

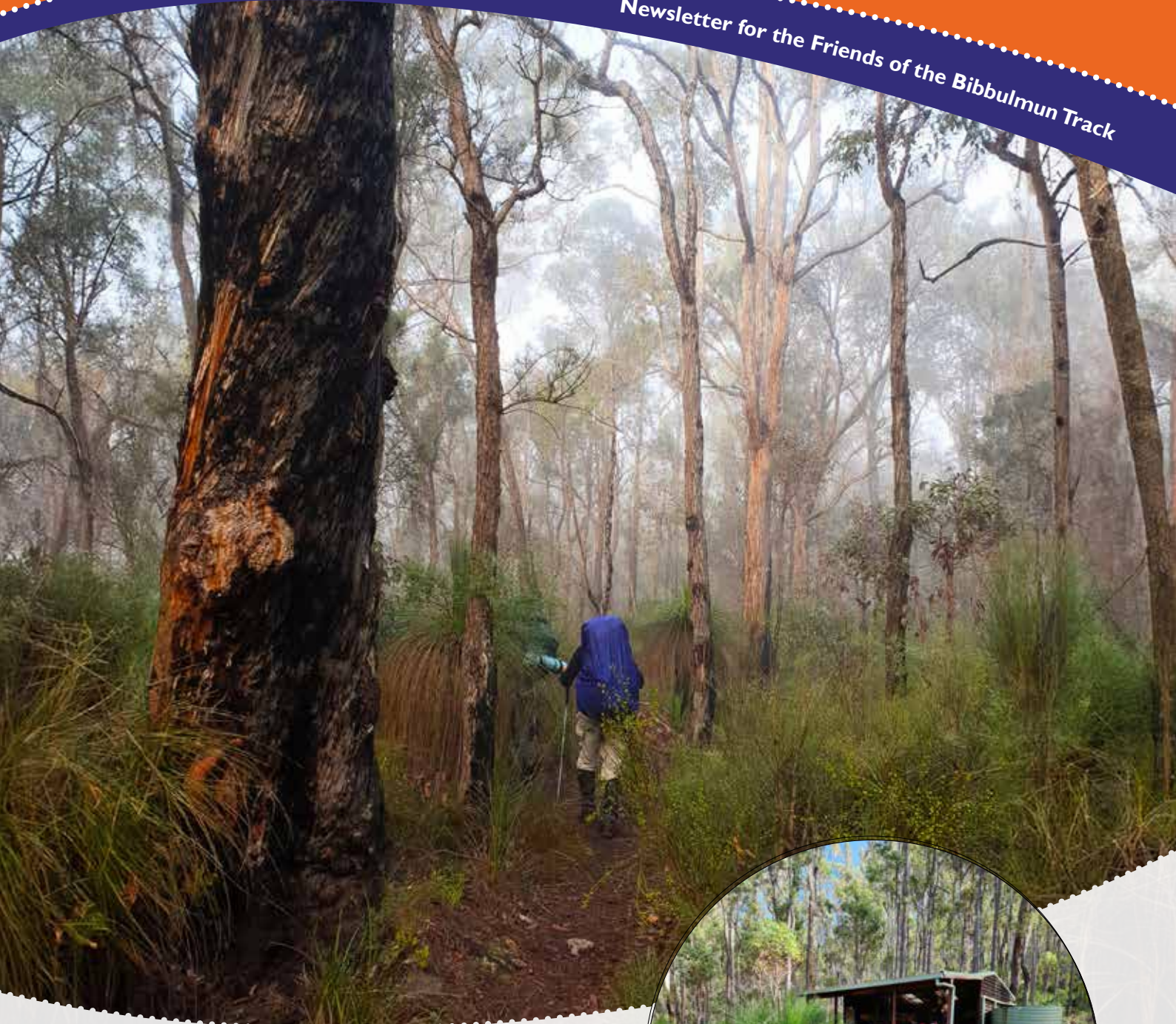
Bibbulmun

NEWS

APRIL 2024 - JULY 2024
SEASONS OF DJERAN & MAKURU
ISSUE #95
RRP \$8.00



Newsletter for the Friends of the Bibbulmun Track



Cooler weather has arrived and walkers are heading back on the Track.

(Above) Walking between Collie and Balingup. Photo: Vanessa Huesges
(Right) Swamp Oak Campsite near Dwellingup. Photo: Ce Kealley

BTF Members' Trips

We are close to finalising two exciting itineraries and invite you to join us!

Places are limited to 16 passengers on each trip so please email your interest to events@bibbulmuntrack.org.au and we will send you the details as soon as we can.

Taiwan – 15th to 26th November 2024

Through the Taiwan Thousand Miles Trail Association we are excited to offer a fascinating 12-day trip in northern Taiwan. Accompanied by an English-speaking guide, and the BTF's lead guide, Steve Sertis, you'll explore historic trails characterized by beautiful scenery and a rich culture. Admire spectacular mountains, hidden waterfalls and the marble canyons of Taroko National Park. The delicious food, night markets and cultural sights of Taipei all add up to a fantastic experience.



Taroko Gorge National Park. Photo: PonAek

Tasmania – March/April 2025

This 13-day itinerary has been specially designed by Peregrine Travel to make the most of Tasmania's classic walking destinations. Accompanied by an experienced guide and the Foundation's ED, Linda Daniels, you will enjoy the very best day walks and attractions Tasmania has to offer. Fully catered and staying in comfortable accommodation this tour is a wonderful way to take in this tiny, but mighty island.

Adventure Raffle get your tickets to win!

Fantastic prizes to raise funds for a great cause – the Bibbulmun Track!

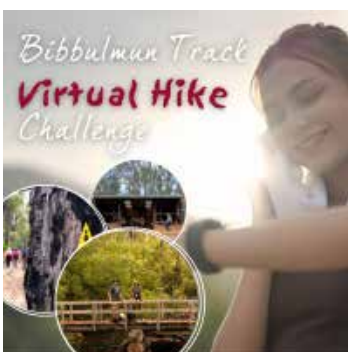
It takes money to keep the Bibbulmun Track maintained – and free for all to enjoy.

Please support our fundraising efforts and buy some tickets – on sale from 1st April so keep an eye out for details!

Prizes include:

- ✓ **Nepal trek for two to Everest Base Camp.**
- ✓ Anaconda voucher.
- ✓ Mont Sleeping Shelter.
- ✓ Aarn Featherlight Freedom pack.
- ✓ Two Frontier Cook Pot sets & accessories

Total Prize value is over \$10,000!



Boost workplace health & wellness with our Virtual Hike Challenge

The Bibbulmun Track Virtual Hike Challenge is the perfect way to promote fitness, camaraderie, and friendly competition among your team, no matter where they're located. A fun and engaging team building experience - let your boss or HR staff know about it! Email friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au for more information.



The scenery in Nepal is hard to beat.



SCAN HERE
to buy your tickets
(from 1 April to
30 June 2024)



PEREGRINE
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Huge thanks to our sponsors for donating these great prizes!



FROM MY Desk

Welcome to the winter edition of Bibbulmun News.

At the DBCA Volunteer Awards in December 2023, the Foundation was very proud to be awarded one of two Outstanding Service by a Community Group awards.

The Award recognised the work of the organisation which ensures the Bibbulmun Track continues to be maintained and managed to a very high standard and remains a quality experience for walkers.

We were also delighted that BTF volunteer Ross Simpson was named Volunteer of the Year. Ross's contribution to Track maintenance is outstanding and this recognition was well deserved. You can read more on page 11.

In this edition we also recognise all the volunteers that received Long Service Awards and rewards at our own annual Volunteer Thank You days. Over 400 volunteers contribute to the work of the BTF and based on the formula used by Volunteering WA, their contribution to the Bibbulmun Track was worth over \$1.5 million in the last year alone.

Over the past 10 years the number of volunteer hours has increased by 36% and the number of maintenance reports received and processed has increased by 35%. The number of walkers has also increased by around 150% and the feedback received, such as the letter from Janette on page 4, show they are highly appreciative of the work of the Foundation.

We had a record number of walkers register an end-to-end with us last year including 106 from outside WA. Of course, the majority of walkers are just out there for a short walk and a day on the Track is a great way to unwind at the end of a busy week.

Both hiking and volunteering are good for your mental health, and we recently became an official partner of Act Belong Commit WA's longest-running mental health promotion campaign.

Thanks to all our members for your continued support. We are currently planning a few members events and I hope you will join us at one or more during the year. Keep an eye out for the Bibb Bytes e-news for dates.

Keep on walking!

Linda Daniels
Executive Director

Join us on



Thank you! Thank you! THANK YOU!

A sincere thank you to the following walkers who have generously made donations to the Foundation.

Bill Koster
Glensse Dyson
Jasmine Trueman
Jessica Seemann

Michael Paterson
Nola Rademakers
Vere Berger

Donations are tax deductible!

Through the National Trust, donations to the Foundation are deposited in a special account and assigned specifically to projects that enhance the Bibbulmun Track's environmental sustainability. The National Trust provides this service for free so you can be sure that 100% of your donation will go to Track projects.

Tax deductible donations can be made online, in person by cash or credit card, or by cheque which can be made out to the Bibbulmun Track Foundation with your name and address. We will then provide you with a receipt from the National Trust receipt book which indicates the donation is specifically for the Bibbulmun Track.

All donations, regardless of the amount, are gratefully received and all help to preserve our beautiful Bibbulmun Track.

Perth Schoolgirl Sets Bibbulmun Track Record

In late 2023, seventeen-year-old Peppermint Grove schoolgirl Zara White became the youngest person recorded to complete the Bibbulmun Track solo.

She took just 54 days to complete the walk, leaving Kalamunda on October 2 and arriving in Albany on November 24. Zara took only four rest days during her epic adventure, sometimes walking more than 38 kilometres in a single day.

She is also raising funds for the Bibbulmun Track - and is so close to her \$15,000 goal!

Help her get there by going to www.gofundme.com/f/bibbulmun-track-foundation or scan the QR code



YOUR Letters

G'day,

I completed the Bibb Track end-end southbound at the start of November. I walked for 57 days. The scenery, sights and sounds were beyond stunning. I'd like to express my gratitude and especially my amazement at how well this track is maintained. I've been hiking for over 30 years, and I've never hiked on such a well-maintained track with excellent hiking infrastructure that I didn't even have to pay for. How you coordinate all your volunteer teams is an extraordinary feat. Please know all your hard work shines through and is appreciated every step of the way.

I was sad to approach the end and was wishing with all my heart that the track continued to Esperance. I simply wasn't ready to stop walking! Well, like all things, my journey had a start and it had an end. Regarding the Bibb friendly accommodation options, the Black Diamond in Collie was absolutely fantastic. By far the best, because I had so much fun with Sheree, was Tingle All Over in Walpole. In fact, my stay there was so monumental that I'm returning to Walpole to live so I can help Sheree run it! How good is that? Thanks again for all your hard work. My journey bestowed upon me many gifts. And for that, I'm grateful.

Kind Regards
Janette Kodiah

Hi,

I was doing an overnight from DRV to Gregory Brook. By the time I got to camp my glute was really painful. I suspected it wouldn't magically heal overnight so I planned to hobble to the road and hitchhike back to DRV. I was barely able to walk, when I met Andrew, a Track Angel who came to my rescue. When I shared my plan with him, he said he was parked at Karri Valley and would take me to DRV. Andrew took me from Karri Gully back to my car at DRV. He made an uncertain morning much safer and easy for me, and was such a gentleman

I thanked him profusely but wondered if you would be able to make a note of his kindness in your next newsletter? He truly was a knight in shining armour! When I saw my osteopath she was surprised I could walk at all, as my lower spine was so out of alignment. The body is a magical mystery! I'm so happy I made the hike with Andrew's help, as it was a part I wanted to do for a very long time and didn't want to wait another long summer. You know that Bibb addiction!

Esther

Ed: Andrew Macgregor is a BTF member and Maintenance Volunteer

PHOTO COMPETITION WINNER

This photo of one of our volunteer guides, Neil Gibson, in action out on the Track, inspired many entries including:

"Am I going the right way? I must see a Waugal soon"
Alison Farmer

"Oh, cool—a currawong trying to attract a mate and he's holding something shiny in his beak. Wait a sec—they're my car keys!"
Arthur Wright

"Is it a bird, is it a plane.....?"
Helen Turner

"Wow, with such a glorious display of colour, I can't believe it's taken me so long to catch a glimpse of the elusive Bibbulmun Track marker, a truly spectacular sight to behold."
Greg Ely

And the winner (as judged by our office volunteers) is....

"They said the Waugal was in the tree but WHERE?"
Kathy Bell

Well done Kathy... a prize is in the post!



Walker Story - Tale of a Track Angel

Long time BTF member and End-to-Ender Terry O'Hara recently had an enlightening experience on the Track, a great example of the camaraderie that exists between Bibbulmun Track walkers.

My name is Terry O'Hara, Track name Piscator, I'm 71 and taking on my third sectional end-to-end walk. In late March I began the Balingup to Pemberton section of the Track. The last time I completed this stretch was back in 2010, so thirteen years later with a Camino under my belt and two new knees, I knew what to expect in the coming days with the hills and valleys leading into Pemberton.

Everything was going smoothly, if a little slower than in 2010, as I now move at approximately 3km an hour, until about 13km south of the Tom Road Campsite I had a shooting pain in my right heel which really knocked me. For the next 10km I hobbled along, reaching Boarding House at 5.15pm, absolutely knackered!

Amazingly, across the bridge near the shelter came a young dad and his son, who were out for a day walk from Manjimup. He was the first person I had seen at a shelter on the whole walk.

I chatted with him and explained my predicament, whereupon he immediately offered to drive me into Manjimup, either that evening or the next morning. Wow - my Track Angel! I jumped at the chance of help. The alternative would have been to set off my PLB, as there was no mobile coverage.

Next morning at 7am on Palings Road, approximately 600 metres from Boarding House Campsite, along he came to take me into Manjimup. What a godsend!

My Angel's name is Paul Fontanini, an artist, blacksmith and sculptor from one of Manjimup's well known families. and he was walking with his son Xavier. I couldn't have been more appreciative of the lift he gave me. Luckily I was able

to change my Trans WA bus booking and leave on the midday bus back to Perth and home to Freo.

Looking back on the whole episode, I realise I was so lucky that things came together as they did. With luck I'll be back on the Track in the not too distant future. I've discovered I've got plantar fasciitis, which will take a while to heal.

However, I still have three sections to go for my end-to-end number three!

Hopefully others who find themselves in a similar predicament may have a Track Angel experience as unbelievable as mine. Thank you Paul, you were truly a godsend.

One piece of advice, to solo walkers especially—always, always carry a PLB. They are mandatory walking gear items. Track Angels aren't suddenly going to appear when you most need them out in the wild!

Terry O'Hara

Ed: Terry's Angel Paul is an award winning sculptor and artist and a BTF member who also is planning to complete and end-to-end on the Track. If you are in Pemberton, take a look at his creation "Looking to the Future, Remembering the Past", a superb metal sculpture on the main street, part of the Bibbulmun Track.



Terry O'Hara



Paul and Xavier Fontanini came to the rescue.

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Before you go...

CHECK THE LATEST TRACK CONDITIONS

Before heading out on to the Bibbulmun Track it is important that you check the current Track conditions and are aware of any changes that may impact on your journey. Refer to the Section by Section guide on www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au or contact the appropriate Parks and Wildlife Services District (see contact details opposite).

There may be maintenance or construction projects near or on the Track that result in temporary diversions or changes. These will not be marked on your maps. Diversions are usually marked with Waugal trail markers attached to yellow metal posts. If you encounter these when walking, follow these temporary markers, not your map. The diversion will eventually return you to the main trail.

Please remember the Bibbulmun Track is a walking track only. No wheeled vehicles, including trolleys, wheelbarrows, prams or bikes should be on the Track. Please help to preserve the Track and the environment by keeping to *boots only*.

Prescribed Burning Operations

Parks and Wildlife conducts a program of prescribed burning operations each year. Prescribed burning operations are undertaken for a variety of reasons, including property protection, fuel reduction and biodiversity management.

These burns are carefully planned but may cause some disruption to Track users. Where prescribed burning operations impact on the Track, temporary diversions will be put in place. Prescribed burning operations are dependent on appropriate weather conditions and for this reason dates of burns are not available in advance. For information regarding prescribed burns, please contact the District offices.

Groups on the Track

Groups of walkers with eight or more members that are staying overnight on the Track are requested to complete a Group Notification online at www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au/trip-planner/notice-of-intent-for-groups.

Car access to the Track

Walkers are reminded that vehicles can only access the Track at designated points. These are marked on the maps and guidebooks as red car symbols. Other roads that lead towards the Track might be restricted or have locked gates as they enter disease risk areas. Attempting to access the Track at non-designated points can spread disease or damage wildlife. Please use only the access points marked on the maps and guidebooks.

Parks and Wildlife Contacts:

Recreation and Trails Unit

recreationandtrails@dbca.wa.gov.au
Ph: (08) 9219 8265

District Offices

Perth Hills District (Mundaring and Dwellingup)

Perth Hills District (Mundaring and Dwellingup)
Kalamunda to the Harvey-Quindanning Road
Map 1 & 2 and Guidebooks 1 & 2
Contact Rebecca Hamilton on (08) 9290 6100 or mundaring@dbca.wa.gov.au

Wellington District (Collie)

The Harvey-Quindanning Road to Mumballup
(Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Rd)
Map 3 and Guidebook 3
Contact Nick Evans on (08) 9735 1988 or wellington@dbca.wa.gov.au

Blackwood District (Balingup)

Blackwood District (Balingup)
Mumballup (Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Rd) to Willow Springs
(Gold Gully Rd)
Map 4 and Guidebook 4
Contact Crystelle Evangelista on (08) 9731 6232 or blackwood@dbca.wa.gov.au

Donnelly District (Pemberton and Northcliffe)

Willow Springs (Gold Gully Rd) to Pingerup Rd
Map 5 and Guidebook 5
Contact Dean Johnson on (08) 9771 7988 or donnelyd@dbca.wa.gov.au

Frankland District (Walpole)

Pingerup Rd to Denmark River mouth
Map 6, 7 and 8 and Guidebooks 6, 7 and 8
Contact Christie Bentink on (08) 9840 0400 or frankland.district@dbca.wa.gov.au

Albany District (Denmark and Albany)

Denmark River mouth to Albany
Map 8 and Guidebook 8
Contact Sara Hands-May on (08) 9842 4500 or albany@dbca.wa.gov.au

LEAVE NO TRACE TIP: DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY. PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT!

- Carry a bag for your rubbish at all times.
- Minimise your use of canned foods.
- Don't bury waste at campsites.

All wastes which cannot be burned should be carried out. Remember - foil, tin cans and glass do not burn and plastics and polystyrene foams produce noxious fumes when burnt!





Stephen King

TRAILS COORDINATOR, RECREATION AND TRAILS UNIT

TEL: (08) 9219 8265

EMAIL: RECREATIONANDTRAILS@DBCA.WA.GOV.AU



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



Recreation & Trails UNIT

Dear Readers,

This summer has felt really hot and harsh, and while it hasn't been conducive to a lot of work on the ground, it has been a good time to take stock and plan for a busy program of improvements ahead of us.

As part of the continuing program of campsite upgrades, the upcoming jobs are tent site and path upgrades at Gringer Creek Campsite, installation of a second water tank at Murray Campsite and an upgrade of the toilet at Yourdamung Campsite. A contractor has been engaged for the Gringer Creek work, and Support Volunteers are taking on the Murray tank installation in late March. The plans for the Yourdamung Campsite toilet have been revised, with the intent of retaining most of the above ground structure and installing a new large capacity plastic tank.

Good progress is also being made on realignments to improve the Bibbulmun Track experience. The Shire of Denmark constructed a new path along the Wilson Inlet foreshore near Little River, and the Track now follows this path instead of detouring through nearby streets.

A relatively small realignment proposed at the crossing of Albany Highway has been approved by Shire of Boddington. This will bypass the section that runs along the highway shoulder, with a 215m section of new trail to be built through a Shire managed reserve on the west side of the highway. Planning is also

progressing for proposed realignments at Mt Dale and at the powerlines east of Mt Cooke. Both realignments involve construction of new trail to take the track off unappealing vehicle tracks. These require desktop flora assessments and approval under DWER Policy 13 (recreation in drinking water catchment) as the next steps.

Progress on the major realignment south of Dookanelly Campsite is now hinging on the completion of a prescribed burn that covers a large portion of the realignment. Part of the burn area was completed last spring, and the remainder is a high priority on the autumn 2024 program. Once the burn is completed, construction of the northern half of the realignment can commence.

Work is also underway planning and preparing for the NRM funded project that involves reconstruction of the steps and track stabilisation near Lake William Road in West Cape Howe National Park. I have been most impressed again with the capability of volunteers and Foundation staff to lead and coordinate this complex project.

Although there is more of the fire season to come as I write this, on a 42 degree day, I'm pleased to report that the Track has so far remained relatively unscathed. There have been several temporary closures due to fires, but to date no damage to facilities and only minor overlap of burnt areas on to the Track. Luck plays a part here, but due credit also goes to the fire crews who have endured a very busy, harsh season, and have managed to contain numerous fires to a relatively small size.

It was fantastic to see the Bibbulmun Track rank so highly in the Trails WA people's choice awards, alongside WA's other two long trails. This was a great affirmation of how much people value and appreciate the track, and a credit to all those involved in managing and maintaining it, particularly the Foundation and its volunteers. Congratulations and keep up the good work!

Stephen King
Trails Coordinator

WALKER SAFETY

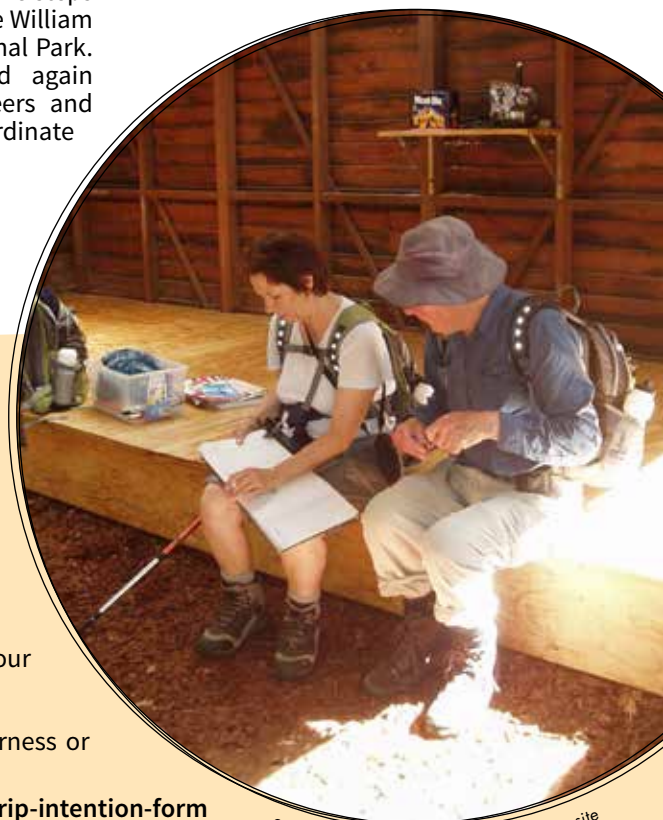
Just a reminder to always sign the green log books at the campsites and at the visitor centres in the towns.

In the event of an emergency, such as a bushfire, the log books can assist us to locate you. If you're worried about privacy, then use a track name that is known to your friends or family.

We encourage all walkers, whether travelling alone or in a group, to give your itinerary to a responsible adult and check in with them at regular intervals.

Completing a trip intention form is good practice for any trip in the wilderness or outdoors. You can find a template at:

<https://www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au/trip-planner/health-hygiene-safety/trip-intention-form>



Signing the log book at Beedelup Campsite

Eyes on the GROUND



Andrew Chiswell

It's been a long, hot summer, with a corresponding decrease in maintenance visits along the Track.

Maintenance Volunteers should be out there in force over the next few months, working on any issues that have occurred during the summer storms. Please remember that you too can help if you come across an issue along the Track, logging onto our website to report a problem. Go to bibbulmuntrack.org.au/trip-planner/track-sections/

Click on the relevant section and then on Report a Problem on the sub-menu.

You can also take a photo of the issue and record the GPS details of the location – this will help us resolve it without delay. Call the office volunteers to guide you through the process if you haven't done this before.

The end of 2023 was a busy time, with a Field Day at Nullaki Campsite and Thank You Days in each District. Both Helen and I love this time of year, as we can meet many volunteers and thank them for their fine work throughout the year.

The Field Day at Nullaki on 24 November saw a strong attendance of south coast volunteers descend on the campsite,

working through a long list of items until early afternoon. Those who have visited the campsite since may have noticed the brand-new timbers on the exterior table, a vast improvement to the old timbers.

Looking forward to 2024, the Support Volunteers will be busy completing projects along the Track, including works in the Lake William, Boat Harbour and Rame Head regions along the south coast, a major and minor realignment in the Perth Hills District, installation of a second water tank at Murray Campsite, and major upgrades to Harris Dam Shelter later in the year.

There are also Field Days planned for all Districts starting with Albany and Frankland in mid-March, followed closely by Perth Hills in mid-April.



The Eyes on the Ground maintenance program is generously supported by our premier partner, Newmont Boddington Gold.



Ross marking start of repair section



Rosie painting posts



The best table on the Bibbulmun!

Lake William Steps Replacement Project

February saw a major milestone met for one of our major projects in 2024, with the completion of bagging operations in Albany, in preparation for getting these loads air-lifted into West Cape Howe National Park. In addition, the team visited the Lake William area to mark the helicopter stockpile and staging locations, and to install survey markers to locate the areas volunteers will be working on during the May and June campaigns.

The team also inspected the new alignment constructed in May 2023 across the Nullaki Peninsula, confirming it was accessible to walkers, now the sandbar across the Wilson Inlet had reformed. To their credit, Bryan and Steven attacked the remaining waterbars with vigour, finally finishing the section around 2.00pm.

Andrew Chiswell Maintenance Manager

The replacement of steps near Lake Williams is supported by funding from the Western Australian Government's State NRM Program.



natural resource
management program



Volunteers and District attending the Nullaki Field Day



Charlie enjoyed strapping the sleepers

Volunteers working on the Helicopter loads



Getting into Gear

Sleeping Bags

David Mitchell once said; “*Any attempt I make to escape the debt-driven rat race must be punished immediately, and in the most brutal fashion*”.

I felt like David in 2016, when I bravely ambled onto the Cape to Cape for my first ever multi-day hike.

I'd been alarmed at the cost of well-reviewed sleeping bags, and opted to borrow my dad's Kmart-branded one instead.

It was early May. How bad could it be?

The thing was light as a feather, and kept me comfortable as I watched the sun go down from my first night's campsite.

I quickly fell asleep, only to wake a couple of hours later to the sound of my chattering teeth.

I got almost no more sleep that night, or the two after it, before bailing out at Prevelly, exhausted.

After returning to Perth in a fit of shame, I marched into Paddy Pallin and demanded they sell me their best sleeping bag.

“But sir, it's \$900!” a salesman probably protested.

I didn't care, and I walked out with a 935-gram, American-made Western Mountaineering AlpinLite, stuffed full of heavenly-warm goose feathers.

Goose down is wonderful stuff – incredibly light, exceptionally warm, and more compressible than any other feather.

Seven years and thousands of kilometres later, the bag is one of the few bits of my kit I haven't upgraded.

If you're in the market for a sleeping bag, the choice may seem bewildering – but it really boils down to one principle.

You can have something warm and light, you can have something light and cheap, or you can have something cheap and warm, but you can't have something that is warm, light, and cheap.

The easiest way to measure a bag's quality is with its fill power, also known as loft rating, represented by a number that's usually between 300 and 950.

The higher the rating, the more compressible – and thus the higher quality – the bag is.

A bag with 900-rated goose down will achieve the same level of warmth as a much heavier bag of 650-rated duck down.

All manufacturers specify a temperature range for their bags, but these are subjective and not consistent between brands.

When reading them, always compare the “comfort” temperature ratings, rather than the “survival” or “lower limit” ratings – you want to sleep, not just survive!

Don't rely on liners to keep you warm – they can add a couple of degrees at most, despite what manufacturers claim.

Most bags are mummy style, meaning they taper around your body and include a hood.

A lot of people find this claustrophobic and opt for a quilt, but unless you're a very warm sleeper I'd give mummy bags a go.

They are much warmer than quilts, and protect you from cold draughts.

Most major brands these days conform to the Responsible Down Standard,



A chilly morning at Yourdamung Campsite.



Compare the pair: My painfully-expensive sleeping bag, and a \$14 Kmart one.

which forbids live-plucking and force-feeding birds.

If you're vegan you can opt for a synthetic bag, although these are heavier and less compressible.

The one advantage of synthetic bags is that they don't lose their insulating properties when they get wet.

Down bags must be kept dry, as water stops the feathers from lifting and thus trapping heat.

Finally, remember that your sleeping bag is only one half of your insulation system.

A well-insulated sleeping mat is just as important at protecting you from the cold ground – but we'll talk about that another time.

Happy trails,

Ben Dickinson

My toasty warm tent on Mount Baden-Powell, California



BTF Recognised at DBCA Volunteer Awards Ceremony

The Foundation was well represented among the latest recipients of the DBCA annual Volunteer of the Year Awards, held in early December.

Along with volunteers for a wide variety of Departmental projects – such as landcare and rehabilitation, wildlife rescue and care, campground hosts and herbarium technicians – the work of our volunteers in supporting the Track and its walkers was prominently recognised.

We congratulate Ross Simpson (Sectional and Support Maintenance Volunteer), who was recognised as the overall DBCA Volunteer of the Year.

Fellow leading Support Maintenance Volunteer Mark Davidson was awarded one of twenty-one Outstanding Service Awards.

Both Ross and Mark are truly deserving of this recognition, having contributed very significantly to the Track maintenance work for many years.

To complete the ceremony, the Foundation was one of two organisations awarded Outstanding Service by a Community Group, having been nominated by Stephen King, from DBCA's Recreation and Trails Unit. The other organisation was the Friends of the Cape to Cape Track, indicating the current strength of volunteer contribution within the trails industry in WA.

We are very proud of all that our volunteers achieve in supporting the Track and its walkers!

Ed: You can read more about these awards presentations, including citations for Ross and Mark, at www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au/news/latest/bibbulmun-track-volunteers-recognised-by-dbca.



Staff and volunteers accept the organisation's award from Darren West MLC. Top right: Ross Simpson. Right: Mark Davidson



Volunteer Profile - Ross Simpson

Since 2010, Ross Simpson has dedicated himself to the maintenance of the Bibbulmun Track. As well as looking after a section between Mount Wells and Chadoora in the Perth Hills district, Ross is a Support Volunteer and his contributions will leave a lasting impact.

As a retired Senior Engineer, he brings valuable expertise to the work of the Support Volunteer team in particular.

Through meticulous planning and technical know-how, he has contributed to the design and execution of numerous track stabilization campaigns along the south coast.

What distinguishes Ross is not only his technical proficiency but also his

ability to collaborate effectively with Parks and Wildlife Service personnel and fellow volunteers. Last year, he willingly shared the skills and knowledge gained through these projects with the Binalup Rangers and was instrumental in establishing a good partnership with them.

Thanks Ross – you are a very worthy winner of the 2023 DBCA Volunteer of the Year Award and the BTF is incredibly lucky to have you as a volunteer!



Ross Simpson

Yes, they did it!

Note: To see full comments from each individual - visit the End-to-Enders Gallery on our website under News.

The Noongar season of Bunurru was definitely true to its nature; many days of over 40 degrees in the northern part of the Track made any desire to go hiking quickly evaporate.

Finally, the wait is over, as with the Noongar season of Djeran cooler weather will come. It is time to dust off your hiking shoes, pack your backpack and prepare to get out on the Track!

See you all on the Track, albeit for a day walk, an overnighter or an end-to-end.

General

An amazing adventure. I was physically challenged on a daily basis, but equally dazzled by the beauty of the landscape.

Melanie, Mudgee NSW

So great to have such an excellent track in our home state. This allowed us the adventure of a sectional end-to-end. We enjoyed 17 different "Bibb holidays" to complete the whole track.

Chris, Craigie WA

How lucky you are as Ozzies to have a facility like this on your doorsteps, and essentially free of charge. Remote, challenging, spectacular, well signed and maintained. I'm an envious Brit.

Martin, Loggerheads, Staffs UK

I was absolutely amazed by the beauty of nature, the diversity of landscapes, wildlife and wonderful people I met. I loved the simplicity and to live in a peaceful bubble for a while being surrounded by nature.

Maria, Munich Germany

Far more challenging than I thought it would be but all the more satisfying because of that - I learnt so much from all the wonderful people I met along the way and have so many fabulous memories, good, bad, awesome, terrible. Altogether, it made me a better person.

Eileen, Roleystone WA

Food Supplies

We only supplied in towns, which was easy and hassle free. Can only recommend!

Jessica, Koenigsee Germany

FREE Trip PLANNING ADVICE

Going on an extended walk or end-to-end?

Our free trip planning advice service is just one of the many benefits of being a member.

Experienced walkers will help you to plan your journey. If you can't make it into the office, then this service is also available via email. This is particularly popular with our interstate and international visitors.

Our dehydrated food had taken months for our walking buddies to prepare and pack, and was fantastic; healthy, tasty, and carb loaded. But when we got to town..... jeez, I think I've eaten a lifetime worth of pastry in the last two months. Eating like a teenager again has been joyous.

Martin, Loggerheads, Staffs UK

I dehydrated all my main meals and sent resupply packages down the track.

Can highly recommend the Naughty Noodle Bar in Northcliffe.

Jenni, Millendon WA

Early on, I did Steve's Food in a Fuel Stove workshop and a couple of those meals became my staple evening meals. Also, it's surprising how a small bag of crisps at the end of the day can lift my mood.

Barbara, Joondanna WA

We bought a dehydrator and it was fantastic. We had a huge range of dinners that tasted amazing. Maryann (my wife) must take all the credit. We posted food, via Aust Post, to a number of town visitor centers. All arrived ok and had no problems picking them up.

Steve, Isle of Capri QLD

Favourite Section

Really loved the wild coastline with dunes in full bloom from Peaceful Bay to Albany.

Valerie, Hovea WA

Because I love the coast, the section from Walpole through to Albany was probably my favourite. All sections had plenty to offer; I rated the huts as I went, and the highest scores were for Grimwade and Tom Road.

John, Bayswater WA

The south coastal sections edge it. The oceans, the whales, the beach walks and the scenery. I also thought Pingerup was marvelous, just so "Australian" in landscape.

Martin, Loggerheads, Staffs UK

It's hard to beat the section from DRV through to Pemberton. I've done it in fine weather and in steady rain, and it was equally stunning on both occasions.

Barbara, Joondanna WA

Highlights

I loved the open jarrah woodlands, the tall karri trees, the campfires, the coastal views, walking the southern beaches, the remoteness of the Pingerup Plains, the foggy mornings at Waalegh and Blackwood, meeting an awesome variety of other hikers, and walking every step with my wife and best friend Vicki.

Chris, Craigie WA

Meeting other hikers and conversations in the hut and around the campfire. Views along the coastal cliffs. Walking every step with my husband, my best friend.

Vicky, Craigie WA

Contrasts in environment. Walking Pingerup plains for four days in knee deep water. Storms at night. Camaraderie of group. Friends who joined and supported.

Erica, Como WA

Catching a glimpse of the shelter's green roof at the end of a long day.

Days and nights hiking solo and feeling completely at ease.

Barbara, Joondanna WA

Meeting fellow hikers and making so many friends on the trail. The two school groups from Christ Church Grammar school who I spent seven nights camping with. And the school group from Albany who helped me to cross the Torbay Inlet

Steve, Isle of Capri QLD

Personal Reactions

It was a great adventure, and one we could embark on during those tough covid years when we couldn't leave WA. It was good to engage in a new way in a life-long passion for being in nature, and to hone our hiking equipment and skills from one outing to the next, as we learnt from other hikers and our own experiences.

Chris, Craigie WA

This was my longest hike and I didn't anticipate the depth of feeling I would encounter when I finally emerged onto the coast after so many weeks in the forest. I cried.

Heather, Highton Vic

Our CONGRATULATIONS to the following 76 walkers
on completing an end-to-end, 38 from WA, 27 from interstate
and 11 from other countries.

68 people completed a continuous end-to-end and 8 a sectional.



Name	Track Name	Age	Started	Ended	DOT	Direction	From
Don Harford	<i>Kiwi Don</i>	76	4/09/2023	27/10/2023	50	N-S	Hamilton Hill, New Zealand
Florian Traber		29	10/09/2023	29/10/2023	43	N-S	Walddorflaslach, Germany
Mareike Meyer		31	10/09/2023	29/10/2023	43	N-S	Walddorflaslach, Germany
Filomena Mattner			1/09/2023	29/10/2023	52	N-S	Glenelg, SA
John Cullen		66	30/08/2023	27/10/2023	57	N-S	Queens Park, WA
Cheryl Cullen			30/08/2023	27/10/2023	57	N-S	Queens Park, WA
Lexy Adamson		55	7/08/2023	29/09/2023	51	N-S	Albany, WA
Tahl Collinson			26/09/2022	22/10/2023	34	N-S	Shelley, WA
Emily Lane		31	20/08/2023	18/10/2023	48	N-S	Moore Creek, NSW
Stephanie Baines		29	10/06/2023	23/07/2023	41	S-N	Floraville, NSW
Daniel Chester	<i>Willy Wonka</i>	33	14/10/2023	29/11/2023	52	S-N	Oakford, WA
Melanie Trethowan	<i>Mudgee Mel</i>	58	8/09/2023	28/10/2023	47	N-S	Mudgee, NSW
Chris Zadow		54	18/04/2020	2/11/2023	54	N-S	Craigie, WA
Vicki Zadow		51	18/04/2020	2/11/2023	54	N-S	Craigie, WA
Jessica Seemann	<i>Brownie</i>	35	12/08/2023	6/10/2023	51	N-S	Koenigsee, Germany
Kai Leitloff	<i>Popper</i>	38	12/08/2023	6/10/2023	51	N-S	Koenigsee, Germany
Erica Anderton	<i>Pocket Rocket</i>	67	14/07/2023	13/09/2023	54	N-S	Como, WA
Alison Stanning		62	5/09/2023	6/11/2023	59	N-S	Scarborough, WA
Rod Taylor		61	5/09/2023	6/11/2023	59	N-S	Scarborough, WA
Heather Dempsey		56	8/09/2023	28/10/2023	47	N-S	Highton, VIC
Noel English		64	2/09/2023	4/11/2023	53	N-S	Hovea, WA
Valerie English		63	2/09/2023	4/11/2023	53	N-S	Hovea, WA
Steff Van Amerongen		44	30/09/2023	6/11/2023	36	N-S	Caversham, WA
Ryan Horner		43	20/11/2022	7/11/2023	56	N-S	Baldivis, WA
Vanessa Moss		51	19/04/2019	29/10/2023	54	Sectional	Gooseberry Hill, WA
Michelle Nelson		54	7/08/2023	29/09/2023	51	N-S	Warnbro, WA
John O'Rourke	<i>Jumping Jack on the Track</i>	60	29/09/2023	11/11/2023	43	N-S	Bayswater, WA
Mia Fracaro	<i>Miander</i>	20	20/08/2023	9/10/2023	47	N-S	Floreat, WA
Regina Harvey		67	2/09/2023	2/11/2023	54	N-S	Cedar Grove, QLD
Kaye Gilhooly		62	4/09/2023	25/10/2023	47	N-S	New Town, TAS
Paul Gilhooly		65	4/09/2023	25/10/2023	47	N-S	New Town, TAS
Lydia Guja	<i>Mark + Lydia</i>	37	3/09/2023	31/10/2023	49	N-S	Palmerston, ACT
Mark Wallace	<i>Mark + Lydia</i>	41	3/09/2023	31/10/2023	49	N-S	Palmerston, ACT
Lindsay Rollo	<i>LindsayR</i>	70	26/08/2022	30/10/2023	47	N-S	Stirling, WA
Susan Sorrell		60	18/09/2023	14/11/2023	52	N-S	Selby, VIC
Martin Shaffery	<i>Martin</i>	61	4/09/2023	2/11/2023	54	N-S	Loggerheads, UK
Carol Hall		74	4/09/2023	2/11/2023	54	N-S	Machans Beach, QLD
Howard Burgess		57	4/09/2023	2/11/2023	54	N-S	Machans Beach, QLD
Ting Wu		36	10/09/2023	24/10/2023	43	N-S	Denmark, WA
Marguerite Richards	<i>Marguerite</i>	65	11/05/2013	26/11/2023	57	Sectional	Bedford, WA
Julie Blackburn	<i>Gumnut</i>	63	4/09/2023	4/11/2023	55	N-S	South Fremantle, WA
Jenni Bowman	<i>Jeza and Dog</i>	66	10/08/2023	12/10/2023	48	N-S	Millendon, WA
Joe Gaspar	<i>POT2023</i>	65	7/05/2023	3/07/2023	52	N-S	Bunbury, WA
Paul Snow	<i>Snowy</i>	52	27/09/2023	14/11/2023	48	N-S	Pinjarra, WA
David Sutherland		42	3/09/2023	26/10/2023	48	N-S	Kardinya, WA
Anthony Page	<i>Cheeseman</i>	52	16/09/2023	11/11/2023	54	N-S	Ipswich, UK

Yes, they did it! (cont'd)

Name	Track Name	Age	Started	Ended	DOT	Direction	From
Julie Buswell	<i>J&T</i>	67	1/07/2017	19/10/2023	52	Sectional	Hammond Park, WA
Maria Koops	<i>Pocahontas</i>	42	16/09/2023	11/11/2023	52	N-S	Munich, Germany
Rebecca Rae	<i>Rebecca</i>	67	1/09/2023	29/10/2023	53	N-S	Taren Point, NSW
Nicole Waser		54	26/09/2023	19/11/2023	51	N-S	Cronulla, NSW
Stephen Waser		60	26/09/2023	19/11/2023	51	N-S	Cronulla, NSW
Barbara Elliott		66	11/05/2013	23/04/2022	53	Sectional	Joondanna, WA
Zara White		17	02/10/2023	24/11/2023	53	N-S	Peppermint Grove, WA
Shane Doyle	<i>Sherpa Shane</i>	67	30/08/2023	27/10/2023	52	N-S	Manunda, QLD
Ellie Garnett	<i>Ellie G</i>	34	19/07/2023	20/08/2023	32	N-S	Marrickville, NSW
Carolyn Burmester		59	9/09/2022	27/10/2023	51	Sectional	Scarborough, WA
Emma Stubbs		44	17/09/2023	9/11/2023	51	N-S	Canterbury, NZ
Owen Stubbs		13	17/09/2023	9/11/2023	51	N-S	Canterbury, NZ
Wendy Weeding	<i>Weeds</i>	52	30/10/2023	25/11/2023	48	N-S	Parkhurst, QLD
Kelvin Weeding	<i>Weeds</i>	52	30/10/2023	25/11/2023	48	N-S	Parkhurst, QLD
Joe Keh		61	14/07/2023	13/09/2023	54	N-S	Booragoon, WA
Rebecca Rae	<i>Rebecca</i>	67	1/09/2023	29/10/2023	53	N-S	Taren Point, NSW
Bianca Hall	<i>Dotti</i>	22	20/10/2023	20/11/2023	30	N-S	Frenchs Forest, NSW
Caroline Wren	<i>Tim and Caz</i>	57	30/09/2023	22/11/2023	50	N-S	Apollo Bay, VIC
Timothy Cobb	<i>Tim and Caz</i>	57	30/09/2023	22/11/2023	50	N-S	Apollo Bay, VIC
Sara Nelson		63	28/09/2023	25/11/2023	44	N-S	Lopez Island, USA
Michael Strom	<i>Spiker</i>	69	28/09/2023	25/11/2023	44	N-S	Lopez Island, USA
Bruce Meakins		64	21/07/2022	28/06/2023	56	Sectional	Scarborough, WA
Eileen Severin		70	22/02/2021	22/09/2022	53	Sectional	Roleystone, WA
Vince Baeli	<i>Ferris Beuler</i>	59	2/07/2023	4/09/2023	56	N-S	Maida Vale, WA
Mackenzie Taylor		22	30/07/2023	16/09/2023	47	N-S	Spearwood, WA
Steve McBean		70	12/10/2022	1/12/2023	47	Sectional	Isle of Capri, QLD
Andrew Walton		62	15/09/2023	11/11/2023	53	N-S	Fremantle, WA
Barbara Jolley		65	3/09/2023	31/10/2023	52	N-S	Silverdale, NSW
Jess Gaspar		37	7/05/2023	3/07/2023	51	N-S	Wandi, WA
Nathan Pendlebury		29	10/06/2023	23/07/2023	41	S-N	Charlestown, NSW
Benjamin Lechat		24	6/09/2023	25/10/2023	39	N-S	East Fremantle, WA
Bruno Benaise		58	5/09/2023	19/10/2023	43	S-N	Roleystone, WA
Ivaylo Todorov		51	7/08/2023	19/10/2023	49	N-S	High Wycombe, WA
Tracy O'Brien		57	2/09/2023	27/10/2023	54	N-S	Warrenup, WA



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I can't say I loved every moment of it – as there were times when it required real resilience – but for the most part – I just felt grateful to be there. I loved being in the Bibbulmun Bubble where all you really talk about is track life – I miss that. There were times when I arrived at a hut and just thought, 'how lucky am I to be here!' Overall, I struggle to find words to describe the experience what I can say is, if you get a chance, do it!

John, Bayswater WA

The calmness that partial isolation, and the "eat sleep walk, repeat" lifestyle brings, is under-appreciated by many, and enjoyed by few.

Martin, Loggerheads, Staffs UK

Wildlife

I loved listening to the birds and watching them hop around the huts.

Vicky, Craigie WA

We saw at least 50 snakes (mainly on the southern half), many blue wrens, emus, wallabies, kangaroos (of course), whales and eagles. Not to mention the flies and mosquitoes!

Alison, Scarborough WA

Fantastic things I've not seen before like Jewel beetles and bush cockroaches.

Steff, Caversham WA

Being from Northern Europe I've never been aware of an ant nest making a noise before, listening and watching was compelling. The 'roos, reptiles, emus and ocean life were spectacular. Falling asleep at dusk and waking up at dawn to kookaburras laughing makes me chuckle just remembering it.

Martin, Loggerheads, Staffs UK

Comparison with other walks

This is unique. I have walked the Camino Santiago, and many shorter walks in New Zealand but this walk is incomparable.

Don, Hillcrest New Zealand

Compared to the PCT an easy walk with beautiful shelters. Makes it a more relaxed hike because you don't have to think about the water supply, where to camp or where to best dig your cat hole!

Jessica, Koenigsee Germany

These were definitely the best set up camps I've come across in Australia so far. Having the option to sleep in the shelter and save time on packing up a damp tent in the morning was a bonus.

Heather, Highton Vic

I have walked many tracks in the eastern states, NZ, Nepal France, Italy, Switzerland with paid guides but this track and the ongoing proactive measures to keep improving it, leaves many of the other

for dead. The scenery here can become a little monotonous in the northern section with all of the burnt-out forest and various grades of recovery but overall, the southern section of the walk makes up for this.

Lindsay, Stirling WA

Best Equipment

Hiking poles, Aarn backpack and balance pockets

Lexi, Albany WA

Gore-Tex free trail runners! Especially for the wet sections. They dried fast with no worries of changing shoes all the time.

Jessica, Koenigsee Germany

My coffee grinder. Ah, the aroma of fresh coffee...

Heather, Highton Vic

My puffa jacket. A must have in camp on cold nights - on the first nights were cold.

Martin, Loggerheads, Staffs UK

My walking poles. Takes a load off your knees and they are great when wading through streams. Canvas knee high gaiters - a must in snake country and when the trail is narrow and the vegetation scrapes against your shins. My Lightweight HMG back pack (900g).

Steve, Isle of Capri QLD

Worst Equipment

Rain pants. Got soaked anyway because they didn't work.

Jessica, Koenigsee Germany

A noisy sleeping mat. My thanks to Paddy Pallin in Perth for express shipping a quieter one so I could stop driving my hiking partner mad.

Heather, Highton Vic

A poncho was totally useless in high winds on the beach – not surprising (it was great otherwise).

Vanessa, Gooseberry Hill WA

Sleeping mat sprung a leak and had to spend several "hard" nights before I could replace it.

Barbara, Silverdale NSW

Advice for others

Train on hills carrying pack before attempting E-2-E.

Don, Hillcrest New Zealand

Do not listen to other people's advice all the time. Go out there and see it yourself and answer all your questions yourself. Too much information can also destroy a hike because you are not doing it your way!

Jessica, Koenigsee Germany

Hike like you feel the most comfortable and enjoy every kilometer. There is no reason to rush. Take a dip in the ocean, enjoy the sunrise/sunset...

Kai, Amstadt Germany

Stick to your pace and don't be rushed by others. Try not to be too judgmental of others. All of us have a story to tell so take the time to ask and to listen to what others have to say.

Lindsay, Stirling WA

Train with weighted pack as much as you can before, it will make the first week so much easier and you likely won't get injured. Go as light as you possibly can! Bring a tent for a more peaceful sleep. Trail runners (Altra Lone Peaks) work fine.

Michael, Lopez Island USA

Visit the Foundation offices and talk to the people there - they are so helpful and have so much knowledge about the Track, plus they are great to talk to - use the paper maps and booklets, not just apps

Eileen, Roleystone WA

FUN FACT

In 2023, there were **228 registered end-to-enders**, with **122 from WA**, **73 from interstate** and **33 from other countries**.

Among them, **204 people completed a continuous end-to-end**, and **28 completed in sections**.



Photo by Steve Sertis

Accommodation, Tours and Services

Please support the Walker Friendly Businesses that support the Track.



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Busy Blue Bus Tours & Charters	ALBANY		0418 414 425	busybluebus.com.au
Balingup Oakfield Country House B&B	BALINGUP		0428 878 560	balinguptourism.com.au/accommodation/oakfield-house
Southampton Homestead	BALINGUP		0412 229 564	southamptonhomestead.com
Time Travel Tours & Transport	BALINGUP/DONNELLY RIVER		0417 099 268	facebook.com/TimeTravelToursandTransport
Black Diamond Lodge	COLLIE		(08) 9734 4439	https://blackdiamondlodge.com.au
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Dwellingup Adventures	DWELLINGUP		(08) 9538 1127	dwellingupadventures.com.au
Dwellingup Transfers	DWELLINGUP		0473 924 681	facebook.com/dwellingup
Jarrah Forest Lodge	DWELLINGUP		0491 276 028	forestdiscoverycentre.com.au
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ALBANY	Albany Visitor Centre	(08) 6820 3700	theamazingsouthcoast.com
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DENMARK	Denmark Visitor Centre	(08) 9848 2648	denmark.com.au
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KALAMUNDA	Perth Hills Visitor Centre	(08) 9257 9998	experienceperthhills.com.au
MANJIMUP	Manjimup Visitor Centre	(08) 9771 1831	manjimupwa.com
NORTHCLIFFE	Northcliffe Visitor Centre	(08) 9776 7203	visitnorthcliffewa.com.au
PEMBERTON	Pemberton Visitor Centre	(08) 9776 1133	pembertonvisitor.com.au
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\$35.00

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SCAN the QR CODE to buy online.
BTF Member Rates apply.

Vollie Corner



Helen Grimm

Thank you to all of our 435 volunteers!

Our dedicated volunteers do a huge amount of work to help us support DBCA with the management, maintenance and marketing of the Track. Big thanks to all of you for being part of the team!

Volunteers keep the Track clear and safe, the office running smoothly, our events well organised and led, the records from campsite logbooks transferred to a database, the digital Track-user counters checked regularly, brochures distributed, support our online marketing, and ensure we are soundly governed.

Each November, we hold volunteer 'thank you' days which include special presentations of Long Service Awards and Annual Rewards. Last year, events were held in Perth, Capel, Albany and Peaceful Bay.

Long Service Awards

These recognise the commitment and loyalty of our long serving volunteers.



Volunteers recognised in Perth for their contribution during the year.

25 YEARS

Bruce Manning
Gwen Plunkett
Chris Plunkett
Steve Sertis
Mike Wood

20 YEARS

Linda Daniels
John Murphy
Peter Sweetman

15 YEARS

Paul Harris
Diane Tinker
Leigh Wallace

10 YEARS

John Beard
Marilyn Beard
Claire Brittain
Liz Browning
Steve Clark
Cameron Hobson
Bill Hollingworth
Teresa Hughes
John McKay
Terry Ryan
Sandra Willis-Jones

5 YEARS

Barry Bastow
Daphne Bastow
Rob Bortot
Gwen Buch
Tyler Burrows
Ken Butson
Kyle Chrystie
Sue Della
Dave Dixon
Sharon Edward
Jennifer Endersbee

John Fenn
Susan Freeman
David Gratwick
Helen Grimm
Trisha Howe
Tim Larkin
Christian Mau
Meredith Mulcahy
Nicola Ridsdill-Smith
Stephen Smythe
Paul Stafford
Don Stallard



Volunteers gathered at our 'thank you' in Perth



Annual Volunteer Rewards

Our total contribution in the 2022-23 financial year was 32,402 hours. These rewards thank certain volunteers for their considerable contribution in this period.

500+ HOURS

Jim Baker
Isabel Busch
Mark Davidson
Charmaine Harris
Ce Kealley
Sue Lee
Graham Murdoch
Gordon Roberts
Ross Simpson
Charles Soord
James Young

Andrew Chiswell
Alan Compton
Garry Connell
Mike Cosson
Terry Coumbe
Brian Dearle
John Fenn
Greg Foster
Jennifer Fraser
Susan Freeman
Lynda Frewer
Helen Grimm
Clair Halliday
Jack Halliday

300+ HOURS

Jim Baker
Isabel Busch
Mark Davidson
Charmaine Harris
Ce Kealley
Sue Lee
Graham Murdoch
Gordon Roberts
Ross Simpson
Charles Soord
James Young

Paul Harris
Kerry Hill
Denise Hilsz
John Hosking
Trisha Howe
Jan Howie
Mona Humphreys
Beth Hutchison
Simone Jackson
Tony Jennings
Mar Knox
Phil Lehmann
Margot Lowe
Nina Martin
Tim McGrath
Corinne Mercer
David Miller
Russel Montgomery
Selene Moonbeams
Jeff Ovens

100+ HOURS

Jenny Arnold
Greg Arnold
Derek Bracken
Bianca Brucciani
Jack Busch
Sandra Ceriani
Gary Ceriani



Frankland district volunteers enjoying morning tea in Peaceful Bay.

Albany district volunteers celebrated the work of the year.

Kerry Ovens
Claudia Payne
Hugh Payne
Terry Ryan
David Scott
Steve Sertis
Carol Simmons
Stephen Smythe
Michael Snart
Guy Spouge
Ronald Sweeney
Julia Taylor
Mark Tomkinson
Gary Tomkinson
Patrick Tremlett
Benjamin Veale
Sue Verran
Judy Wade
Alex Williams



Prize-winning Trek in Nepal

In 2020 the Foundation held a fund-raising raffle with the first prize being a trip to the Annapurna range of mountains in Nepal. The prize was donated by travel partners the Peregrine Travel Centre WA, now based in the Carine Quarter, and Intrepid Travels based in Melbourne. Unfortunately, COVID caused all overseas travel to be halted. After a few false starts the winners managed to finally start their trekking adventure.

Harry Jockel and his partner Teagan sent us an update and we are delighted to hear that they had a fantastic time. In Harry's words "A bit belated, but last year in October my partner Teagan and I were given the opportunity to travel to Nepal and take a crack at the Annapurna Circuit.

"It was an amazing, challenging experience that I can't recommend enough. Over 11 days we trekked a total of 155km with 10,550 m elevation and reached a max altitude of 5416 m at Thorong La Pass. The trek takes you from rice fields and lush forests to the high-altitude Himalayas. We had some tough weather at the start, copping the end of the monsoon season, but it cleared up and every day as we ascended the views got better and better.

"The mountains are breathtaking, and it feels completely surreal going from flat Western Australia to sitting at a teahouse, sipping on ginger tea while looking over at the Annapurna range. We visited some fascinating towns and learned a lot about Nepalese culture.

The trek was run by Intrepid; the guides were fantastic, everything was really well organised and we had a great group of people, which made the trek all the better. We received lots of good, relevant advice and tips from Mike Wood of Peregrine Travel regarding the gear to take and how to deal with the altitude.

(Ed: Mike is a very experienced Himalayan trekking guide and founding Chair of the Foundation, a current Board member and a volunteer guide.)

If anyone is considering the trek, I would highly recommend it. I can't wait to get back to Nepal. Teagan and I went on to trek to Everest Base Camp and Teagan did the full Three Passes circuit."

Harry Jockel

Our thanks to Intrepid and Peregrine Travel for donating this amazing prize.

Another trip is up for grabs in our **2024 Adventure Raffle!**

(See page 2 for details)

Crossing the bridge to Phedi, the final stop before going through Thorung La Pass.



Our first clear day with beautiful views of the Annapurna Range.



We were fortunate to have great weather at the top of the Pass



TRACK TOWN - NORTHCLIFFE

The quiet little town of Northcliffe is one of the hidden gems of the Southern Forests and Valleys region, located 298km from Perth by road, or 653km from Kalamunda and 351km from Albany on the Bibbulmun Track.

Northcliffe is a great base for a three-day, two-night walk from Pemberton. Alternatively, those looking for a longer wilderness experience can enjoy a week of hiking south through the Pingerup Plains from Northcliffe to Walpole.

The towering forests of the region can be explored on foot along the Bibbulmun Track, by mountain bike on the Munda Biddi Trail or in the Northcliffe Forest Park, a 240ha nature reserve on the doorstep of the town. In addition, a 2.5km trail from the historic Boorara Tree leads to Lane Poole Falls where the Canterbury River cascades over granite during the wet season and the new Warren Blackwood Stock Route offers an opportunity for visitors to explore Shannon National Park on horseback.

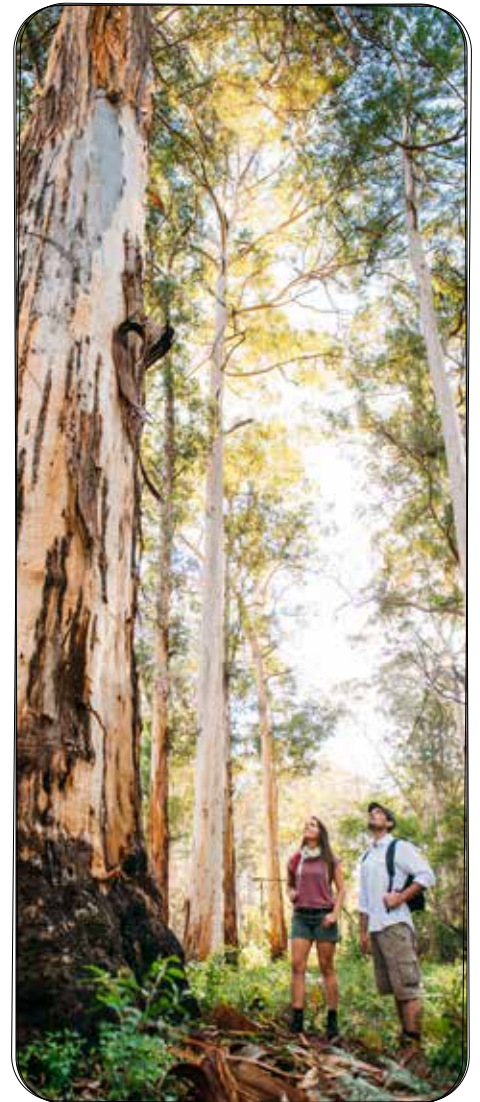
Over time Northcliffe has transitioned from a booming timber town to a vibrant, nature based and cultural tourism destination. Understory Art in Nature, open daily, is a unique 1.2 km ephemeral sculpture walk trail established in 2006. Understory continually evolves and provides a connection with the spirit of place,

providing visitors with an immersive experience in Northcliffe's majestic forests. The Painted Tree Gallery is open daily at the entry to Understory showcasing a series of exhibitions by talented local artists.

The nearby D'Entrecasteaux National Park spans 130km of spectacular coastline, much of which is accessible only by 4WD. Several access points and viewing platforms can be found at Windy Harbour, Cathedral Beach, Pt D'Entrecasteaux, Tookalup and Salmon Beach. All these locations are perfect places to relax with a fishing rod and a bottle of local wine while watching the sunset over the Southern Ocean.

Just 15km south of Northcliffe, Mt Chudalup is an ancient block of granite 187 metres high which provides fantastic 360° views over the surrounding national park to the ocean. This monadnock is home to a range of flora including some that are found nowhere else.

The Northcliffe Visitor Centre is open daily and stocks Bibbulmun Track walker supplies, maps, reference and local history books and gifts. The Visitor Centre also offers a second-hand book swap station, and vehicles can be left in our carpark for the duration of your walk. Drop in to sign the Bibbulmun Track logbook, book a TransWA ticket, pick up your supply parcel or ask our local staff anything you need to know about the region.



Walking through the Northcliffe Forest Park.
Photo: Tourism Western Australia



'Understory' Art and Nature Trail is full of surprises. Photo: Frances Andrijich

Northcliffe Visitor Centre

Muirillup Road

Open 9am to 4pm daily.

Phone: (08) 9776 7203

visitnorthcliffewa.com.au

facebook.com/Northcliffevisitorcentre

Please support our
Walker Friendly Businesses
in the area.

Karri Country Good Food
(08) 9776 6707

Naughty Noodle Bar
0439 661 371

Northcliffe Holiday Park
0436 965 529



Naturalist on the Bibbulmun

Thankfully, the cool weather has returned, bringing with it the first rains, and walkers are emerging on the Bibbulmun Track—and not just the two-legged variety.

The first heavy rains of Djeran awaken millipedes that have long been buried, sheltering deep in the soil from the drying heat of summer. When enough rain penetrates the soil to awaken them, millipedes crawl to the surface and can be found marching across granite outcrops along the Darling Escarpment, especially during or after rain showers.

The name millipede comes from the Latin *mille* (thousand) and *pes* (foot). Although most species of millipede do not in fact have one thousand feet, they are nonetheless well endowed in the foot department. Perhaps the most common species, found along the Darling Escarpment from Kalamunda through to Warren River, is the marri millipede, which as its name suggests feeds exclusively on the leaf litter of marri and so is confined to areas of the escarpment where this tree is common. The marri millipede has 29 pairs of legs. Ironically, despite having so many legs, millipedes do not walk far. Indeed, their dispersal abilities are so poor that populations living on one granite outcrop will rarely, if ever, interact with populations living on another granite outcrop. Isolated populations can drift apart quickly in their

genetic make up and in their appearance, and consequently form new species. Marri millipedes are a case in point. A remarkable feature of marri millipedes is that they mate using two of their 58 legs! On the male, the seventh pair of legs are not used for walking, but rather have the appearance of a pair of corkscrews on a Swiss army knife. The male loads these so called gonopods with sperm before inserting them into the female to deliver sperm into a receptacle where they are stored before being used to fertilize eggs. Amazingly, slight variations in the shape of the gonopods that have arisen in some isolated populations mean that the males of one population of marri millipede are unable to mate with the females of another population. They have become reproductively isolated, which is the start of the speciation process. Marri millipedes belong to a large genus of millipedes known as *Antichiropus* that can be found across Western Australia from the Great Southern and Esperance regions to the Pilbara. Each species of *Antichiropus* typically occupies a restricted range, a consequence of their tendency to travel only short distances and to form new isolated species. There are currently estimated to be around 160 different species of *Antichiropus* millipede, found only in Western Australia. Travelling the 1000km of the Track, you will come across many different species if you watch out for them.

Heading north from Albany during Makuru, walkers can expect to witness the spectacle of the one of the longest mammalian migrations, as humpback whales travel 5000km from their feeding grounds in Antarctica to the warm waters of northern Australia, where they will mate and give birth. Bibbulmun Track walkers can expect to see humpback whales travelling west along the coast between Albany and Mandalay. It is especially common to see large numbers of humpbacks from point Irwin, west of Peaceful Bay, where they come within meters of the granite cliffs. These ocean



giants take three months to complete their 5000km journey north, about four times the pace of the average walker. This pales into insignificance in comparison to the Djeran migration of muttonbirds, which leave Shelter Island at the east end of Torbay heading northwest across the Indian Ocean to Sri Lanka. One bird tagged at Shelter Island travelled the 6000km in just six and a half days! However far you are travelling along the Track this Djeran and Makuru, watch out for your fellow travellers, large and small.

Leigh W. Simmons

Marri millipede, Antichiropus variabilis



Humpback whales from point Irwin, Peaceful Bay

Leigh's fascinating book *Naturalist on the Bibbulmun* is available from the BTF.

All royalties are donated to the Track.

Change in Age Groups Over the Years

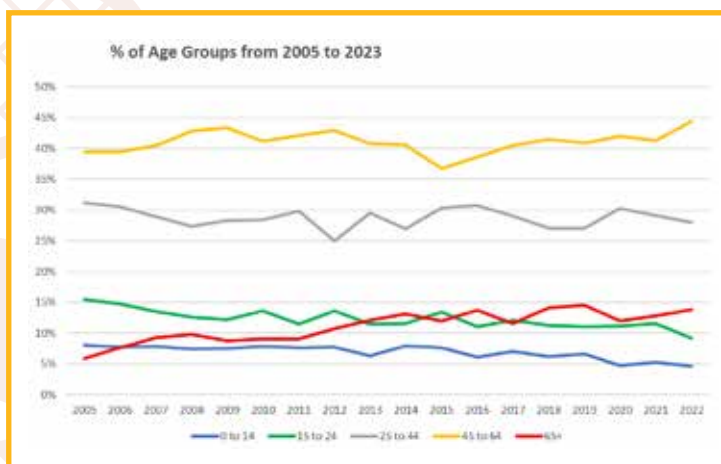
Firstly, it would be remiss not to acknowledge the fantastic work of the Data Entry Volunteers. There are now over 500,000 (Yes, over half a million) records in the database. Every one of them entered by one of the volunteers. Well done to you all, past and present.

Now while taking part as a sectional walker on the 25th Anniversary Walk, Mike Wood, former Board Chairman, proposed that he thought there was a greater percentage of older people walking the Track now, than there were in earlier years. Was his inclination correct?

While there has been a very good increase in the number of walkers over the years, with the exception of the Covid years, some age groups have certainly increased at a faster rate than others. In fact, the three older age groups have increased much more than the other categories.

As illustrated by the red line in the bottom chart, in 2005 those aged 65+ used to make up around 6% of walkers. This increased to 14% of walkers in 2022 so yes – Mike’s inclination is correct. In fact, many of these walkers are over 75 and probably include many of the original Bibbulmun Track walkers!

Dr Barry Bastow



Note: This data is more reflective of those walking for two or more days. Many day walks don't include a campsite and, unfortunately, a high percentage of day walkers don't sign the log books.

Bibb Track Birds - Splendid Fairy-wren

by Mark Davidson

When in full breeding plumage the male Splendid Fairy-wren, Djer-djer⁽¹⁾, is the beautiful boy of WA's small birds. Its glossy violet blue feathers on breast, throat and back are so bright they shimmer in the sun while the paler blue feathers under its eyes are larger and contrast with the black eye strip and breast band. Our male malurus splendens, subspecies splendens, is the darkest of Australia's four subspecies.

Outside of the breeding season the male's bright plumage is slowly replaced by dull brown body feathers with light blue wings and tail.

The adult female is less easy to discern as it could be mistaken for a juvenile, a non-breeding male or any of the teenagers, aka helpers that are immature birds making up the family group. However, the adult female's tail is a bright, almost turquoise, blue which stands out amongst the duller group colours.

Some groups can comprise six to eight birds sometimes with two breeding males. Groups generally stay in one place and can be found in many environments along the Track wherever insects, their main food source, exist.

Splendid Fairy-wrens will sit on exposed perches preening, a communal activity, or singing, "...a rapid series of slightly metallic, high-pitched pips that blend into an "undulating" call⁽²⁾". Walkers should be able to spot the birds and follow them as they move quickly through their range foraging or engaging in social activities.

The Splendid Fairy-wren is one of the most attractive birds on the Track where its appearance either in the forest, on the plains or the coastal heath, will brighten any walker's day.

⁽¹⁾ Naturalist On The Bibbulmun, Leigh W. Simmons
⁽²⁾ birdlife.org.au



The male Splendid Fairy Wren.

Notice board

FOR SALE

WILSON INLET CROSSING

Wilson Inlet Crossings restarting on 1/3/24 after summer break, either direction from Denmark Rivermouth (town) to the Nullaki or the Nullaki at the Wilson Inlet mouth.

Motorised canoe suits up to 2 passengers. Volunteer, free of charge, not always available, happy to book several weeks in advance.

Contact: Greg Carson
Telephone: 0404 611 657
Email: gregorymcarson@gmail.com

SEA TO SUMMIT TUMBLEWEED ANKLE GAITERS-XS

Never been worn. Size stated as S/M but they are very small. I am female size 39 & I couldn't get these over my boots. I would recommend for use with walking shoes "Hokas" for a very small foot. Size XS. Price \$15.

Contact: Debbie Millard
Telephone: 0400 207 729
E: debbie@dhmcoaching.com.au

SCARPA MEN'S BOOTS

Scarpa Mens Terra goretex medium height boots. Size 45/ 10.5 UK/ 11.5 US hiking boots, near new. Too narrow for me. Selling for \$120.

Contact: Andrew Stevens
Telephone: 0427 917 174
Email: amjstevens61@gmail.com

KATHMANDU HYBRID TRAVEL BAG

Never used 50L Hybrid Trolley Bag with telescopic mono handle. Converts to backpack via stashable harness, has lockable zips and heaps of internal pockets.

Dimensions 70cm x 37cm x 30cm.
Price: \$150.00

Contact: Ian Rae
Telephone: 0429 417743
Email: ijrae54@gmail.com

"SUPERFEET" INSOLES

2 pairs "Superfeet" arch support insoles or footbeds- full length. Either \$30 per pair, or \$50 for both pairs. (Currently retail at \$79.95 per pair).

1 pair - "Orange" All Purpose High Impact Support - never been used. Size "C" 37-38.5. Check out product details here: <https://www.superfeet.com/en-au/all-purpose-high-impact-support>

1 pair - "Purple" All Purpose Women's High Impact Support Size "D" 38.5-40- used only a couple of times. Check out product details here: <https://www.superfeet.com/en-au/all-purpose-womens-high-impact-support>

Contact: Debbie Millard
Telephone: 0400 207 729
E: debbie@dhmcoaching.com.au

MENS HIKING BOOTS

Men's Hiking Boots made by Van Gorkom in Canada. Size 11 (Euro 45), leather, wide foot, hardly worn, quite heavy, weighing 2.25kg. Available for a donation to the Bibbulmun Track Foundation

Contact: Bibbulmun Track Foundation
Telephone: (08) 9481 0551
E: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

WOMAN'S ZAMBERLAIN HIKING BOOTS

Woman's Zamberlain Hiking Boots. Size 6 or 7. Slight wear on the heel. Available for a donation to the Bibbulmun Track Foundation

Contact: Bibbulmun Track Foundation
Telephone: (08) 9481 0551
E: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

TYVEK TENT GROUND SHEET

Tyvek is widely used as a groundsheet for protecting the bottom of your tent. It is breathable, super light-weight, waterproof and very tough.

Discount for members.

For more information about this product including pricing see the notice on our website.

Contact: Steve
(08) 9481 0551
E: events@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

FREE - USED MOUNTAIN DESIGN BACKPACKS

75 litres and 65 litres. The Backpacks are now surplus to our requirements. They are in good condition with rain covers and travel bags. A bit heavier than current designs but are robust with multiple adjustment capability and comfortable to carry. Happy to give these to some Bibb Track walkers who need some equipment.

Contact: David Hibbard
Email: dchibbard@gmail.com

CHANGED ADDRESS?

Help us save time and postage and update your details. Hop onto our website, log in and update your details under My Account. You can also upload a pic of yourself!

Not sure how?
Visit our Website Help page under Contact Us at
www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Otherwise call us and we will update your profile for you.

Adverts are free for members & \$5 for 3 months for non-members.

Find out more on our website.

Prize WINNERS!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING WHO WON THE EARLY BIRD MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL PRIZES.

October

Gary Dennis received an Xcup .

November

Christine Kennea received a Lightweight DrySack and a Nano HeadNet.

December

Barry Small received a TPU Guide Accessory Case.

January

Wayne Bertram received a TPU Guide Map Case.

Winner of the Annual Draw for those who became a Life Member.

Gillian Groom won a half day Beach & Forest Eco Adventure from Pemberton Discovery Tours

All prizes generously donated by Sea to Summit unless otherwise noted.



Favourite Short Walk

Beedelup Falls to Beedelup Campsite

Starting Point: **Beedelup Falls Carpark, off Vasse Highway.**

Distance: **3.2km return**

Difficulty: **Grade 2**

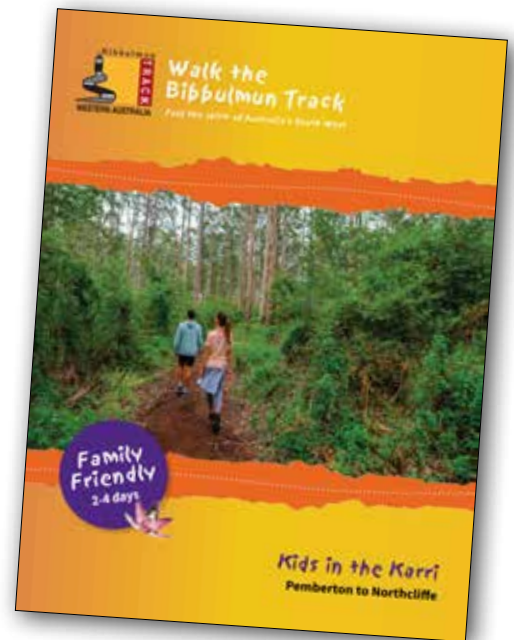
Time: **1-2 hours**

This easy walk will lead you through karri forest to Beedelup Falls, a 10m high waterfall that is particularly impressive in winter and spring (June to November). Cross the suspension bridge for a close-up view of the falls before returning to the carpark to follow the Track to Beedelup Campsite.

The campsite is set amid tall karris on the banks of a brook, making it a peaceful spot to relax and enjoy the sounds of the forest while enjoying your picnic lunch or a cool drink.

This walk is from the Kids in the Karri itinerary which features three family friendly walks and other fun things to do between Pemberton and Northcliffe.

Download from our website under [walk-the-track/bibbulmun-walking-breaks](#)



Do you have a favourite short walk?

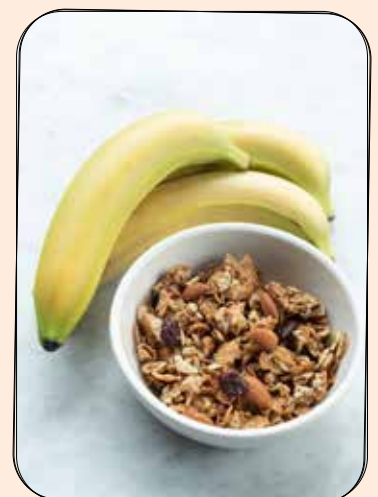
Send the details (around 200 words) and a photo if you have one to admin@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Track Tucker Healthy Hiking Muesli Bar

Ingredients:

- 360g mashed ripe banana (about 3 large)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 200g porridge oats (gluten-free if needed)
- 90g dried fruit
- 50g walnuts (chopped)
- 75g sunflower seeds
- 80g pepita seeds
- 60g sliced almonds
- 35g chia seeds
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C
2. Lightly grease a large rectangular baking dish and line with a piece of baking paper
3. In a large bowl, mash the banana until smooth. Stir in the vanilla.
4. Add the remaining ingredients to the banana mixture and stir until fully combined.
5. Spoon the mixture into the prepared dish and press down until compacted.
6. Bake for 22 to 26 minutes, until firm and lightly golden along the edges.
7. Place the dish on a cooling rack for 10 minutes.
8. Place the slab on a cooling rack until completely cool-then slice it into bars.
9. Leftovers can be wrapped up and stored in the fridge for a week, or stored in the freezer for 4 to 6 weeks.



*Healthy ingredients include bananas and nuts.
Photo: Wirestock*

Upcoming Events

For a full description of each event and to make a booking head to bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Camp Cooking for Kids

In a beautiful bush setting children will learn camp cooking through hands-on experience!

A 4km return walk to a typical Track campsite during the school holidays. Just bring refreshments, snacks for kids and lunch for adults. Maximum two kids per adult; and 2 adults per child. Ages 6 to 12yrs. Includes ingredients for cooking and experienced guides.

Date: Sat 6th April at 9:30am or 12pm
Rating: Beginners
Cost: Adult members free;
Kids \$45

Bush Adventure Quest

With the school holidays upon us, it's time for a grand treasure hunt, brimming with anticipation and enigma. Rally your friends, don your explorer hats, and prepare for an exciting escapade in the heart of the bush. Following the special Waugal trail marker, we will employ our skills to seek out each item on our unique treasure list while traversing the Bibbulmun Track. Suitable for children 3-6yrs.

Date: Sunday 7th April at 12.30pm
Rating: Beginners
Cost: Adult members \$5;
Kids \$20

Paws and Claws

Hey kids! Come and learn about our native animals!

Walk 2km to a typical Bibbulmun Track campsite to meet the friendly native creatures from Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre and return following the Waugal trail markers. Ideal for kids 5 - 12 yrs. Watch their faces light up as they interact and learn about our native animals. Maximum 2 kids per adult and two adults per child. Not suitable for pushchairs. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Date: Sunday 7th April at 3:30pm
Rating: Beginners
Cost: Adult members \$10;
Kids \$45

Getting into Gear

Come along for a fun and interesting workshop run by experienced walkers. Learn as they show you the gear they like to use, talk about the gear they don't use, and give you those tips you never hear about.

Date: Wednesday 17th April at 6pm
Cost: Members \$35

Balingup Adventure

Escape the stresses of daily life as we take you to the enchanting Blackwood region. Friday night we stay deep in the karri forest at Donnelly River Village, before starting our two-day walk north. Immerse yourself in the beauty of karri/jarrah/marri forests during two glorious days of walking, concluding with breathtaking views of the Blackwood Valley. Experience the tranquility of the forest as you stay at a typical campsite. Freshen up on Sunday afternoon with a hot shower before boarding the bus back to Perth.

Date: Friday 19th to Sunday 21st April
Rating: Intermediate
Cost: Members \$300

L-plates on ANZAC Day

Are you a first timer or do you just occasionally dabble in bushwalking?

This is a great way to learn about what the Track has to offer you. The walk (approx. 12km with some hills) takes you through mixed jarrah forest with views over the Mundaring Weir to a Bibbulmun Track campsite. Your guides will be on hand to talk to you about walking the Track and share their personal experiences. We finish near the walkers' favourite local haunt, the Mundaring Weir Hotel. An all-round fun day and great introduction.

Date: Thursday 25th April at 8:30am
Rating: Beginners
Cost: Members \$30

Walking with Dad Weekend/ Walking with Mum Weekend

Kids grow up so quickly and before you know it, they have flown the nest! Savour this time by creating as many wonderful memories together as possible.

Enjoy two walks through the magnificent jarrah forest and camp overnight at a Bibbulmun Track campsite. Here you will learn bush and camping skills from our experienced guides and perhaps enjoy some marshmallows roasted over the fire. Includes trained guides, map, comprehensive planning night, trip preparation manual, equipment hire and return transport from Perth. BYO food.

Suitable for children 8-13yrs.
With Dad: Sat 27th to Sun 28th April.
With Mum: Sat 4th to Sun 5th May.
Rating: Beginners
Cost: \$240 Members
(for 1 adult & 1 child)

Over the Hill (1)

Embark on a beginner-friendly, 9km round-trip walk designed for individuals aged 60 and above. This guided journey leads to a classic Bibbulmun Track campsite, accompanied by our experienced guides who will be on hand to answer any of your questions.

Date: Tuesday 30th April
Rating: Beginners
Cost: Members free;
Non-Members \$25

Gregory Brook Campsite. Photo: Steve Sertis



Bibbulmun For Beginners

The perfect introduction to overnight bushwalking, discover the tranquillity of the bush as you explore a relatively easy section of the Bibbulmun Track. We walk approximately 8km each day and camp out under canvas at a typical Bibbulmun Track campsite. Our experienced and friendly guides will teach you all you need to know about walking and camping and give you the confidence you need to venture out on your own. Hire gear available at no extra cost on this overnight Trek.

Date: Sat 4th and Sunday 5th May
Rating: Beginners
Cost: Members \$150



Walk with Mum participants. Photo: Elsie Grygiel

Murdoch Park'n'Ride rail terminal as well as all transfers over the weekend for you.

Date: Fri 24th (3:45pm) to Sun 26th May
Rating: Beginners
Cost: \$355 Members

Ramble and Paddle

Two adventures wrapped up in one weekend! This is one of our favourite events. A fantastic walking and paddling weekend escape in Dwellingup. Forget the heavy packs; enjoy a rewarding 14km walk on our Track with only a day pack. You will have time to enjoy some of the local attractions and a fascinating tour of the historic Murrinup POW camp before a tranquil paddle down the Murray River. Includes two nights accommodation in town with late check out, two continental breakfasts, guided POW tour, experienced guides, canoe equipment and instruction. We have organised return transport for from

Teen Trek

A thrilling three-day adventure during the school holidays tailored for teenagers, immersing them in the joys and companionship of bush life while camping out.

This journey fosters connections with nature and peers, offering both theoretical and practical challenges guided by experienced leaders. As an added bonus, participants can strive for their bronze or silver level of the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, making this event a multifaceted and enriching experience. Hire gear included.

Date: Tues 9th to Thursday 11th July
Rating: Intermediate
Cost: Teenagers \$280

PHOTO CAPTION COMPETITION

Send us a caption!

Volunteer, Alex Williams, in action out on the Track.

The most popular caption will win a prize (judged by our office volunteers!)

Email to:
friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au
 or by post.



Send us your caption!

Social Sunday walks

Free for members. See booking conditions online.

WALK RATINGS: 🐾 BEGINNERS 🐾🐾 INTERMEDIATE 🐾🐾🐾 EXPERIENCED

DATE	DETAILS	RATING
9 June 10:30am	11km return walk from Mundaring Weir to Ball Creek Campsite	🐾
16 June 9:00am	17km return walk from Brookton Hwy to Canning Campsite	🐾🐾
7 July 9:00am	15km return walk from Mt Cooke Pines to Nerang Campsite	🐾🐾
28 July 8:30am	23.5km return walk from Perth Hills Discovery Centre to Helena Campsite (Fit and experienced walkers only!)	🐾🐾🐾
11 August 8:30am	22km return walk from Kalamunda to Hewett's Hill Campsite (Fit and experienced walkers only!)	🐾🐾🐾
25 August 8:30am	21km return walk from Brookton Hwy to Mt Dale Campsite	🐾🐾🐾

Bookings for each walk will open one month prior to each walk.

Book online, or contact the BTF office for a booking form.
 Bookings cannot be made over the phone.

Track Trivia



Hello Fellow Track Lovers,

As I write it's 43deg outside, hardly conducive to striding through the bush.

Sadly, I don't stride through the bush anymore. Health issues and age now mean my time walking the Track has come to an end, making me a vicarious bush walker, if such a beast exists.

Now I take great pleasure in helping others to enjoy what the Track has to offer by offering advice to walkers and in sharing memories of the many kilometers I have walked myself.

A few weeks ago I spent a couple of hours in the office with a young New Zealander, offering advice for his end-to-end walk. He was extremely well prepared, his gear was up to date, he had trained hard and spent a lot of time studying the Track, using the BTF website to good advantage. Towards the end of the session, he asked me how well I had been prepared for my first end-to-end, back in 2001.

I thought about it and laughed because I hadn't been!

I had never set foot in the Australian bush, having emigrated from Singapore about a year earlier, I had never seen a kangaroo or a snake in the wild, I had no equipment to speak of and had only decided to walk the whole Bibbulmun Track after hearing about it at a dinner party. The concept of a 1000km walk through the bush fascinated me; I bought the guide books and the maps and I was ready to go!

I had never heard of the BTF, or The Friends of the Track as it was then, I had little knowledge of the Internet and my only knowledge of how to go about walking the Track was gleaned through the information in the guide books and word of mouth from a couple of people who had spent some time on the Track.

Looking back I'm amazed that I made it, but I walked the whole thing, virtually trouble free, in 38 days. I negotiated a major bushfire, had a very close

encounter with a large tiger snake and paddled a canoe for the first time in my life. My equipment was too heavy, I carried too much food and clothing, had no emergency device and in effect I was a disaster waiting to happen!

One of the major pleasures of working in the BTF office is in meeting walkers from near and far and talking to them about the Track. One of the questions that keeps coming up is "What is the record time for completing the Track?", to which I reply that we don't keep such records; we leave it to everyone to take as much or as little time as they wish. But out of curiosity, I took a look at some records related to walking.

A recent one is by a gentleman who walked up and down Mount Kilimanjaro (5985m)

backwards. Now there's a Bibb Track challenge! There are many records related to distances walked on the hands which could be bit dodgy in the Pingerup in the winter or when crossing the Torbay Inlet. An interesting record was set in the USA recently for the longest distance walked while balancing a lawn mower on your chin. Maybe one of our Support Maintenance Vollies could try that, substituting the mower with a chainsaw?

On a final note, one of my favourite memories of offering advice to an end-to-ender was when I met a wonderful gentleman from Albany. He was a small man, slightly built, in his mid-sixties and I was a bit concerned that he wasn't fully aware of the physical demands of walking with a heavy pack in the bush, so I asked him a bit about his walking experience and

what sort of training he was doing.

"Oh", he said, "I run about 20km every morning and I do a lot of walking with my pack every day."

"So you're a bit of an athlete?"

He smiled. "Well, I do hold the world record for an over 65 year-old running across the Nullabor in summer."

That was end of that line of questioning--and yes, it was true!

Happy walking!

Wrong Way Jim

Gear for hire!

For more information, simply **SCAN** the **QR code** or **visit us in person** at our new office, located at Unit 3, 62 Ord Street, West Perth.

BTF Member rates apply.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE REGISTERS

CANNING

Happy St Patrick's Day! No better way to spend it than to be in the bush escaping the Corona Virus!

Carolyn 17/03/2000

I've been struggling lately with loneliness on the Track. Not so much while walking but when I get to the campsite. Doing this by myself I find I'm getting too caught up in my head after the sun fades away about what might go wrong. I want to be able to let go of this fear, when I should be grateful for the opportunities I now I will have. But I find myself longing for the companionship of other hikers...I'm going to be braver, I'm going to be braver...

Anon 19/09/2022

(Ed: Which is why we always stress to walkers, especially those walking solo, that long treks in the bush can be as much a mental exercise as a physical one)

Have travelled from Oxford UK to do this trek. I sampled a week on the Track two years ago and enjoyed it so much I decided to come back and do the whole lot. Thankfully it's a little cooler this time, 35deg in December two years ago. All going to plan at the moment and enjoying all the bus has to offer. Good luck to all end-to-enders Enoy!

Alan 11/10/2019

BALL CREEK

I feel like a monkey who is about to walk back into the zoo and lock himself in the cage! I would like to stay out here longer but I have already extended my stay twice. Love the forest and the sound of nature. I noticed two things as I got closer to Perth, noise and light pollution. I've really enjoyed my stay on the Track. I've grown in many ways, it has been an amazing journey. I made great new friends and ran into some familiar faces. The sound of the wind in the trees, bird choruses, water running in the creeks, I've loved it all.

The Last King Jarrah 03/10/2021

BEAVIS

Having me in camp is great
Because I'll be your mozzie bait
When the buggers buzz about
you can reat, without a doubt
'Cos if I have my flesh exposed
'Tis to me they are disposed!

Anon 09/11/2020

The karri-marri tree stopped me in my tracks. Wow! There's something about walking for days and days on end that soothes the soul. It's so special out here, deep in the land filled with both tiny and huge wonders. It helps you get back with your big feelings and far away from the clutter in your head. How lovely to listen to the silence. I have come back to a strong sense of self along the path.

Happy Tails!

Hana Smythe 21/11/2020

SOME EXTRACTS FROM THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY WALKERS' DIARY:

Yay! Learned to wee with my pack on! Art form, tilt perfection!

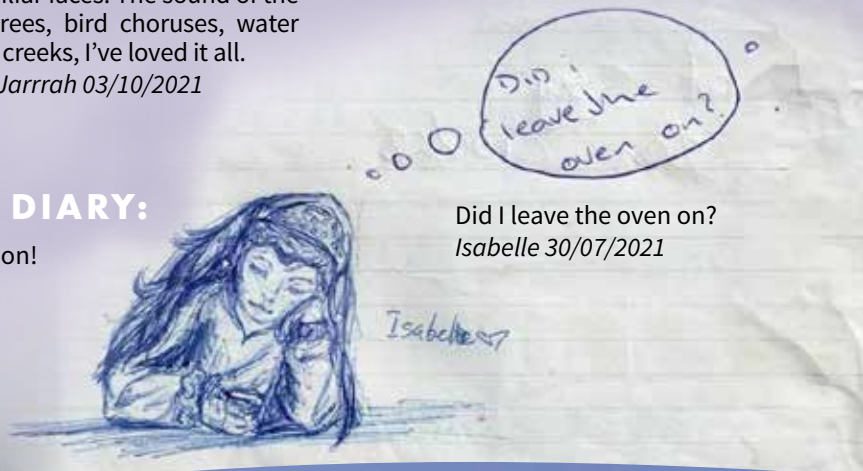
Scones and tea at Parry beach—what a treat!

Oh no! Only 70km to go!

After 56 days I'm going to miss the friendship and the fun.

Two more sleeps before Albany—we are nearly done.

Sandpatch, day 61. Our last night!



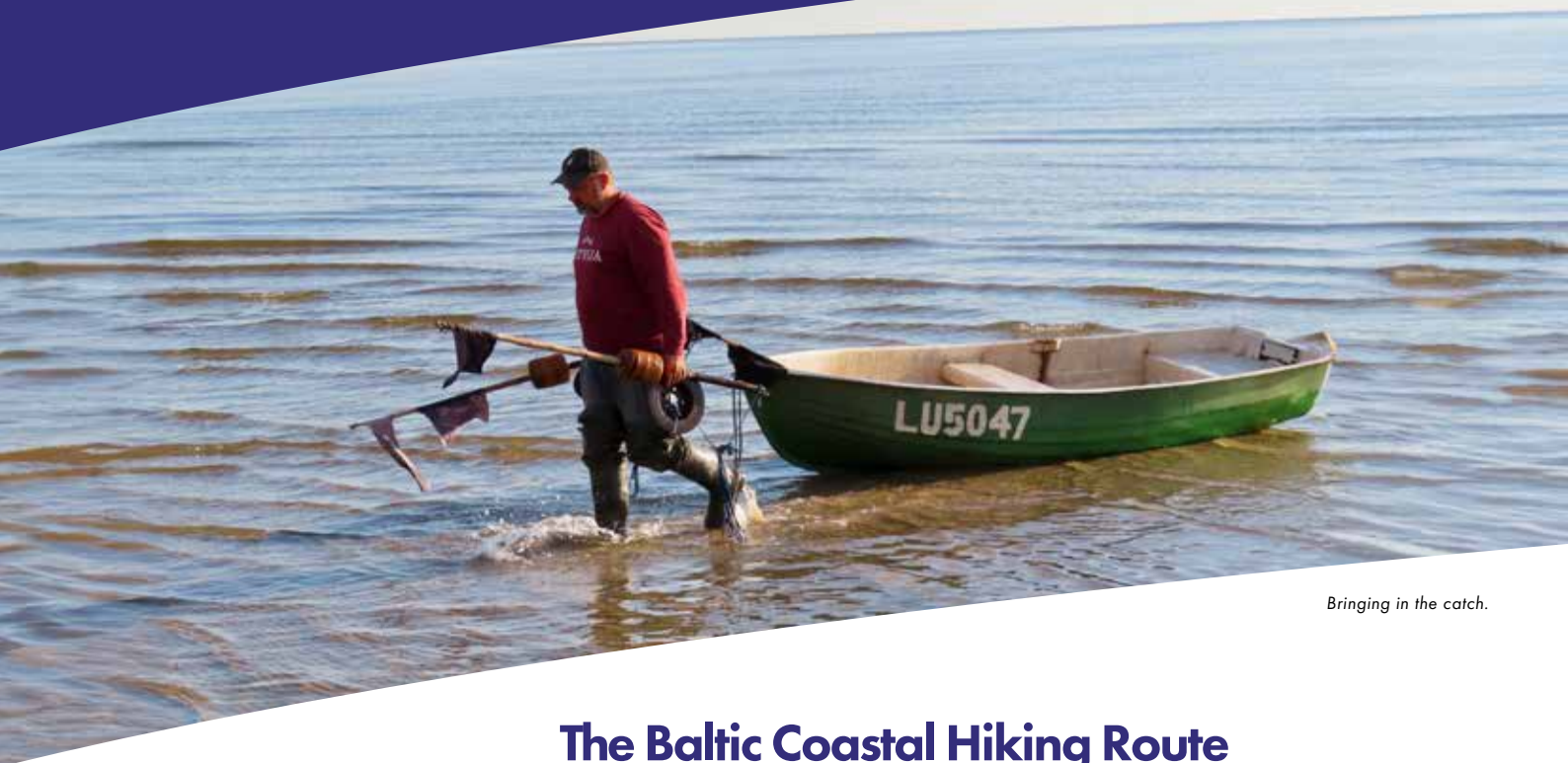
Did I leave the oven on?

Isabelle 30/07/2021

LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY...

Include a gift for the Bibbulmun Track Foundation in your will and help ensure the Bibbulmun Track is maintained for generations to come.

Trailing around the World



Bringing in the catch.

The Baltic Coastal Hiking Route

The 1419km Baltic Coastal Hiking Route forms part of the E9, one of Europe's long-distance paths, which runs for 9880 km from Tarifa, Spain to Narva-Jõesuu in Estonia. The Baltic Route begins at the Kaliningrad/Lithuanian border on the Curonian Spit, heads north through Lithuania and Latvia and finishes at Tallin in Estonia. It takes around 70 days to complete.

As the name suggests this is a coastal route, passing along lovely firm beaches by the Baltic Sea. It's easy to enjoy a mostly obstacle free beach with the occasional creek outlet. One of the wonderful things about this trail is a forest option that provides shade and shelter from wind and is never much more than 100m from the beach. The hiker can simply bounce back and forth between beach and forest at will.

More than 50% of the Baltics consists of beautiful forests, predominantly coniferous with scattered beech and birch trees. The trail is essentially flat, with a maximum elevation of 66m and there are plenty of opportunities to watch sunrises, sunsets, and to swim. In one section of the forest we found remnants of the old iron curtain fence. not uncommon in the old eastern bloc countries.

Hikers also have the option to explore the West Estonian Islands, which are easily accessible by ferry. Some of the islands have free buses for touring around the island, or bicycles that can be hired for the day.

Through the Estonian section the beaches frequently become impassable due to reed beds and the trail passes through fields filled with stunning flowers, termed wildflowers locally but which are often flowers that are tended with loving care back here in Australia!

Walkers can forage for blueberries, blackberries and lingonberries along the forest trails and scout the water's edge

*Bibbulmun Track stalwarts
Hedley Amos and Lari
McDonald walked the
Baltic Coastal Route in
June-July-August 2022.*

*This is an account of
their trip:*

For more information visit:
<https://baltictrails.eu/en/coastal>



Amber found everywhere on the beaches

for amber, which washes up along a large part of these shores, especially through the Latvian section. A legend has it that a princess lived underwater here in an amber castle. She married a commoner and her father was so angry he shattered her castle and that is why there is amber washing up on the shores.

There are many deer, foxes and squirrels in the forests. The only wildlife to be concerned about are the Baltic Airforce or black flies that are prolific at times and bite as if they haven't feasted for ages. If you stop moving for five seconds, you can't see your skin. One day in the forest it was so bad we bolted for the beach, jumping logs and ducking under branches at breakneck speed as they swarmed us all the way. Picture Winnie the Pooh after he's raided a hive with a stream of bees behind him and you'll get it.

The only wildlife to be concerned about seriously are ticks, as these can cause encephalitis and it is well worth organising a vaccination for when you arrive. The cost of organising this in the Baltics is about 10% of the cost and lengthy lead in time if you do it in Australia.

In the early mornings, you will see fishermen bringing in their catch for the day as they have done for decades. The Baltics, previously part of the



Wildflowers in the meadow

Soviet Union, still show many remnants of the austere lifestyle the people have lived with for decades. There are beautiful and ancient buildings; mostly wooden, and many with thatched roofs. Many people still live a very simple life and one of the wonderful things about hiking here is experiencing such a different culture.

Camping is easy with campgrounds along the way with water and toilets and many of them are free. Most have firepits and they all provide serenity as you sleep peacefully through the night listening to the sounds of the forest or the lapping waves of the Baltic Sea. There are many options for family stay accommodation for those nights that you want to sleep inside and get to know and understand the local culture. We had a great experience one night with nowhere to camp or stay when a lovely lady offered us a small room in a disused but still functional church she had bought to set up for hikers.

Hikers can also find plenty of options for food resupply at many small shops along the trail. As a bonus for coffee lovers, there are vending machines everywhere and they pop up on beaches and forests in the middle of nowhere. Toilets are plentiful and appear wherever you cross roads or are near popular areas.

The cities of Riga in Latvia and Tallinn in Estonia are well worth a couple of days visit. These cities are rich in history and there are many free tours in English. The people throughout the Baltics are friendly, most speak English and

love to spend time with you --- you can learn so much from them.

Thanks to a large grant received for the marketing of this trail, there are free maps and guides available online that give all the information you need to take this beautiful hike on a trail less travelled. By comparison to other parts of Europe this region is relatively inexpensive to travel through.

There are many options to get to the trail from any major city in Europe – you just need to get to Riga in Latvia or Vilnius in Lithuania and take a bus from there to the kick off point. We chose to fly from Perth to Helsinki to visit a hiking friend in the archipelago for a few days, then flew on to Riga

Lari McDonald & Hedley Amos



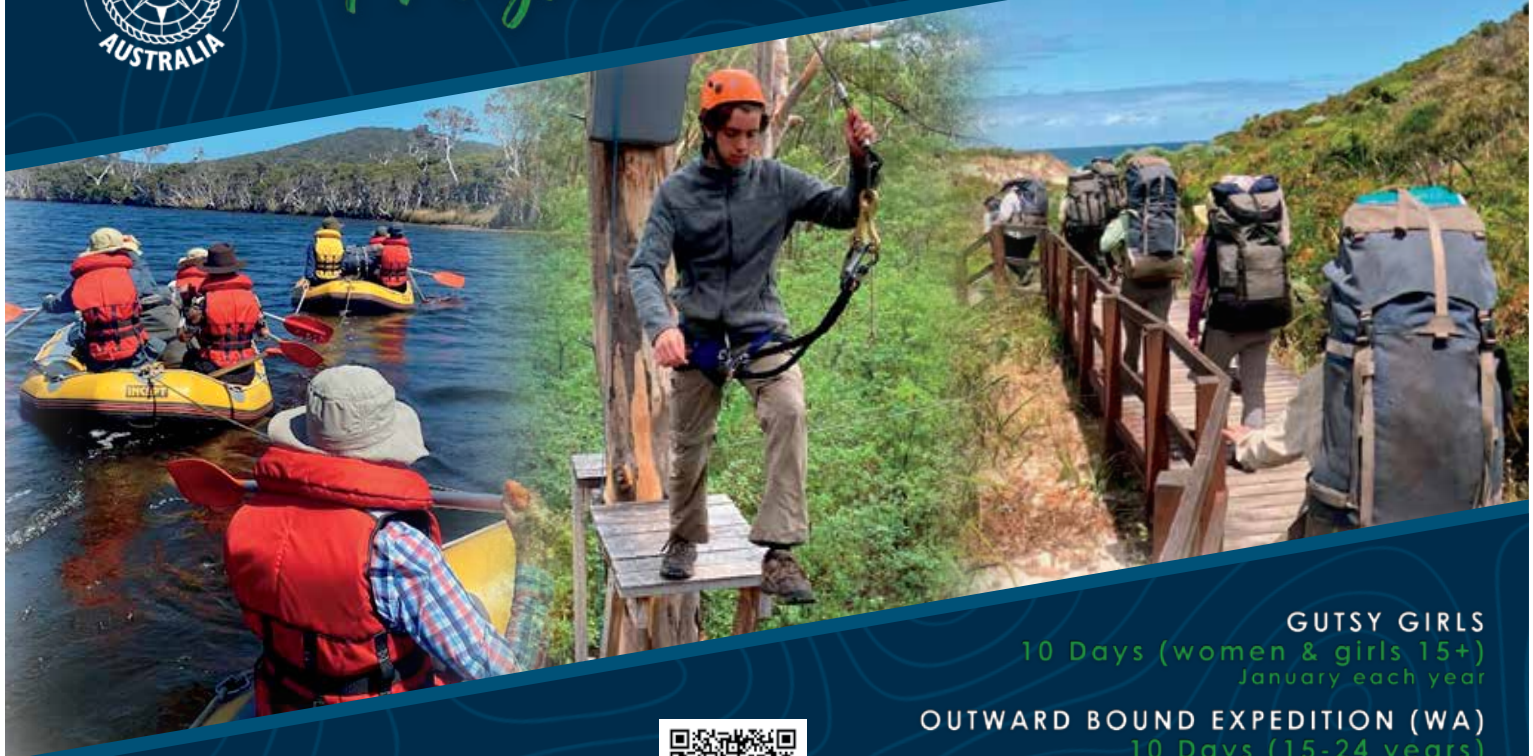
The western most point of Latvia



Old buildings in the forest



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