

Federation of Western Australian Bushwalkers Inc.

MINIMUM IMPACT BUSHWALKING CODE

Codes of Practice set standards for the Federation of Western Australian Bushwalkers(Inc), and may be revised from time to time after appropriate consultation with the member club representatives.

By following this Code, participant Clubs will minimise the impact of their activities on the resource that provides us with so much pleasure.

1 CAMPSITES

- 1.1 Use an existing campsite rather than make a new one in the same area. Setting up camp will be easier and additional ground cover will not be damaged.
- 1.2 Leaders should limit the size of their party, especially in sensitive areas.
- 1.3 Never cut live trees for tent poles.
- 1.4 Minimise damage to flora and fauna by taking care in selecting how and where you camp.

2 CAMPFIRES AND STOVES

- 2.1 Strictly obey all regulations regarding campfires and fire bans.
- 2.2 Fires should not be lit in sensitive areas, or areas with a shortage of firewood. Stoves must be used in high-use areas (note: in some areas of Australia regulation prescribes "stove only" areas).
- 2.3 Use established fire sites wherever possible. By preference use a "pit" fire and bury ashes. Use only dead wood for campfire fuel and ensure sufficient cleared area is maintained around fires and stoves for the prevailing conditions.
- 2.4 Don't make fires near trunks of trees, on roots, on peaty soil, or where the fire could spread or be difficult to extinguish.
- 2.5 Keep a suitable fire suppressant handy to control the fire should it begin to spread.
- 2.6 Once fire remains are cold, bury them and spread leaf litter or soil over the fire site. Distribute unused firewood and minimise the visual impact.
- 2.7 Don't dispose of aluminium foil or cans by burning (note: some material may be lined with foil, leaving an unsightly and non-biodegradable mess). Don't dispose of other material unless the fire is very hot and you are sure that it will be reduced to ash. Avoid producing noxious smoke. When in doubt carry it out!
- 2.8 Exercise great care with stoves. Do not allow excess pressure, which may cause safety valve ignition.

3 SANITATION

- 3.1 Bury human wastes. Dig a 200mm (8") deep hole at least 100m away from any open water.
- 3.2 Disposal of human waste at heavily used campsites requires more effort. Go further away!
- 3.3 Wash well away from streams and ensure that any soap, detergents or food refuse does not enter water ways and water sources. When cleaning utensils use gritty sand rather than detergents.

4 RUBBISH

- 4.1 Apply the "carry in, carry out" rule. This applies to orange peel, fruit cores, sanitary items, seeds and egg shells. (Remember to take some plastic bags and, if you can, carry out rubbish left by other parties.)
- 4.2 Before leaving a lunch spot or campsite check that no rubbish is left.

5 TRACKS AND ROUTES

- 5.1 Go in small parties and tread carefully to avoid damaging vegetation. Use stepping stones or boardwalks where provided in eroded areas.
- 5.2 Limit walking in areas that have been over-used.
- 5.3 Minimise walking on loose ground, scree slopes, dunes, marshes and bogs.

6 FLORA AND FAUNA

- 6.1 Native flora and fauna should be left undisturbed. Do not kill snakes.
- 6.2 Do not take domestic animals on walks.
- 6.3 Report sightings of feral animals, illegal forest grazing or illegal use of protected areas (eg. wood cutting or removal of rocks) to park or forest authorities as appropriate.

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7 DIEBACK POLICY

7.1 Dieback is an exotic disease of our forests affecting over 900 species of native plants including banksias, blackboys, zamia palms, snottygobbles, emu bushes, sheoaks, hakeas, dryandras, heaths and jarrah. It is caused by the fungus *Phytophthora cinnamomi* which lives in the soil and infects the roots of susceptible plants, resulting in reduced water uptake and death.

7.2 As the fungus thrives in warm, moist conditions the south coast is particularly at risk. Some of the more susceptible plants are rare, endangered or restricted in distribution. Dieback is not just a problem for native plants; it is also having a detrimental effect on nectar-eating creatures (e.g. honey possums and honeyeaters). It may take from 3 to 10 years before visible signs of the disease (e.g. dead leaves) develop.

7.3 To assist in preventing the spread of dieback, we adopt the following practices when venturing into dieback affected areas:

- Keep to well-drained, well-formed roads and tracks where possible.
- Clean boots and tent pegs before and after all walks and making full use of dieback wash down points and raised boardwalks where available e.g., Fitzgerald River National Park.
- Take heed of signs alerting of the presence of dieback fungi.
- Leaders to contact the local Park Ranger for up-to-date local knowledge and redirect the walk to keep out of, or go around, dieback infected areas.
- Avoid wet and muddy areas at all times. Be prepared to change the route of the walk during or after warm, wet weather. If muddy areas cannot be avoided, remove the mud from your boots before moving onto dry or higher ground.
- Ensure that drivers of vehicles taken onto roads with restricted access due to the risk of dieback are in possession of a current vehicle access permit and that all restrictions that may be imposed are adhered to.

8 NOISE

8.1 Do not make unnecessary noise that may detract from others enjoyment of the bush. Radios and cassette players should be left at home.