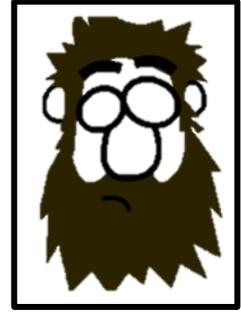


Uncle Wacko's Gear Corner



TRAMPING GEAR ADVICE FROM THE EXPERT

Your problem solved

Humans have an amazing ability to unnecessarily complicate life. Being part human, trampers aren't immune from this affliction.

Take your water bottles. First up Uncle Wacko can't understand why you'd use something rigid rather than collapsible. But heaps do.

Then after a tramp, why would you spend an eternity trying to dry them out? Just rinse, shake and bung 'em in the freezer, job done. Simple, quick, kills bugs, prevents mould.

But oh no, a bunch of you are pathologically opposed to simplicity and want to store your bottles and bladders in a cupboard. Which means they need to be 100% dry to avoid mildew. And in our wonderfully humid climate that'll take you several days or more. So how do you do it?

Well, first, whirl 'em around vigorously to get as much moisture out as possible. Ideally without destroying chandeliers, kid's teeth or an ACL.

Then try one of these methods people apparently use:

1. Hang 'em upside down on the clothesline, or somewhere or other outside, and wait .. and wait ... and wait
2. Place 'em on a bottle drying rack (and clutter up the kitchen for days)
3. Bend a wire clothes hanger into a sinister shape that'll get into the corners, tape cloth around it and swab dry (hilariously optimistic!)
4. Shape a clothes hanger so it keeps the sides of your bladder apart and hang it somewhere for an eternity
5. Build a DIY rig similar to the photo and bung a hair dryer on the end (hopefully without melting your bottles)

Or you could try this tidy solution discovered by an excited reader. Buy a 2 Watt air pump and silicon hose for a fish tank. Bung the hose into your bottle and switch on. She'll be as dry as Wacko's humour in a couple of hours.

If you don't like the end of the hose flapping around like a demented Tasmanian devil, slide a plastic straw over it.

Total cost? \$5 on Aliexpress. How's that for a neat solution to a completely unnecessary, self-induced problem! You're welcome. Spot ya.

Uncle Wacko

