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Some camping gear is too weird for words,

from the products that provide behind-the-bar value beer at basecamp, to Crocs tinkering with gadgets and bracelets fitted with fix-it kits for outdoor dynamics.

...Until Ben and Lauren find twenty-three products, thirty-three minutes, and two microphones.

In this episode of the Snowys Camping Show, our outdoor experts unpack the camping gear on the cusp of clever and the tackle that barely tickles normal.

It's time to get a little weird, and discover a whole lot of wonderful.

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Mentioned in this Episode:

Blogs:

[Weird, Wonderful & Disturbingly Strange Camping Gear – By Ben Collaton](#)

Snowys Products:

[Portable Beer Keg \(Growler\)](#)

[Shewee Extreme Female Urination Device](#)

[LifeStraw Straw Filter](#)

Snowys Pages:

[GrowlerWerks](#)

Other:

[“Man Bangle” \(Leatherman Tread\)](#)

[“Weirdly Stupid Sleeping Bags”](#)

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[Squat Strap – YouTube](#)

“Man Bangle” (Leatherman Tread)

A multi-use tool, Lauren’s first thought when she was faced with this product was: “...huh?” The “[man bangle](#)” is a chain-link tool bracelet, with each fragment allowing for mini tools to click on and off conveniently – including socket wrenches, screwdrivers, corkscrews, and glass breakers.

As much as this bracelet (or bangle) provides the means to attach tools and gadgets like a “bit kit”, it also contributes to a kick-butt outdoor get-up!

Portable Beer Keg (Growler)

A [portable beer keg](#) is a campsite-friendly alternative to cracking open a six-pack of cold ones – maintaining the same, familiar frosted walls as your favourite craft beer behind the bar! While they aren’t the most packable product – growlers are a cool, crafty option to keep beer or cider cold and carbonated. Simply fill the growler with homebrew (or beer on tap at the pub), and fasten the lid fitted with CO2 cartridges.

Check out the range from [GrowlerWerks](#).



Maintain the same, familiar frosted walls as your favourite craft beer behind the bar. Credit: GrowlerWerks

Shewee

Those who haven't used a Shewee before are likely to study the product, establish how it works... then twitch uncomfortably, and scratch their head.

Yes, they're a little strange – but Lauren maintains that they're incredibly useful for the women of the Wilderness. A perfect balance of weird and wonderful, the Shewee works hand in hand (or hand in pants?) with another product* discussed later in the episode...

LifeStraw Straw Filter

If you've ever wandered past a fellow adventurer lying flat on their stomach drinking straight from a puddle, you've probably either laughed or checked in to see if they're feeling OK. Chances are though, they're using a straw filter – a hydration sensation designed to filter water straight from natural reservoirs.

While no-one looks sane using one, this product by LifeStraw is handy, life-saving, and an excellent hydration option for lightweight hikers.



The straw-filter is a hydration sensation designed to filter water straight from natural reservoirs. Credit: LifeStraw

Selk'bag

For those who feel the cold, the Selk'bag offers all the benefits of a sleeping bag...with sleeves and a hood!

Lauren describes the garment as a large onesie for adults, either synthetic- or down-filled. On that note, Safety Ben reminds us to be wary of any sporadic embers by the campfire – a synthetic-filled bag can burn, while a singeing a hole in a down-filled bag will have it shedding feathers around the campsite!

Muk Mat

One word: brilliant.

While we don't stock this product here at Snowys, Ben and Lauren maintain that this artificial turf – like AstroTurf – is a thick, good-quality doormat option for preventing dirt, muck, and grit from making its way into tents and caravans. Available in many different sizes, and with the option to customise, Muk Mats can be fitted to the steps of caravans, vans, and other vehicles.



Kombi Tent

The kombi tent looks how it sounds: a tent that looks like a kombi van.

Some models are designed to camouflage with backdrops, where Ben eagerly describes a paddock-like scene, dotted with sheep. To that, Lauren must ask: how can Ben have previously downplayed the convenience and ambiance that cheap, functional fairy lights bring to a campsite – then talk so keenly of a seemingly pointless kombi tent?! This disagreement between our outdoor experts will likely resurface in every outdoor gadget debate for episodes to come...

Like Field Candy tents, kombi tents are typically traditional A-frame structures. Single-skinned too, they're generally not used for hardcore outdoor adventures, but instead in fair-weather conditions and as backyard hangouts for the kids.

“Weirdly Stupid Sleeping Bag”

While we're on the topic of pointless, party-trick products, a “weirdly stupid sleeping bag” also looks how it sounds: like a weird, stupid-looking sleeping bag.

Essentially, it's a sleeping bag printed with bright patterns or pictures that offer an element of theatre – for example, a shark or bear print that appears to “eat” whoever climbs into the mouth of the bag, an interpretation of Adam and Eve, and even a depiction of a dead body bag!

While they don't offer the same functionality, nor would they withstand the wild outdoor elements – these sleeping bags are great for kids' sleepovers.

*Kimbos Pants

If a Shewee still doesn't make the cut in your camp tackle... it'll make the *zip* if used with Kimbos pants! Ever worn a unitard on a bike ride and needed to rip it all off behind a bush mid-route? Eliminating the need to remove your pants, Kimbos pants work well in partnership with the Shewee – together or alone, they're urination sensations.

Kimbos pants are constructed with Neoprene fabric, as used for wetsuits, with a similar-style zip. The zipper seam starts at the front of the body and follows through the legs to the back in a U-shape. A tag attached to the zipper allows for reaching down between the legs to unzip for a swift and easy pee-stop pull-up.

Victorinox Swiss Champ Knife

Picture the pocketknife your Dad gifted your brother the year he turned thirteen. At most, it had four layers – including three blades, and maybe a corkscrew.

The Victorinox Swiss Champ knife is more than a pocketknife – some would say a little too much more. With roughly eight layers, 118 components, 83 functions, and 65 millimetres in width – it's a multi-use tool that well and truly activates ‘beast mode’.

As impressive (and intimidating) as the Victorinox may appear sitting next to a standard model – how functional is it really when kicking back on a lowkey camping trip with the kids?



Dog Shoes

For ultimate paw-protection on piping hot footpaths, dog shoes are as adequate as they are amusing.

In the summertime, hiking tracks can become scorching hot, where some trails in the Adelaide Hills are sharp and shaley. Fitting your furry friend with a set of technically designed footwear can help alleviate the discomfort. Lauren approves!

Adventure Crocs

... Are they *actually* a shoe? While Ben is keen to know after having no luck finding proof of their existence online, Lauren maintains that they're the bee's knees (or rather, the camper's crocs).

Rigged out with a roller hoochie cord, compass, pocketknife, or other gear and gadgets – this model of Crocs was kicking it on the shoe store shelves for at least a season.

Fire Control Blanket

A fire control blanket is often deemed a practical item, stored snug in a crevice of our caravan and placed over a campfire at night to contain the flames but keep sparks and embers from flying freely at night. Pulling back the blanket the following morning reveals a fiery, flaming pile of ash – and while this is in keeping with their purpose, it nonetheless raises questions surrounding safety.

While metal is the most resistant material to burning, a fire blanket constructed of metallics would be impractical. That said, a fire control blanket appears to be made with a PVC or plastic-like material like a tarp, which has Ben and Lauren querying how safely the blanket is containing the hot coals.

With so many brands manufacturing fire control blankets, it's possible that the thought behind the design and functionality stems from American culture and their approach to campfires which we in Australia aren't aligned with. Nonetheless, Ben and Lauren aren't fond of the idea of letting fire smolder beneath a piece of tarp throughout the night...

Light-Up Tent Stakes

What's more painful than stubbing your toe on a tent peg? Stubbing your toe on a tent peg *in the dark*. Everything hurts more when you can't see your attacker.

These gizmos eliminate that factor and bring a whole new meaning to "cool lighting". Be it an angle iron or a regular tent peg, LED lighting is welded into the top 10 centimetres of the peg to provide top-of-the-turf service at sundown.

Pocket Chainsaw

A whizz-bang pocket-tool for the tacklebox, Lauren can only describe the pocket chainsaw as *wicked*.



Devised as simply two handles linked by a chainsaw cutting chain, the chains themselves are available in different teeth configurations, such as the ‘cheese skin’ design. Lightweight, compact, and more efficient than a standard handsaw – after observing her friend use one, Lauren confirms she would make more use of a pocket chainsaw than her Silky saw. Plus, the pocket chainsaw uses no petrol and comes contained in a convenient zip-up pouch. Weird? Wonderful.

Foldable Kayak

We’ve all seen the stobie poles plastered with political promotions, government messaging, and “Vote 1” advocacy – but have you ever thought to look past all the propaganda to what those posters are actually made of? Well, if you’re familiar with the foldable kayak – it’s the same material!

Constructed with corflute, the foldable kayak folds up like an origami briefcase and operates as a fully functional kayak. Some brands offer a range of different shapes and sizes, including surf, lake, and expedition models. A stupendous blend of strange and savvy, it’s nonetheless recommended to avoid fast-flowing waters or rapid, rockier waterways in a foldable kayak. A similar product is an inflatable kayak, though this is bulkier, heavier, and factors in a weight limit. For example, an inflatable tandem kayak can hold a maximum of 100 kilograms, thus allowing no more than one adult and a child.

Glow-in-the-Dark Toilet Paper

A true late-night dunny-run chum, glow-in-the-dark toilet paper is certainly easy to find in the dark – but as Lauren quite rightly queries, what the heck is it made of?!

Inflatable Lounge

It’s a “no” from Lauren who believes that, after their relatively short lifespan, inflatable lounges will quickly end up in landfill.

Hydro Hammock

Ever stood in front of a whiteboard with a faded marker and calculated how you could possibly incorporate your beloved bath into your camp clobber for an off-grid getaway? Lauren advocates for the Hydro Hammock: a high-strength fabricated sack suspended between two sturdy, steadfast trees, filled with water. Essentially, a portable bath. Still staring at that whiteboard? Read between the lines – bath among the vines!

Bumper Dumper

Classy name, hey?

A Bumper Dumper is a toilet structure attached with a hitch to a vehicle’s tow ball, allowing adventurers to sit on the back of their vehicles and go about their business.



That said, a toilet system within a bucket suspended from a tow ball could also achieve a similar effect. Given its connection to a tow ball too, the Bumper Dumper wouldn't be positioned much higher than the ground – so is it really more efficient fitted here than if it were positioned on the ground instead? Given this, a Bumper Dumper is more ideal for use on the back of a 4WD as opposed to lower-built car models.

Dry Flush Toilet

There's peeing via a Shewee... then there's pooing into a bag.

The Dry Flush Toilet technology works by collecting your business and vacuum-sealing it at the press of a button. The bag then appears as a sausage-like shape which can be thrown straight into the tip. Imagine being a forager at the dumping ground and finding what can only be described as a "waste sausage"? Yep – in a world full of wonderful, that would be weird.

Candwich (Canned Sandwich)

A name we read and hope doesn't mean what we think it does – the Candwich confirms those packable snack-food fears.

Yeah. It's a sandwich in a can.

The Candwich is a convenient, double-packaged concoction of an ordinary roll with sauce wrapped in a bag and packed into a can. For a visual aid, a good laugh, or a reason to face-palm – Ben recommends checking out the original video advertisement.

Squat Strap

Ben saved the best until last with the Squat Strap – a Nylon strap with carabiners, wrapped around and fastened to a tree trunk to support campers while they go about their business. The user squats as though sitting on a chair, held upright by the resistance of the straps. Squat Straps have also been used to suspend food in trees, away from bears and other wild animals.

OK weirdos, enough now...

That's twenty-three products that camp comfortably on the border of weird and wonderful – but we refuse to believe there aren't more.

Your bizarre but brilliant camp equipment is wanted – be it for use in the outback or the backyard. Convince us – what's weirder than a squat strap, or more wonderful than a pair of Kimbos pants?

For more when this came from, check out Episode 96.

Thanks for listening, tune in again for next week's



episode!

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If you have any questions for Ben and Lauren, make sure you head over to our [Facebook group](#) and let us know as we'd love to hear from you.

Catch you out there!