

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 - 4th Tuesday of the month

This Bulletin covers both the end of the 1964's activities and the beginning of a New Year. As this is a busy time of the year we hold NO monthly meetings in December and January. However there is to be a special meeting for all people interested in conservation on Friday 11th December at the Academy of Science at 8 p.m. Mr Max Nicholson, Director-General of Nature Conservancy in the United Kingdom will be the speaker. This meeting will be advertised in the local press to remind you. There is an outing in January. The details are featured on the last page.

A matter of interest to some members will be a Conservation Seminar to be held during January at the New England University, Armidale. The seminar will be held from 22nd January to 25th January, 1965. Papers will be presented by Dr M. Day, Dr H. Frith, Dr L. Webb, Mr A. Strom (Chief Guardian of Fauna for N. S. W.), Miss J. Wright and Mr Lionel Bigg. The seminar will examine by means of lectures and discussion groups the position of conservation in Australia in its broadest sense. The last day, Monday 25th will be devoted to field expeditions.

Christmas Cards - The N. P. A. Christmas Cards have been very popular this year. The 600 we originally ordered were

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sold within a fortnight. The second of 300 has once again been sold. If we have not been able to fulfil your order you may wish to buy the cards from N. S. W. N. P. A. Send your order to Mr T. Moppett, 48 Park Ave., Roseville.

Subscriptions - Don't let 1964 slip away and then discover that your subscription for 1964-65 has not been paid. The Treasurer's work is much easier if subs are paid as soon as possible after the annual meeting.

Conservation Council of N. S. W. This council held its fifth Annual Dinner in Sydney during October. The subject of a series of short talks was "The Dying Coastline". Two unhappy facts revealed were (1) that most shire councils whose territory includes the coastline have no plan of organised development or protection of their area; and (2) that almost all of the north coast beaches of N. S. W. are being either mined or prospected for Rutile. As Mr Stanly, the Administrator of Parks in N. S. W. pointed out when he addressed us, the U. S. A. found to its cost how necessary it is to protect and reserve sections of the shoreline and the country behind it before it is completely destroyed or becomes freehold land.

Looking for a New Area to Visit? A National Park you might visit during your holidays is the Mount Kaputar National Park which has an area of about 10,000 acres which includes the highest peaks of the Nandewar Mountains about 30 road miles east of Narrabri. Mount Kaputar has an altitude of over 5,000 ft which gives an adjacent plateau a semi-alpine appearance and flora.

For literature about Nature Reserves and National Parks in N. S. W. write to the Fauna Protection Panel, Caltex House, 167 Kent Street, Sydney

News from Other National Park Associations -

1. Explorer groups in N. S. W. - These groups set out to

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find areas suitable for proposal as reserves. The following is the report from one such group.

"Area investigated about 20 miles from Gulgong around Ulan Trig on the Dividing Range, consisting of 9,500 acres of plateau dissected by Ulan Creek and its tributaries and bounded on the east by the Goulburn River. A very full report was submitted with a collection of vegetation specimens, which confirm the area as consisting mainly of heath and wet and dry sclerophyll. Numerous sightings made of lyrebirds, white and black cockatoos, rosellas amongst other birds. Kangaroos, wombats, possums and two species of gliders were also noted. Rock sculpture was a feature, but because of lack of spectacular scenery and permanent water this group recommended that it be secured as a Faunal Reserve. The Fauna Protection Panel has made a submission to the Lands Department that it be so dedicated."

2. Queensland

The N. P. A. of Queensland in conjunction with the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland and the Noosa Parks Development Association called a special meeting to enlist public support against the granting of special mineral leases in the Noosa National Park.

3. Victoria

The Victorian N. P. A. is most concerned about a threat that some thousands of acres of the Mallacoota National Park is to be excised despite the statement in the National Parks Act 1958 that the National Parks Authority would "maintain every national park in its natural condition and encourage and regulate the use of national parks by the public and provide for the enjoyment thereof by the people in such a way as to leave parks unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations". These two examples prove the point that N. P. A. groups must act as "watch-dogs" over all national parks and reserves which are gained if they are to be kept for future generations.

Do you like cats?

The domestic cat gone wild is a great destroyer of wildlife. It can climb trees, stalk native animals, steal their young and take eggs from nests both in trees and on the ground. It multiplies at a phenomenal rate. It is, without doubt, a significant factor hindering wildlife conservation in some places. Think twice when you want to dispose of a cat and don't choose to release it in the bush.

(From "Wildlife Service") Fauna
Protection Panel Journal.

Water Birds of Lake Burley Griffin - Ian Grant

Many species of water-loving birds are common at Lake George but few could be described as plentiful in the A. C. T. Indeed until recently some species seen frequently at Lake George had not been recorded for the territory. Except for parts of the Murrumbidgee, Cotter and Molonglo rivers and some dams on rural properties there is little suitable habitat for water birds in the A. C. T. At least, this was the case until last summer. Then the water held back by the Scrivener Dam slowly started to flood the gouged out valley of the Molonglo to form Lake Burley Griffin. We had a long, dry summer and autumn during which much of the lake bed was covered with shallow water.

This provided ideal habitat for duck and several species quickly took advantage of it. The central basin particularly became a happy hunting ground for hundreds of Grey Teal and Black Duck. The low mudbanks covered with these greyish birds were brightened on one occasion by the beautiful plumage of a male Chestnut-breasted Shelduck. After the scene was enhanced by the delicate grey and contrasting black plumage of several hundred Manded Geese resting on grassy hillocks. Less common was the Pink-eared Duck, sometimes known as the Zebra Duck because

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of its prominent barred flanks, while a few Blue-winged Shovellers constituted a new record for the A. C. T. On open water Black Swans and White-eyed Ducks were common while small groups of Musk Duck were seen regularly, diving for food. As the Musk Duck is supposedly a poor flier, how more than 50 of them found the new habitat so quickly is something of a mystery.

Perhaps, most common, was the Coat, a dark bird with prominent white forehead, while the rather similar Dusky Moorhen was only seen occasionally. The much larger Eastern Swamphe, blue breasted with strong red beak, occurred regularly in twos and threes. On the water Little Grebe were numerous whilst occasionally the white be-whiskered Hoary-headed Grebe was seen. Did you see a longish, ruffed neck and tufted head sticking out of the water? This was the Great-crested Grebe recorded for the first time in the A. C. T.

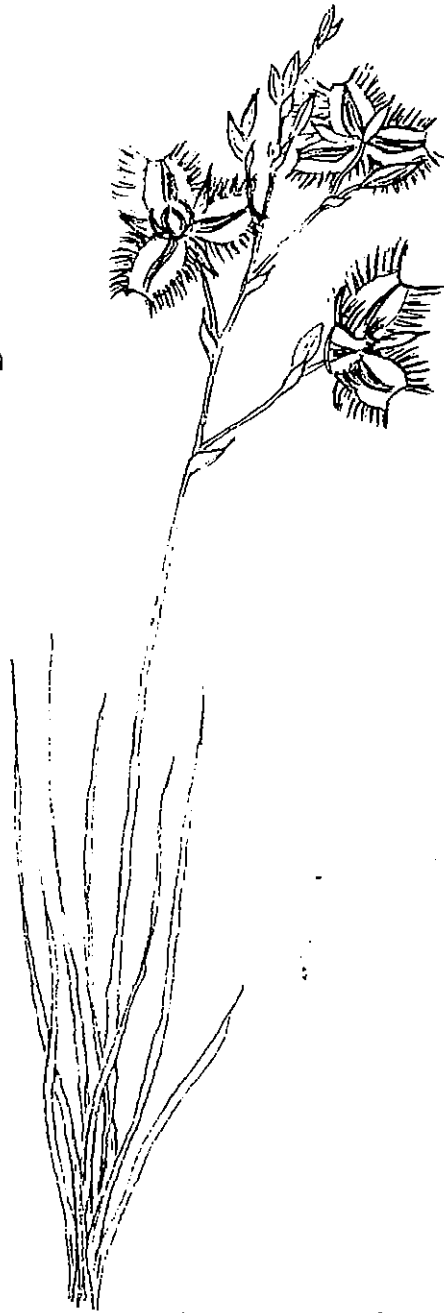
Flocks of ibis (2 species) found conditions to their liking. The White-faced Heron too, was common but we saw the much larger White-necked Heron only occasionally. In autumn eight Yellow-billed Spoonbills and several Royal Spoonbills were about but perhaps the most regal-looking birds were the White Egrets. Standing warily, necks fully stretched, these large snow white birds were strikingly handsome. The smaller Plumed Egret was another A. C. T. "first".

Then there were the small, rarely seen birds skilking in the drowned grasses. Steve Wilson and his bird banders recorded the Spotted Crake and the Painted Snipe as more A. C. T. "firsts". They also banded the Marsh Crake, Banded Sandrail and Japanese Snipe. One of the latter, after journeying from Japan to enjoy an Australian summer, incautiously got caught and ended up starring on Canberra's T. V. On the whole the abundant birdlife that we saw during the filling of the lake seems unlikely to be repeated, but keen observers, occasionally seeing "rarities", will recall the pleasure of past encounters with water birds on Lake Burley Griffin.

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EYES OR NO EYES No. 10

Dr. N. Burbidge



The flowers of the Fringed Lily (Thysanotus tuberosus) have an outer series of three narrow petals and an inner series of three broad ones with beautifully fringed margins. Unlike the flowers of the Vanilla Lily and the Chocolate Flower those of the Fringed Lily are not sweetly scented.

These species shown occurs throughout southern Australia. Despite the delicate flowers which soon wither, especially if picked, species of Thysanotus can grow in very dry places. Some are to be found in Central Australia and many others in Western Australia.

Our Fringed Lily grows among grasses in woodland and open forest places. A second species which also grows all over southern Australia, may be found in the A.C.T. This is twiner with small r flowers and it often twists up the wires of fences.

Have you seen these?

N. T. B.

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OUTINGS

January

Date : Sunday, 31st January 1965
Place : Mt. Gingera
Leader : Dr. Key
Feature : Meet at 10 o'clock Piccadilly Circus.
Bring a packed lunch and drinks as fires are not allowed at this time of the year. The area should have a fine display of alpine flowers and we may find bogong moths.

February (Preliminary Announcement)

Date : 27th & 28th February 1965
and
28th February.
A weekend trip to Coolamon Plains and Yerangobilly.
A Sunday outing to the Molonglo Gorge and Mt. Jerrabombera.

The Nineteen Sixties and Seventies is Our Time

What we do with these years will be the inheritance for the people of the eighties and nineties and for the next century.

The destruction that we cause today cannot be repaired by tomorrow's people. Who are we to say that Man no longer needs this animal or that, this plant or that? In our hands we hold the power of survival of many living species and they may only survive by the preservation of an adequate amount of selected environments. (From "Wildlife Service").

The Committee wishes to extend to all members the Season's Greetings and an Active New Year.

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