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FROM THE  
PRESIDENT  
**Patrick  
Flanagan**

## GETTING YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED

Looking back at our group's activities over the past year, I believe we have been going great guns in getting young people involved with the Friends of Eastern Otways. This time last year we did two weeding sessions at the Mangowak Reserve, each session with a dozen students from the Aireys Inlet Primary School. In June we had a healthy presence of young ones at the Koala count, including Janet's and my grandson James, Peter and Ellen Crowcroft's sons Hughie and Ollie, and Kim and Joe Attwood's grandson William.

In September we worked with ParksVic Ranger, Carlie Bronk, to introduce children and their families to some of the wonderful flowers within our Great Otway National Park. We also involved young people at our spotlighting activity in January, and in April we once again helped Carlie Bronk and Ranger Claire Miller with running their successful Junior Ranger Program (see photos on page 3), spotlighting again, at Moggs Creek Picnic Ground, where we had three families with young children wide-eyed and excited.

We had a great turnout of the Eels football team and their parents weeding on the coastal heath at Moggs Creek overlooking the Great Ocean Road in March – more details are in the report below. There are plans to capitalise on the enthusiasm of the footy club players and parents and weed at this area again later in the football season. In November we intend trying a new kind of activity using electric bikes (with trailers for toddlers) to ride the Old Beechy Trail in the Otways. We hope we can continue to build on our successful youth involvement record so far.

In line with Victorian government policy for the Victorian Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) we have recently documented the Friends' policy for Child Safe standards when working with children. It is very important that we are a child safe organisation, ensuring that when children participate in our activities they are safe and secure at all times.

## COMMUNITY INTERACTION FOR COASTAL CONSERVATION

It was a fun occasion when the Aireys Inlet Eels Under-13 Australian Rules Football Team joined with the Friends of Eastern Otways, the Friends of Moggs Creek and a few local residents to help remove some of the environmental weeds that have invaded the beautiful coastal heathlands at Moggs Creek.

Keen to get fit for the oncoming football season, the Eels turned up on March 18 ready to help the community groups with their weeding activity. Paddy Dangerfield, a local resident and well-known and respected Geelong footballer, came along and spoke to the players emphasising how important it is for sporting groups to support their local communities in various activities. Indeed local involvement is a feature of the Geelong Club and we certainly appreciated Paddy's involvement. His words inspired the young players who were so excited at his presence. He also stayed and joined in the activity and weeds soon started to disappear.



There were plans for a training session for the Eels on the beach after morning tea, but unfortunately the skies

opened up and the long waited-for rain came down in a deluge sending the players and other helpers scuttling for shelter.

ParksVic staff were very supportive of the activity with rangers coming along on the day and also organising the mulching of the cut vegetation. The Eels are keen to come back later in the football season and help out again and we look forward to this happening. The Friends of Eastern Otways say thank-you to all involved! **Margaret MacDonald.**

*Above: Friends of Eastern Otways & Friends of Moggs Creek with members of the Aireys Inlet Eels football team at the Moggs Creek community conservation weeding morning. More pictures page 4.*



## ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDING



The autumn program was carried out in the eastern section of the Great Otway National Park – the corner of Great Ocean Road and Forest Road, and near Hurst Road. We had great attendance at each of our sessions including a new recruit through Park Connect, Adele Hunter. Once again Bluebell Creeper was our main focus and weeders worked tirelessly to remove this invasive species.

### Winter program - Tuesdays - June 12, July 10 & August 14

Meet at the entrance to the Eumeralla Scout Camp Anglesea at 9.30am

Contact Margaret MacDonald 0412 652 419

Weeding will once more be in the eastern area of the Park where various environmental weeds have endeavoured to make this area their home. Meet just inside the archway on the gravel road leading into the Eumeralla Scout Camp at 9.30am.



## COMING EVENTS

### ANNUAL KOALA COUNT

Saturday June 16

Meet at Aireys Inlet Community Centre 9.30 am

Contact Kaye Traynor 0408 551 667



Join us for our annual count of Koalas along Grey River Road at Kennett River. It's a fun day out looking for Koalas, with plenty of opportunity for bird watching. Bring morning tea, lunch, water, sturdy footwear and wet weather gear if necessary. And your binoculars.



### PT ADDIS & IRONBARK BASIN

Saturday July 21

Meet at Ironbark Basin Pt Addis Road at 9.30am

Contact: Alison Watson 0400 570 229

A circuit walk through Eumeralla tracks and Hurst Rd to Red Rocks & along the beach to Pt Addis, the Koori Cultural Walk and Ironbark track through the Basin back to the cars. Either 11 kms for those who enjoy a longer walk or we can leave cars at Pt Addis as an 8 km alternative. Lovely vistas, grasstrees, heath & orchids.

Bring morning tea, lunch, drinks & appropriate clothing.



### LEMONADE CREEK WALK

Saturday June 30

Meet at Aireys Inlet Community Centre 9.30am

Contact Kaye Traynor 0408 551 667



This walk links Blanket Leaf Picnic ground and the Erskine Falls Car Park, taking you through interesting vegetation whilst offering gorgeous views of the creek gullies and forest. It is an easy to moderate walk with some slightly uphill climbs. Approximate length 8km return. BYO lunch, snacks & drinks. Wear appropriate walking clothing and footwear.



### HARRISON TRACK NORTH

Saturday August 18

Meet at Angair 9.30am

Contact: Margaret MacDonald 0412 652 419

We go into the former Alcoa Lease area known as the Anglesea Heath to walk along Harrison and Shiney Eye Tracks, passing through woodland, swampland and heathland.

Panoramic views across Marshy Creek filled with Scented Paperbark. Approx 8 km, easy to moderate walking. BYO morning tea, lunch, drinks & appropriate clothing for all weather.





## FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

### LEMONADE CREEK WALK - March 21

Unfortunately this event was cancelled due to the day being declared Total Fire Ban. It has now been rescheduled to Saturday June 30. Please refer to Coming Events on page 2 for further information.

### PARKS VICTORIA SPOTLIGHT NIGHT WALK – April 10



We met at 6pm at Moggs Creek just as it was getting dark. Park Rangers Carlie Bronk and Claire Miller brought along a display of Brush-tailed Possum, Sugar Glider, Barn Owl and Boobook for the children to observe before we set out. Three family groups and Friends walked along the Nature Trail, observing marks on trees and listening to various birds, crickets and bats.

We could hear but not see Yellow-bellied Gliders and kept walking.



Crossing a bridge a keen visitor spotted a koala, caught in our bright lights. The spotlights also illuminated the reflected eyes of spiders. We walked the whole circuit enjoying being out in the dark of the forest.

Towards the end of the walk shining the spotlight on heart shaped cuts, and following them up the tree we discovered a Yellow-bellied Glider silently observing us. Those ahead returned and everyone had a good look, some with binoculars. No other gliders were seen though they were heard. We could smell the smoke from Ross's fire and were pleased to have a hot cuppa or cordial on our return. Thank you to Carlie and Claire for a very enjoyable evening. **Alison Watson.**

### CANADIAN CORRIDOR/WOOWOOKARUNG REGIONAL PARK EXCURSION – April 21

Although it took over 90 minutes travel and navigating roadworks on the Midland Highway, a group of 15 gathered to hear amazing facts about this very special area. Just a few years ago much of it could have become more housing for Ballarat but a dedicated enthusiastic group managed to convince the authorities of the importance of a continuous green corridor on the eastern edge of the growing city of



Ballarat. So the pine and blue-gum plantations, which constituted about half of the area, were razed and regeneration and some seeding is occurring.

The success of the project is found in the multi user groups coming together under a single banner of keeping the area as a park for all. Innovative ideas for the park such as 'pop up' fungi and wildflower walks, a dementia walk with an app featuring associated natural sounds, and regular events and speakers maintain interest.

Many people use the area which is dry woodland with mainly Box and Stringybark eucalypts with an abundance of grass-trees. Bob and Jeff showed us the Gorge area and we saw some of the issues they are facing such as erosion from 4WD's and bikes, and rubbish dumping. We drove a short distance to the lookout with a stunning view over Ballarat and the surrounding hills and heard about the recent astronomy evening held here.

After lunch in the shade we took a short circuit walk through the bush. We noticed a few small Brown-tipped Greenhoods and an emerging Tall Greenhood. Some of the grass-trees in this area were affected by *Phytophthora cinnamomi*. Birds seen included White-throated Tree-creeper, an unidentified Robin, Spotted Pardalote, Grey Fantail and Grey Currawong.

Everyone enjoyed their day out visiting a new area and hearing and seeing how another Friends group operates. Thank you to Bob, Jeff and Rob and the Friends of Canadian Corridor. **Alison Watson.**





## FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

### FRIENDS FIRST AID – April 20



14 of us arrived for our one-day St Johns First Aid course at the CFA rooms. We had done the pre-reading, and this was the practical day. DRSABCD - Danger, Response, Send for help, Airway, Breathing, CPR, and Defibrillation was emphasised, followed by CPR practice with life-like babies and adult models, hands on with the defibrillation machine, bandaging, epipen practice, various scenarios and the final 'quiz'.



In between a delicious morning tea and lunch from Café Daniele appeared and a yummy surprise birthday cake for Margaret. It was a successful day and we all gained knowledge and confidence and we appreciated Tom's excellent teaching.



*Above left: Alison & Phil Watson and Ros Gibson treating a patient.*

*Above right: Willing participants!*

*Left: Alison Watson and Kaye Traynor saving choking infants. Right: A demonstration by teacher Tom on patient Doug.*



### COMMUNITY INTERACTION FOR COASTAL CONSERVATION

**From page 1**

*Above left: Paddy Dangerfield lends a helping hand.*

*Above: The weeding group silhouetted against a very calm ocean backdrop.*

*Left: Rangers Claire & Scott thank the Friends for organising the successful weeding activity with the Aireys Inlet Eels Under-13 football team.*



## FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

### SABINE FALLS FUNGI WALK – May 19

Following a two hour drive, which included a stop at Kennett River for morning tea, we arrived at the picnic ground carpark to commence a walk to the Sabine Falls, the highest waterfall in the Otways. Some of the group preferred to study the fungi in detail, while four people chose to walk the 3.6 km return track to the Sabine Falls viewing platform.

It was clear that destructive wind storms had passed through the forest in the previous few days as a number of fallen trees and debris meant climbing over obstacles strewn across the walking track.

The rich beauty of the rainforest was apparent with masses of ferns, on the ground and overhead, tree trunks both upright and fallen covered with mosses, lichens and liverworts and some adorned with colourful fungi. We were in awe of the majestic Mountain Ash, Grey and Manna Gums, towering above the forest and in the deep gullies. The forest however, was very quiet with just an occasional bird call.



Along the walking path it was exciting to find live Otway Black Snails *Victaphanta compacta*, as well as several snail remains and we wondered what their main predator might be. We also noticed some trees bearing signs of scarring by Sugar Gliders.

We paused at an historic sawmilling site. After 90 years since the mill closed, all that remains is the sawpit.

We reached the second creek crossing, and because of the rapid flowing water, two of us decided not to attempt to cross on the slippery rocks and we turned back. Two walkers went on a short distance and was able to view the Sabine Falls.

The other half of the group didn't proceed very far at all along the track as every few steps there was new fungi to photograph and record. We were very fortunate to have fungi expert Richard Hartland with us and we really appreciated his help and knowledge. About 40 species were seen and we were impressed with the diversity. Two species required further investigation.

When the others returned we were reluctant to turn around but in the end our stomachs dictated it was time for a late lunch. Some of us returned via Benwerrin Rd and Erskine Falls Rd to Lorne, a very picturesque drive through the tall forest and we discovered it was a quicker alternative to the coast road.

It was a most enjoyable day spent in one of the most beautiful places in the Great Otway National Park, and well worth a return visit. The fungi were really only just getting started and most were very small. With winter approaching even greater diversity is predicted. **Kaye Traynor & Alison Watson.**



*Above: Two of the many varieties of fungi found during the Sabine Falls walk.  
At left: An Otway Black Snail.*



*Above: Kaye & Graham negotiate a fallen tree on the track to the Sabine Falls.*

*Below left: A happy group of Friends at the Sabine Falls sign. Below right: Richard Harland helps Kim identify a fungi specimen.*





**CAMERA MONITORING REPORT**

In the middle of February we placed three cameras behind the Horse Club in Coalmine Rd, at a quiet bend in the river overlooking Coogoorah Park. They were close to the water and in an area away from tracks and through-ways. This area is adjacent to Alcoa freehold land that, on their plan, is slated for infill development.

John Lenagan and I picked up the cameras on March 17. The cameras were in place for just over a month, representing around 99 camera days. One camera (HF2) stopped working on 22/3. It may be because the batteries went flat, but I'm not sure of the cause so will 'monitor' it.

Over 4000 frames were collected. The species identified included Black Wallabies, Red Fox, Fallow Deer, Grey Shrike-thrush and Eastern Grey Kangaroo.

A notable observation was that the EGK, a young male Kangaroo, was in very poor condition. I sent a query, with photos, to Graeme Coulson from the University of Melbourne seeking his opinion of the Kangaroo's condition. He replied that "Males are quite lean a lot of the time and can look thin and miserable then bounce back into much better shape".

As we well know, the late summer and warm autumn has been very dry, this extended period without rain has reduced noticeably the quality and quantity of grass to feed on. Perhaps, the shortage of good-quality food explains his emaciated appearance. I do wonder why he doesn't just join the mob on the Anglesea Golf Course, where more green grass is available.

We also observed the 'roo resting, just on the edge of the camera frame, in two locations, once for 90 minutes and a second time for just short of two hours, both in the early morning. He was obviously using the area as a quiet resting place away from the hustle and bustle of more disturbed places.

The Fallow Deer was also skinny, but not quite as skeletal as the 'roo. The Black Wallabies appear to be in much better condition and we snapped frames of a female with a joey in her pouch. Obviously, she thinks conditions are good enough to keep breeding.

The results of the monitoring have been uploaded to the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas, including comments on the poor condition of the 'roo. I did play around with doing a batch upload of the results to the VBA, but when I ran into problems, I just entered the data directly on the website. I also sent the location of the sighting of the fox and the deer to Claire Miller who has taken over from Cathy Longmore on the Otway Ark Project.

Kaye, Margaret, Alison and I placed 4 cameras at a dam below the gate of the Eumeralla Scout Camp after the April weeding. We will leave them there until later this month. **Patrick Flanagan.**



*Above: Patrick Flanagan attaches a camera to a tree on a quiet bend of the Anglesea River opposite Coogoorah Park.*

**MEMBERSHIP FEES**

Members are reminded that the annual membership fee of \$15.00 for individuals and families was due on March 1. If you have not yet renewed, the fee may now be paid by:

- 1. Electronic Bank Transfer

Bendigo Bank: BSB 633-000

Account No: 150830826

Account name: "Friends of Eastern Otways"

Please enter your Membership ID in the Referenced Field, in the "To" Account.

This ID takes the form of the first 5 letters of your surname (less if your surname is shorter than 5 letters) plus a number, which is either shown in your email, or printed on the address label of your newsletter.

OR

- 2. Cheque made payable to "Friends of Eastern Otways", and mailed to the Treasurer, P.O. Box 140, Anglesea, Vic 3230.

We depend entirely on your support for our ongoing effort to protect our environment, especially as we sometimes need to pay for outside contractors to complete some of the heavier work.

Not sure if you have renewed? If you receive your newsletter by mail and the year shown on the address label is 2017 or earlier your subscription has not been paid.

If you receive your newsletter by email and are not sure if your subscription is up to date please do not hesitate to contact us.

The Friends of Eastern Otways thank everyone who has renewed their subscriptions and also those who have made a donation. **Ross Davey, Hon Treasurer.**

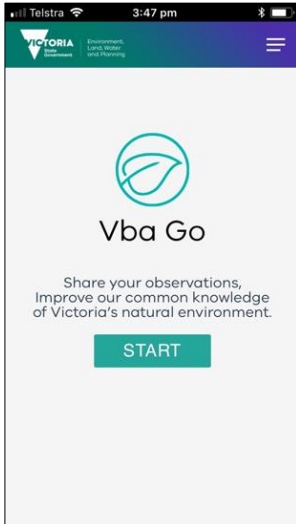


We welcome Caryl Nowson and family from Aireys Inlet who have joined us since our last newsletter:



### VICTORIAN BIODIVERSITY ATLAS (VBA) GOES MOBILE

The Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) is an electronic record of Victoria's wildlife and is used to inform important planning and development decisions. The Atlas obtains its entries from formal sources, such as ParksVic and DELWP, and informal sources, such as the Friends. For example, we contribute all records from our camera monitoring, the Koala count and annual survey of Anglesea's *Caladenia maritima* to the Atlas.



Now there is a more convenient and user-friendly way to contribute to the Atlas, called VBA Go. So, if you are a keen bushwalker and observer of wildlife, or if you just enjoy observing what visits your garden or your local conservation reserve, you can use VBA Go to record them on the VBA.

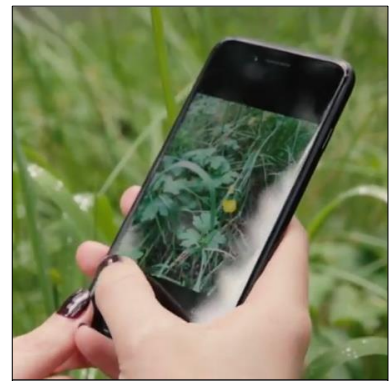
You can now contribute these sightings to the VBA from any smartphone when you are out and about. The VBA mobile tool (called VBA Go) is a website (<https://atlas.biodiversity.vic.gov.au/about>) that allows you to enter your observations on the Atlas easily and conveniently.

VBA Go is useful because you are able to enter your observations when you make them, in the field: Entry takes no more than a minute or two, once you have set it up.

The most powerful feature of the VBA and VBA Go is a flexible, intelligently-searchable database of flora, and terrestrial and marine fauna. The database is accessible either by common name or scientific name, that guesses from what has been typed, what the species might be and

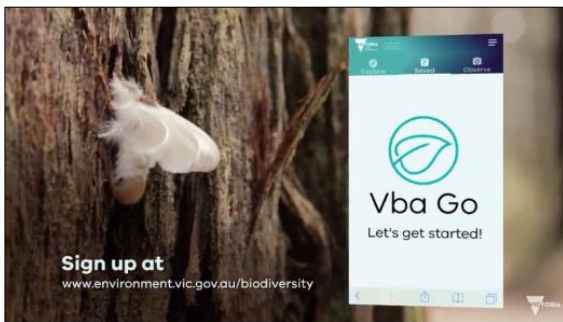
the more you type the better the database narrows down the list of candidate species. The database will come up with the common and scientific names. To make the search process simpler, you can select to search only within Fauna, Flora, or Marine species.

Another useful feature of VBA Go is the ability to use the inbuilt GPS, available in most smartphones, to identify the location of the observation and store it automatically. You are also able to upload a photo of the animal or plant from your phone camera, if you wish.



So get involved. All you need is your VBA login details and your smart phone. If you don't have a VBA login you can first sign up on the desktop version and thereafter login to VBA Go.

To sign up to the VBA, visit the main website ([vba.dse.vic.gov.au/vba/](http://vba.dse.vic.gov.au/vba/)) and select "Sign up". Enter a Username (which can contain



letters, numbers and underscores and have 6-15 characters), your first and last name, your email address and a password with more than 6 characters. You can also make Friends of Eastern Otways your organisation by selecting it in the drop-down list of Organisations. Accept "DATA ENTRY – amateur naturalist" as your Primary Use of VBA. Select the "Please read Terms and Conditions" checkbox and, finally, select "Sign Up".

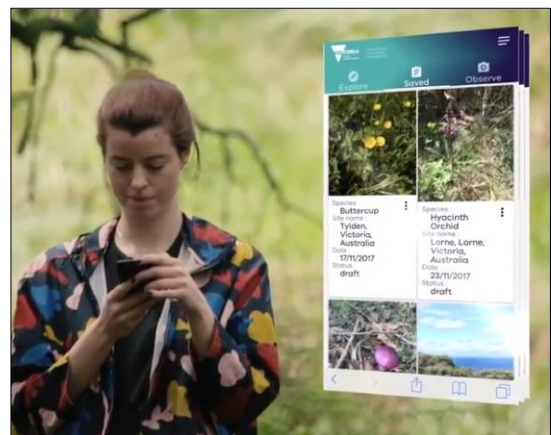
You will be notified at the email address you provided when your account has been activated. Once you have received the confirmatory email, it might pay to try logging in to the desktop site to make sure you can log in correctly. Thereafter you can use VBA Go on your phone.

To allow VBA Go to access your GPS, location services need to be enabled. This is in Settings. Finally, it's a great idea to add VBA Go to your home screen. It then becomes an icon that you just select and it will open, so you don't have to start a browser and type in the address each time.

You can take a look at how VBA Go works in this short video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMxAKtEruFc>

Further details are available on the DELWP VBA website: [www.environment.vic.gov.au](http://www.environment.vic.gov.au). Just go there and search for VBA Go. This website and video will show you how to add a new observation.

If you want to use VBA Go but are having problems with signing in or using it, please email me at [friendofeasternotways@gmail.com](mailto:friendofeasternotways@gmail.com) and I'll try to help. If I can't Rani Hunt and Mel Hardie from DELWP (who provided the material for this item) will be useful backups. **Patrick Flanagan**



Hello everyone,

**STAFF MOVEMENTS**

There are no major staff movements to report this month. Katrina Lovett is acting in the District Operations role and will be returning to her normal role once the position is filled. The fire crew has finished up soon after a reasonably quiet fire season, and a late busy fuel reduction burning period in April. It is always sad to see the fire crew finish their contracts, as they make up such a valuable part of Parks Victoria, but hopefully we will see them back for another season.

We are pleased to have Felix Marshall join us as a new Ranger in Anglesea Heath. Felix has been with us for many years in different roles and will be a great asset to the team. Felix has a lot of work ahead of him making the old Alcoa lease area into a National Park that protects our valuable plant community and enables passive use by the community.

**FUEL REDUCTION BURNS**

Due to milder weather conditions this autumn, Parks Victoria and DELWP have been busy completing fuel reduction burns in the area. We have been able to complete some important burns around the Anglesea, Aireys Inlet and Lorne townships, which will hopefully reduce bushfire risk during danger periods. Also, the Friends will be aware that a portion of the O'Donohue's block was burnt recently, and I am sure that everyone will be looking forward to seeing what emerges from the ground in the coming year.

**JUNIOR RANGERS PROGRAM**

The Rangers on the Surf Coast are very pleased with the successful Easter holiday Junior Ranger program. My personal highlight was the Junior Ranger event held at the Cumberland River Caravan Park. At this event there was well over 40 people who really



enjoyed the activities that my colleague Claire Miller and I organised. Thank you to all the Friends who ran the spotlight event at Moggs Creek.

Claire reported that the kids had a lot of fun and saw some fantastic creatures.

I also have some great feedback to pass on to the group, one of the mothers on the day said that the Friends have inspired some young naturalists to take lights out into their local environment for more spotlighting.

Our Rangers enjoy helping families learn about the Great Otway National Park. Our Otway Ark camera activity is getting rave reviews from kids who really enjoyed being part of this activity and we hope to run a lot more activities throughout the year.



*Pictured above are participants in the Junior Rangers program at the Cumberland River Caravan Park, and at right, Ranger Claire Miller with some enthusiastic young naturalists checking their facts.*



**ANGLESEA HEATH**

The Anglesea team are busy getting a range of projects up and running out in the Heath that will hopefully start in the next month or so. This includes motorbike compliance where we will target off track use, asbestos removal, and road improvement. Also, contractors are well and truly on the way to completing pest plant projects in the Heath. I am particularly happy with the work that has been completed along the Salt Creek area, which was performed by Simon and the team at Ecological Rehabilitation Solutions.

*Left: The view to the west across the Anglesea Heath towards Aireys Inlet. ParksVic photo.*

**WOMBAT TALE**

Also, on a slightly odd note, our Lorne staff recently found a dead Wombat on the side of the Deans Marsh Road. I'm sure that the Friends will be aware there are no historic records of Wombats in the Otway Ranges, but we also have some photos captured by our staff of Wombats on the Great Ocean Road. Carlie Bronk will be following up on this matter but it seems that our Wombats may have been relocated from another area. It appears Wombats have finally made their way to the Otways. If any of the Friends see any Wombats please let us know, as we like to keep collecting records. **Matt Russell, Ranger, Lorne**