



WARBY RANGE
BUSHWALKERS Inc.

FUN . FITNESS . FRIENDSHIP

warbybushwalkers.org.au

NEWSLETTER : December, 2025

Welcome to the December 2025 Newsletter, and what a great year we have to look forward to in 2026. As well as a nicely varied Walks Program (see separate email) there is our annual week away, which will be based at Healesville, in the Yarra Valley (April 29 - May 5, 2026; details later in this newsletter).

A reminder that this year's Christmas BBQ will be held on Saturday, December 20, starting at 6pm, at the Murmungee Memorial Hall. This is at 6 Nearys Lane, Murmungee, accessible by turning off the Great Alpine Road (or Buckland Gap Road) onto the Murmungee-Bowmans Road.

Specifically, from Wangaratta, take the Great Alpine Road, and drive 31 km to the Bowman-Whorouly intersection, then turn left onto Bowman's Road (signposted Bowman-Murmungee Hall).

BYO drinks and meat (or something else, if you prefer) for a BBQ. Crockery, cutlery and chairs are provided. Contact Marita on 0427 521 122 to book in (before December 18), and to advise if you will bring either a sweet, or a salad, to share.

CANOLA WALK : WAHGUNYAH TO RUTHERGLEN : WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

On September 3rd, three Warby Walkers, and four new casual participants enjoyed this very pleasant nine kilometre walk along the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail from Corowa to Rutherglen.

(The railway tracks have long since gone; the line opened in 1879, and remained in service until 1962).

This section of the rail trail is about nine kilometres long, and vast expanses of brilliant yellow flowers from the canola plant stretched along our path, and sheep and alpacas were also to be seen.

As we approached Rutherglen, the canola fields were replaced by vineyards, as to be expected in this noted wine growing area.

The recently completed Silo Art, titled 'Birds of Seasons' celebrates the local fauna, and was appreciated by us all as we neared the historic township of Rutherglen (named after a suburb of Glasgow, Scotland).

And the rain held off! [Greg]



MURRINDINDI SCENIC RESERVE WALKS WEEKEND : SEPTEMBER 12 – 14

On the weekend of Sept 12 – 14, thirty-one walkers descended upon the township of Yea and the Riverside Caravan Park, but that was fine, they were warned and prepared for us. I have always thought that the lovely Yea township is warranted of an exclamation mark after its name. Yea! Whereas Yarrck possibly warrants a question mark.

For this weekend, two days of walks within the Murrindindi Scenic Reserve, a park situated in the northern end of the Toolangi State Forest were on the agenda. Comprising 1,068 hectares in size, featuring a mixed species of Eucalypt Forest, tree ferns, cascading waterfalls and wildlife awaited our eager group.

For some, the experience of a club weekend walk was novel. First timer Shannon, who travelled with us, was so excited that she forgot her suitcase when she arrived at our home, and had to go back to hers and collect it. Then about 30 minutes into our journey she realised that her hand-bag with her money, and phone, was left behind in her car. Although penniless and technology poor, she was about to enjoy her time immensely.

We met Friday evening at 8pm in the caravan park's meeting room for a briefing about Saturday's walks. It was a wonderful little space for twenty people. Not so great for thirty enthusiastic walkers who at times have difficulty containing their excitement. I can only imagine the exhilaration of some members if given a Kinder Surprise treat!

Three walks were planned. One involved the complete Murrindindi River Walk of about 12km, a shortened version of the same walk at about 8km, and a mix of the river walk and the Boroondara Loop, which involved an ascent to the Wilhelmina Falls, to create an adventure of almost 17km.

Meeting at 8am the next day the group assembled for the drive to the scenic Reserve. The request of a later start was denied the night before, and as the morning progressed it was for good reasons. Saturday began with all walks starting at the Cascades Picnic Area, located at the southern end of the Reserve.

To facilitate the three different walks from the same location, but with three different end points, required 10 cars, an essential car shuffle and pre-planning that was bewildering to many, including myself, and I was the one who supposedly knew what was happening. Fortunately, Jeanette fact checked everything the night before.

At the starting point, I managed to assemble everyone into the largest circle that we have had for some time for introductions, and final instructions. This was no easy feat without the assistance of trained sheep dogs.

Heaven knows what casual member Kathryn thought of it all up to this point. Each group proceeded down steep steps to the cascades. This is a pleasant section of the Murrindindi River, flowing swiftly over rocks, and creating a wondrous sound amongst the dense vegetation.

From here the trail was a steady descent for about 2km. It wasn't long before each of the three groups spread out, and members of those groups even more so. Morning tea was taken by some walkers around 10.30am.

The long walk group had split into smaller groups. Walking along the track Neil was happily photographing many fungi, and encountered a wild orchid. It then dawned upon me that I wasn't positive that there was a footbridge for the short walk group to cross the river to the car at their end point, Water



Gauge Camp. Some panic set in, and then Jeanette and I did a double time march to get to the road to re-evaluate the situation. I passed some of our group having morning tea and explained my “Houston, we have a problem” moment.

Fortunately, we met some campers at Bull Creek Road, and its Campsite, with one who has visited the area for twenty years assuring me there was a footbridge at the Water Gauge Camp, where the short walk was due to finish. As it turned out I hadn’t needed to worry because they decided to end their walk early at this road, and instigated their own Plan B.

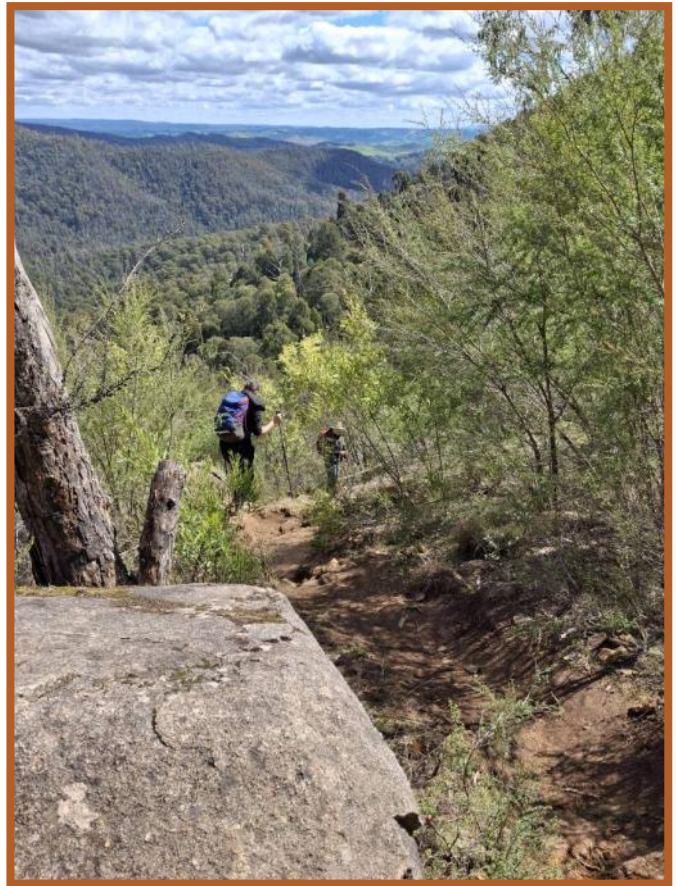
At the Bull Creek Road there is a bridge which you must cross to then continue along the river walk trail. Jeanette, and I, missed this during our reconnoitre in April, and spent 15 minutes aimlessly wandering around Bull Creek Camp, located adjacent to the road, looking for an obvious trail and signage.

Our long walk group continued after a sizeable break. At some point on this trail Murray spotted a lyre bird. That’s his secret for wildlife encounters. Get out in front, and walk quietly. It was to be the first of three he would observe. It must be his after-shave that attracts them.

The river trail encompasses several foot bridges, some short steep hills, occasional steps through a variety of open forest to damp fern gullies. It genuinely is a picturesque walk. We approached the well signed Water Gauge Camp and noticed the footbridge amongst the bush. Along the way we spotted a large wallaby on the other side of the creek that was adopting the approach of, “if I don’t move a muscle, you can’t see me”. But we could.

Near the 10km mark we turned to begin the Wilhelmina Falls ascent. Lunch was taken at a picnic table, but the supposed view of the Falls on various maps was non-existent. But as it was pointed out to me later, no-one climbed on top of the table to see if the view was from that vantage point. After lunch we walked up for about one kilometre, and then some of us went in to view the Falls which is at about the mid-point of their drop. It’s a popular spot for all hikers. Except for those that miss this detour on the trail.

Continuing to the top of the Falls, we rested again before the final four km leg of the trail, which completes the Boroon-dara Loop. There was still some uphill to be walked, and then a long strenuous descent that my calf muscles would remind me of for days to come about this day’s activity. Our group finally reached the end, which required a short walk along Falls Creek Road to the car at the Ferns Camp. [Michael Braendler] Elsewhere along the trail, Chris was taking his happy hikers the entire length of the river walk, and Rod



walking with the shorter group. Here's a brief description of their encounters.

After marvelling at the cascades, the 'easy' walkers set off. It was a cool morning here in the towering forest. Down, down we walked leaving the river. Eight of us delighted by the lichen gardens on fallen trees, at the curling of new ferns and the lovely track. An old timber track we all thought, and an old jinker, complete with log, confirmed our thoughts.

Lunch was beside the river, sitting at picnic tables that Helen said were 'luxury'. The steady haul back up hill gave Adrian an opportunity to show his skill with poles. With head down, elbows like pistons, poles pumping he conquered it.

The 'easybeats' completed a seven-kilometre walk of outstanding beauty. [Rod Davis]

Fourteen walkers chose the medium option for our first day of the Yea Weekend, 12 gals and two guys. Setting off for our 12km walk from the Murrindindi Cascades, we were instantly agog at the lush vegetation, and its variety – particularly the ferns. The route followed an undulating pathway, and there was as much interest in the landforms, as there was in the vegetation.

Some long climbs kept us quiet for a few minutes, but then the chatter resumed.

Birdlife kept us amused, with many lyre-birds scurrying around, and several amazing groups of black cockatoos flying past us. Morning tea was held after a few kilometres, and then lunch was at the Water Gauge Camp, followed by the last four kilometres of our journey to the suspension bridge. All we needed to do now was to complete the car shuttle and retrieve three cars from The Cascades.

Overall, a very enjoyable walk – a must to repeat next year. It was a bit tiring, but we all felt at peace with nature afterwards. All campgrounds that we passed were quite busy, and some of these campers were also bushwalkers, completing short there-and-back walks. [Chris McLaughlin]

Each walking group successfully completed their Saturday hikes, found a seat in a car and made their way back to the caravan park. Happy hour began around 5pm on the banks of the Yea River outside some of the cabins. Dinner was at the Country Club Hotel. where most of the group walked to that evening.

Day two of walks began at the more civilised meeting time of 9am. Prior to this Jeanette spotted a platypus outside our cabin hastily swimming along with the current. Today some members would elect for touring of the area in place of another walk. This included the Yea Wetlands and Cheviot Tunnel.

Those still prepared for another day of walking had two options, the 10km Mill Loop Track, or to the Wilhelmina Falls

viewpoint that does exist and return, making about an 8km hike. Each walk began at the northern end of the Reserve, beginning at the Suspension Bridge Day area, and would finish at the same spot without requiring any car shuffle. Hooray!

Here is Marita's description about the medium walk to the Falls.

On the Sunday 10 of us completed the medium walk, of 8 km. The walk meandered along the Murrindindi



River, then turned away from the river and headed up through the bush, climbing along a rocky path until we arrived at the Wilhelmina Falls. The Falls were flowing well as we've had rain. This was the half waypoint, and we enjoyed a break here. Some of us walked further up to get different views of the Falls, but I think everyone agreed that the best views were from the bottom, looking up at the Falls.

After the break we walked back the way we came, through the beautiful bush with wattle still flowering, and tall timber. [Marita Samuelsson]



The Mill Track group set off on our journey. After a short time, I spotted a wombat in bush alongside the track. We startled each other, and the wombat took a little tumble over some vegetation. The wombat afforded me a photograph, before moving leisurely on its way, and was gone by the time the rest of the group caught up. Murray too, was gone at this stage. Obviously keen to attract more lyrebirds out of their hiding places.

Along the river the Mill Track is lush and green. Higher up there is more dead wood, and leaves strewn about. Eventually it meets Jacksons Road after about two km. It was here that morning tea was taken. Brigitte was feeling satisfied. The hard uphill section was now complete. Unfortunately, she was reading her map incorrectly and we had the same distance of ascent ahead of us. Jacksons Road is more exposed to the elements than other trails, and it was a bit windy as we sauntered on.

During much of the walking over the weekend there were many fallen trees on the walking tracks. It was either a less than gracious climb over them, or for the more flexible among us, a limbo underneath. As we neared the end of our walk along Jacksons Road a huge fallen tree presented itself. No vehicle would be passing beyond this point. We proceeded over the tree, and onwards soon encountered our trail that would lead back through the bush to the top of the Wilhelmina Falls.

An abundance of healthy ferns grew along this part of the trail. It was at this moment a lyrebird darted metres in front of our group. Murray, Brigitte, Shannon and I all getting a glimpse of the bird scuttling away into the bush with it nowhere to be seen after that. At the top of Wilhelmina Falls some young walkers with their lovely young dog greeted us despite the Reserve being 'a no dogs allowed' park. This was the perfect lunch spot, as the sun did its best to break through clouds.



The next part of the trail was the descent down the Falls Track. Sturdy steel ladders, and the occasional posts and chains, not always so sturdy, helped navigate the more difficult sections.

A large steel platform offered wonderful 180-degree views of the Reserve, and from here, we continued down with a random view of the Falls in some places. Once at the path leading to the Falls, we soon encountered others who were taking in the sights and relaxing. The Falls cascade 75m down a steep granite rock face.

Our last stage of the walk involved more descent, but the most challenging was completed. It was a pleasant afternoon, and numerous walkers were passed. The river walk trail greeted us at the bottom,

and we simply walked back to the starting point. Another couple had two dogs with them (did I mention no dogs are allowed in the Reserve?) and were photographing a snake which had curled up alongside the trail. I completely missed this and was informed by Murray and others later.

Towards the end of the river walk is a walk-in camping area which unlike the rest of the park was deserted. Arriving at the Suspension Bridge we met the other walking group who were being entertained by Neil and his remarkable bush walking story of survival. A must to investigate and read if you have no knowledge of the extraordinary adventure. Spoiler alert, it all ends well.

As we drove back to Wangaratta, we visited the Cheviot Tunnel, and then took the scenic Highlands Road to view the Stone Circle. The viewing of this modest monument didn't allow me the opportunity to say to Jeanette, "well you've seen one now, no need to visit Stonehenge".

Thank you to everyone who came along to make the weekend enjoyable. It truly embraced the club's motto of 'fun, fitness and friendship'. As well as the unofficial one, 'walk, talk and gawk'. [Michael]

WARBY RANGES, NORTH TO SOUTH : FRIDAY 26TH, TO SUNDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER

This was a long weekend in the Warby Ovens National Park, walking the Warby's south to north, then through Killawarra Forest to Peechelba via Wallaby Hill, and the national park track along Irishtown Creek. There were 15 club members, plus five guests from further afield (Tasmania, Melbourne and Kilmore) and we achieved the traverse of our beloved Warby Range and the Killawarra Forest in excellent weather conditions.

Seven walkers made the 53 kms over the three days, with the longest journey being Saturday when about 23 kms was covered from Wenham's Camp to the Forest Camp, including ambling up Mount Killawarra. Three adventurers camped the two nights, and two of these carried packs all the way!

The Park seemed in great condition overall, with magnificent wildflowers visible all the way, and our very special grass trees flowering prolifically right along the range. The only obvious common weed observed, was St John's Wort, which is extremely difficult to manage in wilderness areas.

This special walk was part of 50-year celebrations saluting the pioneer work of the Warby Range Preservation Society; the Society began their efforts in 1975 with the aim of building a state park along the Warby Range, which was then only conserved in small sections.

When that task was achieved, the Society developed two extra groups to continue their endeavours. The strong Warby Range Bushwalking Club continues to this day, and the Friends of the Warbys after a 15 year or so "rest" carries on in the form of the Friends of the Warby Ovens National Park in 2025.

It was fantastic to have two WRPS original members (Adrian and Helen Twitt) walking for part of the journey on Friday with their daughter and granddaughter as well!! [Andy Kimber]



HAVILAH : SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12

This morning, Sunday 12 October, there were seven of us that drove to Havilah, where we started our walk. Havilah is an area of heavily forested hill country on the link road between the Great Alpine Road and the Kiewa Valley Highway.

Setting off, we walked on a bush road that led up along the ridge on the northern side of Havilah.

There was a mixture of pine plantation, with their unmistakable scent, and native forest, where the scars of the 2009 fires were visible. We had views towards Mudgeegonga, and the surrounding hills, including Mount Stanley, which we enjoyed through the gaps in the trees.

As usual we enjoyed having conversations with each other while we were walking, and also when we stopped for morning tea and lunch. After about four hours (13km) we were back in the cars, and then headed home for a rest. But we can't wait for the next walk. [Marita]

**ROVE NUMBY**

Numby Station is a 6000 hectare property in the upper reaches of the Lachlan River, upstream of Wyangala Reservoir (south-east of Cowra).

The landscape of Numby incorporates wonderfully diverse terrain - from fertile river flats to rolling hills and steep mountains, and is host to an abundance of native wildlife, birds and plant species.

The history of Numby goes back to the 19th C, but one of the main interests of this area today is as a bushwalking venue. Not only do the Crawford family run a sheep and cattle enterprise at Numby Station, but also offer a three day, fully escorted walking holiday, based at a historic homestead, with adjoining glamping tents.

The walks cover a variety of terrain on the Station, with great views of rolling hills, beautiful creeks to cross (see photo) and birdlife to photograph. After the day's walk there's Happy Hour, and a delicious three course evening meal to enjoy.



Members of our club who wish to book on this walk can receive a 10% discount by quoting the Discount Code: FRN100. More details at rovenumby.com.au

BEECHWORTH GORGE WALK : WEDNESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER

The Warby Range Bushwalkers were joined by a walking group from Bendigo to participate in a walk in the Beechworth Gorge as part of a week of activities enjoyed by a wider group of Bendigonian outdoor adventurers, staying in a Wangaratta Caravan Park.

On the Gorge Walk, there were fourteen walkers in all, and the visitors were enthusiastic to explore territory new to them.

The variety of orchids especially enthused the photographers, whilst others enjoyed the occasional vistas appearing when there was a break in the black cypress forest which covers much of the slopes.

A large koala, bemused by the incursion into its territory, was seen sitting at ground level as we walked past.

Having covered eight kilometres in warming temperatures, the pangs of hunger brought the walk to a conclusion, and an invasion of the Beechworth cafes and bakeries ensued, with some picnicking in the Town Hall gardens.

Following lunch, half the group went on to explore the Woolshed Falls, whilst others strolled the town before returning to Wangaratta. [Adrian]



FEDWALKS 2026

After the great success of this year's FedWalks weekend (in the Grampians) it is rumoured that the 2026 event will be based on the Great South West Walk (GSWW), near Portland.

The GSWW is a 260km loop, with hundreds of short walk options, through some of the best coastal walking areas in Australia. See the website of the Friends of the GSW (greatsouthwestwalk.com) for more details.

The club spent the 2016 Week Away exploring this beautiful area, so we must be ripe for a return visit.

Stay tuned to fedwalks.org.au for more updates as the year progresses.



MOUNT STANLEY : SATURDAY, 1ST NOVEMBER

Seven enthusiastic hikers travelled to Stanley to walk a 11.4km circuit of Mount Stanley last Saturday.

Setting off in dry sunny weather from the junction of Circular Creek and Mount Stanley Roads, we slowly descended along a gravel road enjoying wildflowers and birdsong (and plenty of chatter).

The observation was made that we were descending significantly when we ultimately needed to ascend to the summit. Spurred on by morning tea stop after five kilometres, we soon reached the base of the jeep track.

No photo seems to capture its extreme and persistent steepness. Having no alternative, we tackled it at our own pace, enjoying the wildflowers and anticipating the eventual sense of achievement and rewarding views at the top.

It didn't disappoint, in fact we had the summit of Mount Stanley 1050m picnic area to ourselves, and sat on some boulders in the shade eating our lunch.

We saw a lizard but no snakes, not even a snake lolly because Anne accidentally left them in her car.



After enjoying the 360 view from the highest boulder, we returned down the gravel road finishing back at our cars where we had a snake snack.

The total time was 10am-3pm, including break stops. [Anne Forde]

CUP DAY : TUESDAY, 4TH NOVEMBER

The annual Cup Day walk this year was held at Wahgunyah, circling Lake Moodemere.

On a cold spring day, that provided many weather varieties in one day, we completed a loop walk of about 12km from Pfeiffer Wines that took in the newish shared pathways along Anderson and McDonald Roads, before reaching the Murray Valley Highway and entering the Lake Moodemere Reserve.

A standing room only lunch, due to rain, was held at the reserve under a shelter located by the rowing club finish line, and after lunch we continued on the roads within the reserve towards the Murray River, which was looking magnificent, despite the weather.

On reaching the river side of Pfeiffer Wines we were in beautiful sunshine, and the entire group decided to continue on the shared pathway to Hynes, O'Donoghues and then Distillery Road to reach Pfeiffers.

Enroute, the sunshine disappeared and the clouds became larger, greyer more threatening and loud with thunder. How-

ever, with a varying amount of 'caught in the rain' the group reached Pfeiffer's and enjoyed the shared afternoon tea with, you guessed it 'Çup Cakes', and lots of bubbles under the large verandah at the barrel and high tables.

Best Race Day Hats were won by Ninetta, with a floral design, and Alan with a feather design.

The odds were raised for having the cupcake with the winning horse skewered on the pastry, as many of the 15 attendees scored two chances to have the winner on their cupcake.

This years event was won by 'Half Yours', and yours truly, and she's impressed that the jockey also won the Caulfield Cup, and has made the history books. Well done Jamie. [Jeanette]

WEEK AWAY : 2026

Next year's Week Away will be based in the Yarra Valley, with accommodation at the Park Lane Holiday Park, Healesville, the dates being April 28 to May 05.

Full information PDFs, and booking forms etc, for this great event are on our website.

For a preview of some of the great walks available see the 280 page guide book "Melbourne's Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Walking Trails" (published by Yarra Ranges Tourism).

PARADISE FALLS AND MCMILLANS LOOKOUT : SUNDAY, 9TH NOVEMBER

The 13 participants of this 10km walk headed out past Cheshunt to Paradise Falls and McMillans Track in the Upper King Valley.

On arrival we descended the track to view Paradise Falls, which had two streams of water flowing over the top. The Falls are always a delight to view, and after spending some time admiring the scenery, we ascended the track back to the car park, and enjoyed morning tea at the picnic area before venturing onto the Paradise Falls Link Track.

We followed the link track for approximately three kilometres, with its gentle ascent to McMillans Track. A number of wildflowers were on display, and we passed over the stream that feeds the Falls, along with a couple of a large trees that had fallen across the track close to the three kilometre mark.

On reaching McMillans Track, we headed west towards the Lookout, located about 1.75km further along. The track was a bit steeper here, and required a couple of drink stops.



Lunch was held at the rocky lookout point, and where we had been sheltered from the freezing cold wind, that was straight off the snow at either Mount Stirling or Mount Buller, we were now not so sheltered.

Coats, gloves and scarves all came out to keep warm against the wind, and enjoy lunch with the magnificent view to the snowfields, and over towards Lake William Hovell.

After taking some funny photos, among others, we returned to the link track, and the Paradise Falls car park. We then found our way to the café at Cheshunt for afternoon tea, with chai teas, cappuccinos, hot chocolates, and a variety of sweet treats, before returning to Wangaratta. [Jeanette]



NINE MILE TRACK : SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Sunday's 17km walk on the Nine Mile Track from Mount Buffalo NP to Ovens had six attendees. Enroute to the walk we met the original walk leader (Marita) to collect maps, and arrange the car shuffle for the end of the walk. Marita was unwell, and unable to lead the walk.

Continuing on to the National Park, we parked at Nine Mile Point to begin the walk.

Nine Mile Track follows the ridge towards Ovens township, and is a vehicle track for management vehicles only, which allows a wide path for walkers to converse as they descend and ascend the route through the forest. Starting at an elevation of about 780m we began descending, but it wasn't long before we were ascending, then descending, and ascending along the ridge, reaching a high of about 820m.

Due to heavy rains over the previous night, the views included waterfalls on the Mount Buffalo rockfaces, and we had views to the alps in the east after the low lying cloud disappeared.

Morning tea was held about an hour into the walk, and whilst getting unpacked for morning tea, Michael noticed he had been transporting the home of a spider upon his backpack. After disturbing the resident of the web, eventually the spider made its way off the backpack to establish a new home.



We continued on the ascending and descending nature of the walk, and had lunch at an open space with an intersecting track at the 10km mark. The clouds gave way to blue skies, we heard the kookaburras laughing and other birds tweeting, Fringe Lilies were out along with Sundews.

Close to the end of the walk, Marita met us in Selzer Lane and transported the two drivers back to the start of the walk to collect their cars.

The remaining walkers continued on to the Happy Valley Hotel for an afternoon tea of cold refreshments and muffins, while waiting for the drivers to arrive to have theirs.

A big thank you to Marita for her hospitality, and organising the car shuffle, which greatly reduced the wait time at Ovens before we could all return back to Wangaratta. [Jeanette]