



Summer Program 2023-24

SYDNEY BUSH WALKERS INC

Covid-19 Updates & Conditions

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic the conditions which activities are operating under may differ from usual, and can change at short notice with government advice.

Please refer to <https://www.sbw.org.au/SBW-Activities-Program> for current information.

Integrated Program

THE INTEGRATED PROGRAM <https://program.sbw.org.au/> combines the Seasonal Program and any changes/additions which have come through the Weekly Updates. It is the most up to date source of what is happening with the club.

SIGNING-UP: Once you've perused the program and want to join a walk it is best to go to the Integrated Program and click on the leader's email address from there. That way the subject line & draft email content will be pre-populated – saving you some time, and giving the leader more consistent information.

WALKS GRADING

Day Walk:

A day walk means walking all day - the walks usually start at 8:00am and finish by dark. Often we have dinner afterwards.

Weekend Walk:

A weekend walk may start Friday night and camp at the start or early Saturday morning. On the first day, the party usually gets to camp after 3:00pm and before dark, (hopefully). Happy hour occurs before dinner and is a time when party members share 'nibbles'. The next day's walking could start between first light and 9:00am, usually 8:00 to 8:30am. We usually get back to the cars between early afternoon and dark. After dark finishes do happen, however they are usually not planned for. Often a dinner is arranged at a venue on the way home.

THE GRADING SYSTEM

The Grading System is shown at the bottom of each page and has 4 categories: (D)istance, (F)itness, (A)scent, (T)errain and (E)xposure

Distance S < 10km, M 10-19km, L 20-30km, X >30km; Fitness 1-3; Ascent 1-3; Terrain 1-3; Exposure

D - Distance:	S Short - under 10 km per day
	M Medium - 10 - 20 km per day
	L Long - 20 - 30 km per day
	X Extra Long - more than 30 km per day
F - Fitness:	1 Beginners - frequent long rest breaks
	2 Intermediate - stand up regroup, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea breaks, stops for views
	3 Strenuous, fit walkers only - short regroup, short meal breaks, potentially fast paced
A - Ascent:	1 Flat to undulating
	2 Undulating with one or more 200m to 300m climbs
	3 Climbs of 300m plus, or one or more large steep climbs
T - Terrain:	1 Formed tracks and / or open terrain, no scrub
	2 Sections of rough track and / or off track and/or creek crossing and / or rock scrambling
	3 Similar to 2 for long periods and / or thick scrub
E - Exposure:	Mild to high exposure to heights (yes or no)

Note that some walks may involve an **exploratory** component where the leader is exploring a new area or feature.

Q - Qualifying: Prospective members note that qualifying walks are indicated on the program with a Q

IMPORTANT: All Q walks require a good level of fitness. It is advisable that new members do a number of easier walks with the club prior to applying for a Q rated walk.

Walker Guidelines – before the walk

1. If you wish to participate in a programmed activity, contact leaders with reasonable notice. We recommend that weekend walks should be booked a week in advance and day walks should be booked by the Tuesday prior to the weekend of the walk. Many leaders send out walk information early in the week leading up to the walk, and later signups cause them additional work. At minimum, no later than 2 days before a day activity and 4 days before a full weekend activity.
2. Inform the leader of your level of experience and ability, and also any factor that may impair your walking. The suitability of any person taking part in a club activity is entirely at the discretion of the leader. Leaders may refuse to take any person on activities irrespective of whether that person is a member or not. By clicking on the leader's email address from the Integrated Program (<https://program.sbw.org.au/>) you will get a draft email with the information the leader would like to know.
3. Leaders may cancel an activity if there are insufficient participants (less than 4) or if circumstances are likely to make conditions unsafe.
4. Advise the leader early if you have to withdraw from the activity as this allows someone on a waiting list to go.
5. Visitors are only permitted with the express permission of the leader.

Walker Guidelines – on the day

1. Arrive on time. Leaders and vehicles (at their discretion) will only wait 15 minutes.
2. Ensure you're adequately equipped for the activity and all possible conditions with suitable clothing, hat, rain gear, sunscreen, food, sufficient water for the conditions (typically minimum of 2L), First Aid kit, torch and appropriate footwear. Check the club's website and New Members' booklet for details.
3. You will need to sign the activity sheet, after noting any hazards/risks that the leader will have indicated may be encountered. If you have any questions, ASK!
4. Let the leader know if you are taking any medication or have a medical condition that may require treatment.
5. Be prepared to follow the leader's directions. They are volunteers but will have experience.
6. Walk together - this enhances group safety. Always keep sight of the person ahead - if you're having trouble keeping up, you need to stop for water, a blister repair, rest or toilet break, TELL the leader. Never leave the party or fall behind the "tail".
7. Allow sufficient space to ensure that you are not injured by branches flicking back or pressuring the pace of the person ahead.
8. On activities of more than one day you will have to provide your own camping gear. Prospective Members can borrow camping gear from the SBW Gear Officer: gearofficer@sbw.org.au
9. We expect walkers to be prepared and self-sufficient.
10. Carry out all rubbish. Minimum impact is our aim: "Take only photographs, leave only footprints".
11. Have a sense of adventure and humour handy!
12. Leave a record of your intentions with a responsible person. All walkers should advise relatives/friends that they may return home later than planned due to unforeseen circumstances. Emphasise that they should wait ~15 hours after your expected return before becoming concerned.

PLEASE NOTE: All participants, including visitors, are reminded that they join in activities as volunteers. Your fitness is your responsibility. Bushwalking and other activities on our program have associated risks including but not limited to the risk of accidental injury. All persons joining in any activities of the Sydney Bush Walkers Inc. accept sole responsibility for any injury howsoever incurred and the Sydney Bush Walkers Inc., its office bearers and appointed leaders are absolved from any liability in respect of any injury or damage suffered whilst engaging in any such activity.

Legend		
Colour Codes		Abbreviations
Day Q Walk		NP: National Park
Overnight Q Walk		SF: State Forest
Social Activity		NR: Nature Reserve
Extended Walk		RP: Regional Park
Any other Activity		SCA: State Conservation Area

All Map scales are 1:25000 unless otherwise specified.

Electronic topographic maps can be found on

- <https://maps.six.nsw.gov.au/etopo.html> – select the map name from the drop-down list
- <https://maps.ozultimate.com/> - enter the Map Name into the search button on the right-hand side



Wadbilliga NP ©Lauren Curtis

Advance Notice and Extended Walks

**Tue 26 Dec
- Tue 2 Jan
Q**

Kosciuszko NP - Christmas in the Snowys 26th Dec 2023 - 2nd Jan 2024

Maps: Perisher Valley, Geehi Dam, Chimneys Ridge, Tom Groggin

Christmas in the Snowys 26th Dec 2023 – 2nd Jan 2024

Preliminary Expression of Interest

‘Christmas in the Snowys’ will be on again this year – from Boxing Day - Tuesday 26th December 2023 through to Tuesday January 2nd, 2024, staying at Smiggin Holes. Both David Trinder and I (Jim Close) are co-ordinating this year’s program, so to anyone who has joined us before, you know what to expect. For those who have not yet experienced Christmas in the Snowys – well, it’s just a lot of fun.

Windarra Lodge is available to us once again and we are negotiating on the availability of rooms at IMBAC and Clancy Lodges - directly behind Windarra Lodge.

All lodges have a combination of rooms i.e. up to 5 beds (combinations of queen, doubles and single bed bunks), double bed bedrooms, queen bed bedrooms, twin single or king single bedrooms or double single bed bunk combinations available for family, shared or single room occupancy.

Bathrooms are either ensuite or shared.

All lodges have well equipped kitchens and large communal dining rooms. There’s plenty of food storage cupboards, fridges and freezers – so bring all your food with you or pick it up at Woolies on the way through Jindabyne. There are also clothes and shoe drying rooms, washing machines and clothes dryers.

Each day there will be a number of day walks offered (weather permitting) or you may wish to lead one yourself. There are a number of favourites we like to do each year e.g., Main Range Walk, Ramsheads to Dead Horse Gap, Guthega to Consett Stephen Pass, The Chimneys etc. You can walk each day if you wish – or take the day off and sleep in, lounge around the lodge or drive into Jindabyne for the annual rodeo or treat yourself to one of the Boxing Day movie releases.

On at least one occasion we will be driving around to Thredbo for the hike to the Ramsheads and Dead Horse Gap or to The Chimneys - so you can always pop into Jindabyne on the way back to restock during the week.

Or if your thing is to do a little mountain biking, there will be plenty of opportunities to get out onto some of the mountain tracks or fire trails – so bring your bike with you!

And our party on New Year’s Eve has already gained legendary notoriety - so expect the unexpected!

Whilst we have not yet received the final costings for the lodges this year, we believe it will be comparable with previous years i.e., from \$300 - \$350 per person – shared room accommodation, for the week, depending upon room requests and final room allocations.

We have strict limits for the number of people able to stay at the lodges, so if you are at all interested, please let me know just as soon as possible and I will add your name onto the list in the order that I receive your responses. Over the next couple of months, as everyone’s plans become more concrete, and I have a better idea of the room requirements, I will be asking for confirmations and payments to secure your spots.

I will be overseas from 27th September until 2nd November and I would like to be able to ‘finalise’ the numbers before I leave.

Please contact me, by email or by mobile phone.

Grade: M232-Q

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<p>Wed 27 Dec - Mon 1 Jan Q</p>	<p>Kosciuszko NP - Jagungal from the north Maps: mainly Jagungal, Toolong Range, Denison A 5.5 day ramble in the magnificent high country surrounding Mt Jagungal. Start at Round Mountain, visit Jagungal itself, across to Cesjack's Hut, and then back north to Kiandra via Boobee Hut and Far Bald Mountain. The route will involve a mixture of fire trails and off-track walking through the open alpine plains. You will need to travel from Sydney to Round Mountain on 26 December in order to start walking on the 27th. We'll finish on 1 January with a short walk out in order to give plenty of time for the drive back to Sydney. Grade: M232-Q, about 75km</p>
<p>Wed 27 Dec - Tue 2 Jan Q</p>	<p>Blue Mountains NP, Kanangra-Boyd NP - Jenolan Caves to Katoomba Maps: Jenolan, Katoomba This is an off-track walk along the length of the Jenolan River from Jenolan Caves to the Coxs River and then partly on track to Katoomba. (not to be confused with the Six Foot Track). We'll camp along the two rivers. Pace will be relaxed with an expected schedule of 4 days to reach the Coxs River and two to three days from there to Katoomba. Depending on interest car shuffle or private bus may be needed to get the party to the start of the walk. First two days partly exploratory for the leader. Suited to anyone who wants to be in the wild for 7 days. Grade: M233-Q</p>
<p>Wed 27 Dec - Wed 3 Jan</p>	<p>Kosciuszko NP - Post Xmas hikes in Kosciuszko Maps: Perisher, Thredbo Lodge stay in Guthega. A variety of grades day hikes together with fellow members staying in Smiggins. Joint walk with Bush club. Grade: M232</p>
<p>Fri 12 Jan - Thu 1 Feb</p>	<p>Uganda, Africa - Rwenzori, "Mountains of the Moon"; gorillas; + Kibale NP [TRIP FULL] Maps: Rwenzori Mountains At last, post Covid and Uganda is in our sights! 7 day supported walk in the Rwenzoris with hut accommodation; non-technical climb to Weismann's Peak, 4,620 m. You will experience fantastic views of surrounding peaks and range; a diverse range of plant and animal life including, hopefully, the Malachite Sunbird and possibly wild chimpanzees; streams and waterfalls. It will be a tough trek with steep ridges, mud and boggy sections. Followed by 4 day wildlife safari and mountain gorilla trekking in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. And finishing up with a rare opportunity to assist on an ecological research trip to Kibale National Park, home to the greatest primate diversity on earth and a rich variety of other wildlife and vegetation. Small group only. Grade: M332</p>
<p>Wed 24 Jan - Sun 28 Jan</p>	<p>Kosciuszko NP - Watsons Crags Main Ridge Maps: Geehi Dam and Perisher Valley An attempt to ascend the main ridge of Watsons Crags from Olsens Lookout in the Snowy Mountains. Very difficult walk through untracked terrain. Expecting thick scrub and regrowth. Need to carry water for two days. Ascent ~1400-1500 m. Probably two high camps then return via Townsend Spur or alternatively drop down into Lady Northcotes Canyon. Last year the group I led successfully ascended a much steeper ridge from Opera House Hut. The goal this year is to access the longer gentler main ridge. Partly exploratory for the leader. Route: Olsens Lookout – Geehi River - Watsons Crags Main Ridge – Watsons Crags – Mt Townsend – Abbott Ridge – Townsend Spur – Geehi River – Olsens Lookout. Grade: M333E</p>

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<p>Wed 24 Jan - Mon 29 Jan Q</p>	<p>Kosciuszko NP - Cowombat Flat Maps: Suggan Buggan, Davies Plain Cowombat Flat is where the Murray River starts. I have tried five times to get there, each time from the north. It has always proven just a little too far for the time allotted. I'm going to nail it this time, for sure. This time, I'll start from the Victorian side. Four days walking, all less than 20 km. Day 1: drive to Victoria; Day 2: Bulley Creek campground to Cowombat Flat; Day 3: north to Carters Hut via the Australian Alps Walking Track; Day 4 returning to Cowombat Flat, via Cowombat Trail. On this return leg, we'll attempt to summit The Pilot (1829 m), the highest peak in the area. (This part depends on how thick the scrub has become.) Day 5: Cowombat Flat back to the cars Day 6: travel home It's a lovely part of the world, great for camping. All the pleasure of Kosciuszko without the crowds! Even the long drive is quite attractive! Grade: L222-Q</p>
<p>Fri 23 Feb - Mon 26 Feb Q</p>	<p>Gibraltar Range and Washpool National Parks. - Gibraltar-Washpool World Heritage Walk Maps: Rockadooie, Coombadjha, Cangai A 45 km circuit walk straddling the Gwydir Hwy, between Grafton and Glen Innes. Full pack walk. About 15 km each day (one extra day allowed for side trips). One of NSW's "Great Walks". Don't know much about it yet but hey, with a pedigree like that it must be good. It's a long way from Sydney, so don't forget to specifically allow for travel time when making your plans. Grade: M222-Q</p>
<p>Sat 16 Mar - Sun 17 Mar</p>	<p>Kangaroo Valley - SAVE THE DATE - Coolana Annual Bush Camp Maps: Burrier Come along to Coolana for the Annual Bush Camp! Full details to follow. SBW has a beautiful river front property called Coolana, situated in the Kangaroo Valley. A 60 hectare Wildlife Refuge. Coolana is a wonderful place to be at peace with nature. There are cliff lines, eucalyptus, rain forest, palms and grassy flats perfect for camping, beside a meandering river. Meet the wallabies and the wombats by torchlight, see their eyes glow in the dark. Sit back, relax and watch the clouds roll by. Take a walk, swim or kayak on the river. Haven't been to Coolana before? This is your opportunity... new members, prospective members, full members, inactive members... all are welcome! Grade: NA</p>
<p>Tue 26 Mar - Thu 28 Mar Q</p>	<p>Royal NP - Great South Coast Walk - Stage 1 - Kurnell to Otford Maps: Otford, Port Hacking The Great South Coast Walk is the longest (and newest) coastal walk in Australia and goes from the southern side of Sydney to Mallacoota in Victoria. 660 km in total. Completing it will be done in stages and if its anything like my recent north coast walks will likely take a few years. Stage 1 starts at Kurnell and will be a three day walk to Otford. Rather than take the Coast Track in Royal NP we will head inland. Our first night's camp will be at Bonnie Vale and our second night will be at Uloola Falls. The walk will finish at Otford. Both start and finish accessible by public transport. Short ferry ride across Port Hacking. Nearly all on track except for a short section off-track between the Hacking River and Garrawarra. Expect a few leeches. Grade: M222-Q, 50km</p>

<p>Sat 13 Apr - Sun 5 May</p>	<p>Nepal - Everest Base Camp, Ama Dablam Base Camp plus Rhododendrons Maps: Everest Base Camp, Nepal Map Publishers, available in Kathmandu</p> <p>Expressions of interest are sought for a trek to Everest Base Camp in April/May 2024. It is designed to traverse rhododendron forests that flower in April and the standard Everest Base Camp trek misses. This trek is designed to minimise the drawbacks of flying into Lukla to start the trek to Everest Base Camp (risk of altitude sickness, risk of weather disrupting the start of and consequently the whole trek) by driving to Paphlu to start the trek. The walk from here to Namche Bazaar will take in spectacular rhododendron forests in bloom and allow for appropriate acclimatisation. There will be an opportunity to visit Ama Dablam Base Camp (4,800m) during a rest day. After visiting Everest Base Camp (5,300m) there will be an opportunity to see a sunrise from Kala Patar (5,545m) before beginning the descent to Lukla and flight to Karhmandu. There is a Plan B in the event of disruption at Lukla airport.</p> <p>Grade: M232E</p>
<p>Wed 24 Apr - Sat 27 Apr Q</p>	<p>Mannus and Munderoo State Forests - Hume and Hovell Track Maps: Tumbarumba, Munderoo, Lankeys Creek</p> <p>Full pack walk from Tumbarumba to Lankeys Creek (62 km), following in the footsteps of the first explorers to find out what lies between Sydney and Melbourne. The first stage (between Yass and Tumut) proved very attractive in 2020, but then the bushfires came and wiped out the next section of the Track, to Tumbarumba. It's still closed. So, while they're fixing it up, why not take a peek at the final stage (to Albury)? We'll do just half of that. Three days walking, two, three or fours days camping, depending on where we decide to stay at the start and the finish.</p> <p>Grade: L211-Q</p>
<p>Fri 26 Apr - Mon 13 May</p>	<p>Scottish Highlands - Cape Wrath Trail [TRIP FULL] Maps: Various</p> <p>The Cape Wrath Trail is a bit of a misnomer - there is no constructed trail, no signposting and no fixed route. If you've walked the West Highland Way, this is NOTHING like that! From Fort William in the south to Cape Wrath Lighthouse (at the NW tip of Scotland) over 18 days, linking valleys ("glens") and passes ("bealachs") through the remote and mountainous North West Highlands. Dramatic scenery over mostly straightforward terrain including estate roads, historic tracks, faint deerstalkers paths and trackless ground. Plenty of bogs, and plenty of ascents, rugged in places. Optional diversions to various Munro summits which will increase the difficulty. Mixture of accommodation and wild camping. Several food resupply points. Possibility to join just part of the adventure.</p> <p>Grade: M233, 320km, 10000m ascent, more for optional Munros</p>
<p>Wed 15 May - Tue 1 Oct</p>	<p>France - EOI Hexatrek - May 2024 Maps: http://hexatrek.com</p> <p>HexaTrek is a 3034 km hiking trail, connecting 14 of the most beautiful national parks and crossing France from the Vosges to the Pyrenees. The path follows the highest mountain regions of the country, often nicknamed "l'Hexagone" for its hexagonal shape, joining together some of the most emblematic summits, natural wonders and wildest places. Stopping off in the most picturesque villages, HexaTrek is a journey into wilderness, tradition, history and French culture.</p> <p>This walk has stunning scenery, (ignore) concentrate instead on the fact this will be a hard walk with 138,000 metres of elevation change. Looking for expressions of interest from suitably fit and experienced multiday walkers.</p> <p>Hard days (plenty) maximum 25klms per day. Easy days (few) minimum 25klms per day. Budget – 12K. Very very limited numbers (3). Dates are approximate only. 140 days (just a guide) including 20 zero days (end to end).</p> <p>Grade: L332E, 3034km, 138,000m elevation gain</p>

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<p>Sun 2 Jun - Sun 7 Jul</p>	<p>Peru - Peru trekking - Cusco and Chachapoyas From Cusco, the Vilcabamba route to Machu Picchu and the Ausangate circuit, both featuring snow capped mountains. Treks in the less visited north eastern Andes from Chachapoyas – through the Belen valley to Kuelap archeological site, and Great Valley of the Condors. Ruins, mummies, sarcophagi, cloud forest, lakes, hot springs and more. UPDATE Nov 2023: Places still available. Grade: M231E, The only particularly steep passes are on Ausangate</p>
<p>Wed 12 Jun - Tue 25 Jun</p>	<p>Catalonia - Cami Gironi Maps: Michelin Espana Noreste This is the easternmost of Spain's Caminos de Santiago. It runs 232 km from Coll de Panissars (a low (350 m) pass through the Pyrenees) south-west through Catalonia to Montserrat, one of Europe's great monastic centres. Undulating, between 100 and 1000 m. Staying in hotels (I don't think there are any pilgrim albergues). R&R days in Gerona and Vic. On the whole, a rather up-market Camino. Grade: L221</p>
<p>Fri 28 Jun - Sun 7 Jul Q</p>	<p>Catalonia - GR11 - Catalan Pyrenees (West) Maps: Editorial Alpina GR11 Stages 23 -32 of the GR11, 118 km from the border with Aragon at Espitau de Vielha, eastwards to Andorra. The route stays just south of and beneath the summits of the Pyrenees, rising to 2757 m at its highest point. Distances most days are quite short, but the ups and downs are formidable - 1500 m not unusual. Staying in refugis and hotels. Easily extendable to other Sages of the G11, or combined with my immediately preceding Camino. Grade: M232-Q</p>
<p>Fri 9 Aug - Thu 22 Aug</p>	<p>French/Swiss Alps - The Walker's Haute Route: Chamonix to Zermatt [TRIP FULL] Maps: Maps of the Swiss survey, Landeskarte der Schweiz (LS/Carte National de le Suisse, www.swisstopo.ch) The classic Chamonix to Zermatt trek from Mont Blanc to the Matterhorn in the Pennine Alps: 225kms, crosses 11 passes and gains more than 12,000m of ascent and descent over 14 days of trekking; staying in mountain huts and some hotels. Discover delightful villages sitting in some of the most dramatic scenery in the world, wander meadows and forests, skirt exquisite tarns, and tackle the challenging Europaweg. Suitable for walkers with previous alpine trekking experience. I did the Tour du Mont Blanc hike this year and now I am keen to go back for more. Contact me for more details. Small group. As this is an overseas hike, participants will need to take out their own insurance as normal club insurance does not apply. Grade: M332E, Contact leader for more details</p>
<p>Sun 25 Aug - Sat 31 Aug</p>	<p>Ticino, Switzerland - Ticino Canyoning: Information Evening leading to Expressions of Interest Maps: Swiss Topo Ticino is truly the El Dorado of canyoning. Within a short drive of Bellinzona are scores of canyons, ranging from the touristic to very demanding. Ticino has the highest concentration of top quality canyons in the world, as well as beautiful alpine scenery and walking. I've undertaken 27 canyon descents in and around Ticino, and am looking forward to more next northern summer. I am intending to run an SBW canyoning trip to Ticino during late August / early September of 2024. Exact dates TBC. I will hold a Zoom information session at 7:30 PM on 19/10/23 to provide further information. Grade: M222</p>

Regular Activities	
Tuesdays	<p>Climbfit Indoor Climbing Weekly Tuesday night indoor climbing at Climbfit Macquarie. Leader will be there from 6. \$23 casual entry fee (\$30 if you need to rent a harness/ \$33 also includes shoes). No climbing experience required.</p>
Wednesdays	<p>Orienteering – Sydney Summer Series Sydney Summer Series is "a series of running events timed over 45 minutes that involve visiting a variety of local features, or checkpoints. These checkpoints are marked on specially prepared orienteering maps that are used to help navigate your way around the local parks, streets and bush tracks where the events are held. https://www.sydneysummerseries.com.au/ You can either walk or jog by yourself or with a friend. Cost is \$20 for Adults and \$10 for juniors (under 21) per event. We usually go to the pub after the event, it's a good way to socialise and discuss route choices.</p>
Thursdays	<p>Stair Training at The Rocks Join Thursday night stair training to build your fitness for hills. Circuit of 8 sets of stairs around The Rocks and Barangaroo. A chance to get to know other walkers. Send a text if you want to join. Be ready to start at 6.30pm from Agar Steps, Millers Point. Please note at times there may be alternative leaders for this activity. Check the SBW Integrated Program for the particular evening's details.</p>

Additional Expenses
<p>TRAVEL: SBW recommends fuel travel costs are recovered at 30 cents per kilometre shared by all the occupants in the vehicle, including the driver/owner. Drivers may however suggest any amount they believe appropriate. There may be other expenses such as tolls & park entry fees. In non-Covid times we encourage car sharing, it is environmentally friendly, helps with driver fatigue and it is a good way to get to know other club members.</p> <p>ABSEILING/CANYONING: On abseiling trips, fees may be charged for use of the ropes.</p>



Munmorah SCA ©Lauren Curtis

Summer Program Activities

2-3 December

Sat 2 Dec	Blue Mountains City Council - Cox's Road, Lockyers Road and an adit Starting at the historic wells on the road to Mt York, visit Barden's lookout and the Mt York lookouts before descending Cox's road to the Lockyers track head on Waltons Road. Return via Lockyers Road, passing an interesting old coal adit (off track). The walk is mainly on tracks except the initial section and end which are on the bitumen road and the old mine adit. 11km with 350m of ascent. Gentle pace. Lockyers Road was the second attempt to cross the Blue Mountains (after Coxs Road) but was never finished after the work gangs were transferred to Victoria Pass (which now carries the Great Western Highway). Grade: M232	Maps: Hartley
Sat 2 Dec	Blue Mountains NP - Grose Head North A companion piece to John Kennett's walk to Grose Head South the previous weekend, this walk goes from Vale of Avoca to Grose Head North via Paterson Hill and return. Do them both - this is a rare opportunity to be totally Grose. Grade: M233	Maps: Kurrajong
Sat 2 Dec Q	Gardens of Stone SCA - Pagoda Maze Find out why this spectacular area must be better protected for future generations. Park the cars at GR 276 193 on Moffits Trail. Climb north and explore several pagoda ridges, before crossing into Gardens of Stone NP to visit Palatine Rock and Tarpeian Rock with their spectacular views. Then on to the amazing Pagoda Maze, best part of which is located in the Gardens of Stone SCA and is therefore not properly protected. Scrambling and exposure. About 8km. Grade: S323E-Q	Maps: Ben Bullen
Sat 2 Dec	Royal NP - Sydney Summer Series I - Woronora River Explore Circuit Forum Drv - Pipeline Trl - Heathcote Rd - Heathcote Rd Bridge - Woronora River - Battery Causeway - Pipeline trl - Forum Drv Preamble; This river-walk has been inspired by my regular driving over the Woronora river at the bridge and especially more-so as the bridge was upgraded. Every time time I headed past, I always took furtive glances up the river and thought "I wanna walk up there!" Exploratory walk loop predominately for some river walking/swimming (about 5k+) to escape the heat and enjoy the various pools along the way. Therefore, this IS a wet trip with off-track creek walking; with the usual rock-hopping and swimming through the river rather than bashing the scrub via the banks. You will need to have appropriate footwear for a wet slippery terrain and the means to keep gear dry (quality dry bag or multiple-garbage-bags). You can wear a bike helmet or similar though not mandatory. Preference given to those wanting to get into river walking and possibly canyoning in the future (though I will not excude veterans as I prefer a balanced group). Please contact me if you have any questions, doubts; esp. gear-related...and please remember; we all had to start from somewhere! Grade: M222	Maps: Campbelltown
Sat 2 Dec	Blue Mountains NP - Stairs, Stairs, Stairs of the Federal Pass Golden, Furber, Giant and Fern Bower Stairs. The plan is to ascend and descend all four stairways. About 20kms all up. About 4000 stairs. A biggish day but taken at a reasonable pace. Grade: L221	Maps: Katoomba

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<p>Sat 2 Dec - Sun 3 Dec</p>	<p>Kangaroo Valley - Coolana - camp, swim, social, bush-care Stunning river frontage sanctuary. Camp out in this beautiful conservation area, swim, work out with some mowing and weeding. Enjoy the animals and walks such as the Scenic Circuit Grade: S112</p>	<p>Maps: Burrier</p>
<p>Mid Week</p>		
<p>Tue 5 Dec</p>	<p>NA - Leadership training program - Zoom information session This zoom session will provide club Leaders with information on the new leadership training - Enriching the Team Spirit & Nature Connection of Leaders & Participants - an online self paced program which has been developed and just released by Bushwalking NSW. Grade: NA</p>	
<p>9-10 December</p>		
<p>Fri 8 Dec - Sun 10 Dec Q</p>	<p>Kanangra-Boyd NP - Hellgate Gorge Black Range Rd - Warlock Ridge – Jenolan River – Hellgate Gorge 3 days by the Jenolan River to recce Hellgate Gorge for an extended walk planned in the area over the Xmas period. Hellgate Gorge may require scrambling and jumping in pools. If too challenging we should be able to go high, up around the gorge. Lovely and peaceful campsite for two nights by the river. Hellgate gorge exploration as a day walk. Grade: M222E-Q</p>	<p>Maps: Jenolan</p>
<p>Sat 9 Dec</p>	<p>Blue Mountains NP - Reverse Claustral Canyon This is a short duration but technical trip. We are walking in the normal way, going down to Thunder Junction, leaving ropes in situ, and then will return the same way. Trip involves abseiling in on single 9mm ropes, and then prusiking out on the same ropes using mechanical ascenders (BYO). Note: participants must be able to prusik from a swimming start, under a waterfall. This requires a degree of upper body strength. Wetsuit and head-torches required. Participants must pass a prusik kit test evaluation on a tree in the car park before being allowed on the trip. Grade: S332E, Canyon grade v3a3 III</p>	<p>Maps: Mt Wilson</p>
<p>Sat 9 Dec</p>	<p>Ku-ring-gai Chase NP - Bairne there, done that Bairne Track - Bairne Trig - Morning Bay - Bairne Lookout. A mix of fire trail and off track, with some rock-hopping thrown in around the foreshore. One great aboriginal site and a few other bits and pieces to keep the interest up, including remnants of occupation around the foreshore and an old track up to the lookout. Not a fast pace, but the scrub can be thick in places. Early start to beat the heat, see the carvings in their best light, and (with any luck) make it back to the bakery before it closes at 2pm. Grade: M223, Approximately 10km</p>	<p>Maps: Broken Bay</p>
<p>Sat 9 Dec - Sun 10 Dec</p>	<p>Kanangra-Boyd NP - Morong Deep [TRIP FULL] Maps: Kanangra, Yerranderie, Shooters Hill, Gurnang Walk, swim & boulder hop through the majestic sculptured granite gorge of the upper Kowmung River. Participants must be able to swim with full pack and have shoes with good grip on wet rock. Exit via Megalith Ridge (800m climb). Drive to Kanangra Friday evening for an early start Saturday. Grade: M333E</p>	
<p>Sun 10 Dec</p>	<p>Blue Mountains NP - Whungee Wheengee Canyon Whungee Wheengee is an excellent canyon, quite sustained and challenging. It is also dark and the water is usually cold. There are some short abseils, numerous little climb downs, one short duck-under, and many swims up to about 30m. Wetsuit, abseiling gear and head torch needed. Grade: M233E, Canyon grade v2A4</p>	<p>Maps: Mt Wilson</p>

THE SYDNEY BUSH WALKERS INC – Summer Program 2023-2024

Sun 10 Dec	Royal NP - A walk in the Royal National Park Otford Railway Station - Garawarra Ridge Trail - Burgh Ridge Track Burning Palms Beach - Burgh Track - Hacking River Trail - Helensburgh Railway Station Grade: M221, I hope to have a swim at Burning Palms and a walk to the figure eight pools.	Maps: Otford
Mid Week		
Wed 13 Dec	Kirribilli Community Centre - SBW Christmas Party Come and join us for the annual SBW Christmas party. Reminisce about the walks undertaken during the year and start planning for 2024. Meet new walking friends or catch up with walkers and swap tales tall and true. Drinks will be supplied but please bring a plate of your favourite festive food to share as per SBW tradition of "happy hour". There will also be a variety of awards presented to worthy recipients. We look forward to all prospectives and members joining us. Time: 7pm to 9pm Location: Kirribilli Community Centre, 16-18 Fitzroy St Grade: NA	
16-17 December		
Sat 16 Dec	Blue Mountains NP - Hat Hill Canyon Hat Hill Canyon is a beautiful walking/scrambling/wading/swimming canyon near Blackheath. No abseiling required, so together with its convenient location and excellent sections of canyon, it offers a great bang-for-buck way to spend a warm summer day. Need to be comfortable with a couple of cool swims, wading, slippery creek-walking, rock-hopping, scrambling and enjoying some of the best scenery in the mountains. If there's enough time we may head up onto Bald Head on our way back to the cars. Wetsuit recommended, unless its a warm day and you enjoy gritting your teeth through cool wades and swims. You'll also need a canyoning/climbing-style helmet (bicycle helmet is ok as an alternative), shoes that grip on wet rocks, and a dry bag for your food/clothes/car keys. Grade: M222	Maps: Mt Wilson
Sat 16 Dec Q	Blue Mountains NP - The Devils Wilderness : Dark Valley South of Bilpin, take the Browns Ridge Trail and descend via the Fishermans Track to the Grose River. Idyllic river scenery. Locate the historic 19th century Engineers Track on the far bank and walk upstream to Dark Creek. Follow the creek up to Dark Valley, named by Caley in 1804. Rope required on one section of Dark Creek. Then back to the Browns Ridge Trail. About 7 hours. Grade: M233E-Q	

THE SYDNEY BUSH WALKERS INC – Summer Program 2023-2024

<p>Sat 16 Dec</p>	<p>Royal NP - Sydney Summer Series II - Bundeena Bonnie Vale RNP Kayaking Maps: Port Hacking Bonnie Vale (kayak hire) - Simpson Bay - Port Hacking - Cabbage Tree Basin Inlet - Cabbage Tree Crk - Offtrack upstream explore - Return approx. same route Join me for second trip in the Sydney Summer Series, a kayaking adventure including some upstream exploratory of Cabbage Tree Creek and possible ledge jumping (optional). We will later parallel some of the typical walking track for those who have hiked from Heathcote to Cronulla before and its great seeing it from a different perspective. As this IS a wet trip with off-track creek walking; with the usual rock-hopping and river swimming. You will need to have appropriate footwear for a wet slippery terrain and the means to keep gear dry (quality drybag or multiple-garbage-bags). Also please ensure you carry an first aid kit at all times including during our up creek exploratory (small pack like typical Sea2Sum ones). Regarding Kayak hire, this cost is obviously borne on the SBW'r. At the time of writing it is \$60 for 4hrs (https://www.bundeenakayaks.com.au/), which for this trip will suffice or you can bring your own functioning kayak if you wish too. Logistically Bonnie Vale Kayak Hire is about 1.5ks and a 15min walk from the Bundeena/Cronulla Ferry Dock. Our proposed meet point would be at Bonnie Vale Kayak Hire. Grade: S211</p>
<p>Sat 16 Dec</p>	<p>Namadgi NP - Orroral Valley ACT Maps: Corin Dam, Rendezvous Ck Day walk around the Orroral Valley in Namadgi NP. Route to be determined partly by weather conditions, cooler weather discover some of the Granite Tors in the hills or hotter walk to nursery swamp. I will not be walking on Sunday but can suggest some good walks in the area if participants want to. Camping available in the Orroral Valley campground. Grade: M222</p>
<p>Mid Week</p>	
<p>Fri 22 Dec</p>	<p>Bouddi NP - Western Bouddi Coastal Excursion Maps: Broken Bay Escape the pre-Christmas craziness with a day enjoying the coastal scenery of this less frequently visited area in Bouddi National Park. We will be completing a scenic circuit, walking the beaches and scrambling and hopping along the coastal rocks and rock platforms as much as possible, with minimal time on established tracks. You can expect stunning coastal scenery and relatively few people. There will be some sections where a swim is necessary (only if ocean conditions are suitably calm). Participants must be competent swimmers, confident & experienced rock hoppers/scramblers and comfortable walking in close proximity to breaking waves. A sense of adventure will help, too. Route is familiar to me after successfully completing this circuit with a great group late last year. Mid morning start time to coordinate with low tide. Options for post walk food /drinks if interest. Can offer lifts to 3 x from Woy Woy station. Outside of driving, catching the Ferry from Palm Beach to Wagstaffe is another transport option. Grade: M213E</p>
<p>23-24 December</p>	
<p>Sat 23 Dec</p>	<p>Blue Mountains NP - Jinki Valley Mine to Dalpura Creek Maps: Mt Wilson From the Bells Line of Road, along Jinki Ridge and down the Jinki Valley to the old mine adit. A delightful walk to this point. But then it gets more challenging. We will try to go all the way down to the Grose River (secateurs required) and back up Dalpura Creek to another mine adit (tunnelled to drain the now defunct Canyon Colliery) and then complete a loop back to the cars. If we have to beat a retreat, there are plenty of other great things to do in the area including Wilkinson Hill and Jungabura Brook. Grade: M233</p>

Mid Week	
Tue 26 Dec - Mon 1 Jan	<p>NSW South Coast - NSW South Coast Short Walks Maps: TBA, Various</p> <p>I am going to visit the NSW South Coast between Christmas and New Year to study and admire what I hope are several interesting coastal geological and scenic attractions. I will be travelling alone but I also wouldn't mind some company for a small part if compatible walkers were nearby. Contact leader to discuss. You likely need to have your own transport and accommodation. I will be travelling between Batemans Bay and Eden, including Eurobodalla NP, Mimosa Rocks NP, Bournda NP, Beowa NP, and others. Possibly slightly inland as well. New for me. Most only short walks, mostly straightforward, mostly coastal, and time for swimming, photography, and other interests too.</p> <p>Grade: S212</p>
30-31 December	
Wed 27 Dec - Tue 2 Jan	<p>Blue Mountains NP, Wollemi NP - Mt Wilson area canyons / lilo Maps: Mt Wilson, Wollangambe</p> <p>Seven days of separate activities using Cathedral of Ferns campground at Mt Wilson as the base. Trips may include Wollangambe lilo trips, easier grade canyons up to Whungee-Whengee Canyon (Grade 5). No program at this stage - it depends where the bulk of the interest is. You can do one day or all seven. All trips except Wollangambe lilo trips require harness, canyon shoes, descender etc. Possible canyons includes: Serendipity, Waterfall of Moss, South Bowen, North Bowen, Geronimo, Bell Creek, Du Faur, Yileen, Dalpura, Better Offer, Koombanda, Dargans Creek. Party limit of 8 (unless other leaders participate). Let me know if you are interested and the difficulty level. Grades vary S111E to S223E.</p> <p>Grade: S222E, Canyon Grade 1 to 5</p>
Mid Week	
Fri 29 Dec	<p>Sydney Harbour - North Sydney Circuit Maps: Parramatta River</p> <p>After the excesses of Christmas, and before the excesses of NYE, freshen up with me, following the harbour foreshore west from Luna Park. Probably finish at St Leonards, though could continue further if people want to. Swim at Greenwich Pool.</p> <p>Grade: M211</p>
Wed 3 Jan	<p>Sydney Harbour - Taronga Zoo to Balmoral Evening Walk</p> <p>Commencing 4 pm. This is one of the most enjoyable Sydney Harbour walking tracks. This 6.5km trail swirls its way past secluded beaches, picturesque bays, impressive lookouts and historical sights. We finish at Balmoral Beach in time for the Annual Picnic.</p> <p>Grade: S111</p>
Wed 3 Jan	<p>NA - SBW Annual Picnic at Balmoral Beach</p> <p>An ideal start to the year! This is the annual SBW feature event. Come to the southern end of Balmoral Beach from about 6:00 pm and join with old and new members for a very enjoyable evening.</p> <p>Bring along a picnic meal or buy fish and chips at the nearby shops. No need to phone but if assistance is required call me</p> <p>Grade: S111</p>

6-7 January

<p>Sat 6 Jan</p>	<p>Sydney Harbour NP - Sydney Summer Series III - Shelly Beach Social Snorkeling Maps: Do you really need one! Shelly Beach (Cabbage Tree Bay) - Marine parade (Rockshelf below approx. 54 Bower St) - Snorkel - Explore around and return multiple times Join me for my third trip in this Sydney Summer Series; lets go snorkeling! Preamble; Come share your enthusiasm for the underwater world with me or maybe try it out for the first time. You will not be disappointed! I first did my scuba diving course here and a refresher before heading off to Central America. Over time have scuba dived pretty much all around the world (accept Asia) even including the remote elusive Galapagos Islands. For this trip, in the small protected bay of Shelly beach you will be able to enjoy the minimal water currents of this great intro the underwater world. You will obviously need to provide your own mask and snorkel. A Spring suit or more/less thermal insulation always can help, depending on the weather of the day as it can help with staying in the water longer. Furthermore to aid in your underwater mobility I highly recommend some fins (or flippers), though these are not compulsory (otherwise you will be kicking around more to keep up!), they will strongly help in 'getting-around'. My general plan is to drive-in early and snatch a free park and then 'base-camp' as such on the rock shelves (adjacent to Marine parade, rock shelf below approx. 54 Bower St) for a meet n greet and then gear-up and head out to explore the bay. Though fear not if you cannot come along early, I hope to establish a noticeable base for later arrivals, this way we can all meet in share in our underwater adventures. I look forward to seeing you underwater! Grade: S111E</p>
<p>Sat 6 Jan - Sun 7 Jan Q</p>	<p>Wollemi NP - Tootie Creek Overnight Maps: Mountain Lagoon Lots of swimming, delightful scenery. North of Mountain Lagoon, top of T3 trail to the junction of Tootie and Cabbage Tree Creeks, then downstream to a hidden campsite adjacent to a beautiful one hundred metre pool. Early afternoon arrival allows time for an ascent (daypack only) of a nearby peak named Not-Mount-Darcy which has outstanding views. Sunday move onto Tootie Cascades, a 400 metre long chain of pools, and 80 minutes later to the Colo River. 500 metre climb out back up the T3 to the cars but on track and relatively well graded. Grade: M233-Q</p>
<p>Mid Week</p>	
<p>Tue 9 Jan</p>	<p>Eastern Suburbs - Evening Walk Bondi to Coogee Beach An easy walk on a summer's evening along the coastal pathway followed by dinner (fish and chips or BYO) in a beachside reserve. Meet at the steps at southern end of Bondi Beach above the toilets. Grade: S111</p>
<p>Fri 12 Jan</p>	<p>Northern Beaches - Newy to Syd, the coastal route - #5 Palm Beach to Manly Maps: Multiple Dreamed up as a coastal alternative to the GNW (Great North Walk)... what would it look like if you walked from Newcastle to Sydney, but followed the coastline as closely as possible? The last stage ended at Patonga, finishing off the Central Coast stretch. (Although some have humorously suggested that I should be staying on the north bank of the Hawkesbury river all the way through to Windsor!) Now it's onto the much logistically easier Sydney stages. Expect a mixture of some urban street walking, beach walking, scenic lookouts, well established walking trails and superb coastal scenery. Maybe a little (optional) rock hopping here or there if suitable tides/conditions. Opportunities for a quick dip and even a potential cafe stop or two. Participants should be comfortable walking at a good pace. About 35km. Starting time from Palm Beach will be around 7:30am. Will be postponed in the event of overly hot weather. Grade: X211, approx 35km</p>

13-14 January	
Sat 13 Jan	<p>Blue Mountains NP - Hat Hill Canyon Maps: Mt Wilson</p> <p>Excellent introduction to canyoning, Hat Hill is an impressive short canyon that does NOT involve abseiling, however the ability to swim is mandatory. Participants must also wear a wet suit and helmet. Hat Hill Creek walk is beautiful and includes moving over moss covered boulders, logs and into canyon/restriction sections. Route Hat Hill entry track- Hat Hill Creek- Exit track (relatively short but steep 270m climb)- Hat Hill (excellent views across the mountains to Sydney) - Hat Hill Road.</p> <p>Grade: M222</p>
Sun 14 Jan	<p>Kiama Council Reserves - Kiama Coastal Geology and Photo Walk Maps: Kiama</p> <p>The coastline between Minnamurra and Kiama is a special place with interesting volcanic rock formations and great coastal photography opportunities. This walk is for admiring the geology, for photography, and for swimming, and will be done at a slower than average pace with regular breaks. Route: Minnamurra Station - Minnamurra Point - Cathedral Rocks - Bombo Headland - Bombo Beach - Kiama. Mostly easy walking on popular tracks, with a small amount of exploring over rock platforms and outcrops. Relatively short. Several swimming opportunities at beaches and a rock pool. Suitable for a warm day, but if very hot it might be postponed. Accessible by train.</p> <p>Grade: M112</p>
20-21 January	
Sat 20 Jan	<p>Blue Mountains NP - Wollangambe River from Boronia Point Maps: Wollangambe</p> <p>Beautiful river scenery, great swimming. Wollangambe 5 and 6 are access/exit points on the river downstream from the much more popular sections. Walk starts from the Mount Irvine Road. We walk along the for the first part but must swim the rest of the river section which is canyon like in character. The water is not freezing but is cold so wear a spring suit / thermals and consider using floatation. Fairly straight forward pass leading back to the Boronia Point Trail. Probably only about 10km and 6 hours.</p> <p>Grade: S223</p>
Sat 20 Jan - Sun 21 Jan	<p>Morton NP - Shoalhaven Gorge Maps: Caoura</p> <p>Long Point Lookout – Kingpin Mountain – Shoalhaven Gorge - McCallums Flat – riverside camping – return via same route.</p> <p>A leisurely paced overnight hike where focus is on experiencing the spectacular Shoalhaven Gorge and allowing time at camp to enjoy your hobby of choice, whether it's a swim or float in the Shoalhaven River, fishing, reading, photography or further exploration downstream. From the Long Point Lookout near Tallong we will follow the trail past Kingpin Mountain and then descend steeply into the Shoalhaven Gorge and follow the Shoalhaven River downstream towards McCallums Flat until we find a suitable campsite. My aim is to make camp around lunch time/early afternoon. Please note the descent/ascent from the lookout to the river and back is a very steep and challenging 500m elevation change and the walk following the river is expected to be overgrown and rough in parts. This area is exploratory for the leader.</p> <p>Grade: S232E</p>
Sun 21 Jan Q	<p>Gardens of Stone SCA - Wild Gorge, Dome Cave and Cosmic Cave Maps: Cullen Bullen</p> <p>Find out why this spectacular area must be better protected for future generations. Park on a fire trail off Sunnyside Ridge Road and walk east to the head of a tributary of Wild Gorge. Descend it, visiting Dome Cave and Pinch Point Circle along the way. Climb Split Rock, then move south east and out towards Carne Creek. Climb out on a tributary and visit Cosmic Cave. Exit via Split Rock Point and Pass. Re-connect with the cars. About 8k. Scrambling and exposure.</p> <p>Grade: S323E-Q</p>

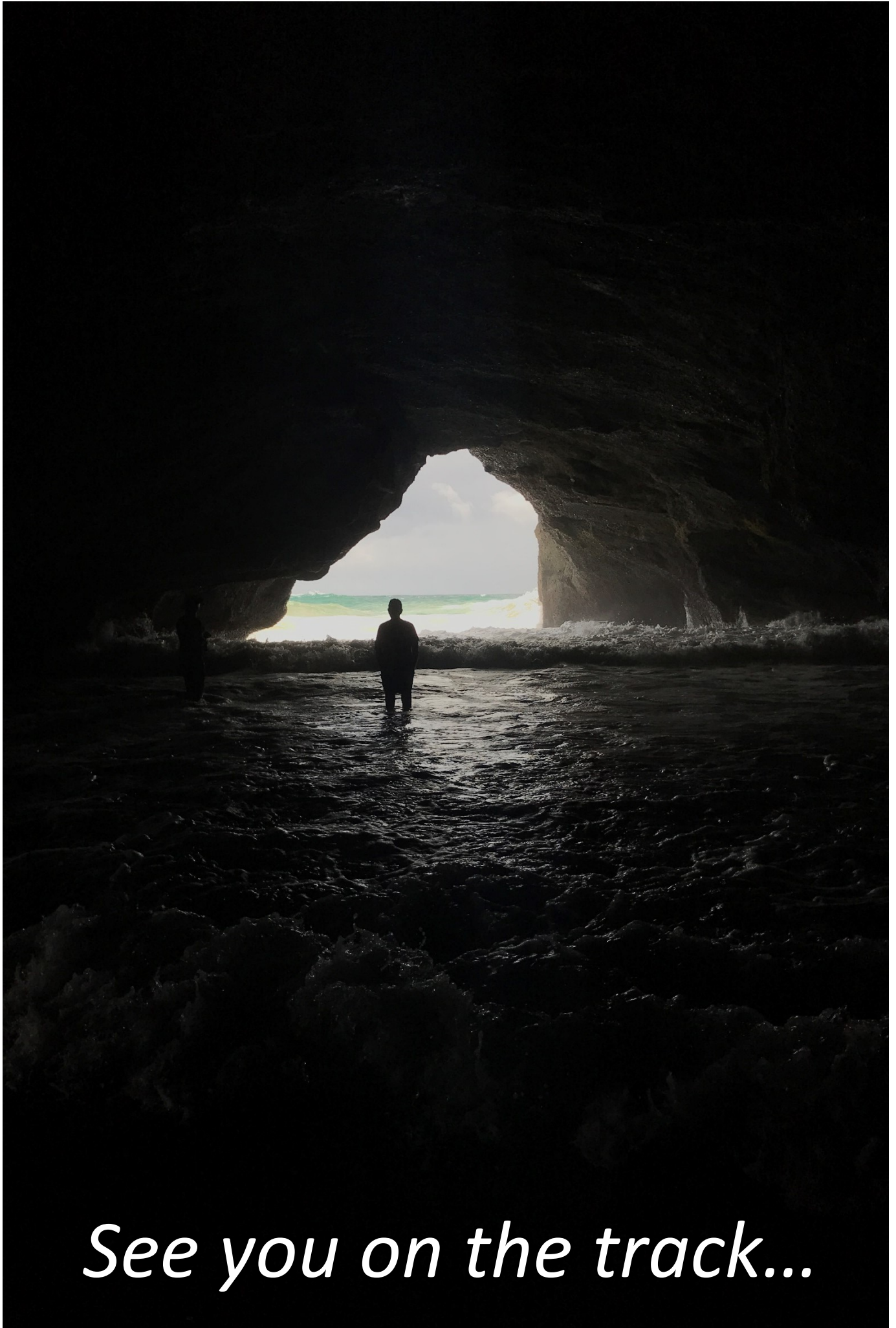
<p>Sun 21 Jan</p>	<p>Towra Point NR - Towra Point Nature Reserve Kayak Maps: Port Hacking Towra Point NR, located on the northern side of the Kurnell Peninsula, is an internationally recognised and important wetland area. It is one of the largest and most diverse in the Sydney Region. It is also only accessible by water. This trip is to explore the area, hopefully to admire interesting and uncommon estuary environments, vegetation, and bird life. Short land excursion and swimming opportunities too. Participants do not need to be expert paddlers, casual paddlers are welcome. The trip will likely involve a mixture of open and enclosed waters. I have not visited previously. Tentatively start at Dolls Point. Roughly half a day. Suitable for a warm day, but the event might be rescheduled in very hot weather or large swells. Bring your own kayak, paddle, and PFD. Grade: NA</p>
<p>26-28 January – Australia Day Long Weekend</p>	
<p>Fri 26 Jan - Sun 28 Jan Q</p>	<p>Tarlo NP - Tarlo River walk Maps: Chatsbury, Taralga River walking along the Tarlo River. Tarlo NP was not affected by the 2019-2020 bushfires and so most of the walking is through open forest with light to medium scrub. This walk will be almost all off track and follow the river and side creeks for much of the route. A few "short cuts" over the bends in the river and entry and exit points, though these will not be too strenuous as I'll be struggling to find a climb of 200m in the whole park. Access through private property to be confirmed. Area new to leader. Grade: M222-Q</p>
<p>Fri 26 Jan - Sun 28 Jan</p>	<p>Kanangra-Boyd NP - Morong Deep Australia LWE Maps: Kanangra, Rock Hill, Kanangra sketchmap Kowmung River FT - Kowmung River - Morong Creek, Savage Cataract (Morong Deep Upper) - Kowmung River (Morong Deep proper) - Megalith Ridge or poss Hanrahans creek ascend, depending on temps - Morong Falls FT - Morong Creek FT Morong Deep is one of the classic summer trips in the Kanangra, Members will need to be confident in river walking, rockhopping, scrambling and swimming fully loaded with a overnight pack (lots of compulsory swims) and there are some compulsory handline sections. All gear will need to be stored in drybags or similar. In addition, please ensure you allow some dry clothes to change into after our day's wet adventures; this is imperative for your overall health and well being and so there should be NO skimping on this as temps drop in the evening; I have seen people shivering as they have had no dry clothes to change into, simply to just reduce their pack weight! Small Party size due to limited camp space, though preference will be given to progressing members who have not been to this area or route before; though I'm open to some veterans to provide an experience balancing for the group. As with typical LWE's the Boyd River Campground will be overloaded and I therefore plan to car camp the Thursday night at different nearby location. In all cases, visit my FLICKR page of Morong Deep to see/decide for yourself; https://www.flickr.com/photos/164155312@N02/albums/72157710195459807 Or maybe checkout past SBW trip reports of Morong Deep to see if its your kind of thing. Minor car-shuffle required; so please remember a change of clothes, so as to not possibly dampen your driver's spirit and the car with a wet ass afterwards! Grade: M232E</p>

3-4 February		
Sat 3 Feb Q	Wollemi NP - Bowens Creek from Little Tootie From just north of the private property at Little Tootie, descend to Bowens Creek down a dark gully, past great cliffs and numerous cave formations that Yuri has discovered. Rope may be required on one section. Walk upstream and find a route to complete a loop. This walk is a building block towards a multi-day hike I am planning later in the year. About 7 hours. Grade: M233E-Q	Maps: Wollangambe
Sun 4 Feb	Blue Mountains NP, Wollemi NP - Wollangambe River Adventure Wollangambe River is becoming one of most popular areas in Greater Blue Mountains for bushwalking due to closure of Grose Valley. I led several walks in this area in the past including Dec 18 2016, Feb 12 2017, Feb 18 2018, Jan 21 2019, Feb 3 2019 , and recently Feb 4 2023 (cover photo of SBW March Magazine) and Feb 19 2023. If water temperature is not cold we will revisit Wollangambe River for walking, and swimming would be very enjoyable. As expected we will be walking in part of river and some canyons in addition to many swimming opportunities. The route may be adjusted depending on local weather. The planed route enters Wollangambe canyon 1 entry and exits near Bell Creek. This walk is for full members, but fit prospective members are most welcome. Party limit applies. Grade: M222	Maps: Mt Wilson
10-11 February		
Sat 10 Feb	Wombeyan Karst Conservation Reserve - Mares Forest Creek Canyon This trip is only tentative because the area is currently closed with an unclear reopening date. It also might not go ahead in very hot weather. I have long wanted to see this reportedly nice place at Wombeyan Caves. A relatively short and straightforward introductory walking canyon with wading, short swims, a little scrambling, and really interesting limestone geological formations, but probably lowish water levels. Wear shoes to walk in water with good grip. Wetsuits encouraged. Time for an optional visit to the caves (a popular tourist site) and to camp at the campground afterwards (pay for both). A later than normal start time due to the long drive. New for leader. Grade: S212	Maps: Richlands
Sat 10 Feb - Sun 11 Feb	Blue Mountains NP - Upper Grose Swim / Camp / Swim This trip is all about enjoying the two large pools above and below the Victoria Creek cascades. A late start on Saturday, a lengthy swim in the lower pool, and then down to the Grose River to camp at Burra Korain. Reverse the order next morning, this time stopping to swim in the upper pool. There should be a sweet spot when it's just warm enough to enjoy a swim, but not so hot as to make the climb out unbearable. Only about 6 km, but with up and down 700 m. Grade: S231	Maps: Mt Wilson
Sun 11 Feb	Bungonia SCA - Blockup Gorge Lilo This walk is tentative dependent on my walk the previous day and also might not go ahead in very hot weather. Blockup Gorge is an impressive part of the Shoalhaven River, south of the more well known Bungonia Gorge, with 300 m high steep red cliffs directly beside the river. I'm curious to try this variation and hope it will work. Walk to the northern end of the gorge, lilo up and back through the gorge (less than 1 km each way), then return same way. Route: Stan Jones Trail - Trestles Track - Shoalhaven River - Blockup Gorge - lilo side trip - return same way. The walk in/out is relatively straightforward but includes a 400+ m descent and ascent. You can join if you don't want to lilo, but it would be nice to have most of the group do the same thing. If you do lilo you need to be able to swim as the water is very deep. Grade: M232	Maps: Caoura

Mid Week	
<p>Mon 12 Feb - Fri 16 Feb</p>	<p>South Coast - Midweek at Erowal Bay Maps: South Coast</p> <p>The house is on the waterfront. It is roomy and has an attached boathouse and jetty – ideal for swimming! We come here each year for a great week.</p> <p>The date has been confirmed and the likely cost will be about \$120 - \$150 per person.</p> <p>Grade: S211</p>
17-18 February	
<p>Fri 16 Feb - Sun 18 Feb</p>	<p>Wollemi NP - Colo Gorge, Boorai Creek and Barakee Pass Maps: Colo Heights, Six Brothers</p> <p>A 3-day adventure. Day 1 – From Culoul Range Trail, descend to the Colo River. Establish a base camp. Day 2 – A recce day to explore a route up through the cliffs on the western side, and beyond for a future trip (around Barakee Pass). Day 3 – Walk up Boorai Creek to about GR 737 220 and then climb back to the ridge and the cars. About 20 km total. Great swimming in between walking. Partly exploratory. Scrambling and exposure.</p> <p>Grade: S333E-Q</p>
<p>Sat 17 Feb</p>	<p>Blue Mountains NP - The Devils Wilderness : Heery Pass Maps: Kurrajong</p> <p>Another adventure on the idyllic Grose River, south of Bilpin. Donnas Track to the river - beautiful waterfalls and huge trees at the junction. Locate the historic 19th century Engineers Track and walk upstream to the next major creek on the eastern side, and find a way up to the ridge (we may need a rope) and a very old logging trail. Option to return via Browns Ridge if the Engineers Track is in good enough condition. About 7 hours.</p> <p>Grade: M233E-Q</p>
<p>Sun 18 Feb</p>	<p>Sydney Harbour NP - Newy to Syd, the coastal route - #6 Manly to Circular Quay Maps: Sydney Heads, Parramatta River</p> <p>Dreamed up as a coastal alternative to the GNW (Great North Walk)... what would it look like if you walked from Newcastle to Sydney, but followed the coastline as closely as possible? This is the final stage, taking us through to the Obelisk in Macquarie Park that officially marks the southern terminus of the GNW. Expect a chunk of footpath walking, complemented by some beach walking, scenic lookouts, well established walking trails and coastal scenery. Maybe a little (optional) rock hopping here or there if suitable tides/conditions. Opportunities for a quick dip and even a potential cafe stop or two. Participants should be comfortable walking at a brisk pace. About 35km. Walk will be postponed in the event of overly hot weather.</p> <p>Grade: X211, approx 35km</p>

24-25 February	
<p>Sat 24 Feb - Sun 25 Feb</p>	<p>Barrington Tops NP - Below Williams Falls Maps: Barrington Tops, Carrabolla, Chichester</p> <p>Two day trips along sections of Williams River. Trip will only proceed if conditions suitable – will not proceed in the event of high or strong river levels. Early start on Saturday, so it is expected that participants will car camp in Chichester SF on Friday evening (approx 3.5 hours north of Sydney).</p> <p>D1 - Short carpool from Chichester SF. Commence walking at Lagoon Pinch, follow Corker track up to Scouts Alley (approx. 350m ascent) and then cut across to the base of Williams Falls. From here, follow the Williams River down to Rocky Crossing. This is a canyon style descent (no abseiling) including slippery rocks, multiple jumps, slides and use of tape/handline for sections. Participants must be comfortable with offtrack walking, confident/strong in the water and have experience with similar trips (e.g. non-abseiling canyons). Sections will be steep and slippery. Wetsuit and helmet required. Expect a long day.</p> <p>D2 - Commence from Rocky Crossing, follow the lower Williams River down to the Williams River picnic area. Earlier exit points available as needed. Return via the beautiful Rocky Crossing track through to Rocky Crossing. This will include some walking on rock platforms, slippery rocks, scrambling, wading and swimming. Includes a few hundred metres of gorge and there is one jump. Participants must be confident in the water. Wetsuit and helmet required.</p> <p>Grade: M233E</p>
<p>Sun 25 Feb Q</p>	<p>Ben Bullen SF - The Middle Valleys Maps: Cullen Bullen</p> <p>Gardens of Stone SCA/Ben Bullen State Forest west of the Great Dividing Range encapsulates, in a relatively small area, everything that is exciting and interesting about bushwalking – incredible rock sculptures, tall pagodas, narrow slot canyons, magnificent caves, verdant forests and more. This unique area is currently under serious threat from mining. Find out why this area must be protected for future generations. About 8k. All off track, some rock scrambling and exposure.</p> <p>Grade: S323E-Q</p>
2-3 March	
<p>Sat 2 Mar - Sun 3 Mar</p>	<p>Kangaroo valley - Coolana in Kangaroo Valley - bush care and social</p> <p>Weeding, mowing, general maintenance</p> <p>Grade: S112, Camping, swimming</p>

Images: Front cover: Bouddi NP ©Lauren Curtis; Back cover: Munmorah SCA ©Lauren Curtis



See you on the track...