



NATIONAL PARKS
ASSOCIATION
OF THE A.C.T.
BULLETIN

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NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE A.C.T. INC."A NATIONAL PARK FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL"

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Monthly Meeting: 3rd Tuesday of the month.

The last months of the year are always hectic but it is hoped that members will still have time to attend the monthly meetings and outings which are listed on pages 7 and 8. A special date to keep in mind is Saturday 21st December, when the association will hold a Christmas barbecue and dance at Tharwa. Details of this activity will be given in the next bulletin.

Speaking of Christmas, remember to purchase some of your Christmas cards from this association. No new cards have been printed this year but there are cards of previous years productions, available from Mrs Hammond- Cost 5 cards for 40 cents.

Have You Renewed Your Membership? If not, this is the last bulletin you will receive as postal regulations will not allow the association to use bulk postage rates for unfinancial members. Send your subscription (\$3 single; \$5 family) to The Treasurer, Box 457, P.O., Canberra City.

Publications Received

1. Youth Hostels Association of N.S.W. Newsletter.
2. Circular of the Illawarra Natural History Society.
3. N.P.A. News. (Queensland N.P.A. production.)
4. The National Parks Journal (N.S.W. N.P.A. production)
5. The Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletter
(July)
6. Viewpoint Series No.3 "The Cape Barren Goose".
7. National Fitness Council of South Australia 28th
Annual Report.

- 8. Wildlife Service (National Parks & Wildlife Service of N.S.W.) Vol.3, No.10 production.
- 9. The Warrumbungle National Park Booklet.(50¢)

This last booklet is a "must" if you intend visiting the Warrumbungle National Park. Written by Allen Fox of the National Park and Wildlife Service, it contains maps, articles and accommodation information. The articles cover the following subjects: (a) Geology & volcanic action of the past; (b) plant communities; (c) birds of the park (a very detailed list); (d) mammals and other animals; (e) the history of the area before and after discovery by John Oxley.

The second half of the booklet describes the various well-graded trails throughout the park, mentioning plants, animals and geology to be seen. The booklet is liberally sprinkled with excellent photographs and sketches.

An Appeal

Articles written by association members will be received with great pleasure by the editor of the Bulletin. Write about your thoughts on Conservation, places that you have visited that are worthy of becoming reserves, areas visited that are already reserves, or nature observations. Send all contributions to the Editor, 11 Dyson St., Lyneham.

Nature Reserves to Visit.

The David Stead Wildlife Refuge No.163 "Wirrimbirra", a Wildlife Refuge and the property of the National Trust of Australia (N.S.W.) is situated along the Hume Highway near Bargo, New South Wales. It consists of freehold land and Crown leases comprising in all nearly 200 acres. A small part of this, some 12 acres is being developed as a wildflower garden where flowering plants from all states mingle with the native plants.

"The Rock" Nature Reserve No.24 is of 900 acres and is one of a series of "islands" which are

surrounded by highly developed agricultural lands. The area (access: The Rock - Lockhart Rd. which is S-W of Wagga) contains some interesting relict plants which are similiar in some aspects to the flora of the Flinders Range in South Australia. These are "infertile" stumps of ancient ranges and remain as the last refuge for the once widespread fauna.

Environmental Ethics.

Written by the American writer Aldo Leopold and taken from Vo.3 No.10 "Wildlife Service".
do we not already sing our love for and obligations to the land of the free and the home of the brave? Yes, but just what and whom do we love? Certainly not the soil, which we are sending helter-skelter down river. Certainly not the rivers, which we assume have no function except to turn turbines, float barges, and carry off sewage. Certainly not the plants, of which we exterminate whole communities without batting an eye. Certainly not the animals, of which we have already extirpated many of the largest and most beautiful species. A land ethic of course cannot prevent the alteration, management, and use of these "resources", but it does affirm their right to continued existence, and, at least in spots, their continued existence in a natural state.

The disquieting thing in the modern picture is the trophy-hunter who never grows up, in whom the capacity for isolation, perception and husbandry is undeveloped, or perhaps lost....

To enjoy he must possess, invade, appropriate. Hence the wilderness that he cannot personally see has no value to him. Hence the universal assumption that an unused hinterland is rendering no service to society. To those devoid of imagination, a blank place on the map is a useless waste; to others, the most valuable part. It would appear, in short, that the rudimentary grades of outdoor recreation consume their resource base; the higher grades, at least to a degree create their own satisfactions with little or no attrition of land or life....Recreational

development is a job not of building roads into lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind.

Wetland Conservation

by B.R. Grant, Hon. Secretary, Nature Conservation Council of N.S.W. taken from "The National Parks Journal" (Sept. 1968).

A crisis has arisen in the problem of wetland reservations in New South Wales. Conservationists have been aware that, as reclamation works and extension of agriculture proceeded, the number of swamps available for waterfowl have been steadily decreasing. The normal pattern of waterfowl movements in Eastern Australia is that breeding takes place on the extensive inland billabongs following the periodic but irregular flooding which takes place in the infant rivers. Following breeding, the populations disperse. During the dry spells which are a normal feature of the climate of inland Australia, the populations of waterfowl move to the coast where the rainfall is more reliable and gather on the large swamps which occur behind the coastal rivers. The Northern Rivers, particularly the Richmond and Clarence Rivers, are the main stronghold during inland droughts.

These rivers have a regular cycle of flooding which is responsible for filling the extensive swamps which lie behind these banks. Since the areas of their basins have been developed for agriculture, the intensity and frequency of these floods appear to have increased. One of the causes of this is the clearing of extensive areas of steep forest land in the headwaters. This has resulted in more rapid run off after the heavy summer rains which are the normal pattern in the area. Poor agricultural management in the area has accelerated the soil erosion process and resulted in a decrease in the rivers' channel capacity and increased the damage done by what would be otherwise minor floods. Because of the heavy monetary damage done by these floods, local authorities and the State Government with aid from the Federal Government

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This very common plant often varies much in size. It has leaves which are green on the upper side but covered with a dense web of white hairs beneath. The flower stems are often short and the petal like rays of the flowerhead are bright yellow. The common name is "Bear's Ear" but there are two species which are difficult to separate unless ripe seeds can be found. In Cymbonotus lawsonianus which may be found in gardens as well as in the bush, the seeds are curved, smooth on the back and sides but with a ridge down the centre of the sunken inner face. In C. preissianus, found near Canberra and in the mountains, the seeds are straight and wrinkled and lack a ridge on the inner face. The first species is found in south-east Australia from Queensland to Victoria, the second is widespread and extends from eastern Australia to Western Australia. So use a hand lens and find these for yourself. N.T.B.

have been engaged in a programme of flood mitigation by draining the swamps and fitting flood gates to the drains. The swamp lands can then be filled rapidly as the river rises, thus lowering the height of the main channel and preventing the river breaking its banks in any of the agricultural or commercial areas. As the river height falls so the flood gates are opened and the former swamps empty to become dry pans again till the next flood. Thus by this programme the formerly extensive swamplands have been reduced, until now only three really large ones remain - Tuckian on the Richmond River, Swan Creek on the Clarence, and further south, Hexham Swamps on the lower Hunter. If these swamps go, so will the waterfowl and the result will be that the populations already under stress during dry spells will be decimated. This could lead to extinction of species at least locally and will certainly destroy any hope of a duck management programme in the State.

The Nature Conservation Council has written to the Premier and others, asking that current plans to drain these swamps be halted and that an interdepartmental committee be set up to examine the situation. The Council believes that if proper planning is followed, the fitting of flood gates to some of the swamps could benefit waterfowl conservation, since minor floods which would not otherwise fill the swamps would enter them. If a reasonably early warning system of river run off was set up, these areas could still serve as vital overflow areas. However, it is essential that at least some of the big swamps be left undrained to safeguard against human error and to preserve the very important ecosystems which they contain. It is hard to see how a swamp, 5000 acres in extent, can by itself be a significant factor in controlling the flooding of the lower regions of a river the size of the Clarence. We think that we can have flood control and waterfowl. We hope the Government will agree.

MEETINGS

OCTOBER

- DATE : Tuesday, 15th October, 1968.
 PLACE : Institute of Anatomy at 8 p.m.
 FEATURE : A talk by Dr Ross Florence "The Use and Conservation of the Australian Forest".

MEETINGS (continued)

NOVEMBER:

DATE: Tuesday, 19th October, 1968.

PLACE: Institute of Anatomy at 8 p.m.

FEATURE: Mr David Purchase will give an illustrated talk about his visit to "Macquarie Island".

REMEMBER: Visitors are always welcome.

MEMBERSHIP

The Association will welcome new members and acknowledge renewal subscriptions in the next issue.

OUTINGS

OCTOBER:

DATE: Sunday, 27th October, 1968.

PLACE: Angle Crossing.

MEETING PLACE: Cooma Road, at turnoff 100 yds past the Service Station at Williamsdale at 10 a.m.

FEATURES: Survey walks along the Murrumbidgee River with either lunch at the cars or somewhere along the river, according to the wishes of each person.

NOVEMBER:

DATE: Saturday, 23rd and Sunday, 24th.

PLACE: Araluen Valley.

MEETING PLACE: Main Street of Captains Flat at 11a.m.

FEATURES: Lunch at Parkers' Gap then on to Araluen to camp at Ray Mortons farm. There is a sheltering barn available to party. Informal visit to the local pub that evening with the leader Robert Story.

SUNDAY - Ray Morton will show members around the area. Members will find their own way back to Canberra during the afternoon. Distance to be travelled over weekend 180 miles.

REMEMBER: Keep SATURDAY, 21ST DECEMBER, FREE

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