



NATIONAL PARKS
ASSOCIATION
OF THE A.C.T.
BULLETIN

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2. NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE A.C.T. Inc.

"A National Park for the National Capital"

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Treasurer : Mr. J.L. Schunke, 26 Clianthus St., O'Connor

Monthly Meeting - New Time 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Whilst reading recently a review of books about conservation of native flora and fauna, I noted a timely warning given by the reviewer. He stated that most conservation books "preach to the converted few". Only people interested in nature will bother to read about it and very few of this number are willing to do something active about conserving natural areas. Our Association will only be "preaching to the converted few" unless each member tries to introduce their disinterested friends or acquaintances to the great enjoyment that comes from viewing and exploring our bushland and studying its inhabitants. Once people learn to love nature they will not want to see it destroyed and will join forces to conserve it. The stronger our National Parks Association becomes, the more effective our voice becomes when conservation issues are raised.

Whilst talking about membership, did you know that our Association has a lapel badge? By wearing a badge you advertise the association and the idea of national parks. Badges may be bought for 50 cents from the treasurer or Mr. Roy Tate.

Publications

Selling in the newsagent shops, a monthly publication called "Animals" - the International wildlife magazine, published in

England and selling here for 60 cents a copy. It contains informative articles, well illustrated with coloured photographs and black and white drawings, covering wildlife in both the northern and southern hemispheres.

The producers of this publication also organise Photographic Safaris through a "Safari Club". For 1967 they have 7 safaris to East Africa, two of which will be specially catering for ornithologists. Armand Denis meets each party at Nairobi to tell them something about the country they will be going through. A safari to the Galapagos Islands is also being planned. The main aim of the Safari Club is to "foster an intelligent interest in natural history and to promote the principles of conservation".

The patrons of "Animals" are Sir Julian Huxley and Sir Solly Zuckerman and the panel of advisory editors includes David Attenborough, Alan Moorehead and Peter Scott.

N.P.A. Bulletin

The editor is always pleased to receive articles for publication in the bulletin. Subject matter should cover animal and plant studies, geology or descriptions of national parks or nature reserves or areas visited. Articles to be no more than 700 or 800 words. Please send to 11 Dyson St., Lyneham.

New National Park in N.S.W.

The Dharug National Park is to be declared soon on the northern side of Hawkesbury river near Wiseman's Ferry. It contains many examples of aboriginal art, both rock carvings and cave paintings, which are relics of the Dharug tribe who once owned this area. The reservation of 30,000 acres aims at the preservation of native fauna and flora in rugged sandstone country.

Christmas Cards - Cover Pictures.

Our Association has been asked to supply colour slides which would be suitable as the pictures on this year's Christmas Cards.

National Parks Association of the A.C.T. Bulletin Feb.-March 1967.

4.

A selection will be chosen from our members' slides. Please send your slides to 11 Dyson St., Lyneham by 21st February 1967, or bring to the February meeting.

Membership

The following members have renewed their membership since the last bulletin: - Family subscriptions: Tredinnick; B.P. Moore; Knox; Perrin; Raggatt; Scott; Cameron; Morley; Finson; Paitjmans; Whitrod; Pook; K. Crawford; Walker; . Single Subscriptions: Henry; Copley; Costell-Brown; Judge; Whitten; Gilmour; Vshivkina; Key; L. Adams; Phillips; Costin; Mrs. Sexton; McPherson; Grant-Lipp; Rowan; Clancy; Day; Greenhalf; Swain.

We welcome to the association the following: Miss Dahl; Mr. & Mrs. Cruttwell; Dr. & Mrs. Robbins.

Bushfires

This is the bushfire season, and once again terrible destruction is occurring to bushland areas. The following extracts are taken from an article by Mr. C.P. Gabel, Operations Officer, Parks Service Bureau, Department of Lands, N.S.W. The title of the article - "Fire Protection of the National Parks of N.S.W. - appreciation of the problem".

"While the surface vegetation presents a fuel problem, the removal of which is desirable for fire protection purposes, it is this surface vegetation which forms the ecological balance in the biotic community which is most important to National Parks. For the survival of the whole park or individual communities within a park, some breaking up of the area with access trails and buffer strips will have to be effected." Speaking of fire control he says: "It is the accepted practice that the tool for hazard reduction shall be controlled fire. This is not necessarily so in the case of National Parks. Fuel reduction may be carried out by other methods, namely:

1. Mowing or slashing and removal of the resultant debris, particularly along roadside firestrips.

National Parks Association of the A.C.T. Bulletin Feb.-March 1967

2. Maintenance of the vegetation in a non-inflammable or green condition by watering. This can be implemented around facilities along river banks by pumping, or in hilly country by dam construction with contour banks to carry water to the areas required.
3. By inducing grazing by the native animal population. This can be done by the reintroduction of palatable but fire resistant vegetation on the buffer strip - e.g. grazing lucerne.

In speaking about the varying combustibility of the bush he says: "Vegetation on slopes with a northern or western aspect dry out much more quickly than that on an eastern or southern aspect. The western aspect is open to the full force of the dry westerly winds, while the eastern slope is sheltered ...and eastern winds are moist and have a dampening effect. The sun has little drying effect on the vegetation from sunrise to mid-morning and reaches its highest capacity in the early afternoon, by which time the western aspect receives the full drying effect. Therefore, hazard reduction and the resultant buffer strip should where practicable, be located on the western and northern slopes. Eastern slopes and southern slopes and valley floors should be maintained in an unburnt condition to provide the biotic community necessary for National Parks.

Fire Behaviour. The factors which affect the behaviour of fire are: 1. Fuel moisture content 2. Wind velocity 3. Fuel quantity 4. Slope . On days of extreme danger with high winds the forward rate of spread on flat ground has been known to exceed 6 m.p.h. In rugged country, a fire will spot or jump from one ridge to another. It gathers speed as it moves up the dry western slope from whence the whole process is repeated. However, as the fire moves over the hill, downhill to the eastern or southern slope, it loses acceleration from the wind and encounters vegetation of a higher moisture content. Although the main head of the fire may travel up to 100 miles in a day many islands of unburnt fuel will remain to burn in the days that follow.

6.

Animal Movement Although no reference can be found to the habits of animals on days of high fire danger, it has been observed that animal communities tend to abandon the western slopes and ridge tops in windy weather, when the moisture dries out and during periods of extremes in temperature. This means that on days of extreme fire danger the majority of animal life has abandoned the dangerous western slopes and ridge tops, in the majority of the more rugged National Parks Kangaroos will travel with the fire for some time, then turn and break through an area of low flame height to the safety of burnt ground. A visit to Morton National Park shortly after the disastrous fire of 1965 revealed a surprising number of various communities of birds and animals. It can only be presumed that they moved into sheltered areas during the height of the fire and fled to burnt ground when fire invaded the sheltered positions. On Muogomurra, however, where there were no protected eastern gullies for animal communities to take sanctuary, there was a large number of fatalities, particularly among the tree dwellers.

Camping weekend 4th and 5th March

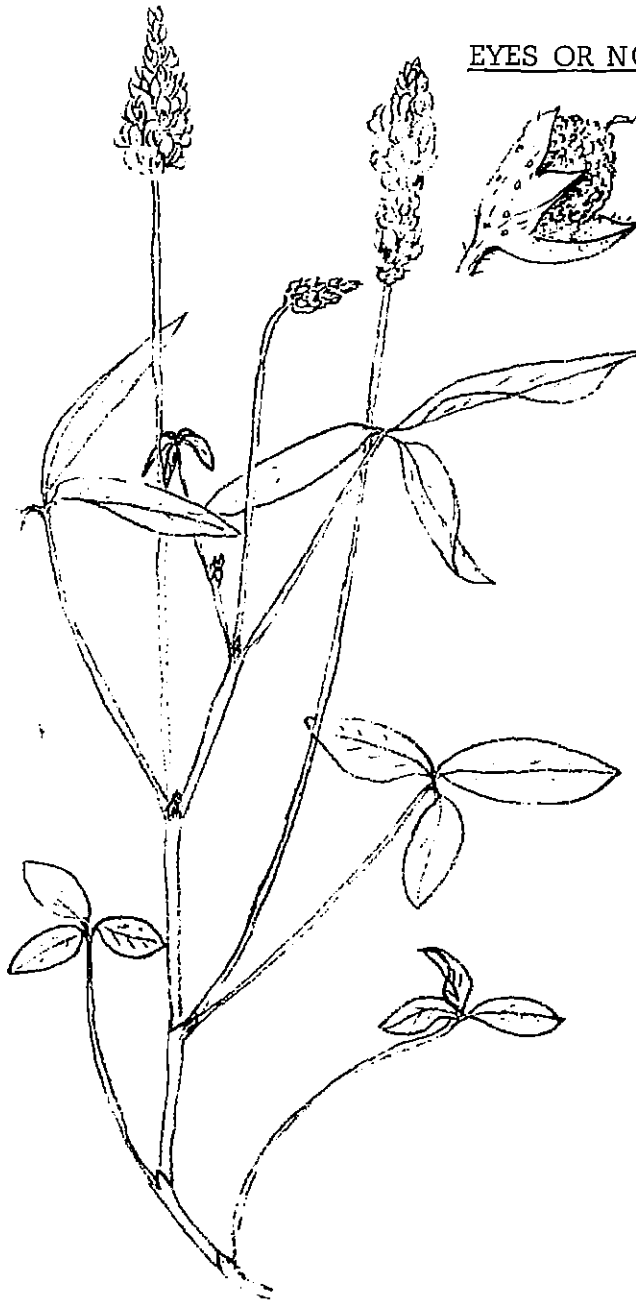
Place : Pebbly Beach, south coast N.S.W.

Time : Friday night - Sunday afternoon.

Leader : Sandy Brand - Jim Webb co-leaders.

Feature: Saturday and Sunday - study of marine life., beach activities. Saturday night barbecue. Bring your steaks. Camping fee charged by Shire.

If you are going and can offer seats in cars, please ring Sandy Brand, work telephone 49-2694

EYES OR NO EYES No. 20

The plant shown is called Psoralea adscendens because the leaves and flower spikes stand erect from the trailing lower parts of the stems.

The flowers are of the "pea" type and are pinkish-purple in colour. The pod has a warty surface and turns black as it ripens. It only has one seed inside and this is not released. The pod remains closed and acts as an extra coat around the seed.

Owing to the black pods, the dark hairs of the flower spikes and stems and the dark green of the leaves the plants have a dark hue which is characteristic. They grow in forests, under the shade of trees and shrubs. You can find them along the road between Bullshead and Mt. Franklin and also in the forest near the Corin Dam road.

N.T.B.

MEETINGSFebruary

Date : Tuesday 21st February
Place : Institute of Anatomy at 8 p.m.
Feature: A talk by Mr. Murray-Elliott :- "The Biological
significance of Water."

March * Please note a change in date and place

Date : Monday 20th March 1967
Place : Griffin Centre
Feature : An illustrated talk by Mr. Harry Black; - "A Bushwalker's
View of the Antarctic".
Slides will show the natural spectacular beauties of
animals and landscape in Antarctica.

* Our meeting for this month had to be given a new date and
site as the Institute is unavailable for the complete month
of March.

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9.

OUTINGS

February

Date : Sunday 26th February 1967

Place : Uriarra Crossing

Feature : This will be a social gathering at the Murrumbidgee River in place of an "active" outing in the hot summer weather. Members to gather at the sandy beach on the right side of the crossing during the afternoon, have a swim and later cook a meal in the fireplaces provided. If there is a total fireban, bring a cold dinner or sandwiches.

April

Date : Sunday 2nd April, 1967

Place : Swamp Creek - a walk along the creek towards Uriarra.

Leader : Mr. J. Schunke

Meeting

Place : 10 a.m. at Uriarra Homestead.

Feature: Mr. Schunke warns that this walk is not suitable for young children, and as the access road is steep and rocky, please ring him (46828) prior to outing day, to check the condition of the road. Bring a cut lunch and water for the walk.