

First, it was takeaway food, now it's takeaway rubbish

TOWARDS the end of '93, former ranger-in-charge of Walyunga National Park Ross McGill and I removed the park's rubbish bins and installed recycling bins for glass and aluminium cans.

Thanks to sponsorship from Westcan, we also provided plastic rubbish bags to all park visitors, and invited them to take their rubbish home.

The bags were distributed either by direct hand-out at the gate or through conveniently placed dispensers in the picnic areas.

Ross departed from Walyunga about 14 months ago to take up the position of ranger-in-charge of King Leopold National Park, but the rubbish removal project at Walyunga continued.

Steve Strachan took

by George
Duxbury

over from Ross as ranger-in-charge of Walyunga and now enough time has passed for Steve and I to assess the effects of the rubbish disposal system.

Co-operation from visitors has been extremely gratifying. Occasionally, a bag of rubbish is left behind, but mostly visitors take the bags away with them.

And there has been a distinct reduction in ground litter. When there were bins available, some visitors didn't take too much trouble to ensure the litter they directed at the bin actually reached it.

They frequently neglected to replace the bin lids, which encouraged the birds and 'roos to pull the

rubbish out again.

Now, when rubbish is left behind it is usually in one of the handout rubbish bags, so it is much easier to pick up.

From a cost-efficiency point of view, we believe the project has been a huge success.

We estimate that a saving of about \$3 500 has been made since the project began.

The saving has been made through reduction in rangers' time spent in picking up ground litter, emptying bins, replacing and repairing bins, bin lids and liner bags, and running costs of the vehicle travelling to and from the tip about eighteen kilometres away.

About \$150 has been generated from glass and cans through the recycle

bins, with about \$100 coming from the recycling of aluminium cans.

Steve and I believe that because visitors have the plastic bags with them wherever they picnic, they are more inclined to put all of their rubbish (including the recyclables) into the bag and take it away with them. We can only hope they sort their rubbish at home and dispose of it carefully.

This project is a winner; both in the wider sense of park visitor acceptance and that of sponsorship from Westcan, which has a major interest in promoting recycling.

It also shows the community that we are genuine in our recycling endeavours and we believe this encourages them to be the same.



Part-time gatekeeper Jeanne-Marie Pehlic hands a rubbish-disposal bag to Walyunga National Park visitors. Photo by George Duxbury

A 2nd proof sheet - sent to George Duxbury

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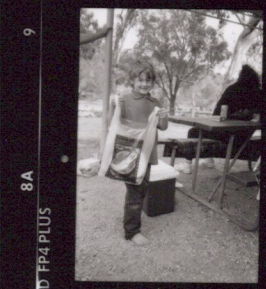
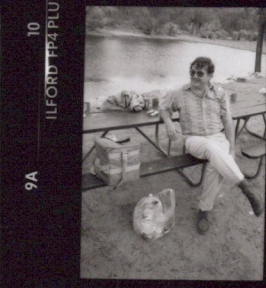
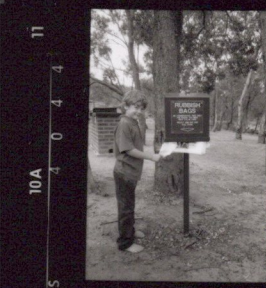
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