but via Mersey Crag on a long ramble from Lake Augusta. By the time I got around to the short track, it was snow all round. It's an "interesting" descent on that boulder field with ice, and boots trying to fall to pieces.



Other States

July 2019

WINNER



Elder Range
Brian Eglinton

By tackling sections of the Heysen Trail, SA, in several day bursts over time one gets regular doses of getting away from it all. At 1200 kilometres long, the scenery varies from coastal to temperate hills and pastoral settings, but the northern part traverses along the drier Flinders Ranges.

The most dramatic large scale sections of the Flinders are the Elder Range and Wilpena Pound. They are the highest points in the range and steeply rise well above the surrounding valleys and plains. One of the standout features of the Ranges are the various different coloured bands of rock above red earth and forested low lands, at this time also with tinges of winter grasses. This was a shot on day two of a three day trek. Having walked for a day and a half at the base of the Elder Range we were crossing the wide valley towards Wilpena Pound. This afforded a classic view of the face of the Elder Range with Mount Alec its highest point.



From the
falls' perspective
John Walker



The Cascades
AJW Canyon2011



First Aid Kit

What to Carry and How to Carry it

Matt McClelland



Having a good practical working knowledge of first aid, its principles and rationale is really the most important part of any first aid kit.

First aid is all about prevention and assisting sick or injured people until they recover or until full medical management is available. As first aiders our role is primarily to prevent other people (including ourselves) from getting injured or sick. First aid is mostly about experience and knowledge, not gear.

The third unconscious person I came across was on his front, and the fourth was in a seat. In first aid training and books, the casualty was always lying on their back, and it was embarrassing how confusing that was for me at the time. People never injure themselves as the book or instructor says, so do not learn just what to do, understand the principles and why we do it. Understanding “why” means that we can improvise and deal with unusual situations and prioritise them. When I was studying to become a first aid instructor I read *The rationale of first aid* by St John Ambulance Australia it was a great leap forward for me.

If you have a good understanding of first aid principles, and you have a calm head then it is much easier to improvise and take care of the situation - even with no first aid kit. A first aid kit is simply a tool that helps us step up the level of care a few notches. This stepping up is often very worthwhile, for example, being able to reduce the risk of infection or use medication to help serious medical conditions, but the kit alone does nothing.

Mental health first aid

It is not just blood and broken bones. Before we get into the first aid kit, please allow me a small soapbox. First aid courses basically never cover mental health first aid. This is a real issue and I hope that this area of training will become more common in the future. There are two core streams here, firstly helping people following an emergency, *Psychological First Aid* (similar to crisis counselling), and *Psychosis First Aid* that helps people experiencing the onset or increase of mental health issues. This kind of first aid maybe less ‘sexy’ than dealing with blood or broken bones, but done well it can have an enormous positive impact on the person's life and the outcome of your bushwalk.

The best training I have done in this space is in Solution Focused Therapy. There is no scope here to go into detail, but worth looking into options if this is an area of interest.

Why do we even need a first aid kit?

Now don't get me wrong here, it is not all about knowledge and experience, and I encourage you to carry a first aid kit. There are some situations where some simple items can save people's lives, like an allergy or a heart attack. Other items buy you a lot more time for help to arrive, like bleeding or snake



Two first aid kits make it easy to pack and find what you need. One is for common minor issues, and one is for rare emergencies.

bite. Some items just allow you continue your adventure, such as treating blisters, small cuts or light burns.

There are a bunch of factors such as terrain, length of walk, isolation, weather and group size that determine the number and type items you carry. Possibly the biggest impact will be how you perceive the duty of care you owe to people in your group (and yourself). Duty of care is simply a moral (and potential legal) obligation to ensure the safety and well-being of others. Yes it is possible to do the minimalist thing and manage (not very well) a wound with toilet paper and leaves, but when you think through your duty of care you can decide if that is actually what you want before you leave home.

Suggested list

A good start is buying a first aid kit with most of the contents and a casing that suits you then add and remove from there.

This list is one I developed for club group leaders, so it has been designed to cope with various conditions for larger and diverse groups of people. But for longer walks you are likely to be exposed to a wider range of injuries and may need to manage the longer.

Personal protection

- 4 Rubber gloves
- 1 CPR Face shield
- 1 Alcohol gel hand wash

Injury and bleeding management

- 20 Adhesive bandage (eg Band Aids™) (various shapes and sizes)
- 1 Spare gauze pads
- 3 Sterile non-stick compresses 2 x (7.5 x 10 cm), 1 x (5 x 7.5 cm)
- 2 Triangular bandages
- 2 Elastic roller bandage
- 1 Moleskin
- 1 Steristrips
- 1 hypoallergenic tape
- 1 Zinc oxide tape: securing dressings, strapping and repairs

Wound cleaning

- 5 Burn-aid burn gel
- 5 Chlorhexidine wipes
- 10 Ear buds
- 2 Saline squeeze vials

Hardware

- 1 Trauma shears: removing clothing, packs and shoes
- 1 Tweezers: removing splinters, stings and other foreign bodies
- 3 Splinter probes: removing splinters
- 1 sewing kit: repairs to packs & clothing
- 1 Small torch: night emergency backup & neurological pupil assessments
- 5 Safety pins: General gear repairs

Information

- First aid booklet
- Pencil & paper
- Group contacts and party member medical details

Medications

- Panadol: pain relief
- Ibuprofen: pain relief
- Aspirin: pain relief, possible use for management of suspect heart attack
- Gastrolyte: to help with rehydration and replacement of electrolytes.

Emergency management

- Whistle: for attracting attention and re-grouping
- Bike tube pieces with frayed edge: emergency fire starters
- Gas Lighter: emergency campfire lighter, sterilising metal.
- Micropure: water treatment for ten litres.
- Space blanket: keeping warm, preventing hypothermia, managing shock
- PLB: Emergency communications when out of mobile coverage

Personal medications

There are some first aid items that people in your group may carry themselves. Such as medications for allergies, asthma, heart conditions and much more. Hopefully along with the medication they will have an action plan that outlines the process of managing the condition if it flairs up. Speak with them about it and know where it is in their pack.

But what about ...?

Yes I can already hear people screaming out, "But what about ...?" If you have someone in your group with a specific risk then there may well be more training and equipment for you to carry. If you see a reasonably foreseeable, reasonably likely and the outcome significant enough to warrant then, add it :)

How far do we take this is always going to be a question. Should we carry oxygen cylinders? A semi-automatic defibrillator? Splints? Stretchers? Maybe (not usually), consider vulnerability in your group, costs, weight etc. Think about what is expected of you and what most other people would do in a similar situation. Think about stuff going bad and how you would cope without having it.

At present it is not normal to carry a defibrillator on a bushwalk. When they become as small and cheap as your phones then I suspect they will be added to our backpacks. The first aid kit will always be changing as technology, medicine, communication and transport improves.

How to pack it

It seems that most walkers have a first aid pouch and pack it near the top of their pack. Usually the PLB is separate. While this works, I do things a little different. I have two first aid kits as well as a bandage and PLB separate. Let me explain.

PLBs need to be handy, but not the first things you grab, so it lives in the main section of my pack. I carry a roller bandage on an outside mesh pocket in my pack (in snap lock bag). The first aid kit item I need most is almost always a roller bandage, usually for a minor strain or sprain. I keep it handy for that reason. It also quick and easy to access in case of a snake bite or major bleeding.

“I have two first aid kits as well as a bandage and PLB separate. Let me explain.



Oh Crap! bag. This is a vacuum bag sealed emergency first aid kit, easy to rip open, but very waterproof so it can be carried in the top of your pack. This bag contains items used for significant events such as major bleeding, snake bite, broken bone etc.

Oh Crap! Bag

My major emergency first aid kit is for those moments when someone shouts out or is way too quiet. Maybe a “trauma kit” would be a better name, but I prefer mine. This is a clear vacuum sealed bag (or just suck the air out of a snap lock bag) with triangular bandages, shears, gloves, shock blanket, etc. These items are to help when someone has likely in a lot of pain or at risk of bleeding out quickly. This bag rips open quickly and basically never gets used, but sits at the very top of my pack, not in any extra waterproofing.

Oh Yeah bag

This is all the other stuff in the main first aid kit list. It is the part of the first aid kit that gets the most use. It is for dealing with the minor or less urgent issues, before they become big and ugly. For blisters, small cuts etc.

Getting help

Remember that first aid is mostly about buying time before medical aid can be accessed, and avoiding things from getting worse. For most minor issues you can visit a doctor after you finish the walk, if you need to visit all. Occasionally, someone in your group or someone you find on the track may need medical aid urgently. In situations such as a heart attack, stick in the eye, significant bleeding, severe allergic reaction, and significant burn, the faster you get help, the more likely the person will survive as well as have a faster and better their recovery.

You do not want to be in this situation wishing you had a way of contacting help and not been able to. Mobile phones are the best tool, when they work. Download the [Emergency+ app](#) now, and you can use it to make the call and know your location. When you are out of mobile range then I always recommend carrying a [PLB](#).

Potential improvisations

There are many things in your pack, on your body and around you in the bush that can be used to help with first aid. It is worth considering what you already have in your pack that can be used.

For example, a sleeping mat can be used to keep a person warm and comfortable, it can also be used as a splint or maybe even a stretcher to help move someone a short distance if really needed. I have used a space blanket/tarp to splint a broken lower arm effectively. When my son broke his lower arm, he was holding his arm across his tummy. Instead of going through the trauma of opening the first aid kit we were able to make him comfortable just by lifting the lower part of his shirt over his arm and hold it for the drive to the hospital, probably more effective than a triangular bandage in this case.

First aid by remote control

A last little tip before we finish. Good first aiders take control of a situation, keeping everybody safe and making good stuff happen.

Great first aiders take control, keep things calm and clearly instruct people to help. If the injured person can safely help, then ask them to. They can clean their own wounds, and put on band aids. Asking people to do their own first aid, under good clear instruction, means you may not need to touch them at all, reducing your exposure and their risk of infection. It helps keep people calm, may even reduce their pain. It helps you be more situationally aware of what is going on around you, allowing you to deal with several injured people at the same time. It also helps improve the dignity of the overall experience and helps people learn new skills from you.



In the News

The Great Burragorang Valley Walk

Wollondilly, Blue Mountains and Wingecaribee Shire Councils are working together to produce a walk that will [connect the three councils](#) and include the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Areas, national parks and conservation areas.

Why you should always let someone know of your bushwalking plans

An experienced walker fell about eight metres off the track and shattered her pelvis. After three days she was rescued to tell [her experience](#) and new gained knowledge.

Botanist collecting pencil pine seeds in Tasmania

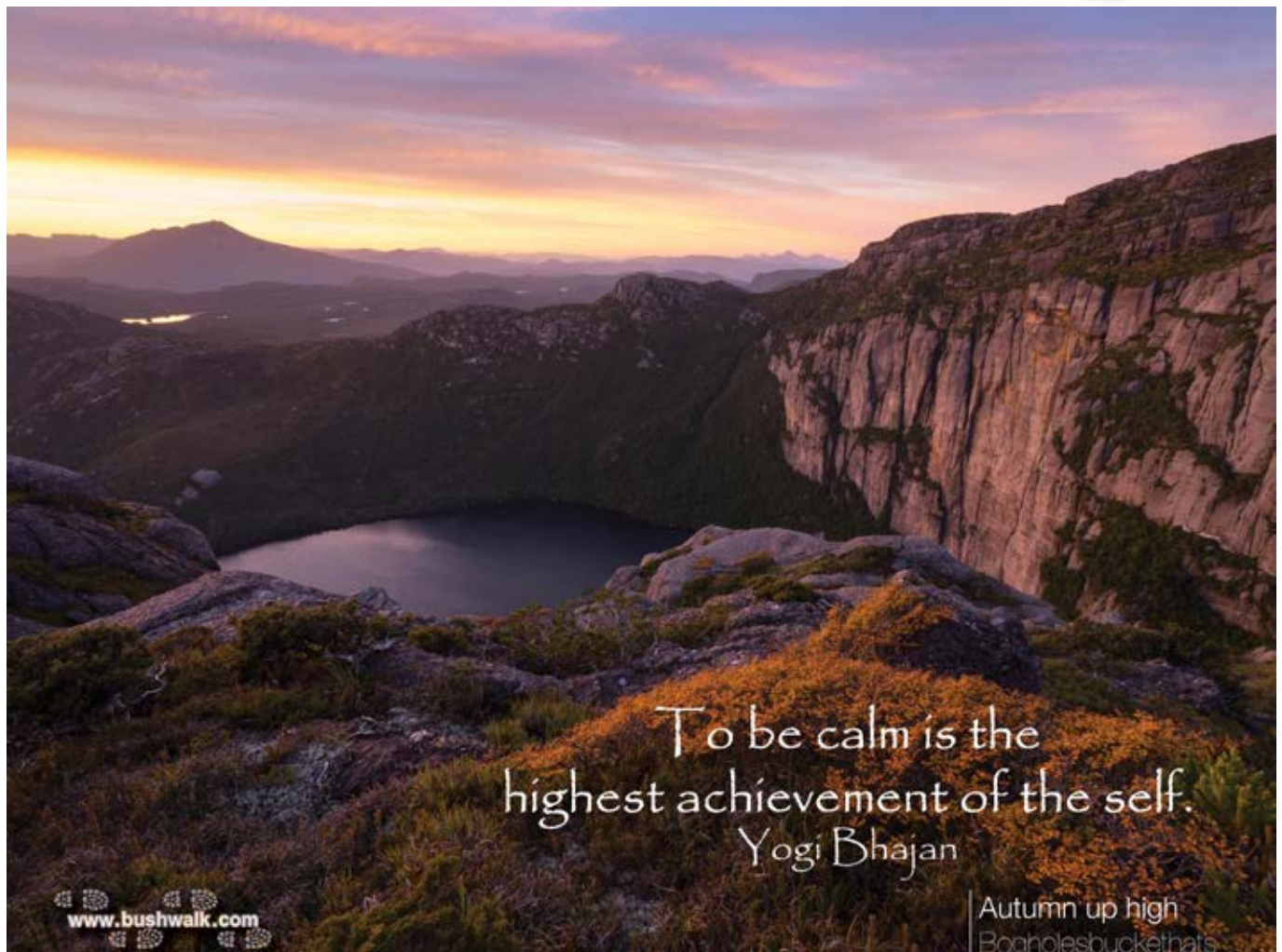
Botanist James Wood and seasoned guide Justin Dyer went on a hunt for pencil pine seeds that are [most at risk](#) from climate change in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

What3words

If you get lost and don't know [how to describe where you are](#), What3words app might help.

Is Coronavirus-crisis good for national parks?

Closures of national parks in the crisis is a perfect opportunity to [rethink national park tourism strategies](#).



Too much of a good thing? How drinking too much water can kill

David Bentley



Drinking enough water is very important during long periods of physical activity or recreational pursuits. But there are rare instances when too much fluid intake can be harmful, and even lead to death.

In September 2012 the ABC reported on the [unfortunate death of a bushwalker](#) in Tasmania's north western ranges. The coroner's report said the most likely cause of death was an "exercise-related medical condition caused by drinking too much water during prolonged exertion."

This condition is known as hyponatremia, which quite literally means low (hypo), sodium in the blood (natremia). Hyponatremia is [relatively common](#) among people with certain disease conditions and among athletes, such as marathon runners. But it's very important to recognise that harm and risk of death due to hyponatremia are very low.

Sodium (chemical symbol Na) is an important nutrient obtained from a normal diet. Sodium levels in the body are impacted by the intake of salt, which is contained in a variety of common foods. It's unlikely that the bushwalker died because of low dietary intake of sodium because only a small amount is required for our body to function, even during exercise. Indeed, [scientific reports indicate](#) that marathon runners diagnosed with hyponatremia don't have low sodium levels in their blood.

The coroner's report outlined that the deceased bushwalker had a swollen brain (cerebral edema), which in his opinion was due excessive water intake. But how can water lead to death due to hyponatremia?

Excessive or low water intake and excessive or low sodium intake can initiate a series of hormonal reactions largely mediated by the [antidiuretic hormone](#). These reactions lead to either retention of water or its elimination from the body through urine. This process maintains a normal level of fluid and blood volume in our body.

A dramatic increase in water ingestion leads to a so-called "water intake overload", which may be associated with a decrease in the volume of circulating blood, even though total body fluid volume is greater. This can, in turn, lead to abnormal accumulation of fluid in the body or edema (swollen brain). Decreased blood volume stimulates the

release of the antidiuretic hormone, which leads to further water retention and a worsening of the condition.

Blood pressure is an important way of regulating oxygen delivery to all of the body, including the muscles and brain. And oxygen is important for keeping our muscles moving during exercise. The oxygen supply to the brain influences decision-making processes and cognitive functioning. Irregular blood pressure can lead to low oxygen levels. When combined with cerebral edema (as suggested by the coroner's report), this can lead to confusion, disorientation, and unconsciousness.

While common in pathological states, hyponatremia occurs less frequently in healthy exercising adults. There are reports of marathon runners having hyponatremia but in nearly all cases, the condition can be treated and dangerous situations avoided.

The low risk of suffering from hyponatremia by eliminating water intake is far outweighed by the gains of improving exercise performance by drinking the correct amount of water, regularly. The [recommended intake of fluid](#) is generally small – in the range of 150 millilitre to 200 millilitre for every 15 to 20 minutes of exercise.

Exercising adults should know about effective fluid and dietary intake before and during sport or exercise. While these are influenced by severity (walking versus running), duration and environmental conditions (hot or cold, dry or humid) of exercise, the simple recommendation for avoiding fatigue (due to dehydration) as well as hyponatremia, is for people who are exercising to drink according to thirst, that is, before, during and after exercise.



David Bentley

Lecturer in Exercise and Sport Science,
University of Adelaide

This article first appeared in [The Conversation](#) on 21 September 2012.

These Are a Few of my Favourite Things

Sonya Muhlsimmer



So, here we are still in isolation with all those amazing canyons and bushwalks beckoning me to come. Alas, I cannot. But soon, sometime soon, I will return to the bush proper. Who knows what another week, or month will bring? I had planned to complete the Great North Walk from Somersby to Newcastle over Easter. The last two years my friend and I have completed the first half. The first year we walked from his front door in Hunters Hill to Cowan. Last year we walked from Cowan to Somersby. This year we were intending to push through and do the last leg in one go, over nine days. I may have missed out on completing the GNW, but luckily I live in the Blue Mountains, right near the Grose Valley. At the end of my street there are fire trails and footpads that can take me to some beautiful waterfalls galore, spectacular bush and historical dams. Just across the highway and within walking distance I can visit historical public baths, more waterfalls and lots and lots of bush. Now, bushwalking is my absolute favourite activity, but there are other things. Chocolate Anzac slice and cinnamon spiced biscuits are two more of my favourite things.

Falconbridge Point lookout, Blue Mountains, New South Wales
All pictures by Sonya Muhlsimmer

Chocolate Anzac Slice

In light of Anzac Day just gone with a difference, being in a pandemic and standing in the driveway, listening to neighbours play their tribute to the fallen ones, here is a favourite recipe of mine, with a difference. The recipe is the same as it would be for Anzac biscuits, it just has chocolate pieces added and compacted into a slice. Nothing hard about this recipe, but oh they are so delicious. If you let them cool down just enough from taking them out of the oven, the slice will still be warm, and the chocolate will be gooey, oh yum. It really doesn't need to be Anzac Day to enjoy these biscuits. This one is for you Pop.

Plain flour	½ cup	80 grams
Brown sugar	½ cup	90 grams
Rolled oats	½ cup	45 grams
Shredded coconut	½ cup	44 grams
Cooking chocolate bits	3 Tbsp	50 grams
Butter	¼ block	62 grams
Golden syrup	1 Tbsp	32 grams
Bicarb soda	½ tsp	3 grams
Water	1 Tbsp	

Preheat a fan forced oven to 160 °C. Grease or place a piece of baking paper in an 18 cm x 28 cm baking tray. Combine flour, sugar, oats, coconut and chocolate bits in a large bowl. Combine butter, golden syrup and



water in small saucepan, stirring constantly over medium heat until butter is melted, stir in bicarb soda. Stir mixture into dry ingredients. Place the mix in a baking tray, flatten down with a spoon or your hand then bake for 15 mins. Let cool on the tray for about 5 mins before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely. Cut into slices and enjoy.

Cinnamon Spiced Biscuits

What else is there to do when stuck at home in isolation but to sort through your old recipe books? I have found an old favourite recipe book and have had it for many years. When I was cheffing this was my go-to book for information and inspiration, and it has one of my favourite recipes in it. This recipe always pleases the hardest crowd or critic. It has been so long since I have made these biscuits, I can't remember when I made them last. I do remember one time I made them, it was after I left cheffing and was working in an office. I took them into work and shared them around. My boss came up to me and said I am not allowed to bring them in anymore. The way he said it I thought he was serious. His family was a big foodie family so I thought I had offended him. I quietly asked why, and he said they are too good and he nearly ate all of them. Well, at least I was not in trouble. I do wish I could say this recipe is mine but I can't. These biscuits are so good, I don't want to share them around. Oh look at that, I can't share due to social distancing laws, shame about that ... I will have to enjoy them all to myself. They are easy to make, go on you won't regret it.

Butter	1 cup	225 grams
Caster sugar	¼ cup	50 grams
Plain flour	2 cups	225 grams
Cornflour	1 cup	115 grams
Vanilla essence	1 tsp	
Icing sugar	½ cup	50 grams
Ground cinnamon	1 tsp	



Preheat a fan forced oven to 160 °C. Grease or line an oven tray with baking paper. In a bowl cream the butter and caster sugar for about 2 to 3 mins until light and fluffy. Stir in the sifted flour, corn flour and vanilla essence and mix together. Roll heaped teaspoon sized mix into a ball and place on the oven tray. With a fork, lightly press down on the top of the ball to leave an imprint and to flatten them slightly. Bake for 30 mins or until pale golden in colour. While the biscuits are in the oven, sift the icing sugar and cinnamon together in a bowl. When the biscuits have cooled enough to handle, toss them in the icing sugar mixture. Let the biscuits cool down completely on a wire rack. Enjoy.





Keep on lunchin' in the free world
ILUVSWTAS

My Favourite Things - Bushwalking

Stephen Lake



The Main Range from Jagungal, spring snow
Stephen Lake

Tune: *My favourite things*

Out in the bush so far from the city.
Mild winds a blowing and vistas so pretty.
Campsites well sheltered, dining like kings.
These are a few of my favourite things.

Walking on mountains with views all around us.
Hectares of flowers completely surround us.
Birds flying by with the sun on their wings.
These are a few of my favourite things

A hut giving respite from wet angry weather.
Watching from inside, snow over the heather.
Hot cups of tea my friend always brings.
These are a few of my favourite things.

When I'm rained on.
When I'm tired.
When I'm feeling sad.
I simply remember my favourite things,
And then I don't feel so bad.

Soft grass to camp on with water for swimming.
Out every weekend, good for my slimming.
Joyful together my heart always sings.
These are a few of my favourite things.

Climbing a rock made safe with belaying.
You might think it's hard but for me it's just playing.
Skiing in winter and on into spring.
These are a few of my favourite things.

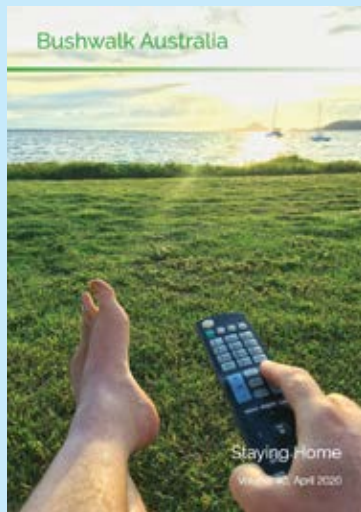
Wild open snow plains the wind on our faces.
Journeying further exciting new places.
Crossing a river, a small bridge that swings.
These are a few of my favourite things.

When I'm rained on.
When I'm tired.
When I'm feeling sad.
I simply remember my favourite things,
And then I don't feel so bad.

Inspired when subbing Sonya's article.



Bushwalk Australia



Staying Home

- > Mount Giles
- > Southern Ranges and Du Cane Range
- > Bushwalking in a Pandemic



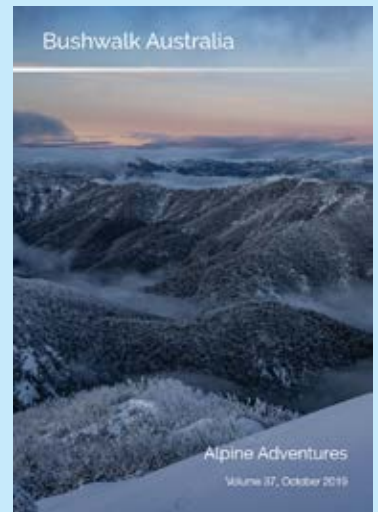
Fire and Fury

- > The Great Dividing Trail, VIC
- > AAWT fastest known time
- > 2019-20 bushfires overview
- > In memory of Four Mile Hut



Hills & Valleys

- > Orange Bluff
- > Two State 8 Peaks
- > Walking on fire
- > Hand Hygiene in the Bush



Alpine Adventures

- > Hannells Spur Loop, NSW
- > Australian Alps Walking Track
- > Skiing With the Bobs, take two
- > MUMC – 75 Years Old



Awesome Adventures

- > McMillans Track, Victoria
- > Island Lagoon
- > Franklin River, Tasmania



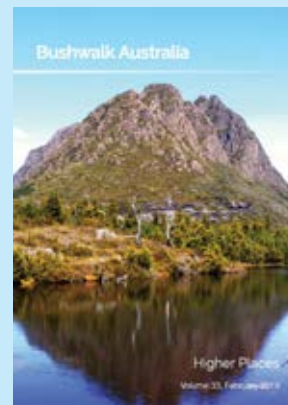
Wild & Rugged

- > Queen Charlotte Track, NZ
- > Huemul Circuit, Argentina
- > Never Say Never



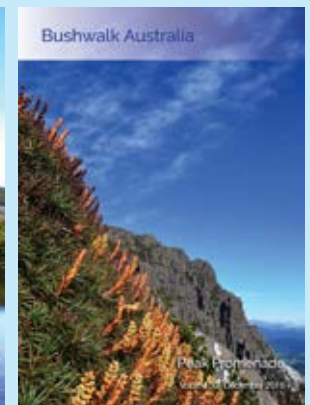
Going the Distance

- > Mt Wills to Mt Bogong
- > Hume & Hovell WT
- > Walk of Wonders



Higher Places

- > AAWT
- > Tassie Winter Trip
- > Our High Country Lore



Peak Promenade

- > Pindars Peak
- > Cordilleras in Peru
- > Brothers Point, Scotland



Ridges & Valleys

- > Buffalo, The Bluff and Mt McDonald



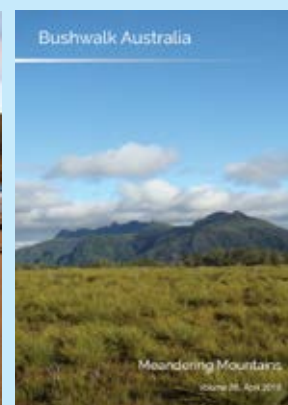
Ambling Adventures

- > An Abel challenge
- > Pack hauling



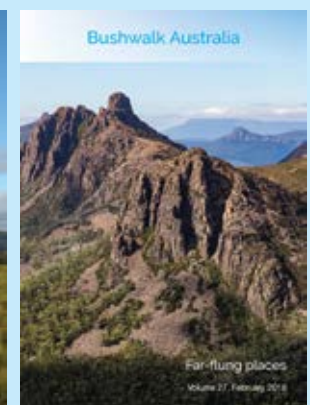
Act Now

- > Viking Circuit
- > Overland Track



Meandering Mountains

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



Far-flung Places

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