



NPA *Bulletin*

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National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory Inc.



Little Eagle project



NPA Annual General Meeting



Bushwalk reports

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

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From the President

The NPA ACT has had an amazingly successful year but it is starting to take a toll on our core group of faithful volunteers. Can you please help us as we move into our 60th year celebrations and look toward the future? There are many ways to volunteer, both large and small. All will be much appreciated by your Management Committee. Please do have a look at the list below. Contact details for committee members and subcommittee conveners are always on the inside of the *Bulletin* back cover.

Opportunities to volunteer for the environment

- Join the Management Committee or a subcommittee. You will be enthusiastically welcomed at any time.
- Write a letter or submission to the government or the press. The Environment Subcommittee is responding to an increasing number of government requests for submissions. You can help with the NPA ACT submission or write your own private submission on the issue.
- Get involved in publications – the *Bulletin* and our nature guides can use writers, ideas and help with production.
- Go to a festival or open day and spend a couple of hours helping staff our information and book sales stall.
- Take a walk with our experienced leaders. If you have walking experience volunteer to lead one – anything from a

half-day urban stroll to a week-long bushwalking and camping adventure.

- Work in nature with a ranger-supported work party – tools supplied.
- Contribute to our citizen-science projects, in your home or in the bush.
- Help keep our office organised.
- Get online and help us enhance our online presence.
- Be artistic and join our twice yearly Art Week at Gudgenby Cottage in Namadgi. Painting, sculpture, woodworking, embroidery, photography, writing poetry or prose, or however you express your artistic self.
- Be social and sign up on the general meeting supper and set-up roster. You might need to shop for tea, coffee and biscuits but you won’t need to bake unless you are really keen.
- Bake a slice for meetings and events involving morning or afternoon tea. You don’t have to actually attend. Just let us know you are willing.
- Encourage family and friends to join NPA ACT.



Esther Gallant

PLEASE THINK ABOUT HOW YOU MIGHT HELP AND CONTACT A COMMITTEE MEMBER!!

President's report 2018–19

Another busy year with some rewarding outcomes. A new brochure, a start to the celebrations of our 60th anniversary, engaging speakers, exciting research, new members and more volunteers are just a few things to note. Especially noteworthy was the selection of NPA ACT as **ACT Conservation Council 2018 Environmental Group of the Year**.

60th anniversary celebrations start

The combined **60th Anniversary–Promotion and Outreach Subcommittees** (convened by Cynthia Burton and Allan Sharp respectively) are hard at work on both the celebration of the founding of NPA ACT (1 March 1960) and also importantly on activities to attract new members and inspire more volunteers. The goal is to celebrate our past achievements while ensuring the continued effectiveness of the NPA ACT into its seventh decade. The first event was a members' discussion held at the April 2018 general meeting with a number of suggestions offered on ways to celebrate our past and chart our future. The first major event was the 60th anniversary members forum held on 6 April 2019 with invited guests from other environmental and bushwalking groups in the ACT. Discussions and brainstorming sessions were ably conducted by Cynthia Burton after keynote speakers Brett McNamara (ACT Parks) and Megan Rowlatt (Intrepid Landcare) addressed the group. The topics of the day were the challenges in protecting the environment and in strengthening NPA ACT and how to meet these challenges into the future. Outcomes of the forum are under consideration by the committee and plans are underway for several other events to celebrate our milestone year.

The Promotion and Outreach Subcommittee produced a stunning new brochure designed by Sabine Friedrich. It has been widely distributed already and handed out at NPA information stalls at the ACT Connect and Participate Expo and the Jerrabomberra Wetlands open day. NPA ACT books have been given to children as reward for interest in the environment: Junior Rangers at Jerrabomberra Wetlands and Australian National Botanic Gardens; Canberra Bushwalking Club family activities; winners in the Children's Threatened Species Art competition, the ANBG Friends Schools Photography Competition and Reclaim Kosci

colouring-in competition, as well as prizes for students at Namadgi School.

Reclaim Kosci campaign

Regular *Bulletin* readers will not be surprised if I call this the 'Year of the Feral Horse'. Many reports have appeared in these pages (including in this issue) concerning the battle to remove feral horses from national parks.

The Reclaim Kosci Coalition, formed at a Canberra meeting in July 2018, consists of five organisations: NPA ACT, NPA NSW, Nature Conservation Council, Invasive Species Council (ISC) and Colong Foundation for Wilderness, each having a member on the Steering Committee chaired by Andrew Cox of ISC. There is also an Advisory Committee with about 25 members from the same organisations plus environmental scientists and former national park staff (several from the ACT). This group holds online discussions and has had two meetings in Canberra. NPA ACT has been the major financial supporter of the campaign while Canberra Bushwalking Club (CBC) has been a major source of volunteers.

NPA ACT sponsored publication of the abstracts from the Kosciuszko Science Conference and contributed funds and volunteers to the NSW election lobbying campaign. We supported the CBC-organised Sydney to Summit Save Kosci walk with drivers, walkers, bakers and petition circulators. About 30 NPA ACT walkers were at the Kosciuszko summit on 8 December on the final day as part of a group of about 200 walkers.

The major campaign event organised by NPA ACT (thanks to Di Thompson) was a trip for ACT politicians and staff and Icon Water and PLC representatives to see a healthy alpine wetland. Massive

support for this event was provided by ACT Parks staff including their bus to transport the 30+ participants (*see photo*). At Ginini Wetlands, Namadgi Manager Brett McNamara and environmental scientist Professor Geoff Hope talked to the group about the importance of keeping our water catchment healthy and free of feral horses. ACT MLAs from all parties seem determined to keep feral horses out of the ACT water catchment. We will continue to encourage them to hold to that view!

The **Environment Subcommittee** convened by Rod Griffiths responded to an increasing number of government proposals and requests for comment, as well as attending some hearings. They completed seven submissions to the ACT Government, three to NSW and one national one on a variety of topics: bushfire management, cat containment, pest plant and animal management, Spotted Quoll action plan, woodlands strategy, Nature in the City, new mountain bike trails, horse riding in the wilderness (NSW), alpine walking tracks management (NSW), travelling stock routes (NSW) and feral deer, pigs and goats (national).

Support for Environmental Science

Rosenberg's Monitor studies in the Naas Valley of Namadgi National Park (leader Dr Don Fletcher, partially funded by an NPA ACT grant) continue to provide interesting and sometimes surprising results. A second research grant has been awarded by ACT Environment to continue the project. As an add-on to this project NPA ACT has funded DNA studies by University of Canberra PhD student Jason Dobry.

We have also provided funding for the Little Eagle project led by

(continued on page 4)



*The group that visited Ginini Wetlands.
Photo courtesy Elizabeth Lee.*

President's report 2018–19 *(continued from page 3)*

Dr Michael Mulvaney, a study of the Rakali distribution in the ACT (Australian Platypus Conservancy), bushfire behaviour modelling (Dr Phil Zylstra) and Biodiversity Outcomes analysis (ANU Honours student).

General meeting speakers

An interesting schedule of 10 general meeting speakers covered topics ranging from local environmental science to walking and paddling in our vicinity. We also had a special request from ACT Parks and Conservation who made a presentation on the proposed Regional Fire Management Plan as they know of our keen interest in that topic.

Work parties and outings

Walks program convener Steven Forst and many leaders keep the schedule filled with weekend walks and coordinate our contributions to the Wednesday walks program. Monthly work parties are conducted in Namadgi National Park and surrounds by NPA ACT (conveners Martin Chalk and Brian Slee) and by the Gudgenby Bush

Regeneration Group in the Gudgenby Valley (convener Doug Brown).

Social activities

The Christmas party at Namadgi Visitor Centre was well attended in spite of looming rain, and lavishly provisioned. An outdoor picnic was abandoned and indoor space gratefully occupied when the rain arrived. Later we adjourned to the theatre for Adrienne Nicholson's wonderful slide show recapping many years of Art Week. As is now customary, two art weeks at Gudgenby Cottage were organised by Adrienne Nicholson and Hazel Rath, and a display of the resulting art works set up at the Namadgi Visitor Centre.

NPA office

The office staff capability has been enhanced by the arrival of new volunteers and together they processed membership applications with astonishing efficiency this June and July. Thank you all.

National Parks Australia Council AGM 2019

It is our turn to host this annual event which will be held at Namadgi Visitor Centre on 18–20 October 2019. Planning of the schedule and speakers has been underway for several months. Volunteers will be needed to help with catering and transport.

Management Committee

After retirements last year we are still seeking some additional committee members. Unfortunately, our new treasurer was enticed away again by an attractive career opportunity. Our long serving (and long suffering) treasurer Chris Emery has kindly stepped back into the role while we recruit yet another replacement. Many thanks Chris! We still have 2–3 places to fill on the committee and ask members to consider whether they might want to join in leading NPA ACT into the future.

Esther Gallant

News from the Environment Subcommittee

For a small group, the Environment Subcommittee gets through a lot of work. Since the last *Bulletin* the subcommittee has been involved in the following activities:

- **Submission on the Draft ACT Cat Plan** – The NPA ACT felt that the plan provides a balanced message about the positive benefits of pet ownership and the owner's responsibility for the welfare of the pet, the broader community and the natural environment. Matters that we thought need strengthening include: promotion of responsible cat ownership; improving compliance and enforcement; reducing the numbers of semi-owned and unowned domestic cats; and predation by feral cats.
- **Submission on Proposed Amendments to the Pest Plants and Animals (Pest Animals) Declaration Discussion Paper** – The key issues raised by the NPA ACT were: the need for wild rabbits and wild pigs to be subject to regulations and pest management activities; and the need for the declaration to include sport fish species such as Rainbow Trout, Brown Trout, Redfin and European Carp.
- **Submission on the ACT Woodlands Strategy** – The NPA ACT is a strong advocate for improved protection of

the ACT's woodlands. Our submission notes that a large proportion of the ACT's lowland woodlands are not in conservation areas. This requires the strategy to focus on the engagement of rural lessees for the protection and enhancement of rural-based woodlands. It states the need to increase the area of woodlands in conservation reserves, and for the consolidated management of woodlands as opposed to management through multi ecosystem-based management plans.

- **Submission on the ACT Strategic Bushfire Management Plan Version 4 2019-2024** – The NPA ACT believes that version 4 of the SBMP shows a greater awareness of the needs of the environment in the management of the ACT's bushfire risks than have versions of the SBMP. However, it was disappointing that the SBMP does not clearly articulate a more two-tier approach to fire management in bushland with: 1) smaller, more manageable burns on a local scale which take into account the nature of the vegetation, topography and weather over the period beyond the actual burn, and leave the canopy intact to prevent weeds and fire obligate species returning; and 2) more concentrated

activities in areas close to key assets.

The SBMP also fails to effectively deal with the residual risk. Residual risk is a key concept in risk modelling and indicates the level of hazard remaining after various mitigation actions have been taken.

In respect to prescribed burning, the NPA ACT argues that the frequency of burns should consider if they will have a short-term effect of leading to an altered and more fire-prone landscape. It is important to protect long-unburnt areas where the vegetation profile limits fire risk.

The NPA ACT welcomes the introduction of Aboriginal Fire Management Zones.

- **Best of Canberra Mountain Bike Experience Project-Reference Group** – The NPA ACT is a member of this reference group and advocating strongly to ensure the group fully considers the potential environmental issues arising from this project.

As always, if you are interested in being involved in the subcommittee feel free to contact me on 0410 875 731.

Rod Griffiths
Convener



Treasurer's report 2018–19

After the departure of our temporary treasurer in late May, all accounts had to be reconciled. The accounts are now in good order. The auditor's report could not be completed in time for the AGM but should be finalised by early September.

We spent 8 per cent more than in the previous year. Major expenditure was on the Rosenberg's Goanna project, coming

from both the 2018 ACT Government Environment Grant and the Bubb fund, with the majority of the balance spent on the Kosciuszko campaign (see the piecharts and lists).

Member donations are always extremely useful and we thank you for them as they greatly extend NPA's capacity to do great environmental work.

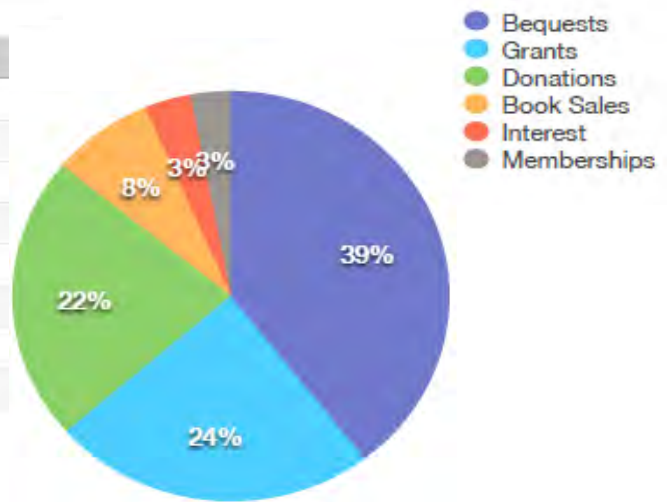
An NPA member has volunteered to learn MYOB and take on the treasurer's role.



Chris Emery
Acting Treasurer

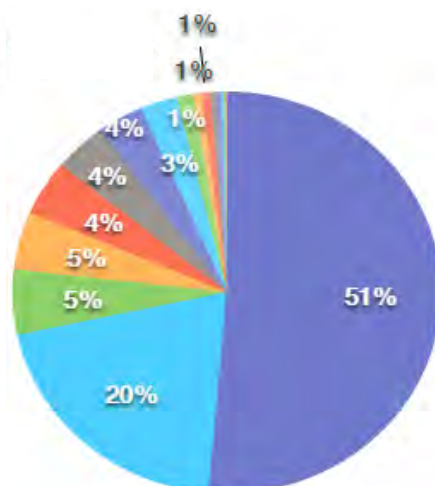
NPA Income FY19

	TOTAL
Bequests	\$54,370
Grants	\$33,115
Donations	\$30,848
Book Sales	\$10,463
Interest	\$4,739
Memberships	\$4,126
Sundry	\$2,427
Total	\$140,088



NPA Expenditure FY19

- Rosenberg's Monitor project
- Feral Animals project
- Biodiversity Offsets project
- Little Eagle project
- Office costs
- Cost of Books Sold
- Membership costs
- Bulletins
- Books as gifts
- Phil Zylstra project
- Rakali project
- Meetings
- Inventory adjustments
- Other
- Volunteers grant
- Volunteers



	TOTAL
Rosenberg's Monitor project	\$78,397
Feral Animals project	\$30,900
Biodiversity Offsets project	\$8,000
Little Eagle project	\$7,116
Office costs	\$6,788
Cost of Books Sold	\$6,067
Membership costs	\$5,361
Bulletins	\$4,254
Books as gifts	\$1,899
Phil Zylstra project	\$1,000
Rakali project	\$1,000
Meetings	\$655
Inventory adjustments	\$617
Other	\$258
Volunteers grant	\$205
Volunteers	\$166
Finance Costs	\$131
Total	\$152,814

Goanna project: winter 2019 update

This is a report on progress in the goanna project over the 2019 winter. The development of the project [‘Monitoring of Rosenberg’s goanna (Varanus rosenbergi) in Namadgi National Park] is set out in previous issues of the Bulletin (June 2019, March 2019, June 2018, and March 2018) and an informal report on the web page December 2018.

Grant from ACT Government

An important development was the successful application to EPSDD for a second ACT Environment Grant for the 2019–20 year, this one providing an additional \$34,609 from the ACT Government for equipment. (An ACT Environment Grant of \$29,500 was secured in 2018–19, and additional funds were provided from NPA sources.) The grant will enable an additional year of GPS tracking research by providing for two new GPS tracking packs and an additional base station receiver, and refurbishment of many of the existing GPS packs. The funds will also boost the number of cameras available for surveys, including a new attempt to estimate the goanna population size, using facial recognition. They also include provision for temperature logging ‘ibuttons’ which can be used to monitor temperature in termite mounds and goanna burrows.

What happened over autumn–winter (so far)

Every week or two, radio-tracking was used to locate goannas (9) in their winter burrows. This was done by a small dedicated crew, most notably John Brickhill, and also Kevin McCue, Enzo Guarino, Bruce Boreham, Rupert Barnett and me. After 1 June most goannas occupied only one winter burrow each, with the few alternative burrows being close by. Each winter



burrow with its surroundings, nearby vegetation and canopy cover has been recorded, including a 180 degree fish-eye photo from which tree canopy cover will be calculated. The radio tracking proved much more difficult than anticipated because in autumn the goannas moved away from the Naas Valley Fire Trail to higher elevation for the winter. That’s correct, I’m saying they moved UP to where the atmosphere is about **3 degrees colder**. And the distances they moved to these wintering sites were up to 6 km.

This was a previously unknown episode of movement, in different directions and to different places than the movements recorded in the past 2 years by the GPS packs fitted to goannas during the warmer months only. These wintering sites were thinly vegetated, rocky, north-facing slopes, high on the valley sides. Many of the burrows were beneath a massive rock (often metres across); three burrows that were measured were 2 m, 3 m and >2.5 m long, in hard, stony soil between boulders. Thus, they would be impregnable to predators.

The explanation for the elevated locations appears to be that, during winter brumation (roughly analogous to hibernation in mammals) the goannas are emerging occasionally to bask and, in these high places, sunlight is available for hours longer than on the lower slopes. Consequently, soil-surface temperatures measured outside the burrows, on the ‘basking platform’, were always several times higher than the soil-surface temperature measured at the same time on the fire trail below. So, for goannas, there is a positive trade-off between more sunlight and colder air, unlike mammals.

Effect of the fuel reduction burning on goannas

Every effort was made by us to evaluate the effect of the fire on goannas but the three goannas in the burn area did not cooperate. All left a few days before. One moved far away, another continues to occupy a place only hundreds of metres outside the burnt area.

Termites

The winter radio-tracking increased the number of recorded termite mounds in Naas Valley. We now have GPS coordinates for 29 *Nasutitermes* and 20 *Coptotermes* (unsuitable for goannas)

John Brickhill recording termite mound information. Photo by Don Fletcher.



*A burrow repeatedly used by goanna H.
Photo by Don Fletcher.*

mounds. The *Nasutitermes* are in the downstream northern half of the valley at recorded altitudes from 680–810 m and the *Coptotermes* are in the upstream southern third of the valley from 950–1,050 m. That distribution cries out for closer examination, but the key point for the project will be to patrol the known *Nasutitermes* mounds at the time when hatchlings emerge. Quite a number were dug into by goannas during the breeding season, so there is potential to find substantially more than the one nest that we found last season.

Trapping dates for spring – would you like to help?

To bring female goannas into the study, our plan is to trap earlier this year. After not feeding since mid to late autumn, we hope that the female goannas will be active by then, and still hungry enough to enter traps (the males must be bolder or less smart and enter traps in any warm month). So if you would like to help on these dates, please email me at don.fletcher@emailme.com.au. There is no point trapping in cold weather, therefore plans will be changed if necessary.

September cage trapping:

Wednesday 18 to Friday

20 September; and Wednesday

25 to Friday 27 September.

Male dates

In October we plan to recapture the existing males to replace their radio transmitters with GPS packs. This will be a targeted activity for just a few people at a time.

Tuesday 8 to Thursday 10 October

and if necessary Monday 21 to

Wednesday 23 October.

Foot patrols of termite mounds:

late October to end November.

Roster to be organised later.

Don Fletcher
0428 489 990

The Little Eagle project

At the May general meeting, Dr Michael Mulvaney, Senior Conservation Officer of the ACT Government, gave a presentation on the Little Eagle citizen-science project, which has involved studying, using GPS wireless trackers, the numbers and distribution of Little Eagles in and around the ACT. The research is looking at the foraging areas, dispersal, diet and breeding rates of the birds. Little Eagles are the world's second smallest eagle (wingspan about 1 m, the smaller male weighing in at about 0.8 kg), are endemic to mainland Australia and, in the ACT, are found mainly in open forest, where they breed in August and the young fledge around the following February. Evidence suggests that ACT numbers are in slow decline, with breeding pairs falling from 12 to 9 in recent years.

Michael explained that the research has followed a number of birds, including one male Little Eagle for two seasons. In the first season, the bird didn't breed, in the second it did. Its foraging area was found to be about 65 km², but in the breeding year the bird, perhaps not surprisingly, spent more time closer to the nest. Its diet was young rabbit (60 per cent), other birds (30 per cent, predominately rosellas), and reptiles and insects (including cicadas, Christmas beetles, Blue-tongue Lizards and Shinglebacks) the remaining 10 per

cent. Diet seems to relate to the food available, because other birds have been found to make up to 50 per cent of the diet of other Little Eagles.

Intrepid travellers

The distance Little Eagles travel has been a surprise. One individual was tracked along the Murrumbidgee to Wagga Wagga, returned to the ACT and then travelled, in a now well reported trip, over 3,000 km in 18 days to the Northern Territory, covering 480 km in one day and reaching a top speed of 68 kph. Other birds have travelled north to the Gulf of Carpentaria and eastern Queensland beyond Bundaberg. Little Eagles have travelled south, spent time in Melbourne (where there is a good supply of Rock Dove and Silver Gull), with one then going to Adelaide and on to Port Pirie. Others have not travelled as far. Common features of this dispersal according to Michael include following watercourses and avoiding large expanses of water. This helps explain the Little Eagle's absence from Tasmania.

Michael then went on to say that so far the research has collected only limited information about female Little



Little Eagle photo provided by Don Fletcher.

Eagles. The plan now is to fit 19 birds with transmitters (with NPA funding two transmitters) and to find out more about nesting sites locally. Moreover, while the Little Eagle is declared vulnerable in the ACT and NSW, given the vast distances individuals travel, its protection surely requires a national approach.

Kevin McCue

Two Lost Boys

Two lost boys in montane forest
Missed the turnoff, talking Brexit,
Three good eyes between them.
Snow gum, black sallee, candle bark.

Missed the turnoff, talking Brexit.
The rescued, the rescuers, those who wait,
Snow gum, black sallee, candle bark
Welcome the breeze that cools the sweat.

The rescued, the rescuers, those who wait,
Drown in the burble of a mountain stream,
Welcome the breeze that cools the sweat.
I scrunch my apple, crunch my carrot,

Drown in the burble of a mountain stream.
Three good eyes between them.
I scrunch my apple, crunch my carrot.
Two lost boys in montane forest.

Gerry Jacobson

Annual General Meeting 2019: report

President Esther Gallant welcomed about 25 members and guests to the Annual General Meeting on 15 August. After acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land and paying respects to their elders past and present, she extended a special welcome to new members (see page 30). Several members were travelling or unable to attend the meeting for health or various other reasons.

Activities in 2018–19

After confirmation of the previous year's minutes by the meeting, Esther gave an overview of the association's activities in the past year and displayed the main points of her presentation on the big screen. She emphasised that the committee, subcommittees, working groups and individual members had all contributed to the successful activities and projects of the association and thanked them all. A highlight was that NPA ACT was named Environmental Group of the year in 2018 by the Conservation Council of the ACT Region. Her full report is on pages 3–4.

Financial report

Chris Emery explained that, due to the departure of the Treasurer in May, he

had, as Acting Treasurer, only just finished reconciling the finances and given the financial statements to the auditor, so the audit could not be completed in time for the AGM. You can find the financial report on page 5.

Election of the Management Committee

Member Bruce Boreham, as Returning Officer, oversaw the election of office bearers and committee members. He informed the meeting that six nominations had been received and asked for additional nominations from the floor, but there were none forthcoming. Bruce declared the following members elected to the Management Committee for 2019–20:

President: Esther Gallant

Vice President: Cynthia Burton

Secretary: Sonja Lenz

Treasurer: Chris Emery remains Acting Treasurer until further notice

Committee members: George Heinsohn, Kevin McCue

Rod Griffiths as Immediate Past President is an ex-officio committee member.

Bruce reminded the meeting that additional committee members can be

co-opted into vacant positions during the year.

Presentations

Five members gave short, illustrated presentations on various topics:

- Esther talked about her recent rafting trip on the Snake River, Canada
- Di Thompson reflected on her outback trip in Western Australia and the obvious importance of water in the WA goldfields and the wheatbelt areas
- Adrienne Nicholson displayed some of the interesting members' photos used in the Namadgi book and also some of her nature observations in the Bush Capital
- Chris Emery gave us a pictorial impression of the recent open day at the Namadgi Visitor Centre (with lots of Sabine Friedrich's colourful photos)
- John Brickhill gave us an overview of the work involved in monitoring Rosenberg's Goannas in the Naas Valley, with some very interesting photographs and anecdotes.

The presenters were thanked and everyone was invited to partake of the supper and mulled wine provided.

Sonja Lenz

60th anniversary planning update – it's getting closer!

In early August, 60th Anniversary Subcommittee members Cynthia Burton, Ed Highley, Judy Kelly, and Annette Smith met with the head of the Publicity Subcommittee, Allan Sharp. A *Young Photographers' Competition* is planned for early 2020 (see box at right).

Also, a tentative date of Monday, 2 March 2020, has been set for a celebratory gathering to mark the 60th anniversary, subject to confirmation of availability of a suitable venue. Please note this down in your calendars!

Additionally, there are plans to hold a joint bushwalk and overnight family camping experience with ACT Parks and/or local bushwalking clubs later in 2020 (activities to be further developed).

If you are interested to help out with organising any of these events, please contact me at

cynthia.burton69@bigpond.com

or 0488 071 203.

We are counting on your support!

**Cynthia Burton, Convener
60th Anniversary Subcommittee**

Inviting new visions

As NPA ACT members, we know and love our local and regional natural environment, especially the riches of Namadgi National Park. After all, our association had a pivotal role in creating it. But it's hard to escape the fact that we constitute a largely grey demographic.

How do younger people see our natural environment, locally and further afield? What do they feel about it? How much do they know about the work that we – and related organisations – do in researching, conserving and remediating the natural environment? What impediments or incentives exist to attracting those with an environmental leaning to come on board and help avoid the loss of those aspects of the natural world they appreciate?

These are the sorts of questions we seek to explore in the *Young Photographers Competition* that we will be running next year; it will be a key event in our 60th anniversary celebrations. The competition will be open to amateur photographers up to 35 years of age.

We are seeking from young people fresh perspectives on the values and future of our natural environment. It will be an opportunity not only for entrants to display their skills and appreciation of the natural world – and for us and the wider community to enjoy their work – but also for us to promote NPA activities and membership, and stimulate wider interest in our association.

The 60th Anniversary and Publicity subcommittees are working together to firm up the finer details of the competition, and its promotion. We will keep members informed via the *Bulletin*, *Burning Issues* and the website. The current schedule entails calling for entries in March 2020 with the presentation of awards to the winners on 5 June 2020, World Environment Day. There will be cash prizes and public exhibition of the winning entries.

Watch this space ...
and spread the word!

NPA work party summary May–July 2019

Month	Activity	Agency	Participants
May	Lower Cotter – poplar control on Blundells Flat. Third transect established – all three approximately 150 m ² in area. Central (last year’s eastern) transect clearing was completed and one quarter of the new eastern transect was cleared.	PCS	7
June	Gudgenby fence removal. Last 100 m of fence F10 (above Rowleys Hut site) removed to point F10A. Section of fence F11 (also above Rowleys Hut site) between F11C and F11D in place. All barbed wire removed from fence F21 (adjacent to Rendezvous Creek near Boboyan Road) from F21A to F22B and posts and mesh removed from southern 60 m from F21A.	PCS	5
July	Work party cancelled due to lack of participants.	–	–

Martin Chalk

Supressing the woody invaders at Bendora and Blundells

In autumnal months April and May 2019, members of the National Parks Association of the ACT continued their ongoing program to control the spread of exotic trees into Namadgi National Park. Work parties were held at Bendora Arboretum and Blundells Flat.

The Bendora Arboretum is the sole surviving arboretum in the Brindabellas; others were destroyed in the 2003 bushfires. It was established in 1940 by Dr Charles Lane Poole, Director of the then Forestry and Timber Bureau, as one of a series of experimental plantings to help determine which species of trees could be grown commercially in the ACT. There are 52 species of trees in blocks (81 trees per block), including coniferous larches with soft, feathery foliage (larch is one of the world’s few deciduous conifers), maples and European Limes. The arboretum is listed on the ACT’s Heritage Places Register, its name Bendora being apparently made up by Lane Poole.

We met ACT Park Ranger Darren Roso on site to discuss the work plan and subsequently began weeding on the southern boundary of the arboretum, in native bushland across the perimeter track. More than 800 *Pinus radiata* wildings up to 2 m high were found and pulled out or cut off, most of them within 20 m of the track. Fewer scattered wildings were removed from outside the other three plantation boundaries.

Within the arboretum there were 100 *Pinus radiata*, and Arizona Cypress carpeted the forest floor. We removed about 2,500



The kind of problem we don't want in the national park! Photo by Brian Slee.

wildings within the plantation. Also removed were an oak, a suckering apple, and numerous briars and blackberries.

As Brian Slee, our work party leader commented, *the weather was fine and chilly and the light superb, especially filtering through the yellowing leaves of the deciduous larches. Mountain Peppers bore plump berries.*

Some amazingly large and colourful fungi dotted the floor of the arboretum, as seen in the photo. Probably needless to report that we did not collect them for dinner. Notable was the lack of birds or other wildlife.

Blundells Flat is an unusual montane flat and wetland below Mount Coree. It is close to Namadgi National Park and the adjacent Brindabella National Park in NSW. Nine of the Blundell’s 11 children were born in their hut after they moved there in 1866.

An arboretum of about 0.5 ha, dedicated to poplars, was established between 1959 and 1963. Sources of seedlings

included USA, Canada, New Zealand, UK, South Africa and local. These poplars were trialled by Lindsay Pryor as part of a research program to improve availability of matchsticks. Yes, matches. Demand for matchsticks (and consequently funds for research) waned, so the plantation was never harvested commercially. But the trees were not removed. Most of the arboretum had been destroyed in the 2003 bushfire.

NPA’s May work party was the third at the site and aimed at eradicating the large infestation of poplar wildings. The poplars range from finger-size wildings to trees requiring chainsaw removal. We lost count of numbers but one couple cut and dabbed 240 suckering wildings in a 10 m² area in about 1 hour (before morning tea break). Five *Pinus radiata* and numerous briars were also removed.

We spotted few birds but there were spiders in the moist leaf litter. We had been asked to search out *Eucalyptus camphora*, a tree species known to occur naturally from just this area of the ACT, but ran out of time.

Kevin McCue



Fungi NOT collected for dinner. Photo by Kevin McCue.

A hero of the Reclaim Kosci Campaign honoured



Linda Groom at Kosciuszko with five walkers she inspired to complete the whole 560 km, Sydney to Kosciuszko summit. Photo by Esther Gallant.

CBC volunteers to gather 10,000 signatures on a paper petition to be presented to the NSW Parliament, calling for a debate on repeal of the 'heritage' horse legislation. The petition was presented to parliamentarians last month, with over 13,000 signatures! And she continues now as a fundraiser to enable the Reclaim Kosci Campaign to continue employing our very effective campaign coordinators.

I was very pleased to be able to support Linda's nomination on behalf of NPA ACT. Congratulations Linda and THANK YOU!

Esther Gallant

Unfortunately, the petition to repeal the 'heritage horse' legislation was voted down by the NSW Parliament on 20 August – the fight continues.

Ed

This year the annual Bushwalking NSW Chardon Award for outstanding contributions to bushwalking was awarded to Linda Groom. Her achievements and contributions span many years as a member of Canberra Bushwalking Club (CBC) and a relatively new member of NPA ACT. She has served CBC as President and Walks Secretary, as well as making major contributions to computerising the walks booking process, developing programs to involve more families and to increasing club membership. These achievements alone constitute outstanding contributions to bushwalking.

Moreover, over the past 14 months Linda has made an astonishing contribution to the Reclaim Kosci Campaign. She started by proposing and then organising the Save Kosci walk from Sydney to the summit of Mount Kosciuszko. This event involved not

only planning a route and advertising the event to about 500 NSW groups but also arranging requisite permissions from various authorities along the way. The success of her effort is obvious with approximately 500 participants helping out as either walkers and/or supporters with about 200 walkers also summiting Kosciuszko on the last day. Perhaps even more importantly, many people were made aware of the problem of feral horses in KNP through conversations along the walk, at petition-signing tables, or through discussions at gatherings and in the media.

But Linda was not done. She determinedly set out with a team of

Below. Three scenes showing protest supporters as the walkers passed through Queanbeyan. Photos by Sabine Friedrich.



Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group: 2018–19 in review

The past year has been another productive period for the 'Gudgenby Bushies' as we continue to support rehabilitation of the former Gudgenby pine plantation in the far south of Namadgi National Park via our monthly work parties.

Following the pattern established a couple of years ago, no work parties were held in January and February due to the likelihood of difficult weather conditions and the risk of park closures. With the summer of 2018–19 among the hottest and driest ever recorded in Canberra, this proved a wise approach and one which we'll likely have no choice but to pursue in the future as it seems inevitable that climate change will proceed apace.

For the statistically minded, we held 11 work parties during the year, with an average of 11 people per work party and overall 881 work hours recorded. Two work parties were held in March to make best use of autumn's more conducive conditions. The extra work party was devoted to a foot survey for African Lovegrass along Bogong Creek fire trail, a site where this invasive species had been previously recorded. Fortunately the track was clear but this does reinforce the need for vehicle wash down and other biosecurity procedures to guard against accidental spread of this now prevalent Canberra weed.

The year began with an undoubted highlight, a gathering at Gudgenby Cottage to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the group's very first work party held in July 1998. As reported in the September 2018 *NPA Bulletin*, past and present park staff joined with us to celebrate the achievements of the previous 20 years and also to remember those long-serving members who have passed on, including former President Eleanor Stodart who was instrumental in the group being established.



*GBRG 20th birthday toast around the refurbished trailer.
Photo by Rupert Barnett.*



*A warming break from barbed wire fence removal in the snow.
Photo by Kevin McCue.*

Weed control at a range of sites in the Gudgenby Valley again was the focus during the warmer months, particularly cutting and dabbing of woody weeds (hawthorn, blackberry and briar). Return visits to two of our regular work sites, 'Eleanor's Grove' on Hospital Creek and 'Croajingalong Slope' on the north-western edge of the rehabilitation area, were pleasing, with fewer and fewer blackberries and briars being recorded, a good indication of the success of our previous efforts. A survey along the upper section of Hospital Creek in April, as a follow-up to a summer spraying program, also recorded low numbers. Nevertheless, woody weeds are still prevalent in areas adjacent to the rehabilitation area and will no doubt be a major focus for us for some time yet!

We also continued with removal of unsightly and potentially dangerous barbed wire from derelict fences in remoter parts of the rehabilitation area during the colder months, when weed control can be problematic. This can be a strenuous activity and, as the group experienced very recently, sometimes in challenging weather conditions! In June, we were particularly appreciative of the contribution of park staff in making time

available to remove several truckloads of accumulated fencing and other material from Eleanor's Grove. This area is now not only much more presentable, but also several hundred wire tree guards were retrieved and made available for re-use by other landcare groups.

Weeds and fences were not our only activities. Our September 2018 work party was devoted to mapping the location, size and accessibility of warrens in the vicinity of Rendezvous Creek in support of a future rabbit control program by parks staff. Similar mapping exercises in previous years were an important contribution to highly successful rabbit control in the valley itself and we hope we will see further reductions in rabbit populations in the wider area. We also contributed to the recent (July 2019) Open Day held at the Namadgi Visitor Centre via a stall with a display illustrating the group's activities.

This has been my first year as president after taking over from Michael Goonrey, who stepped down after 10 years in the role. A big thank you to Michael for his great service and to other committee members for their work during the year. Our AGM scheduled for 26 August will include planning for our 2020 work program as we continue to help the recovery of this special part of Namadgi.

**Doug Brown, President
Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group.**

Art Week at Gudgenby Cottage

Another NPA Art Week will be held at Gudgenby Cottage from 18 October to 25 October.

Members of NPA ACT are welcome to join in for a day, to stay overnight, or for several days to explore the Gudgenby Valley through any artistic endeavour they can think of. Come out for a day visit and picnic with inspiration. Delegates and visitors to the National Parks Australia Council will be visiting on Saturday 19 October.

Gudgenby Cottage will have an Open Day for association members and the public on Sunday 20 October.

For information and to book to stay, contact Adrienne Nicholson on 6281 6381 or Hazel Rath on 4845 1021.

NPA art works will be displayed at the Namadgi Visitor Centre November 2019 to end of January 2020.



1.



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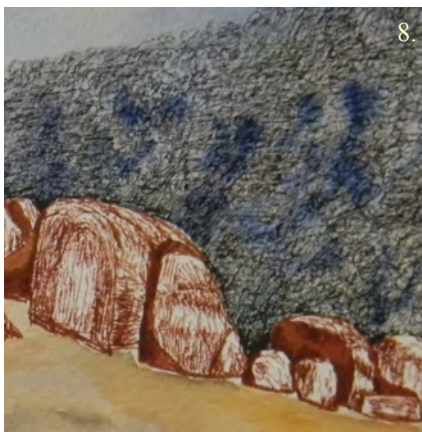
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Pictures from art week activities in recent years

1. Bruce Boreham making a field sketch of the cottage.
2. Esther Gallant returning from a photographic expedition.
3. Tree trunks near the cottage.
4. Fiona MacDonald Brand, Brett McNamara and Sonja Lenz discussing screen printed fabric produced many years ago by Alison Alder; highly treasured by the association.
5. An NPA exhibition at the Namadgi Visitor Centre.
6. Adrienne Nicholson producing cord from shredded lomandra leaves.
7. Esther Gallant's photo of an old fence post and the wire remnants after removal of an old farm fence in the Gudgenby Valley.
8. Jenny Gibson's Gudgenby Valley rocks painting detail.
9. Hazel, Sonja and Kevin relaxing by the fire in the cottage lounge room.
10. An embossed picture of kangaroos sparring.



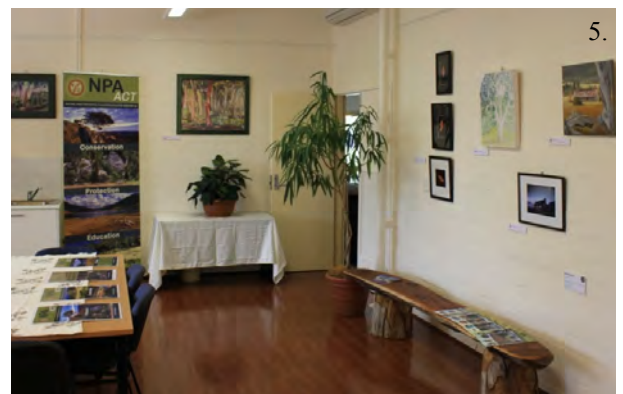
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Walk reports

Gungahlin via light rail

Date: Sunday, 7 July 2019

Participants: Brian Slee (leader), Peter and Marilyn Anderson-Smith, Ross Andrews, Mike Bremers, Ailsa Brown, Greg Lawrence, Max Lawrence, Michaela Popham, Margaret Power, Deidre Shaw

Weather: Cloudy and mild.

Canberra Metro's first section of light rail, Civic to Gungahlin, has been the subject of intense dispute about cost and its value to the community. It arrived in April and NPA has now taken a ride.

After gathering at London Circuit at 9 am, we hazarded our way around road works to the Alinga Street terminus. Simplicity is the first thing you notice. Tapping the console with a MyWay card was all that was required for most of us to get aboard. Sleek red trams slip quietly into open platforms with no step and not much gap. Rails are set in flat bed concrete; overhead powerlines are not conspicuous. There is little fencing. Willow eucalypts fill the gaps along Northbourne Avenue. Gazing out the large windows, you blink at how much has been demolished along the way. Real pleasures are the stable ride and watching all the lights turn green.

After 20 minutes we alighted at Manning Clark Crescent. At this point tram tourists generally gulp down a cup of coffee, condemn everything about Gungahlin and return to the city. But our coffee was 2 km away – we were here to tour some of the area's magnificent gum trees. After crossing to Cantamessa Avenue we followed its tree-lined path north into Forde, then dodged through back streets to Fell Street Reserve where ancient eucalypts survive in isolated splendour.

Next we came to the wetlands in Lyell Gillespie Corridor. Coos squabbled; a pair of swans demonstrated that even probing mucky depths can be done elegantly. A cute bronze frog is



The wonderful Yellow Box at Forde. Photo by Ailsa Brown.

being consumed by veg. Three huge Yellow Boxes (one heritage listed), with cathedral vaulting and crowned in glory, detained us before we finally made it to *Frankies* in Forde. We shared an outdoor table with friendly locals.

The return to the tram was initially via Gundaroo Road footpath. Long lines of trees ended in a grove of Brittle Gums (*Eucalyptus mannifera*). Ahead lay the clear waters of Yerrabi Pond, the northern end of which we circled, crossing Eastern Island to Nellie Hamilton Avenue. A Bengal cat, in harness, was taking its owner for a protracted stroll. A passing child called it an ocelot but its brilliant markings were leopard-like.

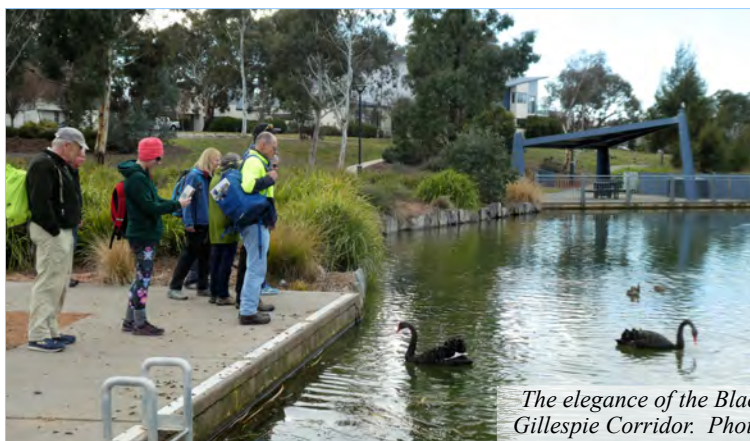
Nellie Hamilton led us to another tree-adorned avenue, Gungahlin Place, and to the terminus in Hibberson Street. The plan was to alight from the tram at Elouera Street and have a fish lunch at *Catch* in Lonsdale Street. But the

latter closed in June so we had salads instead, diagonally opposite (through the rainbow roundabout) at *eighty/twenty*. As is the modern way, the ingredients were thoroughly chopped but the combined flavours worked (for me, anyhow). Even the sun shone for the first time in the day.

We walked back to the car park via Garema Place, again puzzling at all the changes to the city. It is hard not to like the tram. Maybe it will become driverless – it will never make a profit at current staffing levels.

Note: Unnumbered/unsigned Seniors Cards should be replaced at Access Canberra before being used on Canberra Metro.

Brian Slee



The elegance of the Black Swans of the Lyell Gillespie Corridor. Photos by Max Lawrence.



Walking tracks in the Molonglo River Nature Reserve



In conjunction with the development of suburbs in Molonglo, early plans were for the Molonglo River to be dammed at Coppins Crossing and for the creation of a lake behind, I am told, a 17 m high wall. The presence of the threatened Pink-tailed Worm-lizard on land that would have been inundated contributed to abandonment of the idea. The river corridor between Scrivener Dam and its junction with the Murrumbidgee is now being restored as a nature reserve, a huge task considering its weedy and degraded condition. A stylised worm-lizard has become the symbol for the reserve and is depicted on most signage.

Two tracks: Grassland and Woodland

A walking track through the corridor is part of the long-term plan. On NPA's outing on 18 June 2017 (*NPA Bulletin* September 2017, p 25), which took us south from the Arboretum across the Molonglo to Coombs Pond, we could see the potential of such a route. So Peter Anderson-Smith and I were happy to join a walk on the morning of 8 May 2019, as part of Tree Week, along the recently established Grassland and Woodland tracks.

Both tracks begin at a point on Southcott View*, Wright. Grassland Track heads east from there for 0.8 km but appears blocked from further extension until decisions are made about the development of land at the end of Fred Daly Avenue. Woodland Track curls



north-west then east for 1.8 km around a bend in the river and could be extended.

Twenty-six participants gathered at Edgeworth Parade, below Holdens Creek Pond (a kilometre north-west of Coombs Pond), in cold, windy weather; it was straining to rain. Our leader was ecologist Dr Darren Le Roux, senior project manager with ACT Parks, a man of great energy and passion for his work in restoring the Molonglo environment.

Heavy planting to counter erosion

We set out mid-way along Grassland Track, heading west across the pond embankment which has been heavily planted with wattles to counter erosion. Soon we detoured onto a raised walkway leading to a lookout over what was formerly known as Misery Point. The rocky hillock is home to the worm-lizard; extraordinary measures have been employed to enhance its habitat. In the distance, Barrer Hill is even more thoroughly pincushioned with plantings than in 2017 (see *Canberra Times* 20 June 2019, pp 1 and 7 for an interview with Dr Le Roux [misspelled 'La Roux'] about work in that area).

Moving up the embankment to Southcott View, we next came to a Yellow Box tree trunk, a gangly giant hauled to the site from Gungahlin. Detailed signage explains its value as habitat; Darren argues that messiness is a necessary part of a healthy ecosystem in providing refuges for many forms of life. Indeed, logs are being dumped throughout Molonglo River Reserve.

Combatting weeds

Desperate measures are being employed to counter weeds: large surface scrapes of soil, down to 30 cm, together with their seed burden, are being replaced with clean fill. A scrape further down the valley has gained publicity from being shaped like a giant Wallaroo when viewed from above (*Canberra Times* 6 April 2019, Tim the Yowie Man page). Waterways are being restored with erosion control.

Continuing along Woodland Track, we began seeing signs of Aboriginal occupation in scar trees. At the same time, we visited the curated remains of Blundell's Riverview Cottage, overlooking the Molonglo, giving us pause to also reflect on early European settlement. From here one gets long views back to Coombs and Wright; uniform building heights bring to mind the same deadening effect they have had at Kingston Foreshore.



Darren Le Roux explaining a 'dumped' tree trunk as habitat. Photos by Brian Slee.

Significant box-gum grassy woodland

As we continued north, we found the corridor is being squeezed from the west by John Gorton Drive and a planned regional shopping centre. Further north a housing estate will project surprisingly close to the river. Paradoxically, this area contains the most attractive country and significant box-gum grassy woodland, featuring ancient Apple Boxes, Blakely's Red Gums and mighty Yellow Boxes. Superb Parrots, reputedly only ever seen north of the river, have been seduced to cross into this area.

The current terminus of the track, again with detailed signage, is a high point with views to Barrer Hill and the Molonglo. Raptors circled and hovered; kangaroos bounced about. One can only hope that the ugliness created by the deployment of an enormous number of tree guards and stakes is dealt with once the trees and shrubs have reached maturity.

Darren concluded by observing what a paradise for adventurous children is being created in Molonglo. Indeed it is.

Thanks to the ACT Government for organising this interesting excursion.

Brian Slee

* Situated west of Holdens Creek Pond, Southcott View (a crescent) is accessed from Edwin Hicks Way. Neither is shown in the 2019 UBD street directory. To get there from the city, turn right from John Gorton Drive at Opperman Avenue lights. Parking is minimal!

NPA outings program

September – December 2019



Bushwalk grading guide

Distance grading (per day)

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

Terrain grading

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

- Day walks** Carry lunch and snacks, drinks, protective clothing, a first aid kit and any required medication.
- Pack walks** Two or more days. Carry all food and camping requirements. CONTACT LEADER EARLY.
- Car camps** Facilities often limited. Vehicles taken to site can be used for camping. CONTACT LEADER EARLY.
- Work parties** Carry items as for day walks plus work gloves and any tools required. Work party details and location sometimes change, check NPA website, www.npaact.org.au, for any last minute changes.
- Other activities** include ski trips, canoe trips, nature rambles and environment or field guide studies.
- Wednesday walks (WW)** Medium or somewhat harder walks arranged on a joint NPA, BBC (*Brindabella Bushwalking Club*) and CBC (*Canberra Bushwalking Club*) basis for fit and experienced club walkers. Notification and details are only emailed to members registered for WW. Only NPA-hosted WW are shown in this program. For WW email registration, contact the *Outings Convener*, outings@npaact.org.au.
- 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*, (outings@npaact.org.au) is happy to suggest locations suitable for a walk if you do not have something in mind. Feel free to send in suggestions for outings with a suggested date to the *Outings Convener* by email to outings@npaact.org.au

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

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

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

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

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



NPA work party in the snow, Gudgenby Valley. Photo by Brian Slee.

NPA outings program September – December 2019 (page 2 of 4)

8 September Sunday get-together to remember David Large Orroral Valley picnic area

David Large, who died in March, was a conscientious member and supporter of the NPA and other bushwalking clubs. He was a keen bushwalker, walks leader, committee member and friend. All friends and colleagues of David are invited to a remembrance get-together at the Orroral Valley Picnic Area, starting at about 12 noon. Beforehand, at 10:00 am, there will be a short walk to the Orroral Homestead. Come for the walk and get-together or just the get-together. Bring lunch and memories of David.

Organisers: Tim Walsh and Mike Smith
Contact: 0412 179 907

9–11 September work party at Dananbilla

This work party will involve planting and watering-in of trees in the Windermere section of the Reserve. Contact the leader for further information.

Contact: Brian Slee on 6281 0719 or brianslee@iprimus.com.au



Exploring Dananbilla.
Photo by Adrienne Nicholson.

14 September Saturday work party Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group

Meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9:00 am. Car pool to Gudgenby Valley. Repair fence in to Gudgenby Homestead (subject to availability of ranger staff) and associated weed control. Tools provided.

Leader: Doug Brown
Contact: 6247 0239 or kambalda@tpg.com.au

14 September Saturday walk The Pimple

The Pimple is the most westerly peak on the Tidbinbilla Range. To get there we follow the developing footpad from the Lyrebird Trail to Snowy Corner then, time permitting, climb Tidbinbilla Mountain, en route to The Pimple, which is accessible from the ridge about 500 m north-east of the summit. Return to the cars at Mountain Creek via Tidbinbilla

and Johns peaks. The walk involves a mixture of off-track (with some thick scrub), footpad and firetrail. Total climb of about 950 m. Expect to be walking for 7 to 8 hours. Limit of 8. Contact leader, preferably by email, by Thursday 13 September.

Drive: 66 km, \$28 per car + reserve entry fee
Map: Tidbinbilla 1:25,000
Grading: 3 A/D/E
Leader: Philip Gatenby
Contact: philip.gatenby@gmail.com or 0401 415 446



Snowshoe outing. Photo by Brian Slee.

22 September Sunday walk Guthega (snowshoe)

Early start. Drive via Jindabyne to Guthega. Destination will depend on access and conditions. For weather check, departure time and departure point, contact leader by Friday evening, 20 September. Chains may be required.

Drive: 420 km, \$168 per car + Park entry fee.
Map: Perisher Valley and Geehi Dam 1:25,000
Grading: 2 A/B
Leader: Brian Slee
Contact: 6281 0719 or brianslee@iprimus.com.au

20–23 September Car camp Give a Dam Campaign – Yerranderie area, Blue Mountains Joint NPA / CBC Activity

The aim is to support the campaign to prevent the wall of Warragamba Dam being raised, with subsequent damage to the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. Come and see some of the areas that would be affected. Participants are invited to make a donation to the campaign. On Friday morning, drive to Yerranderie in the south-eastern Blue Mountains to camp free for two nights next to the cars at Batsh Camp. Friday pm: Explore this old mining town or ascend Yerranderie Peak. Saturday: Follow the fire trail to Byrnes Gap, ascend Gander Head and explore the Axeheads, with wide-ranging views. Sunday: Drive back to the Mount Armour Fire Trail and ascend basalt-capped Mount Colong, the highest peak in the southern Blue Mountains. Monday: Drive home (about 4.5 hours).

Drive: ~\$200 per car
Maps: Yerranderie and Bindook 1:25,000
Grading: 3/4 C/D/E
Leader: Meg McKone
Contact: frankmckone@optusnet.com.au

25 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 R
Contact: 0437 023 140 or brdr001@bigpond.net.au

28 September Saturday work party Pine Island fence removal

This is a new activity in a reserve familiar to NPA work parties. The task consists of removing fencing from Pine Island Reserve. Please bring gloves – cutters, post puller, etc. will be provided. Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:45 am.

Drive: 25 km, \$10 per car
Leader: Brian Slee
Contact: 6281 0719 or brianslee@iprimus.com.au

5–7 October Pack walk Mount Talaterang

After a long drive with a stop at Ulladulla for lunch, we have a short walk across Little Forest Plateau via Mount Bushwalker to a camp site at the top of Ngaityung Falls. The next day we climb down and then up onto Mount Talaterang with excellent views of Pigeon House Mountain and the Clyde Valley along the way, before returning to camp. Walk out and drive home on the third day. Contact leader by Wednesday 2 October.

Drive: 480 km, \$192 per car
Map: CMW Budawangs
Grading: 1/2/1 A/B/C
Leader: Steven Forst
Contact: 0428 195 236 or steven.forst@inet.net.au

5–24 October 20-day walk Walk the Border ACT

Conservation Council President Rod Griffiths is walking around the 306 km border of the ACT to raise funds for the Conservation Council. Starting from Mulligans Flat, Rod will walk the border in anti-clockwise direction.

You can sign up to join him for a couple of days, a half day or even the whole walk on the Conservation Council's website

<https://conservationcouncil.org.au>

If walking is not your thing you can sponsor the walkers.

NPA outings program September – December 2019 (page 3 of 4)

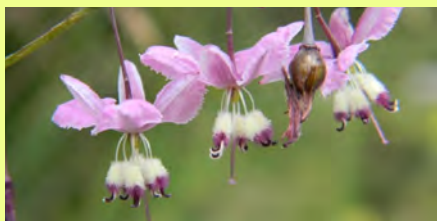
12 October Saturday work party Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group

Meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9:00 am. Car pool to Gudgenby Valley. Weeding and spraying at Frank and Jacks Hut as follow-up to control of large blackberries during the previous summer. Tools provided.

Leader: Doug Brown

Contact: 6247 0239 or

kambalda@tpg.com.au



12 October Spring wildflowers 48th Black Mountain wildflower ramble

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

Time: 9:30 am sharp to 12 noon or later.

Meet: Belconnen Way entry just before Caswell Drive turnoff – watch for balloons.

Please allow time to park and walk to the meeting point.

Contact: friendsofblackmountain@gmail.com

or Cathy 0406 976 751 or Libby 6296 1936

Details will be announced at the September NPA general meeting

Contact Kevin McCue (0405 082 306) if you can help, or wish to attend sessions on the Friday, Saturday or Sunday.

On Saturday afternoon delegates will visit NPA ACT's Art Week at Gudgenby Cottage (see next notice).



18–25 October NPA ACT Art Week at Gudgenby Cottage

Members of NPA ACT are invited to join in for a day, overnight, or several days to explore Gudgenby Valley through painting, photography, drawing, writing or other artistic endeavours. Come out for the day and picnic with inspiration. For further information and accommodation bookings contact the leader early.

Leaders: Adrienne Nicholson and Hazel Rath.
Contact: 6281 6381 or 4845 1021

20 October Sunday walk Kosciuszko National Park (snowshoe)

Destination will depend on snow depth and conditions. Contact leader by Friday evening for weather check, departure point and time, and car arrangements (chains may be required).

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

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

23 October 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

26 October Saturday work party Broom control, Brayshaws to Westermans

This work party will involve the removal of Broom in the area between Brayshaws

and Westermans huts. The location of the Broom plants has been refined over previous years and we will return to the most 'productive' sites. All tools and equipment will be provided, just bring gloves and a GPS. Meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre at 8:30 am.

Drive: 90 km, \$36 per car.

Leader: Brian Slee

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

29 October – 2 November Tuesday to Saturday car camp Three Mile Dam or Long Plain Hut

Camping at Three Mile Dam or Long Plain Hut camp grounds in KNP. Visiting mining relics, huts, subalpine flowers and the frost plains. Come for all or just a couple of nights. Enjoy a friendly warm camp fire. Contact leader one week beforehand for final details.

Maps: Denison and Tantangara 1:25,000

Leader: Isobel

Contact: 0429 798 887 or icrawford@iinet.net.au

30 October Wednesday walk Joint NPA / BBC / CBC activity

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

Leader: Barrie R

Contact: 0437 023 140 or brdr001@bigpond.net.au

2 November Saturday walk Upper Orroral Valley loop

Meet at Kambah Village Shops for an 8:30 am departure. A walk from the Orroral Valley Tracking Station picnic area up the southern side of the valley to Sawpit Creek then across the Orroral River to a high point for lunch before returning down the northern side of the river.

Drive: 82 km, \$32 per car.

Map: Corin Dam 1:25,000

Grading: 3 A/B

Leader: Steven Forst

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

9 November Saturday work party Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group

Meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9:00 am. Car pool to Gudgenby Valley. Weeding and spraying of hawthorns at Middle Creek minigorge. Tools provided.

Leader: Doug Brown

Contact: 6247 0239 or kambalda@tpg.com.au

NPAC meeting 18–20 October

See June *Bulletin* page 12.

NPA ACT members are invited to help with the logistics (catering and planning) of the NPAC meeting and to attend sessions.

**10 November Sunday walk
Bungonia Gorge**

Meet on Antill Street just down from the roundabout on the Federal Highway at 8:00 am. A walk on track across Mount Ayre (great views) and then steeply down to the Shoalhaven River and Bungonia Creek. Then following the creek upstream through the spectacular Bungonia Gorge which involves some rock scrambling. Climb (400 m) out via the steep 'Efflux' route.

Drive: 220 km, \$88 per car.

Map: Caoura 1:25,000

Grading: 2 A/E

Leader: Mike S

Contact: 0412 179 907

**17 November Sunday walk
Wanniassa Hills**

Meet 9:30 am at the ACT Parks and Conservation Athllon Depot (heading south on Athllon Drive, take first turn left after Beasley Street – UBD map 78, H15).

From the meeting place, we will walk south west on Farrer Ridge and cross under Erindale Drive through to Wanniassa Hills Nature Reserve. From here we follow the track to Mount Wanniassa (809 m) and then turn south through open forest to Macarthur Hill for lunch. Returning north under Long Gully Road into Isaacs and then west back to Farrer. Some steep climbs, great views. Afternoon tea at Continental Bakery, Mawson. About a 10 km walk.

Map: Canberra street directory;

Tuggeranong 1:25,000

Grading: 1 A/B

Leader: Brian Slee

Contact: 6281 0719 (h) or



*Bulbine lilies on Farrer Ridge.
Photo by Adrienne Nicholson.*

brianslee@iprimus.com.au

**23 November Saturday work party
Briar control around Max and Berts Hut**

This work party will be our fifth to Max and Berts Hut. We have always found plenty of briars in the area but this year the visit will be before the plants set seed to see if we can interrupt the breeding cycle. Max and Berts Hut is in a remote location on the Booth Range above the

Naas River about 10 km south of Caloola Farm. Access to a point below the hut will be by vehicle and the last 1 km (horizontal) and 200 m (vertical) will be on foot. The site is a delightful location and deserves our attention by removing the scattered briars.

Meet at Kambah Village at 8:00am.

Drive: 88 km, \$36 per car.

Leader: Brian Slee

Contact: 6281 0719 (h) or

brianslee@iprimus.com.au

**27 November 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



Barrer Hill, view from Molonglo Ponds walking track. Photo by Brian Slee.

**1 December Sunday morning walk
Molonglo ponds and tracks**

Meet 8:00 am at Stromlo Depot (heading west on Cotter Road, turn right at the slip lane immediately after Streeton Drive – UBD map 67, G6). Walk around North Weston ponds and follow the Molonglo west to Coombs Pond. Continue along the Molonglo corridor, picking up Grassland Track to Holdens Creek Pond. Connect to Woodland Track and continue to where it ends and perhaps beyond. Return similar way, with variations. About 9 km. Brunch at Sakeena's, Cooleman Court. Walk will proceed only if the forecast temperature is below 30°C.

Map: Canberra street directory

Grading: 1 A/B

Leader: Brian Slee

Contact: 6281 0719 (h) or

brianslee@iprimus.com.au

**1–4 December Pack walk
Mount Kelly area**

We walk from the Yankee Hat Track car park, initially on track then beside

Middle Creek and up its main southern tributary which rises in Bogong Gap, camping in a clearing below the gap. Climb Mount Burbidge from the gap then continue towards Mount Kelly, staying the next night on the headwaters of Sams Creek. Climb Mount Kelly and spend the third night further down Sams Creek. Return to the cars via the saddle south of Mount Gudgenby. Most of the walk is off track or on overgrown track. Extensive climbs, rock scrambling and some thick scrub. Contact leader by Friday 29 November, preferably by email. Limit 8.

Drive: 120 km, \$48 per car

Map: Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000 and

Yaouk 1:25,000

Grading: 2 A/B/D/E

Leader: Philip Gatenby

Contact: philip.gatenby@gmail.com or

0401 415 446

8 December Sunday

**NPA Christmas party
at Gudgenby Cottage**

from 11:30 am.

Some drinks, nibbles and cake will be provided.

Bring your own lunch and something to share.

If possible, bring a chair.

If you need a lift out to the cottage, get in touch with a committee member (see inside back cover for contact details).

**14 December Saturday work party
and Christmas party
Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group**

Meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9:00 am for work party. Car pool to Gudgenby Valley. Weeding and spraying in the vicinity of Gudgenby Cottage and Homestead. Tools will be provided.

The work party will be followed by the **GBRG Christmas party** at the cottage.

Bring something to share for lunch.

Leader: Doug Brown

Contact: 6247 0239 or

kambalda@tpg.com.au

Bushwalk reports

Mount Budawang

Date: Sunday, 19 May 2019.

Participants: Brian Slee (leader), Mike Bremers, Michaela Popham, Margaret Power, Terrylea Reynolds, Barrie Ridgway, Mike Smith.

Weather: Cool, early mist, later sunny, light breeze.

Scheduling a walk the day after a federal election was poor timing. Actually, the NPA program was finalised before the election was dumped on us. The blues soon dissipated, however, and we had a good outing.

Mount Budawang was the destination on the first NPA walk I led in 1999 and it has been repeated on average every 5 years since, the last in 2014 (*NPA Bulletin*, June 2014, p 17). It is a straightforward route, up an old logging track, returning via a fire trail, 14.5 km altogether with a main climb of 440 m.

We departed Kingston station at 8 am with the two Mikes driving and made our way past Mongarlowe to the junction of Budawang and Mount Budawang roads where the parking area is less chaotic than it was in 2014. Walking the first 2.5 km to the logging track is optional but soft morning light on



Bush bashing back to the fire trail.

Photo by Mike Bremers.

country lanes made for a pleasant beginning. We had a break before starting the climb.

Nature is reclaiming the track's surrounds, with good displays of banksias (mainly *B. spinulosa*) and epacrids. Medium-sized xanthorrhoea and tall, willowy, native grasses fill in

and form the understorey to a variety of lofty eucalypts. The steep final climb over scree ends at Mount Budawang Road, which is then followed to the summit (1,138 m).

We have never had a perfect view of the distinctive peaks of Budawang/Morton National Parks on this walk; on this occasion cloud was wafting in from the west, particularly over Currockbilly. While this was not great for photography, it provided a nice cinematic backdrop to lunch.

Mike B thought a bush bash should preface our return journey so after we strolled a few hundred metres west of the summit, he led us down a scrubby shortcut to the fire trail. A New Holland Honeyeater hovered. As always, a feature of the subsequent descent was the tree ferns lining the fire trail, healthy and flourishing, amid magnificent forest trees.

Afternoon tea was at Braidwood Bakery and we were back at Kingston at sunset.

Brian Slee

Back Perisher and Mount Perisher

Date: Saturday, 20 July 2019.

Participants: Brian Slee (leader), Peter Anderson-Smith, Margaret Power, Barry Reville.

Weather: Sunny; thin high cloud; cold and windy to very windy.

Since 1987 the Skitube train has tunnelled its way for 8.5 km from Bullocks Flat through the ranges to Perisher Valley and then (change of line) to Blue Cow. NPA wildflower rambles were occasionally conducted using the service before summer operations ceased. I have used it for NPA snowshoeing only once, opportunistically, in 2010 (*NPA Bulletin*, December 2010, p 12). The current \$60 (\$50 concession) fare is pricey but the Skitube can be convenient for reducing driving and avoiding icy roads.

This walk was scheduled for 14 July but a blizzard caused it to be postponed. The forecast was still for strong winds. In the event, we encountered moderate winds at Blue Calf but past Back Perisher we were cold-blasted while crossing the saddle to Mount Perisher. It was enervating, so the ultimate distance

was reduced to 7 km by deleting the climb to Mount Wheatley.

We had departed Calwell at 6:30 am in Peter's Forester and drove in fog to Cooma. The volume of traffic suggested it would be slow through Jindabyne but there was no delay, even though the Barry Way lights were not operating. We were at Bullocks Flat at 8:50 am. Skitube was crowded but ran smoothly and we were on solid snow at Blue Cow station at 9:30.

The clear sky boosted our mood. The Main Range was magnificently blanketed. 'Mmm', murmured glorious leader, enviously, when Barry debuted in new Tubbs for his first snowshoe outing. Heading south on ridges, we were soon on untracked snow but at one ski crossing we encountered an excellent snow statue of Blinky Bill hidden among trees. Winds were building to 50+ km per hour.

Morning tea was at 10:30 on Back Perisher (2,014 m). The mast and nearby

snow gums were encrusted in ice; surface snow was turning to crunchy glass. As mentioned, it was an effort to get to the base of Mount Perisher (where my map blew away) but relatively easy to climb. Peter found a somewhat sheltered spot for early lunch on the

(continued on page 20)



Blinky Bill in the trees with Margaret.

Photo by Brian Slee.

Back Perisher and Mount Perisher (continued)



eastern side. A child clad in brilliant hues charged up from the busy chairlift, determined to get to the summit.

At 12:15 pm we were descending south-east, moving beyond the resort boundary to be among the colourful Snow Gums. Lower down the snow had some delightful softness as Kosciuszko Road came into view. We met the road 500 m short of Mount Wheatley turn off and followed it to Perisher Skitube station. Back at the car at 2:30.

For a change we stopped at Cooma Café on the return trip, mainly to purchase baklava. Back at Calwell at 5:15 pm. The Skitube provides elevated access to the centre of the snowfields. Given good weather, the addition of Mount Blue Cow or Mount Wheatley to the route taken would provide a superb outing. One for the future.

Brian Slee

*The Main Range from Back Perisher.
Photo by Brian Slee.*

Round Mountain (via Nimmo Hill)

Date: Sunday, 16 June 2019.

Participants: Brian Slee (leader), Diane Cross, Barry Reville, Max Smith.

Weather: Cool; early fog, later sunny; light breeze.

Round Mountain (1,755 m) is a prominent peak near Jagungal. But 25 km south-east of it, also in Kosciuszko National Park, is another Round Mountain (1,570 m) near Gungarlin River. It is less well known perhaps because it offers only glimpses of itself from Island Bend Fire Trail, via which it is usually approached. However, when observed from further north, out on Snowy Plain, it has a distinctive conical summit.

When programming this walk I had never climbed the mountain, so on 22 May I did a recce with three others. We parked on the fire trail at the park boundary and followed ridges south-east and south to the summit, returning to the fire trail on a ridge arcing west and north-west. It was through magnificent open forests but 8 km was too far. The year's shortest day was looming and we needed a quicker route.

We departed Calwell at 7:00 am (sun rising) in Max's Outback and despite the ski season, traffic was light. Fog lifted at Cooma and snow on Toolong Range greeted us as we crossed Rocky Plain. From Nimmo Hill (wallabies galore) we descended the fire trail to the park boundary gate but parked 200 m further down the hill.

At 9:40 am we set out on a faded vehicle track (elev. 1,300 m) up an open valley until we connected to the recce route at the boundary fence. Here we climbed south to a creek crossing and up to a grassy clearing at 1,500 m for morning tea and sweeping views over Snowy Plain to the Great Divide. Then it was only a short climb in beautiful forest to the rocky summit and the well-preserved SMA0103 pyramid trig.

All being well, the ridge leading directly from the trig down to CSIRO Rabbiter's Hut would be faster than the recce. And it was. Initially it was steep and slow. Having reached a gentler grade, it then became scrubby with wattle and fallen trees. However, the terrain levelled and with regular GPS checks from Barry and Max, we made good progress. Gang Gangs creaked. The scenic terminal hump deposited us on the fire trail, within sight of the hut, at 12:40 pm. Our 'inside' route was only 5 km.

The former rabbit research laboratory is a plain structure, carefully restored and set among tall

eucalypts of great character. A detailed hut history is on display in folders – take a bow Graham Scully. Chairs were available for us to sit outside for lunch. What a gorgeous place.

On the recce Max had mentioned an abandoned gold dredge on Snowy Plain. At 1:15 pm we descended to the massive steel platform on which balances a perforated metal barrel. It sits in a pond atop rotting wooden pylons – surreal¹. We followed a pretty creek back to the car, arriving 2 pm, having added 2 km to our day.

Afternoon tea was at an old favourite, Cooma Café – its baklava more delicious than ever. We were back at Calwell at 5 pm (sun setting, spectacularly). Thanks Diane for choosing to walk with NPA. Join us again soon.

Brian Slee

¹ According to the NSW Heritage Register, it dates from 1904 and operated for only a short time as the claim that gold was present in the area was fraudulent.



Left. Lunch stop at the CSIRO hut.

Right. Relics of a gold dredge.

Photos by Brian Slee.



The 'Wednesday walks'

Every Wednesday, medium/hard bushwalks are on the relevant programs for members of the National Parks Association, Canberra Bushwalking Club and Brindabella Bushwalking Club. Details of each walk are sent to those on the Wednesday walks email list a few days ahead of each walk. Each club provides a leader in turn. The NPA leads the walk on the fourth Wednesday in each month and also the fifth, should there be five Wednesdays in the month. Last July saw the NPA leading two: two superb mountain days in one week!

24 July 2019: Philip Gatenby led a walk to the aptly named Orca Rock.

Fifteen cheerful bushwalkers gathered at the Kambah Village shops for car pooling and an 8:00 am departure for the Rendezvous Creek car park in Namadgi National Park. It was a stunning winter's day, cold, but sunny.

We started off along the good track from the car park, but when the track crossed Rendezvous Creek we kept walking up the eastern side of the creek through grassland, tussocks and occasional patches of open forest. Rendezvous Creek Valley looking lovely; its ochre grasslands contrasting with the high blue ridge of its western flank.

For those of you who have visited the Rendezvous rock art, you may have noticed a prominent finger of rock pointing to the sky, high up on the north side of the ridge on the opposite side of the valley: Orca Rock, so named by Linda Groom. This particular ridge leads upwards, south-east to SH. 1403. We left the creek at about south-west of SH 1403, just after a distinctive eastwards loop of the creek, and commenced our climb. It was steep, a bit rocky and scrubby, although the scrub was not too bad. Despite the cloudless sky and warmth of the sun, we were now in the shade. It was cold, with a sneaky breeze every now and again. Morning tea, however, was had in the sun on a



Orca Rock above Rendezvous Creek Valley. Photo by Barrie Ridgway.

pleasant granite outcrop. We came out on the ridge between Orca Rock and SH 1403. Here we turned right, but before reaching SH 1403 stopped at a wonderful granite tor for lunch. Here our party spread out just a little, some opting for level tops of huge boulders, others preferring to have lunch on the highest point just above. The breeze had gone, the sun was warm, the view was superb, and we were happy and relaxed.

After lunch we wandered down to Orca Rock. This is the best and most spectacular approach, showing clearly why it was so named. Everyone was most impressed. Quite a bit of time was spent here, and then Philip started the descent, taking us down the northern side of the tor. On the way down several people spent time scrambling around the tops of the boulders, while Terrylea and I ventured through a crack and found a large network of tunnels and caves rivalling those of Temple of Doom. On regrouping we went around to the south-west side of the bottom of the tor to admire the huge cliffs above us. From there it was a long steep, scrubby descent to the creek. On the way down I caused much mirth from Terrylea in front of me and Jan behind me, by falling forwards, face down, and facing down the steep slope, unable to get up. Did they help? Not on your life.

We crossed the creek and spent some time lounging on the grass in the sun before the long, easy walk down the valley – a beautiful afternoon. A total of 13 km and 592 m climb.

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The highest point for the day at the lunch time tor. Photo by Barrie Ridgway.





Tidbinbilla Mountain on the left, Tidbinbilla Peak in the middle and Johns Peak on the right. Photo by Barrie Ridgway.

31 July 2019: I led a walk to the summit of Tidbinbilla Mountain and to Johns Peak.

Four of us met at 7:30 am at the Kambah Village shops and were joined by the fifth member of the party at Mountain Creek car park where it was -3°C , cold and frosty, but one of those superlative Canberra winter days: cloudless, crystal-clear air and not a breath of wind. Lyrebirds were calling.

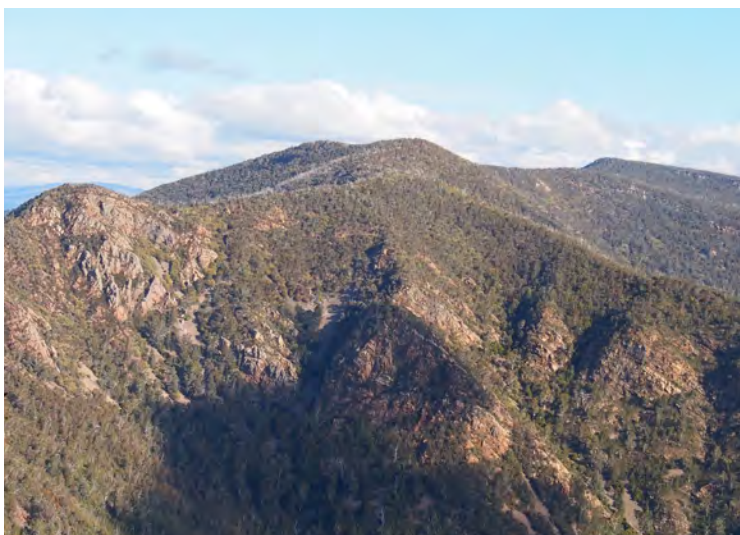
While there is a footpad nearly all the way, there are places where it disappears in rough terrain and scrub, and one needs good route-finding skills. The pad up to the Snowy Corner cairn is continuously steep, rocky and often loose. One rises about 550 m in 2.45 km. We climbed steadily up to that cairn, virtually without any stops, other than the obligatory one at the two benches which demand use. Besides, the view there over the Tidbinbilla Valley and beyond is superb. From there, it never seems all that far to the cairn. Without pausing at the cairn, we turned

right, along the footpad through thick pea scrub to the lovely grassy clearing about where Snowy Corner is marked on the map. Here we sat in the sun for a leisurely morning tea, the grey logs glinting in a covering of frost, and the tall cliffs guarding the southern side of the summit looming over us. After tea we continued to climb, first through a forest of regrowth saplings where the pad is sometimes hard to follow and where it was icy, then up through the grasslands of the final slopes. Rather than going straight up, we took a less steep, scrub-free route, off-track, to the north-east side before heading up through the rocks and then across to the top. There we lingered in the incredible stillness with 360° views: the rest of our route, Canberra, the Tinderries, the Cotter Valley, the Brindabellas. A breath-taking view which no-one was in a hurry to leave.

From the top we followed the last part of our upwards route down, then through lovely open woodland to the saddle to the northeast, then up onto the ridge and across to Tidbinbilla Peak for lunch. Parts of this walk can be tricky, what with scrub, rocky terrain and the footpad disappearing, but there are some great views along the way. After a long lunch, we headed off for Johns Peak. On the approach to Johns Peak we left the track and instead went up the delightful, short rock ridge, right on the edge of the cliffs. After a pause on the top, it was the scramble down and follow the footpad. Just before the last knoll before the communications tower, we contoured off to the right through more lush vegetation, but easy walking, and then dropped straight down through very open forest to the Camels Hump track and the walk back to the cars.

The total distance was 12.6 km and total climb 947 m.

Barrie Ridgway



View from the Camels Hump: Johns Peak on the left, Tidbinbilla Peak in the centre and Tidbinbilla Mountain on the right. Photo by Barrie Ridgway.

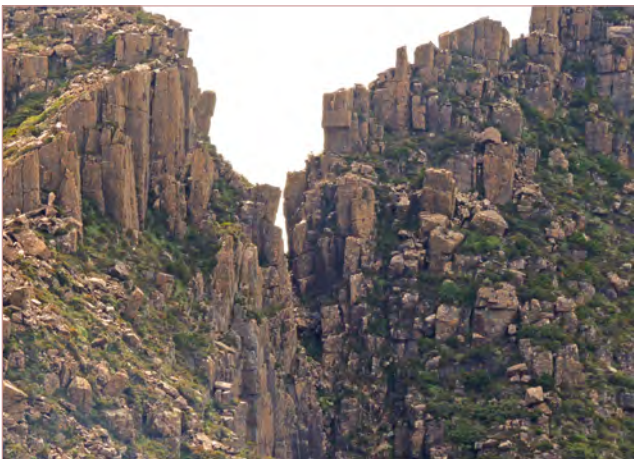
'Ordeal by fire' at Mount Anne

On several previous trips to Tasmania, Jan and I had hoped to climb Mount Anne and walk the circuit but on each occasion inclement weather, forecast and actual, curtailed our plans. Last January a trip to Tasmania with our daughter and eldest son to walk the trendy Three Capes Track presented another opportunity to fulfill this ambition. The weather forecast for the 4 days we'd set aside was almost perfect.

The Mount Anne Circuit, as described in Chapman's Walks in South-west Tasmania is a 3 to 4 day walk east of Lake Pedder with a number of side trips, including the climb to the summit. At 31 km it's not a long walk but the terrain, especially on the first 2 days, is very slow going in places.

Mount Anne and most close-by peaks are capped with dolerite,¹ an igneous rock which as it cools forms massive polygon-shaped columns. As the rock erodes, the exposed columns are likened to massive organ pipes. Dolerite covers about two-thirds of the surface of Tasmania. Mount Anne is on the western edge of this cap so the mountains further to the west, such as the Western Arthurs, are mostly composed of quartzite and look very different. Mount Anne is part of a crescent-shaped range forming a cirque around Lake Judd, the source of the Anne River.

Our son Andrew dropped Jan, our daughter Claire and me at Condominium Creek on the Scotts Peak Road and said he'd see us in 4 days at Red Tape Creek about 8 km south of our drop-off point. The morning's track was flat for about 100 m then climbed unrelentingly and steeply on the side of Mount Eliza to High Camp Hut. With the temperature about 30 degrees it was hard work. At the hut we had lunch. March flies were abundant but didn't seem to bite as much as those we often encounter in the Snowies. In the book at the hut we read



The Notch.
Photo by Philip Gatenby.



Mount Anne from Shelf Camp. Photo by Philip Gatenby.

entries from Pat and Eric Pickering from February 2008. They'd been holed-up in there for several days in a raging blizzard, sufficient to give Eric frostbite.² What a contrast to our experience.

Between the hut and the top of Mount Eliza is a steep boulder field, a tiring climb particularly in hot weather with a full pack. But we were rewarded when we reached the summit with excellent views of Lake Pedder, the Western Arthurs, Federation Peak and Precipitous Bluff away to the south. Beyond the summit the track crosses a plateau of cushion plants and pandanus then another boulder field around the side of Eve Peak to a saddle below Mount Anne from where it drops to Shelf Camp for our first night. We put our tents up on a rock slab with a wonderful view of Mount Anne. It had been a very hot walk in so we had a dip in a tarn below the tents before dinner.

Most people we'd spoken to on the track hadn't made it to the top of Mount Anne so with an early start we set off with day packs in some trepidation. I carried a rope. It wasn't needed but would have been in damp or windy weather. Quite a bit of scrambling was required and there were a couple of exposed bits. An hour from Shelf Camp we were on the top of the mountain with views in every direction. The

distinctive Frenchmans Cap could be seen to the north-west, Mount Field to the north-east and, somewhat ominously as it turned out, the remnants of the Gell River fire (which lightning had ignited 3 weeks previously) smouldering in the haze to the north. South of us were similar views to those from Mount Eliza with the added bonus of being able to look down on the other nearby peaks including Eve Peak and Mounts Lot and Sarah Jane, as well as the needle-like Lots Wife.

Back at Shelf Camp we collected our packs and headed for the infamous Notch, a narrow steep-sided break in the ridge, which we again approached with some apprehension. There was a track of sorts, more a marked route with an occasional footpad. Shelf Camp, it seems, is as far as most people go on the Mount Anne Circuit. Again my rope was at the ready but not needed. On the climb out of the Notch we had to pass packs once, then climbed to the ridge, scrambling in a couple of places, and on to the summit of Mount Lot, where there are a 'lot' of spectacular views. It was quite windy so we lunched just below the high point. Our way off Mount Lot was down the very rugged (and, as it turned out, appropriately named) Lightning Ridge to Judds Charm, one of the beautiful Lonely Tarns, where we found a couple of tent sites.

By late afternoon, and contrary to the forecast a few days ago, cloud was building up in the west. Persistent thunder and lightning prompted an early dinner and as rain started we headed to the tents. About 30 seconds later the

(continued on page 24)

'Ordeal by fire' at Mount Anne *(continued)*

rain stopped. The storm had passed. Venturing out again a plume of smoke was visible about 15 km to the east from a fire just ignited by lightning on the side of the Jubilee Range. There was more white stuff towards Mount Eliza but we couldn't decide if it was smoke or cloud (perhaps it was both). Night fell, we retired again, but once more I was soon out of the tent because of the smell of smoke. By now the Jubilee Range fire was a swirling orange glow. We didn't seem in imminent danger particularly as it wasn't windy so it was back to the tent yet again. I managed a few hours sleep.

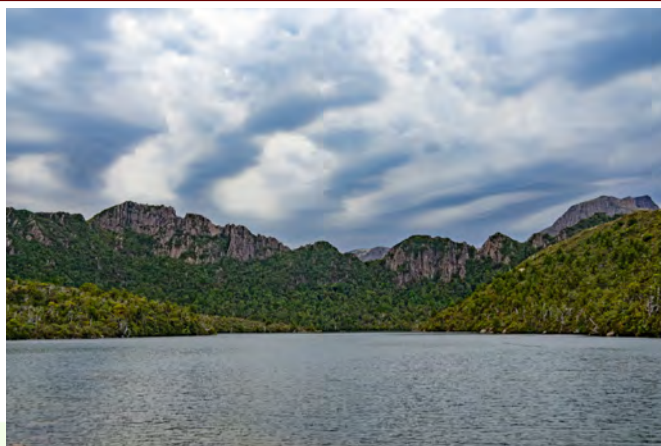
The morning was calm, smoky and misty but we had no idea of where the fires were so messaged Andrew on Claire's satellite communicator to see what he could find out. Lot and Lots Wife were partially obscured on our short side trip to Lake Picone. Back to Judds Charm to pack up, then away by 10:20 am, smoke and anxiety levels increasing. The more height we gained the better the view and the stronger the mobile signal. By midday we arrived at a rocky plateau dotted with small tarns. From here the circuit plunges westwards towards the Anne River and imposing Lake Judd. To the north a footpad climbs to the summit of the boulder strewn Mount Sarah Jane. We hid our large packs near the start of the footpad, lunched on the summit peering into thickening smoke and phoned the fire service. Thus we found out that 70 new fires were burning in south-west Tasmania due to lightning strikes the night before (later we found out that thousands of dry lightning strikes had been recorded the previous night, mostly in a band across south-west Tasmania and another band across the south-east). There was a fire on Mount Eliza (our way in) and one near Anne Gorge (the way out). The noise of helicopters, which we'd heard at times throughout

the morning, became more apparent. One was flying at low altitude over the circuit, clearly looking for walkers. We expected the summit of Sarah Jane to be checked but it wasn't and despite our frantic waves and jumping up and down we weren't noticed. A pity we'd hidden our packs so well.

We returned to our packs but before heading into the bush and down to Lake Judd we decided to phone the Parks Service. While waiting for an answer our son Andrew called to say he'd spoken to them and was told that everyone from the Mount Anne Circuit and nearby Western Arthurs was being evacuated. Jan then got onto the Parks Service who confirmed this so we gave them our location and they told us to put out any brightly coloured things we had. About 15 minutes later a helicopter arrived, picked us up and flew us to Mount Field. On the way another previously unrecorded fire was checked out and logged.

The Parks Service handled our evacuation, and that of other walkers in the south-west, in an exemplary manner. It highlighted the importance of log books. When mass evacuations are required an accurate log book is the easiest way for the Service to know how many people to locate and evacuate. Moreover, we were lucky that we had a satellite communicator and sporadic mobile phone coverage. Without this our experience would have much more stressful.

While we still haven't completed the entire Mount Anne Circuit we were lucky to be able to experience the best



*Lighting Ridge and the approaching storm.
Photo by Claire Gatenby.*

part, missing only a side trip to Lots Wife and the long downhill and relatively uninteresting walk out. In the 3 days we walked only 25 km (and climbed about 2,300 m) but it was pretty tough from a combination of terrain and hot weather. The walk lived up to expectations and should certainly be on the 'to do' list for a Tasmanian trip providing you don't mind scrambling and a bit of exposure.

Philip Gatenby

¹ Described in 1807 by French scientist and mineralogist, Rene Just Huay, whose name lives on in Cape Huay on the Tasman Peninsula, which of course is made of dolerite.

² Eric wrote an account of their experience. See Pickering 2008, A Tale of Woe, IT, May 2008.

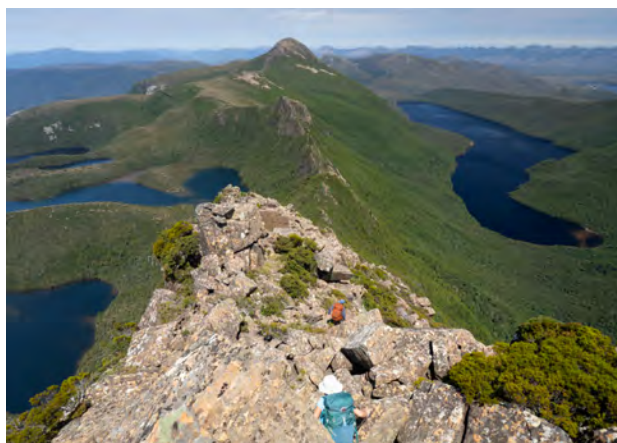
Note: at the time of writing the Mount Anne Circuit was still closed as a result of the January bushfires.

Below: The views disappeared!

Left: Lonely Tarns, Lightning Ridge and Lake Judd.

Right: Smoky top of Mount Sarah Jane.

Photos by Claire Gatenby.



Conserving nature in Brandenburg, FRG



National parks and nature reserves are different in central Europe: people live there, farm there, thousands of them, and have done so for about the last 10,000 years since the ice sheet covering Germany melted and retreated north. We recently travelled in Brandenburg surrounding Berlin, one of the larger states in Germany and naturally took an interest in observing how they care for their environment compared with how we do in the ACT.

Brandenburg is about 12 times larger than the ACT or an eighth the size of Victoria and boasts one biosphere reserve, one national park and 11 nature parks, nearly a third the area of the state in total.

The areas now under conservation used to house large military training bases, open-cut coal mines or inaccessible political border zones. The now disused mines have been flooded, adding to the numerous glacial lakes that formed after the ice receded and forming an extensive lakes district.

Nature conservation is the highest priority for park managers but sustainable regional development and ecotourism are close behind. Hundreds of kilometres of hiking, bicycle and canoe routes have been created and mapped, along with camping grounds and access points for public transport.

Among the challenges was the rehabilitation of a former sewerage outfall where sewage from Berlin was pumped to open surface pits outside the city from about 1830 to prevent rising cholera deaths and other major health problems in the city. Civil engineer James Hobrecht with



the esteemed pathologist Rudolf Virchow masterminded the project. With increasing population and industrialisation, toxic heavy metals were also deposited in these pits. The sewage circulated through the soil and the thus 'cleaned' water was drained and pumped into nearby streams.

This form of processing was replaced by modern treatment plants after World War II and work began on rehabilitating the pits, covering them with sand, then mechanically mixing the sand and sewage residue and replanting

them with trees and bushes to absorb the nutrients and build up a new plant cover. UV should have killed most of the pathogens. Sheep, cattle and horses were introduced, and other animals, wild pigs, deer, beavers and birds among them, migrated into the areas. Testing of the soils, trees and animals continues to the present time.

We cycled to a museum dedicated to explaining the project. It is on the outskirts of a small village in the middle of the works which place must have been very unpleasant when pumping was in progress. I remember in the 1950s living in Griffith [ACT] when the Weston Creek sewerage works was operational and a westerly wind was blowing – phew!

The rehabilitation now seems to be working well, after it was realised that the drainage pipes could be re-functioned as irrigation pipes using some of the clean effluent from the nearby treatment plant.

We were in Brandenburg in mid-summer, Europe hit by a heat wave, and walked and cycled around lakes and through mainly conifer forests where the temperature in the shade was about 10°C below that in the open air. Small-bird numbers seemed down on past years but the sunny weather brought out masses of flowers and many butterflies of all colours and sizes.

Kevin McCue



*Information panels and actual rehabilitation areas.
Photos by Kevin McCue.*

Pardalote paradise

Spotted Pardalotes (*Pardalotus punctatus*) are reasonably common around Canberra and their distinctive calls can often be heard in our gardens. With their flashy golden breasts and tiny stature, they are a welcome break from Indian Mynas (introduced feral pests) and the very aggressive Noisy Miners, which, though native, are dramatically expanding their range. These aggressively territorial birds drive out all smaller birds.

Over the past few years, any stockpile of garden earth I've had has been occupied by Spotted Pardalotes from mid to late winter; they claim it for several months. So, last year I made them their own permanent mound! Using old bricks, I made a circular structure about 1 m across and filled it with earth packed down gently. I left the front bare and poked in a couple of twigs to act as potential perches.

Within a few days, a pair of pardalotes was very busily burrowing into the mound (they will burrow up to 1.5 m if they have room). Their nesting chamber is at the end of the tunnel; they incubate 3–4 eggs for 19 days and the nestlings spend another 21 days in the nest. Both birds burrow and care for the young.

I also share my Hills Hoist with them; this is close to their mound. Frequently, while I'm hanging out washing, a pardalote will appear on the wire with some morsel in its beak. After pivoting around for a couple of minutes, it will suddenly dash into its burrow.



'Organic gardening with biodiversity benefits'. Photo by Sally Stephens.

In early December last year I returned from a three-week holiday and saw no activity at the mound. Had they reared young successfully? I hoped so. As I thought they had finished for the season, I planted three Golden Nugget seedlings on the top of the mound. So I was surprised and delighted when I saw pardalotes once again using the mound. In mid January they were taking food morsels in there again. Then a second clutch was on the way. I trained the

pumpkin vines away from the burrow entrance; this is organic gardening with biodiversity benefits!

Even though Spotted Pardalotes have nested in my garden for several years, I have yet to determine how successful they are. Early in the season, when they are attracting mates, they are very obvious with their constant calling. When they are burrowing or feeding young in the nest, they are also visible as they come and go, though they can be very swift. But then they seem to disappear – are they just being discreet with babies around; are they just less concentrated after breeding? I'd be interested to hear of the experience of others.

Anyone can build a pardalote mound in the garden. Give it a go!

Sally Stephens

Another version of this article has been published in the Winter 2019 Canberra Organic Growers Society's magazine, Canberra Organic, Vol. 27, Issue 103, p. 14.

Adult Spotted Pardalote and emerging chick at their nesting burrow in suburban Aranda. Photo by Kevin McCue.



PARKWATCH

Public parks, NOT private playgrounds

Flinders Chase National Park on Kangaroo Island has been protected for 100 years. Yes it's the park's centenary year this year, not, you would think, the time to wreck the joint. Along its almost 100 km of coast are only two human-built structures: Cape Borda and Cape du Couedic lighthouses.

The 5-day walking Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail opened in 2016 with community consultation and agreement. The trail has four campsites and the original idea was that harder eco-friendly structures would be constructed nearby for softer walkers. But there's a problem. Now, the SA Department for [sic] Environment and Water and the Australian Walking Company are proposing two private luxury accommodation villages kilometres away from the trail on wild coastal sites with staggeringly beautiful views. That's **impact** at those fragile sites, **impact** in the extra trail length they walk to them, **impact** from the service roads. And Sandy Creek hikers will arrive at their remote coastal destination to be overlooked by buildings on the headland.

Each village:

- has 10 substantial buildings (one an 18 by 9 metre communal dining/lounge), plus water tanks, lookouts and connecting paths
- is located up to 3 km from the Wilderness Trail
- is conspicuously placed on coastal sites overlooking wild, remote beaches
- requires an additional 3 km of service road to be bulldozed through native vegetation.

The island community is campaigning to bring this development back to the original concept with support from many organisations such as the Royal Society of South Australia, KI Natural Resources Management Board, and Friends of Parks groups across South Australia.

We at *Chuffed Org* made our message clear to the developers and the department but we need them to act and change their plans. We are establishing a case for the development to be challenged in the Supreme Court for:

- not being legal under the SA *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*
- not according with the management plan for Flinders Chase National Park and the Kelly Hill Conservation Park adopted in September 1993 and amended 2017
- proceeding without appropriate community consultation

- proceeding without a legitimate environmental assessment of the potential impacts on nationally threatened species and referral under the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Many wild places are in the sights of developers. They could be coming to a park near you soon. Our case could set a precedent for other communities fighting similar development proposals in their neighbourhood. We need \$75,000 to fight the development in its proposed form all the way to court:

- \$3,000 for campaign costs and promotional material
- \$22,000 for preliminary legal fees (at a reduced hourly rate from our lawyers) for research and establishing the case
- \$50,000 for a Senior Counsel to fight the case in the Supreme Court.

If we can't establish a case, then we will not proceed to court, and will refund any money above \$25,000. The biggest reward for your support is saving a wild and natural area from the blight of inappropriate development.

<https://chuffed.org/project/public-parks-not-private-playgrounds>

National parks funding decreases amid growing threats to the environment

Former rangers, traditional owners and conservationists are warning Australia's national parks are reaching an environmental tipping point, with funding cuts at both a state and federal level leaving them in poor condition.

Kosciuszko National Park is Ross McKinney's backyard. The former ranger first fell in love with Kosciuszko in 1970. Moving from Canada he landed a job as a search-and-rescue ranger, called up for his expertise in the snow. It was the start of a long career spanning more than four decades with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and later serving as the federal Department of Environment's assistant director. But Mr McKinney holds grave fears for the future of the park and more than 500 national parks like it across the country.

'If it's not addressed urgently, we will sit here with a degrading set of circumstances, and the task will become greater by the year. I'm hoping it won't take more extinctions to wake people up', he said.

Those fears come down to one key problem: a lack of funding for national parks.

'When I was working with parks, I was extremely fortunate; looking back, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service was graded as one of the top five in the world. Now it doesn't even rate', Mr McKinney said. 'It's not because the people aren't dedicated, it's not because they aren't hardworking – they're not being resourced and they're not being allowed to do it.'

In the 2016–17 budget, \$121 million was cut from NSW national parks and, according to the NSW Public Service Association, that resulted in about 100 ranger jobs being lost. In the latest NSW budget, \$80 million is being cut from the department that oversees parks. In a statement to the ABC, the NSW Government said those cuts would come through more efficient work practices in the department. 'The NSW Government has a strong record on environment funding recently committing \$632.2 million for national parks, walking trails, public parklands and gardens to improve liveability and sustainability and increase tourism.'

Mr McKinney is sceptical and believes the impact of the cuts could be brutal. 'There has been restructure after restructure, and so many people have left', he said. 'No nature conservation agency can manage properly when you're seeing those sort of cuts.'

With resources to parks decreasing, Mr McKinney warns threats are on the rise, with climate change, pests, weeds and growing visitation all posing challenges.

www.abc.net.au/news/2019-07-06

Climate change: emissions for export

The Paris Agreement on climate change, of 2015, has been adopted by 196 countries. It aims to limit global warming to 2 degrees C by reducing the emission of greenhouse gases. Researchers at University College London (McGlade and Elkins, 2015) calculated that in order to limit warming to 2 degrees, a third of the world's oil reserves, half the gas reserves and over 80 per cent of current coal reserves must remain unused during the next 40 years. Meanwhile, in Australia, coal barons and corporations were jockeying for position to begin mining the Galilee Basin – one of the world's largest untouched coal deposits. The magnitude of coal mining proposed for the Galilee Basin of central Queensland is not widely appreciated. Mining on the scale planned would have an impact on global greenhouse

(continued on page 28)

PARKWATCH (continued)

gas emissions larger than that of the whole of the rest of the Australian economy.

In 2011, the Mackay Conservation Group collated information about coal mining applications lodged with government authorities. They found proposals for nine new mega-mines in the Galilee Basin, of which five would be larger than any coal mine then operating in Australia. If these mines proceed as planned, they could produce up to 330 million tonnes per year of coal for export. When burned in power stations overseas, this quantity of coal would release 705 million tonnes of carbon dioxide per year. (For comparison, the whole of Australia emitted 533 million tonnes of greenhouse gases in the year 2018.) These findings were made public in 2012. At the same time a comprehensive plan to oppose the mining proposals, titled *'Stopping the Australian Coal Export Boom'*, by Greenpeace, was leaked to the press. Thus began what has now become the largest environmental campaign in Australian history.

Two comprehensively researched and very readable books explain, and underline, the global significance of the Stop Adani struggle. *Adani and the War over Coal* is by Quentin Beresford, professor of politics at Edith Cowan University, Perth. *The Coal Truth* is by David Ritter, CEO of Greenpeace Australia Pacific. In his introduction Beresford states: 'this book unpacks the war over coal and the pivotal role of Adani's Carmichael mine in this process. In Australia, there are few bigger political fights to take on ... what oil is to Texas and tar sands is to Canada, coal is to Australia.'

Both Beresford and Ritter structure their books chronologically. Beresford outlines reasons for the growing global demand for coal in the period 2000–2012, and the response to this in Australia. He describes the rise of Gautam Adani, India's coal billionaire, and recounts how multinational mining corporations operating in Australia shored up political support for the coal industry as concern grew about the effects of climate change. The second half of Beresford's book considers the campaigns opposing coal mining in the Galilee Basin. Traditional owners and environmental organisations are using the courts. The growing divestment movement focuses on influencing Australian and overseas banks, and other financial institutions.

Both Beresford and Ritter draw similar conclusions from the wealth of

information they present. Beresford observes that the campaign against Adani has united the separate environment and climate change movements in Australia into one. Many of the 36 organisations that have joined the campaign are using social media to recruit mass membership. They are mounting effective campaigns to target corporate interests. Stop Adani is now rated as the biggest environmental campaign ever in Australia. Both Ritter and Beresford agree that collective actions of ordinary people are necessary to speed the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Pressuring Australia's big four banks towards stronger commitments on climate change and away from funding Adani is helping achieve this goal. Both Ritter's and Beresford's books are clarion calls to action. Both are optimistic in asserting that the world is still there to be won. However, to prevent decisions being made with far-reaching and disastrous consequences, it's necessary that reasonable people take action against them. The British science-fiction writer H.G. Wells once said that life was a race between education and disaster! Specifically, we need decisive government action to prevent the extraction of thermal coal from the Galilee Basin, lest Adani's latest, scaled-down proposal becomes a Trojan Horse for future expansion.

Nature NSW, Winter 2019

The natural wonders of Wombat State Forest

One of the reasons we love Wombat State Forest [ca 50 km west of Melbourne] and want to see it better protected as a national park is that we have spent a lot of time there enjoying the forest and conducting citizen science.

Between 2012 and 2016 more than 200 volunteers contributed over 2,500 hours to monitor wildlife in Wombat Forest as part of a citizen science program, the *Caught on Camera* project. This is part of a ten-year project and VNPA has just released a report of the findings at the five-year halfway mark. The first 5 years of this inspiring citizen science effort amassed highly valuable data on 13 native mammal species and 15 native birds. We also recorded nine introduced mammal species and one introduced bird species.

Black Wallabies were the most commonly detected species, photographed on all 44 research sites, and recorded on more days than any other species. The next most common

mammals were Common Wombat (36 sites), Agile Antechinus (31), introduced Red Fox (28), Mountain Brushtail Possum (26), Eastern Grey Kangaroo (22), and Bush Rat (18). The two small species in the group, Antechinus and Bush Rat, were recorded on more days at each site than the larger species, reflecting their small home ranges and consequently higher density.

An exciting finding was of Brush-tailed Phascogales, a threatened species listed under Victoria's *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*. Phascogales were caught on camera at three sites, demonstrating this is an area of important habitat for them and showing that they make use of widely distributed less threatened habitats like Foothill Forests.

The most commonly detected bird species was the Superb Fairy-wren (20 sites) followed by the Grey Shrike-thrush (18). Camera trap monitoring focuses on animals that come to the ground. Therefore no gliders or bats were recorded by the cameras which are located at ground level. However, Wombat Forestcare has observed greater gliders on many sites. Foxes were common across sites and generally were photographed only a few times in a sequence. They seem to move quickly through an area and may have been aware of the cameras.

Moving forward we will continue this fantastic community effort and continue monitoring the wildlife in the Wombat State Forest. Partnerships that have been forged have enabled the success of this citizen science project, and we hope to continue the effort and build on these for more years.

Park Watch (VNPA),
No. 277 (June 2019)

Murujuga WA World Heritage nomination

Murujuga, the traditional Aboriginal name for the Dampier Archipelago and surrounds, is being nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List, to have its unique cultural, spiritual and archaeological values internationally recognised at the highest level.

Murujuga is home to one of the largest, densest and most diverse collections of rock art, or petroglyphs, in the world. It is estimated to contain more than one million petroglyphs, which provide an archaeological record of traditional use of the area over thousands of years. The rock art has

(continued on next page)

PARKWATCH (continued)

deep meaning for the traditional owners, providing a link to stories, customs and knowledge of their land and connecting them to the events and people of the past and their beliefs today. The Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation is working in partnership with the Western Australian Government to prepare the World Heritage nomination, in collaboration with the Australian Government and stakeholders.

WA Parks and Wildlife Service News,
19 May 2019 www.dpaw.wa.gov.au

Citizen science wrap up, Sydney area

The Wild Wild Inner West (WWIW) project aims to engage young adults (18–35 years old), a group which is under-represented in council environmental activities, with the local urban environment. Despite the lack of remnant vegetation, Sydney's inner west is home to a rich variety of native

wildlife like bees, Powerful Owls and microbats that are reclaiming the urban landscape. After a very full year of programming, the project has now finished. The WWIW provided urban ecology workshops and nature education walks to inform young adults about urban nature in their local area and what they can do to improve this habitat.

Nature NSW, Winter 2019

Compiled by Hazel Rath

Kosciuszko's 75th

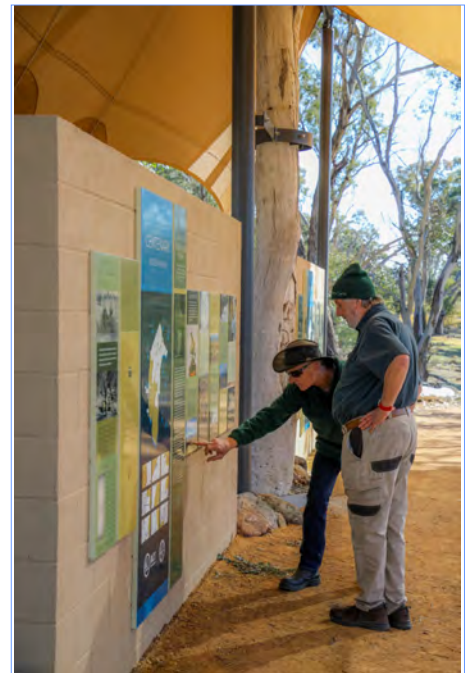
In his compelling article 'Celebrating Kosciuszko's 75th', released on 18 April, the day before the park's birthday, Graeme Warboys describes the establishment of the park in 1944 by 'visionary NSW premier Sir William McKell' with the help of others, including conservationist Myles Dunphy, Soil Conservation Service Commissioner Sam Clayton and James Muir, a school teacher from

Cooma. McKell was shocked by the damage done to alpine areas by grazing. Bipartisan support for the park and the protection of Alpine areas lasted 74 years until the 'pure vandalism' wrought by the NSW Berejiklian Government's 2018 Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act.

Kosciuszko's 75th according to Warboys 'should have been a celebration of catchment recovery and the benefits of professional conservation management by generations of park managers. Instead, high mountain wetlands, the headwaters of the Murray, Murrumbidgee and Snowy Rivers and native Australian species habitats were all being impacted by feral horses'.

The full article can be viewed at <https://johnmenadue.com/graeme-warboys-celebrating-kosciuskos-75th-anniversary/>

Namadgi Visitor Centre Open Day and World Ranger Day



Sunday 28 July acknowledging World Ranger Day.

Scenes from the Open Day at the Namadgi Visitor Centre. A fine sunny day, with display/information booths set up by a variety of outdoor and conservation groups. Short, informative walks in the precinct. Rangers, and a Gang Gang cockatoo, to talk with.

Photos by Sabine Friedrich.



NPA notices



National Parks Association Calendar

	September	October	November	December
Public holidays	—	Mon 7	—	Wed 25 - Thurs 26
General meetings	Thurs 19	Thurs 17	Thurs 21	—
Committee meetings	Tues 3	Tues 1	Tues 5	Tues 3
NPA Christmas party ¹				Sun 8
Gudgeny Bush Regeneration ²	Sat 14	Sat 12	Sat 9	Sat 14
Art Week at Gudgenby Cottage		Fri 18 - Fri 25		

Further details: **1** See notice page 18.
2 GBRG. Meet at Namadgi Visitor Centre 9:00 am. Christmas Party notice below.

The NPA welcomes

the following new members
 Monica McDonald
 Geoff Barker (rejoining)
 Diane Cross
 Kimberley Schiphof.
 We look forward to seeing you at NPA activities.

This *Bulletin* was prepared by:

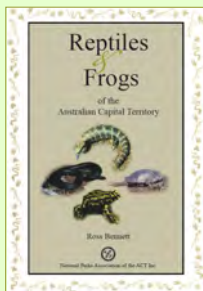
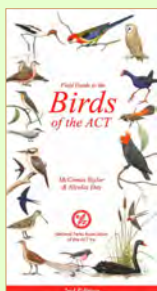
Editors, Kevin McCue and Sonja Lenz
 Copyeditor, Ed Highley
 Presentation, Adrienne Nicholson.

Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group Christmas Party 14 December at Gudgenby Cottage

[For work party, meet at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa at 9:00 am.]

The scheduled work party will be followed at 12:30 by the
GBRG Christmas party at Gudgenby Cottage.
 Bring something to share for lunch.

Leader: Doug Brown, Contact: 6247 0239 or kambalda@tpg.com.au.



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



Contributions for the *NPA Bulletin*

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

Deadline for the December 2019 issue: 31 October 2019.



Red spot

Subscriptions for 2019–20 are now overdue. If there is a red spot on your *Bulletin* address sheet and in your *Bulletin*, or you have received a reminder notice and not yet paid, the association's records show your current subscription has not been received. Please take the time to make amendments to the renewal form if the information NPA holds confidentially in its database needs correcting. Please send the whole form back with your payment details.

Thank you.
 Sonja Lenz, Secretary

Cover photographs

Front cover

Main photo. *Lots Wife* (article page 23).

Photo by Claire Gatenby.

Insets. Left. *Little Eagle* (article page 7).

Photo by Don Fletcher.

Centre. *Bruce Boreham, returning officer at the NPA's Annual General Meeting* (report page 8).

Photo by Sabine Friedrich.

Right. *Flowering epacrid in the Budawangs* (page 19). Photo by Brian Slee.

Back cover

Top. *Tiny lichens, no more than 0.5 cm tall, on the south-east side of Black Mountain, Canberra.*

Photo by Barrie Ridgway.

Bottom. *The frost melts into tiny drops of water, inverted mirrors, on small mosses, Black Mountain.*

Photo by Barrie Ridgway.

General Meetings

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



Thursday 19 September

Managing erosion in our parks

Kevin McCue

NPA member

As governments foist more and more responsibilities onto volunteers, we need both experience and experiment to respond to the challenge. A example of such a task is managing erosion in Canberra nature parks. Members of the Friends of Aranda Bushland have been experimenting for more than a decade in drought and average rainfall years with mixed results, as you will see if you come to the meeting.

Thursday 17 October

Challenges for State NPAs

Representatives of the state NPAs will be in Canberra for their 3-day National Parks Australia council (NPAC) meeting to discuss challenges affecting them (and us). This year the meeting will be hosted by NPA ACT, at the Namadgi Visitor Centre.

The evening before the NPAC Annual Meeting at NVC Canberra, several of the delegates will give short talks about issues of immediate importance in their States.

(See page 17, outings).

Thursday 21 November

National national parks

A spokesperson from Parks Australia (Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy) will summarise the opportunities and threats facing Australia's *six national* national parks: Kakadu, Booderee, Christmas Island, Norfolk Island, Pulu Keeling and Uluru-Kata Tjuta, and the marine national parks that they administer.

There are no general meetings in December or January.

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.

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www.facebook.com/NationalParksAssociationOfTheAct

Membership subscription rates (1 July to 30 June)

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

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

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

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

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and follow us at www.facebook.com/NationalParksAssociationOfTheAct