



NATIONAL PARKS
ASSOCIATION
OF THE A.C.T.
BULLETIN

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NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE A. C. T. Inc.

"A National Park for the National Capital"

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Treasurer : Ian Baird, 9 Canterbury Crescent, Deakin
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Monthly Meeting, 4th Tuesday of the month, Institute of
Anatomy Lecture Room

We welcome the following new members to the
Association:- Mrs V. McFarlane, C/- Canberra
Community Hospital; Mr Gerald Hill, P. O. Box 153,
Queanbeyan; Mr & Mrs G. J. Hall, 1 Miller St. O'Connor
Mr F. Swann, 8 Leichhardt St. , Kingston.
Mr & Mrs Kennedy, 65 Rivett St. , Hackett.

Renewals of Subscriptions - Mr Ia. Mackay;
Dr & Mrs Bornemissza; Mrs N. T. Sexton.

In the first progress report of the Australian
Conservation Foundation, Dr F. N. Ratcliffe, the Director
of the Foundation, listed the progress that has been made
to the middle of April this year. This is summarised
briefly here.

The result of an appeal for finance to establish
and equip the Foundation's headquarters and the initial
expenses involved in this, was disappointing. The result
of the appeal was that \$18,500 was donated, with only
\$14,500 being immediately available in the current year,
far short of the estimated target of \$90,000. Perhaps one
major reason for lack of donations was the Commonwealth
Government's failure to allow these as Income Tax
deductions.

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The Foundation's most pressing need is judged to be personnel for there is a great deal of unobtrusive work of the foundation laying kind to be carried out, before the Conservation Foundation can stand on its feet in public, and pronounce or produce.

As there was such a poor financial response, the Executive Committee was unable to appoint a full time officer, but a suitable part time candidate for the position is being sought. Three sub-committees have been set up to deal with (1) Finance and Membership, (2) Headquarters Administration, (3) Cape Barren Goose. Others to follow will be (4) Publications and Publicity, (5) Education and Training, (6) Relations with other bodies, (7) Targets (Objectives), (8) Public Issues.

Office accommodation was a problem, until a temporary building for this purpose, was offered by the C. S. I. R. O. Division of Entomology, A. C. T.

The Foundation has supported a number of projects. One of these is to sponsor the publication of a book on Australia's system of National Parks and Reserves in the next few years. Together with this the collection of basic data on national parks and reserves (which must cover plans and needs in addition to achievements) will be an essential and important part of the functioning of the Foundation as a reference centre for conservation information. The Nuffield Foundation was approached for a grant to enable Dr J. G. Mosley to accept a part time A. N. U. lectureship and continue his studies on our national parks and reserves. It is hoped he will help establish a reference and records system in the Foundation's Headquarters, and to complete, as a personal study, a section of the Australia-wide survey which the Foundation plans to carry out.

It was also hoped to obtain a special grant that would enable Mr Graham Pizzey and Mr Robin Hill to complete the Field Guide for Bird Identification within a couple of years with the desired high standard of accuracy in the text and illustrations. This was unsuccessful, but the committee is to consider ways and

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means of assisting, or at any rate encouraging the production of this much needed book.

The Council decided that before a general membership drive was carried out, it would be wise to seek an initial membership in circles already interested in conservation. The co-operation of existing societies, associations and university departments, is being sought in drawing to the attention of their members the worthwhile need to support the Foundation. A list is being made of these potential members likely to be interested in the Foundation. Any help that can be given in suggesting names of people to be approached directly, would be appreciated. Names and postal addresses of the Secretaries or Hon. Secretaries of interested societies would be needed with some indication of the special interests and official positions of individuals to be listed as likely supporters and members.

It was decided the Foundation should become a Corporate Member of the International Union of Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, which has its headquarters at Morges, in Switzerland.

The I. U. C. N. has one of its periodic Technical Meetings in June, at Lucerne, and it is hoped 2 members of Committee, who will be in Europe then, will attend.

Last November, the I. U. C. N. (together with F. A. O. , UNESCO and National Research Council of Thailand) sponsored a Conference at Bangkok on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in tropical S. E. Asia. With a help of a small grant from C. S. I. R. O. , we were able to arrange for a council member, who was prior to this, attending a Bird Banding Conference in Kuala Lumpur, to participate as a representative of the Foundation. There were five Technical Sessions covering (1) International Biological Programme, (2) Ecology, (3) Education and Training (4) Threatened Species, (5) National Parks and Reserves.

Of special interest was a survey conducted by Dr L. J. Webb, a member of the Foundation's Council and a C. S. I. R. O. botanist, with several zoologists from University of Queensland, on tropical rainforest. Its object

was to suggest areas that should be set aside as reserves in a region where a unique vegetation and its associated wildlife has already suffered wholesale reduction (mostly by clearing for sugar farming), and is now under threat of virtually complete elimination, due to technical advances that have simplified the problems of clearing, draining, and the use of fertilisers. As a result. of the survey, the selection of twenty specifically defined areas have been recommended for gazetting as reserves (or National Parks).

The rainforest and its associated plant communities in that part of the world can be classified into a variety of types within a framework set by differences in soil fertility, depending on parent rocks, and soil moisture relations. His twenty recommended reserves would safeguard for the future, samples of practically all the distinctive major vegetation types occurring in the tropical lowland belt, and their gazettal would be a very important step in the conservation of the highly specialised tropical rainforest fauna.

Although the initiative for this survey did not come from the Foundation, it provides an example of the approach the Foundation would unquestionably adopt in implementing its policy of working for a more adequate national system of reserves. This is a much sounder approach than the more usual ones of local pressure for the reservation of an area without any serious attempt to compare it with other possible examples of that particular type of country. It is hoped that Dr Webb's report and recommendations will be published in the near future.

It is hoped members have found interest in reading this summary, and it has clarified their thoughts on the aims and objects of the Conservation Foundation, and has answered questions that have come up from time to time at meetings about the Foundation.

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Among the plants which flower in the bush near Canberra during the winter months are a number of heaths. One of these is Styphelia triflora which is shown in the figure. The plants are shrubs up to about four feet high and the flowers are a pale yellow. The petals are much longer than the sepals and coil back to show the hairs inside. The stamens and pistil protrude above the tube of the flower. Though the plants began flowering during May they can still be seen on the slopes near Queanbeyan and along the Federal Highway. Some of you may remember seeing them in the Molonglo Gorge where they are quite common.

Another species which is flowering now is a prostrate plant with rather prickly leaves and bright red flowers with a slender tube. Later in the year there will be small yellow berries which children pick and eat. They call them "Cranberries" though they are not the same as the Cranberries of America. This plant is called Astroloma humifusum.

Yet a third winter heath has erect tufted stems which are rarely more than one foot high. There are numerous short plump whitish flowers along the stem. One reason why the flower looks so fat and short is that the pointed petals are not much longer than the stiff sepals and are not coiled back. The leaves have sharp points and as in many of our heaths the veins seem to fan out from the base.

N. T. B.

Notice of Motion to Amend Constitution

7.

At the Annual General Meeting on the 26th July a motion will be put to amend the wording of the Constitution slightly to conform with our obligations under the Incorporation Ordinance -

1. Alteration of Honorary Auditor to Auditor
2. All references to £. s. d. to be replaced by decimal currency.

1966 School Science Awards

This year we have sponsored a section of the School Science Awards. Entries have been requested as essays on any aspect of plants or animals that exist or have existed in the A. C. T. A Selection of the entries will be displayed in the Monaro Shopping Mall from June 20 to 24th.

MEETINGS

JUNE

Date : Tuesday 28th June, 1966, at 8 p. m.
Place : Institute of Anatomy
Feature : Dr J. Carnahan of Botany Dept. A. N. U. will give an illustrated address on - "Some New Zealand National Parks".

JULY

Date : Tuesday 26th July, 1966 at 8 p. m.
Place : Institute of Anatomy

Annual General Meeting : Election of Officers for ensuing year. Members are requested to bring along colour slides of any past outings for screening at completion of business. Please see Dr Story at the meeting if you intend to bring along slides.

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OUTINGS

JUNE

Date : Sunday 26th June, 1966
Place : Blue Range - Coree
Leader : Dr N. Burbidge
Time : 10 a.m.
Meeting : Junction of Mt. McDonald Road and
Place : Uriarra Road.
Details : Lyre Birds should be heard in the Blue
range area. Tree fern gullies will be
inspected, and return via Two Sticks
Road. In the event of unsuitable weather
making roads unsafe, an alternative trip
has been selected, same meeting place.

JULY

Date : Sunday 31st July, 1966
Place : Hurdle Creek
Leader : Mr. ~~Wilson~~ Schofield
Time : 10 a.m.
Meeting : Junction of Paddy's River Road and
Place : Tidbinbilla Road.
Details : Bring your binoculars, and leave your
animals at home and you may see some
Lyre Birds.