

## Canterbury Botanical Society Member Health and Safety Guide

This guide provides specific information to help you participate safely in Canterbury Botanical Society activities. Please read it carefully and keep it for reference.

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### A. General Principles

#### Participate at Your Own Risk

The Society is a voluntary organisation. By attending any meeting or field trip, you are participating at your own risk. You are responsible for your own safety and well-being (please refer to our [Health and Safety Policy](#)).

#### Read Activity Information Carefully

All activities will be advertised in the newsletter with relevant details. It is your responsibility to read this information and decide whether the activity is suitable for you.

#### If You Are Unwell

If you are feeling unwell or have any cold or flu symptoms (including COVID-19), please do not attend any in-person activities.

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### B. Indoor Meetings

Our evening meetings are currently held at the St Albans Community Centre. Please follow these guidelines:

- **Parking:** Be aware of your surroundings when walking to and from your car, especially when dark.
  - **Venue Safety:** Take care on stairs, ramps, uneven flooring, and around other obstacles. Abide by the venue's Health and Safety plan.
  - **Kitchen:** Take care when handling hot water to avoid spills and burns.
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### C. Field Trips

#### Choosing the Right Trip

Field trips vary in difficulty. To choose a trip suited to your abilities:

- **Read the trip description in the newsletter.** It will include details such as:
  - The approximate duration and distance.
  - Terrain and track conditions (e.g., formed track, rough route, no track).
  - Specific hazards identified by the leader.
- **Assess your own fitness and experience** against the description.
- **If you have any doubts** about your ability to complete a trip safely, discuss this with the trip leader at least two days before the trip.

## Carpooling

Many field trips involve carpooling to reduce costs and environmental impact. Please note the following:

- **Vehicle condition:** Drivers are responsible for ensuring their vehicle is safe and legally registered and warranted.
  - **Passengers participate at their own risk:** By travelling in a private vehicle, you accept the risks associated with road travel.
  - **Luggage space:** Be mindful of the space available in the vehicle. Large packs or gear should be secured safely.
  - **Seatbelts:** Everyone must wear a seatbelt at all times. The driver has the right to refuse travel to anyone not wearing a seatbelt.
  - **Driver fatigue:** Drivers should take breaks on long journeys and advise the group if they are feeling tired. Passengers should support drivers by staying alert and assisting with navigation.
  - **Contribute to costs:** Passengers must contribute fairly to fuel and running costs. The trip leader will advise on the suggested contribution.
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## What to Bring on Every Field Trip

Canterbury weather is changeable. You must come prepared for all conditions. As a minimum, you should bring:

- **Sturdy footwear:** Tramping boots or stout walking shoes with good grip.
  - **Rain gear:** Waterproof jacket, even if the forecast is fine.
  - **Warm layers:** Merino or polypropylene top, fleece or warm jersey.
  - **Sun protection:** Hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen.
  - **Food and water:** Enough for the day, plus extra in case of delays.
  - **Personal medications:** Such as asthma inhalers, EpiPens, antihistamines, or any other medication you normally carry.
  - **Fully charged mobile phone:** Stored in a plastic bag to keep dry. Note that coverage may be unreliable in remote areas.
  - **Emergency blanket:** A lightweight emergency blanket is highly recommended.
  - **Personal first aid kit.**
  - **PLB or INREACH GPS if you have one:** In case of emergency.
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## On the Day of the Trip

### At the Start

- Arrive at the meeting point on time.
- Fill in the Health and Safety book/log with your emergency contact details and your mobile phone number or complete the online form (if relevant).
- Listen carefully to the trip leader's safety briefing. The leader will identify any specific hazards for the day.
- Inform the trip leader if you have any relevant medical conditions.

### During the Trip

- Look after yourself. Monitor your energy levels, stay hydrated, and speak up if you are struggling.
- Stay with the group. If you stop to look at plants, keep others in sight and within earshot.
- Follow the leader's directions, especially at potentially hazardous points such as stream crossings or steep sections.

### If You Need to Leave Early

- If you decide to leave a trip early for any reason, you **must inform the trip leader immediately**.
- You must be confident that you know your way back to the start.
- It is strongly recommended that you do not return alone. If you choose to return alone, you do so entirely at your own risk.

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## D. Camps and Multi-Day Trips

For camps and multi-day trips, additional considerations apply:

- **Accommodation:** Follow hut / campground rules. Be considerate of other users.
- **Food Storage:** Store food safely to avoid attracting wildlife.
- **Daily Trips:** Each day trip during a camp will have its own safety considerations. Pay attention to daily briefings.
- **Alcohol:** Consume alcohol responsibly and ensure it does not impair your ability to participate safely in trip activities.

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## E. How this Guide will be Communicated

- This guide will be available to members via our website and in the newsletter.
- Any significant changes will be notified to all members.