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**New Membership
Fees**

\$30 per Person

Subs due 1st July

Sunraysia Bushwalkers

July 2015

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Affiliated with:



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Brush-tailed rock wallaby



*The Deceiver - *Laccaria laccata**



Sun dew

To view the complete calendar, please
follow the link:

<http://www.sunbushwalk.net.au/calendarofactivities.html>

FORTRESS ADVENTURES

The reconnaissance party comprised Roger, Karl & me, Meryl. Not having been to the Fortress in way too many years, I was keen to steal the Friday of the June long weekend to have an extra night camping up there. Peter & Russell were to drive down later, spending the night at Buandik campsite, & walking up on Saturday morning.



The drive down took about 4.5 hours to Deep Creek

campsite, about 4km beyond the turn into Buandik, and the site of a magnificent camp fire 3 weeks after our return to Australia in October 2004. Having neither time pressure nor the need to lug water, the track up to the Fortress, Oasis Campsite, was blissful. Sandy under foot for about 20 minutes, then the steady climb up to the cave (1hr). We paused here because it's such a great rock formation. To add to the relaxed mood, it was warm enough to be in shirt sleeves & rolled up pants – not bad for winter. There was plenty of variety in the vegetation, along with healthy regrowth after the fires. Variety to in the rocks we tramped over & between – from chalky ochre-orange sandstone to slippery grey granite covered with happy, fat mosses and red-brown sundews aplenty.



The eucalypts had a full crown of buds, readying for the spring. But those slippery rocks are always patiently waiting for a careless tread – crash to Roger and blooded elbow, but no worse.

Oasis campsite, as it is signed, (or Deep Creek on the map) 2.3 hours, was bursting with water. Indeed, there was even a waterfall. I've never seen so much water flowing through here, and it was quite amazing to see how quickly it diminished over just a couple of days. Quieter at night though.

We awoke to a low, heavy mist; a companion that lingered the whole day. The 3 of us ventured down & around to the North, in search of a previous rock overhang campsite. With the mist & fire regrowth, it was not to be found, but a good morning's amble with rain jackets on to guard from the mist in the air as well as the dew snared on the grasses & branches.



Brewing a 2nd coffee (!) around 11a.m., when Russell & Peter arrived. Over lunch, the campsite began to fill, reaching a maximum of 9 campsites & 13 people by evening, plus a couple who'd ventured onwards.

Our Saturday afternoon intention was a few hours of exploring around the Fortress rocks, as we'd done in the past.

It's always a mystery tour, with a few crevasse crawls and shimmying through squeezes and scratchy bits, but Roger & the rocks spit us out eventually – eventually just took a bit longer today! Flourishing grass trees with flower spikes forming rough, beautiful statues, occasional single red Correa flowers & a few pink heath clinging to their summer show amongst incredible, craggy, gargoyle rocks & chunky slabs.





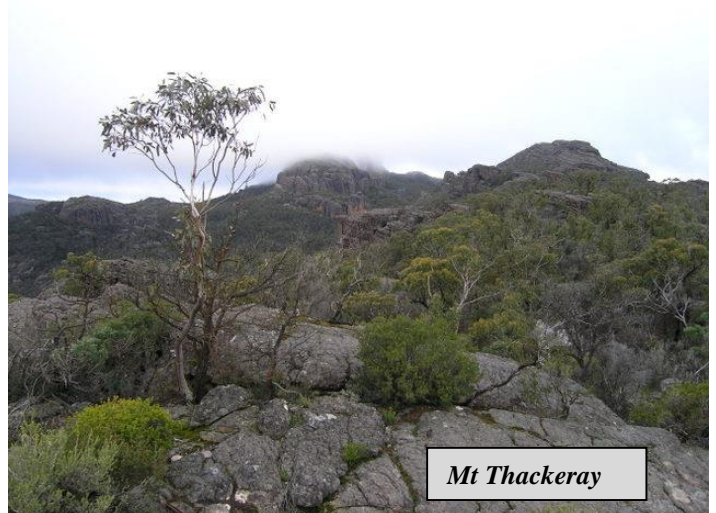
Orange Jelly – *Dacrymyces Chrysospermus*

And some gooey, soft blobs of high-viz orange fungus oozing quietly on dead banksia branches.

*Though widely distributed, this is generally an uncommon species except in North America. It is a saprotrophic, wood-rotting species occurring on barkless wood and like many other gelatinous species is capable of rehydration after dry spells. It is one of the largest Dacrymyces species. Taken from **The Book of Fungi** by Peter Roberts & Shelly Evans (Editor)*

Amazing, but with the emphasis on ‘maze’. Off track in the Grampians is always challenging, but with wet under & overgrowth plus heavy mist, you’ll gather why a degree of unease had settled over the quintet by 3.30 pm, accompanied by varying N-S vs E-W vs upstream/downstream type discussions. Hmmm.... fair to say, we held firm, & with Roger backed up by Karl (& me starting to wonder what a night in the bush without water, food or shelter might be like – yikes!), we eventually found a cairn – and then another one, and so on. Spirits definitely lifted once the split rock of the campsite revealed itself, & soon after we intersected our homeward track. A cat wash, warm clothes, dinner washed down with wine & port had us all purring and in bed by 7.30p.m.

Sunday brought clear skies and sunshine on the adjacent cliff face. With day packs only, it was cruisy & fun as we went off seeking to ‘bag’ Mt Thackeray’. First stop, about 30-45min up the track was another grand overhang, Fortress Cave campsite, (5 or so tent sites, plus another small bush camp prior to this). We scored tremendous views back into Billywing country as walked along the ridge, before descending down to a 4WD drive track. After a couple of hours on the track, and possibly with Mt Thackeray side track around the very next bend, we elected to turn back. This decision rewarded us with sighting 2 gorgeous charcoal-cinnamon toned rock wallabies & lunch, before hiking back up to the ridge & scampering out to take in the views that had been denied us on Saturday.



Mt Thackeray



We had the campsite to ourselves on our return, so lit a small fire and had a yarn or two as we supped & sipped & gnawed on chocolate.

Russell & Peter were the advance exit party, heading off early on Monday once again into a mist.

Highlights of the return journey were flowering thryptomene & spying 2 greenhood orchids – & the joy of being there.



Greenhood orchids

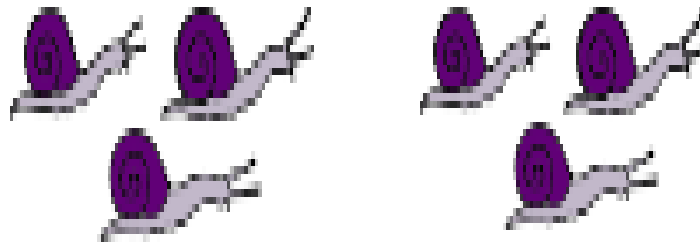


Membership Renewals for 2016 are now due

\$30 per person

Payments to our new Treasurer, Karl

Snail Supper



If six snails can eat 6 shoots in $\frac{1}{10}$ of an hour, how many would it take to eat 100 shoots in 6000 seconds?

Find out the answer at the meeting on Wednesday



CALENDAR

2015		
July 5-11	Edoewie Gorge, Flinders Ranges Walk through to Wilpena Pound	Contact Roger 0488121648
July 18-19	Mid-Winter Dinner Kukurna Homestead	Contact Peter 50221898
August 5	Meeting	
August 8 - 9	Pink Lakes, Day Walks Overnight Camp	Contact Roger 0488121648
August 19	Mid-week Walk	Contact Roger 0488121648
August/Sept	Scotia Sanctuary	Contact Meryl 50227676
September 2	Meeting	
September 6	Nowingi, Day Walk	Contact Roger 0488121648
September 16	Mid-week Walk	Contact Roger 0488121648
October 7	Meeting	
October 24 -25	Federation Walks Weekend Daylesford & Hepburn Springs	Contact Roger 0488121648 (details in April newsletter)
October 31 – 3 Nov	Heysen Trail - Day Walks	Contact Roger 0488121648
November 16th	Overseas Walk – Patagonia South America	23 day walk, early indication of interest required. Contact the Club at: enquiries@sunbushwalk.net.au

Next Meeting
Wednesday 1st July at 8.00 pm
at Drysdale's
2164 Fifteenth Street,
Irymple