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**Membership Fees**

**\$40 Per Person**  
**Subs due July each year**

# *Sunraysia Bushwalkers September 2013*

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## RED OCHRE LAKE RAMBLE

17TH AUGUST 2013



What a roll-up, we were a party of ten for this particular walk led by Roge. Even though the Club has visited Red Ochre Lake on previous trips it never fails to provide us with a great deal of pleasure to visit this intriguing area.

As is Roger's want, we all met at the Club rooms at 8.30 am, sorted out the car pooling and we were off – no lazy Saturday for this group!

We entered the Park on the Nowingi track. It was great to see how well the bush is

recovering after the drought, lots of lush new growth on the Mallee. A large grey kangaroo was encountered as we drove along the dirt track. Part way along, the cars were parked and we set off for our day's adventure.



Having been there before Roge at least has some idea of what direction to head in so the rest of us just tag along and enjoy the area we are walking through. Our first sighting of significance was a lovely little patch of green hooded orchids.

It wasn't too long before we reached Red Ochre Lake.

The 'Lake' is a clay pan area on which there is very little vegetation situated between sand



ridges. It was very obvious that there were emus in the area judging by the tracks left in the clay but unfortunately there were no birds to be seen.

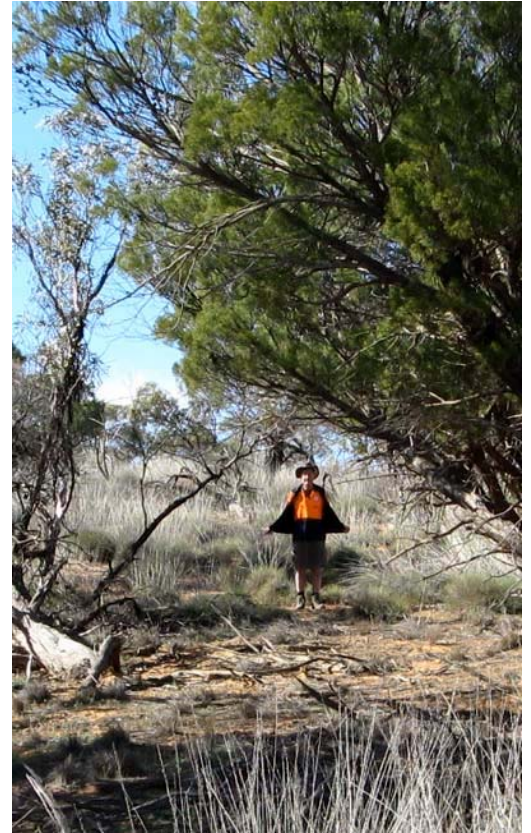
We left our own tracks as we walked across the 'Lake' to the ridge on the far side. Perhaps one day in the future Archeologists will find our foot

prints and wonder just what sort of people we were out tracking emus! The previous night there had been a light shower of rain and the clay on the 'Lake' was still damp and tacky and stuck to our boots. It was very obvious that the rain permeates through the sand on the ridges and then drains into the clay pan areas. Salt bush is about the only vegetation that tries to grow in this harsh environment.





Once across the 'Lake' we discovered an extremely large wedge-tail eagles nest in a dead tree beside the edge of the clay pan. It was also interesting to note that there were very Murray few pines to be seen amongst the mallee.



Our Leader (who at one stage pretended to be a luminescent sign post) then led us to the top of a sand ridge for a view of the mallee stretching westward and for a welcome scroggin break. Our next break was for lunch on yet another ridge with views this time to the north. Obviously we had done a 90° turn in direction.



After lunch we turned back towards where we hoped to once again find the cars. On the way we came across a very large active mallee fowl nest. Further on we discovered pieces of emu egg shell, the work of a fox, so our thoughts then turned to the precarious survival of the mallee fowl hatchlings!

The last part of the return trip was through some rather dense mallee and we lost sight and contact with the trailing group. So a mobile call was made just to make sure all was well – quite a surprise to have reception out there! The trailing group had a GPS so made their own route back to the cars which really weren't too far away. Once back we all enjoyed a welcome cup of tea/coffee.

Thank you Dick, Russell, Peter, Rita, Elizabeth, Noel, Robert, Callum & Roger for a great day in the Hattah-Kulkyne National park.

*Overheard comment: It is wonderful to have no fear of animals while walking in the bush – no baboons or wild monkeys!*

Report by Barb





The Grampians walk in the July newsletter was conducted by two groups of walkers. One group set off from the Jimmy Creek campground and the other from Mt William car park, this was done so that there was a vehicle at each end. The following report is from the Mt William group end of the walk.

## Major Mitchell Plateau – Grampians

Written by Tony, the Club's Weather Man

Saturday 8th June, left home at 6:15 am to pick up Dick & then Russell.

The Bureau's forecast for Halls Gap area indicated cool but fine conditions, so a good sign that weather wise we were going to encounter favourable conditions during the weekend.

The plan was to walk 19.4 Kms over 2 days from Mt William car park to Jimmy Creek campground.

We were making good time so stopped at Hopetoun for a quick toilet stop & coffee/cakes, arriving at Horsham by 10:25 am to fill my vehicle with LPG.

We took the scenic winding route via Zumsteins to Halls Gap & after driving through Halls Gap; our first port of call was the Grampians National Park Office, where Dick registered our intended hiking trip & overnight camp.

We drove towards Mt William (1167 metres or 3,829 feet) & parked the vehicle about 12:30 pm. The car park had several cars & support crew due to a cross-country fundraising event (Dunkeld Community).

This is known as "Serra Terror", a 2½ day event, hiking the 3 highest peaks in the Grampians over 40 Kms.

For more info go to : <http://www.dunkeldadventure.com.au/serra-terror-iv-2013/>



The weather was cool & partly cloudy. Our walk began up the relatively steep bitumen road 1.8 kms to the top of Mt William - adorned with transmitter towers.

Once on our way we came across several walkers from the opposite direction. The scenery was so beautiful that there were many stops for photo snaps. A section of track was close to high vertical cliffs, above which wedge tailed eagles were soaring and we had spectacular views of the surrounding countryside.

After a steep downhill section to Boundary Gap, we stopped at 3:10 pm for a quick snack.

We came across the last of the "Serra Terror"

walkers with the "sweeper" bringing up the rear. We were rather concerned for them as we calculated they wouldn't reach their destination, Mt William car park, until just before sunset. Next it was uphill again, scrambling/climbing over sandstone rocks and boulders, this area being known as Banksia Hill.

We arrived at the First Wannan campsite at 4:15 p.m. after having walked approx. 6 kms for the afternoon. According to the Bureau of Meteorology data, the max temp at Mt William was 4.2°c.

It was good to see that the creek had running water. After a while we were greeted by Roger, Christiana & Robert, (the other members of our walking group) who had walked from the opposite direction. We camped overnight with the constant sound of “running” or “trickling water”.

I normally get up once for a “leak” during the night, but on this occasion, I broke the record, as I got up 3 times; my tent was close to the small creek!

*Russell & Dick on top of the Range*



*Russell, Dick & Tony – the Mt William group'*

The original forecast for Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> was for “fog then sunny”, but it turned out to be mostly cloudy with an updated forecast indicating possible late showers. The showers didn't eventuate, so it turned out to be an ideal day for hiking. The next forecast was for an overnight minimum temperature of 1.1°C & a maximum of 5.7°C at Mt William.

We left first at 8:35 a.m. Our 2<sup>nd</sup> section would be 13.4 klms for the day. We noticed a helicopter and wondered if it was being used to empty toilet-cans, but as it was circling, it indicated a

possible search & rescue. Our thoughts then turned to those last “stragglers” from the previous day?

During the walk we came across small areas of flowering heath plants.

About 11.30 am we came across a sign that indicated 6 klms to Jimmy Creek. Our distance covered for the day was about 19.9 klms.

The other three turned up after we had made it to Jimmy Creek having made a very relaxed time of their walk to the Mt William car park with a long stop for lunch on the summit.



## PLANNED WALKS FOR 2013

*If you intend going on any of these trips please contact the Trip Leader by 8 pm the Thursdays beforehand so that arrangements may be finalized. Unless a minimum of 4 walkers (including the Trip Leader) have registered by Thursday evening walks may have to be cancelled.*

2013	Activity	Grade	Contact
4 <sup>th</sup> Sept	General Meeting		
14th-15th Sept	Sunset Country Walk	SE	Dick 50220300
October	Croajingalong (Altered destination)	MM	Roger 50257325 0488121648r
November	Bike Tour & Ramble – Tasmania 6 Days Devonport to Penguin & Ride in Deloraine area		Michael 04005749988
<b>2014</b>			
Easter 18 – 21 April	Mootwingi National Park		
	Cobdobla – <i>Suggestion only at present</i>		
	Glue Pot - <i>Suggestion only at present</i>		

All walks are given a **two letter grading code**

**The first letter refers to the distance**

- S** - short (8-12 klms a day)
- M** - medium (12-20 klms a day)
- L** - long (20 plus klms a day)

**The second letter refers to the terrain**

- E** - easy (mainly following form of marked track typically on flat ground)
- M** - medium (mainly on formed tracks but may include some off-track walking with moderate climbs on or off track)
- H** - hard (day or overnight walks which may require long or multiple steep climbs, cross country travel, creek crossings &/or some rock scrambling)
- R** - rough (day or overnight walks in difficult terrain which may include long &/or steep climbs and considerable off track walking. May include special requirements such as requirement to carry extra water, experience in rock scrambling &/or snow, knowledge of survival)

**Next Meeting**  
**Wednesday 4th September at 8.00 pm**  
**at Drysdale's**  
**2164 Fifteenth Street,**  
**Irymple**