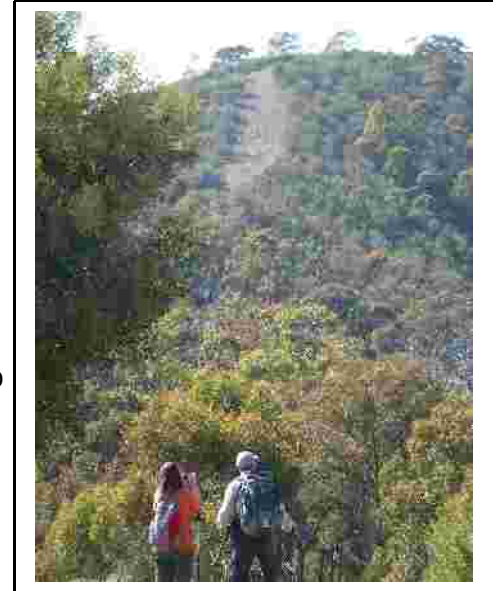


A relaxed group gathered on a balmy Friday night at Bluegums Riverside Holiday Park for drinks, nibbles, a BBQ dinner, and a weekend promising scenic walks. A less relaxed group were up at the crack of dawn on Saturday for an early start but we were rewarded with perfect weather!

A drive to the base of the Blowhard track gave us great views of Lake Eildon. Margaret and Sueli assured us we would see even more spectacular vistas at the top of the track. The walk began with a 630m climb up a steep track, and we did have a great view. While the climb up was arduous and challenged our lungs, the descent was steep scree to test out knees and quadriceps!

The remainder of the track undulated back to the lake level where we followed a scenic route to the parked cars. We drove back to camp for showers, a change of clothing and hearty snacks, before heading to the Eildon pub. Being a group of 15, we made quite an impact on arrival. The locals looked surprised to see such a large, animated group hit their watering hole!

Sunday broke with more fine weather and an early start. This time we drove to Lakeside Camping Ground and climbed another steep scree track to Estate Spur. Again, we were rewarded with a fabulous view of the inlets and bays of Lake Eildon. Further undulations and we were back at lake level to do a different lakeside trail. A detour to the "Nature Trail" was worthwhile as Iris educated us along the way about the birds we saw, and plants we encountered. After 101 questions from us, she declared "no more, she was off-duty"!



The lakeside trek back to our cars was also very scenic. Along the way an echidna crossed our path, and a large kangaroo peered at us from a shrub near the track. We then drove to Eildon for the necessary afternoon tea at The Eildon Bakery. A relaxed group gathered to drink and eat (more!) before hitting the road back to Melbourne.

Many thanks to Sueli and Margaret for a well organised base camp. Their effort in 'planning' good walking weather, and interesting walks was well appreciated!

