



# NPA *Bulletin*

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National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory Inc.



**Rosenberg's  
report**



**River rafting  
Canada**



**Farewell to  
Friends**

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

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## President's report

This has been a very busy quarter for the committee, with encouraging good news on some of our activities.

### Research grants and scholarships

Phil Zylstra has submitted an encouraging report on his use of our research grant for studies of bushfire modelling (see Christine Goonrey's report in the March 2018 *Bulletin*). The two students we sponsored for Forests Forever Easter Ecology Camp in East Gippsland (Goongerah) have written an enthusiastic article on their experience (reported in this issue of the *Bulletin*). The Committee will offer to sponsor 10 environmental science students from ANU or UC to attend in 2019.

### NPA projects/grants

The NPA-funded pilot project on tracking of Rosenberg's Monitors in the ACT has been completed, with all involved enthusiastic about the information

obtained and the potential of a future larger study. A number of NPA ACT members assisted with the study (see Don Fletcher's report in this issue).

The committee has agreed to contribute to a citizen science study of the Native Water Rat (Rakali) in the ACT, jointly with the Canberra Field Naturalists. This project was initiated by the Platypus Conservancy Group in Victoria. They want to extend their survey to the ACT and have asked for local support (see Kevin McCue's report in this issue). A group representative will come from Melbourne to give a public talk on 2 August.

### Books

The *Field Guide to the Birds of the ACT* and the *Field Guide to the Butterflies of the Australian Capital Territory* have been reprinted. A stall at the Connect and Participate Expo at the Old Bus Depot on 24 March sold books and gave out



information, as well as recording names of people interested in knowing more about NPA ACT. Jane O'Donohue (a former committee member) has taken over the project to provide organisations and schools with Namadgi books as rewards for kids' participation in environmental activities.

### Website redesign

Redesign of the association's website has been completed by member Sabine Friedrich. Chris Emery (webmaster) has requested that members visit it and

*(continued next page)*

## President's report *(continued)*

submit comments or problems to him. High-quality photos of NPA activities would be appreciated for display.

### NPA 60th anniversary celebration

Suggestions made at the April general meeting member's forum have been noted. Before plans can progress, a committee and chair are needed to arrange the event. Volunteers are encouraged to contact any committee member or the NPA office on [admin@npaact.org.au](mailto:admin@npaact.org.au)

### Publicity/promotion and engagement committee

A subcommittee is being organised to plan a strategy for attracting new and younger members. Suggestions and volunteers will be welcomed by all committee members.

### New Conservator for Flora and Fauna

Ian Walker has just taken over this position. Rod Griffiths and I met with him to discuss both his role and the activities of the NPA. He encouraged us

to bring issues of concern to him, and we invited him to walk with us in Namadgi. He accepted and on 18 May the walk took place, taking in the Yerrabi Track and visiting Gudgenby Cottage.

### General meeting trial format

Starting in May a secure link to online minutes of the previous meeting will be provided in *Burning Issues*. A few paper copies will be available at the meeting for those without online access, along with detailed financial statements. These will be on a table near the hall entrance with the attendance book. The chair will request any corrections before asking for

approval. Minutes will be displayed only if there are significant corrections to be made. We hope that this will both shorten and enliven the meetings while providing everyone with an opportunity to read the minutes.

**Esther Gallant**



*NPA stall at ACT Government Connect and Participate Expo.*

*Photo by Esther Gallant.*

## Notice of Annual General Meeting

**Thursday 16 August 2018**

### Business: Minutes of the AGM 2017

- 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.

## OAM Presentation

As reported in the March *Bulletin*, NPA ACT member, Di Thompson, was awarded an Order of Australia on Australia Day 2018. Di was presented with her medal by the Governor-General on 3 May.



*Dianne Thompson with her Order of Australia medal.  
Photo by Alice Thompson.*

### Nominations for NPA ACT office bearers and committee 2018/19

Nominations are sought for office bearers and committee members to be elected at the AGM on 16 August 2018.

We nominate .....  
for the position of ..... in NPA ACT for 2018/19  
Proposed by ..... (signature)      Seconded by ..... (signature)  
I accept the nomination ..... (signature)      Date .....

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

## Report from the Environment Subcommittee

The NPA ACT has a proud history of lobbying on behalf of the natural environment. From its very inception it has worked for the protection of the ACT's and the local region's natural environment. The work of the NPA ACT's Environment Subcommittee continues this tradition and the past few months have been very busy.

The NPA ACT has made submissions on the following four matters:

- Protection of the Alpine National Park: Feral Horse Strategic Action Plan 2018–2020 – continuing the NPA ACT's advocacy for the protection of Australia's fragile high country ecosystems from a significant feral animal threat (28 January, 5 pages)
- Draft ACT Aquatic and Riparian Conservation Strategy and Action Plans – to recognise the importance of these areas in the ACT for water

quality and paths of connectivity between natural habitats (11 March, 1 page)

- Molonglo River Reserve Draft Reserve Management Plan – to express concern over the vulnerability of the nature values of this reserve to pressures from the urban environment (20 March, 13 pages)
- ACT Climate Strategy to a Zero Net Emissions Territory Discussion Paper – to emphasise the important role that natural ecosystems and reserves play as carbon sinks and refugia as the climate changes (8 April, 3 pages).

Copies of all these submissions can be found on the NPA ACT website, [www.npaact.org.au](http://www.npaact.org.au)

The NPA ACT's campaign for a new grassy woodlands national park has seen the creation of a grassy

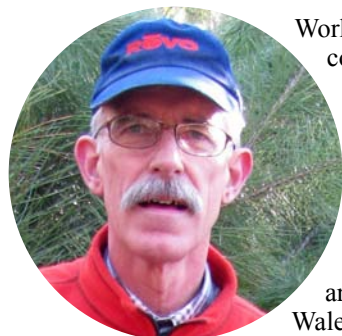


woodlands consultation group, of which the NPA ACT is a member. The ACT is currently revising its woodlands strategy and the group has the opportunity to provide valuable input to this process.

The Environment Subcommittee meets regularly to continue guiding the NPA ACT's environmental policy and welcomes new members. Contact Rod Griffiths, 0410 875 731.

**Rod Griffiths**

## NPA ACT Work Parties



Work parties are conducted monthly, apart from December and January, to help with the management of national parks in the ACT and nearby areas of New South Wales. A summary of

work party activities in the first quarter of 2018 is presented in the table below.

Work parties are integral to the objectives of the NPA and the amount they can achieve is directly proportional to the number of members prepared to participate. You can find out more about work parties by contacting Martin Chalk on 0411 161 056.

**Martin Chalk.**



*Poplar removal at Blundells Flat. Photo by Martin Chalk.*

Month	Activity	Agency	Participants
February	Upper Cotter briar control. 439 briar cut/dabbed from Gallipoli Flats and 367 cut/dabbed from both sides of Licking Hole Creek Fire Trail. Return November 2021.	PCS	8
March	Lower Cotter – poplar control on Blundells Flat. Two transects established each approximately 150 sq m in area. Western transect cleared and eastern transect half cleared.	PCS	4
April	Dananbilla Nature Reserve. Remaining tree guards removed in Windermere Section. Four new kangaroo exclosures built in this section. Wattle silt traps established on western side of the range.	NPWS	10
April	Reedy Creek briar control. 849 briar, 4 willow, 3 apple and 1 hawthorn removed from Reedy Creek 400 m up and downstream from Brandy Flat Fire Trail crossing. Revisit the downstream section in November this year.	PCS	6

## Christine Goonrey – a great leader

You could see it was going to happen, but when it did the shock was nonetheless palpable. We had come to rely on her leadership, judgment and political nous; five years as President, then another five as Immediate Past President, and when Rod Griffith resigned as President they shared the role until Esther stood up in 2017.

Christine Goonrey joined NPA ACT on retirement from the Public Service and within a year was elected President, in 2005. Not long after that she joined the Conservation Council Board and then took on the presidency of the National Parks Australia Council. In that capacity she presided over a memorable meeting with the Hon. Peter Garrett, then Minister for the Environment, a meeting of equals as all could see. No shrinking violet our Christine.

The environment was front and foremost on her agenda. We held three symposia on her watch at her suggestion, published our beautiful coffee-table book *Namadgi – A National Park for the National Capital* (her idea) and, finally, she spearheaded another symposium, a

game changer, in 2017: *Bushfire Management – Balancing the Risks*. This was the culmination of several years on the ACT Bushfire Council, no place for mild men let alone a woman, dynamic, forceful and educated as she was. But she turned them around – such a conquest – and brought protection of the environment into the Council's remit.

There was much more, the parliamentary committee presentations, field guide updates, the 50th anniversary, Art Week and these all took a toll. We supported her as best we could and wonderful calm Michael was always there to pick up the pieces and provide solid, unswerving support. In the end she sought refuge in the bush, the very bush where she had grown up near Bega. They built their dream house and we sensed, feared, that sometime she and Michael would leave Canberra and make the bush house



Christine with then Environment Minister, 2009.  
Photo by Kevin McCue.

their home, and that Christine would resign from the Committee.

Now that has come about. A time for contemplation, reflection, art and to write. But she has made lots of friends in Canberra and in the NPA equivalents in all states and in ACT Parks. We hope to maintain that friendship to the end and wish them well.

Well done, Christine, and a big thank you!

**Kevin McCue  
for the committee**

## Rakali recovering from near extinction

During Art Week a few years ago, Adrienne Nicholson photographed in the Gudgenby River an Australian native water-rat, *Hydromys chryso-gaster*, now commonly known by its Indigenous name 'Rakali'.

The sighting was a surprise. According to the Australian Platypus Conservancy (APC, Victoria) the population of Rakali is recovering from the brink of extinction following overenthusiastic trapping for skins. It urges that studies be made of population density and distribution to inform plans for management of the species. A recent study in Western Australia identified drowning in freshwater crayfish traps, predation by foxes and cats, habitat degradation and changes in hydrology as important threats to Rakali.<sup>1</sup>



NPA ACT and the Field Naturalists Association of the ACT have agreed to participate in a survey of Rakali in the ACT with a number of other like-minded organisations.

Geoff Williams from APC will give a public talk about Rakali and the survey on 2 August 2018 at 7:30 pm in the Robertson Building, ANU. We urge as many NPA members as possible to get along to the meeting. The previous Victorian survey model will be followed in the ACT region, particularly as the Canberra-based focus of the work will have the added benefit of bringing the species to the attention of Commonwealth agencies and their staff.

The Norman Wettenhall Foundation has supported the APC's ACT project with a grant of \$10,000 of the estimated \$18,000 required, and the NPA committee has agreed in principle to donate \$2,000 to the survey, and asks members to participate.

NPA tasks will include:

a) encouraging members to become involved in spotting and reporting Rakali in the region. This would

*Water-rat or Rakali, in the Gudgenby River.  
Photo by Adrienne Nicholson.*



make a morning or evening coffee outing, or strolls by Canberra lakes even more enjoyable.

b) promoting the project and any public lectures and water-rat spotting sessions. Perhaps the Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group, Friends of the Botanic Gardens and others would agree to get involved. If you have contacts there, please use them.

This is an interesting proposal; please volunteer your time and ideas. We suggest all sightings with photos be reported to Canberra Nature Map <http://canberra.naturemapr.org>

**Kevin McCue**

<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.wwf.org.au/Article-Documents/353/pub-rakali-community-survey-2014-2015-08dec15.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y>

# Hammered by hooves

*This article details information on the feral horse problem provided by guest speakers Di Thompson and Annette Smith in a presentation at the March 2018 meeting of the NPA ACT.*

The presentation<sup>1</sup> showed the increasing level of feral horse damage from the source of the Murray River, and along tributaries of the Murrumbidgee River in the Tantangara Valley of Kosciuszko National Park (KNP).

NPA members used to walk a lot in the Tantangara Valley in the 1980s and 1990s, but rarely walk or camp there these days because of both the number of, and damage being done by, feral horses and horseriders. On a single-day visit last year, Annette, Mike and Di counted 170 feral horses in the Long Plain and Seventeen Flat areas.

Di has made several long pack-walking visits to Cowombat Flat, KNP, from the mid 1980s and again in 2012, 2013 and 2018. In 2013, the NPA 'Magnificent Nine' walked in the area for 9 days, witnessing and recording the feral horse damage. This year, Esther, Gary and Di returned in February to undertake a Five Year Review over a 4-day period.

Put bluntly, we were shocked at the spread and increase in the level of damage from feral horses. We did see one deer on the Pilot Fire Trail, but otherwise, with confirmation from Esther, who is an Emeritus Professor of Veterinary Medicine, were readily able to confirm the damage was from feral horses.

In December 2015, NPWS, under pressure from the horse advocacies, had the National Cultural Heritage Values Assessment and Conflicting Values Report on Kosciuszko feral horses prepared (see <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/protectsnowies/knp-assessment-conflicting-values-2804.pdf>).

That report concludes:

... that the cultural heritage values identified should be addressed, and that this implies retaining a wild horse population in an appropriate location or locations within the KNP as one of the attributes of the identified cultural heritage values. But equally, the impact of an expanding wild horse population on both natural and cultural heritage values across a widening landscape must be addressed to ensure that these values are not put at risk.

Apart from the absurdity of recognising the heritage value of a feral animal, one aim of the presentation was to demonstrate that the price of protecting the 'heritage' horses is too high. The overwhelming increase in feral horse impacts in Cowombat Flat, Murray River headwaters, includes:

- no frogs, excepting in the exclusion plots
- the grassland valley floor is so eaten out that the horses are now pulling the grass up by tufts
- because grass is too scarce, the horses are now eating through the wire into the exclusion plots
- there are no macropods present, though we did see birds
- the number of horse wallows has increased, and the old wallows are now much larger and knee deep
- hooves have further cut the banks and broadened the creek and Murray River lines
- excepting for the scattered Black Saltees and Snow Gums, the flats and creek-lines are a hakea monoculture.

Of the Tantangara area, the Friends of Currango sum up the damage succinctly. They commenced visiting Currango Creek and its valley, attracted by the trout fishing, in the early 1970s.



*Cowombat Flat looking north to exclusion plot, February 2018. Photo by Di Thompson.*

... that the entire wetlands surrounding Gurrangorambla Creek ... appear to have been destroyed. In many places the principal bed of the creek is now abandoned. On the west side of what used to be the swamp is an eroded watercourse many metres wide, with no vegetation whatsoever.

Whereas the stream and adjoining wetlands were permanent features of the landscape as recently as approximately ten years ago, these features have now completely disappeared.

The mobs of feral horses in the Tantangara area and, in particular, at Seventeen Flat are many and large. There is not a wet area or creek left untouched. For those walking the Australian Alpine Walking Track through these regions, their health and safety are issues. Annette and Di know from meeting West Australian farmers doing the AAWT, that Namadgi National Park was the highlight of their walk. It is our duty to support and praise our respective Namadgi land managers and the ACT Government for keeping Namadgi free of feral horses.

Compounding the visual damage to the environment and the loss of native animals and plants is the lack of any effective action to control the cause, *(continued next page)*

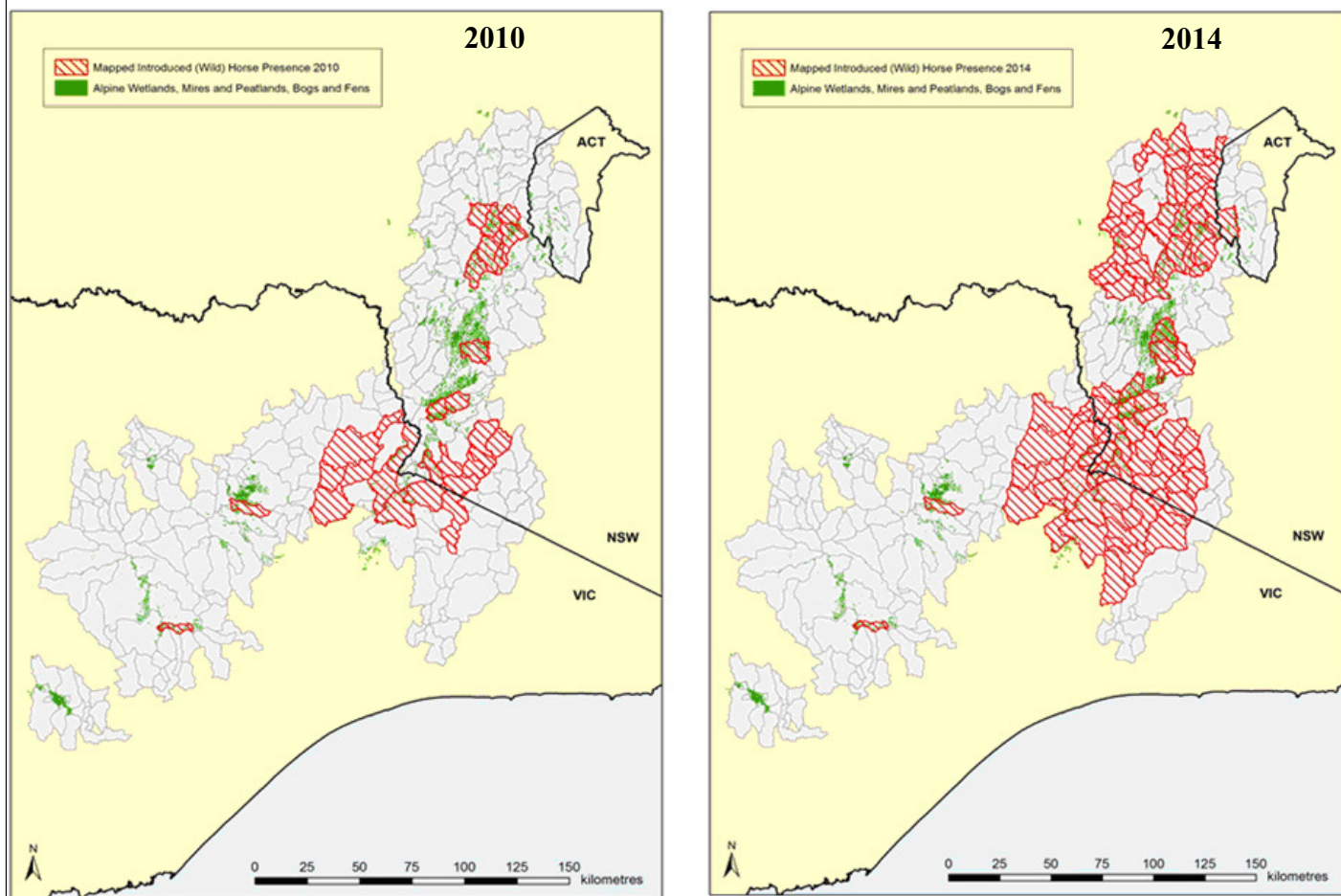


*Culvert at fire trail junction, Seventeen Flat. Photo by Di Thompson.*



*The creek banks dry out, Seventeen Flat. Photo by Di Thompson.*

**Mapped wetlands across the alps landscape and wild horse distribution, based on interviews with protected area staff.<sup>2</sup>**



primarily feral horses. Remediation of damage seems far from consideration.

**Feral horse range and numbers in KNP**

The area identified as occupied by feral horses across the Australian Alps increased dramatically over the period 2010 to 2014.

The increased presence of feral horses noted on these maps corresponds with the results from surveys of feral horse numbers conducted every 2–3 years over the period 2003 to 2014, and observations from people who get away from main roads in KNP.

The feral horse population throughout the Australian Alps, including KNP, was severely affected by the 2003 fires. The **estimated** populations of feral horses and **records** of the numbers removed from KNP since those fires is:

- 2003: population 1,500; 49 removed
- 2006: population 2,500; 133 removed
- 2009: population 4,237; 362 removed
- 2012: population 4,836; 588 removed
- 2014: population 6,000; 1,558 removed.<sup>3</sup>

These estimates show a remarkably consistent trend – upwards, at an alarming rate.

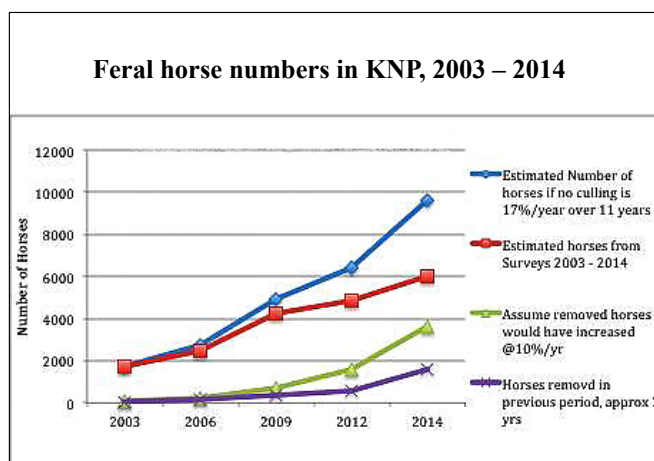
Based on this trend, a 17 per cent increase per year from 6,000 would result in over 8,000 in 2016, and 11,000 horses in 2018, less the adjusted number removed during this period. We wait with interest to see the results of the next survey, scheduled for 2019. It is disappointing that with such a worsening situation it will come at least 5 years after the last survey.

The NSW Government policy of doing nothing effective is costing the environment, and also the budget, and

will result in much greater distress and potential danger for the personnel involved in managing feral horses. Instead of removing 2,000 horses in 2003–04, the number is now likely to be over 10,000, and is growing rapidly. Feral horses crossing the border into the ACT water catchment increasingly affect the ACT.

**Survey of public opinion**

A 21st Century Town Hall Meeting was conducted in Queanbeyan on 29 November 2014 as part of the review of the Wild Horse Management Plan (WHMP). Three years later the WHMP has not been finalised. At the meeting, Straight Talk was engaged to ascertain general public opinion. It surveyed a representative sample of 72 people, based on age, gender and rural/urban settings, who did not hold particular views on the issue of ‘brumbies’ in KNP.



For Sources and Other calculations, see Footnotes next page.

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## Hammered by hooves *(continued)*

By summing the percentage of votes in the range 1–5 (Not acceptable) and 6–10 (Acceptable) for each question a good indication of sentiment can be gauged. The results recorded are shown in the table above.

Note the high acceptance of aerial shooting, still banned by the NSW Government even though it can be an effective and humane method of reducing horse and other feral animal numbers. Note also the low approval of brumby running, still being considered by the Victorian Government.

The KNP feral horse population is still youthful, with most born since 2003, in its full prime for people wishing to rehome captured feral horses. Even so, rehoming accepted only 583 or about 18 per cent of the 3,183 horses removed from KNP between 2002–03 and 2015–16,<sup>4</sup> despite intensive publicity and liaison with NPWS staff. Attempts to rehome even 200 feral horses per year cannot keep up with the annual increase of over 1,500 and rising.

The situation in the Eastern Alps region of the Alpine National Park in Victoria is similar to KNP. Despite the draft feral horse strategy released recently for the Alpine National Park, where the text indicated a realisation of the damage and intent to substantially reduce the horse population, the numbers used were years out of date, and the action required to bring horse numbers down to their target is far greater than that proposed in the draft strategy.

The situation worsens as knowledgeable staff are laid off from NPWS and Parks Vic, so fewer people have to multitask across fields they have neither the time nor detailed expertise to do justice to what is

### Scores from meeting in Queanbeyan, November 2014

Ranked 1–5 (Not acceptable)	Ranked 6–10 (Acceptable)	Management method
29	70	Trapping and euthanasia onsite
38	62	Aerial shooting
47	53	Trapping and removal and rehoming or transporting
48	52	Aerial ground mustering
55	46	Fertility control
55	46	Ground shooting
76	24	Brumby running or roping
77	22	Fencing

needed. Feral horse management policy appears as little more than an ongoing local employment program at an extreme expense to the taxpayer and the environment. Under current NSW Government policy, KNP could be reduced to a dustbowl within 50 years.

**Di Thompson and Annette Smith**

#### Footnotes

- 1 See <https://www.flickr.com/photos/91914657@N08/sets/72157692770426751>
- 2 Worboys, G.L., Good, R. B., Freudenberger, D., Pulsford, I. and Banks, S. (2015) *Our Australian Alps Are Changing...For The Worse*, Canberra, Available at: <https://theaustralianalps.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/our-australian-alps-are-changing-for-the-worse-part-1.pdf>
- 3 <http://protectsnowies.environment.nsw.gov.au>
- 4 *Review of the 2008 Horse Management Program Plan and Wild Horse Management Program, KNP.*

#### Chart Sources and Other calculations

##### Sources:

The estimated number of horses from surveys was from <http://protectsnowies.environment.nsw.gov.au>

The horse 'numbers removed' was taken from the *Review of the 2008 Horse Management Plan and Wild Horse Management Program, KNP.*

##### Other calculations:

The removed horses adjusted for just 10 per cent natural increase in numbers had they remained.

The estimated number of horses in KNP had no horses been removed.



*This is the water access for campers at Bill Jones Hut on the internationally renowned AAWT. Photo by Di Thompson.*



*Horse wallows have spread and deepened to knee height, February 2018. Photo by Di Thompson.*



# Update on the ACT Rosenberg's Monitor project – the 2017–18 season

In an article in the March 2018 issue of the NPA *Bulletin*, Kevin McCue reported on the trapping of Rosenberg's Monitors by a team based at Horse Gully Hut in the Naas Valley in December 2017. Central to this was the release of two males fitted with radio-linked GPS tracking packs. The two tracking packs were purchased by the National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory (NPA). That article also introduced some of the people and the research collaboration between NPA, the University of Canberra (UC), Conservation Research in EPSDD (Australian Capital Territory Government), and unpaid helpers including Matthew Higgins and me (affiliated with the Fenner School at the Australian National University).

Rosenberg's Monitor has been researched more than any other Australian goanna species, mainly on Kangaroo Island, and especially by Brian Green who is helping lead our project. However, there is much to learn so we can enhance the conservation of the species in the temperate part of its range. The species is listed as 'vulnerable' to extinction in NSW, Victoria and South Australia.

There is little genetic difference between Rosenberg's populations across the range of the species, but Brian tells us the local animals are notably larger and seem more docile, among other possible differences. Together with the larger Inland Carpet Python and Tree Goanna (both virtually gone from the ACT region), and the dingo, Rosenberg's would have been one of the largest terrestrial predators in the ACT region over the last several thousand years and is likely to have helped

regulate prey populations, thereby tending to aid in the maintenance of diversity.

## Adventures and excitement with tracked goannas

After spending 12 days within half a kilometre of their release point, both tracked goannas headed away during the Christmas break. We now know that one went approximately 3.5 km into a hidden gully, where its radio signal was trapped behind low ridges. The other travelled to a point 12 km distant, far beyond the range of the radio equipment used to download the GPS data.

Movements of this magnitude were a severe threat to the success of the project. We would lose the animals and their tracking equipment if they remained out of radio contact until the batteries were exhausted. Our project had been designed in the knowledge that the largest published home range for any member of the Varanidae family was less than 2.5 square km: the movements we recorded were beyond even the most speculative possibilities suggested by goanna researchers.

Hard work by many people eventually located both animals. They were still in Namadgi but in fairly steep gullies. Walking to their locations we noticed several *Nasutitermes* mounds – the kind goannas lay eggs in. Was this what the male goannas had come for – to be in a place that would be visited by females with eggs to lay? However, another problem immediately became apparent.

## Goannas trump girls!

In the rough granite of Namadgi, our harness design from Kangaroo Island had already worn through and was



Matthew Higgins with G5 after its tracker was removed. Photo by Elesha Curran.

hanging by a thread! Firenzo Guarino (UC) quickly fashioned a new harness from a piece of denim torn from the leg of his wife's jeans! (Thanks Jo! But why didn't he use his own pants?) The new harness design was not only stronger, but also simpler and lighter.

## Il Tunneler?

A new harness was made ready for the other goanna, but too late. On 13 January, he, that is 'Goanna 3' (the identification symbol painted on his back), left his tracking pack and harness deep in a crack between boulders and tree roots half way up a mountain.

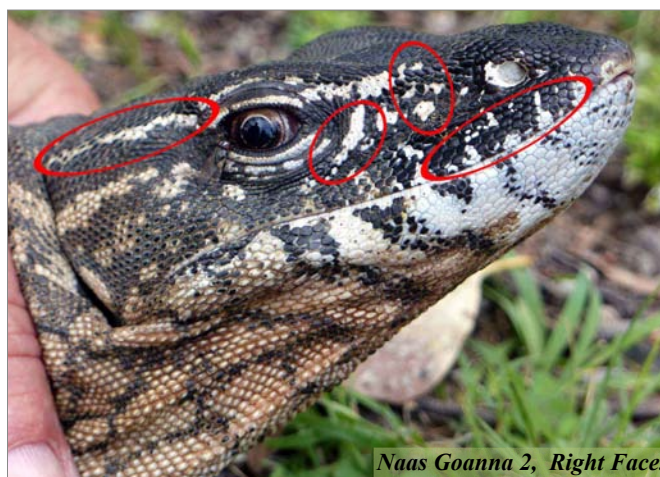
It was obvious the recovery attempt was going to test us. Enzo (*L'eccellente tunneler*) had a small wrecking bar and his Italian heritage to fall back on – there are even small tunnels in his Canberra back yard – whereas I only had a high school tour of the Snowy Scheme. With all our expertise we managed to tunnel under the boulders and recover it, only to both confess back in the car that night that we had each almost completely given up at least once, only refraining

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The unique faces of Rosenberg's. Photos by Don Fletcher.



Naas Goanna 3, Right Face.



Naas Goanna 2, Right Face.

## Update on the ACT Rosenberg's Monitor project – the 2017–18 season *(continued)*

from starting to pack up because at that moment the other seemed so keen to keep trying.

### Migrating monitors

Both goannas were then returned to the place where they had been caught and released! Kevin photographed Goanna 3 crossing the fire trail back at his release point and the GPS fixes for Goanna 5 (still wearing Jo's jeans) traced a 38 km round trip. There are important conservation implications if this behaviour is normal, rather than aberrant behaviour by one odd individual.

### Social animal, Casanova, good dad; or all of these?

Having tried unsuccessfully for a fortnight to catch Goanna 3 to re-attach his dislodged tracking pack, we fixed it to the next goanna we saw. Goanna H became the hero of the project, leading us to four other goannas, including his main mate Goanna M, whose nest in a nearby termite mound he was helping to guard. Over the weeks that the pair remained near this termite mound we took several photos of honm and even some of monh (H on M and M on H).

By leaving trail cameras on the nearby burrows and mounds, three more individual goannas were revealed within a few hundred metres, including a presumed female driving a larger goanna away from 'John's termite mound'. We couldn't help noticing this group of goannas was only about 1 km from the place Goanna 5 had travelled to on his 38 km excursion.

A trail camera showed that a 'not M' female frequently visited the night burrow of Goanna H. But unfortunately he had always left for the day before she arrived. Some days she waited around on his front porch, sunbathing without a bikini. Like a teenager watching a soap opera, I could hardly wait for each new episode of 'Goanna Home and Away' to

be revealed by the trail cameras borrowed from Conservation Research.

### How many goannas are there?

While the tracking project was playing out, another 4-week-long investigation was carried out with even greater involvement of NPA members. This entailed the installation of 60 trail cameras at 20 locations 500 m apart, at each of which a smelly meat bait had been left, then relocation of all 20 sites, and removal of all the equipment afterwards.

The aim was to attempt, by mark and resight, an estimate of the Naas goanna population, or at least to obtain an index of abundance for comparison with other goanna sites. Although some goannas marked in the December trapping session were recorded by the cameras, the main intent was to identify individuals by facial recognition. In our case the 'mark' in the name of the method could be misleading. It means only the allocation of an identity (a 'name code') to each face recognised in the photos. Rosenberg's Goannas seem to have unique faces. The reason for placing three cameras at each bait site was to capture both sides of each goanna's face in as much detail as possible. However, the first step is to plough through the 400,000 photos to find those containing goannas.

### And what other species were detected (or absent) along the Naas Valley Fire Trail?

I have quickly inspected some of the images. As well as RGs, the survey also recorded Common Blue-tongue Lizards, Brush-tailed Possums, four species of macropods, Agile Antechinus, dingo, and Sambar and Fallow Deer. Birds attracted to the bait or the associated insects included Collared Sparrowhawk, Eastern Yellow Robin, White-throated Treecreeper, Grey Fantail and Australian

Raven. Other species may be present in photos yet to be examined. More interesting is the absence from photos inspected to date of any fox, cat or feral pig, and the presence of only two dingoes. The absences may be more meaningful than the species recorded.

### Volunteers and corporate support

At least 16 people provided voluntary field support for the project: John Brickhill, Isobel Crawford, Elesha Curran, Jan Gatenby, Philip Gatenby, Brian Green, Enzo Guarino, Stephanie Haygarth, Matthew Higgins, Sonja Lenz, Chris Malam, Steph Manson, Kevin McCue, Kerry Moir, Brian Slee and Jamie Valdivia. I apologise to anyone I have inadvertently omitted. Between us all, more than 1,000 volunteer hours were worked with key individuals spending more than 150 hours in the 'Kingdom of Bursaria' (not including the time spent extracting thorns over ensuing days).

Needless to say, the project would not even have commenced without this inspiring input of expertise, common sense and time.

Employees of Conservation Research (Mel Snape, Kat Jenkins, Claire Wimpenny and Chris Malam) and Parks and Conservation (Mark Eldridge and Deklyn Townsend) also provided essential support, especially Kat Jenkins who was in the right place with a 4WD vehicle on quite a few occasions.

### Plans

In the spring we will be able to look for hatchlings emerging from the mounds that Goanna H led us to. It will be a great thing to see, so if it works out as hoped I will be happy to take there anyone who supported the project. For now, the trackers have been removed from both goannas and we are in preparation mode for their next

*(continued next page)*

*Below. Termite mound with repaired damage.*

*Right. Goannas H and M on guard duty (the mound is to the left of the tree).*

*Photos by Don Fletcher.*



# How should we celebrate NPA's 60th?

Members are invited to submit their ideas on how best the Association can celebrate its 60th Anniversary in 2020. At the April general meeting, ideas were canvassed in a members' forum. Ideas aired at the forum included:

- making some of the Association's past endeavours more widely known and accessible, such as by republishing the nature notes (written by Nancy Burbidge and other early members and published in *The Canberra Times*) from the 60s and 70s; organising an exhibition at the Heritage Library where NPA's papers are being kept; or commissioning a history of the NPA
- using photographs taken by members over the years, together with input from researchers, to provide evidence, for instance, of climate-induced changes in the Alps, or in other specific areas
- replicating in the Outings Programs for 2020 some of the outings conducted in the 60s and 70s
- preparing an anniversary issue of the *Bulletin* to continue the historical timelines in the previous special issues – such an issue would also contain art work and poetry by members
- having a party in the bush
- displaying Nicolas Day's original bird paintings – possible venues include the Canberra Museum and Gallery or the Tuggeranong and Belconnen art centres – selling printed cards and/or calendars from the existing scanned copies of the paintings was also suggested
- convening a conference on 'Nature in Canberra' and how it has changed in the past 60 years
- revitalising the NPA by actively recruiting new and younger members, using a variety of strategies, including:
  - social media
  - recruiting a professional from outside the Association onto the organising committee to develop these strategies
  - getting sponsorships and locals with a high profile to publicise NPA and its anniversary
  - building better links with teachers
  - organising competitions for primary and high school kids and university students, with an emphasis on photos, essays, an app for nature spotting in the ACT and so on.

Any members who want to be involved in arranging 60th Anniversary celebrations or with ideas on recognising this milestone are asked to contact a committee member or send their ideas to [admin@npaact.org.au](mailto:admin@npaact.org.au)

**Sonja Lenz and Philip Gatenby**

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## What's happening with NPA publications?

The Publications Subcommittee has been very busy over the last year: In December 2017 the third edition of the tree book was published; in early April our most popular publication, the bird book, was reprinted with minor changes; and in May our updated field guide on butterflies of the ACT was also reprinted.

If you have previously received a faulty copy of the *Field Guide to the Butterflies of the Australian Capital Territory* 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. You can also exchange your faulty copy for a copy of the updated reprint at a general meeting.

One of our eagle-eyed members, Rupert Barnett, noticed that there were some errors in the eucalypt key in the *Field Guide to the Native Trees of the ACT* – one line of the key was missing and one eucalypt species had the wrong number. The Publications Subcommittee

had errata labels printed which are being inserted into the book. If you have already bought a copy of this new edition (without the erratum slip at the foot of page 58) please pick up a label at the general meeting or notify the office on (02) 6229 3201 or by email [admin@npaact.org.au](mailto:admin@npaact.org.au) and a sticker will be sent to you by post.

**Sonja Lenz**

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## Update on the ACT Rosenberg's Monitor project – the 2017–18 season *(continued)*

deployment, which requires refurbishment by Telemetry Solutions in the USA. We also need to start the analysis and reporting of the results.

We should try to see how prevalent these migratory moves are because of their potential conservation significance, so more animals need to be tracked over summer. The first step is to secure funds. That can be another task for this winter.

### Donations

The NPA web page now provides specifically for donations to the goanna research project and already we have had two generous gifts, taking our budget for further research to \$1,000. The first priority is to secure the

approximately \$1,300 needed to refurbish the two existing trackers. New trackers cost several times as much.

### Conclusion

At present there is an unusual abundance of Rosenberg's Monitor in the eastern part of Namadgi. While it lasts, this event provides an uncommon opportunity to research the species in a part of its range where abundance is generally low, as indicated by its threatened status. In particular, recent decisions about potential environmental impact showed researchers the value of locally based movement studies. The results of our pilot research to date have further emphasised the need for that research.

Thanks to the injection of experience by Brian and Enzo, at the end of the 2017–18 season we already have viable methods ready for future investigations in the local region, including capture methods, camera trapping and tracking systems that can cope with local circumstances, such as challenging sites like the Clear Range and Booth Range. This progress has come about only because of the vision of key NPA individuals that led to the purchase of two tracking packs, and the generous input of time and bush experience from the volunteers who capably assisted the research. Thank you all.

**Don Fletcher**

# River rafting in Canada: chasing butterflies down the Nahanni



*Floating down the Nahanni River on a lovely sunny day. Photo by Esther Gallant.*

The recently enlarged Nahanni National Park in southern Northwest Territories of Canada now includes the entire catchment of the Nahanni River – Naha Dehe to the indigenous Dene. It was one of the first seven designated UNESCO World Heritage Sites and the first in Canada. It is also designated a Canadian Heritage River to ensure its long-term protection.

The park includes a section of the ice-free corridor during the last major glaciation (Wisconsinian) that extends into Alaska. Much of the river valley

was last glaciated over 200,000 years ago. Since then the river has been gradually carving through the ever-rising rocks. Ancient rocks form the canyon walls and fossils abound on the river banks. The canyon is noted for its geology and on my previous trip a Canadian geologist could not contain his delight in the fossils and 5 million-year-old rocks.

The park is home to many species of native mammals, birds and fish as well as the dramatic 117 m Virginia Falls and Canada's deepest canyon at over

1,000 m. Recently I returned to raft the river from Virginia Falls to the settlement of Nahanni Butte (195 km) for the second time. It is a trip well worth repeating and one member of the group of 11 was on her third trip.

The torrent over Virginia Falls was a somewhat unsettling sight as our Twin Otter float plane circled to land upstream on the river. Winds were so strong that a smaller Cessna had to turn back and try again the next day. The river was in flood, so our large, inflated rafts sped along with no need for paddling – only a bit of steering was required of the three young guides.

We spent two nights in the relatively luxurious Parks Canada campground above the falls. There were picnic tables, tent platforms, duckboard walkways and actual dunnies with walls and doors. During our time there everything was carried from the float plane dock to the launch point below the falls. Single-wheeled carts with hand brakes were used for heavier items. The rest went on human backs – all who were able participating. There was the opportunity for interested hardy souls to climb Sunblood Mountain which rises above the falls. Four of us paddled across the river and completed the 990 m, 8 hour, 16 km trek to the summit. The views up and down the river and across the surrounding mountain ranges were exhilarating. Following is my contribution to the group journal describing the day.

## **Sunblood Ascent**

Swift water crossing, paddles flashing  
Boggy spruce track, puddle jumping  
Steep pine trail, poles essential  
Long scree slope, scary track  
Yellow Cinquefoil, White Camas Lilies  
Butterflies clinging in strong wind  
Distant views of looping rivers  
Sunny skies, approaching showers  
Rocky summit, restful lunch  
Happy chatter on descent  
Hugging trees to slow the pace  
Dinner waiting, adventurers feted.

In comparison to the Sunblood hike, the rest of the trip was rather sedate but never boring: watching the magnificent scenery go by, loading and unloading the rafts every day, keeping watch for wildlife. A few days later most of us

*(continued next page)*

*Virginia Falls (117 m) with Sunblood Mountain 1,000 m above. Photo by Esther Gallant.*



## River rafting in Canada: chasing butterflies down the Nahanni *(continued)*

climbed the 490 m Nahanni Gates cliff to look down on a narrow constriction of the canyon and the winding river beyond.

**Wildlife:** Along the way we saw a young male moose on the bank watching with apparent curiosity as the strange red objects floated by. It tried to follow us downstream, but the rugged river bank soon brought his progress to a halt. There was lots of beaver-chewed wood along the way. A beaver passed within a few metres of our dinner circle splashing down a shallow rivulet to attend to beaver business in the big river. There were numerous Dall Sheep appearing as

moving white dots on the mountain sides about a thousand metres above us. A small Black Bear rushed through one camp on a mission that didn't involve humans.

Then there were the butterflies! I photographed two clinging to vegetation in a gale on top of Sunblood. There were many Red-spotted Admirals and Pink-edged Sulphurs plus several other less numerous species all along the river. Others in the group noticed my interest and started paying attention as well and pointing out butterflies. There also were many small bumble bees, some with red bums, in riverside willow shrubs. There

seemed to be something they wanted on the under surface of the leaves.

On day 10 we deflated rafts and packed gear for the 1-hour trip to Nahanni Butte. First Nations boatmen carried us through about 20 km of sluggish braided river to the landing strip in their village. On this final day we saw several large Wood Bison resting along the banks. Then a last small-plane trip (with wheels this time) back to a lovely B&B for hot showers and a final group dinner.

**Esther Gallant**



*Anise Swallowtail near Sunblood Summit.*



*Pink-edged Sulphur Butterfly.*

*Photos by Esther Gallant.*

### Nights Out

Nights in the swag, waking from time to time as the sky moves around. The clarity of stars, the fuzziness of brain, trying to work out which is which. Is the moon in Scorpio tonight? Deep down I want to go back to the desert. Or do I really? By day it's so desolate and remote. But by night I'm part of that great turning.

I've never owned a swag. Doing field work it was always the firm's. And on private walking and climbing trips it was too heavy and bulky so I just used a sleeping bag. Must have been hundreds of nights out there. Some tense moments ... mmm ... it's clouding over ... doesn't often rain in the arid zone. Feeling the first raindrops on my face – will it, won't it? Go back to sleep Gerry! Sometimes it's OK, sometimes not. Some nights I wake up soaked and need to do something about it though sleepy, bedraggled and wishing for morning light.

I did try a bivvy bag for a year or two. Then it rained in the 'always dry' Nullarbor. I lay in the spinifex for three nights in an orange plastic coffin, wet from condensation. But oh, the wonder of that underground lake, swimming with a head torch, marble walls agleam.

just before  
the frosty dawn  
Orion  
rises in the east  
summer will surely come again

**Gerry Jacobson**

# 2018 Forests Forever Ecology Camp

What do you know about the native forest logging crisis prevailing in East Gippsland? If you have an answer other than ‘not much’, you’d be heads and shoulders above the two environmental science students from the University of Canberra writing this report. But Easter changed all that for us.

If you were to have ventured north of Orbost around Easter time each year for the past 35 years, you’d find a gathering of people as diverse as the forests they briefly inhabit. A type of people all too rare in this day and age, but one that is immeasurably important. This year was no exception, with engineers, photographers, four-wheel-drive enthusiasts, tree surgeons and nomads all converging on the forests around Goongerah in East Gippsland. The Forests Forever Ecology Camp, hosted by Environment East Gippsland, the Victorian National Parks Association and Goongerah Environment Centre, seeks to bring forest and nature enthusiasts together to raise awareness and funds, and discuss and learn about the various forest types in East Gippsland and the issues that surround them.

Through guided tours in some of the remaining stands of old-growth forests and presentations from some forest ecology experts, we learnt about the damage being done and the misconceptions surrounding forest management in East Gippsland. We learnt that as forests are removed by clear-fell logging and subsequent burning, they are transformed from incredibly biodiverse ecosystems to stands of monoculture trees with little ecological importance. To the general public, this burning is portrayed as a regeneration technique, when in reality it has great detrimental impacts.

Once this ‘regeneration’ technique has been performed, the remaining stands of trees are more susceptible to bushfires, unlike the old-growth forests that stood before them. Old-growth forests, with their thick canopies and understories that cast a year-round shadow, can maintain a moist forest floor even at the driest of times. This presence of moisture encourages decomposition of leaf litter, significantly reducing the amount of fuel available for fires. This means that they are naturally fire-detering. Clear-felling and burning has been conducted in a scattered manner in the forests of East Gippsland, meaning the margins of remaining old-growth forests have increased in length, in turn increasing the amount of light and heat penetration into the forests, subsequently drying them out. Thus, not only are we reducing the amount of old growth forests existing, but also we are causing the remaining stands to become more susceptible to fire.

The reason these forests are allowed to be logged in the first place is due to the Victorian Regional Forest Agreement (RFA), which allocates certain areas of the forests as either areas to be logged or areas to be protected, depending on the type of forest that area is described as. This means that the accurate description of forests plays a very important role in their conservation. If a rare Mountain Ash stand were to be incorrectly described and designated as a mixed forest, then regardless of its actual composition, that forest may become open to logging. The RFA is currently up for renewal, and there is a push from environmental groups to have it reviewed and changed, away from the old scientific understanding it is currently based on.

During the evenings we were treated to presentations by speakers from the supporting environmental groups of the camp. One such presentation looked at the important survey work being conducted in the forests around Goongerah, such as a camera trapping survey conducted in the Queensborough River forests that identified protected Greater Gliders. This detection was enough to enact legal protection of the forest and stop prescribed logging from occurring. This was just one example of the plethora of important fauna species that can be found in the region.

How can you measure the success of such an event? Is it a monetary value or the count of participants? We’d be inclined to argue for the number of eyes that are opened and priceless value in sharing information and stories, and the very essence of standing underneath a towering Errinundra Shining Gum. There isn’t a dollar amount that will bring about the change so desperately needed in the currently insatiable Australian forestry industry, but perhaps after chucking a couple of keen environmental students out there in the fresh forest air, they’ll come back and tell their friends and family.

**Max Mallett and Erin Fischer**



*Young wattle monoculture regrowth. Photo by Di Thompson.*



*Mature wattle monoculture regrowth. Photo by Di Thompson.*

# NPA outings program

June – September 2018



## Bushwalk Grading Guide

### Distance grading (per day)

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

### Terrain grading

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Points to note

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

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

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

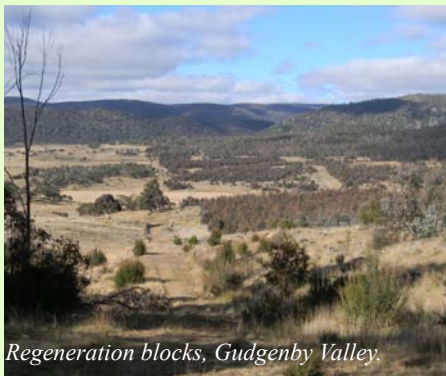
To minimise these risks participants should endeavour to ensure that the activity is within their capabilities and that they are carrying food, water, equipment, clothing and footwear appropriate to the activity. Participants should advise the leader if they are taking any medication or have any physical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

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

**Leaders to note.** Please send copies of completed *Attendance Record and Risk Waiver Forms* to Brian Slee, contact 6281 0719 or [brianslee@iprimus.com.au](mailto:brianslee@iprimus.com.au)  
NPA has a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) available to leaders. The PLB can be obtained from Steven Forst, contact 0428 195 236 or [steven.forst@iinet.net.au](mailto:steven.forst@iinet.net.au)



*Main Range from The Paralyser, Kosciuszko National Park. Photo by Brian Slee.*



*Regeneration blocks, Gudgenby Valley.*

**9 June Saturday Work Party  
Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group**

Meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9:15 am and car pool to Gudgenby Valley. Some will collect and remove piles of barbed wire and star pickets and bring to Frank and Jacks Hut, assisted by a Ranger using the park's quad bike. Others will chip weeds around the hut. Tools provided.

Leader: Kevin McCue

Contact: 6251 1291 or

[mccue.kevin@gmail.com](mailto:mccue.kevin@gmail.com)

**9–11 June Pack Walk  
The Vines**

A walk in Morton National Park mainly on fire trail from the Nerriga entrance. A two-night camp in the forest clearing at the former site of Piercys Cabin in The Vines area between Quiltys Mountain and Galbraith Plateau. The second day we will visit the Bora Ground on Quiltys Mountain and Hidden Valley before returning to the camp site. Walk out on the third day. Contact leader early for details.

Drive: 256 km, \$102 per car.

Map: CMW The Northern Budawang

Range, Endrick 1:25,000

Grading: 2 A/B/E

Leader: Steven Forst

Contact: 0428 195 236 or

[steven.forst@iinet.net.au](mailto:steven.forst@iinet.net.au)

**17 June Sunday Walk  
Lake Burley Griffin – Eastern  
Circuit**

Meet at National Carillon car park at 9:30 am. Follow path east under Kings Avenue Bridge and proceed via ACT Hospice and Molonglo River to Jerrabomberra Wetlands. Sit-down lunch at Kingston Foreshore. Return to Carillon via Kings Avenue Bridge. There will be time to linger at the wetlands and the new developments in the foreshore area.

Map: Canberra street directory; Barrow's *Walking Canberra*, Walks 60–63.

Grading: 1 A

Leader: Brian Slee

Contact: 6281 0719 (h) or

[brianslee@iprimus.com.au](mailto:brianslee@iprimus.com.au)

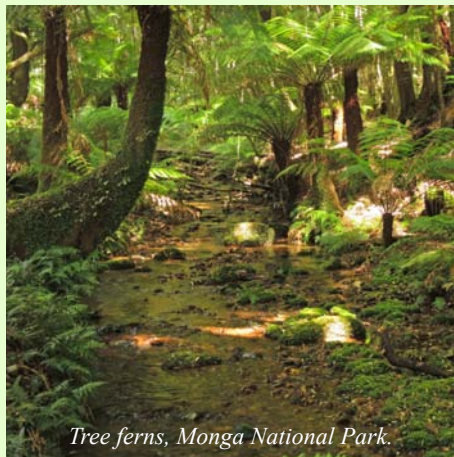
**23 June Saturday Work Party  
Fence removal – Gudgenby Valley**

This will be the first fence removal NPA work party at Gudgenby this year. We will concentrate on the fence line to the north-west of the valley that ran towards the site of Rowleys Hut. All tools will be provided. Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:00 am.

Drive: 80 km, \$32 per car.

Leader: Martin Chalk

Contact: 0411 161 056



*Tree ferns, Monga National Park.*

**24 June Sunday Cycle  
Milo Trig, Monga NP by bike**

We will transport bikes by car to Penance Grove in Monga National Park, past Braidwood. We will then push and ride the bikes uphill along unsealed fire trails, up Milo Road, past the junction with Saddleback Road to Macquarie Road. From the high point on the road, it is a short walk through the bush to Milo Trig (1,050 m). Lunch on the summit. More downhill on the return. A unique rainforest experience. Contact the leader by Thursday 21 June to express interest.

Drive: 190 km (from Queanbeyan), \$76 per car.

Maps: Monga and Araluen 1:25,000

Grading: 3 A/C

Leader: David Dedenczuk

Contact: 0417 222 154 or

[ddedentz@bigpond.net.au](mailto:ddedentz@bigpond.net.au)

**27 June Wednesday Walk  
Joint NPA / BBC / CBC activity**

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

Leader: Mike S

Contact: 0412 179 907

**1 July Sunday Walk  
Settlers Track**

A walk along a formed walking track in southern Namadgi of about 10 km visiting Brayshaws, Waterhole and Westermans huts, as well as the Tin Dish School site, historic fence, sheep dip and yard remains, plus the Westerman graves. Meet Kambah Village Shops for departure at 8:30 am.

Drive: 160 km, \$60 per car.

Maps: Yaouk and Shannons Flat 1:25,000

Grading: 2 A/B

Leader: Mike S

Contact: 0412 179 907

**8 July Sunday Walk  
Nursery Swamp and  
Rendezvous Creek from Orroral  
Valley**

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:30 am. Our walk will take us from Orroral Valley over into Nursery Swamp for morning tea overlooking wetland. Then back up the track and over to Rendezvous Creek to a little clearing for lunch. After lunch we will climb back to the top of Nursery Creek and then back down to the Orroral Valley.

Drive: 90 km, \$36 per car.

Maps: Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000

Grading: 2 A/C/E

Leader: Steven Forst

Contact: 0428 195 236 or

[steven.forst@iinet.net.au](mailto:steven.forst@iinet.net.au)



*Nursery Swamp.*

**15 July Sunday Snowshoe Walk  
Tate West Ridge**

Depart 6:15 am. Drive to Guthega car park. Climb Guthega Ridge and cross Consett Stephen Pass to Tate West Ridge. Great views to Watsons Crags from western side of ridge. Return via Guthega River valley (or via ridge if too difficult). Some steep climbs. Afternoon tea Jindabyne. Participants hiring snowshoes should be in possession of them prior to departure. Book with leader by Saturday morning for weather check, departure point and car arrangements (chains may be required).



Note: If traffic holdups are likely in Jindabyne, the walk may be delayed until Monday.

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

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

Grading: 2 B (on snow)

Leader: Brian Slee

Contact: 6281 0719 or

[brianslee@iprimus.com.au](mailto:brianslee@iprimus.com.au)

**21 July Saturday Work Party plus GBRG 20th Anniversary Lunch Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group**

We are celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the first Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group Work Party in July 1998. We will have a work party in the morning chipping weeds west of Frank and Jacks Hut towards Bogong Creek. We will then have a “pot luck” lunch at 12:30 pm at Frank and Jacks Hut. Past and present Park Service staff and GBRG members are invited to join us for lunch. For those joining us for the morning work party we will meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9:15 am and car pool to Frank and Jacks Hut. For visitors joining us for lunch, meet at the Yankee Hat car park at 12:15 pm (locked gate).

Leader: Michael Goonrey

Contact: 0419 494 142 or

[mjgoonrey@grapevine.com.au](mailto:mjgoonrey@grapevine.com.au)

**25 July Wednesday Walk Joint NPA / BBC / CBC activity**

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

Leader: Mike S

Contact: 0412 179 907

**28 July Saturday Work Party Stoney Creek Nature Reserve – Pine Control**

This is the fourth formal NPA work party in this area. The activity will be a continuation of the work conducted in July 2017. 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: 35 km, \$14 per car.

Leader: Martin Chalk

Contact: 6292 3502 or 0411 161 056

**4 August Saturday Walk Wave Cave**

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. Car shuffle maybe needed. Contact leader by Thursday 2 August, preferably by email, for start time and transport arrangements.

Drive: 280 km, \$112 per car.

Map: Nerriga 1:25,000

Grading: 2 A/D/E/F

Leader: Philip Gatenby

Contact: 0401 415 446 or

[philip.gatenby@gmail.com](mailto:philip.gatenby@gmail.com)

**11 August Saturday Work Party Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group**

Meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9:15 am. Car pool to Gudgenby Valley. Barbed wire fence removal west of Peppermint Hill. Tools provided.

Leader: Simon Buckpitt

Contact: 6154 1403 or

[simon.buckpitt@inet.net.au](mailto:simon.buckpitt@inet.net.au)

**12 August Sunday Walk Lower Orroral Loop**

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 8:30am departure.

Drive: 94km, \$37 per car.

Map: Corin Dam and Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000

Grading: 2 A

Leader: Steven Forst

Contact: 0428 195 236 or

[steven.forst@inet.net.au](mailto:steven.forst@inet.net.au)

**15 August Wednesday Walk Joint NPA / BBC / CBC activity**

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

Leader: Philip Gatenby

Contact: 0401 415 446 or

[philip.gatenby@gmail.com](mailto:philip.gatenby@gmail.com)

**19 August Sunday Snowshoe Walk Ramshead**

Departing at 6:30 am. Drive past Thredbo to Dead Horse Gap (park at upper level). Climb ridge west of Bogong Creek then NW to Ramshead. Lunch on summit with great views of Main Range. Return via ridge on other side of Bogong Creek. Steep climbs. Afternoon tea at Jindabyne. Participants hiring snowshoes should be in possession of 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.

Map: Perisher Valley and Chimneys

Ridge 1:25,000

Grading: 1 B (on snow)

Leader: Brian Slee

Contact: 6281 0719 or

[brianslee@iprimus.com.au](mailto:brianslee@iprimus.com.au)

**25 August Saturday Work Party Moores Hill – Woody Weed Control**

This is the first time the NPA has visited this site. The activity will involve the removal of woody weeds. Bring loppers and bush saw. Replacement saw blades and gloves will be provided, as will herbicide. Meet at Cooleman Court (behind McDonald's) at 8:45 am.

Drive: 32 km, \$14 per car.

Leader: Martin Chalk

Contact: 6292 3502 or 0411 161 056

**29 August Wednesday Walk  
Joint NPA / BBC / CBC activity**

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

Leader: Steven Forst  
Contact: 0428 195 236 or  
[steven.forst@iinet.net.au](mailto:steven.forst@iinet.net.au)

**2 September Sunday Walk  
Bushfold Flats**

Walk from Honeysuckle Campground to Booroomba Rocks for morning tea. Anyone not wanting to make the climb up Booroomba Rocks is welcome to join the walk and have their morning tea in the Booroomba Rocks Campground and wait for the group to return. Continue on the Australian Alps Walking Track to Bushfold Flats for lunch. In the afternoon proceed via Reads Hut (aka Bushfold Hut) to the fire trail and continue to Apollo Road. Car shuffle involved. Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:30 am.

Drive: 60 km, \$24 per car.  
Map: Williamsdale 1:25,000  
Grading: 3A  
Leader: Margaret  
Contact: 0448 924 357 or  
[power000@tpg.com.au](mailto:power000@tpg.com.au)

**8 September Saturday Work Party  
Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group**

Meet at Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9:15am and car pool to Gudgenby Valley. Weeding and spraying at Peppermint Hill. Tools provided.

Leader: Doug Brown  
Contact: 6288 2805 or  
[kambalda@tpg.com.au](mailto:kambalda@tpg.com.au)

**16 September Sunday Morning  
Drive/Walk  
Glenburn Precinct**

We will visit most historic sites to see what has been achieved over the past decade by the Parks Service and the Friends of Glenburn. We will also talk about work in progress and what still needs to be done at some sites. Meet at Canberra Railway Station, Kingston at 9:00 am for car pooling.

Leader: Col McAlister  
Contact: 6288 4171 or  
[cvmac@grapevine.com.au](mailto:cvmac@grapevine.com.au)

**16 September Sunday Snowshoe  
Kiandra Area**

Depart 6:30 am. Drive via Adaminaby to Kiandra area. Destination will be decided having regard to snow coverage and general conditions. Participants hiring snowshoes should be in possession of them prior to departure. Book with leader by Saturday morning for weather check, departure point and car arrangements (chains may be required).

Drive: 280 km, \$112 per car.  
Map: *Rooftop's* Kiandra–Tumut  
Grading: 2 B (on snow)  
Leader: Brian Slee  
Contact: 6281 0719 or  
[brianslee@iprimus.com.au](mailto:brianslee@iprimus.com.au)

**17–21 September Car Camp  
with Accommodation  
Yathong Nature Reserve**

Yathong is about 500 km to the northwest of Canberra, in central NSW. Accommodation in shearers quarters, with twin beds in each room, kitchen and ablutions block. Cost (donation) about

\$50 per person, plus travel costs. This reserve of 115,604 ha has semi-arid woodlands, mallee and rocky hills. Activities over 3 days will include slow walks with birdwatching, plant identification, searching for orchids, inspection of historic buildings and Aboriginal objects and sites. Also quick visits to a few nature reserves while travelling between Canberra and Yathong. Numbers limited. Contact leader early.

Maps: Mt Allen 1:100,000 and Coombie 1:100,000  
Grading: 2 A/B/C/D/E/F  
Leader: John Brickhill  
Contact: 0427 668 112 or  
[johnbrickhill@gmail.com](mailto:johnbrickhill@gmail.com)

**22 September Saturday Work  
Party  
Orroral Valley (Rabbity Hill)  
Weed Control**

This is the first time the NPA has visited this site. The activity will involve the removal of weeds (horehound and the like) from the rocky knoll that bears SSW about 450 m from Orroral Homestead. Bring leather gloves. Nitrile gloves and herbicide will be provided. Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:00 am.

Drive: 87 km, \$35 per car.  
Leader: Martin Chalk  
Contact: 6292 3502 or 0411 161 056

**26 September Wednesday Walk  
Joint NPA / BBC / CBC activity**

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

Leader: Barrie  
Contact: 0412 179 907



*Locals on the road at Yathong Nature Reserve. Photo by Jan Gatenby.*

# Glenburn Precinct

## Friends of Glenburn

In February and March, five more benches were erected and painted with a mix of linseed oil and mineral turps. Three of the benches, costing some \$1,800, were donated by the Friends.

The Friends held its final work party and wake on 8 May. 'New' post and rail fences at Glenburn Homestead and the Colverwell graves were painted. Former and current volunteers and some members of the Parks Service then celebrated the work of the past decade by the Friends and the Parks Service in the Precinct over lunch. At the end of the lunch I proposed the following toast:

Thanks all past and present volunteers of the Friends of Glenburn and all cash and in kind donors to the cause. Long live the Parks Service's commitment to the Glenburn Precinct. May you get all the resources you need to do the job.

Vale Friends of Glenburn.

## Other developments

On 8 February 2018, the ACT Heritage Council made changes to the heritage registration details for the Glenburn Precinct. The main change was to include Atkinson Trig.

On 16 February 2018, I wrote to Minister Gentleman asking him to address the tardiness of ACT Heritage in clearing the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Precinct and to ensure that the Parks Service is sufficiently resourced to make Glenburn Homestead and the shearing shed complex structurally safe. A reply from the Minister on 23 May inferred the CMP will be finalised shortly. The

Minister gave no assurances about future funding for the Precinct.

Staff of the Googong Depot have recently erected signs on the Kings Highway and mowed/slashed some sites and the heritage trails. While these trails are still open, some sites have restricted access, particularly the pisé home of Glenburn Homestead and the Shearing Shed Complex, where studies are underway on what can and cannot be removed and what should be done about the contaminated sheep dip (that is temporarily fenced off). In the near future, a new, protective, rabbit-proof fence will be erected around the Shearing Shed Complex, and the steel cattle yards owned by the lessee will be relocated.

## Collection of Glenburn photos and other material

Max Lawrence has taken many photos on outings to Glenburn over the past 15 years and collected photos and material from other sources including the descendants of early settlers, the National Library, newspapers and visitors to the Precinct. Copies will be provided to the Parks Service and ACT Heritage Library. Other NPA members may wish to provide me with a small selection of their best photos, particularly those taken at visits by



*Newly treated fence, and Glenburn Homestead, May 2018.*

*Photo by Max Lawrence.*

Ministers Rattenbury and Gentleman, at family reunions and work parties. Provide me with a memory stick/CD or simply e-mail them to [cvmac@grapevine.com.au](mailto:cvmac@grapevine.com.au)

## The future

Staff and students of the ANU Centre for Heritage and Museum Studies will visit the Precinct over several days in June 2018.

With the winding up of the Friends, protection and conservation tasks in the Precinct now largely rest with the Googong depot of the Parks Service. There is a possibility that Kosciuszko Huts Association (KHA) will be able to assist. In mid-February, Simon Buckpitt of KHA met with Nadia Rhodes of the Googong Depot to discuss possible help from their members, many of who are skilled in restoring old buildings.

**Col McAlister**



*Col with the PCL team – Anthony Hart, Colin Schofield and Lois Padgham. Photo by Max Lawrence.*



*Friends at work on the fence surrounding Glenburn Homestead, May 2018. Photo by Max Lawrence.*

# Bushwalk reports

## Six days in the Budawangs

**Date:** 7–12 November 2017.

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

**Weather:** Cool, fine, mostly sunny.

In the weeks before the walk, unseasonably warm and dry weather raised our concerns about fire danger and a lack of water in the Budawangs. All this changed on the day before the walk when heavy rain eased the mini-drought and ensured there would be an adequate supply of water. Fortunately, the day of rain coincided with a meeting Dave had to attend, so the start of the walk had already been delayed by a day.

We travelled to the Nerriga entrance of Morton National Park at the end of Meangora Road and from here walked on the now designated track to the Endrick River. It was flowing well. Once across, we continued on the Redgrounds Track to Teatree Creek for morning tea. Wildflowers either side of the track were abundant – isopogon, teatree, hibbertia and boronia. Cicadas were in full voice in the morning sun.



*Isopogon.* Photo by Philip Gatenby.

Our lunch stop was soon after crossing the Endrick again. We then headed south on the Endrick River Trail, passing an isolated stand of flowering waratah (*Telopea mungaensis*) on Vines Creek, through the rainforest of The Vines, where Dave saw an echidna, and on to Camp Rock. It's named as such, apparently, after being used as a camp in the mid 1880s by a cattle grazer, David Strang, who was possibly the first lessee in the Budawangs (Watson 1982). On our arrival at camp we were greeted by a cool, sluggish Tiger Snake which slowly slithered into the undergrowth. Cloud rolled in from the east as the sun set, but by the time the expected drizzle eventuated we were well ensconced in our tents for the night.



*Hollands Gorge from Folly Point.* Photo by Jan Gatenby.

### Hollands Gorge

About 3 km east of Camp Rock, just after Newhaven Gap, a rock cairn beside the Endrick River Trail marks the start of a foot track to Folly Point and beyond. The quality of the track to the point varied from easy going to 'in need of maintenance'. Mitchell Lookout, with views to the south and east, was the ideal spot for a break. The lookout is named after Graeme Mitchell who explored and mapped the area in 1957 (Watson 1982). Soon after the lookout there were views into Hollands Gorge and of the Castle and other sandstone massifs to the south. We admired the view as we lunched at Folly Point then found the top of Watsons Pass, our access to the gorge. The rope I'd brought wasn't needed but we had to pass packs in a number of places to get through the top cliff line. Near the top, spikes driven into the rock and a small chain helped the descent. In 1961, Colin Watson<sup>†</sup> of the Coast and Mountain Walkers found the pass which goes from Folly Point to Hollands Gorge and now bears his name (Hilder 1982). It's a drop of more than 600 m through two cliff lines. The pass used to be graced by a track which has now mostly disappeared but there are still cairns and relatively recent pink tape marking some sections. We followed these markers to the cave below the second cliff line then, soon after, lost them or they disappeared. Near Camping Rock Creek, our



destination for the day, progress slowed in thick scrub and lawyer vine (*Smilax australis*). We eventually found a place to camp on the creek, close to its junction with Hollands Creek, about 11 hours since setting out in the morning.

Walking upstream along Hollands Creek the next morning involved numerous crossings that were not difficult. The banks were fairly open if we kept close to the creek. We stopped briefly at an attractive campsite at the junction of Angel Creek and Hollands Creek before climbing steeply west then south-west out of Hollands Gorge on the ridge west of Angel Creek. The bush on the ridge was open and once it levelled off walking was easy. Lunch was on a knoll with a view. Where the ridge meets the lower cliff line is a large cairn. We took this to indicate it was time to contour below the cliffs and drop into the rainforest of Angel Creek, above Crooked Falls. Progress up the creek steadily became more difficult as large moss-covered boulders clogged its bed and the sides got steeper and closed in. About a kilometre upstream of the falls, pink tape marked a possible exit from the creek to the western side of Mount Donjon. It was getting late so we decided not to attempt an exit here but continued another 800 m upstream to a campsite recommended by Linda Groom of the Canberra Bushwalking Club. It's a beautiful spot in a stand of coachwood at the junction of two branches of the creek. Darkness fell and glow worms 'turned on' in the rocks across the creek from our tents. We'd taken 10 hours to cover 5.5 km and were well and truly ready for a rest.

Going further up the creek's right hand branch didn't look inviting so about 100 m from our campsite we climbed to the east out of the creek. It was steep and scrubby and a stop-go affair negotiating minor cliffs but

*(continued next page)*

*Negotiating Watsons Pass.*  
Photo by Jan Gatenby.

### Six days in the Budawangs (continued)



Teatree with a Jewel beetle. Photo by Philip Gatenby.



Sluggish Tiger Snake. Photo by Philip Gatenby.

eventually we cleared the cliff line and the gradient lessened. We were now 'out of the frying pan' so to speak. As the slope levelled, the scrub thickened and soon became almost impenetrable. I'd always thought getting through head-high coral fern was hard going. It has nothing on head-high Dog Rose (*Bauera rubioides*) – patches of Coral Fern (*Gleichenia dicarpa*) were welcomed as they provided some relief from the Bauera. After 2 hours we reached the morning's target, the foot track along the western side of Mount Cole, 600 m from and 200 m above last night's campsite. Leaving packs in a nearby camping cave, three of us completed a clockwise circuit around Mount Cole, passing Donjon Mountain, Seven Gods Pinnacles near Shrouded Gods, through the green and damp Monolith Valley then along the side of Mount Owen. Beyond Monolith Valley there wasn't a track but a negotiable route marked with cairns and tape, some looking quite fresh. We had lunch on Mount Owen and admired the views of The Castle, nearby Mount Nibelung, Yadboro Forest and the distant sparkling sea. Tonight's campsite was to the west of the overhang where we'd left our packs, 2 km along the track which by now we'd rejoined, at the headwaters of the Corang River, between Bibbenluke Walls and Mount Tarn.

#### Names change

I was interested in the names of the mountains around us. Owen and Cole are named after local bushwalkers who explored the area in the 1930s (Hilder 1982). Major Sturgiss (of *The Man from the Misty Mountains* fame<sup>2</sup>) suggested the name Nibelung, after a visit to the mountain in 1941 when he was engulfed by a storm of 'Wagnerian' proportions, as well as Shrouded Gods and Seven Gods Pinnacles (Watson 1982). Donjon is obvious if you know what a donjon is.

Earlier government maps give each of these mountains a different name. Thus Owen was called Mount Renwick, Cole was Roswaine, Donjon was Fletcher, Nibelung was Irambang and Shrouded Gods was Pataird. These alternative names first appeared on a sketch map called Mount Pigeon House – The Castle, which was prepared by Ken Angel in 1951. They were mostly based on the names of his friends (Rigby 1985). It was not until The Budawang Committee made a submission in 1967 to the Geographical Names Board of NSW on nomenclature in the Budawangs, which was largely accepted, that the names currently in use were officially recognised (Watson 1985).

Next morning (day 5) we crossed Mount Tarn (Tairn on some older maps), taking advantage of recent track work to clear the more scrubby sections. We then skirted the southern and eastern flanks of Mount Haughton (named after a local grazier from early last century), where the track in places is obscured by regrowth, and continued to the Styles Creek crossing for lunch. From the crossing we went north to The Vines on an old forestry road. Jan and I detoured briefly to Hidden Valley. The track north of the Kilpatrick Creek crossing, through a section of rainforest and about 2 km from its junction with the Endrick River Trail at The Vines has been recently cleared of many of the fallen logs which on previous trips had significantly impeded progress. We made for Piercys Clearing for the night, just to the north of the junction.

On the last day our route repeated most of the walk's first day. Apart from heading in the opposite direction, the main difference from day one was that the volume of water at all the creek crossings had reduced significantly. Making good progress along the

*Telopea mongaensis*. Photo by Jan Gatenby.

Redgrounds Track we finished by lunchtime. I think all of us felt quite a sense of achievement having walked 86 km and climbed over 2,300 m in some remarkable country.

Philip Gatenby

#### Footnotes:

- <sup>1</sup> Colin Watson played a key role in getting the Budawangs included in a national park. He received an OAM for his work in conservation and bushwalking and died on 30 April 2017 aged 93.
- <sup>2</sup> Sturgiss J. H. 1986, *The Man from the Misty Mountains*, The Budawang Committee, Eastwood.

#### References:

- Hilder, Wilf 1982, *Bushwalkers – The Latter Day Explorers*, The Budawang Committee, *Pigeon House and Beyond*, Eastwood, pp. 96–140.
- Rigby, Frank 1985, S.B.W. Place Names in the Budawangs, *The Sydney Bushwalker*, May, <http://sbw.ozultimate.com/wiki/198505>
- Watson, Colin 1982, *Dictionary of Place Names*, The Budawang Committee, *Pigeon House and Beyond*, Eastwood, pp. 181–190.
- Watson, Colin 1985, *Place Names in the Budawangs*, *The Sydney Bushwalker*, July, <http://sbw.ozultimate.com/wiki/198507>



## Three Mile Dam

**Date:** 4 March 2018.

**Participants:** Brian Slee (leader), Peter Anderson-Smith, Stephen Marchant, Margaret Power, Margaret Strong.

**Weather:** Sunny, mild.

‘Wildflowers?’ ‘Nuh, all finished - we may see a few gentians’, said dear leader. In reality the slopes around Three Mile Dam were replete with daisies, helichrysums and other hang-about from summer, all brighter and more youthful than might have been expected. No gentians.

Last September’s NPA walk (*Bulletin* December 2017, p. 20) took in the middle section of Wallaces Creek Fire Trail, Shaw Hill to Marica Trig. Mike Bremers followed up on 16 January with a Canberra Bushwalking Club bicycle ride along its full length, Three Mile Dam to Coppermine Fire Trail (14 km, all on the Great Divide). This walk was to be on the first section, to Shaw Hill, and new to us all.



Having left Calwell at 7 am, we reached the dam via Cooma and Kiandra at 9:15. The dam was built in the 1880s, the water being used at New Chum Hill to wash gold into sluice boxes, destroying whole hillsides in the process. The impounded water is now popular with campers (plenty about); we parked on the northern bank.

Once across the dam wall, a NPWS sign lured us south to a purported viewpoint but finding nothing, we returned to the start of Wallaces. After gently climbing it for a kilometre we stopped for morning tea among Podolepsis (tall golden asters), adjacent to a remarkably intact trig marooned in a sea of trees (1 km west of Reeds Hill – not marked on maps).

We were seeing plenty of skinks but no snakes. The fire trail has a nice grassy surface but is surprisingly miserly when it comes to lookouts, considering its proximity to a deep gorge. We rambled along, like Steven in the Brindabellas. A brief diversion west led only to a (Snowy Hydro?) communications device. We turned short of Shaw Hill and headed east then south. Feral horses in the distance, shrubby going in parts, after a few kilometres we stopped in a

*Helichrysums.* Photo by Brian Slee.



*Three Mile Dam.* Photo by Brian Slee.

grove of trees overlooking a plain and Racecourse Trail. March flies joined us for lunch in this beautiful place.

Now that we were away from Wallaces, there were views aplenty, back along the powerline which towers above Racecourse Trail, and then over the dark blue lake when the trail topped the rise. Back at the cars at 2 pm, we took a quick trip along Ravine Road to Wallace Creek Lookout and its 700-metre view down the creek and to the distant Bogong Peaks. Spectacular.

After a stop at Cooma Cafe on the way home, we were back in Calwell at 5.45 pm. A good 14 km walk in an area well worth further exploring.

**Brian Slee**

## Jounama and Ravine – a follow-up

**Date:** 10 April 2018.

**Participants:** Brian Slee (leader), Peter Anderson-Smith, Kathy Saw.

**Weather:** Cloudy on the plains, breaking up in the high country; warm.

**Map:** *Rooftop's* Kiandra–Tumut.

Walk report? Just 3.2 km on a mostly level track, mown 2 metres wide. We were saved from a second walk, as Blue Creek Trail was unlocked as far as (New) Jounama. However, the drive was always going to be the point of the day. On 4 March we had gazed into the depths of Wallaces Creek from the lookout on Lobs Hole Ravine Road and it was inevitable that we would return to descend the whole way. The unexpected bonus was that once the Yarrangobilly

River is crossed at Ravine, the road continues north, back to the Snowy Mountains Highway. We would approach it from that end.

We left Calwell in Peter’s Forester at 7:20 am, puzzled by Margaret’s non-appearance. After egg-and-bacon rolls at *PD Murphy* in Cooma, we proceeded on Snowy Mountains Highway through Kiandra, turning left onto Lobs Hole Ravine Road 10 km past Yarrangobilly. The country here is more open and level than might be expected.

The aforesaid walk began 2 km down the road. It connects the remains of Old Jounama, Glendella and Faraway homesteads. An orchard dominates the first site, small (damson?) plums ready to eat. Glendella had tall pines and

substantial remains, but Faraway was the most attractive with an elevated position surrounded by eucalypts. Nice peaky views along the way.

By noon we were seated for lunch beneath shady conifers at the ruins of (New) Jounama (1,140 m). The double red brick house of multiple rooms appears to have been a tasteful establishment. A circular drive entered between dry stone walls and along a short avenue. After resumption by National Parks in 1957, Jounama fell into disrepair and was burnt out. However, it and remnants of the English garden are cared for by volunteers. You sense that they share the intense feelings for the place experienced by all those evicted from the Park. With the first

(continued next page)

## Bushwalk reports (continued)

### Jounama and Ravine – a follow-up (continued)

autumn tints, under the best sun of the day, the whole site was immaculate and spectacularly beautiful.

Beyond this point the road, accompanied by a powerline, unceasingly descends a ridge through tall trees to Ravine (560 m). Sheer mountain

faces add drama to the scene until Talbingo Reservoir comes into view. Shown on maps as 4WD, the road could be handled in 2WD, provided the Yarrangobilly is low – it was 30 cm and flowing solidly when we crossed (during a dry spell). It is narrow and could flood quickly.

Several campers were in the area. After inspecting the bulky pisé ruins of Washington Hotel on the southern bank, we were on our way back to the highway. After a break at Adaminaby Bakery we returned via Cooma, arriving

6 pm. Good news was that Margaret was not in hospital but had been detained at home by a defiant garage, which had locked in the Mazda. Time for a carport!

Brian Slee



Left. Washington Hotel ruins, Ravine.



Right. Peter Anderson-Smith gauging the Yarrangobilly River crossing.

Photos by Brian Slee.

### Spotlighting at Mulligans Flat

**Date:** 20 October 2017.

**Participants:** 20 participants from NPA ACT, and the Canberra and Brindabella bushwalking clubs.

Woodland and Wetlands Trust ranger/guide, Shoshana Rapley, led the group on a spotlighting walk in the Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve.

It was a beautiful night, chosen because the moon was down. It rained gently for much of the walk, and that was a blessing as it produced one of the most fascinating sights of the evening: the emergence of winged forms of one of the common local termites, *Nasutitermes exitiosus*. Michael Lenz identified the species and explained that this alate flight occurs (at the right time of year) when it is raining or shortly after, as rain makes it easier for the pairs to dig/disappear into the soil.

Other arthropod sightings included a more or less well-camouflaged Wolf Spider *Tasmanicosa godeffroyi*, and many Golden Orb Weaver spiders (*Nephila plumipes*).

We saw two of the threatened mammal species which have been reintroduced to Mulligans Flat: nine Eastern Bettongs (*Bettongia gaimardii*) and one Eastern Quoll (*Dasyurus viverrinus*), and heard the hauntingly eerie call of the Bush Stone-curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*), also reintroduced.

We also saw numerous Common Brushtail Possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*), Eastern Grey Kangaroos (*Macropus giganteus*) and Red-necked Wallabies (*Wallabia rufogriseus*), a nest of White-winged Choughs (*Corcorax melanorhamphos*), roosting Crested Pigeons (*Ocyphaps lophotes*), and heard

six species of frogs: Common Eastern Froglet (*Crinia signifera*), Plains Froglet (*C. parainsignifera*), Peron's Tree Frog (*Littoria peronii*), Whistling Tree Frog (*L. verreauxii*), Brown-striped (or Striped Marsh) Frog (*Limnodynastes peronii*) and Spotted Grass Frog (*L. tasmaniensis*).

Isobel Crawford

Below left. Termites *Nasutitermes exitiosus* tending their mound following a dispersal flight of winged adults.

Below. Wolf Spider *Tasmanicosa godeffroyi* at Mulligans Flat.

Photos by Sabine Friedrich.





## **Bullen Range South**

*Tidbinbilla Valley from near the southern end of the Bullen Range. Photo by Ed Highley.*

**Date:** 25 April 2018.

**Participants:** Many; led by Bob Dewar, Canberra Bushwalking Club.

**Weather:** Coolish early, then sunny and warm.

Thirty-one of us crossed the river to invade the heights of the Bullen Range, in what was billed as follows: 'Anzac Day special: wade onto a far shore and scale the heights – Kambah Pool to Calvary ruins'. This was one of the Wednesday walks that are jointly organised by the Canberra and Brindabella bushwalking clubs and the NPA. Details of how to join them are in the outings program in the NPA *Bulletin*.

The river was, of course, the Murrumbidgee. We walked to it via paddock and track from a gate not far from where the Kambah Pool Road starts to make its descent to the river. The river is currently flowing quite lethargically and we made for a point where it was possible to wade across in water no deeper than a little above the knees. Hard to imagine that it's a part of Australia's greatest river system.

After a bit of rock scrambling up the western bank, we located and began our ascent up the Bullen Powerlines Fire Trail, the poles and lines carrying energy to consumers in the Tidbinbilla Valley. This is a steep and slippery climb that seems to get more acute the higher one gets, but that may be just an illusion of failing energy. There is a modicum of compensation in the fine and extensive views to the north, east and south, spoiled a little one has to say by the power lines.

Once at the top of the range, we walked southwards for a time, along a fire trail through low, open forest with no understorey and showing signs of prescribed burning in relatively recent times. Not long after the forest had given way to shrubbery, and we had scaled yet another gate, it was off into the light scrub to find the ruins of the Calvary Homestead, the planned lunch stop. They were located with little trouble, an exotic tree in autumn livery serving as a beacon.

The ruins really are ruins: there is little left of the rammed-earth (pisé)

building. Within the remains of its walls and in the surrounding scrub there is much domestic litter, such as broken crockery and pots, but apparently there is nothing here deemed of heritage value by those devoted to such matters.

After lunch in the warm sunshine, the enjoyment of which was further enhanced by authentic, home-baked Anzac biscuits provided by our leader (nice thought, Bob), a short cross-country stroll took us to a fire trail running south and east. As we walked this trail, Fallow Deer stags bounded across the path ahead on two separate occasions. The glimpses were fleeting, but the two animals appeared to me to be markedly different in colour, one quite light, the other very dark.

The track took us to the ridge near the southern end of the Bullen Range. The views in all directions from here are stunning, but especially that of the full extent of the Tidbinbilla Valley.

We then descended into the open country to the west of the Murrumbidgee, travelling north along a made road roughly paralleling the high-tension power lines that run from Snowy Hydro 1.0 to avid consumers north. Along the way, we passed a thoroughbred horse establishment, the equine residents taking an uncommon interest in our passage. Perhaps they'd never before seen so many humans so close to home.

A short, cross-country diversion took us to the river at Red Rock Gorge, where we discovered a few families cavorting in the deep pool there, taking advantage of the ongoing Indian summer. From there, it was but a hundred metres or so to our crossing point and the track back to the cars.

A most enjoyable walk of 15 km or so.

**Ed Highley**



*The Bullen Powerlines Fire Trail, from the western edge of Kambah. Photo by Ed Highley.*



# Dananbilla acacia trial

As reported in the September 2013 and 2016 issues of the *Bulletin*, NPA has held work parties at Dananbilla Nature Reserve since 2013, under the watchful eyes of rangers Andrew Moore and Susan Jackson. Consistent with the vision of rehabilitating and preserving the largest protected area of White Box–Yellow Box–Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland in New South Wales, the emphasis of NPA’s work has shifted over time. There was originally a focus on clearing fences, then tree planting, erosion control using cut saplings (an application of the leaky-weir approach), weeding, building kangaroo exclosures and removing tree guards.

One of the tree plantings involved an interesting experiment in genetics and

now almost 3 years later hundreds of acacias are growing in a previously bare, former farm paddock on the south-western corner of the nature reserve. The aim of this planting is to ensure a mixture of locally native *Acacia deanei* genes is available for future trees. Farming had separated the otherwise continuous gene range into separate small groves of nearly identical genes – an unhealthy outcome for any species. Rangers Andrew and Susan collected separate batches of seeds from isolated populations throughout the reserve and elsewhere in the broader area. The seeds were germinated by a regional nursery and, when ready in June 2015, healthy seedlings were planted out in rows by the NPA work party led by Martin

Chalk. The results are amazing, as you can see in the before and after photographs below. Nature will nurture. Andrew estimates that it will soon be possible to collect seeds from some of the trees. It remains to be seen which batches produce the most profuse and sturdy trees and if there is anything unique about the locations where the seeds were collected.

An earlier attempt to grow acacias from seed sprinkled by Martin’s regulars in separate rows at regular intervals across an acre of otherwise sparse grassland had yielded only meagre results. It was dry in 2013 and only one or two plants had managed to poke above the ground.

Kevin McCue and Philip Gatenby



Acacia planting and results: June 2015 (left) and April 2018 (right). Photos by Jan Gatenby.

## NPA Art Week at Gudgenby Cottage

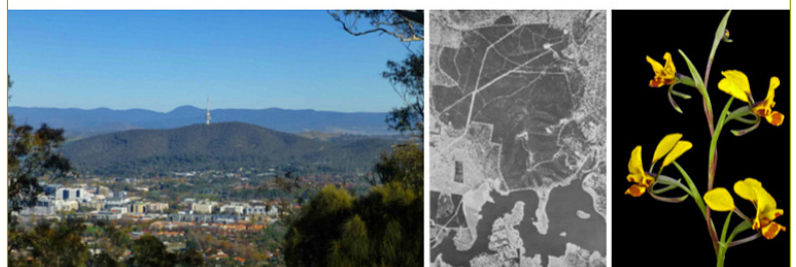
Another successful and productive Art Week was enjoyed in May 2018. So let’s have another one, **tentatively** in the second half of October.

Contacts: Adrienne Nicholson 6281 6381 or Hazel Rath 4845 1021.



## Black Mountain Symposium 2018

THE PAST 50 YEARS INFORMING THE NEXT 50



### 24 August 2018

9:00 for 9:30 am to 4:30 pm

Themed talks at CSIRO

Discovery Centre

Followed by wine and cheese

### 25 August 2018

9:30 am to 12:00 noon

Walks in Black Mountain

Nature Reserve

SAVE THE DATE NOW

#### Natural environment themes:

Diversity and ecology of plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, and fire ecology.

#### Cultural environment themes:

Colonial and national uses; a place of protest, recreation, education and scientific endeavour.

**Cost:** Symposium talks \$55 (fully catered); Wine and cheese option \$10; and a guided walk \$5.

**Registration:** Registration online and program available at [www.friendsofblackmountain.org.au/symposium](http://www.friendsofblackmountain.org.au/symposium)

# Book reviews

## Charlie Carter: Hermit, Healer and High Country Legend

by Klaus Hueneke

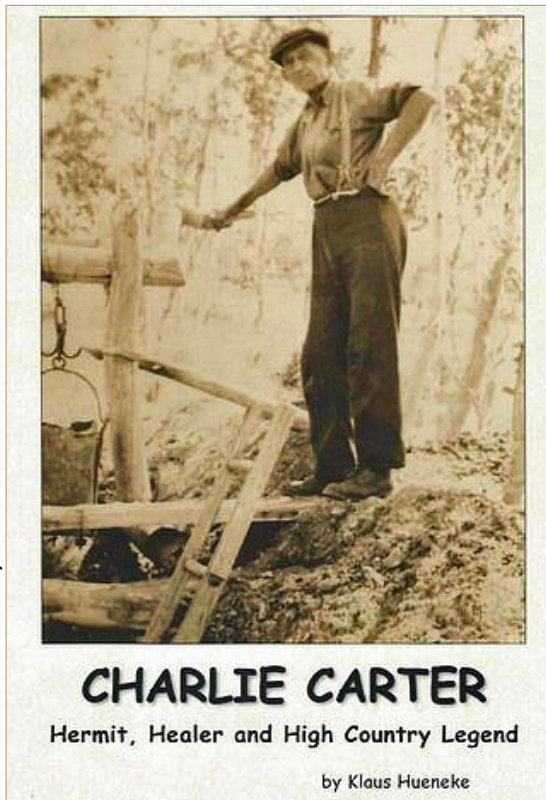
Tabletop Press, Palmerston ACT, 2017.  
147 pp.

Klaus Hueneke has been capturing stories of the people and places around south-eastern Australia forever it seems. I was living in Melbourne when in 1990 his book *Where the Ice Trees Burn* inspired me: I had to get back to the Main Range.

Hueneke had published four titles before *Ice Trees* and two more since. One of the latter, *People of the Australian High Country*, describes some eighty of the men and women of the region. From them he selects one to give us a rich picture of an intriguing but often lone figure.

Charlie Carter is a name that most who have ventured south from Dead Horse Gap will remember, as someone they 'met' at the Tin Min Huts. The huts have been a haven for walkers and cross-country skiers for decades but had been built in 1936 to service a mining operation on the upper Tin Mine Creek. However, it was soon abandoned and Charlie moved in. He survived by running a few cattle and horses, and catching brumbies. But most passers-by would find him digging, always assuring them that the lode was 'only another two feet down'.

The austere circumstances of this life were illustrated by his death in 1952, aged 81, when he was found dead beside his hut. The calendar inside had been crossed off to a few days earlier, but there was no food and it is assumed he'd



died intending to catch a horse to go out. An autopsy concluded the death was caused by a heart attack.

Charlie was described by one bushwalker as 'a quietly spoken tragic old philosopher of the mountains'. It had not always been that way though. He'd been born near Melbourne in 1871, written a novel, found his way to the southern Monaro and later Snowy Plains where he farmed and trapped possums and feral horses. In between, a fall-out with the neighbours ended up in court.

He moved briefly to Brisbane then Sydney (and stood for the NSW parliament – 36 votes) before moving to

Tin Mines Huts. However, like many of his time he'd maintained an interest in the issues and activities of the outside world and would share his views with visitors on a range of subjects that included finance, politics, cancer cures and communism.

Hueneke also enjoys telling us the stories of his experiences as he collected this account, of the many people who had met Carter, and of the subsequent care of the huts. Nor is he unmindful of the Indigenous people that had ranged over the area, though it seems none interacted with Carter.

Those that know the area are likely to enjoy the book's wealth of unexpected detail. For example, I found that the 1936 huts and the walled diggings a kilometre west were not from the first serious mining effort; in 1889 facilities had been built on the ridge another kilometre west – and that reminded me that the best view of the gorge below Tin Mine Falls is from the north end of that ridge.

For those that do not know the country around Tin Mine Creek, The Pilot or the Indi, this book offers an invitation to walk a little down the Cascade Trail towards Charlie's country.

The book is available at [www.tabletoppressbooks.com](http://www.tabletoppressbooks.com) for \$30.00, postage \$5.00.

**Rupert Barnett**



*Tin Mine Huts. Photo by Rupert Barnett.*



*Carter in his late 40s, reproduced by the author from Carter's own publication The Principle of Life.*

## Bold Horizon High-country Place, People and Story

by Matthew Higgins  
Rosenberg Publishing Pty Ltd,  
Dural, 2018.  
176 pp.

A man with stories 'hived in him like old honey'. This is how Matthew starts the chapter about Hughie Read, who was born in the Naas Valley in 1907 and is one of the many characters talked about in the book. It is a quote from Judith Wright's poem *South of My Days* but not only could it apply to Hughie Read, it could equally apply to the whole book!

Matthew is well known to NPA members as a historian and great storyteller. Over many years he has given talks to our meetings, led outings and written a number of books related to the history of the ACT and Snowy Mountains. Matthew has hiked and skied extensively through these areas, so there would be no better person to write a book about the High Country and its people. In this book Matthew brings together the stories of many of the interesting characters of the mountains. Many of the stories are based on oral-history interviews that Matthew conducted during the 1990s, of old-timers many of whom have now passed away. These interviews extract the reality of what life was like in the High Country in the early twentieth century. It is easy to think that life in the old days in the mountains must have been idyllic but when Matthew asked if they were the 'good old days', a common reply was no, they were 'rough old days' or 'shocking cruel days'.

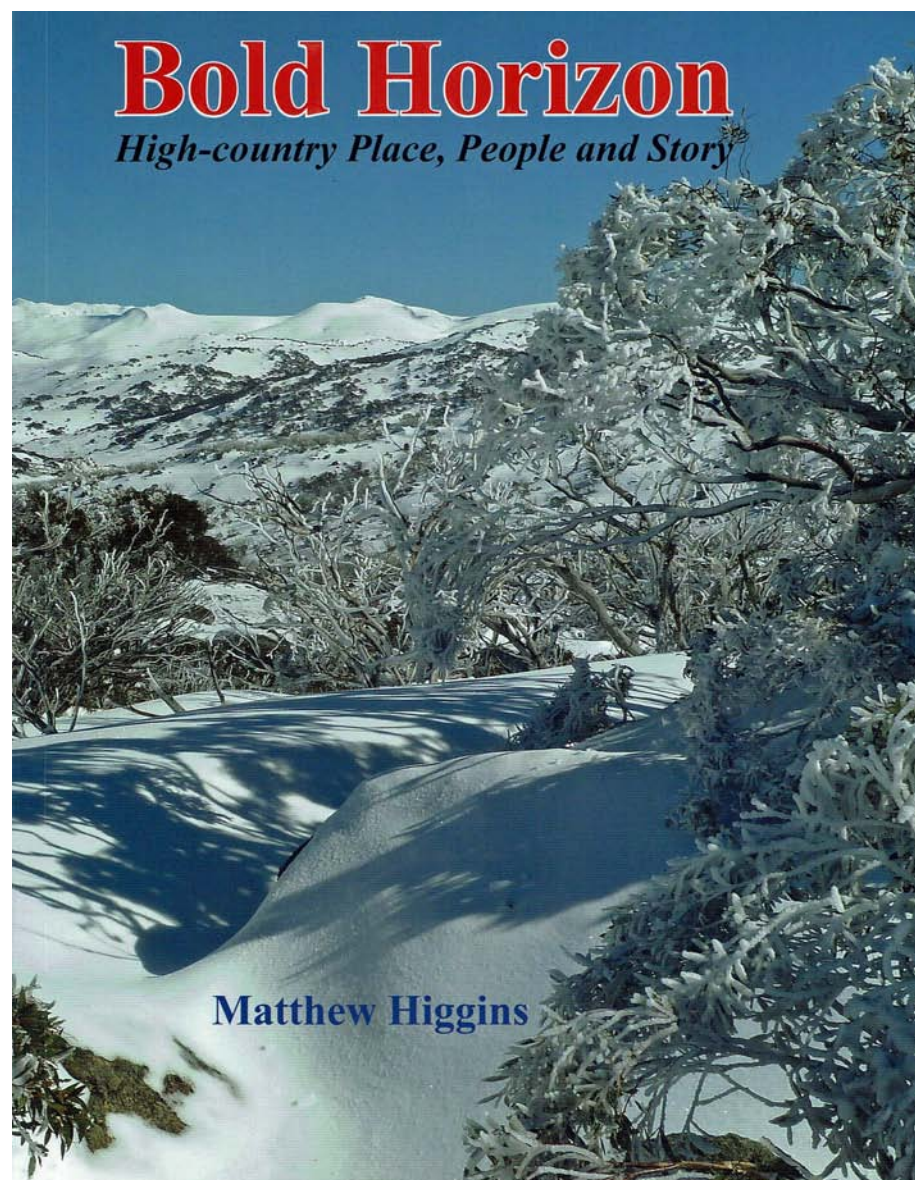
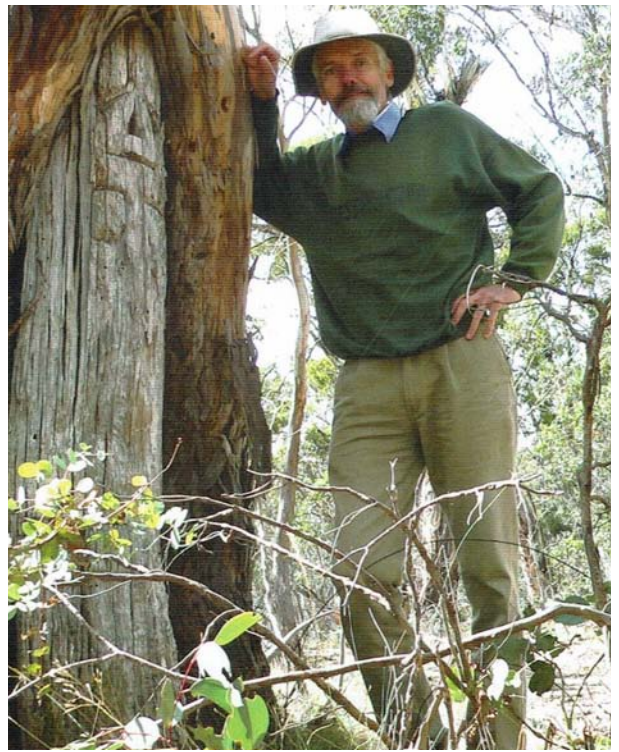
The first part of the book, called 'My Place', covers Matthew's experiences in the mountains from when he first visited them as a seven-year-old child to later skiing and hiking experiences over several decades. These recollections include those of places such as huts that many of us are familiar with, of people who shared his experiences with him including veteran skiers and walkers and of outings that he has led for various institutions. And there is a chapter extolling the rewards of solo journeys in the bush.

The second part of the book, called 'Their Place', profiles eleven characters who have worked, lived or played in the mountains. They include Indigenous rangers, stockmen, authors, foresters, tourism operators, hikers and skiers. Not only does the book tell us about these characters, it also connects them to the

places that many of us are familiar with. For example, author Elyne Mitchell enjoyed stockmen's huts such as Whites River Hut and Pretty Plain Hut, so this knowledge will enrich my next visit to these places.

*Bold Horizon* is a book that will appeal to anyone interested in the High Country or its history. It is attractively presented and includes many beautiful images by the author, as well as historic photos of people and places. The book includes a detailed index, and could be read in one go from start to finish or dipped into at leisure, then kept as a reference.

Mike Bremers



# PARKWATCH

*News from state-based associations  
and agencies.*

## **Park's chance to heal**

Parks Victoria is about to take action on the thousands of feral horses trampling wetlands and eating out other areas of Victoria's magnificent Alpine National Park. It's been a long journey to get to this stage, involving two exhaustive series of stakeholder consultations and numerous expert reports over the last six years. The length of that process is remarkable, given that a seemingly endless list of obligations under international treaty, and national and state law, actually compel the government to act on feral animals.

However, it seemed the common perception of the 'pure-bred brumby' galloping through alpine wildflowers, might be able to override decades of evidence and unambiguous law. The truth is a little different, however: the horses up there are a bit of a hotchpotch of breeds, and they don't always have a good time. They suffer and die in droves in bushfires, drought and heavy winter snows. Many are in a condition that, if found on a farm, would lead to action against their owner.

In 1946, long before the Bogong High Plains were included in a national park, action was taken to remove horses and sheep from the area and limit cattle grazing. It was found back then that hard-hooved grazers were causing soil erosion and affecting the quality and release of water at the headwaters of so many of Victoria's rivers. Science informed that action then, and the 'outstanding' nature of the many High Country scientific studies have now been recognised in the National Heritage listing for the Australian Alps National Parks.

Victoria's Alpine National Park protects some 575 rare and threatened plants and animals, many of which have been slowly recovering from decades of grazing. The cattle are gone, but horses, deer, pigs and goats now increasingly reign over what should be one of the land's most important protected conservation reserves. The High Country shouldn't be a paddock, it's a national park. Parks Victoria has recently increased action on pigs in the eastern Alps and Victoria's environment department is developing a strategy to deal with the so-far intractable problem of feral deer. By removing all horses from the Bogong High Plains, and taking 400 a year from the eastern Alpine

National Park, Parks Victoria is starting a process to restore this remarkable park to health.

This action must be done as humanely as possible, but doing nothing won't help the park or the horses.

*Parkwatch VNPA  
March 2018 no 272*

## **The Falls to Hotham fantasy**

Some time ago, Tourism Victoria got the notion that Victoria needed four 'icon walks' to challenge the great adventure walks of our neighbours: Tasmania and New Zealand. Ignoring several long-distance walks Victoria already had (such as the Great South West walk and the Alpine Walking Track), they came up with four new ones, all featuring serviced accommodation along the way.

Parks Victoria swallowed the scheme whole, and set about planning:

- The Great Ocean Walk
- The Grampian Peaks Trail
- The Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing
- A Croajingolong coastal walk

The Great Ocean Walk, from Apollo Bay to the Twelve Apostles, is up and running, but it soon proved far better for everyone if existing B&B operators on nearby private land picked up people who wanted a bit of luxury. Unnecessary development impacts to Great Otway National Park were avoided.

The second walk, the Grampians Peaks Trail, is partly constructed, but plans for private serviced cabins along the way have been abandoned – no private investors showed interest.

The third 'icon' walk is the Falls to Hotham Crossing, in development for several years now. This time the powers that be seem determined to fulfil their dream of serviced in-park luxury accommodation at each stop, to look after the 'comfort seeker'. At the insistence of Tourism Victoria, one set of luxury huts will be positioned on a steep and hard to access spur off Mount Feathertop, where servicing of fresh bedding and gourmet food will necessitate intrusive daily helicopter trips. And fire regulations now mandate clearing native vegetation for some distance around all new accommodation.

But this enthusiasm for serviced multi-day walks to boost tourism in Victoria is founded on a fantasy. While there is a level of interest in Victoria's long walks, the proportion of people that actually do them is very small. The great majority of people visiting our parks do short walks, even if they stay in the park for a number of days.

Victoria should dump the 'icon walk' idea as an expensive and damaging waste of resources. We should be playing to our advantage, and promote the state as somewhere where you can travel regional Victoria, staying at wonderful wineries, B&Bs and charming hotels, and experience any of the many hundreds of great short walks our natural areas offer. That would be better for tourism, better for the health of Victorians, and better for our remarkable but very vulnerable national parks.

*Parkwatch VNPA  
March 2018 no 272*

## **Australia needs a strategy for nature 2018–2030**

The Federal Government's new draft Strategy for Nature has been described as a 'global embarrassment'. If adopted, it would replace a currently unfunded policy of substance with airy statements. Headings like – 'We must work together to care for nature' is followed with 'Caring for nature is essential if we want it to persist, to provide services for present and future generations and to remain integral to our national identity'.

No data, funding plans or projects to protect the natural environment back up these remarks. Yet 'Strategy for Nature' is designed to replace the previous Biodiversity Conservation Strategy that has measurable outcomes and was once funded. Under the previous and current Federal Coalition Governments the funding and the public service administration of the projects went, but now strategy is to be gutted.

While the Coalition government allocated \$1.4 billion to environmental funding in the 2013–14 Budget, there was a 30 per cent drop in the 2016–17 Budget down to \$980 m. It fell again in the 2017–18 Budget to \$945 m (Adam Morton, *The Guardian*, 13 Dec 2017). The Federal Department of Environment and Energy is almost a shell. Programs like Landcare, Indigenous Protected Areas and the National Water Initiative should be well funded. Identification and protection of World and National Heritage values must be accelerated. The National Reserve System needs to be strengthened and managed. The extraction limits established under the multibillion dollar Murray–Darling Basin Plan must be enforced and adequate environmental flows secured using Federal constitutional powers. The Regional Forest Agreements must be scientifically reviewed and replaced by a new deal that protects our remaining

*(continued next page)*

## **PARKWATCH** (continued)

publicly owned native forests. The curtailment of land clearing which underpinned Australia's carbon concessions in the Kyoto protocol in 1997 must be reinstated. This minimal list of unsupported environmental policy reveals that our national environment program is now a shambles. On all fronts, Federal environmental management is being swept away.

*Colong Bulletin* March 2018 #270

### **Regional Forest Agreements extended**

[On March 26] we called on the Andrews Government to publicly rule out logging of national parks. Today our state and federal governments announced a two-year extension of Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) in Victoria. While this is much better than rolling over the previous failed and out of date 20-year RFAs, it will still leave large areas of high-conservation forest open to continued logging, and many of our most threatened wildlife, such as Leadbeater's Possum and Greater Glider, at further risk as their habitat continues to be destroyed.

The RFAs provide special treatment to the logging industry, allowing for logging of our public native forests that does not require approval under national environmental protection laws. They will now remain exempt from this protection for a further two years. None of the Victorian RFAs have met their objectives. Numbers of forest-dependent species listed as threatened continue to rise, and forest health is declining and will only get worse under climate change and the cumulative impacts of successive bushfires. Even the native forest industry is stagnating and in decline as their main resource runs out.

Moves announced today to protect small parts of the Kuark Forest in East Gippsland are welcome, but they urgently need to be formally added to Errinundra National Park in this term of government. Any review of the RFAs needs to be rigorous, independent and open; and consider all aspects including forests in the west of our state and other non-wood forest values such as water, ecosystem services, recreation and tourism that are contributing significant sums to the state's economy, and could contribute further.

The Regional Forest Agreements should be abandoned and replaced with improved, modern and transparent arrangements for management of Victoria's publicly owned native forests – based on current science, and on community views about how our state

forests should be valued, used and managed. The Victorian National Parks Association will continue pushing for improved protection and management of our native forests across the state, including creating a Great Forest National Park in the Central Highlands.

<https://vnpa.org.au/regional-forest-agreements-extended/>  
*NEWS* 27 March 2018

### **Development proposals on reserved land in Tasmania**

Tasmania is facing unprecedented pressure for tourism developments within our national parks and other reserved land driven by the government's policy to 'unlock' our reserves. When concerns are raised about the assessment of such proposals, the public are generally assured that there will be comprehensive scrutiny of the proposal and opportunity for public input. The reality is not quite so simple. Environmental impact assessment is often assumed to be a holistic process in which all issues receive full and balanced consideration. In practice it is part of a statutory process of development assessment. It does not necessarily consider all values, only values as defined in legislation or subordinate documents (in the case of national parks, management plans).

National parks are proclaimed primarily for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage. A major resource development (forestry or mining) in a national park would be unlikely to receive approval, but the footprint of a tourism development, even a large one, is orders of magnitude smaller; it is likely argued that it is an appropriate use and that its impacts on natural and cultural heritage are not significant.

The wilderness qualities of the more remote parts of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA) are highly valued by visitors. Sightseeing helicopter flights are proliferating. Some of the proposed tourism developments will require additional helicopter flights to transport supplies to huts. It is hard to think of any more intrusive reminder of one's lack of remoteness from the environmental disturbance of contemporary people than a nearby helicopter, yet there is little explicit requirement to assess this impact on the experience of visitors.

Concerns about the visitor experience are unlikely to feature prominently in the assessment because the relevant legislation is weak. Decades ago, when our current planning legislation was first implemented, there was a consensus that

national parks and reserves were out-of-bounds for development. There was no need for a rigorous, legally defined process for the assessment of developments in national parks and we still do not have such legislation even though times have changed! In the case of the TWWHA we have even gone backwards; the 1999 management plan provided the authority to require a comprehensive assessment but this has gone from the 2016 plan.

This is alarming because a major role of national parks is a place for visitors to experience nature. There are plenty of places around the world with more spectacular scenery than can be found in Tasmania but very few that offer better opportunities to experience wilderness and wild nature. Preservation of these opportunities is vital to all who appreciate our parks and also for Tasmania's tourism industry. Surveys consistently identify wilderness, nature and heritage among visitor's top priorities – we cannot afford to let a few ill-conceived tourism developments detract from these qualities.

The World Heritage Convention provides an additional layer of protection for the World Heritage Area but this does not necessarily mean that the Commonwealth Government can or will intervene to save the Tasmanian wilderness from excessive tourism development. World Heritage status may result in additional scrutiny but will not necessarily lead to any additional protection of natural and cultural heritage or visitor experience.

*TNPA News*

Newsletter no 26 Autumn 2018

**Compiled by Hazel Rath**

# NPA notices



## National Parks Association Calendar

	June	July	August	September
Public holidays	Mon 11	—	—	—
General meetings	Thurs 21	Thurs 19	Thurs 16 AGM	Thurs 20
Committee meetings	Tues 5	Tues 3	Tues 7	Tues 4
Gudgeny Bush Regeneration <sup>1</sup>	Sat 9	Sat 21 <sup>2</sup>	Sat 11	Sat 8

Further details: 1 GBRG. Meet at Namadgi Visitor Centre 9.15 am.  
2 20th anniversary of first GBRG work party.

## The NPA welcomes

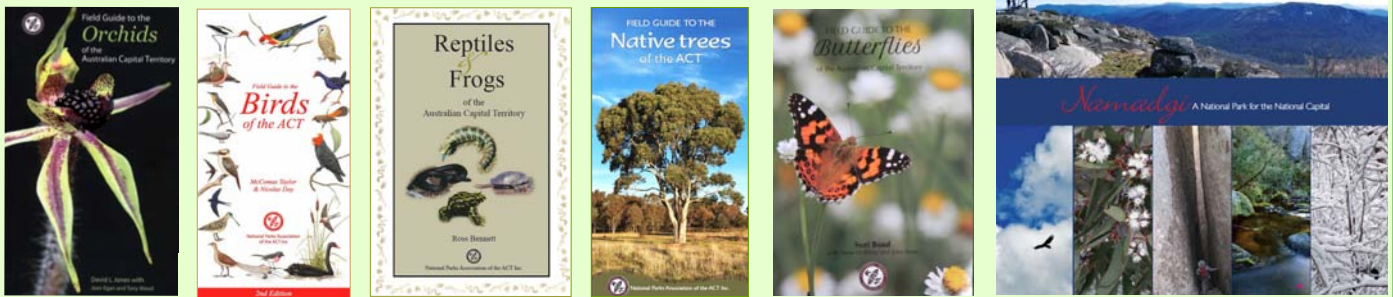
Don Fletcher as a new member and Brian Palm who has rejoined the association.

We look forward to seeing you at NPA activities.

This *Bulletin* was prepared by:

Editor, Philip Gatenby  
Copyeditor, Ed Highley  
Presentation, Adrienne Nicholson.

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



### 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 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](mailto:admin@npaact.org.au) by email.

For payment by Mastercard or Visa credit card please use the on-line facility on 'Trybooking', or you can pay by on-line bank transfer. Detailed instructions are in the letter. We ask you to please 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

### Call for volunteers

At NPA general meetings volunteer members set up the hall and the supper. We need more volunteers for 2018 as the roster is by no means full. Please contact Quentin Moran if you can help. [qmoran@webone.com.au](mailto:qmoran@webone.com.au)

Thank you.



## Contributions for the NPA Bulletin

Contributions of articles, letters, poems, drawings and photographs are always welcome. If possible keep contributions to no more than 1,000 words. Items accepted for publication will be subject to editing and may also be published on the NPA website. Send all items to the *Bulletin* Team, email [admin@npaact.org.au](mailto:admin@npaact.org.au), or to the NPA ACT postal address (see page 31).

**Deadline for the September 2018 issue:  
31 July 2018.**

## Cover photographs

### Front cover

**Main photo.** Seven Gods Pinnacles, Morton National Park (article page 20).

Photo by Jan Gatenby.

**Insets. Left.** Goanna threat display (article page 9).

Photo by Don Fletcher.

**Centre.** Young male moose watching passers-by (article page 12).

Photo by Esther Gallant.

**Right.** Col McAlister thanks his loyal team for 14 years of work at Glenburn (article page 19).

Photo by Max Lawrence.

### Back cover

**Top.** (New) Jounama ruins (article page 22).

Photo by Brian Slee.

**Bottom.** Dananbilla Nature Reserve (article page 25).

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 21 June

*What a high! Over three decades of exploring our mountain country*

**Matthew Higgins**

Matthew has skied and bushwalked in the Australian High Country since he first visited Kiandra as a kid. He is an award-winning historian and short-filmmaker who during the past thirty years has worked with many of Australia's leading national cultural institutions in Canberra.

## Thursday 19 July

*Butterflies of Namadgi National Park. Special stories and conservation issues*

**Suzi Bond**

Since the *Field Guide to the Butterflies of the ACT* was published by NPA last December, Dr Suzi Bond and her colleagues have had another productive season of butterfly observations. Her talk will concentrate on Namadgi species and conservation issues, especially the problem of fire. We will hear about the species, their habitats and also some special stories about Silky Hairstreaks, Banks' Brown and others. The recent reprint of the field guide will be available at the meeting at the members' price of \$25.

## Thursday 16 August

### Annual General Meeting

*Earthquakes in PNG*

**Kevin McCue**

NPA committee member, Kevin McCue, will give a short talk about the Papua New Guinea earthquakes. Kevin travelled to PNG's Southern Highlands to install seismographs to record aftershocks and to collect data for design and building code purposes.

## 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>	Esther Gallant	6161 4514 (h)
	<a href="mailto:galla001@umn.edu">galla001@umn.edu</a>	
<i>Vice President</i>	Quentin Moran	6288 9840 (h)
	<a href="mailto:qmoran@webone.com.au">qmoran@webone.com.au</a>	
<i>Secretary</i>	Sonja Lenz	6251 1291 (h)
	<a href="mailto:sonjalenz67@gmail.com">sonjalenz67@gmail.com</a>	
<i>Treasurer</i>	Chris Emery	6249 7604 (h)
	<a href="mailto:chris.emery@optusnet.com.au">chris.emery@optusnet.com.au</a>	

### Committee members

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Rod Griffiths (Immediate Past President)	6288 6988 (h)
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Kevin McCue	6251 1291 (h)
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### Conveners

<i>Bulletin Working Group</i>	Kevin McCue	6251 1291 (h)
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<i>Cultural Subcommittee</i>	Quentin Moran	6288 9840
	<a href="mailto:qmoran@webone.com.au">qmoran@webone.com.au</a>	
<i>Environment Subcommittee</i>	Rod Griffiths	6288 6988 (h)
	<a href="mailto:rod.blackdog@gmail.com">rod.blackdog@gmail.com</a>	
<i>Outings Subcommittee</i>	Steven Forst	0428 195 236
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<i>Promotion and Engagement Subcommittee</i>	Vacant	
<i>Publications Subcommittee</i>	Kevin McCue	6251 1291 (h)
	<a href="mailto:mccue.kevin@gmail.com">mccue.kevin@gmail.com</a>	
<i>Work Party Co-ordinator</i>	Martin Chalk	6292 3502 (h)
	<a href="mailto:mchalk1@bigpond.com">mchalk1@bigpond.com</a>	

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

**Phone:** (02) 6229 3201 or 0429 356 212 (if urgent)

**Website:** [www.npaact.org.au](http://www.npaact.org.au)

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