

MELBOURNE
BUSHWALKERS INC.

ABN 14 396 912 508



THE NEWS

#874

January
2024



Camping near Roper's Hut, Bogong High Plains - Fang Fang

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

Next committee meeting: Monday 5 February

New Members

We welcome the following new members:

Andreas Meister

David Rhoderick

Club room closure 27 December 2023

Please note that the clubrooms will be closed over the Christmas-New Year period on 27 December 2023.

The clubrooms will be open on Wednesday evenings as usual from 3 January 2024 onwards.

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 recommended). 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

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



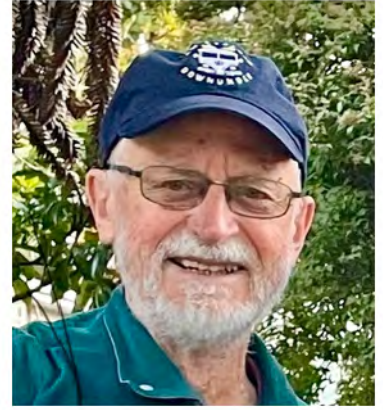
The catering team preparing for the MBW Christmas party - but where's Meredith?

Would you like your trip photos featured in the newsletter?

Due date for contributions to February News: 21 January
Email: news@mbw.org.au



Our Christmas party was held on Tuesday 12 December when we had about 100 members attending. I was never quite convinced that catering was better than 'bring your own' as we used to do but I am now! There was a great variety of food available, just as well as I was suddenly hungry. I was able to catch up with a number of bushies that I hadn't seen in a while and there was a great deal of chattering going on. All most enjoyable. Three walk leaders scored a \$50 voucher each when their names were pulled out of a hat - well-earned congratulations to Ian Mair, Jerry Grandage and Brett Daniel. Thanks Meredith and team, you did a grand job, thanks to you all.



Looking towards next year now and the AGM, may I draw your attention to the awards that are on offer to club members: **Go The Extra Mile (GTEM)** and **Above and Beyond Call of Duty (ABCD)**.

The GTEM award is a *monthly award* to recognise members for extraordinary help, for example:

- Aiding a leader on a walk, such as First Aid, walking an injured or unfit walker out
- Taking on a walk at short notice
- Assisting a leader to do a preview, if not the co-leader

The ABCD annual award is for the *best significant contribution* by any member in the prior year. This could include:

- Committee members undertaking significant one-off tasks
- A walk leader who has made exceptional contributions
- Managing the Club's Federation activities

The Awards panel needs your nominations for the ABCD award **by the end of February** so please put on your thinking caps! Find the on-line form for both these awards in the *members' area of the website*.

I seem to be reading lots of articles about health at present, eating, drinking (or not), exercise, with changing views always depending on the author and their alliances. Some things remain fairly constant though and I picked out the following recently:

People Living in Green Areas seem to age slower at the cellular level. Surrounding ourselves with nature does wonders for our bodies, from better mental health to healthier hearts and stronger developing immune systems. So much so that some doctors are literally prescribing nature as a treatment.

and another observation:

Just one in three Australians know how to deal with getting lost, while two in three Australians entirely reconsider going on trail walks due to safety concerns, according to research commissioned by popular hiking app AllTrails.

Umm! It seems that being a Melbourne Bushie scores well on both of these points!

Finally - the AGM! All committee positions become vacant at year- end and need to be filled at the AGM. We have several committee members who are not putting up for election this year, so we need some new blood. It is vital for the health of the Club that we fill all positions, so please seriously consider putting yourself forward. Don't be shy! And the retiring committee members are only too pleased to help you ease into the positions. The general committee members are *members without portfolio* so this is a good place to start. Give me a call if you're thinking about it.

Have a great, safe, and adventurous 2024!

Derrick Brown

January Safety and Risk Reminders



This month the main theme is “**being a friendly and welcoming club**” and the **members responsibilities** that underpin this aim. How we behave towards each other (and the Leader and Whip!) helps determine how good a time everyone has on an activity. While many of us make great friends in the Club it is easy to forget that, maybe when we joined, it took more time than we hoped to be ‘included’!

The Code of Conduct: (MOD): As a legally Incorporated Organisation we have a number of obligations in how we operate our Club. One of these requirements is to have a **Code of Conduct** that makes it clear what behaviour is expected and what will not be tolerated on outdoor activities, social gatherings, meetings including Committee Meetings, etc. It applies to everyone as a member, leader or in any of the club’s numerous voluntary roles you are involved in. Please read it carefully and reflect on how well you and your friends adhere to the principles e.g.

- Do you make new members feel welcome?
- Do you make an effort to include people who are on their own in your group’s conversations, or just approach them and say hello?
- Encourage people who may be struggling?
- Do you provide support for new trainee leaders?
- Call out inappropriate behaviour?
- In your dealings with others do you treat them with dignity, respect and listen to their concerns?
- Do you argue in public with the leader?
- Do you treat the leader as if they are a paid employee of a travel company?



Participants Responsibilities on Club Activities: Club activities require individual responsibility from all participants. The responsibilities listed in the document are intended to ensure a safe and enjoyable time for everyone. They cover a wide range of items including checking the grading of the activity fits your capabilities, carrying all the relevant equipment you need including a personal first aid kit with your medications, and following all reasonable instructions from the Leader and Whip. Please have a read of this important document!

The **Code of Conduct** and **Participants Responsibilities on Club Activities** documents are reprinted in this News. They are part of the **Club’s By-Laws**, copies of which along with our **Rules** are always available on the Club Website.

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.

Mick Noonan, Risk Officer



CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Statement

Every person participating in the activities of Melbourne Bushwalkers should strive to ensure:

- The inclusion of every person regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, race, culture or religion
- There are opportunities for people with a range of abilities to participate
- They demonstrate respect towards each other, the organization and the broader community
- There is a safe and inclusive environment for all, free from violent or abusive behavior
- There is protection from sexual harassment or intimidation

2. Breaches of the Code

The following behaviors are considered to be breaches of the Code:

- Violent or abusive behavior or vilification of any kind towards another person or the organization
- Discrimination against another person based on their age, gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, religion or any other irrelevant personal characteristic
- Victimization of another person for exercising their rights through this Code of Conduct
- Failure to maintain a safe environment free from violence, abuse, discrimination and harassment

3. Responsibility of Individuals

It is the responsibility of individuals bound by this Code of Conduct to:

- Make themselves aware of the standards of behavior required
- Be accountable for their behavior
- Report breaches of this Code to a Committee Member or Leader

4. Responsibility of Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.

It is the responsibility of the Committee to adopt, implement and comply with this Code of Conduct and treat any breach or complaint made in an unbiased, sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner. Any breaches of this Code will be dealt with in accordance with the Club's By-Laws and Rules.

5. Policy Implementation

The Code of Conduct will be published on the Club's website, be printed in the Club's Newsletter and copies made available in the Club's meeting room

6. Related Policy Documents

- Melbourne Bushwalkers(Inc.) - By-Laws
- Melbourne Bushwalkers (Inc.) - Rules of Association
- Melbourne Bushwalkers (Inc.) - Participants' Responsibilities on Club Activities
- Bushwalking Victoria - Code of Conduct



MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS (INC)

GPO BOX 1751, MELBOURNE, VIC, 3001

PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSIBILITIES ON CLUB ACTIVITIES

Club activities require individual responsibility from all participants. The guidelines listed below are intended to ensure a safe and enjoyable time for everyone.

- Check the grading of the activity and read the grading definition in the Preview. If in doubt as to your ability to undertake the activity, check with the Leader before you commit to participate.
- Persons under 18 years are required to be accompanied by a parent or authorized guardian.
- Bring all the correct clothing, equipment, sun protection, food and water with you. (A minimum of 2 liters of water per day should be carried although this is dependent on terrain and weather conditions. If in doubt about what to bring ask the Leader at booking time or before departure.
- Participants on all Club lilo, rafting and canoe activities are required to use buoyancy vests and helmets.
- Arrive at the meeting place in time to depart at the time stated.
- Ensure your health and fitness is suitable for the activity. Advise the Leader if you feel unwell or suffer an injury during the activity.
- If you suffer a medical condition that may require assistance or medication, ensure you advise the leader, carry appropriate instructions and that the leader or a friend know where these are located.
- Ensure you carry the Club's green Personal Health Details card at all times when participating in a Club activity, preferably in the outside pocket of your pack.
- Ensure you have ambulance cover as evacuation from remote areas is expensive.
- Follow all reasonable instructions from the Leader and "Whip".
- Provide assistance and support to others on the activity.
- Be aware of and comply with the Club's Code of Conduct and demonstrate respect and consideration for other participants
- Stop at all track/road junctions, signs, or whenever there is doubt about the correct route and wait for instructions from the Leader.
- Carry a personal First Aid kit, whistle, torch, pen, paper, matches in waterproof container
- The code when using a whistle is (1 blast – acknowledge, 2 blasts – stop and regroup, 3 blasts – EMERGENCY).
- The Whip is there to assist slower members and to ensure that nobody is left behind. If you need to leave the track for a toilet stop, inform someone nearby and leave your pack on the track.
- Care for the environment – minimize plant damage, don't cut track corners, take your rubbish home, keep at least 100 meters away from watercourses for toilet stops and bury toilet waste at least 15cm below the surface.
- Clean shoes after walking in Phytophthora areas (70% methylated spirits/bleach to 30% water).
- When camping, fuel stoves are encouraged, fires should be kept to a minimum size, no rubbish burnt in fires, only dead wood used for firewood and fires to be completely extinguished before bedtime if conditions warrant and when leaving the campsite.
- Don't pollute streams with shampoo, soap, detergent or food waste. Ensure washing is done away from streams, lakes, etc.
- Ensure you leave details of the activity and names and telephone numbers of the Club Emergency Contacts (noted on the quarterly Activity Program) with your family or friends and make them aware of the emergency procedures.

Summer Seasonal Bushfire Outlook

This is an extract from the AFAC Summer Seasonal Bushfire Outlook. For the full article see [Summer 2023 Bushfire Season Outlook](#)

Overview

Australia has experienced record-breaking dry conditions and warmer than average temperatures during early spring, with hot and dry conditions expected to persist into the new year for many locations.

Abundant vegetation growth supported by previous La Niña rainfall will continue to dry throughout summer, increasing the flammability of fuel loads. This includes some areas burnt during 2019-20 season. These factors are driving increased risk of fire for large areas of Queensland, NSW, and NT, as well as locations in Tasmania, Victoria, SA and WA. This summer, all communities across Australia are urged to prepare for bushfire and monitor local conditions.

Victoria

Rainfall during October eased spring dryness and early fire activity in Gippsland, however above average fuel loads and fire potential is expected to persist this summer, especially in areas that did not burn, or only burned lightly, in the 2019-20 season.

In many of the Black Summer burnt areas, high levels of forest regrowth have already become very dry and may carry fire again, though not as intensely as unburnt forest. In western and central Victoria, including along the Surfcoast, a very dry winter and spring has led to significant rainfall deficits and very low soil moisture.

afac Seasonal Bushfire Outlook

Summer | 2023



KEY: Increased risk of fire

Figure 1 Seasonal Bushfire Outlook Summer 2023. Areas are based on the interim biogeographic regionalisation for Australia and other geographical features.

Increased risk of fire is the likelihood of an increased number of significant bushfires occurring in the outlook period compared to average.

Victoria



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Summer 2023 in Victoria

Summary

- Rainfall over winter and spring has been significantly lower which means above-average fire potential can be expected in eastern, western and central Victoria.
- Tall, damp forests are expected to have lower fire potential until later in the summer due to underlying moisture and abundant green growth.
- Make or review your Bushfire Survival Plan at www.cfa.vic.gov.au/bushfireplan. Know how to stay informed and which information channels work for you.

For further information see: emergency.vic.gov.au

Much of this is evident in terms of above-average fuel availability in dry forests, woodlands and heathlands which means above average fire potential is expected in these areas through summer. Contrasting this, taller damp forests still have underlying moisture and abundant green growth, and so are expected to have lower flammability at least through the early part of summer. Conditions will be monitored through summer.

In agricultural areas, elevated crop and grass fuel loads are expected and likely to cure earlier than most years, increasing fire potential. This may affect areas further south than normal due to very dry soils. Elsewhere around the state, the fire risk potential is average 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. After three wet years, even areas deemed to have average fire risk, could still see significant fire activity, particularly where extra growth dries out, so communities are encouraged to prepare and maintain a high level of awareness in all areas through the summer period.

A Polenta and coconut savoury biscuit recipe

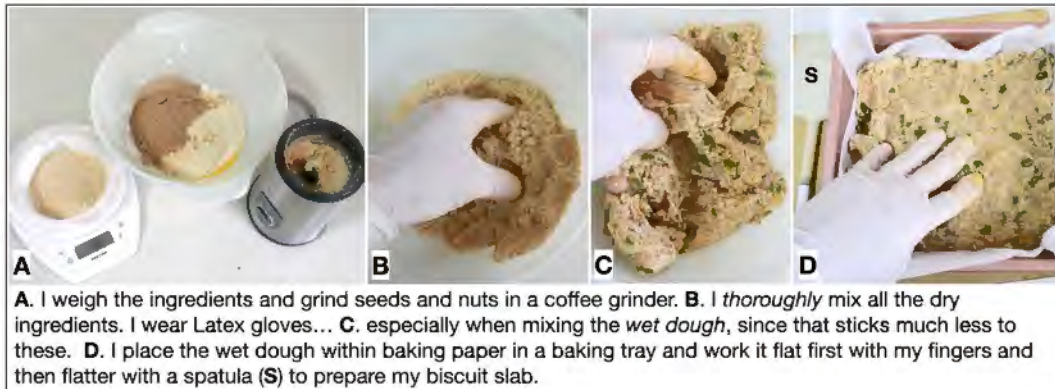
Rob Jung

On extended pack trips for lunches, I eat biscuits that I bake at home. They are four biscuits, each with a different flavour, making up a total weight of about 100g. More recently I have also preferred them over muesli for breakfast as well. They taste even better eaten with a cup of tea. Typically now, my mixture of biscuits consists of two sweet and two savoury type biscuits.

I consider my recent savoury biscuits to be a big improvement over what used to be, prior to joining Melbourne Bushwalkers at the beginning of 2023. I tasted some of Claire's *Keto cracker* biscuits (*The News*, **854**, May 2022), tried her recipe and then experimented further. Unlike Claire, I grind most of the seeds, instead of using mostly whole seeds like she does. Ground seeds are more easily digested, as well as making a stronger biscuit. The recipe for one of my savoury biscuits is given here. My choice of ingredients make this a sweeter biscuit than Claire's. The texture in my biscuits is less, but some is provided by the Polenta and the whole seeds. I eat mine with *Promite* spread.

Ingredients

Coarse Polenta	90g
Coconut flour	80g
Topioco flour	20g
Psyllium husk	15g
Chia seeds, freshly ground	45g
Cashews, freshly ground	45g
Sesame seeds, freshly ground	45g
Almond meal	45g
Pumpkin seeds (whole)	45g
Sunflower seeds (whole)	45g
Coconut oil (melted)	40g
Boiling water	240g
Salt (optional)	2g

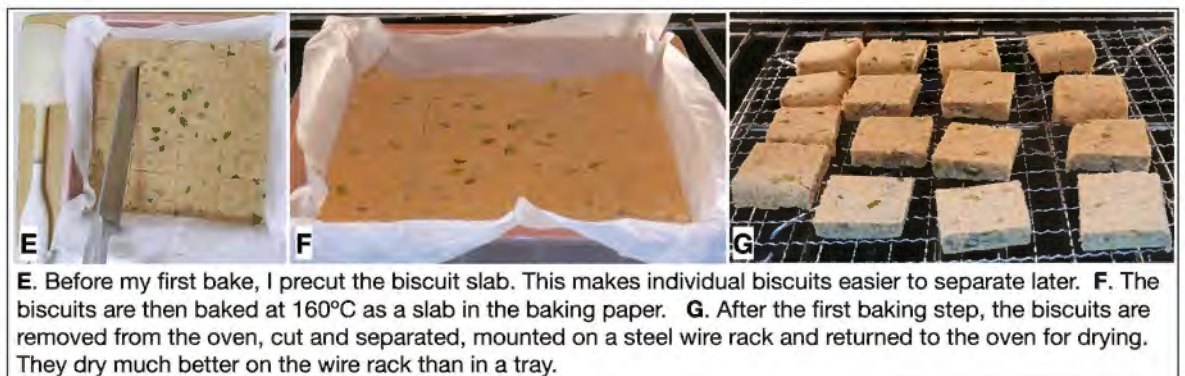


My baking technique is the same for all my biscuits. It also works for the whole seed version of Claire's crackers.

1. Mix all the dry ingredients thoroughly first (yellow in the Table and **B**)
2. Add the liquid (blue in Table), to the dry ingredients and mix in to make a dough (**C**).

3. Place the dough into a 30cm x 20cm baking tray lined with paper and precut it into 24 biscuits within the paper (**D** and **E**). In the photos I have used a smaller tray with a smaller batch size.
4. Bake for 20min at 160°C (**F**), remove from oven and cut into individual biscuits. The separated biscuits are returned to the oven and placed on a steel rack for drying (**G**).
5. Two drying steps are used, firstly for 20min at 130°C, followed by at 100°C for 1 hour. The longer drying time at the lower temperature reduces burning.
6. The biscuits are then cooled before sealing them in a container.

The drying steps are important with these biscuits. A lot of water is needed to form a coherent dough and the biscuits must be dried properly. If you don't, they will go mouldy – within a few days in warm humid weather.



Going the Extra Mile

Just before the Beginners Pack Carry to Mt Feathertop, the leader found she could not lead the walk. Rather than have nearly 16 walkers disappointed, including a number of beginners, Brett Daniel generously volunteered to lead the walk. Unfortunately the weather forecast was dire and not appropriate for Mt Feathertop let alone a Beginners Pack Carry. So Brett converted it to a Base Camp at Harrierville. With the forecast and the changes a number of people elected to drop out, but those who went were rewarded with far better weather than expected. Thank you Brett!



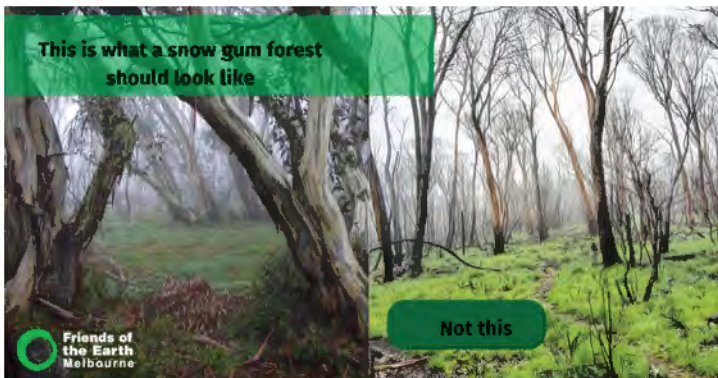
Ghost forests: Snow gums under threat

A story by **Miki Perkins** in **The Age** on 27 December explains the threats posed by climate change driven fire regimes on our Alpine snow gum forests but also points out that meaningful action can stop the ecological collapse that is already underway. You can read the story [here](#).

Cam Walker of Friends of the Earth Melbourne is coordinating a campaign asking the state government to intervene to protect these threatened forests. He says that the first step in a meaningful government response should be to authorise an investigation into the ecological health of the forests, which would make recommendations to the state government about what to do next. You can read the FoE rescue plan for snow gums [here](#).


FoE would like us to [Please send an email to the state environment minister](#) the Hon Steve Dimopoulos and the State government to urge them to take steps to protect our iconic snow gum forests. The FoE report, *An Icon at Risk, Current and Emerging threats to the Victorian High Country*, released in 2021 ([and available here](#)) highlights the many risks faced by the Alps, including the potential loss of the snow gum forests from fire and dieback.

We all love our snow gums, let's do what we can to protect them.




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Mount Ossa - Where did the name originate?

Geof Martin

Elevation 1617m - rising in the Central Plateau of Tasmania

Many people have heard of Mt Ossa either walking the Overland Track or wanting to. It is a major aim for us bushies to venture to the Central Plateau and brave the inconsistent weather to make the ascent of Mt Ossa and claim the highest peak on the Tasmanian Isle which is at the northern end of the rugged DuCane Range. Mt Ossa, along with other surrounding peaks surpassing 1500m, lie within Cradle Mountain–Lake St. Clair National Park. These peaks are characterized by steeply rising dolerite which have been deeply eroded by glaciers to form cirques and consequently an array of marvelous tarns and lakes.



You may have noticed when perusing a map of the area that a theme develops in the naming of the surrounding peaks to Ossa. The name Ossa, along with the adjacent mounts *Pelion*, *Achilles*, *Minotaur*, *Acropolis*, *Geryon* and *Parthenon* are taken from the Greek classical period. You don't have to look much further away to the Walls Of Jerusalem area to see a similar theme of classical names such as *Herod's Gate* and *Solomon's Throne*.

The person responsible for Mt Ossa's naming was the Surveyor General of Tasmania, George Frankland. Frankland was assigned the task to survey central Tasmania in 1835. From the southern end of Lake St Clair, he set off with his party north-west. Here Frankland found a dolerite mountain overlooking a gorgeous lake. Being amazed at the grandeur of the moment, he named it Mount Olympus, the "mountain of the gods" from the Greek classics. Being an educated Englishman, Frankland was well versed in classical history. It was he who developed the theme of naming prominent geographical landmarks with classical titles. The Central Highlands are now infused on our walking maps with gods, heroes, giants, queens and kings!

Today, fortunately, the Central Highlands have mostly escaped the world's invasive spread and utilisation due to the area's ruggedness and isolation. Most credit goes to Gustav and Kate Weindorfer. In the 1910s they began campaigning for the area from Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair, including Mount Ossa, to be a national park. It was declared a scenic reserve in 1922, a wildlife reserve in 1927 and its current designation of national park from 1947. Since then, Mount Ossa has become a popular bushwalking destination with an established route to the top.

Will you be next to climb Mt Ossa?



Billywing Gorge, Grampians - 27-29 October 2023

Celesta Fong

Leader: Leigh Wykes

Participants: Gina, Celesta, Ting, John

Photos by Ting and John

A short car shuffle from Buandik campground brought us to the trailhead towards the Fortress. We followed this briefly before heading off-track following the ridgeline as best we could whilst negotiating many rock outcrops, with early views of the Fortress and our route ahead. The wildflowers were gloriously distracting with our leader stopping frequently to point out an orchid or other flowering plant along the way. Their scientific assignments escape me but there was plenty of enthusiasm for this epic display of colour and form. Springtime in the Grampians is a sight to behold!

Leigh was generous with his knowledge of the flora and terrain and his chosen route provided us spectacular views of the surrounding peaks and into Billywing gorge. The re-growth was challenging in places and our leader did all the hard work bulldozing a route through oft time head high and relentless scrub. We were fortunate to pick up water for the evening near the road junction so did not have a dry camp. It had been a long day so we were pleasantly exhausted when we arrived at the Mt Thackery campground on dusk.

After a quick ascent of Mt Thackery the next morning we continued our off-track exploration, though Leigh's original route had to be curtailed somewhat as the route-finding through broken rock and heavy scrub was time consuming. We had lunch below the Jug Handle but were unaware of this fact until we looked back. Although we had a mind to climb it, time was against us as we had the Maze to negotiate. Our changed itinerary led us to a well-cairned route off the range and back to our car.

Thanks, Leigh, for a wonderful glimpse into this fabulous part of the Grampians, and to everyone who worked together to find safe passage for the whole party. As promised, this was a great walk for some good rock scrambling and bush bashing, and the views and terrain were rewarding. It is certainly one of the most spectacular and interesting walks in Victoria!

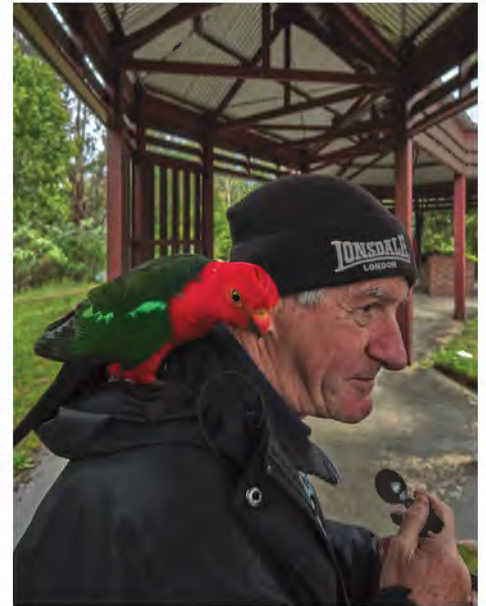


Lerderderg River Ramble - 2-3 December 2023

Janet Wilkinson

The waterfall. The company. The misty, moist atmospheric forest. The beer (or two!) The dry river crossing. Seeing a parrot on Ian's head! These were highlights listed by some of the 13 participants on the pack carry from O'Briens Crossing to Blackwood, and return. And, of course, the pleasant walking through beautiful countryside!

The walk commenced with a short, steep climb before the Byers Back Track levelled and largely followed water races to Blackwood, about 12.5 kms away. Reminders of the region's history of gold mining were evident - abandoned deep shafts or tunnels, mullock heaps and a diversion tunnel. Drizzly rain accompanied us for much of the day, but the plus side of the rain was the waterfall it created and the atmospheric, damp forest. At times views of the fast-flowing Lerderderg River could be glimpsed far below.



By early afternoon we arrived in Blackwood and a short walk through town took us to our campsite, an exclusive area of the caravan park, near the river. A picturesque setting with glamping additions of flushing toilets, tap water, undercover seating for cooking and chatting, and showers! We had plenty of time to relax before heading to the local hotel for evening refreshments. Here a log fire was warming and welcome and allowed the drying out of various items of clothing. All seemed pleased with their choice of liquid refreshment and meal: an easy winner over eating a rehydrated meal at the camp!



By Sunday the rain had eased, and we set off at 8.45am to return to O'Brien's Crossing via a different route, stopping first to sample the mineral water at a spring. A steady climb to Sweet's Lookout gave us views of the township and the steep-sided gullies. We skirted Shaws Lake and across to North Blackwood Road until it intersects with Tunnel Point Track. This track took us down a 200-metre steep, slippery descent to the river at The Tunnel - a diversion tunnel cut by hand in the search for alluvial gold.

Whilst a short lunchbreak was taken, Ian checked out the best way to cross the river. Thankfully, he found a way for us to cross keeping our feet dry! Then a steep climb up Gribbles Track returned us to Byers Back Track, and within an hour we were back at our cars. Most of the group then adjourned to Bacchus March for refreshments at a café. The general consensus was that this was a style of pack carrying that one could become very accustomed to with the creature comforts we had enjoyed at both the camp and the local pub! Thanks to Ian, our leader, and Halina, the whip for the weekend, for guiding us so ably.

Mt Nelse-Ropers Hut – 15-17 December 2023

Barry Daly

We drove up via Bogong High Plains Road to Big River Fire Trail track gate, arriving Friday evening. From there we walked in roughly 300meters on the fire trail and found a nice, sheltered camp site amongst the snow gums where we stayed that evening, the temperature going to a chilly 4 degrees Celsius overnight.

At 8.30am the next morning we met up with all the other walkers at

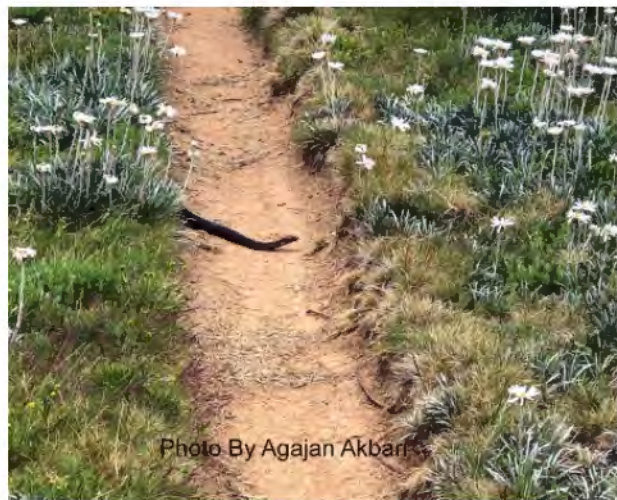


Photo By Agajan Akbar

the fire track gate and set off along Big River Fire Trail towards Mount Nelse. We were treated initially with

gentle slopes, the trail cutting through open grass lands and an array of blooming flowers, some areas thick with white daisies. As the sun rose high in the sky, the wind picked up blowing us around and making the going tough. The temperatures reaching about 14 degrees Celsius which was pleasant.



Photo By Ann Wilkins

We walked about 4.5km, dropped our packs, and did a side trip to Edmonson's Hut, then walked another 2km and did a side trip to the summit of Mount Nelse with a total elevation of 1,885m. After Mount Nelse we walked another 5km to Ropers Hut. It was good to get down out of the high winds on the plain. The camp site was spacious with a freshwater creek nearby.

We left the camp site the next morning around 8.30am to back track back the same way to the cars. The wind was all but gone making for a beautiful scenic hike back.

Thanks to Claire for planning and leading the walk and Agajan, Anne, Fong, Kate, and Sonya, for there good company, also thanks to Brett for going whip.



Photo By Fang



Photo By Barry Daly

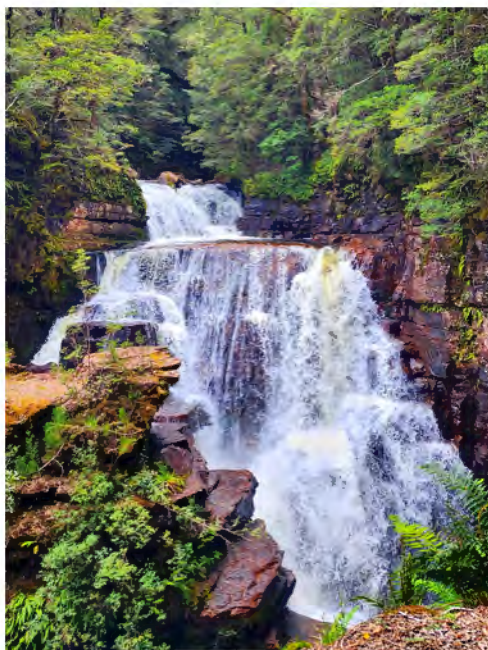
The Overland Track: Cradle Mountain to Lake St. Clair, Tasmania – 27 November-6 December 2023

Robin Curwen-Walker

Our 90.2k Overland trek from Cradle Mountain included an additional walk into Pine Valley and from Narcissus Hut to Cynthia Bay. Over 7 days of hiking the track varies from lots of boardwalk, particularly over the button grass plains, to the many deeply rutted tracks through temperate rainforest with large exposed tree roots and jagged rocks.



Button grass plains and heath - G. Martin



Hartnett Falls

they weren't huge so it felt a little like playing tent tetris to fit all 12 tents on. Each of the group sites included a shed with a stainless steel bench area where food could be prepared or gear stored.

Whilst day

one involved a significant climb, either up and over Marion's Lookout, or following the contour around on the Horse Track, the main spine of the walk is not too challenging. An additional 34ks in side trips over the week made the trek adaptable to our varying degrees of fitness and enthusiasm. Some of the group made all the ascents - primarily Barn Bluff, Mount Ossa and the Labyrinth. We also descended into the stunning cascades of Hartnett and D'Alton Falls.



Typical group camping platform and shed - G. Martin

As a group, we were compelled to camp on the dedicated group tent platforms -



We were treated to an abundance of wildlife including little Bennett's wallabies, wombats and pademelons. The landscapes across the journey varied spectacularly from delicate alpine moorlands and button grass plains to temperate rainforests of old growth sassafras, tall ash, bluegum and the deciduous fagus beech. Of particular beauty to me were the Pandani forests – ancient Gondwana period plants with a real sense of grandeur and antiquity about them. As we progressed on our walk we were treated to the distant views of the great dolerite mountain ranges including Mount Pelion West, Mount Achilles, Mount Thetis and Mount Ossa.

Along the track

This was a great walk and we were really fortunate to encounter only one day of mild drizzle. The rest of the trip we walked in relatively mild and sunny conditions. As always Jill did a terrific job as our group leader. We had a great group of walkers.

Everyone was easy going, helpful and up for a laugh and a chat. It made the whole experience very enjoyable. Thanks to Jason, Bec, Bernadette, Geoff, Richard, Ken, Nick, Kate, Jill, Prabhu and Bruce for being top walking buddies.



Pandani forest - G. Martin



Sunrise on the Labyrinth - G. Martin

BECOME A Volunteer CAMPGROUND HOST

Volunteering as a Campground Host in the Northern Territory is a great way to enjoy some of Australia's best nature and wildlife experiences while providing important services to park visitors.

Enjoy spectacular waterfalls at Litchfield National Park, or discover the ancient landscapes of Finkel Gorge National Park in the Red Centre.

Experience the rugged landscapes, wildlife, and Aboriginal and pastoral histories of the East MacDonnell Ranges at Trephina Gorge Nature Park, fish the mighty Victoria River or take a walk through the spectacular gorge country of Judbarra/Gregory National Park.

The Territory is waiting to be explored.

Our Campground Hosts are often the first point of contact for visitors. They support our Rangers by welcoming campers, providing general information about the area and assisting with the maintenance of visitor facilities.

A First Aid Certificate and a valid National Police Check is required. Campground Hosts are largely self-sufficient with their own tent or caravan, staying on site for at least three weeks.

When is hosting available?

Hosts are particularly needed between May and August – the dry season in the Top End, and the cooler months in Central Australia. Some host sites are also available in April and September depending on weather and access.

Register your interest

For further information, and a copy of the Position Descriptions, contact the Volunteer Program Manager.

Training and Induction is provided.

P: (08) 8999 3821

E: volunteer.parks@nt.gov.au

W: nt.gov.au/parks-volunteers

BECOME A Volunteer CAMPGROUND HOST
and experience the natural beauty of the Northern Territory

Upcoming activities

January 2024

Mon 1	SOC: New Year's Day BBQ	Pvt		Susan Maughan
Thu 4	TOF: TBA (check website update)	Pvt		
5-9	PC: Quartz Ridge-Mt Bogong-Spion Kopje	Pvt	M	Gina Hopkins
Sun 7	DAY: Andrew Hill & Island Creek (Kinglake)	Car	E/M	Robert Ian Mair
Wed 10	DAY: Coburg & Edwardes Lakes	Pvt	E/M	Jopie Bodegraven
12-19	PC: Ramble in the High Plains & the AAWT	Pvt	M	Hiroko Nakano & activity mentor
Sun 14	DAY: Wombat Station to Daylesford	Bus	E/M&M	Brett Daniel & Deb Shand
Mon 15	MOF: Maroondah Dam-Donnellys Weir	Pvt	E	Robert Ian Mair
19-21	PC: Lake Eildon-Rocky Peak	Pvt	E/M	Robert Ian Mair
Sun 21	DAY: Indented Head-Edward Point State Fauna Reserve with ice creamery	Bus	E&E/M	Christopher Collett & Hiroko Nakano
Thu 25	SOC: Fitzroy & Treasury Gardens (public transport)	Pvt	E	Sandra Mutimer
26-29	BTAC: Foothills & Southern Alps region of Alpine NP	Pvt		Meredith Quick
26-2	PC: Genoa River & Genoa Wilderness Zone	Pvt	M/H	Claire Luxford
Sun 28	DAY: Warramate Hills, Yarra Ranges	Car	E/M	Jopie Bodegraven
Wed 31	DAY: Arthurs Seat	Pvt	E/M	Mark Heath
Wed 31	SOC: Dehydrator Meal Workshop	Pvt		Hiroko Nakano

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