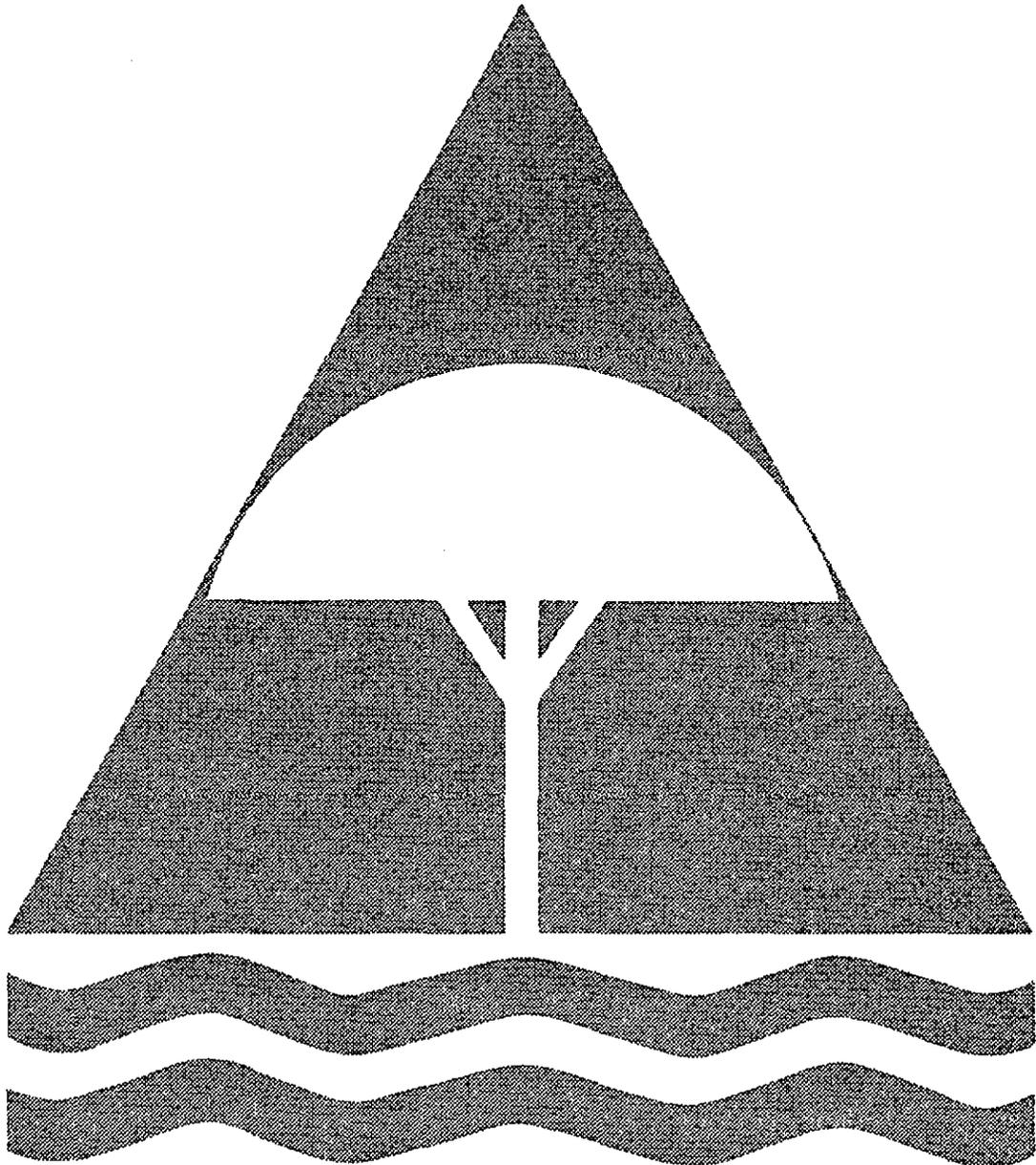


# NPA Bulletin

National Parks Association of the A.C.T. Inc.



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## NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE A.C.T. INC.

"A National Park for the National Capital"

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### AIMS AND OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- Promotion of National Parks and of measures for the protection of fauna and flora, scenery and natural features 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 by organized field outings, meetings or any other means.
- Co-operation with organizations and persons having similar interests and objectives.
- Promotion of and education for natural conservation and the planning of land-use to achieve conservation.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

As this issue covers the summer holiday period, when more newcomers will be coming on walks, it is perhaps an opportune time to remind ourselves of our responsibilities as walkers. On the back of the outings pamphlet are listed some suggestions about walking. Please read them.

I am also a newcomer as editor of the bulletin, Brian Lee having given up this job to spend more time on other N.P.A. affairs including the newly formed Australian National Parks Working Group. We have to thank Brian for the smart new design on the frontcover and for bringing a professional journalist's touch to our bulletin. He put in a lot of hard work and we are very grateful to him. We also thank Esther Hardware, who took on the job of secretary during Sheila Kruse's absence and cheerfully set about this arduous task.

*Bruce Ward*

## WE MEET THE NCDC

Four members of the Association met with representatives of the NCDC on the wet and dismal evening of October 10th. The aim of the meeting was to glean information from the Commission about its intentions or the progress being made with the six topics dealt with below. Our representatives were Ian Currie, George Chippendale, John Schunke and myself.

### *Revised proposals for Molonglo Parkway*

As you may have noticed in the press, this road has shrunk from three lanes each way to two. The final plans have not yet been drawn up, but the proposal to build Lady Denman Drive between the Parkway and Lake Burley Griffin on an embankment so as to shield the Lake from the Parkway, should go ahead.

The Commission assured us that the Molonglo Parkway would not bite into Black Mountain Reserve at all. The extra land needed for the wider road will all be obtained by filling in the lake. The smaller Parkway would be about 16 metres narrower than originally planned.

The final plan should be available for public discussion before the end of this financial year.

### *Other encroachments on the Black Mountain Reserve*

The Commission's ideas on the routing of the Gungahlin Freeway through the reserve appear to have changed considerably. Originally, the Commission proposed cutting off a large corner of the reserve near Aranda. The route now favoured appears to be much closer to Aranda, but it does still cut into a small part of the reserve in the same corner.

This road has also shrunk from the original plan for a massive six lane highway. Current NCDC philosophy is to plan roads to cater for offpeak demand only (i.e. two thirds of the peak demand).

It will be some years yet before the Gungahlin Freeway is built.

#### *Definition of the Ainslie-Majura Reserve*

The proposal to declare the Ainslie-Majura area a reserve doesn't seem to have progressed at all during the past year. Mr. Murray Elliott from the Department of the Capital Territory, who also attended the meeting, pointed out that although the Department is carrying out some work putting in and maintaining walking trails, its efforts are limited by the fact that the area has no legal status. Until Ainslie-Majura has some legal status, the Department cannot demand a budget for it.

The continuing lack of an A.C.T. Parks and Reserves Ordinance isn't helping here, but even so it ought to be possible to have the area declared a public place - as is the Black Mountain Reserve at the moment.

#### *Relationship between use of National Parks and metropolitan open space systems*

The NCDC put this item on the agenda. The Commission wanted to hear our views on what recreation facilities should be available in the Gudgenby National Park, and in the corridors along the Murrumbidgee. The Commission pointed out that 170,000 people would be living close by in Tuggeranong when the town was completed.

The NPA suggestions assumed that the proposed Tennant Dam would be built in the National Park fairly soon. We suggested that there should be three zones around the lake a narrow strip around the lake for intensive recreational use, another for less intensive use, and the wilderness area outside this where access would only be allowed on foot.

In the Murrumbidgee corridors the NPA members seemed to generally favour intensive development of small areas (such as Kambah Pool and Point Hut crossing), rather than a general development of the whole river frontage.

#### *Locations of future trail bike tracks*

The Commission has plans for more trail bike tracks, which should ease the pressure close to Canberra. It doesn't seem to have come to grips with the problem of trail bikes in the mountains.

Everybody seemed to agree that these bikes are a legitimate form of recreation and should be adequately catered for, but new legislation is required before the police can do much about them.

*Alternative locations for catchments of Canberra's future water supply*

The Tennant Dam proposal is still top of the NCDC's list of suitable proposals, but it may not be the next to be proceeded with. Other viable proposals include taking water from Tantangara Reservoir (by letting it into the Murrumbidgee and catching the water near Tharwa), and damming the Murrumbidgee at Billilingera (near Bredbo). Both these proposals would need the consent of the New South Wales Government.

*Brian Lee*

WEEKEND AT MT. CLEAR

After almost 24 hours of continuous rain it came as rather a shock to phone Ian Currie and hear the ominous news "The trip's on, be at the meeting place at 11 a.m." There was an odd shower on Saturday morning but it was sunny when the would-be campers met at the Honeysuckle Creek turn-off ready to spend the October long weekend at Mt. Clear. While the ranger set off to survey the road, we drove to the car park on the Orroral river and went for a short walk. At 3.30 p.m. we had our report - the road was passable with care. Fifteen people in nine cars set off for the Mt. Clear homestead, finding the road a little greasy but not too bad. The track into the homestead was a different proposition but after slipping, pushing, towing, digging and detouring we arrived safely. To show its contempt for things human the weather decided to clamp down and cold wind and rain made pitching tents and cooking the evening meal most unpleasant.

Sunday morning dawned sunny but all too soon the clouds rolled in and it looked as though it would start raining any moment. Undeterred the group started walking and reached the summit of Mt. Clear at 1 o'clock. So far no rain; after a huddled meal in the shelter of the cairn everyone was pleased to be mobile again and in the cold wind the warmth of walking was a pleasure. The route back was in a straight line to the campsite and the group split up into two parties, three enthusiasts setting off at great pace to arrive one hour before the rest and thus having the honour of starting the fire and brewing the tea. Most of the group cooked and sat by the campfire till about 8.30 p.m. when the thought of bed and rest proved irresistible.

Monday also dawned cloudless and in fact it was a very fine day for walking, sunny but cool. Six of the party left in the morning, so after breakfast the nine remaining set off to climb the nearest hill getting to the top about 11.30 a.m. A leisurely walk down got us back to the camp in time to brew up a billy, eat lunch, break camp and get on the road just after 2 p.m. The road and track had dried out and there was no problem driving back to Canberra.

Although it was a very pleasant weekend in an extremely peaceful setting. There were only a few flowers out, though many were in bud.

The flowers seen generally belonged to the either the daisy or Epacrid families, though Acacias, Grevilleas, Tetratheca and Ranunculus were to be found. The weather kept the reptiles inactive and only one small skink was seen. Kangaroos and rabbits were seen on both days and one group of walkers was inspected by a rather short-sighted young wombat on the Sunday. The birds were quite well represented and a check-list of twenty-seven species was made for the homestead - Mt. Clear area, while others were seen but not positively identified.

The general conclusion was that this is an extremely fine wilderness area and that the people of Canberra are fortunate indeed to be so well served.

*Norman and Jenny Morrison*

#### FLOWERS ON BLACK MOUNTAIN

On September 26th a party visited Black Mountain to look for and identify flowers and shrubs. On account of the cold wet spring there was not the usual display of flowers expected at this time of year. The list of flowers and shrubs seen on that Saturday, which is fairly complete, is given at the end of this article.

The party started from the Belconnen Way entrance and was led by Edna Watson. It was a rather dull afternoon but very pleasant for walking. There were about thirty or more people on the outing including a visiting botanist from California, Professor Stebbins. The flowers and shrubs are listed more or less in the order we found them, starting at the foot of the hill and working upwards. On the roadside before we climbed the hill we found many patches of Purple Coral-pea and clumps of *Indigofera* which was just starting to burst into flower. The Early or Poverty Wattle, which had been blooming most of the winter was still in flower and the Boxleaf Wattle was at its peak.

As we walked along the paths we saw patches of Canberra Grevillea, White Bearded Heath, Rice Flowers and Candles. Yam-daisies and Nodding Blue Lilies were scattered but not in profusion. The blue Caladenias with their mauve and white sisters bordered the paths and were plentiful. The other orchids were late but we did find a few Leopard and Tiger Orchids. The small Guinea Flowers were in abundance. The Parrot Pea was just starting to flower - just one or two blooms on the odd shrub. A very small shrub about two or four inches in height with tiny white flowers was identified as *Marianthus*.

*Rose Allen*

#### PLANT IDENTIFIED ON BLACK MOUNTAIN

Common name	Botanical name	Family name
Early Wattle	<i>Acacia diffusa</i>	Mimosaceae
Boxleaf Wattle	<i>Acacia burxifolia</i>	Mimosaceae
Purple Coral-pea	<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	Papilionaceae
Australian Indigoo	<i>Indigofera australis</i>	Papilionaceae

PLANTS IDENTIFIED ON BLACK MOUNTAIN (Continued)

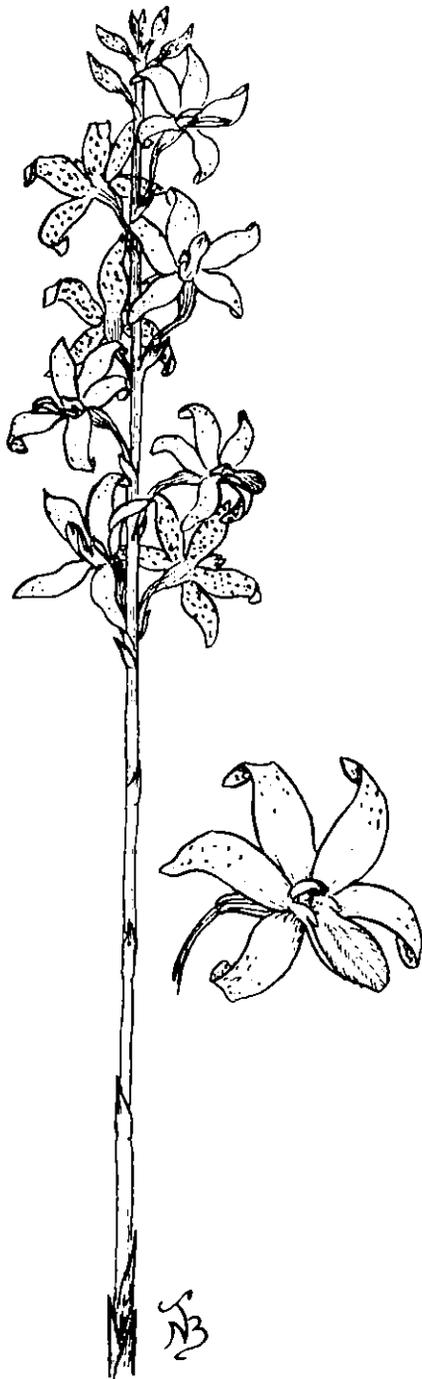
Common name	Botanical name	Family name
Canberra Grevillea	<i>Grevillea</i> sp.	Proteaceae
White Bearded Heath	<i>Leucopogon</i>	Epacridaceae
Blue Caladenia	<i>Caladenia caerulea</i>	Orchidaceae
(white and mauve flowers of the same variety)		
Nodding Blue Lily	<i>Stypandra glauca</i>	Liliaceae
Yam-daisy	<i>Microseris scapigera</i>	Compositae
Leopard Orchid	<i>Diuris maculata</i>	Orchidaceae
Tiger Orchid	<i>Diuris Sulphurea</i>	Orchidaceae
Slender Rice Flower	<i>Pimelea linifolia</i>	Thymelaceae
Candles	<i>Stackhousia monogyna</i>	Stackhousiaceae
Guinea flower	<i>Hibbertia calycina</i>	Dilleniaceae
Parrot Pea	<i>Dillwynia retorta</i>	Papilionaceae
Bearded Orchid		Orchidaceae

'WOODCHIPS'

By channels of coolness the echoes are calling,  
 And down the dim gorges I hear the trees falling.  
 The scream of the saws with their groaning is blending  
 -- The valleys fling back the tearing and rending.  
 They come! With a roar -- and the great metal claw  
 Tears at the moss, and the saged forest floor --  
 The earth shudders softly, and mutely bows down  
 As they tear at her heart, and strip off her gown.  
 Behind, in the stillness, a sobbing is heard --  
 Soft is their weeping -- so hushed is their crying --  
 The Bellbirds! The Bellbirds!  
 The Bellbirds are dying.

Val Osborn

## HYACINTH ORCHID

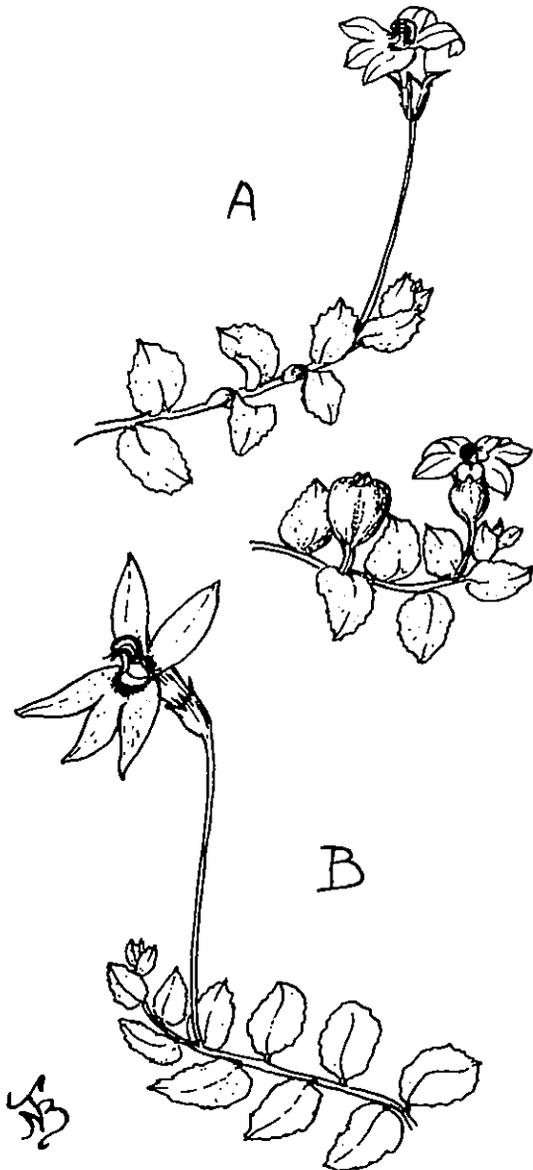


Hyacinth orchid flowers in the late summer and is one of the most beautiful members of the orchid family. It is a leafless plant with dark robust flowering stems and may grow to 1 m in height though they are more usually 30-60 cm. The flowers are about 2.5 cm across and vary from deep to pale pink with the petals often spotted or blotched with purple-red on one or both sides. From the centre of the flower there is a projecting lobe of the labellum which is coloured like the petals and is minutely haired. The second half of the botanical name, *Dipodium punctatum*, refers to the spotting of the petals.

This leafless orchid obtains its food and energy from the rotting of organic matter (decaying leaves etc.) in the soil. Consequently it only grows in areas where such matter is available. The species is widespread and is found in all states except Western Australia. In the A.C.T. it is common in some areas especially in the rather dry forests at low or intermediate altitudes. During good seasons it is particularly abundant in the Tidbinbilla Fauna Reserve where it may be seen along the walking trails.

*Nancy Burbidge*

FLOWERS OF THE SWAMP



Two species which are easily confused are shown in the figures. Both belong to the family Campanulaceae and are low creeping perennial herbs. Figure A depicts *Pratia pedunculata*. The top part shows the flower with a narrow base (calyx) on a slender stalk. In the bottom part the stalk is short and the calyx fat because it contains the young seeds; a swollen fruit is shown on its left. The flowers are white or pale bluish with purple veins and are smaller than those of *Isotoma fluviatilis* (figure B). *Isotoma fluviatilis*, commonly known as Swamp Isotome has bluish to blue coloured flowers with pointed petals and a characteristic pale patch with a dark blue boarder at the base of the three lower petals.

In both flowers the stamens are fused into a column with the dark curved anthers protruding from the tube of the flower. This makes them look very alike but if you look closely you will find the flower in A is split to the base between the two upper petals. In B the split is short. *Pratia* is more common at higher levels in the mountains but *Isotoma* can be found near Canberra as well as in the mountains.

Nancy Burbidge

## OLD MILL ROAD

Weather conditions did not allow us to walk to Devils Peak so our leader Lyn Richardson reconnoitred possible walks while we watched the coots on the pond at Uriarra Homestead. Then we shuffled cars in three shunts to Picadilly Circus where snow and ice lay in patches like polka dots on a dress. Our walk started from the disused mineshaft and led gently down a slope on the Old Mill Road. Throughout the walk we had views of Canberra, first of the lake and Civic Centre and then of Woden Valley as the track wound round the hill. There was evidence of considerable damage due to the recent rains both on the Cotter Road and in the forest where many trees had obviously fallen only recently. The track was indeed well named. We lunched in the sun overlooking South Canberra and afterwards the party split into two groups. The first were led by Lyn through a mile of dense bush to a lower track and returned to one of the earlier shunting spots.

The remainder had ample time to retrace their steps leisurely and take note of their surroundings. The children had fun looking for termite nests, lyrebird scatchings and wombat holes. With a smaller party the birds came closer and white-throated tree-creepers, thornbills, white-eared honeyeaters and a flame robin were all seen in a small area. We left the Brindabellas with the snow falling once again to cover the traces of our intrusion.

*Bruce Ward*

## OUTINGS

See separate insert

## TREASURER'S PLEA

In view of the increased cost of postage it is uneconomic to send out receipts when subscriptions are paid. In future no receipts will be posted unless specifically requested. Members are respectfully reminded that if they have not paid their subscriptions this will be the last issue of the bulletin they receive. This reminder has also been inserted into the outings pamphlet, so in the words of the bard 'You have been warned'.

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following: Mrs. P. Lewis, Mr. & Mrs. K. Steward, Dr. & Mrs. L.T. Carron, Mrs. A.U. Evans, Mrs. N. Green, Mrs. J.G. Curtis, Mrs. T.G. Downes, Mr. & Mrs. G. Young and family, Miss B. Graham, Mrs. D. Balfour, Mrs. P. Grover, Mr. P. Judge and family, Mrs. M. Walker, Mr. & Mrs. J.H. Cumpston, Mr. & Mrs. N.W. Esau and family, Dr. Thelma Hunter, Mr. & Mrs. J. Scougall and family, Mr. & Mrs. W.G. Stoffell, Mr. & Mrs. C. Hughes and family, Ms E. Hallet, Ms S. Calvert, Ms M. Rafferty.

## NPA OUTINGS

If in doubt about the venue or other details, please check with the walk leader or Andrew Fordham.

### JANUARY

12th, Sunday

Red Hill, Tidbinbilla

Easy walk on paths in the reserve before lunch. After lunch a further easy walk along fire trails.

Meet at Tidbinbilla Information Centre at 10.30 a.m.

Leader - Edna Watson 816601 (home)

24th-27th, Friday to Monday

Canberra Alpine Club at Perisher

Long weekend in the Snowy Mountains. Accommodation (\$3.00 per night) at the Club Lodge is limited in the first instance to 24 persons. A further 14 places may be made available one week prior to the weekend, subject to the requirements of club members. Anyone wishing to make a firm booking should contact Julie Henry as soon as possible. As our numbers are strictly limited, this is necessary in order to make a fair allocation of places.

Walks during the weekend will be in the easy, medium and hard categories; details will be posted at the lodge.

Meet at the lodge on the evening of Friday the 24th or at 10.00 a.m. on the Saturday.

If unable to be accommodated at the lodge, members might like to reserve a camping site at Sawpit Creek.

Leaders - to be nominated

Organiser - Julie Henry 485130 (home).

### FEBRUARY

8th, 9th, Saturday, Sunday

Green Patch, Jarvis Bay

Camp at the Coast

Examination of the flora and fauna of the reserve and the sea-shore

Meet at Green Patch campsite at 11.30 a.m. on Saturday

Leader - Laurie Adams

Contact - Andrew Fordham 863791 (home)

FEBRUARY (Continued)

16th, Sunday  
Shoalhaven River  
Walking, swimming and rock hopping  
Meet at the Shoalhaven Bridge on the Braidwood Road at  
11.00 a.m.  
Leader - Reg Alder 542240 (home)

\*22nd, 23rd, Saturday, Sunday  
Mount Franklin  
Local walks including Ginini Swamp and Ginini Falls  
Lecture on 'The sky at night' by Professor C. Allen,  
weather permitting.  
Meet Canberra Alpine Club Chalet on Friday night or  
10 a.m. Saturday  
Accommodation \$2.00 per night  
Leaders - Bill Adams 487584 (home)  
Clay Allen

MARCH

9th, Sunday  
Mount Majura  
In conjunction with 'Australia 75' a public walk  
will be held in the reserve at Mount Majura.  
Meet at Dukes Street, Hackett at 2.00 p.m.  
Leader - Eddy Pook

16th, Sunday  
Gudgenby National Park area  
Public walk in association with the 'Australia 75'  
festival.  
As these walks may be attended in large numbers,  
members are urgently requested to help with the  
organisation.  
Meet at Tharwa Village at 10.30 a.m.  
Leaders - Julie Henry 485130 (home)  
Charles Hill

\* To be confirmed

MARCH-APRIL

29th - 2nd, Friday to Tuesday  
Easter weekend. Itinerary to be decided - members are invited to put forward suggestions. These should be sent to the N.P.A., Box 457 P.O., Canberra City, 2601. The ideas will then be discussed at the next meeting of the Outings Committee.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Please pay your subscription if it is due.  
Any member failing to pay, will not receive  
the next copy of the Bulletin.

## DO'S AND DON'TS FOR WALKING

- 1) Arrive at the right place at the right time
- 2) Listen to advice from your leader
- 3) Do not bring dogs or other pets
- 4) Bring adequate windproof and waterproof clothing
- 5) Wear stout footwear and bring a hat
- 6) Bring a torch, a box of matches, a map and a compass whenever possible
- 7) A first aid box is a useful extra
- 8) Do not leave the party without informing the leader
- 9) Do not litter
- 10) Do not pick wildflowers
- 11) Carry water or other refreshing drink. On whole day walks bring plenty of food.

It is suggested that articles are packed in a rucksack or shoulder-bag.

This is not meant to be a list of restrictions but rather a list of the minimum requirements for you to enjoy the walk fully and to ensure your safety in unforeseen circumstances. The latter are fortunately rare. With these few factors in mind your walk should be pleasant and you will leave the countryside unspoilt for others to enjoy.

## NEW LIBRARY BOOKS

Bushwalking near Canberra. Canberra Bushwalking Club.  
(C.B.C. - Canberra 1974).

Damania. Proceedings of a symposium to enquire into the Hydro-  
electric Commission, the environment and Government in Tasmania.  
R. Jones (Ed.). (Fullers - Tasmania 1972).

Pedder Papers. Anatomy of a Decision. Australian Conservation  
Foundation. (A.C.F. - Melbourne 1972).

The Future of Lake Pedder - Report of the Lake Pedder Action  
Committee of Enquiry, June 1973. (Lake Pedder Action Committee -  
Tasmania 1973).

## BIRD OF PARADISE SANCTUARY

Recently I was fortunate enough to be in the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea near Mt. Hagen working on an archaeological field site in the upper Wahgi Valley. The last Sunday in the area provided an unexpected opportunity to visit the Baiyer River Bird of Paradise Sanctuary which is 54 kilometres north of Mt. Hagen.

The drive to the Sanctuary was itself an experience. Initially the dirt road twisted and turned, crossing numerous water courses by classic examples of the ubiquitous Bailey bridge, and passing by native villages with their neat gardens of sweet potato. The many natives met along the way smilingly returned our greeting of "morning true", meaning a perfect morning. The latter stages of this journey involved following a precipitous route down the side of a deep valley towards the junction of the Trauna and Baiyer Rivers where the Sanctuary is located. As we were sweeping down this there suddenly appeared around one corner a truly magnificent vista of the plane of the rivers set against a distant chain of blue tinged mountains. Floating at half height against these was an uneven sash of cotton wool cloud puffs which added further contrasts of light and shade to the already flamboyant scene.

The 100 hectare Sanctuary is beautifully set out with well shaded paths passing from neatly kept grassed areas through to stands of virgin rain forest. The cages containing the birds and other creatures are spread out so that the impression of a zoo is minimised. Picnic round houses are thatched in the native style and remain cool and pleasant at all times. Nearby I found, also nicely blended into the landscape, what must be one of the biggest little houses in the southern hemisphere.

The Birds of Paradise being vain, and not seeing many visitors, were anxious to display their colours. I remember one Raggiana Bird of Paradise with a magnificent plume of vivid reddish-pink tail feathers hanging upside down and positively begging us to look and admire. There were also really fine examples of powder blue Victoria Goura pigeons crowned with delicate spreads of tiny

## National Parks Association outings summary

feather fans on their heads. Among the other birds were eagles, owls, parrots, bower birds, and dwarf Cassowary. Some small mammals were also represented in the form of Tree Kangaroos.

The Sanctuary has its origin in the gift in 1966 by Sir Edward Hallstrom of his private Bird of Paradise collection to the Administration. We can therefore thank this man and those that came after him for what is truly a unique miniature zoo. If you are ever in the area take time off for a visit.

*Allan Mortlock*