

Wartook Lookout to Halls Gap: Sunday 3 October

Concerned citizens: all those who booked.

Given W'bool's iffy Covid status at the time, the likely foul weather, and the distance to drive it was decided to abandon the exercise.



Bike ride around Warrnambool: Saturday 9 October

On a perfect morning for cycling Gwenda led Irene, Linda, Mabel, Coralie, Dina, Jim and Geoff on a 25 km ride that included the rail trail beside the Merri, the path beside Russell Creek, and the boardwalk overlooking Lady Bay.





A Killarney sunset walk: Saturday 9 October

Lothar, Chris S, Coralie, Mary, Jim, Rob, Chris M, Graeme, Geoff and Marjorie assembled at 6 pm at the Killarney Beach lower carpark with great expectations of a 7:45 sunset viewing. A walk along the broad beach to the Basin Track and back filled in our time nicely. Alas the clouds that promised a colourful display had vanished. We drove 100 metres from the lower car park to the upper car park for tea beside one of the most well behaved flocks of gulls one could hope to meet.



Swamps R Us: Saturday 16 October

Kiknophobia-free: Lothar (leader, 📷), Ali, Graeme, Chris M 📷, Coralie 📷, Mabel, Mary, Rob 📷

The aim was to explore some of the swamps/wetlands around Dunkeld and Peshurst, and hopefully see lots of bird life, including Brolgas, and have a bit of a walk. We visited Yatmerone wildlife reserve (WR), Bryan Swamp WR, Gooseneck Swamp, Brady Swamp WR, Walker Swamp restoration reserve, Greens Swamp, and Scales Swamp. We only had a bit of Scottish mist in the morning. Morning tea and lunch were in Dunkeld.

We enjoyed a bit of a wander at Bryan Swamp: a big open area with plenty of swans and a couple of Royal Spoonbills.

The highlight of the day was the return walk to Brady Swamp. We parked at Walker Swamp, followed a National Park management track past Gooseneck Swamp and saw many swans with cygnets. Brady swamp was further along. It was many times bigger and had a many more swans. Birds of prey flew overhead. In the distance we could see Sturgeon, The Piccaniny, Abrupt, and Signal Peak. Definitely worth a return visit!

Walker Swamp was a bit disappointing bird-wise. But Mabel nearly stood on a massive snake beside Gate 5 where we had a close inspection of one of the dams the Nature Glenelg Trust had put in to prevent the swamp from draining ... so that made up for some of the disappointment.

We didn't see any Brolgas—a return visit to the swamps in March or April might have more luck! Thanks to all for a great day out!

Lothar PS 1: No leeches! PS 2: Revisit scheduled for 19 Mar 2022





***Yatmerone
Wildlife
Reserve
at Penshurst
(left)***

***Bryan Swamp
in the Victoria
Valley (right)***



***Gooseneck
Swamp***

*Our feet were
nice and dry
walking along
the boundary
track of the
National Park.*

*Much croaking
from the
swamp.*

*Many, many
more than
seven swans a
swimming,
especially after
adding in all
the cygnets.*



Walker Swamp

Part of the Nature Glenelg Trust's restoration: a sand-bag dam across a drainage channel to restore the water level.



Café Crawl: Sunday 17 October

Gourmets: Chris M, Lothar ("leader"), Mabel, Mary, Theresa, and guest Chris S

We departed the carpark next to KFC at 8 am and 5 minutes later were seated at *Bohemia*. Just as well—the indoor limit of 10 was reached a few minutes later. We sat at one of the bay window tables, ordered coffees, and then leisurely ordered breakfast. Our poached and scrambled eggs and granola dishes arrived and were consumed with glee.

We walked to the foreshore precinct, through the Sunday market on Pertobe Rd, and then onto the breakwater. Chris S joined us briefly at this stage as we headed back to the skate park for coffees from the back of the *Xpresso Mobile Cafe* van.

We walked through Surfside 1 to the flume carpark and then via Merri St back into town. The leader made the point that for a Café crawl you had to go to at least 3 cafes ... and so to the *Two Tarts* we went. More drinks and mouth-watering treats!

Full as googs we headed back to the cars.

Lothar

Thunder Point ↔ Levys Point: Saturday 25 October

Participants: Coralie, Christine, Theresa, Simone, Mary, Linda, Rob, Gwenda, Rosalie

The forecast rain/drizzle did not deter nine bushwalkers leaving Thunder Point carpark at 8 am. We took the coastal track via the Wannan Water sewerage works to Wellington St and the rail trail to Swinton St, noting some ducks, egrets and a couple of white faced herons. There were cormorants and swans in the swamp.



The current access to Levy's Beach is a steep sandy slide as the sea has encroached into the dune. Besides strolling along the beach, we collected some of the beach rubbish—plenty of small micro-plastics are washed ashore. Easy access around most of the rocky points, but some preferred the upper route over the top and a slide back onto the beach. Just before Shelly Beach, we all abandoned the rocks and followed the track back to Thunder Point. Coffee for some at the Beach Kiosk when we finally had a brief shower of rain. A pleasant way to spend the morning.

Rosalie



Twelve Apostles to Princetown: Saturday 30 October



Despite threatening weather, six hardy souls—Lothar, Ali, Coralie, Rosalie, Rob 📷 and Dina 📷—met at the appointed time for this walk of 8 km from the 12 Apostles to Princetown. Even though state-wide travel was now permitted, we met relatively few people either on the track or at the tourist sights. The rangers did warn us that they expected to shut down the GOW track from Princetown eastwards, due to fallen trees from the storm 2 days before, but our walk was not impacted. The rangers were very efficient in removing the one fallen tree we saw on the track in the time between our start and finish. The walk involved lots of stops for photos of views and plants and was done without getting wet. We had lunch at Peterborough, including a coffee from one of the 3 coffee shops and Ali's luscious lemon slice (made with Rob's lemons!)



GSWW—Nelson to Lake Monibeong: Saturday 6 November

Beach-bashers: Diane, Mabel and Rob 📷 ✍️

Third time lucky for this walk. We met at Lake Monibeong, left our camping gear and Diane's car there, and piled into Rob's car to drive to the start of walk, pausing only for coffee at the Nelson kiosk. The first 8 km is on the beach, with some rocks to break the monotony. The track leaves the beach for 4 km giving good views from the cliff tops and a perfect lunch spot. Another 2 km on the beach before the inland route took us the final 7 km to the Lake, our campsite for the night.

The day had been chosen because it had a high low-tide at 7 am and an almost identical height low high-tide at noon. There was more than enough beach to walk on, with the sand mainly firm and never slushy. No chance of the usual scourge of beach walking, namely a beach stretching forever into the distance— the sea spray and mist saw us in our own little cocoon for much of the morning. Even better, the promised rain didn't come, making for beautiful weather for walking.

Usually we had the company of two oyster catchers, different pairs as we went from territory to territory. Asides from that, bird life was sparse, though looking at the photos cormorants featured. Floats topped the beach litter. A shark was the most interesting RIP find.



GSWW—a slight detour: Saturday 6 November

The 2019 Google Earth image near Nobles Rocks shows what had to be a man-made “thing”. Further, it wasn’t there in the 2014 image. Probably a dam to raise/restore a swamp’s level as memories of the Nature Glenelg Trust talk sprang to mind. Obviously it needed to be investigated and it duly was! Astute readers would be correct in concluding that the leader cunningly let the other two see if it was possible to cross the creek below the dam with dry feet.



GSWW—Battersby to North Nelson Road: Sunday 7 November

Satisfied walkers: Diane, Mabel and Rob 📷 ✍️

After a pleasant night at Lake Monibeong (Mabel possibly excepted after discovering her eight-legged sleeping companion) the order of the day was (1) collect Rob's car, (2) coffee at the Nelson kiosk, (3) drive both cars to the end of the North Nelson Rd, (4) leave Diane's car there, (5) drive Rob's to Battersby, and (6) start walking. It was perfect weather for it. Other than ti-trees not many flowers were out. Glimpses and full views of the Glenelg River gave us excuses for stops of a minute or two to admire. It was a quiet day: few birds, only a couple of boats and canoes on the river, the occasional wallaby but no echidnas, somewhat of a surprise given the number of treacherous holes that marked ex-ant nests in the track.

Pattersons Camp was our midday lunch spot and its walnut tree, food scavengers will be pleased to know, has lots of fruit forming. There was more walking along the road than I remembered, but all that was forgotten in the final couple of kilometres with their magnificent views of the river and its cliffs. With the walk finished, all that remained was an ice cream stop at Nelson, car retrieval from Battersby, and the drive home after a very enjoyable weekend. A couple of broilgas flew over the car near Bessiebelle!





Base camp at Blanket Bay: 18–21 November

Two days of walking on the Great Ocean Walk

Gwenda (leader, 🦅), Mabel 📷, Rosalie 📷 and Chris Mc

Friday 19: Shelly Beach Picnic Area to Blanket Bay

Thick, oozy mud,

Can't go over it, can't go under it, got to go through it!

Otherwise a beautiful days walk, beneath tall eucalypt forests, with lots of grunting from the many koalas sighted.

Saturday 20: Blanket Bay to the Cape Otway Lighthouse

Walking mostly along cliff tops, with glorious ocean views and pristine beaches. A river crossing at Parker Inlet.

A very enjoyable base camp, topped off with a delicious brunch at Port Campbell on the way home.



Around Tower Hill's rim: Saturday 20 November

Participants: Rob 📷 🦘, Lothar and Graeme

The 9 km circuit around the rim was its usual pleasant way to spend a morning: easy walking, good views, supercilious kangaroos peering down their noses at us, and swans with cygnets on the lake. The only exception to this bliss was a brief but close encounter with box thorns at the southernmost part of the walk. The kangaroo track usually followed between said box thorns and the lake was well and truly under water. Lunch on the second last operating day of *The Garden Café* rounded off the walk.



The Lake Linlithgow Triumph: Sunday 21 November



Riders: Diane, Jim, Rob, Coralie and guests Fred, Jack, Helen and Jeff



Not wishing to ride in appalling weather conditions, this trip was ridden a week later than advertised. Armed with Rob's excellent research from a previous trip, the group left the lake around 9.20 and pedaled south to the Peshurst-Hamilton road, crossing this to pick up the route to the small settlement of Tabor. The roads here were narrow but luckily the church-goers in cars were mindful of the 'heathen' cyclists.



About 20 km from the start saw us break for morning tea at Tarrington's *Catalpa Café*. Admired the hay bale art of Tarrington's *Laternenfest* on our way to the Hamilton-Chatsworth road. The leg along that road was, unfortunately, a push into the wind. We battled on until turning into West Lake Road, then North Lake Road and beyond to complete the loop around the lake.



Lunch was enjoyed on a bank of Lake Linlithgow. Here we ate, indulged in some bird-watching, and toasted the Grampians with Fred's homemade wine before heading home. If you'd like to join us on the ride check it out on Facebook at https://fb.watch/9q_i4lYKv-/.

Coralie





GPT: Cassidys Gap—The Piccaninny—Dunkeld: Saturday 27 November

Walkers: Rob ↯, Diane, Mabel, Kate and Rosalie

The opening of the Grampians Peak Trail meant the portions of track especially constructed for it were no longer verboten. Three such sections were on this walk, planned as a day walk or two half day walks as participants wished in what was dubbed a **4 Peaks Challenge**.

I defy you to come up with more intricate car shuffling: Rob would leave his car at Dunkeld to ferry people back to their cars at the end, Diane's car would ferry people from their cars to the start of the walk at Cassidys Gap, Mabel needed her car left at Dunkeld in case we was late and she had to leave at once to meet her babysitting commitment, Kate was only coming for the afternoon and would leave her car at The Piccaninny carpark around noon, where Rosalie's car would be since she was only doing the morning walk. Simple really.

Peak 1—Signal Peak: From Cassidys Gap the new track lulls one into a sense of complacency. This is rudely broken as the first of many stone steps is reached. The wind was strong, the weather looked ominous, but there were hazy views over the swamps to the east. Time at the summit was brief and we sought shelter from the wind in the same spot that we sought shelter from the wind in June. The walk to the Mt Abrupt track was as pleasant as it was in June, with the highlight being a couple of large patches of *Fairy Aprons* in the moss on rock slabs.



Peak 2—Mt Abrupt: The usual route soon found us on a wind-blown summit at 11:35. We left at once down the new track. On reflection we should have had nibbles near the top but the predicted 30 minutes to the new Mud Dadjug campsite seemed adequate. It only took 42 minutes, but seemed much longer, courtesy of many impressive flights of steps. Steps, like all great art, are best viewed at a distance. The vegetation in one part was quite different with a gully having tall trees but no understorey.

We had lunch on platform 11 of the camp site. It's open for business but the communal shelter and real toilet block are still under construction. We came across signs stating that the Piccaninny car park had been closed two days earlier for helicopter work.

Kate came up the track to meet us, the momentous event occurring about 15 minutes after we had left the camp. The distance of 11.9 km from Cassidys Gap was further than estimated and took 5 hr 20 min making it too late for Mabel to do the rest of the walk and still get home in time. Diane also decided to stop here. The resultant discussion on how each could be delivered to their respective cars almost beat the challenge proffered in paragraph two.

Peak 3—The Piccaninny: The well-travelled route took Rob and Kate to the summit where the sparkling loo of the Mud Dadjug campsite could be seen. Kate turned back at the Victoria Valley Rd to return to her car having achieved one peak and very much in eager anticipation of a work-related Christmas party.



Peak 4—Mt Sturgeon: By now the sun was out, it was hot, and the usual route was as steep as ever. There were several people on the summit, one of whom was watching the cricket below through binoculars. He phoned a friend to see who'd just got out. The new route goes down the south west ridge—hardly any steps—before turning sharply to sidle across the southern face of the mount. There are some classy metal ladders and walk-ways. Near the bottom a signposted junction has 4 km to Dunkeld or 1 km to the Mt Sturgeon car park. In other words **Mt Sturgeon now has a very pleasant circuit walk.** Time to do these two peaks was 3 hr 40 min for the 10.9 km.



Rail Trail working bee: Sun 28 Nov

The east side and some of the west were in pristine condition due to **Linda's** fortnightly Spring mows. The rest of the west was acceptable due to **Rob's** less frequent mows but did need a trim.

Two hand mowers were used to do this for reasons that would use up the allotted space. **Dina** did most of the mowing—her triumphant dispatch of the last blade is pictured. **Rob** picked up sticks, looked after the fire, and did some mowing. **Ross's** tree trimmings had but a short life on the burn pile.

The **burn pile** met its inevitable fate.



Bridgewater end of year do: 3-5 December

Eager Participants : Chris McA, Di D, Lothar 📷📷, Mabel, Mary (Sunday morning), Rob 📷📷



Friday: Bridgewater to Murrells Beach

An entrée to the main event. Mabel's fridge had died and so it was only Rob and Diane who arrived at Murrells Beach at the same time as 20 Portland Year 10 students on their walk/ride to Bridgewater Lakes.

We drove to Bridgewater Café in one car, had morning tea, admired the new stone work, and started walking the 15 km to the other car. It was a glorious day as the view (above) from our lunch spot shows. The beached containers are still there. The walk ended with enough time to drive back to buy dinner from the Bridgewater Café before it closed at 4. Found Lothar and Christine drinking coffee there.

An impressive marquee for a Friday black tie wedding greeted us at the camp. The choice of loud thumping music could be the only criticism of the group, some lingering until Sunday.



Lothar's menu of poached eggs, muesli and toast was a welcome breakfast treat.

Saturday AM: Blowhole to the camp

This clifftop walk is arguably the most spectacular part of the GSWW. The Petrified Forest is always interesting in spite of the wind turbines imposing on the views. We stopped often to look at the scenery and to try and pick out any seals leaping out of the water far below. We photographed a couple of mobs of kangaroos, and were blessed by large numbers of Australian fur seals below the colony lookout.

Lunch was champagne, prawns and potato salad.



Saturday PM: Bridgewater Lakes to the Blowhole

Two needed a coffee hit at the Café. They were picked up as Lothar drove us to the Bridgewater Lakes before he returned for his coffee hit and a rest. Usually ohing and ahing at the views and the breaking waves, which never quite coincided with the clicking of the shutter.



Lothar was well into dicing the vegetables when the walkers returned. The dinner of Tasmanian salmon with a medley of chopped roast vegetables, and poached pears, was yet another delicious meal.

Kris Kringle arrived. Veterinarian Diane mended the crayfish's claw using the "stuffing with a wad of alfoil" technique.





Lothar's Sunday breakfast menu had pancakes with a choice of raspberries, blueberries, maple syrup and mascarpone.

Sunday AM: Cape Nelson to Yellow Rock

This was again a clifftop walk with lots of opportunities to look at the views. The 'South Solitary' start of the walk has spectacular cliffs. We checked out the newish Mallee Camp, observed the overgrown old camp, and stopped for a nibble at the lookout in the Enchanted Forest. Many many upward steps later we were out of the forest and almost sprinting the last half hour to the Yellow Rock lookout.

A pleasant lunch at *Isabella's* at the lighthouse completed a most enjoyable weekend.

Thanks to all for the excellent weekend!
Lothar



To which the five of us add
*Lothar, a hearty thank you
for our well-fed and well
organised weekend.*

The "lump" on the lizard is a Southern Reptile Tick
One clump of the rare **Orthrosanthus multiflorus** is by
the track, in flower just like last year and the year before



Botanic Gardens, Albert Park and Russell Creek: Saturday 11 December

Strollers: Mary (leader, ) , Kim, Ken, Shirley, Dina, Rosalie, Lothar and Rob 

It was an early Saturday morning start for this pleasant walk around Warrnambool. Eight walkers made their way from Russell Creek in Bromfield St to the Botanic Gardens, entering to the screeching and squealing of bats starting their roost for the day. A majestic Lone Pine, under planted with poppies, provided a great point of interest—a plaque provided information on the Pine's origins and significance.

After passing the duck pond, manicured lawns and many other plantings of interest, the group made its way to the main entrance and onwards to Albert Park. This sprawling park, home of many interesting sporting precincts including the famous Reid Oval whose redevelopment project was well underway. Improvements could be seen already.

But without doubt the Japanese Garden was the highlight of the Park's features. Created to acknowledge the friendship of Warrnambool with its sister city Miura, it provided a serene area to reflect.

The intrepid walkers then proceeded along the race course boundary, through the Brierley Reserve, and onto the Russell Creek trail to return us all to our starting point. But not before coffees were enjoyed in the sun at the *Pig & Pie Bakery* in Mortlake Road.



Hopkins River and dunes behind Lady Bay: Saturday 18 December

Walkers: Shirley, Ken, Dennis, Kathy, Simone, Christine, Mary, Lothar, Rob, Rosalie 📷

This was similar to last year's ramble and just as pleasing. We started to the steady boom of a drum setting a dragon boat's stroke rate. The exit from the small beach was its usual scramble while the track by the railway line had fewer vegie beds. We admired the bridge art at Simpson St and Otway Rd. The surf views from the track along the sewerage line were unspectacular on an overcast morning. We tried out several seats: Millers Rest and two more donated by Rotary along the bush path to the Hopkins Bridge. Then it was more art at Blue Hole, a steep sandy walk to the beach, past the rocks at the Hopkins mouth, along the river edge to the bridge, and so to the hospitality at Proudfoots for coffee and scones.

