

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS 2002 - 2003

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Deadline for Newsletter: March 11th 2003

February Meeting Program 26/2/2003

Janet and Colin Hockings will present a slide program on Tasmania's famous Overland Track. The Overland Track is a challenging walking track from Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair, taking, on average, 6 days to complete, as it winds its way through spectacular terrain.

Pre Outing Report for 23rd February.

Firstly the outing we were to have to Rocky River is unavailable because we don't have permission to visit the property. John and Sue are unable to lead an alternative, so I have decided in consultation with Helen Hartman, to have an Historical Tour of the communities south of Tenterfield.

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and travel to the Railway Station at Tenterfield for smoko. Hot water will be available and there will be a charge of \$2.00 entry to the Museum.

Helen will be our guide. The Southern Communities Historical Group has been formed to preserve the history of Bungalla, Bluff Rock and Bolivia, both oral and physical. A member of this group will accompany us to these three centres and we will have lunch at Bolivia Hall where there is a small museum display.

After lunch those of us who wish, will return to Tenterfield to visit the Henry Parkes School of Arts. The entry fee to this excellent display is \$5.00, and is well worth a look. There are other things to look at in and around Tenterfield, such as the cork oak and Ghost Gully for those members who prefer.

We will meet for afternoon tea at the park with the band rotunda. The program is subject to change depending on how long we take at each of our stops.

Kris Carnell

Outing To Glenalla Woolshed Friday 7th February

Meet at Weeroona Park at 11.00am. We will be travelling to a reserve near Glenalla Woolshed on Goldfields/Pikedale Road, several kilometres south of the Cameronian Gate. This is an interesting area with abundant birdlife, a series of billabongs (with water at present) and plenty of shade trees. As it is still hot, good idea to bring chairs and a table, if possible, and there will be a gas BBQ. Phone John on 46813227

Outing Report – Bottle Rock

Extra outing Sunday 17th November 2002. Attendance 23

Leaders: Errol & Annette Walker

The scheduled outing to “Bottle Rock” on October 20th 2002 was cancelled due to the disastrous bushfires which savaged the area. Such was the interest in visiting the area an additional outing was organised for November.

After a little rain the weather was perfect – a cool day with south-easterly winds and a vivid blue sky with just the right amount of cloud for good pictures.

23 persons attended the outing with a good showing of guests. Eight 4WDs left Weeroona Park at 7.30am. The 7.30am start was a lot earlier than we were used to but I didn’t hear any grumbles. It was great to be alive and out and about on such a lovely Granite Belt morning.

Three senior members of the club were encouraged into commencing the walk with the possibility of turning back when we got to the rock. It was downhill or flat all the way from there, so I am pleased to report that we all made it.

A special commendation to Millie, Jean and Rob for making the effort Your company on our walks is always valued. Millie saw that every flowering shrub was recorded and Jean and Rob brought up the rear guard photographing the many aspects of nature recovering from severe fire.

We followed fire trails which had recently been upgraded for the fire effort. It was obvious where fire breaks had done their job. It was also obvious that many animals would not have survived the blaze.

Walking to the balancing rock was easy as the normally thick bracken had been burnt, exposing the granite formations as we have never seen them before. Good views of West Bald Rock and Middle Rock were enjoyed during lunch and then it was on to South Bald Rock before the long flat walk back to the vehicles. While taking one of our many rest stops we heard the sound of falling timber. We had been warned that some of the burnt timber was unstable and to be on our guard.

We really enjoyed afternoon tea with the vehicles at 3.15pm, then a slow drive home with (in our case) plenty of photo stops to capture the newly exposed rock formations on film. Finally, apologies from the Walkers for forgetting the November meeting. Such is the stress of moving house.

Errol & Annette Walker

The Ironbark Beetle or Cast Iron Beetle (Observed on the Mount Norman Through Walk.)

It is described , “As unusual in shape with almost parallel sides, very roughly sculptured and resembling a miniature Maori carving”. Its extreme hardness gives rise to its vernacular names. It is so hard it defies the entomological pin, which just bends under the stress.

Why is it so armoured? Its pro-thorax has deep channels for reception of its antennae. The head is deeply sunk into the prothorax and eyes are almost entirely hidden. The hind legs are unusually short. Has it been troubled by a hidden dark past or is it just provision for its protection in its very secret lifestyle?

Its rugged exterior leaves proportionately, little room for its interior! It cannot fly, and it dwells beneath the bark of Eucalyptus trees. The known, recorded habitat is North-East N.S.W. However, it has been known from the Stanthorpe district for a long time – at least since 1920.

Its habitat must make it extremely vulnerable to the very hot bush fires in times like these. It has no means of fast escape. Fires like these, destroy all ground cover and bark of trees which is its normal dwelling place. One wonders how long before lost populations are replaced?

Jean Harslett

POSSUM MAGIC

Over the last few years, ringtail possums (*Pseudocheirus laniginosus*) have frequented our garden. Their large spherical nests of leaves are easily seen in the trees surrounding our house, and at night these small possums are noisy travellers along the “gutter highway” of our roof.

The ringtails have taken a liking to the tender new leaves of a large apricot tree that grows outside our son Peter’s bedroom. The only foliage left is bunches of leaves low to the ground and out of reach of hungry possums.

We have observed these beautiful little marsupials with great interest and last year were delighted to see that mum ringtail had twins. While again observing their nocturnal habits by torch light the other evening, Colin and I were amazed to see mother ringtail not with twins but half grown and very healthy TRIPLETS! She appeared unperturbed by her somewhat substantial load even though one of the babies was dangling its tail over her face. As she moved from one branch to another, with the help of her prehensile tail, she was able to maintain her balance and grace as well as any well-trained gymnast.

How common are triplets in the ringtail possum world? What an amazing effort for this little possum to successfully raise three babies, considering the very dry year we’ve had to date. Maybe apricot leaves are a very nutritious supply of food!

Janet Hockings

Flowers seen on Errol’s 16k walk to Bottle Rock

Listed by Millie Marsden

Orange Fungi	Kunzea		
Olearia sp (Daisy)	Xanthorrhoea australia	Persoonia cornifolia (in seed)	Banksia
Goodenia hederaca	Boronia ambillis	Pultenea	Dianella
Hibbertia	Ziera	Conospermum retsum	Glycine
Pimelea collina	Bachelor Buttons	Trigger Plant	Goodenia bellidalofolia
Leucopogon muticus	Paterosonia	Acacia betchei	Hakea sp (3)
Prosanthera	Callistemon sieberi	Mistletoe	Kunzea bracteolata

Leptospermum arachnoides	Solanum	Rice Flower	Leptospermum phyllioides
Choretum candolleo	Dampiera purpurea	Lomandra	Petrophilla

Senna odorata

After the bush fires in 1994 we found a number of plants of Senna odorata (formerly Cassia odorata) blooming along the creek banks at *Orana*. After about five years all the plants had disappeared, as had the ones in my garden which I grew from seed. There are already new plants along the creek after the fires in October, one of which already has a flower. Interestingly, two of the plants which I gave to my son-in-law in 1995, are still growing and are currently in bloom. To germinate the seed I pour boiling water over it and let it sit till it is cool.

Margaret Carnell

New Photocopier

Our application for a grant to purchase a new photocopier was successful and this magazine has been printed on it. Thank you very much to Liz for her persistence in making the application.

Pre Outing Report – Wooli Camp 21 – 23 March

We will be camping at Wooli Bushland Holiday Park, right on the river and close to the ocean. We are ourselves staying a week, i.e. 21 – 27 March, so if you can't get away at the weekend, please come after.

There is lots to do, the river is surrounded by National park, Central Yuragir N.P. protects about 25km of splendid coastline between the Sandon River and Wooli, Minnie Waters and Diggers Camp close by, interesting State Forest drives to Brooms Head and good beach and headland walks. You can catch your breakfast from the bank or we will have our boat there, so bring your fishing gear if you are so inclined.

There are cabins, on site vans, powered or non powered sites (Ph 020664907519). For campers they have a good amenities block with laundry and freezer. The township has a bowls club (good Chinese restaurant), hotel, pizza shop, butcher, seafood co-op and a couple of general stores.

In the past we have experienced good flora and a splendid array of birds. Contact Sue or John 46813227 (away 18 February – 11 March). Brochure at February meeting.

John & Sue Allison

Outing to Third Crossing 19th January

Our 2003 outings commenced on a scorching day with a visit to the Severn River west of Ballandean. Ten hardy souls met at the Ballandean school and drove to our parking area, then we walked for about fifteen minutes to a beautiful hole on the Severn River. Although the river is quite low, this particular hole does not have irrigation water taken from it, so there was ample for swimming. The swimmers cooled themselves off before lunch making good use of the tyre that Rob had carried from the cars. In spots the water was more than two metres deep and there was a sandy bottom on a lot of the hole so it was very pleasant.

There were not many birds or wildflowers to be seen because of the weather but obviously there would be many more birds either early or late in the day. We had our lunch in the shade of the trees beside the water and then took some photos of the immediate area. The swimmers decided not to swim after lunch so after a long lunch we meandered back to the cars and then to home. Many thanks to Liz for arranging the venue and to Rob for being leader on the day.

Flora & Fauna - Outing to Third Crossing

Compiled by Kris Carnell

Fauna: Gerengone (call), Cuckoo Shrike, White Naped Honeyeater, Superb Blue Wren, Grey Fantail, Silver Eye, Butcher Bird, Firetail Finch, water dragon

Flora: Callistemon, Glycine, Whalenbergia, Angophera, Bursaria, Bulbine Lily, Verbena weed, river weed (Small yellow flower), two daisies.

There are no minutes in this magazine as we have changed the publishing date to give details of the first Friday outing of the year. The minutes will be read at the meeting.