



# NPA *Bulletin*

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National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory Inc.



**Butterfly Book  
to be launched**



**PM's Science Prize  
to Rick Shine**



**Bilby trilogy to ACT  
primary schools**



*Articles by contributors may not necessarily reflect association opinion or objectives.*

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## On the outcome of the ACT election

The recent ACT election has seen a maintenance of the status quo with return to government of the ACT Labor / Green alliance. But what does the ACT election mean for the NPA?

The election itself provided an opportunity for the NPA to flag its new national park proposal to the political parties. This proposal seeks the creation of a single management unit for the ACT’s lowland grassy woodlands. The ACT is blessed with some of the finest remaining examples of the ecosystems making up lowland grassy woodlands. The NPA believes that these national treasures should be given broad recognition through the creation of a national park devoted to their management. While many examples of the ACT’s lowland grassy woodlands are included in Canberra Nature Park, the NPA believes that the creation of a specific national park would help focus management actions, promote further connectivity and provide an appropriate national level of recognition. During the election campaign the NPA wrote to all

the major political parties. This interaction led to The Greens putting forward a proposal for a feasibility study into the new national park, which has subsequently been included in the parliamentary agreement between Labor and The Greens for the next 4 years. The NPA welcomes this progress but would contend the feasibility of a new national park has already been confirmed as a result of a report prepared for the ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment (OCSE). This report, by Ian Pulsford, forms Appendix H to the 2011 Nature Reserves Investigation Report and can be found on the OCSE website.

The election has also resulted in changes to portfolio responsibilities in the ACT Assembly. Of particular relevance are the following:

*Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Development (including major projects) and Minister for Urban Renewal – Mick Gentleman:*

these three portfolio responsibilities have the potential for conflicts and

there will need to be strong lobbying to ensure the environment does not suffer.



*Minister for Housing and Suburban Development – Yvette Berry:*

this portfolio will be directing green field development in the ACT, which has the potential for habitat reduction.

*Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability – Shane Rattenbury:*

climate change will continue to have significant biodiversity impacts for the ACT.

*Shadow Spokesperson on the Environment – Elizabeth Lee:*

one of the new Assembly members.

The NPA will be engaging with all Assembly members to flag the importance of the ACT’s reserve system and the significance of the ACT’s biodiversity.

**Rod Griffiths**



# From the committee

The NPA ACT has continued its wide range of activities. A key recent focus has been the ACT election which saw the NPA:

- interviewed on ABC local radio in respect to the ACT Liberal Democrats' election policy to 'open up' Namadgi and the NPA's own proposal for a new national park
- lobbying political parties, which resulted in The Greens adopting a policy to investigate the feasibility of a new national park.

In support of its new national park proposal the NPA has also held discussions with the ACT Conservator and the Director of Parks and Conservation.

The NPA has also been expressing its concerns in response to a privately supported proposal for the introduction of commercial helicopter tours in Namadgi National Park. These concerns have been raised at various levels of the administration. A key point against helicopter tours is the banning of

recreational aircraft landings by Namadgi's plan of management.

The NPA continues to engage the younger ACT community in a number of ways. Recently, all of the ACT's public, Catholic and independent private primary schools have received a set of the Bilby's Ring trilogy of books as a donation from the NPA. This series of books (see article in this issue) covers many of the issues facing Australia's biodiversity in an engaging way through the journey and adventures of five friends, each representing an endangered species. If you haven't seen the books, there will be some for sale at the NPA's Christmas party.

The NPA has also continued its involvement with 'nature play', a program to engage younger people in outdoor activities and also a new version of the junior ranger program.

The NPA's publications subcommittee remains active with work continuing on a new edition of the NPA's tree guide and a new *Field Guide to the Butterflies of the*

*Australian Capital Territory*, the latter to be launched in December.

Fire management has long been an issue for the NPA and work has continued in the planning for a fire symposium to be held in July 2017.

On the cultural and heritage front, a detailed submission has been made on the draft Conservation Management Plan for the Glenburn Precinct, Kowen Forest.

The NPA was pleased to comment on the well-developed new draft of the Mt Ginini Wetlands Management Plan. The management plan provides for a range of comprehensive actions for the protection of these important wetlands.

The above provides a snapshot of the many activities in which the NPA is involved. With so much to do there are always opportunities to assist. If you would like to deepen your involvement with the NPA, please don't hesitate to contact any of the members of the committee.

**Rod Griffiths**

## NPA spreads the *Bilby's Ring* story

Kaye Kessing's *Bilby's Ring* comprises three books for 8–12-year-olds describing the perils faced by many endangered native animals as a result of human activities and the proliferation of feral animals. The National Parks Association of the ACT (NPA ACT) recently donated a set of the books to each of the 108 primary schools in the public, private and independent school systems of the ACT.

NPA ACT is a community-based conservation organisation with a history of more than 50 years working to protect our natural environment. A key objective of the NPA is to promote a greater awareness of the issues facing the ACT's, and Australia's, natural heritage.

When launching the *Bilby's Ring* trilogy at the Australian National Botanic Gardens last year, Commissioner for Threatened Species Gregory Andrews commented that every school library should have the books. Donating them thus became a 'natural' for NPA. Here was an epic tale stretching across the breadth of Australia involving endearing characters taking action on some of Australia's environmental challenges.

*Bilby's Ring* is written as a quest story in which a small band of endangered native animals ('The Ring') crosses the continent in search of help. Along the way they are aided by many friendly animals and a few humans, and threatened by quite a few predators. They pass through many different ecosystems and are amazed by the changing landscape.

*Bilby's Ring* readers learn about geography and native animal biology as well as natural and human-altered environments. Online teaching resources are available now for use in the teaching of English. Others are likely to become available in the future. The



*Esther Gallant from the NPA ACT Committee presenting 67 sets of 'Bilby's Ring' books to Jason Borton, Acting Director of ACT Learning and Teaching. Photo by Quentin Moran.*

*Bilby's Ring* trilogy ticks many of the Australian curriculum's boxes, and the NPA believes that it will be a valuable resource for the ACT's teachers.

**Esther Gallant**

The NPA ACT management committee wishes all NPA members and their families a safe and happy Christmas break and all the very best for the New Year.

# NPA's monthly get-togethers

As you know, one of the really rewarding features of NPA membership is being able to come along to our monthly general meetings, commune with like-minded people, discuss directly with our office-holders what issues are being looked at, what's being done about them, and share a cuppa and nibbles.

But, as the promo goes, wait – there's more! And that 'more' is hearing the presentations of our guest speakers. The program for coming months is shown on page 27 of successive *Bulletins*. Over the Christmas period we'll be having a bit of a break, but activities resume as normal with the February general meeting.

NPA has had a wonderful series of guest speakers in recent months, and this will continue in 2017.

In June our scheduled speakers had to cancel, but they did arrange for a particularly good substitute in Scott Ryan, Senior Wildlife Officer at Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve (TNR). Scott's topic was 'An overview of TNR threatened species programs'.

Accompanied by an excellent PowerPoint display Scott gave members a lively and very expert insight into the extent and detail of TNR's programs to re-introduce and preserve local populations of Southern Brush-tailed Rock-Wallabies (SBTRWs), Eastern

Bettongs (complementing the program at Mulligans Flat Sanctuary), and Northern Corroboree Frogs. His description of the process of cross fostering of SBTRWs using Yellow-footed Rock-Wallaby mothers was very interesting, as was his description of the breeding process at TNR for Northern Corroboree Frogs. In the latter case they are able to successfully breed large numbers of frogs at TNR, but survival rates are low when they are transferred to their natural habitat of High Country sphagnum bogs, where they are just 'hanging on by their fingernails'.

In July, our guest speaker was Kate Auty, Commissioner of the ACT Environmental Defenders Office, and in August Rod Griffiths spoke at the Annual General Meeting of his bushwalking adventures in Tasmania.

In September Matthew Higgins, local historian and naturalist, chose 'Ainslie to Kossie: window on a wonder wander' as his topic. Matthew's presentation focused on the wonderful array of natural flora and fauna to be found in a traverse from Canberra Nature Park's Mount Ainslie through the urban areas, across the Murrumbidgee, and on through Namadgi and Kosciuszko national parks to the alpine areas above the tree line on the Main Range. The presentation was

accompanied by an excellent array of photos depicting examples of the wonders to behold, all of which he took himself during his wanderings over the past 3 years. At the two extremes were shots of Sugar Gliders on Mount Ainslie and Mountain Pygmy Possums above the tree line around Kosciuszko. Matthew's main message was to urge people to be aware and appreciative of the wonderful natural world around us, and to enjoy it for what it is here and now.

In October our guest speaker was Brandon Galpin, a ranger with the ACT Parks and Conservation Service. Brandon's topic was 'Old fella trees', and his talk took a look at the dynamics of the largely missing contingent of old-growth trees in the landscape, even in Namadgi itself, and how Australia's national parks system can offer long-term restoration of forest ecology. Brandon noted that, in Namadgi, changes in fire regimes since European settlement and logging, especially of Alpine Ash trees in the Brindabellas, had meant that his old fella trees had become increasingly scarce.

The feast continues in the new year. Don't miss out.

Max Lawrence

## Rosenberg's Monitors on Mount Ainslie!

According to NPA's *Field Guide to the Reptiles and Frogs of the ACT* Rosenberg's Monitor is a large ground-dwelling goanna, over 1.5 metres long. Up to 19 eggs are laid in termite mounds; hatchlings are able to escape from the nest when the female parent reopens the mound.

At his presentation to NPA's September general meeting, Canberra historian and naturalist Matthew Higgins reported that he had observed Rosenberg's Monitors on Mount Ainslie, and was keeping an eye on a termite mound where they had laid eggs. He was waiting for the adults to return and open up the mound, and to observe the emergence of the young.

In the *Canberra Times* of 25 October it was reported that Matthew has in fact observed the hatchlings emerging from the nest, and there are photographs of the happy occasion. However, the hatchlings are very vulnerable to predators, of which there are plenty on Mount Ainslie. We hope that some will survive. Matthew will be giving us a full report at our March 2017 general meeting (see page 27 of this *Bulletin*).

Max Lawrence

### Rosenberg's or Heath Monitor

#### *Varanus rosenbergi*

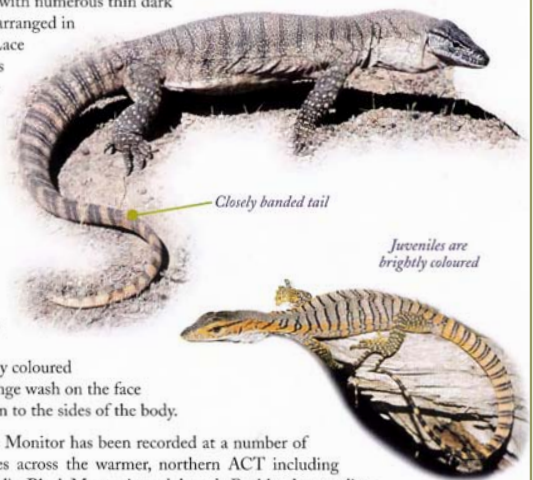
Rosenberg's Monitor is a large ground-dwelling goanna, over 1.5 m long. It has dark grey cross bands and rows of pale dots on a lighter grey body colour. The legs are also patterned with yellowish spots arranged in lines. The intensity of the markings may diminish with age. The tail serves to distinguish this goanna from the only other local species, the Lace Monitor *Varanus varius*. The tail of Rosenberg's Monitor is pale yellow with numerous thin dark

grey bands arranged in pairs. The Lace Monitor has a distinctive tail pattern consisting of very broad bands of light and dark contrasting colours.

Juvenile Rosenberg's Monitors are strikingly coloured with an orange wash on the face extending on to the sides of the body.

Rosenberg's Monitor has been recorded at a number of wooded sites across the warmer, northern ACT including Mount Ainslie, Black Mountain and Aranda Bushland, extending as far south as Gigerline and the Orroral River. Some specimens have been collected in Canberra gardens. The species has also been well documented in adjacent parts of New South Wales from the Sutton area to Googong Dam. In the larger context, the species has a disjunct distribution across southern Australia from the Sydney region to south-western Western Australia.

Unlike its only local relative, Rosenberg's Monitor is a terrestrial species. Up to 19 eggs are laid in termite mounds; hatchlings are able to escape from the nest when the female parent reopens the mound. Despite its large size, this species was not recognised as part of the ACT herpetofauna until the late 1980s, possibly because of past confusion with the Lace Monitor.



# River Red Gum in the ACT

The River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) is an uncommon tree in the ACT. The NPA *Field Guide to the Native Trees of the ACT* records its distribution as follows: 'In the ACT known from a solitary large tree probably predating European occupation, on a small creek south of Tharwa'. Indeed, I have driven past this tree many times over the years en route to points south, but have been preoccupied with the bumpy crossing of Spring Station Creek (the aforementioned small creek) and the activities that lie ahead. That is, until I recently organised a work party to start ridding the site of its latest weed infestation. However, I'm getting ahead of myself.

Over the past 20 years, ACT Parks and Conservation Service has coordinated many community groups in weeding and seed collection activities around this tree. The species' drought resistance and fire tolerance has made it a popular riparian revegetation tree downstream of the Gudgenby/

Murrumbidgee confluence. About 900 seedlings have been propagated from this tree and planted to date, with a good survival rate.<sup>1</sup>

This past volunteer activity has included some of the NPA's members who participated in African Boxthorn and African Lovegrass removal in 2008 and subsequent follow-up work. (An account of the 2008 activity can be found in NPA *Bulletin* Vol. 45, No. 2, June 2008.)

In September and October 2016, the NPA undertook two more work parties. The villain this time was blackberry infestation. Two distinct thickets covered about a third of the enclosed reserve area. Also, the tree's low-hanging dead branches were vulnerable to grass fire, as was the overgrown state of the three saplings at the bottom of the reserve. After two work



*It's a big tree! Photo by Martin Chalk.*

parties, all but a small patch of blackberry had been cut/dabbed and removed from the site, the low-hanging branches cut off and removed from the site, and 22 Red Gums located and marked with tape (12 inside the reserve and 10 outside).

*Clearing the blackberries bit by bit. Photo by Max Lawrence.*

During these visits I took the opportunity to look closely at the tree and was taken aback by the sheer size of the plant. The four trunks, each of substantial size, stem mallee-form from a central bowl, which reflects an original trunk of similar size.

**Martin Chalk**

Note 1. From information provided by Darren Roso, Senior Ranger – Murrumbidgee, ACT Parks and Conservation Service



## More trees for Gudgenby

Last year in spring, a small group of 'Gudgenby bushies' met at Greening Australia (GA) to plant some tree, shrub and grass seeds in pots so that they could be planted out in the regeneration area the following year. Then, over the summer months, the seeds were nurtured and watered by GA, enabling all the tube stock to grow well and be at the right stage when we needed them.

We planned to begin planting in early winter, but the wet weather commenced and it was impossible to use the fire trails in the Gudgenby area without doing some damage. So it was August before the first plantings took place. We had to park our vehicles well below Peppermint Hill and walk up to the planned site. Fortunately, Ben the ranger ferried all the plants and tools up on his

ATV even though it was his day off. He also took Fiona for a ride so she could 'supervise' as we worked. Fourteen workers planted about 130 trees that day, placing tree guards around everything except the grasses. The site was on a windy hillside that had been graded due to rabbit warrens, although some grass had started to grow again after the two year interval. However, the wind proved a problem and Clive later had to take a staple gun to attach the tree guards to the stakes as many were blown away in a storm.

The remaining 100+ trees were to be used above Frank and Jack's Hut, on a closed fire trail that we had attempted to repair on several occasions. But again the weather defeated us and we had to postpone the planting until the weather

improved. We held an extra work party during the first week of the school holidays so we had some younger members to help out. The ground was very wet and soft and made digging holes much easier. So after 3 hours work we had completed the task.

We hope that most of these trees and shrubs will survive, as they have had a good start with all the rain. It is very satisfying to see Gudgenby taking on a more mature environmental profile as the work over the past 15 years or so is changing the landscape from a sterile pine forest to a native woodland and a home for wildlife.

**Hazel Rath, Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group**

# Glenburn/Burbong Historic Precinct news

Since my last report in the June 2016 *Bulletin*, there have been some important developments. Despite the wet weather, volunteers have carried out some important work in the precinct.

## The Conservation Management Plan (CMP)

During October I provided detailed comments on two, near-final drafts of the CMP.

I am very pleased with the material in the drafts.

They provide baseline data, including sketch plans and many colour photographs, on the physical layout and condition of each of the historic sites together with comprehensive, practical advice on what should be done to each of them together with suggested priority rankings.

Implementation of some of the advice, particularly for the Glenburn Shearing Shed, the Glenburn Shearers Quarters and Glenburn Homestead would be very expensive.

The challenge in the years ahead will be for the ACT Government to provide the ACT Parks and Conservation Service with sufficient funds for it to put a substantial dent in the high priority tasks that need to be done in this important ACT heritage area.

The Friends of Glenburn, through the NPA will be able to provide some small financial assistance from donations. The Friends will also be able to continue to provide hands-on practical assistance by its volunteers.

I look forward to receiving the final report in the near future. It will provide the fundamental building blocks for the Parks Service to set its work programs for many years to come in the Glenburn Precinct, which is an important ACT heritage site.

More donations and volunteers would be most welcome to help the NPA assist the Parks Service. Tax-deductible donations can be made to NPA requesting that the money be spent on Glenburn. Anyone interested in volunteering can contact me on 6288 4171 or at [cvmac@grapevine.com.au](mailto:cvmac@grapevine.com.au).

## Interpretative Signs

Three more interpretative signs have been erected in the precinct, bringing the total to 13. They are for the sites of the Glenburn Hayshed, the Glenburn Hay/Machinery Shed and Yards, and the Glenburn Sheep Dip and Yards. The texts

of these signs, as well as those for the other 10, are on the NPA web site [www.npaact.org.au](http://www.npaact.org.au) under Friends of Glenburn.

The cost of the plates for the latest three signs was \$1,631. This was paid for by The Friends of Glenburn from money donated to the NPA for work on Glenburn. The Parks Service provided the posts, and volunteers assisted Parks Service staff to erect them. Work is progressing on the preparation of the texts for an interpretative sign for the Glenburn Precinct overall, to be located at the new car park on Charcoal Kiln Road, and for a pamphlet on the Glenburn Precinct. Both will include a map showing the route of the Glenburn Heritage Trail.

The Friends of Glenburn will pay for the plate for this interpretative sign also. Because it will be much larger than the other 13 interpretative signs, its cost could be as much as \$1,500 to \$2,000.

## The Glenburn Heritage Trail

The trail for walkers and cyclists is effectively three trails. The Glenburn Heritage Trail will link, via River Road, almost all of the historic sites in both the Glenburn and Burbong areas. The Glenburn Trail will connect those in the Glenburn area and the Burbong Trail will connect those in the Burbong area.

More than 20 route marker posts have been erected by the Parks Service and volunteers. Also, four gates have been installed by the Parks Service in the fences near the site of Curleys Homestead, near the Glenburn Shearing Shed complex, on Charcoal Kiln Road near Glen Burn Creek and at the intersection of Charcoal Kiln Road and River Road to improve access for pedestrians and cyclists. The Friends of Glenburn will pay for the manufacture and installation of two of these gates at a cost of some \$730.

All work on the trail should be completed by early 2017. The most significant work still to be done is the erection of the new, large locked gate (which has been manufactured already) in the yet to be constructed car park on Charcoal Kiln Road, and the improvement of the crossing of Glen



*Ranger Sally Hatton, Brian Slee, Diedre Shaw, Matthew Higgins, and Col McAlister with one of the first marker posts for the new Glenburn Heritage Trail, June 2016.*

*Photo by Max Lawrence.*

Burn Creek near River Road. Other tasks include erecting traffic signs on Charcoal Kiln Road, improving the surface of some management tracks and slashing the trail where it passes through some paddocks.

The intention is that the Parks Service will invite the relevant Minister to officially open the trail, probably around Easter 2017.

I hope that the completion of the Glenburn Heritage Trail will encourage more Canberra, Queanbeyan and Bungendore residents to visit the area, which was once a small, vibrant, NSW rural community.

The Heritage Trail will provide a good exercise venue. And there is much to see. The precinct contains many rich relics of early European settlement that give an insight into how the early settlers lived, worked, played and educated their children.

## Visit by Edmonds Descendant

On 27 September, Ross Edmonds and his wife Robyn, from near Tweed Heads, visited Glenburn Homestead. Ross's grandfather, Stanley Augustine, was born in the slab home in 1898.

He was the first of John James and Agnes May Edmonds' five children who were born in the homestead before the family moved to Glencoe in northern NSW in 1906. A further six children were born there.

Members of the Edmonds family have spread to the four winds. I was pleased to show the homestead to some other family members for the first time.

**Col McAlister**  
**Friends of Glenburn**

# NPA Art at Gudgenby Cottage

The weather dominated the activities of the spring art week held in the first week of September at Gudgenby Cottage. It delayed the planned early start at the beginning of the week due to water on the roads and we had the same problem at the end of the week! But in between the wind blew the clouds away and we had sunshine for a few days when we could sit on the veranda and enjoy the view. This is what makes art week so special. Time to enjoy the birds, roos and lizards, and all the bush creatures that inhabit the area around the cottage.

Nine people stayed for a night or more, with some enjoying the whole week. We had visitors too. Sarah and Jocelyn from the homestead; Clive called in for afternoon tea; and friends of Adrienne's from Queensland came for the day. Rangers Ben and Mark also stopped by to say hello.

Painting, poetry, prose and photography were just some of the activities during the week. Books were also an enjoyable pastime as we huddled around the fire, especially in the evenings. During the day, the weather restricted many of the outdoor activities as the rain never seemed too far away, but when the sun shone we followed it from the front veranda to the back yard!

Friday brought a deluge of rain and the creek rose quickly. The water rushed over the banks forming a lake and almost overflowing onto the footbridge, bringing with it lots of branches and debris so that it had to be cleared before it threatened a bridge collapse. On Saturday the weather had not improved and the planned Gudgenby Bushies work party had to be cancelled so, instead, everyone came into the cottage for morning tea. The entertaining did not end there as in the afternoon scones and cream were provided to the rangers Ben and family, Sally and Jess. This was supposed to have been the afternoon tea post work party but became an opportunity to thank the rangers for all their work in the park and for looking after us while we were staying at the cottage.

Once again, a very enjoyable week for those who came to stay. Our work will be on exhibition at the Namadgi Visitor Centre over the months of November to January. Call in and see what can be achieved over a few days.

**Hazel Rath**

## Gudgenby Cottage, Spring 2016

The flames sing  
In the black fire box,  
The log turns white and red  
As ash and coals accumulate.  
The heat warms the residents  
On this cloudy cold morning.

Out on the hillside  
The small roos keep warm  
Hopping in circles around their  
mothers

Or darting up the slope.  
No basking in the sunlight today  
But eating and movement.  
The cloud lowers and obscures  
the hill tops.

Hazel sits at the desk  
Paintings orchids for the  
exhibition  
And Fiona writes a poem.

**Fiona MacDonald Brand**



*Drawing lessons were the answer to bad weather during May art week. Teacher Maria Boreham (right) added her collection of insects and miscellaneous items to gathered leaves and wood pieces; students Ailsa Brown (left) and Fiona MacDonald Brand made good use of the materials and the marvellous instruction.*

*Photo by Adrienne Nicholson.*

### Acronym

Water everywhere  
Cottage  
Abundant pools  
Teeming creeks  
company  
Eddying along  
minds  
Restless  
Paint, write, muse, cook

### Dylan Thomas Portraits

Have you ever seen a swallow?  
Welcoming, diving, snuggling?

Have you ever tasted Hazel's  
scones?  
Light, fluffy, delicious.

### Haiku

Civilisation.  
Thankfully it's left behind.  
Peace has descended.

### Free

Gudgenby  
Cosy fires  
Convivial  
Creative  
Carve.  
Relax!

### Syllable Poem

Large  
Diverse  
Intricate  
Interwoven  
With many large sticks  
High off the ground  
So the chicks  
Can be  
Safe

**Barbara Slotemaker de Bruine**

Brooding

A travesty of a name – Yankee Hat

Onyong beckons

Kevin McCue

# Another award for our lad

Way back in 1967 NPA ACT conducted a schools essay competition, the winner of which was a young fellow by the name of Richard Shine. His essay was a treatise on the Red-bellied Black Snake. It was reproduced in the March 2010 Golden Anniversary edition of this *Bulletin*, which may be accessed via the NPA ACT website. Rick was the guest speaker at NPA's 50th anniversary meeting in 2010.

Since then Rick has gone on to great heights in his chosen career, and the focus has always been on reptiles and amphibians. Today he is Professor of Biology with the School of Life and Environmental Sciences at the University of Sydney. He has had a very impressive academic career, but the crowning achievement must be winning the 2016 Prime Minister's Prize for Science.

The Prime Minister's Prize recognises the research Professor Shine has done on the Cane Toad invasion of tropical Australia, and the devastating impact the invasion was having on the native reptile predators of the region. As a result of this work Northern Australia's peak predators – snakes and lizards – are now more likely to survive.

After accepting the award Rick said 'I was the kid who brought Blue Tongue Lizards to school. When my big brother learnt to drive, he took me out into the bush where I could capture snakes and bring them home'.

He went on to say 'The Prime Minister's Prize for Science is an incredible recognition of the value of basic, simple science, it's the kind of thing Charles Darwin did when he wandered around the world. You go out



into the bush and you see what the animals are doing, there's nothing more sophisticated than a notebook involved'.

**Max Lawrence**

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## Max Day and the 'unraveling' of the Scribbly Gum Moth



A panel has recently been unveiled at the Australian National Botanic Gardens in honour of Dr Max Day and to commemorate the work he did on Scribbly Gums that began in the gardens. Max, the oldest working scientist in the Australian Institute of Alpine Studies (aias.org.au), had his 100th birthday in December.

Max Day's research found that the scribbles were made by the larvae of several species of moth that make tracks underneath the bark.\* The scribbles become visible when the bark is peeled off. The Scribbly Gum Moth research was published in 2012 when Max was 97 years old, in a paper senior-authored by Marianne Horak, with mountain moth stalwart Ted Edwards another in the team.

Max was publishing on mountain insects as long ago as 1954 with the classic paper with Ken Key [Key, K.H.L. and Day M.F. (1954) A temperature-controlled physiological colour response in the grasshopper *Kosciuscola tristis* Sjost. (Orthoptera, Acrididae). *Australian Journal of Zoology* 2, 309–338.]. I can recall getting a question from him in 2006 about the elevation to which scribbles go on Snow Gums and whether they were present at Charlotte Pass. I couldn't recall seeing scribbles on Snow Gums at all above the winter snowline so I went to check at Rennix Gap. At 1,550 m elevation none of 25 snowgums had scribbles on the bark, while slightly below at Wilsons Valley (1,440 m), 9 of 20 did. Talking with Dane Wimbush about this he told me that this is at about the turnover from *E. pauciflora* to *E. niphophila*. Later, Roger Good brought Max up from Canberra and we did a similar survey along the Alpine Way to above Thredbo. The results in the 2012 paper confirmed that scribbles are found only up to an elevation of about 1,400 m and might be restricted to 'ssp. *pauciflora*'. While some may distrust the taxonomic split between *Eucalyptus pauciflora* and *E. niphophila* it seems as if the moths can tell one from the other.

**Dr Ken Green**

\* The scribbly gum moth larvae (*Ogmograpta scribula* and *O. fraxinoides* near the elevational limit of *E. pauciflora*) bore a meandering tunnel through the eucalypt tree's bark at the level of the future cork cambium, first in long irregular loops and later in a more regular zigzag which is doubled up after a narrow turning loop. When the cork cambium starts to make cork to shed the outer bark it produces scar tissue in response to the feeding of the caterpillar, filling the doubled up part of the larval tunnel with highly nutritious, thin-walled cells. These replacement cells are ideal food for the caterpillar, which moults into its final larval stage with legs, turns around and eats its way back along the way it has come. It now grows rapidly to maturity and leaves the tree to spin a cocoon at its base, where it pupates. Not long after the caterpillar leaves the tree, the bark cracks off and exposes the iconic scribbles beneath.

Anyone interested in alpine lake research (and alpine research generally) might like to log on to <http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/cirmount/publications/mtnviews.shtml>



# A visual feast of native Rock Lilies

On 27 October, in the company of the caring and down-to-earth Yass Valley Landcare Group, the naturalist Rainer Rehwinkel and a superb bird imitator from Greening Australia, I had the pleasure of stepping, snaking and stumbling up a narrow, rocky track along the Yass River (turn right at the last roundabout in Yass town). The Yass River was a creek no more but rather a turbulent cascade of thick brown soup with piles of flood debris from four recent floods, the piles sometimes 3 metres tall, 10 metres long and 5 metres across. The earth was thickly matted and sprouting with the weeds of white man's 200 unstoppable, all

conquering, years. Surely nothing native could survive here.

Then lo and behold, after passing some cliffs, the first signs – a splash of waving yellow here and there, on high, among the rocks. Someone called, 'must be Bulbine Lily'. A little further the cliffs opened on to a precipitous slope of riotous, floral abundance right up into the sky. Spying hundreds of nodding, arching, deep-yellow flower heads, thick as thieves, jostling for a bit of light, we were, for a moment, quite spellbound. This was an Australia rarely seen by urban dwellers.

Rainer came to the rescue: 'not Bulbine Lily but Rock Lily' (*Bulbine*

*glauca*). New to me but not to him. 'A rare species, possibly endangered and very vulnerable, used to be abundant across the local area.' I looked it up in *Woodland Flora*, the new encyclopaedic bible by Sarah Sharp and others. 'Tufted, perennial forb with unbranched flower stems, leaves onion-like', they wrote in language more scientific than mine. That's it. I checked in the beautifully presented *Ngunnawal Plant Use* but they had only Bulbine Lily. 'Eaten roasted and rich in calcium and iron, harvested with digging sticks', it said. Probably true for both species. I must try them – yum, yum.

Klaus Hueneke

# Butters Bridge: a new crossing of the Molonglo

The lower Molonglo has a big new bridge about a kilometre downstream from Coppins Crossing. However, it is not a road bridge. Its primary purpose is to support a sewer pipe servicing the new Molonglo suburbs, linking in with the sewer main to the treatment works on the northern side of the river.

A beneficial feature of the structure is that it also provides a substantial public access walkway for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the river. At 242 metres long and 25 metres above the river the bridge provides walkers with a whole new



Butters Bridge. Photo by Mike Smith.

perspective of the river corridor. Park your car at the carpark at the Weston Creek end of Coppins Crossing, and it takes about 15 minutes to walk down the river to the bridge.

The bridge is named after Sir John Butters, who was the first Chief Commissioner of the Federal Capital Commission during the 1920s. Essentially, his task was to organise the building of Canberra from dusty paddocks to a national capital. Details are provided on an interpretive sign at the site.

Max Lawrence

# The 'Butterfly Book'

The NPA ACT is privileged to have been approached by Dr Suzi Bond with an invitation to publish a book on the butterflies of the ACT. Suzi offered considerable enticement with a wonderful selection of photos so we readily agreed. We ended up working out of Esther's dining room, many pleasurable hours going through the text and photos, being kept alert with freshly baked ginger snaps and fair-trade hot coffee or interesting soups. Mariana Rollgejser turned good photos into artworks and we are thrilled to be part of Suzi's book. All of us on the Working Group have been converted into Lepidoptera photograph hunters.

This book is a valuable addition to our series of field guides on natural species of the ACT: birds, frogs and reptiles, trees, and orchids, all written by experts with beautiful photos or paintings and enough non-technical text to help you identify and value them and their environment. We hope you will enjoy this new field guide as much as we will.

Kevin McCue

Photos © CSIRO



## An invitation

### *Field Guide to the Butterflies of the ACT*

by Suzi Bond  
with Steve Holliday and John Stein

will be launched by

**Genevieve Jacobs**

Crosbie Morrison Building  
Australian National Botanic Gardens

**Tuesday 13 December 2016**

**3.30 pm.**

All welcome.

Contact: Sonja 6251 1291 or  
sonjalenz67@gmail.com

# River rides, pitcher plants, and macaques in Malaysian Borneo's Sarawak

A trip outline under the auspices of pitcher plant specialist, Stewart Macpherson, and Canberra naturalist, Ian Fraser, tempted us to leave Canberra in early May 2016 for 3 weeks to see a selection of Malaysian Borneo's natural wonders.

We'd be avoiding the smoke blanket which results from Indonesia's burning of rainforest to clear land for small-scale farming and commercial palm oil plantations. Burning starts in early July and coincides with the dry season.

Straddling the equator, Borneo is the third largest non-continental island in the world. It is also north-west of dividing lines that scientist Alfred Wallace, biologist Thomas Huxley and biogeographer Richard Lydekker, established in the mid to late 1800s to mark biogeographical differences between the natural world of Australia and New Guinea and that of South-East Asia. Their lines follow the deep-sea trenches between continents which formed during the ice ages.

Upward movements of molten magma, volcanic activity, tectonic plate movement, and the actions of ice over rock have moulded Borneo through the millennia. The areas we visited were largely sedimentary with outcrops of limestone and granite.

The sketch map shows how Borneo is divided between Malaysia with the state of Sarawak on the west and that of Sabah to the north-east, with Indonesia to the east, while Brunei is squashed into the north-east corner of Sarawak. The

British colonised Malaysian Borneo, whereas Indonesian Borneo fell into Dutch hands.

Our group of fourteen landed in the early afternoon in the hot and steamy city of Kuching, capital of Malaysian Borneo, with its gilded mosque turrets, colonial buildings, and parliament wearing its multilayered roof shaped like a four-cornered hat.

## *Motorboats passed us, laden with nets and their cargo of jelly fish*

Leaving Kuching by bus, we transferred to motorised river boats that took us from the broad estuary flowing into the South China Sea, across a bay to Bako, our first national park in the state of Sarawak. Wooden houses perched on stilts formed small settlements along the riverbank. Motorboats passed us, laden with nets and their cargo of jelly fish for drying and selling at markets. Verdant vegetation on the banks contrasted with the brown water where plastic containers and bags bobbed along.

As in Australia, discarded plastic was a noticeable problem. For health reasons we and many others were drinking bottled water, which was only exacerbating the problem.

Our two Malaysian guides were from the Iban tribe, one with the name of Rivas that a Portuguese Catholic priest had given him. Both spoke English and thanked us for coming on the trip, saying it was people like us whose patronage provided them with their employment.

The path to our accommodation took us past mangroves and through rainforest where we saw our first monkeys, the Pig-tailed Macaques, smallish, bold, grey and very quick to swipe food from an unguarded lunch plate on the balcony. Silver-leafed Monkeys, darker than the Macaques, were also part of the mix.

Then the orangey-brown Proboscis Monkeys swung into view with their



exaggerated clown-like snouts which might enhance their communications, and pot bellies. A noticeable feature of the male Proboscis Monkey is its permanent erection. Why, we don't know.

## *Baby Proboscis Monkeys ... entertained us with their acrobatics*

Baby Proboscis Monkeys are dark brown in contrast to the orange of the adults. The babies entertained us with their acrobatics, risky leaps, swings, and near falls. Their alert mothers were constantly on the watch, grabbing their offspring if they started slipping off the branch and cuddling them when they'd had enough action. By contrast other adults in the troop could be amazingly rough with the babies.

Our two guides took us along a walkway through the forest, explaining the Iban use of plants as medicine or in building, with indigenous names which weren't always easy to match with a botanical name. The thorny trunk of the Nibung Palm (*Oncosperma tigillarum*) is used for fish poles; a *Calophyllum* tree species yields the component of a medicine used in treating AIDS and HIV although the vaccine is now manufactured synthetically and the tree is protected.

A highlight during the walk was a pool with a resident turtle and two catfish, like eels with two long 'rays' near their mouth. Mossy-nest Swiftlets were flying into their nesting holes in the sandstone above the pool, one just discernible on its nest. Emerging from the forest one of our group noticed a



Beach and cliffs, Bako National Park. Photo by Dave Kelly.

(continued next page)

## River rides, pitcher plants, and macaques in Malaysian Borneo's Sarawak (continued)

movement on a lower tree trunk. It was a Green Tree Lizard that moved with lightning speed along a branch before taking a leap into space and landing on a tree several metres away. It was like a translucent toy on springs, similar in colour to the venomous Tree Pit Viper that lay passively coiled on a low bush near a building, merging with the leaves.

### *The pitcher plants (Nepenthes spp.), looked other worldly ...*

For one of Baku's best surprises, we climbed up a rough track to a sandstone plateau to find pitcher and ant plants growing amongst vegetation including a She-oak or *Casuarina* sp. that reminded us of Australia's sandstone habitat. The pitcher plants (*Nepenthes* spp.), looked other worldly, nature's jugs with lids forming the end of the leaf. The number and diversity of these plants in a small area were striking, not to mention their mechanics. Stewart showed how rain is funnelled down the leaf into the pitcher plant. Little spikes or the white line of hairs as in *Nepenthes albomarginata* or



*Nepenthes bicalcarata* showing fangs.  
Photo by Dave Kelly.

the white-coloured pitcher plant attract insects which fall into the pitcher, ultimately decomposing and providing the plant with its food. The pitcher plant colours varied from green to purplish-brown, with different shapes, stripes and sizes.

Theo, a *Nepenthes* enthusiast from Germany, returned from a circular walk on the plateau saying that most of the pitcher plants on the far side had died from the 4-week drought that had been affecting Borneo before our arrival. Notices in hotel rooms asked us to use



*Orchid.* Photo by Dave Kelly.

water sparingly. Several times during night walks Stuart and Ian noticed the lack of insects and wondered if it was related to the drought.

Strange round ant plants that resembled desiccated succulents were another curiosity. The ants live in the plants, feeding off their nectar and, in turn, protecting the plant from being eaten.

Birdwatching in Borneo presented problems for the beginner because birds were quick and the foliage was dense. Malaysian bird specialist, CK Leong, known as CK, was on hand to help spot birds and identify them. Of course the bigger birds like the Fish Eagle that soared overhead in Bako were easier to see.

### *[Bako] park and its wildlife are vulnerable to climate change and population increase.*

As with many of Malaysia's national parks, Bako is a relatively small area between water and the hinterland mountains, close to settlements and human activity. The park and its wildlife are vulnerable to climate change and population increase. Again, as in Australia, a supposedly developed country, park infrastructure needs maintenance and renewal.

Our next experience in Sarawak was a boat ride along the Delok River, a significant local transport route, to Nanga Sumpa Village near Batang Ai National Park. Foul-smelling fuel powered our low, streamlined boats, each with two skilful crew who enjoyed racing each other.

Our transport stuttered to a halt in the middle of a broad reach of water. Several attempts to start the motor were unsuccessful. CK with his sly sense of

humour suggested one of us might have to be sacrificed to a resident crocodile. Fortunately, the others returned to support our lame boat with jests as the driver tried to restart the engine with the help of a drinking straw. Simple but it worked.

Crews skilfully manoeuvred rocky rapids as we passed the verdant rainforest with breaks where villagers were growing spindly rubber plants and sometimes tobacco. Gouges on the banks indicated where timber was being harvested on a small scale. Surprisingly heavy earth-moving equipment emerged every now and then.

Unbroken stretches of forest alongside the river gave us a feeling of isolation and a picture of times before any settlement.

Tying up under a rickety wooden bridge with a friendly village dog wagging a welcome, we climbed up to our Nanga Sumpa lodging. The villagers from Nanga Sumpa across the river had built the lodge from local timber after demanding that the English architect change his Balinese design which is popular in peninsula Malaysia, to one more in keeping with their local Sarawak buildings.

Nanga Sumpa Lodge is a cooperative venture with the villagers, who benefit from the earnings. Village women worked cheerfully in the kitchen, preparing our meals of steamed or fried chicken pieces and Australian beef (part of an Australian trade deal), stir-fried greens and boiled rice. Small sweet bananas were a delicious dessert. Early every morning we heard the roosters, prompting CK to wish all would be dispatched to the cooking pot.

(continued next page)

*... we spotted a striking Asian Paradise Flycatcher*

The most inviting part of the lodge was the open-air dining room with seats overlooking the river. From there we spotted a striking Asian Paradise Flycatcher with its dark-blue head and long white tail feathers rippling behind like shooting stars. We also saw a small Malaysian Blue Flycatcher, blue on top and orange underneath.

We visited the new village longhouse which is being rebuilt with the help of Malaysian and Australian funding after fire destroyed the old one last year, killing two elderly occupants. About 10–15 families, each with their own room, will occupy the longhouse which has a large communal space. Our guide told us the village site had been occupied for 200–300 years and was one of very few where most of the young people had remained instead of moving to cities.

*... orangutan nests ... looked like leafy hammocks formed from intertwined branches*

The next day we set off for a 3-hour walk through the rainforest following a rough path behind a machete-wielding local Iban villager from Nangpa Sumpa. He pointed out orangutan nests, which looked like leafy hammocks formed from intertwined branches. The nests had been made 2–3 weeks ago but the orangutans had gone.

Putting his ear to the stump of a sago palm, our local guide heard sounds and unerringly dug out a caterpillar that the locals eat. Another food source was the inner kernel of a rattan, which was used as survival food during World War 2.

Conditions were steamy and trying with 99 per cent humidity and the temperature about 35 degrees Celsius. Insects chirred, rasped and clicked constantly like electronic toys. From a ridge top, we looked across at a plot of dry rice. As families increase, more land

is needed for food and commercial crops like rubber or pepper. Rivas said that high-yielding crops, using fertiliser, lessened the need to clear even larger areas of land, which was a win for conservation. The villagers lived and worked their land within the park as part of an agreement with the government.

Finally we reached our destination, the Enseluai waterfall cascading into a large inviting pool. As we waded and sank into the pool, heat and fatigue dissolved.

*... little fish used to treat psoriasis at spas came to nibble at our limbs.*

If we sat in the shallows long enough, little fish used to treat psoriasis at spas came to nibble at our limbs. Initially they tickled faintly but then grew unpleasantly bolder and more persistent until it was time to move.

We left our grotto to cross to the opposite bank where the longboat crews with Rivas had prepared a fire. What was for lunch? Lemon chicken and rice were steaming separately in hollow bamboo stems over a fire while Rivas prepared eggplant and garlic in a wok over another fire. Stir-fried beef plus steamed spinach and green beans were also on offer.

It was hard to believe our luck to be sitting on the quiet stretch of river on seats from the longboats with a feast at hand. The boat crews sat on their haunches, eating, talking and laughing. They seemed genuinely happy and relaxed.

After watching a graceful demonstration of casting a fishing net, we boarded our longboats and returned



*Waterfall near Nanga Sumpa.  
Photo by Dave Kelly.*

to the lodge. That evening a tropical thunderstorm broke, sending the rain bucketing down. The river rose impressively, which made our downstream trip over the rapids easy next morning. The brilliant flash of the Black and Red Broadbill and a long slim black snake with orange belly that was swimming across the river were enduring memories as we made our way back to Kuching.

**Judy Kelly**

## Shimmering

That recurrent dream. A rocky mountain ridge rises out of deep forest. The sun shines on warm rock, and no one has been here before. Our calendar's on the fridge. I turn the page for April and it's a frosty morning on the Labyrinth plateau looking across the valley to misty Mount Geryon. Were those the days my friend? Did they never end?

the dark cloud  
slowly lifts and I see  
snow covered  
mountains shimmering  
in distant sunlight

**Gerry Jacobson**

# NPA outings program

December 2016 – March 2017



## Bushwalk Grading Guide

### 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, fire-trail or track        | E Rock scrambling |
| B Open forest                      | F Exploratory     |
| C Light scrub                      |                   |
| D Patches of thick scrub, regrowth |                   |

**Day walks** Carry lunch and snacks, drinks, protective clothing, a first aid kit and any required medication.

**Pack walks** Two or more days. Carry all food and camping requirements. CONTACT LEADER EARLY.

**Car camps** Facilities often limited. Vehicles taken to site can be used for camping. CONTACT LEADER EARLY.

**Work parties** Carry items as for day walks plus work gloves and any tools required. Work party details and location sometimes change, check NPA website, [www.npaact.org.au](http://www.npaact.org.au), for any last minute changes.

**Other activities** include ski trips, canoe trips, nature rambles and environment or field guide studies.

**Wednesday walks (WW).** Medium or somewhat harder walks arranged on a joint NPA, BBC (*Brindabella Bushwalking Club*) and CBC (*Canberra Bushwalking Club*) basis for fit and experienced club walkers. Notification and details are only emailed to members registered for WW. Only NPA-hosted WW are shown in this program. For WW email registration, contact the *Outings Convener*.

**Transport** The NPA suggests a passenger contribution to transport costs of **40 cents per kilometre** for the distance driven divided by the number of occupants of the car including the driver, rounded to the nearest dollar. The amount may be varied at the discretion of the leader. Drive and walk distances shown in the program are approximate for return journeys.

*NPA ACT members undertaking walks or other activities in this program are advised they should have PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE or, at least, AMBULANCE COVER in case of an accident requiring evacuation by ambulance or helicopter.*

## Points to note

Please help keep our outings program alive by volunteering to lead outings. New leaders are welcome. The *Outings Convener* is happy to suggest locations suitable for a walk if you do not have something in mind. Feel free to send in suggestions for outings with a suggested date to the *Outings Convener* by email to [outings@npaact.org.au](mailto:outings@npaact.org.au)

All persons joining an outing of the *National Parks Association of the ACT* do so as volunteers in all respects and as such accept 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 injury or damage suffered whilst engaged in any such outing.

In voluntarily participating in these activities conducted by the NPA ACT, participants should be aware that they could be exposed to risks that could lead to injury, illness or death or to loss of or damage to property. These risks could include but are not limited to slippery and/or uneven surfaces, rocks being dislodged, falling at edges of cliffs or drops or elsewhere, risks associated with crossing creeks, hypothermia, heat exhaustion and the risks associated with any of the Special Hazards listed on the *Attendance Record and Risk Waiver Form* provided by the leader at the activity.

To minimise these risks participants should endeavour to ensure that the activity is within their capabilities and that they are carrying food, water, equipment, clothing and footwear appropriate to the activity. Participants should advise the leader if they are taking any medication or have any physical or other limitation that might affect their participation in the activity. Participants should make every effort to remain with the rest of the party during the activity and accept the instructions of the leader. By signing the *Attendance Record and Risk Waiver Form* participants agree that they understand these requirements and have considered the risks before choosing to sign the form and waiver any claim for damages arising from the activity that they might have against the association, the leader or any other participants in tort or contract.

Children under 18 years of age are welcome to come on NPA ACT activities provided they are accompanied by a parent, guardian or close relative. Parents or Guardians will be required to sign a specific *Risk Waiver for a Child* form.

**Leaders to note:** please send copies of completed *Attendance Record and Risk Waiver Forms* to Brian Slee, contact 6281 0719 or [brianslee@iprimus.com.au](mailto:brianslee@iprimus.com.au)

**2–5 December** **Pack Walk**  
**ETTREMA GORGE**  
**Joint NPA / BBC / CBC activity**  
**Map** Nerriga 1:25,000  
**Grading** Overall 4 C/D/E/F  
**Leader** Barrie R  
**Contact** 0437 023 140  
Limited numbers, deadline for bookings 25 November.

A relaxed trip in the iconic Ettrema Gorge. Read, swim, paint, photograph. A walk in of about 4 km and a descent of

about 300 m. Two days exploring up- and downstream from a base camp, then retracing our inwards track back to the cars. A truly beautiful place to be. Gaiters, gloves for the walks in and out, possibly wear volleys for the walks up and down the river which may also involve some compulsory swims. Day packs with waterproof liners also advisable. We will need four-wheel drive vehicles.

Drive about 330 km, \$132 per car.

**4 December** **Sunday Walk**  
**MOUNT LEE AND ALPINE WILDFLOWERS**  
**Map** Perisher Valley 1:25,000  
**Grading** 2 A/B  
**Leader** Brian Slee  
**Contact** 6281 0719 or [brianslee@iprimus.com.au](mailto:brianslee@iprimus.com.au)

Depart 6.30 am and drive to Charlotte Pass. Take trail to Snowy River then follow Club Lake Creek to the lake, looking for anemones. After a break,

## NPA outings program December 2016 – March 2017 (page 2 of 4)

climb ridge to Main Range Track. Divert to Mount Lee and descend to Kunama Hutte ruins for lunch. Return via slope of Mount Clarke. Some steep climbs and descents. 12 km. Afternoon tea at Jindabyne. Book with leader by Saturday morning for weather check and departure point. Twice cancelled – third time lucky?

Drive 420 km, \$168 per car plus park entry fee.

### 10 December Saturday Work Party and CHRISTMAS PARTY

#### GUDGENBY BUSH REGENERATION GROUP

**Leader** Michael Goonrey

**Contact** 6231 8395 or 0419 494 142 or mjgoonrey@grapevine.com.au

Meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9.15 am. Car pool to Gudgenby Valley. Weeding and spraying around Gudgenby Homestead. Tools provided. Stay for Christmas lunch at the Gudgenby Cottage. Bring a plate to share, some drinks provided.

### 11 December Sunday Activity

#### NPA CHRISTMAS PARTY NAMADGI VISITOR CENTRE FROM 11.30 AM

**Leader** Rod Griffiths

**Contact** 0410 875 731 or rod.blackdog@gmail.com

This year our Christmas Party is to be held at the Namadgi Visitor Centre.

Bring your own lunch and something to share. Some drinks and Christmas cake will be provided.

### 3–6 January Pack Walk

#### HIGH COUNTRY

**Map** Geehi Dam 1:25,000 and Jagungal 1:25,000

**Grading** 2 C/D/E

**Leader** Philip Gatenby

**Contact** 0401 415 446 or jandp.gatenby@optusnet.com.au

Walk from Munyang and explore the areas north and east of Disappointment Ridge. The walk is partly exploratory and mostly off-track. There will be climbs of about 500 m on the first 3 days. Expect patches of thick scrub. Note that the dates of the walk may vary slightly depending on the weather. Contact leader for more details closer to the date of the walk. Limit 8. Bookings by Sunday 1 January, preferably by email.

Drive 430 km, \$172 per car.

### 8 January Sunday Walk

#### GUBUR DHAURA, GUNGAHLIN HILL AND GUNGADERRA CREEK

**Map** UBD Street Directory, Maps 29, 30, 39

**Grading** 2 A/B/C

**Leader** Brian Slee

**Contact** 6281 0719 (h) or brianslee@iprimus.com.au

Morning walk. Depart 8.15 am from Gubur Dhaura entrance (Diane Barwick Street, Franklin – UBD map 29, location P11) and after walking over hill, head south west across grassland reserves to Gungahlin Hill. Some fence climbing. Return across grasslands to Gungaderra Creek and follow path through wetlands to Harrison before returning to Gubur Dhaura. Gaiters useful. Brunch/lunch at the district (pub), Crace, unless someone has a better idea.

There are long unshaded sections so walk can be shortened if weather is hot.

### 14–16 (17) January 3–4 day Pack Walk

#### ETTREMA GORGE

**Map** Nerriga 1:25,000

**Grading** 2 D

**Leader** Dave Kelly

**Contact** 6253 1859 or janddkelly@gmail.com

A walk from the creek 1 km north of Bullfrog Creek, down along Ettrema Gorge to Transportation Spur (visiting Jones Creek), then return to Tolwong Road via Pardon Point. Scrub, rock-hopping, wading, and possibly swimming. Contact leader early.

Drive about 330 km, \$132 per car.

### 25 January Wednesday Walk

#### Joint NPA / BBC / CBC Activity

**Leader** Philip Gatenby

**Contact** 0401 415 446

Details are emailed to those on the Wednesday walks email list. Otherwise contact the leader.

### 2 February Thursday Outing

#### SECOND TIP TRIP

**Leader** Esther

**Contact** galla001@umn.edu or 0429 356 212.

The Soft Landing Mattress Recycling Facility received ACT Sustainable Communities awards in multiple categories in 2016, only 6 months after opening. Join this tour at Mugga Lane followed by morning tea and questions. Soft Landing will provide tea and biscuits. Spaces limited. Contact leader by Monday 30 January to reserve your place and for directions to meeting place and time.

### 4-5 February Canoe and Walk

#### TALBINGO PADDLE AND WALK

#### Joint NPA / CBC Activity

**Maps** Yarrangobilly 1:100,000 or Ravine 1:25,000, Yarrangobilly 1:25,000

**Grading** 1C (for any walking)

**Leader** Mike Bremers

**Contact** 0428 923408 or mcbremers@gmail.com by the previous Wednesday

Paddle from “Sue City” (O’Hares Rest Area) 4 km to the campsite on Talbingo Reservoir. Options for the afternoon and the next morning include paddling, swimming or walking up some of the many nearby hills for views over the reservoir. A beautiful location suitable for beginners. BYO canoe or kayak. Limit 8.

Drive 450 km, \$180 approx per car.

### 5 February Sunday Walk

#### MOUNT TWYNAM AND MOUNT CARRUTHERS

**Map** Perisher Valley 1:25,000

**Grading** 2A/B

**Leader** Margaret

**Contact** 0418 645 303 or power000@tpg.com.au

Depart 6.30 am and drive to Charlotte Pass. We’ll take the Main Range track to the Snowy River, then to Blue Lake lookout. From here we’ll ascend steeply off-track to a ridge and then proceed to Mount Twynam. After a break, we’ll follow the ridge south, with fabulous views in front of us, and then re-join the Main Range track. If time and energy permits, we’ll follow the track up to Mount Carruthers before returning to Charlotte Pass. Book with leader by Saturday morning.

Drive 420 km, \$168 per car plus park entry fee.

### 7 February Tuesday Work Party

#### GLENBURN PRECINCT

**Leader** Col McAlister

**Contact** 6288 4171 or cvmac@grapevine.com.au

Work in the Glenburn Precinct to be negotiated with the Parks Service. Meet at the Canberra Railway Station, Kingston at 9:00 am.

Drive 50 km, \$20 per vehicle.

### 11 February Saturday Work Party

#### GUDGENBY BUSH REGENERATION GROUP

**Leader** Michael Goonrey

**Contact** 6231 8395 or 0419 494 142 or mjgoonrey@grapevine.com.au

Meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9.15 am. Car pool to Gudgenby Valley. Work will include weeding and spraying around Eleanor Grove and Hospital Creek. Tools provided.

## NPA outings program December 2016 – March 2017 (page 3 of 4)

### 12 FEBRUARY Sunday Walk MOUNT TOWNSEND

**Map** Perisher Valley 1:25 000  
**Grading** 3 A/C  
**Leader** Brian Slee  
**Contact** 6281 0719 (h) or  
brianslee@iprimus.com.au

Depart 6.30 am. Drive to Charlotte Pass and follow Kosciuszko Road to Seamans Hut. Take footpad down to Rawsons Creek and climb to Mueller Pass, cut around Mueller Peak and climb Townsend (2,209 m) for lunch. Return same way or via Mount Clarke. Spectacular views. Afternoon tea Jindabyne. Contact leader by Friday for departure place and weather check.

Drive 410 km, \$164 per car plus park entry fee.

### 14 Feb to end February Pack Walks Two 6-day Walks

**CENTRAL HIGHLANDS OF TASMANIA**  
**Maps** Walls of Jerusalem National Park, and Olympus 1:25,000.

**Grading** 2 C/D/E  
**Leader** Dave and Judy Kelly  
**Contact** 6253 1859 or  
janddkelly@gmail.com

Walk 1 (partly on tracks). A circuit from Mersey Valley to the Walls of Jerusalem, Junction Lake, Cathedral Mountain, followed (after a break) by Walk 2. (mainly off-track). A traverse of the Traveller Range from Du Cane Gap to Derwent Bridge. Variable scrub and some scrambling, visiting the wildest and least damaged parts on the western edge of the Central Plateau, with glacial lakes and alpine heathland.

Between the two, a short trip to Tyndall Range is possible (glacial peaks and lakes).

Contact leaders for more details.

### 19 February Sunday Walk BRINDABELLA RAMBLE

**Map** Cotter and Tidbinbilla 1:25,000  
**Grading** 3 A  
**Leader** Steven Forst  
**Contact** 0428 195 236 or  
steven.forst@iinet.net.au

A walk in the hopefully slightly cooler tall mountain forests of a south-facing fold of the Brindabella Range. The walk mainly on fire trail, follows Old Mill Road and Wark's Road before climbing back up to the Brindabella Road.

Drive 85 km, \$35 per car.

### 22 February Wednesday Walk Joint NPA / BBC / CBC Activity

**Leader** Mike S  
**Contact** 0412 179 907  
Details are emailed to those on the Wednesday walks email list. Otherwise contact the leader.

### 24–26 February Pack Walk

**SNOWY MOUNTAINS WALKING FROM GUTHEGA** (3 days, 2 nights)  
**Joint NPA / BBC / CBC Activity**

**Maps** Perisher and Geehi Dam 1:25,000

**Grading**  
**Leaders** Terrylea R and Barrie R  
**Contact** 0437023140, or  
brdr001@bigpond.net.au

This is a lovely walk along the Main Range with time to explore. From Guthega walk north up the ridge to Consett Stephen Pass where we camp on the first night, with time in the afternoon to explore the Tate West Ridge. The second day walk south-west along the Main Range to Mount Anderson where we spend the night, with time in the afternoon to explore Mount Anderson. On the third day possibly go up Mount Anton or Little Twynam before returning to Guthega via the lower slopes of Little Twynam and Illawong Lodge.

Deadline for bookings 17 February (maximum number 8).

Drive 446 km, approx. \$178 per car.

### 25 February Saturday Work Party HONEYSUCKLE CREEK AREA

**Leader** Martin Chalk  
**Contact** 6292 3502

In May 2015 and again in March 2016 we removed a number of exotic plants from this area. This work party will continue this activity. Cut and dab equipment will be provided but suggest you bring gloves and your favourite bush saw. Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.30 am.

Drive 87km, \$32 per car.

### 26 February Sunday Walk BIG HOLE / MARBLE ARCH

**Map** Kain 1:25,000  
**Grading** 2 A/B  
**Leader** Mike S  
**Contact** 0412 179 907

Meet Canberra Railway Station car park by 8.30 am. A walk mainly on bush track past the Big Hole to the Marble Arch in the Deua National Park. Wading across the Shoalhaven River is required and it could be slippery in wet conditions at the Arch. Old footwear or sandals for crossing the river are advisable.

Drive 180 km, \$72 per car.

### 4 March Saturday Walk SQUARE ROCK

**Map** Corin Dam 1:25,000  
**Grading** 1 A  
**Leader** Steven Forst  
**Contact** 0428 195 236 or  
steven.forst@iinet.net.au

A short morning walk, through subalpine forest high in the hills to avoid the heat. Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8.00 am.

Drive 75 km, \$30 per car.

### 11 March Saturday Work Party GUDGENBY BUSH REGENERATION GROUP

**Leader** Michael Goonrey  
**Contact** 6231 8395 or 0419 494 142 or  
mjgoonrey@grapevine.com.au

Meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9.15 am. Car pool to Gudgenby Valley. Work will include weeding and maintenance of the Gudgenby Track towards Hospital Creek. Tools provided.

### 11–13 March Pack Walk Canberra Day Weekend

**THE VINES AREA**  
**Map** CMW Budawangs  
**Grading** 2 A  
**Leader** Steven Forst  
**Contact** 0428 195 236 or  
steven.forst@iinet.net.au

A walk in to The Vines area in the Budawangs near the base of Quiltys Mountain from the Nerriga entrance to Morton NP. Contact leader early as numbers limited.

Drive 360 km, \$140 per car.

### 19 March Sunday Walk YANKEE HAT NORTH

**Joint NPA/BBC/CBC activity**  
**Map** Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000  
**Grading** 2 D/F  
**Leader** David Dedenczuk  
**Contact** 0417 222 154 or  
ddedentz@bigpond.net.au

Starting at the Yankee Hat car park, we will skirt the southern flanks of the mountain before following a tributary of Bogong Creek towards the saddle between the north and south peaks. The walk will be very scrubby. Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.00 am. Please contact leader by Thursday 16 March if you wish to participate.

Drive 140 km, \$56 per car.

## NPA outings program December 2016 – March 2017 (page 4 of 4)

### 22 March Wednesday Walk Joint NPA / BBC / CBC Activity

**Leader** Steven Forst  
**Contact** 0428 195236 or  
steven.forst@iinet.net.au

Details are emailed to those on the Wednesday walks email list. Otherwise contact the leader.

### 25 March Saturday Work Party BLUNDELLS FLAT WEED CONTROL

**Leader** Martin Chalk  
**Contact** 6292 3502

This is a new work area for the NPA but complements the work we have previously undertaken on the slopes above Blundells Flat. The area has heritage-listed exotics but the weeds include wilding exotics and the usual suspects – plenty to do. Some tools provided but a bush saw and/or loppers and gloves would be handy. Meet at Cooleman Court (behind McDonald's) at 9.00 am.

Drive 45km, \$18 per car.

### 26 March Sunday Walk CENTENARY TRAIL: CAMPBELL TO WATSON

**Map** Canberra Centenary Trail map 1 or UBD Street Directory

**Grading** 3 A/C

**Leader** Brian Slee  
**Contact** 6281 0719 (h) or  
brianslee@iprimus.com.au

Depart 9.00 am from Treloar Crescent car park, Campbell, opposite High School (UBD map 2, location L3). Climb steeply to Mount Ainslie and follow track north before connecting to Centenary Trail. Continue to Mount Majura for lunch. Descend to Centenary Trail and continue to Federal Highway, North Watson. Car shuffle required.

### 29 March Wednesday Walk Joint NPA / BBC / CBC Activity

**Leader** Barrie R and Terrylea R  
**Contact** 0437 023 140

Details are emailed to those on the Wednesday walks email list. Otherwise contact the leader.

# Bushwalks

## Temple of Doom

**Date:** Sunday 31 July 2016.

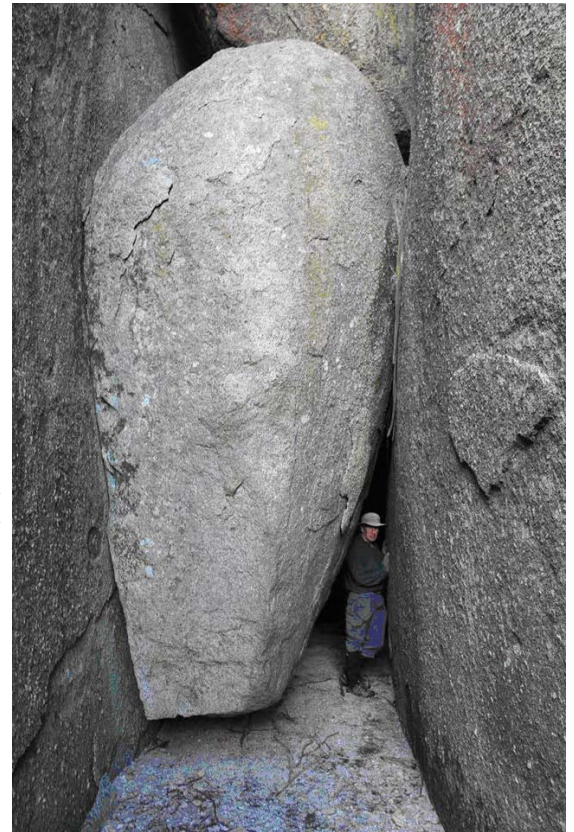
**Participants:** Philip Gatenby (leader), John Brickhill, David Dedenczuk, Jan Gatenby.

**Weather:** Fine, cool and windy.

Outcrops of large granite boulders are a feature of many of the ridges of Namadgi National Park. The ridge to the south of Orroral Hill is particularly well endowed in this regard and one of its most spectacular outcrops is known colloquially as the Temple of Doom. It includes a number of subterranean passages that allow the outcrop to be traversed. Eric Pickering was the first person I heard to use this name to describe the outcrop.

This walk started from the Orroral Valley on the well-used track to Nursery Swamp. About 2 kilometres in and 200 m above the car park the track goes through a saddle and curves to the south on its way to Nursery Swamp. The remnant of an older track, now a footpad, heads north-west up Nursery Creek to Indigenous rock art a kilometre or so away. The track, faint in places, keeps to the creek's true left bank. We intended to look at the art work then go uphill to the Temple of Doom. After more than half an hour stumbling around in the scrub beside Nursery Creek and not finding any sign of the paintings we turned to the north-east for the climb on to the ridge, detouring in places to avoid collections of large boulders. It was the best part of an hour from the creek to the Temple of Doom.

Arriving at 11.30 left plenty of time to explore. We walked, crawled, slithered and climbed through a number of passages. We crossed underneath the rock outcrop, while at least one passage took us back to almost where we'd



One entrance to the Temple. Photo by David Dedenczuk.

started. Torches were required and some passages were quite tight and damp.

Lunch was at the base of the rocks then a course was set back to the saddle on the Nursery Swamp Track. Flat and scrubby to begin with for a kilometre or so, then we went steeply downhill through more scrub until we re-joined the track at the saddle. This took less time than expected and we were back at the cars by 2.30 pm.

I mention as a bit of an aside that much of the walk was through scrub, regrowth since the 2003 bushfires, and thick and scratchy in places. Nevertheless, and maybe it was my imagination, but the scrub seemed thinner than on an earlier walk to the Temple of Doom in March 2014.

**Philip Gatenby**

## Vale Mike Ogden

Mike Ogden joined NPA only recently, but late in life. Mike really appreciated his welcome-to-membership phone call from Graham Scully, and decided he would write a letter to NPA stating his reasons for joining. That letter was published in the June 2014 *Bulletin* (page 5). It reads in part:

I am 76 years old and, had my oncologists been correct 18 months

ago, I would not still be alive. I joined because I have very good friends amongst your membership. I well know and appreciate the good work NPA has done and is doing, and in its advocacy role membership numbers give strength.

Mike passed away on 26 October, and will be missed by his NPA friends.





## Bungonia Gorge

**Date:** Wednesday 23 March 2016.

**Participants:** Mike S. (Leader), John D., Jan and Philip G., Barry K., John K., Terrylea R., Barrie R., Phillip S. and Andrew S.

**Weather:** Warm and mostly sunny.

Bungonia is one of the oldest reserves in New South Wales, dating back to 1872, the year after the limestone quarry across Bungonia Creek from the reserve opened. Both are still going strong. The reserve was established, so the sign in the car park says, to protect water supply, for recreation and, later (1902), to preserve the area's limestone caves. For many years a state recreation area, Bungonia has been a national park since 2010.

Mike led us on what's known as the White Track down to the junction of Bungonia Creek and the Shoalhaven River, initially around the flank of Mount Ayre, then steeply down hill. Morning tea was at the junction, where some members of the party contemplated a swim in the river's limpid brown waters but didn't venture in. From here we turned up the creek, passing numerous sparkingly clear pools and a number of signs warning of rock falls due to explosions at the limestone quarry. We admired a large fish in one of the pools and noticed an eel gliding above it towards us. We then noticed the eel was glossy black with a red belly. Fortunately, when the snake pretending to be an eel noticed us it quickly about-turned and swam to the opposite bank.

Soon the massive limestone cliff of Troy Walls towered above us. We joined



*Negotiating the boulders in Bungonia Gorge. Photo by Philip Gatenby.*

a pad known as the Red Track. Where the creek has carved a passage through the walls to form Bungonia Gorge slot canyon, huge chock stones appeared to block our way but the emergence of a group from the Shoalhaven belied appearances. A scramble under and over the boulders took us upstream to a flatter, more open section of the gorge. Voices overhead indicated rock climbers precariously scaling the cliff walls. Lunchtime entertainment at the junction of Bretons and Bungonia creeks was provided by a male lyrebird. It was one of a number we saw during the day and it scratched around on a nearby rock face seemingly unconcerned by our presence.

Bretons Creek was our exit point from the gorge. A drainage path has been cut from one of Bungonia's caves to the lower section of the creek, which is known colloquially as the Efflux. The climb out on the Red Track was steep and slippery, especially where the creek was trickling. Eventually, a series of zig-zags lessened the gradient as the Red Track took us back to the car park to conclude a memorable walk. From two lookouts nearby, with spectacular views of the Shoalhaven Valley, Troy Walls and the Marulan quarry, we had an overview of much of our route.

**Philip Gatenby**

## A walk to The Rolling Ground ... almost

NPA's snowshoe walk to The Rolling Ground, scheduled for 21 August, was cancelled due to adverse weather. However, four of us decided, at short notice, to set out on a private walk from Munyang the following Sunday, 28 August, with the aim of getting to Horse Camp Hut and deciding whether to proceed from there.

As reported in Kosciuszko Huts Association *Newsletter* (Winter 2016), Horse Camp Hut was dismantled and rebuilt between 15 November 2015 and 16 May 2016. The main purpose was to raise the structure from the ground where it was rotting away. The only obvious change is that the wood stove has been moved from the middle of the hut into the fireplace. The loft remains locked for safety reasons. A commendable effort.

We had not encountered much snow on the way to the hut but there was plenty beyond, in firm condition, so we began climbing west on snowshoes up the ridge through trees. We had barely seen the sun in the morning and as we rose steeply into open country, clouds descended and the wind increased. At 1,860 metres, less than a kilometre from The Rolling Ground, we huddled beneath ice-encrusted Snow Gums for lunch, hoping the almost white-out conditions would clear. They did not but we had a delightful

descent of 500 metres back to the hut and Munyang.

**Brian Slee with Margaret Power,  
Mike Bremers and Max Smith**



# Some Central Queensland national parks



Australia has many environments very different to the south-east around Canberra and, in July 2016, I drove to Central Queensland to learn more about some of them. My intention was to spend time in national parks in central NSW, then the Carnarvon Range and ‘dinosaur triangle’ of Central Queensland. The return route would visit parks further west.

I set off with fine weather projected for 10 days. As it turned out, that’s when the sunshine ended; days of rain closed most parks and the dirt roads of the area, so I headed home.

One aim of the trip had been to follow up the interest in scarred trees I’d discussed in the March 2016 issue of the *Bulletin*. That had alerted me that removal of bark by Aboriginal groups was done not only to produce items for both practical uses but also to mark sites of ritual significance, such as burials and bora grounds, by carving patterns in nearby trees. The property of Collymongle north-west of the village of Collarenebri has a rare collection of such trunks.

## The carved trees of Walgett and Collymongle

The visitors centre in Walgett gave me directions to Collymongle, then asked if I was aware of the town’s own collection ... and there by the Barwon River 6 kilometres to the west, were more than a dozen trunks in covered cages. It appeared the bark from these had been taken for practical uses, while accompanying information described the long Aboriginal occupancy of the area. It also answered a question I’d been discussing with passing travellers the previous day – these inland rivers, now always muddy, had run clear before European settlement.

The carved trunks at Collymongle had marked a nearby bora ground. Last used 1896, in the 1940s most of them were removed to avoid further deterioration; some have been housed for public viewing in covered cages on the property and, in 1949, a dozen or so were transported to State museums in each of Sydney and Adelaide; two went to Brisbane.

*Carnarvon Gorge east edge. Photo by Rupert Barnett*

The *Australian Women’s Weekly* of 12 November 1949 gives an interesting account of that operation, and also a small insight into the bora ceremonies, as recounted by a few of the men that had been involved in its ceremonies. The reporter for the *Weekly* wrote:

I have a vision of a procession of frightened lads. Their tongues tied literally, so that they could make no sound, they were led at dusk from one grotesquely carved and painted tree to another, their elders imparting dread secrets along the half-mile lane to the sacred circle.

The youths would spend the night in the circle, in absolute silence, under kangaroo skins, awaiting and fearing the initiation rites to follow on the morrow ...

Informed general comment about marked trees is available at <https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/land/aboriginal-scarred-trees>.

*(continued next page)*



*White Mountains National Park. Left. Grevillea pteridifolia. Right. Grevillea decora. Photos by Rupert Barnett*

## Some Central Queensland national parks (continued)

### Parks of the Carnarvon Range

The Carnarvon Range was named by Major Mitchell on his way in 1846 to Port Essington, east of Darwin. It includes the popular Carnarvon Gorge NP and other parks and reserves to its east and west, which here comprise the Great Dividing Range, some 600 km from the coast. The park has almost 600 dicots, 100 monocots, 50 orchids, 250 birds and over 90 mammals.

The three western parks had for decades been grazing properties, and the external and internal access reflects this. Mount Moffatt NP is reached by a long drive from the south. Much of it is grassy woodland, with colourful sandstone ridges and hills that include arches and pinnacles. According to one tribal memory, a European fitting the description of the explorer Leichhardt (d. 1848) was killed in one of the rivers which starts in this park, the Maranoa.

A notable feature is Tombs Rock, an important Aboriginal cemetery site where wrapped bodies were placed in natural holes in the high face. At its foot a gallery of rock art includes lattice patterns thought to be associated with the burials, and a world-unique stencil of a full size human torso.

The Carnarvon Range continues west of Mount Moffatt through the Ka Ka Mundi and Salvator Rosa NPs and well beyond; these parks are accessible only from the north side. They offer drives and walks through open woodland – and on Homoranthus Hill the flashing cheeks of a squabble of Blue-faced Honeyeaters – or upwellings of artesian waters such as the Major Mitchell Springs that green parts of what is often a dry and dun landscape.

### Galleries of Aboriginal art

The plateau in Carnarvon Gorge NP is similar terrain, but the popular track along the Gorge floor leads through the different world of remnant subtropical forest, tall fan palms (a *Livistonia*), taller



Carnarvon Gorge Amphitheatre. Photo by Rupert Barnett.

stark white cliffs. Side gorges contain ferny waterfalls, fluted walls that press close, hidden sink holes. Here too are extensive galleries of important Aboriginal art and, on a hidden face beyond all the paths, the incised names of some visitors in 1897 – bogus, graffiti, or heritage?

On such a trip there are the expected points of interest, such as the Dinosaur Museum at Hughenden or the Tree of Knowledge at Barcaldine. This Ghost Gum was healthy when I saw in 2003 but was poisoned 3 years later. Its remains have been preserved and now stand under an impressive canopy as a memorial to its role in the Shearers Strike of 1896 and formation of the Australian Labor Party. Its clones survive around the town and in the National Arboretum.

Many satisfactions are unexpected though – Pied Butcher Birds working as

a team to distract me from my meal, spectacular red or orange grevilleas in the midst of a swarm of flashing locusts, two bustards staging a warm-up for a pair of broilgas, and they in turn for a large snake with a shiny black head. All good, and inviting my return ...

**Rupert Barnett**

*Photos below by Rupert Barnett.*

*Left. Black-faced python, Torrens Creek Road.*

*Centre. Fluffed up Apostle birds at Injune.*

*Right. Big Bottle tree beside the Dawson Development Road.*



# A few days in the Cockburns



*In June and July this year, NPA members Jan and Philip Gatenby drove to the Kimberley and across northern Australia to Queensland. When the opportunity arose for a break from driving they completed a multi-day walk in the Cockburn Range.*

The Cockburn Range lies south of the Kimberley town of Wyndham and to the north of the Gibb River Road and Pentecost River. The range is an extensively dissected red sandstone mesa which reaches a maximum altitude of 580 m. Of main interest to bushwalkers are its numerous gorges, the result of millions of years of erosion mainly by water.

As time was limited, we started and finished our 4-day walk at Emma Gorge, where El Questro have a resort with an interpretive track that provides access to the gorge, a couple of kilometres to the north. The Canberra Bushwalking Club

(CBC) and others have completed walks in the Cockburns previously, typically taking over a week to traverse the range from Diggers Rest in the north-west to Emma Gorge in the south-east. Our walk was based on part of a traverse led by Linda Groom in 2014 and advice from Linda on what to visit on a shorter 'there and back' walk rather than a traverse, with the help of kml files of the routes followed by Linda's party and an earlier group led by fellow CBC member Ian Hickson. The environmental officer at El Questro, where we camped the night before the walk, was also very helpful. We contacted him believing permits were needed from El Questro for overnight walks in the Cockburn Range. This proved not to be the case with a very recent change in land tenure arrangements meaning El Questro no longer has a lease on the range. Still, we left our details and plans with the EO who said we'd have the place to ourselves (which turned out to be the case) and who also contacted the relevant WA government department on our behalf to let them know our intentions.

From Emma Gorge Resort was a steep climb of 200 m

to the plateau, en route crossing a largely defunct toad fence, then south across an undulating landscape of dry watercourses, knee-high dry grass and scattered small trees. The grass obscured loose rock underfoot so the unwary could easily stumble. Intermittent footpads, from either wild cattle, people or both, eased progress. After a couple of kilometres we were overlooking the head of an extensive system of gorges. It was hot, we'd seen no water since Emma Gorge but were confident we'd find some in the gorge even if it wasn't flowing. A steep but easily negotiable ridge gave us access to the gorge. Its higher reaches were dry but about a kilometre down a creek bed we came to the first of a series of rock pools. We had no hesitation about jumping in. Our mood lightened considerably. It was clear now that whatever happened, finding water would not be a problem.

*... at the base of a cliff 30 m above the creek was a gallery of art work*

We set up our tent beside the pool in the rocky creek bed, the only flat area available. This was the same place that Linda's party had camped 2 years earlier. Nearby, at the base of a cliff 30 m above

*(continued next page)*



## A few days in the Cockburns *(continued)*

the creek was a gallery of art work. That afternoon we explored 2 km downstream from our campsite, where the gorge deepened and rock pools became more numerous and larger, to a cliff line and a large, dry waterfall.

*... the beautiful sound of flowing water could be heard*

Our route on day 2 headed downstream, mostly on the creek's true left bank. We found a way through the cliff and down to the base of yesterday's waterfall, which was in a spectacular four-way valley surrounded by towering red cliffs. Approaching the falls the beautiful sound of flowing water could be heard. At their base a pool of clear water was replenished by a spring a couple of metres above, well below the top of the falls which were dry. Near the pool were two wildlife motion-activated cameras which we'd been told to look out for. Continuing downstream through a narrow gorge (which we later named Green Ant Gorge) and, once again taking Linda's advice, we avoided a compulsory swim by climbing to and following a ledge above the creek. Beyond the gorge the creek changed direction and led to our second campsite., a sandy area at the base of cliffs with a couple of Great Bower Bird bowers.

*... the residents of a colony of several thousand bats ... whizzed around our heads*

That afternoon we explored a tributary of the main gorge system we'd been following. Soon our side creek became tunnel-like and to proceed we had to swim. It was dark enough to need head torches. This disturbed the residents of a colony of several thousand bats which whizzed around our heads. The walls of the bat cave were covered in bat droppings and great care was needed to avoid swallowing any of the poo-infested water we were swimming through. The whole exercise had then to be repeated because soon after we'd got through the cave a small waterfall blocked our progress and the only way out was the way we'd come in.

With day packs we explored further down-stream next morning. First up was another gorge about 600 m long, then a stretch of creek where the banks were



more open, with a number of waterholes and honeyeaters in abundance, before a climb to bypass an impressive 150 m pool. Another spectacular pool 500 m further on was passable only by swimming so we decided here was a good place to turn around. We returned to camp, collected our gear and retraced our steps, camping our last night near the base of the waterfall in the four-way

valley. With a 6.30 am start on the last day of the walk, again largely retracing the route we'd followed on the first day, we took advantage of the cool morning weather and returned to Emma Gorge Resort by 10 am.

**Philip Gatenby**

*Photos by Jan and Philip Gatenby.*



### **Second Trip to the Tip      Thursday 2 February      The Soft Landing Mattress Recycling Facility**

Soft Landing received 2016 ACT Sustainable Communities awards in multiple categories only 6 months after opening.

Join the tour at Mugga Lane followed by questions. Soft Landing will provide tea and biscuits. Spaces limited.

Contact leader by Monday 30 January to reserve your place and for directions to meeting place and time.

**Contact** Esther at [galla001@umn.edu](mailto:galla001@umn.edu) or 0429 356 212.

# Exploring the Kimberley Coast

Clear blue sky, calm waters, waterholes and plunge pools, salties at a safe distance, rock art and raptors galore! And that is just the beginning of the story of my Kimberley cruise.

The 10 kg limit on luggage meant that no one would 'dress' for dinner. Those who did chose sarongs, also worn during much of the day under the upper-deck shade sail. The captain on his eleventh year in the Kimberley is known to some locals as 'Lennie the Legend'. He dresses in T-shirts, shorts, a sly smile and bare feet. In addition to navigating, he leads all on- and off-boat activities. The boat has two tenders so that all 22 passengers can go ashore together – no waiting in queues. The food was delicious, varied and seemed unlimited. A huge array of choices was presented each night, including fresh veg and piles of baby spinach for all 13 days. And best of all, the catamaran spends the nights anchored in sheltered coves, all but one with no other boats in sight.

## *There were numerous art sites to be visited*

The 2-metre draft of our boat meant we could travel up channels big boats couldn't. And then we went further up gorges and creeks in the tenders. There were many 'scenic' tender tours up narrow gorges and through the ubiquitous mangroves. At times we walked and/or climbed further to visit waterfalls, swim in saltie-free plunge pools and admire unspoiled nature. There were numerous art sites to be visited. We learned the differences between Wandjina, Gwion and Archaic art styles. At Fresh Water Cove an elder led us on a tour of Cyclone Cave and explained three different styles of Gwion art. The traditional style of her mob was the one depicted in the Sydney Olympics opening ceremony and was a source of great pride for her. After morning tea and damper she explained the stories illustrated in an enormous painted banner in their open-air art gallery. Several of our group left with paintings.

## *Nights we watched sharks and crocs swimming around the boat ...*

We saw Saltwater Crocodiles, Tawny Nurse Sharks, dolphins and Humpback Whales. Three whales delighted us by swimming parallel to our course for a time and then directly toward us. Captain Lennie stopped the boat and we

watched them surfacing and blowing until they finally headed on their way. Nights we watched sharks and crocs swimming around the boat attracted by the small fish that in turn came for insects attracted to our lights.

Raptors and their nests were seen throughout the trip: Wedge-tailed and White-bellied Sea Eagles, Osprey, and Square-tailed, Whistling and Brahminy Kites. The majestic Brahminy Kites were seen many times and put on an impressive show at our last anchorage where the cruise always either starts or finishes. A nesting pair has become accustomed to the boat. Captain Lennie has enticed them to perform for the passengers with a monthly supplemental feed of meat cubes. Both birds caught cubes tossed in the air and one took them from a pencil held in his hand (to protect from talons).

Apparently no Kimberley cruise would be complete without a chance for an adrenaline rush at Horizontal Falls. We were there early to beat the crowd and had opportunities for both the helicopter and boat trip. In addition, on the return to Broome, we saw the falls from our small plane – perhaps the most interesting view of all.

## *... our visits to various sites needed to be timed according to the massive 10+ metre tides*

The 13-day itinerary started in Broome with an early morning bus trip to Derby. There we boarded the catamaran DiscoveryOne (formerly a small Sydney ferry) for an all day cruise out of King Sound into the Buccaneer Archipelago. From there we travelled sometimes in circles as our visits to various sites needed to be timed according to the massive 10+ metre tides. Especially notable stops included Montgomery Reef as the tide went out, St George Basin including Prince Regent River and King Cascade (only about 15 km



*Brahminy Kite. Photo by Esther Gallant.*

from the end of a pack walk completed in 2014), the Anderdon Islands and the Roe and Hunter rivers. On the last day we were picked up from a beach on Naturalist Island by a helicopter and flown across the Mitchel Plateau with a circle over Mitchell falls. From the Mitchell Falls airstrip we flew back to Broome in a small plane with views of places we had seen from the water. A memorable trip indeed.

**Esther Gallant**



*A very close look down the saltie's throat. Photo by Esther Gallant.*

# PARKWATCH

*Edited extracts from recent issues of journals and newsletters, and online sources.*

## **Dingoes and wild dogs: are we just splitting hairs?**

The autumn rewinding edition of *Nature NSW* featured a variety of perspectives highlighting the ecological importance of dingoes, along with the continued pressure and persecution the species faces. Many of the views expressed are those that have led Humane Society International (HSI) to campaign for dingo protection over the past decade, most recently through the submission of *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* 1999 nominations for *Canis dingo* as a 'conservation-dependent species' and the cascading effects of the loss or removal of dingoes from Australian landscapes as a Key Threatening Process (KTP).

Since domestic dogs were introduced into Australia, dingoes have been subject to hybridisation with them. The term 'wild dog' is widely used in legislation and management documentation to group hybrid dingoes and feral domestic dogs, differentiating them from dingoes and attributing them little or no value. Hybridisation is frequently used as a ground for ongoing control of 'wild dogs' under the auspices of dingo conservation, despite there being no evidence that it has led to a predominance of dog genes in dingo populations.

A growing body of evidence suggests that hybrids not only look like dingoes, but share important aspects of social behaviour such as pack formation, home ranges, reproductive cycles and feeding habits. There is also little agreement between genetics and morphology when assessing dingo purity, so arguments regarding hybridisation do little but divert the debate from ecological function to superficial semantics. Since hybrids share the same ecological role as dingoes they should be considered equally as important to conserve as apex predators in Australian ecosystems, and the difficulty in distinguishing hybrids from pure dingoes means all 'wild dog' controls are essentially indiscriminate. Conservation efforts should instead focus on understanding and managing the role of modern dingoes in different regions and habitats throughout Australia.

Indiscriminate control, particularly in the most common method of baiting, is intended to reduce stock predation and is increasing throughout Australia.

Research suggests that dingo control efforts may actually be counter-productive when it comes to stock predation, with intact dingo packs exhibiting behavioural boundaries that limit such predation. When packs are fractured through baiting, loss of social cohesion leads to more opportunistic feeding patterns. Additionally, the reduced ability of dingo packs to hunt large prey such as kangaroos sees greater herbivore pasture competition with stock – ceasing 'wild dog' control efforts may be the most economically sensible management option for pastoralists.

Dingoes have been shown to play a positive conservation role by suppressing a number of introduced pest species including rabbits, goats, pigs and deer. But perhaps the greatest ecological benefit is their control of feral cats and foxes. Dingoes are known to suppress populations of these introduced species and, in areas where dingoes are baited, numbers of small predators tend to increase along with their predatory impact on prey.

A healthy dingo presence is beneficial for threatened species conservation, and this ecological role was the focus of HSI's KPT nomination which, if successful, would lead to greater scrutiny on current 'wild dog' management practices. Despite the weight of science supporting our nomination growing each year, meaningful dingo conservation measures will take bold government action. Here's hoping 2016 is the year, as management practices have so far led to nothing but a loss of biodiversity, and time is running out for our threatened species.

*Nature NSW*, Vol. 60,  
No. 3 (Spring 2016)

## **Bringing the buzz back to the Cumberland Plain Woodland**

Land clearing for agriculture and urban expansion in Western Sydney has reduced the Cumberland Plain Woodland to less than 10 per cent of its original distribution. The Cumberland Plain Woodland is a critically endangered vegetation community that grows on the shale soils of Western Sydney with a grassy to herbaceous understorey and a canopy dominated by one or more of the following tree species: Grey Box (*Eucalyptus moluccana*), Forest Red Gum (*E. tereticornis*), Narrow-leaved Ironbark (*E. creba*), Thin-leaved Stringybark (*E. eugenoides*) and Spotted Gum (*Corymbia maculata*). This ecologically significant community is represented mostly by small patches,

plus a few large stands of Cumberland Plain Woodland (e.g. Kemps Creek Nature Reserve) surrounded by Sydney's suburban sprawl. Many of these fragments have been disturbed by grazing, logging, increased nutrient loads from fertilisers, dumping and urban expansion.

Considerable effort is being directed to restoring these remnant patches to their former glory: but insect pollinators are rarely considered in restoration plans even though they provide a crucial service to ensure the reproductive success of an ecosystem. The NPA (NSW) will be 'bringing the buzz back to the Cumberland Plain Woodland' with our new project funded by the Environmental Trust Restoration and Rehabilitation grant. We have teamed up with the University of Sydney and three councils from SW Sydney – Camden, Campbelltown and Liverpool – to restore the floral diversity of six patches of Cumberland Plain Woodland adjacent to new housing developments.

We are working with the councils to start up new bushcare groups at each of the sites to encourage new residents in new housing developments to protect their local woodland. Concurrently, 'Bringing back the buzz' will be running an education program at school and community 'working bees' to encourage pollinator-friendly behaviour in suburban backyards. We'll be surveying insect pollinators throughout our project to see how they respond to our bush regeneration effort and improved habitat. Hopefully the results will be un-BEE-lievably fantastic!

*Nature NSW*, Vol. 60,  
No. 3 (Spring 2016)

## **Flooding wilderness, wild rivers and world heritage**

Two weeks before the federal election with Warragamba Dam threatening to spill due to severe storms, the Baird Government committed to raising the dam wall to prevent potential flood impacts on the marginally held seats in Western Sydney. The economic case and environmental impact statement for such a major project are years away, so it seems to be another case of decision, judgment later, for NSW.

This is not a new proposal. A similar scheme was defeated in 1995 following a strong campaign by the Kowmung Committee led by Andrew Cox, after the Greiner-Fahey Government had committed to raising the wall in 1993. The subsequent Carr Government then

*(continued next page)*

## PARKWATCH *(continued)*

approved construction of a large spillway beside the dam, completed in 2002, to protect it from major floods.

Raising Warragamba Dam's wall will inundate over 3,000 hectares of World Heritage listed national park land, wilderness and wild rivers. Lower reaches of protected wild rivers, including the Kowmung, Coxs and Nattai rivers, will be flooded. Temporary inundation caused by the proposal will scar wilderness areas, kill riverbank vegetation and deposit sediment. The affected parts of the southern Blue Mountains national parks, arguably the most protected parks in Australia, may have to be revoked as they will be degraded if the scheme proceeds.

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society is opposed to the development. Vice president Tara Cameron said: 'We are very concerned that between Badgery's Creek Airport and raising the Warragamba Dam wall, the World Heritage values of the Blue Mountains will be deemed at risk by UNESCO. Australia has an international obligation to protect these areas, not destroy them'.

The best way to reduce the impacts of flooding on people is to relocate low-lying homes and avoid further building in flood-prone areas. Floodplains are for floods and the proposed higher dam wall does not alter that fact.

Given Sydney Water's new capacity to access water from the lower levels of Warragamba Dam, and the water security provided by the desalination plant, a less damaging solution would be to reduce the dam's full storage level by a third and allow that proportion to be used for flood storage. The dam's hydroelectric plant could be refurbished and then operate to lower the stored water to desired levels following a flood, while generating electricity for the national grid. Efficient use of existing dam capacity, along with better flood planning and emergency response will save lives and the World Heritage area from an unnecessary \$700 million dam project and its contingent real estate development boom on the flood plain.

*Colong Bulletin*, No. 264  
(August 2016)

### **Native Broad-toothed Rat makes a comeback in the ACT**

Rat populations are not usually something to celebrate but an increase in Broad-toothed Rat numbers in the ACT has researchers excited. The Broad-toothed Rat is a medium-size native rodent which lives in alpine and subalpine swamps and grasslands. The rodent was nearly wiped out during the

2003 bushfires, which destroyed its habitat in areas of Namadgi National Park. A study by the ACT Government and the Australian National University found the species has recolonised burnt-out areas and returned to pre-fire distribution.

'A decade on, the habitat has recovered remarkably,' ACT Government senior ecologist Dr Murray Evans told 666 ABC Canberra's Drive program. 'Now that the habitat has rebounded, the Broad-toothed Rat has rebounded as well.'

The rise of the rat is an indicator of wider recovery at Namadgi National Park. 'Our ecosystems are pretty resilient to things like fire,' Dr Evans said. 'Species we've seen return [to Namadgi] are arboreal marsupials like gliders, possums – there's good populations of those. Some species are still struggling, like the Corroboree Frog, but overall I'd have to say the report card for Namadgi is looking pretty good. I don't know of any species that we've actually completely lost due to those 2003 fires'.

The Broad-toothed Rat is rare in the ACT and is in decline nationally. 'As well as climate change, which reduces habitat in alpine areas, the species faces other risks such as predation by foxes, habitat degradation by feral pigs and the spread of exotic grasses and plant foot fungus,' Dr Evans said. He said protecting habitat and national park corridors would go a long way to securing the rat's future.

'It's very important to have areas that are well connected ecologically where animals can move through from one habitat to another to recolonise if those populations are lost,' he said. 'It's also important to have large areas like Namadgi that are conserved – if Namadgi was highly broken up, there's a greater chance that you'll lose species such as the Broad-toothed Rat.'

*666 ABC News Canberra website,*  
accessed 20 October 2016

### **The national park experience**

*(Written by Michelle Prior,  
President NPAQ)*

A few years ago, I took a little jaunt on the Larapinta trail. Somewhat satisfied (and astonished) at our completion of 229 km, we moved onto the final celebrations – a family pilgrimage to the heart of Australia: Uluru and Kata Tjuta. The long-awaited destination was not the culmination I had naively believed it would be. Despite the indescribable brilliance of the rising of the July full moon over Uluru, the experience was shattered with the glare of vehicle head

lights, the blaring music and the party atmosphere in the carpark we were condemned to be in with countless others. Fair enough, I told myself – this is a special place, and the hordes of people had to be constrained in some way.

However, by dawn the next morning my patience was ground to dust, as red as the dust at my feet. Desiring to watch the sun stream its first glorious rays of the day on our world heritage listed icon, we attempted to 'fit' into the designated location in the pre-dawn. Desperately we fled, seeking to find a quiet place away from the hordes of camera-clasping, video-clutching, ear-plugged tourists crammed together in the barricaded area – all pushing for a front line spot.

After driving frantically to find an 'ecologically and culturally appropriate' place in which we could experience this magic sight unhindered, we finally found a spot to ourselves by the side of the road. Just as the sun's rays met the Rock and the magnificent spectrum of colours appeared, up pulled other vehicles, complete with music pumping.

The resounding stillness of the land was shattered. Our moment was gone, our singular communion with nature lost. I longed for the Larapinta Trail and that feeling of being an integral part in a land so vast, so steeped in time that it was beyond mental comprehension. The experience also highlighted why national parks matter to me. National parks protect nature's beauty and diversity, and help stem the destruction of the natural world in the push for never-ending development. They are the last bastion for conservation.

National parks connect us to our country, our land. They contribute to bridging the gap between the traditional peoples and those who have come after. They provide a place of refuge from our fast-paced and often stressful lives; and are invaluable in counterbalancing the urban life. National parks provide the opportunity to experience the glories, and the mundaneness of the Australian Bush. Superlative descriptions of Australia's national parks abound, particularly in tourist brochures. For me, they ring true, they live up to their expectations. But national parks do more than that, they take me beyond my small, human, constructed world to an expansive, astounding, natural domain. The untamed wildness of the bush realigns my internal compass and makes my spirit soar!

*Protected QNPA*, Issue 10  
(August–September 2016)

*(concluded on page 25)*



## **PARKWATCH** (continued)

### **Announcing Bushwalking101.org: Look, Learn, Explore!**

For a beginner, going bush is a very daunting task. Bushwalking101.org is a website to help people better settle into bushwalking with the NPA (NSW). It's about sharing 'bite-size' information and practical advice to new bushwalkers. Our hope is to encourage our new members to take up bushwalking as a lifelong passion and to continue to grow and improve their bushwalking skills. View the website. We love feedback.

*E-newsletter, NPA NSW,  
October 2016*

### **Review: Restoration conserv- ation: the Mulligans Flat and Goorooyarroo Woodland experiment**

*[Report of talk by Professor Adrian  
Manning on 20 July 2016 at  
Canberra Bushwalking Club.]*

Australia has an unenviable record when it comes to species extinction, accounting for 28 per cent of mammalian losses worldwide. The toll has been greatest among small mammals weighing between 350 and 550 grams. Around Canberra, the bettong has been gone for 80 to 100 years. Birdlife has been affected too. As suburban development has extended, the Hooded Robin and the Brown Tree-creeper have retreated from the city.

As a result of the declines, the community's understanding of ecological 'normality' changes. Expectations grow lower, and the constituency for conservation degrades. In a program designed to provide evidence to reverse these trends, the ANU, with partners CSIRO, James Cook University and the ACT Government, has implemented an ambitious program of restoration ecology at two dedicated nature reserves at Mulligans Flat and Goorooyarroo.

ANU's Adrian Manning took an appreciative CBC audience through the wide-ranging research that had been undertaken. The principal aim is to restore Box Gum woodland as the basis for supporting improved wildlife diversity. A key part of the restoration is based on the reintroduction of the bettong, a small burrowing marsupial that turns over and conditions soils as it searches for food. In addition, identified woodland compartments have been given different treatment (such as removing grazing marsupials) and the effects on broad species diversity measured. Ninety six 1-hectare sites are being carefully monitored in this way.

The results so far are encouraging. Tasmanian bettongs introduced to Mulligans Flat have thrived. The latest reintroduction is the Eastern Quoll. Some of the woodland treatments, such as the addition of dead wood to provide additional habitat, have been so successful, that they will be applied to other areas in the ACT. Most importantly, the community is involved with the projects, through a management subcommittee that oversees a range of land care activities, in partnership with ACT Parks and Conservation. The impact of actually seeing bettongs back where they once belonged is the most vivid possible demonstration of the importance of ecosystem restoration.

*it (magazine of the Canberra Bush-  
walking Club), August 2016*

### **Barrington Tops National Park expansion plan presented**

A proposal to extend the Barrington Tops National Park by about 9,500 hectares has been presented to Dungog Shire Council. The suggestion is to incorporate part of the Chichester State Forest in the adjacent World Heritage-listed park in the Upper Paterson and Allyn River Valleys. The submission was prepared by NPA NSW (Hunter Branch) in consultation with community groups in the Dungog and Gresford area. NPA NSW (Hunter Branch) president Ian Donovan said the extension would help preserve the area.

'The park extension will protect high natural and scenic values of the area, water catchments and rationalise land management arrangements,' Mr Donovan said. 'Importantly the submission to the NSW Government included an economic analysis highlighting the high tourism and recreational benefits that the proposal can bring to the area.'

A key part of the proposal was to improve public access to the southern end of the Barrington Tops National Park for recreational use. The submission also provided a framework for improving management of recreation in the Upper Allyn area. Additional NSW Government investment in tourism infrastructure has also been sought.

This year marks 60 years since the establishment of the NPA in the Hunter Region. Mr Donovan said the organisation had continued its support for nature conservation in the area after having a key role in the establishment of Barrington Tops National Park nearly 50 years ago.

Dungog Mayor, Councillor Harold Johnston, said he thought the proposal

was a good idea in principle. However, he said to make the extra land a worthwhile tourist attraction, there would need to be additional funding from all three levels of government. He said funding would be required for maintenance of the initial infrastructure as well as an upgrade of roads, picnic and camping areas. 'A lot of work has got to be done on what the impact of it will be, not only ecologically but financially,' Councillor Johnston said.

*Dungog Chronicle,  
28 September 2016*

### **Large increase in known population of Night Parrots**

A joint initiative by Australian Wildlife Conservancy and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) has uncovered the largest known population of the endangered Night Parrot in Diamantina National Park.

A field survey led by AWC Senior Field Ecologist, John Young – who in 2013 became the first person in over a century to find a living Night Parrot – has confirmed a significant increase in its known population and distribution.

Exploring remote sections of Diamantina National Park by helicopter, all-terrain vehicle and on foot, John Young located three nests, observed birds at these three nests and at another location, and identified birds at three additional locations by their distinctive call. John was assisted by AWC Senior Ecologist Dr Rod Kavanagh, and by a number of experienced volunteers.

AWC scientists have developed a habitat model which indicates a large area of Diamantina National Park is preferred roosting habitat for Night Parrots. It is hoped the model will help identify and protect additional populations of the Night Parrot.

*Australian Wildlife Conservancy.*

### **Lachlan Valley National Park**

The NSW Government has declared as national park an additional area of over 20,000 hectares between the towns of Hay and Balranald NSW. The area has Lachlan River frontage and links separate portions of the former Kalyarr National Park.

*NSW Government Gazette  
No. 88 (4 November 2016)*

**Compiled by Hazel Rath**

# NPA notices

## National Parks Association Calendar

	December	January	February	March
Public holidays	Sun 25– Tues 27	Sun 1–Mon 2, Thurs 26	—	Mon 13
General meetings	—	—	Thurs 16	Thurs 16
Committee meetings	Tues 6	—	Tues 7	Tues 7
Gudgeny Bush Regeneration <sup>1</sup>	Sat 10 <sup>2</sup>	—	Sat 11	Sat 11
Glenburn work party <sup>3</sup>	—	—	Tues 7	—
NPA Christmas Party	Sun 11			

Further details: 1. GBRG. Meet at Namadgi Visitor Centre 9.15 am.  
 2. Includes GBRG Christmas Party.  
 3. Friends of Glenburn meet at Canberra Railway Station, Kingston at 9.00 am, or at the locked gate off the Kings Highway at 9.20 am.

## New members of the association



The NPA ACT welcomes

Anastasia Sim and  
 Carol Anderson

as new members.

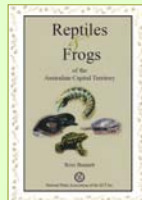
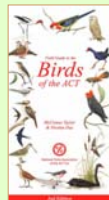
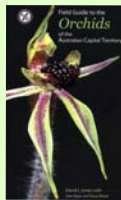
We look forward to seeing you at NPA activities.

## Call for volunteers

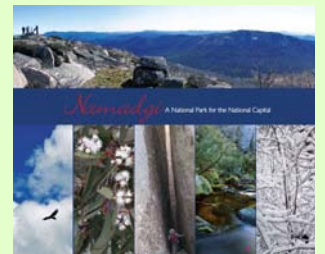
At every NPA general meeting volunteers from the membership set up the hall and the supper. We need more volunteers for 2016 as the roster is by no means full. Please contact Quentin Moran if you would like to help on [qmoran@webone.com.au](mailto:qmoran@webone.com.au)

Thank you

NPA books available from some bookshops (eg ANBG), or contact the association office



Butterfly book in press.



## Contributions for the NPA Bulletin

Contributions of articles, letters, poems, drawings and photographs are always welcome. If possible keep contributions to no more than 1,000 words. Items accepted for publication will be subject to editing and may also be published on the NPA website. Send all items to the *Bulletin* Team, email [admin@npaact.org.au](mailto:admin@npaact.org.au), or to the NPA ACT postal address (see page 27).

**Deadline for the March 2017 issue:**  
 31 January 2017.

This *Bulletin* was prepared by:

Editor, Max Lawrence

Subeditor, Ed Highley

Presentation, Adrienne Nicholson.

## Its all happening at Mulligans

**Note** there is now a Facebook page for Mulligans Flat Sanctuary where people can keep up to date with developments there.

You can find it by Googling

**The Wild Things of Mulligans Flat.**

## NPA ACT Christmas Party

**Namadgi Visitor Centre**

**Sunday 11 December**  
 from 11.00 am

Bring your picnic lunch and Christmas cheer.

Nibbles, some drinks and Christmas cake will be provided.

Check *Burning Issues* or the NPA website for last minute details.

Contact an NPA committee member if you need a lift, or for further information.

## Cover photographs

### Front cover

**Main photo.** *Grevillea sessilis*, White Mountains CG track, Central Queensland (article page 18). Photo by Rupert Barnett.

**Insets. Top.** *Yellow Admiral*, butterfly wings close up (see page 9). Photo by Adrienne Nicholson.

**Centre.** Rick Shine, winner of NPA ACT's 1967 schools essay competition, wins the 2016 Prime Minister's Prize for Science (article, page 8).

**Bottom.** Bilby's Ring books have been presented to ACT primary schools (article page 3).

### Back cover

**Top.** Cockburn Range, WA, from the Pentecost River crossing (article page 20). Photo from Philip and Jan Gatenby.

**Bottom.** Dargonelly CG waterholes, Mount Moffat National Park, Queensland (article page 18). Photo by Rupert Barnett.

# General Meetings

Third Thursday of the month, (not December or January)  
8.00 pm, Uniting Church hall, 56 Scrivener Street, O'Connor



There is no  
General Meeting in  
December 2016 or  
January 2017

## Thursday 16 February

*Effect of coarse woody debris on  
browsing inside woodland reserves*

**Joseph Stapleton**

Joseph was the recipient of the 2016  
NPA ACT Student Scholarship at the  
Fenner School, ANU.

High herbivore densities in ACT  
reserves can repress regeneration, one  
ecosystem feature that may reduce  
browsing is coarse woody debris  
(CWD). Recently, CWD has been  
manually applied into endangered  
woodland reserves. This study looks at  
whether this can help reduce browsing  
and how it compares to CWD from  
natural sources.

## Thursday 16 March

*Adventures with Rosie: monitoring  
Rosenberg's monitor on Mount Ainslie 2013 –  
2016*

**Matthew Higgins**

Historian and outdoor enthusiast.

Rosenberg's Monitor, a large goanna rarely  
seen in the ACT, is listed as a threatened spe-  
cies in NSW, Vic. and SA. Matthew looks at  
key activities of these beautiful reptiles,  
recorded on Mount Ainslie. The project was  
a partnership between Matthew and ACT  
Government Senior Ecologist Don Fletcher.  
Rosenbergs lay their eggs in termite mounds  
and Matthew took what are probably the first  
ever photographs of egg-laying and hatching in  
the Territory, and for a good distance beyond.

### National Parks Association of the ACT Incorporated

Inaugurated 1960

#### Aims and objectives of the Association

- Promotion of national parks and of measures for the protection of fauna and flora, scenery, natural features and cultural heritage 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 and cultural heritage by organised field outings, meetings or any other means.
- Cooperation with organisations and persons having similar interests and objectives.
- Promotion of, and education for, conservation, and the planning of landuse to achieve conservation.

#### Office bearers

<i>President</i>	vacant
<i>Vice-President</i>	Christine Goonrey 6231 8395 (h) cgoonrey@grapevine.com.au
<i>Secretary</i>	Sonja Lenz 6251 1291 (h) sonjalenz67@gmail.com
<i>Treasurer</i>	Chris Emery 6249 7604 (h) chris.emery@optusnet.com.au

#### Committee members

Isobel Crawford	6257 1660 (h) orru@iinet.net.au
Esther Gallant (Minutes Secretary)	6161 4514 (h) galla001@umn.edu
Rod Griffiths (Immediate Past President)	6288 6988 (h) rod.blackdog@gmail.com
George Heinsohn	6278 6655 (h) george.heinsohn@gmail.com
Kevin McCue	6251 1291 (h) mccue.kevin@gmail.com
Quentin Moran	6288 9840 (h) qmoran@webone.com.au

#### Conveners

<i>Outings Subcommittee</i>	Vacant admin@npaact.org.au
<i>Environment Subcommittee</i>	Rod Griffiths 6288 6988 (h) rod.blackdog@gmail.com
<i>Cultural Subcommittee</i>	Quentin Moran 6288 9840 qmoran@webone.com.au
<i>Publications Subcommittee</i>	Kevin McCue 6251 1291 (h) mccue.kevin@gmail.com
<i>Promotion and Engagement Subcommittee</i>	Vacant
<i>Bulletin Working Group</i>	Kevin McCue 6251 1291 (h) mccue.kevin@gmail.com
<i>NPA Work Party Co-ordinator</i>	Martin Chalk 6292 3502 (h) mcchalk1@bigpond.com
<i>Glenburn/Burbong Work Parties</i>	Col McAlister 6288 4171 (h) cvmac@grapevine.com.au

**The NPA ACT office** is in Unit 14 / 26 Lena Karmel Lodge, Barry Drive, Acton, together with the Conservation Council. It is staffed by volunteers on an irregular basis. Callers may leave phone or email messages at any time.

**Phone:** (02) 6229 3201 or 0410 875 731 (if urgent)

**Website:** www.npaact.org.au

**Email:** admin@npaact.org.au

**Address:** GPO Box 544, Canberra ACT 2601

**Facebook:**

www.facebook.com/NationalParksAssociationOfTheAct

#### Membership subscription rates (1 July to 30 June)

The subscription rate is \$22, which includes a **digital copy only** of our *Bulletin*.

If you want to receive a printed copy of the *Bulletin*, the subscription rates are:

Household membership	\$44	Single members	\$38.50
Corporate membership	\$33	Full-time student/Pensioner	\$22

Note: All the above subscription categories reduce to \$11 if a donation of \$100 or more is made.

#### Advertising

The *NPA Bulletin* accepts advertisements and inserts. Contact the NPA office for information and rates.

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For information on NPA ACT activities, please visit our website <http://www.npaact.org.au>  
and follow us at [www.facebook.com/NationalParksAssociationOfTheAct](http://www.facebook.com/NationalParksAssociationOfTheAct)

