As Much Bush Lore As Will Fit On Two Pages

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

This information sheet is in the nature of general comment only. Before embarking on a particular walk, you should seek specific advice from an experienced bushwalker or the Australian National University Mountaineering Club (ANUMC). While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information here, it is the sole responsibility of each person to ensure they are properly equipped and provisioned, and that they take appropriate safety precautions. No responsibility will be accepted for any loss or injury resulting from the application of information in this pamphlet.

**Equipment list**

Many of these items can be hired from the ANUMC or outdoor stores around Canberra.

- These items are absolutely vital! Carry them wherever you go, even on short daywalks!
- These items should be considered essential.
- Several people could share these items.
- These items are for cold weather.
- These items are for normal conditions.

**Sleeping:**

Light weight tent with fly, or a bivy bag. Should have a bucket floor. Make sure you have all the pieces and know how to put it up!

- Sleeping bag (rated to 0°C for summer, -5°C spring and autumn. But it depends where you are going). Should be stored in a waterproof bag. Down is the lightest filler for its warmth, but synthetic fillers are improving and they perform better when wet.
- Sleeping roll (foam mat, thermarest®, etc).

**Clothing:**

It’s a good idea to build up your clothing in layers. A large number of layers is warmer and lighter than a single thick garment. Layering also allows you to shed clothing gradually and better control your temperature. If you think carefully about the clothing you bring, it should be possible to wear everything in your pack at once if it gets really cold. It’s best if layers aren’t cotton as cotton is no good when wet. It can cause hypothermia which is the major cause of death in the outdoors. Reliable fowl weather equipment makes a difference.

**Extreme clothing:**

A dry set of clothing in case everything gets soaked. Should be wrapped up in a heavy duty garbage bag to keep it dry. This clothing is brought along as extra - it won’t be needed unless conditions are unusually bad. It should be able to be worn in conjunction with your other gear. If you get extremely cold, you can always huddle up in your sleeping bag.

- You need spare socks, underwear, long pants, shirt and jumper, all to the descriptions above (thermal underwear and tights are often good for emergency clothing as they are light) in here. The garbage bag can also be a good place to keep the rest of your unworn clothing and perhaps your emergency food.

**Walking:**

Phone money and driver’s licence, just in case.

- Petrol money to compensate the generous person who drives you out there.
- Pack. Should be comfortable when it is loaded up. It is important that the pack has a hip belt to help distribute the load across your back and waist. Be sure the pack you have is suited for your back height, hips and waist or your load may feel unnecessarily heavy.
- Compass.
- Maps of the area to be walked in. 1:25000 contour maps are the best. Learning to navigate is an essential bush skill. It is a good idea to laminate your maps (front and back) with contact to water proof them and reduce wear. Maps will last many times longer with just a little work. Place two non-adjacent maps back to back to save contact.
- Alternately (not as good), use a map case.
- Plastic bags and garbage bags for waterproofing things and for garbage. Snaplock bags are great.
- Whistle to tell people where you are (a good pair of lungs does the job too).
- Toilet paper.
- A trowel for digging toilet holes.
- Towel. Should be small and easily run out. Packtowel® towels are good.
- Matches or a lighter (better). These should be in a waterproof covering so they still work when your pack gets soaked.
- Sunscreen. Use blockout (SPF 15+).
- Mosquito repellent. RID® is good stuff.
- Water bottles. At least 2 litres of water should be carried. Old soft drink bottles are excellent containers. Also useful is a water bladder - a compactable container for when you have to cart lots of water. The inside of a 4 litre wine cask works well.
- Water purifiers, eg. puritabs®, micropur® (taste better), or a water filter are essential in many areas, since water from streams and lakes may be polluted and make you sick (talk to someone who has spent a month on the toilet with Giardia!).
- Personal first aid kit. Should contain a pen, paper, a triangular bandage, a wide crepe bandage, a wide compression bandage, band aids (elastoplast® is also good), antiseptic, tweezers, safety pins, gauze dressings, a pain killer (paracetamol or aspirin), diachec® or some other anti-diarrhoea pill, and something for blisters if you are prone to them.
- Torch. The best are headlamps (Petzil®), to keep your hands free. Maglite® torches are also good. Should be light. Bring spare batteries and bulb.
- Rope, strong enough to take a walkers weight. Good for all sorts of things - stringing up washing, tying down your tent, getting up that difficult scramble, keeping your food away from rats....
- Daypack. Useful when you plan to go for daywalks so you don’t have to lug around your pack.
- Camera. Make sure it’s water and shock proof!
- Book. But you’ll never get time to read it.
- Pack of cards.

**Cooking:**

- Camp stove. Whisper-lite®, Trangia® and Bluet® are all popular. Should be light weight, reliable, easy to use and to control the flame heat.
- Cooking gear.
- A billy (must have a lid - a!), A frapan (O), and Sprondomagles (pot holders - O).
- Big bowl for breakfast and dinner.
- Spoon.
- Sharp knife for serious cutting. Often on a....
- Pocket knife. The important implements are a knife blade, cork screw and tin opener.
- Cup.

**Food:**

Basically anything goes as long as it’s light and doesn’t need refrigeration. You can live quite comfortably on 1-2kg per day. Any more and you should think about leaving some behind. Here are some ideas:

- Scroggin (trail mix). Nuts and dried fruit, jelly babies and boiled sweets. To eat on the move.
- Chocolate (watch where you pack it so it won’t melt!).
- Fruit. Granny smith apples can take a pounding and still taste good. Bananas are instant energy but difficult to store. Oranges are great but you must carry the skin out as it doesn’t decompose easily. Rabbits like carrots and celery.
- Tea, coffee and sugar.
- Breakfast - Muesli is filling. Sunshine full-cream powdered milk tastes great.
- Lunch - Pita bread keeps well for days (dry biscuits like Ryvita® keep even better) and cheese (stored in a cooler part of your pack), salami or spreads are excellent toppings.
- Dinner - This is your opportunity to be creative. You normally want something hot. Rice and pasta are light for their bulk. Meat goes off quickly and is heavy (not recommended). Onions, capsicum, garlic, carrots and zucchini are some veggies that keep well in the sun. Many dried fruits reconstitute well (particularly apples) to make fine desserts.
- You must have an extra day’s food in case you are stuck outdoors longer than expected. Packets of minute noodles are excellent for this, as are dehydrated meals. Extra muesli, pita bread and salami keep well. People can live on chocolate for weeks....

**Packing it all in**

Heavy things are best carried close in to your back.
and towards the bottom. It isn’t always possible to do this because things you are most likely to need should be packed where they are accessible (this often means at the top).

Hygiene

Toilet: Opinions vary on the most environmentally sound practices. For more information, contact The Wilderness Society (02-2677929):

• Choose a place at least 20 metres from camp sites and water courses. If possible, downstream of the campsite.

• Bury faecal waste and toilet paper at least 15cm deep. Bring a small trowel to aid digging. Alternatively, lift up a large rock, deposit the waste in the hole under it and replace the rock to fill the hole. In heavily camped areas, care should be taken when lifting rocks!

• Tampons and sanitary pads must always be carried out as they are slow to decompose and may be dug up by foraging animals. Animals think blood smells particularly interesting so store waste in an airtight bag (ziplock).

• Faecal waste should be removed altogether from sensitive areas - alpine areas above the tree line (particularly in Kosciusko), caves, canyons and areas of minimal water flow (bogs and marshes).

• Don’t burn toilet paper as this can easily start fires in the Australian bush.

Personal: Soaps and detergents are serious environmental hazards and it’s unnecessary to use them in the wild. Rinsing in a stream without cleansers is sufficient to remain hygienic for the few days one is in the bush. If body odour is a concern, applying a deodorant or other perfume (never an antiperspirant - you need to perspire!) will cover any smell until the return to “civilisation”. If cleansers are used, it’s important to ensure they don’t pollute water courses. They should be applied well away from water courses and polluted water should be scattered over dry ground. The guidelines for toilet should be considered for all other pollutants.

Washing up: Once again, detergents aren’t necessary. Billys, frypans, plates, etc. can all be cleaned using the natural cleansers in the environment. Use gravel to get the food burnt onto the bottom of frypans off. Sand and dirt make excellent scourers for removing less stubborn grime. Green leaves and pine frypans off. Sand and dirt make excellent scourers for

• Plastic should never be burnt on a fire. It gives off a great number of dangerous fumes and can unexpectedly bubble, splash out and burn people.

• Carefully put out the fire when you are finished. Pull larger pieces of wood away then douse the fire with large quantities of water until no steam rises up when you add more water. Cover the wet coals with soil. Stray sparks from “dead” fires are a common cause of bushfires. Leave the campsite as you find it.

• Any foil, metal or other leftovers in a fire should be collected and carried out with your other rubbish.

Bush fires: There are only a few things you can do if caught in a fire:

• Remember - it’s the radiant heat that will kill you. Make sure you don’t have line of site to the fire front, ie. shelter behind or under something.

• Try to find an open area like a rocky outcrop, creek or cave.

• Soak yourself in water and cover yourself with as much clothing as possible but not synthetic fabrics or reflective blankets which will “shrink wrap” you in the heat!

• Steep gullies are dangerous to be in as trees can fall down into them. Steep hillsides are slightly better - the fire there burns faster and cooler - it will pass over more slowly. Be cautious and don’t get caught out!

• In general, attempting to outrun a fire is dangerous and pointless as you can trip or injure yourself while hurrying. If necessary though, running downhill is best as fires burn slower when descending.

On the track

• Leave details of where you are going and when you are expected back with a responsible person. Tell them not to be concerned until the party is at least 12 hours overdue as sometimes it may be necessary to stay out an extra day.

• Be sure to tell the party leader of any pre-existing illnesses (eg. asthma, bad knees, a cold, etc.). Carry a set of these “products”, you can clean anything at all.

Fires

Fires are often unnecessary and unsafe. Fuel stoves offer more consistent cooking, sleeping bags and jumpers offer more complete warmth and campers can provide the focal point and atmosphere created by a fire. However, if a fire is required, the following guidelines should be observed:

• A permit is required in some national parks.

• Fires should never be lit if there is a high fire danger warning current or in high winds. This can be checked by ringing the National Parks and Wildlife Service before you leave.

• Fires should be lit in an area clear of high dry grass or other vegetation. If possible, the fire should be lit in an existing fire ring. Great care should be taken to observe the behaviour of sparks.

• Only dead fallen wood should be used for fuel. In heavily camped areas this can be almost impossible to find. Green wood burns very poorly and besides, it is illegal to destroy living vegetation in national parks.

Use only small branches (no thicker than your wrist) and keep the fire small - if you're cold, get closer!

• Fires should never be lit in an area close to dry dead vegetation or trees. Armed with these

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