



Affiliated with
Bushwalking Victoria

Box 2446 GPO Melbourne 3001
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Issued free to members.

CIRCULAR

www.melbournewalkingclub.org

REG. No. A657P

JANUARY 2018

JANUARY WALKS

Wednesday	3	Jacana - Fawkner	Alan Hosking
Wednesday	10	Cheltenham - Black Rock	David Blackwell
Monday	15	Eltham - Eltham Aqueduct	Gordon Proudfoot
3rd Wed	17	Ringwood Lake	Stewart Stanlake
Sunday	21	George Bass Coastal Walk	Arthur Robertson
Wednesday	24	Greensborough - Blue Lake	Keith Tupper
Wednesday	31	Aircraft - Sanctuary Lakes	Richard Bowen

Copy for February to: Charlie Freedman - Phone: 0415 558 249
email: editor@melbournewalkingclub.org

by the 1st Wednesday in the month, 3rd January

Circular Preparation: 3rd Thursday - 18th January at 2:00 pm

Venue: John Horan's home at 9 Oxford Street, Malvern 3144.

Bushwalking News Victoria (BNV)

The Melbourne Walking Club is affiliated with Bushwalking Victoria which publishes a monthly "**Bushwalking News**" on the Internet. For those interested, the Current and past BNV's can be read on their web page:

<http://www.bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/what-we-do/publications/newsletters>

Talk Over Lunch

All members are reminded of the regular social event which occurs on the **2nd Tuesday of each month (except January)** at the **Charles Dickens Tavern Bistro**, in the basement of 290 Collins Street Melbourne, at **11:45am for 12:00 noon**.

Barry Revill, Phone: 9555 1114 or email: barryrevill@bigpond.com

Have You Changed Your Contact Details?

If any member has changed their postal address, phone number or email address in the last year, please let David Ikin know by mid December, so he can update the latest members register:

Phone **9878 6301**, or email daikin@optusnet.com.au

Mt Buller Lodge

Did you know that the Mt Buller Lodge is available to members of the MWC? You can use it winter or summer.

Maybe you're a family member, a walker or a skier? You don't have to be a member of MWC, but be a guest to one who is!! There are some protocols for safety reasons, but check it out!

It is fully self contained, hydronically heated and offers en suites to each of 5 bedrooms. There's a games room and a TV lounge. The kitchen has up to date white goods. In summer a BBQ on the deck is enjoyable for a lunch or dinner. The rates are generous and competitive.

So members, please consider visiting the Lodge, bring guests, make a booking and encourage your families to visit there too.

Bookings can be made through the booking officer Ian Morton at:
ianmorton@optusnet.com.au

The Donna Buang Hut

The Donna Buang Hut is available for use by members and their family and friends at most times of the year. You may choose to visit either for the day or an overnight stay. The Hut is in terrific condition. It's bright, clean and tidy. The only restricted times are days of total fire ban or high risk of fire.

For bookings contact David Kerferd by phone or email at:
donnabuanghut@melbournewalkingclub.org

Laugh With Lance

Wisdom comes with age, but sometimes age comes alone.

Club Website News

New photos from Alan Shell have been added to the Club's website. They are titled "**Base Camps MWC**" and "**Bush Walking with MWC**", and can be accessed via:

www.melbournewalkingclub.org/photo-gallery/archives

Programme Amendments

Please note the following amendment to the 2018 Programme:

- March 4 Point Addis and Bell's Beach Walk. Change date from Sunday March 4 to Sunday March 25. Leader is still Jenny Hosking, but change phone number to 9504 0377.
- April 4 Deep Creek - Heatherdale Walk. Change leader from Marsha Rankin to Alan Manzoori (phone number 9830 4627).

The following two walks have swapped places in the 2018 Programme:

- March 19 Upfield - Batman, leader Alex Hordijenko. Was April 23.
- April 23 Belgrave - MenziesCreek - Belgrave, leader Wayne Hansen. Was March 19.

Leaders Required for 3rd Wednesday Group

We have vacancies for Leaders in the 3rd Wednesday Group. No prior experience is necessary, but having had Metro Group etc. outings would be an advantage.

Interested members contact Travis Clark on 9874 6326, 0407 272 333, or by email to tec11942@yahoo.com.au

Help Required For Work At Walter Briggs Hut

Help is required from members with practical skills to carry out some maintenance work at the Walter Briggs Hut at Mt Donna Buang.

One of the current projects at the hut is to repair the corrugated iron roof. In particular the roof sheeting needs to be refixed and made waterproof. It would be appreciated if someone with skill and experience in this type of work could contact the Hut Convenor, David Kerferd by phone or email at:

donnabuanghut@melbournewalkingclub.org

Trevor Rosen, President

JANUARY WALKS

Wednesday 3 January Jacana - Merri Creek - Fawkner

Leader: Alan Hosking

Phone: 9570 3695
9504 0377

Rendezvous: 9.15am at Jacana Railway station.

Maps: Melway 6, 7, 17, 8 & 18

Distance: 14km.

Grading: Medium (because of distance).

Transport: 8:42am Craigieburn train ex Southern Cross Railway Station, arriving Jacana Railway Station 9.09am.

Walk Details: The original walk was 16 km so I have shortened it a little. We won't enter The Northern Memorial Park and will end at the Fawkner Railway Station instead of the Merlynston Railway Station.

The walk starts at the Jacana Railway Station and heads east to the Jack Roper reserve for morning tea. Melway Map 7, B10. Then continues east to cross the Sydney Road (Hume Highway). Now north to the Merri Creek trail starting just below the Ring Road. Continue south. Lunch spot is just south of a tennis club complex. After lunch the Merri Creek Trail continues further south. Eventually, the trail will reach the eastern end of Lorne Street. Continue west along Lorne Street, cross Sydney road again at the traffic lights and finish at the Fawkner Railway Station. Toilets at Jack Roper Reserve and the vegetation along the Merri Creek Trail.

Wednesday 10 January Cheltenham - Foreshore - Black Rock

Leader: David Blackwell

Phone: 9557 1009

Rendezvous: 9.40 a.m. Cheltenham station south west side.

Maps: Melways 86, 77 & 85 Grading: Easy Distance: 12 km.

Transport: 9.05 a.m. Frankston train ex Flinders St to Cheltenham arriving 9.37 a.m. or 9.04 a.m. Flinders St train ex Frankston to Cheltenham arriving 9.31 a.m. Return from Black Rock by bus to St Kilda, Sandringham, Moorabbin, Mentone or Cheltenham.

Morning Tea: About 10 am, a short walk from the station, in Cheltenham Park (has toilets). Melways 86 G1.

Walk Details: Walk has plenty of street walking but visits many parks & reserves: Cheltenham Park, Cheltenham cemetery, Pobblebonk reserve, The Green Belt, George Rd reserve, Tulip St reserve, Tricks reserve, Balcombe park, Donald MacDonald reserve and coastal path to Black Rock.

Lunch: Balcombe park reserve (has toilets). Melway 86 C4.

Monday 15 January Eltham - Eltham Aqueduct - Eltham

Leader: Gordon Proudfoot

Phone: 9717 8322

0405 083 074

Rendezvous: Eltham station at 9.19am.

Morning Tea: Eltham Central Park Melways 21 J8.

Maps: Melways 21, 22, 12 & 11 Distance: Approx. 13 kms.

Grading: Medium (some steep hills on Allendale Road).

Transport: Train from Flinders Street at 8.25am to Hurstbridge (arriving at Eltham at 9.19am or by 902 bus from Doncaster Shopping Town at 8.54am arriving Eltham at 9.12am or by car. If coming by car there is parking in Youth Road (near tennis courts (5-hour limit). Entry to Youth Road is just through Eltham township on left).

Walk Details: The walk is partially along suburban streets and walking paths. There are seats and shelter at morning tea but no facilities at the lunch spot.

3rd Wednesday 17 January Ringwood Lake

Leader: Stewart Stanlake

Phone: 9870 9061
0468 300 132

Rendezvous: 10am Ringwood Lake. Under shelter opposite footbridge. Melway 49 K8. Lunch and morning tea at the rendezvous.

Transport: If by car, in the carpark just east of Daisey's. If by train, then the Lilydale train departing Flinders St station at 9:07am and arriving East Ringwood station at 9:48am. Leader will meet the train and walk 1km back to Ringwood Lake to ensure he does not get lost. Return trains every 20 minutes.

Maps: Melways 50 & 49. Distance: 4km in am and 1km in pm.

Walk Details: A picturesque flat easy walk around the lake and Bedford Park.

Remember to slip, slop and slap as it will be a warm day. Carry plenty of water.

Sunday 21 January George Bass Coastal Walk - Punch Bowl to Anderson

Leader: Arthur Robertson

Phone: 9580 6405
0419 895 916

Rendezvous: Punch Bowl car park 10.00am morning tea for 10.30 departure (some cars will need to be taken to Anderson).

Distance: approx. 12km.

Grading: moderate, undulating no steep climbs.

Transport: Punch Bowl car park (small) is at the end of Punch Bowl

Road, which is a left turn off Phillip Island Road if coming from the Bass Highway roundabout at Anderson.

Walk Details: Lovely walking along the cliff tops overlooking Bass Strait to Kilcunda, approx 7km Hotel café toilet available. Balance of walk on Rail Trail to Anderson, approx. 5km steady climb for most of the way but not severe.

Wednesday 24 January Greensborough - Blue Lake - Greensborough

Leader: Keith Tupper

Phone: 9457 2595
0434 112 192 on 24 January only.

Rendezvous: 9.27am at Greensborough station.

Maps: Melway 20, 11 & 10 Grading: Easy/Medium Distance: 10km.
Transport: 8.40am Eltham train ex Flinders Street, arriving Greensborough at 8.27. Bus #385 at 9.42am from Greensborough station.

Morning Tea: Reserve cnr Treetop Tce & Daviesia Drv. Melway 11C7.

Walk Details: Pipe track to Plenty, then Mackelroy Rd, Yellow Gum Park, Blue Lake. Return: follow general direction of Plenty River (both sides) to Greensborough station.

A varied and pleasant walk, some streets but mainly bush and riverside tracks. There is one steep gully, one narrow section of track high above river, and a river crossing with stepping stones, when walking poles and/or alternative footwear (e.g. sandals) and towel are recommended. Walk has been shortened, using bus, owing to likely hot weather, and may be cancelled if forecast temperature is over 30°. Contact leader if in doubt.

Wednesday 31 January Aircraft - Pt Cook - Sanctuary Lakes

Leader: Richard Bowen

Phone: 9701 2925

Rendezvous: Aircraft Station, 9:25 am.

Maps: Melway 53, 207 & 208 Grading: Easy Distance: 16km.

Transport: From Flinders Street Station take the 8:58 am Werribee train to Aircraft Station, arriving at 9:25 am.

Morning Tea: BBQ area between creek & Carinza Av, Melway 53 A12.

Walk Details: Walk by creek and lakes to Sanctuary Lakes with lunch by the lake. If very hot walk could be shortened. WCs near Aircraft Station, otherwise bush toilets (lunch close to shopping centre).

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

Sunday 4 February Lake Mountain

Leader: Michael Clarke

Phone: 9807 9779
0412 849 989

Monday 5 February Peninsula Walk

Leader: Don Ziino

Phone: 5975 6626

Wednesday 7 February Mt Martha - Mornington

Leader: Geoffrey Cohen

Phone: 5974 1342

Rendezvous: 10.10am corner Nepean Highway and Helena Street, Mt Martha.

Maps: Melway 145 & 104

Distance: 11km.

Grading: 90% easy 10% medium.

Transport: 8.05am Frankston train ex Flinders Street arrives Frankston 9.08am. (8.15am arrives 9.21am), then 9.25am #788 Portsea bus from Bay H alighting at Helena Street, Mt Martha (stop 12610) at 9.56. Alternatively, if coming from the Peninsula take the #788 Frankston bus ex Portsea and alight at Helena Street, Mt Martha at approximately 10.07am. If taking this option please phone Leader in advance to ensure you are met.

Note: After leaving platform at Frankston Railway Station walk down ramp and turn right to exit and right onto Young Street to bus Bay H.

Morning Tea: Citation Reserve, Melway 145 C 11.

Walk Details: The first part of the walk is along paved and unsealed roads. We then follow a coastal track to Mornington. After lunch we proceed along a track, a little beach walking and we ascend a track to Beleura Hill, then follow the golf course to the finishing point. There are four bus routes to Frankston offering a frequent service.

Wednesday 14 February Werribee - Hoppers Crossing

Leader: Richard Kellaway

Phone: 9802 4290

Rendezvous: Werribee Station.

Maps: Melway 205 & 206

Grading: Easy

Distance: 12km.

Transport: 9.00am. Werribee Train ex Flinders St. arriving at Werribee at 9.43am.

Morning Tea: Along the river path about 20 minutes from the station.

Walk Details: A pleasant flat walk along Werribee River then through parks & some streets back to Hoppers Crossing Station. Escapes: many buses to either Werribee or Hoppers Crossing. Toilets at beginning & end of walk.

Saturday & Sunday 17-18 February 2018 Weekend Pack Carry, Sealers Cove (Wilson's Promontory)

This walk is planned as a pack carry weekend walk with an overnight stay at Sealers Cove. However, day walkers are welcome to join the walk to Sealers Cove and return the same day.

Leader: Tony Cagney

Phone: 0411 843 609

tony.cagney@optusnet.com.au

Rendezvous: 10:00 am Saturday 17-February at Telegraph Saddle Carpark.

Maps: SV Maps Outdoor Recreation Guide - Wilson's Promontory 1:50,000.

Distance: Pack carry. Saturday 10 km to campsite + 6 km excursion to Horn Point lookout. Sunday 10 km return to carpark (day walkers. Saturday only 20 km return).

Grading: Easy/Medium

Transport: Private car. Wilson's Promontory is approximately a 3-hour drive from Melbourne via South Gippsland Highway (M440). Turn left off Wilson's Promontory Road onto Mt Oberon Carpark Road and drive 2.5km up to the rendezvous point. Note there is no longer a toilet at the rendezvous carpark but public facilities are available at Tidal River.

Walk Details: Saturday: 10 km walk to Sealers Cove (allow 3 hours). Lunch on the beach then cross Sealers Creek to Sealer Cove campsite. Set up camp before afternoon excursion for 6 km (return) along the Refuge Cove Walking Track to lookout with views back over Sealers Cove. Dinner and overnight stay at Sealers Cove campsite. Sunday: breakfast on the beach then 10 km return to cars via the same route.

Notes: Sealers Cove campsite is a bush campsite set above the beautiful Sealers Cove beach with composting toilets and a siphoned water source from a nearby stream. To reach the campsite we cross

Sealers Creek on foot and will get wet, though how wet depends on the tide times. This walk requires walkers to carry their own shelter, water and food but has been selected because it is accessible for those who are new overnight walks or have not done one for a while.

Attendance: Please contact the leader as soon as possible if you have questions about the walk, how to participate or would like to confirm your interest. Campsite bookings need to be made in advance and are limited to 12 people per group so this will be a first come first served basis.

Monday 19 February Royal Park - Fitzroy Gardens - Middle Park

Leader: Tom Gillham

Phone: 9857 8347
0433 170 561

Rendezvous: Royal Park Rail Station 9:30 am.

Maps: Melway 29, 2B, X871, 2G, 2F, 2K Grade: Easy Distance: 14km

Transport: Upfield train departs 9:05am Flinders Street to Royal Park arrive 9:19am. Return Tram #96 from Wright St. Albert Park (Stop #129).

Morning Tea: East side of Princes Park near adventure playground, with seating, toilet, but no cover. (Melway 29 H12).

Lunch: BBQ site on the Yarra River bank, Alexander Avenue, (toilet) limited seating, no cover. (Melway 2G C11).

Walk Details: Interesting walk from Royal Park to Princes Park, thru Melb General Cemetery; Melb University; Museum; Parliament Gardens; Fitzroy Gardens; MCG; Tennis Ctr., Swan St Bridge, Botanical Gardens; to Albert Park Lake.

Escapes: Numerous options available.

3rd Wednesday 21 February Altona Beach

Leader: Bruce Armstrong

Phone: 0416 758 204

Rendezvous: 10.15 am Altona Station. Melway Ref 54 G11.

Distance: 4 kms in AM and if required in PM 2-3 kms and then return to Altona Station.

Transport: Laverton Train ex Flinders Street departs at 9.41am and ex Southern Cross 9.44 am and arrives at Altona Station at 10.12 am.

Leader will meet train and all will walk to Logan Reserve (Melway Ref: also 54 G11). Morning Tea and Lunch at Logan Reserve.

Walk Details: Pleasant walk on track along foreshore.

Sunday 25 February Point Lonsdale - Queenscliffe

Leader: Kim Rosen

Phone: 0422 804 816

Rendezvous & Morning Tea: 9.30am at Point Lonsdale foreshore opposite Pasquini's Café (Melway 499 K5). Toilets available.

Maps: Melway 499, 500 & 486

Grading: Easy

Distance: 12 km.

Transport: Private cars. Approximately 1½ hours' drive from Melbourne. Parking is available along the foreshore at Point Lonsdale.

Walk Details: This is a circuit walk which starts from Point Lonsdale and follows the bicycle path next to Port Phillip Bay before turning inland and crossing the peninsula to Swan Bay. The old train line is then followed to the historic Queenscliff station. Lunch will be in the park at Queenscliff where picnic tables and toilets are available. After lunch, at low tide, the walk continues along the beach back to Point Lonsdale. There are many historic points of interest around Queenscliff and beautiful vistas across Swan Bay and Port Phillip Bay to the heads.

Escapes: There is the possibility of an escape on the 12.56pm bus from the Post Office in Queenscliff back to Point Lonsdale.

Afternoon Tea: Pasquini's Café, Point Lonsdale.

Please telephone the leader beforehand if attending.

Monday 26 February Easy Metro - Seaholme - Williamstown

Leader: Stewart Stanlake

Phone: 9870 9061
0468 300 132

Rendezvous: Seaholme rail station at 9:29am.

Transport: 9:01am Laverton train departing Flinders St and arriving at Seaholme 9:29am. Return trains from Williamstown every 20 minutes.

Morning Tea: At Casser Reserve, Seaholme. Melway 55 A11.

Maps: Melway 54, 55 and 56.

Distance: 10 kms.

Walk Details: I am not sure why anyone would want to come on this walk. There is no street walking and it is not undulating. There are water views at all times. It is necessary to walk through five coastal parks, alongside one marine park, circuit in a reserve opened by John Landy, through an historic racecourse and view the shacks built on old rifle buttes. We walk under the guns protecting us from the Russians and go under a national trust classified pedestrian overpass (one of only two in Victoria). All the above disadvantages are put aside for the privilege of walking with the leader and viewing the home of the Seagulls.

Remember slip, slop and slap. It will be a hot day. Carry extra water.

Wednesday 28 February Laburnum - Wattle Park - Gardiner

Leader: Ted Porter

Phone: 9874 6203

Bus Trip to Walhalla 2018

The Club is organizing a Bus Trip to Walhalla on Wednesday 14 March. The leader will be David Ellis (phone 0402 392 786).

Rendezvous at 8.00 am departure (SHARP) at Nunawading Civic Centre Car Park. Additional pick up point 8.30 am (SHARP) at Service Lane of Whitehorse Rd at the Whitehorse Rd and Heatherdale Rd intersection, close to Heatherdale Rail Station. Catch Belgrave train departing Flinders Street at 7.45am and arriving Heatherdale Station at 8.20 am. Morning Tea (15 min) at 9.45 am, Toilets and Hot water for Tea and Coffee available.

There will be two walks. Long Walk approx 10 km walk into Walhalla. Short Walk approx 6 km walk into Walhalla. Non Walkers Activities - Magnificent scenery, Shops, Cafe, Hotel, Goldmine Tour and possibly a short ride on the narrow gauge Train to the Thomson River.

Depart Walhalla 2.30 pm (SHARP). Heatherdale Station 4.50 pm approx, Bus will stop in Service lane of Whitehorse Rd near Heatherdale Rd intersection. Finish Trip 5.00 pm. approx. Service lane of Whitehorse Rd, opposite Nunawading Civic Car Park.

Maps Melway Map X928 D 5, and Walhalla Self Guided Visitors Map.

Cost \$35 per person, Max Bus Capacity 50 people. NO PHONE BOOKINGS. Seats must reserved and this can only be done by payment of \$35. Cash, Cheque payable to the "Melbourne Walking Club" to Graeme Barker, 3 Buxton Rd, Mitcham 3132.

Mallacoota - Croajingolong National Park Trip

The Club trip to Mallacoota and Croajingolong in March 2018 is now **fully booked**.

Those who have booked may still contact Kim Rosen by email on: kimtjrosen@yahoo.com or mobile 0422 804 816.

Bushwalking News Victoria



Leadership Training

Bushwalking Victoria is offering a weekend course in leadership for members of clubs who would like to lead walks. The course will cover the topics of leadership, planning, conducting a walk, risk management, walk administration and emergency management. The course is given by BWV Board members in a very helpful and informative way where you can meet and work cooperatively with trainee leaders from other clubs.

Date: Saturday & Sunday, 7 & 8 April 2018.

Times: 8.45am - 4pm (earlier finish on Sunday).

Location: Outdoor Recreation House - Conference Room, Westerfolds Park (Melways 33 G3), Fitzsimmons Lane, Templestowe.

What to bring: BYO lunch, compass (preferably Silva brand), pen, grey lead pencils, ruler.

What's provided: Morning & afternoon tea, maps, BMLC book.

Registration and Enquiries: judy@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au

Registration Closes: 1 March 2018.

Defibrillator Training

Bushwalking Victoria has been successful with their application for a Defibrillator. This Defibrillator will be for use of member Bushwalking Clubs. As part of the commitment to the grant, Defibrillator training has to be conducted. Bushwalking Victoria is seeking expressions of interest of bushwalking clubs who would like to send a representative from their club for some training.

Anyone interested should advise Patsy or Simone at:
admin@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au

Hawkweed Eradication Program

The Volunteer recruitment is now open for the 2017/2018 season of Falls Creek Hawkweed Eradication Program Volunteer Surveys.

As you may know, Hawkweeds are a highly invasive pest plant species which could cause major environmental damage in alpine & sub-alpine areas of Australia if not eradicated early.

Participating in the Falls Creek Volunteer surveys is a great way to help protect the Victorian Alps from this dangerous weed, as well as a fantastic opportunity to enjoy the magnificent alpine environment during the green summer months.

The dates for the 2017/2018 Season are provided below:

Session 1: Monday 11th – Friday 15th December 2017

Session 2: Monday 18th – Friday 22nd December 2017

Session 3: Tuesday 2nd – Friday 5th January 2018

Session 4: Monday 8th – Friday 12th January 2018

Session 5: Monday 15th – Friday 19th January 2018

Session 6: Monday 22nd – Thursday 25th January 2018

Information Flyer:

Could you please forward this email to your contacts and post the flyer on any social media, forum, newsletter, website, blog or notice board that may attract interested volunteers. Thank you.

What is involved?

Volunteers will be required for one week to survey the Alpine National Park looking for Hawkweed and need to make their own way to Falls Creek the night before the session start date. There is no experience required, all training is provided. Volunteers will just need lots of enthusiasm, a moderate fitness level, a good eye for detail and persistence required to survey the Alpine National Park for at least 5 hours per day walking through sometimes challenging terrain.

What is provided?

There is no cost for being a volunteer on this Project. Bunk style accommodation has kindly been provided by Falls Creek Resort Management. Transport will be provided to and from the survey areas each day. Parks Victoria will be providing catering for breakfast, coffee/teas, morning tea and a group dinner on the last night.

What will participants need to bring?

An information pack about the surveys and what to bring will be sent a few weeks before the Survey session starts. In brief - Hiking boots are

a must, gloves, hat, sunscreen, long sleeve tops and pants, wet weather gear, drink bottle, bedding and food for lunch, dinner, cold drinks, fruit and snacks.

New way of joining the program through Park Connect:

Parks Victoria is now using a **new** online system called Park Connect to register people on volunteer programs. If you are interested in helping to eradicate this alpine invader and would like to apply, you will first need to:

- Register as a volunteer at www.parkconnect.vic.gov.au.
- Once you're registered, login to apply for upcoming programs listed here and select the Hawkweed Eradication Program you would like to join.
- Once you have signed up to a Hawkweed Session on Park Connect, this ensures you are covered under the Parks Victoria Insurance Policy for this activity and you will receive an automated Park Connect email.
- You will then be contacted following your signup on Park Connect and will be sent further information about the program before your Session starts.

If you have any questions, please contact:

yohanna.aurisch@parks.vic.gov.au

Native plant species at risk from fungus import

From *The Age*, December 5th 2017

Bushwalkers and other travellers heading to Victoria and Tasmania over the summer are advised to take care to avoid spreading a fungus that has already placed dozens of native plant species at "immediate risk". So far, the two states have only identified the imported *Myrtle Rust* in nurseries, but its rapid spread along Australia's east coast in just a few years underscores the challenges facing biosecurity staff in all states to contain the fungus.

The devastating rust has been blamed for killing about 57 per cent of adult native guava trees, a common shrub along the east coast in just a few years. Some 380 species among the *Myrtaceae* family of plants, ranging from eucalypts to paperbarks, are considered susceptible to the rust.

"It's very unusual among rust fungi in that it's got an extremely wide host range," said Bob Makinson, a conservation botanist and vice president of the Australian Network for Plant Conservation, adding most rusts only threaten a couple of species. "There are about 50

species of immediate concern" in Australia, said Dr Makinson, ahead of a two-day workshop on myrtle rust control attended by government agencies and scientists that began on Tuesday in Canberra.

The fungus does best in moist forests and woodlands and has spread widely since its first detection at Wyong, near Gosford in NSW, in 2010.

With a few exceptions, such as the Clarence River catchment of northern NSW, the rust has mostly been confined so far to about 40 kilometres of the coast. It attacks new growth, such as leaves, preventing flowering. Seedlings are also particularly vulnerable, creating the potential for a rapid spiral decline of susceptible species. It is spread by microscopic airborne spores that can also accumulate on hats, tents and other gear used by travellers, such as bushwalkers.

Its entry into Australia is unknown. "It could have been somebody going for a bushwalk in Hawaii and then going for a bushwalk here," Dr Makinson said of its introduction to Australia. Increasing travel and trade are raising the risk from bio-threats for both wildlife and agricultural sectors. "What we're seeing is a very marked acceleration of the movement of some of these diseases out of their native areas and into new ones," he said.

The rust penetrates and infects leaves of susceptible plants. Treatment of diseased plants includes coating them with sticky sprays before their removal to avoid the inadvertent spread of spores into the air.

Standard washing-machine use with detergent will kill the spores on clothing. Similarly, bush travellers can concoct a mix of 75 per cent methylated spirits and 25 per cent water to spray on tents and other equipment to kill the spores, Dr Makinson said.

A spokesman for NSW's Environment Minister Gabrielle Upton said the state's government "is commencing a project under its \$100 million Saving our Species program to help manage the threat".

"The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney and Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan are part of a network of Australian botanic gardens raising awareness, providing expertise and establishing conservation programs in response to the threat of myrtle rust," he said.

"People carrying out activities where there is potential to spread myrtle rust to vulnerable species or plant communities are advised to take precautions to minimise risk," he said, adding the DPI website had more details about its management.



On the Flat Rock Walk, but where is the Flat Rock?

If undeliverable, return to:
Melbourne Walking Club
Inc.

Box 2446 GPO
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Melbourne Walking Club
Circular

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