

ABW ACTIVITY INVENTORY (AI) - Activity Information Record

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Activity Code
W

Area code
Victoria

Record No
Vic0006

Activity

Walk

Location

Australian Alps Walking Track - Viking Circuit area starting from 8-Mile Flat camping area on the Howqua River.

Outline of activity

An 8 day walk comprising a figure 8 circuit, with the cross over at Mt Howitt; taking some of the best parts of the Alps Walking Track. 22nd April to 1st May, 2011.
Approx 4000m ascent/descent during the walk.

Permits & permissions required, with contact details

None

Maps required

Selwyn 8223-N and Buller 8123-N (1:50000)
Or there is a good Alps Walking Track map that covers the whole area - available from the Map Shop; but unsure of its exact title.

Travel: recommendations, times, car shuffling, parking etc.

We drove across in one day from Adelaide. Just under 11hrs of driving.
Departing Belair 8am, Mansfield for tea at 6:30pm, arrived 8-Mile Flat about 8:20pm.
Normally accessible in a 2wd (which we had), 16km of dirt road; we touched bottom a little on drain humps getting into 8-Mile Flat.
Left the car on side of the road just before the creek crossing to 8-Mile Flat campsite. There is generally plenty of spots to park, for us arriving late Good Friday only one or 2 choices.
Coming back we left after lunch, stayed the night at St Auburn caravan park (tentsite for \$6ea). Arrived Adelaide 1pm the next day.

Water availability

Water can be a serious issue.
Out walk was from 22nd April to 1st May; following on from good rains the previous couple of months.
We had reliable water nearby on all our campsites; although sometimes requiring a walk of up to 400m to water. In general there was no nearby water during the day.
At the end of a dry summer much care would be needed.

Restrictions (fires, gates etc.)

Fires were allowed for the whole walk, with generally plenty of firewood available and well used fireplaces.
With cold weather a fire is appreciated!

Route overview

Day 1: From 8-Mile Flat leave on the Upper (not the Lower) river track; after a couple of 100m at junction take the Bluff track. 1000m climb up to the Bluff - a hard first day; walk on to Bluff Hut to get water from tank; we camped 500m up the hill from the hut area to avoid the crowds.
Day 2: To Mt Magdela (water a couple of hundred metres sth down to creek)
Day 3: Along crosscut to Mt Speculation (water down track to 4wd and creek)
Day 4: To Viking Saddle (water down foot pad to the NE); with a quick 1 hr sidetrip scramble out to the Razor.
Day 5: To Wonnangatta River (note we initially stayed too long on ridge heading south and needed to traverse across to correct ridge)
Day 6: To Macalister Springs - 1000m climb (note we came up ridges through light scrub, to meet a disused 4wd track at the top; but we walked right over the top of it and had to zig-zag back to find it- it is now just a faint foot pad - but is worth finding.
Day 7: To Pikes Flat campground on the Howqua River
Day 8: Return to 8-Mile Flat for lunch.

Campsites used & possible alternatives

The figure 8 circuit could possibly be done in reverse, or maybe just the Howqua river loop the other way; the benefit of this would not to have such a hard first day (I had 67% of my party, ie everyone else but me :) considering quitting after day 3!
If an extra day was available a long day walk could be done from Mt Speculation out to Mt Cobbler.

Walk Ratings:

Distance	S: Short, 0-9 km	M: Medium, 10-17 km	L: Long, 18+ km
Gradient	E: Undulating	M: Steep	H: Very steep/exposed
Terrain	E: Track/open, 4 km/h	M: Medium scrub, 2-4 km/h	H: Heavy scrub/rock, 0-2 km/h
Qualifying? (Q)	MMMQ		

Supplementary information

Track Notes: Alps walking track covered in Chapman/Siseman 'Australian Alps Walking Track'. Viking Circuit covered in Chapman's general book on walks in Australia. Section from Howqua river - there are some info on the web.

The section from The Razor to Viking Saddle is made somewhat challenging by the thick tree regrowth. The track is still clear at foot level (about 30cm width) but thickly along track - maybe 50 per sq metre - are young trees about 2 to 2.5m high; at head height there is no gap. In a year or 2 this may become quite difficult.

Not many people appear to do the Viking Circuit part (ie the part not on the Alps Walking Track), although it is an enjoyable section.

We encountered very few mozzies or blowflies and had great weather - fine cool days, no rain for the 8 days! We were lucky though not to strike colder + wetter weather this time of year.

Note: This activity outline has been compiled from information provided by ABW members. Its accuracy is subject to variations in individual members' observations, climate and weather conditions, land and ownership, accessibility, national park rules and permits.

Members should not rely on this information but use it as a guide and supplement it with their own research as appropriate.

While all endeavours will be made to ensure that the information is kept current, it is the responsibility of the member using this document to determine whether it is the most up to date version.

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