



**BAYSIDE
BUSHWALKING
CLUB**

PACKS UP!

December 2023

Volume 40 Number 3



On the Way to Jervis Hill - Flinders Ranges

Photo by Andrew Piddington (June 2023)

If you enjoy reading this magazine or would like to know more about walking with the Bayside Bushwalking Club, visit our website www.baysidebush.org.au

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HAPPY CHRISTMAS

AND

BEST WISHES FOR 2024

Benalla Art Silo and Warby Ranges Base Camp

Thoona, a very small town near Benalla, was the base for the Club's tour of the Art Silos (and wineries) in Northeast Victoria, led by Jane Braham. Twelve BBC members attended, staying at "The Church" B&B. Thoona means "small hill" in the local first nations language.

Day One – Warby Falls Heritage Walk

By Kevin Armstrong and Anne Murphy

The first day's walk took us along the Warby Falls Heritage Walk, the start about 15 minutes' drive from Thoona.

Rendezvousing at Taminick Cellars we were met by veteran winemaker Peter Booth who gave us helpful tips and directions to the nearby start of the trail. He promised that the recent rains would bring us waterfalls and frogs - but accompanying snakes were unlikely due to the cool and overcast conditions.



Initially our route followed the creek and passed the remains of an old sawmill. Progress depended on our fearless leader Jane Braham probing the long grass for the mostly hidden trail. Our course was generally flat with occasional short climbs through the delightful lightly timbered grassy slopes above the creek.



Eventually we reached Warby Falls which has a drop of

The No. 3 Weir Below the Falls

approx. ten metres and with an old weir downstream from the falls. The weir once fed a water race which we assume, serviced the old sawmill.

Occasional drizzle during our exploring did not dampen our spirits.

Speaking of spirits – before leaving the car park on our return, the group made a quick visit into Taminick Cellars, built in 1914 from local Warby stone. We particularly enjoyed the Taminick version of Liqueur Muscat.

Day Two – Winton Wetlands

By Sue Rose

Our day at the Winton Wetlands was, all in all, a very inspiring day.

The Winton Wetlands Project is one of the world's most significant environmental, social and economic renewal projects, whether measured by its environmental ambitions, its social and cultural significance, or its sheer scale.

The flooding of the landscape killed around 200,000 river red gums, so there are many dead trees that have striking sculptural forms.

We walked around the lake and saw some wonderful birds, including egrets, black swans and pelicans flying over the landscape.

One of the walks took us past a sculpture group representing three first nations people looking out over the wetlands and to a painted water tank honouring fire fighters.

We enjoyed a cup of coffee at the cafe which supports social enterprise and has modern first nation sculptures in its surrounds.





Gazing at the Lake

Day Three – White Box Walk and Mount Pilot National Park

By Jane Braham

The White Box Track is a well signposted pretty 8 km loop walk south of Chiltern and the Hume Highway. It is home to the rare Regent Honeyeater. The track is so named because of the tree species which dominates the central section of the walk.

The start of our walk was delayed by rain which we waited out with a morning coffee at Chiltern under a veranda supporting a grape vine planted in 1867. Once on our way and after viewing the abandoned Golden Bar Mine from 1860's gold diggings, we continued over a small ridge, crossing a creek by means of a couple of bush bridges along the way. On our next ascent we were rewarded with sightings of various honeyeaters darting in and out of the trees and bushes. They were too quick to identify properly, however we did enjoy their chatter and singing. There are few remaining large remnant box or ironbark trees in this area. Nearly all the large diameter trees were removed during the early gold mining days or from subsequent forestry operations.

We finished our walk with lunch at the Honeyeater Picnic Area, adjacent to the Cyanide Dam, the name is another remnant of the gold digging times. Adjourning to Beechworth after lunch we completed a walk at Mayday Hill looking at significant trees.

The White Box walk would be well suited to new leaders' training because it covers a range of terrain through open woodlands of white box and ironbark trees.



Day Four – Mount Glenrowan

By Frank Braham

After a short drive from Thoona, at the picnic area at Taminick Gap, we set out up the 4WD ridge track towards Mt. Glenrowan. We had a pleasant walk in fine cool weather through the light forest, which contained some particularly green and healthy looking grass trees. Occasional views of the nearby Winton wetlands reminded us of our visit on day two.

After walking for two hours and climbing a few medium sized hills, we arrived at the summit of Mount Glenrowan, which is crowned by some impressive communications towers and offers an excellent view over the plain and the town of Glenrowan.

Having lunched at the top we took a side track to Chick hill, for the view over the north side of Glenrowan Township with Wangaratta in the distance.

On the return journey to Thoona, some travellers visited two nearby vineyards, Taminick Cellars, and Baileys of Glenrowan to purchase essential supplies. Taminick cellars sell a particularly nice Liqueur Muscat, which we bought and shared.

Day Five – Silo Art

By Andrea Hunt

Our cultural day! We were blessed with blue skies and sun for our touring around some lovely historical towns to view their impressive silo art.

First stop was St James where the GJ Coles legacy began in 1882.

In Tungamah, the beautifully painted silos depicting Australian birds were painted by Sobrane Simcock and were the first silos painted in Northeast Victoria, setting a precedent for other small towns. Some enterprising volunteer locals spotted our group and realising the potential for some sales, quickly opened their lovely information centre. Here we chatted and made some purchases to justify the local optimism.

On to Katamatite, Dookie and then Devenish where the moving silo art by Cam Scale is a tribute to the 50 young men and women from the Devenish community who enlisted for military service in the First World War - an image of a WW1 nurse and a modern female military medic in the Australian Armed Forces and a smaller silo with a tribute to the Australian Light Horse.

Our final silo stop was Goorambat. In the centre of town, Jimmy Dvate has depicted the endangered barking owl and its habitat on the silo as well as the majestic Clydesdale horses from the local farming community.





Tungamah



Devenish



Benalla





Sophia

By artist Adnate

**depicts the female aspect
of the Holy Spirit.**

**This mural covers the
entire the front wall of
the Goorambat Uniting
Church**



Clem, Sam and Banjo

Majestic Clydesdales

**From the local farming
community.**

Goorambat

Artist – Jimmy Dvate



We finished the day meandering around Benalla, enjoying the colourful, art filled streets with murals painted by many Australian and overseas artists.

Truly a wonderful day!

(Day 5 photos by Andrea Hunt)

Day Six – Wangaratta and the Warby Ranges

By Gail Bell

For our final day, on a beautiful warm and sunny morning, we walked the 2.4 km Bullawah Cultural Trail in Wangaratta.. The trail, which provides a creative insight into the local Indigenous Australians, the Bpangerang people, snakes along the Ovens River and crosses it twice on suspension bridges. This self-guided walk allows you to observe Aboriginal stories, sculptures and a bush tucker garden. It was a wonderful experience to be immersed in the Aboriginal culture.

Bullawah (bulla meaning two and wah meaning water) signifies the two suspension bridges crossing the river as well as the joining of the two rivers and the coming together of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

After leaving Wangaratta we completed two short walks. First to Salisbury Falls and then to Briens Gorge and Jubilee Falls. Both of these falls were flowing well after the recent rain.

Leader – Jane Braham
13th to 20th October 2023

- ❖ **Go to Page 29 for more photos from this outstanding trip**
- ❖ **Go to Page 31 for some background notes on the Winton Wetlands**

Annual Christmas Concurrent Walks

Sunday 17th December 2023.

For details and to book on a walk refer to the Trips Tab on the BBC Website.

Our Next Member's Meeting Will Be Held on

Monday 5th February 2024.



Tawonga Huts – Cup Day weekend

Six walkers set off from Pretty Valley Pondage near Falls Creek to camp for three nights at Tawonga Huts over the Melbourne Cup long weekend. As it is only a short 4.5 km walk into Tawonga Huts, our packs were heavier than usual with a few extra luxuries such as nicer food, glass of wine etc. The weather forecast was average, cloudy with some rain; however, we ended up with cool pleasant walking days but some very frosty / wet nights; very little rain while walking.

Tawonga Huts is the perfect camp - plenty of open grassy campsites, convenient permanent streams for water, and of course the old cattlemen's huts which can be used for emergency shelter or cooking on a cold wet night. Additionally, we enjoyed the company of other walkers when we shared the best hut for cooking one very wet evening. The four huts are former cattleman's huts with the remnants of the cattle yard still present.



Tawonga Huts Nestled In an Alpine Meadow

Our first day walk was to Mt Jaithmathang which had great views to Hotham and Feathertop. Sadly, many of the big old snow gums have been killed or severely damaged by bushfires leaving their white skeletal remains like ghosts in the mist.



Like all *e. pauciflora*, the limbs are twisted but those near the summit of Mt Jaithmathang were very twisted.

Leaving Mt Jaithmathang we followed a “track” along the ridge towards the Fainters. The track was clearly marked on the map; however in reality it was completely overgrown. Sometimes it was an easy walk through the grassy meadows but at other times we had to push through waist high scrub. Rob kept a check on his GPS, we were always on the right track, but we just couldn’t see it. This was very slow walking but eventually we met the Fainter Fire Trail.



Large Snow Patches Still Remaining



Descending from Mt Jaithmathang to the Fainters Fire Trail



Tawonga Huts in the Morning Light

Frost covered our tents the next morning, which saw us walking to Ryders Huts. We followed the Australian Alpine Walking Track for a short distance before going cross country down to the Cope West Aqueduct track.





There were still several large snow patches remaining in sheltered spots as we dropped down to the small dam at the head of the aqueduct.

At Ryders Huts we made a discovery dear to the heart of every bushwalker. A new state of the art toilet has been installed. The date on the tank was August 2023. From Ryders Huts we followed the aqueduct to the Cope Saddle Hut and returned to base via the Alpine Walking Track, back to Pole 333 and then north to Tawonga Huts.



Snow Pole Number 333

Leader – Paul Redmond (Nov 2023)

Author – Christine Dawes



Spectacular Sydney 2023!

Sydney proved to be a great adventure for everyone this year. Very warm weather interspersed with showers, sparkling seas, yachts racing across the harbour, historic monuments and houses, charming sculptures and challenging walks – Sydney had it all for us!

Part of the Great North Walk between Mt Ku-ring-gai and Berowra was a challenging walk to start our Sydney adventure. At only 9.7 km in length the walk is, surprisingly, listed as hard. We soon realised why as many times we had to scale large boulders to cross the creek. The relief of the grassy salt plain for lunch was counteracted by a very steep post lunch climb up the side of the valley to reach the fire trail. The last group of the party was treated to a turf war between a large goanna and two sulphur crested cockatoos. The cockatoos were protecting their eggs and the goanna, looking for its lunch, was hard pressed to stay unpecked.

Indeed, as Lord Tennyson wrote *“Nature, red in tooth and claw”*.

Rain the following day did not diminish our taste for the challenge of wet weather along the Maroubra to the Bondi Coastal Path.

The main feature of the day was the iconic Waverley Cemetery to see the Irish Memorial, Henry Lawson’s grave and the memorial to the McKellar family, where “I Love a Sunburnt Country” was recited in tribute to Dorothea McKellar. This was followed by a very enjoyable time looking at the Sculpture exhibition — we were all good critics showing impeccable taste.



Day three commenced with a ferry trip to Watsons Bay from where we walked on part of an original convict road around to South Head with the vertical red and white striped lighthouse, returning past the Gap, to a café selling outstanding home-made breads. A visit to Vauclose House, with its detailed presentation of the Wentworth family’s life in the 1800s, was next on the agenda. From there we followed the coastal path to New South Head Road and a bus back to the city.

How to explain the middle day’s adventure? Our best plans to start at Cowan were foiled by rail track maintenance works. The helpful customer service staff explained the bus alternatives but by the time we arrived at Berowra, we realised there was not enough time to reach Cowan by another bus and still be back in time for dinner at a local Italian restaurant in the evening.

A restorative coffee which facilitated a suggestion for an alternative walk saw the group set off from Berowra to Berowra Waters for lunch and return. The walk along the Berkeley Trail is very much in the bush and as we arrived at the Naa Badu Lookout, we were asked to participate as extras in a photo shoot for a protein powder, soon to be released on the market. Stay tuned for our impressive start in commercial advertising!

Down, down to the water’s edge for lunch gazing at boats moored peacefully on the still waters of Berowra Creek and observing the comings and goings of a small car ferry. The vegetation was stunning and, the cliff face of hollowed out sandstone, just amazing.

Most people nominated this day as their favourite walk. Next year Cowan will be at the top of the walk list.



Berowra Waters

Descent

Ascent



Our last day - sunshine sparkled on the water as the ferry took us to the Taronga Zoo landing. From there we walked past a stand of Sydney Red Gum (*Angophora costata*), around past Bradleys Head and the naval memorials, then on to Chowder Bay and superb coffee and muffins at the former Army Maritime School.

After looking out at the magnificent views from Georges Heights, we counted all the steps down to Balmoral Beach where we enjoyed lunch and a swim in the shark netted pool.

Finally, we walked around to Spit Bridge and then caught a bus and a train back to our accommodation.

What more could you ask for? Beautiful Sydney turned it all on for us and the jacarandas were in full bloom adding to the photographic vistas. We also must mention the public transport system – clean, cheap, graffiti free and the most amazing and helpful customer service teams. We all felt challenged by some of the walks as they were harder than anticipated. However, the challenge, when competed, gave us a great sense of satisfaction. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed our week.

Judy Hunter and the Sydney Walkers 2023.

Leader - Judy Hunter

Photos - Rob Berry and Fiona Hare.



The Sculptured Sandstone Cliffs



President's Column

Leader Training

Bushwalking Victoria conducted a leaders' training day for 20 Bayside Bushwalking Club participants in November giving new leaders and some experienced leaders the chance to refresh.

BBC and Bushwalking Victoria board member Judy Hunter and John Hillard from the Border Walking Club (John travelled from Mt Beauty to assist with the training) covered skills, styles, planning, reconnaissance, mentoring and risk management. We thank Juia Trenchard-Smith for coordinating the day.

Participants gained confidence with map craft and navigation explained in plain English. Judy and John showed us ways to choose a walk, highlighted information that members wanted to know about the difficulty of walks, planning toilet and lunch stops and what to wear and bring. They also showed us how to minimise risk to keep everyone safe in remote areas.

We look forward to seeing new leaders putting up walks on the website. Keep in mind walks coming up may have restricted numbers to give the new leaders a chance to establish themselves.

Also thanks to the Sandringham Bowls Club for offering their premises at mate's rates for our training.

BBC supports and encourages its leaders. We need to keep in mind this is a volunteer role with significant responsibilities and that without leaders there would be no organised walks.

Planning For Fed Walks 2024 Is Well Underway

BWV will celebrate the 90th anniversary of organised bushwalking in Victoria at Tidal River, Wilsons Promontory, on 11-13 October 2024. Put the date in your diary and watch out for booking opportunities next year.

The organising clubs for the event are Bayside Bushwalking Club supported by Melbourne Bushwalking Club and local walking clubs in the Gippsland area.

Accommodation for 300 plus attendees has already been secured for the event, in roofed lodges or huts, powered and unpowered campsites in the national park.

Walk previews will take place 11-15 December 2023 and 5-9 February 2024 in preparation for the event later in the year and for the printing of a hard copy booklet designed by Doug Crompton that will be given as a souvenir to participants for the occasion.



Jane Braham has put together a leaders' preview group for the December dates to do reconnaissance walks and is looking for another group of leaders to help preview walks for the week in February. BBC members who participated in the recent leader training are encouraged to lead a walk. Let Jane know if you are available.

The BBC Committee agreed to pay 50 per cent of accommodation costs for leaders on the two reconnaissance walks, which will cover those staying in the lodge as well as those camping.

This is a one-off consideration for the 90th anniversary of Bushwalking Victoria and the requirement to recruit 40 plus leaders to make this a successful event. The discount acknowledges the generosity of our volunteer leaders.

Many BBC members travelled extensively throughout the year and it is great to hear about their walking adventures in exotic locations.

Martin and I had a great trip in Italy in September/October. We were lucky enough to walk for six days from Lucca to Sienna on the Via Francigena which we started talking about in 2019.

We joined nine BBC members - led by Peter Holland who walked for another six days to Bolsena and Peter walked on to Rome taking 23 days to complete his pilgrimage. It was a fabulous trip and Peter and Marg Martin will present some of the highlights to a club meeting in 2024.

Other active holidays I've heard about include Mont Blanc, Patagonia, Vietnam, Cornwall, Jordan, Egypt and Darwin.

Vale – Ian Sullivan

Club member Ian Sullivan died on 1st September 2023.

Many members will remember Ian as a great contributor to the Bayside Bushwalking Club and the leader of many well researched and historical walks.

Enjoy your walking.

Lyn Curtis
(President)



Volunteer Track Clearing in Croajingolong National Park

Point Hicks in the Croajingolong National Park is named after Lieutenant Zachary Hicks, the naval officer on James Cook's *Endeavour* who first sighted the southeast tip of the Australian continent just after daybreak on April 19, 1770.

Cook sailed towards the landmass for two hours and described it in his journal before turning northeast. "What we have seen of this land appears rather low and not very hilly, the face of the country green and woody, but the sea-shore is all a white sand" — an accurate description of Point Hicks and the coastal park to this day.

Smoke from several fires was observed — probably from managed burns and Gunaikurnai campfires. Cook took the fires to mean that the land was inhabited, but no one came out of the bush to greet the visitors.

Moving forward a couple of centuries — to Grand Final weekend September 2023 — and smoke was seen again in east Gippsland, this time from out-of-control bushfires.

BBC member Mike Grant was packing for a weekend of volunteer track clearing in Croajingolong on Grand Final Thursday when the Parks Victoria ranger in charge rang him to advise that the trip should be cancelled due to the fire risk.

As Mike said later, while Captain Cook had the Pacific Ocean as an escape route, there is only one road out of Wingan Inlet, which would be a problem in a bushfire.

Mike has organised the Grand Final long weekend track clearing project at Croajingolong for the past five years. In 2022, 14 volunteers took part. The 2023 event has been rescheduled for the Anzac Day weekend of April 25 to April 28 next year —254 years after Captain Cook.

The Croajingolong track clearing event is one of twelve in an annual program organised by Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation (BTAC), a group of environmental volunteers organised by Bushwalking Victoria, the umbrella body for bushwalking clubs in Victoria.

Mike says it's a sociable weekend of camping and track clearing with opportunities for walking and enjoying the sandy coast. The weekend starts on Thursday with the 450 km drive. The group sets up camp at Wingan Inlet or Point Hicks campground ahead of a 9am Friday briefing with Nick Wilkins, the Parks Victoria ranger based at Cann River.

On Friday and Saturday, the group clear tracks radiating out of the camp site. Equipment, including chain saws, brush cutters and hand tools, is supplied from an all-terrain vehicle and trailer maintained by the Strzelecki and Ben Cruachan bushwalking clubs.



On Saturday night Parks Victoria hosts a barbeque for the workers at the camp site. The 6.5-hour drive back to Melbourne takes up most of Sunday.

Track clearing is a niche bushwalking activity. Some track clearing takes place in remote and difficult country — like the Victorian Alps — and volunteers need to be strong and fit to carry chain saws, brush cutters and fuel into remote areas as well as their own tent, sleeping bag and food.

Mike's project at Croajingolong is not arduous and most BBC walkers would manage.

“The long weekend in September is often beautiful camping weather. We use the opportunity to get into the bush at Croajingalong and help keep important parts of the park open for bushwalkers. If the tracks grow over, they're impassable and can be lost for all time.”



Thurra River from the Croajingalong Sand Dunes

Mike said there was a wide role for volunteers in track clearing.

BBC takes responsibility for keeping Freemans Track in west Gippsland maintained. Freemans Track is relatively easy to access and a day trip from Melbourne. Working bees are held two or three times a year.

BBC member and Conservation Co-ordinator Bob Edwards is part of the BTAC organising committee that decides projects in conjunction with the land managers



Parks Victoria and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

BTAC takes on some very remote and difficult track clearing projects including McMillans Track, the Australian Alpine Walking Track, Mt Howitt Spur Track and Eagles Peaks Track in the Alpine National Park.

“There’s a cohort in bushwalking who are up for hard walks and hard work,” Bob said. However, there are less demanding events such as reinstating the track to Mt Thorn that will take place in mid-November.

“In the remote areas we may have to carry in the equipment and fuel as well as our camping gear, so that’s for stronger bushwalkers. But other tracks — McMillan’s for example — we can usually get the equipment trailer to the camp site, or we can carry equipment and volunteers’ packs in 4WD vehicles.”

Volunteers have been fewer since the COVID shutdown, but Bob said that numbers have improved, and younger volunteers were participating. A survey last year by DEECA showed young people were open to the idea of working to improve the environment but were not prepared to commit to membership of an established group.

Bob said Parks Victoria and Bushwalking Victoria were conscious of this and looking for ways to promote event-based, short-term opportunities for people with a range of abilities.

At the last BTAC event at Ropers Hut in the Alpine National Park maintenance work was undertaken on the hut by volunteers not wanting to participate in the more demanding track clearing activities.

Freemans Track working bees and Ruth Brown’s boneseed removal project at Churchill National Park are advertised through the BBC web site.

To sign up for Mike’s weekend next year and for the full program of track clearing opportunities go to <https://bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/btac/>.

To volunteer for a BTAC activity register via www.parkconnect.vic.gov.au

Martin Curtis

October/November 2023





Bushwalking Victoria

Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation

Mt Howitt

Friday 26 to Monday 29 January 2024

Maintenance of walking tracks in the vicinity of Mt Howitt from a base camp at the Vallejo Gantner Memorial Hut.

Track:	(1) Mt Howitt walking track from Car Park to summit (2) Old Zeka Track (2kms)
Project Leader:	Joe van Beek Phone: 0411749799 Email: joevanbeek@bigpond.com
Where to meet:	Mt Howitt Car Park at the end of Howitt Road.
Working hours:	Track maintenance activities will occur on Saturday and Sunday and if required on Monday morning starting at 8am each day.
Skills needed:	Good level of fitness. Chainsaw operators, brush cutting, hedge trimming, use of hand tools, manual lifting. There is a wide range of tasks. No previous track maintenance experience is required.
Transport:	Arrange your own transport to the Mt Howitt Car Park. Car pooling is encouraged. For access to the Car Park AWD or 4WD is recommended. Transport will only be available for track clearing gear and equipment from the Mt Howitt Car Park to Vallejo Gantner Hut.
Accommodation:	Camping at the Vallejo Gantner Hut at Macalister Springs. 5km walk from the Mt Howitt Car Park. <u>This is a fuel stove only area.</u>
We will provide:	Parks Victoria and BTAC will provide all track maintenance equipment and PPE.
Please bring:	Camping gear and provisions for all meals in a back pack. A day backpack to carry lunch, energy snacks, water, raincoat, warm top, emergency contact, and medical information form, small first aid kit, hand sanitiser, etc. Sturdy work footwear. This activity is in the high country where the weather can change rapidly. Come prepared for all seasons.
Scope of work:	We will be working as volunteers to Parks Victoria to do track maintenance work, involving brush cutting, hedge trimmer and chain saw operation, erecting markers and the use of hand tools for vegetation trimming and clean up.
Meeting time:	2pm on Friday 26 January at the Mt Howitt Car Park.
Finish time:	By noon on Monday 29 January.
WWCC:	It is a requirement of Parks Victoria that all volunteers after their first volunteering activity have a Working With Children Check and load it up on ParkConnect as evidence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must register on ParkConnect by 20th January 2024 to attend this activity. • Please also register on the BBC web site so that Bob Edwards (BBC's Conservation Coordinator) has a record of members attending. 	





BTAC Planning List - February to May 2024

23-25 Feb	Alpine National Park	AAWT High Cone To Square Top	Patrick Platt	1
8-11 March	Alpine National Park	AAWT Johnnies Top	John Green Joe van Beek	1
29-31	Baw Baw	AAWT	Peter Maffei	2
25-28	Croajingolong	Rescheduled	Mike Grant	2
May	Alpine	Howqua Area	Bob Edwards	3
				1 – in Planning 2 – Proposed 3 – Possible
Go to BTAC - Bushwalking Victoria for further details and for updates				



The latest issue of the Bushwalking Victoria Bulletin is available through the link on the BBC Website under the Packs Up! tab. It is also available direct at BWV by clicking [HERE](#)



Snake Bite at Oberon Bay: A Lesson in Preparedness

On a sunny Saturday afternoon in late October, ten BBC members had their dinner preparations at the Oberon Bay campsite interrupted by Annette Forde discovering that a day walker had been bitten by a snake.

Without hesitation, the group grabbed their snake bandages and rushed to the edge of the beach on the grassy verge, to find Luca, the unfortunate victim, on the ground being cared for by his friend. Another camper had already put two compression bandages around Luca's foot and ankle, and Annette wrapped two further snake bite bandages around his leg up to his thigh and firmly advised Luca to stay still until help arrived.



Luca's Leg in Four Snake Bite Bandages

As luck would have it, his friend had mobile coverage and was talking to emergency services. The BBC party carried both a PLB and two Garmin InReach devices which could have been used in the absence of mobile coverage.

Parks Victoria Ranger, Luran, arrived in about 30 minutes and about half an hour later two Ambulance Victoria paramedics arrived, followed by another ranger in a 4WD. The ambulance could not negotiate the very sandy track from the Telegraph Track into Oberon Bay.



Given Luca was not showing any symptoms, a helicopter was not called in. But unfortunately, the paramedics did not have a stretcher. In the absence of a stretcher, some strong arms helped shift Luca across the 50 metres up to the 4WD parked in the clearing near the toilets and water tanks. The paramedics and rangers had put a thin plastic sheet under Luca and the plan was to drag him on the ground so Annette and Jeff lifted the sheet at his leg end, making sure his bandaged leg was kept still all the time. After about 30 metres, one of the paramedics needed a break and the rangers took over the head end. Luca had to be dragged over sand, rocks, tree roots and grass. The 50metres felt like a very long way. He was then told to hop up and slide across the back seat of the ute. Which he did very sprightly, as it turned out he is a Pilates instructor. Not sure if that helped him though.

The 4WD took Luca back to the Telegraph Track and the ambulance which took him to Wonthaggi Hospital, where snake anti-venom was available together with the ability to monitor him 24 hours a day. (Apparently Foster hospital had antivenom, but could not do 24 hour care).

Annette received a message from Luca's friend in the early Sunday morning:

"Hi! Wanted to thank you again for today! We are still in the hospital, Luca really got bad when he was in the ambulance but now with the anti-venom it's getting better. He had venom in his system so thank you for your help! You guys did an amazing job (even the doctors said it) ❤️ Have a great trip"

Our members are very pleased that they were there and could help. Luca was very lucky to have so many well prepared (and strong) bushwalkers on hand to demonstrate quick thinking, teamwork, and the importance of being prepared for the unexpected

This incident serves as a crucial reminder of the challenges that can arise during bushwalking adventures, especially during snake season:

- **Vigilance During Snake Season.** October to January is in the thick of the snake season, and all walkers must remain vigilant, especially those exploring the Prom. Watch the trail ahead of you, and anytime you step off the trail for a break, or a lunch stop, make sure you have a good look where you are putting your feet or hands,(they love warm rocks too).
- **Know First Aid:** Keep your first aid certification up to date.
- **Smartphone apps** are available that provide specific step by step instructions for most first aid situations. These apps can be downloaded for use in the absence of mobile reception:



- [First Aid – St Johns Ambulance Australia](#) – Google Play
 - [First Aid – St Johns Ambulance Australia](#) – Apple App Store
 - [First Aid – Australian Red Cross](#) – Google Play
 - [First Aid – Australian Red Cross](#) – Apple App Store
- **Inclusion of Snake Bandages in First Aid Kits:** Every bushwalker should carry snake bandages in their first aid kit as a crucial precaution. You should always carry 2 snake bandages, more if in a group.
 - **Do Not Move the Patient:** If a snake bite is suspected, the first treatment must always be to advise them not to move (unless they are in other danger).
 - **Carrying a PLB or device to contact emergency services:** Not all parts of our wilderness have mobile coverage, so it's important that you have a way to contact emergency services if you need to. Read about using mobile phones, PLB's and satellite tracking devices in the Bushwalking Victoria Bushwalking Manual:
 - [Using your mobile phone to contact emergency services](#)
 - [Personal Locator Beacons \(PLB'S\)](#)
 - [Satellite Tracking Devices](#) with SOS (eg. Garmin inReach, Zoleo)
 - **Be Prepared to Wait for Help:** It is important to understand that help is rarely immediate. Emergency services need to triage your call, and plan how they will respond, frequently seeking assistance from multiple agencies. Add in rough terrain, and accessibility challenges, it can take hours or more for help to arrive.
 - **Be Prepared with clothing:** It's easy to think it's only a short walk, and the sun is out, I don't need a jumper. Always pack for the scenario where you need to sit still for multiple hours, waiting for help. Make sure you always have a waterproof/windproof jacket and a mid-layer (fleece or puffer). It's always a good habit to carry a space blanket, or even better, a space bag to put your whole body in to keep warm, they take up little space, and should be in your first aid kit.

Thanks to Richelle Olsen at BWV,

and to Jeff McDonell,

who led the walk that sunny October weekend.

➤ **Check out Page 34**



This Month's Photo Riddle

Where are you and what are you looking at?



Answers to the editor at newsletter@baysidebush.org.au

(Photo by the editor)

Last month's photo showed the view from the Bennison Lookout on the Tamboritha Road.



It's Fly Season Again

As the days grow longer and temperatures climb, we're greeted by a familiar chorus of buzzing - It's fly season again.

This year is off to a bumper start, with bush flies swarming beach-goers, March flies on the march, and mosquitoes taking to the skies en-masse.

There are almost a million species worldwide and some 30,000 call Australia home.



The (unusually) warm weather also presents an opportunity to appreciate these remarkable and essential insects with which we share our world.

Despite their sheer diversity, we're likely to encounter only a select few flies daily. So, who are these curious insects, and how should we think about their presence in our lives?

Familiar Faces

Bush flies (*Musca vetustissima*) are the iconic Australian fly and are found country-wide. They slake their thirst on the sweat and tears of mammals and so linger around our heads, shoulders and faces in search of a refreshing drink.

They're so persistent that they're credited with inspiring the "Aussie salute". These small explorers are otherwise harmless and pose no serious threat to health or home beyond being a mild nuisance.

Similar in appearance are house flies (*Musca domestica*), which frequent our homes. Unlike bush flies, however, they're more interested in scraps of food and waste left unprotected. They regurgitate digestive juices to break solids into a mush, more amenable to their straw-like mouths and can pose a minor hygiene concern as a consequence.

Blowflies bring some sparkle to the fly world, and are easily recognised by their often large, shiny bodies. Although sometimes a pest, they're also voracious scavengers and



effective pollinators. In this way they do their bit to break down organic matter, recycle nutrients, and transport pollen to support plant life.

The sheer size of horseflies makes them powerful fliers, which can often be heard and seen at a distance. Females demand a blood meal and so pack a hearty bite to mammals, including us, and can be a nuisance to livestock. They are also, however, excellent pollinators, with some orchids relying on their hard work and specialised mouthparts for survival.

Finally, and famously, are mosquitoes. (Yes, they are a type of fly.) Many summer evenings are spent swatting females as they sip our blood.

More serious is their role as vectors for diseases that have helped to topple empires, and which remain a significant health burden, especially in the Global South. Malaria is among the farthest-reaching, while Ross River Virus, chikungunya, zika and dengue all circulate with help from mosquitoes.

Shoo Fly?

For the minority of flies that prove a recurring annoyance, the primary goal is to deter rather than kill them. In this case, the remedies are simple:

- use topical repellents containing DEET or Picaridin, and wear loose-fitting clothing when outside
- install flyscreens in the house, and check them regularly for holes
- keep your food covered, both at home and when out enjoying the warm weather
- empty your bins regularly and minimise standing water, both of which can attract unwanted attention.

Avoid reaching for the bug-bombs and sprays, which have devastating impacts on beneficial insects. If a chemical last resort is required, choose selective sprays rather than broad-spectrum options such as pyrethroids and neonicotinoids, which kill the many good bugs with the few bad ones.

Similarly, those noise-emitting, electrified or smelly gadgets that promise a fly-free existence are best avoided, as most are either ineffective, or harm far more than their intended targets.

From Pesky to Paramount

While our daily encounters with a handful of fly species may taint our perception of the group as a whole, such a view is both unwarranted and unjustified. Flies are among the most diverse animals on the planet and are utterly crucial for the healthy function of our ecosystems.

Many, like hover flies, are important pollinators. In an era of pollinator declines and heightened food insecurity, their ongoing work is key to supporting agricultural production, and plant life more generally.



The larvae of the black soldier fly (*Hermetia illucens*) are highly effective decomposers, eating twice their own bodyweight every day.

On the other side of the circle of life are outstanding decomposers, such as black soldier flies. Each individual larva can eat twice its bodyweight daily, which at the scale of tens of thousands of grubs presents a promising pathway towards sustainable waste management. They are also a rich source of protein for livestock, or even humans.

Just as a very few flies are pests, many serve as remedies in their role as biological controls. The 10,000-odd species of tachinid, for example, make a living as parasitoids of other insects. That is, they lay their eggs inside, and eventually kill, the developing young of others, which include pest caterpillars, flies and bugs.

Moreover, flies have proven invaluable in forensics, medicine and scientific research, and environmental monitoring, underscoring how deeply our lives intertwine with theirs.

As the warm weather rolls around, then, take the opportunity to look a little closer at our nimble neighbours, and consider both their staggering diversity and the vital roles they humbly fill. The natural world — us included — would not be the same without them.

By Thomas White, senior lecturer and Tanya Latty, associate professor, both at the University of Sydney. This piece first appeared on [The Conversation](#).



Vaucluse House

❖ **See Spectacular Sydney 2023! Page 12**

More Photos from The Benalla Art Silo Base Camp

Salisbury Falls



Mount Glenrowan



Devenish



St James



Winton Wetlands



Ancient Snow Gum Trunk – Jaithmathang

See “Tawonga Huts – Cup Weekend” on Page 9



The Winton Wetlands Project

The Winton Wetlands Project is one of the world's most significant environmental, social and economic renewal projects, whether measured by its environmental ambitions, its social and cultural significance, or its sheer scale.

LAKE MOKOAN AND ITS DECOMMISSIONING

The flooding of the Winton (Mokoan) Swamp in 1971 to create Lake Mokoan was broadly welcomed for the economic and recreational values that it promised. It created a large water storage that irrigated thousands of hectares of agriculture, adding \$10-\$15 million to the local economy each year. At the same time the new reservoir inundated around 7,000 Ha of agricultural land, ancient forests and beautiful and unique wetlands. The flooding killed around 200,000 river red gums including many Aboriginal scar trees that are still standing today, having re-emerged from the lake as dead stags but still retaining their scarring and their stories. Over a run of dry years, Lake Mokoan sometimes dried out completely and at other times was subject to blue-green algal breakouts.

Water managers seeking ways to save water in the Murray-Darling system noted that the expansive and shallow water body was losing far more water through evaporation than it contributed to agriculture, and raised the question of its decommissioning. This was met with strong local opposition from irrigators and recreational users of the Lake, and after a great deal of protest and community anguish, the lake was decommissioned. Water that would otherwise have been stored in Lake Mokoan now contributes to environmental flows in the Murray-Darling river system and allows Snowy River water previously diverted into the Murray-Darling river system to be returned to the Snowy.

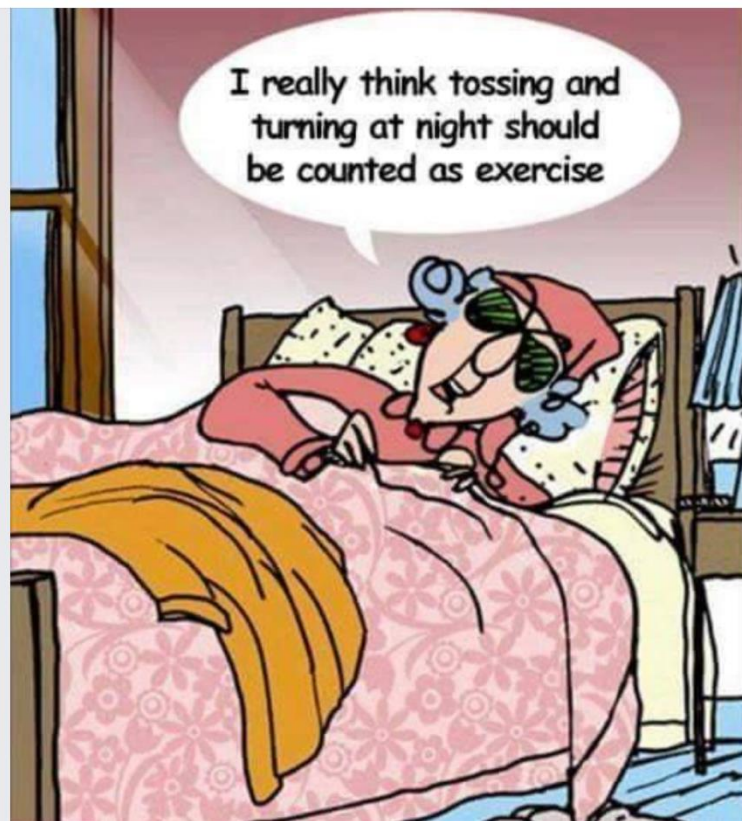
RENEWAL

In 2010, the Winton Wetlands Committee of Management was charged with the restoration of the site. The Committee has delivered a thriving site supported by multiple partners and supporters – and is focussed on:

- Rebuilding ecological integrity and protecting and reintroducing threatened species;
- Renewing infrastructure and amenity to rebuild local access, recreation and pride;
- Creating unique and life-changing experiences for visitors;
- Involving local indigenous people in the renewal project and through recognition of hundreds of indigenous cultural heritage sites; and
- Demonstrating how ecological and cultural regeneration can affect people's lives and drive economic development.

For more information go to [Winton Wetlands – A project of national scientific, environmental and cultural significance](#). *(Article reproduced from the Winton Wetlands Website)*





Upcoming Walks and Activities

The current listing of BBC activities can be found on the club's website.

Leaders who would like their activity detailed and promoted here should contact the editor at newsletter@baysidebush.org.au .

Currently BBC has 341 members.

If you enjoyed reading this magazine or would like to know more about walking with the Bayside Bushwalking Club, visit our website www.baysidebush.org.au .

The Club is welcoming to new members. If you are unsure about a first walk with BBC, we can provide a 'buddy' to assist and prepare you for an enjoyable day in the bush or on an urban walk. Places are held for new members on the popular walks that quickly book out.

Identifying details of members have been removed from this 'public' edition of the magazine. Some of the formatting may have suffered from this action.



On the Track to Timbertop
(Photo by the editor Nov 2023)



Packs Up! is the newsletter of the Bayside Bushwalking Club (BBC).

Editor – Paul Redmond

Contributions can be sent to the editor at newsletter@baysidebush.org.au.

Text must be in Microsoft Word format and photos for inclusion in jpg format.

Deadline for contributions is the close of business on the third Monday of the month.

The contributor is responsible for ensuring that all authors and photographers have agreed to publication in *Packs Up!* and that persons depicted in photographs have given their consent for their image to be published in *Packs Up!* and appear on the BBC Website.

Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Bayside Bushwalking Club Inc., its office bearers, or members.

Advertisements may be accepted from members relating to Club activities, sale of second-hand equipment or seeking expressions of interest in club or private trips. Advertisements submitted must comply with Club policy as set out in Appendix 2 to the "ABC of the BBC".

Publication of all submissions will be subject to limits of time, space and the editor's discretion, especially the editor's discretion.

Find us on Facebook

The Bayside Bushwalking Club's Facebook page is attracting lots of "likes" every week. If you're on Facebook and want to find us, search Bayside Bushwalking Club in the Search box at the top of the Facebook screen. There is also a link on the BBC website that will take you straight there. And if you "Like" the page or one of the posts, you will get any new BBC posts on your Facebook feed.



**BAYSIDE
BUSHWALKING
CLUB**

ABN 25 734 864 041
Incorporated Association A0007879P

P. O. Box 460, Sandringham Vic 3191
Website: www.baysidebush.org.au
email: info@baysidebush.org.au

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