



Benalla Bushwalkers clearing a track at Mt Samaria

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:
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 or
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 Camberwell Victoria 3124

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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

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WALKING AND TALKING WITH THE BUSHWALKING VICTORIA PRESIDENT

Bushwalking Australia Conference

Bushwalking Australia is, as its name suggests, the peak body for all bushwalking organisations in Australia. The annual get-together was hosted by Bushwalking Queensland and was held at the eco lodge in the Glasshouse Hills north of Brisbane.

As you can guess, there are a lot of issues and opportunities that the states share, and this has become an increasingly valuable forum for taking **advantage of others' efforts and saving each state from duplicating work already done.**

Among the issues that affect us all are:

- insurance for bushwalkers and bushwalking clubs
- impact of mining and other extractive industries on accessibility
- finding and training event leaders
- helping all bushwalkers become more responsible and knowledgeable about how to behave in the bush
- building the strength of our clubs
- engaging with the wider bushwalking community.

There are many more areas where we share common interests and concerns, but the above list is enough to start with.

As you may know, Victoria has taken the lead in putting together a leader training course. This is not aimed at any formal accreditation of leaders, but at drawing on the good work already done by some clubs for the benefit of all. All of the states were very interested in what we are doing, and we propose to share our course material with any state that wants it. It is possible that South Australia will create a parallel course, aimed at teaching individual bushwalkers (club or independent) how to behave in the bush, and how to bushwalk safely and responsibly. If this eventuates, Victoria will benefit from the outcome.

Camping Fees

Bushwalking Victoria has put in a submission to the Department of Environment and Primary Industry (DEPI) in response to the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) released in October.

We forwarded the RIS to the clubs and I am very happy to see that a number of clubs and individuals have also made submissions. I received quite a number of emailed comments on the RIS and I tried to reflect the points made in the Bushwalking Victoria submission.

The submission will be available on the Bushwalking Victoria website shortly.

In addition to the issues we have with charging for non-serviced camp sites and the very steep increases in some categories of campgrounds, we objected to the fact that there was no consultation with the key camp-user peak bodies prior to release of the RIS. In our view, this reflects a very cavalier consultation process, where consultation



(with only the legal minimum 28 days is allowed for response) appears to be merely box ticking. This is not what we expect from the Victorian Government and we will be making representations to that effect.

Victorian Trails Strategy

As I commented last month, this is a very important **document. It sets out the Victorian Government's approach and priorities for the Victorian trails 'network' for the next 10 years. It potentially affects every bushwalker in the state.** We got feedback and comments from a number of clubs and individuals, and several clubs put in their own submissions – which is excellent.

The second round of public consultation has been completed. Bushwalking Victoria Board members attended sessions in Melbourne and the Latrobe valley. We feel that while the final document may not give bushwalkers everything they might wish, we have had a fair opportunity to contribute and comment throughout the process of evolving this strategic plan. The draft plan appeared to take a reasonable approach to trail-related issues, but as the strategy is strongly tourism driven, we need to keep a very close watch on how it is implemented. We tried to incorporate the comments and feedback we received in our final submissions.

The Victorian Trails Strategy is due to be completed in December and to be placed before the minister for signature prior to Christmas. We will be watching with interest.

Leadership Training

As I mentioned above, this project has already begun, and is progressing rapidly under the leadership of Gerard Vander from Diamond Valley. Better leader training can only benefit us all and, in particular, we hope that the training kit will help smaller clubs find and train the leaders they need. I will provide an update on progress at the end on the first quarter in 2014, at which time I expect to be able to tell you what the course will comprise, when the course material will be available and provide a schedule **for the first 'train the trainer' courses.**

2014 and Beyond

This is my last column for 2013: the year has gone alarmingly quickly. They say that as you get older you get **longer days and shorter years and I'm beginning to believe it!**

It has been an eventful year, and I believe, a productive one for Bushwalking Victoria and for all Victorian bushwalking clubs. In the first column for 2014, I will talk about some of the key initiatives we will be beginning next year, and how they will (hopefully) enhance our bushwalking environment.

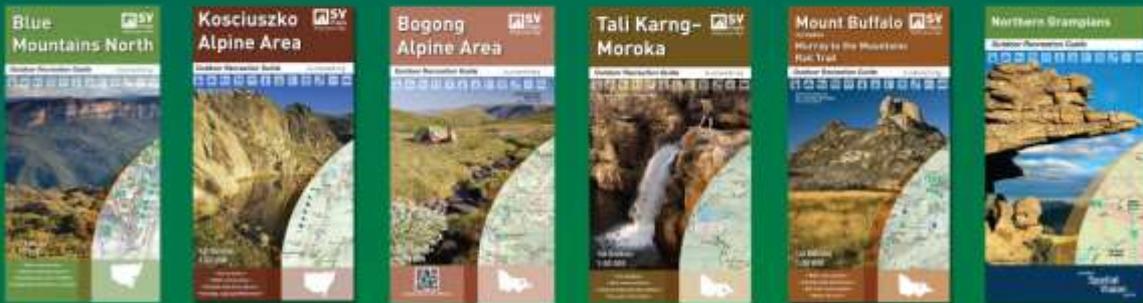
Meanwhile, let me wish every bushwalker a very happy summer break, and all the best for 2014.

See you on the track.

Tony Walker, President

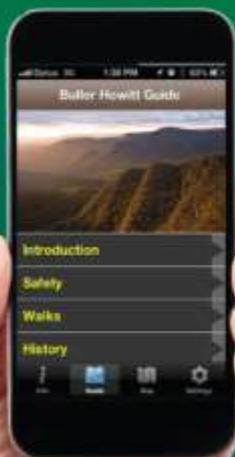


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BTAC—BUSHWALKING TRACKS AND CONSERVATION

As Tony Walker explained in the November issue of *Bushwalking News Victoria*, the Board has created a new standing committee called BTAC, to replace the Bushwalking Environment Committee (BEC) to:

- Provide a more proactive focus on tracks and trails strategy – ie, to concentrate on looking at opportunities for new or upgraded tracks and trails, and to be able to articulate a vision of the bushwalking facilities that we want for the future
- Increase the focus on engaging with key land-manager decision makers so that Bushwalking Victoria can influence planning as it affects bushwalkers more effectively and at an earlier stage.

A third aim is to more actively engage bushwalking club members and individual members of Bushwalking Victoria in track maintenance and conservation activities. This will be reflected in the way BTAC will operate.

How BTAC Operates

- Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation Volunteers do the hands-on work on tracks and conservation projects that have been approved by Parks Victoria, now part of Department of Environment and Primary Industry (DEPI). Work may include clearing vegetation, constructing or repairing steps or rails, fixing netting on boardwalks, installing or replacing signs, clearing water bars, removing noxious weeds or any other work that Parks Victoria/DEPI would like Bushwalking Victoria to help with.

If you are already a volunteer and want more information about forthcoming projects, contact Charlie Ablitt, Projects Coordinator, at conservation@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au

If you wish to be added to our list of BTAC Volunteers, contact Patricia Scales, Bushwalking Victoria's Office Manager at admin@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au

- Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation Club Contacts act as a point of contact to receive information about projects and to advise BTAC of track/conservation issues and activities that concern their clubs. The club contact person should have or develop a close relationship with the local Parks ranger, Friends Group or Advisory Group which may have a common interest.

To update Club Contact details, contact Patricia Scales, Bushwalking Victoria's Office Manager, at admin@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au

If your club is planning a local track or conservation activity and would like additional help, contact Charlie Ablitt, Projects Coordinator, at conservation@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au

- Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation Field Officers are appointed by the BTAC and are responsible for a designated geographic area. They liaise and network with local bushwalking clubs and land managers and report monthly to BTAC. They are expected to be long-term appointees and not subject to changes at club committee level. They should be frequent visitors to their area and build strong relationships with land managers. Their task is to identify issues, recommend possible courses of action, research and investigate issues as requested.
- The Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation Committee is a standing committee of Bushwalking Victoria. It replaces the Bushwalking Environment Committee. **Its role is to develop, coordinate, promote and administer all of the above.**

If you have questions or issues that you want BTAC to address, contact the BTAC Convener, Megan Major, at tracks@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au

Around the Tracks—e-Newsletter for People Interested in Tracks and Conservation

BTAC is planning an e-newsletter specifically for track maintenance and conservation activities. We plan for the On the Tracks newsletter to be sent each month to each person on the BTAC database, and a bulletin to be sent when something of importance comes up or changes at short notice.

Both will be 'works in progress' with regard to content, format and timing. And we will want your input about these.

We also want you contribute reports on your activities, promote upcoming track and conservation events, raise issues that you think should be addressed, or simply forward articles of interest from another source. We want the newsletter and bulletin to be a 'two-way street'.



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BUSHWALKING TRACKS & CONSERVATION CALENDAR

Activity	Details
<p>Upper Howqua track clearing Fri 6 - Sun 8 Dec 2013 Sponsors: BTAC, Parks Victoria</p>	<p>Parks Victoria has requested help in a track clearing event in the wild and rugged area of the Upper Howqua. On Friday, we will drive to a campsite just past Bindaree Hut. On Saturday morning, we pack carry to our basecamp at the confluence of the north and south branches of the Howqua River. After pitching camp, we will work our way up to and along the Mt Thorn Track, clearing as we go. A ranger will join us and instruct us on our tasks. Experienced brushcutter users are needed. If you have Chainsaw Accreditation, please bring a copy of your accreditation along. You will also need to bring steel-capped boots to wear when working with a chainsaw. Bring the usual gear for an overnight walk—food, tent and wet weather gear, etc. Please send your expression of interest ASAP to Charlie Ablitt at charlieablitt31@gmail.com or 0400 967 054.</p>
<p>Sallow Willow eradication, Falls Creek Sat 25 - Mon 27 Jan 2014 Sponsors: BTAC, Parks Victoria</p>	<p>Once again Parks Victoria has invited us to partake in the Annual Willow Hunt on the Bogong High Plains at Falls Creek on the Australia Day weekend, 25-27 January 2014. In 2014 we are arranging the activity to suit everyone, from the comfort loving to the rugged camper. We are looking for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 people to work out of Falls Creek. Accommodation will be at the Viking Ski Lodge. • 18 people who will work from a base camp on Mt Bogong. <p>Please send your expression of interest ASAP to Charlie Ablitt at charlieablitt31@gmail.com or 0400 967 054.</p>
<p>AAWT and Baw Baw feeder track clearing Fri 14 - Mon 17 Mar 2014 Sponsors: Parks Victoria, Friends of Baw Baw NP, Strzelecki Bushwalking Club</p>	<p>Bushwalking clubs and individuals are invited to join local Parks Victoria staff, Friends of Baw Baw National Park and the Strzelecki Bushwalking Club over a 4-day track clearing activity on the Baw Baw Plateau (Baw Baw National Park). The activity will focus on clearing the walking track network between Jeep Track Flat and the Baw Baw Alpine Resort, including a section of the AAWT across Mt St Phillack. This will further enhance walking opportunities in Baw Baw National Park following the completion of track works in the remote Mt Whitelaw area of the park in 2012 and the Cascades Trail in 2013. Parks Victoria will establish a base camp for this activity at Jeep Track Flat from early Friday 14 March 2014. Access to the base camp is via the St Gwinear car park or Baw Baw Village. <u>Parks Victoria will supply fresh fruit, general consumables, energy food and all evening meals for participants who register an interest in attending with ample water also available at Base camp.</u> Volunteers will need to bring camping gear, sturdy footwear and wet weather clothing. Participants are welcome for whatever time they can spare and there will be a variety of tasks to complete from very easy to arduous. All safety gear will be provided by Parks Victoria. For further information or to register your interest in this activity, please contact the Parks Victoria Latrobe Ranger in Charge, Andy Gillham, at agillham@parks.vic.gov.au or 5172 2186 or 0428 333 464.</p>
<p>Cathedral Ranges track clearing Sat 15 – Sun 16 Mar Sponsors: Boroondara Bushwalkers Inc, Parks Victoria</p>	<p>Boroondara Bushwalks Inc has agreed to be a support group for the Cathedral Ranges State Park under the auspice of Parks Victoria and ranger Rhyl Shaw. Our first project will be track clearing (lopper work) on the southern ridgeline between Farmyard and Mt Sugarloaf. (Location may be subject to change.) Parks Victoria will provide training, tools, PPE, etc and insurance cover. We will work on the Saturday and bushwalk on the Sunday. We will have a basecamp (tents) on Saturday night. BYO everything, including water. Members of other bushwalking clubs and individual members of Bushwalking Victoria are invited to participate. To register interest, contact Joslin Guest at president@boroondarabushwalkers.org.au or 9882 7629 or 0400 988 668.</p>

CLEARING THE TRACK TO THE PLANE CRASH MONUMENT AT MT TORBRECK

Some friends and I went on a 4WD trip in the Rubicon State Forest near Eildon at the start of June to see if we could find the almost forgotten crash and memorial site of a WWII bomber - an Avro Anson that crashed into the summit of Mt Torbreck on 16 May 1940.

Here is some background to the plane crash. The missing plane was one of three RAAF Avro Ansons that set off from Point Cook at 11:45am on 16 May 1940, en route from RAAF Base Pearce, WA, to Central Flying School Camden, NSW. Their call signs were 8BNE, 8BNF and 8BNA. The aircraft encountered adverse weather conditions—dense cloud. 8BNE reached Cootamundra, but 8BNF and 8BNA attempted to return to Point Cook. Call sign 8BNA (Anson A4-4) went missing. The aircraft struck near the summit of Mount Torbreck (1516m) in foggy weather. It had failed to clear the top of the mountain by only 200ft. All four crew were killed. The RAAF mounted several air searches for the missing plane, to no avail. The wreckage was found in extremely rough country with no road access (22 miles on horseback) by two experienced bushmen—Mr S Sawyer and Mr J Fry—while mustering sheep or cattle (reports vary) on 24 January 1941.

The information that we had of the memorial's location was vague at best, but we intended to find it. We found what might have been a walking track, but the post-bushfire regrowth and the many fallen giant snow gum and mountain ash trees really meant that the track was virtually non-existent. It was quite a hard slog, but after most of a day searching we found the memorial.



A tree across the memorial, which we removed
Note the slope of the land

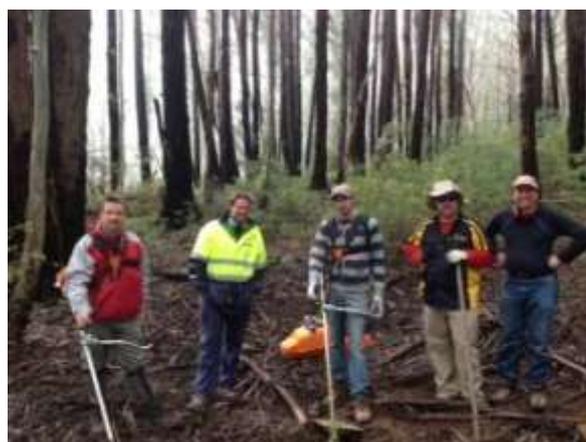
Below are links to photos and information that I have supplied to two research websites:

- <http://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/disaster/aviation/display/33312-avro-anson-aeroplane-crash>
- <http://www.ozatwar.com/ozcrashes/vic88.htm>

After walking out, I couldn't help but think what a real shame it was that such a significant wartime aviation disaster had been forgotten due to no maintenance of the site. So I was determined to do what I could to get the site re-established so that all people from all walks of life could visit to pay their respects. There is also a sentimental side to the project as I have made contact with a family member of the pilot of the aircraft and they are thrilled that this area will be restored as a true memorial.

After many emails to various military and government organisations, I was contacted by the planning manager of the Department of Environment & Primary Industries (DEPI) for the Rubicon area about my proposal. Due to a lack of DEPI recourses, restoration would have to be carried out by a volunteer group.

In late October, five of us went in for the first stage of the restoration of the area as a memorial. We managed to clear 440m of track in really steep, rough and overgrown country.



First work group
L-R: Me, Ryan, Nick, Rob & Shane (Steve behind the camera)

On Saturday 16 November, five of us participated in the second stage of the Avro Anson Memorial and Track Restoration at Mount Torbreck project.

As it was three weeks since we were there last, I was interested to see what our previous work looked like and I'm happy to report that it looks great as it seems to be getting a bit of foot (or hoof) traffic which is keeping what we cleared nice and flat.

Lugging in all the gear to where we reached previously was pretty hard yakka. After we caught our breath again, we fuelled up the machinery, fitted our PPE and we were into it. The scrub was still very thick and once again the brushcutters did a great job clearing the undergrowth, but now we were coming across the heavy timber, which Andy made light work of with his chainsaw. Andy is a very experienced CFA volunteer and does this type of work for a living. He was amazing to watch on a chainsaw; he knew exactly where to cut and where it would fall. I am extremely grateful for having such an experienced person

on this project, not only for his amazing ability to clear fallen timber, but for his understanding of the safety aspect that goes with this type of work. He is a true professional.



What the 'track' looked like at the beginning

By the end of Saturday we added another 200m to the 400m that we had done previously, which put us at nearly halfway. One of our party, Nathan, had to return to Geelong because of a prior engagement (thanks for your effort, Nath!) and the rest of us camped at Barnewall Plains and had a very enjoyable night around the campfire. We had a very insightful conversation with Andy about his experience in the 2009 Black Saturday fires. He spent most of his time in and around Kinglake during that fateful day and he had us hanging on his every word. What he and many other CFA volunteers did on that day is nothing short of heroic.

On Sunday, we woke up to a beautiful clear day and our bodies were feeling refreshed (heads a little less so) for another day of work. We left our gear on the mountain on the Saturday so the walk in was not as tough as the previous day. Progress was a little slower as we were one person down and most of what had to be done was cutting and moving fallen trees. Some of these trees had trunk girths of 3m or more, and some were 20-30m long and extended back up the mountain. As sections were cut out, the log would move down bit by bit; and to see a log of that size wanting to slide down is a pretty frightening experience. Once again, Andy's expertise in this type of work was invaluable. When we encountered a fallen Mountain Ash tree with a trunk girth of about 4m, we called it a day as it will require further planning to work out how to get through it. I marked its waypoint on the GPS, and we had reached 800m from the beginning of the track, which means we have roughly 500m to go!

I can't thank everyone enough (nine different people over a total of three days) for the time they have put into the project and the effort they have put in to achieve what we've done so far. A fantastic effort! I also must acknowledge my employer, Lend Lease, the operator for the Peninsula Link Freeway in Melbourne, for the loan of brushcutters, chainsaws and PPE, without which the work would have been much more difficult. A big thank you to Lend Lease.

With summer just about upon us, we will take a break for a number of reasons: snakes and the risk of heat fatigue and fire danger. I plan to recommence works around about mid-March 2014.

I'll keep you informed with any information that comes my way between now and then. Once again thank you to all involved and I look forward to catching up with you again.

Anthony Dykes, independent bushwalker

If you would like to participate in any future work or would like information of the aircraft crash, the memorial, or the walking track you can contact Anthony at ajdykes79@live.com.au



4 of the 2nd work group—L-R: Pat, Shane, Nathan & Andy



An indication of how thick the scrub is



What was achieved; a well defined path

CONSERVATION NEWS

Fluker Posts—Take a Photo and Contribute to the Monitoring of the Environment

[Martin Fluker](#), a lecturer in Tourism Management in the College of Business at Victoria University, with the support of partners such as Melbourne Water and Parks Victoria, has devised a project for monitoring the environment in designated areas. The project uses crowd-sourced photography to keep long-term tabs on ecologically sensitive landscapes such as revegetated areas, wetlands, foreshore areas, offshore reefs, etc or areas that need significant monitoring such heavily trafficked tracks.



The Fluker Posts are 120cm tall (4ft in the old money), weather-hardy, bright green posts topped with camera cradle, a small platform designed to accept any digital camera and pointing in a particular direction. Passers-by are instructed where to point their camera to ensure that the same perspective is recorded each time a photo is taken and to email their date-stamped digital photograph to FlukerPost@gmail.com

The pictures are arranged chronologically in a PowerPoint presentation, allowing land managers to easily view the impacts of trail usage, design and maintenance, weed infestation, fire damage, general erosion, climate change and so on in a given location over a number of years. The public can view the images at www.slideshare.net/towbike

Since the first Fluker Post was installed five years ago, over 1500 images have been recorded from 68 posts in Victoria—eg, the Great Ocean Walk in the Great Otway National Park, the You Yangs Regional Park and the Brisbane Ranges National Park. In January 2013, Martin installed two posts on a pontoon overlooking a part of the Great Barrier Reef that was exposed at low tide and—a first— an underwater post (made of aluminum) to observe the a coral shelf at the same site.

Martin single-handedly manages the posts' construction and manages the online photo data feed to land managers. Each site's land-manager pays for posts in their area of responsibility. Martin hopes to extend the monitoring to urban landscapes. 'Land managers of national parks spend heaps of money and resources on designing, creating and maintaining...walking paths', Dr Fluker says. 'One of the most important reasons to monitor

the condition of the tracks is to make sure walkers are kept safe.'

Parks Victoria's Great Ocean Walk Team Leader Nick Alexeyeff welcomes the initiative. 'It's been great to work with Victoria University on this project. The 10 posts are in remote locations and can be hard to get to [regularly]. For a park ranger it can be a two hour walk from any road. This project enables us to check the condition of the tracks from the comfort of our office. It's a great tool for us.'

Sources:

- <http://www.flukerpost.com/>
- <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/fluker-posts-help-protect-victoria8217s-environmental-treasures/story-fni0fit3-1226727822160>
- <http://www.vu.edu.au/news-events/media-releases/posting-photos-for-research-is-all-in-a-day-s-walk>
- <http://www.slideshare.net/towbike/great-ocean-walk-fluker-post-001-3876912>

Shine a Light for Parks at the Wilsons Prom

In August, the Victorian parliament passed legislation allowing private developers 99-year leases in national parks. On Saturday 2 November 2013, more than 1200 bushwalkers, park friends, campers, VNPA supporters and locals gathered at Wilsons Promontory National Park to spell out a huge HANDS OFF PARKS! sign using torches on the beach at dusk.

The VNPA, which organised the event, maintains that Victorians want our national parks to be protected and do not want them opened up to private development with 99 year leases or used for cattle grazing, fossicking, prospecting and other damaging activities. The protest was part of the campaign by the VNPA and other community groups to reverse recent changes to Victoria's national parks that allows the 99-year leases on two-thirds of the 'parks estate'.

Sources:

- <http://vnpa.org.au/page/bushwalking-and-activities/events/shine-a-light-for-parks-at-the-prom>
- <http://www.foster.vic.au/1200-shine-light-parks-prom/>



Hawkweed

Scientists, land managers and weed ecologists from Victoria, Tasmania and NSW met at Falls Creek on 7-8 November to discuss the control and eradication of highly invasive Hawkweed in Australia. Three types of Hawkweed occur in Victoria: Orange Hawkweed, King Devil Hawkweed, and Mouse-ear Hawkweed, Orange Hawkweed is also found in NSW and Tasmania.

Australian land managers want to eradicate all three species before they create the level of damage that is occurring in NZ. In NZ, 10 species of Hawkweed occupy more than 6m ha. In the South Island, Hawkweed is the dominant plant on more than 500000ha.

Speaking on ABC Radio National's *Bush Telegraph*, Charlie Pascoe, Parks Victoria's Environment Program Manager for the Alps, said that it is not known for sure how Hawkweed got to Australia. However it is likely that Orange Hawkweed was introduced by European migrants working on hydro schemes in NSW, Victoria and Tasmania. It is believed that Devil Hawkweed was introduced to Falls Creek by ski field machinery brought over from NZ. Ski field machinery from Falls Creek is known to be responsible for the introduction to Devil Hawkweed to Mt Buller. No-one knows how Mouse-ear Hawkweed was introduced, but he suspects that it came in from NZ via seeds attached to socks, bootlaces or trousers. Hence the importance of thoroughly cleaning and checking all bushwalking equipment and clothing after each trip and before you carry or wear it on another walk.

Hawkweed is the perfect weed. It can adapt to almost any niche—all soil types, including gravel, full sun, part shade, frost or snow. Like many introduced plants that become weeds, its environment plasticity is greater in its adopted country than in its native environment. It is highly aggressive. It produces massive amounts of seed—more than 40000 per square metre—and uses the full range disperse methods. It can spread vegetatively both above

and below ground—stolons and rhizomes—to form dense mats. It has allelopathic capabilities that enable it to change soil chemistry, not only to outcompete native species but other weeds.

There are three requirements for eradication: detection, prevention of seed production and destruction of plants.

Currently detection is based on surveillance using contractors, land manager staff and volunteers.



Missy, the trainee Hawkweed sniffer dog

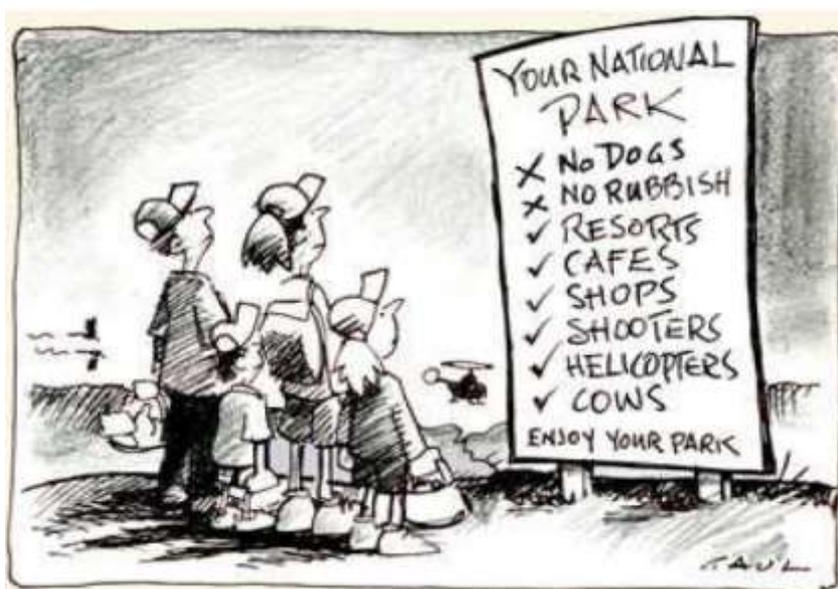
There is now a program to see whether dogs can be trained to detect Hawkweed by smell. The trial currently underway indicates that dogs can be trained to do this. Missy, a two year old Springer Spaniel, has just completed the first stage of her training, during which she has been 100% successful in detecting Hawkweed on a detection panel. The next stage of training will be to introduce Missy to Hawkweed in different habitats. It's hoped that if there is hawkweed in a 1ha area, she will be able to detect it in a matter of minutes. At present, it takes many volunteers a long time to cover an equivalent area.

Parks Victoria is running four hawkweed detection weekends for volunteers in January 2104. All four weekends are booked out. To find out more about these weekends, contact the Hawkweed Team:

Mt Beauty Parks Victoria Office
(03) 5754 4693 or hawkweed@parks.vic.gov.au

Sources:

- <http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/about-us/news/national-hawkweed-meeting-at-falls-creek>
- <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bushtelegraph/past-programs/>



Cartoon:
Go Bush, Nov 2013
Newsletter of Bendigo Bushwalking
and Outdoor Club

Missing from the cartoon's sign is
✓ Fossickers (Editor)

RE-OPENED GDT TRACK

After three years, following the 2010 floods, Jackass Gully, Creswick, is officially OPEN.

The gully crossing has been significantly widened and is now a road, not a track. The soil and rock fill under the road contains huge concrete drainage pipes. Diversion and no-go notices have been removed and the actual Goldfields Track (W G Spence Walk) in that section can be walked.

Keep a look out for the Eureka-time early childhood home site of W G Spence. There's an interpretation sign a few metres in, to the right of the track. Refer GT Walking Guide, pp50-51, ref 29; or Wallaby Track map ref 29.

Thanks to DEPI Midlands Region, who persisted with an insurance claim and organised the works.

Alison Lanigan
GDTA

PROPOSED INVESTIGATION INTO HISTORIC PLACES

There are many historic places on public land—eg, the memorial to the WWII plane crash at Mt Torbreck and Wonnangatta station, comments about which have been in the news lately.

The Minister for Environment and Climate Change will request the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) to investigate historic places on public land in Victoria. The department is seeking comments on the proposed terms of reference for this investigation by 5pm on Wednesday 18 December 2013:

[Proposed Terms of Reference - VEAC Historic Places Investigation](#)

Other information

Comment is being sought only on the terms of reference. Any comments on the subject matter of the investigation can be provided to VEAC once the investigation commences.

Where do I send my comments?

Comments on the proposed terms of reference can be emailed to proposedinvestigation.tor@depi.vic.gov.au or mailed to:

Director Strategy, Land Management Policy Division,
Proposed Investigation into Historic Places,
Department of Environment and Primary Industries,
PO Box 500, EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Other VEAC investigations

- [Current investigations](#)
- [Completed investigations](#)

Source: <http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/forestry-and-land-use/managing-land/victorian-environmental-assessment-council>

VICTORIAN HIGH COUNTRY HUTS ASSOCIATIONS

Interesting Guest Speaker for your Club

The new president of the Victorian High Country Huts Association, Ken Birch, has a PowerPoint presentation about huts that he is happy to present at any bushwalking club meeting anywhere in the state.

Contact Ken at president@hutsvictoria.org.au to arrange a presentation at your club.

The Victorian High Country Huts Association was founded after the major bushfires of February 2003 to try and preserve the remaining high country huts.

The Association's goal is to be a 'voice' for the huts - to pull together the various individuals and groups with an interest in huts, to lobby government, raise funds and coordinate volunteer efforts. It relies solely on volunteers in all its efforts.

Since 2003 it has helped to rebuild nearly 20 huts. There are some 200 huts that need ongoing regular maintenance, otherwise they will not survive.

Calendar

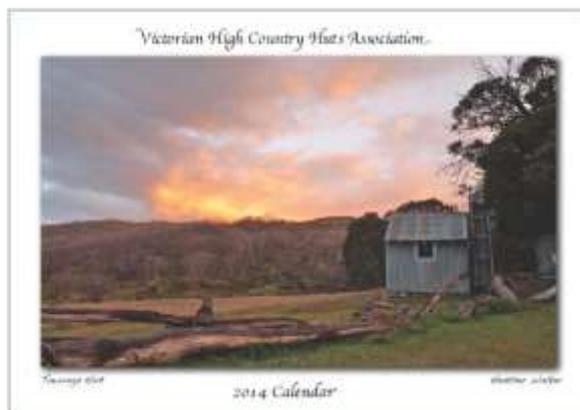
The VHCHA 2014 calendar is available. It has a limited print run of 1000 calendars and costs only \$11 including postage.

The calendar features 13 full-colour photos of huts and is printed on high-quality glossy paper. It includes useful information such as Australian school term dates and **public holidays**. **The theme for 2104 is 'My Favourite Hut'**, and the photos are the result of a competition that drew contributions from bushwalkers, 4WDers, horse riders and campers.

To purchase the calendar, complete the [order form](#) at <http://www.hutsvictoria.org.au/forum/viewtopic.php?f=277&t=1904> and return it together with your payment to:

The Treasurer, VHCHA
PO Box 784 Mansfield Vic 3724.

Every dollar from calendar sales is used to preserve and maintain the huts that are a living and breathing heritage that everyone enjoys.



BUSHWALKING TIPS—WHISTLES

100dB+ Whistles

A whistle is an important safety and alert item for bushwalkers to carry. It is important to use a whistle that has a rating of 100 decibels or higher so that it can be heard for long distances when used. The sound of ordinary whistles does not carry far. Blowing a whistle is better than shouting. It uses less energy than shouting, which means that you can signal for help for longer, which is especially important if you are injured or weak.

The BSAR website gives two examples of whistles rated above 100 decibels:

- Fenix Emergency whistle [NW20](#) - 120dB. (There is also a [NW30](#).)
- [Storm®](#) All Weather Safety whistles - 118 and 120dB

Source: BSAR website <http://www.bsar.org/whistles>

Both of the above are American whistles. A locally available whistle, the [Wear It Australia Survival Rescue Emergency Safety whistle](#), claims a '120dB staccato sound'.

Other sites of interest are two sites that tested whistles:

- <http://www.bladeforums.com/forums/showthread.php/887457-A-Quick-Test-of-Six-Whistles>
- <http://briangreen.net/2011/03/safety-whistles-decibel-testing.html>

Whistle Code

Any recognised whistle code is based on the international distress signal code for watercraft. The generally recognised conventions for signalling with a whistles are.

- **One blast = 'Where are you?'**
Also used to respond to other whistle codes.
- **Two blasts = 'Come to me.'**
- **Three blasts = 'I need help!'**
Three of anything (whistle blasts, fires, rifle shots, piles of rocks, flashes of light, etc.) is universally recognized as a distress signal

Each blast should last about three seconds and should be repeated at regular intervals. One source suggests a minute between repeats, which might seem like a long time if you are in distress. However, whatever the interval, leave long enough to make it clear whether you are signalling 1, 2 or 3 blasts, and leave sufficient time between sets of blasts to allow time for someone to signal back.

Sources:

- <http://voices.yahoo.com/selecting-personal-safety-whistle-12386557.html>
- <http://www.outdoorlife.com/blogs/survivalist/2013/06/survival-skills-signal-whistle-codes-%C2%A0>

MARYSVILLE SMARTPHONE APP

Marysville has released a mobile phone application called Visit Marysville to provide a comprehensive pocket resource for visitors.

In addition to tourist-type information, the app includes 14 guides to bushwalking trails that range in difficulty from easy to hard and in duration from 20 minutes to four hours. The audio tours of the Michaeldene and Wilks Creek trails **include information about Marysville's logging history, the bushland surrounding Marysville and the native animals that are re-establishing themselves in the area.**

The app includes information about local flora and fauna, such as a wildflower field guide and information about native birds—images, descriptions, locations of where they can be found as well as audios of bird calls.

The Marysville App is available in both Android and iPhone versions and can be downloaded for free from the iTunes App Store, Google Play or on location at the Marysville Visitor Information Centre 24hr wi-fi hotspot.

If you don't have a smart phone or MP4 player, devices preloaded with the app are also available for hire from the Visitor Centre with free earphones.

Download the Visit Marysville App at www.marysvilletourism.com/visit-marysville-apps.
For more information, phone: 03 5963 4567



FEDERATION WALK WEEKEND 2014 - UPDATE

Rawson & Surrounds Friday 7, Saturday 8 & Sunday 9 November 2014

The Federation Weekend 2014 Walks Planning Subcommittee has been very busy carrying out walk recces. Some of the iconic walks which appeared on the program the last time there was a Federation Weekend in the area, back in 2004 will be repeated. Seven new walks will be offered. The hub for the weekend will be the Rawson Village. An all inclusive accommodation-and-meals package has been negotiated with the venue owners.

Please put the date FED14 7-9 November 2014 in your diary.

Who's Who at Bushwalking Victoria

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 Stephen Skaleskog

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 Victorian Deputy Delegate: Chris Towers
 Please contact via the office

Organisations where BWV Members Provide a Bushwalking Perspective

Grampians Peak Trail Task Force: Phil Brotchie
 Living Links Steering Committee: Tony Walker



Bushwalking News Victoria

If undeliverable
 please return to

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 PO Box 1007
 Templestowe 3106
 Victoria