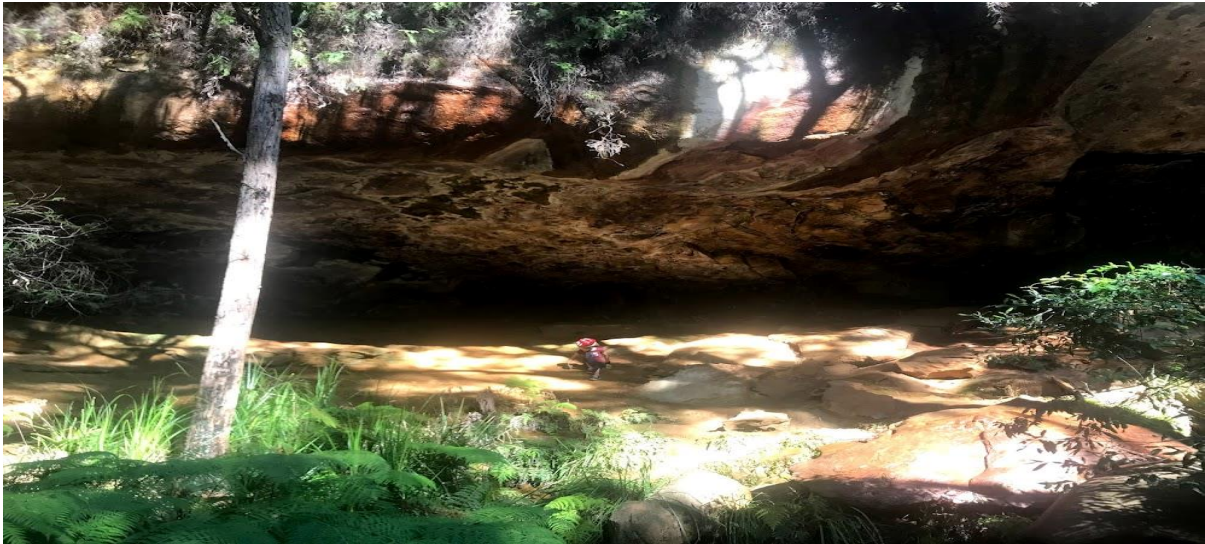


Equipment – What to Carry



What to Carry



Back Packs



Day Packs

What To Carry

Introduction

For most people, the amount you carry on a trip has a direct impact on your level of enjoyment. We have never as yet, met someone who loves to be loaded down like a pack mule.

The decision on what and how much to carry is a definite balance of safety, necessity and “bush-luxury” versus the weight and discomfort of cartage.

The “meaner and leaner” you go the more you may expose your party to potential risks and discomforts. However, the “pack mules” of the group will be more appreciative. If you try to cover every possible risk and many additional comforts, the group may be more content but those doing the load carrying will not.

In planning your trip (as suggested in the Safety Section of the website) you should consider a number of factors and potential risks that may directly impact your group and your adventure. From considering the likelihood and impact of these factors, you can then decide what measures to take to minimise these effects. In doing so, you may then begin to identify and rank what to take with you – from essential safety items to “bush -luxuries”.

The items presented here come from our own personal choices and experience. Hopefully, they can at least give you an idea of where to start when making your decisions about what to carry with you on your adventures.



Modified Vest



Camel Pack



Plastic Lined Packs



Canyon Bags

Scope

The suggested items are based on reasonably easy, day trips with a good weather forecast

Back Packs

These days there are many good quality, reasonably cheap options when it comes to Back Packs and Day Packs.

When deciding what to use you will need to consider the capacity you need to carry and how you will split it up amongst the group. A couple of small Day Packs distributed across the adults of the group is often a good decision. Kids carrying packs tend to be a recipe for constant complaining and group misery.

For most trips in the early stages of your bush adventures, Day Packs should be more than adequate. As you move to longer or more challenging trips you may consider a Bush Walking or Trekking Pack. More ideas on these can be found in the Advance equipment Section of the website.

When we head out into the bush, we tend to take either a Day Pack and Trekking Pack or two Day Packs and a modified vest. However, much of the time we are exploring areas unknown to us and so need to cover a number of contingencies.

Dry Bag or Canyon Bag

Lining your Pack or Day Pack with “doubled-up” plastic bags can be a good way of keeping food and items dry. Cold, wet jumpers and clothing, and soggy snacks, tend to make for a less pleasant trip.

When used properly, purpose made items such as Canyon Bags or Dry Bags can provide excellent protection against water. If proper care is taken, they have long life expectancies and are a more environmentally friendly solution, although more expensive, option to plastic bags.

Additional Clothing

Suggestions and ideas on “Additional Clothing” to carry are outlined in this section of the website under that title.

Basic Navigation Equipment

As a minimum we always carry a topographical map of the area, a compass and a mobile phone (fully charged) with at least one Navigation Application in operation.

Further information and suggestions on navigation and navigation equipment can be found in the Skills and Training Section of the website.



Basic Navigation Equipment



Group Safety Items



Individual Safety Items



Compression or Bite Bandages

Basic Safety Items

As a minimum we always carry the following:

For the group:

- At least one mobile phone (fully charged);
- A Basic First Aid Kit;
- “Sting Goes” type spray or similar;
- At least one water resistance torch or head lamp; and
- An emergency shelter big enough to cover the group.

Attached, where possible, to each individual, (and especially children):

- A Safety Whistle; and
- A Safety Blanket.

If YOU make the decision, to carry no other basic safety equipment (which we MOST strongly recommend against), the ONE item we would IMPLORE you to always carry is at least one Compression or Snake Bite Bandage. These are cheap, light weight and very well could save a life IF you know how to properly use it.

Further information and suggestions on “Basic Safety Items” is contained in that part, of this section, of the website.

Further information and suggestions on “Treating Bites” is contained in the Safety Information section of the website.

Food

When heading out on day trips, we aim to carry light weight, containerized or compartmentalised, high-energy food and snacks, mixed with a variety of containerised fresh fruit.

Keeping food items containerized or buying compartmentalized items is strongly recommended as squashed or leaking food items can be very messy and far less appetising, especially to children.

There are wide ranges of cheap, robust and well-sealing food containers available and a small investment in some is well worth considering. We use a series with an inner rubber seal and clip lock sides that have proved very successful over many trips.

Frozen oranges, properly containerized, can be especially good on longer trips on hotter days.

Further information and suggestions can be found under Food and Water in the Advanced General Equipment section of the website.



“Sting Goes” type spray



Food and Snacks



Food Containers



Water & Frozen Water



Rubbish Disposal

Water

When planning your trip, careful consideration should be taken regarding how much water to carry. At 1kg per litre, the weight really starts to add up. If you carry too little, the trip can be anywhere from uncomfortable, with complaining kids, to highly dangerous (due to dehydration and/or heat illness). We ALWAYS err on the side of caution and carry more rather than less. However, this still needs to be within reasonable levels. We generally plan between 300ml-500ml per person per hour. This can vary greatly depending on terrain and season. Over time and with experience, you should be able to start to gauge your own water requirements.

When carrying water, it is suggested to have a supply in pockets on the outside of your pack for easy access and to ensure your party is maintaining hydration. We also often pack some frozen bottles (inside a collapsible, insulated bag) for the later stages of the trip. Ice cold water on a hot day is a simple but effective “bush-luxury”.

We also recommend (where possible) to avoid prolonged sun exposure for water in plastic bottles. We try to keep most of our water inside our pack, with a bottle in an outside pocket for easy access during the trip.

Further ideas and information regarding water on longer or more challenging trips can be found under Food and Water in the Advanced General Equipment section of the website.

Other Items to Consider

Rubbish disposal.

Please ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS take your rubbish with you and dispose of it properly when you get home.

It is both heart breaking and infuriating to find beautiful areas of our bushlands, National Parks and beaches strewn with rubbish from individuals who are happy to bring their containers and wrappings to an area but too lazy to take them out when they leave.

We always carry at least one, large bag for rubbish. When we have emptied one of our “snap-lock” food containers, we use it as a waste container. It helps seal in leaks and we can wash it out when we get home.

We also try to “take three for the sea” (or the bush) and remove a bit extra where we can. PLEASE help protect and preserve our environment. For more information on National Parks and Conservation, please visit that Section of our website.



Toilet Paper



Harness Tapes



Knife or Secateurs



Matches or Fire Starters



Protection & Fire Bans

Toilet Paper.

We always carry a spare roll in the car when we travel and one in our pack when in the bush. It is never pleasant to locate a public toilet without paper, when you really need it.

In the bush we always double-seal a roll of toilet paper in plastic bags and carry it in our pack.

When in the bush you should use toilets where ever they are provided. The next best option is to carry out waste (poo) to reduce the effect on the environment.

If you have to dig a hole, it should be at least 15cm deep and a minimum of 100m from creeks or water. Fill the hole back in when you are finished. You should still pack out any other sanitary waste because much of it is not biodegradable. A light-weight, hardened plastic shovel is a great, cheap item for these purposes.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service provide some excellent information on the web regarding how to minimise your impact on the bush when exploring and adventuring.

Harness Tape

A length of harness tape, or similar, is an item well worth considering for your Load List. We normally carry a 5m tape which is light-weight, exceptionally strong, relatively cheap to buy and comes in very handy when scouting around or lifting loads/packs in steep or rocky areas.

Special care needs to be taken with these tapes as they are susceptible to heat and chemicals (including some acids found in foods and drinks). Most outdoor-type shops sell these tapes by the metre.

NEVER use sub-standard ropes or tapes as climbing aids or in hauling loads, people or equipment. NEVER undertake rope sports (Abseiling, Climbing and other similar activities) without proper TRAINING and equipment.

Further information and suggestions regarding tapes and ropes can be found in the Advanced Equipment section of the website.

Knife or Secateurs and Matches

Finally, a good quality Knife or pair of Secateurs can be very useful and a box of waterproof matches (or similar) is also worth considering. Always remember that restriction may be in place for lighting fires and all Fauna and Flora in National Parks are protected.