



November 1, 2014

From the President

*Rachel Faggetter*



Anglesea heathlands, listed for over 20 years on the Register of the National Estate were spectacular for our annual wildflower walk in October. It was a perfect spring day to observe and enjoy dozens of species, including the rare Purple Eyebright and the plucky Flying Duck orchids growing in a gravel pit. It was a walk for retraining the brain and revitalising the botanical memory.



*(Purple Eyebright)*

At lunch we sat with a panoramic view over the huge Anglesea coal mine, and heard the distant grind of the trucks. Around us the Silky Teatree spread its white and pink carpet. A Shining Gum was weighed down by its thick creamy flowers that were being visited by the spectacular Imperial Jezebel butterflies attracted by the strong scent of the flowers. A Thornbill called. With so many flowers it was hard to find a clear spot to sit.



When I was a child, the mine wasn't there. We explored the flowery paradise all round the back of Anglesea. By 1960, mining for brown coal had begun, and in 1969 the power station began to generate electricity for the Alcoa Point Henry smelter, that closed down in July this year. So much heathland was destroyed, and so much more will be gone if the mine continues.

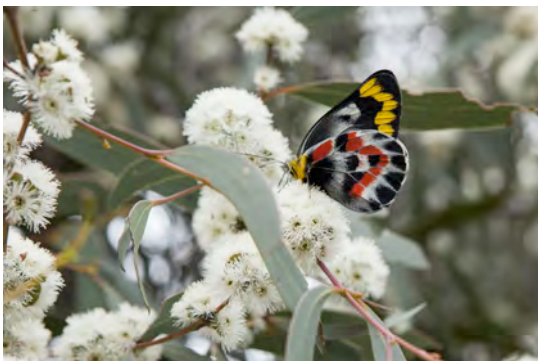
*(Flying Duck Orchid)*



Over lunch I dreamed that in ten years' time we might sit at that same place and look out on a landscape healed and restored. Why not?

It could be a project to inspire the nation. It would take imagination, expertise and money, but the community would provide willing helpers and the project would generate many jobs.

Surely it is feasible, with political will and some courage. We would be joining the rest of the world in ending our reliance on coal, especially on an outmoded and unnecessary mine which threatens the health of our community.



Imagine the challenge of working with nature to restore that wonderful landscape and bring back its plants and animals. Perhaps there might be a lake or a large bank of solar collectors hidden by the mine cliffs. So many possibilities. It would be a mighty community project to recognise a unique treasure, our heathlands.

*(Imperial Jezebel butterfly captured by camera on Eucalyptus falciformis Shining Peppermint)*

*(Photographs per courtesy Bryce Dunkley)*

## FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

### MAMMAL SURVEY & WALK IN THE PARK

#### Forrest Area

Saturday, November 15

9.30am – 5.00pm

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

Contact: Lachie 5289 7029



Our annual Mammal Survey is to take place in the Forrest area where we will join with Geelong naturalist Trevor Pescott who lives in the area and has a wealth of knowledge that he will willingly share with us.

Having placed our four remote cameras within the Great Otway National Park where we hope to widen our knowledge of mammals in the area, Trevor will lead us on a walk in the district. At this stage we are not too sure where we will be going but any walks in the Forrest area are always a delight. It will not be a strenuous activity.

We intend visiting the Forrest Guest House for afternoon tea before returning to Aireys Inlet.

### END OF YEAR CELEBRATIONS

Saturday, December 13

Combined activity with ANGAIR Inc. and Parks Vic.

Meet at the Moggs Creek Picnic Ground at 10.00am.

Short walk around the Moggs Creek circuit track where there is always a wealth of flora and many birds to observe or hear.

If you don't wish to participate in the walk, just come along to the Picnic Ground and join us for lunch at 12 noon.

Meat, sauce and bread provided.

Bring your own salads, sweets, drinks, plates, glasses, cutlery and fold-up chair.



*We would love to see you there.* Contact Kaye: 5263 2011

### ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDING

Our regular environmental weeding will continue on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month – 9.30am-11.00am. November 11, December 9 and February 10. We will give ourselves a well-deserved holiday in January.

We are switching our attack once again to the River Site at Anglesea as we are keen to complete the implementation of our Caring for our Country Grant.

*Meet at corner of Camp Road and Coalmine Road. Following all of these sessions we will visit one of the local coffee shops in Anglesea. Our December 9 will be a celebration of our achievement. We would certainly welcome some more helpers.*

Contact Margaret 5289 6326

November 11    December 9    February 10

### AN EARLY DIARY ENTRY

#### *Annual General Meeting*

Sunday, February 8 at 2pm ANGAIR Natural History Centre

McMillan St ANGLESEA

## INFORMATION REGARDING FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

### August 16 Loves Track Walk (Report by Joe Bolza)

Twelve walkers were keen to see the site where a memorial seat would be erected in honour of Claire Roberts, co-founder of the Friends Group. We set off from the start of Loves Track on Bambra Road, in perfect weather. This is a very pleasant forest track leading through tall Brown Stringybark trees, and many indigenous plants had begun their flowering season.

Yellows were well represented by Myrtle, Spreading and Varnish Wattles, Hop Goodenia and Guinea Flower; reds and pinks by the Common Correa, and Pink Bells; and white and creams by the Scented Sundew, Dusty Miller and Slender Pimelea. Occasional sightings of greenhoods, both Tall and Nodding added to the kaleidoscope.

Loves Track crosses the Currawong Falls Track at Trig Point, and here we took a narrow path for one km, to a 'Picnic Site', where there is a magnificent panoramic view of the Split Point Lighthouse and the township of Aireys Inlet. This will be a fitting resting place for the memorial seat, and much discussion took place about the best vantage spot.

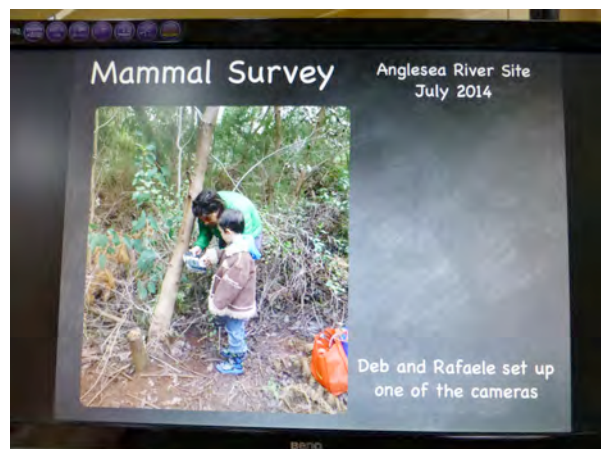
The 2km descent track that leads to the Distillery Creek Picnic Ground has some beautiful glimpses of the coast and later Ironbark Gorge, but unfortunately too many views of the ravages of the Cinnamon Fungus. Although we sprayed our boots and the bases of our walking sticks both before and after the walk, the popularity of this route amongst walkers, runners and even mountain bikes means the spread of this fungus will remain unchecked.

### Saturday, September 20 & Sunday, September 21 ANGAIR Wildflower Weekend

Thanks to those members of the Friends Group who helped with the preparation and implementation of our display at the ANGAIR Wildflower weekend.

We were very proud of the display that featured the accessible waterfalls within the Great Otway National Park. We were able to link the display to our Walk Book of the Otways and were able to sell a good number of copies.

We also had a visual laptop presentation sharing our camera surveys, annual koala survey, flora surveys and the Hooded Plover story where we had two young juveniles raised at Moggs Creek in February 2014. We were thrilled to have some Hooded Plover specimens from Barwon Coast Management enabling people to gain a visual impression of the size of the birds. Birds Australia used our static display and our laptop visual presentation to impart information to the community regarding these great little birds.



Our displays attracted many visitors who were keen to locate the waterfalls on the map provided and to talk about the surveys we had carried out during the year.



## September 26 & October 10

## *Caladenia maritima* Surveys

As in previous years, two surveys were carried out to determine the population of this endemic orchid that is now included under the Victorian Flora & Fauna Guarantee Listing.

Our survey results for this year indicated a presence of just 548 flowering plants.

Last year we counted 1208 and in 2012 we had 1272 orchids.

The results were very disappointing but it is a similar story with all types of terrestrial orchids throughout Victoria this spring. The dry conditions just have not encouraged orchid growth. Another scenario we had was a great infestation of ants on the eastern side of our survey. The ground had been completely turned over and very few orchids were found in that area. However the orchid population is very healthy and we are optimistic for better results next year. It is as we have said previously a bit worrying that we know only of this one population that is endemic to the Anglesea district.



## Mammal Surveys

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.



We have only carried out one survey since our last Newsletter and that was once again on the Anglesea River Site where we have carried out our Caring for our Country Grant project over the last two years. This time we identified Brushtail Possum, Fox, Swamp Wallaby, Domestic Dog, Thrush, Rabbit, Feral Cat and a Southern Brown Bandicoot.

We also placed hairtubes in the area and the analysed wafers indicated Brushtail Possum, Antechinus sp. and House Mouse all visited our hairtubes.

We presently have our four remote cameras placed near Gundrys Road. It used to be habitat for New Holland Mouse so we are always optimistic.

## Wildflower Walk in Anglesea Heath Saturday, October 18

Despite a few hiccups in the preparation for our wildflower walk, when we found we had omitted to include details in our previous Newsletter, the wildflower walk in the Anglesea Heath was most enjoyable. We had a group of 25 members and friends who shared in this activity with us and we were joined by Bryce and Deborah, professional photographers, who were keen to get some pictures of flowers and people enjoying themselves in the bushland. Some of their photography has been included with this report and also with the page 1 article written by Rachel.

As Rachel has said it was a perfect spring day and we were amazed that, despite the lack of rain, the heathland flowers were most spectacular. We visited three sites. Our first stop was at a section of the Great Otway National Park at Mt Ingoldsby where the Purple Eyebright grows. It was showing off its beauty in all shades from pale mauve to deep purple. We were also thrilled to find two Tiny *Caladenia pusilla* in perfect condition, and also some flower buds of the rare Blotched Sun Orchid *Thelymitra benthamiana*, hopefully strong enough to open in a couple of weeks time. This area is scheduled for an ecological burn which should be of great benefit to the vegetation. Our next stop was on Mt Ingoldsby Road where we just stopped long enough for everyone to admire the Flying Duck Orchids.

The main purpose of our walk was to take people into the Salt Creek area between Alcoa Boundary Track and Peregrine Track that is designated as a future mining area if coal mining is continued in the area. We wanted people to be aware of the beauty of the area. There were so many species to admire – so many colours intermingling. Bryce and Deborah's cameras were certainly capturing so many images.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Caring for our Country Community Environment Grant 2013-14

We have almost completed our project on the Anglesea River site bounded by Camp Road and Coalmine Road. Our final report is due early in 2015. The project to protect this significant area of vegetation has been a culmination of our efforts enabled by previous funding through the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and the Federal Government. It has been a challenging but very rewarding project, and it is an area that we will continue to monitor in the years to come. So many people have been involved – we have been supported by Parks Vic, DEPI, Alcoa, ANGAIR, CVA, many school groups and of course our wonderful individual volunteers.

We say a big thank-you to you all.

### Growth! Is bigger better?

Surf Coast Energy Group extends an invitation to listen to leading experts, and join the discussion on Sunday, 16 November at 2-5.30pm at the Quicksilver Auditorium, 27 Baines Crescent, Torquay.

The event will be chaired by Rod Quantock, and speakers include:

Emeritus Prof. Ian Lowe – Griffith University: *Bigger or Better*

Prof. David Karoly – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: *Climate Change & Coal*

Geoff Carr – Ecology Australia : *Decline in Nature Here and Everywhere*

There will also be a Q&A session for South Barwon candidates in the forthcoming State Election.

### Anglesea Heathlands Time To Protect a National Treasure

With this Newsletter we are including a brochure produced by the Geelong Environmental Council with support from the Victorian National Parks Association, ANGAIR and the Friends of Eastern Otways.

The message is of course that with Alcoa closing the aluminium smelter at Point Henry we believe that we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to protect the Anglesea Heath by ceasing mining in the area, rehabilitating the mine, and including the Alcoa Lease area in the Great Otway National Park.

We urge everyone who wishes to protect our unique Anglesea heathland for ever in a secure National Park to inform the Premier of Victoria (whoever it may be) of your concerns regarding any future mining and power operations in Anglesea, and the advantages for all Victorians in ensuring the long term preservation of the Anglesea heathlands.

*Friends of Eastern Otways wish you and your family  
a safe and happy holiday season.*

*We thank you for your help in 2014 and  
look forward to your continued support  
in 2015.*



*We hope to see you at the Moggs Creek Picnic Ground  
on December 13*



**RANGER REPORT**      **From: Cathy Longmore PARKS VICTORIA**  
**1/11/14**

### Staffing Movements

Just to bring you up to date with recent staffing movements in the area.

#### **Ranger Anglesea**

*Cathy Longmore* I have started as a Ranger based out of Anglesea. I will be running with the fox baiting program, assisting with Otway Eden, the small mammal monitoring project and also assisting with community groups including of course Friends of Eastern Otways. I look forward to meeting up with you.

**District Manager** – After eight years as District Chief Ranger, Trevor Dess has decided to leave Parks Victoria and has taken a position as the Manager for Fire Preparedness and Response for the Barwon South West Region. Dale Antonyson has commenced his role as the new District Manager. Dale has been the District Manager for the North West for the last five years and is keen to return to this area where he was formerly Ranger-in-charge.

**Summer Crew** – Our seasonal firefight crew are starting to come online. There will be 14 seasonal firefighting staff in total based out of the Lorne and Anglesea depots. Their job will be to assist with fire prevention works locally and to contribute to the state-wide emergency response team.

### **A few additional items of interest**

#### Track openings and Park Maintenance

Staff have been busy clearing timber off the tracks and all of the seasonal tracks will be reopened by 31<sup>st</sup> October.

They also have been busy getting the campgrounds and day visitor areas up to scratch for the Melbourne Cup weekend. Weed control, mowing, brushcutting and repairing a vandalised picnic table at Urquhart Bluff have all been ticked off the work list. It will be interesting to see how busy the campgrounds will be for the Melbourne Cup long weekend with the new camping fees and booking system up and running.

#### Spring Burning

Taking advantage of a warm, dry spring, a number of fuel reduction burns have already been undertaken around the Anglesea, Aireys Inlet and Forrest areas. The usual road and track rehab will follow these burns. There are still a number of identified spring burns to occur in the Eastern Otways area if the conditions are right.

#### Pest plant/animal control

Weeds in the Coalmine Rd/Camp Road block - Peter Hay plans to tackle Coast Wattle and larger woody weeds in this area. If the Friends group wish to target the Boneseed with a school/tafe group it would be very much appreciated. There are a few large patches in there, when you begin to walk around.

## **A big thank-you from the Eastern Otways Staff**

It seems unbelievable that the year is already drawing to an end! On behalf of Parks Victoria and all the Eastern Otways staff we would like to say a big THANK YOU to all the members of the Friends of Eastern Otways. We truly appreciate the immense effort and time that such volunteers put in to enhancing the Great Otway National Park and Anglesea Heath area.

Have a wonderful time as the summer draws near. We look forward to seeing you all at the end of the year celebration BBQ on December 13.

Thank you once again for your invaluable contribution and dedication to the Anglesea Heath and Great Otway National Park

Take care,  
*Cathy Longmore* Ranger – East Otways