



WILDSIDE

THE WILDERNESS SHOP NEWSLETTER

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Staff member Jonno skiing at Mt McKay this season.

Winter 2018 Edition

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What's New: Women's Climbing Shoes



LA SPORTIVA OTAKI

Striking a right balance between on-the-wall comfort while still feeling technical and precise. One of our staff members claims that the Otaki makes credit card edges feel like ledges! The P3® band – technology borrowed from the La Sportiva Solution – wraps the midfoot and heel to maintain tension, giving you more power in the toe.



LA SPORTIVA FINALE

The Finale appeals to a variety of people: Newbies love its out-of-the-box comfort, intermediate climbers like its precision-edging toe-box and veterans pick it for high-mileage trad days. This Italian-made model delivers with a glove-like fit, thanks to its unlined leather upper. On the sole, sticky Vibram XS Edge rubber adds stiffness and support.



Also New: Men's La Sportiva Skwama

Marrying aggressive performance features with unconventional flexibility. This slipper-like shoe delivers a mix of power and sensitivity. It works well for those who prefer a softer shoe, as well as for climbers who like a second-skin fit for committing to smears on technical slabs.

*We now stock seven women's climbing shoe models across our range!

Backcountry Beta: Where to Go Skiing (That Isn't Lake Mountain)

By Andrew

So, you're new to skiing and you've been to Lake Mountain a couple of times. You've done the big green loop up there, and you're keen to explore a new area. But you still yearn for friendly terrain and trails near civilisation. Where do you go? Here are some suggestions.

MUSHROOM ROCKS

This is the perfect destination if you have beginner-style boots (like triple NBC or 3-pin boots). Hike in starting at Mushroom Rocks carpark at Mt Erica. The track winds through a unique boulder field before hitting the snowline, where you can change to skis. Continuing up and along Baw Baw Plateau, the track gets more open the further you go. Before you venture out, find out how much snow has fallen. (If it's dumped at Baw Baw and St Gwinear, it's probably dumped at Mushroom Rocks too.)

Map: *Walhalla*, Vicmap, \$12.95

MT STIRLING

Feeling adventurous and want to be out the whole day? Mt Stirling has steeper slopes and more technical terrain. Yet, it offers straightforward, simple gradients. From Telephone Box Junction (TBJ), head upwards to the summit on one of the many trails. Most beginners are capable of skiing to the summit. And, if you ski down the way you came, you'll know where the steep bits are. Alternatively, do a circuit, passing Bluff Spur Hut, the summit and the Machinery Shed.

Map: *Buller-Howitt Alpine Area*, SV Maps, \$13.95



Staff member Chelsea on Baw Baw Plateau (hasn't broken out the skis yet!).

Climbing Beta: Winter Crags Near Melbourne

By Chelsea

Winter can inspire lazy mornings under the doona (or in your sleeping bag). But, in the right conditions, a bluebird winter day can be the perfect time for a jaunt on the rock. And, if you're into the hard stuff, winter is most certainly "send" season. All you need to do is choose your day carefully: Check weather forecasts. Get a rain radar app. And, check out these winter-friendly crags...

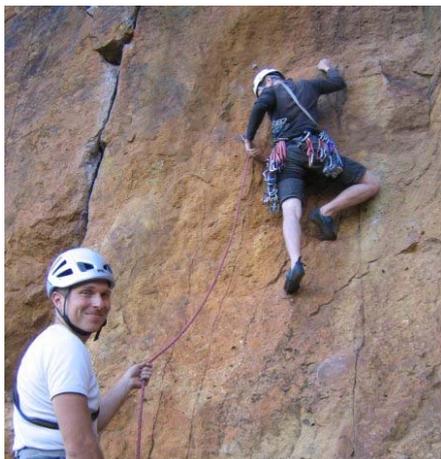
WERRIBEE GORGE

From Melbourne: 65km

Rock: Conglomerate

Style: Cracks, faces, arêtes

| Trad, sport



At Werribee Gorge, Falcon's Lookout is a sun trap, which makes it the perfect winter crag. In particular, Veni Vidi Vici Wall is north-facing and gets sun all day. Scrambling over from the main boardwalk can be troublesome, but there are a handful of good routes (mostly in the grade 21-26 range). Otherwise, the popular Amphitheatre does get morning sun.

Recommended Route: *Pocko Wall*, 20m 23** (sport). "An exacting technical exercise."—Glenn Tempest

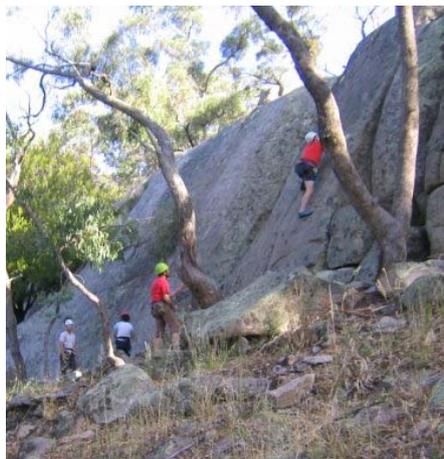
MT ALEXANDER & BLACK HILL

From Melbourne:

135km (Mt Alexander); 91km (Black Hill)

Rock: Granite

Style: Slabs, cracks, faces | Trad, sport



Comprising a band of granite tors that span across central Victoria, Mt Alexander and Black Hill are viable options in winter. These two locations are at lower altitude than Mount Macedon (where it snows, sometimes), so they're not as frigidly cold. Plus, the routes tend to be short – which makes bailing in an unexpected shower a quick affair.

Recommended Route: *Where Beagles Dare*, 12m 17 (carrot bolts). "Careful slabbing. Tiptoeing to the first bolt would be scary on lead."—Chelsea

YOU YANGS

From Melbourne: 63km

Rock: Granite

Style: Slabs, cracks

| Trad, sport, mixed



This collection of granite hills rising out of Melbourne's western plains is a good option if the weather is sub-optimal elsewhere. The You Yangs lies in a rain shadow, which means it tends to stay dry even if it's raining everywhere else. Like Mt Alexander and Black Hill, there's a variety of climbing areas scattered over the range, so you're less likely to encounter crowds.

Recommended Route: *Silver Knight*, 15m 16** (trad). "Surprisingly good natural route with good pro."—Mac

Heading out? Check out Glenn Tempest's *Rockclimbs Around Melbourne* guidebook. Price: \$29.95

Tech Tips: How to Choose a Down Jacket

By Mac

The first question to ask is, *What are you using it for?* Perhaps you're going on a multiday hike. Maybe, you need one for travel and about town. Or, you need a down jacket that can handle the mountains. Thinking about what you'll be using your down jacket for *specifically* will lead you to consider the features that are most important to you.



MULTIDAY HIKE

Particularly in winter, warmth is paramount. Next, might be weight. If you want to cut down on weight, consider how much warmth you're willing to sacrifice. (You might be able to cut weight elsewhere; by choosing lighter cookware, for example.)

Luckily, down has an excellent warmth-to-weight ratio, which is what makes down jackets ideal as an insulating layer.

How warm the down is can vary from jacket to jacket. It comes down to two numbers: loft and fill weight. Loft (also called fill power) is a unit of measurement that refers to how warm the down in your jacket is. The higher the number, the warmer the down. For example: 850+ loft is warmer than 650+ loft. Fill weight refers to the quantity of down in a jacket. Fill weight is measured in grams.



Mont Icicle (pictured)

Expedition-standard, toasty-warm.

Loft: 800+

Fill Weight: 310g | size M (Men's)

Jacket Weight: 850g | size M (Men's)

Price: \$569.95

Mont Fusion

The Icicle's little brother: no hood, lighter.

Loft: 750+

Fill Weight: 240g | size M (Men's)

Jacket Weight: 630g | size M (Men's)

Price: \$389.95

TRAVEL / ABOUT TOWN

Down jackets are an ideal insulating layer for going about your business around town or travelling around cities. When it comes to travel, look for a jacket that is light and packable. Lightweight down jackets can pack down extremely small (thanks to down's out-of-this-world compression qualities) and is very warm for its weight. Find a jacket with a light overall weight, as well as light outer fabrics.



Mont Zero Down Jacket (pictured)

Whisper thin 7-denier outer fabric makes this down jacket incredibly lightweight. But, you will sacrifice some durability. If you use it heavily with a big daypack, it could wear out in the shoulders.

Loft: 800+

Jacket Weight: 198g | size M (Men's)

Price: \$329.95

Mont Neon Down Jacket

A more robust lightweight option, the Mont Neon Down Jacket is made from Mont's Hydronaute XT fabric, which is both highly water-resistant and durable. However, unlike heavier jackets such as the Mont Fusion and Mont Icicle, the Neon has less fill. This makes the entire unit lighter, thinner and more easily packed down small.

Loft: 750+

Jacket Weight: 415g | size M (Men's)

Price: \$349.95

CLIMBING MOUNTAINS

Warm, light, technical. You need a jacket that pulls out all the stops if you're going to use it in the hills. Warmth: Clearly an important factor, because you're going to be using this jacket in a cold environment. So, look for something with high loft and high fill weight. Light: Choose a jacket made from light fabric. Ideally, this fabric is also durable (to hold up to a bashing in the mountains) and waterproof (mountains are wet environments). Technical: Look for features such as a helmet-compatible hood, and most importantly a jacket that is cut for active movement and use with a harness on (for example: high-placed A-line hand-pockets).



Outdoor Research Incandescent (pic.)

Technical, light, high loft. Downside: Not the most durable.

Loft: 800+

Jacket Weight: 468g | size L

Price: \$529.95

Outdoor Research Floodlight

Pertex Shield+ 2-layer outer fabric, which has a 13,000mm waterhead and breathability of 20,000g/m² over 24 hours. Translation: Waterproof and breathable, which is ideal for moving in the mountains.

Loft: 800+

Jacket Weight: 639g | size L

Price: \$599.95

Trip Review: Climbing in Nowra

by Chelsea

The Wilderness Shop's newest staff member is Chelsea, who has joined us to help with marketing tasks. Chelsea has been climbing for nine years, and her favourite style is multipitch trad. She also likes dayhikes along Victoria's wild coastline, and has trekked part of the Annapurna Circuit in Nepal. If you see her about, say hi!



Nina on A Day at the Beach (21)

The drive to Nowra is long. Eight and a half hours, to be precise. Which isn't too bad, except that we travelled with a toddler and as such, 80% of our roadtrip soundtrack was "Let It Go" from the cartoon movie *Frozen*.

Nowra lies just inland of the coast of New South Wales, about a three-hour drive south of Wollongong. On the banks of the Shoalhaven River, Nowra is not exactly a tourist town. Together with its sister-town across the river, Bomaderry, it has a population of about 35,000. To an outsider like me, it's largely unremarkable – especially when the long, white beaches of Jervis Bay and the sheer, cobalt-blue cliffs of Point Perpendicular are only a stone's throw away.

However, Nowra's little secret is that it's widely regarded as Australia's 'ancestral home' of sport climbing. Many of Australia's hardest lines lie in the quiet shade of its leafy grottoes. Today, it's a popular crag, thanks to its quick walk-ins, easy sport routes and closely spaced bolts.

Having learned the ropes at the trad climbing mecca Arapiles, sport climbing is a bit of a novelty for me. At a friend's suggestion, we headed for Thompson's Point (affectionally, "Thommo's").

There's something for everyone at Thommo's: bolted climbs as easy as grade 11 (virtually unheard of in Victoria!); as well as every style including slabby, slopery, bouldery, technical... Thommo's is also home to the iconic roof *Cowboy Junkies* (25).

We started off on the two-star grade 11 called *Lucifer*, which was strangely enjoyable. It starts out with holds that are slopey enough to keep things interesting, before busting around a small rooflet.

Next, we hopped onto the classic *Santa's Little Helper* (15). I really enjoyed this climb. The sun was peeking over the cliffline as I committed to the crux rockover. The technical, "FEET!" style got us warmed up for our next climb, *Samurai Pizza Catz* (18).

By now, we'd become accustomed to the style on these bulbous, short walls. *Samurai Pizza Cats* was another technical exercise, and I fell off the tensiony crux move down low. The rest of the route, though, prepared me for my next climb: *Butt Head* (17), which, with slopers and technical, oozy moves, was right up my alley.



Hyams Beach in Jervis Bay

After this, we trotted around the corner, admiring the completely horizontal roof of *Cowboy Junkies* as we sidled along the ferny track. We stopped at a remarkable orange wall with large scoop features and a square arête. The main climb in this area is called *Orca* (18). It starts with a couple of long moves, followed by vertical climbing through a series of hueco-like features. Then, you teeter around the corner, entering steeper terrain punctuated with good, positive holds. After stretching and rolling around the overhang, it's more bulbous slabbing to the chains.

That was all we had time for before our toddler called 'time'! We spent the afternoon running in and out of the warm, turquoise, lapping waters of Jervis Bay, admiring postcard-white sand and Beecroft Peninsula on the horizon.

Throughout our week-long trip, we spent the majority of our time climbing on Beecroft Peninsula's Point Perpendicular. But, that's a story for another time!



Chelsea on Butt Head (17)

Recommended guidebook: *Nowra Climbing* by Onsight Photography and Publishing. Price: \$49.95