



# The Message Stick

## May 2026

Mackay Bushwalkers' Club Inc. PO Box 1313, Mackay, 4740

Web: <https://mackaybwcq.org.au/>

Email: [mackaybushwalkingclub@gmail.com](mailto:mackaybushwalkingclub@gmail.com)

### Future Events

Hazelwood Camp.....	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> May
Sparkle Falls.....	10 <sup>th</sup> May
TBA.....	17 <sup>th</sup> May
General Meeting.....	20 <sup>th</sup> May
Homevale Camp (The Bluff).....	23 <sup>rd</sup> , 24 <sup>th</sup> May
The Lagoon, St Helens Creek.....	31 <sup>st</sup> May
TBA.....	7 <sup>th</sup> June



### Sparkle Falls

#### Club Officers

President	Peter Bennett	0427 383 732	Contact Officer	Wendy Bennett	0429 363 929
Vice President	Telina Lambert	0434 392 558	Newsletter Editor	Telina Lambert	0434 392 558
Secretary	Philip Morgan	0431 130 074	Walks Coordinator	Coral Morgan Telina Lambert	0407 164 856 0434 392 558
Treasurer	Robert Kollin	0448 375 743	Equipment Officers	Frances Eiteneuer Penny McMahon	0447 866 188 0421 071 294
Membership Secretary	Wendy Bennett	0429 363 929	Librarian/ Archivist	Robert Kollin	0448 375 743
Social Media Manager			Safety Training Officer	Kevin Smith	
Digital Officer					

## From the Editor

If anyone has any old documentation, walk write ups, newsletter articles e.c.t from the 60's, 70's or 80's please get in contact with our Librarian, Robert Kollin on 0448 375 743.

And just a reminder to all members that any persons who wish to attend a club walk must be a registered member this is all new members, including day members and children and all must attend and induction before participating in any club walks if you cannot make it to the induction meeting feel free to contact our Club President Peter Bennett at 0427 383 732 to arrange a solution.

It's starting to cool off now but weather can still be unpredictable so any cancellations will be advertised on the Club's Facebook Group. Also remember that the terrain can be treacherous and have a possibility of poisonous animals and plants so be prepared with a small personal **First Aid kit**. It doesn't have to be huge but should include a snake bandage.

### Trip Leader Bag

All walk's leaders need to arrange for the trip leader bag to be returned to Frances or Penny ASAP after every walk please. Our equipment officers need to check the bag each week to ensure it contains all the necessary equipment and forms needed for the following Sunday's Walk.

TBA: A Club Brunch will be held for those who are part of the committee as well as for those who have been leaders as a thank you for your hard work and commitment to the club (terms and conditions apply) More info will be released closer to the event.

Assembly point for walks (unless otherwise advised):  
CAR PARK - CORNER of ALFRED AND NELSON STREETS  
Car Park address is 295 Alfred Street  
Please arrive 15 minutes before walk start time.

Please make sure that if you would like to lead a walk in the following months, please inform our walks coordinator **Coral Morgan 0407 164 856** or **Telina Lambert 0434 392 558** before the 19<sup>th</sup> May.

All items for the next newsletter including walk information for upcoming walks and previous walk write ups should be sent to [mackaybushwalkingclub@gmail.com](mailto:mackaybushwalkingclub@gmail.com) by 26<sup>th</sup> May.

**Happy Birthday to those who are celebrating their birthday in May hope to see you on a walk soon 😊**



## Key to Walks Grading System

Distance	Terrain	Difficulty
S = short – under 5km	1-3 = Graded or open terrain, no scrub	1-3 = Easy, suitable for beginners
M = medium – 5-10km	4-7 = Bush, minor scrub, rainforest	4-7 = Medium, reasonable fitness required
L = long – over 10km	8-10 = Rocks, creeks, rock hopping, scrambling, thick scrub, major rock scrambling using hands, technical	8-10 = Hard, strenuous, fit walkers only

## Future Events

**All trip leaders please ensure you collect the club gear bag before undertaking your walk and return it as soon as possible afterwards.**

Please contact the leader to nominate for all walks before 12.00pm the day before the walk unless otherwise stated.

### **Hazelwood Camp- Hazlewood Gorge Upstream Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May**

**Leader:** Kate Brunner 0467 976 955

**Depart:** 7am from Mackay

**Journey:** 200km = \$20 from Mackay

**Grade:** S57

**Pace:** Average

**Total Uphill sections:** n/a

**Estimated walking time:** n/a

**Vegetation:** Scrub and rocks

**Terrain:** uneven

**Expect:** We approach gorge along a dirt track through gumtree pasture, then descend and follow the creek. Which means some scrambling and rock hopping, also some swimming. There are some trees but it is quite open and possibly sunny. Around midday we return along the same route.

Campers will set up camp then **Coral would be happy to lend tents to potential campers who have none of their own**

### **Hazlewood Gorge Downstream Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May**

**Leader:** Peter Bennett 0427 383 732

**Depart:** 7am Mackay or as discussed with peter previously.

**Journey:** 200km = \$20

**Grade:** M78

**Pace:** Average

**Total Uphill sections:** n/a

**Estimated walking time:** n/a

**Vegetation:** Scrub and rocks

**Terrain:** Uneven

**Expect:**

Again, there is a short walk along a track to the edge of the gorge, where we descend steeply. Then among lovely rock formations we scramble, hop and jump, hopefully also swim a bit. There are some nice shade trees but a fair bit of open creek country [some might want to relax in shade while others walk too the waterfall.] Depending on the group

and the water level we might reach a quite impressive waterfall. Eventually return the same way, to camp, cars and home.

### **Sparkle Falls 10<sup>th</sup> May**

**Leader:** Kate Brunner 0467 976 955

**Depart:** Sign on in Finch Hatton Gorge 8 am

**Journey:** 150km = \$15 from Mackay if someone could organise the town end

**Grade:** S/M 8 7

**Pace:** Average

**Total Uphill sections:** n/a

**Estimated walking time:** n/a

**Vegetation:** Rainforest

**Terrain:** Uneven

**Expect:** We follow the general walking track almost to wheel of fire. From there we scramble steep up the left slope. We will follow tapes that veer off to the right above Finch Hatton creek. They will take us above the waterfalls into a creek section known as The Left Branch or Waterfalls Creek or Sparkle Falls. The creek up there is lovely with lots of gushing water and fun swimming possibilities. We follow this creek till we had enough and return via the same route. Expect steep slopes, large boulders, lots of cooling water, swimming breaks and some exploring. This will be a full day walk. Out for the weakest.

**TBA  
17<sup>th</sup> May**

**More information to come.**

**General Meeting 7.30pm  
Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May**

Downstairs room, Mackay Family Care and Community Support Association Centre 60 Wellington Street, Mackay. Newcomers and visitor's welcome.

**Homevale Camp  
23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> May**

Homevale out past Nebo, is a majestic scenic national park. The old Mt Britton township is a historical site with info about the early gold mining days. We plan a car-based camp at the township site which is free of charge. There are good toilet facilities and **non-potable** water so bring your own drinking water. A walk is planned for each day. Please note the 8am start for Saturday. If you can't camp and want to attend a day walk, please notify Coral (**0407 164 856**) by Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May and it might be possible to make arrangements.

**The Bluff  
Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May**

**Leader:** Ralph (Contact Coral 0407 164 856)  
**Depart:** 8am from Mackay  
**Journey:** 250km = \$25  
**Grade:** S64  
**Pace:** Average  
**Total Uphill sections:** 240m  
**Estimated walking time:** 3-4 hours  
**Vegetation:** Scrub  
**Terrain:** Uneven

**Expect:** This route to reach the bluff is different to previous club outings. We will be crossing First Creek and following an old fire break for some of the trip and then following a ridge to the summit. There will be a variety of terrain including long grass(spear grass protection recommended), lantana, open and dense forest and more. There will be some Scrambles and loose rocks to negotiate. There are good views to be had from the summit which can be rather windy at times. The leader has requested no birthday cake.

**Pods Pinnacle  
Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May**

**Leader:** Kevin Smith 0417 326 634  
**Depart:** 7:30am from Mackay  
**Journey:** 250km (\$25)  
**Grade:** M75  
**Pace:** Average  
**Total Uphill sections:** 280m  
**Estimated walking time:** 6 hours  
**Vegetation:** bush, scrub, grass  
**Terrain:** 4wd track, rock, grass, steep slopes

**Expect:** The walkers on this walk can either camp at Mt Britton on Sat night or depart from Mackay Sunday morning as normal.

Pod's Pinnacle is a newish walk for Mackay Bushwalking Club. It is located near the Diamond Cliffs in Mt Britton. The Pinnacle is quite impressive and has spectacular views of the Diamond Cliffs, the Bluff etc.

The walk will commence from the Mt Britton Township Fig Tree at 09:30.

Walk up a 4wd track through a private mining claim area for 2.5km.

Walkers will then walk through the bush over a couple of ridges and into a major creek. We will walk up the bed of the creek a ways and then exit the creek up a steep slope at the side of the lower Pod's Pinnacle. The Pinnacle has 3 parts. We will climb on the top of the first section, and second higher Pinnacle. From here we walk through the bush to the top of the 3rd section which is a large flat area of rock with great views, plenty of space and could be a beaut spot for a late lunch. We will walk back under the cliff of this pinnacle then back toward the creek etc.

**The Lagoon, St Helens Creek  
31<sup>st</sup> May**

**Leader:** Deb Wilson  
**More information to come later**

**TBA  
7<sup>th</sup> June**

**More information to come later**

## **Advanced Warning for Walk Planning**

### **In Upcoming Months**

#### **Combined Campout**

22-24<sup>th</sup> May 2026 Combined Campout date  
Hosted by the Capricornia Bushwalkers Club  
Inc. **See Below For more information if  
interested**

#### **Christmas in July**

##### **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> July**

**Save the Date** – We are planning a social club camp when people, don't have end of year commitments. A morning walk and a get together on the Saturday and an overnight camp at Ball Bay, for those who wish to stay the night. Come along to our next monthly meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> May or contact coral on 0407 164 856 with any ideas for a fun event.

More details to be published at a later date.



## "Get your Camping Fix in 2026"

### COMBINED CLUB CAMPOUT DATE CLAIMER:

- ❖ 22 – 24<sup>th</sup> May 2026. \*
- ❖ Bouldercombe Sport and Recreation Complex.

Hosted by: Capricornia Bushwalkers Club Inc.

*Bouldercombe Sport and Recreation Complex is located within the Bouldercombe township mid-way between Rockhampton and Mt Morgan on the Bennett Highway. The facility provides both camping grounds and open plan shed accommodation. Join us for a weekend of exciting activities. More details later, but put the dates in your diaries now.*

*\*Access to the complex is open Friday from 9:00 am for anyone wishing to arrive early. Official sign-in will be on Friday afternoon, with the walk nominations being available at that time.*

For enquiries email: [capbushwalkers@gmail.com](mailto:capbushwalkers@gmail.com)

Kevin Cullen – 0487 655 892

Capricornia Bushwalkers Club Inc.



# Previous Activities

## The Arch

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April



First and foremost. Thanks, Debs, for leading us to an amazing place. 11 of us coming from all directions met up in the carpark before further carpooling into more off-road vehicles for the last bit to our starting point. Yeah. Easy walk.... For the first few hundred metres along a track through coastal scrub and palm dotted rainforest, then a scramble down onto the beach. Not a grain of sand in sight. Well a little rock hopping is fine. A little climbing, a challenge but wet feet.....? Nope!

The tide was still a bit high, so it was

decided to sit and chat for a while while it dropped a bit lower. A while grew into a longer while as some of us explored a small cave behind us. Complete with a few bats. Finally, the water was deemed shallow enough to cross about 2 metres before it was discovered it was high and dry thereafter. I had already walked the wet and guided a few under a rock overhang into a large 3 level cave which we could walk through to the next bay. Of course it had to be

explored with photo opportunities.

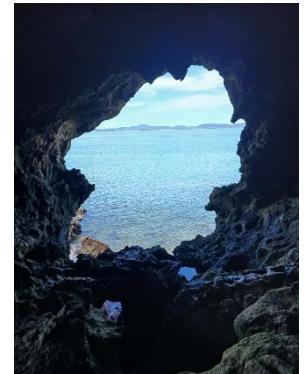
The next bay was long. All rock

again, but as we went further there were dramatic cliffs and giant conglomerate concretion blocks, which made it feel like we were walking through ancient archaeological ruins. Rocks weathered into some interesting yet rugged sculptures. Legs tired there was a shout of whoop ahead and soon we tail enders saw why.

A sharp narrow finger of rock juttied out into the ocean. Impressive in itself, but the giant hole



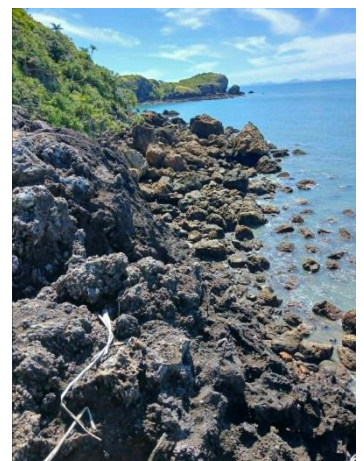
known as "The Arch" couldn't be missed. We sat in its shade for lunch and some explored further into a very challenging rocky inlet, with its own small Arch and fascinating rock shaping and sculpting of spikes and waves. The next point of land revealed yet another small bay inlet, again shaped by the steady violent waves of nature. We had hoped to glimpse Wedge Island but yet another rocky point hid her. People were tired so there was no more forward travel, but a return to the cars. Rubbish bags were pulled out as we



started finding debris until a track off the beach was seen. We came up and right there, was the lagoon few seemed to know about. Small but significant in that the indigenous peoples used it for fresh water only metres from the beach. Debs led a few around the loop through the rainforest before we all headed back to the cars and an old aboriginal fish trap. Not much interest there. Interest was honed in on soft car seats and home.

Great day with incredible terrain. We even saw a few turtles. Thanks again, Debs, and thanks for the good company of fellow explorers.

**Celestine Lambert**



## Freshwater Point Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April



The weather really turned it on for us. Absolutely beautiful clear blue skies, contrary to the weather forecast. The water was reflecting diamond sparkle on gentle caps. A slight breeze. Now that I have set the scene, 11 of us donned back packs, and made the social circle. I set the rules early. No running, plenty of breaks, and lots of chatting. This being an easy, social walk. We stepped into the bush, and as is tradition, we all scrambled up the stony track to the lookout and out came the cameras. It was a little overgrown up there but still a worthwhile climb. The trek to the point was uneventful. The guava trees bore only hard green fruit, so no treat there. The view from the point, as usual, beautiful, but hot in the sun so after quick photo shoot it was onwards to adventure. Well a long plod to the first beach, Bell Alters Bay, noted for distinctive rocks



on both points, for a nice long smoko. Only had to skirt one bog hole showing how dry it has been. Smoko was long enough to think we had stopped so we all decided to move onto the rocks, getting as far as the log before the traditional photo shot. 10 people were cosy. We then just dispersed to



explore the rocks, looking at coloured stones and rock features of which, there are many. Some took to picking up rubbish, which was sad to see how much there is. But not to let it spoil our day, we gathered again under the big tree, and remembered past trips there, looking for the plaque and making home movies, amongst other chit chat. A slightly less used track we crossed over into Turtle Bay and enjoyed strolling the beach. The water inlet ck was surprisingly high so we went around it onto another track to lead back to the sign, proclaiming it to be turtles



nesting and Keep Off The Beach. Back on the trail we found the lagoon very full with the melaleuca forest a welcome pretty spot. It was too wet to venture to look for the old well ruins so it was onwards to the next spot. Coming upon a large tree, with pure white bark some decided they had trekked far enough and it was a nice place to stop and await the groups return, so 8 of us continued to the coloured thermal rocks and had lunch.



The tide being high covered many of the amazing colour formations, but still impressive banding and layers. The stone chip road was still under water when we made our way back. As we re-entered the forest, we came upon 3 people sprawled flat enjoying a sleep. Taking relaxing walk to a new level. In the past we have always returned to the road, but on a previous exploratory I had found an alternate bush way out so we enjoyed a shaded stroll out, picking up rubbish bags where we had left them at the tree. The track was very carved out in some places, showing past bogging's which made walking more interesting than flat and boring. No one

fell into the holes and we were soon back at the cars. In recap we were not alone on the trails. A very healthy goanna posed for us up his tree, and a sea eagle circled, checking us out. The ducks on the lagoon didn't hang around but nice to see. It is a truly beautiful place well worth the visit in a respectful appreciative way. And I thank those who came for making it a great day.



**Celestine Lambert**



Eleven Bushwalkers enjoyed the Freshwater Point walk on a perfect autumn day. There was more track walking than beach walking this trip. This is the first time for many years that I have seen water in the freshwater lagoons. A good change from usual was that we track walked back to the cars instead of road walking. Thanks,

**Penny McMahon**