

WORKING WITH THE FRIENDS OF THE ESCARPMENT PARKS

Revised May 2024

A GUIDE FOR VOLUNTEERS

A very warm welcome to Friends of the Escarpment Parks (Toowoomba) Inc. (FEP). We appreciate your support to help us achieve our vision for the future of Toowoomba's bushlands, and we also value your company and assistance with what we are trying to achieve.

Our vision is that:

“All remnant natural bushland in Toowoomba should be weed free, well managed, and valued by the community, in vigorous growth and contain a diverse range of plant and animal species”.

To achieve our vision, FEP is systematically removing environmental weeds from our urban Bushland Parks and Reserves, allowing the native vegetation to regenerate and pro-actively assisting revegetation by planting local native plants.

The impact of some FEP work may not be immediately apparent, but our long-term volunteers all have the satisfaction of witnessing the major benefits of the bushland regeneration after a number of years. We hope that your volunteering experience in Toowoomba's Bushland parks will be rewarding and enjoyable.

We work closely with Toowoomba Regional Council (TRC) and other landholders, since they are responsible for the Parks/Reserves and provide us with support, including tools, safety equipment and other supplies.

ABOUT THE FRIENDS OF THE ESCARPMENT PARKS

One sunny weekend in the mid 1980's Dr John Swarbrick took his daughter to visit her friend at Spring Bluff Railway station. While there, John walked around the area with the Stationmaster and saw the big problem that the Lantana was creating. He invited a few friends to work in the area and so the seeds of Friends of The Escarpment Parks were sown.

Once the group achieved their goals there, they moved to Prince Henry Drive and then to Duggan Park. It was here that their success, enthusiasm and expertise so impressed the then Director of Parks and Recreation of Toowoomba Council that in 1991 he proposed that they form a Friends group to help attract more attention to the Bushland parks at Council level and to increase funding for the Bushland Park Management and share their expertise and local knowledge with Council. So the seed was germinated!

The emphasis at that time was on the parks along the eastern escarpment of the city, hence the name Friends of the Escarpment Parks.

The group incorporated on 1st September 1994 as The Friends of the Escarpment Parks (Toowoomba) Inc. and continued working much as before. New maintenance groups have progressively been established in Redwood Park, Echo Valley Park, Hartmann Reserve, Duggan Park, Nielsen Park, Hancock St Park, Rogers Reserve (Highfields), Highfields Falls Park, Leopard Ash Bushland Park, Rangeview Rd Blue Mtn Heights, and Panorama Crescent Park (Prince Henry Heights).

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide has been developed for people who are working in the bushland parks with FEP as volunteers. There is a lot of information which needs to be understood for the benefit of both FEP and our volunteers.

We request that you take the time to read through these guidelines on how we work.

Please feel free to discuss any issues of concern with your Bushcare Coordinator or Committee Member and let us know if there are any other topics that you think should be included in this guide.

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1. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS

Policy

Friends of the Escarpment Parks (Toowoomba) Inc. (FEP) is committed to the Health and Safety of our volunteers. To facilitate this FEP provide all necessary safety equipment and information.

FEP works with volunteers of all age groups, many with differing physical abilities. Volunteers are encouraged to undertake tasks which bring them satisfaction and that are suited to the age and abilities of the volunteer.

Responsibilities

The work of volunteers comes under Queensland Government's Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011, and Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011.

Health and Safety is a responsibility of FEP Committee, the individual volunteers and Toowoomba Regional Council. FEP Committee will provide information, advice, guidance and some safety equipment for volunteers. The Committee will ensure that necessary records and reports are kept up to date. It is the responsibility of Toowoomba Regional Council, Friends of the Escarpment Parks and individual Bushcare Coordinators that before commencing duties:

VOLUNTEERS MUST

- Understand Workplace Health and Safety policies as they pertain to the roles being undertaken and procedures including incident reporting,
- Undergo training relevant to the volunteer role,
- Attend volunteer induction courses with FEP and T.R.C. when appropriate.

First Aid

A basic First Aid Kit is provided at each bushcare site. If you require first aid at any time, please advise the Bushcare Coordinator, who has access to a First Aid Kit. If necessary, the Bushcare Coordinator will call an ambulance or arrange for you to be driven home.

Anaphylactic Shock is the most serious allergic reaction and can cause death without prompt medical attention. Anybody who has a serious allergy needs to carry their own medication (usually EPIPEN) and should advise others of his/her allergy and how to use the EPIPEN so that they can assist in an emergency

If there is an injury, no matter how minor, it **MUST** be recorded in the Incident Section of the Volunteers Work Register. Also, the Bushcare Coordinator **must** call Park Community and Volunteer Support facilitator and submit an Incident/Hazard Report to Toowoomba Regional Council for all incidents with or without injury and near misses (e.g. Snakes).

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Fire is a serious risk in bushland throughout the year, therefore, **Smoking is not allowed** whilst working in the bush or during breaks. **Alcohol and drugs** may affect your judgment and increase your risk. Alcohol and drugs are NOT permitted and anyone who appears to be affected by either shall be asked to leave the site by the Bushcare Coordinator.

2. INSURANCE

Volunteer Insurance for FEP members is provided by AON Insurance through Queensland Water and Land Carers (QWaLC), which is a statutory body set up by the Queensland Government to coordinate and support groups such as the Friends of the Escarpment Parks (Toowoomba) Inc. that are engaged in caring for our country. They provide us with insurance against Personal Accident, Public Liability and Association Liability.

You can view all the insurance policy details on the Q.W.aL.C. Web Site,

- [QWaLC AHI Voluntary Workers Personal Accident policy wording 2024-25](#)
- [QWaLC AON CGU NFP Protector Association policy wording 2024-25](#)
- [QWaLC AON Canopus combined Public Products Liability wording 2024-25](#)

or request your Bushcare Coordinator to obtain details for you.

To be eligible for insurance cover you must be a member of FEP, working on approved FEP projects and sites under a Bushcare Coordinator (experienced FEP supervisor) with your hours recorded on our timesheets.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU RECORD ANY INCIDENT ON THE DAY IT OCCURS AND FOLLOW REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR TRC.

You must be taking proper care of yourself and be wearing appropriate clothing and safety equipment. You must not be under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs or be committing any unlawful or illegal act.

3. RISK ASSESSMENTS

Formal Risk Assessment Procedures have been completed for each of FEP's Parks and Reserves to identify the hazards which face us each day. These include

- The terrain which can result in trips, slips and falls. Some parks are flat and level, others have steep slopes, cliffs and creeks
- Fallen trees, vines and branches.
- All Parks/Reserves have wildlife including snakes, ticks and other poisonous creatures.
- All contain thorny plants and some have Stinging Trees. We need to be prepared for these.
- We work with low impact herbicides and we need to know how to deal with these.

Detailed information is also provided in these Guidelines.

All new or different activities require a New Risk assessment to be completed.

4. PROCEDURES WHEN WORKING IN THE BUSH

Volunteers' Health and Safety is of prime importance. We encounter many hazards in our bushland parks. Most will normally pose little or no risk, but we all need to be aware that they exist. We have a few basic rules when volunteering with FEP:

- **Before starting work please ensure you have registered with the FEP Bushcare coordinator on the attendance register.**
- **Never do anything that you think is too hazardous or dangerous,**
- **Preferably work in groups or pairs and if you must work alone at all please advise others of your location,**
- **If you see a hazard or danger, report it to the Coordinator in charge of the group,**

- **If you see another person doing something dangerous, warn them and offer to help them, if appropriate,**
- **We are committed to working safely and have instituted a risk management process in which all volunteers are involved; so please be 'part of the team'.**

The bushcare coordinator will work with you to ensure that all activities are carried out safely and correctly. Should you have any queries at all, please discuss with your Coordinator or Committee Member.

In an emergency, please phone 000 and ask for an ambulance.

Should you experience a health problem from any injury or bite sustained and require medical attention at a later stage you should:

- Contact your GP or,
- Present to Emergency Department of Toowoomba Base hospital (public), or St Vincent's Hospital (private).

If you experience a health problem at a later stage from any injury or bite sustained and require medical attention, please advise your Bushcare coordinator afterwards so that the appropriate reports may be completed to support any potential Insurance claim.

5. WHAT TO WEAR AND WHAT TO BRING WHEN WORKING IN THE BUSH

For your safety and comfort, please make sure you wear:

- **Solid covered shoes or boots, which MUST BE WORN otherwise insurance will be denied.**
- **Gloves - Soft leather or other suitable material must always be worn,**
- **A light weight fully brimmed hat (preferably with a neck covering), to provide sun protection, stop debris falling down your neck and help to protect your face and neck against scratches and bites,**
- **Long trousers or overalls, to protect your legs against scratches and bites,**
- **Gaiters or Socks long enough to tuck your trousers legs into, to protect you against bites,**
- **Long sleeved shirt - to protect your arms against scratches and bites,**
- **Prescription glasses/Safety glasses/sunglasses, to protect your eyes,**
- **Knee Pads or Kneeling Pad - are advisable as much of our work is done on our knees.**

Gloves, hats, protective glasses, insect repellent and sunscreen are all available on request. Please ask your Coordinator.

Please also bring sufficient drinking water or other drink and food.

6. HAZARDS WHEN WORKING IN THE BUSH

Bushland is an untidy and uneven place. Move slowly and look up, look down and look ahead where you are going. Beware especially of:

- falling over logs, branches, sticks, wire, stumps etc. on the ground – LOOK DOWN
- working under dead branches hanging in the trees above – LOOK UP
- catching on protruding twigs etc. – LOOK AHEAD
- falling on steep slopes – avoid or be very careful when working on steep slopes
- Scratches and splinters – WEAR GLOVES
- Broken glass and other litter – WEAR GLOVES, be careful when kneeling, and keep your tetanus injections up to date
- Syringes – **do not handle syringes** or other hazardous objects you may find; mark their location clearly and report them to the site supervisor, who will collect and dispose of them safely,
- Branches and twigs which can injure the eyes – WEAR SAFETY GLASSES. Secure your prescription glasses with a neck strap to avoid losing them,
- Spiny plants can scratch and cut – take care and wear work gloves, long sleeves and trousers,

- Dangerous wildlife including snakes may sometimes be present – take care, make noise to scare snakes, and work in groups or pairs,
- Insects including bush ticks are nearly always present – use insect repellent and be aware of how to treat tick bites,
- We work with sharp tools including secateurs, loppers and saws – ensure that you know how to use and maintain them correctly,
- We work with some low impact herbicides – wear gloves and be aware of what you are using and how to use it, Read M.S.D.S.
- Sun and adverse weather conditions – wear hat, long sleeves and sunscreen 50+, do not work in wet or stormy weather,

Volunteers will receive a detailed site safety induction on particular hazards which may be present, prior to commencing work in each park.

Back strain

Back Strain may occur if you lift heavy objects or twist or fall whilst carrying them. Please take care of your back in the bush.

Do not heave or strain to pull out weeds or lift heavy logs etc. when pulling woody weeds. It is best to kneel beside them, grasp them firmly at the base with one or both hands and use your body to pull. If they do not pull out fairly readily then cut them off close to the ground and poison them immediately leaving the roots in the ground. Only lift logs etc. when necessary and get someone else to assist you.

Eye protection

Eyes are vulnerable to injury from Lantana, other scratchy items, poky branches and from the sun.

Considerable protection is afforded by wearing a stiffly brimmed hat that largely protects your face from scratches, pokes and the sun. Normal glasses and sunglasses give you limited protection. Safety glasses are available with clear or tinted lenses and should be worn.

The sun

When working outside any exposed skin is at risk of sunburn and you should take precautions to prevent sunburn by wearing a hat and sunscreen.

Wind

Due to the risk of falling timber cease work if wind speed exceeds 60kph. (Beaufort scale 8 -gale-whole trees in motion). Do not commence work if forecast from Bureau of Meteorology is for >50kph wind.

Thunder/Lightening

Cease work immediately and seek shelter in a 'hard-top' (metal-bodied) vehicle or solid building. If this is not possible never shelter under small groups of (or single) trees. Crouch (alone, feet together), preferably in a hollow. Remove metal objects from your head and body. Don't lie down flat but avoid being the highest object in the vicinity. If your hair stands on end or you hear 'buzzing' from nearby rocks, fences etc., move immediately. Stay away from metal poles, fences, clotheslines etc.

Powered Equipment

Powered equipment is not to be used without approval by TRC. Volunteers must be fully trained and licensed with the appropriate safety gear.

Tools

Some of the tools we use can be hazardous. Take care when carrying saws and loppers – always carry them with the teeth and jaws pointing downwards and away from you, in case you trip and fall.

7. ANIMAL AND PLANT HAZARDS

Most insect bites and stings result in a localised itch and swelling that settles within a few days. Severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) to insects are relatively uncommon and are usually due to bees, wasps, bull ants and ticks.

Fortunately, effective treatments are available to treat allergic reactions to bites and stings. Anaphylaxis from stinging insect allergy results in an average of three deaths per year in Australia.

*Please disclose **All existing Medical conditions** to Bushcare Coordinator.*

Ants

On occasion, we come across a bull ant or jumping ant nest. Keep an eye out for them and avoid working around strange looking mounds or exposed soil.

Wearing long trousers, a long sleeved shirt, gloves and repellent insecticide should give you reasonable protection. If ants do get onto you, move well away from the mound and brush off any ants from your skin and/or clothing.

Fire Ants

South American fire ants are an introduced species. They were detected in Brisbane in 2001 and spread west to the Lockyer Valley. In 2023 they were detected at Kleinton, not far from Leopard Ash Bushland Park. In 2024 they were detected at Oakey and Meringdan West. They have not yet been detected in any of the parks and reserves where FEP volunteers work but there is a risk that they may be found. We need to know how to identify and report them.

Fire ants are small (2 to 6 mm with variable sizes in one nest) and copper brown in colour with a darker abdomen. They are dangerous to humans and animals because they attack in swarms, stinging repeatedly with venom that can cause severe pain, anaphylactic shock, and even death.

The National Fire Ant Eradication Program website (<https://www.fireants.org.au>) has extensive information and resources including factsheets, an online training program to assist with recognition, and a portal for reporting their presence.

Bees

Are a particular nuisance during Summer when they seek water to cool their hives that are built in the hollows of trees. Unlike hornets and wasps they have a barbed sting that tears from their body when used causing the bee's death.

Flying Foxes

If working in an area with flying foxes, **do not touch them under any circumstances. Advise your Bushcare coordinator if you locate any injured flying foxes and they will call a Wildlife Carer.**

Wasps/Hornets

Care needs to be taken as you move through the bushes as unlike bees, wasps/hornets can inflict multiple stings.

Snakes

There are snakes in our urban bushland, but the risk of snakebite is low. Move slowly and carefully through the bush, looking where you are putting your feet. Check logs and rocks before sitting on them, putting your hands on them or stepping over them. Most of our activities are slow and disturbing, and snakes move away ahead of us. We rarely see snakes in the bush.

If you do see a snake stop, call out to warn others, and retreat carefully. Do not try to kill snakes

REFER ATTACHED APPENDIX 1 FOR TREATMENT OF SNAKE BITES

Spiders

Are present especially in leaf litter. Wearing long trousers, a long sleeved shirt, hat, gloves and repellent insecticide should provide adequate protection. *Leave them alone or brush them off you with a glove.*

Stinging Trees

Arguably the most painful plant in the world. There are two types of Stinging Trees which can cause months of excruciating pain and itching. It grows in the rainforests of the coastal regions of Queensland.

In Toowoomba this tree is present in Redwood Park, (especially in the gullies), the rainforest section of the Boyce Gardens and possibly in other of our forest areas.

The leaves and new growth are densely covered with tiny spikes (or hairs) that easily break off when touched. These spikes are constantly being shed so one should avoid working beneath the trees as much as possible. Even lightly touching their leaves can give you a painful sting which can last for a week or more. Seedlings and small plants carrying leaves within two metres of the ground are the main risk.

Wear gloves, long pants and sleeves, and avoid touching stinging trees. There is no cure, but applying Veet or other depilatory wax will remove those spikes that have not been broken off by rubbing and scratching.

Should you accidentally come into contact with a Stinging Tree, please contact your Bushcare Coordinator immediately for assistance and advice.

REFER ATTACHED APPENDIX 2 for STINGING TREE IDENTIFICATION.

Ticks

Ticks are the most serious biological hazard that we face in the bush. They are active throughout the year but particularly from October to March. Ticks attach themselves by burrowing the head under the skin and securing strongly with hooked mouthparts. They feed by injecting toxic saliva (which causes rapid blood flow to the bite area) and sucking the blood. Irritation at the bite site follows, and this can last for 2 weeks and be intense in sensitive people. The Rickettsial infection Australian Tick Typhus can be transmitted by ticks. Allergic reactions can occur including the development of mammalian meat allergy

Avoidance is the best remedy. This is best achieved by wearing long trousers, long sleeved shirt, gloves and a broad brimmed hat (preferably with neck protection), and spaying your ankles, cuffs, wrists, neck, hairline and front shirt buttons with insect repellent (e.g.) Bushman's 40% DEET heavy Duty

When using repellent avoid contact with eyes and breathing in fumes and be aware of possible skin irritation.

Have a shower as soon as you arrive home and check and get checked for any ticks. Wash your work clothes in hot water as soon as possible. Keep them separate from your other clothes.

What to do if you are bitten:

It is important to remove all ticks as soon as practical after discovery. The tick should not be touched (scratched) or disturbed until immediately prior to removal as the tick will inject saliva into the skin and makes the situation worse.

DO NOT apply methylated spirits or use a lighted match, cigarette or fingernail polish to remove the Tick as these are likely to increase Tick saliva and foregut contents entering the wound, increasing the chance of disease transmission.

REFER ATTACHED APPENDIX 3 FOR TREATMENT OF TICKS

8. CHEMICAL HAZARDS

FEP regularly uses low impact herbicides. Please advise us if you have any allergies, or do not wish to use herbicides and we will show you alternative methods or allocate different tasks.

FEP's work areas are all within the defined "Hazardous Zone No2" under the provisions of the Agricultural Chemical distribution Control Act 1998. This requires that all insecticide application be supervised and recorded by a person who holds a Commercial Operators Licence. FEP have several licenced operators.

They will make you aware of the herbicides you are using and of the precautions which need to be taken. Generally, safety precautions for commonly used herbicides are as follows:

GLYPHOSATE (Roundup or similar – Wear rubber gloves, face shield or goggles when mixing. No specified when spraying but Safety glasses, hat, long sleeves, trousers and boots are recommended.

FLUORXYPUR (Flagship 200 or similar) (Refer to M.S.D.S.) – Wear rubber gloves, face shield or goggles when mixing and spraying. Hat, long sleeves, trousers and boots are recommended.

All clothing and hats should be washed separately in hot water when you get home.

9. HOW WE CONTROL ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDS

Most of the environmental weeds that we remove from the bush are woody – they are shrubs (eg. lantana), small trees such as broadleaved privet, vines (eg Japanese honeysuckle, passionfruit and cat's-claw creeper) or tough woody herbs like pavonia. Most such weeds can be controlled manually by using simple hand tools. We only use herbicide (glyphosate only) when necessary, and as an FEP volunteer you can of course choose not to use it yourself.

We use three main methods to remove weeds from the bush:

- pulling or digging them up by the roots,
- cutting them off close to the ground and immediately treating the stump with glyphosate weedkiller (*the cut stump method*), and
- Stem injection with glyphosate weedkiller.

We occasionally use other methods for certain tough or specialised weeds. Where possible and required the seeds or other regenerative parts of the weeds are collected for proper disposal elsewhere. The tops of the weeds are generally scattered over the ground as mulch which helps to reduce further weed invasion, keeps the soil cool and provides shelter for insects and small animals.

Pulling or digging the weeds up by the roots sounds simple, but some weeds can be tough and strongly rooted and do not pull up easily. Where necessary we use appropriate tools such as trowels, spades or Root Blades to dig out the roots. For plants that can be pulled up by hand please follow this procedure: kneel beside the weed (do NOT bend over it), grip the weed firmly with both gloved hands as close to the ground as possible, then using your own weight lean backwards and pull the weed out of the ground.

It is important not to break the weed off near the ground – it will only regrow later on from the stump and will be more difficult to control later.

It is also important not to bend over the plant and try to pull it out by using your back muscles, since this may result in a strained aching back.

Weeds that are too tough or too big to be pulled or dug up should be dealt with by either the cut stump or stem injection method.

The cut stump method consists of kneeling beside the weed, cutting it off close to the ground and immediately applying weedkiller to the exposed stump. Long handled loppers are used to cut off most weeds, since these are stronger and safer than secateurs. We use hand saws for small trees that are too big for the loppers.

It is important to cut off the weed close to the ground (not more than 5cm high) so as not to leave a stump to trip over later. The weedkiller is also much more effective when the stump is as short as possible; longer stumps may reshoot and require retreatment, and are a tripping and spiking hazard later on, especially when hidden by regrowth.

It is also important to spray each of the cut stumps immediately (within 5 seconds of cutting) with the weedkiller provided. Delaying spraying for more than 10 seconds often means that the weedkiller will not be taken in properly and the stump will regrow later on and have to be controlled again.

Volunteers are supplied with premixed weedkiller in spray bottles for use on assigned weeds. We use weed killer to control woody weeds by the cut stump method. Park coordinators will organise the mixing and supplying of weed killer in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. To be effective the spray must wet the full area of the exposed cut, but not the ground or other vegetation nearby.

After spraying the stump the cut-off top of the plant may need cutting up and spreading over the ground nearby. Material spread over the ground should if possible be no higher than knee height so that people can step over it to access the area later on to remove any new weeds that may come up in the future

Stem injection. Trees such as broad-leaved privet and celtis that are too thick to cut down can be killed by injecting their trunks with 50% glyphosate herbicide. Using a small axe or tomahawk make a series of downward sloping cuts through the bark and into the sapwood. The cuts should be as far apart as the width of each cut, and they should be low down on the trunk – at least below any side branches. Then spray two squirts of weedkiller into each cut. This will usually kill the tree.

Spraying: when dealing with areas heavily infested with little native growth, we spray with 2% glyphosate (1.44% active ingredient) using 500mls plastic spray bottles or larger hand operated sprayers.

10. USING TOOLS

Important Note: Always wear gloves when handling and using tools.

Volunteers will be issued with appropriate tools for the task in hand.

Loppers: We use ratchet Loppers with extending handles and Bow Saws for the thicker plants. When cutting and poisoning it is important that the cut is made as near the ground as possible to limit regrowth and avoid leaving short stumps that can be tripped over. The cut **MUST** be sprayed within 10 seconds of cutting otherwise the plant will seal itself off making the spray ineffective. Volunteers are advised to kneel when cutting close to the ground to avoid back strain.

When cutting thicker growth extend the handle of the Loppers for greater leverage and be prepared to make a second or third cut if necessary. The jaws are made of forged steel and are rather brittle and may snap if twisted. Do not twist or lever when cutting stubborn growth-use a saw.

Bow Saws: These are very sharp, so be careful when carrying them. When cutting very thick growth they can be used by two people when each should put pressure on their pulling stroke and relax as it is drawn back.

The Root Blade: The Root Blade is a long-handled shovel which has been specifically modified for removing woody weeds from the soil. The blade is narrowed towards the tip, sharpened and reinforced. Place the tip of the blade beside the shrub or small tree to be removed, stamp it deeply into the soil with your foot to cut the weed's taproot, then lever the weed out of the ground. Once the weed has been removed you may need to fill in the hole with some of the surrounding soil and cover it with mulch.

Root Blades do not work well in rocky soil and we do not use them on steeply sloping ground where erosion can be an issue.

Power tools: We are no longer allowed to use power tools including chainsaws, trimmers and mulchers in TRC Parks and Reserves. Powered equipment can only be used in areas approved by TRC by fully trained and licensed volunteers with appropriate safety gear.

11. YOUR INDIVIDUAL WORK RECORD SHEET

FRIENDS OF THE ESCARPMENT PARKS

Overview of procedures performed by..... (park coordinator)

Signature.....

Date.....

Volunteer name.....

Signature.....

Date.....

12. APPENDIX 1 TREATMENT FOR SNAKE BITES

Snake bites in Australia from land or sea snakes can be potentially fatal and immediate medical assistance should be sought for all cases of suspected snake-bite. While not all snakes are venomous, it is difficult to identify snakes, so all bites should be treated as being potentially dangerous.

If a snake bite occurs, **call 000 for an ambulance**, use the pressure-immobilisation technique, and **have the patient taken immediately to the emergency department of the nearest hospital**.



Contact the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service on 1300 130 372 and follow the prompts if you have a snake in your yard that you would like to have removed. Do not attempt to kill or capture the snake yourself.

For more information on Queensland snakes, see the [Queensland Museum Snakes feature](#).

Pressure Immobilisation Technique

The pressure-immobilisation first aid technique was developed in the 1970's by Professor Struan Sutherland. Its purpose is to retard the movement of venom from the bite site into the circulation, thus "buying time" for the patient to reach medical care. Research with snake venom has shown that very little venom reaches the blood stream if firm pressure is applied over the bitten area and the limb is immobilised. Pressure-immobilisation was initially developed to treat snakebite, but it is also applicable to bites and stings by some other venomous creatures. It is currently recommended for most life-threatening venomous bites and stings in Australia.

Pressure-immobilisation is recommended for:

- all species of Australian snakes, including sea snakes
- funnel web spiders
- blue ringed octopus
- cone shell stings

Do not use pressure-immobilisation first aid for:

- spider bites other than from a funnel web spider
- jelly fish stings
- stonefish and other fish stings
- bites by scorpions, centipedes, beetles

Bites to the lower limb

1. **Call 000 for an ambulance**
2. Apply a broad pressure bandage over the bite site as soon as possible. Crepe bandages are ideal, but any flexible material may be used. Clothing, towels etc may be torn into strips. Panty hose have been successfully used.

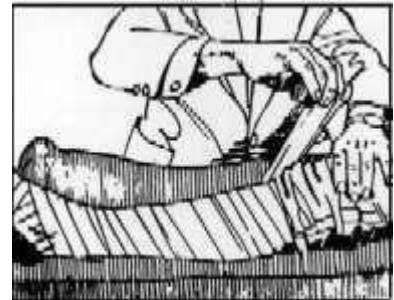


3. Do not take clothing off as the movement of doing so will promote the movement of venom into the blood stream. Keep the patient (and the bitten or stung limb) still.

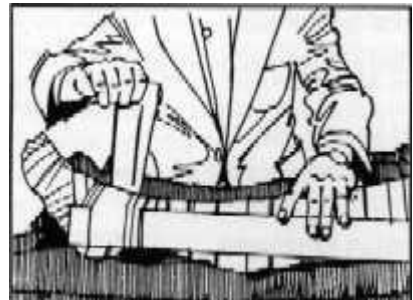
4. Bandage upwards from the lower portion of the bitten or stung limb. Even though a little venom may be squeezed upwards, the bandage will be more comfortable, and therefore can be left in place for longer if required.
5. The bandage should be as tight as you would apply to a sprained ankle.



6. Extend the bandage as high as possible up the limb.



7. Apply a splint to the leg. Any rigid object may be used as a splint. e.g. spade, piece of wood or tree branch, rolled up newspapers etc.



8. Bind it firmly to as much of the leg as possible.



9. Keep the patient still. Lie the patient down to prevent walking or moving around. Have the patient taken immediately by ambulance to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.

(Images: Pressure-immobilisation, courtesy of the [Australian Venom Research Unit](#))

Bites to the hand or forearm

1. **Call 000 for an ambulance**
2. Bandage as much of the arm as possible, starting at the fingers

3. Use a splint to the elbow
4. Use a sling to immobilise the arm
5. Keep the patient still. Lie the patient down to prevent walking or moving around. Have the patient taken immediately by ambulance to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.

Bites to the trunk

1. **Call 000 for an ambulance**
2. If possible apply firm pressure over the bitten or stung area. Do not restrict chest movement. Keep the patient still. Have the patient taken immediately by ambulance to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.

Bites to the head or neck

1. **Call 000 for an ambulance**
2. No first aid for bitten or stung area. Keep the patient still. Have the patient taken immediately by ambulance to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.

Additional information:

- Research stresses the importance of keeping the patient still. This includes all the limbs.
- Do NOT cut or excise the bitten or stung area
- Do NOT apply an arterial tourniquet. (Arterial tourniquets, which cut off the circulation to the limb, are potentially dangerous, and are no longer recommended for any type of bite or sting in Australia.)
- Do NOT wash the bitten or stung area. The type of snake involved may be identified by the detection of venom on the skin.
- Note: Even if the bitten or stung person is ill when first seen, the application of pressure-immobilisation first aid may prevent further absorption of venom from the bite or sting site during transport to hospital.
- If the bandages and splint have been applied correctly, they will be comfortable and may be left on for several hours. They should not be taken off until the patient has reached medical care.
- The treating doctor will decide when to remove the bandages. If a significant amount of venom has been injected, it may move into the blood stream very quickly when the bandages are removed. They should be left in position until appropriate antivenom and resuscitation equipment has been assembled.
- Bandages may be quickly reapplied if clinical deterioration occurs, and left on until antivenom therapy has been effective.

(Adapted with permission from the [Australian Venom Research Unit](#) Struan Sutherland/AVRU)

13. APPENDIX 2: STINGING TREE IDENTIFICATION

1. Shiny leafed sting tree



The shiny leafed Stinging Tree leaves are large (approximately 10cms across) broadly oval to round and have toothed margins and are covered with stinging hairs.

2. Giant Leafed Stinging Tree



The giant leafed Sting Tree has pale green leaves between 15cms/20cms in diameter.

14. APPENDIX 3: TREATMENT FOR TICKS

It is important to remove all ticks as soon as practicable after discovery.

- The tick should not be touched or disturbed until you are ready to remove it, as the tick will inject saliva into the skin and make the situation worse.
- Tiny ticks can be dabbed with Lyclear, a scabies cream containing permethrin. After 24 hours it should drop off naturally or be gently removed with fine-tipped forceps.
- Larger ticks should be removed by grasping the tick as close to the skin as possible, (attempting to grasp the neck and head of the tick) and gradually retract outwards in a straight line.
- When a tick is removed an area of surrounding inflammation can remain for some days. If a large local reaction does occur, then a doctor should be consulted.
- It is normal for a tick bite to remain slightly itchy for several weeks, however if other symptoms develop, then a doctor should be consulted immediately.
- Another alternative is to use a wart freeze applicator on the tick, leaving for 30 seconds. Protection of the skin around the wart freeze is important.

DO NOT:

- grasp the tick by the body because this may leave the head and mouth parts behind and cause more toxin to be injected into the person
- apply methylated spirits or use a lighted match, cigarette or fingernail polish to remove the tick as these are likely to increase of tick saliva and foregut contents entering the wound, increasing the chance of disease transmission.

QLD Health's general recommendations for removal of adult ticks recommends following the.

[The Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy \(ASCI\)](#) recommendations to freeze adult ticks with an ether spray (e.g. Wart off spray) .

Unfortunately this is not practical in our situation as Wart -Off needs to be stored at <25°C which can't be guaranteed in our storage containers.

15. APPENDIX 4 - CONTACT LIST FOR COMMITTEE AND PARK COORDINATORS

FEP Management Committee members for 2021 and Park Coordinators are listed below.

Volunteers are welcome to contact Committee members with relevant concerns, but please note your Park Coordinator's details and use them as your primary FEP contact.

Park Coordinators 2021

Name	Park	Phone	Email
Hugh Krenske	Redwood Park	0418748282	hkrenske@gmail.com
Rob Brodribb	Nielsen Park	0407124863	rwbrodribb@ozemail.com
Greg Lukes	Echo Valley South	0428288077	glukes@bigpond.com
Greg Lukes	Hartmann Reserve	0428288077	glukes@bigpond.com
Kaye Wood Riley	Duggan Park	0402183087	kwoodriley@gmail.com
David Heckscher	Panorama Crescent	046391127	panorama.crescent.park@outlook.com
Geoff Sharp	Jubilee Park	0427038055	geoffsharpy@gmail.com
Michael McGoldrick	Leopard Ash Bushland Park	046357371	Michael.mcgoldrick@westnet.com.au
Bev Yates	Hancock St Park	046354350	abyates@bigpond.com
Greg Lukes	Rogers Reserve	0458155177	glukes@bigpond.com
Jane Butler	Highfields Falls Park	0423747169	Jane.butler@westnet.com.au
Tom Esplin	Redwood North	0438441188	tom@180Partners.com.au
Christell Pidcock	Rangeview Rd	0448325008	Ted19@tpg.com.au

FEP Committee – Sept 2023

Name	Position	Phone	Email
Rob Brodribb	President	0407124863	secretaryfep@gmail.com
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Tom Esplin	Member	0438441188	tom@180partners.com.au
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Penny McGowan	Publication officer		vectorspace101@live.com
Bev Yates	Park coordinator convenor	46354350	abyates@bigpond.com

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