

Walking or camping in the Abel Tasman

We are pleased you have chosen to bring your students to the Abel Tasman National Park.

The information and ideas below are mainly suggestions made by the Abel Tasman Youth Ambassadors - student representatives from schools who have adopted restoration areas in the park. This is what they think other kids visiting the park might like to know.

We hope the information makes it easier to plan your trip and helps everyone get excited!



Photo Amber Tate

Abel Tasman app

First, download the Abel Tasman App - it is a free smartphone app which is packed full of info about the park.

It works offline and has a map with geo-location so you always know where you are.

There is also heaps of information about the history of the park, plants, marine life, the stops along the way and even bird calls to help identify what you are hearing or seeing. Just search for Abel Tasman in your App or Google Play stores and download for free.



Great walk information

There's also a huge amount of information about the Great Walk on the DOC website. Where are the huts? How long is the walk between each hut? Maps and alerts are all available. Download the Abel Tasman Coast Track walk brochure.

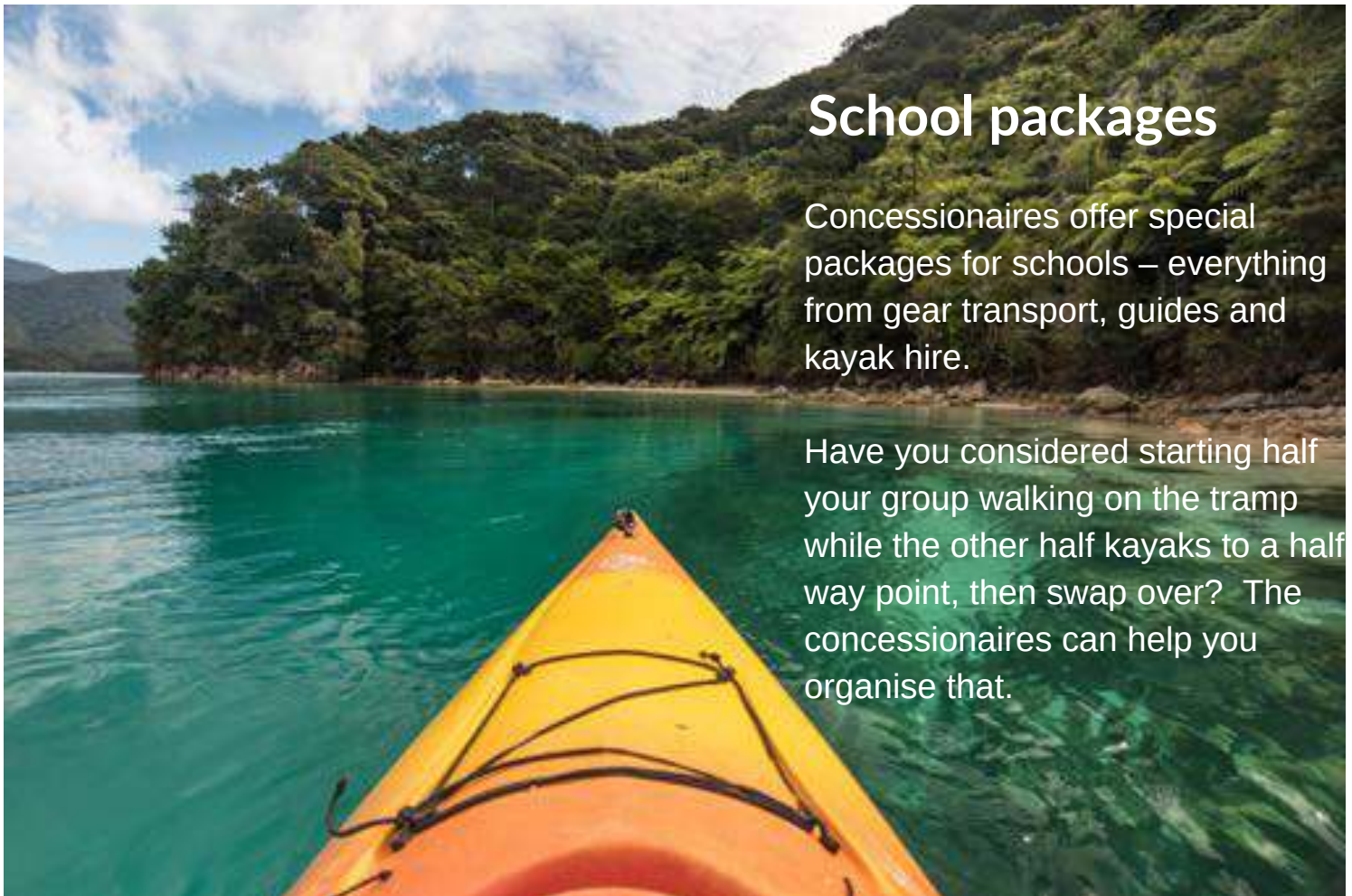


Your students might like to look at the Project Janszoon website to learn about what the ATYA students are up to and the conservation work going on in the park.

Videos

There are hundreds of videos about Abel Tasman National park on You Tube. Click here for one of our favourites - it has an overview of the track and lots of pretty scenery.

This video outlines some of the conservation work being undertaken by Project Janszoon, DOC, iwi and the Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust.



School packages

Concessionaires offer special packages for schools – everything from gear transport, guides and kayak hire.

Have you considered starting half your group walking on the tramp while the other half kayaks to a half way point, then swap over? The concessionaires can help you organise that.

Does a kid poop in the woods?

Here's a link for some activities on how to deal with human waste and the other seven principles of Leave No Trace so you can make sure your trips is a positive one.

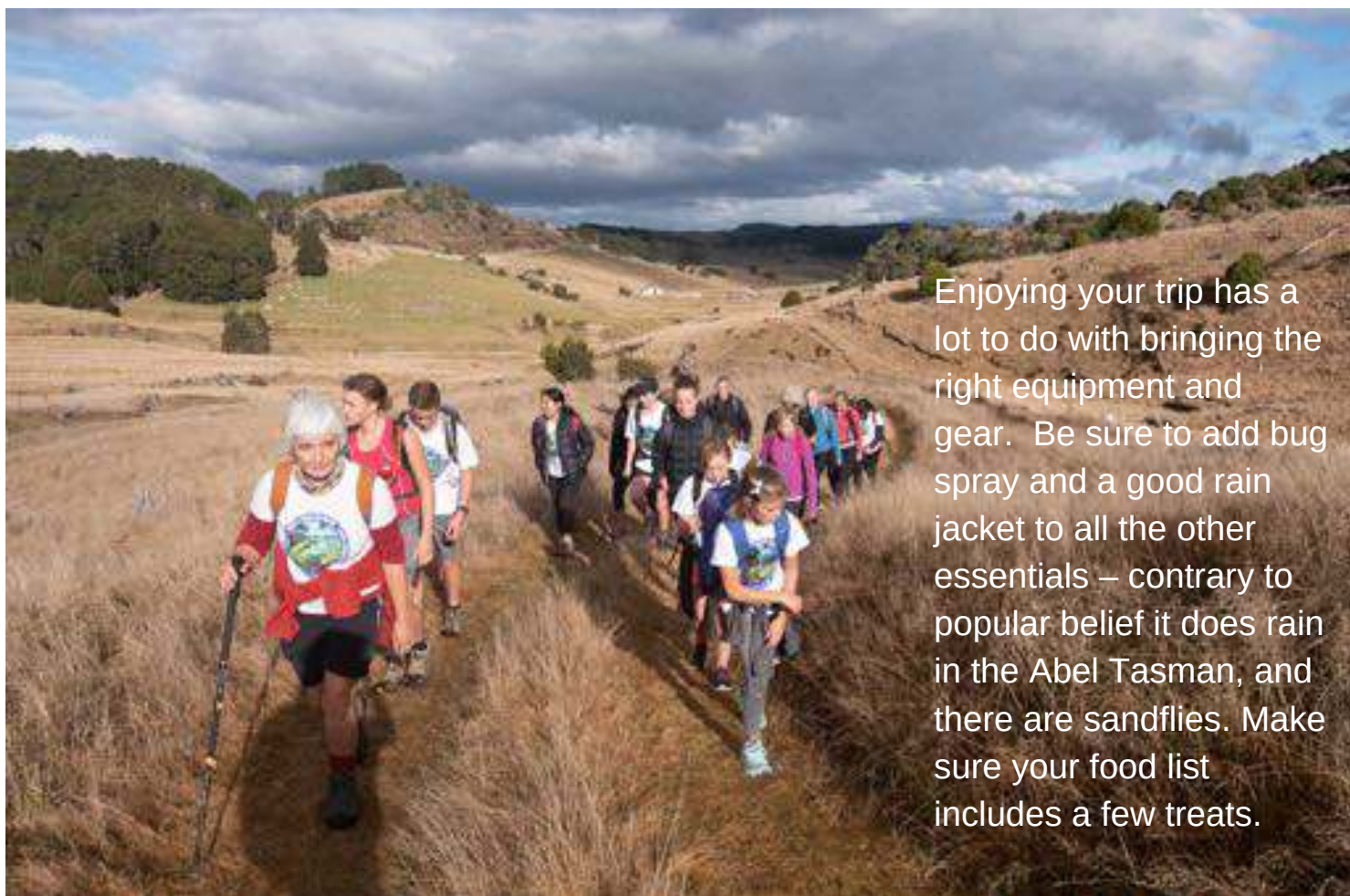


Slow down

Slow down! We understand part of the satisfaction of doing a Great Walk is completing it but there is a lot to be said for choosing to spend an entire day (or two nights) at one hut/campground. It is a great way to refresh tired kids and really explore. It also gives more time for activities, team building and swimming. We recommend Anchorage Hut and Bark Bay as great full day stops. Check out the Education Toolbox for things to do at night at these stops as well.

Tramping - all you need to know

Te Ara gives a great overview of tramping in New Zealand – everything you may want to consider including its history, tramping lingo and good tramping yarns. You may find this helpful to generate talking points and excitement. [Link here.](#)



Enjoying your trip has a lot to do with bringing the right equipment and gear. Be sure to add bug spray and a good rain jacket to all the other essentials – contrary to popular belief it does rain in the Abel Tasman, and there are sandflies. Make sure your food list includes a few treats.

Essentials

There are hundreds of gear lists and backcountry food recipes available online. Here's some links to a few of our favourites:

- DOC's Great Walk Gear List
- Mountain Safety Council information
- First aid kit essentials

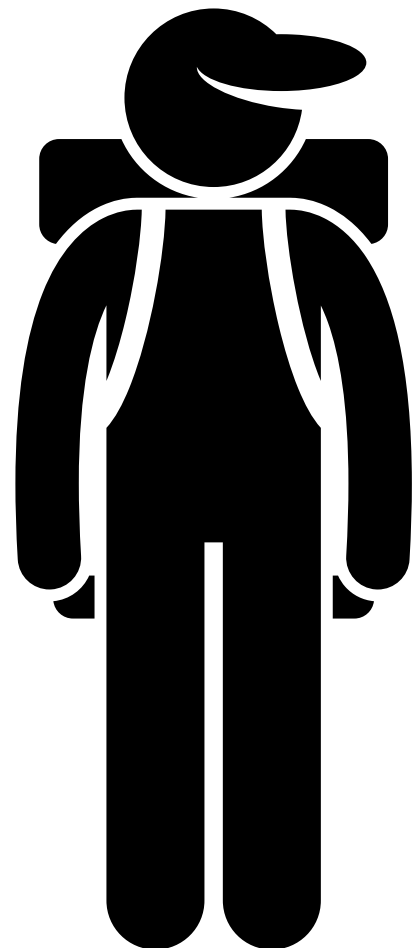
Is your bag overweight?

Figuring out how much weight to carry in your backpack can make a big difference, not only in how much students enjoy their trip but is also important in helping to prevent injury (back, shoulder, neck and knee strain).

Guidelines used by recreational backpackers are that an individual in good health should be able to carry about 15–20% of their body weight, about 7.5kg for a 50 kg person. Have your students figure out how much weight they should carry (remember to include the weight of the pack when empty). The amount each person can carry will depend on several factors, such as fitness, build type, bone and muscle density, the health of your joints (knees in particular), and age.

A week or two before the trip have students pack their backpack with everything they think they might like to take (or rocks weighing the same amount) and wear the shoes they are planning to wear on the tramp. Then go for a walk around school or the neighbourhood for at least 30 minutes. This will help them figure out if the backpack is adjusted correctly and if their shoes are comfortable.

It's important to pre-test new hiking shoes, and this should not be on day one of the tramp! Are there any rub points that need attention with band aids or gauze? HikersWool or Moleskin are very thick, cushioned, extra-adhesive, specialized plasters for blisters. They are available from pharmacies and well worth the extra cost.



More useful information

- Good information (and video) on packing a backpack
- Good information (and video) on backpack adjusting and fit
- Comprehensive blister prevention/treatment info

Kids get the last word

Here are some of the 'must do' tips from ATYA

- Swim – the water is amazing!
- Kayak – you haven't experienced Abel Tasman unless you see it from the water
- Visit Cleopatra's Pool – it's a short side trip and you will never forget it.
- Make a difference – find out how you can get involved in helping Project Janszoon restore the Abel Tasman, or get involved with a conservation or restoration project close to your home.

Have a great time in the park from the ATYA crew

