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## Walking and Talking with the Bushwalking Victoria President

### Bushwalking Victoria board

As I write, the invitations are going out to all clubs and individual members for the Bushwalking Victoria Leadership Forum and AGM to be held on 13 June, at Templestowe Valley Primary School. I hope that as many clubs and members as possible will attend. There is always a good exchange of thoughts and experiences at these meetings, and we all usually come away with some good ideas.

At the open forum this year we have proposed two main topics.

- A number of clubs have begun using social media to communicate with **their members and to tell the world about what they're doing**. Many individual members rely on social media to organise and plan events. Bushwalking Victoria itself now has a Facebook presence, which is **drawing an increasing number of 'likes' and comments**.

About 10 years ago, we all were all coming to terms with how we would use the Internet **to further our clubs' or groups' interests. Clubs were**

building an online presence and learning how to create an effective website. There were some learning experiences, but now nearly all clubs use the web as an effective part of how they communicate with their members and present themselves to the public.

In 2015, a similar challenge exists. There are a large and growing number of social media options - Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, etc. The number seems to grow every week! Which are most suited to our needs? How are we using these channels? What works (and **doesn't**)? What can we learn from each other to help us decide what would work best for each of us? These are some of the valid questions. **We'll have a brief presentation from a club that is already using social media very actively; then, hopefully, we can all discuss where we're at.**

- Most clubs experience problems in motivating members to be more involved - with running the club, leading events, interacting with the local community and with getting involved with Bushwalking Victoria activities such as [BTAC](#) and [BSAR](#). **So we'd like to discuss the issues**, talk about some success stories (maybe some horror stories) and exchange ideas on how we can encourage more people to be more involved. The health and future of our clubs and meetup groups depends on motivating people to help.

**We would also very happy to hear about any other topics you'd like to raise, and there will be time in the agenda for you to bring up ideas. It would be helpful if you can let us know at least one week in advance if you have any particular topic you'd like us to reserve time for.**

So please, whether you represent a club or are an individual member, come to the Forum and contribute your ideas and views.

## Outdoors Victoria

**As I mentioned in last month's report, Outdoors Victoria held its first leadership forum in Geelong, in early March.** The forum brought together representatives from government agencies such as Parks Victoria, Sports and Recreation Victoria (SRV) and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), tourism operators, outdoor education providers, and outdoor user groups such as Bushwalking Victoria.

The forum identified four key priority issues for the outdoor sector. The brief summary below is based on the interim papers provided. Once the final papers are published, we will post a link on the Bushwalking Victoria website.

- Communication of shared messages about the outdoors:

*Those active in the outdoors know the benefits it provides in terms of personal wellbeing, social resilience, health, education, environmental sustainability and economic prosperity. We also know the risks of being disconnected from nature.*

- Stimulating investment in outdoors infrastructure and programming:

*Investment in outdoors infrastructure and programming is a basic precondition for people to be active in the outdoors.*

- Development of the outdoors workforce:

*The outdoors workforce in Victoria is varied and high quality spanning professionals in a range of areas and many thousands of volunteers. There are challenges in attracting and retaining talented people.*

- Growing participation in outdoors experiences:

*Being outdoors is fundamental to our sense of personhood – being active outdoors is a strong part of our quality of life, but there are many factors that can eat away at our outdoor time. As a result, health problems related to inactivity are on the rise, and a sense of disconnection from nature affects more and more people.*

Each of these broad areas provides opportunities for actions and projects we can get involved in to make a difference. Not all of them directly affect bushwalkers, but many do. Over the next few months, Bushwalking Victoria will continue to work constructively with Outdoors Victoria to further the projects we can help with and to ensure that our part of the outdoors community has its voice heard loud and clear.

Bushwalking Victoria has been, and will continue to be the strong voice for the Victorian bushwalking community.

See you on the track.  
Tony Walker

## Notice – Leadership Forum and AGM

Date: Saturday 13 June, 2015, 9.00am-4.30pm

Location: Templestowe Valley Primary School, Birchwood Avenue,  
Templestowe (Melway map 33 A5)

Registration:

Individually or on behalf of a club, by email to [admin@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au](mailto:admin@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au) or by telephoning the Office Manager, Patsy Scales, on 8846 4131.

If emailing, please ensure you include the name, contact details and position of each person and details of any special dietary requirements.

Please register as soon as possible, but no later than 9am on Wednesday, 10 June to allow for catering requirements to be organised.

Leadership Forum: Agenda:

9.00am: Arrive

9.30am: Introduction and opening remarks - Tony Walker, Bushwalking Victoria President

9.45am: Strategic Plan - progress, issues and opportunities - Tony Walker

10.00am: Promoting Bushwalking - Elaine Towers

10.20am: Bushwalking Search and Rescue (BSAR) - Peter Campbell

10.35am: Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation (BTAC) - Megan Major

10.50am: Morning tea

11.10am: Open Forum - opportunity to raise and discuss matters affecting clubs or bushwalking generally

12.15pm: Lunch

1.15pm: Leadership Forum - moderator Chris Towers assisted by Hadi Hezaveh

Using Social media to broaden your reach and appeal

Opportunities for wider involvement - motivating members to participate in event leadership, running the club, involvement with the local community, and involvement with Bushwalking Victoria (including BTAC and BSAR)

2.15pm: Closing remarks - Tony Walker

2.30pm: Finish

Bushwalking Victoria AGM: 3.00pm

Tea, coffee and fruit juice will available all day. Lunch, morning and afternoon tea will be provided.

# Extended Walks Leadership Course

## Calling applicants

Bushwalking Victoria has worked with some of the bigger clubs to develop courses that help clubs identify and train activity leaders.

The first course covered leadership skills, planning and conducting a walk, basic navigation and risk management.

An extended course has been developed for leaders of day walks who would like to extend their knowledge to include base camps and overnight walks (pack carries). The course will also help leaders improve their navigation skills.

When: Saturday 16 May to Sunday 17 May, 2015.  
Time: 9am-4.30pm both days.  
Where: Conference Room, Parks Office, Westerfolds Park (Melway map 33 F1).  
Cost: FREE  
A light lunch and morning and afternoon tea will be provided on both days.

Eligible applicants: The course is open to all members of clubs affiliated and associated with Bushwalking Victoria and to individual members of Bushwalking Victoria. The course numbers are limited. Preference will be given to applicants who have attended the initial course and are now leading day walks OR applicants who have significant day walk leadership experience.

To register contact: Sally Walker (email preferred) at [training@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au](mailto:training@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au) or telephone 03 9807 5576.

Deadline for applications: Friday 1 May.

Notification date: Successful applicants will be notified by 8 May.

When applying, provide the following information:

Name:		
Club name / Individual member:		
Telephone:		
Mobile phone:		
Email address:		
Leadership experience:		
Did you attend the first course?	Yes No	
If you did not attend the first course, indicate your level of navigation skills:		
• Map craft	Understanding contour lines and landforms	None Basic High
• Navigation	Using grid references	None Basic High
• Map scales	Estimating distance	None Basic High
• Using a compass	Grid bearings	None Basic High
	Magnetic bearings	None Basic High
	Walking on a bearing	None Basic High

# BTAC Training Opportunities

Operate and maintain chainsaws accreditation training  
Saturday 9 May 2015

This course is now fully subscribed. However, if you wish to put your name on the waiting list, contact Charlie Ablitt, Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation Projects Coordinator, at [conservation@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au](mailto:conservation@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au).

Leadership training for project and crew leaders  
Saturday 18 July and Sunday 19 July

This two-day course for anyone interested in being a BTAC project and team leader will be held at Gembrook. The first day will be a modified version of relevant units from the Bushwalking Victoria Leadership Course. The second day will include a simulated, hands-on track maintenance exercise in the bush. Parks Victoria rangers will contribute to the training.

For more information and to register interest, contact Charlie Ablitt, Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation Projects Coordinator, at [conservation@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au](mailto:conservation@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au).

## Track and Conservation Activities



### Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation - Adopt a Track

Bunarong Bushwalking Club adopts Condons Track

On Tuesday 21 May, Charles Ablitt and Dave Rimmer, representing BTAC, met with Parks Victoria rangers Dan Jones and Peter Schock to introduce to them to Margaret Chisholm from the Bunarong Bushwalking Club which has taken on the Condons Track as part of **BTAC's** Adopt a Track initiative.

When a club adopts a track, they build a relationship with the land manager and local ranger, visit the track as needed to monitor what needs to be done to keep it accessible and safe for walkers and, then, with the **ranger's** approval, undertake the work required to deal with overgrowth and remove obstacles.

Margaret from Bunarong Bushwalking Club and Peter from Parks Victoria will be in touch with each other to organise the first reccie, hopefully before winter weather makes the task arduous. Their first working bee will be in the spring. So walkers can look forward to a great improvement in the track conditions.

While talking about track conditions, please visit the Bushwalking Victoria website to complete a [Tracks Condition Report](#) if you see anything while walking that Bushwalking Victoria and Parks Victoria need to know about, so that we can get it attended to.

Charlie Ablitt  
Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation Projects Coordinator

### Regent Honeyeater Project

Nest box weekends

The purpose of nest box weekends is to check for the presence of [Squirrel Gliders](#), [Sugar Gliders](#) and [Bush-tailed Phascogales](#).

The last nest box weekend for 2105 is 16-17 May.

Please notify Ray Thomas, Convener of the Regent Honeyeater Project, at [ray@regenthoneyeater.org.au](mailto:ray@regenthoneyeater.org.au) if you intend to attend.

### Habitat planting weekends

The purpose of the habitat planting weekends is to plant wildlife corridors to connect otherwise isolated pockets of habitat of endangered birds and animals - for example, Regent Honeyeaters, Grey-crowned Babblers, Squirrel Gliders and Brush-tailed Phascogales.

The 2015 habitat plantings weekends are scheduled for 1-2 August, 15-16 August, 29-30, 12-13 September and 26-27 September.

More information

<http://regenthoneyeater.org.au/index.php>



## Parks Victoria's Melbourne Region Volunteer Event

In recognition of your contribution to Melbourne's parklands, friends and volunteers are invited to join Parks Victoria to visit Werribee Mansion and Werribee Open Range Zoo.

- o When: Saturday 16 May, 9am-5pm
- o Where: Werribee Mansion, K Road, Werribee
- o Itinerary:
  - 9am: Werribee Mansion opens.  
To gain free entry to Werribee Mansion, please advise entrance staff that you are attending Parks Victoria's volunteer event.
  - 10am: Guided tour of the State Rose Garden with friends group
  - 10.45am: Guided Tour of Werribee Mansion 1
  - 11.00am: Guided Tour of Werribee Mansion 2
  - 12:00pm: Picnic lunch at Werribee Park farm
  - 1:30pm: Free entry for Parks Victoria volunteers to explore Werribee Open Range Zoo
- Note. Due to a limited number of entrance tickets to Werribee Open Range Zoo, free entry is available only to volunteer groups registered with Parks Victoria. Members of friends groups (and their family members) who do not volunteer with Parks Victoria, are welcome join us, but must pay the entrance fee for Werribee Open Range Zoo on arrival at the zoo.
- 5:00pm: Werribee Mansion and Werribee Open Range Zoo close
- o BYO: Picnic lunch and drinks.  
Parks Victoria will provide a sausage sizzle, tea and coffee to complement your picnic
- o RSVP: Monday 11 May by phoning Parks Victoria on 13 1963 or by emailing [bernice.dowling@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:bernice.dowling@parks.vic.gov.au)



## Friends of Mt Worth Invite You to the Launch of its Learning Trail

Join the Friends of Mt Worth and Gary Blackwood MP to celebrate the completion of its Communities for Nature Project, and the introduction of interpretation signs in the park.

A light afternoon tea will follow the short official program.

Date: Saturday 16 May 2015

Time: 2.00pm

Location: Moonlight Creek Picnic Area, Mt Worth State Park

Contact: Merrin Butler, mobile 0425 775 85 or email  
[mtworthfriends@gmail.com](mailto:mtworthfriends@gmail.com)

## Camping Fees Removed for Basic Campsites

Some fees introduced last year by the Victorian Coalition Government have been scrapped. The Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water, Lisa Neville, announced on 2 April that the Labor Government has abolished fees on 500 basic campsites in 70 camping grounds in the following 19 Victorian parks:

Cape Conran  
Croajingolong NP  
Baw Baw  
Gippsland Lakes CP  
Mount Samaria  
Broken Boosey  
Lake Eildon  
Cathedral Range  
Wyperfeld  
Lerderderg  
Great Otway NP East  
Great Otway NP West  
Cobboboonee  
Grampians  
Little Desert  
French Island  
Bunyip  
Kurth Kiln  
Mornington Peninsula.

This returns the position to what it was before the fees were introduced on 1 July 2014.

The previous government expected the fees on 500 campsites to provide \$600,000 of revenue to Parks Victoria a year.

So while the removal of the fees is good news, especially as the fees applied to Basic and Very Basic campsites – that is sites with a pit toilet at the best but usually no more than a clearing in the bush – their removal puts additional strain on the Parks Victoria budget.

The Parks Victoria budget is now less than when Parks Victoria was established in 1996, even though it is now responsible for a much greater area.

The Andrews Labor Government has asked Parks Victoria to review all other camping options to make sure the balance between affordable holidays and funding for new facilities is right. Notice that there is no mention in this of protecting the environment in Victorian parks.

It is incumbent on bushwalkers to make sure that the government does more **than just consider people's holidays when funding Parks Victoria. Don't leave** the protection of the bushwalking environment to Bushwalking Victoria or organisations like the VNPA. All bushwalkers - clubs and individuals - need to put constant pressure on governments of all persuasions to protect and improve our national and state parks, our tracks and trails and bushwalker facilities.

Editor

# Alpine National Park Deer Control Trial

## Background to deer in Victoria

Various species of deer have become established in the wild in Australia since being introduced by acclimatisation societies and private individuals in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The feral deer population seems to be increasing and their range expanding. They are damaging a range of parks, including the Dandenong Ranges, Kinglake, Yarra Ranges, Grampians and Alpine parks.

An indication of feral deer numbers can be gauged from a report on Victorian deer hunting that estimates that licensed shooters killed 50,112 deer in 2012-13, 20% more than in the previous year. Yet there seems to be no decline in the amount of damage done and deer sighting are up.

Deer are classified as 'wildlife' under the *Wildlife Act 1975* and enjoy the same protection as native wildlife. **Six species are listed as 'game'** and may be hunted. Governments in Victoria have resisted calls to unprotect deer because it could result in unrestricted and unsafe hunting practices on public land.

## Alpine National Park Deer Control Trial – Notice of Planned Activity

Parks Victoria is implementing a deer control trial on the Bogong High Plains in the Alpine National Park. This letter provides background to the project and details.

A significant expansion of deer populations in the Alpine National Park has been observed over the past decade, particularly with increasing signs of deer activity at higher elevations. This corresponds with observed increases in the impacts of deer on significant environmental assets, including Alpine Peat lands, an endangered ecological community listed under the *Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999)* and *Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1988)*.

The control trial will investigate whether ground shooting (using primarily volunteer hunters) can be used to mitigate deer impacts on significant environmental values, including Alpine Peatlands, in selected areas of the Alpine National Park. The trial includes a detailed monitoring program to assess the effectiveness of the control operation.

Parks Victoria will partner with the Australian Deer Association (ADA) and the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (SSAA) to deliver the control stage of the trial. ADA and SSAA members have significant experience in deer hunting and will hunt deer strictly in accordance with a detailed Operations Plan and under the direction of a Parks Victoria Operations Controller. This operation complements other deer control programs through which Parks Victoria is partnering with the ADA and the SSAA across Victoria.

Coordinated ground shooting has proven to be an effective method of invasive animal control across Australia. The technique is a humane and highly target specific method of animal control, with no impact on off-target species. Participants involved in the control operation will observe state and/or national standards to ensure best practice in animal welfare.

Visitor safety is paramount - all personnel involved in the control operation will be readily identifiable and will act in accordance with legislative requirements and strict protocols to ensure the safe use of firearms. The park will not be closed and there will be no access restrictions for visitors; however signs will be placed on major access points to advise that an operation is being undertaken. The trial is scheduled to begin from late-April during periods of very low visitor

activity.

While deer hunting is not permitted on the Bogong High Plains; the activity occurs as a legitimate recreational pursuit elsewhere in extensive areas of the Alpine National Park and surrounding State Forest, with minimal interaction between hunters and other visitors. It is expected that visitors to the Bogong High Plains during the periods of the operation are unlikely to witness operational personnel in the act of hunting.

## Control operation logistics

- Where:



- Timing:
  - ADA and SSAA onsite familiarisation weekend [occurred on] 18 and 19 April [during which no deer control took place]
  - First deer control operation: pending the finalisation of planning and weather conditions, late April/early May. If you wish to know the exact dates of the control operations, you may register your interest with me via phone or email. You will then be contacted once dates are secured.

At the conclusion of the Deer Control Trial, Parks Victoria will provide stakeholders and community information regarding outcomes and the potential for deer control to continue into the future. It should be noted that outside of Parks Victoria managed control operations, hunting will remain prohibited on the Bogong High Plains.

Should you require further details or advice on this matter please contact me on 02 6071 5325 or 0428 339 344 or [dave.jenson@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:dave.jenson@parks.vic.gov.au).

Yours sincerely  
Dave Jenson  
Area Chief Ranger Kiewa & Murray



## Bush Search and Rescue

Bush Search and Rescue (BSAR) has been a significant part of Bushwalking Victoria for over 60 years, with BSAR members assisting the Police in many searches for people lost in the bush. Most recently, BSAR participated in the successful five-day search for Luke Shambrook at the Fraser National Park.

For Bushwalking Victoria to continue to provide this service to the community, BSAR needs new members. Visit <http://www.bsar.org/joining>.

## Premier, Minister for Emergency Services and family thank searchers

BSAR searchers and other emergency services workers directly involved in the search for Luke Shambrook over Easter were thanked in State Parliament on Wednesday 22 April by Premier Daniel Andrews, the Minister for Emergency Services, Jane Garrett and Luke's parents.



Premier Daniel Andrews and BSAR

## BSAR training weekend

The BSAR Annual Training weekend is being held on 20-21 June in the Fryers Ranges near Castlemaine.

The weekend will provide BSAR members and others interested experienced bushwalkers with training in skills for bush search and rescue. The program is designed to be active and hands-on for all participants and includes:

- Saturday 20 June: Workshops, search exercises, night searching
- Sunday 21 June: Participation in a Victorian Rogaining Association (VRA) 6 hour Rogaine. Rogaine event entry fee will be covered by BSAR.

Who should attend

- Current BSAR members
- Prospective members - experienced bushwalkers interesting in joining BSAR who meet or are close to meeting the [requirements for BSAR membership](#) are also welcome. If you would like to attend please send an email to [training@bsar.org](mailto:training@bsar.org)

## Steep snow and ice

The steep snow and ice training will be on 24-26 July. This will be preceded by a dryland training day at Police SAR at Williamstown on Sunday 19 July.

## BSAR members night

A special social evening for BSAR members will be held at the Retreat Hotel, Nicholson Street, Abbotsford on Wednesday 21 October. There will be a dinner, a brief presentation and opportunity to meet other members.

Peter Campbell, Convener, Bush Search and Rescue Victoria



## Emergency+ Smartphone App

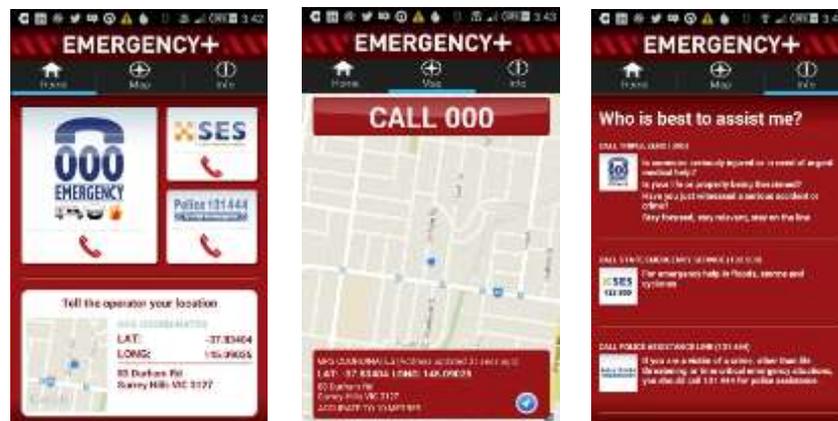
Australia's Triple Zero Awareness Working Group has developed a smartphone app for iOS and Android devices to:

- Provide the caller with information about when to call Triple Zero
- Provide the caller with information about who to call in various non-emergency situations
  - State Emergency Service (SES) (132 500)
  - Police Assistance Line (131 444)
  - Crime Stoppers (1800 333 000)
  - Health Direct Australia (1800 022 222)
  - [National Relay Service](#)
- Assist the caller to dial the relevant number
- Display the GPS coordinates of the phone's location that the caller can read out to the emergency operator.

The app is free of charge and available for download from [iTunes \(iOS\)](#) and [Google Play \(Android\)](#) app stores.

### Using the Emergency+ app

- Home tab: when you open the app you get a screen that displays:
  - Buttons for dialling 000, SES and Police
  - A panel that displays your GPS coordinates for you to read out to the phone operator
- Map tab: displays a larger map with a button to dial 000 and a panel with GPS coordinates
- Info tab: information on emergency services and other national numbers.



You can place a call by pressing on buttons with the telephone symbol on the Home screen or 'Call 000' on the Map screen.

## Other emergency-related apps

If you are considering using another emergency-related app, be aware that:

- Not all of them can do what they claim and could delay emergency assistance
- The only way of contacting Triple Zero (000) is with a voice call - you cannot use SMS, email, instant messaging, video calling or social media to contact emergency services via Triple Zero (000)
- Apps are not able to automatically provide details of your location to Triple Zero (000) or an emergency service organisation. However, you can read out your GPS coordinates to the emergency operator if the coordinates are provided on your smartphone.

Important: You should not rely on any smartphone app as your only way of requesting emergency assistance. In an emergency it is always best to call Triple Zero (000) direct.

## National Relay Service

The [National Relay Service](#) provides additional ways for people who are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment to access emergency services.

Source: BSAR website at <http://www.bsar.org/Triple000-EmergencyPlus-app>

## International standard emergency number

**NOTE:** In Australia, the international standard emergency number, 112, works only from a mobile phone. It cannot be used to call emergency services from a landline. Dialling 112 on your mobile phone directs you to the Triple Zero call service and does not give your call priority over somebody who dialled 000.

*The Warrnambool Bushwalker*, April 2015

## 25 Hiking Tips

*Australian Geographic* has 25 absolutely on-the-spot tips to help ensure a successful hike. You will find them at <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/outdoor/guides/2012/06/top-25-hiking-tips/>

Thank you to Border Bushwalking Club for alerting me to them. (Editor)

# Volunteer Opportunity

*An invitation to join*

## Lake Mountain Ski Patrol

LAKE MOUNTAIN SKI PATROL (LMSP) is recruiting volunteers who would like to join the weekend patrol team and have a proactive role at an alpine resort that boasts one of the highest day-visitor numbers in Australia.

The patrol is integral to the smooth operations of Lake Mountain Alpine Resort which is just 120km from Melbourne's CBD and attracts hundreds of visitors a day at peak times.

Patrollers:

- Are required to have a minimum of Level 2 First Aid
- Need to be fit, competent skiers
- Need to be available to be rostered on weekend days throughout the winter
- Receive free entry to Lake Mountain Alpine Resort
- Can share on-mountain accommodation on rostered weekends
- Are subsidised to gain Australian Ski Patrol Association (ASPA) certification
- Have fun working as part of a team of like-minded people.

The 2015 winter training weekend for current and prospective volunteer patrollers will be held at Lake Mountain on June 13 and 14, 2015.



For further information please contact LMSP Secretary, Cathy Sutton on 0403 146 378 or [ccrsutton@gmail.com](mailto:ccrsutton@gmail.com)



## Contributions

Email or post news, views, club profiles, articles, photographs, sketches and letters on any topic of interest to bushwalkers (publication is subject to editorial approval) to: [editor@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au](mailto:editor@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au) or 24 Moorhouse Street Camberwell Victoria 3124

Deadline for the June 2015 edition: Monday 18 April 2015.

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

