



# yeti



The official magazine of YHA Bushwalking Victoria Club, January to March 2024

Issue 55



# A Christmas Message from the President

Hello YHA Bushwalkers.

Firstly, I would like to wish you a Happy New Year!

I hope that this year brings lots of joy and happy, memorable moments to all of you. And lots of bushwalks too.



I would also like to look back at the last 12 month and advise of some of the plans that the club has for this year.

Last year was very successful for our club in every aspect. The number of walks the club organised has steadily increased over the year as well as the number of active walk leaders. Now most of the weekends have 2 or 3 walks scheduled and there are more accommodated, base-camp and pack carry hiking trips. The number of new club members has increased as well.

Following are the main initiatives introduced at the club in 2023:

- We introduced a 4-stage Leader Recruitment Program that proved to be a really good way to source new leaders for the club
- Yeti Magazine was restarted after a hiatus of more than 4 years
- Our club has gone social and now we have our Facebook @YHABushwalkingClubVictoria and Instagram @YHABushwalkingClub pages - you are invited to follow us on our social media.
- The 'Pack Carry Initiative' was introduced in have more pack carry hikes available in our program

Some of our plans for 2024 are:

- **"YHA Bushwalking Club Open Weekend"** will be held on the weekend of 24-25 February, with the aim to attract new members and to promote YHA Bushwalking Club. The event will take place in Dandenong Ranges 1,000 Steps Walk, with three walks organised on each day. Members and non-members are welcome to attend.
- The club plans to trial Midweek Walks i.e. full day walks organised between Monday and Friday to gauge the interest of the club walkers.
- This year marks the 85th anniversary of the club. The official celebration will take place in September this year, so please keep an eye on the program.

**Special thanks to all Committee Members for their work and dedication during the year, as there are lots of things that need to be done in the background to make our club function seamlessly. Your efforts are well and truly appreciated!**

Also huge thank you to the following non-committee members:

- Craig Beer, our Yeti Magazine editor, for putting extra effort in to get Yeti re-started and published
- Erryn Stephens who established our social media and who now actively manages it
- Stephen Smith who provides technical advice and support for our website, resolving website problems and implementing improvements and upgrades to our website
- Lutz Lademann who provides advice and support relating to the hosting platform for our website



If you have any suggestions or if you would like to provide your feedback regarding any aspect of the club or the club activities, please contact me at [president@yhabush.org.au](mailto:president@yhabush.org.au)

Thank you for being a part of our club and for supporting it.

Happy bushwalking!

Adnan Lovic

President - YHA Bushwalking Victoria

## YHA Bushwalking Club's Committee

Clubs need organisers and leaders to work! Like most clubs, we have a committee and you will meet some of our committee members on hikes and social events.

President	Adnan Lovic	( <a href="mailto:president@yhabush.org.au">president@yhabush.org.au</a> )
Walks Secretary	Doug Miers	( <a href="mailto:walkssecretary@yhabush.org.au">walkssecretary@yhabush.org.au</a> )
Treasurer	Richard Lawrence	( <a href="mailto:treasurer@yhabush.org.au">treasurer@yhabush.org.au</a> )
Secretary	Tanveer Ahmed	( <a href="mailto:secretary@yhabush.org.au">secretary@yhabush.org.au</a> )
Communications	Sonya Radwyl	( <a href="mailto:contact@yhabush.org.au">contact@yhabush.org.au</a> )
Club Nights	Jann Cooney	( <a href="mailto:committee@yhabush.org.au">committee@yhabush.org.au</a> )
Social Events	Angelica Payne	( <a href="mailto:committee@yhabush.org.au">committee@yhabush.org.au</a> )
Everything Else	Ken Sussex	( <a href="mailto:committee@yhabush.org.au">committee@yhabush.org.au</a> )

### Non Committee:

Yeti Editor	Craig Beer	( <a href="mailto:yetieditor@yhabush.org.au">yetieditor@yhabush.org.au</a> )	
Social Media	Erryn Stephens	( <a href="mailto:socialmedia@yhabush.org.au">socialmedia@yhabush.org.au</a> )	<b>NEW!</b>
Website	Stephen Smith		

## New Leaders and New Members

A special shout out to any new members who have joined the club! Also, an extra special shout out to our newest leader, Gary Hamann! Look out for one of his events and join!

Joining the club is easy – simply navigate to the Members page on our website, follow the prompts, and behold! You are a member! Cost is \$35 per annum – peanuts! And we're always looking out for new leaders; reach out to our Walks Secretary, Doug Miers at [walkssecretary@yhabush.org.au](mailto:walkssecretary@yhabush.org.au) .



## Upcoming Events

Our Walks Program has a wide variety of events that are sure to appeal to everyone. It continues to evolve. In addition to our usual selection of Saturday and Sunday walks, we have urban walks over summer, accommodated trips and pack carry events throughout the year. We also have a club night and social event programs and other occasional events such as bird watching and photography walks.

Unfortunately, only eleven leaders are doing the heavy lifting at the moment. It's not like we're not welcoming to new leaders, so please . . . help us out. Most leaders only do three or four events a year. If you would like to try leading a walk, put your hand up. It's a great way to meet people, and you can get access to a variety of benefits.

Regardless, we still have a full program on offer.

**A couple of events are worthy of your attention!** A pack carry along the beautiful **Mitchell River** (towards Bairnsdale) is a must do for any walker who enjoys doing overnights. Our **Falls Creek accommodated** still has a vacancy, while the **Western Plains Traverse** pack carry is being undertaken in the same area at the same time. Who knows, we might bump into each other. so if you're keen, please book. A base camp at **Lake Catani** is on offer for March, as well as a pack carry to the **Bluff and Howqua River**. Finally our Adelaide trip takes place over Easter.

A special shout out for our **Open Weekend** on 24-25 February 2024, which includes a variety of walks in the beautiful Dandenong Ranges for members and non-members alike. You can choose from the following on both the Saturday or the Sunday:

09.30 am	Extended 1000 Steps Walk (duration approx. 4 hours)
12.00 pm	1,000 Steps Walk (Duration approx. 1.5 – 2 hours hours)
2.00 pm	1,000 Steps Walk (Duration approx. 1.5 – 2 hours hours)

The 1000 Steps is probably Melbourne's most popular bushwalk. Officially the Kokoda Track Memorial Walk, walkers love the challenge of the steep trail, locals appreciate the convenience and tourists just want a picture of a gorgeous rainforest walk. It departs from Ferntree Gully Picnic Ground, winding up a steep hill along a creek through lush rainforest, before emerging into a clearing where you can enjoy great views of Melbourne through the trees. The loop is completed by taking the Lyrebird Track back to the carpark.

The following list is current as of 1 January 2024, but will be added to over the course of the next weeks and months. Keep an eye on the club website, and kindly book for events at <https://yhabush.org.au/activities/current-walks-program/>. As always, events open a week early for members. And check your emails in case of last minute cancellations or changes of plan.

Jan 6	Ada Tree Loop via VHC Track	Saturday	Medium	Bill X
Jan 7	Whiskey Creek Loop	Sunday	Medium	Richard L
Jan 9	Clubnight: New Year Social Dinner and Drinks	Tuesday	Clubnight	Doug M
Jan 12	Mitchell River Walking Track	Pack-carry	Medium	Adnan L





Jan 13	Cascade Falls, Kyeema and Dandenong Creek Loop	Saturday	Medium	Bill X
Jan 14	Eastern Dandenong Ranges Trail	Sunday	Easy-Med	Doug M
Jan 20	Falls Creek	Accomm	Various	Craig B
Jan 20	Eureka Track (Goldfields Trail) Mt Buninyong to Ballarat	Saturday	Medium	Mary L
Jan 21	Lerderderg Circuit Walk	Sunday	Med-Hard	Lloyd P
Jan 26	Western Plains Traverse (Bogong)	Pack-carry	Med-hard	Frank P
Feb 1	Summer in the City: Evening Walk	Thursday	Easy	Craig B
Feb 3	Brisbane Ranges Burchall Trail	Pack Carry	Med-Hard	Mary L
Feb 4	Two Bays Walk – Dromana to Cape Schanck	Sunday	Med-Hard	Richard L
Feb 6	Club Night: Bush Search and Rescue	Club Night		Adnan L
Feb 8	Summer in the City: Evening Walk	Thursday	Easy	Craig B
Feb 10	Toolangi and Myrtle Gully Loops	Saturday	Medium	Craig B
Feb 11	Antimony Mine Track and Pyrites Ck	Sunday	Med-Hard	Richard L
Feb 15	Summer in the City: Evening Walk	Thursday	Easy	Craig B
Feb 18	Mt Macedon Loop via Camel's Hump	Sunday	Medium	Mary L
Feb 22	Summer in the City: Evening Walk	Thursday	Easy	Craig B
Feb 24	Open Weekend	Saturday	Various	Adnan L
Feb 25	Open Weekend	Sunday	Various	Adnan L
Feb 29	Summer in the City: Evening Walk	Thursday	Easy	Craig B
Mar 2	Pyrites Creek Southern Section	Saturday	Med-Hard	Claudio P





Mar 7	Summer in the City: Evening Walk	Thursday	Easy	Craig B
Mar 8	Lake Catani (Mt Buffalo) Base Camp	Base Camp	Medium	David S
Mar 9	Noojee South loop	Saturday	Medium	Richard L
Mar 9	Pack Carry: The Bluff and Howqua River	Pack-carry	Medium	Craig B
Mar 23	Portarlinton to St Leonards with dinner in Geelong	Saturday	Medium	Doug M
Mar 28	Adelaide at Easter	Accomm	Medium	Craig B
Jun 7	King's Birthday Weekend: Torquay	Accomm	Medium	David S

## Upcoming Club Nights and Social Events

Club Nights are usually held on the first Tuesday of the month. Please indicate your intention to join via the website – light refreshments are provided. Club nights are held at the East Melbourne Library Meeting Room, 122 George Street, East Melbourne. Drinks and nibbles from 7, presentation at 7.30.

With another action-packed year of club activities behind us and a new one to look forward to, now is good time to reflect on our monthly club nights.

These evenings are open to everyone, free of charge, and have long been a regular feature on our program, providing both a social and instructive element to complement our many and varied walks.

In fact, during Covid, a virtual club night was the only event the club could conduct, and did so for the duration, keeping members and non-members alike engaged and connected in an otherwise isolating time.

Since returning to physical meetings, the club has hosted a range of events including social dinners to welcome the new year, pub trivia quiz nights, sessions on hiking gear and navigation skills, new member and leader introductory evenings, and a Christmas walk, drinks and nibbles.

And, of course, there have been the wonderful presentations by guest speakers, sharing their experiences of home-grown hikes, such as the Grampians and Jatbula, as well as those further afield in NZ, Iceland, Italy and PNG.

With the 2024 walks program promising to be a full and stimulating one, please keep an eye on it and club updates for upcoming club nights and join us for an evening amongst like-minded people who share a passion for bushwalking.

And, of course, we would welcome your feedback and input to help make club nights a night you look forward to attending and leave feeling enriched in some way.

**Our club nights for the next three months include a dinner and drinks evening on January 9. Our February event promises to be interesting, with a talk by the Bush Search and Rescue team, who give up their time to conduct searches for lost bushwalkers in conjunction with emergency services.** It was 75 years ago that Victoria Police called on experienced bushwalkers to provide assistance in searches for missing people. Whilst the first search was a relatively informal request from Victoria Police to the Federation of Victorian Bushwalking Clubs, the relationship





between the Victoria Police Search & Rescue Squad (POLSAR) and Bush Search & Rescue (BSAR) continues to be active and structured.

Ross McKinnon, an experienced BSAR member, will present an overview of some of the searches that BSAR has been involved in, as well as discussing the requirements for club members to join the BSAR callout list.

As for social events, our popular urban walks are on again this year, including a ghoulish trip through Melbourne Cemetery led by a professional guide. Our urban walks do occasionally book out, but usually end up with dinner at a pub or restaurant. However, it is preferable that you have Whatsapp for these events, as things can change pretty quickly due to public transport stuff ups (including one memorable occasion where the trains prevented the leader himself from attending his own event . . . )

## Contribute to Yeti

Have you got something interesting for your fellow bushwalkers? A story of something that went wrong on a hike? A trip report? A useful map or special article? Please reach out; we'd love to hear from you. Yeti contributions can be sent to [yetieditor@yhabush.org.au](mailto:yetieditor@yhabush.org.au).

There are some publication guidelines; we really like photos and will print 3-4 for each trip report. We have the following word limits:

- Trip Reports: 300 words, 2-3 photos (one page only)
- My Favourite Hike: 500 words, 4-6 photos
- Special Features: 1000 words, 4-6 photos

## We have (finally) GONE SOCIAL!

	<p>Yes! We now have an Instagram page and a Facebook page! Erryn Stephens is managing our social media presence and it looks great!</p> <p>Sign up to us on Insta <a href="https://www.instagram.com/YHABushwalkingClub">@YHABushwalkingClub</a></p> <p>And of course, don't forget to tag us! If Erryn sees your tag and likes your pic, she'll add it to our page!</p>
	<p>Our Facebook page is <a href="https://www.facebook.com/YHABushwalkingClubVictoria">@YHABushwalkingClubVictoria</a>. Again, don't forget to tag us with your Facie pics so Erryn can pass them on. We're pretty confident we'll build a major following, and look forward to seeing you there!</p>

## Life Members

In our last edition, we paid tribute to our life members; with a special request for people to reach out if they knew of more. Stephen Smith (himself a life member) reached out and advised of two extra names to add to our list.

Bruce Meincke

Andrew Stevenson

Ken Sussex

Stephen Smith

Ron Bell

Mark Beyer

Ron Bell was a leader for many years, including several on committee, and organised an annual bushdance and accommodated Mt Disappointment weekend. He eventually felt a bit old for YHA but (in his eighties now), but is still an active member of Essendon Bushwalking Club.



Mark Beyer was active from the 1980s - early 2000s before moving away from Melbourne and starting a family. He was President (Chairman back then) for two years, also served as Treasurer and Secretary during his period on committee, and later on YHA Victoria state council. A very experienced leader of overnight and extended pack-carries, he's well remembered for a series of New Year pack-carries along the AAWT end-to-end.

If you are a life member and not on the list, (or you know someone who is a life member but not on this list), then please reach out so we can correct our records and right this terrible wrong.

## **Club Policies**

As with all clubs, we do have a variety of policies, rules and 'ways of doing things', which are generally in place to make sure this club has a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

### ***Emergency Contact System***

The Club operates an emergency contact system, usually for pack carries in the more remote parts of the bush. It is a simple phone number which your loved ones can call should they need to reach you. This is usually captured within the trip notes on the club website.

### ***Ambulance Insurance***

As always, club members are politely 'encouraged – in the strongest possible terms' to expressly have ambulance cover. It *may* be part of your private health cover but check your small print carefully. Many private health funds have significant limitations, caps or even exclusions to ambulance cover. Ambulances are not free, they are not covered by Medicare, and our leaders will not carry you out to save you the cost of an ambulance should you hurt yourself.

Ambulance cover is around \$50 a year for singles and is Australia wide.

If you don't have ambulance cover, head over to [ambulance.vic.gov.au/membership](https://ambulance.vic.gov.au/membership) today. Make sure you renew your subscription each year. It's well worth it.

### ***Introducing PayID***

Paying drivers for car pooling and other sundries is becoming rather difficult in these cashless times, as few people carry any cash of consequence these days. Drivers may find it easier to get onto PayID . . . you can set this up through your banking app, and people can pay you their share for petrol through their mobile phones. Once you are registered for PayID, you only need to supply your mobile phone number, and people can then pay you via their banking app. Check it out!

### ***Let someone know before you go***

The advent of smart phones makes this almost redundant – after all, most of us can be reached almost anywhere these days. But the sentiment still remains – let someone know before you go. Even if you are doing a solo event that is not attached to YHA Bushwalking, you should still let someone know before you go. It won't cost you a cent . . and could save your life.

### ***PLB Hire***

The club offers free Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) hire for leaders undertaking hikes in remote areas (usually away from Melbourne). Please reach out to Ken Sussex to make arrangements; he can be reached directly at [kesussex1@optusnet.com.au](mailto:kesussex1@optusnet.com.au). It is usually mailed to you, and you, of course, must mail it back. Postage is paid for by the club.





# ***We need more Leaders!***

We have around 65 to 70 leaders at the moment, but leaders come and go, so we're always looking for more. The joy of being a leader is you can pick hikes that interest you. Other leaders and committee members are more than happy to show you the ropes, and formal training is also provided.

Leaders enjoy a raft of other benefits too. Leaders can attend free, fully accredited first aid training, and get to attend the annual leaders lunch! It's also a great way to meet new people and develop your organising and leadership skills.

For more information on becoming a leader:

**Reach out to our Walks Secretary, Doug Miers at [walkssecretary@yhabush.org.au](mailto:walkssecretary@yhabush.org.au).**



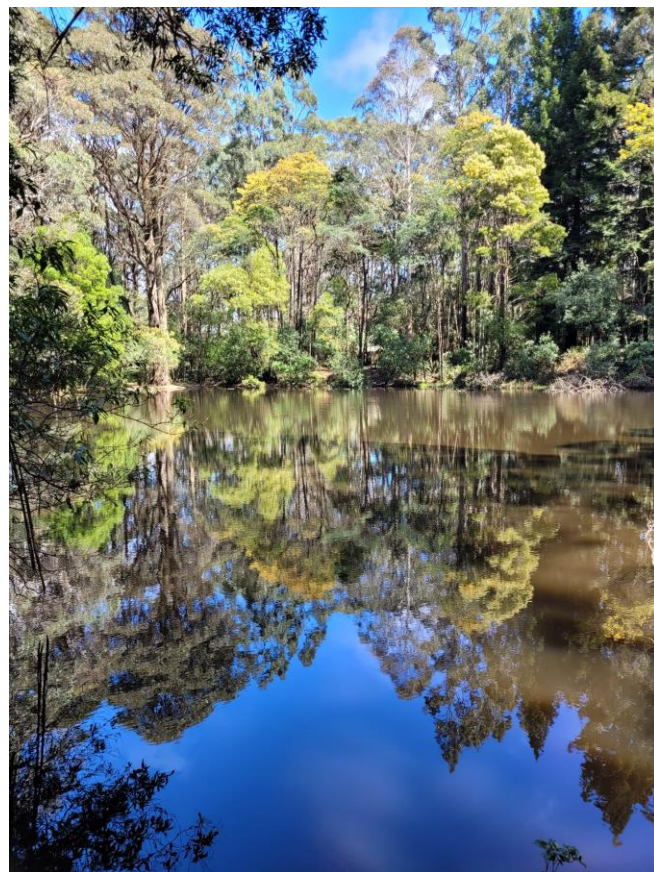
## Trip Reports

### Photography Trip – Mount Macedon

*Craig Beer recently organised a photography trip at Mount Macedon. A cruisey affair, with a relaxing hike of about 16 kilometres in cold, clear conditions, a civilised café nearby and an intrepid band of walkers keen to test out their artistic skills led to the following photographs being produced.*



Nick Wadsley



Craig Beer



Erlinda Loverseed





Terrence Bowen

## Little Desert Discovery Tour

*Craig Beer recently led a trip to the dry Little Desert in far western Victoria.*

*Just outside of Dimboola, the Little Desert has a three day (or four day option) 'discovery tour' where hikers can walk from campsite to campsite, pitching their tents in this most remote section of Victoria.*

*Most of us arrived on the Friday night and spent the evening in Horsham having a quiet dinner and a drink or two. We commenced walking on the Saturday at 10.30. The first day is 20 kilometres, but the second and third days are only 13. Note there is an option for a longer loop of about 75 kilometres, which was our original plan. But the endless scrub, complete lack of wildlife (except for countless flies) and relatively boring scenery had the majority of the team opting for a shorter option.*

*The campsites are equipped with fresh water, although we treated ours, pit toilets and, it must be said, a beautiful serenity at dusk and dawn that is hard to capture elsewhere.*

*The best time of the year to undertake this hike is **early** spring, when the wildflowers are blooming, the weather is pleasant, and the area is yet to dry out. Our visit in late spring was probably not the best time of year.*



Elizabeth Jarman

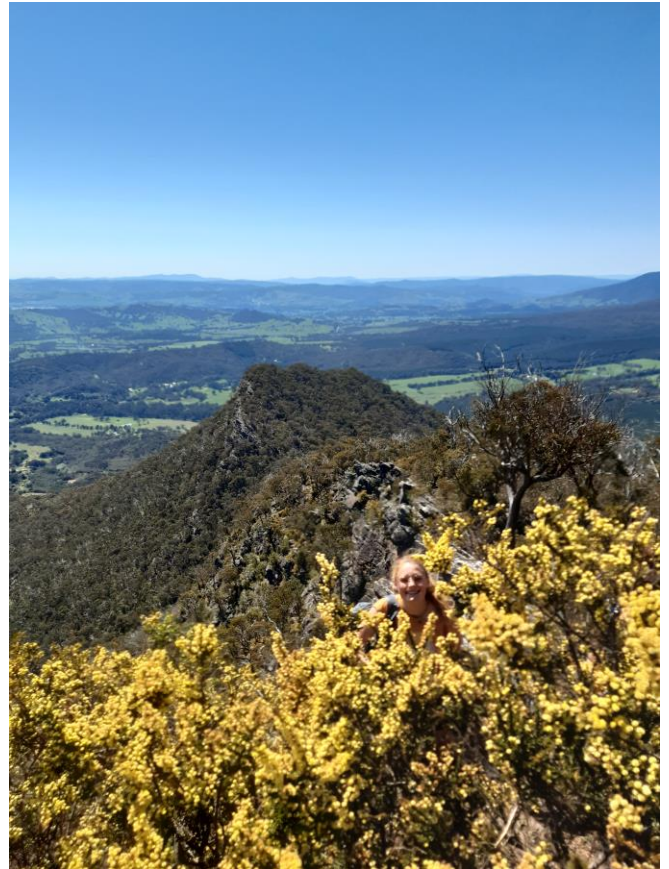


Jenny Kirby





*Craig Beer*



*Someone is playing peek a boo in the bushes!*



*Erryn Stephens*

## **Cathedral Ranges**

Bill Xiang led a hike to the Cathedral Ranges recently. The Cathedrals are one of Victoria's most epic day hikes, and to become a Cathedral Ranger is something to cherish. The Ranges are close enough to Melbourne to allow a day trip, or you can camp out there for free or stay at nearby Toolangi if you prefer more comfort.



*The weather was crystal clear.*





*Photos - Hallam Payne; The views you are missing. If you haven't visited the Cathedral Ranges, then put it on your to do list*

## **Mt McLeod**

*Stephen Smith led a walk to Mt McLeod, near Mount Buffalo. Marina Carpinelli captured the event in words and pictures.*

Saturday 18th November: 10 people drove from Melbourne to Mt Buffalo. The participants were Stephen, Jan, Marina, Laura, Rashidah, David, Ritesh, Marian, Livia and Joanne. We started off with the 2 km return Lake View Track and ate lunch where a pile of large rocks affords views over Lake Catani. Back at the cars we donned overnight packs and walked to the Mt McLeod campsite. This is 11 km along fire trails and a section of foot track. We saw many red rosellas playing in the trees along Reservoir Road. When we turned right onto the Mt McLeod track, we crossed a large creek with clear water and a strong flow. Some people drank from this, then we walked on a section of foot track called The Shortcut track. This was pleasantly shady. After a section back on the fire trail we reached the campsite. This is a grassy area with snow gum forest on

both sides, overlooking a frost hollow. We found enough space for 10 tents comfortably, but not many more tents would fit here. There were some issues with ants crawling on people who set up their tents near the nests!

There is a toilet with a mouse living in the roof and water from streams. We set up tents and cooked out dinner and rehydrated. Although the air temperature was not high, the sun was very powerful, and we needed to drink a lot of water on this trip. After dinner we walked the last 1 km up to the summit of Mt McLeod and settled in to admire the light on the landscape as the sun set. We saw a massive bird of prey, maybe a wedge tailed eagle, circling in the thermals above a nearby peak. There was a hakea with stunning yellow flowers in bloom in the area. After a series of group photos taken within the trig point, we were rewarded with a delicious lemon muffin. Stephen made the muffins using lemons from Jan's tree. We descended back to the campsite in the dusk, just making it by dark.

Sunday 19th November: We woke to find ice on the ground, indicating a large drop in temperature overnight. From inside the tent, I could hear many different types of birdsongs. While we ate breakfast, the campsite was flown over by black cockatoos and an eastern whipbird sang nearby. We retraced our steps back to the cars, arriving by 12:30pm.

There were many wildflowers through the forest, including a ground cover with white flowers similar to those of a tea-tree. Livia, Joanne and Rashidah descended the mountain, while the rest of us drove to Lake Catani. Here we walked the 3 km Lakeside walk and ate lunch at a picnic table near the campsite.

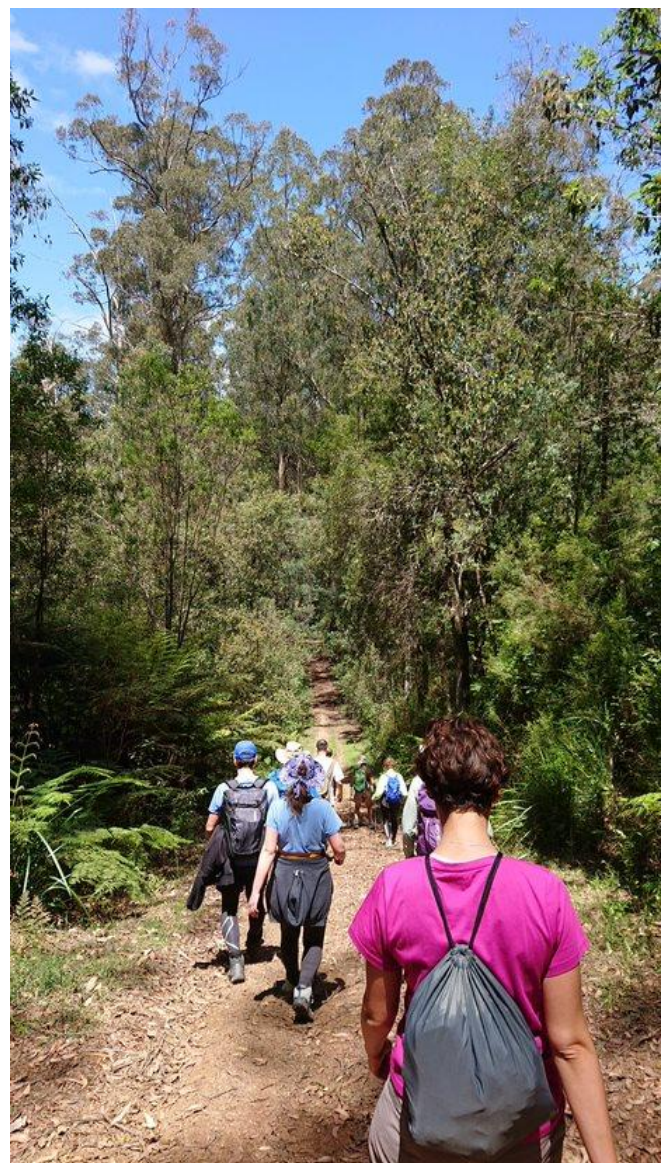
When we crossed the outlet stream on a bridge, large fish could be seen swimming in the water below. We returned to the cars and drove back to Melbourne with a stop at Glenrowan on the way for cherries, popcorn and ice-cream.

This was a relaxing and scenic walk that smoothly and with good weather. Thank you to Stephen for organising such a revitalising weekend.





district north of Warragul. The Weir is deep in the forest but easily accessible mostly on fire tracks. The group enjoyed a sunny day, some rather steep sections topped off with a lovely afternoon tea. Thanks to Richard for organising!



*All photos: Stephen Smith*

## **Pedersen's Weir**

Richard lead a group of hikers to Pedersen's Weir on a fine sunny day in November. Pedersen's Weir is near Gentle Annie, a

*Photos: Ali Doyom*



## Benalla

Craig Beer organised a short weekend to Benalla – well, the attendees did the organising as they had to find somewhere to stay. Craig simply led them up to Mount Samaria on a lovely 16 kilometre hike. The rain forecast was for 20-30 mls at the beginning of the week, stabilising at 10-20 ml as we got closer to the day. “We’re going anyway” thundered Craig, who then advised that he ‘didn’t really believe in the rain forecasts’.

Of course, it rained.

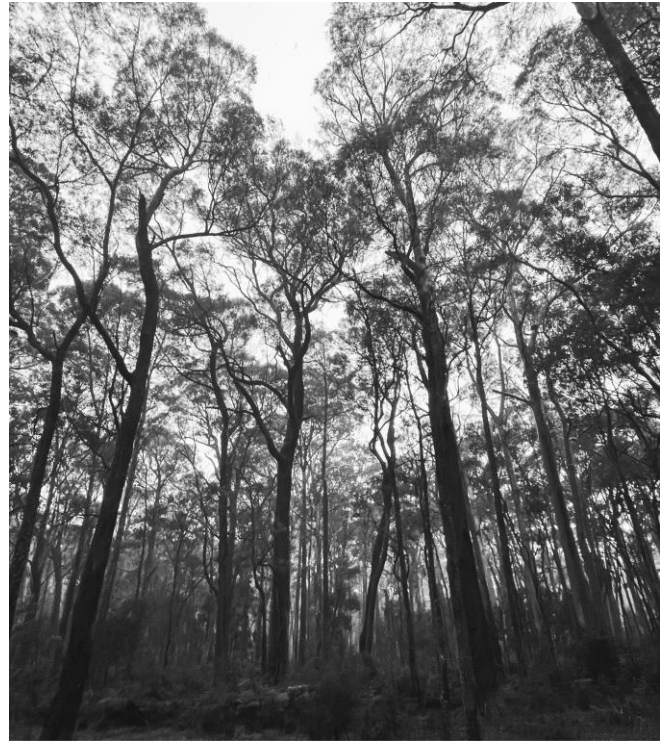
To be fair, the rain only lasted for about 30 minutes, but absolutely bucketed down, just as we sat for lunch. “Pack up, we’re leaving” urged Craig. This, of course, upset our Walks Secretary, Doug, not known as a particularly fast eater at the best of times. Eventually we stood under a tree while Doug packed his things in the rain. Thunder clapped and a couple of bolts of lightning made us feel alive.

But still Mt Samaria is a wonderful hike.

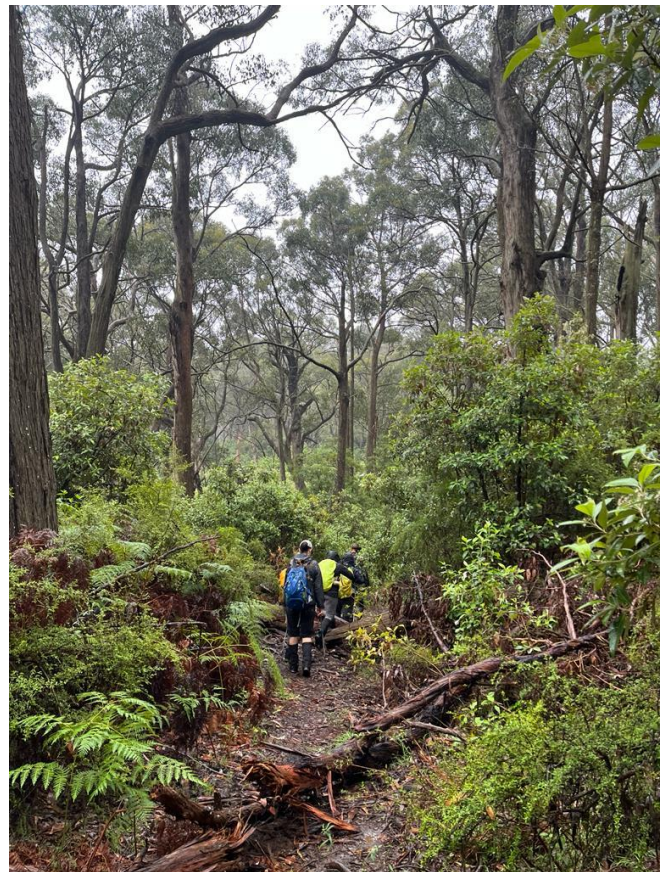
We all retired to a pub for dinner in the evening, before making our way to the Warby Ranges National Park at nearby Wangaratta for the Sunday. Two hikes beckoned. The first one up Mt Glenrowan was relatively easy with pleasant views; the second one through the interior of the park was dry, dusty and full of flies and, basically, a complete waste of time. But still, a dreary day in the Warby Ranges is better than a good day at work.



*Martina Owen; The view from Mount Samaria*



*Martina Owen, Before the storm.*



*Ruth Stewart; I can't help wanting to yell out 'Don't go in there!'*





*Char White; This intriguing photo captures 'tree foam' during a storm.*

*One wag, who'd probably had one too many over the years, opined that the tree was 'crying with happiness due to the rain'. The science is, of course, much more boring; a plant scientist from University of Sydney, Associate Professor Charles Warren says this is a natural phenomenon after dry spells. 'Essentially what's happening is as rain falls on trees it's dissolving chemicals off the leaves and bark and the compounds the trees produce act as a natural soap. Because of it acting like a detergent, water will then basically foam up as it's running down the tree trunk. The chemicals were produced mostly by eucalyptus trees to defend themselves against microbes and herbivores. You see the foaming much more after a dry spell because it gives the chemicals time to accumulate on the leaves. It's quite a common phenomenon but it's really spectacular.'*

*(Research by Martina Owen).*

## Mount Beckworth

*Richard Lawrence, one of our more prolific leaders, very much enjoys visiting the Goldfields.*

The Victorian Goldfields has long been a favourite location for YHA Bushwalking. Recently we completed walks at Mount Beckworth and from Vaughan Springs to Castlemaine.

Mount Beckworth Scenic Reserve is 10 minutes from Clunes. I haven't managed to find out the Dja Dja Wurrung name for the feature, the first inhabitants of the area.

Walkers travelled to the starting point by car and train, meeting at Clunes Station where we travelled to the trailhead, making this one of Victoria's few hikes genuinely accessible by public transport.

Despite being only a 9 km walk the scenery (and the company) made it well worth making the trip from Melbourne.

Mount Beckworth is like other nearby granite outcrops like Mount Alexander in the scenery and views of Central Victoria on offer, but it has its own unique characteristics. We got to see the large Monterey Pine at the top known as the Lollipop Tree (I wonder why??) which was planted all the way back in 1918 and on the Victorian Register for Significant Trees.

Upon completion of the walk, we headed into the beautifully preserved Fraser Street in Clunes for a drink and an icecream. Clunes is the site of Victoria's first gold discovery, and the historic streetscape would have to be rank alongside (or even just ahead of) Maldon in my humble opinion. We missed the monthly market this time, but a future trip is on the cards – maybe for the Booktown Festival in May.







## Vaughan Springs

This was a point-to-point walk of around 19 km from Vaughan Springs to Castlemaine. Vaughan Springs is a beautiful spot on the banks of the Loddon River, and it would be good to spend a little more time there – something for future trips.

We made our way from there towards Fryerstown which is a quaint village with some nice historic buildings. The walk then proceeded past the former Spring Gully Goldmine which has some great, well-preserved relics. Once we walked past The Monk (the site of a former mine), the track started along the former water races used for mining where we picked up some momentum and headed back into Castlemaine, where fortunately the same 14 people who started the walk were at the finish. A few of us then partook in some refreshments (as with the previous walk, do you sense a theme?).

I've done quite a few walks in the Goldfields and this one would rank near the top for the human-scarred but still pretty landscape. The great thing about both walks is that they were accessible by public transport.



*Photos: Erryn Stephens. Readers may not know who Burke and Wills are; they lead an expedition from Melbourne to the Gulf of Carpentaria, curiously choosing to take two months to hike to modern day Menindee when a mail coach would have taken a week. Why not have started the expedition at Menindee? They could have taken a combination of ocean ship from Melbourne to the Murray River in South Australia and then relaxed on a paddle steamer.*



## Alexander Technique and Lerderderg Gorge

David Moore led an event which combined two activities into one; an informative session on the 'Alexander Technique', a 'method of rediscovering natural balance and poise through thinking in activity'. David has an excellent webpage at <https://www.alexanderschool.edu.au/david-moore> which will provide far more detail than we can provide here, should you be wish to pursue this further. After the information session, participants put their new found knowledge to work on a hike through the Lerderderg Gorge, one of our most remote and spectacular national parks, less than an hour from Melbourne.

All photos by Sarah Martin.



*That's David with his back towards us!*



## Beeripmo Pack Carry

Adnan Lovic organised Beeripmo overnight pack carry hike on the Grand Final Weekend of 29-30 September 2023. Good weather, campfire, trivia night and 14 cool participants made an excellent hiking weekend! (It seems that some people hate Collingwood so much, they'd rather go hiking



*This is David with Rob, a dentist. For professional reasons, we could not show you his face. Morning Rob!*



. . . but we digress). A largish group of 13 made the trek up past Ballarat. Incidentally, we did the same trip last year, and it was wet and freezing cold with a -1 overnight minimum! This time, there was not a cloud in the sky!



*All photos: Adnan Lovic*

## **Blue Mountains**

David Sale ran his famous Melbourne Cup weekend trip, this time to the Blue Mountains.



Despite the many hours of preparation, research and organisation, there was one thing David could not control – the weather.

It rained.

And rained.

And rained.

Sadly, our photos of the trip are not as spectacular as usual. No doubt leeches were out in force. But still, some hiked!



*Oh well. What else were we supposed to do?*

*Adnan Lovic*

## **The Blackwood Circuit**

Adnan led a group through the Blackwood Circuit. A tough hike, with a distance of 22.6 kilometres and 916 metres in elevation on what looks like a rather cold summer's day.

The photos reveal a particularly cheery group, enjoying fresh air.



*Adnan Lovic*



## Christmas Party

46 people attended our Christmas Party at Albert Park Lake. It rained. Doesn't it always rain in Melbourne on a Saturday? Regardless, a short jaunt around Albert Park Lake was in store to stretch the legs. It was agreed that if you got lost on this part of the day, then the rules of natural selection would be allowed to play out. A barbecue with salads and desserts was then held, with the day winding up about 3 pm. Til next year . . . do you recognise any old friends in the photos?





# Meet the animals of the bush!



## The lyrebird

There are two types of lyrebird in Australia; the superb lyrebird, and Albert's lyrebird, also known as the northern lyrebird. You will only find the superb lyrebird in Victoria, and they are relatively numerous in the Kinglake and Yarra Ranges National Parks.

They have a distinct ability to mimic a variety of sounds that they hear in their environment; some lyrebirds have been recorded as mimicking dogs, other birds or even a chainsaw.

They are ground living birds with strong legs and feet and short rounded wings. They don't fly often, but will occasionally attempt to glide downwards, such as down a hill or embankment. They are very much smaller than they look, generally weighing in at less than a kilogram. Essentially, they are insectivores, eating a variety of insects and small lizards and frogs. They do eat seeds, but this is not a main part of their diet. Sensibly, they know to keep away from humans; if you do spot one, it will usually scurry off into the forest to escape any danger that it perceives you to present.

They can live for up to 30 years in the wild. Their tail of the males are very distinctive, and were seen to resemble a lyre (a type of musical instrument) when the animal was first sighted during European settlement; hence its name.



## The hoop snake

The rare hoop snake, a highly venomous serpent of many colours, has the unfortunate ability to curl itself in to a hoop from head to tail. It then raises itself off the ground so it resembles a car tyre, and then rolls after a victim (usually a person) who has caused it offence. It chases the victim with the express purpose of catching them, and then biting them to death.

However, the hoop snake is rarely seen. Why? Perhaps the Australian habit of over-exaggerating the danger of our wildlife has something to do with it?

If you're fairly new to Australia, and a local tells you, in all seriousness, to be careful of the hoop snake, simply smile and nod your head and pretend to believe everything you hear – as those of us who enjoy telling tall tales want you to believe us!

<https://www.mythocreatology.com/Desert.html>



# Blast from the Past!

19 years ago, in the spring of 2004, a trip to Mount Feathertop in winter was undertaken, led by Bruce Meincke, still an active member of the club, and a life member at that – he has been walking with YHA Bushwalking for more than 50 years! This trip report was provided by Greg Shepherd. Note there are no photos – digital cameras were still being introduced! This trip was undertaken in the winter of 2004.

It was great, after the bushfires closed the track last year, to see Bruce Meincke's traditional Mt Feathertop trip back on the program. Mt Feathertop via the Bungalow Spur.

Ah, the very name inspires images of turmoil, sacrifice, struggle and exhilaration! This trip has become the stuff of legend around the bushwalking circuit. This year the trip was completed in near perfect conditions. Nineteen intrepid people came along, and we had perfect weather throughout. The snow - in this fantastic season – was deep, and came down to around the 950 metre mark.

Starting at 9 am, most of us reached the old site of Federation Hut (destroyed in the 2003 bushfires) by 1.30 pm for a late-ish lunch before setting out for the summit at 2.30 pm. Of course, my 15 year old son David was well ahead of me on the trail (though he was a bit lax in not having prepared a three course luncheon with a civilised collection of wines and aperitifs for my famished, but nonetheless discerning palate) - preoccupied himself instead with the wasteful exercise of building a snowbreak/wall for our campsite.

The afternoon was absolutely glorious; we could see for miles and miles in all directions across the magnificent vista of the Victorian Alps. Some of our party had crampons, some had ice-axes and some snowshoes, but all had a resolute, steely and never-say-die determination in their eye. Fortunately in the fine weather and ideal snow conditions it took a mere hour and a quarter to get ourselves up on to the summit (complete with its treacherous overhanging cornice).

The thing about this trip is the variability of snow and weather conditions each year. This year we camped out in the snow – our insulation mats providing an all important thermal barrier between us and that cold white stuff underneath. The temperature probably hovered around minus 6-7 overnight, and - after a nourishing pasta meal cooked over our gas burner - it was early to bed: playing "Twenty Questions" and so on to pass the time, before dropping off to sleep.

Greg Shepherd

## Caring for your compass

Not everyone uses compasses these days – rightly or wrongly. However, if you have a compass, there are a couple of things you may not know:

- Do not store compasses together in a steel cabinet or drawer, or near a magnet. Over time, the poles may reverse, and the red end of the needle will point South
- Do not use a compass near iron or steel objects, such as a vehicle or power lines.
- The local geology, specifically rock strata, may affect your compass. If the compass bearing alters significantly when it is held near the ground, there may be a local magnetic anomaly. Guide books or better quality maps may indicate where this is a local problem.
- Compasses manufactured for use in the Northern Hemisphere will not operate satisfactorily in the Southern Hemisphere, and vice versa. The needle will not sit level and may tend to jam. This is because the needle is weighted for a magnetic dip, which is different in the two hemispheres. However, some top of the range models will have a built in adjustment for this.
- Liquid-filled compasses may develop a bubble over time. The bubble will change in size with changes in altitude and temperature, but it does not affect the use of the compass unless it becomes quite large. The needle case can generally be replaced.

With thanks to our friends from Bushwalking Victoria, Bulletin 65, September 2023



# Would you like to volunteer for the environment?

## Landcare

Landcare is a community-based movement that began in Victoria almost 40 years ago. It now involves thousands of Victorians and more than 600 groups working together to shape the future of our land, biodiversity and waterways.

A group of farmers near St Arnaud, in central Victoria formed the first Landcare group. For these farmers, it made sense to work together to tackle their shared environmental problems.

The movement has grown from this to the adoption of a broader focus on sustainable management of all of Victoria's natural resource assets. It now encompasses individuals and groups across the whole landscape from coastal to urban and remote areas of Victoria.

Being a part of Landcare is a way to help our environment, wildlife, farmers and community. Landcare people range from retirees to families, surfers to farmers and business people to students. United by a shared desire to create positive change in their local community and environment, these individuals recognise that collectively their efforts have greater impact.

Groups work together to develop their own priorities and projects and are often supported through this process by a Landcare network and their regional Catchment Management Authority. Groups apply for funding from a variety of different sources including local, state, and federal government, and corporate and philanthropic organisations to support their work.

If you would like to know, please head to <https://www.landcarevic.org.au/> and make your own enquires.

## Parks Victoria

Being a volunteer in our parks is a great way to help conserve Victoria's special places. You may also experience some of the personal benefits that come with being a volunteer. You may learn more about plants and wildlife, gain new skills, be in the outdoors, improve your health and well-being and meet new friends. Time spent in nature also reduces stress and promotes physical well-being.

Discover hundreds of exciting volunteer opportunities around Victoria and learn about groups that work in your local area. There are volunteer activities for every age group, skill, and ability. Join a regular group or just participate occasionally. You can volunteer for a huge range of activities, to:

- improve habitats for wildlife
- learn how to propagate plants and collect seeds
- take photos of endangered species and habitats
- provide visitor information along popular tracks and campgrounds
- provide interpretation and guided walks

So many opportunities exist to give more to our natural environment than simply bushwalking. Head to <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/get-into-nature/volunteering> if you would like to know more.





# Trivia

*Jann Cooney put together the following during the pandemic for an evening of trivia, red wine and Zoom. The highest score at that time was 24. Think you could do better?*

*Answers on the next page!*

Q 1: A foundation member of the Federation of Victorian Bushwalking Clubs, YHA Bushwalking was founded in what year? (1 pt)

Q 2: Snowy's Outdoors is an online outdoor gear supplier. In what Australian city will you find his "bricks and mortar" home? (1 pt)

Q 3: The Australian Alps Walking Track is a long- distance walking trail through the alpine areas of Victoria, New South Wales and ACT. Where does it officially start and finish? (2 pts)

Q 4: On a topographical map, what colour is used to depict contour lines? (1 pt) A. Pink B. Brown C. Black

Q 5: Closed gates should be: (a) vandalised, (b) swung upon joyfully, (c) opened and closed behind you, or (d) cut open with bolt cutters.

Q 6: Darn Tough and Wigwam are examples of what important item of hiking gear? (2 pts)

Q 7: A ground sheet made specifically for a certain size or brand of tent is known as a what? (1 pt)

Q 8: Bushwalking lore has it that the word "scroggin" is an acronym derived from its ingredients, only 4 of which are not hotly debated. Based on one common interpretation, fill in the blanks. S.....C.....R.....O (orange peel/other) G (ginger) G (glucose) I (imagination) N.....(4 pts)

Q 9: Five Mile Beach, Johnny Souey, and Tin Mine Cove are all campsites on which Victorian wilderness circuit walk? (1 pt)

Q 10: What countries are home to the following outdoor gear manufactures? A. Scarpa B. Berghaus C. Osprey (3 pts)

Q 11: What term is given to measure how well the filling of a sleeping bag (usually down) traps air? (1 pt)

Q 12: Victoria currently has 45 national parks. Name: A. The oldest B. The closest to Melbourne CBD C. The largest (3 pts)

Q 13: What is the protective rubber strip around the toe of a hiking boot called? (1 pt)

Q 14: As a visitor to a Victorian National Park, what are 2 things you cannot do there that you might in a State Park? (2pts)

Q 15: When hiking in remote areas, walkers are encouraged to carry an EPIRB, an electronic device that, when activated in a life-threatening situation, assists rescue authorities in their search to locate those in distress.

What does the acronym EPIRB stand for? (1 pt)

Q 16: What is the primary active ingredient in a tropical strength insect repellent? (1 pt)



Q 17: In Cheryl Strayed's best-selling book "Wild" she walked the Pacific Crest Trail with a pack nicknamed what? (1 pt)

Q 18: Mt Juliet is reputed to be one of the steepest and hardest hill climbs in Victoria. True or false? (1 pt)

Q 19: What is the enduring legacy of Gustav and Kate Weindorfer and their contribution to Australian bushwalking? (1 pt)

Q 20: Referring to its propensity to suddenly drop branches on unsuspecting campers who unwisely pitch their tents beneath it, the River Red Gum has been nicknamed the what? (1 pt)

Total pts: 30

## Where is it?

One of Victoria's premier hiking destinations, the crystal clear turquoise waters house an abundance of sea life, with whales, seals and even sharks seen from its shores. Bushwalkers will still bravely enter the waters for a refreshing dip on a warm day. The surrounding countryside is home to wallabies, wombats, emus, possums, a vast array of reptile and bird life and some of the most beautiful trees in the state. But . . . where is it?



Q 1: 1939  
Q 2: Adelaide  
Q 3: Waltham (Vic) to Tharwa (ACT)  
Q 4: B. Brown  
Q 5: Open and shut behind you  
Q 6: Socks  
Q 7: Footprint  
Q 8: Sultanias, Chocolate, Raisins, Nuts  
Q 9: Wilson's Prom, Northern circuit  
Q 10: A. Italy B. UK C. USA  
Q 11: Loft  
Q 12: A. Tower Hill Reserve (1892) B. Organ Pipes NP (30km) C. Alpine NP (6674 sq km)  
Q 13: Rand  
Q 14: Light a fire, take a dog, ride a dirt bike, hunt, carry a firearm  
Q 15: Emergency Positioning Indicating Radio Beacon  
Q 16: DEET  
Q 17: Monster  
Q 18: True  
Q 19: Established Lake St Clair/ Cradle Mt N.P.  
Q 20: The Widow-maker  
Where is it? Little Oberon Bay, Wilson's Promontory National Park



# Hiking Products Reviewed

## Insect repellent

## RECOMMENDED



A blast of insect repellent – particularly around your ankles, wrists and neck – is a good way to keep those pesky mosquitos at bay; some use them against leeches too.

Personally, I rather dislike the sensation of insect repellent on my skin, and prefer to cover up if insects are particularly annoying. A headnet can be particularly useful to keep them away without chemicals.

## Gaitors

## RECOMMENDED



Somewhat uncomfortable at first . . . gaitors provide a great deal of protection from snake bite, some protection from leeches, and a lot of protection from the snarls and prickles and nasty twigs and spikes of the Australian bush, particularly in summer.

Available from all good hiking stores, although my experience is that they are extremely expensive at certain shops – I've seen them for up to \$150 which seems ludicrous for what you get. They may be well priced at others. Strongly suggest you look online for a sensible pair of gaitors at a reasonable price.

## Sunscreen and sunglasses

## RECOMMENDED



I remain utterly gobsmacked at the number of people who go hiking without sunscreen. I am also alarmed at people who constantly leech sunscreen off others – it actually isn't cheap these days . . . and I remain gobsmacked at the people who use a tiny amount of it. You need to cake it on!

A dollop of at least the size of a 20 or 50 cent coin – for one arm alone! That means a lot of sunscreen for your arms, your neck and your face . . . and we haven't even got to our legs yet. And reapply it at least every two hours.

Preferably wear long sleeved pants and shirt sleeves on truly sunny days to protect your skin. A hat is a must, and sunglasses.



Now, naturally, you are smart enough to know that this magazine does not offer medical advice. However, bush first aid is something we take seriously, so we offer some tips that you may or not find useful. But you know your body, and you also know that any queries you have about the following should be followed up privately.

## Leeches

These little buggers are surprisingly resilient. Their bites are bloody itchy, and they will reach all areas of your person; legs, arms, neck, face, ears, even under your clothes. I've even heard of them on eyeballs.

They leech on to you and suck your blood, eventually dropping off when they've had enough. Some people just flick them off; others use salt to remove them, and some actually try to burn the little fucker. I personally don't recommend this course of action; it's time consuming, rather dangerous if you have hairy legs and apparently the shock of the burn makes them vomit . . . right back into your blood stream.

Insect repellent may keep them at bay, but it may not.

You may like to use Stingose or some sort of itch cream for the after effects. I have also noted that the itch may hang around for up to two weeks and seems to be particularly virulent when you are having a shower; maybe something about the hot water. However, you do eventually seem to build up some sort of immunity after a few bites.



*Bastard of a leech doing what they do best. Photo: <https://australianhiker.com.au/advice/leeches-and-hiking/>*

Source: The Author

## Minor Burns

Burns are surprisingly common on hiking trips; normally inflicted on a hand in the wrong spot from a cooking tool, or from spilt water/hot food.

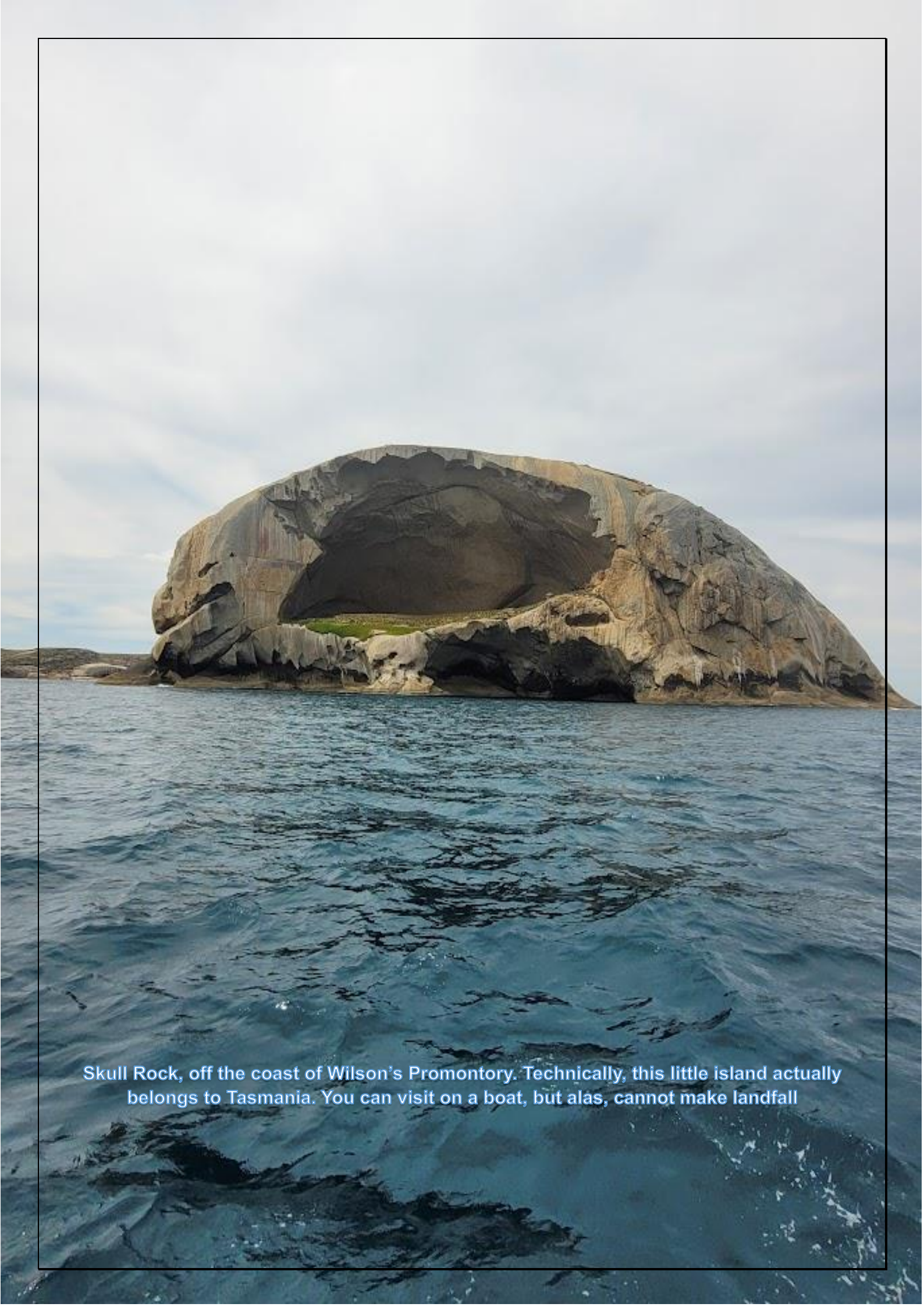
However, you 'may' have the tools on hand to deal with a burn effectively in the first instance. Is there a creek or pond nearby? Is it feasible to dip the victims' hand or leg into the water for a good 15-20 minutes? This will alleviate a lot of the damage. Maybe you could dip their hand into a cup or bowl of clean water for 15-20 minutes?

After that, best to wrap it up in a bandage and send the patient off to seek medical assistance.

More serious burns may require the victim to leave the hike immediately. Whether you call 000 for a burn event is probably best assessed at the time and depends on a number of factors.

As for sunburn; how about avoiding it in the first place with generous amounts of skin covering and sunscreen. Otherwise, there is not much we can do for you. You could apply moisturising cream, but you really need to get out of the sun for a few days and let it heal. A cool shower can provide temporary relief.





Skull Rock, off the coast of Wilson's Promontory. Technically, this little island actually belongs to Tasmania. You can visit on a boat, but alas, cannot make landfall