



NPA *Bulletin*

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National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory Inc.



Glenburn opening



Bushfire Symposium



A Sabah journey

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

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From the Committee

As mentioned in the last issue of the *Bulletin*, the committee expected 2017 to be a busy year and it is certainly shaping up that way. Already the NPA ACT has taken both the ACT Minister for the Environment, Mick Gentleman, and the Opposition’s Spokesperson for the Environment, Elizabeth Lee, on separate bushwalks to Goorooyarroo and Yankee Hat, respectively. These trips provided an opportunity to raise environmental issues facing our reserves in a relaxed manner while appreciating some of the wonders of the ACT’s natural environment.

The NPA ACT has also continued to champion the cause of the ACT’s lowland grassy woodlands through participation in the ACT’s Feasibility Reference Group, which is considering the NPA’s proposal for a new national park. Less than a third of these woodlands in the ACT are protected in nature reserves. NPA’s proposal for a new national park to provide consistent management of these woodlands across the ACT is contributing to a growing awareness of the need to

focus protection on these nationally important ecosystems (there is more on this proposal on page 4).

New projects for the committee include the development of a new policy for fire management in the ACT. Work on this is happening in conjunction with NPA ACT’s community symposium, *‘Bushfire Management – Balancing the Risks’*, to be held in July this year. Also on the agenda is a project to make the NPA ACT’s constitution more responsive to changes in communication techniques (see the separate notice on facing page).

As always, our walk and work-party leaders continue to provide a wide range of opportunities to explore the natural environment and to help protect both it and our cultural heritage.

One of the social highlights of the year for the ACT’s environmental community is the World Environment Day dinner. This is the major fundraising event for the Conservation Council, the ACT’s peak environment NGO. It is a night that features great food and wine, inspiring

speeches and entertainment. The NPA ACT has been a strong supporter of the dinner and continues to be so this year with two NPA tables already booked. It is an opportunity to spend a convivial evening with friends from the NPA (and others, of course). The committee would love you to join them on the night. It will be at the ACT Arboretum on 3 June.



Rod Griffiths



NPA ACT Environment Subcommittee

The NPA's Environment Subcommittee meets monthly to discuss environmental issues within the conservation reserve system in the ACT, some NSW conservation sites and off-park landscapes.

The subcommittee members are Rod Griffiths (convener), Clive Hurlstone, George Heinsohn, Neville Esau and John Brickhill. Cynthia Burton is also a member, linking in with her role as the environmental officer for the Canberra Bushwalking Club. The subcommittee considers issues raised by members, those referred to it by the NPA Committee and more general issues that are open for public comment. Recently, the subcommittee has considered a diverse range of issues, such as a proposal for a new northern ACT

national park, management audits of current ACT parks and reserves, and the kangaroo fence beside Tuggeranong Parkway. The last-named was deemed to be outside the interest of the NPA. The northern national park proposal has been followed by meetings of a Feasibility Reference Group (where NPA is represented by Rod Griffiths) and that process continues (see separate article).

The subcommittee has reviewed numerous proposals and management plans, and in the last two years has made submissions to the relevant departments of the ACT, NSW and federal governments. These include a Submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment *Inquiry into the Register of Environmental Organisations* May

2015, comments on the *Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Draft Management Plan Review*, the pre-draft of the *Management Plan for Canberra Nature Park*, the *Management Plan for Ginini Wetlands Ramsar Site* and the *Management Plan for the Lower Cotter Catchment*. Copies of these submissions can be seen on the NPA ACT website under the link to Our Policies/ Submissions.

The subcommittee fulfils an important role for the NPA and membership is open to all Association members. Please contact convener Rod Griffiths on 0410 875 731 if you would like to be involved.

John Brickhill

Constitution review

Help bring the NPA ACT's constitution into the 21st century.

With the constant changes to society's means of communication, is the NPA ACT's constitution flexible enough to embrace the most appropriate technologies? Does the NPA ACT need to consider changes to the way it communicates with its members?

To help the Committee address potential improvements to the constitution, Michael Goonrey has agreed to facilitate a review and he would welcome any input from NPA ACT members on this matter. Please feel free to contact Michael on 0419 494 142 or mjgoonrey@grapevine.com.au by 23 June 2017.

A copy of the constitution can be downloaded from the NPA ACT website under About Us / Our Constitution.



Notice of Annual General Meeting

Thursday 17 August 2017

- Business:** Minutes of the AGM 2016
 Activities Report
 Financial Report
 Appointment of Auditor
 Election of Office-bearers and Committee
 Any other business

Note: all office-bearer and committee positions become vacant at the AGM.

Nominations for office-bearer and committee positions for the coming year are welcome. Please copy or scan the nomination form below.



Editor's note: It's gratifying to see throughout this *Bulletin* the increased interest in reporting sightings of butterflies and moths since the publication by NPA ACT of Suzi Bond's *Field Guide to the Butterflies of the Australian Capital Territory*.

A Spotted Moth, family Erebidae.
Photo by Mike Bremers.



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 September 2017 issue: 31 July 2017.

Nominations for NPA ACT office bearers and committee 2017/18

Nominations are sought for office bearers and committee members to be elected at the AGM on 17 August 2017.

We nominate
 for the position of in NPA ACT for 2017/18
 Proposed by (signature) Seconded by (signature)
 I accept the nomination (signature) Date

(This form can be photocopied/scanned and used for nominations.)



Developments on a new national park (part 2)

As part of its discussions with candidates for the 2016 ACT election, the NPA ACT put forward a proposal for a new national park. The proposal sought to create a single reserve that would protect and celebrate the ACT's lowland grassy woodlands, and promote the development of a comprehensive and consistent management approach to this nationally important ecosystem across the ACT.

The ACT has a number of individual reserves that incorporate lowland grassy woodlands, but more than two-thirds of these woodlands are currently outside either nature reserves or Namadgi National Park. This is despite more than 25 years of various activities and plans relating to the conservation of the woodland ecosystems.

As reported in the March 2017 issue of the *Bulletin*, in early February the ACT Government announced the formation of a Feasibility Reference Group on the new national park proposal. Two meetings of the Reference Group have now been held and there is a strong likelihood that a recommendation to not proceed with the national park will be made. The process, however, has raised widespread awareness of the need to protect the ACT's lowland grassy woodlands, and the NPA ACT is recommending that a final decision on the status of the proposal be postponed to allow wider consultation on how best to achieve comprehensive protection for woodland ecosystems.

The NPA ACT will continue to contend that a single reserve across the

ACT's lowland grassy woodlands would provide significant advantages for ACT-wide conservation management. However, whatever the outcome is for a new national park, if the current proposal results in improved management for the ACT's lowland grassy woodlands this will be a significant achievement.



Rod Griffiths

Fire symposium

If acronyms or abbreviations could put out bushfires we need never worry about catastrophic fires again. SBMP, BOP, RFMP and BPA are just a few of them thrown around when talking about fire management in the ACT. They have a huge importance in locking us, as a community, into very specific strategies and actions. Slashing, prescribed burns, chemical treatment, grazing, training, access and infrastructure are all covered by a cascade of plans and reports. If you see smoke in autumn on Black Mountain or over Namadgi National Park, that is the SBMP and the BOP and the RFMP in action.

So, how do we as a community make sure we are getting it right? Furious debate has been a feature of fire management for a century or more, particularly our reliance on prescribed burning. Do we have to burn the bush to protect our buildings? Doesn't that destroy the natural values of our national

parks and reserves? How do we know where to burn? How often and how hot does it need to be to be effective? Can't we leave it to the experts – they know what they're doing, don't they?

The controversies around fire management continue unabated among the experts, and there are no easy answers to all these questions. One thing we can be sure of though: we all have a responsibility to take part in the debate.

'*Bushfire Management – Balancing the Risks*' is a two-day community symposium on 21 and 22 July 2017 to discuss research, strategies and expectations in fire management in the ACT (see flyer facing page). NPA ACT is underwriting the event with the assistance of the Conservation Council of the ACT and with the support of the ACT Parks and Conservation Service and the Emergency Services Agency. It will be of particular interest to members of the Rural Fire Service, Parkcare groups,

conservation groups, bush-lovers and rural leaseholders. All are welcome.

The symposium will listen to experts discuss existing fire management practices, the underlying values in the community towards fire management, and new and evolving research. The last session will draw all this together to inform the processes of developing long-term fire management plans for 2019 to 2024 and beyond.

A field trip on Sunday 23 July will look at the impacts of prescribed fires on Aranda Bushland. Go to the NPA ACT website (www.npaact.org.au) for registration details or contact the Conservation Council.



Christine Goonrey

NPA Art Week at Gudgenby Cottage, May 2017

Nine NPA members spent some wonderful time at Gudgenby Cottage in May for this year's Autumn Art Week.

It is hoped that NPA can continue with its Art Weeks at Gudgenby Cottage and that another Art Week can be held in Spring. However, we hear that there is a change afoot for the management of the cottage and we are not sure what this will mean for us at this stage.

We do hope NPA members can continue to use the cottage for artistic inspiration, with the results to showcase NPA ACT interests at the Namadgi Visitor Centre each summer.

Adrienne Nicholson

Maria Boreham, Hazel Rath and Fiona MacDonald Brand making the most of the evening comfort available at Gudgenby Cottage. Photo by Adrienne Nicholson.





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



Draft Program

Friday 21 July 8.30am – 6.30pm

8.30am–9am Registration and Coffee

9.00am–9.30am Opening and Welcome

9.30am–10.15am Law and Legislation

10.15 -10.45am Morning Tea

10.45am–12.30pm Values and expectations

12.30pm – 1.15pm Lunch

1.15pm–2.15pm Hazards and Risks

2.15pm–3.15pm Planning for fire management

3.15pm – 3.45pm Afternoon tea

3.45pm–5.30pm Research and Management

5.30pm –6.30pm Symposium drinks and nibbles

Saturday 22 July 9.30am – 4.15pm

9.30am–9.40am Welcome back and overview

9.40am–10.20am Indigenous Fire Management

10.20am–11am Ecological impacts and climate risks

11am – 11.30am Morning Tea

11.10am–12.30pm Impacts of fire on the community

12.30 – 1.15pm Lunch

1.15pm–2.15pm Wildland urban interface

2.15pm–3.15pm Shared responsibility for ways forward

Wrap up and Communique

3.15pm– 4.15pm Afternoon tea

Sunday 23 July 9.30am – 12.30pm

9.30am–12.30pm **Field trip** Site visit – Aranda Bushland (Black Mountain)

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



Goorooyarroo walk with Minister Gentleman



Above. Minister Mick Gentleman with the NPA's Rod Griffiths on the visit to Goorooyarroo. Photo by Esther Gallant.

Scattered showers didn't dampen the NPA ACT's walk with the ACT's Environment Minister, Mick Gentleman, at Goorooyarroo Nature Reserve. The walk allowed NPA members Esther Gallant and Rod Griffiths to show Minister Gentleman the natural beauty of the ACT's lowland grassy woodlands and to discuss some of the issues facing these ecosystems.

Some expert background to the nature of the woodlands was provided by rangers Dave and John and ACT Parks and Conservation head Daniel Iglesias. Along with Haydon, the Minister's advisor, the party's journey up the slopes of Goorooyarroo highlighted how the vegetation mix of the woodland changes with altitude.

Rod Griffiths



Right. Daniel Iglesias held the group's interest despite the rain at Goorooyarroo. Photo by Esther Gallant.

Elizabeth Lee introduced to Namadgi National Park

On Wednesday 12 April 2017, six NPA members introduced Elizabeth Lee, ACT Shadow Minister for the Environment, to Namadgi National Park. Elizabeth was accompanied by advisers Josh Gani and David Chun. It was her first visit to Namadgi. John McCrae, Ranger-in-Charge, showed Elizabeth around the Visitor Centre. We then drove to the Gudgenby Valley and walked the 3 km track to the Yankee Hat rock-art site, viewed the art, and lunched at a spot on a few large logs to the north.

Elizabeth was impressed by the rock art and the beauty of the Gudgenby

Valley and surrounding mountains. We explained the importance of having a national park for the national capital, that Namadgi is part of the Australian Alps National Parks, plays a vital role in protecting Canberra's water catchment and conserving plant and animal communities, and provides recreational opportunities for bushwalkers and others. We stressed the importance of resourcing the ranger service adequately to ensure the continuing good management of the park's natural and heritage resources, and pointed out the regeneration work done by NPA ACT and the Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group.

The most commonly encountered, albeit somewhat tatty, butterflies on our walk were Meadow Argus (*Junonia villida*) and Marbled Xenica (*Geitoneura klugii*).

Isobel Crawford

Below left. Setting out for the art site at Yankee Hat. Photo by Kevin McCue.

Below. Admiring the Indigenous art at Yankee Hat. Photo by Kevin McCue.



Gudgenby Bushies party on

The Gudgenby Bushies (GBRG) are proud of their achievements in the regeneration area near Hospital Creek and on Peppermint Hill. The very wet winter last year encouraged us to plant out a variety of trees and shrubs that we had grown at a Greening Australia facility during the previous spring. We planted at Peppermint Hill and on an old forestry track above Frank and Jacks Hut. Both areas are sloping sites where erosion threatens to denude the fragile soils.

Two years ago the forestry track required grading by a bulldozer because a large gully had developed. The Bushies had previously attempted some repairs but only plants on the upper part of track survived. Replanting was our only option. Tree guards were placed around each plant in the hope that this would encourage better growth and also offer protection from roos and rabbits. The survival rate of these plantings after a very hot and dry summer has been impressive – nearly 70 per cent!

GBRG is not just about planting trees. Weeding during the warmer months is our usual occupation and there are plenty of weedy and woody patches that attract our attention. *Verbascum* is a weed that was very prevalent around Gudgenby Cottage. We have spent a number of work parties chipping away at this weed and now, if you are sitting on the veranda of the cottage, you cannot see any *Verbascum*, a great achievement. *Verbascum* has not

been eradicated from the surrounds but we feel that our annual efforts are heading in the right direction.

In contrast, briars, hawthorn and other exotics are a huge problem behind Gudgenby Homestead. Several work parties attempting to reduce these weeds have been held there, but it's an uphill battle. We will need to keep returning to make any real difference.

Barbed wire removal is another of our tasks. It is very hard on the hands and requires a lot of rolling into loops for easy removal at a later date. If possible we also remove the star pickets, so that the landscape is clear of previous farming practices. This is usually a winter job and we try to hold at least one or two work parties per year to do this.

Mapping rabbit warrens is always interesting. It is pleasing to know that rabbits will be targeted through our efforts. The valley near Yankee Hat was mapped some years ago and baits then laid. We have since remapped this area and found very few active burrows. We hope that further treatment will make rabbit numbers plummet further.

Every year we find different tasks to do or we enjoy revisiting sites we may not have seen for a while. The regeneration area is so large that we cannot always get to places more than once during a calendar year. The friendships formed over the years with



*Fiona at a recent work party.
Photo by Sabine Friedrich.*

the rangers and park service officers, and within the group, keep us returning to our special area as we endeavour to improve the landscape for future generations. Of great pleasure to us is that our most senior member, Fiona MacDonald Brand, continues to join our work parties.

Hazel Rath, Secretary, GBRG

Suggan Buggan

Christmas was bushwalking time in those honeyed days. Away, away with billy and pack. That year we walked from Suggan Buggan to Thredbo. How did we get to such a remote place in east Gippsland? There were four of us (H and J, and Rae and me) all just married. We shouldered our 'mountain mule' packs and walked for seven days? Ten days? I don't remember.

I do remember the wildflowers of northern Victoria: J was a botanist and could identify them all. I remember trout in all the streams: H was a

countryman and knew how to tickle them. I remember jumping the Murray River near its source at Cowombat Flat, and the wrecked WW 2 aircraft nearby. I remember carrying a heavy pack up and over the Cobberas Range, inexhaustible in those days. I remember boiling the billy with a quick fire of a few twigs.

How young the world was when all that mattered was finding water and the next camp site, lighting a fire and singing a song. Little did we know that life would soon take over. Careers and babies and houses to be renovated.

sitting
back to back and then
we part
how short, how long
that moment of separation

Gerry Jacobson

Graeme Barrow

Graeme Barrow, long-time NPA ACT member and well known author of numerous books on bushwalking and history in the local area, passed away on 15 May 2017. Graeme was a frequent contributor to the *Bulletin* and a guest speaker at NPA general meetings on a number of occasions. There will be an obituary to Graeme in the next issue of the *Bulletin*.

Sabah: from coast to Mount Kinabalu



Sabah: national parks and reserves visited in the north-east near Sandakan. Mount Kinabalu is to the north-west.

After our time in the Malaysian province of Sarawak¹, eastern Borneo, we flew from Kuching to Sandakan, capital of the province of Sabah. We then travelled by bus to the Kinabatangan River in the north-east, passing depressingly monotonous expanses of oil palm plantations, a parallel to our pine plantations or vast wheat fields. Breaks in the vegetation gave way to little roadside stalls selling fruit and vegetables, and shacks nearly always with a line of clean washing that gave an optimistic lift to the scene.

A lodge on the Kinabatangan River

Our destination that night was a lodge on the Kinabatangan River where an early morning cruise introduced us to honking hornbills that were easy to spot and look at. We saw several species including Oriental Pied Hornbills, as well as a Stork-billed Kingfisher and a



Oriental Pied Hornbill at Sepilok. Photo by Dave Kelly.

White-bellied Sea Eagle (also found in Australia), soaring aloft. A large resident salt-water crocodile, shared with northern Australia, was parked on his muddy berth, immobile and inscrutable beneath mangroves.

A walk behind the lodge away from the Kinabatangan River, took us up a steep hill through the rainforest to a viewpoint overlooking the brown river with its surrounding mat of luxuriant trees. An oil palm plantation near the lookout on the left hand side of the path emphasised the narrowness of the rainforest between us and the Kinabatangan.

We'd been told we might see the endangered Asian elephant but it seemed highly unlikely that such a narrow stretch of rainforest would provide sufficient habitat for them. Later, an evening cruise on the Kinabatangan showed us Proboscis Monkeys perched on bare boughs above the river for the night, out of reach of snakes or other predators. They looked strangely vulnerable, especially when our guide's torch illuminated them. No bedroom privacy.

The Orangutan Sanctuary

The next day we drove to Sepilok where we visited the Orangutan Sanctuary, which cares for orangutans that are injured or displaced from the forest when it is felled for palm oil plantations and agricultural holdings. Babies are often rescued from dead or dying mothers.

The Bornean Orangutan has 97 per cent of its DNA in common with humans, which reflects their close relationship to us. Despite their cumbersome looks, these powerful apes were remarkably agile, practising their gymnastics among the trees and along ropes and platforms, while the babies learned their climbing skills. Patient staff watched over a troupe as it fed on bananas, greens and paw paws or

melons, and ensured that recently arrived and hesitant juveniles had a fair go.

Very young ones held the hands of their keepers, while others teased and played around. Playful behaviour could quickly become aggressively charged, all a reflection of humans whether in the sandpit or at a meeting to discuss policy development and strategies.

The orangutans are guided through several stages to gain survival skills and confidence before being released into the wild. Since 1964, 760 orangutans have been taken in. Sixty-six per cent of orangutans are successfully released.

On our way to the nearby Gomantong Caves, along a boardwalk through forest, a trip highlight emerged amongst the tree tops in the form of a young orangutan that swung ever closer to us, as curious about us as we were about it. It peered at us, jumping and moving about as its enormous mother moved about uneasily, well in the background. It was a thrill to see the pair outside a sanctuary fence in the wild although close to a public pathway and tourist site.



Baby wild Orangutan. Photo by Dave Kelly.

Bats, swiftlets, monkeys, bears and squirrels

Gomantong Caves, which have a wide, high entrance in the limestone hillside, are the dark, pungent smelling home to bats and swiftlets. A very strong smell of ammonia hit our nostrils as we entered the cave, advancing slowly over the slippery boardwalk in our torchlight, which picked out cockroaches lining the walls, glistening like polished mahogany toys.

The caves are famous as a source of bird's nest soup made from the nests of White-nest and Black-nest Swiftlets, comprising the birds' saliva and often

(continued next page)

1. See 'River rides, pitcher plants, and macaques in Malaysian Borneo's Sarawak', NPA Bulletin, Vol. 53, No. 4, December 2016.

Sabah: from coast to Mount Kinabalu *(continued)*

detritus that even the irrepressible Stewart denounced as ‘absolutely disgusting’. The nests have been harvested for centuries after nestlings have hatched. The practice continues under a licensing system, harvesters using rattan and bamboo poles and ladders, which we saw stashed in a corner of the cave.

We visited two other sanctuaries in the area, the first, Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Reserve, on land that an oil palm owner had reserved to protect Proboscis and Silvered Leaf Monkeys. It was the edge of a mangrove forest, badly affected by drought, with large areas of dried mud. The thin Proboscis Monkeys were fed large chunks of white bread with some fruit and a scattering of Snake Beans. Despite their condition they were very active, running through the tourist shelter at breakneck speed and racing across the metal roof, creating their own thunder.

Our next stop was at a Sun Bear Conservation Centre opened in 2014. We saw one Sun Bear with very long claws, grappling with bare logs and trunks against the forest background. Sun Bears are omnivorous, eating honey, honeycombs, termites, beetles and fruit. They are victims of deforestation and poaching, either to be sold illegally as pets or to have their body parts used in medications. Our guide in Sarawak had told us that his uncle, despite exposure to Western medicine, was insistent that the guide give his son an unguent concocted from an endangered animal for his asthma.



Sun Bear at the Rehabilitation Centre. Photo by Dave Kelly.

A high point was a tree walk in the rainforest near Sepilok and watching a Red Giant Flying Squirrel at dusk. The guide’s red laser (not harmful to animal eyes) spotted the squirrel’s eyes as it peered out of its hole for take-off. One long swoop saw it land on another mighty tree, probably a dipterocarp, to satisfy its diet of leaves. Dipterocarps



*Rainforest walkway at Sepilok.
Photo by Dave Kelly.*

(Greek: two winged fruit) are the tallest and most dominant of the tropical rainforest trees.

The Rainforest Discovery Centre gave excellent information about flora and fauna, although we needed more time to absorb the information.

Disappearing peat swamps

Peat swamp forest, which is stratified into five different zones in Borneo, is being cleared and drained, to the detriment of wildlife and Borneo’s biodiversity. Research shows that the peat in peat swamp forest, which is more widespread globally than originally thought, stores a higher percentage of carbon than the forest on the surface. Clearing the forest and burning the peat adds significantly to carbon release and to climate change.

On Sabah’s west coast we visited the Klias Swamp Forest, a remnant of lowland peat swamp, where we walked among high trees glimpsing elusive birds. It was very different peat swamp from what we experience in temperate south-eastern Australia. One example here is Wingecarribee peat swamp near Robertson in the Southern Highlands, which the landscaping industry has exploited, causing the swamp’s partial

collapse. Another example is the alpine peat in Namadgi and Kosciuszko national parks, which wildfire has severely damaged.

Turtles laying

From swamp forest we headed for Selingan Island in the Turtle Islands National Park, an area vulnerable to rising sea level and beach erosion, where the Green and Hawksbill Turtles come ashore to lay their eggs. We were in the Sulu Sea between the Philippines and the Bornean Islands. Pirates have operated in these waters creating wariness within the region.

In the evening we congregated with other visitors in the dining room for a long wait until 10 pm when the call came through that we could go quietly and without running to a selected turtle, which was about to lay her eggs. We had torches but were not allowed to use a flash and had to stand back. Any noise could cause a turtle to return to the sea without laying her eggs.

The unfortunate Green Turtle selected for us was in a trance, surrounded by a wedge of enthusiasts trying to take selfies and using the occasional forbidden flash. Her eggs slipped out, many being transferred to a bucket and then to 70 cm holes dug beyond the beach behind a fence, safe from beach predators like the monitor we saw prowling about. We watched children helping to bury the eggs and mark the spot with a dated stake.

Returning to the beach, we watched newly hatched turtles from the hatchery being tipped on to the beach from a plastic basket near the wavelets, and moving frantically to the safety of the water. If they survived to maturity they would return to the same beach to continue the cycle of life. As we walked back to our cabins in moonlight, we saw a few other dark lumps moving in the sand, covering their hollows. One discouraged turtle returned to the sea without laying any eggs.

Climate change resulting in higher temperatures is another factor contributing to infant mortality as turtle hatchlings are literally cooked within their eggs. If the higher temperatures don’t kill, they result in the birth of a larger proportion of female turtles.

Climbing Mount Kinabalu

Our last big excursion on Sabah was when Dave and I left our group at the end of the trip to climb Mount Kinabalu, which is 4,095 m high and in a World Heritage national park.

(continued on page 10)

Sabah: from coast to Mount Kinabalu *(continued)*



Rhododendron at Kinabatangan.
Photo by Dave Kelly.

The area has very high biodiversity with up to 6,000 plant species, 324 bird species and more than 100 identified mammal species. The number of insect species is hard to nail down. The reasons for Kinabalu's high biodiversity include the altitude range, low-fertility toxic soils (ultramafics), the high rainfall and the fact that the area has experienced the effects of glaciation and drought, forcing nature to adapt.

At the lower altitude we passed from fig trees, mosses, insectivorous liverworts, sundews and pitcher plants to rhododendrons. We then came to stunted, heathy bushes in the subalpine zone before hitting the granite shoulders above the tree line. Dave spotted a Celery-top Pine (*Phyllocladus hypophyllus*), which has a relative in Tasmania's mountains (*Phyllocladus aspleniifolius*).

Hiring a guide is compulsory and a means of providing employment for those who live in villages at the foot of Kinabalu. Our guide was Zeverinus, a name he inherited from the Catholic Church. He was patient, gentle and content with village life, belonged to the

Dusan people and said he disliked the big cities.

Substantial migration to Sabah from mainland Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines has caused rapid population growth, with a high proportion of Muslims. Islam is Sabah's official state religion, but the different tribes of indigenous Sabahans have their own languages and customs and are mostly non-Muslim. This has led to increasing tensions.

We started early from our accommodation inside the park boundary after our permits were granted and had allocated 3 days for the climb and descent. Even with daypacks, the climb was slow and arduous and I was feeling nauseous, probably from a dubious chicken dinner.

After recent heavy rains, waterfalls and streams were flowing strongly. We walked up through rainforest, stopping at resting points with comprehensive interpretative signs and flush toilets that discouraged use.

It took us about 5 hours to reach our accommodation, which was a lodge dug into the rocks. We had a freezing bathroom basement shared with seeping rocks. We'd been booked into a lodge that catered primarily for those booked on the via ferrata, a steel cable attached to the rock face with steel bolts. Posters in the lodge showed climbers, including Chris Bonington, extolling the virtues of Kinabalu's via ferrata. An Italian climber gave conditional approval, acknowledging that a plethora of via ferrata could mar the mountain's beauty.

From the lodge we gazed at the enormous granite shoulders leading to the summit, which was out of sight. Huge boulders marked landslides

showing where the 2015 earthquake had struck, killing 18 people, including guides and school children from Kuala Lumpur. Locals attributed the earthquake to the anger of the mountain gods when overseas visitors had shown disrespect by stripping and urinating on Mount Kinabalu despite the pleading of their guide.

After a fitful sleep we woke at 1 am to misty rain. There was a general scramble as most left the lodge at 2 am to reach the summit before dawn. We left at 4 am to avoid the peak hour rush. Slowly we ascended with Zeverinus in the cold pre-dawn light with our head torches. Gradually we reached the station where the climb up bare rock begins. We were checked through and continued, progressing up the granite slope and meeting the mostly young ones who were on their way down. They said we were doing alright.

Finally we were at the top with an aerial vista of the granite slabs below looking like giant armadillo scales. The 2015 earthquake had toppled one of the ears from a rock feature, the Donkey's Ear(s). Signs of tectonic activity and glacial action were imprinted on Mount Kinabalu's rocks adding to the sense of an ancient geological history. Mountains stretched away to the lowlands approaching Kota Kinabalu on the north-west coast. A very chilly wind ensured we didn't stay long at the top. Soon we headed down but took our time to savour the experience and the sights.

The next day we headed back with Zeverinus, who returned to his village. It marked the end of our trip to Malaysian Borneo with all its wondrous sights and the substantial destructive challenges facing its people and unique natural life, so much of which can be appreciated only in its vulnerable national parks and reserves. Borneo, in a politically unsettled region, shares great challenges in common with countries the world over, including Australia.

Judy Kelly

Sabah Map reference

[http://editors.eol.org/eoearth/wiki/](http://editors.eol.org/eoearth/wiki/File:397px-Sabah_map.jpg)

[File:397px-Sabah_map.jpg.jpeg](http://editors.eol.org/eoearth/wiki/File:397px-Sabah_map.jpg)



Roped route up Lowes Peak, Mt Kinabalu.
Photo by Dave Kelly.

NPA ACT Work parties

Honeysuckle Creek

Date: 25 February 2017.

Participants: Martin Chalk (leader), John Brickhill, Kevin McCue, Kathy Saw, Andrew Saw and Brian Slee.

It was tough-going pushing through the dense bush leading from the car park down to a tributary of Honeysuckle Creek (still bubbling despite the torrid summer), every step precarious on the steep rocky slope. A typical NPA work party you might say, loppers, secateurs and spray bottle in hand, Martin directing traffic.

The target weed, Mahonia, is a garden escapee from the glory days of the 1960s when NASA operated a big dish at Honeysuckle Creek to monitor the US moon landing in July 1969. The station closed in 1981, the dish was moved to Tidbinbilla, and the rest was dismantled, leaving only bitumen roads and parking lots, concrete foundations, some engineering artefacts including concrete tanks, a small weir and the weeds.

NPA has a strong interest in maintaining the environment and heritage sites so it was very interesting to see the wide variety of plants and trees in the local bush, many of the shrubs flowering, which attracted flocks of small honeyeaters and Silvereyes and several species of butterflies (including Marbled Xenica), moths and other insects. John even found a metre high



Mahonia. Photo by Kevin McCue.

Hyacinth Orchid which was good going as you had to almost step on the Mahonia to find it. There were Scotch Thistles, St Johns Wort, Briar Roses and Verbascum too, which were dispatched in passing, but our focus was on Mahonia or Oregon Grape as it is also known because of its small purple fruit – no doubt the cause of its spread by birds.

This was the third year an NPA work party has been to this site and the number of Mahonia has decreased dramatically. It's too early to say we are

winning but next year's outing will be telling.

By 2.45 pm we had swept the site and were all tired. On the way home we called in at the Namadgi Visitor Centre to return the spray bottles, grab an icecream and view the NPA exhibition.

Kevin McCue

Reedy Creek, near Glendale Depot

Date: 29 April 2017.

Participants: Brian Slee (leader), Rupert Barnett, John Brickhill, Doug Brown, Neville Esau, Philip Gatenby, Sonja Lenz, Kevin McCue, Andrew Saw, Kathy Saw, Tim Walsh.

Reedy Creek flows from the Billy Range south and west for 3 km before joining the Gudgenby River (Michelago 1:25,000). Brandy Flat Fire Trail crosses the creek a kilometre above the confluence. Water was not flowing on the day of the work party but had collected in puddles and ponds of surprising clarity. Eleven volunteers worked for 4 hours on a cool, still day, with early fog clearing to sunny skies.

NPA has not worked in the area before and volunteers noted that, while briars in open areas adjacent to the creek had been sprayed in the past, the only obvious work done to control pest

species along the creek related to a grove of up to six willows located 100 m west of the crossing.

Briars varying in size from seedlings to over 2 m in height were found all along the creek for about 250 m south-west of the crossing and 400 m north-east of there. Accessing them was difficult where the creek was steep-sided. Surrounding vegetation was often thick and spiky. While 1,669 briars were recorded as having been cut and dabbed, the true number would lie between 1,600 and 1,800. While more than half a kilometre stretch of creek, plus the section west of the creek to the walking track, has been cleared of a most briars, volunteers reported a serious infestation of unusually large bushes at the northern end of the work area and considerable numbers downstream.

Two apple trees were cut and dabbed, with a third (larger one) left

behind. A few other exotics were lopped or left. The willows referred to above are resprouting and will require a separate effort. The supply of herbicide in the GBRG trailer was almost drained.

Despite the effort involved, it was a rewarding day for volunteers as Reedy Creek is an attractive area and was experienced in beautiful weather. Thanks to all participants and to ranger Mark Elford for his customary good-natured and obliging assistance. Special mention for Michael Goonrey who came good with a trailer key.

Brian Slee

Caterpillar on the Kurrajong

During late summer I noticed a curious phenomenon, for me anyway, on a small, street-side kurrajong tree near our house. The terminals of many of the tree's branches were bound up by webbing into bag-like structures (see photos). I opened one of the bags and found inside a host of small, striped caterpillars busily feeding.

Later on, a little bit of research allowed me to identify them as the larvae of the Kurrajong Leaf-tier moth. Here is the description given by Kerruish (1997):

Kurrajong leaf-tier (*Lygropia clytusalis*, Pyralidae) caterpillars are pests of the foliage of *Brachychiton* spp., especially kurrajong and Illawarra flame tree (*B. acerifolium*). Moths have a wingspan of about 25 mm and are pale orange with irregular wavy black bands across them. Caterpillars are light-green, agile and about 25 mm long. They always

feed in a group and web leaves together to form a shelter (bag) up to 250 mm long which makes trees look ugly ... Caterpillars do some feeding within their shelter but also come out at night to feed on other leaves. They pupate inside the shelter, and moths emerge. Occurs in eastern and inland Australia from December to April.

By the time I'd gotten around to writing this article, the caterpillars had departed to pupate, leaving behind a scene of destruction and abundant frass. Interestingly, the moth seems to have passed by several other kurrajongs within a 100 m or so of the affected tree.

More generally, I was delighted to discover the reference cited, which is astonishingly comprehensive and detailed. Readers who are also keen gardeners may be interested in it. The work is available online at appsnet.org and is the third of a four-part series, the other three covering: 1. Pests, diseases and weeds; 2. Methods of control; 4. How to diagnose plant problems.

Ed Highley



Reference

Plant Protection 3: Selected Ornamentals, Fruit and Vegetables, by Ruth M. Kerruish, RootRot Press, Hughes, ACT (paginated in 16 sections) [ISBN 1 875907 00 9 (print); 978-1-875907 06 9 (online)]



Photos:

Above right. Kurrajong with moth 'bags'.

Left. Close up of the caterpillar 'nest'.

Right. 'Bag' after departure of the moths.

Photos by Ed Highley.



If I was a Mountain Hut

If I was a mountain hut I would
be warmed by the morning sun,
be protected from icy westerly winds,
be close to a gurgling mountain stream
and have a view across a snowgrass plain.

If I was a mountain hut people would
renew my scarred and tired old skin,
replace my worn out, tottering legs,
leave some food for me to eat,
replenish my wood supply,
build a fire to keep me warm and
tell me stories, tall and true.

If I was a mountain hut I would never
have to move house,
pay rent, get a divorce,
be in a traffic jam,
put my clothes away,
or have to wash the dishes.

If I was a mountain hut I would hear
wombats scratching and scuffling under my floor,

swallows building and tending their nests,
the wind swishing in nearby snowgums,
currawongs composing melodious tunes,
snow settling like a butterfly kiss and
later sliding off with an ooompphh.

If I was a mountain hut I would be famous in
peoples minds and memories,
their photographs and archives,
their videos, movies and books,
and their sacred management plans.

If I was a mountain hut I could
meditate all day and night,
sleep whenever I like,
be silent if I wish and
never write another damned word.

If I was a mountain hut I could
live forever
as long as people loved me and
no joker burnt me down.

Amen

Klaus Hueneke

NPA outings program

June – September 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

NPA has a new Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) available to leaders. The new PLB, which replaces two older models, can be obtained from Steven Forst, contact 0428 195 236 or steven.forst@iinet.net.au

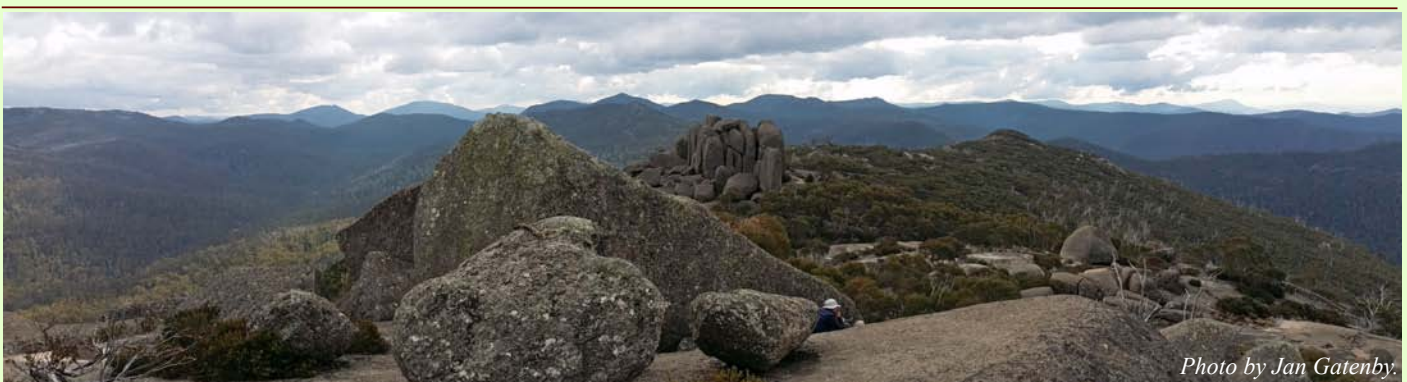


Photo by Jan Gatenby.

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

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. Park 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, \$48 per car.

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 at 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 the 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 provided.
Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8 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.

2 July **Sunday Walk**
 MOLONGLO RIVER, URIARRA CROSSING
 TO COPPINS CROSSING
Maps Canberra, Cotter, Umburra
1:25,000
Grading 2 A/C/E
Leader David D
Contact 0417 222 154 or
ddedentz@bigpond.net.au
Contact leader before COB Thursday
29 June. Meet at Cooleman Court car park
at 8.00 am. Walk upstream from Uriarra
Crossing to Coppins Crossing through
lichen-encrusted gorges and whispering
Casuarinas. Ten km walk. River crossings
required and slippery rocks to be
negotiated. Some light scrub. Car shuffle
required.
Drive 32 km, \$12 per car.

8 July **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 the
Peppermint Hill area. Tools provided.

16 July **Sunday Walk**
 ETHERIDGE RIDGE (SNOWSHOE)
Map Perisher Valley 1:25,000
Grading 2 A/B (on snow)
Leader Brian Slee
Contact 6281 0719 or
brianslee@iprimus.com.au

Depart 6.15 am. Drive to Thredbo and
take Kosciuszko Express chairlift to
Eagles Nest. Follow metal track to
Cootapatamba Lookout before turning
north and climbing Etheridge Ridge for
spectacular views. Descend to Seamans
Hut. After lunch explore Snowy River
north of Kosciuszko Road before
returning to chairlift across the plain.
Afternoon tea in Jindabyne.

Participants hiring snowshoes should
have them prior to departure. Book with
leader by Saturday morning for weather
check, departure point and car
arrangements (chains may be required).
Drive 420 km, \$168 per car + park
entry fee + chairlift fee.

22 July **Saturday Work Party**
STONE CREEK NATURE RESERVE –
PINE CONTROL
Leader Martin Chalk
Contact 6292 3502 or 0411 161 056

This is the third formal NPA work
party in this area. The activity will be a
continuation of the work conducted in
September 2015. Bring loppers and bush
saw. Replacement saw blades and gloves
will be provided. Meet at Cooleman
Court (behind McDonald's) at 8.30 am.
Drive 30 km, \$12 per car.

23 July **Sunday Walk**
 SERENITY ROCKS
(Joint NPA/BBC Walk)
Maps Bombay and Bendoura 1:25,000
Grading 2 A/B/C
Leader Barrie R
Contact 0437 023 140

Walk commences in tall forest from
Bald Hill Fire Trail, Tallaganda National
Park, wanders along a ridge, off track for
a couple of km, then through open forest,
before going down to cross Mulloon
Creek and up the hill on the other side.
The rest of the walk is along foot tracks
and fire trail, a bit rough in patches, with
a bit of climbing, through varied
vegetation, and several creek crossings.
Great views from Serenity Rocks. You
need to be fit. About 10 km and 670 m
climb. High clearance vehicles needed.
Please bring tea/coffee and a snack for
after the walk. Meet at the Spotlight car
park, Queanbeyan, Bungendore Road
(Kings Highway) 8.20 am, for 8.30 am
departure.

Drive about 100 km, \$40 per car.

26 July **Wednesday Walk**
 Joint NPA / BBC / CBC Activity
Leader Terrylea R
Contact 0408 715 218
Details are emailed to those on the
Wednesday Walks email list. Otherwise
contact the leader.

29 July **Saturday Walk**
 WAVE CAVE
Map Nerriga 1:25,000
Grading 2 A/D/E/F
Leader Philip Gatenby
Contact jandp.gatenby@optusnet.com.au

Wave Cave is a spectacular sandstone
formation in the headwaters of Bainbrigg
Creek in the Budawangs. The walk is
south of the Nowra–Braidwood Road,
getting into and out of the headwaters of
the creek via breaks in the cliff line and
involves rock scrambling and negotiating
thick scrub. Total climb of about 400 m.
Note that the leader has not previously
walked in this area. Car shuffle may be
needed. Contact leader by email by
Thursday 27 July for more information
including start time, meeting point and
transport arrangements.

Drive 280 km, \$112 per car.



Photo by Philip Gaténby.

**30 July Sunday Walk
LOWER ORRORAL LOOP**

Map 1:25,000
Grading 2 A
Leader Steven Forst
Contact 0428 195 236 or
steven.forst@iinet.net.au

A gentle walk from the Orroral camping ground up the Orroral Valley, with morning tea at Orroral Homestead, before continuing through the old tracking station site to an interesting split rock for lunch. We will then wander back down the valley to complete our loop. Meet at Kambah Village Shops for an 8.30 am departure.

Drive 95km, \$38 per car.

**1 August Tuesday Glenburn 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 August Sunday Day Walk
OAK HILL AND MULLIGANS FLAT**

Map Canberra Street Directory
Grading 3 A/B
Leader Margaret Power
Contact 0418 645 303 or
power000@tpg.com.au

From the meeting point ascend Oak Hill. After enjoying the views of Canberra from the north, descend and follow the track along the border. Enter Mulligans Flat and probably proceed off track through open bushland, stopping for lunch. After Mulligans Flat take a pedestrian/cyclist track to Forde, where we'll stop for afternoon tea at Frankies. Then a relatively easy walk, about 30–40 minutes, back to the cars on a path that follows the route of the (now gone) Old Gundaroo Road.

Meet at 9.30 am at the car park on Mulligans Flat Road, on the left about 100 m after the corner of Henry Williams Street, Bonner. No car fee.

**12 August 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. Maintenance work on the Gudgenby Walking Track. Tools provided.

13 August Sunday Walk

Map MOUNT DOMAIN
Tidbinbilla 1:25,000
Grading 2 A/D/E
Leader Mike Bremers
Contact 0428 923 408 or
mcbremers@gmail.com

Walk along the fire trail to Fishing Gap then on the newly constructed footpad towards Mount Domain. The track peters out and we push through patches of regrowth, with some rock scrambling, to reach the peak. Lunch at the top while admiring views of Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve and the Cotter Valley. Afternoon tea at Tidbinbilla Tracking Station Café if time allows. Total climb of about 700 m. Contact the leader by the night before to indicate interest and for weather check.

Drive 50 km, \$20 per car + reserve entry fee.

**20 August Sunday Walk
ROLLING GROUND (SNOWSHOE)**

Map Geehi Dam 1:25,000
Grading 3 A/B (on snow)
Leader Brian Slee
Contact 6281 0719 or
brianslee@iprimus.com.au

Depart at 6.15 am. Drive to Munyang and follow AAWT, steeply at first, to Horse Camp Hut. Leave track north of hut and climb ridge west to Rolling Ground. After lunch follow different ridge back to hut and retrace steps to car. Could be late finish. Afternoon tea Jindabyne. Not suitable for beginners. Participants hiring snowshoes should have them prior to departure. Book with leader by Saturday morning for weather check, departure point and car arrangements (chains may be required).

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

**23 August 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.

**26 August Saturday Work Party
LOWER COTTER CATCHMENT –
WILDING PINES**

Leader Martin Chalk
Contact 6292 3502

This work party is a continuation of the activity undertaken in previous years. The area is undergoing significant rehabilitation following the removal of the pine plantation. The focus of this work party will be an inspection of the full area to determine how much pine regrowth has occurred. Bring loppers and/or bush saw. Replacement saw blades and gloves provided. Meet at Cooleman Court (behind McDonald's) at 8.45 am.

Drive 45km, \$18 per car.

**30 August 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 September Sunday Walk
DEVILS GAP AND GIBRALTAR ROCKS**

Map Tidbinbilla 1:25,000
Grading 2 A/B
Leader Margaret Power
Contact 0418 645 303 or
power000@tpg.com.au

The walk will start from Flints picnic area in Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. Walk up to Devils Gap then descend down the other side, and follow a fire trail around to Gibraltar Rocks. Take the foot track up onto the Gibraltar Rocks. After a break descend to Dalsetta on the zig-zag track, and then off-track, through open land and forest, back to Flints. Meet at Park & Ride car park, Kirkpatrick Street (Weston) near the Australian Defence College (after turning into Kirkpatrick Street from Cotter Road, follow Kirkpatrick Street around to the right) departing at 8.30 am.

Drive 60 km, \$24 per car + reserve entry fee.

**9 September 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 between Old Boboyan Road and Hospital Creek. Tools provided.

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

16 September Saturday Walk

MAURICE LUTON FIRE TRAIL

Map Yaouk 1:25,000

Grading 3 A

Leader Steven Forst

Contact 0428 195 236 or

steven.forst@inet.net.au

A walk in the upper Naas Valley to the ACT border crossing on the Maurice Luton Fire Trail. A pleasant spot for lunch in a high forest grove behind Sentry Box Mountain. Meet at Kambah Village Shops for an 8.30 am departure.

Drive 150 km, \$60 per car.

17 September Sunday Walk

LITTLE TWYNAM (SNOWSHOE)

Map Perisher Valley 1:25,000

Grading 2 B (on snow)

Leader Brian Slee

Contact 6281 0719 (h) or

brianslee@iprimus.com.au

Depart 6.15 am and drive to Guthega. Proceed via Illawong and follow Twynam Creek on its north and west sides to Little Twynam. Return on opposite side of Twynam Creek. Magnificent views. Some hard climbs. Afternoon tea at Jindabyne.

Participants hiring snowshoes should have them prior to departure. Book with leader by Saturday morning for weather check, departure point and car arrangements (chains may be required). Alternative destination: Mount Twynam (if conditions excellent).

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

23 September Saturday Work Party

BENDORA ARBORETUM

Leader Martin Chalk

Contact 6292 3502

We last visited this site in April 2015. This work party will involve the removal of wilding pines from around Bendora Arboretum and eucs and other natives from within. Hopefully, the task will be one of maintenance. Please bring gloves and a bush saw. Meet at Cooleman Court (behind McDonald's) at 8.00 am.

Drive 92 km, \$38 per car.

24 September Sunday Walk

MOUNTS MAJOR AND MINOR

(Joint NPA/BBC walk)

Map Bombay 1:25000

Grading 2 A/B/C

Leader Barrie R

Contact 0437 023 140

This is a lovely walk giving a variety of terrain and vegetation including snow gums, rain forest, red granite outcrops, as well as great views. It commences in forest on the Jinglemoney Fire Trail, Tallaganda NP, before ascending Mount Major, after which there are several ups

and downs. A walk of about 12 km and 600 m climb. Mostly off track with rough, steep ground, rock scrambling and some patches of thick scrub.

Scrub gloves and gaiters recommended, and possibly eye protection. Bring plenty of water. Walkers will need to be fit with off-track and scrambling experience. Higher clearance vehicles would be appreciated. Please also bring tea/coffee/snacks for after the walk. Meet at Spotlight car park, Bungendore Road (Kings Highway), Queanbeyan at 8.20 am for prompt departure at 8.30 am.

Drive about 100 km, \$40 per car.

27 September Wednesday Walk

Joint NPA / BBC / CBC activity

Leader Mike S

Contact 0412 179 907

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

Advance Notices

7–27 October Day and pack walking

ACT BORDER WALK

Leader Rod Griffiths

Contact 0410 875 731 or

rod.blackdog@gmail.com

The aim is to walk the 300 km ACT-NSW border through a series of consecutive day walks and two pack walks. If interested in participating in the walk, part of the walk or providing support to the walkers please contact the leader for further details.

9–13 October Car camp

YATHONG NATURE RESERVE

Maps Mount Allen 1:100,000 and Coombe 1:100,000

Grading 2 B/C/E/F

Leader John Brickhill

Contact 0427 668 112 or

johnbrickhill@gmail.com

Yathong is about 500 km to the north-west of Canberra, in central NSW. Accommodation in shearers quarters with twin beds in each room, kitchen and ablutions block. Cost about \$15 per person per night. This reserve of 115,604 ha has semi-arid woodlands, mallee and rocky hills. We will try to find a small cave art site, walk to the top of the range, assist NPWS staff to search for rare orchids, see results of fire management practices, see goat management works, look for rare mallee birds, inspect a range of pastoral buildings and visit a few other reserves while travelling between Canberra and Yathong. **Numbers limited**; contact leader early.



Photo by Adrienne Nicholson.

14 October Saturday Walk

46th BLACK MOUNTAIN SPRING

WILDFLOWER RAMBLE

Contact Libby Viccars 02 6296 1936 or

friendsofblackmountain

@gmail.com

Meet at 9.30 am sharp, Belconnen Way entry just before Caswell Drive turnoff – watch for balloons. Finish at 12 noon or later

Celebrate the spring flowering on beautiful Black Mountain with a social ramble for wildflower lovers in the tradition established by Nancy Burbidge, and continued by George Chippendale. Discover the surprising diversity of tiny orchids, bush peas, wattles and billy buttons on easy bush tracks with experienced guides and good company. All springs are not the same. The pattern remains, but timing and abundance vary with the weather. Friends of Black Mountain welcomes all comers, be they experts or those who have never slowed down to see the somewhat cryptic diversity. We plan several guides, with helpers, who will take different directions.

BYO morning tea, water, hat, sunblock and wear stout shoes.

Booking Essential to ensure we have enough guides.

21–29 October Car camp

WEDDIN MOUNTAIN AND NANGAR NPs

(Joint NPA/BBC activity)

Leader Mike S

Contact 0412 179 907

Nine days of car camping and day walking in these two central NSW national parks near Forbes (3 full days in each NP plus 3 days for travelling to, from and between). October will be wildflower time out west but we may be towards the end of the best showing. For day-to-day details of activities or to express interest, contact the leader early. **Numbers limited.**

Butterflies galore

For about a week towards the end of March, while the weather was still warm, a gumtree near us daily attracted literally hundreds of butterflies. I have short videos of the quite spectacular event, but still-photography was nigh impossible. Think about it.

The attractant was a white, (unpleasantly) odoriferous substance, presumably manna, exuded from the trunk and branches of the tree. The exudate was prolific, wetting the footpath under an overhanging branch. I am unable to identify the species of Eucalyptus, since the leaves, buds and nuts are too high to access, but my NPA field guide to local trees suggests that it is neither *E. viminalis* nor *E. rubida*, the species usually associated with manna production. My best guess is that it is a

youngish Yellow Box, *E. melliodora*, which is common locally.

The butterflies seemed to be all of one species, which I identified by capture and consulting my copy of the new NPA field guide* as *Heteronympha merope* (Common Brown). The accompanying photograph of the underside of the wings of a female confirms this, I hope.

The sweet exudate attracted not only butterflies, but also bees, various other flying insects and even the local bullyboy Noisy Miner honeyeaters.

Ed Highley

* *Field Guide to the Butterflies of the Australian Capital Territory*, by Suzi Bond, with Steve Holliday and John Stein, NPA ACT, 2016, 229 pages, RRP \$30. Details of how to purchase at www.npaact.org.



Photos:
Left. The butterfly-attracting gum tree.
Above right. The exuded manna.
Right. Common Brown (*Heteronympha merope*).
Photos by Ed Highley.

From the monthly meetings

NPA's monthly meetings, notice of which is given in the Bulletin and the Burning Issues monthly e-newsletter, feature invited speakers on topics of general interest to members. Here we report on the presentations of speakers at the February and March meetings.

Effect of woody debris on browsing levels

Joseph Stapleton from the ANU Fenner School was the recipient of the 2016 NPA ACT Student Scholarship. He now has a Masters degree in Environmental Science. Joseph's presentation was on the 'Effect of coarse woody debris on browsing inside woodland reserves'. In his project on this topic, Joseph sought to



Joseph Stapleton at the February monthly meeting.
Photo by Sabine Friedrich.

(continued on page 18)

From the monthly meetings *(continued)*

find out whether applying coarse woody debris (trunks and branches of trees) helps reduce the impact of herbivores. He compared the effect of introduced debris with that of naturally occurring coarse woody debris and no debris.

Since European settlement, the combined effects of clearing for agriculture and urban development have reduced Box–Gum grassy woodland in the ACT by 95 per cent. The remaining 5 per cent of this vegetation community is preserved in reserves and is classified as critically endangered. High herbivore (mainly kangaroo) densities in reserves can repress the regeneration of woodland vegetation. The plant communities affected are also threatened by exotic weeds and further urban encroachment.

Kangaroo numbers have significantly increased in ACT woodland reserves in recent years. Currently, their management includes fencing of reserves and culling. One ecosystem feature that may also reduce the impact of browsing is the presence of coarse woody debris. The literature hints that the presence of brush piles may reduce herbivore grazing, suggesting that coarse woody debris might act as a browsing deterrent.

In ACT reserves, a lot of naturally occurring woody debris has been removed (for example, for firewood), so Joseph's work included applying debris from felled street trees from which the finer branches had been removed. Also, he planted 450 Red-leaf Wattle (*Acacia rubida*) saplings at 90 sites in 27 blocks at 7 locations, yielding the three different site types: applied coarse woody debris; naturally occurring coarse woody debris; no woody debris.

Joseph monitored the sites over 8 weeks. As an indication of browsing pressure he used faecal pellet counts and

undertook vegetation and coarse woody debris surveys. His analysis found that the naturally occurring coarse woody debris, which was structurally more complex, showed the lowest probability of browsing and offered the best protection of the saplings. It was more effective than applied coarse woody debris. His findings also supported the need to manage kangaroos in ACT reserves.

Monitoring Rosenberg's Monitor

At the March meeting, local historian and outdoor enthusiast Matthew Higgins gave an illustrated presentation titled '*Adventures with Rosie: monitoring Rosenberg's Monitor on Mount Ainslie 2013–2016*'. With the help of ACT government ecologist Don Fletcher from Parks and Conservation, who arranged access to wildlife cameras, Matthew was able to follow the breeding activities of this large reptile – the second largest in Australia after the Perenti Goanna. Also called the Heath Monitor, it can, according to Ross Bennett's *Reptiles and Frogs of the Australian Capital Territory*, reach a length of over 1.5 m.

Matthew saw his first goanna on Mount Ainslie in 2013 and began observing activities at various termite mounds there. In November 2014 and March 2015 he observed further activities. For this study, cameras were set up to allow a termite mound to be monitored for the Rosenberg's and potential predators.

The female, 'Rosie', was observed and photographed laying eggs in one particular mound on the mountain, then closing off the dug-out hole. She, and occasionally her male mate Rex, guarded

the mound for 2–3 weeks. Termite mounds are conducive to hatching such eggs, because after the eggs are laid, the termites immediately and completely repair any holes to keep constant the temperature and humidity inside their mound.

On 24 September the young ones started hatching. Little holes were dug in the mound and tiny goanna heads, each with its own individual facial pattern, poked out. Soon the young left the mound for excursions in its vicinity but always retreated to the termite nest. Termites are a major part of their diet; later they feed on carrion, small mammals, other reptiles and even cannibalise other Rosenberg's eggs. By November 2016 Matthew had observed the appearance of 16 hatchlings. They later left the termite mound completely.

Only 1 in 12 goannas reaches 1 year of age. They must survive a multitude of threats including other Rosenberg's, kookaburras, foxes, dogs, cats and road traffic. Ongoing habitat destruction is also a major challenge. Rosenberg's Monitor is a threatened species and further monitoring in the ACT will enable its population to be assessed which, it is hoped, will lead to a declaration of its threatened status in the Territory by the end of this year.

Sonja Lenz and Philip Gatenby

Below left. Rosie and Rex on guard near the mound on Mount Ainslie, January 2016.

Below. Rosenberg's hatchling emerging from the mound, September 2016.

Photos by Matthew Higgins.



The Friends of Glenburn: some good news ... and some not so good

First, the good news

Work parties

In recent months there have been three work parties that have involved considerable maintenance at several sites. In February 2017, the 25th anniversary ParkCare bench was erected at the Charcoal Kilns site and the outside of the shearing shed complex was cleaned up. The clean-up left four very large piles of material. Further action on the piles will follow an 'expert' assessment of what is rubbish and what should be retained and stored.

On 2 May, the new locked gate at the intersection of Charcoal Kiln Drive and the Kings Highway and the outdoor setting at Colliers were painted. Curleys homestead site was cleaned up and the Burbong trail from near Curleys was mowed and blackberries removed.

Interpretative sign unveiled and heritage trails opened

On a visit to the Glenburn Precinct on Friday 5 May, the Minister for Environment and Heritage, Mick Gentleman MLA, unveiled a large interpretative sign for the precinct and opened three marked heritage trails for walkers and cyclists. In his speech, the minister thanked the Parks Service, the NPA ACT and The Friends of Glenburn for the work that has been done in the precinct to protect and conserve several of the historic sites of early European settlement. Refreshments were served at Glenburn Homestead where the minister spoke with many of the Parks staff and visitors including Ken and Suzanne McInnes whose forebears have been associated with the area since the 1860s.

The interpretative sign, erected near the new locked gate at the intersection of Charcoal Kiln Road and the Kings Highway, includes a map of the three heritage trails. The text of the sign can be seen under Friends of Glenburn on www.npaact.org.au. The Friends paid for the sign and its erection at a total cost of some \$2,800. This just about exhausts the money available to the Friends from private donations through the NPA.

An informative brochure on the Glenburn Precinct has been prepared by the Parks Service with the assistance of The Friends of Glenburn. Copies can be obtained from the Parks Service Stromlo depot, 500 Cotter Road, Weston. Copies are also available in a box located through the locked gate on Charcoal Kiln Road.



Minister Mick Gentleman and Col McAlister with the new Glenburn Precinct Interpretative sign. Photo by Chris Emery.

The three marked heritage trails in the Glenburn Precinct, open for walkers and cyclists, are the 10 km Glenburn trail, the 10 km Burbong trail and the 12 km loop trail. These trails are expected to increase the number of visitors to the precinct.

Now to the not-so-good news.

Possible asbestos

In early April 2017, staff of the Environment Protection Agency visited the shearing shed and shearers' quarters complex to assess the sheep dip and the buildings. Unfortunately, the buildings possibly contain asbestos, and a thorough investigation of possible hazards is now being undertaken.

The Parks Service acted quickly to surround the site with 2 m high protective fencing to prevent entry to the buildings. The safety of staff, volunteers and visitors is paramount.

Conservation Management Plan (CMP)

After several drafts on which I provided detailed comments, the consultant, David Hobbes of Philip Leeson Architects, produced a final report in December 2016.

This report, which is comprehensive and provides sensible, practical advice, should be a blueprint for all future work in the Glenburn Precinct. The report includes much information and many photos on the physical condition of the various sites. It provides a benchmark against which the future physical state of the sites can be monitored.

David Hobbes also provided a copy of the final report to the ACT Heritage Council in December 2016.

More than three months later, ACT Heritage Council/ACT Heritage provided David Hobbes with a large number of comments – some minor, some more substantial. There was no consultation with either the Parks Service (that manages the precinct) or with The Friends of Glenburn/NPA. (The Parks Service is paying for half the cost of the CMP with the NPA paying for the other half through an ACT Heritage Grant.)

David Hobbes, staff of the Parks Service and I are working through the comments to see which ones can or cannot be accommodated. This continues to be a slow process. We hope that, in the end, we will have a negotiated, sensible and practical document to guide all future work in the precinct.

Col McAlister

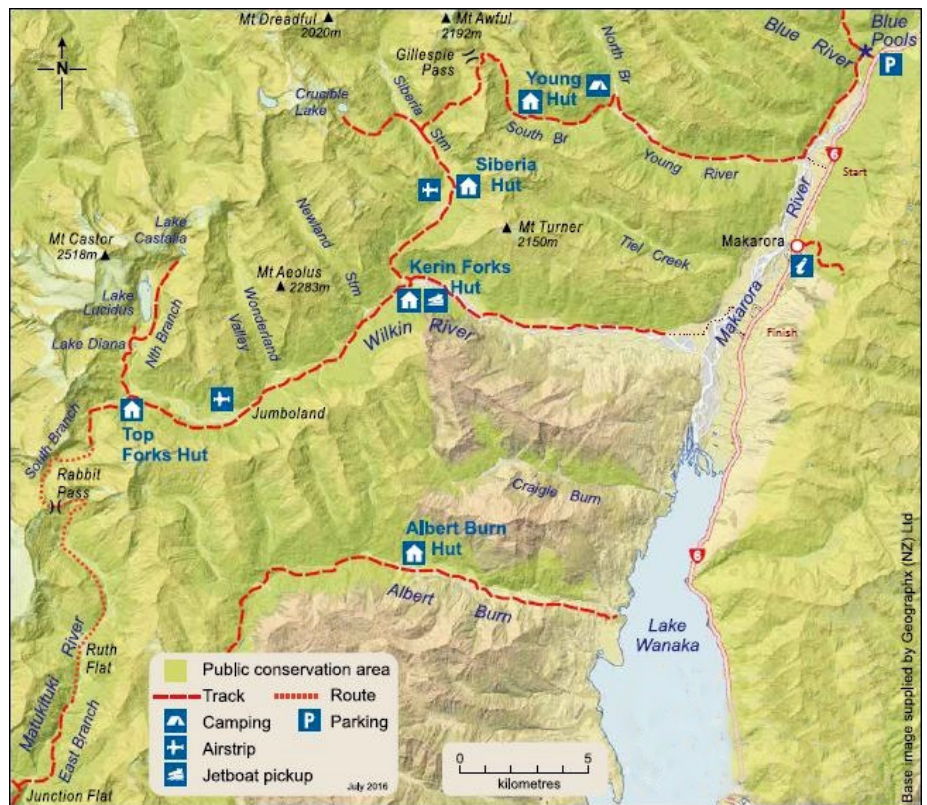
New Zealand's Wilkin-Young Circuit

In February last year Jan and Philip Gatenby travelled to Wanaka in the south-west of New Zealand's south island to walk in the magnificent Mount Aspiring National Park.

Mount Aspiring NP, named after New Zealand's ninth-highest peak (aka Tititea), offers trampers a variety of inspiring walks. The national park is New Zealand's third largest (355,543 hectares) and combined with a number of adjoining parks, including Fiordland and Aoraki (Mount Cook), protects an area of 2.6 million hectares (roughly 10 per cent of New Zealand's land) in a World Heritage area called Te Wāhipounamu.

Our base for the walk, Wanaka, which is a bit like a miniature Queenstown, was hot and dry. Brown grass by its famed lake, in which a significant proportion of locals were cooling off, cracked underfoot. Here we bought provisions for our walk and organised transport to the start, 50 km to the north-west at the hamlet of Makarora, where next day we were dropped off beside a stile. The plan was to follow the Wilkin-Young Circuit over Gillespie Pass, then if the weather was good, go up the Wilkin River via Top Forks Hut and over Rabbit Pass to the Matukituki River. On the way we planned on a side trip to Crucible Lake, and another from the Wilkin to Lakes Lucidis and Castalia. We took supplies for 9 days, and a tent.

The walk began with a stroll across Sawmill Flat's grassy paddocks and an easy wade of the shallow slow-flowing Makarora River, near its junction with the Young River. Like elsewhere in New Zealand's south island stoat traps were evident beside the track. The Department of Conservation and other



Map of the area into which the Gatenbys were venturing.

groups are waging a long war against stoats which are regarded as one of the causes of the dramatic decline in native bird populations since the arrival of Europeans. Despite warnings of their likely impact on birdlife, stoats were introduced in the 1880s to combat the adverse effects of the growing number of rabbits which had been introduced a decade earlier. Indications are that trapping is making a difference to native bird populations which seem to be increasing in the areas targeted.

Our destination for the first day was Young Hut, 17 km upstream on the south branch of the river. The track undulated through beech forest then climbed

steeply soon after the river split. With heavy packs the hut was a welcome site. There were about 12 staying in the hut (which sleeps 20) and 5 camping. We chatted to a NZ woman called Grace who'd just completed the 3,000 km Te Araroa track

which goes from one end of New Zealand to the other.

Perhaps 'Siberia' reflects the remoteness of the place.

Next day's climb to Gillespie Pass soon after leaving the hut was unrelenting and steep but the views, including of the nearby snowy Mount Awful and the more distant Mounts Alba and Dreadful, were spectacular. Flowers beside the track included Mount Cook Lily. We were heading for Siberia Hut, about 9 km from and almost a kilometre below the pass. A pool at the base of a waterfall near the hut provided the opportunity for a refreshing dip. This well-appointed hut is close to Siberia Stream in the Siberia Valley on grassland between steep forest-clad slopes. The origins of the local names intrigued me but my cursory research didn't provide a complete answer. Perhaps 'Siberia' reflects the remoteness of the place. An account in *New Zealand Geographic* suggests Mounts Dreadful and Awful were named by an early explorer who had a lot of trouble getting out of the area and failed to appreciate the stunning scenery (Biswell 2006).

Siberia Hut has a resident ranger who gave us the all-important morning weather forecast. It wasn't very

(continued next page)

*Crossing the Makarora River on day one.
Photo by Philip Gatenby.*



New Zealand's Wilkin-Young Circuit *continued*

encouraging, 'a front stalls as it moves onto the south of the South Island. Rain, with heavy thundery falls possible and north-west gale in exposed places easing this evening'. We took some hope from the 'stalled' bit and decided to journey to Crucible Lake. It was the right decision with the worst weather we experienced being a bit of light drizzle. The lake was just over 2 hours from the hut, very picturesque, nestled under Mount Alba, with a couple of icebergs, one of which rolled over as we watched.

The following morning's forecast was again awful – heavy rain and gale-force winds, for the next 4 days. Rabbit Pass, which can be treacherous even in fine weather, was starting to look unlikely. Places were still available on the afternoon jet boat (down the Wilkin River to the track head at Makarora). A number of the trampers at the hut had already made bookings but the weather looked much like yesterday's (a bit drizzly) so we thought at least another night out would be okay and we'd then decide what to do. If by morning a miraculous improvement in the weather had occurred we could stick to our original plan and head to Rabbit Pass. So we set out, walking beside Siberia Stream and then up a bit to bypass a gorge before descending on nicely graded zigzags to the Wilkin River.

A tricky river crossing

The jet boat pick-up on the Wilkin is just downstream from the hut we were heading to, Kerin Forks Hut, but on the other side of the river. The hut is well-named, at the junction of Wilkin River and Siberia Stream and where other tracks go either upstream (to Top Forks Hut, Rabbit Pass and beyond) or downstream to Makarora. Trampers can use the jet boat to cross the river and we could have done so had we arrived 5 minutes earlier. The Wilkin seemed to

be flowing quite strongly, suggesting that while we'd had little rain so far this was not the case elsewhere. We found a place to cross which included a small island, based on the notion that a split flow is a weaker flow. The depth was almost to the top of our legs. Five other people were at the hut, including Grace who we'd met at Young Hut on our first night, as well as a Mount Aspiring guide and his client. The guide and client had been intending to tackle Rabbit Pass but decided against it because of the weather. They confirmed that further up the Wilkin quite a bit of rain had fallen overnight. This and the forecast for more rain finally persuaded us to give up the idea of going over Rabbit Pass. By late afternoon all the people apart from Grace, Jan and I (but none of the sandflies) had left the hut for Makarora, either by jet boat or walking.

... and an even trickier one

Rain fell for most of the night. The morning light showed that the Wilkin had risen somewhat and it was still raining. Any idea of walking upstream to Top Forks Hut for a night or two was abandoned and we decided we should try to cross the river while it was still possible and return to Makarora. Grace was heading out too so the three of us set off together. To cross the river (at the same place as yesterday) we linked up – me (the heaviest) upstream, Jan in the middle and Grace downstream. The second channel was waist deep, flowing strongly and I lost my footing but managed to recover. Out of the river we found the track and walked down the Wilkin, rain jackets on all the way although the rain had



Crucible Lake. Photo by Philip Gatenby.

turned to drizzle. Progress was quick. At one point the track, where it had been rerouted due to an earlier landslide, went straight into the now swollen river necessitating another waist deep wade followed by a tricky climb on to the bank. We reached the Makarora River, now wide and racing towards Lake Wanaka. Finding a place to cross took some time. We chose a wide spot with two channels, probably three until quite recently. We crossed the first channel without much difficulty, but the second was chest deep and swift. We started to float and, still clinging together, I had visions of going all the way to Lake Wanaka, about 5 km downstream, but suddenly our feet touched bottom again and we were able to scramble out. Once across the river we had a snack, changed into drier clothes and completed the last kilometre of the walk to the Makarora Country Café. The heavens opened as we reached the café – impeccable timing!

Philip and Jan Gatenby

References

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/international-agreements/world-heritage/te-wahipounamu/>
Biswell, Shelley 2006, *New Zealand Geographic*, Issue 79, May-June.

Map modified from:

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/Documents/parks-and-recreation/tracks-and-walks/otago/gillespie-pass-brochure-web.pdf>



Mount Cook Lily (Ranunculus lyalli). Photo by Jan Gatenby.

Bushwalks

Yankee Hat North

Date: Sunday, 19 March 2017.

Leader: David Dedenczuk.

On a cool, clear morning, two NPA ACT members and two Canberra Bushwalking Club members formed a small party intent on visiting Yankee Hat North. The party left the Yankee Hat car park and took the track that leads to the famous rock art site on the flanks of Yankee Hat. Even this part of the walk was rewarding, with the vistas over the grasslands to the peaks of Namadgi beyond. Bogong Creek was running well, and a pair of male Scarlet Robins chased each other above its banks.

The party left the trail and headed south, picking up a fire trail, climbing and skirting Yankee Hat's eastern flanks. When the fire trail had reached its highest point, and a tributary of Bogong Creek came down from a saddle between the two Yankee Hats, the party left the fire trail and headed into the lush scrub. A previous visitor to the area had given the leader of the party a route that headed up this way, with assurances that the scrub was not too bad, and indeed it wasn't. The party made its way through light scrub on the banks of the creek – wattles and pea mainly, but nothing too dense. In the creek itself, best progress could be made. Long stretches of tussocky grass in the creek and areas of rock made for relatively easy going, and the party reached the saddle about 2 hours after leaving the car park.

Once in the saddle, the party headed to the north, again through light scrub. Even though the forest had been burned in the 2003 fires, there were no 'pick-



The Yankee Hats. Photo by Philip Gatenby.

up-sticks' to contend with. The rocky summit was quickly reached with a further hours walking, and the party was gratified to find that the highest rocks could be climbed easily. Sadly, by this time, misty clouds had descended and obscured what would have been a good view. Nonetheless the party had lunch on the summit and was pleased to be there.

The descent was very pleasant, and afforded close observation of the nearby forested flanks of the higher Yankee Hat South, beyond the saddle. The party did not have the time, the energy or the inclination to do a reconnaissance of the southern peak, but the accessibility of the saddle means that this may be the best way in to the southern peak. Intelligence indicates that Yankee Hat South is not as easy as its northern twin. At least 350 m of pick-up-sticks have to be contended with. I will lead a walk back there next year.

The party reversed its steps, detouring to visit the art site, and delighting in the many birds that were visiting the site. More robins, Grey Fantails and whistlers made for a lively scene among the great tors of granite. The party returned over the grasslands, completing the 6-hour walk, admiring again the great rocky and forested peaks, variously cloaked in mist and painted with golden sunbeams.

David Dedenczuk

Below left. Female Scarlet Robin at Yankee Hat art site. Photo by David Dedenczuk.

Below. Homeward bound, with Hospital Hill in the background. Photo by David Dedenczuk.



BUSHWALKS *(continued)*

Centenary Trail: Campbell to Watson

Date: Sunday, 26 March 2017.

Participants: Brian Slee (leader), Peter Anderson-Smith, Mike Bremers, Michaela Popham, Margaret Power.

Weather: Blue sky, mid 20s, still air.

You will not be alone when climbing to the top of Mount Ainslie (843 m ASL) on any weekend. Kids, well-behaved dogs, people of all sizes. The early crowd says 'Hello' but then there are too many. It is home to magnificent Scribbly Gums. Takes 30 minutes to the top, which is where we reconvened at 10 am after a car was shuffled to the Federal Highway, North Watson. Blame the cigarette butts at the summit lookout on those who drove up the other side.

Canberra's Centenary Trail (CT) heads north around the peak through casuarinas, skirting the road before descending on the eastern side of the ridge. A chance to amble, chat and catch up on news. The trail becomes a road, reconnecting to the CT bike path, and we stopped soon after for a break at 10.45 in a leafy glade at the rear of Hackett.

Continuing north, the appearance of McKenzie Street car park on our left indicated that the track to Mount Majura

(888 m), away from the CT, was about to begin. Gently meandering at first, it becomes a steep trudge. At midday we were sheltering under a spreading Kurrajong for lunch with views over Majura Valley, green again following a mini drought. We had climbed almost 600 m since setting out.

The afternoon's descent was the least populated and most pleasant part of the walk. Half way down Majura we took the side track back to the CT, a path none of us had walked before, and it was beautifully shaded with sparkling views across the city. Lower down there were stretches of grassy woodland where the CT leads walkers around 'Little Majura' peak. Shinglebacks lay torpid in the sun but Matthew's monitors (Rosie and Rex) heard us coming and hid. An interesting alternative descent from Majura would be via the service road and 'Little Majura'.

Traffic noise was increasing and we were soon at the car, around 1.45 pm.



Shingleback (Tiliqua rugosa).

Photo by Mike Bremers.

Despite the boggy track and gloomy tunnel under the highway giving access to the parking space, nothing was awry. We had walked 13.3 km according to Mike's gismo.

Cherryripe at Watson (formerly *Carlo's*), was a good spot for afternoon tea – observant staff provided a second bottle of cold water unprompted, having noted how quickly the first was being guzzled. In a March that had been unusually cloudy, we had lucked it with a lovely day and an outing to match.

Brian Slee

Jagungal Wilderness from the north

In Robert Green's *Exploring the Jagungal Wilderness* (reviewed in *NPA Bulletin* June 2016), the author expressed no opinion on the best view of the Wilderness. Anyone who has been there, however, would favour that from the north at Fifteen Mile Ridge (1,700 m) in the vicinity of a pair of white-painted huts known as Linesmans No. 3. They are located 2km from Tooma (Cabramurra–Khancoban) Road on an easy walk via Happy Jacks Road and the Bicentennial Trail. Due south from the huts looms the massive bulk of Jagungal (2,062m), and further south the Main Range which was covered in early-season snow when Mike Bremers, Max Smith and I visited the site on 11 April 2017. Extending west from Tumut and Tooma valleys is the Wilderness itself.



Linesmans No. 3 huts and Jagungal Wilderness.

Photo by Mike Bremers.

The power poles which once marched along the ridge have been felled, enhancing the magnificent sight.

Logbook entries suggest the huts are little used. The flat-roofed hut, moved

into position in the 1980s, no longer has a stove but contains chairs, a side table, a cupboard and odds and ends. It is lined with masonite and both windows are fitted with slide shutters – a small but comfortable retreat. The 1950s pitched-roof hut stores building material. Water collects in adjacent ponds after rain but cannot be relied upon. Unfortunately, roads in the area are closed from June to October, locking out almost everyone from the view when it would, at times, be something else again.

Brian Slee

PARKWATCH

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

Adventure World Racing Championship 2016

In November 2016 adventure racing World Championships were held in South Coast region national parks including Morton National Park and Budawang Wilderness. Ninety-eight teams of four members made their way from one destination to another by foot and on bicycles along formed and unformed tracks that were chosen by their navigators as the fastest route.

The Budawangs Wilderness in southern Morton NP has long been known and acknowledged to be highly vulnerable to environmental disturbance. Until recently it has suffered significantly from decades of unregulated visitor interest. Sensitive vegetation was being spoiled, damaged or disappearing across key elements of habitat, caused by the increasing number of visitors, poorly located tracks and camping practices.

When the Plan of Management for Morton NP (2001) was in preparation, there was strong concern expressed by NPWS and the community, who had also recognised the vulnerable nature of the region's sensitive landscape and the accumulated impact of unregulated use patterns. This led to an action statement in the Plan for the development of the "Budawangs Bushwalking and Camping Strategy". Page 1 states *'High visitor numbers and concentrated use in some areas have resulted in track proliferation, vegetation loss, erosion, water quality deterioration and other unacceptable impacts'*. Since then, the Budawangs has been the focus of concerted effort to address adverse visitor impacts.

The route of this recent event traversed terrain where environmental disturbances are well known to management. The policies outlined in the Plan of Management (2001), and the Bushwalking Strategy document are in clear conflict with the physical goal of the endurance event. Office of Environment and Heritage Orienteering and Rogaining Policies and Procedures, state:

• Orienteering and rogaining events will not be permitted to take place in nature reserves, Aboriginal areas and historic sites due to the specific conservation requirements of these reserve categories.

• In accordance with the Wilderness Policy and the Events, Functions and Venues Policy, orienteering and rogaining events are not permitted in wilderness areas as they are not consistent with the management principles for wilderness.

Why then was the Budawangs Wilderness put forward and accepted as an appropriate venue for the event? What is the purpose of plans of management, policies and procedures if they are to be ignored rather than be used as a tool to stand up for the environment?

Planning for the event had been conducted over almost a year but kept secret from the community at large, including the NPWS Regional Community Advisory Committee, to ensure the participants would not be aware of the route to be followed. Had it been known, it would certainly have raised concern as to the commitments embodied within the Plan of Management and the Bushwalking Camping Strategy Document.

The decision to hold the event in this sensitive protected landscape will seriously impair any management headway achieved to date by the Bushwalking Strategy and creates a precedent for future uses and events of a similar type. National Parks and Wilderness were created to protect nature. The plans of management state what needs to be done and must be followed unless they are changed in an open and transparent manner.

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No 1, Autumn 2017*

National Parks for Sale – Again!

Three current proposals for commercial developments in national parks are seriously worrying, and there could be more to come! Has Parks Victoria's tourism arm lost the plot? Are they simply answering to pressure from their political masters? Is the tourism industry still running on the previous government's policy? Maybe it's all three!

Whatever the case, the government and our park managers seem to have lost sight of the fact that Victoria's parks already contribute over \$1 billion to tourism, yet cost less than 1 per cent of the State budget to run: a good deal by any standards. And they seem to have also lost sight of the guiding principle of keeping private tourism developments outside parks, where they pose no threat to parks but do benefit regional communities.

The Andrews' Government came into power promising to reverse the previous government's enthusiasm for private developments in our parks, and quickly legislated to end the insidious 99-year park leases. It also sensibly promised to upgrade facilities in parks to 'encourage more Victorians to get outdoors and enjoy our natural environment', and increase funding for management. There has been a moderate increase in park funding already, much of it for infrastructure. Hopefully a lot more is on the way.

But that seems to have done little to quell Parks Victoria's over-enthusiastic support for three proposals it has on hand:

1. The most outrageous is a so-called 'community-led' proposal to excise at least six hectares from Mount Buffalo National Park, around the historic Chalet, and hand it to private developers for a 'Mount Buffalo Chalet Village'.
2. Then there's the disastrous scheme to put over 30 buildings along the track from Falls Creek to Hotham in the Alpine National Park.
3. Lastly, for now, there's the proposed commercial boat tours at the Prom.

What's the theory driving all of this? Apparently people visiting parks don't spend enough money while they are actually at their destination i.e. inside the park. So, putting private developments into parks will drain more from their wallets during their visit. But if you take a good look at most tourism plans, the best way to fleece a tourist is to get them to extend their trip at wineries, B&Bs, spas and restaurants in the region. These options don't have to be inside the park at all. We need our parks to protect our much threatened native plants and animals, and to give us rest and refuge from the ever faster moving world we live in.

*Parkwatch VNPA
March 2017, No 268*

Major changes to planning Tasmania facilitate tourist developments within National Parks.

The State Government is in the midst of downgrading Tasmania's once exemplary planning system with the aim of facilitating development. Most attention has focussed on the introduction of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme, and its effect on urban development, but it is accompanied by

(continued on page 25)

PARKWATCH (continued)

two other measures which have attracted less attention – indirect changes to development assessment on reserved land by the Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) and the foreshadowed introduction of Major Project's legislation.

All three have major implications for development approval in Tasmania, including on reserved land. Major developments such as tourist resorts within national parks will soon be able to be approved without the public having any right to comment on proposals or appeal to the decision. The legislative changes to establish the Tasmanian Planning Scheme were passed by State Parliament in 2015 but approval of Local Provisions Schedules is required before the new scheme can fully take effect – this is likely later in 2017.

Tasmania has never had a statutory process (defined in legislation) for the assessment of developments in national parks but this did not matter much in the 1990s because there was broad agreement that national parks were off-limits for development. The State Government's policy of "unlocking" Tasmania's national parks for developers has left our parks at risk of development proposals which may be approved with no guarantee of public scrutiny and no opportunities for legal challenges. The National Parks legislation requires only that a major development within a national park receives approval from the land manager, the PWS. There is no requirement for any public involvement in the decision.

The main mechanism for attracting development proposals on reserved land has become the State Government's call for Expression of Interest in "tourism investment opportunities". The "assessment" of these proposals can be summarised as ensuring that all existing legal requirements are met. The main criteria are the extremely broad objectives of the relevant reserve class and the purposes of reservation defined in legislation.

The Major Projects legislation is the likely mechanism for assessing the Cradle Cable Car (Visitor Centre to Dove Lake) proposal and the Mount Wellington Cable Car, if this ever progresses to a formal proposal.

The absence of a thorough process for the assessments of developments on reserved land can only be addressed by changes to Tasmanian legislation. This needs to acknowledge that a development in a national park does not only affect the natural values but also affects important matters such as the

experience of other visitors (e.g. a development which involves the use of helicopters), and that this is beyond the scope of any currently required assessments. This legislative change would provide a separate, statutory process for the assessment of development proposals in national parks which would consider the effect of the proposal on all the values of the parks and guarantee an opportunity for public comment and right of appeal.

TNPA News No 24
Summer 2017

Baseless beliefs threaten survival

The 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) was held in Johannesburg, South Africa in October 2016. HSI (Humane Society International) Australia attended as one of a strong team of HSI offices and as part of the Species Survival Network.

CITES is an international agreement between governments aiming to ensure international trading in wild animals and plants does not threaten species survival. One of Australia's key focusses, the marine species proposals, were a great success. Thresher sharks, silky sharks and Mobula ray proposals to list these species on Appendix II (controlled trade) were all adopted – despite opposition from Japan and Iceland. The sharks and rays are all threatened by international trade for their fins and gill plates. We will start to see these in effect from mid-2017 and HSI strongly believes that the listing of these sharks and rays reflects a seismic shift in the way the world views and conserves sharks.

In other great news, domestic markets for ivory were recommended to be closed immediately. Often legal trade in wildlife specimens provides a front for illegal trafficking, and with a huge rise in poaching and the illegal wildlife trade seen in recent time, the adoption of this commitment by CITES parties cannot have come soon enough.

CITES CoP17 was a success for most species and HSI will continue striving so that all species gain greater protection and benefit from enforced anti-trafficking.

Humane Society International Newsletter
Volume 23 Issue 1 Mar 2017

New statewide plan maps out nature protection for Victoria

A new statewide strategy to protect Victoria's natural heritage highlights the

importance of the state's natural places. The plan is the first formal, statewide biodiversity strategy to be released in Victoria for two decades. The last plan was released in 1997 – the new plan has been long overdue.

"Tens of thousands of native plants, animals and other remarkable lifeforms live in Victoria's remaining areas of native forest, heathlands, wetlands and grasslands," Victorian National Parks Association executive director Matt Ruchel said. "These areas are also vital to the health and wellbeing of the Victorian community. Protecting this heritage for future generations is a job for everybody – the government, industry and the Victorian community, but the government needs to lead."

The VNPA welcomed the release of the well-thought-through plan, *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2036*, and congratulated the Victorian Government for leading on these issues.

"There have been a few attempts over the past decade to come up with a formal state government strategy for nature and biodiversity, but none have been realised until now," Mr Ruchel said. "While some natural areas are doing well, others face threats from pest plant and animal invasions, land clearing and destructive development. Increasingly, the impacts of climate change are adding to these pressures and require new management strategies."

"Funding levels for nature conservation and protection have been at record lows, and while there has been some recent turn-around in that situation, management resources must be significantly increased over coming years, starting with this year's budget. The new strategy calls for a 'sustained period of investment' and, importantly, guides the effective application of resources, linking knowledge and expertise to strategic actions. The strategy also recognises the critical importance of our national parks, indigenous protected areas and other reserves on public and private land. It calls for both the extent and condition of these protected areas to be enhanced," Mr Ruchel said.

www.vnpa.org.au
accessed 26/4/2017

Compiled by Hazel Rath

NPA notices



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

National Parks Association Calendar

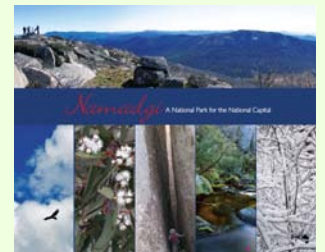
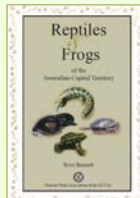
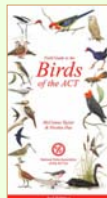
	June	July	August	September
Public holidays	Mon 12	—	—	Mon 25
General meetings	Thurs 15	Thurs 20	Thurs 17 AGM	Thurs 21
Committee meetings	Tues 6	Tues 4	Tues 1	Tues 5
Gudgenby Bush Regeneration ¹	Sat 10	Sat 8	Sat 12	Sat 9
NPAACT Bushfire Symposium ²		Fri 21, Sat 22 +Sun 23 outing		
Glenburn work party ³	—	—	Tues 1	—

Further details: 1. GBRG. Meet at Namadgi Visitor Centre 9.15 am.
2. Community Symposium – Bushfire Management: Balancing the Risks. See pages 4, 5.
3. Friends of Glenburn meet at Canberra Railway Station, Kingston at 9.00 am, or at the locked gate off the Kings Highway at 9.20 am.

This Bulletin was prepared by:
Editor, Philip Gatenby
Copyeditor, Ed Highley
Presentation, Adrienne Nicholson.

The next issue will be edited by
Kevin McCue and Sonja Lenz.

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



Note: If you have received a faulty copy of the *Field Guide to the Butterflies of the ACT* it will be replaced. Please return the faulty copy to the office or leave a phone message on (02) 6229 3201 to arrange for a replacement.

Membership fees are now due.

It's that time of year again! You will be receiving your letter for membership renewal and donations later in June, either as a digital document (if we have your email address) or as a printed copy through Australia Post.

The letter contains the data we store confidentially on our membership database about you. We are asking members to check that the information we have (name/s, address, phone number/s, your interests in supporting the NPA ACT, email address/es etc.) is still correct.

Please take the time to check and amend your details, if necessary, and send the whole form with your membership dues (and donation) back to the office by post with cheques or money orders. The completed form can also be scanned and sent to admin@npaact.org.au by email.

For payment by Mastercard or Visa credit card please use the on-line facility on 'Trybooking'; on-line bank transfer is also possible. Detailed instructions are in the letter. We ask you to still send the completed form back to the office with an indication of payment method after paying on-line.

Thank you all for your cooperation.

Sonja Lenz, Secretary



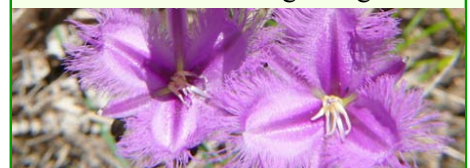
Annual General Meeting

Thursday 17 August

Notification of meeting and
Nomination Form for
committee positions on
page 3.

14 October Saturday Walk
46th BLACK MOUNTAIN SPRING
WILDFLOWER RAMBLE

Details in the Outings Program.



Cover photographs

Front cover

Main photo. Autumn daisies (*Coronidium monticola*), Gudgenby Valley.
Photo by Graeme Taylor.

Insets. Left. Glenburn Precinct new signs 'opened' (article page 19).
Photo by Chris Emery.

Centre. Bushfire symposium (see pages 4, 5). From Symposium poster.

Right. Stork-billed Kingfisher, Sabah (article page 8). Photo by Dave Kelly.

Back cover

Top. Mount Ainslie look out (see article page 23). Photo by Mike Bremers.

Bottom. In New Zealand, Mount Awful from Gillespie Pass (article page 20). Photo by Philip Gatenby.

General Meetings

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



Thursday 15 June

Communicating Science

Dr Erin Walsh
Scientific Illustrator.



Erin will give an overview of what scientific illustration is, its place in history, and the role it plays in communicating science today. She will also discuss how every field naturalist and citizen scientist is thinking like a scientific illustrator.

Thursday 20 July

Citizen Science

Dr Andrew Claridge
Senior Research Scientist, NSW
NPWS.

Dr Claridge has a broad range of research interests ranging from quolls to truffles and has authored or co-authored several books on ecological topics. Dr Claridge will talk about the use of strategically mounted cameras to study the distribution and range of various animals, native and introduced, and the possibility of including citizen-science activities to support these research programs.

Thursday 17 August Annual General Meeting

*Panel discussion on the July
Bushfire Symposium*

A panel will lead a member discussion on the recent Bushfire Symposium, a 'washup' on how it went, pointers from the latest science and any outcomes that might influence future NPA policy.

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
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<i>Secretary</i>	Sonja Lenz 6251 1291 (h) sonjalenz67@gmail.com
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<i>Glenburn/Burbong Work Parties</i>	Col McAlister 6288 4171 (h) cvmac@grapevine.com.au
<i>Outings Subcommittee</i>	Steven Forst 0428 195 236 steven.forst@iinet.net.au
<i>Promotion and Engagement Subcommittee</i>	Vacant
<i>Publications Subcommittee</i>	Kevin McCue 6251 1291 (h) mccue.kevin@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.

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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

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

