

Tread Softly

We all enjoy the experience of being out in the bush: walking among towering trees, hearing the wind rustling in the leaves and branches, spotting animals, listening to birdsong and smelling the scent of eucalyptus and wet earth.

In order to preserve these experiences for future generations it's important that everyone observe certain important rules relevant to all visitors to the bush.

*It's also worth remembering that you are essentially entering someone's backyard.
Places that animals, birds, reptiles and bugs all call home.
We are the intruders so let's keep our intrusion to a minimum.*

Some of the things we can do are:

- 1) Keeping parties small to minimise our impact on tracks and the environment in general
- 2) Keep noise to a minimum so you don't disturb the inhabitants; that way you might actually see more of them too.
- 3) Keep to the paths to avoid damaging sensitive native vegetation and to prevent soil erosion. It can take years for damage to be repaired. Don't take short cuts unless they are unavoidable.
- 4) Disturbing fallen branches will impact on the ecosystem that has established itself under its protection so try to avoid moving them
- 5) Take your rubbish home with you. Avoid unnecessary packaging unless you are prepared to carry it out. You might also consider bringing a plastic bag to clean up and carry out rubbish left by less considerate visitors.
- 6) If you light a camp fire, make sure you put it out before you leave and always observe fire danger regulations. Plan ahead and bring your own wood. Most parks prohibit the use of fallen timber for camp fires as it provides shelter and food for animals, birds & insects.
- 7) If you must go potty, make sure you bury your waste and toilet paper at least 15 cms deep. The soil and moisture will help degrade your waste quicker. Choose a site well away from camp sites, tracks and water sources
- 8) Don't feed animals or birds. Our food is not a natural part of their diet and might make them sick or they may become dependent on humans, which may impact on their ability to survive
- 9) Plants and seeds should not be taken home. Most plants require specific growing conditions and are not likely to survive away from their normal growing environment
- 10) To prevent the spread of plant and soil pathogens, weeds and prohibited plants, use hygiene stations wherever they are located and clean your footwear between walks
- 11) Above all leave the environment as you found it. The locals will appreciate it