

The 4WD Guy's Newsletter

Experience the Wilderness - Braidwood & Beyond

www.4wdtrips.com.au

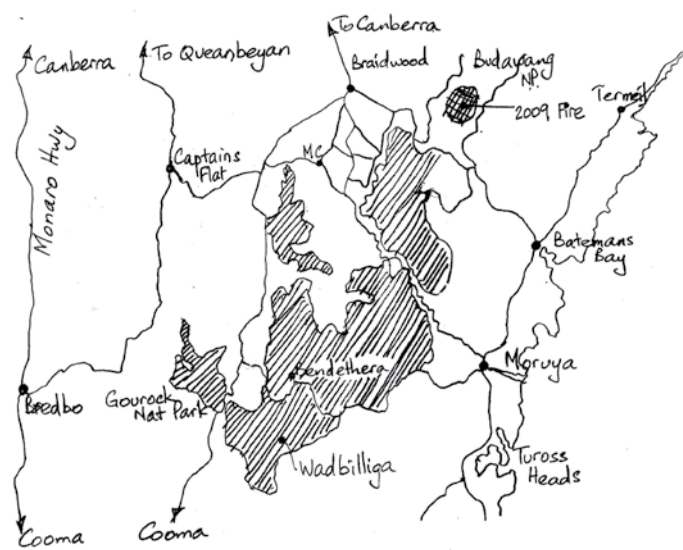
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The Main Issue

This summer saw the most devastating bush fires in recent history with the loss of more than 200 lives. Much has been said and done so I will not linger.

However, it is important to gain some insight into the size of the fires by trying to relate them to our own bush regions around Braidwood.



Deua National Park	122,033 hectares
Wadbilliga NP	95,542 "
Monga NP	26,464 "
Gourock NP	7,862 "
Badja Swamps	543 "
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	252,444 "
Size of Budawang Fire	~ 2,000 "
Size of Kinglake Fire	217,000 " (Feb 16 th)

The above map lists the area of the National Parks that we all love. In total, the Deua, Wadbilliga, Monga, Gourock and Badja Swamps are only slightly larger than the two fire complexes centred on Kinglake and Marysville that had merged on Feb 16th 2009.

The serious fire in the Budawang to the west of the Western Distributor ended up being a tad more than 2,000 hectares compared to 217,000 hectares for the merged fire complex in Victoria. At the same time some 70,000 more hectares were also burning in Wilsons Promontory and in other regions. The Wilsons Promontory fire alone was equivalent in area to 40% of the Monga National Park and each of the Bunyip and Churchill fires were equivalent to the Monga. Lets hope this time we learn something!

Victoria's High Country is still recovering from major fires in 2002-03 and 2005-06 (see pictures below March 2008). It is a sobering sight to travel through vast tracts of burnt bush.



The Trips - Easter +

Expect a range of Day Trips as well as some 3-4 day camping trips. Also stay tuned to the website for longer trips to the Victorian High Country (early May, November) and the Simpson Desert (Winter - Early August probably). Register potential interest by sending an email the4wdguy@4wdtrips.com.au

The Easter trip program has been placed on the website. I will be doing afternoon trips to the Monga "Wild Places" on the Friday and Monday. On Saturday & Sunday there will be full day trips. Sunday's trip will be a full on circuit of the Oulla Wilderness returning to Braidwood via Bendethera.

What's On in March+

Braidwood was quite a busy in March with the Braidwood Show. The weather started off rather cool with a thick blanket of fog and light overnight rain. Later the fog lifted to a glorious day and the earlier moisture had kept the dust under control.

4WD Trips were on display and there were many people that dropped by for a chat. Of particular interest was the number of new people settling in the area. We have been here coming up to four years now and much of the early days were spent out in the Land Rover exploring the excellent bush around Braidwood.



Specialty Trips

A "specialty trip" might be one where there is a group of either or both passengers and/or tag along vehicles with a special interest such as going to certain locations, or camping, photography, history or bushwalking. Enquire as to minimum numbers to enable your group's trip to be accommodated.

Track Notes

The Deua River at the Dry Creek camp site had stopped flowing at the crossing to the Mericumbene FT. The water level is normally up to the front wheels of the Defender. Several goannas were spotted here. Burra Creek has stopped flowing and the Deua at Bendethera was down to a trickle last weekend.



Dry Creek Crossing

Deua River Crossing at the picnic area, Bendethera (March 30 2009)



Trip Notes

In late November we held a special trip to visit sections of the Brindabellas, Namadgi National Park and the Long Plains area south west of Canberra.

The area offers the possibility of day trips from Canberra and 3 day camping trips to explore the high country. Some routes are not that difficult (low range not used) and can take in visits to a number of historic cattlemen's huts and homesteads. Some pictures of the huts in the area have been added to the Huts page in the [Photos] part of the website.

A second day recce trip in March went west from Captains Flat to the Namadgi National Park, then south to Adaminaby, Cooma and back to Braidwood. Watch the website for upcoming trips to this general region.

Following the Braidwood Show, we conducted a day trip into the Quart Pot area. The trip involved turning off the Kings Highway 30km east of Braidwood, travelling along the 2WD roads to the bottom of the Corn Trail. After crossing the Buckenbowra River, the driving was predominantly in low range until we descended to the Deua River south of Bakers Flat.

A large section of a fallen tree was cleared along Misty Mtn Road, near the Cabbage Tree Fire Trail. This was the first real test of the new chainsaw - it passed but it took 3 people some 40 minutes to clear. After this the tracks were in excellent condition and the weather was very clear.

The trip is not for the novice as some climbs along the Gollarabie FT have some of the steepest hill climbs and descents in the area. Harold's beautifully kitted out Jeep Rubicon completing the climb up Firebreak Fire Trail



In 2002, some 55,000 hectares of wilderness at the head of Oulla Creek burnt for over a month. (Twice the size of the Monga NP, largely unreported). The fire trail along the eastern side of the area became overgrown with new saplings for a kilometre or two. However late last year this track was regraded and now provides an interesting "medium+" graded route.

On Easter Sunday, I am offering a full day trip doing this track as well as visiting Bendethera on the way back to Braidwood.