

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, 20 May 2021

Uniting Church Hall, Scrivener Street, O'Connor

1. Welcome and apologies

President Esther Gallant welcomed about 30 members and guests to the meeting and paid respects to the traditional custodians of the land and their elders past and present.

Apologies were received from Judy & Dave Kelly and Di Thompson.

2. Current activities

Esther noted that the NPA's *Burning Issues* provides information on current environmental issues. Esther reminded the audience that comments are welcome on a new NRM Plan of Management that is currently being prepared, and that the ACT Parks and Conservation Service is conducting a survey about the use of reserves in the ACT. Details can be found in *Burning Issues*.

Esther also reminded everyone about the Waterhouse Exhibition which is on until 6 June 2021.

3. Presentation by Aaron Chatfield - Dreamtime Connections

Esther and Rosemary Hollow welcomed Aaron Chatfield, Ngunnawal, Kamilaroi man, to talk about Aboriginal culture through local native bush foods. Aaron owns and operates Dreamtime Connections which focuses on connecting schools and community groups to culture through interactive workshops, particularly connecting to the outdoors. Aaron has worked and trained with Greening Australia.

Aaron brought along a number of native plant species (in pots) and shared how they could be prepared as bush tucker and used for tools and other implements. Aaron noted that the *Ngunnawal Plant Use: A traditional Aboriginal plant use guide for the ACT region* was a fantastic book which had more information on the plants he discussed.

The following list contains some of the local species discussed by Aaron. Some of the detail have come from the *Ngunnawal Plant Use* guide.

Common name	Indigenous name	Scientific name	Uses
Mint Bush		<i>Prostanthera lasianthos</i>	
Chocolate Lily		<i>Dichopogan fimbriatus</i>	Has little yams like potatoes
Bulbine Lily		<i>Bulbine bulbosa</i>	Slice bulbs and roast in oven.
Spiny-headed mat-rush		<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>	Seeds can be crushed to flour or boil like rice. White part of plant near soil is a bit like celery.
False Sarsparilla		<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	Steep in hot water overnight; has a subtle tea flavour
Mountain Pepper		<i>Tasmannia lanceolata</i>	Spicy
Sticky Hopbush		<i>Dodonaea sp</i>	Medicinal use – chew to relieve toothache. Early settlers used to make beer- hence the name hopbush.

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Silver Banksia	<i>Dhulwa</i>	<i>Banksia marginata</i>	A durable wood. Use flowers for cordial when full of nectar.
Cauliflower Bush		<i>Cassinia longifolia</i>	Used to help heal injuries as a little bit sticky and sometimes called a band aid bush. Used in smoking ceremonies.
Kangaroo Apple		<i>Solanum linearifollum</i>	Bush tomatoes. Eat when yellow (not while still green). Can make jam and relish.
Austral Indigo		<i>Indigofera australis</i>	Used as a fish poison. De-oxygenates the water and makes fish sleepy. Flowers make a pink-purple dye.
Black Casuarina	<i>Dhulwa</i>	<i>Casuarina cunnighamiana</i>	Crush seeds for paste, used as a broom, and good clear space to sleep under.
Black Wattle	<i>Nummerak</i>	<i>Acacia melanoxydon</i>	Scrub leaves with water to form suds. Seeds can be used for little cakes.

Aaron also showed the audience some Aboriginal implements made from native trees and shrubs and invited everybody to come up to the front after his talk and have a closer look. He also shared a thermos flask of tea made with some aromatic leaves and biscuits containing Acacia seeds with the audience.

The official meeting over at 20:45 pm several members and guests still mingled for a while admiring the wooden implements and finding out more about the plants.

Next general meeting: Thursday, 17 June 2021 at 19:30 pm

Chair: Date: