



NPA *Bulletin*

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National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory Inc.



**Club Lake
walk**



**Butterfly book
launched**



**Mattresses to
bales of steel**

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

CONTENTS

From the Editor's desk.....2 <i>Kevin McCue</i>	National Parks Australia Council AGM.....11
From the committee	Ox-eye Daisy alert.....11
Welcome, members and friends, to 2017.....3 <i>Rod Griffiths</i>	ACT environmental news12
Grassland (Southern Lined) Earless Dragon project3 <i>Chris Emery</i>	NPA outings program, March – June 201713–16
Developments on a new northern national park4 <i>Kevin McCue and Rod Griffiths</i>	NPA ACT Christmas Party 2016.....17 <i>Photo montage</i>
Managing bushfire risks.....4 <i>Christine Goonrey</i>	'Soft Landing' for old mattresses at the tip18 <i>Esther Gallant</i>
Symposium notice5	Bushwalks
Butterfly book launched.....6 <i>Sonja Lenz</i>	Club Lake and Kunama Hutte ruins19 <i>Brian Slee</i>
Book review. <i>Field Guide to the Butterflies of the ACT</i> by Suzi Bond with Steve Holliday and John Stein.....7 <i>Rupert Barnett</i>	Up the Burrungubugge20 <i>Philip Gatenby</i>
Not dead yet: rejuvenation of the River Red Gum8 population at Spring Station Creek <i>Isobel Crawford</i>	Gubur Dhaura ('Red Ochre Ground').....21 and Gungaderra Creek <i>Brian Slee</i>
Ongoing research in Namadgi9 <i>Kevin McCue</i>	Wandering Weeders on the Mountain22 <i>Kevin McCue</i>
Conservation Council events10	PARKWATCH23 <i>Compiled by Hazel Rath</i>
	NPA notices.....26
	Meetings and speaker information.....27
	NPA information and contacts27

From the Editor's desk

In this issue of the *Bulletin* we congratulate authors Suzi Bond, Steve Holliday and John Stein and thank the NPA team of Sonja Lenz, Esther Gallant, Adrienne Nicholson and Ed Highley [and myself!], and designer Mariana Rollgejser, for a spectacular book all about butterflies (pages 6–7). We are elated to see it published, and gratified that it has been well received by the public – we're already thinking about a reprint.

While the butterfly book has been a very public activity of NPA ACT, behind the scenes another huge success is that a northern ACT national park is a step closer (page 4). For this, we say to Rod Griffiths and the Environment Subcommittee, well done! Another important activity, the symposium on fire management to be held in July (pages 4–5) and convened by our own Christine Goonrey, will illuminate the way ahead for community input into, and understanding of, bushfire management, and help to take the ACT public along on the path to fire resilience.

Human greed, intolerance and ignorance, or a combination of these, have driven many animal species to

extinction. Once great forests are being savaged for woodchips here in Australia (page 11). But again, here in the ACT, we have a good news story – the successful breeding of the Eastern Bettong in a sanctuary (see *NPA Bulletin*, March 2016). It and the Bush Stone-curlew, the Northern Corroboree Frog, New Holland Mouse, Magpie Goose, Cape Barren Goose, Southern Bandicoot, Spotted Quoll, Koala, Rock Wallaby, Green and Golden Bell Frog among others were driven to extinction by the activities of our forebears in the ACT over just the past 150 years.

Whether any or all of these species can be bred and successfully reintroduced into the wild outside a sanctuary is problematic, but we can help achieve this goal by:

- ridding the ACT of feral foxes and cats as a necessary first step
- providing safe road crossings, under- or overpasses to stop the carnage of native animals on our roads
- learning how the environment cycle works – removing 95 per cent of grassy woodlands surely has important consequences for the animal world and ultimately for humans

- not burning the bush too frequently. This has serious consequences for insects and other small critters that live in the leaf litter and recycle soil nutrients to keep the undergrowth alive, prevent erosion, grow orchids and other native flowers, and the next generation of trees (page 4).

Learning, for instance, all about the life cycles of the many beautiful species of butterfly that waft through our gardens and open spaces is essential if we want to conserve them – we do, don't we? Our new butterfly book will help.

There is huge value in maintaining as much of the natural habitat as we can, forgoing some of the pleasures of 4-wheel driving, cycling, fishing and shooting in protected areas, to give other animals a chance. The long-term survival of humans on Earth may depend on the ecological values inherent in protected areas – is the cost of their maintenance too high a price to pay?

Kevin McCue

From the committee



Welcome, members and friends, to 2017

The NPA Committee is expecting another active year, which has already kicked off with significant developments relating to the proposed new national park (see article on page 4) and an increased focus on ecotourism by the ACT Government. This increased focus has resulted in the issuing of a request for proposals for the 'Provision of Eco-accommodation, Volunteer Guide Management and Nature Based Tourism Experiences'. This proposal seeks:

the 'holistic management of an "on-reserve" eco style housing portfolio', as well as the 'development of sensitive, appropriate nature based tourism experiences that build on existing natural and cultural values within the Territory'.

The NPA believes that familiarity with the bush breeds understanding but, in seeking to achieve this, the primary responsibility of our conservation reserves remains the protection of the natural environment. The NPA will therefore be closely monitoring progress on ecotourism proposals and will work

to ensure only appropriate projects are implemented.

The last few months have been busy despite the festive season. In December we saw the successful launch of the *Field Guide to the Butterflies of the ACT*. This has proved to be an immensely popular book and has opened many pairs of eyes to the diversity of the butterfly world in the ACT. The Publications Subcommittee is already thinking about the need for a reprint!

Work on the new edition of the NPA's *Field Guide to the Native Trees of the ACT* continues and it will be a worthy successor to the current edition.

The NPA has had stalls at the environmental fair in December and the open day at Jerrabomberra Wetlands (see photos on page 10). Both stalls were well patronised and have contributed to strong sales of the NPA's publications.

Following the ACT election, the NPA congratulated the successful candidates and offered to take them on a bushwalk as an opportunity to showcase the importance of the ACT's reserves. There has been a positive response to this offer

and it is expected that the various walks will take place from April.

The Environment Subcommittee is currently putting together a response to the draft management plan for the Lower Cotter Catchment (LCC). The LCC adjoins Namadgi National Park and, in the future, as the natural environment recovers from the 2003 bushfires, it is likely that much of the LCC will be incorporated into Namadgi. The proposed plan of management is therefore of key interest to the NPA.

As always, these are just some of the activities involving the NPA and your participation, no matter how small, will be welcomed. Please do not hesitate to contact any of the committee members if you would like to offer your support.

Rod Griffiths



Grassland (Southern Lined) Earless Dragon project

While searching for a suitable Honours project/scholarship to fund from a recently received bequest, we were offered an interesting option from the University of Canberra. As it does not meet the requirements of the bequest, your committee has decided to fund this project from consolidated revenue.

The Grassland Earless Dragon, *Tympanocryptis pinguicolla*, (see page 49 of our *Field Guide to the Reptiles & Frogs of the Australian Capital Territory*) is one of Australia's most endangered reptiles. Once occurring in temperate grasslands across south-eastern Australia, *T. pinguicolla* now exists in only a few small and fragmented populations in the ACT/Queanbeyan area and near Cooma

(NSW). Reasons for its decline are varied but include habitat clearance and fragmentation, and more subtle causes such as habitat degradation (through stock or kangaroo grazing) and agricultural practices. Climate change is also likely to increase the threats to this species.

In collaboration with the ACT Government, the University of Canberra has collected mark-recapture data from populations of the species using back-pattern recognition. In this project, the student will survey the lizard in key population localities within the ACT, combine the data with captures from previous years, and then use the total dataset to develop a population dynamic model for the species. The goal will be to

predict the future population trajectories for the species and the likelihood of its extinction.

Project expenditure would be \$10,000: \$5,000 for a student scholarship and \$5,000 for field work expenses. The project supervisor will be Professor Stephen Sarre. We look forward to the selected student giving us a presentation at a general meeting sometime after June 2018, following completion of the project.

Chris Emery
Treasurer



Life membership of NPA ACT

The committee is again calling for nominations for Honorary Life Membership. If you know a member who has done something very special for our association and is worthy of this recognition, please send a confidential nomination to the secretary Sonja Lenz by mid-April (signed by yourself and another member who seconds the nomination). Further information on what to put into the nomination can be found on the NPA website or by contacting Kevin McCue on 6251 1291 or email mccue.kevin@gmail.com



Developments on a new northern national park

Rod Griffiths wrote the first proposal in NPA ACT's campaign for a new northern national park in the ACT back in April 2009 (published in the *NPA Bulletin*, June 2009) and discussed it with the then Chief Minister Jon Stanhope in September 2009.

In October 2010, the Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment (OCSE), in response to a direction from the then Chief Minister, instigated an enquiry into Canberra Nature Park, Molonglo River Corridor and Googong Foreshores.

By March 2011, the NPA ACT proposal incorporated the ACT's nationally significant lowland grassy woodlands into a single reserve to consolidate the management of these important ecosystems (*NPA Bulletin*, March 2011).

Following the OCSE report, the ACT's Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment, Dr Maxine Cooper, commissioned a report in 2011

titled 'Should Goorooyaroo, Mulligans Flat, Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie become a National Park or remain as discrete Nature Reserves as part of Canberra Nature Park?'. Following publication of its findings, Rod Griffiths as President of NPA ACT wrote on 4 June 2011 complimenting OCSE on the report and not only supported the proposition but suggested adding other reserves and providing connectivity between them. The establishment of a national park would help raise community awareness of the importance of these ecosystems and provide impetus to achieve greater on- and off-reserve connectivity.

Just before the 2016 ACT election, the proposal was aired prominently in a Conservation Council of the ACT Region forum attended by electoral nominees from the Liberal, Labor and Greens ACT parties, who were asked whether they supported such a proposal. The NPA was heartened when the subsequent Labor/Greens parliamentary agreement included

a commitment to investigate the feasibility of the new national park proposal. (A copy of the proposal can be found on the NPA's website.) In early February 2017, Mr Mick Gentleman, the ACT's Minister for the Environment and Heritage, announced the formation of a reference group to investigate the proposal.

As one of a range of stakeholders, the NPA has been asked to nominate a representative to the reference group with the first meeting to be held in early March – watch this space!

Compiled by Kevin McCue on consultation with Rod Griffiths



Managing bushfire risks

NPA ACT has a proud history of working with the community, government and scientists to understand how we can better manage the risks of bushfire. With summers like this one just passed, we believe it is even more important for us all to understand how the risks of bushfires are being managed and what the implications are for our environment.

It is 13 years since the bushfires of 2003 devastated parts of our city. In the current bushfire season of 2016–17, heatwaves have flooded through the south-eastern states of Australia with temperatures regularly reaching 35–44°C and Canberra recording its hottest January ever. A flow of hot air from the Centre sucked the moisture out of grasslands and forests, and sent grass fires tearing through communities and destroying homes around Canberra. The risk of fire has not diminished; it has grown more urgent as climate change begins to bite.

Consequently, NPA ACT is holding a community symposium in July to discuss research, management strategies and community expectations for fire management in the ACT in a changing climate. The symposium aims to ensure an informed ACT community will be able to contribute positively to ACT

government policy, goal setting and strategic directions on fire management.

The symposium will explore the legal setting for bushfire management in the ACT; i.e. what has to be done according to the current laws. In the face of so many conflicting ideas and theories about fire management, we also want to explore the social, economic and personal values each of us bring to the debate. We need to understand the data and modeling which we rely on to estimate the risks involved in different approaches, and what research is saying about the best ways to mitigate those risks.

We need to see clear links between current research and fire management strategies because the environmental risks if we get our approaches wrong could involve the loss of species, ecosystems and even existing natural landscape resilience to fire.

One of the most exciting strategies emerging in the ACT is learning from Indigenous fire practices but the question remains: How do we incorporate that learning into fire management practices? Other key issues to be explored at the symposium include managing the bush–urban interface and the effects of prescribed burning on public health, water, and flora and fauna.

A key objective of the symposium will be to strengthen the responsibility shared between government, researchers and the community for managing fire hazards. We want to build a pathway for the community to interact effectively with the fire management planning processes over the next few years.

So mark the dates in your calendar and encourage people to attend. We need to build community-supported fire management strategies that protect life, property and the environment.

Community Symposium – Bushfire Management: Balancing the Risks
Friday–Saturday, 21–22 July 2017
Pilgrim House
Northbourne Avenue
Canberra City ACT 2601

Christine Gooney
(flyer on facing page)





ACT
Government



National Parks Association of the ACT

Bushfire Management

- Balancing the Risks

Friday 21 – Saturday 22 July 2017

Pilgrim House, 69 Northbourne Avenue,
Civic ACT 2601

A community symposium to discuss research, strategies and expectations for fire management in the ACT in a changing climate

Aim: an informed ACT community able to contribute positively to ACT government policy, goal setting and strategic directions of fire management

Themes include:

- **Law and legislation:** what is the legal setting for bushfire management in the ACT?
- **Understanding hazards and risks:** what data and modelling do we rely on to understand fire hazards and risks?
- **Values:** what social, economic and personal values do we bring to fire management?
- **Mitigating hazards and risks:** knowing our risk models and our values, what mitigation strategies do we turn to? What have we learned from past bushfires and prescribed burning? How do we measure reduction of risks?
- **Linking research and management:** how is current research changing our options?
- **Environmental risks and climate change:** as if it wasn't complicated enough already, how do we deal with new and complex problems presented by climate change?
- **Indigenous fire management:** how do we incorporate the sophisticated fire management used by indigenous people into current fire management practices?
- **Wildland/urban interface:** as the 'bush capital' how does the ACT deal with its special interest in balancing fire management, urban development, conservation and recreation; including consideration of fire prone urban areas; FarmFirewise; asset protection zones?
- **Fire impacts:** what public accountability is needed when fire management impacts on water, vegetation, weeds, fauna, insects and people, eg smoke impact on health?
- **Shared responsibility:** what is our shared responsibility for managing fire hazards and risks and how can the community interact effectively with the fire management planning process?

Contact: Clare Henderson
campaign@conservationcouncil.org.au
phone 0412 425 665

Butterfly book launched



Book launch photographs by Chris Emery (CE) and Esther Gallant (EG).

1. Some of the capacity crowd in the Crosbie Morrison Building at the ANBG for the book launch on 13 December. (CE)
2. The books arrive! (CE)
3. Setting up the sales tables (EG)
4. MC Christine Goonrey introducing the speaker Genevieve Jacobs. Author Suzi Bond looks on. (CE)
5. Genevieve Jacobs launching the book. (CE)
6. Lead author Suzi Bond signing books. (CE)



The butterfly book

The NPA agreed to publish the *Field Guide to the Butterflies of the Australian Capital Territory* in 2014, but serious effort on the NPA's working group's tasks did not begin until 2016 (see also *NPA Bulletin*, December 2016). An agreement with the lead author was signed in July of that year, and the text, albeit not yet complete, was delivered to the group, together with many photographs. Numerous meetings and many hours of concentrated work followed, during which the group massaged the text into a more consistent format and removed all unnecessary duplication of information.

This text and the photos were then passed to the designer, Mariana Rollgejser. What a revelation it was to see her design combine the two components of the book – all our work suddenly had a visual impact!

The 2016–17 butterfly season was now well underway and Christmas was moving closer. The authors were busily surveying for butterflies, updating their distribution maps and collecting more

photos. Updates to the book were coming thick and fast, such that the design for some species needed to be modified considerably to accommodate the new data. It was rapidly getting to the deadline for the printer and still there were better photos and new information coming in.

The book also urgently needed copyediting. Ed Highley completed that task while indexes were still being completed and existing photos replaced by even better ones. My hopes were fading fast that we could complete the final copy in time for the printer and the potential Christmas sales bonanza. The date for the launch had already been publicised: would we make it?

We did and what a relief that was, and it saw this field guide becoming NPA's fastest-selling book.

My thanks go to the authors, the many photographers, the designer,



Esther, Adrienne, Kevin and Ed for all pulling together in what was a stressful, but also exciting, last couple of weeks and days.

Sonja Lenz

Book review

Field Guide to the Butterflies of the ACT

by Suzi Bond, with Steve Holliday and John Stein

National Parks Association of the ACT

2016 229 pages

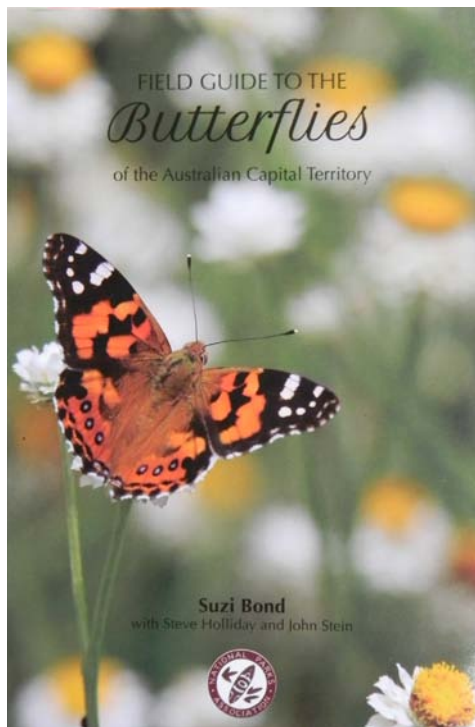
RRP \$30

Most of us probably started taking note of butterflies when we made a net to catch the white ones fluttering over the veggies. I quickly learnt it was much harder to catch them than the picture books suggested, that if I did catch one I was supposed to squash it, and even if I did it made no difference to their numbers.

Fast forward a few decades and most of us had become more aware of butterflies and other insects around us, though we probably still had not learnt much more about them despite the big increase in available information. However, getting a name was rarely as easy as looking up a field guide for, say, birds, mostly because butterflies wouldn't stand still or if you did get a good look the pictures in the books were endless.

Recently too there has been a burst of online sites put up by both public and private organisations that present a range of Australia's insects. However, with an estimated 20,000 species of butterflies and moths in Australia and only half of them described, the chances remain small, as you scan hundreds more pictures, that you'll be exclaiming 'Aha!'

But now we've got the 'butterfly book' for the ACT. Author Dr Suzi Bond tells us that of those recognised species (in the order Lepidoptera) in Australia, just 435 are butterflies, and only 87 have been reported in the ACT. The book describes all of these and, briefly, a score of commonly-occurring moths.



It does the job well. There are introductions to the evolution and anatomy of the group and their life cycles and habits, and practical topics such as suitable plants for your garden. The selection of enough information to allow readers to (mostly) identify a species without using formal key or technical terms must have been a tricky juggle for the authors because without that precision more errors in identification are likely. However, I've no doubt the book will prove popular, so that if there are some wrong attributions it's because many more are correct.

Each species is given a double page, one descriptive and the other showing photos – typically male and female, and upper and undersides of the wings, if these differ. There is usually also its egg, larva and pupa, and a map of its occurrence in the ACT. The photos are mostly excellent, which must have taken an immense and ongoing dedication by the authors and sources on which they draw.

The specimens are presented in five colour-coded families which, if each were easily distinguishable would simplify identification, but I'll need to do more chasing before I recognise features that separate Swallowtails from Jezebels or learn why a Yellow Jewel is a Blue. But we are lucky to live in the ACT – we have to thumb through fewer than a hundred.

Separating butterflies and moths is a different challenge. It seems there are so many species that don't fit convenient groupings that it might be better if we treated those terms as synonymous.

I've used the book to ID a number of photos (I hope), then gone online for more pictures and information. It's not always clear-cut though; my brown almost matched a described species in shape but not colour, and lacked the embroidered margin. Then I realised the edge was tattered and the wings split, and found the note reminding me that butterflies can show their age. With it was an image of my 'unlisted' specimen.

The NPA ACT Publications Subcommittee was much involved in the preparation of the book, as Kevin McCue described in the December 2016 issue of the NPA *Bulletin*; we are grateful.

A reprint could allow improvement of some photos and, reflecting my observation above, include the 'Selected Moths' in the indexes. A few words on a species' distributions outside the ACT would also be of value to many. However, the issue that must be addressed is the book's binding – for the present print run some force is required to hold pages open. That's nuisance enough when using it to find images on a computer but almost impossible in the field when trying to compare species.

We can also hope there are plans to extend this project to cover the ACT's moths. It's unlikely to be a field guide – but maybe an app?

Rupert Barnett



Left. Greenish Grass-dart, *Ocybadistes walkeri*.

Photo by Esther Gallant.

Right. Mating pair of Cabbage Whites, *Pieris rapae* (male to the right).

Photo by Rupert Barnett.



Not dead yet: rejuvenation of the River Red Gum population at Spring Station Creek



The sole naturally occurring population of River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* in the ACT is 1.5 km south of Tharwa, just past the Spring Station Creek single-lane bridge. The single mature adult tree would appear to have had many lives, in the way of this species. Its four large trunks appear to be pre-invasion post-fire regeneration, as they are estimated to be hundreds of years old.

Ian Brooker was a eucalypt specialist at the then Forestry and Timber Bureau, and his curiosity was piqued by this large tree. In 1975 he collected flowering material which he initially identified as the River Red Gum's close relative, Blakely's Red Gum (*E. blakelyi*). Subsequent collections of fruits by Ian and his colleague David Kleinig in 1978 and 1980 changed his mind. With their atypical light yellowish seeds, and buds with their distinctive short-beaked rounded caps, they and the original material were identified as the typical

form of River Red Gum. Seedlings grown from this material displayed the slightly narrower leaves associated with River Red Gums.

Clive Hurlstone described why and how NPA ACT had started caring for this population (NPA *Bulletin* 45(2), June 2008). He described two 2008 work parties and noted that three sapling River Red Gums had been identified by Ian Brooker. Two are in the south-western corner of the enclosure organised by Peter Ormay, and probably erected in the early 1980s to protect the mature adult and saplings, and to encourage further regeneration.

Martin Chalk described two work parties held last spring to cut and dab blackberry (NPA *Bulletin* 53(4), December 2016) and to shorten the pendulous lower dead branches of the adult River Red Gum to reduce its vulnerability to fire. They had died during the Millennium drought and subsequently been accidentally burned in a summer grass fire from the paddock to the west. By chance, a passing Namadgi ranger had been able to extinguish the fire. Martin also noted the very exciting discovery last spring of young River Red Gums, some in the south-eastern corner of the enclosure, and others along the road verge and in the model aeroplane paddock to the south.

In this article, I delve further into the finding of these young plants, among the blackberry and/or long grasses, and the apparently successful transplanting of three individuals.

During the September 2016 work party, Adrienne Nicholson and others found eight very small narrow-leaved River Red Gum seedlings to 18 cm under the blackberry mass in the south-eastern corner of the enclosure. Seven were marked with stakes.

On the road verge east of the adult tree, four narrow-leaved River Red Gum plants of varying ages were recorded. The oldest is a very unhealthy sapling to 4 m, which might have been affected by weedicide. Two of the three younger ones had been repeatedly mown over the last few years, and had therefore produced multiple young stems. The fourth appeared to be from seed germinated in 2016. All were marked with stakes and flagging tape, and Bernie Brown, the ranger, has asked mowing and weeding contractors to take care.

As well, I found 10 seedlings to 35 cm high in the adjacent Namadgi Sports Flying Club paddock south of the enclosure. Five were transplanted, three

(continued next page)



Top left. The base of the grand old River Red Gum showing blackberries sprayed on 12 December 2016. Note the rampant blackberry growth over the fence to the right.

Top right. River Red Gum sapling on the roadside.

Left. Small seedling in the south-east corner of the enclosure.

Above. Transplanted River Red Gum seedling.

Photos by John Brickhill.

Ongoing research in Namadgi

Back in May 2006, a symposium convened by NPA ACT sought to identify scientific research being undertaken in Namadgi National Park that would influence park management decisions. Many surprises came out of that meeting, one being the diversity of research being pursued, and another that the research was not strategically driven but mostly done opportunistically to pursue answers to very focused questions aligned with the interests of the researchers.

A decade on, I posed the question again, this time to the Senior Parks and Conservation Ranger at Namadgi, Ben Stevenson – what research is being done? (it can be undertaken only with the permission of park management).

A list of project descriptions and institutions he sent me included some of the following:

- Ecological integrity for measuring national park management effectiveness – ANU
- eDNA sampling for detecting presence of Northern Corroboree Frogs in sphagnum bogs – UC
- RHDV for rabbit control – CSIRO
- Bird banding – CSIRO
- Ongoing native fish research in the Cotter River – UC
- Cotter River hydrology projects – several
- Bluegum Flats natural history – ANU



Some successful River Red Gum seedlings along the Murrumbidgee River Corridor.

Photos courtesy of Parks Conservation and Lands.

- Aboriginal site preservation and restoration (GBRG involved)
- Planting a million trees in the ACT by 2018, many of them in ACT nature parks and reserves as a contribution to global climate change minimisation
- Kangaroo and dingo populations.

The list does not include ACT Government projects and data collection on major interests such as:

- feral animal monitoring and control – pigs, horses, deer, rabbits, foxes and cats
- water quality monitoring (in which NPA ACT is involved through Martin Chalk)
- bushfire management
- weed control (NPA ACT and GBRG have regular work parties to remove broom, willow, briars etc.)
- restoring the bush to something like its pre-European state by removing unneeded fences and feral trees, planting trees and shrubs where necessary etc. (NPA ACT and GBRG again actively involved).

NPA members are involved, as you can see, in many aspects of park management but there is scope for greater involvement, especially in the eDNA sampling and bird-banding projects. Do volunteer if you are interested and available. Contact me on 02 6251 1291.

Kevin McCue



Not dead yet: rejuvenation of the River Red Gum population ... *(continued)*

to the north-western corner and two along the southern edge of the enclosure. The northern end of the club's paddock is not mown as often as the southern end, closer to the clubhouse, and it also has less African Lovegrass. But the ground layer vegetation there was less dense than under the mature tree inside the enclosure, where no regeneration was recorded. In a discussion with Clem Kyle and Ken Lee, the president and secretary respectively of the flying club, it was agreed that we could mark the seedlings with protective stakes.

All the young plants recorded so far are from south to east of the adult, so would appear to have germinated from seed blown by the prevailing winds from the north-west. The unusually heavy rains of last winter and spring probably encouraged the germination of seed which, in drier seasons, may not have responded.

Bernie Brown and NPA members have done further weediciding of the blackberry regeneration. Some watering of the seedlings has also been done.

So now there is not just one very mature adult River Red Gum and three healthy saplings to ca 2 m, but two younger cohorts as well. In the first week of February 2017, while watering the young plants, John Brickhill and I counted three surviving transplanted individuals in the north-western corner of the enclosure, five naturally occurring ones along the enclosure's southern edge, 24 in the eastern-most flying club paddock and three to the west of this group.

Isobel Crawford

Conservation Council events

The Conservation Council Canberra Region conducts regular 'Environment Exchanges' through the year to provide in-depth discussions on a range of environmental topics.

New venue: the Renewable Energy Hub, 19–23 Moore Street, Turner (just off Barry Drive) and
new day: Tuesday not Thursday. 12–2pm with a light lunch provided and donations welcome.

Planned topics are:

- Tuesday 22 March: Using Nature for Power: How soon to a 100 per cent renewable energy future?

- Tuesday 18 April: Climate Change Action: Getting to zero net emissions
- Tuesday 23 May: Overcoming the Growing Pains: Building a sustainable compact city
- Tuesday 27 June: Reducing Canberra's Waste Mountain

And more events:

- Saturday 16 March 9.30–16.00 — 'Being an Effective Voice for the Environment' symposium
- Saturday 3 June 7pm — World Environment Day Dinner
- Friday 21–Saturday 22 July — 'Bushfire Management – Balancing

the Risks', a symposium with the National Parks Association of the ACT, Conservation Council, Parks and Conservation Service and Emergency Services Agency.

NPA ACT is a member group of the Conservation Council. If you are interested in participating in any of its events, put the dates in your diary and get all the details from its website: <http://conservationcouncil.org.au/>.



How many books are you buying, Rod? The NPA stall at the Ecoelves market on 2 December 2016. Photo courtesy of Esther Gallant.



Setting up the NPA display at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands open day on 5 February 2017. Photo by Esther Gallant.

Butterfly, butterfly

(For the child inside.)

Butterfly, butterfly, where have you been?
 In my sleeping bag having a big dream.
 Butterfly, butterfly, when will we fly?
 As soon as my wings are unfolded and dry.
 Butterfly, butterfly, what will we do there?
 We'll sail like the birds and flutter through the air.
 Butterfly, butterfly, what will we see?
 Some rocks, some dams and a great old tree.
 Butterfly, butterfly, how big will they be?
 Not much more than an ant or a bee.
 Butterfly, butterfly, where will I lie?
 Squeeze in just there behind my green eye.

Butterfly, butterfly, what will we eat?
 Nectar and pollen, some dew for a treat.
 Butterfly, butterfly, you've been very kind
 to open my wings in spirit and mind.
 Butterfly, butterfly, I now have seen
 those rainbow colours just like a dream.
 Butterfly, butterfly, 'tis been a long day,
 but do come again to fly and to play.

Klaus Hueneke
 (with apologies to Anon.)

National Parks Australia Council AGM

Representatives of the National Parks Associations of the ACT, NSW, Queensland and Victoria, as well as the Nature Conservation Society of South Australia (NCSSA), met in the VNPA Office in Carlton, Melbourne, from 18–20 November 2016. NPA ACT was represented by committee members Quentin Moran and Kevin McCue.

Annual reports

Summaries from each member group were circulated in advance, including the NPA ACT report written by Rod Griffiths. The reports were briefly discussed at the beginning of Friday's deliberations. Common issues included:

- prescribed burning in national parks and reserves
- management of pest animals
- tourism and associated infrastructure development in national parks and reserves.

Three invited presentations followed:

- VNPA's Citizen Science Programs, by Caitlin Griffith, Manager Community Engagement and Learning, Christine Connelly, Nature Watch Coordinator and Kade Mills, Reef Watch Coordinator. (<http://vnpa.org.au/page/volunteer/citizen-science>)
- Greater Alpine National Parks Management Plan, by Stuart Hughes from Parks Victoria.
- Feral Horse Management Planning, by Phil Pegler from Parks Victoria.

These were most interesting and generated strong discussion.

Strategic planning

The afternoon session was devoted to strategic planning for the next 12–18 months and development of a work plan to guide the NPAC Policy Officer and member group efforts in relation to NPAC priorities.

Over the past 12 months, Sarah May, the NPAC Policy Officer, has developed detailed background briefing papers on

the six recommendations in *The Jewel in the Crown*, NPAC's policy document. This document will be an important part of NPAC's election campaign in the lead up to the 2018 federal election and briefing papers will be produced over the next 12 months.

Strategic planning discussions continued on the Saturday and the following actions were identified as priorities for the next 12 months:

1. Develop a package of strategic communications on national issues
2. Build relationships
3. Engage politicians.

In the afternoon the delegates visited Toolangi State Forest near Healesville in the Yarra Valley Ranges, part of the proposed **Great Forest National Park**. Our guide was Bernie Mace who has been involved with a long campaign to protect the tall forests in this area. The field trip was a good opportunity for informal discussions with other NPAC members.

The NPAC AGM was held on the Sunday and the agenda included discussion of the President and Treasurer's reports, and the election of office bearers for 2017. The NPAC Executive was re-elected with acclamation:

President Michelle Prior, NPAQ
Secretary Graeme Wiffen, NPA NSW

Treasurer Euan Moore, VNPA
Public Officer Kevin McCue, NPA ACT
Policy Officer Sarah May

South Australia will host the 2017 NPAC AGM over a weekend in late October or early November 2017.

Conclusion

The member groups have a primary focus on the management of protected areas and informing the community, industry and government on conservation issues.

Benefits to member groups of NPAC membership include:

- learning about environmental



NPAC Committee in Wirrawilla Rainforest.

Photo by Kevin McCue.

advocacy and strategies for political lobbying

- sharing knowledge and experience
- coordinating action and ideas on conservation and protected area management at a national level
- enhanced opportunities to meet with federal politicians and staff from the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and influence policy in relation to protected area and threatened species management
- learning how to raise awareness and engage the community in conservation and appreciation of nature, with a focus on national parks through community education work.

Bimonthly NPAC Executive meetings (phone hook-ups) and the AGM are opportunities to strengthen relationships and communications between various member groups.

This is a summary of a more detailed report prepared by Nicki de Preu, NCSSA. Ed.

Ox-eye Daisy alert

Philip Selmes, ParkCare and Volunteer Coordinator, sent out the following email alert.

Within Parks and Conservation Service we are becoming increasingly concerned about the risk posed by a number of 'new' weeds that we are seeing more of. One of these is Ox-eye Daisy. There have been few incursion sites so far including:

1. Roadside near Mount Clear campground – southern ACT
 2. Sutton Road
 3. Mt Franklin Road
- but we are now seeing it in many more areas.

This highly invasive weed is able to colonise intact native vegetation and farm pastures and so we do not want it established in the ACT. Obviously the

more people on the lookout for this weed the better so it would be appreciated if you could not only keep your eye out for this one but pass [this alert] on through your networks. If you do come across it report sightings to <http://canberra.naturemapr.org/> or phone: 13 22 81.

See back cover of this Bulletin for information on Ox-eye Daisy identification. Ed.

ACT environmental news

Hopping to freedom

Late last year Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve's Captive Breeding Program did their sixth annual release of Northern Corroboree Frogs into Namadgi National Park. It was a beautiful sunny day and ten people from the Wildlife Team at Tidbinbilla and from Conservation Research drove up Mount Ginini with 493 frogs loaded into the car in pal pens full of sphagnum moss. After splitting the frogs up between us and putting on a few extra jumpers, we left the track and set off through the bush to find the bog our frogs would soon call home. There were yellow and white wildflowers in bloom everywhere and clear running streams and we even saw a pair of gang gangs flying overhead. We released the frogs next to small pools in the bog and watched them crawl away into the moss, out in the sunshine for the first time in their lives!

It will take three or four years for these frogs to mature to breeding age, and only then will we be able to listen for their mating calls and estimate how many of them have survived. The biggest threat to Corroboree Frogs is Chytrid fungus which we know is present in the Ginini wetlands. Chytrid has had a devastating impact on the population, leaving the species endangered. By doing annual releases we're boosting the numbers of Corroboree Frogs in the wild which we're hoping will give them time to develop a natural resistance to the fungus.

At Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve there are over 1 100 Corroboree frogs in captivity which form a self-sustaining breeding population. Their breeding is managed to maximise genetic diversity so that if the wild population is wiped out, we have an insurance population to save the species. The first eggs were collected from Mount Ginini in 2003 and since 2011 we have released 2 300 frogs back into the wetlands!

www.environment.act.gov.au,
released 10 January 2017
accessed 26 January 2017

Barrer Hill restoration project

A restoration project has been taking place at Barrer Hill in the Molonglo Valley since 2014. The 50-hectare area, on the northern bank of the Molonglo River, across from the new suburb of Coombs, has a long history of human impacts. It was formerly planted with

non-native pines as well as used for livestock grazing. Barrer Hill still retains high conservation value with rocky grasslands home to threatened species like the Pink-tailed Worm-lizard. The area also forms parts of the soon-to-be declared Molonglo River Reserve which will be a key recreational area for the developing suburbs of Molonglo.

The restoration work to date has included removing the pines and progressively replacing them with native shrubs and trees, including the Clustered Everlasting daisy, Red-leaf Wattle and Yellow Box. Extensive weed removal has also taken place. A key part of the project has involved returning habitat structures to the area such as rocks, salvaged logs, and dead trees which provide shelter for wildlife.

The ACT Parks and Conservation Service is working with the Australian National University on a research project at Barrer Hill to inform how modified areas in the ACT and further afield can be restored with vertical habitat structures, including translocated trees and man-made utility poles. The trees, or 'snags', are those which need to be removed from urban landscapes for safety reasons. All snags and poles have been enriched with carved hollows with varying entrance size dimensions targeting different animal species from marsupials to bats and artificial bark that will hopefully attract a host of creatures from spiders to geckos.

The task of securing the snags in an upright position requires structural engineers and skilled arborists, as well as large machinery to lift them into position. Each snag was placed into a hole that has a steel layer and concrete footing so it can remain standing safely for many decades. The research project compares how effective translocated trees and utility poles are at attracting local wildlife. Specialised cameras recording real-time wildlife visits have been installed. Stay tuned for updates and images posted to this website.

www.environment.act.gov.au,
accessed 26 January 2017

The Eastern Grey Kangaroo declared a Controlled Native Species

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate has written to NPA ACT, stating:

The Eastern Grey Kangaroo is an important – and iconic – part of Canberra's grassland and

woodland environment. There are populations at most nature parks in the ACT.

Following the declaration of the Eastern Grey Kangaroo as a controlled native species, the Conservator for Flora and Fauna is preparing a controlled native species management plan for the Eastern Grey Kangaroo.

The Conservator has invited public comment on the draft plan at

http://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1029717/DraftControlledNativeSpeciesManagementPlan.pdf

or search for it on

<http://www.environment.act.gov.au/>

Closing date for comments is 24 March 2017. Send written comments to: Manager, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate by email to

environment@act.gov.au

or post to

PO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601.

Tasmanian Tiger

Tasmanian (Launceston, Tas.),

Saturday 13 June 1885

page 22.

ZOOLOGICAL—The two Tasmanian tigers which were brought to town and lodged in the garden attached to the caretaker's house, Town Park, were shipped on board the s.s. Mangana Thursday en route to South Australia. Mr. M'Gowan, the caretaker of the Town Park, telegraphed to the Director of the Botanical and Zoological Gardens, Adelaide, stating that he had these two tigers for sale, and stating the terms and asking if he would purchase them. He received an immediate reply accepting the tigers on the terms named, and they were shipped accordingly. They should reach Adelaide on Monday next, and will doubtless form a pleasing addition to the zoological collection in the garden there.

NPA outings program

March – June 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, 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

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

Note: Dananbilla Nature Reserve Mid-week Work Parties

Two work parties are in the planning stages and are likely to occur during the period of this program. However, details were unavailable at the time of its preparation.

If you are interested, keep an eye on the online events program or contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Martin Chalk, on 0411 161 056 closer to April.

4 March

Map CORIN DAM
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.

Saturday Walk

SQUARE ROCK
Corin Dam 1:25,000

11 March

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.

NPA outings program March – June 2017 (page 2 of 4)

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 Quilts Mountain from the Nerriga entrance to Morton National Park. 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 D

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.

22 March Wednesday Walk Joint NPA / BBC / CBC Activity

Leader Steven Forst

Contact 0428 195 236 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

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.

Depart 9.00 am from Treloar Crescent car park, Campbell, opposite High School (UBD map 2, location L3).

29 March Wednesday Walk Joint NPA / BBC / CBC Activity

Leader Barrie R and Terrylea R

Contact 0437 023 140 (Barrie)

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

2 April Sunday Walk PADRAL ROAD TO MOUNT COREE

Map Cotter Dam 1:25,000

Grading 2 A/D/E

Leader Rod Griffiths

Contact 0410 875 731

Walking the ACT border – Padral Road to Mount Coree. Walking on the ACT border straight line off Pabral Road. Hiking up to Pabral Road from Blundells Flat, then SW through the top of Musk Creek towards Mount Coree. This is very rough country with strong regrowth and will involve some scrambling near Mount Coree. Return via roads. Up to 13 km and 600 m climb. Fit and experienced walkers only.

Meet at Weston Creek (Cooleman Court) car park 8:00 am.

Drive: 45 km, \$18 per car.

8 April 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. Weeding and spraying at Amanda's Slope and around Frank and Jacks Hut. Tools provided.

9 April Sunday Walk BUGTOWN CREEK

Maps Denison, Tangangara 1:25,000

Grading 2 A/B/C/F

Leader Brian Slee

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

Depart 7.00 am from Kambah Village. Drive through Adaminaby and 6 km west turn right onto Bugtown Road and park 8 km north. Follow Bugtown Creek north to Nungar Plain and tiny Brayshaws Hut for lunch. Return via Circuits Fire Trail. 14 km walk. Afternoon tea Adaminaby.

Contact leader by Saturday morning. Bugtown Road is 4WD and alternative

destination is possible if conditions unsuitable.

Drive 230 km, \$92 per car.

14–16 April Easter Pack Walk SENTRY BOX AND SCABBY RANGE

Maps Rendezvous Creek, Yaouk
1:25,000

Grading 2 A/B/D

Leader Rod Griffiths

Contact 0410 875 731

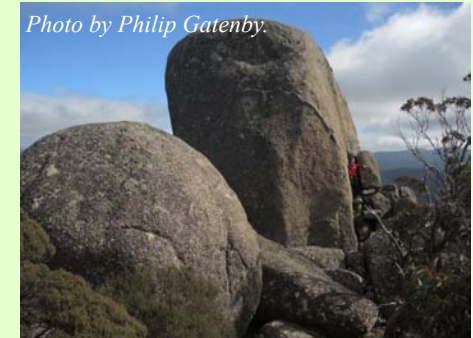


Photo by Philip Gatenby.

Walking the ACT border – Following the ACT Border in the south of Namadgi. Starting from the southern end of the Old Boboyan Road walk on fire trails past Lone Pine and then follow border to Sentry Box and along to Scabby Range, exploring towards Mount Kelly. Return via Sams Creek Fire Trail. Some thick vegetation expected.

Meet at Kambah shops car park 8.00 am.

Drive 110 km, \$44 per car.

22–25 April Pack Walk Currockbilly Mountain – Wirritin Ridge

Maps Brooman, Corang 1:25,000

Grading 2 A/F

Leader Rupert Barnett

Contact 6242 5241 or
rupert.b@iinet.net.au

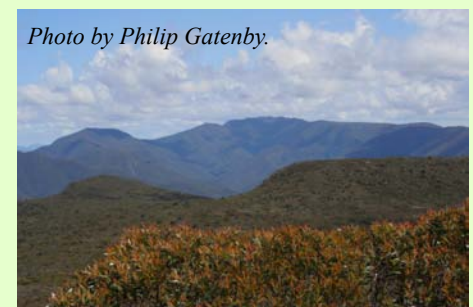


Photo by Philip Gatenby.

Currockbilly Mountain is a notable peak in the Budawang Range near Mongarlowe. Just north of it the Wirritin Ridge splits off – it's not long and has some good views but there are also narrow rocky sections; happily the patches of scrub were burnt 3 years ago and remain fairly open. Day 1 we climb Currockbilly and camp nearby; Day 2 follow the ridge to Wirritin Mountain, then down a steep spur to the Yabboro River; Day 3 climb 500 m to the Wog

NPA outings program March – June 2017 (page 3 of 4)

Wog (Scenic Rim) Track; Day 4 gives extra time to get to the cars if needed. Total distance of the walk is about 24 km.

Please contact the leader by 17 April for details. Limit 5.

Drive 200 km, \$80 per car.

23 April Sunday Walk

THE BORDER AND SETTLERS TRACK

Map Yaouk 1:25,000
Grading 3 A/B
Leader Steven Forst
Contact 0428 195 236 or
steven.forst@iinet.net.au



Photo by Philip Gatenby.

Meet at Kambah Village shops car park at 8.00 am. A walk following the ACT border from the Boboyan Road to the Scabby Range Nature Reserve and returning along part of the Settlers Track. Partly on track, with a few off-track sections to follow the border more closely.

Drive 170 km, \$68 per car.

26 April Wednesday Walk

Joint NPA / BBC / CBC Activity

Leader Mike
Contact 0412 179 907

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

29 April Saturday Work Party

BRANDY FLAT FIRE TRAILWEED CONTROL

Leader Martin Chalk
Contact 0411 161 056

This will be the first NPA work party in this area. The location is about 1 km along the fire trail from Glendale Depot. All tools provided, but bring gloves.

Meet at Kambah Village at 8:30 am.

Drive: 74 km, \$30 per car.

30 April Sunday Walk

BLACK MOUNTAIN AND THE ARBORETUM (via Aranda Bushland and Dairy Farmers Hill)

Map Canberra Nature Parks
Grading 2 A/B
Leader Esther
Contact 0429 356 212 or
galla001@umn.edu

From Aranda Bushland walk to the top of

Black Mountain (200 m climb). Then enter the National Arboretum through the Cork Oak plantation (morning tea) and continue on to Dairy Farmers Hill for lunch and great views over southern Canberra. Return to cars by way of the Himalayan Cedars and Frost Hollow Snow Gums. Meet on the Aranda side of Bindubi Street under the HV powerline (about 1 km from William Hovell Drive) at 9.00 am.

2 May Tuesday Work Party

GLENBURN PRECINCT KOWEN FOREST

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 car.

6 May Saturday Walk

MOUNT GUDGENBY

Maps Yaouk (mostly), Rendezvous
Creek 1:25,000

Grading 3 A/D/E
Leader Philip Gatenby
Contact 6254 3094 (h), 0401 415 446 or
jandp.gatenby@optusnet.com.au



Photo by Jan Gatenby.

From the Yankee Hat car park climb to the saddle south-east of Mount Gudgenby then on and upwards crossing rock slabs to the summit. The return route will be via the mountain's south-east face. Mostly off-track, patches of thick scrub and rock scrambling. Distance of about 17 km and a climb of 800 m. Early start needed.

Contact leader by Thursday 4 May, preferably by email, for start time and transport arrangements.

Drive 100 km, \$40 per car.

7 May Sunday Walk

GOOGONG DAM – HELLS HOLE

Map Hoskintown 1:25,000
Grading 2 A/E
Leader Mike
Contact 0412 179 907

Meet at Canberra Railway Station at 8.30 am. A walk from Googong Dam picnic area to Bradleys Creek via

Gormans Trig along fire trails, with around 250 m climb. Then down Bradleys Creek to suitable lunch spot in Hells Hole area. Steep climb out of Bradleys Creek back to fire trail. Different fire trail route back.

Drive 40 km, \$15 per car.

13 May 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. Barbed wire fence removal in Peppermint Hill area. Tools provided.

14 May Sunday Walk

MOUNT McDONALD, URIARRA

Map Cotter Dam 1:25,000

Grading 2 A/B

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

Depart 9.30 am Cooleman Court car park (Liardet Street, just south of McDonald's) and drive to Brindabella Road car park, just north of Cotter Reserve. Climb through open forest and on track to Mount McDonald for views over Cotter Dam and Brindabella Mountains. Descend west to Uriarra Settlement for lunch. Return on lower level trails near dam. 11 km walk, one steep climb. Afternoon tea Sakeena's, Cooleman Court.

Drive 30 km, \$12 per car.

13–21 May Saturday to Sunday

inclusive or any day/s in between

ART WEEK AT GUDGENBY COTTAGE

Contacts Hazel Rath 4845 1021 or
Adrienne Nicholson 6281 6381

Photo by Adrienne Nicholson.



Immerse your creative side in the park environment (paint, draw, write, think, walk, photograph, whatever you wish) with convivial and like-minded company. Overnight stays for 1 or more nights must be booked with leaders (maximum 6 people each night). Day visitors are also welcome any day, to participate or just to enjoy.

NPA outings program March – June 2017 (page 4 of 4)

20–21 May Pack Walk

ADMIRATION POINT AND SNEDDEN PASS

Map Corang 1:25,000

Grading 1 A/C/part F

Leader Rupert Barnett

Contact 6242 5241 or
rupert.b@iinet.net.au

The Scenic Rim Track from the Wog Wog entrance to the Morton National Park takes us to a number of popular places, but we usually bypass a couple of spots worth visiting. At Admiration Point we'll camp on an unusual promontory with buttongrass slopes and hollows, and at the Point admire big views along the high escarpment past Mount Owen, and south up the Budawang Range. Returning on Sunday we'll detour to Snedden Pass – it's an unexpected little ridge down to Cockpit Swamp.

Contact the leader by 18 May for details. Limit 6.

Drive 200 km, \$80 per car.

24 May 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.

27 May Saturday Work Party

STOCKYARD ARBORETUM

Leader Martin Chalk

Contact 0411 161 056

We last visited this site in April 2014. This work party will continue the task of searching for and removing pine wildings and juniper. With luck, it will be no more than a monitoring and maintenance exercise. Some tools will be provided but suggest you bring work gloves, loppers, bush saw. Approximately 60 minute walk to work site. Work party will be subject to good weather.

Meet at Cooleman Court (behind McDonald's) at 8.15 am.

Drive 126 km, \$50 per car.

28 May Sunday Walk

MOUNT PAINTER AND THE PINNACLE

Map Canberra Nature Parks

Grading 2 A/B

Leader Esther

Contact 0429 356 212 or

galla001@umn.edu

Walk off track to Mount Painter (100 m climb) for views over Lake Burley Griffin and Molonglo Valley and then on to the Pinnacle for lunch with a view. Return along the south edge of Cook via some historic sites.

Meet on the Aranda side of Bindubi Street under the HV powerline (about 1 km from William Hovell Drive) at 9.00 am.

31 May Wednesday Walk

Joint NPA / BBC / CBC Activity

Leader Steven Forst

Contact 0428 195 236 or
steven.forst@iinet.net.au

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

3 June Saturday Walk

HIGH HILLS EAST OF GIBRALTAR CREEK

Map Tidbinbilla 1:25,000

Grading 2 D

Leader David D

Contact ddedentz@bigpond.net.au

Drive to the Corin Dam road, near Woods Reserve. Walk off-track down to Gibraltar Creek, then up spurs to the unnamed high hills to the east of the creek. Proceed north-east along the tops for a few kilometres before dropping back down to the creek and the road again. This is rough, rocky, scrubby terrain. Total climb 700 m.

Please advise leader of intention to participate by COB Thursday 1 June.

Drive 90 km, \$10 per person.

4 June Sunday Walk

MCMAHONS HUT SITE

Map Williamsdale 1:25,000

Grading 3 A

Leader Margaret Power

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

Walk from Honeysuckle Campground to Booroomba Rocks for morning tea. Anyone not wanting to make the climb up Booroomba Rocks is welcome to join the walk and have their morning tea in the Booroomba Rocks car park and wait for the rest of the group to return. Continue on the Australian Alps Walking Track to Bushfold Flats and then to the former site of McMahons Hut for lunch. In the afternoon proceed via Reads Hut (aka Bushfold Hut) to the fire trail and continue to the Apollo Road. Approx 18 km walk. Car shuffle involved.

Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.30 am.

Drive: 60 km, \$24 per car.

10 June 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. Rabbit warren mapping in Gudgenby Valley as directed by local ranger. Tools provided.

11 June Sunday Walk

DEVILS PEAK

Map Cotter Dam 1:25,000

Grading 1 D

Leader David D

Contact ddedentz@bigpond.net.au

Drive to Piccadilly Circus in the Brindabellas, then north along Two Sticks Road, parking at the base of Devils Peak. It will be a short but scrubby walk to the summit. Total climb 150 m, though more if roads need to be walked.

Please advise leader of intention to participate by COB Thursday 8 June.

Drive 120 km, \$14 per person.

18 June Sunday Walk

BARRER HILL AND ARBORETUM

Map Canberra street map

Grading 1 A/B

Leader Brian Slee

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

Meet 9.30 am at National Rock Garden car park, Barrenjoey Drive (UBD map 58, location D7). After checking out geological display, cross under Tuggeranong Parkway into Arboretum and head SW through various plantations to Boundary Road before climbing Barrer (formerly Misery) Hill for morning tea. Descend to Molonglo River before returning to Boundary Road (avoiding fences to the west). Lunch will be in one of the remote Arboretum plantations. Climb Dairy Farmers Hill and have afternoon tea in Village Centre before returning to car park.

24 June Saturday Work Party

FENCE REMOVAL – GUDGENBY VALLEY

Leader Martin Chalk

Contact 0411 161 056

This will be the first fence removal work party at Gudgenby this year. In November we completed the removal of about 900 m of fence that ran to the west of Peppermint Hill. This time we will concentrate on a similar length that runs to Rendezvous Creek. All tools will be provided.

Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.00 am.

Drive: 80 km, \$32 per car.

28 June Wednesday Walk

Joint NPA / BBC / CBC Activity

Leader Barrie R

Contact 0437 023 140

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

NPA ACT Christmas Party 2016



The Namadgi Visitor Centre proved to be a good choice for our annual get-together due to uncertainties about the weather on a hot and windy Sunday 11 December.



Rod's speech highlighted the year's achievements and he thanked all members for their continued support.



There was plenty to eat and drink. Esther and her helpers had set up gazebos and tables and a lovely spread of food and drinks.

Many a conversation about the year almost gone, and that ahead, was had by members.



Conversations continued after lunch in a very relaxing atmosphere.



Photos by Esther Gallant.

'Soft Landing' for old mattresses at the tip

Eleven NPA adventurers ventured out on 2 February to learn how the tip is becoming less waste-full (sic). Our guide Davydd greeted us with biscuits, and enthusiastically described how the operation works. He was obviously proud of what was being achieved in reducing waste of both material and human resources.

The Soft Landing Company is a not-for-profit organisation and originated from Mission Australia. The intention is to clear only 2 per cent above running expenses to allow for equipment maintenance and replacement. Last November, Soft Landing was awarded the ACT Sustainable Communities Commendation for contributions to the environment in Litter Prevention, Waste Management and Resource Recovery. There are similar facilities in Western Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle and Perth.

When you approach the building on John Cory Circuit, you will likely see tall stacks of mattresses in the yard. In busy times they can receive up to 1,000 mattresses a day! You may drop off your mattress (any kind) for \$23 or have it picked up for \$33. Mattresses are picked up from about 40 households a day. They also arrive in containers from as far away as Bega, Cooma and Adaminaby. Last year 18,000 mattresses were recycled. That represents about 13,000 cubic metres less going to landfill.

The mattress recycling operation employs 10 people, mostly those previously un- or under-employed. While the workforce has a high turnover, this is a good thing: once the employees become accustomed to the daily routine of work and presumably motivated by regular pay, they are able to find higher paying jobs elsewhere. So success at salvaging humans!

The main manual labour is cutting apart the mattresses. Each of the five cutters is expected to process 50 mattresses a day. Apparently most eventually achieve this with ease while only a few struggle to reach the goal. Each work position has pallets of mattresses colour coded by worker. Each mattress is placed on a work table and reduced to several piles of materials – these added to growing piles within the work area. Encouragingly, companies such as Ikea are now selling mattresses that are 'easy' to disassemble and recycle.

The mattress components

- **Springs** are mechanically separated from the wooden base and then crushed into a small block which is sold to BlueScope for \$50/tonne (10 tonnes/week). The spring baler is an impressive custom machine with enormous hydraulic pistons made to the company founder's specifications.
- **Wooden bases** are burned at ACT Recycling to generate electricity. They are also available free to anyone who will cart them away. You can also pick up casters – otherwise they go to landfill.
- **Fabric** is baled in a wool press. It can be shredded and used in punching bags but most goes to landfill.
- **Foam** is sold to Dunlop Rubber for 50 cents/kilo and is shredded to make carpet underlay.
- **Latex** is also used for underlay but has no sale value.
- **Coir** (coconut fibre) is not currently recycled. Some of our group suggested and will follow up on the idea that this could be turned into erosion barriers for use by the various landcare groups. Davydd was most interested and hopes that Kevin and Chris are successful in organising this.

There were many questions and some interesting discussions resulting in the tour lasting twice as long as predicted. No surprise there with our group. We then moved to the Farrer shops for coffee and continuing discussions.

Esther Gallant

Photos by Esther Gallant.

1. Cutting up the mattresses.
2. Mattress springs go into a crusher.
3. A bale of crushed springs emerges.
4. Piles of materials to be baled; bales of crushed springs; pallets with springs still to be separated.
5. Sheer power rips the springs from the wooden pallets.
6. Some processes **do** need safety barriers!



Bushwalks

Club Lake and Kunama Hutte ruins

Date: Sunday, 3 December 2016.

Participants: Brian Slee (leader), David Dedenczuk, Timothy Walsh.

Weather: Warm; windy; high cloud, thin at first, gradually clouding over.

Anemone buttercups (*Ranunculus anemoneus*) were thriving in Kosciuszko National Park after late season snow. This beautiful big white mountain daisy – its green inner circle surrounded by yellow – is rarely seen in masses. But where Mount Lee's snow drifts had melted and flowed through alpine grass, they were flourishing. Astonishing to see after years of scouring creek banks for scarce individuals of an endemic species eaten almost to extinction before cattle were excluded from the High Country.

The summit of Lee was our objective. We had reached its base from Charlotte Pass by crossing the Snowy and following Club Lake Creek west to its source. On the way, small shiny-yellow buttercups were prolific with a scattering of other flowers and a few anemones. Pipits darted across alpine grass. The creek was under snow for the final 200 metres, but not the lake. Tim and David put aside their usual habit of plunging in. Snowboarders camped nearby had rock-dodged 180 metres down precipitous snow cliffs from Carruthers Peak.

Protected by the range, the reduced wind permitted the flies to land so we curtailed their annoyance and left at 11.30 am. Close up, it became apparent that Lee's cornice was too steep to climb so it was happy chance that led us to encounter the aforesaid anemones as we contoured south at 2,000 metres around the mountain. Alpine Marsh-marigolds (formerly *Caltha*, now *Psychrophila*) peeped from the water. We nudged across steep snowdrifts and down to Kunama Creek. Easier terrain took us farther south to Northcote ski tow ruins where we contemplated the works of humans, chiefly a bulky internal combustion engine. Kunama Hutte ruins were 5 minutes away and that was lunch at 12.40 pm.

It is a well-known story worth recalling that the short-lived timber ski lodge (built 1953) was knocked from its stone foundations by a Mount Clarke avalanche during breakfast, 12 July 1956. The death therein of 20-year-old Roslyn Twynam Wesche is commemorated on a plaque. An eerie place, the foundations surrounded by rubble, and little visited. Ravens jagged



Kunama Hutte ruins. Photos by Brian Slee.

about, the sky turned grey, even the ants went quiet.

Except for a couple of splashy crossings, the way back was relatively easy as we contoured around Clarke and followed Club Lake Creek to Foremans Chimney. After a break we climbed back to the car, arriving 3 pm; 11 km.

Yellow bikes were everywhere in Jindabyne, being used to promote summer cycling in the mountains. We had the usual treats at Sundance before returning to Calwell, arriving 6.15 pm, having departed there at 6.30 am.

A walk worth repeating for those pursuing early wildflowers: anemones and calthas.

Brian Slee

Anemones and the water meadow.

David measures the snow drift.



Pilgrims

Storm in the night, followed by a cloudy morning. I put my boots on, walk around the lake, over Black Mountain. But always a sense that there's someone walking behind me. A fellow pilgrim? I look back occasionally. Just the shimmering silver of Scribbly Gums, the white cauliflowers of *Cassinia*. Will we catch up this evening, at the next campsite?

campfire ...
circle of my longing ...
smoke swirls
starlit pilgrims
share their stories

Gerry Jacobson

Bushwalks *(continued)*

Up the Burrungubugge

Date: Monday–Thursday, 2–5 January 2017.

Participants: Philip Gatenby (leader), Jan Gatenby, Dave Kelly.

Weather: Mostly fine; mild to warm; light winds.

The planned walk was from the Guthega Power Station to explore the areas of Kosciuszko National Park north and east of Disappointment Ridge. Luckily Dave looked at the NPWS website and found out that the bridge over the Snowy River behind the power station was closed, as was the bridge over Munyang River (which was the case 2 years ago and seems to happen regularly) at the start of the Disappointment Ridge Track. So plans were changed and the leader decided that the area proposed for exploration could be accessed from the Island Bend Fire Trail via the Burrungubugge River. I'd last walked in this area in 1983.

There's a locked gate on the Island Bend Fire Trail, about a kilometre from its crossing of the Snowy River downstream from the Island Bend Dam. We left our car there, walked along the fire trail through displays of mountain bluebells to a bridge over the Burrungubugge. About 100 m beyond the bridge an overgrown vehicular track heads north-west up the river to the ruins of two huts, Constance and Burrungubugge. We had lunch near the ruins. All that remains of Constance Hut is a partly collapsed rock and cement chimney and fireplace, and a few bits of tin and wire. The metal supports of the nearby Burrungubugge Hut are still there, together with a few charred wooden supports and a pot-bellied stove.



Crossing Valentine River. Photos by Philip Gatenby.

After lunch we mostly scrub-bashed up the Burrungubugge for about 3 km in two and a half hours, eventually reaching an extensive open area either side of the river. At its northern end is the picturesque Kidmans Hut, a welcome sight and our camp site for the first night.

An entry in the hut's logbook offered advice on getting to Mawsons Hut (in the High Country) from Kidmans. Apparently there was once a bridle trail. Next day, with the help of what we'd read and occasional cairns, we climbed over 400 m and crossed the Great Dividing Range, then forded Valentines River and arrived at Mawsons Hut in time for lunch. Dave had extolled the virtues (accurately as it turned out) of a camp site where he'd previously stayed on Tarn Bluff on the Great Dividing Range, so this became the day's destination. Crossing Valentines River again we arrived mid-afternoon in time to set up and then explore some of the numerous rock

outcrops of the Bluff. The camp site was among ancient living Snow Gums, perched above a small tarn. Jagungal stood out to the north.

Day 3 we returned to Kidmans Hut in time for lunch, passing initially between the quaintly named hills, Cup and Saucer and Mailbox, en route to re-join yesterday's track. We then battled the scrub of the Burrungubugge again, reaching the ruins of Constances and Burrungubugge Huts by 3.45 pm. Here we spent the third night. Increasing cloud and a few spots of rain hurried our dinner that night. Day 4 was short and involved retracing our steps on the overgrown vehicular track to the Island Bend Fire Trail, then on to the locked gate. Saw two snakes on the fire trail.

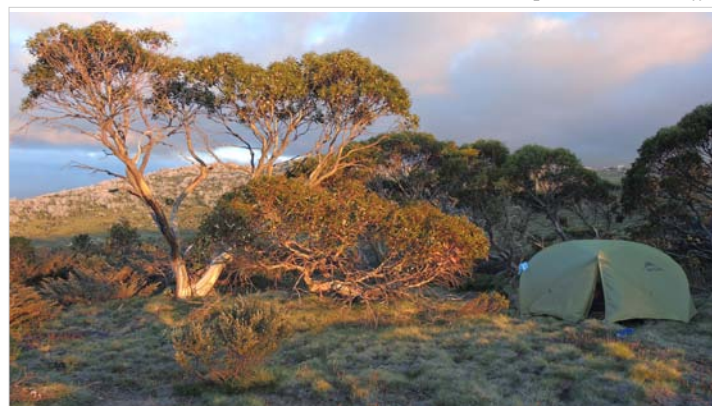
Scrub on the Burrungubugge makes accessing the High Country from Island Bend quite difficult and we weren't able to visit the areas intended. Hopefully the Munyang entrance and track up Disappointment Ridge will be re-opened. In 4 days we saw no other

(continued next page)



Trigger plants, Stylidium.

Campsite at Tarn Bluff.



Bushwalks *(continued)*

Gubur Dhaura ('Red Ochre Ground') and Gungaderra Creek

Date: Sunday, 8 January 2017.

Participants: Brian Slee (leader), Brian Christensen, Julie May, Michaela Popham, Margaret Power.

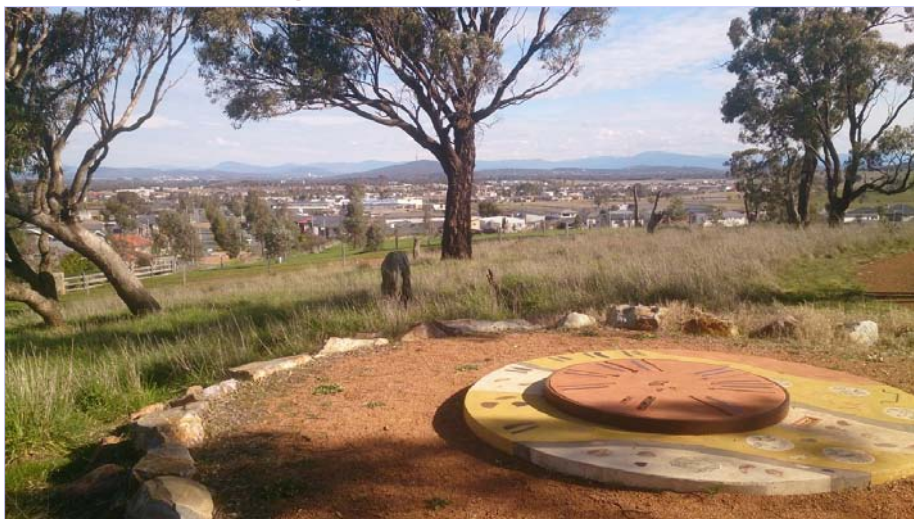
Weather: Warm; cool breeze; high cloud becoming overcast.

Having chosen what was forecast to be the hottest day of summer so far, this walk in East Gungahlin was shortened by deleting the Gungahlin Hill section to concentrate on Franklin and Harrison.

We set out at 8.15 am from the Diane Barwick Street entrance to Gubur Dhaura. The ironstone hill is only 31 metres above surrounding Franklin but offers panoramic views of the northern border, and of hills sweeping south from it on both sides. Mature Apple Boxes frame the view. Ochre was traded from the site by Aboriginal people; the hill was later mined for small amounts of ore and road gravel, and is now a public park (see Barrow's *Walking Canberra*, 2014, p. 16).

Descending east, we soon reached Flemington Road, lined as it is with modern apartments. Canberrans enjoy speeding along here, condemning all they see: 'Slums of the future!'. Would that they took a stroll and surprised themselves. We waited for a tram before crossing but it was a mirage.

Further east we turned beneath one of the area's magnificent eucalypts for a quick geek at historic Gungaderra Homestead before continuing to the first of Gungaderra's ponds. We retraced slightly to walk a long stretch of Well



Wide view out to Canberra's northern suburbs. Photo by Julie May.

Station Road, the original tree-lined dirt track running through the middle of Harrison to the Station. An extravagance of open space.

Gungaderra Creek beckoned so we criss-crossed it as we went along, visiting various ponds surrounded by native plantings. Ducks skid-landed on the water. A pair of fluffy coot chicks perched on a submerged trunk. Ibises did what they do.

Tantalised by sightings of a crowd at 'Parkandplay' (Kilmeny Close), we diverted through there on the way back. It is a sleek collection of open-air exercise and play areas, for children and adults, which could entertain for hours. A game of roller hockey was being played on a caged surface.

We wended our way through the side streets of Franklin, stopping at an eco-modern house with an impressive kangaroo paw garden display. Further up the hill, it was explained to us that mowers are rare so weeds mass along frontages – prickly lettuce was starring. After 2 hours we were back: 6 km.

Frankies @ Forde was declared closed by Google so we stuck to the original plan and had an excellent breakfast at *the district* in Crace. Home by noon. The area lends itself to interesting short walks. Worth repeating in winter.

Brian Slee

Up the Burrungubugge *(continued)*

people, but log book entries at Kidmans and Mawsons Huts indicate the area is visited regularly. March Flies were vicious and little black ants plentiful. Abundant winter and spring rainfall ensured all streams and rivers were flowing well. Apart from bluebells, quite a few wildflowers were blooming, particularly *Prostanthera*, *Richea*, *Orites*, *Herpolirion*, *Kunzea*, *Stylidium*, buttercups, Billy Buttons, various daisies and a number of orchids. Pig damage was extensive but we saw no pigs. Horse droppings were evident particularly on the Burrungubugge. Leaving Kidmans Hut on day 3 we saw fresh horse manure and the probable culprit about 50 minutes later, the only feral horse we saw all trip.

Philip Gatenby

Endnote:

An old map in one of the huts we visited showed the vehicular track up the Burrungubugge extending beyond the hut ruins. The view from Google Earth suggests this may still be the case although we didn't find it. On a future trip a search for the old track may be worthwhile.

Apologies to Barbara Slotemaker de Bruine for getting the following two poems muddled up in the December 2016 *Bulletin*. **Ed.**

ACRONYM

Water everywhere
Abundant pools
Teeming creeks
Eddying along
Restless

FREE

Gudgenby Cottage.
Cosy fires
Convivial company
Creative minds
Carve, paint, write, muse, cook
Relax!

Wandering Weeders on the Mountain

Over the Christmas break Sonja and I spent more than a week in or near Brisbane and visited friends who are very active in a bushcare group called Wandering Weeders. This group reports to, and works closely with, Brisbane City Council's 'Habitat Brisbane'. On a tour of the group's work area on the southern, Chapel-Hill side of Mount Coot-tha we saw not only their impressive weeding exploits but also seed collection, plant propagation, planting and erosion control – the same activities that NPA ACT and Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group know from their work parties – but the plants, good and bad, are very different.

The group has been active since 2004, although the volunteers started working there much earlier under a different name, and work parties attract 4–10 participants weekly. The demographics are similar to those on NPA and GBRG work parties: few youngsters, mostly retired participants, but very skilled across a range of disciplines.

Weeds on 'the Mountain', as it is affectionately called by the Wandering Weeders, include Signal Grass, Corky Passion Vine, Asparagus Fern (three different species), Mother of Millions, Abrus, Madeira Vine, Ochna, Oxalis, and Glycine – most are garden escapees, dumped in the bush or spread by birds that eat the seeds.

The two worst weeds

Signal Grass, introduced by pastoralists (or scientists working for the Department of Primary Industries), out-competes native grasses by a huge multiple and is one of the first plants to show again after a burning event. It inhibits insect life, and seems to have no known insect 'predator' and certainly keeps butterflies away. This grass is also



Abrus or Crab's Eye Creeper on Mount Coot-tha, Brisbane. Photos by Lyn Cole.

highly flammable. It doesn't get sprayed since that would also kill the 'good' plants that are struggling to exist under the Signal Grass, so the Weeders spend many hours digging it out diligently.

As the name suggests, Mother of Millions (*Bryophyllum* sp.) reproduces rapidly, producing hundreds of tiny plantlets which quickly form new colonies. It is adapted to dry conditions and can survive long periods of drought. This increases the plant's potential to persist and spread. Mother of Millions is toxic when ingested by livestock; it is also poisonous to humans and household pets. It has to be pulled out, bagged and taken off the mountain.

Benefits from planting

Planting is undertaken to lessen erosion in areas totally degraded when the neighbouring suburban development went in, with resulting widespread runoff problems after storms. Natural regeneration is easier to nurture than trying to plant in areas where it is difficult to water in hot, dry times. Planting along footpaths is designed to create a 'border' to the forest. The vine *Pararistolochia praevenosa* has been reintroduced to the area because it attracts Birdwing and Big Greasy butterflies. Others plants are staple diet for the numerous bird species that can be

observed on the Mountain and in connected bush areas along creeks; many of the birds are also common in the ACT.

A multi-use mountain

The Mountain is used by a wide range of walkers, runners and cyclists, with the usual problems of off-track adventurers creating multiple new tracks and causing erosion; dogs off-leash chasing reptiles and wallabies; and garbage dumpers introducing new weeds which the council seems unable to manage with the minimal staff available.

Prescribed burning is a problem – new undergrowth is destroyed and butterfly habitat wiped out, as are the pupae, larvae and other grounded insects that break down the litter. Burning is usually carried out in winter when the moth/butterfly larvae are in diapause, so this wreaks havoc on their populations, not to mention the reptiles, and any bird nests. Burning also results in a big influx of weeds.

Wandering Weeders is one of more than 80 such accredited groups in the Brisbane area. It has access to grants, help with tools and gloves, even water cubes (Tilkey Tanks) and hoses in dry times; they maintain close links through work plans, mapping and reporting. They also participate in citizen science projects, such as helping a recent PhD student with work on the adverse influence of Signal Grass on Mount Coot-tha.

Kevin McCue
with help from the Wandering
Weeders on Mount Coot-tha

Large thicket of Signal Grass smothering the native vegetation.

PARKWATCH

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

Will the Darling River survive?

The health of the Darling River system is at a tipping point. Can the system survive the next round of negotiations over how it should be managed? Terry Korn, president of the Australian Floodplain Association discusses a major issue of concern which could seriously impact on recovery of water for the environment, floodplain graziers, Aboriginal culture and small communities downstream of Bourke.

The Australian government has committed almost \$15 billion to the largest rural restructure program in Australia and expects to effect significant changes to water management in the Murray–Darling Basin without affecting the reliability of water supply to the irrigation industry. This is an admirable but unreal aspiration. Few people are aware that the MDB plan has an escape section for governments unwilling to implement decisions which impact on the reliability of water supply to the irrigation industry. The interpretation of this section of the Basin Plan by MDBA and States has the potential to undo not only the gains brought about by the plan, but threatens many environmental gains achieved for the Basin's rivers during the last 25 years.

The section of the Basin Plan interpreted as doing this is section 6.14. It states that:

Nothing in the Basin Plan requires a change in the reliability of water allocations of a kind that would trigger Subdivision B of Division 4 of Part 2 of the (Water) Act.

It is my understanding that the MDBA's view, and the view of at least some of the states, is that this section overrides or turns off any part of the Basin Plan whose requirements, in being met, may change the reliability of water allocations. Of particular concern is the view that section 6.14 can turn off parts of Chapter 10 that deal with water requirements of priority environmental assets and ecosystem functions, planning for environmental watering and enabling environment watering between connected systems. It is also the position of the MDBA that the Basin Plan can be fully implemented based on current water sharing and river operation arrangements; i.e. requiring no changes to existing arrangements.

This means Water Resource Plans (WRPs) which are being revised at present, need not include new rules if those rules affect reliability of water supply. Basin States can include rules in WRPs or Water Sharing Plans (WSPs) which may reduce reliability but these are not required under the Basin Plan. These plans must be approved by the Murray Darling Basin Authority and ultimately the Minister. But the likelihood of such rules being approved if they were perceived to favour the environment rather than the irrigation industry is highly improbable. The legality of the interpretation and application of section 6.14 by the MDBA and States must be challenged as it has the potential to seriously undermine the original intent of the Basin Plan.

For example, in October 2012 the Barwon Darling Water Sharing Plan commenced with amended rules, but without those rules having been adequately discussed with the community. The new rules permitted use of larger pumps for extraction of low flows. The mechanism proposed to protect low flows, Daily Extraction Limits, was excluded for the WSP. These two changes combined reduce the critically important low flows in the Darling system, thus exposing downstream users to less water, longer dry periods, increased salinity and increased likelihood of algal blooms. The last minute changes to the Barwon–Darling WSP mean there is now no effective protection of low flows, including environmental water, downstream stock and domestic supplies and downstream community water supply. These changes are now entrenched in a plan that, in MDBA's view, does not need to be changed to meet the requirements of the Basin Plan. Community well-being is strongly influenced by the health of the river. Ask the Wilcannia community about this!

Nature NSW, Vol. 60, No. 4
(Summer 2016)

Ecosystem accounting; helping make an informed decision on the future of logging

Back in June, scientists and economists from the Australian National University produced a ground-breaking piece of work. They published a set of experimental 'ecosystem accounts' for the Central Highlands region of Victoria. In essence, ecosystem accounts attempt to put a value on elements of an ecosystem that are typically overlooked

in decision making. The thinking is that by developing accounts, decision makers can make more informed land-use decisions by having a full suite of information. Currently, decisions on land use are made with only partial information – a situation that would never be countenanced in most business decisions. The researchers looked at 3 elements:

- Ecosystem service including water supply, carbon storage, timber provision, provisioning for crops and fodder production and culture and recreation;
- The contribution to GDP by industries including agriculture, water supply, tourism and logging; and
- Metrics relevant to biodiversity including populations of arboreal marsupial, the number of threatened species, forest age-class and number of tree hollows.

So what did they find?

- In 2014 two ecosystem services – provisioning of crops and fodder and water provision – dwarfed other services being worth approx. \$120 million and \$100 million respectively. Culture and recreation were worth approx. \$45 million, timber provisioning (the value of timber minus haulage and harvest costs) \$25 million and carbon sequestration \$20 million.
- But when GDP was considered things got really interesting; water and agriculture were again the most valuable at \$2,319 and \$2,477 per hectare respectively. Tourism was worth \$354/ha (a conservative estimate because the entire study was used in the calculation, whereas in reality tourism is likely to be focussed in a smaller area than the total). Timber was worth just \$29/ha. But logging also had a major negative impact on carbon sequestration and carbon stocks; logging reduced sequestration by 3.13 tonnes of carbon per hectare year between 1990 and 2015 – equivalent to \$37.87 per year at a carbon price of \$12.10 per tonne. Furthermore, logging reduced the carbon stocks of forests by 143 tonnes/ha. At \$12.10 per tonne this lost carbon is \$1,730/ha or 60 times the value of the timber. So the double impact of logging on carbon sequestration and storage means that logging costs much more than it makes.

Biodiversity; the key findings were;

- Since 2000, the number of threatened species had risen from 28 to 38, with

(continued next page)

PARKWATCH (continued)

the number of critically endangered species rising from 0 to 5.

- The proportion of forest in older age classes had declined and logging reduced the number of hollow-bearing trees by 70% (compared to 42% loss from fire).
- Populations of arboreal marsupials had fallen sharply in all forest age classes, but older growth had more species and higher number of animals.
- Logging on rotations less than 120 years will result in no recruitment of hollow-bearing trees due to the time needed for hollows to form.
- The key threatening process to arboreal mammals was the loss of hollow-bearing trees and lack of recruitment of older trees.

One concern that people have with environmental accounts is that they fear nature will be given a price tag, and that the price of conserving nature will inevitably be higher than development. In this case the authors didn't attempt to place a monetary value on wildlife, yet their findings on biodiversity are still stark.

Governments at both state and federal level are loathe to face up to the realities, economic and environmental of native forest logging. Part of this is inertia – it's easier not to change something that's been occurring for a long time. But partly it's because the economic value of forest has only been measured as the value of timber or woodchips that they can produce. Public forests belong to everyone, and the government has a duty to make sure they're managed in the public interest. Having a full suite of information can only help in this regard.

Nature NSW, Vol. 60, No. 4
(Summer 2016)

Not-so-healthy parks for wealthy people

Parks Victoria, in liaison with Regional Development Victoria, is planning a multi-million dollar revamp of the walking tracks between the Falls Creek and Mount Hotham alpine resorts, with the aim of discouraging use by the current self-sufficient bushwalkers, who they say are low spenders. They are aiming at the 'high-yield' luxury market, with the provision of privately built and serviced lodges along the track. At a time when park management is seriously underfunded, and many parks have serious weed and pest management problems, the promise that the revamped walk will exhibit 'exemplary environmental management' rings a little hollow.

The full 'Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing' is a five day walk, with four overnight stops generally offering either a tent on the ground (cheapest option), a tent with a raised platform or 'alpine lodging' – luxury serviced huts with bedding and food by a commercial provider. Any future casual camping must take place at least 100 metres from the bookable (and expensive) campsites – if any feasible alternative sites are available.

Most controversial is the provision of a series of luxury huts in three sites, including seven near the top of Diamantina Spur, a steep climb towards the summit of Victoria's largest free-standing mountain, Mt Feathertop. The luxury cabins would have to be serviced regularly by helicopter. There are several quite flawed aspects to this proposal.

- Parks Victoria's much vaunted 'Healthy Parks Healthy People' program is meant to be about encouraging the broad community, especially people who can most benefit from access to our natural areas, to spend time in our national parks. This includes young people from disadvantaged areas, Indigenous communities and especially people suffering from depression. The long-term economic benefits to the state if all sections of the community have access to nature is considered vast, but there is no program aimed at making that happen.
- There are many conflicting claims in the report including that the lodges will not be visible from elsewhere in the park, yet there will be spectacular views from them.
- There has been no environmental impact statement prepared, nor a robust business plan.
- While various options for the walk have been examined, there has been no comparison with other good options for regional ecotourism. A far better project would be to promote the hundreds of vacant beds at Falls Creek and Mount Hotham alpine resorts during summer and the great range of day walks that can be taken from those venues.

It appears investment in national parks is suffering from policy tunnel vision focussing on poorly conceived overnight tracks, trails and luxury huts aimed at untested high-end tourism markets to the detriment and exclusion of everyday Victorian bushwalkers. Government agencies seem intent on implementing old, flawed Coalition policies by stealth, even though the ALP has a clear policy stance against these

strategies. In the meantime, core funding for park management remains seriously underfunded.

Nature's Voice, VNPA
ebulletin, December 2016

Kosciuszko's water catchments

Large numbers of the Wild Horse, a farm escapee, are severely impacting the water catchment wetlands of the Australian Alps, including right across Kosciuszko National Park. In 2014, 35% of the Alps wetlands had been damaged. These high mountain wetlands are the very heart of the headwater catchment sources for our mightiest rivers, the Murray, Murrumbidgee and the Snowy. Numbers of Wild Horses have grown from about 2,000 to more than 6,000 in just 11 years and they are causing great damage to the catchments. The NSW Government, in response to these threats has launched, in May 2016, a draft Wild Horse Management Plan for consultation.

Such a draft plan has been contentious. A special bond exists between many people and horses and many others like seeing Wild Horses in the mountains. Many others however are quite shocked and horrified by the number of horses present, the piles of horse dung and the scale of impacts to the park's streams and wetlands. Stepping away from the welfare and presence of Wild Horses, there is another issue of significance that the draft plan must also reconcile. The sustained delivery of high quality water from Kosciuszko's catchment services to millions of people downstream, all the way to Adelaide. Some 30% of the Murray Darling Basin's water comes from the Australian Alps catchments. This water is of national economic significance and benefits town water supplies, agriculture, irrigation and some industries. The decisions implemented by the final Wild Horse plan are, consequently, of national importance.

The draft Wild Horse Plan public consultation process run by the National Parks and Wildlife Service did identify that many people appreciated the presence of the Wild Horses in Kosciuszko National Park and that they were of heritage importance. The draft plan has been respectful of these views and identified that a remnant or 'attribute' population of up to 600 Wild Horses be present. Because of the Wild Horse potential for damage, this should be considered a maximum number for the interim. A lower number such as 200 may actually be needed to achieve protection of the water catchments.

(concluded on page 25)

PARKWATCH (continued)

The NSW Government should be congratulated. This 2016 draft Wild Horse Plan rises above sectoral self-interest, it responds carefully and strategically to matters raised by the local community; the wider community; the national economy and facilitates protection of Australian alpine and subalpine species found nowhere else on Earth. The plan now needs to be finalised, resourced and accompanied by timely action to restore damage. Most importantly, the plan invests in the delivery of quality water from the catchments at a time of climate change and forecast reductions in precipitation. Kosciuszko's natural water catchments are far too precious to lose.

Nature NPA NSW Volume 60 no 4
Summer 2016

Fairmont Resort builds cabin without consent on the border of Blue Mountains NP

Fairmont Resort has bulldozed a road along the route of Gladstone Pass and then built a cabin on land zoned environmental protection, without approval from Blue Mountains City Council. The owner, the Schwartz family company, believes the development has been unfairly treated. The company has received a \$6,000 fine and was ordered to demolish the cabin. These council directions came after the company undertook another unapproved development that received a lesser fine.

The developer is now seeking approval for the cabin, and if approved, bushwalkers may be subsequently denied access to the Pass. The cabin was built in an environmentally sensitive area, on the boundary of Blue Mountains National Park, near an upland swamp and in the headwaters of a creek. This is not the area for a cabin requiring a toilet. The developer also appears to have already cleared vegetation for the cabin including tree ferns.

Environmental Protection Zones are coming under increased pressure from developers, who deny intact bushland its rights, as if it were cleared, flat land. We encourage Blue Mountains City Council to continue its long tradition of standing up for nature.

Colong Bulletin, No. 265
(December 2016)

Featured walk: Wave Rock, Idalia National Park

Idalia, one of the Central West Queensland National Parks in the Cooper Creek catchment, is 113 kilometres

south-west of Blackall and accessible in dry weather. Established in 1990, the Park covers 144,000 ha and was a former grazing property. The topography includes the Gorman Ranges, the headwaters of the Bulloo River, dense mulga woodland and colourful escarpments of weathered, residual coarse sandstone. Seven species of macropods are protected in the Park and koalas have been sighted.

Visiting the Park is recommended in the cooler months as extreme heat can be experienced in the summer months. In wet weather the 4WD park track becomes impassable. At Park Headquarters there is a comprehensive historical photographic display, a shelter shed and toilets. No other facility or fuel, food or mobile phone coverage is available, but there is a basic camping area for tents and trailers. The Old Idalia and Wave Rock walk from Park Headquarters offers an excellent cross-section of features in its 1.2 kilometres.

Wave Rock is a colourful eroded escarpment overhang approx. 100 metres long and, by scrambling up a short cleft in the rock, the view from the top enables one to appreciate the expanse and topography of the National Park in greater detail. With the diversity of landscape, history, vegetation and wildlife in the Central West Queensland National Park, Idalia offers a range of opportunities and activities. Visitors can explore rugged escarpments with expansive views, indulge in spectacular photography and appreciate possible sightings of rare and endangered wildlife.

Protected, NPAQ, Issue 11
(October–November 2016)

Pocket weed tech

When it comes to managing weeds in the Australian Alps you could have a dream budget, an army of dedicated control staff, and every method known to park management at your disposal and you could still be overwhelmed by an incoming tide of weeds. And that's because one of the toughest parts of the job is keeping across everything: it's too easy to miss the moment for follow-up control work. Happily this is a good news story. It shows that ACT Parks now have in hand a simple tool which is making all the difference. And Steve Taylor, their Senior Invasive Weeds Officer, is keen for everyone to know that it works.

'Before 2008, we'd hand draw onto a topographical map where we'd done our control. Some staff used a GPS which was one step better. It was all brought

into the depot, and when there was time, the information was put into the geographic information system – the GIS – like ArcMap. Paper maps would get lost and staff would forget to load GPS waypoints into ArcMap', he said. 'You'd be out in a remote area and see something. You might be able to mark the location with a GPS but often sightings would go unreported. Five to 10 years down the track, an infestation forgotten about, could spread for many hectares'.

What every weed control manager dreamt of was a bit of tech that could keep track of all control works over all the past years and plot them effortlessly on a map. They waited for the technology to arrive. Which it did via a company called ESRI which produces GIS software – ArcMap, ArcGIS On-line and Collector app which are now in use using smart phones.

Imagine you're a newly recruited ranger. You're handed the latest smart phone as part of your kit. It is also a GPS and camera, so there's no impediment for using weed mapping software and apps. At a glance you can see all of the weed control work done in your patch. You open the app; walk around the area being treated to plot a polygon; fill in the simple drop-down form (which weed, at what density, which control method, who did the control work and when); then tick to finish.

At this point the information is sitting in your phone. The magic happens when you sync your map's edits and instantly everyone else on the system knows what you've done. And if you're out of range, it's not a problem. You can still use your phone to plot weed control, or to spot weed infestation and the syncing will be available when you come back into range.

There are several benefits in having this adaptive management tool – one that's easy, fast and means there is no data entry to do when you get back to the depot. This system makes it easier to manage follow-up control which is the biggest benefit to field staff. And for someone like Steve who seeks to secure future budgets, it's incredibly useful to have current, data-filled maps to explain what's been happening and what lies ahead.

News of the Alps, November 2016

Compiled by Hazel Rath

NPA notices

National Parks Association Calendar

	March	April	May	June
Public holidays	Mon 13	Fri 14-Mon 17, Tues 25	—	Mon 12
General meetings	Thurs 16	Thurs 20	Thurs 18	Thurs 15
Committee meetings	Tues 7	Tues 4	Tues 2	Tues 6
Gudgeny Bush Regeneration ¹	Sat 11	Sat 8	Sat 13	Sat 10
Glenburn work party ²			Tues 2	—

Further details: 1. GBRG. Meet at Namadgi Visitor Centre 9.15 am.

2. 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
Bethan David,
Jason Cummings,
Suzi Bond,
Richard Dallwitz
as new members.

We look forward to seeing you at NPA activities.

Call for volunteers

At NPA general meetings volunteer members set up the hall and the supper. We need more volunteers for 2017 as the roster is by no means full. Please contact Quentin Moran if you can help. qmoran@webone.com.au

Thank you



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, or to the NPA ACT postal address (see page 27).

Deadline for the June 2017 issue: 30 April 2017.

This *Bulletin* was prepared by:
Editors, Kevin McCue and Sonja Lenz
Copyeditor, Ed Highley
Presentation, Adrienne Nicholson.

Community Symposium – Bushfire Management: Balancing the Risks

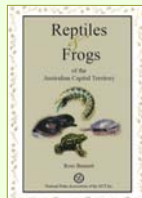
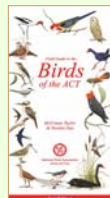
Friday, Saturday, 21–22 July 2017

Pilgrim House
Northbourne Avenue
Canberra City ACT 2601

See notice page 5.



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



Correction to the item about Rosenberg's Monitors in the December 2016 Bulletin.

Matthew Higgins writes: ... you say that I was 'waiting for the adults to return to open up the mound'. I did not say this, because this does not happen with this species. The hatchlings dig their own way out, as the Kangaroo Island researchers have found, and as I have now observed on Mt Ainslie. I know that Ross's* otherwise excellent field guide says the female returns to open the mound but this is unfortunately an error in an otherwise very helpful field guide.

*Ross Bennett is the author of the NPA Field Guide to the Reptiles and Frogs of the ACT. Come and hear all about the Rosenberg's Monitors on Mount Ainslie at the March general meeting when Matthew will give us a full account of his observations! See notice on page 27. Ed.

Art Week at Gudgenby Cottage

Saturday to Sunday, 13–21 May

Contacts Hazel Rath 4845 1021 or Adrienne Nicholson 6281 6381

Immerse yourself in the park environment to paint, draw, write, think, walk, photograph, whatever you wish. Overnight stays for 1 or more nights must be booked with leaders (maximum 6 people each night). Day visitors are also welcome any day, to participate or just to enjoy.

Cover photographs

Front cover

Main photo. Dainty Swallowtail *Papilio anactus* (See butterfly book launch page 6). Photo by Esther Gallant.

Insets. Left. Club Lake area of Kosciuszko National Park (see walk report page 19). Photo by Brian Slee.

Centre. Dr Suzi Bond (see butterfly book launch page 8). Photo by Chris Emery

Right. Steel wire bales at the mattress recycling enterprise, Soft Landing (article page 18). Photo by Esther Gallant.

Back cover

Weed Alert poster.

General Meetings

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



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 species 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.

Thursday 20 April

A visit to Borneo

Judy and Dave Kelly
NPA members.

Dave and Judy Kelly visited Malaysian Sarawak and Sabah on the island of Borneo in May 2016 and will share a sample of what they saw and experienced: the people, river rides, seeing pitcher plants, hornbills, orangutans and ending with a climb up Mount Kinabalu. Some of the environmental problems, similar to those in Australia, are also covered.

Thursday 15 May

The Galapagos Islands

Adrienne Nicholson
NPA member.

Islands are places where evolution occurs in isolation, resulting in amazing flora and fauna ecosystems. Last year Adrienne spent 16 days on the motor yacht *Beagle* in the Galapagos Islands (a side trip *en route* to Venezuela!).

The geology, flora and fauna of the Galapagos are every bit as interesting as expected. Knowledgeable park guides must accompany all groups visiting the islands; where, and when, groups may go is well-controlled; conservation issues were often discussed as an integral part of this visit.

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

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Esther Gallant (Minutes Secretary)	6161 4514 (h) galla001@umn.edu
Rod Griffiths (Immediate Past President)	6288 6988 (h) rod.blackdog@gmail.com
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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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Biosecurity alert

Ox-eye daisy

(*Leucanthemum vulgare*)



petals 10–35, white, 1–2 cm long



overlapping rows of green bracts with brownish margins

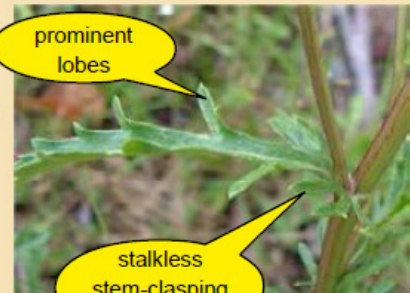


rosette leaves are stalked and have slightly toothed to lobed margins



sparsely branched stems

upper stem leaves are alternately arranged on the stem and are smaller and narrower than rosette leaves, irregularly toothed or lobed margins.



prominent lobes

stalkless stem-clasping leaves

Photos courtesy Environmental Weeds of Australia app and NSW NPWS

Highly invasive of intact native vegetation and pasture

Distinguishing features

- An upright and long-lived herbaceous plant, usually 30 – 60 cm tall, from Europe and Asia.
- Its leaves are alternately arranged along the stems but form a basal rosette during the early stages of growth.
- The rosette leaves are stalked and have slightly toothed to lobed margins, while the upper stem leaves are smaller, narrower and usually stalkless with irregularly toothed or lobed margins.
- Flower-heads (2 – 6 cm across) are like a typical 'daisy' with numerous white 'petals' and a yellow centre.
- The flower-heads give rise to numerous small ribbed 'seeds' about 2.5 mm long.
- Confused with: a) shasta daisy (*Leucanthemum X superbum*) which generally has unbranched stems, flowers in heads 5 – 8 cm wide and regularly toothed leaves. Ox-eye daisy has irregularly toothed or lobed leaves; b) Large-headed daisy (*Brachyscome diversifolia*) has similar flowers and leaves but leaves have a tapering base where it attaches to the stem.

What to do if you see it

Take a close-up photograph of the plant and a grid reference or GPS point (note datum) or draw a map, recording the nearest access point, trail, walking track or creek.

Report sightings to <http://canberra.naturemapr.org/> or phone: 13 22 81

