

YHA Bushwalking: Beginner Pack Carry Mt Stirling (13 -14th January 2018)

Adjacent to Mt Buller, Mt Stirling (1750m) offers pleasant summer bushwalking amidst its snow gum-lined network of cross-country ski trails. On a clear day, the panoramic view from its summit takes in most major peaks of the Victorian Alps. Two huts provide shelter, and there are also other hike-in campsites with basic facilities. From the summit of Mt Stirling, Clear Hills track leads to the very scenic (albeit not very functional) Craigs Hut, originally built as a film-set for "The Man From Snowy River" then becoming a tourist attraction in its own right and being rebuilt a couple of times, most recently in 2007 after being destroyed by a bushfire.



This trip is ideally suited for those wanting to try pack-carrying for the first time, but also has attractions for more experienced walkers wanting to relax after the New Year festivities.

Walking is all on-track in an alpine region within an altitude range of 1250-1750m (camping 1570m). In summer this generally means comfortable daytime temperatures between 15 - 25°C and cool nights.

The walk is graded medium; the pack-carry component is an easy 5km/300m uphill (Saturday) and 8km (200m up/500m down, Sunday) on well-defined tracks of steady but moderate gradient. The hardest section is the side-trip (ie with day pack) to Craigs Hut, as the track passes over a series of hills with several steep ups and downs (that need to be done in reverse for the return journey). Hence although participants don't need to have prior pack-carrying experience, they need to be reasonably fit and have comfortably managed "medium" grade day walks involving climbs/descents of a few hundred metres (eg areas such as Lerderderg Gorge or Werribee Gorge).

Departure from Melbourne will be around 6.00am on Saturday morning, meeting at Mansfield for breakfast/coffee before continuing on to Mt Stirling.

Saturday: Telephone Box Junction car-park – Link trail - Stirling Trail – Cricket Pitch Hut, then further up Stirling Trail to campsite (5km). Set up camp, lunch then 10km (~5 hours) side-trip to Craigs Hut.

Sunday: Campsite to Mt Stirling summit via Geelong Grammar Hut, explore summit, then down to Telephone Box Junction car-park via Bluff Spur Hut (8km / 3 hours)

Cost: \$5 YHA members, \$10 non-members, trip-card holders free.

Bookings open 14th December and must be confirmed by Monday 8th January