

# Bushwalk Australia



Resounding Rocks

Volume 43, October 2020



Bushwalk Australia Magazine  
An electronic magazine for  
<http://bushwalk.com>  
Volume 43, October 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.**



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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 December 2020 edition is 31 October 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.

Budawangs from the top of Pigeon House  
Mandy Creighton

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# From the Editor

Hi

I hope this edition finds you well. Gee wiz, 2020 continues to surprise and constantly turn our world upside down. Our bushwalking buddies in Victoria have experienced a second and long lockdown that is proving very effective and bring COVID-19 numbers down but has also been very hard on a lot of people with cabin fever really setting in.

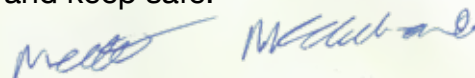
I want to make a big shout out to Stephen, our amazing sub-editor. Stephen is based in Melbourne and has put in a huge effort (as always) into this edition whilst hardly leaving his home. Without his effort, we would not have got this edition out. Thanks!

I want to explain the title "Resounding Rocks". I was taken by the landscapes and bold rocks in the walk, canyon and ski trip articles. I too often forget the important role geology plays in forming the ecosystems they host. So for these, I was thinking that resounding in the sense of "unmistakable" and "emphatic". When it comes to the articles and rallying around Malbena, I was thinking resounding in the sense of the need for people to keep making a sound loud enough to reverberate. I also wonder how much more the earth can take before the rocks themselves start shouting out "enough".

As 2020 continues I look forward to borders reopening and doing more walking in other states. I am looking forward to a travel bubble with NZ, I am really hoping to cross the ditch this summer.

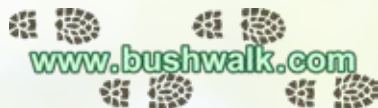
Happy Walking and keep safe.

Matt :)



Matt McClelland (aka Wildwalks)

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## Declaration

The opinions stated in articles are those of the authors and not of those involved in the production of this edition. If you are worried about transparency or any editorial aspect please either write to me or raise the issue on Bushwalk.com. The bushwalking community is a small world and paths often cross. To improve transparency I thought it would be helpful to list my main associations within the outdoor community.

I operate [Bushwalk.com](http://Bushwalk.com), [Wildwalks.com](http://Wildwalks.com) and [Overlandtrack.com](http://Overlandtrack.com), a number of other smaller websites (and related apps) and have written several walking guide books, published by Woodslane. I contract to National Parks Association NSW and I am a member of the Walking Volunteers. I have had contracts with state and local government departments regarding bushwalking and related matters. I have also partnered with a large number of other organisations in environmental campaigns. Any commercial advertising or sponsorship will be clear in the magazine.

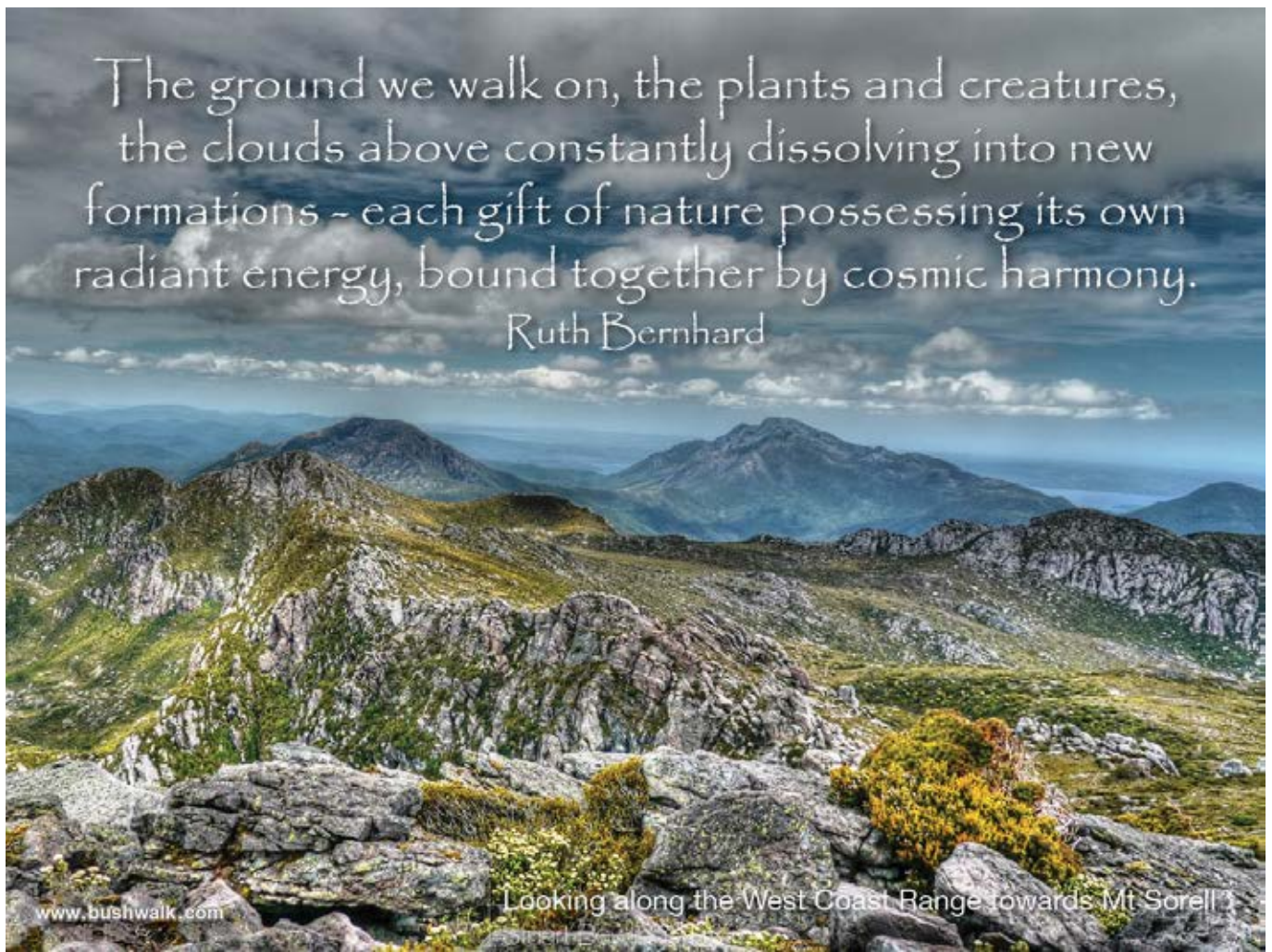


## Video

Paramedics in England's remote Lake District region have been testing a jet suit that gets them to people in danger or distress [in a fraction of the time](#) it would take to travel by car or on foot.



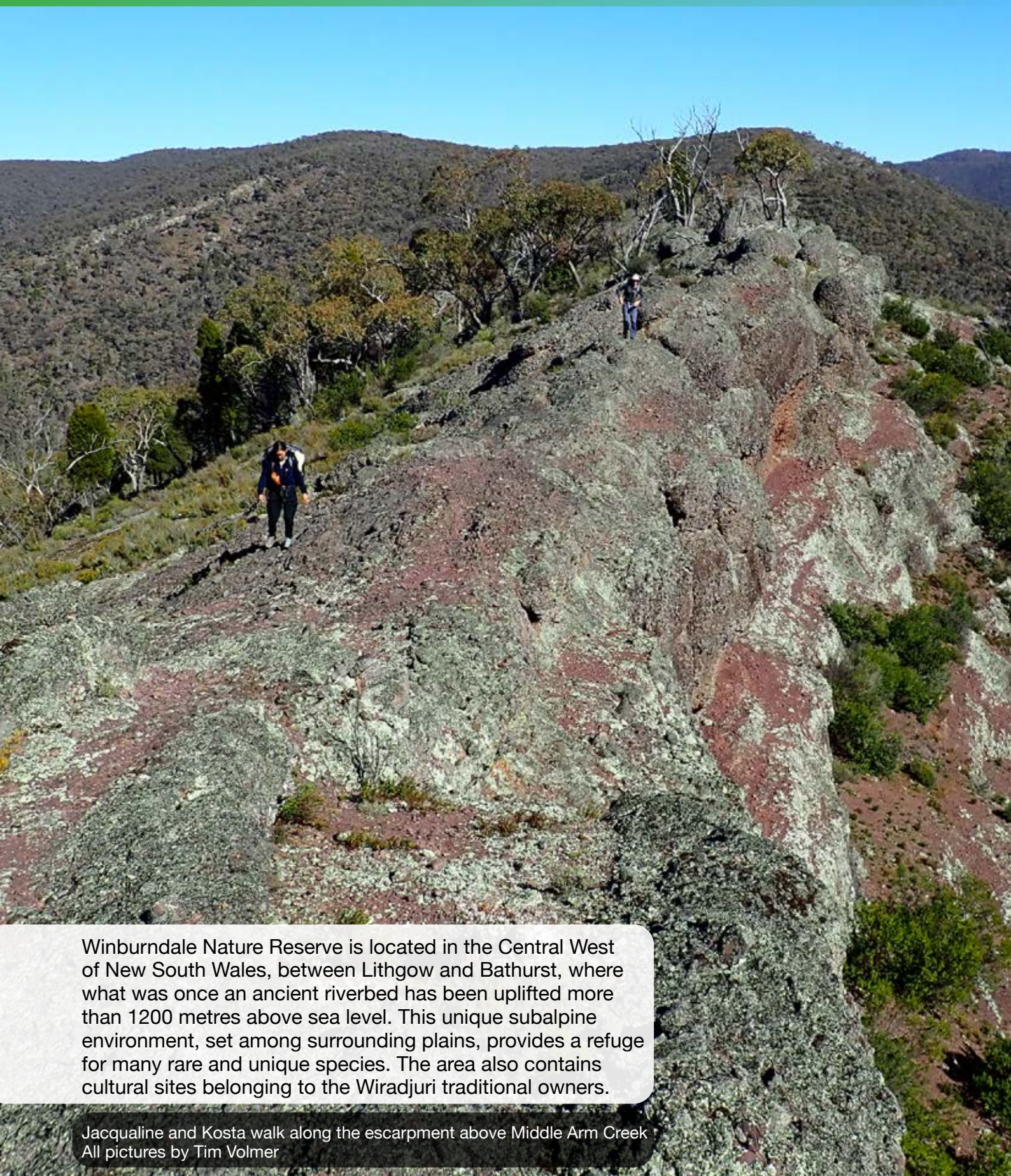
The ground we walk on, the plants and creatures,  
the clouds above constantly dissolving into new  
formations - each gift of nature possessing its own  
radiant energy, bound together by cosmic harmony.  
Ruth Bernhard





# Traversing the Winburndale Range

Tim aka Fat Canyon



Winburndale Nature Reserve is located in the Central West of New South Wales, between Lithgow and Bathurst, where what was once an ancient riverbed has been uplifted more than 1200 metres above sea level. This unique subalpine environment, set among surrounding plains, provides a refuge for many rare and unique species. The area also contains cultural sites belonging to the Wiradjuri traditional owners.

Jacqualine and Kosta walk along the escarpment above Middle Arm Creek  
All pictures by Tim Volmer



Crazy at it sounds, living at the base of the World Heritage-listed Blue Mountains can be a bit of a curse. Having so many spectacular natural places to explore, right on my doorstep, I often fail to make time for places that are a little further afield. This walk was part of my effort to rectify that.

The Winburndale Range, with its series of impressive escarpments running in an almost perfectly straight line, grabbed my attention while trawling satellite images looking for bushwalk inspiration. The fact that I'd never even heard of this place — despite it being located just over the Great Dividing Range — only piqued my interest more.

A little research revealed a unique place full of contradictions: a mountain range topped with river stones; sub-alpine forests perched among the dry plains of the central west; and a row of conglomerate cliffs bursting out of the earth at a 45 degree angle.

Much of the range falls within [Winburndale Nature Reserve](#). Because the primary aim of the park is the protection of diverse flora and fauna, rather than human recreation, there is very little promotion of the area, with low impact activities like bushwalking all that is allowed.

My plan was to traverse as much of the rocky escarpments as possible, including what looked like an impressive knife-edge ridge. I also wanted to check out a couple of interesting creeks as they carved deep chasms through the range.

Making the planned route work required a pretty intense car shuffle, but it seemed the best way of fitting everything into a winter weekend.

A shortage of vehicles nearly scuppered our plans until Bron generously let us borrow her car for the weekend, although if she'd known the beating we were going to give it she may not have been so kind!

Our original plan was to drive out on Friday night and camp where we'd be leaving one of the cars, but with rain rolling through the mountains we decided to stay warm and dry at my place before leaving early the next morning.

As we bounced our way along the maze of rough dirt roads and sailed through some pretty impressive muddy pools, we were very happy with the decision to avoid a wet and chilly night.



Looking south along the escarpment towards our starting point, with Winburndale Dam to the right

After one of these pools the smell of burning rubber forced us to pull over. Our amateur mechanic skills were put to the test, but we quickly confirmed that while we'd lost a fan belt, it was only the one for the air conditioner, so it wouldn't impact the trip. With the first car left in position we made our way back out of the forest and headed south.

### **Gulf Stream to North Spur**

Our chosen route to the start of the walk - which looked like a shortcut on the map - ended up involving a particularly rough track through a pine plantation.

It was mid-morning by the time we set off down a maintenance trail. I'd told everyone to pack light, but we were all lugging a fair amount of water given the ongoing drought.

Before long I diverted the group into the bush in search of a little waterfall in Gulf Stream. We quickly reached a small cliff which took us down to the creek. It was flowing well due to the rain the night before, making my insistence that everyone pack plenty of water seem like overkill.

We headed back to a fire trail for a bit, but couldn't help commenting that the off track walking so far had been an absolute pleasure through beautiful open bushland. We all crossed our fingers that it'd continue like this.

Before long we headed off track again, following the first of our impressive rocky escarpments. Below us, Winburndale Dam was looking a dry and depressing sight. Ahead we could see the ridge we were heading towards, which promised an unrelenting ascent. The wind was gusting, but the clouds that had remained from overnight were now starting to break up, with growing patches of blue promising a beautiful day ahead.

We headed down into Winburndale Rivulet where we were welcomed by an impressive valley shaded by towering casuarinas. After a quick pause to enjoy the scenery and drink from the gurgling brook we set off up the ridge. Despite the steep terrain, the open bush made for pleasant if somewhat sweaty progress.



Looking across Dry Arm Creek from near Big Flat



The climb ended suddenly, bringing us to the top of a lovely ridge. The stunning ridge with towering cliffs was everything I'd hoped for and more. I noticed my cheeks were starting to feel a little sore. It took a moment to realise that the muscles were aching due to all the grinning I was doing as I looked from one stunning view to the next.

We skirted a small gully as it burst through the ridge and plunged downwards. By now we were all rather peckish, so when Kosta located an area that provided great views and shelter from the wind, it was clearly time to stop for lunch.

After lunch, the ridge continued to climb slowly, eventually leading up to a large flat plateau. As we came into a distinctive natural clearing, I spotted the first of several unusual circles made of rocks. They were clearly very old, making me speculate that they were the handiwork of the Wiradjuri, the traditional owners of this area. (After returning home I contacted the local NPWS ranger who confirmed that they were indeed recorded Indigenous sites.)

From here we were soon on top of Big Flat, a very aptly named plateau. This landscape, which now provides a subalpine refuge for many plants and animals, is the last remnant

of an ancient river plain that was forced more than a kilometre upwards by tectonic forces.

We followed a fire trail a short way before setting off into the bush again. The lack of distinctive terrain on the plateau tested the navigation a little, but before long we found ourselves on a ridge that took us to another impressive natural clearing, again featuring several stone circles. From here we were back onto the escarpment, with open forest on our right and a plunging valley to our left.

We continued down to a point where two small creeks, each running north-south, joined together before cutting an oversized gulch through the cliffs. We dumped our pack at the junction, scrambling down to a small waterfall. Kosta pressed on a little further, disturbing a small herd of feral goats.

Up the other side, it wasn't long before we reached the most sustained section of the escarpment. The cliffs weren't particularly high, but the area was incredibly distinctive, with the forest ending in a perfect line, a narrow clearing filled with smooth river stones, the angled cliffs, then deep green valleys below us.

Despite being only mid-afternoon, we decided to look for a place to camp. We'd already covered more than half our



Kosta clambering along the knife-edge ridge north of Clear Creek



planned distance, but more importantly this area provided plenty of flat camping and incredible views for us to sit and enjoy the afternoon sun.

We made camp among the trees at a particularly pleasant spot before bringing out a collection of wine, cheese and snacks. The wind had eased right off and the weather was surprisingly warm for the time of year, so there was nothing dragging us away from the sight of the sun dipping over the beautiful landscape.

When evening arrived, Penny took advantage of the clear sky to share some astronomical knowledge, pointing out numerous planets and constellations. The Milky Way put on an incredible display, with the smear of countless stars and galaxies cutting across the moonless sky. And with so much time looking upwards we were rewarded with the streaks of quite a few shooting stars.

### North Spur to Turon State Forest

A lack of morning people meant a sluggish start the next day. After finally dragging ourselves out of the cosiness of the sleeping bags we made it only as far as the cliff edge before settling in for a long breakfast.

When we eventually departed we were rewarded with easy walking along the open ridge. Another natural clearing — this one with the remnants of an old farm fence — marked the start of our descent into a deep valley below. Following the rocky nose, we startled the same herd of goats from the previous day. Before long we spotted the goats across the valley, wandering across improbably-looking ledges as they climbed the cliffs on the other side.

We made our way into Middle Arm Creek, which had been one of the areas I was keen to examine. We were met with a pool of clear water between boulders, while a stand of casuarinas soared above.

With packs off, we clambered upstream. It was beautiful walking with very little scrub and in places was almost canyon-like as the curved rocky walls closed in. The watercourse cut a zigzag through the landscape as it fought its way through the angled bedrock, before suddenly transitioning into a flat, open valley. We turned back at this point. On our return downstream we scurried up into a side gully where Boris' request to see a wombat was half answered by the discovery of a recently deceased specimen.

The next challenge was going to be getting back out of this creek on the other side. From our vantage point across the valley the cliffs looked quite imposing. We considered trying to follow the route we'd watched the goats climb, but Kosta was convinced a short, steep gully looked promising.

His hunch was spot on and the gully provided a surprisingly easy route through the cliffs. From a few rocky outcrops we enjoyed views back into the valley and across to the ridge we'd followed down.

Another solid uphill slog returned us to the escarpment. More stunning views followed before we dipped downhill to cross a small gully. Once again we stumbled on the poor goats, who by now must have been particularly paranoid about the odd group of people who had been tailing them for more than a day. Not long after we startled



Looking north from our campsite along the edge of North Spur



a wombat that demonstrated the species' surprising speed and agility as it raced down the steep gully and disappeared out of sight.

As we approached the final large creek that cuts through the escarpment, we began to snake our way down rather than risk getting cliffed out. Before long we were in the beautiful and aptly named Clear Creek, with its pools of crystal-clear water. This was another of the creeks I'd been keen to explore, so with time on our side we dumped packs and started scrambling upwards. After half a kilometre or so it became clear we'd seen the best of the small cliffs. My hopes for something canyonish had been dashed, but the creek was still pretty.

Looking at the time, we decided against exploring another creek branch. We filled up with water before setting off for the final big ascent. On the topo map it didn't look much. Sure, it was clearly steep, but there were no cliffs marked. But I knew that was deceptive, and the aerial images had shown what looked like an impressive rocky knife-edge.

Things started with an unrelenting climb through a beautiful open forest. As the verticality started to ease, the ridge began to narrow, with some small rocky sections. Soon we were at the main event. The ridge was just as narrow as I'd hoped. There were some rather exposed moves, with cliffs falling away on both sides, before we reached a gap. Thankfully, what looked at first glance like an impassable obstacle was easily avoided with a scramble on the less-steep eastern side.

Clambering along the ridge, the views were stunning. The late afternoon light had the cliffs glowing a deep orange as we looked back down the knife-edge at the terrain we'd covered earlier in the day. With the car parked nearby, I raced over and grabbed a bag of chips, returning to the impressive viewpoint where the five of us now sat, watching the sun go down.

We thought that was it for the adventure given all that was left was to collect our other car then head home, but as we raced along the rough dirt tracks I noticed something wasn't right with how the car was handling.

Pulling over to check, I discovered a flat tyre. A quick change and we were off again.

We picked a better route through the pine forest this time, making it to the other car without trouble. But as the convoy drove back out I again noticed a problem. Sure enough, a second flat tyre. Unfortunately, Kosta was ahead of us so hadn't seen us pull over. We took the tyre off and waited for the others to return. Thankfully, the spare from the other car fitted. With two flats and no spares, I nursed the car the rest of the way to the highway. It was with some relief that we got back to tar roads.

While the dirt roads had been rough, two flat tyres seemed like particularly bad luck and made us speculate whether we'd fallen victim to some sabotage, particularly as there had been fresh dirt bike tracks near the car that had suffered both flats. Still, a couple flat tires were a small price to pay for a spectacular weekend exploring a truly remarkable area.



Tim (aka T2) lives in Springwood in the Blue Mountains with his partner Bron and four children, including recent addition River. He is a passionate canyoner and bushwalker, with a particular love for exploratory and off-track adventures. He works as a communications consultant, is one of the founding members of the Fat Canyoners, and also runs [Canyon Gear](#).



# My Blue Mountains

Yvonne Lollback

This is something I wrote many years ago to try to express why I just love walking in the mountains. My appreciation of being able to live in these mountains grows every day as I see people crowded into cities, people racing after more and more material goods because they feel so empty but don't know what's missing. I am lucky beyond words.

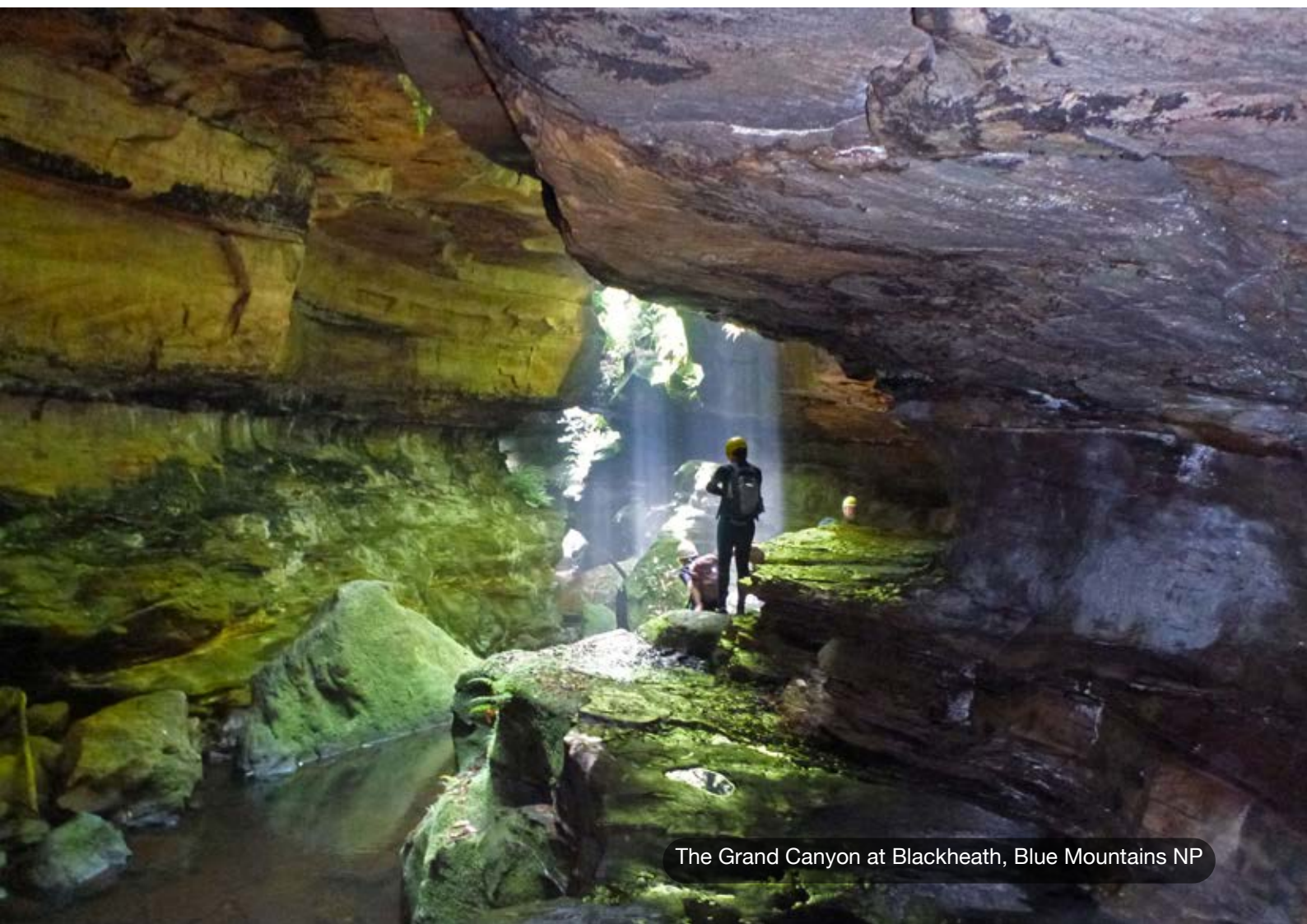


Where do I go for rest and renewal? For peace and inspiration? To discover, yet again, that feeling of awe and wonder and belonging that is so easily lost in the bustle of modern life? To my own backyard - my beautiful Blue Mountains where a lifetime is not enough to explore the many and varied sites, especially as each time an area is revisited, something new is discovered.

I love the awesome sheer cliffs with their age-old wisdom as they preside over green valleys below:- their colours in all shades of cream, yellow, orange, red and grey and everything in between, most ending in gentle scree slopes built up over millions of years of erosion. I love the many weird and wonderful shapes of the pagoda rocks which appear suddenly here and there like long-forgotten temples or lost cities. Then there are the bands of ironstone twisted into the most incredible ways. And the caves, crevices and overhangs where surely fairies and other nature spirits must reside. Above all these are the gentle ridges and flat tops which are all that remain of a once-huge plateau - or was it a long-gone seabed or lake?

Let me tell you about the creeks and waterfalls. There are the ones that tumble down playfully from rock to rock, pool to pool to suddenly plunge over a cliff down a sheer rock face way down to the valley below in one long drop or in a series of falls, as if to prolong the bliss of freedom for a short time, before continuing on their restricted, restless way. Yet others hide themselves shyly in ferny, mossy, cool corners where they fall into crystal clear pools to play with the fairy folk for a while before continuing on their way to join a river and eventually the ocean. Sometimes they, laughingly, cascade from one series of rock terraces to the next, staying but a moment to flirt and tease with wet spray flying, before rushing on and ever down. However, the most daring and exciting are those that disappear down narrow, deep canyons - some of them so dark and narrow that even ferns can't grow on their fantastically sculptured walls. Here I can really feel the heart of the earth and merge with its ageless beauty.

“... a lifetime is not enough to explore the many and varied sites ...”



The Grand Canyon at Blackheath, Blue Mountains NP



And I must speak of the hanging gardens and swamps on the cliffs and slopes and canyon walls, the fantastic shapes of the trees that are able to send roots into tiny cracks and crevices to find that little bit of moisture needed for survival, the orchids and ferns clinging, and thriving, on patches of moss on the rocks and the lichens that manage to grow everywhere - on rocks and cliffs, dead and living trees and wherever there is some moisture.

They are like exquisite paintings, festooning everything, especially patches of primordial rain forest. I love the creepers and vines, the new red shoots and the wild flowers that seem to survive in impossible places under impossible conditions. And who hasn't stood awestruck at the shapes and colours of the fungi when they emerge from the ground to reproduce?

Then there are the mists of the morning, the blue haze of the day, the howling gales and the gentle breezes, the energy-draining heat of summer, the cloud-filled valleys and that fresh, fresh air. And of course there's the bird-song echoing across the gorges as well as the flies and snakes and other small animals that all have their part to play.

“They are like exquisite paintings, festooning everything ...

These mountains are my Book about the Great Mystery, always opening at a different page ever more wonderful and exciting.

These mountains, from the hugeness of the cliffs and valleys to the smallness of the ferny glens and mossy creeks, are my church, filling me with love and peace. Sometimes they make me feel so puny and insignificant until I remember that I, too, am a page of that wonderful precious Book.

“... filling me with love and peace.



Yvonne started bushwalking as a child with her mother, who loved exploring new areas, later taking her infant's class on small Katoomba walks. Yvonne has lived in the Blue Mountains since 1983. Canyons were always a great thrill, with overnight walk favourites being the Grand Traverse above Newnes and the Budawang. It was a pleasure to take her children and family members on walks and go walking overseas. Now in her early 70s her body is starting to tell her she's ageing, but she's inspired by those in their 80s still walking. She only wants to go to Heaven if there are lots of great walking tracks.



Yvonne on Mount Owen with The Castle behind, Budawangs NP



# In the News

## The freezing level

In winter the Tasmanian Search and Rescue team encounter freezing moisture in the air - [the freezing level](#) - which may prevent the helicopter from flying safely or at all.

## Old trees

Read about what we can [learn from trees](#) that may live for several thousand years.

## Overland Track building

Waterfall Valley on the Overland Track just got a [new hut](#).



Source: Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service

## Native forest logging in Tasmania

The Bob Brown Foundation has launched legal action against Tasmanian native forest logging, claiming it is not in accordance with federal law and does not protect [endangered species](#).

## ACT tracks closed, including the AAWT

Namadgi National Park is [partially closed](#) due to the bushfire and flood recovery works.

## What can we learn from the critically endangered swift parrot

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act is [flawed](#) because it considers individual impacts, not holistically, leading to adverse results.

## An interesting documentary

ABC airs [Meet The Ferals](#) which talks about the impact feral animals have on our environment.

## And some podcasts

The ancient trails of the [South East Forests](#) podcast talks about John Blay, a writer and naturalist and his journey of life in the forests of Australia.

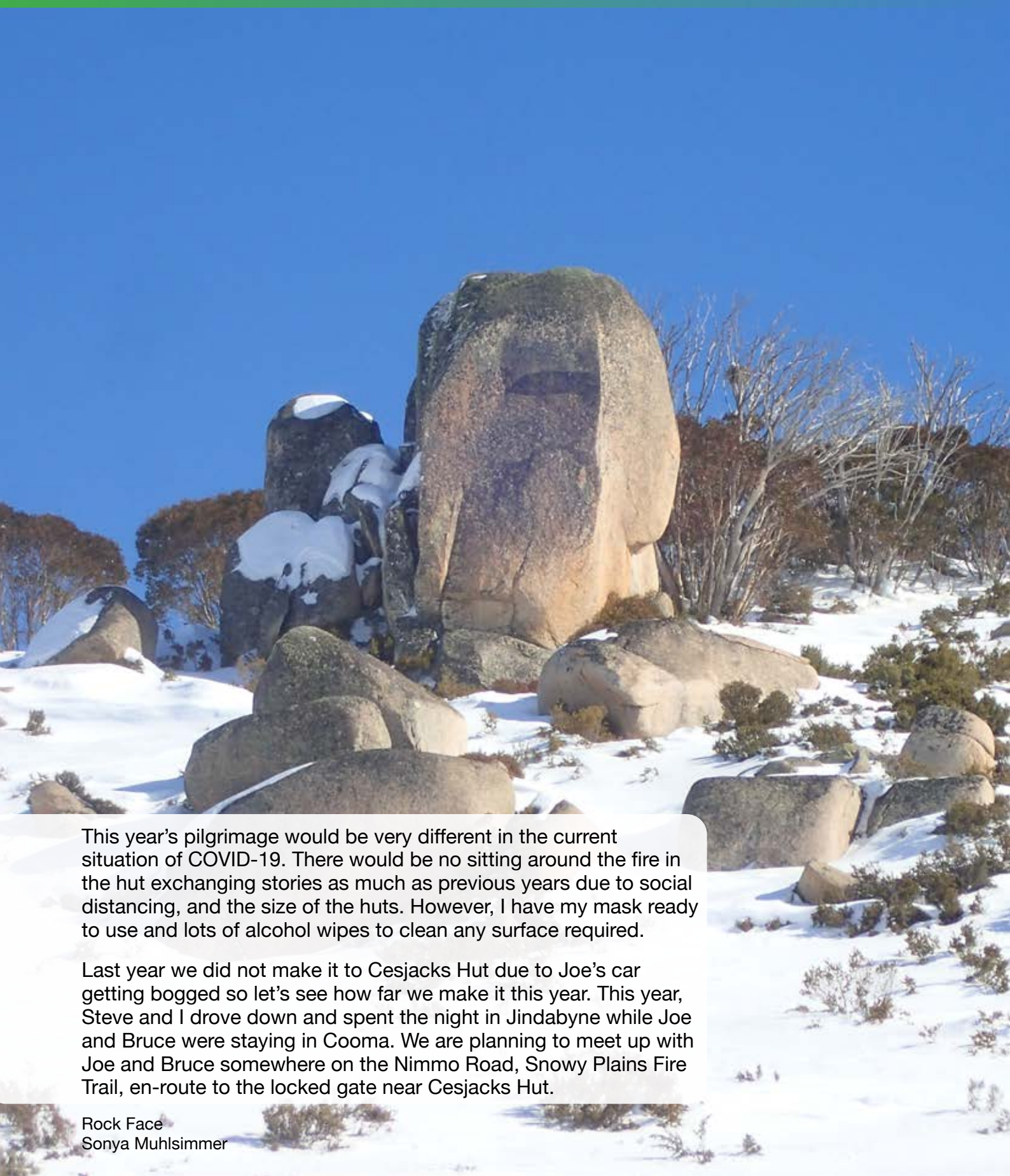
[Go virtual bushwalking in Tasmania](#) takes us on a bushwalk with Ryk Goddard.





# The Annual Pilgrimage Skiing With the Bobs

Sonya Muhlsimmer



This year's pilgrimage would be very different in the current situation of COVID-19. There would be no sitting around the fire in the hut exchanging stories as much as previous years due to social distancing, and the size of the huts. However, I have my mask ready to use and lots of alcohol wipes to clean any surface required.

Last year we did not make it to Cesjacks Hut due to Joe's car getting bogged so let's see how far we make it this year. This year, Steve and I drove down and spent the night in Jindabyne while Joe and Bruce were staying in Cooma. We are planning to meet up with Joe and Bruce somewhere on the Nimmo Road, Snowy Plains Fire Trail, en-route to the locked gate near Cesjacks Hut.



## Day 1 – Jindabyne to Cesjacks Hut

It is 18 July, 7 am and minus 4 degrees Celsius in Jindabyne, time to get up. We had breakfast, loaded the car, stopped off in Jindabyne for a coffee and to pick up a last minute repair kit for the new sled I have, and Steve and I are ready to go. My car is loaded with snow chains, a shovel, a snatch strap, tarps in case I need it for the river crossing and recovery boards if we were to get bogged. Nothing can stop us this time.

The Gungarlin river crossing was over a very small and narrow bridge, which was easy, nothing to worry about here, so far so good. The snow around this point was not so deep and very patchy with lots of mud around, and onwards we go. I have not even put the car in 4WD yet. The further in we go the thicker the snow became. As I was driving Steve was opening and closing the many gates and filming all the scary stuff.



The Gungarlin River crossing on the Snowy Plains Fire Trail  
Sonya Muhlsimmer

The second river crossing is through the water this time. We got out of the car, assessed the river and it looked fine, so I put the car in 4WD and on we go. As long as I don't slow down driving through the water I should be right, right? In contrast to the last ford crossing, the third river crossing was a bit different, wider and a fair bit deeper. This is the crossing I was a bit concerned about. We got out of the car again, assessed it and we thought we would

“As long as I don't slow down driving through the water I should be right, right?”



A sign from Joe Bob before the second ford crossing  
Steven Buchert

be right. I have heard some scary stories about this crossing, and I don't want to make my own story about getting stuck. On the river bank on a patch of snow, and on the dirt track right in front of us, there was a sign from Joe and Bruce. If Bruce can cross this river in his all wheel drive, I will be fine. I have a little more clearance and a four wheel drive so no problem for me, on we go again. Within a few kilometres we finally catch up with them. They are at an unlocked gate, just before a rather big, steep, slippery looking hill, well it looked steep especially if we have to ski from here, about six kilometres from Cesjacks Hut. We decided to put the chains on and drive up the hill as far as we can to the locked gate at the Kosciuszko National Park boundary. Well, another kilometre was driven and that was it, around 1570 metres, but at least we are closer to Cesjacks Hut, here we come. Cesjacks Hut was about five kilometres away now and we don't have to lug up that first part of the hill, but it felt like the hill kept going up and up.

“If Bruce can cross this river in his all wheel drive, I will be fine.”

Once Cesjacks was reached, water was collected, the tents went up and comfortable night time clothes were put on. Steve and Bruce went into the hut and met the other people there; Joe and I poked our head in to the hut, but that was it. Dinner watching the sun set was on our agenda for the night, and then it was early to bed.

“Dinner watching the sun set was on our agenda for the night ...”



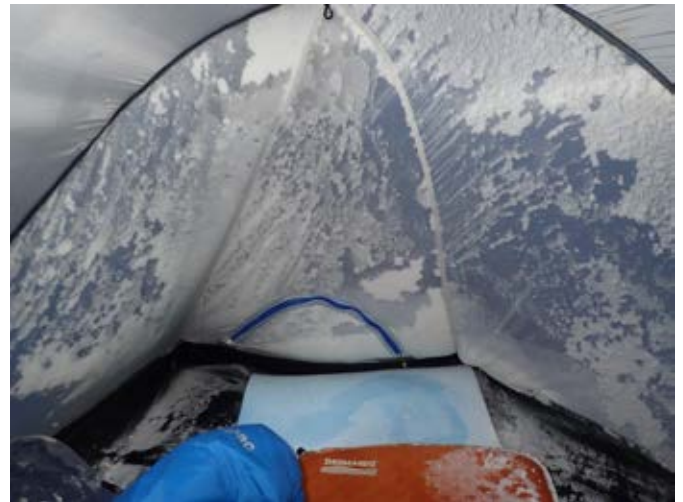
## Day 2 – Cesjacks Hut to camp

We woke to a beautiful sunny day and our plan is to go to Mawsons Hut. After breakfast, it was time to pack up and go. It was a pretty easy going day today meandering our way along the snow taking it somewhat easy. It was so nice to be out on the snow again.

Sometime in the afternoon I was wondering where we actually were, surely we should be near Mawsons

“... the worst night I have ever had.”

Hut soon. From Cesjacks to Mawsons it is around about nine kilometres, we surely have done that by now. I pull out my GPS to get a reading, GR 272942, near the Geehi River. It is still another four kilometres to the hut and it will be dark within an hour, so we decided to camp where we are. The tents were up and we were set for the night. Well, the weather turned for the worst, the worst night I have ever had. I thought last year at Schlink Hilton in a blizzard with about 25 people and six rats running rampant was bad, but that was nothing compared to this night. I got snow drift in my tent; in fact everyone got snow drift in their tent. During the night I kept checking the time to see how long day break would be so we can get out of this blizzard. I wanted to scream, I could have screamed and no-one would have heard me through the wind and flapping of my tent. It was midnight, then 2 am, 3 am and so on. This night was never going to end. Steve wrote



Snow drift in my tent  
Sonya Muhlsimmer

about his experience in his log book and allowed me to share his experience, below. I thought it was only me experiencing the worst night ever, but in fact we all had a bad night.

Last night was a scream – literally. The wind picked up just after we set up the tents in the lee of a rocky outcrop and the wind turned from the west side onto the tents. I did not sleep until 3 am from holding the wall of the fly and tent from collapsing. Sleeping bag was wet and there was nothing to do but to persevere. I thought that it was I only affected but all Bobs had the cave-in tent syndrome. Finally breakfast, packed the wet bag and ice-filled tent and off at 8:00 towards Mawsons.



GR 272942, camp  
Sonya Muhlsimmer



### Day 3 – Camp to Mawsons Hut

What a night, so glad that it's over and we all survived and no-one's tent flew away during the blizzard. Now to pack up and get out of here, only four kilometres away is a nice dry hut waiting our arrival. I secretly hoped that no-one is there tonight so we can spread our gear out to get it dry. After a few hours and off in the distance, there it is, I can see it, Mawsons Hut was in our sight, finally. It was under a kilometre away, what a relief it was to see it. However, there was one last obstacle for the day, the crossing of Valentine Creek. There is enough snow to ski, however the base is not that thick as you can see the ground around the trunk of some trees. There is not enough snow for snow bridges over a lot of creeks. We skied for a fair while to try to find a snow bridge, no luck, but we had to find somewhere to cross. Near the poles around the creek the water was not that deep so off come the skis, and we walk across in the water. My feet got pretty wet but at least we can dry the boots out in front of the fire in the hut, along with our wet sleeping bags and tents. Once we got into the hut, we decided that the night calls for sleeping in the hut tonight. No-one else is around and it will allow us to get all our gear dry as everything was wet. The fire was lit, ski gear came off, night clothes were on, a cup of tea and lunch was made and all the wet tents and sleeping bags were hung up to dry.

“... off come the skis, and we walk across in the water.”



Cesjacks Hut  
Sonya Muhlsimmer

### Day 4 – Mawsons Hut

Today Bruce decided to have a rest day while Steve, Joe and I go out exploring. It took a while to get going but there was no rush. It was decided to stay another night at Mawsons and besides, my tent is still wet. Off we venture south along Valentine Creek towards the other big bend near Brassy Peak to see if we can find a suitable river crossing further upstream so we don't have to get our feet wet again. If we were to camp out again and have wet boots, it will not be a pleasant experience. There must be a better crossing somewhere up the creek. There was definitely nowhere to cross downstream as we skied a fair distance looking for a place to cross en-route to Mawsons, so hopefully there will be something upstream.

“There must be a better crossing somewhere up the creek.”

It was a picture perfect day today, the sun was out and there were no clouds in the sky, just beautiful. We took our time going up the creek stopping many times to take in the view, and a long stop for a leisurely lunch. We saw lots of animal foot prints, and there was even evidence of an animal sliding down the bank to get some water. Hope it didn't fall in. Then there was Rock Face. It was a huge mound of granite that in three different angles it had three distinct and different faces. We stood there looking at it for some time. The day was getting on and it was time to go back to the hut; unfortunately there were no snow bridges along the way to cross. Plan B will have to be initiated for the creek crossing now, but what is Plan B? Discussions will be had looking at the map, over a glass of wine next to the fire tonight.



Discussing Plan B, where to cross the creek next  
Steven Buchert



### Day 5 – Mawsons Hut to Cesjacks hut

Another picture perfect day and it was back to Cesjacks. The first hurdle was the Valentine Creek crossing around where we crossed it before, right near the poles. Bruce called my rucksack the Tardis, as I kept pulling things out of it. Luckily for us the Tardis was armed with a few garbage bags so some of us could tape bags around our feet. Joe had his own bags so there were enough to go around, surely this will work. If there is one thing I hate, it is wet feet. Okay ready, on the count of three. One, two, three and off I go running as quickly as I can through the water. Yes, it worked. Glad I packed those garbage bags.



The second Valentine Creek crossing with plastic bags over our feet  
Joe Zappavigna

Lunch and the rest spot were picked just up near North Bulls Peak, then over towards Smiths Perisher way. An old fence line was reached and a helicopter could be heard so this was a good time to stop and see what the commotion was about. Lo and behold and about a kilometre away the chopper landed on the snow. It was a rescue, gee I



Preparing to cross Valentine Creek  
Sonya Muhlsimmer

hope the person will be alright. Luckily, it's not that often that you see a rescue take place. On we go towards McAlister Saddle. The snow is really quite patchy down in the saddle, so the plan is to stay high and follow the contour line heading north-east towards Cesjacks. In a few more hours Cesjacks Hut was reached.

### Day 6 – Cesjacks hut to home

Instead of the eight days that were planned, it was decided to leave today. To be honest I was not that happy about this decision as this was my annual trip to the snow. I don't know if I can get down again this season so I wanted to stay. But the rule is that we stay together, especially considering we have a hard drive out and who knows what the ford crossings would be like. With not much snow during the week and every day being relatively warm, a lot of snow would have melted making the crossings a little bit more precarious.

“But the rule is that we stay together ...”

After breakfast, camp was packed and down the hill we went and before you know it we were back at the cars. There certainly was more water in the ford crossings. The water went over the bonnet, and half way back home to Sydney at a rest stop on the highway, I noticed that a number plate was missing. I must have lost it in the water. First job back home I needed to do then is to get new plates. This year's trip certainly felt different. There was not a huge amount of snow, only six days out and no mingling in the huts meeting new friends. Well, at least I got to go to the snow and I am not in total lockdown. Till next year.



The snow has melted a lot in a week. At the locked gate, leaving the national park  
Steven Buchert





Above Valentine Creek with Jagungal on the skyline  
Sonya Muhlsimmer



# Overland Track App

This app is to help you plan and prepare for the Overland Track in Tasmania, and then navigate this safely and enjoyably.

You will find detailed packing lists, information on each day of walking, itineraries, yummy recipes, a guide to flora, fauna, geology and travel planning, first aid and much much more. The app has a navigation section with topographic maps that will work offline, photos, terrain profiles, track notes and weather forecasts.

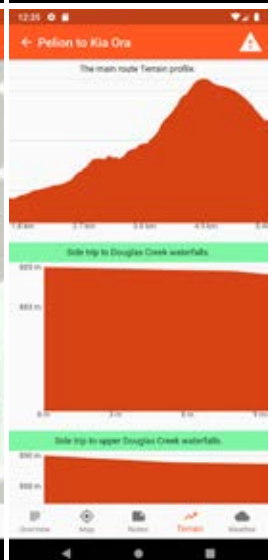
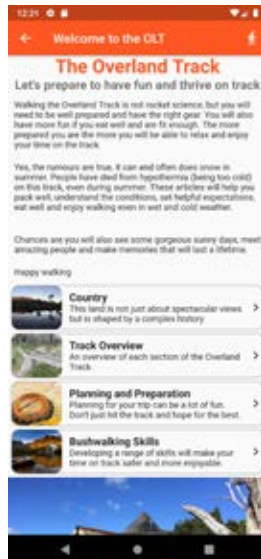
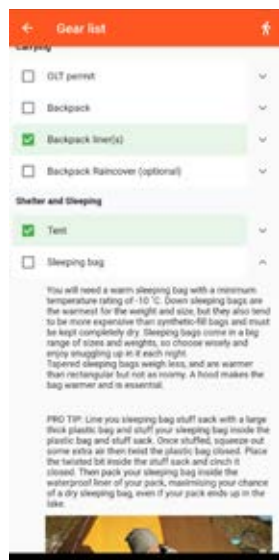
Think of this as the ultimate reference for the Overland Track, a happy marriage between a GPS and a bushwalking guide book.

Each section of the walk has an overview and a moving map (download the map tiles for offline use before hitting the track).

Information on bushwalking skills and equipment also applies to other parts of Australia to help you build your bushwalking skills before getting on track.


This app was made to help you get the most out of your time on the Overland Track, and is designed for all people: those new to bushwalking, hiking or tramping up to seasoned walkers.

More information at [www.overlandtrack.com](http://www.overlandtrack.com)





# Calendar 2021

The [2021 Calendar](#) is ready for orders and posting in December. As always the selection of photos was made from the winners of Bushwalk.com photo competitions. To enjoy this amazing imagery the whole year long, order your copy for the price of \$16 including postage in Australia by sending an email to Eva at [eva@wildwalks.com](mailto:eva@wildwalks.com) or click  to order it straight away.



## BUSHWALK AUSTRALIA 2021





# Photo Gallery



Early sun hits Florentine  
Louise Fairfax

Competition: Landscape September 2014





# BWA Photo Competition





# Landscapes October 2019

## WINNER



We were staying in one of the three old lighthouse keepers' cottages at Cape Du Couedic (Flinders Chase National Park, Kangaroo Island) and only minutes away from Admirals Arch. I sprinted down the boardwalk just in time to see this iconic view through the arch as the sun set.

Sunset through  
Admirals Arch  
Ben Trainor



Sharlands Peak  
looking south  
Doogs



Across the face  
John Walker



The Tidbinbilla  
experience  
landsmith



Aaron Creek  
Brian Eglinton



A clear February morning  
North-north-west



Cheyne serenity  
Graham51







# Non-landscapes October 2019

## WINNER



She'll carry on through  
it all. She's a waterfall..  
Doogs

This photo was taken on a trip to the Frenchmans Cap area. The day before was long so I decided that today would be easier, taking time to enjoy the scenery a little bit more. This was taken on the descent of Barron Pass. I often stop here to enjoy the picturesque little falls and it never fails to soothe the soul.



Pigface  
Brian Eglinton



*Grevillea oxyantha*  
Oandsmith



The hat brothers  
John Walker



Going down  
North-north-west







# Tasmania October 2019

## WINNER



South Coast beach  
at dawn  
ILUVSWTAS

Pure and wild. South Coast Tasmania. After a pre-dawn shuffle across New River Lagoon in the row boats I was greeted by beautiful morning light as I walked the length of Prion Beach towards the day's target, the Ironbound Range.



Iconic  
Doogs



Arm River falls  
North-north-west



Mount Gell  
Graham51



Out of season  
Grug Flowers  
Son of a Beach







## Other States October 2019

### WINNER



Rocky River,  
Kangaroo Island  
Ben Trainor

October 2019 marked 100 years since parts of what is now Flinders Chase NP on Kangaroo Island were first protected as a flora and fauna reserve. This photo was taken on the Snake Lagoon Hike near the mouth of the Rocky River outlet looking out to the Southern Ocean. We had just passed an unexpected waterfall before we continued to a pristine sandy beach. A wonderful walk. Sadly, in December 2019 fires started, continuing into 2020 and burnt 96% of the park, and the adjacent Ravine Des Casoars Wilderness Protection Area. Hopefully, the flora and fauna of the park will rejuvenate and the wilderness will continue to be protected and flourish for centuries to come.



Blowhole Beach  
Brian Eglinton



Gibraltar Peak track  
landsmith



Over the valley  
John Walker







# Landscapes

## November 2019

### WINNER



A commanding position  
John Walker

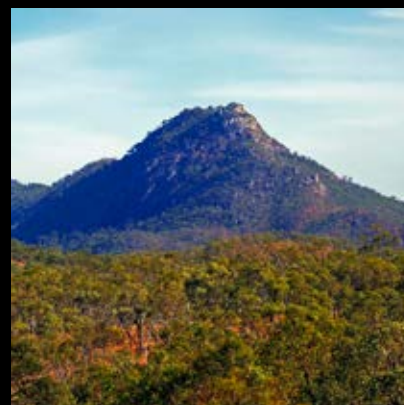
I was driving home from a volunteer bushcare trip late on a sunny afternoon. I'd already been out in the bush all day but still had some unspent energy and plenty of daylight, so I opted for a short walk in the Valley of The Waters. Dropping into the valley, about half way down to Empress Falls I stopped at Queen Victoria lookout, which has a magnificent view. I noticed this stunning mature grass tree (*Xanthorrhoea*), precariously perched in a commanding position on the cliff edge. The escarpment and Jamison Valley beyond framed it nicely and enabled an aesthetically pleasing depth of field.



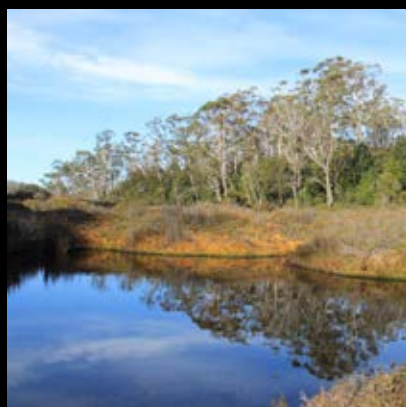
Sunset over the walls  
from Walls  
Tom Brennan



Miriuwung country,  
after the fire  
Osik

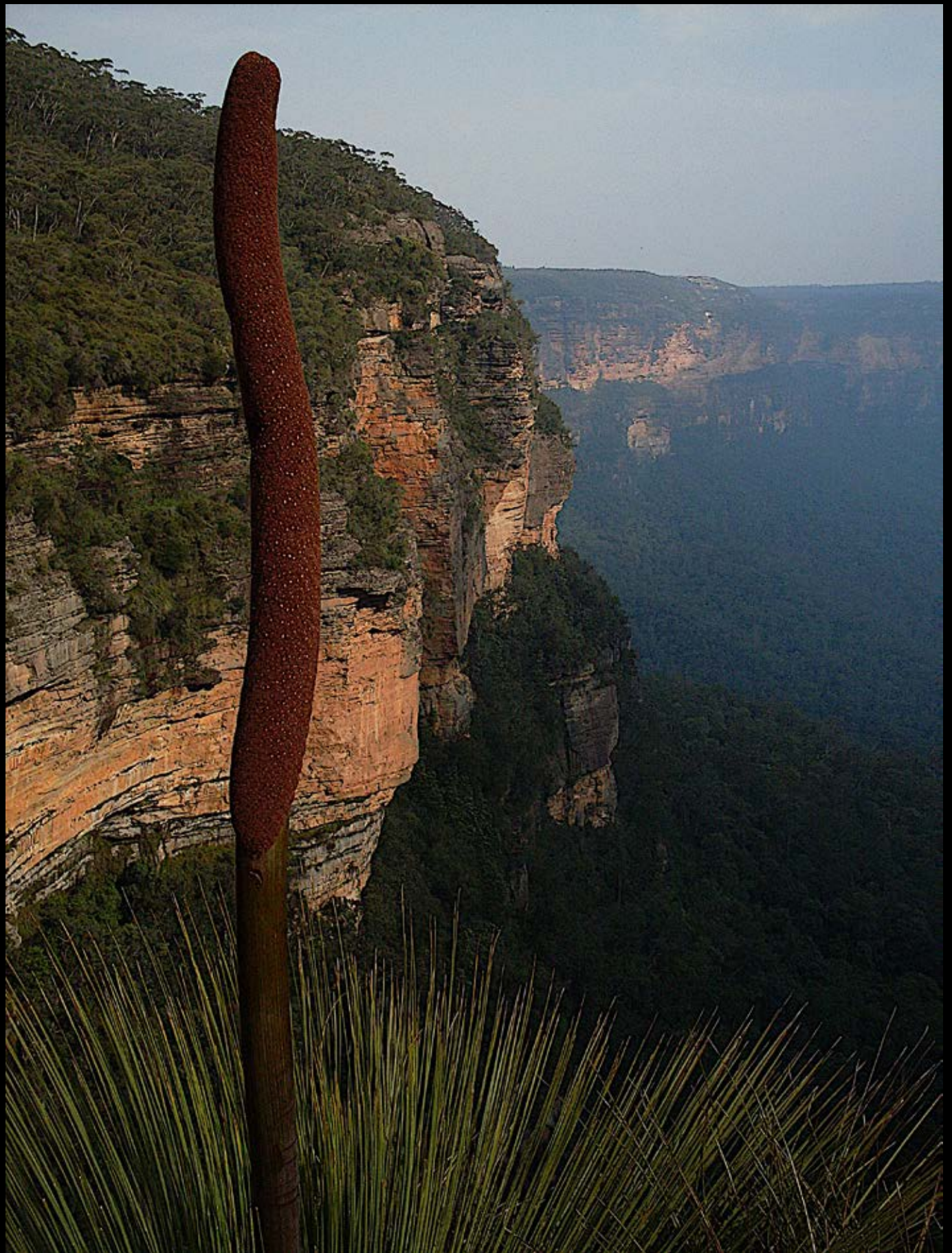


Cape York peaks  
Brian Eglinton



Reflections  
Graham51







# Non-landscapes

## November 2019

### WINNER



Yellow-bellied sunbird  
Brian Eglinton

The Mount Whitfield Conservation Park in Cairns is a popular place for exercise, but also immerses a person in tropical forest. Getting photos of birds is always a tricky business, as they rarely hang around for long.

This very colourful bird was very kind to land close and not be spooked as I came in for a closer shot. It is quite a small bird, but wonderfully coloured and I was quite pleased to take its portrait.



The spectacle  
of the flannel flowers  
John Walker



Eye of the Tiger  
Tom Brennan







# Tasmania

## November 2019

### WINNER



The rustic sign on the Pelion Plains points the way to Mount Oakleigh. The sign stands in contrast to the modern New Pelion "Hut" and the welcome hardening and boarding of the track across the boggy plains.

The way to  
Mount Oakleigh  
Graham51







# Other States

## November 2019

### WINNER



Pebbles  
Brian Eglinton

The coastal road north of Cairns hugs a thin line between sea and forested mountains. Most beaches are sandy, but I was aware of some very bouldery sections.

The light is lost quickly at sunset in the tropics, so I was delighted to be able to try out a one second time exposure on these pebbles in that very short time when the sky was glowing.

I could have done with a tripod, but balancing the camera on a bigger rock was the best I could do to get the misty effects.



Straw deep  
John Walker



A very real Phantom Falls  
Tom Brennan



An off-track run  
in the Kimberley.  
The morning is infinite  
Osik

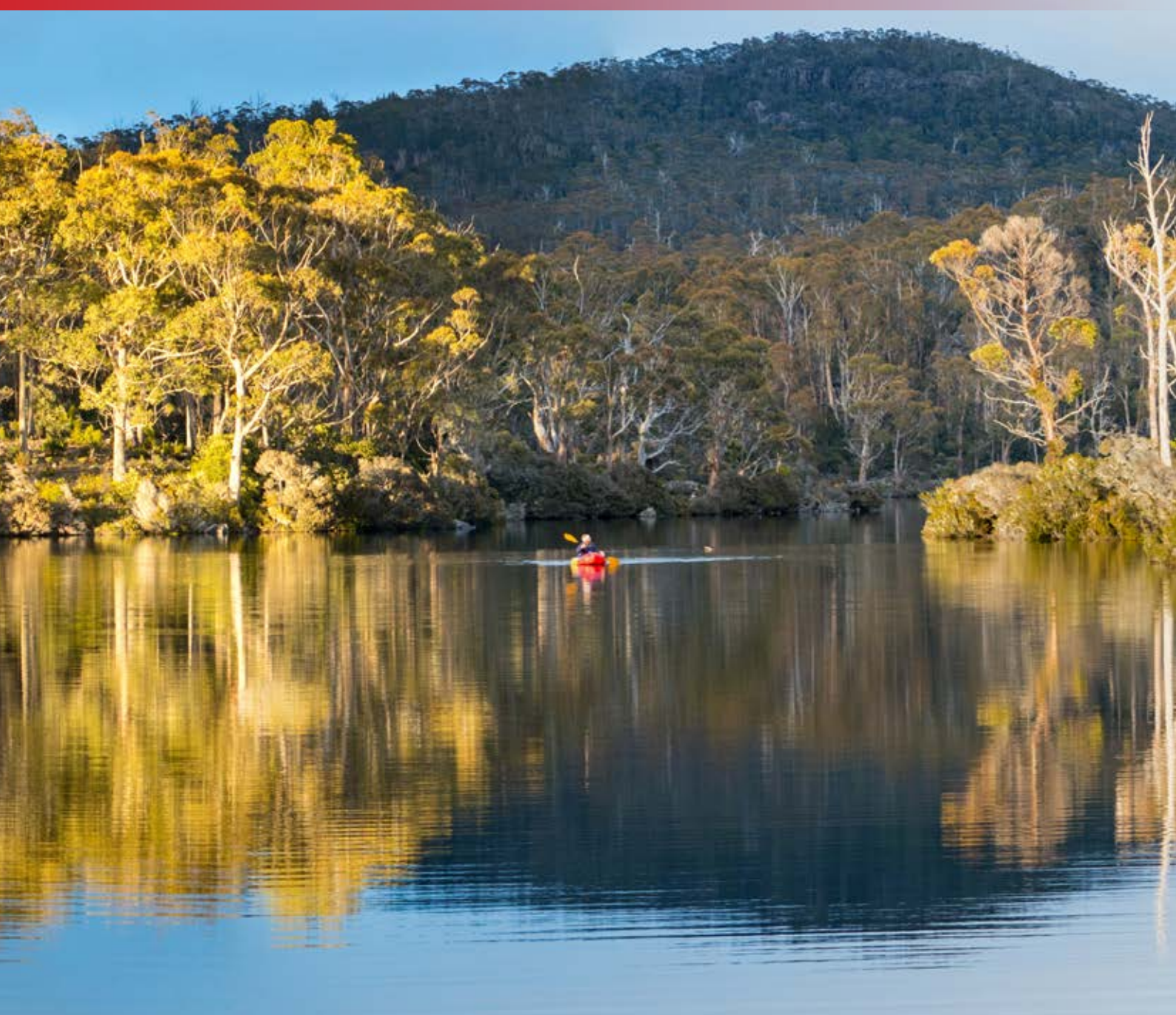






# Malbena Matters!

Jenny Smith



“A hunter, a fisherman, and a bushwalker walk into a community centre” – it sounds like the start of a corny joke, with one of the three coming out looking like a fool or a smart aleck. But on a warm Sunday in September 2020, these three groups came together in a capacity crowd at the community centre in Miena on Tasmania’s isolated Central Plateau, united and determined to not let the terrible joke that is the proposed heli-tourism development on Halls Island in Lake Malbena go ahead.



### Lake Malbena and Halls Island

Near the eastern shore of the isolated Lake Malbena in central Tasmania you will find Halls Island, 10 hectares, named after Reg Hall, who built a tiny ramshackle hut there in the 1950s. Reg was a lawyer and thought it prudent to get a lease on the footprint of the hut, and allowed the hut to be used by walkers and anglers. Lake Malbena is in the Western Lakes on the eastern boundary of the Walls of Jerusalem National Park, one of the top five trout fisheries in the entire world. After a day's walk you can reach Lake Malbena in the incredible Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage (TWWHA) area.

Or rather, that's where Lake Malbena was ... until 2016 when the Tasmanian Government quietly changed the boundary to exclude it from the TWWHA and put it into the Central Plateau Conservation Area (CPCA).

### Developments in secret

Two thousand and sixteen was a busy year. Reg Hall's family passed the hut lease on to a trout guide. Somehow, this hut lease secretly morphed to include a second, exclusive, lease over the entire island, at a cost of slightly more than the lease cost of a rubbish tip. The TWWHA boundary quietly moved to the western side of the lake, so that Lake Malbena was no longer in the TWWHA. The zoning over the CPCA changed to allow 'self-reliant recreation'. Then accessing the CPCA by helicopter was deemed to be "self-reliant recreation". Then the lessee submitted an Expression of Interest to put a "standing camp" on Halls Island, with

helicopter flights in; no one else knew it was even possible to apply. Much of this was discovered by accident, and the lessee and the Tasmanian Liberal Government weren't happy about their cosy little affair being outed. The Government said the secrecy was due to "commercial in confidence" negotiations. Surely the owners of the area – the Tasmanian people – should have a say?

It gets more interesting. A rowboat appeared at Halls Island, which can't be accessed by boats using the usual means. "Fauna monitoring cameras" also appeared on the island; aimed 150 cm off the ground. A packrafter discovered fresh tracks cut with chainsaw leading from the shores of Lake Malbena (a poor fishing lake) towards a trophy lake.

### Rich people only

Right To Information (RTI) documents show "Key target markets will be discerning travellers looking for ... privileged access to Tasmania's wilderness", with "helicopter use (being a) key element of the product". They show the proponent was advised by Parks to split the development into two parts to increase its chances of success. We learned that a heritage island, a jewel in the Tasmanian wilderness, was being leased for \$19/week with plans to charge guests \$4500 each, and only those with "a history of respectful relations with the proponent" would be allowed to go there. The proponents "chose to ... release all ... RTI ... to the public" – hardly a transparent gesture when they were already released.



Digitally augmented sign on the eastern edge of the TWWHA  
Dan Broun



### Poor return on investment and a corrupt process

The dissenting views of the Government's own National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council, the Aboriginal Heritage Council, the Tasmanian Aboriginal Heritage Council and the tiny regional Central Highlands Council (CHC) were ignored. There were over 1300 submissions to CHC; three were in favour. Coincidentally, three is also the number of jobs this proposal will create. **Three** ... yet the Tasmanian Government has said this project would come under its proposed Major Projects legislation.

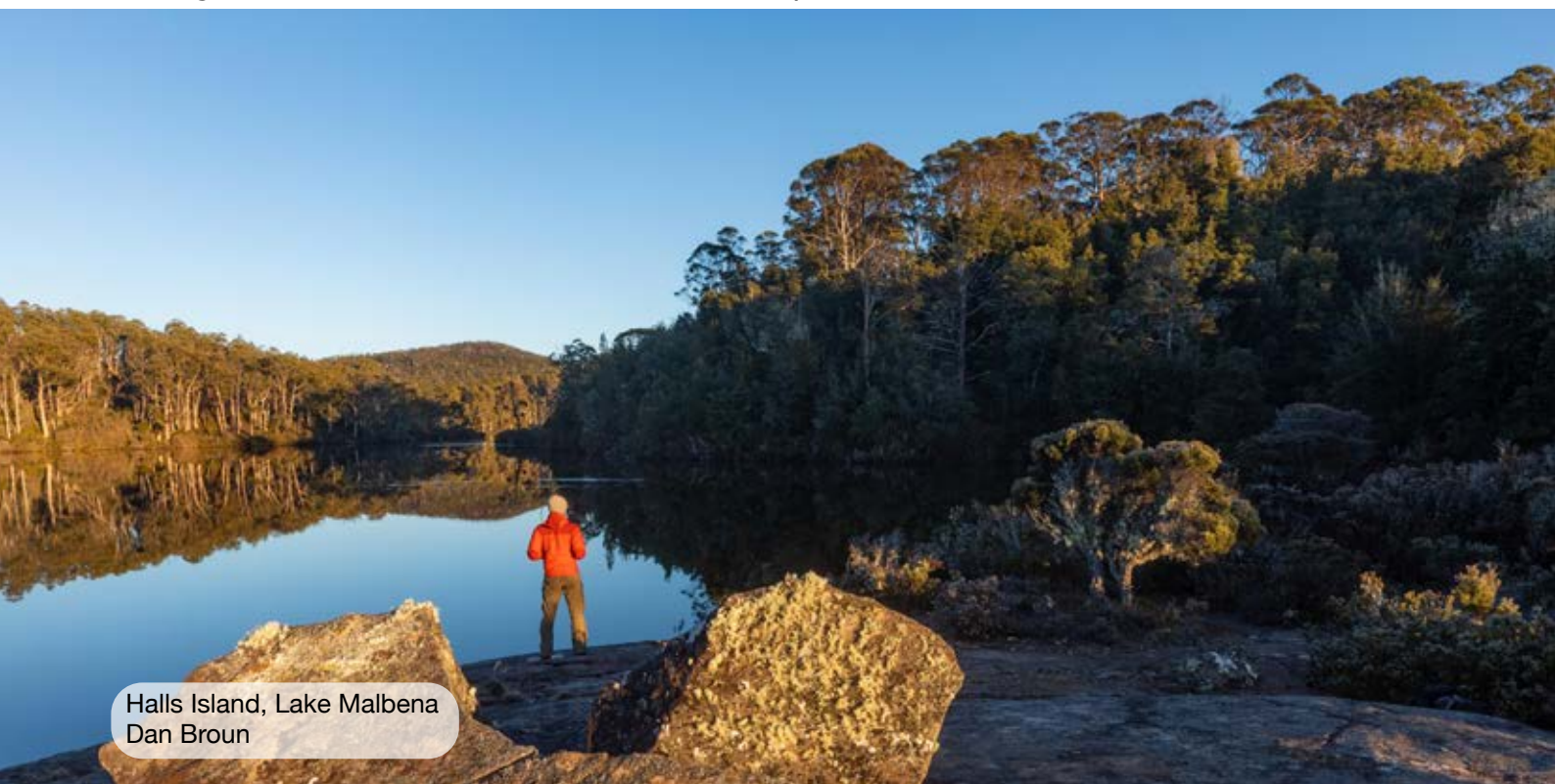
The Halls Island Standing Camp proposal with its corrupt beginning and blatant disregard for social licence or wilderness values has brought together a diverse group. In December 2019, over 150 people came out in poor weather along miles of dirt roads to "Reclaim Malbena". Watching the walkers, the anglers in fly jackets, the conservationists, the kayakers, the hunters in camo gear, the families, and the many ordinary folks interact and come together to condemn this ill-founded and corrupt proposal should be a politician's worst nightmare. In September 2020, this group met again at Miena, and they were much angrier. Initially they were angry about their wilderness being ruined; now they are furious as more and more dodgy dealings are exposed, and their views are being blatantly disregarded in favour of the elite few.

### A federal reprieve

The audience at the meeting organised by Fishers and Walkers against Helicopter Access (FAWAHA) was pleased by the Federal Environment minister [Sussan Ley's announcement](#) on 17 September 2020 that the Halls Island proposal will be a Controlled Action under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act, meaning there will be "a detailed assessment ... made and all possible impacts on the TWWHA (will be) considered." However, the proponent is probably keener than before to get this proposal up, as they've just learned their existing fly-fishing business based at Lake Ina on Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC) land won't have its lease renewed next year.

### Mystery investors; political donations?

The major backers of this proposal hold their shares "non-beneficially" ie, for the benefit of "others". Who are these "others"? Who has a lot of money to keep fighting the court cases? Who has an interest in tourism? Is it a group with a long history of political donations, and post-political career job options? We can't match up the possibilities with the political donations register, because 80% of donations in Tasmanian politics aren't publicly known, due to the weakest political donation laws in Australia. The Liberal Government support this proposal, and Labor have been stunningly silent; who donates substantial sums to both these parties?



Halls Island, Lake Malbena  
Dan Broun



### TWWHA is unique

The TWWHA is the **only** wilderness area in the **whole** world that satisfies **seven out of ten** World Heritage criteria. It is that special, that unique, that precious. It is worth much more than money, it is priceless, our regard for it comes from our hearts not our pockets. And because of this, the diverse group that oppose the Halls Island development will go to great lengths to ensure this thin edge of the wedge will not be driven into our special place.

There was a recent stickering campaign by a group, Anonymous for the Wild, who re-jigged the well-known Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service logo to read "Tasmania Privatising Wilderness Service". Just before this campaign, the secretary of DPIPWE wrote to Parks staff to ask for loyalty and respect to the Manager of Parks; if they asked the staff **why** there was a lack of respect and loyalty, they'd certainly get some answers. Unlike the Tasmanian public, who ask a lot of questions about being locked out of their wild places and get very little in the way of answers.

The court actions continue, and funding is required, so any [donations](#) are greatly appreciated. Have you written to the Parks Minister [Roger Jaensch MP](#) to express your outrage? The Skullbone Plains lease [will not be renewed](#). See also [TLC's statement](#) about Riverfly. The Tasmanian Auditor General has released [a report](#) into the expressions of interest for tourism investment opportunities process. The report is critical of a number of aspects. [TNPA](#) has commented.



Jenny didn't know how good she had it as a child, spending her early years in a small town in the Tasmanian wilderness. She's a keen walker and harpist who supports her passions by working as a scientist. Her partner is a keen angler, and Jenny has spent many an hour on the side of a lake with a small harp, ending the day with a meal of trout caught and cooked by him – he's great in the kitchen and she's great in the dining room, a perfect partnership.





# Malbena Matters!

## The 20 September Meeting

Dan Broun



On Sunday 20 September 2020, Fishers and Walkers Against Helicopter Access (FAWAHA) hosted a public meeting to update stakeholders on the various issues around the Lake Malbena development proposal by Wild Drake Pty Ltd.

Greg French at the meeting  
Dan Broun



A series of speakers spoke about their connection to place, their views on the proposal, the history of helicopter tourism in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA), campaign updates and the broader issues of the erosion of public input into decision making over public land.

MC'd by Dan Broun and Jenny Smith of FAWAHA, the Miena Community Centre was at a COVID-regulated capacity of 100 Tasmanians from all walks of life, anglers, bushwalkers and Central Highlands locals. Opening speaker Sharnie Everett of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre welcomed the crowd to yingina/Great Lake and spoke of the history and connection to the area of the palawa community. She also refuted the proposed development as disrespectful and unwelcome to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community. Tom Allen from the Wilderness Society then spoke of the values of the area, of wilderness as a concept and how the Halls Island development will fundamentally erode those values and Tasmania's "brand". He also launched a fund for nature - a fundraising drive to help groups like FAWAHA with their activities as well as the activities The Wilderness Society undertakes in this battle to protect wilderness values.

Following Mr Allen, Nick Sawyer from the Tasmanian National Parks Association (TNPA) spoke of the history of helicopter tourism proposals in the TWWHA and particularly on the Central Plateau. In the past after studies and periods of public feedback any proposals were dropped - he highlighted how in the past public sentiment was taken seriously and was the deciding factor in stopping heli-tourism in its tracks, and how despite even larger public opposition in the Lake Malbena case public opinion has been sidelined and dismissed. These themes of ignoring public opinion and disrespecting traditional users were picked up by the next speaker, Brett Smith, an angler and founder of FAWAHA. Mr Smith spoke passionately about fishing in the Western Lakes and about the erosion of democratic principles in Tasmania.

The next speaker was Craig Garland, fisher from the north-west coast and a political aspirant who condemned the two major political parties and their secretive and divisive tactics. The simmering frustration felt by all speakers and the crowd found a voice with Mr Garland's no-nonsense address to the crowd. Those gathered were left reassured by Mr Garland's announcement



Malbena Matters campaigners  
Dan Broun



he would again run as a political aspirant to represent local people and to defend the values the collected crowd obviously hold dear. The final speaker was Greg French, a legend of angling in the Western Lakes and a renowned author. He spoke brightly and with purpose of his love of the area, his history in the area and of the corruption inherent in the processes set up by politicians and bureaucrats to push for private development throughout the TWWHA. Mr French bought the crowd together as one when he called for them to get noisy and to "maintain the rage".

The meeting wound up with a Q&A session, an informal chat while indulging in delicious scones, cakes and other refreshments supplied generously by the Miena Community Association. A number of actions were given to the crowd by organisers. Here's a summary.

1. Tasmanian Labor is on the brink of backflipping on their public commitment to maintain rights of appeal in "Major Projects" legislation proposed to pass very soon. This includes "major projects" inside World Heritage Areas. Please tell [Rebecca White MP](#) that Labor should stick to their word. It's not a lot to ask! Phone and email [here](#).
2. When the Commonwealth Government call for public submissions we need to get massive numbers. Sussan Ley MP should recognise that the impact on World Heritage values is unacceptable and she can reject it.
3. The opposition to Malbena and privatising our wild places is getting stronger and bigger. Take a look at the ABC Hobart poll. At the time of writing the count was in excess of 850 comments and 99% were dead against it. Have you actually met anyone who says this is a good idea?
4. Tourism operators and members of the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania can and should speak out and use their voice because sending choppers into our wild places has no public support and it's the opposite of Tassies "brand". Who does the TICT represent?
5. There are plenty of alternatives to developing the heart of our wild places. There are plenty of places on public and private land that have road access that could provide excellent tourism opportunities.
6. The Wilderness Society and Tasmanian National Parks Association Supreme Court appeal is on 2 October and you can donate to this [here](#).
7. We filled the Miena Hall and the locals at the Great Lake Community Centre can put on a great spread. Thank you!



Greg French telling everyone to "Maintain the Rage" because that's what will end this!  
Dan Broun







# Malbena Matters!

FAWAHA



They rezoned a wilderness area because a developer told them to.

Lake Malbena  
Brett Kelly

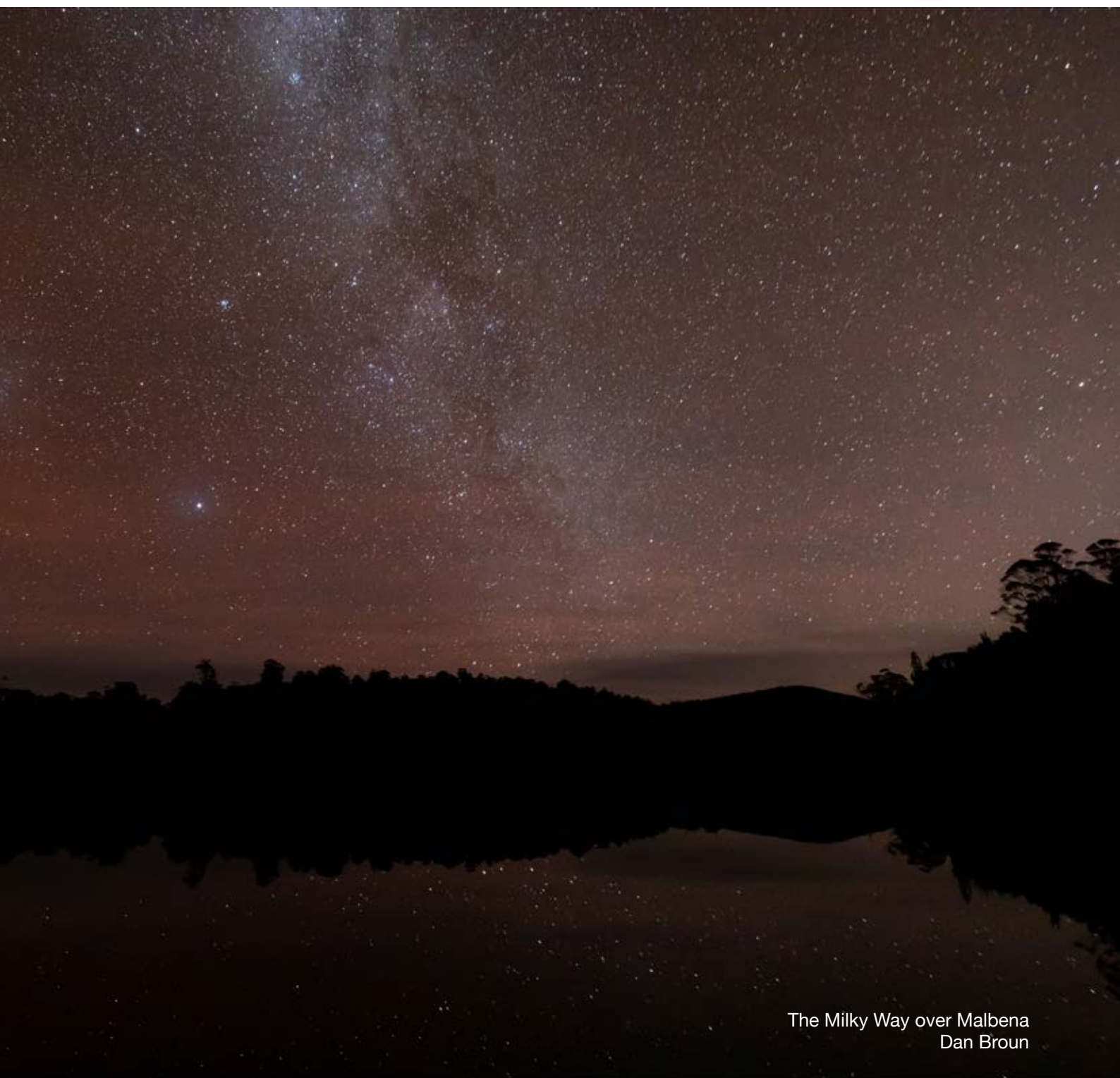


Secretly changed the management plan to allow helicopter access. Signed a lease giving "exclusive possession" of an entire island for slightly more than the lease cost of a rubbish tip. Ignored their own advisory Council (the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council), Aboriginal Heritage Council and Central Highlands Council. Ignored 98% of public submissions, fishers, bushwalkers, everyone who has put pen to paper, made phone calls, protested in the rain, walked in and reclaimed Malbena, signed a petition, lobbied Tasmanian Labor, lobbied the Tasmanian Liberals and written to Jason Jacobi and Tim Baker as heads of Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service.

The Tourism Industry Council Tasmania has called the campaign "hysterical" and labelled the Lake Malbena disaster as "on brand".

It's a disgrace. If the head of Parks signs this off it will be their legacy to have ignored all of these groups and individuals, made every national park, every peaceful lake, every favourite fishing ground and every protected area up for grabs. What a shameful legacy that would be. Malbena matters! You can donate directly to the ongoing legal battle [here](#).

Thank you.



The Milky Way over Malbena  
Dan Broun



# Tasmania's Giant Trees

Jennifer Sanger



Tasmania's native forests are home to some of the [tallest, most beautiful trees](#) in the world. They provide a habitat for many species, from black cockatoos and masked owls to the critically endangered swift parrot.

Chopping down old growth trees doesn't make economic sense.  
Steve Pearce for The Tree Projects



But these old, giant trees are being logged at alarming rates, despite their enormous ecological and heritage value (and untapped tourism potential). Many were also destroyed in Tasmania's early 2019 fires.

Former Greens leader Bob Brown recently launched a legal challenge to Tasmania's native forest logging. And this year, Forestry Watch, a small group of citizen scientists, found five giant trees measuring more than five metres in diameter inside logging coupes. "Coupes" are areas of forest chopped down in one logging operation.

These trees are too important to be destroyed in the name of the forestry industry. This is why my husband Steve Pearce and I climb, explore and photograph these trees: to raise awareness and foster appreciation for the forests and their magnificent giants.

### What makes these trees so special?

*Eucalyptus regnans*, known more commonly as Mountain Ash or Swamp Gum, can grow to 100 metres tall and live for more than 500 years. For a long time this species held the record as the tallest flowering tree. But last year, a 100.8 metres tall Yellow Meranti (*Shorea fagueteria*) in Borneo, claimed the title — surpassing our tallest Eucalypt, named Centrioun, by a mere 30 centimetres.

Centrioun still holds the record as the tallest tree in the southern hemisphere. But five species of Eucalypt also grow above 85 metres tall, with many ranking among some of the tallest trees in the world.

It's not only their height that make these trees special, they're also the most carbon dense forests in the world, with a single hectare storing more than 1,867 tonnes of carbon.



Kevin is in his early 70s and helps us with measuring giant trees.  
Steve Pearce for The Tree Projects



Our giant trees and old growth forests provide a myriad of ecological services such as water supply, climate abatement and habitat for threatened species. A [2017 study](#) from the Central Highlands forests in Victoria has shown they're worth A\$310 million for water supply, A\$260 million for tourism and A\$49 million for carbon storage.

This significantly dwarfs the [A\\$12 million](#) comparison for native forest timber production in the region.

### **Tasmania's Big Tree Register**

Logging organisation Sustainable Timber Tasmania's [giant tree policy](#) recognises the national and international significance of giant trees. To qualify for protection, trees must be at least 85 metres tall or at least an estimated 280 cubic metres in stem volume.

While it's a good place to start, [this policy](#) fails to consider the next generation of big, or truly exceptional trees that don't quite reach these lofty heights.

That's why we've created [Tasmania's Big Tree Register](#), an open-source public record of the location and measurements of more than 200 trees to help adventurers and tree-admirers locate and experience these giants for themselves. And, we hope, to protect them.

Last month, three giant trees measuring more than five metres in diameter were added to the register. But these newly discovered trees are located in coupe TN034G, which is scheduled to be logged [this year](#).

Logging is a very poor economic use for our forests. Native forest logging in Tasmania has struggled to make a profit due to declining demand for non-Forest Stewardship Council certified timber, which Sustainable Timber Tasmania recently failed. In fact, Sustainable Timber Tasmania [sustained](#) an eye watering cash loss of A\$454 million over 20 years from 1997 to 2017.

The following photos can help show why these trees, as one of the great wonders of the world, should be embraced as an important part of our environmental heritage, not turned to wood chips.



Gandalf's Staff  
Steve Pearce for The Tree Projects



It's not often you get to see the entirety of a tree in a single photo. This tree on the previous page is named [Gandalf's Staff](#) and is a *Eucalyptus regnans*, measuring 84 metres tall.

While Mountain Ash is the tallest species, others in Tasmania's forests are also breathtakingly huge, such as the Tasmanian blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) at 92 metres, Manna gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) at 91 metres, Alpine ash (*Eucalyptus delegatensis*) at 88 metres and the Messmate Stringybark (*Eucalyptus obliqua*) at 86 m.



Messmate Stringybark  
Steve Pearce for The Tree Projects

This giant tree, pictured above, was a Messmate Stringybark that was felled in coupe, but was left behind for unknown reasons. Its diameter is 4.4 metres. Other giant trees like this were cut down in this coupe, many of which provided excellent nesting habitat for the critically endangered swift parrot.

Old-growth forests dominated by giant trees are excellent at storing large amounts of carbon. Large trees [continue to grow](#) over their lifetime and absorb more carbon than younger trees.

The tree in the photo below is called Obolus, from Greek mythology, with a diameter of 5.1 metres. Names are generally given to trees by the person who first records them, and usually reflect the characteristics of the tree or tie in with certain themes.

For example, several trees in a valley are all named after Lord of the Rings characters, such as Gandalf's Staff (pictured above), Fangorn and Morannon.

Giant trees are typically associated with Californian Redwoods or the Giant Sequoias in the US, where tall tree tourism is huge industry. The [estimated revenue](#) in 2012 from just four Coastal Redwood reserves is A\$58 million per year, providing more than 500 jobs to the local communities.

Few Australians are aware of our own impressive trees. We could easily boost tourism to regional communities in Tasmania if the money was invested into tall tree infrastructure.



**Jennifer Sanger**

Research Associate, University of Tasmania

This article first appeared in [The Conversation](#) on 6 September 2020.

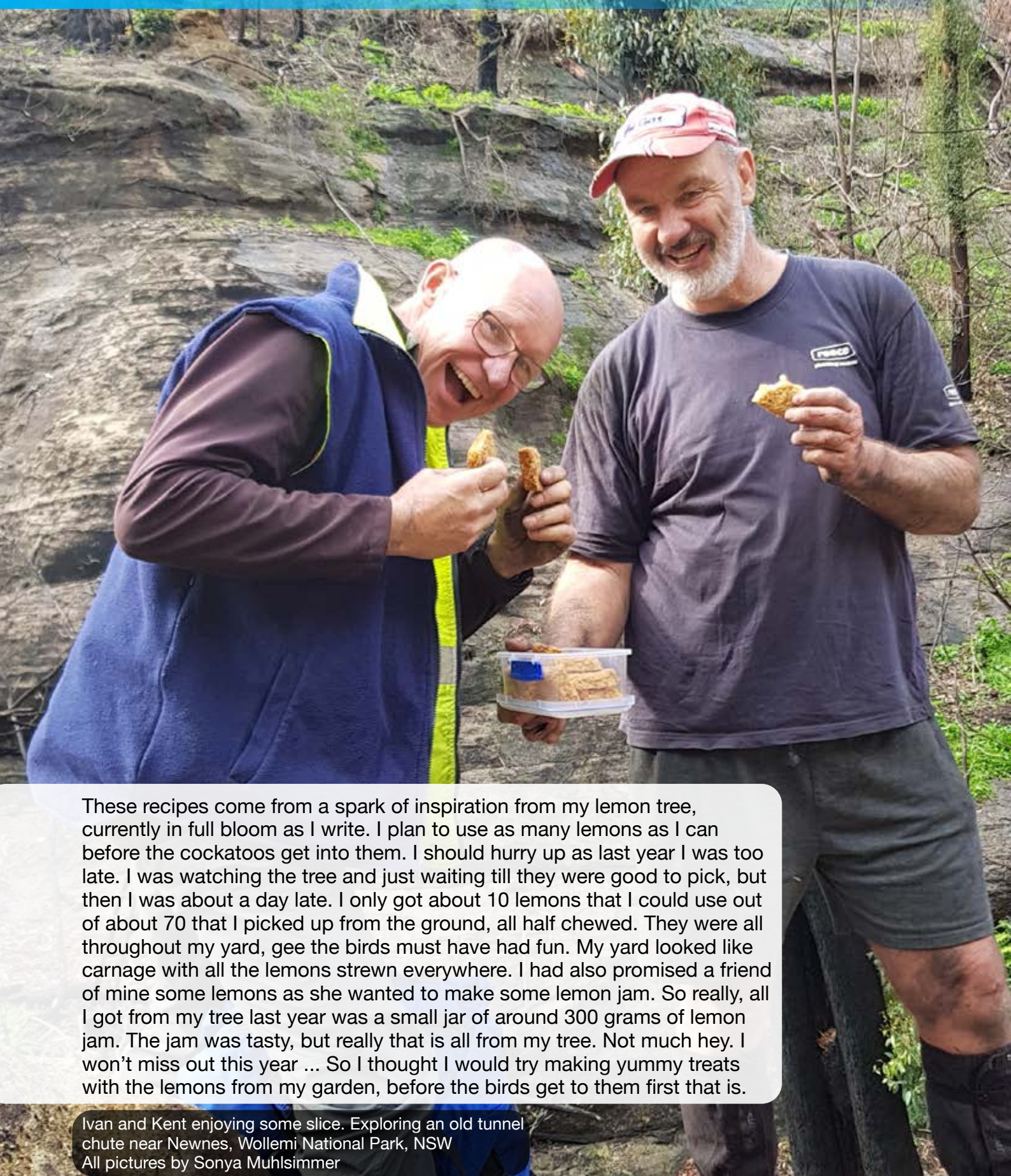


Obolus  
Steve Pearce for The Tree Projects



# What a Lemon!

Sonya Muhlsimmer



These recipes come from a spark of inspiration from my lemon tree, currently in full bloom as I write. I plan to use as many lemons as I can before the cockatoos get into them. I should hurry up as last year I was too late. I was watching the tree and just waiting till they were good to pick, but then I was about a day late. I only got about 10 lemons that I could use out of about 70 that I picked up from the ground, all half chewed. They were all throughout my yard, gee the birds must have had fun. My yard looked like carnage with all the lemons strewn everywhere. I had also promised a friend of mine some lemons as she wanted to make some lemon jam. So really, all I got from my tree last year was a small jar of around 300 grams of lemon jam. The jam was tasty, but really that is all from my tree. Not much hey. I won't miss out this year ... So I thought I would try making yummy treats with the lemons from my garden, before the birds get to them first that is.

Ivan and Kent enjoying some slice. Exploring an old tunnel chute near Newnes, Wollemi National Park, NSW  
All pictures by Sonya Muhlsimmer



# Lemon Madeira Cake

Lemons are packed full of minerals like iron, copper, potassium and calcium and contain flavonoids (which are antioxidants), other antioxidants and Vitamin C, in fact they provide 53 mg of Vitamin C to 100 grams. Although not eaten alone like a normal fruit, lemons are so versatile. They can be used in so many different recipes such as slices, cakes, pies, pasta, rice, noodle and fish dishes, salad dressings. You can add lemon to drinks such as beer – I dread to say the name of the beer at the moment - lemonade, lemon lime and bitters and even add a slice to your tea, oh and the leaves can be used to make tea too, the list goes on. You can use lemons for cleaning your house as the citric acid can cut through some serious grease and clean your chopping boards really well. Before I get too carried away here is a great recipe for your next hike to share with friends. This is pretty easy to make and would make a great snack on the go. I chose a Madeira style cake as it has more flour than a traditional cake, thus it has a firmer texture than a normal cake. Stored safely in a container, the cake would last a few days in your rucksack.



Butter		175 grams
Caster sugar	1 cup	175 grams
Lemons - juice and zest	2 small	
Eggs	3 each	
Self raising flour	2 cups	250 grams

## At home preparation

Preheat a fan forced oven to 165 °C. Cream the butter and sugar for about 5 minutes then add the lemon juice and zest, mix through. Add the eggs one at a time with about a third of the flour at each addition with the egg and mix well. Place in a lined loaf tin and bake for about 40 to 50 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool for about 5 minutes before removing from the tin to a wire rack to cool completely. Cut and serve as is.



# Oat, Lemon and Ginger Slice

When you are out on the trails, sharing this slice with your friends, you can surprise them with some new fun facts like the following. The heaviest lemon ever grown was found in Israel and weighed in just over five kilograms, it was in the Guinness Book of Records in 2003. Hooking a lemon up to electrodes can create a battery to run a small watch. Lemons will stay fresh at room temperature for two weeks and in the fridge for up to six weeks. Lemon juice prevents oxidation in foods, which is the browning of food. Flavonoids in the lemons help improve blood flow. So on this note and last but not least, a website I researched stated that Edmund Hillary owed his success on Everest due to lemons. In the book, *The ascent of Everest* by Sir John Hunt and in the chapter written by Hillary himself, he said he consumed hot water flavoured with lemon crystals and heaps of sugar. I doubt that would have been the only thing that made him succeed, but I do know that at high altitude the body does create more red blood cells to compensate for the lower oxygen level in the atmosphere, thus blood cells carry more oxygen through the body. So, if the lemons help improve blood flow, even more oxygen will be circulated through the body which is what you need in a high-altitude, low-oxygen environment. Makes sense to me but food for thought right, got your slice ready, Everest anyone? Let's go.



Rolled oats	1 cup	100 grams
Plain Flour	1 cup	125 grams
Raw sugar	½ cup	100 grams
Desiccated coconut	¼ cup	20 grams
Lemon – juice and zest	1 each	
Crystallised Ginger		100 grams
Butter		125 grams
Treacle	1 Tbsp	35 grams
Coconut oil	1 Tbsp	40 grams
Bicarb soda	1 Tbsp	6 grams

## At home preparation

Preheat a fan forced oven to 165 °C. Using baking paper, line a 28 x 18 cm baking tray. In a large bowl combine the oats, flour, sugar, coconut, lemon zest and crystallised ginger and mix together. In a pot add the butter, treacle and coconut oil over a low heat until the mix has melted. Take off the heat and add the bicarb. Stir through and add this to the dry ingredients and mix thoroughly. Pat down on the baking tray and cook for about 30 to 35 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool for about 5 minutes before removing from the tray to a wire rack to cool completely. Cut into square slices and enjoy on the go.



# In the News

## Community based initiative of the year - Great West Walk

Blacktown City Council won the Community Based Initiative Award from the NSW Branch of Parks & Leisure Australia for the Great West Walk. The awards are now on the [Parks & leisure web site](#).

## Parts of Kosciuszko National Park closed

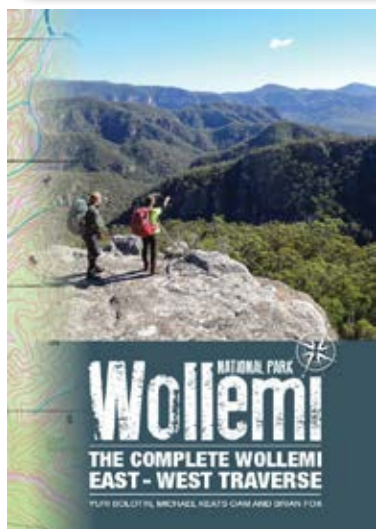
Due to the bushfires, portions of [Kosciuszko National Park are closed](#). After winter the NPWS will be assessing damage, so it may be 4-6 months before more areas are open - a lot of trees need to be cut.



## Winter light photo book by Grant Dixon

Tasmanian photographer Grant Dixon will be publishing a [new book](#) *Winter light* in November.

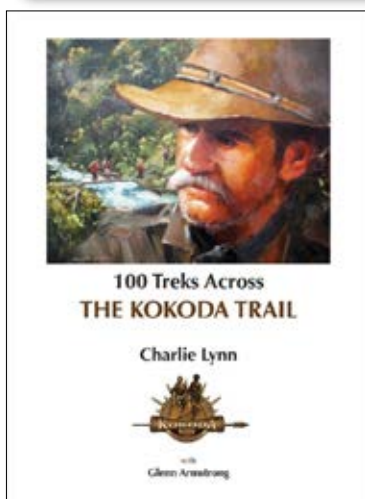
"Grant Dixon's Winter Light displays superb photographs of wild and remote Tasmania in its most splendid season. Winter Light will be taken down time and again from the centre of this wilderness-lover's bookshelf." Bob Brown



## Wollemi National Park new book by Bush Explorers

Yuri Bolotin, Michael Keats OAM and Brian Fox have published a new book, [Wollemi National Park, The Complete East-West Traverse](#).

This detailed chronicle of another ambitious adventure is a companion book to *The Complete Wollemi North-South Traverse*. The east-west story, illustrated with hundreds of colour photographs, will take you on a 12-day journey from Bulga to Growee Gulf via Baker and Bylong Labyrinths. It contains maps and detailed grid references to assist you in planning an adventure of your own.



## 100 Treks Across The Kokoda Trail by Charlie Lynn

A book about the rediscovery of the historical significance of the [Kokoda Trail](#) by Charlie Lynn.

Charlie's first Kokoda trek was in 1991 when the Trail itself was in parts non-existent. It was neither a trail nor a track, for the most part neglected since the end of the Second World War.

The book contains a historic virtual trek for those unable to walk in the footsteps of our heroes, and should rekindle vivid memories for those who have.





# Take Me Home, Mountain Tracks

Stephen Lake

Tune: *Take me home, country roads*

Almost heaven, out bushwalking,  
Bogong High Plains, Murrumbidgee River.  
Life is good there, underneath the trees,  
Camping in the mountains, strolling in the breeze.

Mountain tracks, take me home  
To the place I belong.  
Wild bush country, ever higher.  
Take me home, mountain tracks.

All good memories, remote places,  
Ridge a climbin', mighty wind-swept summits.  
Wild and peaceful, to refresh my mind.  
Dew upon the dawn grass, nature is so kind.

Mountain tracks, take me home,  
To the place I belong.  
Wild bush country, ever higher.  
Take me home, mountain tracks.



I see the pictures of the places that I long for.  
The scattered gear at home reminds me of peaks snowy.  
Those distant mountains, their siren song is  
Calling me to where I need to be, need to be.

Mountain tracks, take me home,  
To the place I belong.  
Wild bush country, ever higher.  
Take me home, mountain tracks.

Mountain tracks, take me home,  
To the place I belong.  
Wild bush country, ever higher.  
Take me home, mountain tracks.

Take me home, on mountain tracks.  
Take me home, on mountain tracks.





# Bushwalk Australia



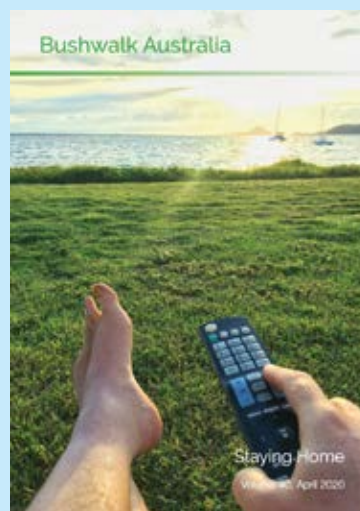
## COVID Contingencies

- > Barrington Tops
- > Mount Emmett
- > South West Cape circuit
- > Overland Track app



## Bushwalking Anew

- > Three Capes
- > Spirit of place
- > The butterfly effect
- > First aid kit



## 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



## Alpine Adventures

- > Hannells Spur Loop, NSW
- > AAWT
- > MUMC – 75 Years Old



## Awesome Adventures

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



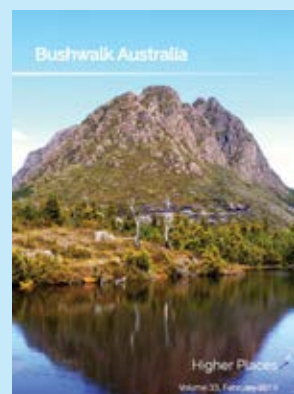
## Wild & Rugged

- > 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



## Peak Promenade

- > Pindars Peak
- > Cordilleras in Peru



## Ridges & Valleys

- > Buffalo, The Bluff and Mt McDonald



## Ambling Adventures

- > An Abel challenge
- > Pack hauling



## Act Now

- > Viking Circuit
- > Overland Track

