



NATIONAL PARKS
ASSOCIATION
OF THE A.C.T.

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NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE A. C. T.

"A National Park for the National Capital"

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Monthly Meetings - 4th Tuesday of the month

1964 is now well on its way and this association's activities commence once again. However your association was not completely idle during the month of January. In connection with A. N. Z. A. A. S. we organized a National Parks exhibition in the supper room of the Albert Hall. Photographs from Queensland N. P. A., New South Wales N. P. A. and South Aust. were displayed alongside photographs of the A. C. T. proposed National Park and the Kosciusko Primitive Area.

The N. S. W. National Parks Association's Christmas Cards proved very popular and all were sold. New cards will be on sale for 1964 Christmas and will be available earlier so that cards may be posted overseas.

It was very pleasing to hear the announcement that the building project of a chairlift to the summit of Ayers Rock has been cancelled. The building contractors stated they were unable to keep to the terms of the contract which stipulated that the structure was not to damage the rock or spoil its appearance.

You will find the announcements of the coming meeting and outings on the back page. Try to attend as many functions as possible yourself and bring your friends. The Conservation cause needs constant support.

Youth Hostels Association.

The Secretary, Miss Isobel Sherlock, has asked that the Youth Hostels Ass. be mentioned to our members. To quote

N. P. A. of the A. C. T.

Feb - March

"The Y. H. A. is a non-sectarian organization open to all. It aims to encourage in all, and especially the young, a love and care of the countryside. It assists by providing simple, cheap accomodation in Australia and overseas and provides healthy relaxation and a chance for people to mingle socially."

Ideas about Nature Conservation - No. 1.

The Role of the Biotic Community - by Richard Schodde

Perhaps I should begin by defining the "Biotic Community": briefly, it is the natural habitat with all its component species of plants and animals. Darwin, in "The Origin of Species", described it simply: "It is interesting to contemplate a tangled bank clothed with plants of many kinds, with birds singing in the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent upon each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by the natural laws acting around us There is grandeur in this view of life (whereby from simple beginnings) endless forms, most beautiful and most wonderful, have been and are being evolved".

Now it is obvious - and it has been said often enough too - that wild animals and plants can be conserved successfully only if their habitat is conserved. Conversely, it is equally true that the biotic community can be conserved successfully only if its component species are conserved within it. This leads to a fundamental concept - implicit in Darwin's description - that the biotic community is a vast complex of interdependent parts: it is a web of life, with each organism linked to the next through many others. Stress on one part brings stress and upset to other parts.

Under primeval conditions, the community maintains a stability of its own, and a capacity to act as a whole. Over the almost immeasurable past, its organisms, plant and animal, have become closely adapted to life under the environmental conditions in which they live. It follows then that the community is resilient and able to bear generally the natural stresses of the environment.

4.

But the community is not buffered against unnatural stresses, of which man's impact in land development and land use programmes is an example. While the native vegetation is eliminated on the spot, native animals may react in two ways to changes wrought by man. The majority die with the vegetation because their association with it is a tight bond forged over countless centuries of adaptation. The remainder may disperse to other natural lands which, we should remember, are already occupied with native animals whose numbers are regulated to the + maximum these areas will carry. Population pressures will then tend to eliminate animals equivalent to the immigrant species and numbers; the net result is still loss of wildlife.

In regions of widespread and intense land use, to regard habitat protection as the only means of conserving nature now oversimplifies what becomes a very complex problem. In these regions, preservation of a single biotic community or habitat area as such is often insufficient to conserve the component species, especially if, as is so often the case in Australia, the reservation is small in size. This is because all species of animals are not evenly distributed, nor equally abundant, and their numbers, in the case of migrant and nomadic species, come and go with the seasons; the ecological requirements for each species are different and likewise their habitat tolerances vary. For example, in areas of southern Australia affected by human disturbance, birds with a wide habitat tolerance such as the starling and magpie have flourished while the Spotted Quail-thrush and Ground Parrot, species which virtually cannot adapt to new conditions, are now very rare. An unmanaged biotic community may thus become merely a temporary refuge area for some species, or it may enable one or more species to increase abnormally at the expense of others.

Conclusions -

1. The biotic community is the basic unit in conserving nature. To conserve the community is to conserve the species, not the reverse.
2. This community is so complex in its functioning that it

- can only be preserved in perpetuity in its natural state.
3. To maintain this natural state, the area of habitat must be large enough and diverse enough to fulfil the food, shelter, and living requirements for each component species, or must be managed to do so.

EYES OR NO EYES NO. 6

(See Diagram page 6)

The plant shown in figure A is the Chocolate Lily. It is about one foot high and has purple flowers which only open during the morning hours. By midday the flowers have closed and the petals lie against the pistil. The flowers smell like dark chocolate.

In the flower the three inner petals have thin frilly edges but they are NOT fringed as in the Fringed Lily with which this is sometimes confused. The Fringed Lily belongs to the genus Thysanotus but the botanical name of the Chocolate Lily is Dichopogon fimbriatus. Another plant with which you can confuse Chocolate Lily is the Vanilla Lily. In this the plants look like those of Chocolate Lily but the flowers are paler and hanging downwards. You can separate the two by looking at the anthers. In the Chocolate there are small masses of minute papillae at the bases of the anthers but the Vanilla has the upper part of the filaments of the stamens covered in bushy hairs. These are shown in figure B. The name of the common Vanilla Lily is Arthropodium milleflorum.

Chocolate Lily grows in open sunny places, among grasses. Around Canberra it can be seen growing with the common Cat's ear Thistle or Flatweed whose golden flowers are a brilliant show in weedy places in late November or early December. Vanilla Lily prefers more shady places and is common in wooded areas or in the forests of the mountains.

6.



MEETINGS

FEBRUARY

Date : Tuesday 25th February at 8 o'clock
 Place : Institute of Anatomy
 Feature : Guest Speaker Mr. N. C. Gare, Park
 Superintendent of the Kosciusko State Park.
 Mr. Gare will give an illustrated address
 on the subject "The Duties of a Ranger in
 the Kosciusko State Park".
 This area is always in the news and needs
 constant protection from misuse.

Remember - friends of members are welcome.

MARCH

Date : Tuesday ²⁴~~25~~th March at 8 o'clock
 Place : Institute of Anatomy
 Feature : Films. The following New Zealand films have
 been selected for your enjoyment.

1. "Four Ways to Milford" . Visiting Milford
 Sound by ship, aeroplane, motor car and
 walking.
2. "Hawke's Bay"
3. "Waitomo" - the stalactite caves of Waitomo
 featuring a boat trip on the underground
 river through the glow-worm grotto.
4. "Wildlife of the Mountains"
5. "Wakatipu" - a lake in the South Island.

A Statement by the National Parks Ass. of U. S. A. -
 "National Parks are spacious land and water areas of nationwide
 interest established as inviolable sanctuaries for the permanent
 preservation of scenery, wilderness, and native fauna and flora
 in their natural condition. National Parks are composed of
 wilderness essentially in a primeval condition, of areas of scenic
 magnificence and of a wide variety of features. Their unexcelled
 quality and unique inspirational beauty distinguish them from all
 other areas, and make imperative their protection, for human
 enjoyment, education and inspiration for all time".

OUTINGSFEBRUARY

Date : 23rd February, 1964
 Place : Fishing Gap, Tidbinbilla
 Features : Members will meet at the junction of the Paddys River Rd. , and Tharwa Rd. at 10 o'clock. This trip will take us into the faunal reserve by walking along the track over Fishing Gap. There should be late summer flowers and birds to see.

MARCH

Date : 14-15th March, 1964
 Place : Weekend walking trip to Mt. Morgan which is on the border of N. S. W. and the A. C. T.
 Features : Members will meet the leader, Mr. Noel Semple at 8 o'clock at the junction of Captain Cook Cres. and the Cooma Rd. The party will proceed beyond Tantangara and commence walking, camping near the foot of the mountain.

MARCH

Date : 23rd March, 1964
 Place : Mr. Archer's property - between Yass and Burrinjuck.
 Features : Mr. Archer's property is a reserve for native flora and fauna. We will meet at Uriarra Crossing at 10 o'clock. There will be a rather steep walk through very pleasant bushland, once we have driven to the property. Bring a cut lunch and liquid refreshment.
