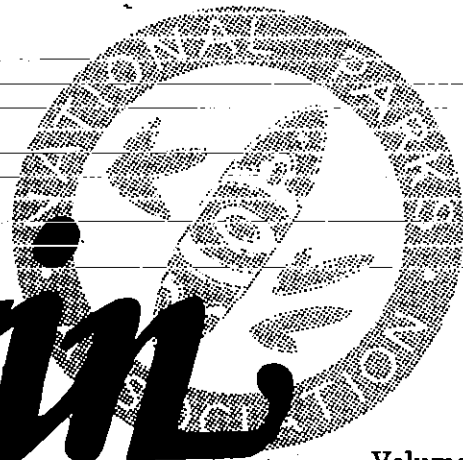


NPA Bulletin



Volume 27 number 3
September 1990

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION / A G I / INCORPORATED



Bimberi wilderness declared

Valuing the environment

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Cover

Photo: Roger Green

Near Mount Bimberi in the newly declared Bimberi wilderness zone of Namadgi National Park.

National Parks Association (ACT) Incorporated

Inaugurated 1960

Aims and objects of the Association

- Promotion of national parks and of measures for the protection of fauna and flora, scenery and natural features in the Australian Capital Territory and elsewhere, and the reservation of specific areas.
- Interest in the provision of appropriate outdoor recreation areas.
- Stimulation of interest in, and appreciation and enjoyment of, such natural phenomena by organised field outings, meetings or any other means.
- Co-operation with organisations and persons having similar interests and objectives.
- Promotion of, and education for, nature conservation, and the planning of land-use to achieve conservation.

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Subscription rates (1 July - 30 June)

Household members \$20 Single members \$15

Corporate members \$10 Bulletin only \$10

Concession: half above rates

For new subscriptions joining between:

1 January and 31 March - half specified rate

1 April and 30 June - annual subscription

Membership enquiries welcome

Please phone Laraine Frawley at the NPA office.

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Contribute to your Bulletin

Contributions of articles (news, description or fiction), black-and-white photographs and line drawings are keenly sought for the *Bulletin*. Please label photographs with the name of the subject, the name of the photographer and the date. Leave contributions at the office or phone the editor, Roger Green, on (06) 247 0059. The editorial fax is (06) 249 7373.

Articles by contributors may not necessarily reflect Association opinion or objectives.

Deadline for December issue: 1 November, 1990.

NPA Bulletin is produced by Green Words for the National Parks Association (ACT) Incorporated. It is produced with the assistance of an ACT Community Development Fund grant.

Printed on recycled paper by Union Offset Co Pty Ltd, Fyshwick, ACT.

ISSN 0727-8837

Red spot

A red spot on the mailing label indicates that this will be the last Bulletin for those who do not renew membership.

President's report

1989-90 was a busy year, generally following the established pattern but also introducing some innovations.

Membership, finance, administration

Membership at 30 June 1990 stood at 697, little changed from last year, and subscription rates were unchanged. The Association is in a satisfactory financial position with donations for the year being somewhat higher than in 1989 and grants from the Community Development Fund also at a higher level. The financial result is in no small measure a reflection of the continued dedication of Treasurer Les Pyke.

The Association has continued to employ a part time office secretary, and an administrative assistant as required, and to engage a bulletin editor on contract. The committee has met monthly and the four subcommittees regularly. Control of our office building has now passed to the ACT Administration and we have been active with other associations in Childers Street to press for the continuing availability of the area for use by community groups.

The importance of dealing systematically with the Association records and files has been recognised. Sheila Kruse has accepted the position of Association Archivist and is already bringing her enthusiasm and knowledge to bear on the task.

Environmental matters

Submissions followed by appearances before investigating bodies were made on the National Capital Plan and the Resource Assessment Commission inquiry into forest resources. Submissions were also made on the Canberra Nature Park, the draft ACT leasing legislation, the Alliance Government environment policy, the Very Fast Train, the future of the tracking station buildings, and NSW coastal development. Other representations concerned development in Jervis Bay and the establishment of a marine national

park, world heritage listing for the alpine national parks, the Molonglo River fish farm, the proposed Ulladulla transmission facility and the report of the ACT Priorities Review Board.

Namadgi National Park and the Murrumbidgee

The Parks and Conservation Consultation Committee was re-established in November 1989 and the Association's nominee, Anne Taylor, was appointed to the committee. During the year the ACT Government gazetted the Bimberi wilderness area and announced its intention to gazette extensions to Namadgi, both of these having been advocated by the Association for some years. The Namadgi Visitors Centre opened in June and includes a display on the history of the park based on material prepared by Association members. Grazing on Gudgenby has been terminated but other recommendations made in a consultant's report on management of the area are still under consideration. The management plan for the Murrumbidgee River corridor has been finalised and a decision taken to gazette four reserves along the river.

Bulletin

The quarterly *Bulletin* provides a wide coverage of conservation issues including Namadgi National Park and ACT reserves, other matters of particular interest to the Association, discussion of important environmental concerns, and news of Association activities. With assistance from the Community Development Fund the *Bulletin* has a wide distribution. It continues to be well received. Roger Green has been reappointed as editor for 1990. During the year recycled paper was introduced and a higher standard of printing achieved.

Publications

Sales of the *Guide to Native Trees of the ACT* continued at last year's level and a reprint is about to be released. The Association

contributed \$500 to assist the Australian Conservation Foundation in publishing a booklet on the Jervis Bay Marine Park proposal.

General meetings

The Association is very appreciative of the general meeting speakers who have all given presentations of a very high order. Attendances at meetings were, however, disappointingly low towards the end of the year. Mike and Annette Smith have operated an inviting bookstall and Adrienne Nicholson and helpers have looked after supper.

Displays and education

The Association provided displays at the Monaro Environment Fair, ACT Alive, Canberra Environment Fair and the University of Canberra Environment Day which, with the exception of the last, were well patronised. Yerrabi Track guides were sent to all ACT schools and distributed through the Parks and Conservation Service. Investigation continued into conducting a nature appreciation course in conjunction with the Centre for Continuing Education.

Outings

The Outings Subcommittee coordinated an imaginative program of day and weekend activities throughout the year comprising just over 100 events. The program included outings of many types attracting members over a wide spectrum of interests and ages. To maintain this interesting program the Association is seeking new ideas and additional leaders.

Working parties

Working parties were organised for track work in the Budawangs and pine removal in the Boboyan pine plantation, both involving close cooperation with park authorities. Work has resumed on the Orroral Homestead but progress is slower than hoped. The Association was responsible for

continued on page 4

World Environment Day 1990

World Environment Day 1984 was made particularly significant for the ACT by the then Minister for territories, Mr Tom Uren, declaring the Namadgi National Park. The ACT Government has also made 1990 World Environment Day one to be remembered by announcing a number of important decisions which, however, were not accorded the prominence they deserved by sections of the local media.

The Chief Minister, Mr Kaine, announced the following measures:

- extending the boundaries of Namadgi National Park to include the lower Cotter catchment (Northern Brindabella) area, Mount Tennent and Blue Gum Creek, parts of the Gibraltar Creek Valley, and Gibraltar Range;
- extending Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve and gazetting it under the *Nature Conservation Act*;

- gazetting of Jerrabomberra Wetlands under the *Nature Conservation Act*
- gazetting of four reserves along the Murrumbidgee River Corridor.

The lower Cotter area contains a number of plant and animal communities of particular value which Ian Fraser identified in the study of the area he undertook for the Association in 1988. To mark the inclusion of this area into Namadgi, Ian has agreed to lead a guided walk for the NPA in November. Details are included in the outings program.

Inclusion of Mount Tennent into Namadgi takes on particular significance with the opening of the new Namadgi Visitors Centre, as Mount Tennent forms a natural backdrop to the building and brings a section of the park within easy walking distance of the centre.

Tidbinbilla is currently gazetted as a public park but the intended gazetting under the *Nature Conservation Act* will give greater protection to the area and ensure that the natural resources of the area be given a higher standing. In the long term, the change could have considerable significance for the reserve.

Gazetting of reserves along the Murrumbidgee corridor will give cover to areas which at present have no specific legislative standing. The area could also be given some protection in the National Capital Plan when that is finalised. While pleased to see these protective measures being introduced, the Association is not yet satisfied that this important area is fully safeguarded.

World Environment Day in the ACT has been marked in an appropriate and practical way.

Syd Comfort

President's report

continued from page 3

the Point Hut area as part of the Clean Up Australia campaign.

Co-operation

The Association continues to be represented on the Conservation Council and Environment Centre and to support a number of other conservation groups. Opportunities to cooperate with local environmental groups have been taken wherever possible.

Appreciation

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all committee members, staff members, *Bulletin* editor and contributors, subcommittee members, outing leaders and all members who have been active in one way or another in advancing the work of the Association. I would particularly like to mention long serving committee members Kevin Frawley,

Glyn Lewis and Steven Forst who are standing down at this time.

Conclusion

The Association operates over a wide spread of activities but a notable feature of this year has been the number of conservation issues about which we have made representation.

I feel that during this year the National Parks Association has continued to pursue its stated aims whilst responding to changing circumstances. I consider that we are well placed to identify future goals and to achieve these provided there is a continuing depth of commitment through the Association membership.

Annual report and financial statements

Copies of the annual report and audited financial statements were distributed to members who attended the Annual General Meeting. Any member may obtain copies from the office or have one posted to them by ringing Laraine Frawley during office hours.

Letter to the editor

I would like to express my thanks to the National Parks Association for assistance with the displays in the new visitor centre at Namadgi National Park.

In particular Reg Alder and Denise Robin provided a range of valuable materials, spent many hours tracking down resources, and coordinated the input of other NPA members.

The centre is open seven days a week and I hope members will call in on their next visit to the park.

Joss Haiblen

Ranger, Namadgi National Park

Packing the Bulletin

Following the many years of stirring service from Peter Roe, John Webster has taken on the job of packing the *NPA Bulletin*. Anyone willing to do a pleasant evening's work making sure that everyone gets their *Bulletin* on time should contact John on (06) 241 4646 after hours.

Visitor centre opened

The new Namadgi National Park visitor centre finally opened on 5 June, World Environment Day. Two of the ACT's ministers performed the honours: the chief minister, Mr Trevor Kaine, and the minister for finance and urban services, Mr Craig Duby.

The centre contains displays on nature conservation, water quality, cultural sites and recreation, and shows visitors an audiovisual presentation about the national park. The centre, which will also be headquarters for national park staff, is on the Naas Road south of Tharwa.

On the occasion Mr Kaine announced extensions to Namadgi National Park, four nature reserves along the Murrumbidgee River, a nature reserve for Jerrabomberra wetlands, and the conversion of Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve from a public park to a statutory nature reserve (see story on page 4). Management plans for the areas would be prepared for public comment.

The extensions to Namadgi would include the lower Cotter catchment area and land near Mount Tennant and Blue Gum Creek. Mr Kaine said, 'Namadgi National Park already embraces some of the most important natural resources in the ACT including wilderness areas and habitat for species which are rare and uncommon elsewhere in the territory. These extensions will enhance the significant role of Namadgi National Park in the nature conservation system.'

He also committed the ACT Government to support the alpine national parks agreement on cooperation in the management of alpine parks in Victoria, New South Wales and the ACT. He said that further elements of the ACT's natural and cultural resources would be formally identified and protected.

Mr Kaine specially mentioned the community groups which had dedicated themselves to the ACT's system of nature reserves: the NPA, the Canberra

Namadgi National Park
- a community achievement

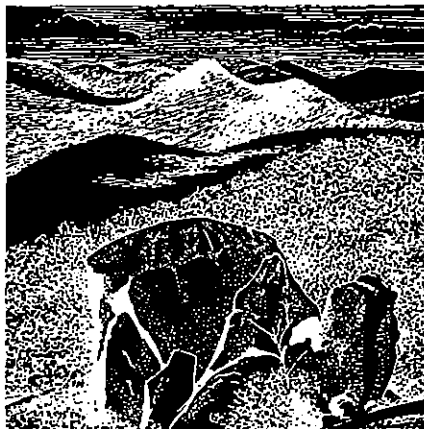


The new visitor centre for Namadgi National Park.
Photo: Reg Alder.

Ornithological Group, and the Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra.

Mr Duby declared the centre open.

The *NPA Bulletin* is seeking reactions from members to the new visitor centre. What are its good and bad points? Will it assist the cause of nature conservation? Contributions short and long are sought for the December issue of the *Bulletin*. The deadline is 1 November.



Bimberi wilderness zone declared

The southwestern corner of Namadgi National Park has been declared a wilderness zone to be known as the Bimberi wilderness.

This makes it contiguous with the adjoining Bimberi wilderness zone in Bimberi Nature Reserve, Scabby Range Nature Reserve and the Kosciusko National Park.

The declaration was made in the ACT Gazette No. 541 of 4 December 1989.

The Bimberi wilderness zone in the ACT is formed by taking a line from the saddle at Pryors Hut to the junction of Gingera Creek and Cotter River, to the summits of Mount McKeahnne and Mount Orroral and thence along the watershed ridge between the Orroral River and Nursery Creek to its easterly high point, thence to Nursery Hill and on to the western borders of the Gudgenby property and the Boboyan pine forest which are then projected to Sheep Station Creek, on to the ACT border and around to the starting point. It will be seen that the wilderness zone includes the foothills of Sentry Box Mountain, Gudgenby Peak, Yankee Hats and Nursery Hill and generally all bushland to the west.

In a wilderness zone it is prohibited to excavate, establish a road or track, use a motor vehicle except on an earlier formed track or road, establish any structure or supply goods and services. The conservator has the authority to prohibit or regulate activities such as lighting fires, camping or carrying weapons. Members are reminded that a camping permit is required in the Cotter catchment portion of the Bimberi wilderness zone.

Reg Alder

Draft Land (Lease and Management) Bill

The ACT Government has drafted a series of bills which if enacted will control a wide range of activities including leasing, planning, environmental assessment, heritage and use of public land. The final bill, the *Land (Lease and Management) Bill* will be fundamental to national parks, nature reserves and wilderness areas in the ACT. It will replace the current *Nature Conservation Act* as the legislation under which these reserves are established. Part V of the draft bill which concerns public land sets out the categories under which public land may be listed and the law under which it is to be administered. It is intended that this bill consolidate the law for various types of public land and operate as part of the comprehensive group of planning and leasing bills.

A schedule in the bill lists the various categories of public land and gives a brief description of each category together with a brief statement of management objectives. The bill sets out the requirement for management plans to be developed for each reserved area to meet those stated objectives.

In its submission on this draft bill the Association has drawn attention to the lack of definition of the relationship between the new bill and the existing *Nature Conservation Act*. As well as providing the machinery for gazettal of reserves, the *Nature Conservation Act* provides protective laws and machinery for the administration of these reserves. Whilst the gazettal function will be taken over by the new bill, it is not clear how these protective and administrative functions will be covered. The Association has sought clarification of this situation.

One particular provision in the *Nature Conservation Act* has been explicitly excluded from the new bill. This is prohibition on the

granting of leases in nature reserves and national parks. The *Nature Conservation Act* is quite explicit in not permitting any granting of leases in reserved areas whereas the draft bill gives the Minister power to approve the granting of leases in reserves except wilderness areas. The Association has expressed its opposition to this policy because it considers that this weakens the protection provided to reserves. The Association considers that substantial tourist facilities should be excluded from parks and that this situation can best be maintained by not permitting the granting of leases.

Another major concern about the draft legislation is in the procedures for revocation of public land. The same procedures apply to all classes of public land and involve an amendment to the Territory plan which would be approved by the Minister and subject to disallowance by the Assembly. The Association's viewpoint is that this arrangement is inadequate in respect of national parks, nature reserves and wilderness areas, and should be replaced by one that requires the Assembly to pass a resolution to that effect. In such an important issue as the loss of an area of national park or nature reserve, the open consideration and debate invited by moving a motion of revocation is the appropriate course. The *Commonwealth National Parks and Wildlife Act* contains such a provision and has been proposed as a model for the ACT.

The draft bill contains procedures for developing plans of management for reserves which will determine how management objectives will be achieved. Broad management objectives containing three brief statements are set out for each class of public land i.e. national park, nature reserve etc and these are the objectives to which management plans must respond.

The Association considers that these objectives are far too broad and that individual sets of objectives are required for each reserve. NPA has proposed that the legislation require the development of management objectives for each reserve as a basis for development of management plans.

This series of draft land bills is of enormous consequence to land use and conservation in the ACT and although complex, demand public and political debate to ensure the adoption of soundly based principles which will provide for the long term protection of public open space areas.

Syd Comfort

ACT Government releases environment strategy

The Chief Minister, Mr Trevor Kaine, has released a statement titled 'Environment Strategy for the 1990s' which has been published as an appropriately green covered 30 page booklet. Whilst this contains many broad generalisations with which few could disagree, there are some specific commitments which are welcomed. However most people committed to conservation of the environment will find the document disappointing. Nevertheless it should be read. After all the price is right.

ACT Government, *The ACT: Caring for our Environment, Environment Strategy for the 1990s*, June 1990.

Commonwealth should take greater role in forestry

The Commonwealth Government should take action to protect National Estate forests and develop hardwood plantations, the National Parks Association has argued in a recent submission to the Resource Assessment Commission. The commission, which was set up to provide independent advice on environmental conflicts, is conducting an inquiry into forestry and timber production.

The Association's submission discussed issues concerning national parks, the timber industry, forest policy and national estate values. It was prepared by Kevin Frawley.

The submission was critical of the trend towards industrial forestry revealed by data for timber production and consumption. It stated: 'Timber volume removals from Australian forests are only slightly less than consumption volumes (both being close to 17 million cubic metres). Nevertheless, there is a current annual trade deficit of \$1595 million showing the extent to which Australia exports low value forest products and imports high value products...'

'The timber industry often bases arguments for continuation or expansion based on the native forest on the need to reduce the trade deficit, but this reduction will only occur if production results in exports of higher value products or substitution for high value imports of local products.'

The submission recommended:

- The Commonwealth should support improved scientific knowledge of Australian forests and their component species.
- The Resource Assessment Commission should consider the world heritage proposal for the alps, which is based on the international significance of the evergreen sclerophyll forests in the region.
- The Commonwealth should play

a role in developing a national forest policy. Guidelines for forest industries should be developed and regularly reviewed in response to changing information and technology.

- The Commonwealth should use whatever powers are available to it to reverse the trend towards industrial forestry in native forests and treat critically proposals for forestry development based on future exports of low-value forest products from native forests.
 - The commission should consider a study into the principles of sustained yield as applied in native forests, logging prescriptions based on the principles of sustained yield and the implications of the application of these principles for other forest values.
 - The Commonwealth should refrain from issuing export licences to timber operations within areas listed on the Register of the National Estate.
 - The Commonwealth can play an important role in developing hardwood plantations through applied research such as the CSIRO young eucalypt program.
- The submission emphasised the cultural significance of forests in the Australian landscape, as opposed to the utilitarian view of natural resource management. It stated: 'The concept of *sense of place* and recognition that landscapes have meaning to people at scales from individual and personal to national or cultural is now expressed in the wide community interest in forest policy and management. The valuation of forests is informed, therefore, by more than aesthetics and recreational opportunity and biological/ecological knowledge. It also derives from a developing new environmental ethic and aspects of cultural identity partly related to a sense of nationalism.'

It went on to point out that it

would be a mistake to assume that science can be the final arbiter of conflicts in forestry. A preoccupation with scientific rationality could be the cause of seemingly irreconcilable conflicts over forest management. 'Scientific studies cannot deal with the questions of values and beliefs, of aesthetic appeal and inspiration, of ethics and morality which provide much of the motivation of human action.'

The submission suggested that the final report of the inquiry should give as full a treatment as possible to the cultural aspects of forests and so recognise the significant shifts that have occurred in public opinion and consciousness.

Bushwalking for the disabled

I have been approached by staff of the Woden Community Service who are keen to use bush walking as an activity to aid disabled people and are seeking assistance from the community in doing this. Following this, I have participated in some walking with the disabled and feel that this may be an area where some members who are keen on walking may be able to use this interest to assist other people. I would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in exploring this area with me. My telephone number is 286 2578.

Syd Comfort

Birds in the ACT

Ian Taylor of the Canberra Ornithological Group (COG) gave members who attended the May monthly meeting much to think about and act upon.

Ian started his talk by describing the work needed to produce the *Bird Atlas of the ACT*. He concluded by explaining the threats to certain bird species in the ACT posed by European landuse patterns and the lack of adequate reserves of woodland and wet forest vegetation types in the ACT.

Four years ago, with financial support from the NCDC, Ian undertook a project to coordinate members of COG and others in a systematic survey of birds in the ACT. This was done by dividing the ACT up into a grid of cells about three by four kilometres based on longitude and latitude.

Each cell created was adopted by a group of people who made three-monthly visits to their cell. Seven and a half thousand data sheets were thus completed which made up a quarter of a million separate recordings of birds. Each cell was visited at least eight times during the study, at different times of the year. Some areas were visited more often; 17 trips were made to Mount Kelly. On average 40 to 50 species were recorded in forest areas with from 90 to 100 species in woodland areas, such as Mulligans Flat.

The goal of the survey was to produce a set of maps for each bird species in the ACT, about 200 in all. This was accomplished. These maps can predict the likelihood of finding a particular species in a particular area at any given time of the year.

Ian explained the powerful computer based data collection system developed for the project and the range of analytical maps it can produce. For instance migratory patterns of birds through the ACT can be plotted. The breeding habits of birds can also be recorded and studied.

In the second half of his talk Ian explained that there are a number of threats to bird species in the ACT.

The main threat is from the clearing of woodland (mainly yellowbox and redgum) for farming, and more recently urban development and the lack of protection in reserves of wet forest areas. For instance little woodland is represented in Namadgi National Park. (Some of it forms part of the Canberra Nature Park but this too is under threat). The bird species that live in woodland habitat are in decline. And here Ian mentioned specifically the diamond firetail, the double-barred finch (also known as the owl-faced finch), the crested pigeon, the southern whiteface, the hooded robin and the speckled warbler. These birds need woodlands in which to breed, hollows in trees, long grass and undisturbed bush. Little of this remains in the ACT.

Ian went on to explain that a number of wet forest birds were also under threat. He mentioned the urgent need to remedy this by the inclusion of the Bendora Dam-Mount Coree area in Namadgi National Park. Birds in decline include the powerful owl, which needs a large territory and which eats about one greater glider or similar possum per day. There are now only about five or six pairs of these spectacular creatures left in the ACT. Other species under threat include the satin bowerbird, the rose robin (a summer migrant from Queensland) and the rufous fantail.

Threats to ACT birds come not only from Europeans' misguided and short-sighted land use practices but also from several species of introduced birds. Ian told of the damage done to local species by starlings and Indian mynas. Starlings, by nesting in hollows in trees the same size as those used by galahs, rosellas and red-rumped parrots interrupt the breeding patterns of these birds. As soon as starlings are removed from an area it is recolonised. He was more hopeful with regard to the Indian mynas. These are descended from about 100 released deliberately in 1969. Ian described them as cane toads with wings!

Although a substantial problem in that they too displace native species Ian believes that they could be controlled if the political will was available and action was taken in the near future.

Ian had a raft of bird anecdotes to tell during a lively question time. He told of the fate of the emu in the ACT. Prior to European settlement emus were common on the Limestone Plains. The Aborigines has husbanded their numbers by a taboo that meant that only adult males could eat emu. However the early European settlers soon discovered that emus could be boiled down to produce a substitute for whale oil for lighting. They had disappeared completely by the middle of the nineteenth century. The bustard or bush turkey made good eating and was soon to decline in numbers and then disappear completely. The last recorded sighting of the bustard in the ACT was at Duntroon in 1923.

Ian had some amusing if hard hitting things to say about domestic cats and the devastating effect they are having on local bird population.

As a finale Ian explained that all the hard work that had gone into the bird survey of the ACT was to result in September 1991 with the publication by the National Capital Planning Authority of a book listing all bird species in the ACT with full details of their characteristics. From Ian's enthusiastic description it will obviously be a magnificent volume.

Frank Clements congratulated Ian on a witty, lucid and thought-provoking talk. Frank's comment that he could have quite happily sat through many more of Ian's slides was a common feeling among the audience.

It is plain from Ian's talk that the NPA must join with COG in attempts to ensure the preservation of threatened bird habitats in the ACT. Birdo members should contact the Environment Subcommittee with offers of help

Timothy Walsh

Boboyan pines pruned

The Boboyan pine plantation lies wholly within the Namadgi National Park and runs south from the foot of Yankee Hat to loop around the Gundgenby property. Generally the pines have not grown well and the condition of the plantation has been further depressed by a bushfire which in 1983 burned out about a quarter of the plantation.

The forest is an intrusion into the national park, degrades its natural values, and is particularly detrimental to views across to the slopes below Mount Gudgenby. The NPA has, over a number of years, pressed for the clearing of the pines and revegetation by natural species.

Of immediate concern are the escape of pine wilding to adjoining natural areas, and the regrowth of seedlings in the burned out areas. Late last year the Association offered to assist the Parks and Conservation Service in dealing with these problems and a work party was agreed for the weekend of 26/27 May. The Kosciusko Huts Association offered assistance and a combined force of about 20 volunteers from the two associations worked from Frank's Hut, some members camping overnight, God forbid, under the pines.

We concentrated on clearing regrowth from a large area which had been burned out and from which the commercially useful trees had been removed soon after the fire. The regrowth in this area has been quite vigorous, assisted no doubt by recent favourable seasons, so that there were more and bigger trees to remove than had been anticipated. The Parks and Conservation Service had used National Estate Grant Funds to clear some of this area by dragging a chain between bulldozers, but although some trees were removed many were flexible enough to just bend over and then spring back requiring individual cutting out. We found bush saws to be the best tools to cut the pines as the spring in the trees made chopping difficult whilst the larger trees were really 'chain saw' material. Some



Members of the working party resting between frenzied attacks on pine trees in Namadgi National Park. Photo: Reg Alder.

not very random sampling of cut rates amongst the toilers gave a range of estimates of the numbers of trees removed as between 5 000 and 10 000.

One of the compensations of working in this area was the great view we had of Gudgenby and the other high points on the other side of the valley. The area we were in will, when rehabilitated, make for some great walking within easy distance of the Boboyan Road.

The ACT Forest Service has now decided to complete the harvesting of the Boboyan pines by 1993 which will clear the way for the rehabilitation of the area. In the meantime the Parks and Conservation Service will continue to clear up the burned out areas and remove wildings from nearby natural areas. In doing this the Service will apply some park management funds as well as National Estate Grant funds but will also be looking for voluntary work to assist in the project. To this end an NPA work party has been set down for 20/21 October during which volunteers can work both days of the weekend or just for one day. Work will again be based on Frank's Hut with camping in that vicinity for those staying overnight. The outings program has further details.

Syd Comfort

Smart AC

A long-time member of the Association, Emeritus Professor Jack Smart, became a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) in the Queen's Birthday Honours list. The award was made for service to education, particularly in the field of philosophy.

Jack Smart was for many years professor of philosophy at the Australian National University and still works at the university as a visiting fellow. He was educated at Glasgow and Oxford Universities and moved to the University of Adelaide in 1950. After four years at La Trobe University he came to ANU in 1976.

He has written a number of books on science and philosophy; his book *Ethics, Persuasion and Truth* was published in 1984. Jack Smart is a keen bushwalker who can often be seen in the mountains of Namadgi National Park.

Science and the alps

When it comes to the management of Australia's alpine national parks, one of the perennial topics for debate is fire. Graziers whose forbears had grazed the land for generations claim that regular burning is good for the country. Conservationists argue that such burning damages the wildlife without increasing human security. Managers and the public wonder who is right. What is the most 'natural' fire regime for the alps?

Family folklore and self-interest is likely to distort memory. The study of fire history in the alps has given some indication of how often graziers and, before them, Aboriginal people burnt the mountain forests in previous centuries. This in turn allows managers to work out what sort of forest may have existed before European settlement and how to return national parks to this state.

At the first Fenner conference on the environment, held at the Academy of Science in Canberra in September 1988, Dr John Banks from the Australian National University described his research

into fire history in the southern Brindabellas and the Snowy Mountains. The paper showed the value of scientific evidence to resolving heated community debates. Unfortunately the conference deserved more publicity than it gained.

The proceedings of the conference, which was on the topic of the scientific significance of the alps, have recently been published by the Australian Alps National Parks Liaison Committee in association with the Academy of Science. The volume, edited by Roger Good of the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, is an important reference for anyone interested in the alps.

The conference was opened by Professor Frank Fenner, who has played a role in both the elimination of rabbits (through myxomatosis) and smallpox. He described his long-standing interest in the alps and the efforts of the Academy in the 1950s to encourage some environmental awareness in the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority.

The last chapter in the proceedings is a brief history of conservation in the alps by Dr Geoff Mosley which mentions, in passing, the efforts of the National Parks Association of the ACT to establish a national park in the southern ACT. Both of these papers are interesting but there is still room for a definitive history of conservation in the alps of New South Wales, Victoria and the ACT.

In between these two chapters are many papers on the natural history of and human activities in the alps. Contributors include such eminent figures as Dr Alec Costin and Professor Ralph Slatyer and talented young Canberra scientists like Linda Broome and Adrian Davey. In the light of the greenhouse effect, the study by Linda Broome and Ian Mansergh of the threatened mountain pygmy possum in New South Wales and Victoria is a most important marker for the effect of climatic change on wildlife in marginal habitats. A warmer climate could eliminate the possum's habitat altogether.

Parkwatch

Endangered species

With funding from the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service, conservation groups have set up the National Threatened Species Network around Australia. The network is part of the Federal Government's endangered species strategy. The aim of the network is to increase awareness of the strategy, to highlight the need for legislation to protect native species, to campaign for the protection of species and habitats, and to monitor treaty obligations. The national coordinator of the network is Michael Kennedy of the World Wide Fund for Nature. There are other organisers in each of the states.

Nattai endorsed

The leader of the NSW Opposition, Mr Bob Carr, has

stated that a Labor government in the state would dedicate the Nattai area west of Mittagong as a national park. This would become part of the greater Blue Mountains system of national parks.

Nattai has been proposed as a national park by the Colong Foundation and is supported by other conservation groups. Possible mining and other private interests are preventing the dedication of the land as national park. Urban expansion threatens the area.

Meanwhile the NSW Government has added 1270 hectares to the southern section of Blue Mountains National Park. The addition is made up of a former travelling stock reserve leading to the old mining village of Yerranderie.

National Parks Journal (NSW), May 1990

Tom Groggin sold

Tom Groggin station, on the Victorian side of the Murray River adjacent to Kosciusko National Park, was passed in at auction in July. It was later sold to the director of a Sydney investment company for \$750 000. With the property went 37 200 hectares of grazing leases in the Victorian Alpine National Park. Conservationists, supported by the NPA, had urged the Victorian Government to purchase the property to add to the national park, as other parts of the property had been added earlier to Kosciusko. Even though the government has not bought the property, the revocation of the grazing leases would remove grazing from part of the Victorian Alpine National Park.

Victorian National Parks Association Newsletter, August 1990

Longer days mean more skiing

As the sun shines longer and the weather becomes warmer the t-bars clank to a halt and the downhill skiers desert the resorts. This leaves the mountains to the snow gums and the cross-country skiers. There is still plenty of good skiing left on the main range.

Spring skiing is one of the best ways to enjoy the Australian alps. Because of the gentleness of the terrain the highest peaks are quite accessible without skins or crampons. This is quite unlike New Zealand where, even though the mountains are higher, once the snow retreats above the resorts skiing is only for skilled mountain climbers or glacier skiers (watch out for those crevasses).

The other great joy of spring skiing in Australia is skating through the snow gums, often to the sound of crimson rosellas or gang gang cockatoos. After snow or rain the moisture brings out the colours — red, olive, grey — in the bark of the trees.

Then, perhaps after a climb, you ski out into an open valley filled with white where cracks are opening up and slabs of snow have fallen into the stream. You find what looks like a firm snow bridge and cross to the other side. On a slope the scattered trees form natural poles for a telemark slalom.

Campsites are easier to find than in midwinter because there are more places where the water comes to the surface, or at least

where the water, with the aid of a cup tied to the end of a stock, can be reached from the surface. A few friendly snow gums can keep the wind at bay and the night time temperatures do not reach the face-numbing crispness of the peak season.

Camps need to be chosen with a little care for the environment. The New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service has banned camping in the catchments of the glacial lakes — Blue, Club, Albina and Cootapatamba and Hedley Tarn — and is discouraging camping above the tree-line. This eliminates a number of favourite campsites. But in this fragile ecosystem the waste produced by even small numbers of humans can quickly pollute and degrade the landscape.

Huts are also popular with some spring skiers but this popularity also leads to environmental impacts. Evidence of saws being applied to the limbs of dead and even living trees often appears quite some distance from huts. And the level of hygiene is usually lower than that of pristine snow.

During the periods of bad weather that occasionally occur in spring, some of the higher huts become unpleasantly crowded. I can remember one October long weekend, after reaching Seaman's hut in a blizzard, quickly eating my lunch and heading outside to find a campsite in the valley. It was a great relief to escape the



Dugald Monro showing his style during the impromptu slalom on the NPA cross country ski trip in August. Photo: Chris Bellamy.

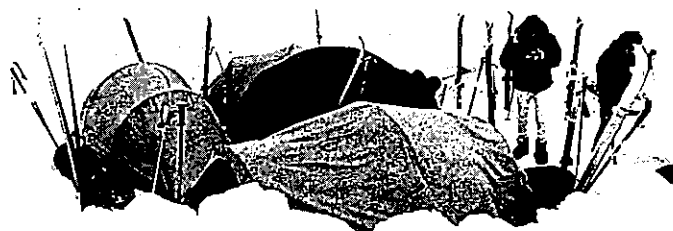
packed steamy hut and climb into the tent.

In Kosciusko National Park the most popular access points for spring skiing trips are the crossings of the Snowy River at Munyang power station, Guthega dam and Illawong Lodge. These lead on to the Great Dividing Range from Mount Twynam and Watsons Crags to Mount Tate, across the Rolling Ground and on to Gungartan and the Brass Mountains.

For those with a few days to spare, gliding through the wilderness to the peak of Jagungal is a great way to spend the time. Routes from the south usually start at Munyang power station. Eastern access to Jagungal, often requiring a long walk, can be by way of Eucumbene dam, the Burrungubugge River or the Gungarlin valley.

Day trippers attracted by the summit of the highest mountain on the continent can catch the chairlift at Thredbo or, later in the season, drive to Charlottes Pass.

Roger Green



Just because the days are longer does not mean the weather is better. Tents huddled together in an October blizzard.

Valuing the environment

How can a value be put on the environment? With difficulty. But this has not stopped economists from trying

One of America's most divisive legislative fights this year promises to be over the clean air bill. So far much of the debate has concentrated on the costs to industry of complying with the planned regulations. But there is a much trickier problem. Is there any way in which the benefits of an improvement to the environment can be measured and thus be compared with the costs of achieving it?

Over the past 20 years economists have grappled with this

question with more ingenuity than success. Their attempts are admirably reviewed in a new paper by Mr Per-Olov Johansson of the Stockholm School of Economics published in the latest *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*. Mr Johansson argues that environmental resources such as clean air or a tropical forest have value for three distinct reasons, and that an adequate environmental costing needs to consider all three.

First people can benefit from the direct effects of an environmental resource. This is the benefit from breathing easily, going for a walk in an unspoilt mountain range, or

having a tropical forest stop the spread of deserts.

Secondly and more controversially, people might value the option of using an environmental resource over and above the value they expect to gain from actually using it. Suppose most people are unsure if they will ever visit the Grand Canyon. They might still value the chance to see it unspoilt whether they are likely to visit it or not.

Thirdly, a few selfless people may derive pleasure from (and be willing to pay for) the mere existence of the Grand Canyon or clean air in Los Angeles. They

Gear: warm, light and dry

Steve Jamieson of J&H Agencies, Queanbeyan, spoke to the July meeting of the Association about modern developments in bushwalking gear. The audience was invited to interrupt and lost no time in making comments and asking questions.

Being an active backpacker himself and well aware of the discomforts likely to be encountered, Steve Jamieson's designs are dedicated to keeping you warm and dry in the bush and lightening the load on the shoulders.

As to weight, there's little sense in fine-tuning the weight of the stuff to be carried only to cram it all into a heavy rucksack. Steve Jamieson maintains that his total backpack load of 10 kilograms even contains fresh fruit and vegetables. A rucksack made in the USA and weighing only one kilogram was displayed but alas is not available in Australia. Why didn't J&H make something similar? Because the 40 per cent duty on the material would make the final product too expensive. The frame of a rucksack adds weight too, so Steve uses a frameless one. He did, however, admit to a sweaty back on occasions.

A warm sleeping bag weighing only 1.4 kilograms contributes to Steve's light backpack load. He

does not consider temperature ratings for sleeping bags to be useful because everyone has a different 'sleeping heat' depending on one's metabolic rate at rest, so season ratings are used by J&H instead. And of course it depends also on how much you wear underneath. The fabric of sleeping bags should have an air porosity such that it lets the air out but keeps the down in. And look out for a draught tube along the zipper. The cost of a sleeping bag lies mainly in the down. If you are the type who has to keep up with the Jones', hand-plucked Siberian goose down would surely do the trick. But whatever sleeping bag you own, use a closed cell foam mat underneath to minimise heat loss to the ground.

We've all wriggled into sleeping bags and liners, panting with relief as the last rumple is smoothed, only to get the zipper caught up in the material. By the time the torch has been located and the zipper extracted with cold fingers, we're wide awake and wondering what we're doing here when there's a perfectly good bed at home. If this is your problem, try the new J&H zipless bag. Heat is lost with a zip, particularly if there is no draught tube, besides which a zipper weighs about 200 grams.

As to raincoats, don't expect them to keep you totally dry! Gore-Tex is the only material that really works but if the garment is made wrongly you will get wet. The Heath Robinson gadget on display that had kept us wondering all evening was not, as was suggested, the process by which the Association's treasurer had laundered the accounts, but a means of testing the waterproofing capability of raincoat seams. The definitive test of waterproofing was located in Scotland and involved a one and a half hour high-pressure shower. No-one was surprised to learn that the failure rate of this test was 98 per cent. However, don't despair - designs are improving all the time and weak spots where leakages can occur are gradually being eliminated.

One problem is that bushwalkers are leaving the manufacturing arena and the professional managers, who don't know what it feels like to have to walk 10 kilometres back to the car cold and wet through to the skin, are taking over. And they won't worry too much either if the metal studs on your jacket throw your compass out by a few degrees so that you are not only wet through but 'misplaced' into the bargain!

Phyl Goddard

Outings program

September to December 1990



Outings guide

Day walks carry lunch, drinks and protective clothing.
Pack walks two or more days, carry all food and camping requirements. CONTACT LEADER BY WEDNESDAY.

Car camps facilities often limited or non-existent. Vehicles taken to site can be used for camping. BOOK EARLY WITH LEADER.

Other activities include nature rambles, environmental and field guide studies and ski tours.

Walks gradings

Distance grading (per day)

- 1 - up to 10 km
- 2 - 10 km to 15 km
- 3 - 15 km to 20 km
- 4 - above 20 km.

Terrain grading

- A - Road, firetrail, track
- B - Open forest
- C - Light scrub
- D - Patches of thick scrub, regrowth
- E - Rock scrambling
- F - Exploratory.

The walks program contains additional information. If necessary, contact the leader.

29/30 September/1 October-Car Camp (1/2/A/B/C)

Bournda State Recreation Area
Leader: Syd Comfort Ph 286 2578

Contact leader by Tuesday for details. Camping on Wallagoot Lake with coast and forest walks. There is a possibility that the venue will be changed to a privately owned lakeside location on the South Coast if this can be arranged. 450 km drive.

2 October Tuesday Walk (1/A)

Murrumbidgee Corridor / Molonglo River
Ref: ACT 1:100 000

Leader: Olive Buckman Ph 248 8774

Meet at Murrumbidgee Lookout (sign) off Stockdill Drive Holt at 9.00 am. A pleasant riverside walk of about 4 to 5 km. May be extended depending on group. Suitable for beginners.

7 October-Sunday Walk (2/A/B)

Mt Tennant Ref: ACT 1:100 000

Leader: Phil Bubb Ph 281 4929 h 246 6128 w

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8.00 am. A day walk in one of the new additions to Namadgi. Some on tracks and some down an untracked ridge. Excellent views of Canberra and Namadgi if the weather is good. 50 km drive.

10 October-Wednesday Meeting

Outings subcommittee meeting

Leader: The outings convenor

(See *Bulletin* insert for details and phone number)

To plan the next outings program, January - March 1991, and other business.

13/14 October-Pack Walk (2/A/B)

Shanahans Mountain and Horse Gully Hut.

Ref: Collinton 1:25 000

Leader: Jack Smart Ph 248 8171

Contact leader early for details. A pack walk from Shanahans Mountain to Horse Gully Hut and out again perhaps via Mount Clear. May involve a short car shuffle. 200 km drive.

14 October-Sunday Walk (2/A/B)

Badgerys Lookout to Shoalhaven Gorge.

Ref: Caoura 1:25 000

Leader: Mike Smith Ph 286 2984

Meet at Southwell Park, Northbourne Ave at 8.30 am. A 10 km return walk to the Shoalhaven River from Badgerys Lookout near Tallong. Involves a 600 metre descent to explore along the river. May also include a possible river crossing to Tryers Gorge, or for the more hardy another 600 metre climb to Tumbledown Point. Depends on river conditions and party. 250 km drive.

20/21 October-Workparty Weekend (1/A)

Boboyan Pines Clearing Ref: Yaouk 1:25 000

Leader: Dugald Monro Ph 231 8776

Contact leader early for details. In cooperation with the ACT Parks and Conservation Service another attack on the wilding *Pinus radiata* from the Boboyan Pine Forest. Come for a day or the weekend. 100 km drive.

24 October-Wednesday Walk (1/A)

Mount Domain via Fishing Gap

Ref: Tidbinbilla 1:25 000

Leader: Margaret Roseby Ph 288 3679

Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and the Cotter Road at 9.30 am. A walk up Mt Domain for views of Canberra. 80 km drive.

28/29 October-Pack Canoe Trip (4/A)

Morton National Park Ref: Moss Vale 1:100 000

Leader: Chris Bellamy Ph 249 7167

Contact leader by the 24th of October for details. A canoe trip up the Shoalhaven River from Tallowa Dam, in Kangaroo Valley, on still water to a camp site some 20 km upstream in the Shoalhaven River Gorge, returning the next day. The gorge has impressive steep rainforest clad slopes and prolific wildlife. Easy paddling would suit beginners. Hire canoes there or BYO. 400km drive.

27 October-Saturday Walk (3/A/F)

Bushfold Flats / Bluegum Creek

Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000 Williamsdale 1:25 000

Leader: Philip Gatenby Ph 254 3094

Contact leader by Thursday for details of this partly exploratory walk. Some of the walk will be on tracks, although some rock scrambling may also be required and thick scrub may be encountered. Total climb of about 600 metres. 80 km drive.

28 October-Sunday Walk (3/D)

Five Peaks, Namadgi Ref: Yaouk 1:25 000

Leader: Frank Clements Ph 231 7005

Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.00 am. A walk involving five peaks south east of Mount Gudgenby. One steep 400 metre climb and one steep 100 metre climb. Half on fire trails and half through rough bush. 100 km drive.

3/4 November-Ski Lodge Weekend

Charlottes Pass Ref: Kosciusko 1:50 000

Leader: Ian Haynes Ph 251 4762

Contact leader by 19 October to confirm accommodation bookings. Arrive Friday evening or by 9.00 am Saturday. Do your own thing, join a walk or just relax. Bring sheets, pillow slips (or sleeping bags) and food (cook your own). Everyone is responsible for making sure the lodge is left clean and tidy, there will be a working bee to ensure the bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchen and dining areas etc are left spic and span. 420 km drive.

3 November-Saturday Walk (1/C)**Nursery Creek Falls Ref: Rendezvous Ck 1:25 000****Leader: Lyle Mark Ph 286 2801**

Meet at the Kambah Village shops at 8.45 am. A 9 km walk mainly on bush tracks to rock paintings, falls and caves in the headwaters of Nursery Creek. A good beginners walk. 100 km drive.

4 November-Sunday Walk (4/A/B)**Mt McKeahnie Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000****Leader: Neville Esau Ph 286 4176 h 249 9500 w**

Meet at Orroral Valley gate near the tracking station at 8.00 am. A long day walk along the Orroral Valley with an ascent of 600 metres up Mt McKeahnie. Excellent views of the northern end of the national park. 80 km drive

10/11 November-Pack Walk (2/A/E)**Shoalhaven Gorge Ref: Caoura 1:25 000****Leader: Mike Smith Ph 286 2984**

Contact leader by Wednesday for details. Starting down Long Point near Tallong a descent of 600 metres to a campsite next to the Shoalhaven River in the vicinity of McCallums Selection. An optional afternoon walk will be up the river to Bungonia Gorge. Sunday we will follow the river downstream to a spur leading 600 metres up to Badgerys Lookout. Several river crossings may be involved. 250 km drive.

10 November-Saturday Walk (1/A)**Black Mountain Nature Ramble****Ref: Canberra Street Map****Leader: George Chippendale Ph 281 2454**

Meet at the Belconnen Way entrance to Black Mountain Reserve at 9.30 am. A morning ramble to see the birds and flowers. Suitable for those aged between 4 and 80. Bring your morning tea and your camera or binoculars. Finishes midday.

11 November-Sunday Walk (4/D)**Mt Kelly Ref: Rendezvous Ck 1:25 000****Leader: Frank Clements Ph 231 7005**

Meet at Kambah Village shops at 7.30 am. A walk to Mt Kelly. It involves two steep climbs of 200 metres each and some rough bush. An elapsed time of 9.5 to 10 hours. NOT for beginners so ring leader if doubtful. 100 km drive.

14 November-Wednesday Walk (2/A)**Horse Gully Hut Ref: Colinton 1:25 000****Leader: Margaret Roseby Ph 288 3679**

Meet at Kambah Village shops at 9.30 am. A 14 km walk in the Mt Clear area. Help Margaret clean up Horse Gully Hut before her aunt revisits the hut for the first time in 30 years. 200km drive.

17 November-Saturday Walk (2/A/B)**Lower Cotter Extension Ref: ACT 1:100 000****Leader: Ian Fraser Ph 249 1560 or 286 2578**

Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and the Cotter Road at 8.30 am. A 10 - 15 km guided interpretive walk through a part of this recently announced extension to Namadgi National Park. Ian, the author of a study on the natural resources of this area, will explain its special natural values and characteristics. 80 km drive.

18 November-Sunday Walk (1/A)**Square Rock Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000****Leader: Olive Buckman Ph 248 8774**

Meet at Kambah Village shops at 9.30 am. A pleasant 8 km walk on tracks through a variety of scenery, to a fascinating rock formation with wide views. A climb of 270 metres. Ideal for beginners. 80 km drive.

24/25 November-Pack Walk (2/A/D/F)**Gungarlin / Burrungubugge****Ref: Khancoban 1:50 000 Eucumbene 1:50 000****Leader: Di Thompson Ph 284 5043 w 288 6084 h**

Contact leader early for details. A walk in Kosciusko National Park visiting Davis and Kidmans Huts and a number of other hut ruins. Walk in part of the beautiful Gungarlin River Valley, and over the ranges to the Burrungubugge River. Half on tracks and half untracked. Some fly fishing for those of that ilk. Last 10 km of road very rough. 28 km walk. 350 km drive.

25 November-Sunday Canoe Trip (1/A)**Googong Dam Ref: Hoskinstown 1:25 000****Leader: Chris Bellamy Ph 249 7167**

Contact leader by Wednesday for details. An easy day trip on quiet water, paddling from near Googong Dam wall, exploring the lake and visiting several islands en route. Bring lunch, swimmers and a bottle of bubbly. Hire canoes or BYO. 25 km drive.

1/2 December-Pack Walk (3/E/F)**Ettrema Ref: Touga 1:25 000 Yalwal 1:25 000****Leader: Philip Gatenby Ph 254 3094**

Contact leader by Wednesday for details. A walk to Ettrema Gorge via Howards Pass, camping at or near the junction of Ettrema and Tullyangela Creeks. Optional exploration of Cinch and Dynamite Creeks. Return along Tullyangela Creek where there are compulsory swims. 300 km drive.

2 December-Sunday Walk (2/A/C/F)**The Source of James Creek****Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000 Rendezvous Ck 1:25 000****Leader: Bob Story Ph 281 2174**

Please contact leader by 30 November for details. Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.30 am. A 12 km walk starting from Orroral Valley. Climb of 400 metres. 100 km drive.

8/9 December-Pack Walk (2/A/D/F)**Kiandra Area****Ref: Cabramurra 1:25 000 Denison 1:25 000****Leader: Di Thompson Ph 288 6084 h 284 5043 w**

Contact leader early for details. A weekend exploring the relics and ruins of the goldmining era in the vicinity of Four Mile, Bloomfield and Long Arm Creeks. Half on tracks, half not. 30 km walk. 400 km drive.

12 December-Wednesday Walk (1/A)**Back-O-Bredbo Ref: Colinton 1:25 000****Leader: Margaret Roseby Ph 288 3679**

Meet at the Kambah Village shops at 9.30 am. A 12 km walk from the "Roseby Built" Bridge along the Murrumbidgee River for views of Colinton Gorge. Swimming if desired. 200 km drive.

15 December-Saturday Walk (2/A/B)**Marble Arch / Big Hole Ref: Kain 1:25 000****Leader: Phil Bubbs Ph 248 6769 h 246 6128 w**

Meet at Canberra Railway Station at 8.00 am. An easy walk mostly on tracks to these scenic features. Bring sneakers for wading the river and through Marble Arch Caves, and swimming costume for swim, hopefully, in the creek. 180 km drive.

16 December Christmas Party**Ref: ACT 1:100 000****Leader: The President**

Meet at the Orroral Valley picnic ground at 3.00pm for the annual NPA Christmas get together. Members and friends welcome.

Points to note

New faces to lead, new places to go. Please help keep our outings program alive by volunteering to lead a walk occasionally.

All persons joining an outing of the National Parks Association of the ACT do so as volunteers in all respects and as such accept sole responsibility for any injury howsoever incurred and the National Parks Association of the ACT, its office bearers and appointed leaders are absolved from any liability in respect of any injury or damage suffered whilst engaged in any such outing.

The committee suggests a donation of TWENTY cents per kilometre DIVIDED BY THE NUMBER OF OCCUPANTS in the car, including the driver, (to the nearest dollar) be offered to the driver by each passenger accepting transport. Drive and walk distances quoted in the program are approximate distances for return journeys.

want to preserve their environmental heritage for others – even if they are never likely to enjoy it themselves.

Measuring the first kind of value - 'use' value - is difficult, but there are at least some real figures to work on. People may pay hard cash to visit a national park for instance; comparing the prices of otherwise similar houses in quiet and noisy streets may give some guide to the value of calm. The only way to try and pick up the more abstract 'option' and 'existence' values is to ask people how much they would be willing to pay for, say, an improvement in air quality or the protection of a threatened rain forest. Such surveys have many drawbacks.

When faced with a hypothetical question people may not respond as they would in real life. They may indulge in green generosity since in fact they do not have to pay for anything. Surveys may talk of environmental costs but they rarely spell out costs of unemployment, lower wages and so on. If these were known people might be less willing to pay them. Many respondents will exaggerate their willingness to pay if they think others will end up meeting the bill. If the cost of a clean up is paid through an income tax, those who do not pay income tax will tend to overstate its benefits.

One partial solution is to look at how much people actually pay for environmental goods in the market and add on existence and option values. Suppose two towns are identical except that the air in one is filthy, in the other crystal clear. In theory the difference in property values should capture the market value of clean air. In practice no two towns are identical. So instead, economists adjust for all the other factors that influence house prices (quality of architecture, location). Then they try to estimate the sole impact of air quality on property values.

The biggest drawback is that information on house prices and air quality usually shows the effect of

only a small difference of air quality on property values. The impact of a large change in air quality is guesswork. Also houses in places with clean air will tend to be bought by fresh air fiends. It will be wrong to assume that everybody sets as high a value on clean air as they do.

A different method based on the cost of travelling to see, say, a national park can be used to value the environment. If there is no entry fee the effective price which visitors pay for entry is the cost of getting to the park. So a southern Californian resident pays around \$50 (the cost of the car ride) for a glimpse of the Grand Canyon; a Dallas resident may pay \$150, a New Yorker \$300. The overall benefit each visitor obtains from the trip is calculated as the difference between the maximum he would have been willing to pay to see the park (in travel costs) and the amount the trip actually cost him.

How can this be calculated? Suppose one in ten New Yorkers, two in ten residents of Dallas and three in ten from southern California have all seen the Grand Canyon. Devotees of the travel-cost method assume that one in ten southern Californians would also have been willing to pay at least \$300 to make the trip, and another one in ten would have been willing to pay at least \$150. Since they paid only \$50, one tenth obtained a net benefit of at least \$250 (\$300 less \$50) and another one tenth benefitted by \$100 (\$150 less \$50). Likewise one tenth of the Dallas residents would have gained \$150 (\$300 less \$150). In this fashion the monetary 'value' of the Grand Canyon can be pinned down.

One difficulty with this technique is that there could be relatively more southern Californians than New Yorkers willing to pay \$300 to visit the Grand Canyon. Economists try to adjust for observable differences between regions such as levels of income, but they will be unable to measure environmental fervour. Californians may be greener than New Yorkers.

Most environmental costing techniques were little more than a twinkle in economists' eyes 20 years ago. These days they are widely used in cost benefit analysis. A snag is that since there are so many techniques all of which invariably produce different outcomes, none is able to resolve conflicts between politicians over the right level of environmental regulation. But the techniques do at least make people ask the right questions and think more coherently - even if the questions do not receive firm answers.

The Economist



*Babette Scougall helping restore Potters Chimney in Grassy Creek, near the Mount Clear parking area. The restoration project is being organised by the Kosciusko Huts Association.
Photo: Reg Alder.*

Bush tracking stations

The Orroral and Honeysuckle Creek tracking stations were constructed in the 1960s but have long since ceased operations. The aerials and much of the other equipment have since been removed. The buildings however remain and the ACT Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on the Arts, Heritage and the Environment has initiated an inquiry into the future of these buildings.

The buildings are located in the Namadgi National Park so the NPA is particularly concerned about their future and has therefore made a submission to the committee.

The submission draws attention to the following characteristics and condition of the buildings: they were built for specific functions and their use for other purposes is limited by such things as the lack of windows, lack of mains power and unserviceable sewerage systems. Vandalism has been extensive.

As the buildings are located within the Namadgi National Park, the submission argues that the future of the buildings should be decided by relating any proposal to the objectives set down for the Park. The key objectives for Namadgi are protection of the park's resources in the interests of Canberra's water supply, and of nature conservation. Secondary objectives include provision for recreation, education, study, and protection of cultural and heritage resources (Namadgi Policy Plan).

The Namadgi Management Plan suggested that the buildings be used for park management functions such as office, stores and workshops, or as a studies centre. The NPA submission points out that with the establishment of the Riverview Visitors Centre and the Glendale Depot, the tracking stations are not required for park management. Their use as a study centre or for a similar function may at first sight appear attractive but noting the costs involved in conversion and maintenance

and the lack of existing services, this application is considered impractical. In examining any use of the buildings it is essential that maintenance of park values must be the dominant consideration and any application must be tested against this criterion.

Retention of the buildings in their present state is not favoured because the buildings are unsightly, ripe for vandalism and use scarce park resources for protection and maintenance.

Because the stations represent one phase in the occupation of the Orroral Valley and Honeysuckle Creek, it may be argued that they should be retained for their heritage significance. The Association has submitted that this value has been greatly reduced by the removal of equipment from the stations and draws attention to the complete facilities at Tidbinbilla as providing a better example of this activity. Some form of memorial at the station sites is suggested as an appropriate recognition of the tracking stations' significance.

The Association submission concludes that the objectives of the national park, especially in regard to the protection of natural values, would be best served by the removal of the buildings. However if this is not accepted, any use of the buildings must be low key, non-commercial, compatible with national park values and be at no cost to park funds.

Syd Comfort

Contributions to drivers

Following a recommendation from the Outings Subcommittee, the Association has changed its recommended formula for determining the contribution to be made by passengers to car drivers on Association outings. The recommendation is that each car attract an amount of 20 cents per kilometre travelled, divided equally amongst the number of occupants including the driver. To avoid any misunderstanding, perhaps leaders could explain this arrangement before setting out.

Orroral geodetic observatory

Orroral observatory's prime instrument is a 1.5 metre diameter optical telescope which is used to direct a stream of very short laser pulses to mirrors on satellites and on the moon, and to receive the pulses back again. Measurement of the times of flight are used to monitor variations in the earth's rotation rate, the wobble of its axis, the position of the telescope on the earth's surface, continental drift, variations in gravity, and other quantities needed in surveying, geodesy, geophysics and astronomy.

The International Earth Rotation Service, NASA's Crustal Dynamics Project and other researchers use the data. Measurement accuracy is now equivalent to one centimetre.

The next few months should see Orroral firing to satellites nearer than is currently possible, opening the way to support specifically Australian oceanographic and geodetic projects.

Orroral's other public interest functions include coordinating precise time within Australia. Its atomic clocks are checked daily against international standards using the global positioning system, a satellite constellation that is revolutionising surveying, navigation and timekeeping.

Australian clocks are checked against Orroral's using television signals coming from AUSSAT. Measurement accuracy is now 25 nanoseconds (one nanosecond is a thousand millionth of a second).

Time reports are sold to clients and Australian clocks contribute significantly to universal coordinated time kept by the International Bureau of Weights and Measures in France.

DAS News

To Cameron's Corner and back

Early one cold foggy Saturday morning in June, 18 hardy souls left the Environment Centre for a 16 day tour of the far north west of NSW which had already been postponed from April because of floods. It now looked as though we were to be thwarted again because on reaching Hillston that afternoon in rain, we found that the road to Willandra National Park was questionable, so we had to retrace our tracks 100 kilometres back to Griffith where we found accommodation in a fruit pickers' motel. As we were carrying three days' supply of fresh food for our catering at Willandra, it was necessary to find accommodation where we could do our own catering and this the motel provided in a large kitchen/dining room. That night further rain fell and Sunday morning found the road into Willandra National Park completely closed.

While we left our tour leaders Margaret McJannett and Ian Fraser from Environment Tours to reorganise the next couple of days we all took ourselves off to the local Griffith Markets where we bought lovely Italian bread, homemade cakes, jams and pickles to put in the food kitty. We were then picked up by our small bus with large green trailer and informed that we were going to Mildura for the night and were able to get into Kinchega National Park a day earlier. That night we celebrated in a caravan park with barbecued chicken and champagne. The next day we really felt that the tour had started when we drove from Mildura to Broken Hill then to Maiden's Menindee Hotel where Burke and Wills had stayed and where we toasted our own trip, before reaching Kinchega National Park late afternoon for our five day stay. Shearers' quarters were soon allocated. Very basic with four bunk beds per room (good mattresses though) and if you were lucky a couple of nails on the walls, good hot showers here. The mess block consisted of a large kitchen with huge fuel stove, plus gas stove, a dining/community

room where we all sat down to meals at one long table, a large fireplace at one end with a supply of wood.

From Kinchega we went out on daily trips to Lake Menindee, Lake Eurodilla where we watched the sunrise, Poncarrie, population 48, where the Darling River was very muddy and running at seven metres deep, all the time looking at flora and fauna, wedge tailed eagles with a wing span of three metres, foxes, rabbits, kangaroos, emus, euros, plus during the entire trip, over 100 different species of birds.

On next to Broken Hill for a couple of nights with visits to the art galleries, Silverton, a deserted mining town with a couple of fine old buildings and an excellent museum, Umberumberka Dam, and the Mindi Mindi plains with an unbroken horizon of 95 kilometres. One day was spent at Mootwingee National Park where we walked up two of the gorges and looked at some of the Aboriginal rock paintings.

From Broken Hill we drove the 350 kilometres along the Silver City 'Highway' of which about 25 kilometres is sealed, to Tibooburra stopping on the way at Milparinka where there are some excellent restored buildings including part of an old cottage which was occupied in the 1890s by a family from Araluen. We practically filled the Tibooburra Hotel which had an amazing collection of 'Bush Tucker Man' hats hanging in the bar. One of the highlights of the trip was made from Tibooburra out to Cameron's Corner, Fort Grey and Lake Pinaroo. Because of the recent rains, large areas of the arid red soil were covered with wild flowers a lot of which were in bloom. We visited Golden Gully a short distance from Tibooburra where there is an excellent

outdoor display of old mining exhibits, and also the Homestead Museum on the Gorge Loop Road where the Ranger gave us a most interesting talk. On one of our walks to look at birds we found a male emu sitting on a clutch of ten beautiful dark greeny/blue eggs. Another day we drove out to the jump ups, very spectacular outcrops of rocks which in places dominate the skyline.

All too soon it was back on the road again to Broken Hill then the Barrier Highway to Cobar for our last night, stopping at Wilcannia to look at some of the historic buildings, signs of flooding still visible over the countryside. The last day was rain, rain, rain, all the way to Canberra.

Thank you Margaret and Ian for driving us safely over nearly 5000 kilometres, a lot on gravel roads, and for providing us with so much information on flora and fauna, as well as sharing some of Ian's collection of poems and bush ballads and for the good companionship enjoyed throughout the trip.

B J Comfort

Environment Tours are run for environmental education by agreement with the Environment Centre and the Conservation Council in Canberra. They are run by Ian Fraser and Margaret McJannett.

*Dry creek bed,
Mootwingee National Park.*



Managing the Cotter River catchment

The Cotter River Catchment supplies water to the residents of Canberra. It is part of Namadgi National Park and is managed by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service.

When Canberra was proclaimed the national capital in 1913 the Cotter River catchment within the ACT was set aside to supply water to the new city. From the start catchment protection measures were put into place to ensure continuing high quality water.

The Cotter River catchment receives approximately 1 300 mm of rainfall per annum, twice as much as Canberra. The Cotter River is fed by rainwater and snowmelt from the high peaks which rim the catchment. Runoff is slow due to the undisturbed vegetation on the slopes. Mountain bogs of sphagnum moss are particularly important because they purify water and release it slowly even in times of drought. The Cotter River Catchment is comprised of two subcatchments, Corin and Bendora. Water from the Corin subcatchment is stored in Corin

Dam and then released as required downstream to Bendora Dam. From Bendora the exceptionally high quality water is piped by gravity to Stromlo where it is minimally treated with chlorine and fluoride and then directed to Canberra residences via the suburban reservoirs.

In 1984 the Cotter River Catchment which was previously managed by ACT Forests was combined with Gudgenby Nature Reserve to form Namadgi National Park. The catchment protection measures that were put into place in 1913 are still in force today and concentrate on restricted activity within the catchment.

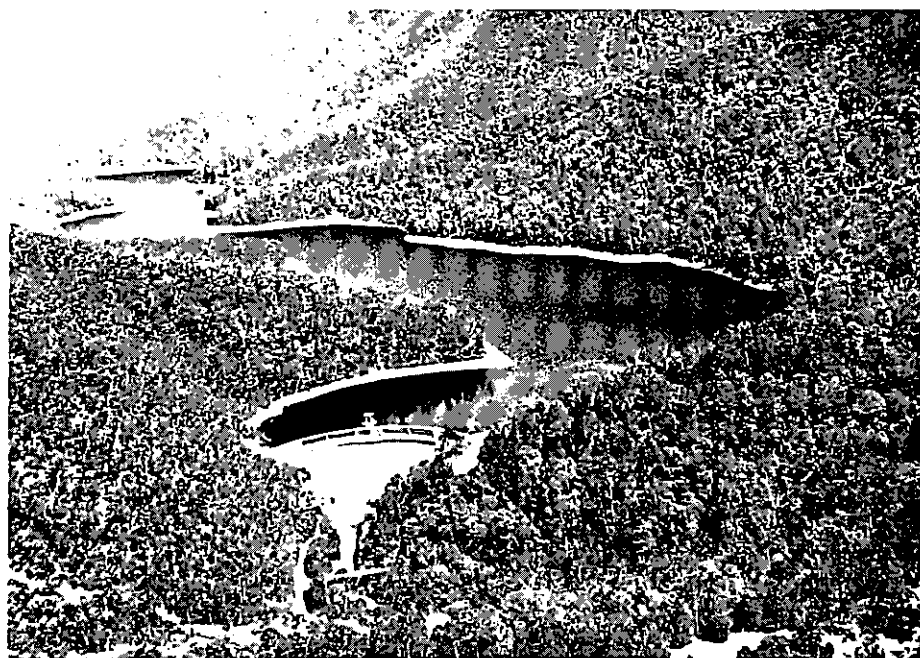
Management practices that utilise herbicides and pesticides follow strict guidelines set down by the Cotter River Catchment Committee. The committee is comprised of representatives from ACT Electricity and Water, ACT Department of Health, and Namadgi National Park. They meet quarterly to discuss issues relating to the management of the catchment.

The use of herbicides is kept to a minimum. Round-Up a herbicide used for the control of weeds such as Patersons curse, English broom, St Johns wort and blackberry is permitted, provided it is not used near a watercourse. Herbicides of greater strength such as Brush-Off are prohibited in the catchment. Fortunately due to the undisturbed vegetation around Bendora and Corin dams, weeds are not a major problem.

Unlike weeds, feral pigs are widespread and the use of Warfarin in recent years has effectively reduced their numbers to a more manageable level. Warfarin causes the reserves of the anti-clotting agent, prothrombin, to diminish and the animal dies not from the poison but from the inability of its blood to clot. The advantage of using this poison is that once the animal has died the waterways are not affected and secondary poisoning cannot take place.

The biggest threat to the Cotter River Catchment is from the impact of recreation. There is no access around Bendora Dam and its environs or upstream to the Cotter River, except by boat. The terrain is steep and difficult to negotiate and the recreational opportunities are minimal. Camping, fishing, and lighting fires are prohibited and the only activities permitted in the area are day walks and the use of the two picnic areas. Fishing is permitted downstream of Bendora Dam.

The Corin sub-catchment is upstream from Bendora and more recreational opportunities are available to the park user. Access to this area is via a network of management service tracks. Camping was a prohibited activity but since the declaration of a management plan, the rules have been relaxed. Backpacking operates on a strictly controlled and limited permit system. Certain conditions apply and these are based on the minimal impact bush-



*Bendora Dam water is piped by gravity and directed to Canberra.
Photo: Odile Arman.*

Lamington National Park

walking guidelines. These include not having a camp site within one kilometre of Corin Dam and 100 metres of the Cotter River, limited group size, obtaining a permit to light a fire, elimination of fireplaces, burial of human waste, and taking rubbish home.

To a large extent management of the Cotter River Catchment presents only a few problems namely, camping without a permit, illegal vehicular access and fishing in the Cotter River and dams. The ACT Parks and Conservation Service maintains a strong presence and this is reinforced with rangers resident at both Bendora and Corin dams. The catchment is patrolled regularly, particularly on the weekends and during holiday periods. Every effort is made to make the public more aware of the importance of the water catchment and the need to protect it. As part of Namadgi's interpretation program, ranger guided walks are conducted to promote awareness. The concept of a water supply system is also incorporated into a display at the Visitor Centre.

As Canberra continues to grow its demand for water will also increase and place greater pressure on the existing water supply. Attitudes need to change from excessive use of water to that of conserving and protecting it. To promote this, the role of the ACT Parks and Conservation Service will undoubtedly continue to increase in the future. After all, where would we be without water?

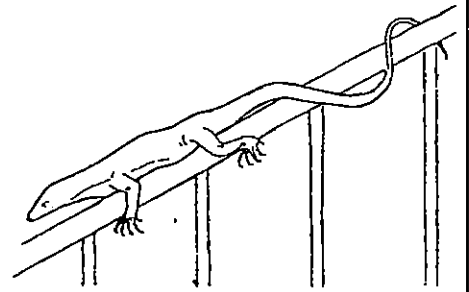
Odile Arman

*Ranger, Namadgi National Park
ACT Parks and
Conservation Service*

*Right: The
upper Cotter
valley.*

One of the attractive features of the dining hall at Binna Burra Lodge is its situation on the rim of an almost sheer 1200-foot (360-metre) forested valley. There is just room enough, before the ground falls away, for a walkway, from which a steep flight of wooden steps goes up and up to a dizzy little landing and a back entrance to the hall and kitchen. As you would expect it has a railing, used not only by those with no head for heights but also by birds, insects, possums, gliders, and a big goanna, which drop in at any time for snacks and even hearty meals from the kitchen window. It is a most lovely look-out for the lodge guests, into thin air and over the tree tops to the blanket of rainforest very far below, with now and then a flock of white specks drifting across it - white cockies out of earshot, and that gives you some idea of how far down it is.

And every so often there is the added attraction of the freebooters. Overseas visitors in particular are enchanted by closeup views of the rainbow lorikeets, sugar gliders and possums, all of them dainty feeders and beautiful, and some don't mind if you stroke them. Strangely enough the goanna is equally fascinating but for reasons in sharp contrast. For one thing you would be wiser



not to stroke him, and you would need a lengthy spell of propaganda before you became convinced he was beautiful, and that applies even more to his way of feeding. He does not muck around. Nevertheless the one time we saw him he stole the show, though admittedly he had no competition because the others prudently withdrew when he began his staid and dignified climb up the steps and on to the window sill to wolf his food. But it was his departure that brought the house down - a headlong swoosh down the bannisters, a lot less on an even keel than I have shown it, only his wild scabbings and tail-lashings are too difficult to draw. I suppose it was unpremeditated, but it is pleasing to imagine that an animal with such a tiny spot of brain could plan a short cut like that and have a sense of merriment into the bargain.

Robert Story



Canoeing in Morton National Park

Easter this year saw nearly 20 paddlers from NPA camping on the idyllic banks of the Kangaroo River near Bendeela. We had warm but mostly overcast weather.



Lazy goanna looking for sunshine, Shoalhaven River.

Having collected the hired canoes from Hampden Bridge Caravan Park we drove up the Kangaroo River Valley as far as Kelly's Road bridge where we launched our fleet of eight canoes and three kayaks. In our one day of solid sunshine, we took advantage of good water levels and some good rapids, shooting down the river with the magnificent vista of the escarpment bounding Kangaroo Valley looming above us, making it back to our campsite in time for a late lunch.

Then the hard work started with two days of still water paddling. Saturday saw us paddling past the nearby Bendeela Power Station along wide open sections of what was clearly a lake formed by the Tallowa Dam, which dams the Kangaroo and Shoalhaven Rivers. Some half way along the valley narrowed and we found ourselves paddling through Morton National

Park. We were soon paddling through some delightful small gorges. Closer to the dam a couple of creeks flowing in from some imposing valleys attracted us but the arrival of light rain had us pressing on to the boat ramp at the Tallowa Dam. Due to the then recent rains the spillway at the dam was working to capacity in an impressive fashion. That evening we left the cheery glow of campfire cooking for a meal at the Kangaroo Valley Bowling Club which offers superb views to diners in the warmer months with daylight saving. And the food is not bad either.

Sunday saw us back at the dam, launching our boats for a paddle up the Shoalhaven River which winds its way through some impressive gorges. The gorge is as much as one kilometre across in places and reaches as high as 350 metres above the river. The steep sides of the gorge closer to the dam are rainforest clad with much dense vegetation. The cliff faces conjure up many strange shapes for the imagination to ponder. A few flat beaches exist for paddlers to stop for a rest, lunch or to pitch a tent. We paddled through a vast amphitheatre with superb acoustics. The three-year-old boy in my canoe was able to make echoes as did we all. We didn't wake up the lyrebirds although we heard many other birds.

Whilst lunching we watched several parties of canoeists paddling past obviously planning to camp upstream. On our return I stopped to talk to some bushwalkers who had taken three hours to walk down from the rim of the gorge in comparison to our two hour leisurely paddle from our cars at the dam to

reach the same point.

The Monday saw us repeating the excitement of our first days' paddling with a rerun of the Upper Kangaroo River section but putting in at a bridge higher on the river (Jarrets Road) and finishing at Hampden Bridge where the hired canoes were returned.

Most paddlers who came had had limited experience yet were still able to enjoy both the flatwater and whitewater sections. So much so that people were anxious to try the thrills and spills of the Upper Kangaroo River rapids.

The scenery in the Shoalhaven River Gorge was such that those who came were keen to be in a camping safari next spring. If you check the walks calendar, I hope to run such a trip about the end of October. Hire canoes are available in Kangaroo Valley. My aim would be to launch at Tallowa Dam and paddle some 15 kilometres or so and make camp at a nice spot in the gorge, paddling back the next day. Being mid-spring there should be much wildlife to enjoy.

Chris Bellamy



Melanie and Allison shooting the white water, Kangaroo River.



*A little rapid on the Kangaroo River.
Photos:
Chris Bellamy.*

*Passing a small gorge,
near Tallowa Dam.*



*Steady as she goes,
Kangaroo River.*

Field guide reprinted

Congratulations to the contributors to the reprint of the Association's Field Guide to Native Trees in the ACT and the members of the organising committee. Their work and co-operation have made this publication possible, which, if the first printing is any indication, will be very well received. The following NPA members served on the field guide committee: Joan Hegarty, Charles Hill, Sheila Kruse, Les Pyke, Babette Scougall, Robert Story, Kevin Totterdell. ROBERT STORY describes developments.

The estimate we made in 1985 of the number of booklets we should print turned out to be as accurate as one could wish. It was five thousand. The supply has now all but come to an end without an unsatisfied demand and without a clutter in storage, leaving a clear field for a reprint tidied and amended and brought up to date. This seemed justified, in view of the booklet's general acceptance, and the NPA Committee directed the booklet subcommittee to see what it would entail.

Under Kevin Totterdell's chairmanship the subcommittee began work in June 1988, the members reading through the booklet independently before pooling their suggestions together with suggestions from people not on the subcommittee. I think we were all in turn a little out of countenance at the things we had missed after seeing the booklet through the press in the first case, and I wonder how many users noticed that the scale inside the back cover goes to 170 millimetres but is only 160 long? This sort of tidying up goes on and on. It includes things that seem to be mistakes but yet are not. If you enjoy Sherlock Holmes stories take a look at the writeup of *Eucalyptus glaucescens* on page 59 of the original booklet. John

Hook's text states that the adult leaves are alternate, but in Betsy Jane Osborne's sketch they appear to be opposite. At first sight either the author or the artist has boobed, but in fact neither has. With plain perceptivity you may be able to spot that something in the sketch is out of kilter - full marks if you notice that the upper leaf stalk appears to be nearly twice as long as the lower one. But to explain the discrepancy you need some botanical knowledge - half way along the upper stalk is a small projection, and that is something that does not occur on eucalypt leaf stalks. In reality it is the end of twig that bears the leaf stalk, which is no longer than it should be and not opposite the other. All is therefore in order, and another set of full marks goes to BJO for accurately depicting what was there - but we took the liberty of making this twig a little more robust in the reprint sketch.

Two new names appear in the reprint. One is an acacia that by occasionally outgrowing its shrubby form and reaching tree height, qualifies for inclusion among the trees. The other is a name which has gone from *Kunzea peduncularis* to *Leptospermum phyllicoides* and is now *Kunzea ericoides*. We hope it stays that way. Name changes plague amateurs and professional botanists alike. They are changed according to a set of rules that is most involved, but the uncertainty, not to say confusion in applying them is as nothing compared to what would result if they were **not** applied. With exceptions; we prudently looked the other way with respect to - or perhaps 'concerning' would be a better way of putting it - a change in the name *Casuarina*, which we kept 'as is'.

Note the a **new edition** comprises extensive alterations to the original material while a **reprint** comprises minor ones. There is no man's land between the two whose demarcation depends largely upon those issuing the work in question. Name changes are routine, corrections to the grammar desirable,

clarity of expression and art work often essential, and so on. We attended to all such imperfections we could find, but in addition John Hook recast the eucalypt key, and that was not a minor job as you will see. Much discussion took place before we decided to call it a reprint, preferring I suppose that people should not feel they had been hoodwinked into buying the mixture as before in another bottle. The 'bottle' is certainly different, and I am glad the art work for the original cover was lost, not that it was in any way displeasing but because there will now be no chance of mixing up the new issue and the old. I had the casting vote on the colour of the lettering and trust that it will not jolt too many of our more conservative members too severely.

We received a setback when our chairman left Canberra and went to live at the coast, but he kept in close touch until he broke his leg in a nasty accident at his new home, and of course that was the end of his involvement. However, most of the difficulties had been resolved by then, and shortly afterwards we were able to hand over the revision to the printers, whereupon nothing happened and nothing happened until we received the news that they were bankrupt. That meant that the assets were frozen, including our revision. It took some anxious weeks before Les Pyke managed to cajole his way through and take possession of it, minus bits of the artwork as I have said; then back again to calling tenders. Union Offset were given the job. They had the galleys ready just before the end of July. They were excellently good, and people who do preliminary work of that quality can be expected to carry it through. We look forward to seeing the finished article.

Pull up those gaiters

With the arrival of spring our cold-blooded friends are once again slithering through the bush. REG ALDER relates a salutary tale about enduring, and surviving, snakebite.

Joan and Frank Rigby, residents of Canberra for some years and now living at Tamworth, were alone on a three-day walk along the Sara River northeast of Guyra. Joan, stopping to consult her map, felt a movement by her feet and a sharp rap against her leg.

She had only a brief look at the snake and Frank's was even briefer as it headed for the river. Joan immediately started to bandage her leg from just below the knee to the four little blood spots with a stretch bandage she carried in an outer pocket of her pack. Before covering the wound, her scratched skin was washed to remove surplus surface venom. Their common opinion was that the snake was a red-bellied black, a species of which they had seen several during the day. They were aware that this species was unlikely to kill an adult but that the venom could produce unpleasant reactions.

What to do then? It was near the end of the day and help could not be expected to arrive before the next day even if Frank could get out back to their car and Joan certainly should not attempt to walk out. The decision was made to make a comfortable and restful camp for the night.

Except for a short spell of palpitations, sweating and faintness about an hour after the bite, overnight Joan felt well, without any pain or breathing complications. Next morning her foot was swollen and bruises and tender joints had developed. Despite the discomfort of the tight bandage, they decided to walk out by a longer but easier route, but by the time they reached a four-wheel-drive track she was well aware that the venom was taking effect. Closed skin scrapes were bleeding, more bruises and swollen joints had developed and blood was being passed in her urine. Except to drink freely and walk on there was nothing more that could be done.

Twenty-four hours after being bitten, they reached their car and three hours later walked into Casualty at Tamworth for treatment. By then Joan had developed heavy haematuria, some impaired vision and severe coagulopathy. It was eventually decided to treat with antivenene, but very little could be given as she developed a bad reaction from the horse serum in it. Next morning, in Intensive Care, she had recovered from all conditions. Later there were only slight complications with a local infection and a mild case of serum sickness.

Joan is now looking for a long pair of army gaiters and wondering what might have been if the snake had been a tiger or brown.

Adapted from an article by Joan Rigby in The Sydney Bushwalker, December 1989.

Reality

*When I look out my window,
I think of what I would like to see.
Grasses of green, trees and flowers,
But that's not reality.*

*I see a developed, dirty world,
With pollutants in the air,
Dirty lakes, seas and rivers,
Making Natural Beauty so rare.*

*Poor younger generation,
It wasn't their fault at all,
It was their parents, their parents
and their parents
And probably their parents before.*

*But there is something we can do
about it,
Be more environmentally aware
Don't waste, recycle, save forests,
Show the world that we really do
care.*

Alice Thompson
Aged 13 years

'Send for the Blacks'

Mary Gilmore in a chapter 'Fire and Planted Seed' in her book *Old Days Old Ways* reported that this was the cry in every settlement when a bushfire started.

There was a vast difference in the way each race confronted a fire. The settlers, in panic, rapidly expended their energies and became tired using large heavy bushes as fire beaters whereas the Aboriginals, conserving their strength, acted with the familiarity of knowing what to do by taking up small bushes.

When the fire broke out the settler lit a roaring and continuous fire break while the Aboriginals made tiny fires, roughly in line, each easily put out in turn. Large fires rapidly exhaust fire fighters and have to be met at a distance and might suddenly turn, small fires can be put out at once.

Squatting, the Aboriginals would start half metre wide fronts of fire which were kept narrow by attention to the sides. As these small fires advanced, others, equally under control, would be started to fill in the gaps. So in the strictest definition of the phrase a 'controlled burn' would be maintained under control and with the least effort the minimum of damage would be done to trees and shrubs as the fire advanced. Once a fire became large enough to create its own draught it becomes invincible.

Of course this procedure requires a large number of people to keep the back burn under control but in certain circumstances, if volunteers are available in national parks, the practices of the Aboriginals could be emulated and the experiences of the past put to good use.

Reg Alder

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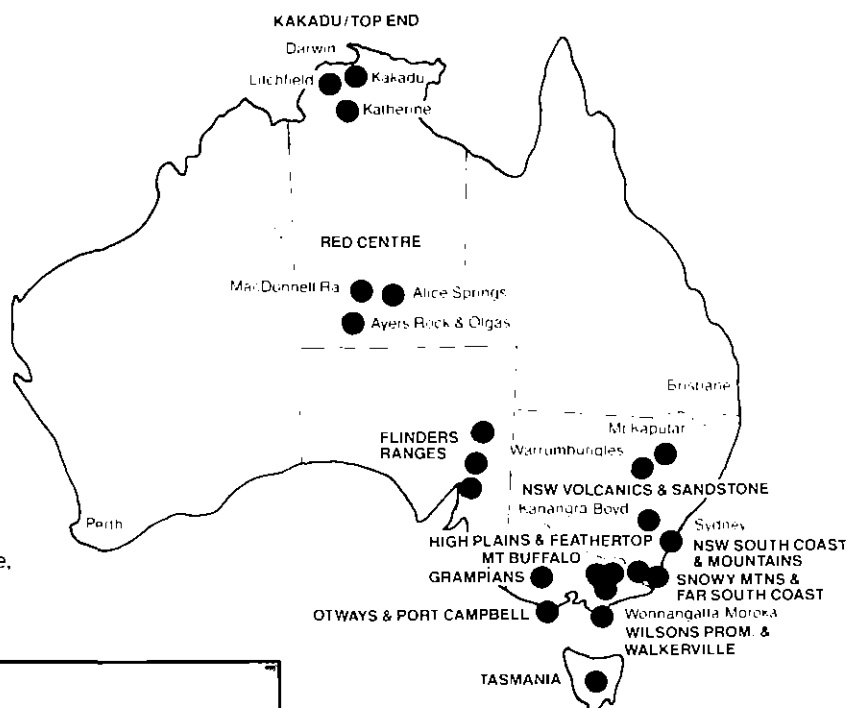
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PROGRAMME

1990		
Oct 13-16	Grampians	4 days
25-28	Grampians Over 50	4 days
Nov 3-6	Wilson's Prom Over 50	4 days
10-18	NSW South Coast & Mtns	9 days
23-26	Otways & Port Campbell Coast	4 days
Dec 1-4	Mt Buffalo	4 days
8-11	Wilson's Prom & Walkerville	4 days
26-30	High Plains & Feathertop	5 days
1991		
Jan 5-13	Snowy Mtns & Far South Coast	9 days
19-27	Victorian Alps	9 days
Feb 8-22	Tasmania Grand Tour No. 1	15 days
Mar 1-15	Tasmania Grand Tour No 2	15 days
Mar 29-Apr 1	Otways & Port Campbell Coast	4 days
Apr 13-23	NSW Volcanics & Sandstone	11 days
27-30	Grampians	4 days
Jun 1-16	Red Centre No 1	16 days
Jun 22-Jul 6	Kakadu/Top End No 1	15 days
Jul 13-27	Kakadu/Top End No 2	15 days
Aug 3-18	Red Centre No 2	16 days
Sep 8-21	Flinders Ranges Grand Tour	14 days
Oct 2-6	Victorian Desert Parks	5 days
12-15	Grampians	4 days

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The President and Committee
wish all members
a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
and invite all to the

Christmas Party
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provided.

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Reunion

MARY JAKES (née BARNARD) will be visiting
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time here is being held on 26 September and all oldie
members are welcome. Please phone Olive Buckman,
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Calendar

SEPTEMBER

Monday 3 Publicity and education subcommittee meeting
Thursday 6 Committee meeting 7.30pm
Thursday 13 Namadgi subcommittee meeting
Thursday 27 Environment subcommittee

OCTOBER

Thursday 4 Committee meeting 7.30pm
Wednesday 10 Outings subcommittee
Thursday 25 Environment subcommittee

NOVEMBER

Thursday 1 Committee meeting 7.30pm
Monday 5 Publicity and education committee
Thursday 8 Namadgi subcommittee
Thursday 22 Environment subcommittee

For venues of committee and subcommittee meetings contact subcommittee convenors – see insert in this *Bulletin*.

NPA Bulletin

National Parks Association of the ACT
GPO Box 457 Canberra 2601

Registered Publication No. NBH0857

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General meetings

Held at 8pm, room 1, Griffin Centre, Bunda Street, Civic.

20 September

Rob Jenkins of the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service will speak on snakes of the Canberra region.

18 October

Greg Fraser, director of the ACT Parks and Conservation Service, will speak on future directions for reserves and conservation in the ACT.

15 November

Richard Baker, curator for the environment at the National Museum of Australia, will speak about the museum with particular reference to the interaction between people and their environment.