

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, 19 July 2018

Uniting Church Hall, Scrivener St, O'Connor

1. Welcome, apologies

Vice President Quentin Moran welcomed members and visitors to the meeting. He paid respect to the traditional custodians of the land and their elders past and present. Esther Gallant, Rod Griffiths, Christine & Michael Goonrey, Judy & Dave Kelly, Sabine Friedrich and Bev Hammond sent apologies.

2. Confirmation of minutes of the 21 June meeting and matters arising

- A link to the minutes of the general meeting of 21 June 2018 had been sent to members before the meeting and printed copies were available at the entrance to the hall. There were no amendments from the floor and the minutes were provisionally confirmed by the meeting.

3. Recent NPA activities

- Rod attended a meeting with Parks and Conservation Service about the development of a work-party agreement, but as yet there is no draft agreement.
- Several members attended the Woodland Forum held by PCS.
- Printed copies of the end-of-financial-year papers were available at the entrance to the hall. The treasurer commented that a new treasurer will take over his job in due course.

4. Other business

- The Gudgenby Bushland Regeneration Group's 20th anniversary celebrations are being held at Gudgenby Cottage on Saturday 21 July from 12.30. All past and present group members as well as past and present rangers who worked with the group are invited.
- Di Thompson drew members' attention to Brett McNamara's article on the 'Gudgenby Bushies' in the recent Chronicle.
- Quentin reminded members that the AGM is on 16 August and asked that members consider standing for positions on the committee as there are plenty of vacancies.
- He also asked members to volunteer for general meeting set-up and supper duties.
- Annette Smith informed members of recent activities by the horse lobby groups in NSW (introduction of feral horses at Barrington Tops) and Victoria.
- Guest Dr Rosemary Purdie gave a short overview of the plans for the Black Mountain Symposium on 24-25 August 2018. 2020 is the 50th anniversary of the declaration of Black Mountain Nature Reserve and papers will present today's knowledge, and the main values as well as the main conservation issues for the future. The theme is: the last 50 years inform the next 50 years. The symposium will be held at the CSIRO Discovery Centre, and there will be walks on Black Mountain on the Saturday. Rosemary encouraged members to register on-line, and left some posters and hard-copy registration forms on the table at the back of the hall.

5. Presentation

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Since the *Field Guide to the Butterflies of the ACT* was published by NPA in December 2016, NPA member Dr Suzi Bond and her colleagues have had another productive season of butterfly observations. In her talk titled ***Butterflies of Namadgi National Park*** with lots of beautiful photos Suzi concentrated on Namadgi species, their habitats and conservation issues.

Suzi is involved in a butterfly research project that has been going on for several years and the aim is to collect long-term data across 140 survey sites in the ACT in a range of habitats. Namadgi is a special place for butterflies. 59 of the 87 ACT butterfly species occur in Namadgi National Park, most of them are breeding migrants or residents, the rest are vagrants. The various habitats and some of the butterfly species are:

- *Subalpine and montane woodland* like Mount Gingera where one can observe the Australian Painted Lady on native daisies; Macleay's Swallowtail on Mountain Pepper; and an alpine subspecies of the Rayed Blue.
- *Swamps and bogs* such as along the Yerrabi Track where the Montane Heath-blue is found on *Epacris* and the Bright-eyed Brown and Alpine Sedge-skipper prefer *Carex*.
- *Montane forest* as in the Rendezvous Creek area where the Orange Ochre prefers *Lomandra* and the Common Brown and Solander's Brown are found on *Poa* grasses.
- *Wet forest* as near Warks Road where the Yellow Jewel and Silky Hairstreak can be observed.
- *Grassland* like the Boboyan Valley with Common Grass-blue, Meadow Argus and the Two-brand Grass-skipper.

Larval food plants, nectar sources for the adults, hilltops and summits for courtship and mating and, for some species, the attendant ant species are very important for butterflies.

Threats to butterflies in Namadgi are: loss of remnant habitats; loss of plant diversity; loss of suitable attendant ants and ant habitats; introduced plants and animals; climate change; summit degradation and loss of long-unburnt habitat. As in other areas, fire is important to maintain butterfly habitats, but the 2003 fires had a major impact on Namadgi butterflies – some sites and species are still recovering. The Silky Hairstreak for instance was only rediscovered after 14 years in 2017 as it requires long-unburnt habitat, a Stink Ant colony and mature eucalypts with wattles close by. It probably recolonised Namadgi from NSW. Banks' Brown was also rediscovered in the ACT in 2017 and is now known from only two ACT locations. It is a wet-forest specialist and very sensitive to heat and aridity as well as being dependent on soft *Poa* grasses. There have been no records of the Montane Grass-skipper since 2003.

Important conservation issues are: maintaining remnant habitat, plant diversity and attendant ant colonies; effective management of feral plants and animals; management of summits and prescribed burns sensitive to butterfly needs. Namadgi is very important as a large continuous reserve with high-country ecosystems and butterfly communities and significant summits and ridges as well as being a buffer in times of drought because of its higher rainfall.

The meeting closed at 9.10 and the Vice President invited all to enjoy the supper provided.

Chair:

Date: