



JOURNEY: The incredible view at South Cape Bay, main picture, the walkers on their way to South Cape Rivulet, top right, and a map of the first leg of the South Coast track. **IMAGES:** Cam Smith/ PWS map

HAVE you been on a bush walk recently?

No matter where you live in Tasmania, you are never far from wilderness and walking tracks.

A member of the Peter Underwood Centre team, which produces *The Wonder Weekly*, embarked on an adventure during the April school holidays with his son.

The pair were joined on a walk on the South Coast Track, by four other father-son combinations.

The party of 10 drove for two-and-a half hours from Hobart to the Southwest National Park, via Cockle Creek, on Australia's most southerly road, before setting off on foot.

But not before signing the log book provided by the Parks and Wildlife Service.

This informs the PWS how many people are in your group, where you are planning to walk to, and when you intend to return.

The group had an experienced bushwalker to lead them, and

were well prepared with good walking boots, thick socks, thermal clothing, water proof pants and coats, sunhats and beanies.

Some members of the team were also wearing gaiters.

Their rucksacks contained lightweight tents, sleeping bags and inflatable sleeping mats, dehydrated food, water bottles, cooking and eating utensils, head torches and dry clothing.

They also brought along a first aid kit, which included plenty of insect repellent, blister packs and sunscreen; and a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB).

The first leg of the South Coast Track, to South Cape Bay takes about two hours, a little longer if you are carrying heavy packs.

Part of this leg is bush track, but it is broken up by a welcome duck board section through button grass plain.

At one point the walkers came across a plant with attractive-looking berries, but with no bush food knowledge they wisely

decided not to sample the purple berries.

They had plenty of high energy food close handy anyway - including trail mix, jerky and chocolate.

The view which greeted them when they reached South Cape Bay was well worth the effort.

They stood on the cliff face of the rugged shore, and contemplated that the next major land mass to the south was Antarctica.

The crew then walked on to South Cape Rivulet, and this section of the track over hilly headlands was quite steep and very muddy following heavy rain.

This proved quite a challenge, particularly for the adults.

They arrived a bit exhausted at the Rivulet camping site, but there was no time for rest, with tents to be erected and dinner cooked.

Water from the Rivulet also needed to be boiled to replenish their supplies.

With dinner on board, the tired walkers headed to the relative

comfort of their tents for much-needed sleep.

Unfortunately the wildlife took a particular liking to the trail mix - and scratched a small hole through a tent, a rucksack and a plastic bag containing food, and savoured a feast of nuts, dried fruit and seeds.

Who could blame them really?

A sunny morning provided the opportunity to dry some damp clothes and rest a little more, before it was time to head back on the muddy trail to South Cape Bay.

The group met several other walkers on the way, some of whom were walking the entire South Coast track.

This tough 85km trek to Melaleuca takes six to eight days one-way.

Often people take a plane flight to Melaleuca and walk back to Cockle Creek.

After arriving back at South Cape Bay, the group prepared for another night of camping.

Dinner, washed down with sweet tea, tasted so good, and the

group talked a lot, about the trip, and many other subjects as well.

Some morning rain did not assist the final pack up the next morning.

Tired, sore muscles were put to the test on the walk back to Cockle Creek, but everyone arrived safe and feeling satisfied that they had achieved their goal and had a great experience.

You don't need to camp or have lots of equipment to enjoy a bush walk in Tasmania.

If an adult family member is happy to go with you, the PWS website has some great information on 60 day walks all around the state:

parks.tas.gov.au/things-to-do/60-great-short-walks

Be aware that depending on which location you choose, you may need a parks pass.

Make sure you are well prepared and check the weather forecast.

Children's University Tasmania members can earn stamps in their passports for this challenge, at the discretion of their school coordinator.



The next broadcast of our live show, *UCTV Alive for Kids*, airs on Wednesday, May 5. Professor Kristyn Harman will talk about Aboriginal men who became convicts. To register: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)