



Walking toward Little Plain and The Fainters (Photo: Gill Sydes)
Benalla Bushwalking Club newsletter, Dec 2011-Mar 2012

Contributions

Email or post news, views, club profiles, articles, photographs, sketches and letters on any subject of interest to bushwalkers (subject to editorial approval) to:

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The statements and opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views or position of Bushwalking Victoria.

Editor: Joslin Guest

Inside this issue...

Walking and Talking with the Bushwalking Victoria President.....	2	Natural Environment:	
Bushwalking Environment:		First detection of myrtle rust in Victoria	6
Track clearing/conservation	3	Remnant Native Vegetation Investigation	7
Wet and remote track clearing - Northern Wilsons Prom	3	Call for nature lovers to speak up for our rivers.....	7
Track work on Mt William (Sheep Hills) Track	4	Bushwalking Victoria Profile:	
Friends of Bogong work party	4	Terry Sydes.....	7
Around the Tracks:		Bushwalking Tips:	
Grampians NP	4	Check before you walk.....	8
Mornington Peninsula Walk	4	Treating snake bite	8
Grand Strzelecki Track	4	Advertisement—Du Nord Ski Club.....	9
Falls Creek to Mt Hotham Walk ...	5	New Walks Book — Melbourne's Western Gorges (Glenn Tempest) ...	10
Great Dividing Trail—GDT Ararat circuit walk map	5	BSAR Training Weekend, Nov 2011	11
Wallace's Heritage Trail	5	Sun & Moon	11
Some rail trail updates	5	Who's Who at BWV.....	12
Wilsons Prom overnight walks	9		

WALKING AND TALKING WITH THE BUSHWALKING VICTORIA PRESIDENT

Wanted: new office bearers and board members

At the AGM to be held on Saturday June 16, Bushwalking Victoria will be seeking candidates for the positions of Secretary, Treasurer, general member and possibly Vice-President. At the 2011 AGM Bushwalking Victoria was unable to recruit anyone to take the role of Secretary and this position remains unfilled. While the current Assistant Secretary, Val Wake, has been performing the duties of Secretary, this can only be a short term solution. In other words, we need a Secretary.

In June this year Fred Bover will complete his third and final year as Treasurer, as under the Bushwalking Victoria Rules the maximum term in an office is three years. We also have a vacancy for a general board member that we would like to fill this year. I have been President for 18 months now which means in 2013 at the latest Bushwalking Victoria will need to find a new President. While the position of Vice President provides an excellent training ground for a potential president, current Vice President, John Creaser, has said he is unable to take on the role of President while working in a full-time job. So ideally we need to find a new Vice President who is also interested in becoming President from 2013.

I strongly encourage all clubs to publicise these opportunities with their members to help ensure that we can fill these vital positions and continue the important work of Bushwalking Victoria. Interested applicants are encouraged to contact me for further information, including possibly attending a board meeting as a guest before committing to applying. Information on the role of the board and role statements for Secretary and Treasurer are available on the *Governance* page of the Bushwalking Victoria web site at <http://www.bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/governance.htm>

Leadership Forum and AGM, Saturday 16 June 2012

The 2012 Leadership Forum and AGM will be held in Melbourne on Saturday 16 June 2012. The day provides a fantastic opportunity to contribute ideas and opinions that will help build a stronger and more successful Bushwalking Victoria and club network and learn first hand about the work undertaken by Bushwalking Victoria and member clubs.

The leadership team (ie. the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) of each club is invited to attend. So all club committees should pencil this date into their calendars now. More details will be provided directly to clubs in coming months. However suggestions for topics to be covered are welcome any time.

Marysville recovery

On Saturday 3 December Val Wake, Bushwalking Victoria's Assistant Secretary, and I were guests of the Marysville community at the official opening of the

Marysville Heritage Trail. Bushwalking Victoria contributed to the cost of a sign, while MLC contributed \$66,500 for 10 signs. The sign that Bushwalking Victoria contributed to is located at the entrance to Marylands Guesthouse in Falls Rd and commemorates the Mary chain of guesthouses, Marylands, Mary Lodge (Kerami), Mary-Lyn and Mary Meadows (El Kanah).

The trail is a great way to experience the heritage and history of Marysville and surrounds. Nine signs have been placed at sites of significance in Marysville, with additional signs at Narbethong, Buxton and Taggerty. Each sign includes historical and contemporary photos, reminiscences by locals and anecdotes from early families.

If you haven't been back to Marysville since the 2009 fires, or haven't been for a while, why not make a New Year resolution to do so. There are now 13 walking trails available; seven Marysville trails and six Marysville Forest trails. There is also plenty of accommodation available in and around the town, with more than 460 beds available ranging from cabins at the caravan park to 5-star bed and breakfast establishments.

Web sites for more information:

Marysville Heritage Trail

<http://www.marysvilleheritage.net.au/>

Marysville Tourism <http://www.marysvilletourism.com/>

The Maroondah Bushwalking Club will be hosting the 2012 Federation Walk at Marysville on Sunday 14 October, so make sure it is in your club walk program.

State Government funding - Victorians More Active

For several years Bushwalking Victoria has received a \$15,000 government grant from Sport & Recreation Victoria. These funds contribute to our administration and general running costs and also helps us pay the subsidies to club members who successfully complete a first aid course. Following the election of the Baillieu government in late 2010 organisations like Bushwalking Victoria that receive such grants were advised that the new government would probably change the focus and intent of this grant program. In late December I received official advice that these changes would be put into effect from mid-2012, with existing funding being 'rolled over' for six months while the changes are implemented. The new program will focus on increasing participation to get more people, more active, more often and is to be called *Victorians More Active 2012-2015*. These changes are consistent with the government's pre-election policy platform and policy priorities announced soon after taking government. Until I attend a briefing session on 8 February I am unable to provide details on what is being proposed, but am hopeful that the role of Bushwalking Victoria and member clubs in encouraging and facilitating active recreation will be recognised and supported.

Chris Towers, President

BUSHWALKING ENVIRONMENT

Track clearing/conservation projects

<p>Friday 24 February - Monday 27 February 2012 Australian Alps Walking Track Clearing</p>	<p>This track clearing event will be held on the Baw Baw Plateau clearing a few kilometres of track between Whitelaw Hut Ruins and Phillack Saddle. This is a continuation of a progressive clearing activity over a number of years where Bushwalking Victoria has assisted the Friends of Baw Baw and the Strzelecki Bushwalking Club, with Parks Victoria as Land Managers. For more information, refer to the November 2011 <i>Bushwalking News Victoria</i>.</p>
<p>Saturday 3 March and/ or Sunday 4 March 2012 Cathedral Ranges State Park</p>	<p>Track clearing and some boardwalk construction Participants required: 16 Free camping for both Saturday and Sunday night at Cook's Mill Contact - Steve Robertson (Bushwalking Victoria Conservation and Tracks Project Officer) via email at srob7859@bigpond.net.au or on 0438 267 129 or (03) 97625367 to register or request further information.</p>
<p>Sunday 22 April 2012 Bunyip State Park and Kurth Kiln Regional Park</p>	<p>The walking tracks in this area are used regularly by many walking clubs, and now it is time to give back and improve those tracks we walk on. In addition, we hope to, on this day, create a new walking track link between Bunyip State Park and Kurth Kiln. There will be many varied tasks from the easy secateur stroller to the more arduous. A day for everyone - it will be fun!! We also hope to have other passive recreational user groups involved on the day but I need your support. Contact Steve Robertson (Bushwalking Victoria Conservation and Tracks Project Officer) via email at srob7859@bigpond.net.au or on 0438 267 129 or (03) 97625367 to register or to request further information.</p>

Wet and remote track clearing - Northern Wilsons Promontory

Following a request from Parks Victoria to Chris Towers, the President of Bushwalking Victoria, in late November 2011 Steve Robertson lead a group of volunteers to re-mark the route from Five Mile Rd to Lower Barry Camp and then as far as they could towards Chinaman's Swamp.

At an early hour on Saturday morning, 20 members of various bushwalking clubs and Friends of the Prom set off on their overnight activity from Stockyard Camp at the entrance to The Prom.

The tasks were to locate old tape markings of the route and apply new tape to identify the route. We also cleared fallen debris and shrubs that obstructed the path, to make the track approximately half a metre wide.

We split into several groups to do the work. We were all in camp at Lower Barry campsite by mid afternoon on Saturday. The rain had been fairly relentless through most of the morning. After setting up camp approximately half the group then persisted despite the weather to define and clear the next part of the track.

Sunday morning saw clear skies and all of us worked for several hours doing the same types of tasks as on Saturday. In spots the growth was almost impenetrable, but we pushed on regardless. Soon after noon we called a halt and retraced our steps to camp, packed up our gear and walked back to Five Mile Rd.



It is hoped that in May 2012 we can complete the next section through Chinaman's Swamp.

A huge thanks to all of the volunteers for their work over the weekend, especially as it is not easy doing track clearing while carrying your overnight backpack.

The following clubs deserve recognition for their participation - Bayside, VMTC, Melbourne Bushwalkers, Maroondah, Waverley, BV; and Friends of the Prom.

Steve Robertson
BWV Conservation and Tracks Project Officer

Track work on Mt William (Sheep Hills) Track, 11-13 November 2011

On Saturday 12 November members of the Ballarat Bushwalkers and Outdoor Club were despatched by the Parks Victoria ranger to clear (and drain) this track, starting just below Mt William car park and, fortunately, working downhill. This is one of many tracks still closed in the Grampians NP. The overgrowth was light at first but became heavier lower down. We completed about one third of the total distance by 2.30pm and then walked out to the main Dunkeld road, about 8km. This was good going, given hot conditions we experienced, but the rewards were magnificent: wildflowers and views of huge landslides on Cathedral Rock and Sheep Hills. We had a refreshing dip in Fyans Creek.

A break-through was that Parks Victoria felt confident (after a safety briefing) to leave us all day to our own devices – a ‘first’ for a volunteer group in the Grampians.

Dave Witham from the Grampians Track Support Group sent the message: *Please thank all volunteers for the work they did. It's great that you bring machinery along and you have got me thinking about buying a scrub cutter for other groups to use. We camped at Borough Huts but perhaps next time we work in the Grampians we should hire a house – so that we have hot showers and a proper place to socialise after our effort on the tracks.*

John Petheram, BEC field officer

Friends of Bogong work party, 12 & 13 November 2011

Saturday – track work on the Mt Cope walking track

We tackled the middle section of the track and repaired ‘braiding’ where walkers were moving off the eroded track, the water run-off barriers and some minor re-alignment. Ranger Rudi Pleschutschnig used the brushcutters to clear away the overhanging vegetation, and some of us worked towards the summit with secateurs and branch loppers to prune back overhanging branches.

We camped at Bucketty’s. When we arrived there at 4pm there was a glamorous wedding in progress – the happy couple and guests were from Mt Beauty and Howman’s Gap; some 80 or so all dressed in 1920s fashion including the children. We were entertained with a giant maypole with bunting, badminton matches, bocce, children sack races, three legged races, etc. We shared in home-made ice cream, lots of scrumptious cake and yummy treats and watched the afternoon activities. The wedding packed up about 5pm and we had the quiet campsite to ourselves with a nice warm fire (many thanks to Margaret as the chief fire maker).

Sunday – We met Ranger Rudi at Pretty Valley for a special visit to the feral horse trap out near Mt Jim. Rudi explained how the trap operates and did a demonstration with the trip wire and gravity based gate shutter. This was most interesting, especially with the explanation of the humane treatment with the feral horses. They are

transported to Ballarat for ‘domesticating’, and are highly sought after because of their breeding and conditioning. Over 45 feral horses have been removed from the Bogong High Plains over the past 2 years.

And Ranger Rudi surprised us with a yummy morning tea of almond fingers, boston bun fresh from the bakery and a giant thermos (two actually) with plenty of hot cuppas. Thank you Rudi for a very enjoyable weekend.

Work party dates for 2012:

24-25 March 2012 (work party)

11-12 November 2012 (work party and AGM).

Friends of Bogong newsletter, December 2011

AROUND THE TRACKS

Grampians NP

Roads:

The big news up here is that the Northern Grampians Rd (Mt Victory Rd) was reopened to traffic on 18 November.

The only major bitumen through-road that remains closed is the Silverband Falls Rd immediately above the Falls, and that is not expected to reopen until August 2012.

Owing to the very recent flash flooding, the Mt Difficult Rd is closed from Boroka Lookout to Lake Wartook picnic area until further notice, although access to Lake Wartook and Boroka Lookout remains open.

Mt Abrupt walking track

From 23 December, the Mt Abrupt walking track will be open again. Parks Victoria warns that walkers need to exercise caution when crossing ground that was landslip-affected during the January floods.

Phil Brothie, BEC field officer

Mornington Peninsula Walk

On Friday 2 December 2011, the 100km Mornington Peninsula Walk was officially opened by the Hon. Martin Dixon MP. The walk links up many of the already well-used walking tracks and includes ocean and bay coastal tracks as well as sections through the bush land of Arthurs Seat and Greens Bush.

Parks Victoria and Mornington Peninsula Tourism combined to make all this happen, and there are plans for packages that will include walkers transfer shuttles, guided walks and accommodation for extended walks.

Margaret Madge, BEC field officer

Grand Strzelecki Track

The Deputy Premier and Member for Gippsland South launched the construction of the Grand Strzelecki Track on Friday 25 November 2011 at the section of track which starts opposite the Tarra Valley car park and picnic area.

The following table outlines the state of progress

	% completed
New track works Wellington Shire	90%
New track works Latrobe City	10%
Works on existing tracks HVP	80%
Directional signs	70%
Marker POST	90%
Variations	
Construct access steps (Tarra Valley car park)	100%
Works on existing track Parks Victoria Diaper Wild Cherry	100%

Dave Rimmer, Manager BEC

Falls Creek to Mt Hotham Walk

There has been talk for a while of a new walk between these resorts and the Alps42 newsletter has this to say: *'It's a great concept - to walk between these two resorts in the warmer months. Of course anyone can currently access a series of tracks to get from A to B, and it's already a walk that appeals to bushwalkers who have the gear and are prepared to carry it. What's special about the yet to be launched Falls to Hotham alpine crossing is that it will open up the experience to everyone - bushwalkers to Sunday strollers.'*

The Ranger Team Leader, Kevin Cosgriff, who is part of the Bogong Management Unit explains:

'We wanted to break down barriers, to make this peak and rolling high plains experience available to more people. The result is an achievable five star 60km walk over three days and two nights - a remote wilderness experience that's easy to do. The walk will start at the resorts, where there is plenty of accommodation; the packs will be carried; it's fully catered and an experienced guide helps visitors appreciate their setting. The experience they get should be mind-blowing.'

'With this as the end goal, much still has to take place to achieve it. Firstly the walk has received three significant ticks of support: from the Victorian Nature-Based Tourism Strategy, the Board of Alpine Resorts Tourism, and the National Landscapes Initiative. Further support has come from Tourism Victoria, the resorts involved, Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment.'

Actual works began on the existing network of tracks in 2011, upgrading surfaces to make the walk more comfortable. An estimated 25km will need intensive work, scheduled for completion 2012.

For more information about the operators offering to take people on the Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing, contact Parks Victoria on 13 19 63.

Footnotes, Vol 31 No 11 Dec 2011, newsletter of the Maroondah Bushwalking Club

Great Dividing Trail—GDT Ararat circuit walk map

The Rural City of Ararat has developed a new map brochure for the GDT Ararat Circuit Walk. The new map shows the 14.5km Ararat Walk, the 9.7km Ararat Walk-Echidna Track and the 4.6km Ararat Walk-Stringybark Trail. The .pdf map can be downloaded from the GDTA website (<http://gdt.org.au/GDTA>). It is also available in hard copy from the Ararat Visitor Information Centre or by contacting Pat Hope on 0418 131 545 to send you a copy.

Newsletter of the Great Dividing Trail Association, Dec 2011, Vol 2011, Iss 4

Wallace's Heritage Trail

The trail and the new tourist facilities are now open, although the official opening of the trail on 26 November 2011 by the Minister for the Environment and CEO of Parks Victoria was cancelled due to inclement weather.

Friends of Bogong newsletter, December 2011

Some rail trail Updates

Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail

The 40km Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail is one of the oldest in Australia. Until October last year, the trail in Lilydale effectively ended at the busy Maroondah Highway just shy of the town centre. With the opening of the architecturally impressive pedestrian/cycle bridge over the Maroondah Highway in Lilydale it is now a much safer trail. A couple of other difficult road crossings are being addressed, which when completed will improve the trail further.

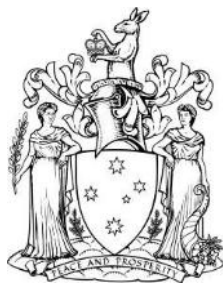
Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail

The 134km Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail will be a fantastic addition to Victoria's rail trails. The shared pathway for cyclists, walkers and horses follows the disused rail line from Tallarook through Yea to Mansfield with a side trail to Alexandra. The trail is a joint effort from Mansfield, Mitchell and Murrindindi Shire Councils, with \$13m funding from the Federal Government and \$1m from the State Government.

Sections of the trail were opened prior to Christmas, but four significant bridges connecting Tallarook to Alexandra to Bonnie Doon were not expected to be completed until January. The official opening will be after January.

Edited from Railtrails Australia Committee
Rail Trail Connections, Summer 2011/12, Vol 18. Iss 2
Cont page 9

Bushwalking News Victoria Advertising Rates		
1/6 page advertisement	\$26.25	Note: Advertisements must be artwork ready. * Advertiser to supply 300 printed inserts each edition. Advertising is welcome but insertion is subject to the editor's discretion. Products or services advertised in this publication are not endorsed or recommended in any way by Bushwalking Victoria.
1/4 page advertisement	\$42.00	
1/3 page advertisement	\$52.50	
1/2 page advertisement	\$78.75	
Full page advertisement	\$157.50	
Address list of affiliate clubs	\$52.50	
Insert for Newsletter*	\$52.50	



Media Release

Department of Primary Industry
Friday, January 6, 2012

First detection of myrtle rust in Victoria

The destructive plant disease myrtle rust has been found in Victoria for the first time, at a *retail nursery on the Mornington Peninsula*.

The disease poses a threat to Victoria's nursery and forestry industries, as well as to public parks and gardens and native forests.

Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Incident Controller, Gordon Berg, said a report of suspected myrtle rust was made by nursery staff and later confirmed by DPI diagnostic tests.

'Because myrtle rust is very easily spread, it is not surprising that it has reached Victoria,' Mr Berg said.

'Since the first Australian detection in New South Wales in early 2010, it has spread to far north Queensland and has been found on over 150 different plant species.

'The tiny spores of myrtle rust are easily spread on contaminated plant material, equipment, vehicles, clothing and shoes, as well as by animals, wind and water.'

Mr Berg said it was not known how the disease reached Victoria but, given its current widespread distribution in New South Wales and Queensland, it will not be possible to eradicate it.

'DPI is inspecting nurseries linked to the affected outlet to determine how it arrived there and how far the disease has spread.

Mr Berg said myrtle rust posed a threat to the nursery industry mainly through trade restrictions, but its effects on plant health could also impact the forestry industry, public parks and gardens and native forests.

'Under the right conditions, it could slow regeneration of the Victoria's native forests after harvesting or bushfire and even change forest biodiversity,' he said.

'DPI should be notified immediately of any plants in Victoria suspected of being infected with myrtle rust.'

All members of the Myrtaceae plant family are potential hosts of myrtle rust. It attacks young, soft, actively growing leaves, shoot tips and young stems, as well as the fruits and flowers of susceptible plants.

Plants at risk include gum trees, bottlebrush, tea tree, lilly pilly, paperbark, myrtle, guava, midyim, rose apple, brush box and New Zealand Christmas bush.

Plants not in the Myrtaceae family and therefore not affected by myrtle rust include roses, fruit trees, vegetables, camellias, grevilleas, crepe myrtle and wattles.

Mr Berg said sites where myrtle rust may be found include commercial plant nurseries, public gardens, parks, streetscapes and bushland.

'The first signs of myrtle rust infection are tiny raised spots that are brown to grey, often with red-purple haloes.

'Up to 14 days after infection, the spots produce masses of distinctive yellow or orange spores.'

Reports of suspected myrtle rust can be made by calling DPI on 1800 084 881, or by emailing photos of the suspect material, together with a contact phone number and the plant's location, to plant.protection@dpi.vic.gov.au

To avoid spreading the disease, do not touch, move or collect samples of the suspect plant.

Further information about myrtle rust can be found on the DPI website at www.dpi.vic.gov.au/myrtlerust

Media contact: Alan Everett 0409 255 140



THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Remnant Native Vegetation Investigation

On Thursday 24 November 2011, the Victorian Government tabled and publicly released its response to the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) Remnant Native Vegetation Investigation. VEAC's Final Report for the Investigation was submitted to the Hon Ryan Smith MP, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, in March 2011

You can access the Government response and associated media release through links on the VEAC website www.veac.vic.gov.au

Dave Rimmer, Manager BEC

Call for nature lovers to speak up for our rivers

The Murray River and its tributaries have been teetering on the brink of collapse. By the end of the last drought, 75% of wetlands in Victoria had disappeared, water bird abundance was down by 80%, native fish were at only 10% of their pre-European numbers and red gum forests were dying.

The Murray-Darling Basin Plan is an attempt to turn that around. But when the draft plan was released in November it was heavily compromised. According to the CSIRO, it doesn't even meet its own environmental objectives.

The good news is that the draft plan is only a draft. Environment Victoria is calling on nature lovers to help make the final plan one which will look after our rivers for the long term. The independent environment group is asking people to sign their submission to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority. So far the campaign is going well. Nearly half of the submissions on the MDBA's website are from people calling for healthy rivers. But to make sure this really makes a difference, Environment Victoria is aiming for 4,000 submissions – one submission for every billion litres of water our rivers need.

If you would like to help our wetlands, trees, water birds and native fish survive the next drought, join hundreds of other nature lovers and sign the submission at www.environmentvictoria.org.au/Save-the-Murray. Then, if you would like to do more, write to your local politician (there's a template at www.melbourne.foe.org.au/?q=bmc/MP_template_letter).

Help us protect our rivers for generations to come.

Domenica Settle

Healthy Rivers Campaign, Environment Victoria

We're Victoria's leading, independent environment group working to safeguard our environment and the future



BUSHWALKING VICTORIA PROFILE

Terry Sydes, General Board Member

What bushwalking club(s) do you belong to?
Benalla Bushwalking Club.

How long have you been a member?
Founding member of the club, which was formed in 1984.

Do you or have you held a committee position in your club(s)

Committee member since 1985. President for 11 years: 1989 to 2000. Currently newsletter editor:(15 years)

How long have you been bushwalking?
Casually with the Boy Scouts. Then with the family. Since 1984 with Benalla Bushwalking Club and 1985 with BMLC.

What got you started bushwalking?
When a group of teachers set up end-of-year activities at Benalla Technical School in the early 1980s, bushwalking was the most appealing option.

How often do you manage to bushwalk?
My wife Gill and I try to walk at least twice a month. We like to support those who lead walks, particularly new leaders.

What sort of bushwalking do you like best?
I like all types, day and overnight hikes, and car camps. I just enjoy the bush, the company and the food. Not sure about the current trend to use cabins.

Do you have a favourite walk?
Overnight hike to the Fainters or day walk to Mt Jim. The old snowgums are icons.

Are you a member of an conservation or friends group?
Not as present. Past member of Plants Australia and Benalla Field Naturalists.

Do you participate in conservation activities? If so what, where and how often? No

What do you do when you are not bushwalking?
I am a retired Technical School teacher. Work in a peach orchard for about 10 months of year. Do trips in the remaining two months. Enjoy gardening.

How long have you been on the BWV committee/been an office holder/been involved with BWV?
First year on board of BWV.

What do you bring to this position?
Lots of bushwalking experience and club members' perspective on issues. I consider myself to be a basic bushwalker, not very political.

What do you get from your contribution?
Amazed at the contribution other members make to BWV. I believe that if members of clubs could (or would) see the contribution made on their behalf, they would get behind the Board and its goals. Still trying to get my head around the big picture and how the Board can best represent those who walk in the bush, not just bushwalking clubs.

BUSHWALKING TIPS

Check before you walk

Before you go on your walk check weather, fire events and track conditions, diversions and closures.

- Parks Victoria: www.parks.vic.gov.au
- DSE: www.dse.vic.gov.au
- Planned burns website: <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/fire-and-other-emergencies/plannedburning-an-introduction/burns-today-current-status>
- CFA: www.cfa.vic.gov.au
- Bureau of Meteorology: www.bom.vic.gov.au
- Victorian Bushfire Information Line (VBIL) on 1800 240 667
- Local ABC radio for warnings in emergencies and extreme weather

Newsletter of the Great Dividing Trail Association,
Dec 2011, Vol 2011, Iss 4

Treating Snake Bite

Warmer weather brings out snakes. About 3000 bites occur each year in Australia, of which 200 to 500 receive anti-venom. Take care when walking—watch where you put your feet; when rock scrambling watch where you put your hands. Consider protecting your legs with gaiters.

Snakes are shy and will usually try to get out of your way, but may attack if they feel threatened. They have had a hard time during the drought, and this summer you may see them in greater numbers than in recent years. Respect them and remember they play an important role in the Australian bush environment.

Some of you may have heard about the efficacy of using glyceryl trinitrate (GTN) as a treatment for snake bite. (GTN is used to treat angina (chest pain).) The original report was published in *Nature Medicine* (26 June 2011) and then picked up by the media here and overseas.

The lead researcher of the study at the University of Newcastle, Associate Professor Dirk van Helden, said applying the ointment gave snakebite victims some precious extra time in which to seek help.

The research was carried out on rats (or mice, depending on which article you read) using venom from the eastern brown snake and showed that the application of the ointment slowed the transport of the venom through the lymphatic system, thereby slowing the effect of the venom and improving survival times for the rodents by up to 50%. In the experiment the rats/mice lived for up to 90 minutes with the ointment on compared to the 60 minutes without the ointment.

Applying the ointment with a 'mock venom' (a harmless dye with the same size molecules as the snake venom) to healthy human volunteers confirmed the findings: the ointment slowed down the pumping action of the

lymphatic system. However, the team could not specify how many minutes or hours the treatment might buy in the case of humans.

First aid for snakebite is controversial. Use of any technique in addition to the Australian Pressure Immobilisation method should not make you feel that you can delay in obtaining appropriate care. The GTN ointment does not inactivate the venom. Its use does not obviate the need to use the Australian Pressure Immobilisation method. None of the reports I read mentioned whether use of the ointment affects the ability to recognise the snake from venom on the skin.

In Australia, the only approved first aid for snakebite is immobilisation of the bitten limb and keeping the victim still.

First aid for snake bite

1. Phone or send for medical assistance.
2. Reassure the patient and encourage them to remain calm.
3. Have the patient remain as still as possible. Do not attempt to catch or kill the snake.
4. Apply a pressure bandage to the envenomed limb (see below). If the bite is to the trunk, apply firm pressure to the bitten area. Do not restrict chest movement.
5. Splint or sling the limb to restrict movement.
6. Where possible, help should be brought to the patient rather than moving the patient.

Australian Pressure Immobilisation method

The purpose of this method is to retard the movement of venom from the bite site into the circulation, thus 'buying time' for the patient to reach medical care.

Do not wash the area of the bite. It is important to retain traces of venom to identify the snake. If you can do so without moving the bitten limb or wasting precious time, place a piece of gauze over the bite site to collect traces of the venom.

If the bite is on a limb, a broad bandage (even torn strips of cloth) should be applied over the bitten area at moderate pressure (as for a sprain; not so tight circulation is impaired), then extended to cover as much of the bitten limb as possible. Ideally you should bandage the whole limb, including fingers or toes. You will probably need several elasticised bandages. This should not be a problem if each walker carries an appropriate elasticised bandage in their first aid kit. Go over the top of clothing rather than risk limb movement associated with removing clothing. The bitten limb should then be immobilised via splint or sling. You should all be carrying triangular bandages in your first aid kits. Use a walking pole or a stick as a splint. Use bandages from your first aid kits or strips torn from clothing to attach the splint to the limb or create the sling.

You can if you wish use special bandages for snake bite with markers to ensure correct and even pressure. The bandages are available from chemists. However, an ordinary strong elasticised bandage is just as effective.

Bites to the head, neck and back are a special problem. Firm pressure should be applied locally if possible. Do not restrict the chest.

Removal of the bandage will be associated with rapid systemic spread. So take appropriate care with the pressure of the bandaging, so there is no need to remove the bandage until patient is in a fully-equipped medical treatment area.

Do not cut or excise the area or apply an arterial tourniquet. Both these measures are ineffective and may make the situation worse.

Principle sources:

Australian Venom Research Unit:
http://www.avru.org/firstaid/firstaid_snake.html

University of Newcastle:
<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/news/2011/06/27/discovery-to-boost-snake-bite-victim-survival.html>

Science Now, June 2011:
<http://news.sciencemag.org/sciencenow/2011/06/when-the-snake-bites-try-ointment.html>

International Business Times:
<http://au.ibtimes.com/articles/169910/20110627/snakebite-s-venom-angina-treatment-ointment-snakes.htm>

Joslin Guest, Editor

ADVERTISEMENT



The Du Nord Ski Club in the middle of Mt Baw Baw Village is offering summer accommodation for groups of up to 24 guests, with a minimum of five guests.

The special offer covers Summer 2012 and 2013. The cost is \$50 per person for the period Friday night to Sunday 4pm.

During several weekends in February to May, ski club members will be opening the lodge for maintenance purposes. We welcome walking club members who wish to tour the lodge to view the accommodation or locate walk trails etc.

For further information contact anne.laul@bigpond.com.au. You can also view our website at <http://www.dunordskiclub.bigpondhosting.com>



Bushwalking planking

I have lost the attribution for this image. Apologies. (Ed)

Around the track cont

Wilson's Prom—Overnight walks

Lighthouse walk to remain closed

The weather forecast over the next couple of months is predicting above average rainfall for the Wilsons Promontory NP area, which has implications for the stability of many currently closed areas. This prediction, coupled with a recent independent engineering assessment on the partially repaired Mt Oberon Rd, means that even limited public access to the southern area of the Prom would result in unacceptable risks to visitor safety if this section of the park is reopened before necessary works are completed.

Even when the current major road works are complete in Autumn 2012, access to southern areas of the Prom will continue to be limited by the next stage of the flood recovery project on Telegraph Track which provides access to the lighthouse. That project will install three new bridges on the Telegraph Track and bring access for the track up to necessary standard.

'Public safety is of paramount concern, so our proposed reopening of the southern section of the Prom for overnight hikes during the summer holiday period will now be no longer possible', said Ms Helen Dixon, the Chief Ranger for the park.

Northern area

While the overnight hiking tracks in the southern Prom remain closed over summer, intrepid walkers may like to explore the remote wilderness of the northern Prom. The Five Mile Rd overnight hiking track from the Five Mile car park to Five Mile beach will be open over summer with overnight hikers camp sites available at Barry Creek and Five Mile Beach.

Bookings are essential and an overnight hiking permit is required before departing.

**Parks Victoria media release, 15 December 2011
Wilson's Promontory NP Stakeholder Flood Recovery**

NEW WALKS BOOK — MELBOURNE'S WESTERN GORGES (GLENN TEMPEST)



Glen Tempest has produced an excellent new walks book—*Melbourne's Western Gorges: A Walkers Guide to the Brisbane Ranges, Werribee and Lerderderg Gorges*.

Glenn says 'Although separated, these significant island reserves share the same geological birth of ocean sediments, glaciation, uplift and recent volcanics. Collectively the Western Gorges are unique, their dry open forest covering a hilly upland, scoured by deep gullies and gorges, then forged by the madness of gold. And only a stone's throw from Melbourne.'

The book describes 20 walks in the Brisbane Ranges, Werribee Gorge SP, Wombat State Forest and the Lerderderg SP. Thirteen of the walks are the same as or variations of the walks in *Daywalks Around Melbourne*. There are seven new walks.

The production qualities of the book are excellent. The layout of the walk descriptions makes critical information easy to find. The pictures associated with each walk are very enticing. A really useful feature of the walk descriptions is the GPS grid reference quoted for each segment of the walk. The terrain profiles are less 'busy' than in *Daywalks Around Melbourne*, partially a reflection of the changes in the walk segments.

The general map showing the overall walk locations is part of the front cover. The walks summary table is part of the back cover of the book.

The maps appear to be very good: whole page and include contours and grid indicators, and a visual indication of grid and magnetic north. However each map carries a warning that it is not intended for navigational purposes and users should refer to official maps or to the downloadable free GPS routes.

The book combines traditional paper format with additional online line resources. The downloadable maps are available from a special website and were mapped using a Garmin GPSmap60CSx device. However you do not need to own a Garmin GPS device to use the downloads, as the Garmin files have been converted to GPS eXchange format (.gpx), an open format commonly used to exchange waypoint, route and track data between various brands of GPSs and mapping software.

Another great feature is that you can open each walk on Google Earth to get a feel for the geography of the walk prior to setting off.

I have one quibble and one disappointment with the book. The quibble is a minor one; that you can't look at the walk index and overall map of the walk locations at the same time. The disappointment is that no walks in the Pyretes Range are included; perhaps next time.

Conclusion: A book that makes you want to get out there and do all the walks. A great addition to an individual's or club' walk library, very reasonably priced at \$19.95 RRP.

Joslin Guest, Editor

BSAR TRAINING WEEKEND IN THE WOMBAT FOREST, NOVEMBER 2011

Seventy participants took part in BSAR’s annual training weekend held on 19-20 November 2011 in the Wombat Forest. It was our largest training event in a long time. Thirteen BWV Clubs were represented, plus a number of BWV individual members. It was especially pleasing to welcome 25 new and prospective members on their first BSAR training event.

The program was a mix of workshops and field exercises, built around a new activity that developed fine map reading and GPS skills in a rogaine style navigation exercise. This was very successful, with impressive levels of skill with the GPS shown by members. The program also included new sessions in observation and tracking, the group leader role, and ‘sound and light’ night searching.

A specific program was provided for our new and prospective members.

Some heavy rain periods on Saturday provoked the inevitable ‘typical search weather’ comments and caused some curtailment of the afternoon program.

With the large number of participants and the streamed program, lots of assistance was required in roles ranging from planning to session organisers and presenters to Field Organisers. Special thanks to the 36 experienced members who contributed in one way or another – and sometimes in several ways - to the planning and conduct of the weekend. Thanks also to our expert visitors for their sessions.

Thank you to Acting Sergeant Jason Ball for his participation and assistance, and to the Victoria Police Search and Rescue Squad for organising the bus transport, radios, shelter tents, maps and handouts.

And finally, to the new and prospective members, welcome again to BSAR and we hope to see you on a search bus.



Duncan Brookes for the Organising Team
BSAR
<http://www.bsar.org>

SUNRISE & SUNSET—MELBOURNE GPO

Fri 27 Jan	0627	2038	EDST	Fri 10 Feb	0643	2025	EDST	Fri 24 Feb	0658	2008	EDST				
Fri 9 Mar	0712	1948	EDST	Fri 23 Mar	0726	1927	EDST	EST starts Sunday 1 April				Fri 6 Apr	0639	1806	EST
Fri 20 Apr	0651	1747	EST	Fri 4 May	0704	1730	EST	Fri 8 May	0716	1717	EST	Fri 1 Jun	0727	1709	EST
Fri 15 Jun	0734	1707	EST	Fri 29 Jun	0736	1711	EST	Fri 13 Jul	0733	1718	EST	Fri 27 Jul	0725	1729	EST
Fri 10 Aug	0711	1740	EST	Fri 24 Aug	0653	1752	EST	Fri 7 Sep	0632	1804	EST	Fri 21 Sep	0611	1826	EST
Fri 5 Oct	0549	1828	EST	EDST starts Sunday 7 October				Fri 19 Oct	0629	1941	EDST	Fri 2 Nov	1612	1956	EDST
Fri 16 Nov	0559	2012	EDST	Fri 30 Nov	0552	2025	EDST	Fri 14 Dec	0552	2037	EDST	Fri 21 Dec	0554	2042	EDST

FULL MOONS

Wed 8 Feb, Thu 8 Mar, Sat 7 Apr, Sun 6 May, Mon 4 Jun, Wed 4 Jul, Thu 2 Aug, Fri 31 Aug, Sun 30 Sep, Tue 30 Oct, Thu 29 Nov, Fri 28 Dec

Source: www.ga.gov.au

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 Please contact via the office

Organisations where BWV Members Provide a Bushwalking Perspective

Walking Trails Classification Project Control Board: David Reid
 Metropolitan Melbourne Reference Group: Phil Brotchie
 Outdoor Recreation Centre Committee of Management:
 Chris Towers
 Living Links Steering Committee: Tony Walker



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