

# Overnight Hikes

## **Lightweight Overnight Pack**

In WA it's quite feasible to walk with minimal overnight kit especially if you're walking on the Bibbulmun Track. The weather is pretty reliable, it's quite warm and there are hiking shelters along the popular walking tracks.

Think about what you can do to reduce the load even further. For example:

- eat a large meal just before leaving then you won't need much for dinner
- share cooking gear – not everyone has to sit down to eat at the same time

As for the day hike except:

- 45 litre pack
- Sleeping bag – get a low volume hiking bag for about –4 degrees. They are expensive, \$150+, but an excellent investment. Remember the –4 degree rating is for when you get in it with your clothes on.
- Sleeping mat. I prefer the hiking blow up mats with individual tubes and integral pillow. These cost about \$25 and are much less bulky than the traditional foam type or the self inflating ones.
- Tarpaulin, \$3. If you can't get in the shelter just put the tarpaulin on the ground (to keep you dry) and put your sleeping mat and bag on top. Wrap the tarpaulin over you and go to sleep. The tarpaulin is mainly to stop the dew forming on your sleeping bag.
- Cooker. A single burner hiking gas cooker costs about \$70 but will last for ever (unless the Scouts get their hands on it). Gas canisters cost about \$10 but will last for about 10 meals – get the right one, there are two common types and they are not interchangeable. Cooking over open fires is not encouraged in WA, there are fire bans in place for most of the hiking season and collecting firewood destroys the local environment.
- Cooking pans. Hiking sets cost about \$20 but, again, last for ever. If you're really clever select food that you can just heat in the can or that you can eat without cooking – that way you don't need to carry pans. The advice is 'don't take cans' – this is because the contents is mainly water and you can get that along the way also you've got to carry the 'dead' cans out. However, if you do take them you can get away without pans – for 1 or 2 nights that can be a weight saving.
- Mug – if you get aluminium then you can use it to brew your tea in. Don't try it with plastic or enamel.
- Knife, fork, spoon sets cost about \$10. Get the type that all clip together.
- Can opener, if you have cans. You can get them integrated with the cutlery set.
- Food:
  - Dinner – a can of stew is fine, just heat it on the cooker. I usually take precooked spaghetti Bolognese then just heat and eat. If you're going for 2 nights freeze it solid and use it on the second night – it'll probably still be semi frozen.
  - Breakfast – Muesli bar. Loads of variety. If you're going for 2 nights try taking a tin of beans & sausage for the second day.
  - Tea/coffee – brew it in your mug. Use powdered milk or one of those small plastic pots you get in fast food places.
- Thermal vest – can't beat them for keeping you warm.
- Toiletries
- Sanitary products
- Plastic bag(s) – multiple uses. Small ones for rubbish, big ones for 'emergency ponchos' or ground sheets.

## **Multi-night hike (or if you want to use a tent)**

As for lightweight overnight hike but add:

- 65/70 litre hiking pack. Bigger than this is okay for Venturers.
- Tent – share the tent, for carrying and sleeping in, between several hikers.
- Food – as above but enough for the journey.
- Clothes – carry spare shirt, pants, underwear, socks (1 pair per day). Pack them in a plastic bag.