



Tips: Lightweight with your Existing Gear!, by Richard

Lightweight is the trend that many bushwalkers are taking up, and with good reason. Here are a few ideas of how to go lightweight without buying a whole new range of lightweight specific gear. Flexibility of use of your gear is the trick!

I love my *Macpac Minaret* as a compact 2 person tent suitable for all Aussie weather conditions, including snow camping. It weighs in at 2.51 kg. For summer walking I strip it down: taking just the fly, poles, 4 pegs and a space-blanket ground sheet brings it weight down to 1.55 kg. A foam mat is lighter than a *Thermarest*, and just as comfortable if you are on alpine snowgrass! If you are just going for one night and the weather forecast is fine, leave the groundsheet and *Thermarest* behind, taking the foamy alone will save up to 1 kg.

About 15 of the 30 tents that The Wilderness Shop has, from *Macpac*, *Salewa* and *Wilderness Equipment* (now renamed *Sea To Summit*), can be pitched outer only in this manner.

Ignore the *Trangia/MSR* debate. Both are heavy compared to lighter options. A small *Trangia* with 300 ml bottle and fuel weighs around 1.5 Kg. A *Whisperlite* with bottle, fuel and *MSR* billy is about 1.1 Kg. *Trangia* lovers can convert their existing stove to the *Mini Trangia*, complete with a pot and grips, weighing 440

grams including 100 ml fuel. This is the amount of fuel in the burner on its own, which you can get away with for one night's simple cooking. You must keep your *Mini* out of the wind. Otherwise a *MSR Pocket Rocket™* with aluminium pot and the smallest gas canister is 480 grams.

Couples are even better off when it comes to sleeping bags. Use a double inner sheet and a semi-rectangular bag as a doona, saving the complete weight of one bag!

Even if you still wish to choose a heavier canvas pack, buy one at the smaller end of the capacity that you require. We have plenty of strap-on pockets to add 10 or 15 litres for those occasional week-long trips. During the year, most people do walks between 2 and 4 days long. Alternatively look at a *Lowe Alpine Hyperlite* pack. They are fully featured, a good size for 2 to 4 day trips and weigh 1 kg less than similar standard models.

Look at the new range of 2 layer *Gore-Tex®* and *Hydronaute™* rainwear. At half the weight and price of their 3 layer cousins, they cannot be ignored. Again, if the weather report is fine, take a basic lightweight nylon shell just in case!

Finally, share a tent, stove and cooking. This can make the biggest difference of all. Have fun!