

THE BUSH CLUB INC.

GUIDE TO GRADING OF WALKS

Grade 1 (Easy)

Opportunity for large number of walkers, including those with reduced walking ability to walk on well marked and even tracks. Tracks are man made and may have a few steps. Should not be steep. Suitable for beginners. Distance should not exceed about 10km.

Grade 2 (Easy-medium)

Easy walk, mostly on tracks of low gradient Opportunity to walk easily in natural environments on well marked tracks. Tracks should not be steep. Distance should not exceed about 15km.

Grade 3 (Medium)

Medium walk with some hilly sections and/or rougher terrain. Opportunity to walk on defined and distinct tracks with some steep sections requiring a moderate level of fitness. Suitable for fit beginners. Distance should not exceed about 20 km.

Grade 4 (Medium-Hard)

Steeper, rougher terrain and may have off-track sections (no more than one quarter of the walk) or a longer distance track walk. Opportunity to explore and discover relatively undisturbed natural environments mostly along defined and distinct tracks. Tracks can be steep. There may be short sections of rock scrambling involved. Leaders should have map reading abilities and/or ability to use a compass. Distance depending on circumstances. Not suitable for most beginners.

Grade 5 (Hard)

Off-track or difficult terrain. Opportunity for walkers with advanced outdoor knowledge and skills to find their own way along often in distinct tracks or off track in remote locations. May include steep sections of unmodified surfaces. There may be rock scrambling, creek walking and crossing involved. Distance should not exceed 30 km, but may be short and difficult. Not suitable for beginners.

Grade 6 (Very hard)

Strenuous off-track walk or very long distance. Opportunity for highly experienced walkers to explore remote and challenging natural areas without reliance on managed tracks. Terrain may be steep, uneven and no track. There may be rock scrambling, creek walking and crossing involved. Distance covered is unlimited, but may be short and difficult. Only for experienced walkers and not suitable for beginners.

Walking with the Bush Club - what you can expect

For any walk, the leader:

- sets the grade, route and pace of the walk;
- is entitled to inquire about the capacity of a member to complete the walk as planned; and
- is understanding, helpful and supportive on the track.

In return, participating members are expected to:

- have the ability to complete the walk as described;
- be self reliant (in respect to water, food, first aid, navigation, clothing, etc); and
- be a participative and co-operative member of the group.

Within The Bush Club, there are some further qualifiers that are used, in addition to the walk grading, to help describe and define the type and style of the walk.

M (Membership Qualifying)

Only walks marked 'M' are membership qualifying walks. Grade 3 is the minimum level for a qualifying walk. However, prospective members may attend any walk with the leader's consent.

LTW (Leadership Training Walk)

The leader is available to instruct aspiring leaders in techniques of walks leadership.

SEA (Support, Encourage, Achieve)

For those seeking to build up confidence and fitness, and looking to complete more challenging walks. For these walks, the leader:

- is purposely considerate of the needs and wishes of such members when planning the route and setting the pace;
- systematically tailors and conducts the walk to suit the capacity of participants; and
- is an encouraging mentor and guide on the track.

SEA walks are for members who:

- are keen to get to new, exciting and wonderful places but with some uncertainty about their abilities to do so;
- want to further stretch and develop their skills and self reliance; and
- are happy to be part of a mutually supportive and encouraging group that stays together on the track.

The 'Route & description' column in the Walks Programme explains any special difficulties or features on a walk.

GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERSHIP QUALIFYING WALKS

Qualifying walks are intended to allow prospective members to assess whether the Club's activities are suitable for them, and from the Club's viewpoint that the incoming member is able to participate safely in its activities and is in sympathy with its objectives. A reasonable level of physical fitness is expected, but not necessarily to the level needed for the more difficult walks on the program.

A Membership walk must be:

- Nominated as such by the walks leader in the program;
- At least of Grade 3 (Medium) standard;
- Not substantially (in time duration rather than distance) on roads, streets, fire trails, cultivated parkland, beaches, canoeing or swimming.

Leaders are encouraged to include some off-track walking in their qualifying walks. This enhances a walker's ability to handle difficulties in the bush.

Although a walk substantially using fire trails is generally outside the definition of qualifying walks, an exception is made for walks that require a high degree of walking stamina (eg Woodford to Glenbrook via the Oaks).