

### **Timboon: Saturday 14 July**

*Walkers: Chris and Lothar, Shirley and Ken, Gwenda, Jim, Rosalie and Dina.*

Eight club members braved the very chilly/frosty morning to walk the Glenfyne to Timboon Rail trail. Lothar and Chris very kindly simplified arrangements by taking both cars to Timboon and walking back in the opposite direction, so no car shuffle was required, hurray!! While it was chilly, there was no wind and eventually the sun appeared once we all met at the renovated trestle bridge. One poor tiny (dead) possum was found on the track and popped into the shrubbery, better than being stood upon. The Distillery with heaters above us, was our lunch spot, of course, and concluded a very enjoyable morning walk.

*Dina*



## Cranbourne Botanic Gardens: Wednesday 1 August

<https://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/visit-cranbourne>

Botanists: Lothar (head curator, 📷), Coralie 📷, Jim, Linda

It was raining heavily as we left Warrnambool on the pre 6 am train but by the time we got to Melbourne the weather had improved markedly. When we reached Cranbourne (around 11) it was a beautiful day.

We followed the PTV recommendation and took a bus for about 10 minutes and then walked for about 20 minutes to reach our destination. We had a delicious lunch at the Gardens cafe before wandering around for a couple of hours. An impressive display of all Australian plants! Linda took the electric bus option and as the only passenger scored one on one commentary by the driver.

The 2:30 taxi returned us to the Cranbourne station to commence our long journey back to Warrnambool.

A lot of travel...but it was worth it!

*Lothar*





## **Mt Abrupt Working bee: Saturday 18 August**

*Diggers: Rob, Linda, Irene, Lothar, Jim, Mabel and Graham (Grampians Tracks Support)*

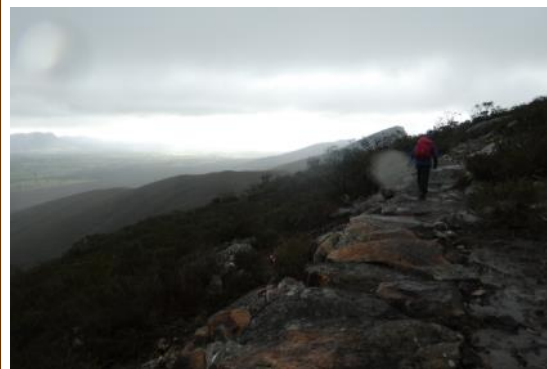
Those who met near KFC at 7:30 were greeted with a sunrise and the bottom legs of a double rainbow, and fairly soon after, an about-as-large-as-you-can-get rainbow. There was time for coffee at Dunkeld before our meeting time of 9 am at the Mt Abrupt track. "Drains! Drains! More drains!" was the message that Graham passed on from Kyle of the National Parks. And those four words, possibly expanded to "Even more drains" summed up our activity for the next four hours.

An occasionally bit of rain and one heavy hail storm dampened the day a little, but did provide proof that the drains actually worked: on our downwards walk, the amount of sand that had washed along the track and into the newly dredged drains was quite surprising and showed why drains are so needed in the Grampians' sandy soil.

We had lunch at the saddle, well above drain digging territory, after which the three of us who hadn't seen the reconstructed track (done by contractors for the Grampians Peaks Trail) went for a squiz and got a drenching.

Thank you all for coming. Graham was very pleased with our trenchant effort.

*Rob*



### **Russell Creek: Saturday 25 August**

*Stollers: Dina, Mary, Rob and (for part) Chris C*

On an almost windless, and almost sunny morning—excellent conditions, considering the recent weather—three walkers met near the Merri River for a morning walk to the far end of the Russells Creek bike path. The initial section was quite wet and muddy underfoot, but obviously, conditions were dry thereafter, once on the bike path. Chris joined us for the mid section of the walk, before looping back homewards. Much discussion centred on why the grass mowers found it necessary to churn up the trackside areas in order to keep down the vegetation, when the grass was not overlong. Naturally, coffee and hot chocolate at the P & P concluded our morning's efforts.



*Dina*

### **The Three Peaks Challenge: Saturday 11 August**

Rain 1, Walkers 0.

## The Fortress: Saturday 1 September

*Walkers: Rob, Mabel & Prudence*

The weather forecast predicted rain. Spot on. Nonetheless we set off at 7 am and reached our starting point on the Harrups Track a little after nine. The walking track is sandy-flat for a while and then rocky-up for a lot longer. There was never heavy rain, but never a time to think one's parka was no longer needed.

We reached the Oasis campsite at 11:15 to find that it had been enhanced by a decent waterfall in the usually barely trickling creek. We continued upwards to the highest point of the track and looked at the misty non-views and the wet rocks. Prudence suggested that this was as far as we should go and so we returned to the Oasis campsite for lunch.

The weather was finer in the afternoon. A couple of detours to the cliff edge gave us good views of Mt Thackeray, the Deep Creek catchment, and an only-for-the-day waterfall. Back at the car by 2:30 for the muddy drive to the highway. Coffee at Cavendish to round off what was, despite the weather, a pleasant day's walking.

*Rob*





## Kooyoora State Park, Melville Caves: 7–9 September

Walkers: Coralie 📷, Marg, Rob

Rob, Marg and I rolled into the Melville Caves Camp Ground at Kooyoora SP around 4 pm on the Friday. After selecting the best of the remaining sites, we had time to erect the tents and visit Captain Melville's Lookout, Melville Caves and Seal Rock before dining.

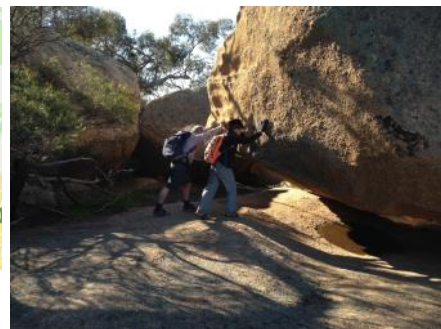
The next morning, we set out on the Long Rock Walking Track, stopping in on McLeod's Lookout and continuing past many large, granite boulders and along the 'long rock'. There were several short climbs and descents and the track was generally easy to follow. We tacked on a section to the Southern Lookout, where we were rewarded by sighting a small patch of orchids. It was a perfect day for walking and admiring views of the surrounding countryside.

After lunch back at camp we tackled the Eastern Walking Track. A loop track, eventually leading us to this circuit, was in much drier country and this was reflected in the sparser vegetation. Once on the Eastern Track our interest was piqued by information boards inciting us to search for green spider orchids. The evening we enjoyed a campfire, burning much of the stash we had collected from the roadside after the walks.

On Sunday, we visited the Moliagul township, where The Welcome Stranger nugget was discovered. We walked from the town to a picnic area where there was an obelisk detailing the history of the find. Following the signposted circuit winding through the bush, we saw a few remaining relics from the Goldrush era.

On the way home, we stopped to photograph a Bealiba household fence made entirely from white painted bed ends and enjoyed coffee and cake in Avoca at a café recommended by Marg. We finished our trip by visiting the hills near Ararat where we marvelled at the Spider Orchids in full bloom.

Coralie



## Circumnavigating Tower Hill's crater: Sunday 16 September

Walkers: Rob, Coralie, Jim, Linda, Ross and guest Fairly

Coralie's suggestion that Sunday's weather looked more promising than Saturday's was reason enough for the date change. The fact that *The Nursery* café isn't open on footy season Saturdays sealed it. Six of us set off at 8:30 from the lookout at the northern end of the crater and went clockwise to return 3 hours and 15 minutes later.

Light drizzle brought out enough parkas to mean the rain went away and ensure a pleasant stroll. The echeum along the east side were in full bloom. The new improved route meant less of a scramble up to the cairn for the first (official) view stop. No kangaroos in the quarry on the south side at the second stop, just piles of dirt and rock. The kangaroos had not disappeared however, and soon they were ahead of us in vast numbers. We fluked an easy route through the box thorn at the southern-most point of the lake. While we were resting for the third time on the western side's log seat, a local came over for a chat, and mentioned a few things at the bottom of the cliffs near Koroit that could be worth a visit: for the snake adverse, that might be some time off since Ross noted a very lethargic one near the car park.

With the walk completed, we headed to *The Nursery* for lunch and a course on phone answering. So finished an enjoyable morning.

Rob





## Timboon Railtrail: Saturday 22 September

*Cyclists: Jim (leader), Coralie, Rob, Jack, Ian, Fred, Lester, Fairly & Jo*

This combination of WBW and Jim's MWF riders met at 9 am at Bunnings before the drive to Naroghid and a 10 am start. We met Fairly and Jo at Cobden a half an hour later: they very sensibly decided that 25 km riding would be a sufficient re-introduction to cycling after a gap of a year or so.

A couple of the bridges were burnt in this year's bushfires south of Cobden. The fires also meant there were more trees over the trail than usual. A pruning saw cleared some of them but better hardware is required to make a non-stop path through the bigger trees.

We had a break at Glenfyne before continuing on our merry way to Timboon for a 1 pm lunch at one of its cafes. The morning's 32 km and 100 metres nett descent had to be undone in the afternoon. We arrived back at the cars at about 5, having taken a little longer because of two punctures. No snakes were seen, but there was something much better: an echidna.

Thank you Jim for a very pleasant day.

*Rob*

PS: there is no truth in the rumour that they are casting for a revival of *My Favourite Martian*.





## Wartook to MacKenzie Falls: Saturday 29 September

Walkers: Rob 📷, Coralie 📷, Mike, Mary, Marg, Rosalie, Dina 📷, a flock of sheep and a herd of tourists

Three cars converged on MacKenzie Falls at 9:30, and two left for Wartook and the start of the Ban-nah trail that would lead us to Zumstein's. The sign on the gate said "sheep ahead". Quite a lot of heads actually—they did a good job leading us along the sandy river flats until a fence intervened. The ground became stonier and we were soon into spider-orchid-spotting mode, with considerable success. A reasonable number of other flowers were seen.

At the Dad and Dave Weir (where Horsham's water is diverted from the river) we occasionally heard a "whomp, whomp" noise. Mike diagnosed that this occurred when the laminar almost-invisible flow of water being released to maintain a flow in the river suddenly become unstable.

After lunch at Zumstein's we looked at the under-repair historic buildings and the swimming pool before following the track to Fish and MacKenzie Falls and up to the car park. From the top of the steps, we counted about 60 people just at the bottom. While the cars were being unshuffled, a leopard orchid was found by those winding themselves down after our 15 km 5 hour walk.

Rob

