

**MELBOURNE  
BUSHWALKERS INC.**

ABN 14 396 912 508



# THE NEWS

#871

October  
2023



Little Desert reflections - M. Quick



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## WE ARE A MEMBER OF



Members of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc meet on Wednesday evenings between 6.30-8.30 pm in the club rooms at:

**Mission to Seafarers Victoria**  
**717 Flinders Street**  
**Docklands**

Visitors are always welcome!

General correspondence should be directed to:

The Secretary  
Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc  
PO Box 1751  
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

[www.melbournebushwalkers.org.au](http://www.melbournebushwalkers.org.au)

Next committee meeting: Monday 2 October

The News of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc (The News) is published monthly, and is the official newsletter of Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.

Editor: Deb Shand

Calls for expressions of interest for club activities and extended trips, walk reviews, articles, poems, news items, photographs of Club events, reports of new gear, book/ movie reviews, letters to the editor, advertisements, et cetera are always welcome (maximum 400 words). However, the Editor reserves the right to edit contributions where space, clarity or propriety dictate, and to maintain editorial consistency.

Note: photographs should be sent as separate high resolution files which are capable of being edited.

**Please send your contributions as unformatted text files by email to [news@mbw.org.au](mailto:news@mbw.org.au)**

**Closing date for receipt of material for The News is the 21st of the month.**

Advertisements should relate to bushwalking (e.g. gear, maps, trips, tours, health and fitness etc.). These may be published subject to space availability and Editor's discretion. For current advertising rates contact the Editor at [news@mbw.org.au](mailto:news@mbw.org.au)

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## New Members

We welcome the following new members:

Angus Dudley

Michael Beljan



Tanglefoot track - J. Allan



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**Would you like your trip photos featured in the newsletter?**

Due date for contributions to November News: 21 October

Email: [news@mbw.org.au](mailto:news@mbw.org.au)



## President's column

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Melbourne Bushwalkers, like other volunteer organisations, brings together a diverse group of individuals and experiences.

All members are bound by the Club's overarching Code of Conduct and Participants Responsibilities. That is, we all have a duty of care towards each other to ensure a safe and enjoyable participation.

The Committee spends considerable time seeking ways to maintain and improve the safety of its leaders and walkers. In the last few years, we've seen a revised risk management plan, a new critical incidents policy and process plan and the mandating of PLBs for most walks. In process is a guideline for Pack Carries and Base Camps to help make them safer and more enjoyable for participants with a strong focus on the leaders' duty of care.

We strive to keep a balance between ensuring we fulfill our duty of care to all participants whether that be someone's first Sunday bus or another person's fiftieth multi day pack carry. This also means striking a balance between the needs of new leaders and those who've been leading for years and decades.

The Committee's approach is to improve safety without adding layers of form filling, box ticking or reporting that may have value on paper but not necessarily on the trail. Leaders will stop leading and walkers go elsewhere if we don't get the balance right.

In all of this, there's nothing stronger than being kind and supportive to each other as required by our Code of Conduct. None of us know what the person next to us may be going through. It sounds banal but a little bit of compassion and tolerance goes a long way especially when something goes wrong and people get stressed.

Happy walking.

David Stockley  
Acting President

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## Upcoming Federation Weekend

Bookings are open for this event, to be held on 21-22 October, in the Trentham area. See our website preview for more details and also the main booking site <https://fedwalks.org.au/>

If you register as a leader or a walker, please email [gws@mbw.org.au](mailto:gws@mbw.org.au) so that our Club records can be updated.

Stuart Hanham (General Walks  
Secretary)





## Vale Debbie Brewis

11 April 1961 – 20 August 2023

Sadly Debbie, another Melbourne Bushie chose to depart a few weeks ago. Her dedicated family and friends supported her admirably up to her last breath. Surrounded by devoted and loving siblings, nephews, family and friends she bravely held a celebration of life to enjoy precious moments with all. She was stoically battling cancer for the last few years.

With her infectious smile and gorgeous golden locks she joined Melbourne Bushwalkers over 20 years ago and journeyed on many adventures locally and overseas. She



was an intrepid traveller and hiked like a beacon at top speed out in front. Her pack carries took her up Kosciusko, Feathertop, Mt Gower on Lord Howe Island and Mt Fansipan in Vietnam.

Walking with her provided many memorable occasions for many different club members whilst in New Zealand, Cambodia, Japan and numerous other places. The laughs, antics and compassion she provided will be treasured by many of her bushwalking buddies.

We all would like to acknowledge her determination and brave spirit which will be missed deeply.

Angela Vetsicas



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## October Safety and Risk Reminders

Mick Noonan, Risk Officer

This month the focus is on the **fire season** ahead, with its associated heat impacts, and the **Club's policy on children on activities**.

**Fire Season:** (MOD) The Fire Season generally starts in October and runs through to the end of April. So look out for Total Fire Bans and use the **Vic Emergency App** to keep across what's happening near you. With the BOM predicting a return to hotter El Nino years we should expect elevated fire risks particularly when grass and other growth from the recent wetter years dries out. See the Spring Fire Outlook in this News.

In Fire Season Leaders should:

- Ensure the **Emergency Plus** (for accurate location data) and **Vic Emergency Apps** (for incidents and warnings) are loaded onto their mobile.



*continued next page*

- Take a **Personal Locator Beacon (PLB)** as required by our updated PLB Policy.
- Review the Activity Guidelines on **Extreme Weather** and **Considering Bushfire Risk before an Overnight Walk**.
- Take an **AM/FM radio or App** for checking ABC Emergency Warnings.
- All groups must have mobile phones preferably with good remote area coverage.

The above safety items are also useful in dealing with floods and flooded creek/river crossings.

Both PLBs (checked periodically by the Club, you don't need to check them!) along with digital radios (you should check the radio batteries!) can be borrowed from the Clubrooms.

**Hyperthermia or Heat Illness (MOD):** There are several forms of **hyperthermia** or heat illness. Early symptoms such as *heat cramps* are fairly mild, *Heat Exhaustion* is more severe, and *Heat Stroke* is the most serious form of hyperthermia. It can be life-threatening. So avoiding it yourself and knowing how to recognise it in others is important. See the St Johns Ambulance Information Sheet in this News.

***If someone is delirious or not responsive and vomiting, they need immediate first aid and medical assistance.***

The Red Cross **First Aid** app is free and works in Airplane Mode on your Smartphone. It is useful for remembering what to do for Hyperthermia and most other medical emergencies at home or outdoors.

**Children on Activities:** Club rules and bylaws require members to be over 18 years of age. Anyone under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. In addition the activity organiser/leader needs to give their approval prior to the activity (By Law 5.7).

***Members and especially Leaders are encouraged to read these monthly Reminders to stay aware of their responsibilities as participants or as leaders on Club Activities: NEW = a new item; MOD = changed from last time; and the others are unchanged.***

## Heat-induced illnesses

**IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY  
CALL TRIPLE ZERO (000) FOR AN AMBULANCE.**

**DRSABCD** Danger ▶ Response ▶ Send for help ▶ Airway ▶ Breathing ▶ CPR ▶ Defibrillation

The DRSABCD Action Plan is the first step when providing first aid. Use this to assess the immediate situation. DOWNLOAD THE DRSABCD FACT SHEET

**HEAT EXHAUSTION**

**WARNING**  
If a person with heat exhaustion is not managed appropriately, they can develop heat stroke.

**SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

- feeling hot, exhausted, weak and fatigued
- persistent headache
- thirst
- nausea
- faintness, dizziness
- rapid breathing and shortness of breath
- pale, cool, moist skin
- rapid, weak pulse

**WHAT TO DO**

- 1 Move the patient to a cool place with circulating air.
- 2 Help the patient to sit or lie down in a comfortable position.
- 3 Remove unnecessary clothing from the patient, and loosen any tight clothing.
- 4 Sponge the patient with cold water.
- 5 Give the patient cool water to drink.
- 6 Seek medical aid if the patient vomits or does not recover quickly.

**HEAT STROKE**

**WARNING**  
Heat stroke is potentially life-threatening and immediate medical aid is needed.

**SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

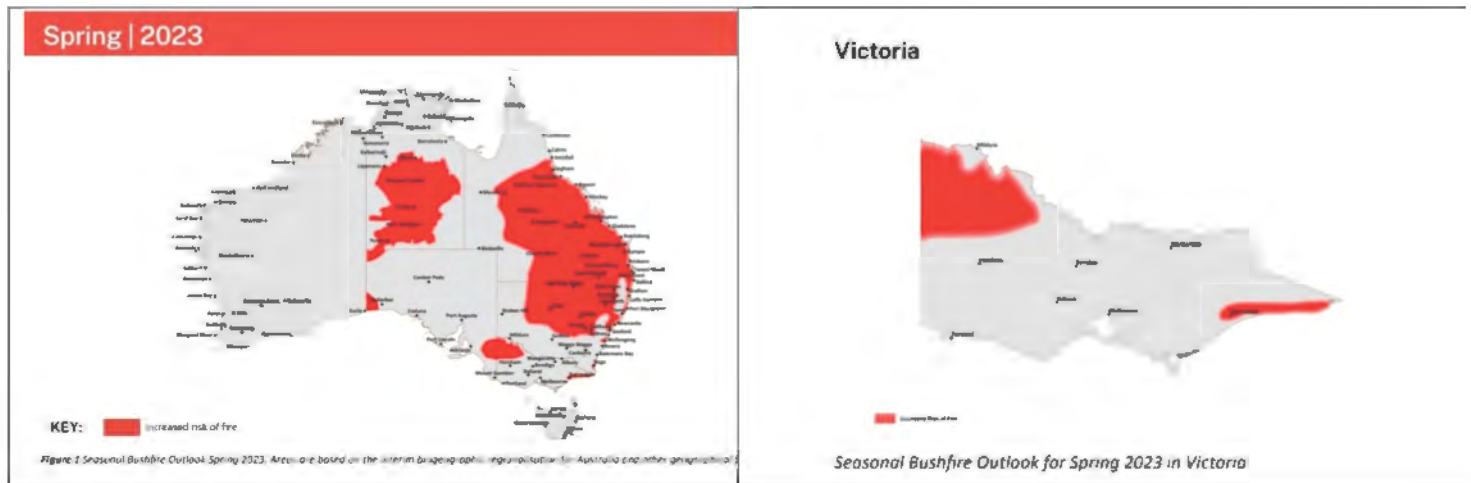
- high body temperature of 40°C or more
- flushed, dry skin
- pounding, rapid pulse that gradually weakens
- headache and irritability
- nausea, vomiting
- visual disturbances
- faintness, dizziness, confusion
- loss of consciousness
- seizures

**WHAT TO DO**

- 1 Follow DRSABCD.
- 2 Call triple zero (000) for an ambulance.
- 3 Move the patient to a cool place with circulating air.
- 4 Help the patient to sit or lie down in a comfortable position.
- 5 Remove almost all the patient's clothing, and loosen any tight clothing.
- 6 Apply a cold pack to areas of large blood vessels such as the neck, groin and armpits, to accelerate cooling.
- 7 If possible, cover the patient with a wet sheet and fan to increase air circulation. Stop cooling when the patient feel cold to touch.
- 8 If patient is fully conscious and is able to swallow, give them cool water to sip.



## 2023 Fire Season Outlook for Spring for Victoria



For spring 2023, **increased risk of bushfire** has been identified for large areas of the Northern Territory, Queensland and New South Wales, as well as regions in Victoria and South Australia.

### Victoria

**Summary:** Victoria can expect a warmer spring and earlier start to the high risk fire season this year, following three years of lower fire risk seasons as a result of La Niña conditions.

Despite below average rainfalls for winter, much of the state has moist soils due to above average rainfall for much of the last three years. This moisture is likely to result in higher grass and crop growth during the spring outlook period.

In the east, a strong drying trend has emerged recently in far east Gippsland, extending to central Gippsland, which has resulted in recent planned burn opportunities. As a result, there is a higher than normal potential for forests to carry fire in the outlook period, especially in and surrounding coastal communities close to bushland where vegetation was unburnt or lightly burnt during the 2019-20 fires.

This outlook indicates drier and warmer conditions than usual for spring. As a result, there is a high likelihood that the bushfire season of 2023-24 will commence earlier across much of central, western and northern Victoria. In agricultural areas, elevated grass fuel loads will likely cure earlier than most years and may present an elevated risk until harvest occurs.

Elsewhere around the state, the fire risk potential is assessed to be normal noting that drier forests, woodlands and heathlands (inland and coastal) can pose a fire risk under the onset of hot, dry and windy weather conditions. There is considerable uncertainty around the effect that forecast climate drivers will have in regard to any potential extremes in drying rates and flammability of foothill and damper forests. As a result, landscape conditions will be monitored during the outlook period to identify key risk areas leading into the summer period.

For the full national AFAC Report (AFAC is the National Council for fire and emergency services) see:

[https://www.afac.com.au/docs/default-source/bushfire-seasonal-outlook/spring-2023/afac-seasonal-bushfire-outlook\\_spring\\_2023\\_v1-0.pdf?sfvrsn=2&download=true](https://www.afac.com.au/docs/default-source/bushfire-seasonal-outlook/spring-2023/afac-seasonal-bushfire-outlook_spring_2023_v1-0.pdf?sfvrsn=2&download=true)



## Track reporting for BTAC

Meredith Quick

Have you come upon an overgrown track? Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation (BTAC) work includes clearing fallen trees and vegetation from existing walking tracks, building or repairing boardwalks, installing or replacing track markers and signage. The preference is to undertake work in the more remote and difficult to reach areas of the State where there is often no local pool of volunteers for the land managers to draw upon.

With spring arriving we are going to head for the hills. Sometimes our progress is hindered by fallen trees or thick regrowth making the track impassable or difficult to navigate. A six hour walk can quite quickly turn into a full day slog.



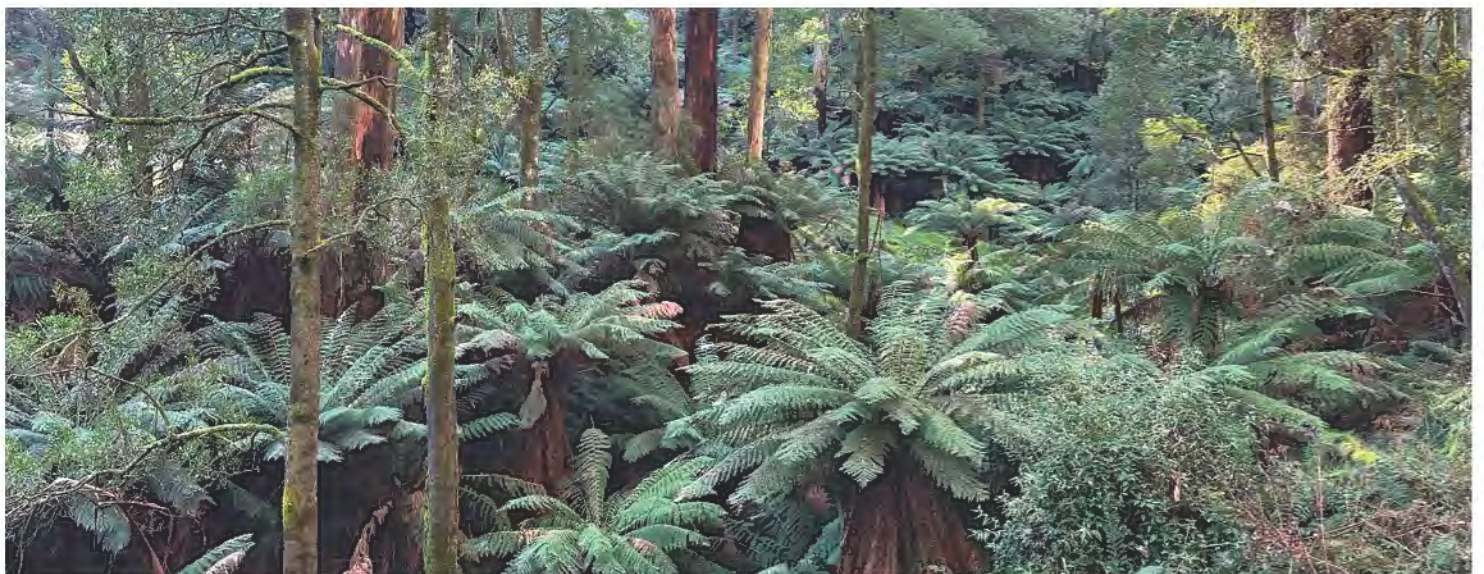
If you encounter these conditions, we need to know about it. We need your feedback to alert us to the tracks that need a bit of love. The best way to report is:

1. Take photos of the scrub across the track
2. Take photos of the fallen trees
3. Take a GPS reading and note the coordinates.
4. Tracks will be overgrown in some sections but not others, estimate the kilometres of track requiring attention.
5. Email your information to [btac@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au](mailto:btac@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au)

I have been assisting with track maintenance for a number of years. It was my way of giving back. This year I agreed to join the BTAC committee, my value is to provide this group with intel on track conditions. Our club has one of the most diverse walking programs and will have greater opportunity to provide the information needed to prioritise maintenance projects.

If you are interested in becoming a BTAC Volunteer, please register on the Parks Victoria Volunteer portal [ParkConnect](#) and join the Bushwalking Victoria group or contact me directly.

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Tree ferns, Mt Worth - R. I. Mair



## WANTED: your favourite dehydrator meal recipe

Bettina Brill

Send in your recipe, if possible with photo of ingredients and/or the cook enjoying the result. Who knows, if we get enough recipes we can have our own Melbourne Bushies dehydrator cookbook. For more info and inspiration contact Bettina who is making this her little project.



This month's recipe is from Deb Shand.

### Simple Gourmet Granola

#### Ingredients:

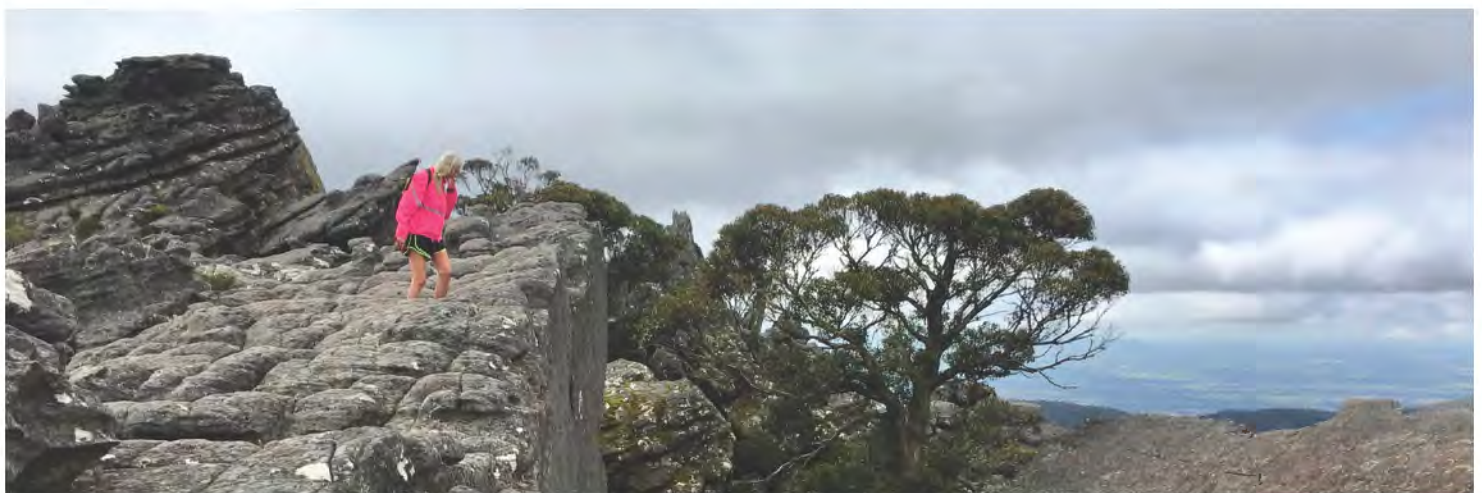
- 4 cups rolled oats (not instant)
- 1 cup walnuts or almonds, chopped
- 1.5 cups mixed seeds (pumpkin, sunflower, sesame)
- 1/4 tsp. finely ground sea salt
- 2-3 tablespoons maple syrup or honey
- 4 tbsp. macadamia or other light oil
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp ground cardamom

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a small saucepan over low-medium heat, stir oil and maple syrup together
3. In a large bowl combine oats, nuts, seeds, salt and spices together. Pour oil and maple syrup mixture over dry ingredients and stir very well to coat
4. Place in a baking tray. Bake for 10 minutes; remove from oven and stir. Place back in oven but remove and stir every 5 minutes or so until the oats are golden brown (approx. 25-30 minutes)
5. Allow to cool and stir through optional additions (eg. cacao nibs, chocolate bits, dried fruit, buckinis) before transferring into large sealed storage jars.

#### Notes:

The granola keeps well in jars in the pantry. Substitute different nuts, seeds, spices, dried fruit etc. as you wish. Serve with yoghurt, fresh fruit, dried milk, or protein powder and water when camping.



Grampians - J. Allan



### Little Desert Pack Carry – 25-28 August 2023

Meredith Quick

The Desert is accessed from the town of Dimboola, a 4-hour drive from Melbourne. Our group arrived in daylight on Friday and were able to select a spacious campsite to accommodate our cars and tents well away from the other residents of the Horseshoe Bend campground. As the sun dipped to the west, Claire's attention to detail paid off: several good sized logs were unloaded from her car boot, the fire was lit and soon the billy was boiling. We all sat around the campfire getting to know each other, sharing tasty nibbles and, of course, a small portion of wine. With prudence we retired early to ensure we were ready to tackle the desert the following day.



We woke to the sound of birdsong. Ros was surprised when 2 emus greeted her as she climbed out of her tent. They hung around for a while to better acquaint themselves, but Ros had other tasks on her mind.

At 9am we headed off along the banks of the Wimmera River for approximately 5km until we turned right and headed into the desert. There had been recent rain so there was plenty of new growth and flowers to keep us captivated as we walked. The local birdlife also was taking advantage of the burst of life brought on by the rains. The varied interests of our group ensured that there were plenty of learning opportunities.

The walking in the desert was tough going. Many motorbikes had recently used the track and the soft sandy surface had been torn up by the tyre tread. There were deep ruts and many sand mounds created by the disturbance. In some places it was easier to walk off track, but of course there was also a potential to tread on fragile plants, so we faced the dilemma of comfort over nature. Shade was a scarce resource as we plodded along the track, and we took advantage each time we came across a shady patch to take our pack off, stretch, drink and steel ourselves for the next segment. At 4:30 we completed the last of the 21km for the day as we



entered the Yellow Gum Campground. Again, we gathered around a fire. The recent rains ensured the tank water was clean and plentiful. It was a great campsite for us to stretch, relax and soothe our aching muscles.

The next day was shorter with only 13km to camp. The changing flora continued to amaze us. Kerry identified a critically endangered Forked Spyridium plant that we had spent hours searching for. We were aware there was a count scheduled for the following weekend to help the science surrounding this rare plant, hence we were on the lookout for it. As the day continued, we walked into orchid territory and spent the rest of the

## Along the track

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afternoon surrounded by them. The walking this day was a bit easier, the motorbikes had opted to go via another route, leaving most of the track in reasonable condition. We reached Mallee camp by 3pm with plenty of time for birding and plant exploration. We again gathered around the campfire as the stars came out, but unfortunately the bright moonlight made it hard to see many of the stars in the milky way. The talk around the campfire was mainly about how we could help parks to curb the motorbikes from using the walking tracks in the park, signs certainly were not a deterrent.

We were up early on the last day ready for our 8am start. We needed to walk the last 14km and return to Melbourne at a reasonable hour. We set off with a low mist shrouding the scrub, it was a grey and windless morning. The mist highlighted the numerous cobwebs strung out between and on the bushes, the bush was looking magical. By 10am we were removing our gloves and jumpers as the mist burnt off and the sun warmed the landscape. There was only intermittent track disturbance from the motorbikes so the track was reasonably easy going. We made great

progress and after only 4 hours we were back at Horseshoe Bend and the cars. We had a leisurely lunch and a good cleanup and were on the road by 1pm for our trip back to Melbourne. We waved goodbye to the emus and we were on our way.

Thanks Claire for organising a great walk.

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## Grampians/Gariwerd Base Camp – 25-27 August 2023

Sylvia Harris

It was with a little trepidation that I picked up Bernie and Liz and headed to the Grampians, a 3-hour drive from Melbourne. 25 members and guests of the Melbourne Bushies joined our Leader, Jill Allen for a two-night stay at the very comfortable YHA.

Saturday morning started at 8.30am where role call revealed that three members were named Sylvia, a quite unique experience for those concerned. The weather was cloudy and mild which was greatly appreciated by those of us who had not done a strenuous walk for a few years. I had not worn my boots for 5 years but was happily surprised that my feet and body went the distance without too much pain.

The Wonderland Walk, past the tranquil Venus Baths, onto the heavily flowing Splitters Falls and up to the Wonderland Car park was strenuous but very picturesque. After a reviving stop, we walked along





## Along the track

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Silent Street with fascinating rock formations and after a detour because of a rock fall, reached the Pinnacle look out. The view down to the township and out along the range was simply stunning. It was a 420 metre climb from Halls Gap and I was happy it was a mild 15 degrees.

The wildflowers were just starting to bloom. We saw some purple and red peas and bright golden wattle bushes and shiny tea tree abounded the area in a stunning display. Another month and the flowers will be amazing. Jill kindly led her group back the same route, avoiding walking down many metal steps. Of course, a walk from the opposite direction always reveals a new view of things.

Back at the YHA, a campfire was lit which created a lovely bush atmosphere, and then our Saturday night dinner was a wonderful display of culinary talents with lots of delicious food to share.

Sunday was pack up and out and heading off at 8.45am for a shorter walk. This time a meandering trail along the creek until the turn off to Boronia Peak. It happened that this weekend was the Wonderland Run Grampians, an amazing trail running event, where hundreds of runners charged flat out along the narrow rocky trails. We had to move very quickly to the sides of the track to avoid being flattened by the enthusiastic runners. We gave them all a big cheer.

Boronia Peak is a 589m peak with a tricky rock scramble to the top. As with Saturday, we had no winds, and with the sun emerging we all sat on the top of the rocks, enjoying another splendid view. This area is incredibly beautiful, and we were so ably led by our leader Jill, who I think, is a great asset to the club. I enjoyed meeting many new people and catching up with others. Many thanks Jill.



## Upcoming activities

### October 2023

Sun 1	DAY: Werribee Gorge circuit & The Island	Car	E/M	Brett Daniel
Mon 2	MTG: Club Committee Meeting	Pvt		David Stockley
Tue 3	MTG: Video session: French Island	Pvt		Christine Dineen
Thu 5	TOF: Elsternwick Parks and surrounds	Pvt	E	Halina Sarbinowski
6-8	BC: Northern Grampians rock scrambles	Pvt	H	Leigh Wykes
Sat 7	TRG: Glasgow Road circuit	Pvt	M/H	Robert Ian Mair
Sun 8	DAY: Mt Donna Buang-Cement Creek	Bus	E&E/M	Robert Ian Mair & Halina Sarbinowski
Wed 11	DAY: Main Yarra Trail, Heidelberg	Pvt	E	Silvia Grande
13-15	PC: Mt Cobbler from the West	Pvt	M/H	Ray Thomas
14-15	PC: Beginners: Tarilta Creek	Pvt	E	Robert Ian Mair
Sun 15	DAY: Tunnel Point via Shaws Lake & Byers Back Track	Car	E/M	Judith Shaw
Mon 16	MOF: Glen Eira Parks and surrounds	Pvt	E	Bill Metzenthien
Wed 18	DAY: Currawong Bush Park	Pvt	E/M	Margaret Curry
21-22	BC: Federation Weekend-Trentham & surrounds	Pvt	Var	Stuart Hanham (contact)
Sun 22	DAY: Surf Coast- Bells to Anglesea	Bus	E&E/M	Bettina Brill & Helen Takano
23-3	PC: Pemberton to Walpole (WA)	Pvt	M/H	Meredith Quick
Wed 25	SOC: MtSV Art Show & Walking in NZ	Pvt		Brett Daniel
Thu 26	SOC: Darebin Creek Trail	Pvt	E	Bernadette O'Connell
26-29	MNT: BTAC: AAWT-Ropers-Duane Spur-Big River	Pvt	M/H	Meredith Quick & Mark A Heath
27-29	PC: Billywing Gorge (Grampians)	Pvt	H	Leigh Wykes
Sun 29	DAY: Lal Lal-Bungal Historic Area	Car	E/M	Jan Colquhoun

For detailed preview notes and program updates, please refer to the activities program on our website: [https://mbw.org.au/mbw\\_activities/MBW\\_activities\\_program.php](https://mbw.org.au/mbw_activities/MBW_activities_program.php)