

Bushwalking NSW

NEWSLETTER

Edition 37
March 2017

Keep exploring, be amazed!



Homestead Creek, Fowlers Gap, Far Western NSW Photo: Sean O'brien

Contents

Free Leave no Trace training	2
From the Executive Officer	2
Clubs survey	2
The Bushwalker	2
Volunteer of the month: Madeleine Miller	3
Meet our community liaison officer: Alexandra Davidson	3
Tracks and Access.....	4
Public road sell offs alarm Bushwalking NSW	4
Personal locator beacons (PLBs).....	6
Conservation Update.....	7
Hunting for hawkweed in Kosciusko NP	7
Horse riding in the Weddin Mountains?.....	8
NEW!! Amateur botanist of the month.....	8
BWRS in Blue Mountains Boxing Day search.....	9

Bushwalking NSW

NEWSLETTER

Edition 37
March 2017

Free Leave no Trace training



We have an exciting opportunity for a limited number of club members to receive two days of Leave No Trace train-the-trainer training. It is designed to be a life-changing experience!

Are you passionate about protecting the beautiful environments where we love to walk? Are you interested in meeting people new to bushwalking and sharing your passion? Learn about this chance to help nurture nature in the [Training Programme Guide](#). Nominate yourself or one of your club members via [the nomination form](#). We wish you all the best in your nomination!

From the Executive Officer

Clubs survey

Thank you everyone for your wonderful response to our club's survey in January! We have received over 100 responses so far and Alexandra Davidson is continuing to follow up with responders and clubs. You still have a chance to add your voice to the [Club Survey here](#).

We will be analysing the results over the coming months, and feeding these into our plans. So far it is very clear that insurance is our most favoured service, followed by our newsletter, and being a united voice for bushwalkers.



The lucky winners of the [Telluride Mountainfilm Festival](#) double passes were: Marilyn Scott, Aidan Basnet and Steve Mahony. Congratulations to all. We hope you enjoy the films!

The Bushwalker

George Quinn gave an update on *The Bushwalker* at our February General Meeting, saying: "we need to consider:

- cost, readership, function and distribution
- enduring relationship and identification
- online & hard copy options, and relationship with the Newsletter"

We mailed a hard copy survey about the magazine to those receiving *The Bushwalker* by post last December and received 27 responses from readers who told us they were mostly satisfied with *The Bushwalker*. Eighty percent of respondents said they would continue to read the magazine if it was published only online. *The Bushwalker's* editor and designer are still keen to continue to publish the

Bushwalking NSW

NEWSLETTER

Edition 37
March 2017

magazine online, so please continue to send in your walk stories to the editor@bushwalkingnsw.org.au!

You can still complete [The Bushwalker survey](#) to have your say on the future of *The Bushwalker*.

A hearty thanks to Dick Weston, who has been delivering *The Bushwalker* to Blue Mountains outdoor stores forever. And of course, many thanks to our editor Roger Caffin, designer Barry Hanlon and proof-reader Roy Jamieson for tirelessly producing *The Bushwalker* for many years.

Bushwalking NSW is very fortunate to now have a dozen regular volunteers, in addition to our six committee members. You'll see the evidence of their efforts throughout this newsletter and all our activities. Our office is attended this year on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday.

Kirsten Mayer – Executive Officer, Bushwalking NSW

P: (02) 8003 5545 | E: eo@bushwalkingnsw.org.au | OFFICE HOURS: Monday Wednesday Friday



Volunteer of the month: Madeleine Miller

A hearty thank you to Madeleine Miller who completed her 6-month internship in January to return to university. Maddy has been the force behind our newsletter for 6 months, as well as performing a huge web-research task for the "It's Sweet to Walk Soft" project looking at Meet-Up groups around the state.

Thanks for all your help Maddy!

Meet our community liaison officer: Alexandra Davidson

Alexandra Davidson joined Bushwalking NSW as our volunteer Community Liaison Officer in January. Alexandra's role is to reach out to our clubs so please do give her a warm hello when she connects with you. Alex is currently searching for members to receive Leave No Trace training, collecting club insurance survey questionnaires, and analysing your club survey feedback.



You can reach Alex at community@bushwalkingnsw.org.au

Bushwalking NSW

NEWSLETTER

Edition 37
March 2017

Tracks and Access

Public road sell offs alarm Bushwalking NSW

Bushwalking NSW is concerned about the state government sell off of roads which it deems no longer of public use. Sales in some cases restrict or even prohibit public access to walking tracks, natural bushland reserves or national parks.

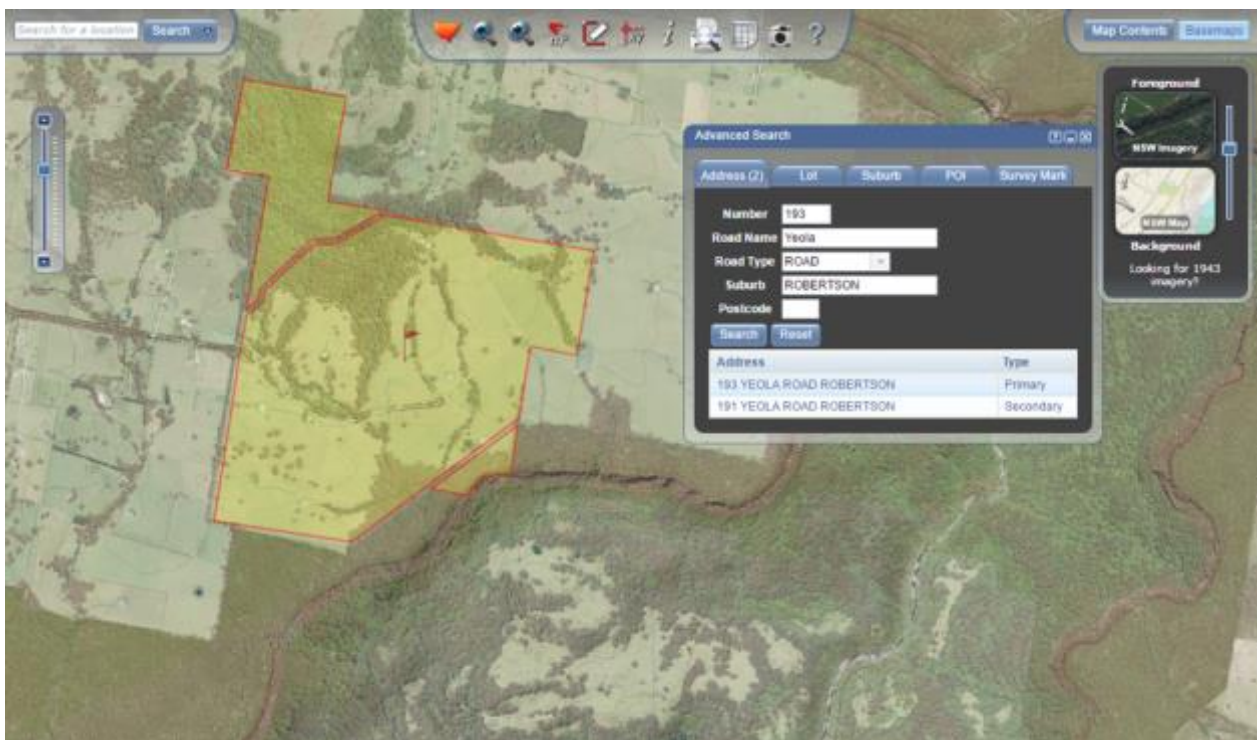
What can bushwalkers and bushwalking clubs do?

Monitor applications

It is vital that bushwalkers monitor their local area to identify potential crown land sell-offs in their region. Local walkers are often the ones most aware of the threats to track access. Visit the NSW Department of Industry — Lands [website](#) regularly to identify roads being considered for sell-off. Check your local newspaper for government ads calling for submissions on potential road sell offs.

Make assessments

You can view a topographic map of land proposed for sale by entering the property address and file reference number into the SIX website: maps.six.nsw.gov.au. This can be enough to indicate the need for a submission and you can make your submission online.



Bushwalking NSW

NEWSLETTER

Edition 37
March 2017

Visit the area and take detailed notes of how this land sale would affect track access for bushwalkers or threaten flora and fauna. Take photos to explain and support your case. Collect other evidence such as statements, environmental reports etc.

Report potential sell-offs


In addition to making your own submission/s, report threatened areas to the [Bushwalking NSW Tracks and Access Officer](#) with details of how it will affect public access to bushwalking tracks.

Make submissions by the advertised deadline

You only have 28 days from the advertisement date to make a submission, either as an individual or as a bushwalking club. The Bushwalking NSW Tracks and Access Officer will make a submission if possible. The more submissions which are received, the more compelling a case is made to government.

Hello Jessica

Regarding the proposed sale of crown land at 193 Yeola Rd Robertson Ref CL 577687. We have no objection nor comment about the section north of Yeola Road but we have concerns ranging from mild to major about any part of the proposal to the south and south east of Yeola Road.



as follows:

1. South from Yeola Rd is an access corridor to Dodds Pass and the narrow escarpment section of Budderoo National Park and although it is fully enclosed within the farm paddock it remains a legal access for walkers.
2. The southern and south eastern sections are not important for access but, if sold, they would be a loss of part of the very small remaining native corridor at the top of the escarpment.
3. **The north east section is critically important to preserve.** This part of DP 106991 projects over the cliff line of the escarpment and if this part is lost then access to part of Budderoo NP and Yarrawa state forest could be lost to all. For this reason we show the aerial photo to illustrate the problem. We would prefer the landowner to donate this section of property to the National Park but if that is not possible then an enclosure permit would be ok but requiring signage stating that this is access and either a stile or gate to provide that access.

Submissions must clearly outline the specific impacts of the proposed closure and should be accompanied by supporting documentation. Quote the file reference number and direct the submission to the Crown Lands case officer whose details are found in the advertisement. For more information see [Department of Industry— Crown Lands](#)

Bushwalking NSW

NEWSLETTER

Edition 37
March 2017

Personal locator beacons (PLBs)

The Australian Marine Safety Authority (AMSA) recommends satellite phones as the first safety product to be considered because they allow two way communications. However, here are some tips on how to use the more commonly used distress or personal locator beacon (PLB).

Before you head off

Always inform (email) your emergency contacts, where and when you are going, and who is in group, plus any relevant matters (e.g. health or specific terrain). A great resource is the [TREK intentions form](#) you can complete and provide to the police station nearest your walk.

Activation

If you are in distress and require assistance, first check that other means of two-way communication such as a mobile or satellite phone are not available. Then, to activate the beacon always read and follow the printed instructions on your PLB.



After activating your beacon, position it in a clear and open area as possible, preferably with 180 degrees or more of visibility, away from trees, buildings, rock faces, mountains, and vehicles. See AMSA's [deployment tips](#).

What happens after you activate your PLB

The beacon will be detected anywhere from 20 minutes to hours based on how visible it is to the satellites. So be prepared to wait. The Australian Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) receives the distress message, and will try to contact the beacon's registered owner to confirm who has the beacon, it's location and whether this is a distress or inadvertent activation. For Australian land based rescues, the ARCC hands co-ordination to the relevant state police.

Remember a rescue can take time, so those in distress need to be prepared to stay calm and remain near their PLB so they can be found. Make yourself very visible from the air by using a brightly coloured sheet of fabric, or if safe, make a smoky fire and extinguish it entirely when the helicopter approaches as their downdraft is intense. Pack up and secure your gear also against the downdraft.

Accidental activation

If your beacon is accidentally activated, switch it off immediately and contact the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) on 1800 641 792. There is no penalty for accidental activation.

More info?

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) website has great information on personal locator beacons, including where you can hire them in NSW: <http://www.bwrs.org.au/?q=faq-plb-epirb>.

Conservation Update

Hunting for hawkweed in Kosciusko NP

This summer three Canberra Bushwalking Club volunteers were part of a 35-member team which found a second infestation of mouse-ear hawkweed (MEHW) in Kosciusko National Park. The Main Range site has now been cordoned off and treated with further monitoring and survey work in adjacent areas planned.



What is mouse-ear hawkweed?

It is an aggressive Class 1 noxious weed which has the potential to infest Australia's sensitive alpine areas and damage our grazing and agricultural industries. Mouse-ear hawkweed (*hieracium pilosella* or *pilosella officinarum*) was first reported on Kosciuszko's Main Range - at Strzelecki Creek - by a bushwalker in January 2015.

Mouse-ear hawkweed (MEHW)

It may have been (unknowingly) introduced by walkers via their clothes, boots or camping gear. This weed also has previously been found near Falls Creek in Victoria.

Canberra Bushwalking Club volunteers have been involved in MEHW survey work since 2015 with Greening Australia and NPWS (NSW) through the Alpine Weeds Project. This year we were joined by NPWS volunteers who have been involved in an ongoing hawkweed control program in the Jagungal Wilderness Area.



Want to know more?

If you are interested in this important and rewarding work contact me conservation@canberrabushwalkingclub.org. To report possible sightings when walking in Kosciusko NP, visit this NPWS [webpage](#). To volunteer for the orange hawkweed program, visit the NPWS [volunteer activities page](#).

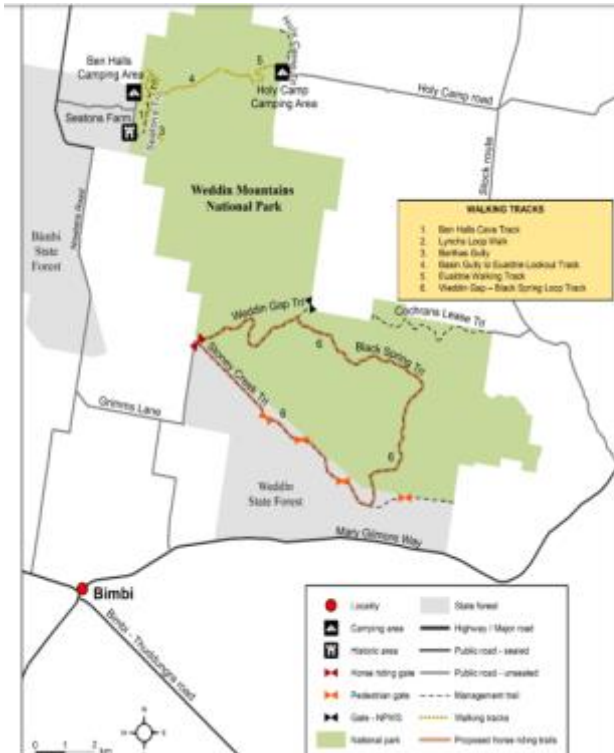
Bushwalking NSW

NEWSLETTER

Edition 37
March 2017

Cynthia Burton – Conservation Officer, Canberra Bushwalking Club | E:
conservation@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Horse riding in the Weddin Mountains?



Under a NPWS new proposed management plan, horse-riding will be allowed in the Weddin Mountains National Park. The amendment would allow “low-key” horse riding on a 20 km loop trail in the southern part of the park.

The trail is said to be relatively weed free. The plan of management also indicates the trail’s susceptibility to erosion and its vicinity to nesting sights of threatened species

Horses in natural areas can damage sensitive ecological communities, erode slopes and waterways and contaminate water sources for native animals. Bushwalking NSW’s official policy position does not support horse

riding in our national parks. Please read [the Amendment](#) and make comment from your perspective as conservation-minded bushwalkers.

The deadline for feedback on the proposed amended Weddin Mountains National Park management plan is **3 April 2017**.

NEW!! Amateur botanist of the month

How often have you seen an interesting or beautiful plant when you’ve been out bushwalking and taken a photo? The only trouble is you don’t know anything about it. Captions like “pretty flower” and “unnamed plant” flourish like weeds in your vast photo libraries

Email us your mystery plant photos. From April, we’ll be featuring one of your unnamed plants and providing a new botanic puzzle for other Bushwalking NSW members to crack. Read the monthly newsletter and if you can identify and tell us



Bushwalking NSW

NEWSLETTER

Edition 37
March 2017

something about the featured plant, email us. We will publish the correct/best answer in the next edition of the newsletter.

Get cracking then!

The deadline to email your mystery plant photo (or thorough sketch) submissions for April is **9pm 21 March, 2017**. Please include the rough location and time of year you saw the plant and any other details about the trip you would care to share. It's good to have a story. Email:

conservation@bushwalkingnsw.org.au

Sierra Classen – Conservation Officer, Bushwalking NSW | E:

conservation@bushwalkingnsw.org.au



BWRS in Blue Mountains Boxing Day search

On Boxing Day last year, NSW Police called on the Bush Walkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) to help search for a missing 64-year-old man on Shipley Plateau, near Blackheath. Despite the request occurring in the middle of the Xmas break, BWRS volunteers responded quickly. Our members joined a NSW Police co-ordinated search which included members of the RFS, SES and ambulance officers.

Little was known about the local man's last known movements, which hampered efforts to find him. The BWRS volunteers spent three days searching the Plateau's rugged terrain, including steep gullies and cliffs. Our vertical rescue trained members were able to contribute their expertise by searching the Plateau's extreme edges.

Sadly the man was not located. Inconclusive searches are always difficult for families of missing people, local communities and all of those involved looking for them. However NSW Police have thanked BWRS members involved for responding to the emergency incident and contributing their skills and time to a significant and challenging search.

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad is a widely-respected volunteer group whose members contribute their time and expertise to supporting remote search and rescues.

Join us!

BWRS is always keen to welcome bushwalkers as new members. Your bushwalking skills can be put to great use in a number of outreach activities as well as remote area search and rescue. You can download a membership application at www.bwrs.org.au. Our website also has heaps of [practical tips on bushwalking safety](#), plus registration details for St John's Ambulance first aid training.

Keith Maxwell – President, [Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad](#)