

Friends of Eastern Otways

(Great Otway National Park)
Inc. A0030273B



Secretary
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May 1, 2014

From the President Rachel Faggetter



12 -18 May is 25th Anniversary of National Volunteer Week.

Of course this is not the silver anniversary of volunteering! Australians have a long history of volunteering, whether it be for war, fund-raising for the Red Cross, or working for the local school and sporting clubs.

The Week is a formal official recognition of the value of volunteers to our society, at a time when values are usually expressed in dollars. *The Report on the Economic Value of Volunteering in Victoria 2012* calculates the value of volunteering in Victoria in 2006 was \$16.4 billion. It is huge. Think of the emergency services, education, health and a host of sectors.

I like the Canadian definition of volunteering: *The most fundamental act of citizenship and philanthropy in our society. It is offering time, energy and skills of one's own free will.* This speaks of the intangible values and opportunities of a civilised society.

We all know that the real value of volunteering cannot be calculated in money. *We work for free but not for nothing* says the T shirt. The rewards are very great. We find friends, learn skills and work with others to build community. We feel privileged and grateful that we are able to contribute and make a difference.

The Friends have the satisfaction of seeing the results of our volunteering in the National Park. We see improvements in the habitat and environment of our own special place through our weeding, monitoring, walking and community education. We keep learning and enjoy the company of others. We are so lucky to be volunteers.



National Volunteer Week May 12 – 18

To celebrate National Volunteer Week, Parks Victoria would like to invite our volunteers to join them for a walk and barbeque at Lake Elizabeth. Sunday May 11 Time: 10:30 am for a walk around the lake followed by a barbeque lunch at 1:00 pm. RSVP to frank.gleeson@parks.vic.gov.au Please inform of any dietary requirements.

Membership 2014 (Patrick Flanagan Membership Officer)

Some past members of the Friends have not renewed their membership for 2014. For those who receive the Newsletter as a hard copy, if the mail label has a 14 on the top line, your membership is current and you do not have to do anything. If our records show that your membership has not been paid for this year, a membership form is enclosed with your copy of the Newsletter. The individual/family membership is \$10.00. Renewals can be paid by cheque or money order through the post to the Treasurer, Ross Davey. Ross's postal address is on the membership form. An alternative method of payment is by electronic transfer from your account to the Friends' account at the Bendigo Bank. The account details for The Friends (BSB and Account) is on the membership form. To enable Ross to identify who made an electronic payment, could you please include your membership ID as reference. Your ID is usually up to the first 6 letters of your surname. If you have paid for 2014, but our records show otherwise, please accept our apologies and let Ross know by post or by email (daveyfam2@bigpond.com). We look forward to receiving your membership renewal.

Electronic/hard copy of newsletter

If you wish to change the way the Newsletter is delivered to you from hard copy to the electronic version please indicate this on the membership form. Even if your membership is current, you can inform Ross about your new preference via email. We would encourage members to avail themselves of this service as it helps us financially.

CONGRATULATIONS

Parks Victoria and the Friends' Group extend congratulations to Evelyn Jones on her award of Life Membership of the Friends of Eastern Otways.



This award was presented to Evelyn by Frank Gleeson, Ranger-in Charge Eastern Otways, at a special function on May 6 attended by many of Evelyn's friends and colleagues.

Evelyn was a founding member of the Friends of Angahook-Lorne State Park Inc. in 1991. With the declaration of the Great Otway National Park, the Friends of Angahook-Lorne State Park became Friends of Eastern Otways (Great Otway National Park) Inc. in 2006. Thus Evelyn has had continuous service in our Friends' group for 23 years, and she has been our bedrock supporter during this time. She has always been a regular participant in all activities – Committee meetings, environmental weeding, flora and fauna surveys, walks in the Park, developing community awareness of our National Park... She brings to all our activities her acute observation, curiosity and quiet enjoyment of the special values of our National Park. Her delightful wry humour and her essential modesty have helped to make her a highly esteemed and valued member of the Friends of Eastern Otways.

We thank her for her contribution.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Woodland Environmental Weeding 9.30am – 11.00am *Contact: Margaret 5289 6326*

Tuesday, May 13

Meet in O'Donohue Road near the start of the housing closest to Harvey St on western side of O'Donohue Road.

We had intended returning to our Coalmine Road/Camp Road site in May to justify our 'Caring for Our Country Community Action Grant' but at this stage we feel we need one more session on this National Park site on O'Donohue Road.



Anglesea River Site Environmental Weeding 9.30am – 11.00am

Tuesday, June 10; Tuesday, July 8; Tuesday, August 12

Meet in Coalmine Road next to Anglesea Riding Club

Mammal Surveys *Contact: 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. Naturally we are keen to photograph rare and threatened species and a minimum of feral animals, but whatever animals we do locate are adding to the overall picture of the fauna population in the Park. Please make contact to find meeting place and approximate meeting time.

An additional mammal survey will be included in our Reedy Creek walk on May 17.

Reedy Creek Mammal Survey and Walk

Contact: Lachie Richardson 5289 7029

Saturday May 17 9.30am – 3.30pm Approx Distance 8 Km

Meet at Aireys Inlet Community Centre at 9.30am
(Bring morning tea and lunch)

Beginning at the start of Big Hill Track up Hershalls Road there is an uphill walk to the top of the ridge through a magnificent stand of Ironbarks. Reedy Creek track joins Big Hill Track near a dam where we will install some cameras and hair tubes to try to determine local fauna. This the area where, in the past, we have been successful with obtaining positive results of hair analysis for Spot-tailed Quolls. We would love to think they do inhabit this special part of the Great Otway National Park.

From the dam it is a delightful down hill walk with views of the ocean in the distance. Eucalypts and acacias are the major tall vegetation while the understorey is very dense and many of our familiar heathland plants are growing in the sheltered conditions. Reedy Creek Track ends at land cleared for the transmission lines which are followed to the start of Broadbent Road with associated private land and houses. The steep descent of this road will be taken slowly until the Ocean Road is reached where some of our cars will be waiting.

Visit to Museum

Contact: Kaye Traynor 5263 2011

Saturday June 21 8.15am – 5.30p.m

Meet at ANGAIR Natural History Centre at 8.15am (Bring lunch)

RSVP Kaye June 3

Please note that our scheduled visit to the Museum for July 19 has been changed to June 21 due to Museum commitments on our planned date. We will now schedule the Koala Count for July 19.

After meeting at ANGAIR at 8.15am we will consolidate transport and drive to Marshall Railway Station to board the 9.25am train to Melbourne.

We will be met at the Museum at 11.30am by a tour Guide who will conduct the group on a tour of the galleries. This will take about 55 mins.

Following the gallery tour, we will have lunch.

After lunch, Dean Smith, Preparator, will take the group on a tour of the Preparation Department to see work in progress of display construction, models, as well as preparation of study skins for the collection and any taxidermy specimens for exhibition.

We may also be able to walk through the Living Museum and the Forest Gallery.

We will return on the 4.00pm Melbourne –Marshall train and arrive in Marshall about 5.10pm.

Reminder to have Myki cards for travelling on the train. These are available at all 7-Eleven stores and train stations.

Koala Survey

Grey River Road

Contact: Kaye 5263 2011

Saturday, July 19 9.30am – 3.00pm



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 88 koalas, compared with 100 in 2013. It will be interesting to see if there is an increase in numbers this year. As we have stated previously, the trees closer to the coast seem to be completely dead. The general condition of the forest eucalypts was good. There were however signs of over-browsing on some of the trees, especially those growing on the lower side of the ridge.

Waterfall Walk

Contact: Lachie Richardson 5289 7029

Saturday August 16

Details in next Newsletter

INFORMATION REGARDING FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

Mammal Surveys

We have only carried out one mammal survey this year and this was in the area of bushland adjoining the Anglesea Primary School. (We presently have our cameras in the woodland section of the O'Donohue Heathlands).

We know that the Southern Brown Bandicoot inhabits the site adjacent to the school. It has been seen there, and we have also noticed its diggings. We thought we may have captured one on camera on one of our earlier surveys, but it was not conclusive. The only fauna that our cameras have managed to detect have been Black Wallaby, echidna, blue wrens and shrike thrush, with many examples of foxes, rabbits and cats.

We were thrilled therefore on our most recent survey to obtain a photograph of a small marsupial identified as an Eastern Pygmy Possum. This endearing little creature with its large ears, long tail and snub nose shelters in a nest of bark and leaves in tree hollows and breeds from August to April. It feeds mainly on nectar and pollen, and there are some great photos taken by nature photographers of the tiny creatures on flowering grass-trees or banksias. It would be just so exciting to think that this species may be breeding in our restored site.



Environmental Weeding



This year with assistance from ANGAIR, our efforts have concentrated on the removal of Coast/Sallow Wattle from the woodland section behind the houses in O'Donohue Road. We have removed copious quantities of this aggressive environmental weed, and the indigenous vegetation is really looking great.

These efforts have been complemented by Parks Victoria who have carried out the mulching of the large piles of cut vegetation stacked on the firebreak.

Visit to Cape Otway Ecological Centre and Walk Saturday March 15



The sixteen members who joined us for this activity were offered a most interesting and informative experience with a viewing of the Spotted-tailed Quolls, and then as an added bonus an enthralling demonstration by Shayne and Lizzie's dogs which have been trained to detect quoll scats by the scent on the ground and in the air. So well did Shayne and Lizzie capture our attention, first with the quolls themselves, and then as an added bonus, an enthralling demonstration by their dogs Tara and Teddy, that the planned 1.5 hours extended to nearly 3 hours.

We then set off for Bimbi Park, and after lunch began our walk to the Lightstation car park. Unfortunately the weather deteriorated very quickly and we received a thorough drenching.

However despite the rain everyone remained in good spirits and we returned safely to Aireys Inlet by 5pm.

Visit to Bat Cave near Cumberland River and walk in Kennet River area Saturday April 19

Although there was a sense of disappointment that Parks Vic policy did not enable us to include the planned visit to the bat cave in our day's activity, the group of 12 that assembled at Aireys Inlet was nevertheless keen to enjoy the Easter Saturday outing.

Once we reached our destination at Kennet River, we realized that we were in a very special part of the Otways. The private land we visited, part owned by Alison and Phil Watson, is completely surrounded by the Great Otway National Park. The land came into private ownership as part of the soldier settlement scheme after World War 2 and as a result of this, the land was exempt from the forestry logging that took place in the Otways for over 150 years until logging was stopped in the National Park in 2008.

The wet sclerophyll forest behind the settlement of Kennet River is dominated by Mountain Ash, Southern Blue Gum, Messmate, Mountain Grey Gum and Manna Gum. The ideal conditions provided by rich soil and high rainfall enable all these species to grow tall and straight trunked in contrast to the trees in our coastal areas that are often stunted and gnarled. Tall Blackwoods were also a feature. As we walked around the boundary of the private land and through the private land itself we were just so impressed with the vegetation. Tree-ferns arched skywards – four different species are recorded, but we had difficulty distinguishing them, although we had no difficulty in admiring their beauty. The many species of fungi as a result of the warm, damp weather were most spectacular. Admittedly there were weeds as a result of human settlement, but nevertheless it is not often that one gets to walk in this type of environment.



As you can imagine it is ideal habitat for our indigenous fauna. We only saw one koala, though we did see evidence of others along the walk. Birds included Yellow Robin, Goldfinch, Pied Currawong, Superb Blue-wren, Brown Thornbill, White-browed Scrubwren, Grey shrike-thrush and we possibly heard Bowerbirds calling, but didn't find any bowers. Frogs were calling but unable to identify. We did think one call might have been from the Growling Grass Frog, a nationally endangered species.

We felt very privileged indeed to share in its splendor and we thank Alison and Phil for making the opportunity available.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP?

The members who joined with us on the visit to the Cape Otway Conservation Ecology Centre are aware of the new Tiger Quoll (Spotted-Tailed Quoll) recovery program that Shayne and Lizzie are implementing at the Centre using trained conservation dogs to help track down quolls in the Otways. For those who were unable to come along we can only say how impressed we were with their work and we would encourage members to support the program.



The following extract from Lizzie's e-mail shares information about the program:-

Finding Tiger Quolls is extremely hard, and as a result, targeting conservation activities is also very difficult. One way to track Tiger Quolls though is through their scat, or poo. However, with an area as big as the Otways, finding small piles of poo requires an innovative response. This is where the keen nose of the Conservation Dogs comes in! One of these incredible dogs is Ted. Ted was a malnourished and abandoned Bullmastiff mix when we found him at a local shelter. His droopy-lipped smile and wrinkled brow was irresistible and as he folded himself into the arms of my then four-year-old daughter, we knew he was destined to be a part of our family.

*With your prompt support today, we will build a team of ten Conservation Dogs. Currently we have four qualified dogs and six that still need to complete different stages of training – including Ted. **But, the simple fact is, we need your help, . Will you help us raise the \$40,000 we need to continue training Conservation Dogs like Ted – by***

donating \$50 today?

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. The warmest thanks as well for your support. I will be so grateful for anything you can do to help.

*Lizzie Corke
CEO and Founder Conservation Ecology Centre*

Our mailing address is:

Conservation Ecology Centre
635 Lighthouse Road
Cape Otway, VIC 3233
Australia

BIG OTWAY TREE PLANT

Who's up for the big
Otway tree plant?

Sat 14 & Sun 15 June 2014

We need helping hands to regreen the Otways for local wildlife – we've got thousands of new trees – all ready and raring to plant on a big weekend of fun in a beautiful part of the world.

Free Accommodation: Camping available at Bimbi Park.

Free Food! Frank's world famous wood fired pizzas on Saturday night.

Visit: www.conservationecologycentre.org for all the details and to put your hand up for a place on the Otway Tree Planting team.

Conservation Ecology Centre
Cape Otway

The Otway Ecological Centre is hosting the “Big Otway Tree Plant “ in an effort to regreen the Otways for local wildlife.

They have thousands of new trees ready for planting and are seeking volunteers to participate in the program.

Free camping is available at Bimbi Park and free food (wood fired pizzas) are provided on Saturday night.

Visit www.conservationecologycentre.org for all the details and to put your hand up for a place on the Otway Tree Planting team.

Email Jack Pascoe jack@conservationecologycentre.org to register your interest

Our mailing address is:

Conservation Ecology Centre
635 Lighthouse Road
Cape Otway, VIC 3233
Australia

Ranger Report Feb 2014

Carlie Bronk



Staff Movements

With Katrina Lovett currently on maternity leave to care for baby Etta Pearl, there have been a few staff adjustments. Emma Danby has temporarily stepped in to cover Katrina Lovett's position as ranger program coordinator. Emma will still continue to work in the Anglesea office for the time being.

Aaron Leddon will cover the team leader position in Anglesea (Emma's former position).

Brooke Bailey will be handling the fire related issues formerly covered by Aaron!

Fire

Due to unfavourable weather, we have not had a very successful burning season. Local crews are continuing to assist Midlands and Wimmera districts with their burning program.

Track/ Road Maintenance

Recent road works have been undertaken on Honeypots, Dusty Miller and Alcoa Boundary tracks with some brush-matting of illegal bike tracks surrounding Woodlands, Gumflats and Cecil Tracks.

Upgrading of tracks and drainage works have also taken place on Jarosite Mine track, Moggs Creek tracks, Distillery Creek tracks, the Ironbark Basin Nature trail, Ironbark Gorge, Dam Wall, with beach access and drainage work being completed at Hutt Gully. Work at Red Rocks Access have included drainage, line of sight, and rehabilitation of an illegal campsite on the headland. Maintenance of access road at Urquhart Bluff is soon to be undertaken.

Otway Eden Summary

Environmental weed management is a major issue in the National Park and Anglesea Heath, and the Otway Eden program provides some financial support to conserve the biodiversity of the area.

Many sites and a variety of weeds have been targeted including: Gundrys Rd / Flaxbournes Rd – Coast Wattle / Boneseed; Tanners Rd – Bluebell Creeper; Grey River Rd – wandering Trad/Blue Periwinkle and African Weed Orchid.

The volunteer work of removal of Coast/Sallow Wattle on the Anglesea Heathlands by the Friends of Eastern Otways assisted by ANGAIR has contributed greatly to our weed management program.

Friends Of Eagle Rock Marine Sanctuary

This newly formed Friends Group has been very active. With funding from Parks Victoria they have prepared a full colour intertidal species ID booklet that is now ready to go to print. This should prove invaluable to the many visitors to our local shores.

A photographic exhibition of Eagle Rock prints is to be held at Eagles Nest Gallery, Aireys Inlet. May 31 opening night.

Marine Bioscan works are to be carried out at both the Point Addis Marine National Park and Eagle Rock Marine Sanctuary during May and June. This should increase scientific knowledge of both marine areas.

Marine Park Signage

New MPA signage will be installed at Anglesea and Torquay boat ramps.

National Volunteer Week

To celebrate National Volunteer Week, Parks Victoria would like to invite our volunteers to join us for a walk and barbeque at Lake Elizabeth. Sunday May 11. Meet at 10:30 am for a walk around the lake followed by a barbeque lunch at 1:00 pm. Please RVSP to Frank Gleeson.

This function will be attended by volunteers from many of our Friends Groups, and it is not only an opportunity for Parks Vic staff to thank our volunteers, but it is also an opportunity for members to share their experiences and gain a greater understanding of just how many people are helping to care for the Great Otway National Park. We hope you are able to join with us.

Thank you once again for your tremendous help and dedication to the Anglesea Heath and Eastern Otways.

Regards *Carlie*