

Friends of Eastern Otways

(Great Otway National Park)
Inc. A0030273B

May1, 2013



Secretary
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From the President

Rachel Faggetter



Sitting alone in the bush, or in the garden, is one of life's great joys. Being quiet, observing and listening, but always being ready for the unexpected. You never know what will happen.

Not long ago I was sitting alone on a headland overlooking the Coral Sea. It was a blissfully warm afternoon and I was reading, enjoying the quiet. Then I became aware that I was not alone. A noisy rustling along the leaves made me look up, and then swiftly draw my feet up on the bench. A large goanna, at least a metre long, was sashaying along, tongue flickering and head waving as it pulled through the undergrowth by the pathway. It was very close, but I remained motionless, and fascinated. It seemed a great privilege to be sharing that space.

I have been reading *Mateship with Birds* by the great nature writer and journalist Alec Chisholm. Originally published in 1922, Scribe has now reissued it as a hardback with an interesting foreword by Sean Dooley, and all the original black and white photographs. Chisholm spent a lifetime observing and learning about birds, and his affection shows in prose which might be called somewhat florid, but is still very engaging because his knowledge is so profound. He writes often of the value of sitting down quietly 'in some bush recess' while you wait for some creature to come and find you.

Good track design in our parks should always include places to sit, some bush recess, whether it be a formal seat, or just a log or some rocks where the walker can sit and look and listen. Being in a park is not always about walking. It should also give opportunities for just sitting. To borrow from the poet, 'What is this life if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare' . . . or sit and look and listen.

A novel also called *Mateship with Birds*, by Carrie Tiffany, recently won the inaugural Stella Prize for Australian women's writing. Tiffany says she was inspired by Alex Chisholm's detailed nature notes. Both books highly recommended.

CRITICAL ISSUES

HANDS OFF OUR PARKS!

The National Parks Association has a strong message for the Victorian Government in response to its decision to open up the state's national parks to development and private investment. It states "*The primary role of national parks is the conservation of nature on behalf of all Victorians. Our parks were not created to end up as building sites for hotels and large-scale infrastructure that can only be used by a privileged few who can afford it.*"

The Friends of Eastern Otways have written to the Victorian Premier Dr Denis Naphthine emphasising the importance of encouraging tourism development on private land, not within national parks.

As a conservation group committed to the protection of the Great Otway National Park we are very much aware of the natural values that have given our Park its national status with highest protection. More than 60% of Victoria is privately owned land with most of that having been cleared of native habitat. The many thousands of visitors who drive along the Great Ocean Road each year marvel at the natural beauty of the remnant area that provides refuge for our indigenous plants and animals. There is a large amount of tourism potential on private land adjacent to our National Park that allows for certainty of investment. We believe that any large-scale infrastructure such as hotels should be developed on this private land, not within our precious Park.

The primary role of all national parks is the conservation of nature on behalf of the people. It is important that the few remote natural places that Victoria has managed to conserve to this time is not eaten away for the sake of providing accommodation for tourists. So many Victorians have given so much of their time and effort to protecting national parks within this state that it is an insult to them to see this land now under threat.

We strongly oppose this policy, and request that community comment is sought before any private development may be allowed to go ahead.

If you are supportive of this stand please write to, or e-mail the Premier, emphasising the importance of encouraging tourism development on private land not within national parks.

denis.naphthine@parliament.vic.gov.au

Hon Denis Naphthine MP, Premier of Victoria 1 Treasury Place East Melbourne Vic 3002

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Environmental Weeding 9.30am – 11.00am



Contact: Margaret 5289 6326

Tuesday, May 14 Tuesday, June 11 Tuesday, July 9

Caring for Our Country Community Action Grants 2011/12 Swampy Riparian Woodland and Heathy Woodland restoration

We have expended the \$18 750 we have received to continue in the restoration of the area of approximately 22ha adjacent to the Anglesea River and bordering Camp Road and Coalmine Road Anglesea. Most of the environmental weeds have been removed from the area, but there are still some areas of concern, including some large Boneseed bushes that have been hiding amongst the denser vegetation on the edge of the river. There is also a large infestation of Bluebell Creeper in the roadside gully along Coalmine Road. We have recently had some assistance from DSE to bring the Bluebell

Creeper under control, but it is a major challenge and not volunteer work. We intend applying for a further Community Environment Grant to complete this and other more difficult works. In the meantime we will continue on the Boneseed and smaller Coast/Sallow Wattles that still need our attention.

Meet at corner of Bingley Pde & Wilkins St, Anglesea

Mammal Surveys

Contact: Mike & Kaye 5263 2011

Mammal surveys using our remote cameras and sometimes hairtubes are usually carried out following Committee meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. We are always pleased to welcome any people interested in our indigenous fauna to participate in these activities. With the excitement of the sighting of the elusive Spot-tail Quoll in Lorne last year we are ever optimistic, but whatever animals we do locate is adding to the overall picture of the fauna population in the Park. Please make contact to find meeting place and approximate meeting time.

Cumberland River Walk

(approx. 4.5 km return to Cascades)

Contact: Lachie 5289 7029

Saturday, May 18

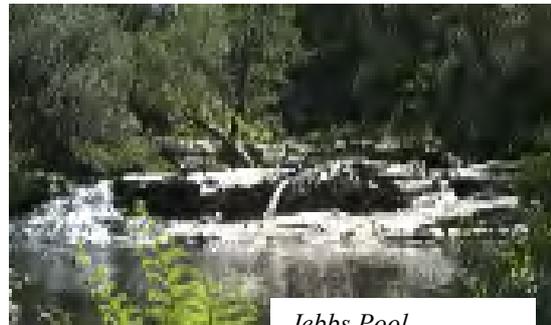
9.30am-2.00pm

Meet at Aireys Inlet Hall (Bring morning tea and lunch)

This is a moderate to difficult walk through one of the most spectacular river valleys in the Otways. The track is generally rough, and four river crossings need to be negotiated to reach the Cumberland River Cascades. Some people may like to finish the walk at the fourth crossing as it becomes more challenging to climb up the last 250 metres to the Cumberland River Cascades.

The track takes you between towering craggy cliffs along the Cumberland River and is lined with a variety of ground-ferns. It winds its way through eucalypts and groves of Blackwood, Musk Daisy-bush, Austral Mulberry and Hazel Pomaderris.

The Golden Whistler and the Forest Raven are some of the bird calls you may hear and small trout can often be seen swimming in the shallow areas of the river. The picturesque Jebbs Pool is just past the first river crossing.



Jebbs Pool

Koala Survey

Grey River Road

Contact: Mike/Kaye 5263 2011

Saturday, June 15

9.30am – 2.30pm

Meet at Aireys Inlet Hall at 9.30am. (Bring morning tea and lunch)



This annual survey at Grey River is always one of our most enjoyable experiences in amongst our yearly program, and we invite you to come along and join in the activity.

If you have binoculars, we suggest you bring them with you. They do assist with spotting the koalas in the distance.

Last year the count was 100 koalas, comparing with 98 in 2011. As we have stated previously, the trees closer to the coast seem to be completely dead, but where the koalas are found the trees appeared to be in a generally good condition with no obvious signs of over-browsing.

Visit to Werribee Zoo Contact: Mike/Kaye 5263 2011

Saturday, July 20 9.30 am – 4.30 pm Meet at ANGAIR at 9.30am. (Bring morning tea and lunch)

Admission prices: Adult \$26.10, Children: 4-15 years Free, Concession: \$20.20

Our activity for July will be a group excursion to Werribee Open Range Zoo. The Zoo cares for an amazing range of different animals, including many endangered species including Eastern Barred Bandicoots, African Servals and Western Lowland Gorillas.

It is planned to spend the day visiting the many enclosures and have the opportunity to hear expert keepers talk about the animals in their care and the conservation work being done for the various species. Safari vehicles run frequently throughout the day around the various exhibits.

Kalimna Falls Walk Saturday August 17 Contact: Joe 5289 6498

This walk takes you into the fern gullies of the Park encouraging you to step back in history as you follow the route of the old timber tramways used for transporting timber to the Lorne Pier back in the 1890's and up to the 1920's when logging ceased in the area. At times the track goes through the tramway cuttings, and in certain areas some of the original tramway sleepers can be seen. An historical marker has been erected to remind us of earlier days.

A few very large trees that escaped logging can still be seen amongst the younger forest.

The Falls, although not large usually have water flowing over the undercut rock ledge following rains.

Lower Falls 2hr - 6.25 km circuit

Upper Falls 3hr – 9 km circuit

INFORMATION REGARDING FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

Mammal Surveys

We have only completed one mammal survey using our remote cameras since our last Newsletter – this was in the Great Otway National Park near Golf Links Road, Eastern View.

A fuel reduction burn is planned for this site in autumn and we were keen to see what creatures might be there – last time we surveyed the area we did pick up a Long-nosed Bandicoot.

However this time we just managed a Black Wallaby and a Brush-tail Possum.
Hopefully they will escape the burn operations.

We also picked up four hairs in our hair tubes that have been sent away for analysis.



Surf Coast Walk Point Roadknight to Aireys Inlet March 16

After over a week of very high temperatures it was great to wake up on Saturday, March 16 and find a pleasant cool morning for our scheduled walk from Anglesea to Aireys Inlet, a section of the newly developed Surf Coast Walk.



The winds were strong and the waves were quite spectacular but the rainbow that appeared in the sky over the Split Point Lighthouse did carry a message for us with a shower of rain falling just before lunch.

We all agreed that the newly constructed track through the coastal bushland of the Great Otway National Park at Urquhart Bluff has been carried out with respect to the environment.

We were concerned that there was no handrail on the steep steps leading down from the bushland to the Moonahs near Sunnymeade Beach. We have been assured both by Parks Vic and the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee that the design does include a handrail. Hopefully this will be installed in the very near future,

It was a great walk and we thank Lachie for planning and leading it for us.

Visit to Lake Elizabeth

Saturday, 21st April

Ross Murray/Alison Watson

Sixteen walkers set out to Lake Elizabeth travelling via Lorne, Erskine Falls Rd., Mt.Sabine/Benwerrin Rd. and down the Kaanglang Rd. towards Forrest. The roads were in good order affording easy driving with beautiful surrounds.



Lake Elizabeth is a beautiful spot, with contemplative vistas through the trees and with birds, fungi and plants to discover. We took our time walking along the excellent pathways lined with massive Tree-ferns, both the Rough Tree-fern *Cyathea australis* and the Soft Tree-fern *Antarctica dicksonia*. There were some wonderful specimens of giant Blackwood *Acacia melanoxylon*.

The White-browed Scrubwrens seemed quite used to people in the picnic area. The autumn light highlighted the colours of the White-throated Treecreeper. On



Crested Shrike-tit



Sacred Kingfisher

the lake we saw cormorants, ducks, grebes, coots, Swamp-hens and a Darter, but no sightings of platypus. At lunchtime many were impressed to see a Sacred Kingfisher.

We wondered about the 40+ Currawongs congregating in the tree tops in the distance. There were many species of fungi to photograph, and the most amazing plant we saw was a Mock Olive *Notelaea ligustrina* tree laden with white, fleshy berries.

At the end of the walk we were all delighted with the antics of a group of Crested Shrike-tits as they searched for food amongst the bark of the trees.

We finalised the walk in Forrest with coffee and cake at the Forrest Cafe and Guest House now owned by Peter and Emma Ashton. Peter was a former ranger with Parks Victoria at Anglesea, and it was great to catch up with him once again.



We returned home via Deans Marsh and Bambra making full circle on a good day out.

Thanks to Ross for planning and leading it for us.

Bird photography per courtesy of Marg Lacey

Reports and photographs of all our walks can be viewed on the ANGAIR Website www.angair.org.au/ under Other Conservation Groups

We thank ANGAIR for this service and Rod Brooks who puts it so capably on the website for us.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Healthy Parks Healthy People Grants 2012/13 Biodiversity Grant

As stated in our last Newsletter the Friends have made an application for the Parks Victoria grants for community groups to carry out biodiversity protection management works on three of our usual environmental weeding sites:- Moggs Creek Heathland Hillside (in conjunction with Friends of Moggs Creek) Gilbert Street, Aireys Inlet (tip site following Ash Wednesday bushfires) and Anglesea Heathlands Gully area on O'Donohue Heathlands.

Funding requested totalled \$7,060. This includes six lots of Conservation Volunteer Australia assistance - \$ 3,600. Chainsawing - \$2,250, Mulching - \$660, Spraying - \$550. This work will need to be completed by May 2014. As yet we have had no response to this application.

Caring for Our Country Community Action Grants 2011/12

As part of our Commonwealth Grant we have asked Marg Lacey, bird photographer from Aireys Inlet, to produce a slideshow presentation of the birds of Anglesea River and Nearby Woodland.

We are delighted with the final production that includes approximately 75 birds casually spotted during the period of the project. We intend launching the presentation with the Anglesea Primary School children in June towards the end of second term, and we look forward to sharing it with a wider audience at a later date.

Caladenia maritima Angahook Pink-fingers or Angahook Caladenia

We are pleased to have been advised that the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Department of Sustainability and Environment has made a Final Recommendation to support listing of this taxon under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.

This orchid was first discovered on the Anglesea heathlands in 1998 and is known from only one location where it grows on well-drained, dark grey sandy loam.

The Friends of Eastern Otways carry out annual surveys to monitor the reproduction and recruitment of the species.



The **Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988** is an act of the [Victorian](#) government designed to protect species, genetic material and habitats, to prevent extinction and allow maximum genetic diversity within the state of [Victoria](#) for perpetuity. It was the first Australian legislation to deal with such issues.

Getting your newsletter Lachie Richardson

At the moment the Friends of Eastern Otways send out 104 quarterly newsletters by post and email. Almost 50% of members have indicated to receive their newsletters by email which results in a great saving in both monetary terms as well as reducing the work load for volunteers in getting the newsletter printed and posted.

If you are receiving this newsletter by post please consider getting it by email if you have an email address. This allows you to view photographs in colour. If you have a printer you can always print it out yourself if you prefer a hard copy.

Please email me at <lrichardson@iprimus.com.au> with your email address to receive your newsletters by email. Thank you in anticipation.

Membership

We still have a few members who have not paid their subscription for 2013. If you fall into that category we would like to think you would renew as soon as possible. We do value your membership and support.



**RANGER REPORT: For Friends of Eastern Otways (FEO)
Anglesea) PARKS VICTORIA**

From: Carlie Bronk (Ranger,

April 28, 2013

Hello Friends of Eastern Otways

April has once again been a busy month for visitor services with Lachie Davis and Craig Hobbs, our new field services officer, installing all the new walking track signs. Burn preparation and burning is continuing, also keeping staff busy.

Prescribed Burning

- Significant work being done by fire crews preparing planned burns
- Burns planned for:
 - Breakfast Creek 1162 ha
 - Big Hill Track 371 ha
 - Eastern View Golf Links Road 330 ha
 - Pennyroyal – Wickham Track 746 ha
 - Kennett Wye Jeep Track 304 ha.

Fox Control and Prey Response monitoring project;

Autumn baiting program has just been completed and the winter program will commence in four weeks.

Otway Eden

- Large amount of work has been completed in the coastal heath opposite Urquart Bluff beach towards Anglesea on the north side of GOR, controlling Coastal Tea-Tree and Bluebell Creeper.
- Ongoing works at Fairhaven between Forest Drive and Ridge Rd controlling Bluebell Creeper, Coast Wattle and Coast Tea-Tree. Bluebell Creeper is proving to be a major challenge at many sites.
- Ongoing works in coastal heath adjacent to Mary White Reserve controlling Bluebell Creeper, Coast Wattle and Coast Tea-Tree (there seems to be a pattern here!)
- Works completed on containment strategy for Asparagus Fern at Wye River site.
- Ongoing Boneseed control works around St George River in the National Park. Large infestations have been detected following Planned Burning.
- Control works on an isolated New and Emerging infestation of Banana Passionfruit on the upper reaches of Sheoak Creek.
- Works completed in the Lorne and Bamba areas controlling Blackberry.

Marine

Rangers have been assisting AME with Subtidal and intertidal reef monitoring

THANKYOU for your dedication

Regards Carlie Bronk