

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, 16 May 2019

Uniting Church Hall, Scrivener St, O'Connor

1. Welcome and apologies

President Esther Gallant welcomed members, especially Life Members, and guests to the meeting. Esther paid respects to the traditional custodians of the land and their elders past and present.

Approximately 35 members and guests were present, with apologies received from Cynthia Burton, Rod Griffiths, Di Thompson and Fiona McDonald Brand.

2. Confirmation of the minutes of the 18 April 2019 meeting

The minutes are available online through the web link provided in the latest *Burning Issues* and a printed copy could be perused before the meeting. They were approved as written.

Matter arising from the minutes: Esther informed the meeting that the planned Tantangara trip for MLAs and staff had to be postponed because of inclement weather conditions.

3. NPA activities

Esther reported on the following activities:

- The new NPA brochure will be included with paper copies of the June *Bulletin*. Please give to a friend who might join. Suggestions for places to display them and volunteers are needed to help with distribution.
- Reclaim Kosci presented the commissioned film "the Underfrog" by Harrison Warne at its Canberra premiere at ANU. Other screenings are being arranged at Namadgi Visitor Centre.
- The petition to repeal the NSW 'Brumby Protection Act' with about 12,000 signatures is still being circulated by Linda Groom and her CBC helpers; it will be submitted shortly.
- Rod Griffiths and Esther have contacted Environment Minister Gentleman's office with regard to updating the ACT 2007 Plan of Management for feral horse control. We are pleased that the process was recently initiated. Look for a future call for comment on the updated plan.
- Five papers from the Kosciuszko Science Conference that specifically address feral horse damage have been published as a separate book. Ten copies of these will be distributed to key ACT MLAs and Environment Directorate officials.
- Our information stall at the ACT CAP Expo was a great success both in number of books sold and the conversations with very interested people. Thanks to Adrienne Nicholson, Sonja Lenz, Kevin McCue, Jane O'Donohue and Allan Sharp for their efforts on the day.
- Our next information stall will be on 28 July at the Namadgi Visitor Centre where World Ranger Day will be celebrated. If you would like to help please contact a committee member.
- Ginninderra Falls/Ginninderry Development: Tomorrow is the last day for submissions on the cross-border development. Comments can be submitted on the Ginninderra Falls Association website.

4.0 Other business

- Barrie Ridgway informed the meeting that the rangers are keen to know where European Wasps are found in the national park or nature reserves. Please report the coordinates of any finds to ranger Marty.

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- George Heinsohn is interested to find out how much usage the trailRider donated by NPA to ACT Parks and Reserves gets.
- Dierk von Behrens drew the meeting's attention to the necessity of a national ban of so-called 'opera house traps' as they still lead to deaths of platypus and rakali.
- Kevin issued an open invitation to all NPA members to take part in the planned Namadgi outing of the National Parks Australia Council on October 18. The visitors will be shown the Gudgenby regeneration area with a stop-over lunch at Gudgenby Cottage where NPA art week will have an open day.
- Dierk reported that 2 rehabilitated koalas have been released on Black Ridge.
- Don Fletcher reported on unforeseen difficulties getting the trackers off all Rosenberg's Goannas for refurbishing in the US over winter.
- Esther informed members that Martin Chalk needs to be temporarily replaced as work party coordinator.
- Annette Smith drew the meeting's attention to the need for more volunteers for general meeting setup and supper.

5. Presentation

Esther and Kevin introduced Dr Michael Mulvaney, Senior Conservation Officer with the ACT Government and co-founder and moderator of the on-line CanberraMapper project. His presentation was titled *The Little Eagle Project*. The Little Eagle, one of two eagles in the ACT, is a vulnerable species in ACT and NSW and is being studied by researchers from the ACT Government and universities. There was not much known about the number of nesting sites and breeding rates per breeding pair, their foraging area, their dispersal range after breeding or their diet within the ACT, except for some 1992 figures. With knowledge about Little Eagles nesting in the Ginninderry development this project was established in 2014 and is piecing together new information. Male birds were fitted with GPS trackers and the data show that they have larger foraging areas than previously assumed. The size of their foraging area is smaller if they have nestlings to feed, and they forage mainly in wooded areas. Detailed reports are available on the Ginninderry website. Pellet analyses show that their prey here is 60% small rabbits, 30% medium-sized birds like rosellas and 10% insects and reptiles like blue-tongue lizards. The most remarkable information gleaned is the dispersal range of the Little Eagles studied: one bird travelled 3,300 km in 18 days, to Daly Waters and back. The maximum speed of flight recorded was 58km/hour and the maximum height 1,800 metres. Their flight patterns may be related to wind currents. All this information highlights that Little Eagles require *national* protection. So far trackers have been attached to 9 male birds, and the plan now is to put trackers on females and find out about their behaviour patterns.

The presentation was followed by questions from the audience at its 9.15 pm conclusion. Esther informed Michael that the NPA committee has recently agreed to finance 2 new trackers for this project. Michael was thanked by acclamation for his very informative presentation and Esther invited everyone to join members for a light supper.

President:

Date: