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FROM THE  
PRESIDENT  
**Patrick  
Flanagan**

## A BUSY AND PRODUCTIVE YEAR

We had a busy, productive and, I think, successful 2018. Apart from our usual activities such as weeding, camera monitoring and regular outings in the Park, our special involvement with the Kids Thrive program at Northern Bay College, Carlie Bronk's Junior Ranger Program in the September holidays and recently helping the students from Aireys Inlet Primary School learn about their Mangowak Reserve, has kept us busy and entertained while helping to ensure the next generation is learning about our local environment.

Next year also promises to be an enjoyable and busy one. Between now and the next newsletter, we have our joint end of year BBQ with ANGAIR on December 8 and a spotlighting night at Moggs Creek on January 4. Remember to put the AGM in your diary for Sunday, February 10 and come along to find out what other exciting activities we have planned for next year.

### JUNIOR RANGER HOLIDAY FUN

Parks Victoria's Junior Ranger Program offers fun, ranger-guided activities aimed at encouraging kids to explore Victoria's amazing parks. During the September school holidays the Friends of Eastern Otways once again shared in implementing an activity with Carlie Bronk, one of our local Parks Vic rangers, and some of the children who either live in the area or were visiting during the holidays.

Numbers of participants were limited, and the Friends worked alongside Carlie to introduce the children and their families to some of the beautiful flowers that grow in the heathland areas of the Great Otway National Park. The children enjoyed placing a flower sticker on their laminated flower sheet when they discovered it (or were shown it) as they walked through the heathland.

It was a fun experience and we all shared the excitement of a little boy who was thrilled to find the last flower on his sheet – a spider orchid! **Margaret MacDonal**.

*Right & below: Friends of Eastern Otways Patrick Flanagan, Margaret MacDonal and Alison Watson assist Carlie Bronk lead the activities.*







## ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDING

### ANGLESEA HEATHLANDS

Our spring program on the Anglesea Heathlands has been most rewarding. Some of the Parks Vic. rangers came to our session in September with our main target being Coast Tea-tree that had emerged since the fuel reduction burn carried out in April this year. It was very pleasing to see that there was very little Boneseed that had emerged.

This was a great contrast to the result of the previous control burn in 2004 when carpets of this weed covered the ground. Obviously we must have done a thorough job when we weeded in 2005.



Above: The Friends were joined by Parks Vic rangers at the September weeding day.



Above: Gail & Mandy, wet but happy on the October weeding day.

Our session on October 9 was carried out in moist, misty conditions but our enthusiastic workers continued regardless – it was a pity the sun was not out as we found many of our sun orchids scattered through the area where we were weeding. Unfortunately we also found two South African weed orchids *Disa bracteata* (at right) that were quickly removed. Another concern appears to be a hybrid Silky Tea-tree/Coast Tea-tree that was in full bloom (pictured below).



Our November 13 session was in perfect weather, but the sun orchids were finished. We removed mainly Coastal/Sallow Wattle nearer to the Great Ocean Road and were dismayed to find more of the weed orchid – this time we estimated over 30 mature plants. Matt Russell, Parks Vic ranger, sprayed the infested site on November 15, so hopefully they will be kept out of our heathlands.

We will continue our summer program on the heathlands as there is still a lot that needs our attention. We are hopeful that the emu wrens

which like these heathlands will return as the coastal plants are now recovering well from the burn. **Margaret MacDonald.**

#### Summer program – Anglesea Heathlands

Tuesdays December 11 & February 12. Meet in O'Donohue Rd close to 5th Avenue. Contact Margaret MacDonald 0412 652 419



## COMING EVENTS

### End of Year Celebration

Saturday December 8 2018

10.00 am – 2.00 pm

Combined activity with ANGAIR & Parks Vic.

Meet at the Moggs Creek Picnic Ground at 10.00am.

Contact: Kaye 0408 551 667



Enjoy a short guided walk around the Moggs Creek circuit track to see the wealth of flora and listen to the calls of the birds. Or just join us for lunch at 12 noon.

Meat, sauce and bread provided.

BYO salads, sweets, drinks, plates, glasses, cutlery and chair.



### BBQ and Spotlight Walk

Friday January 4 2019

BBQ 7.30 pm. Spotlight

Walk 8.30pm

Meet at Moggs Creek

Picnic Ground

Contact Margaret: 0412 652 419

BYO everything for your BBQ, plus mozzie repellent and a torch.



### Friends of Eastern Otways Annual General Meeting

Sunday February 10 2019 at 2pm

at the CFA meeting room Anglesea.



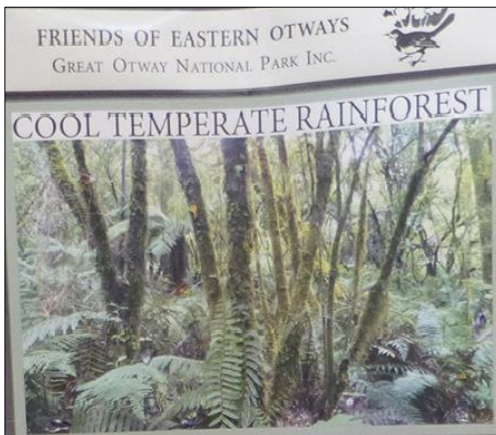


## FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

### ANGAIR WILDFLOWER WEEKEND - September 22-23



Above: Rachel supervises some young visitors enjoying the display of the 'Cool Temperate Rainforest'. Below: The theme of the display.



Below: The display featured the Dusky Antechinus.



These small ground-dwelling marsupials inhabit the cool and wet forest areas and coastal heathland in the south-eastern Australian mainland and Tasmania. They rely on understorey vegetation for food and shelter, are carnivorous and forage in the topsoil and litter for small invertebrates.

Once again the Friends of Eastern Otways contributed to the ANGAIR Wildflower Weekend as our September activity. Our display this year featured the Cool Temperate Rainforest, and the theme enabled us to provide a spectacular display of many aspects of rainforest beauty.

We thank all those people who shared their great photos with us. The rainforest discovery challenge was very successful with children and some adults who also joined in to find the birds and other animals hiding in the rainforest.

Patrick's DVD presentation enabled children to view some of the animals captured on our camera images during the year, while Kaye's display of the Dusky Antechinus introduced many people to this unfamiliar creature.

Most visitors were pleased to stop and have a chat with our members and we were pleased to welcome some new members to our group. **Margaret MacDonald.**



Above: Alison chats to a family of interested visitors. Below: Enjoying the presentation of the mammal surveys.







## FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER



### BALD HILLS WILDFLOWER WALK - October 20

Early rain and it looked like it would be a wet walk but the sky cleared and 14 of us including two visitors, gathered and squeezed into three 4WD's for the slippery drive out to Bald Hills.

At the start of Boundary track the Shiny Peppermint *Eucalyptus falciformis* was a mass of flowers. Creamy Smokebush and Heath Milkwort were both flowering well throughout the area. We were impressed by the Dwarf Bush-pea *Pultenaea humilis*, the dainty Twining Fringe-lily and masses of Silky Teatree – mostly white but patches of pink here and there. There were colourful Red-riding-hood *Gompholobium ecostatum* and the yellow form Dwarf Wedge pea; Globe-pea and Common Aotus. The Small Sheoak *Allocasuarina misera* was flowering and we were able to compare the male and female plants. Orchids seen included a few sun orchids, one small



bearded greenhood and we were thrilled to find a group of Flying Duck orchids.

The views of the mine have changed with the coal face now covered and water accumulating at the base. Somehow the scar seems larger. Rain was threatening but we managed to have lunch at the corner of Peregrine Track before it became heavy and had us stepping out along the much eroded track back to Bald Hill Rd. We all agreed it had been a very enjoyable walk. **Alison Watson**



Top: A well-deserved lunch break on Boundary Track. Above left: Out came the sun and the group enjoyed watching the sun orchids respond. Above right: Looking across the heathland at the mine site. Bottom: Following Boundary Track into the valley.







## FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

### OLD BEECHY RAIL TRAIL E-BIKE RIDE – November 17

A stunning day – sun shining and hardly a cloud in the sky. After a delicious morning tea in the local park in Gellibrand, some practice on how to ride an e-bike, and for some, reacquainting themselves with bicycle riding after a long gap, 11 bike riders and 5 walkers set off in two groups along the Old Beechy Rail Trail. With Nathan as the e-bike instructor and guide, our group pedalled west, towards Dinmont.

The group enjoyed a two-hour ride along the picturesque undulating rail trail, stopping to learn about the trail's history. The trail was narrow, enclosed by the forest and mostly uphill on the first leg. This of course meant a lot of free-wheeling on the way home. The landscapes varied including a logged area, a dairy farm and rain forest.



Between the walkers and the riders there were lots of birds seen and heard including Yellow Robin, Grey Fantail, Golden Whistler, Brown Thornbill, Grey Shrike-thrush, Pied Currawong, Sulphur Crested Cockatoos, Yellow-faced honey eater, Magpie Lark, Welcome Swallow, Little Raven, Sparrow, Starling and Galah.

The walkers observed Mountain Clematis *Clematis aristata* (male), Snow Daisy-bush *Olearia lirata* and stunning Black Wattle *Acacia mearnsii* in flower. The two groups reconvened in the park and enjoyed lunch with the sun on their backs. A good day was had by all, so it's likely we will run it again next year. **Sue Guinness.**



Top: Enjoying a delicious snack and a break in the park. Centre from left: Ellinor, Gretel, Margaret and Margaret; Phil & Patrick watching the action: Eathorne practising. Above: Steady, set and nearly ready to go.





## FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

### ANNUAL SURVEY *Caladenia maritima* – September 24, October 3 & October 13

As we observed that some of our orchids had started flowering slightly earlier than usual this year, we decided to do our first survey on September 24. The site had been burnt in April, and the flowers generally appeared rather small and weak. We counted 182 flowers on the first occasion. Our October surveys surprised us with the number of orchids that had recently appeared, and also the fact that the flowers seemed to be stronger and larger. Our total count was 908. We kept returning to the Anglesea Newsagency for more and more packets of icy pole sticks!



Obviously the species had responded well to the burn as this was our third highest count since we started our surveys – in 2012 we had 1272 orchids and in 2013 we had 1208. Since that time numbers had decreased greatly, with last year's count being just 444 orchids.

Some very attractive hybrids were also observed. We have noticed Pink Fingers *Caladenia carnea* there in the past, but none this year, so we are assuming that the hybrids are *Caladenia maritima/Caladenia carnea*. **Margaret MacDonald.**

*Left: Margaret and Kaye keeping count. Right top: Caladenia maritima and at right, the hybrid.*



### SWIFFT VIDEO CONFERENCE - October 25

The conference attended by Margaret MacDonald and Kaye Traynor, included four presentations with the general theme, "Communication for Conservation". Unfortunately some technical hitches prevented us hearing Emily Gregg's "Strategic messaging for biodiversity conservation".

Ann Jones, producer of the ABC Radio National program 'Off Track', spoke of her curiosity and fascination with natural science as she travels throughout the country. She brings to the radio audience items of interest through her interviews with groups and individuals involved in conservation.

Chris McCormack's presentation was titled "Connection in screen and space. Trialling approaches to nature conservation". He works with a range of community groups and organisations to help people connect with nature and raise awareness of environmental issues and species. By sharing stories and experiences it is clear that people do care and are keen to make a difference.

An initiative begun as an art and science project at Beeac Primary School was the subject of Peter Day's presentation, "Beeac Brolga Pathways". Peter suggested an art project about Brolgas, the native birds which are found around the Beeac area, combining



sculpture, education and community involvement has prompted awareness of Brolga habitat and because of this more sightings are being recorded.

Understanding of ecology of the Brolga, their importance and survival in the landscape creates a sense of ownership of the wetlands and the brolgas for the local school and community. Through art and science, interaction with children has developed a connection and passion for this bird, and their involvement shows just what can be done on a local level. **Kaye Traynor**

*Left: Understanding Brolga ecology through art are these Beeac Primary School children with their Brolga sculpture.*



**ANGLESEA HEATHLAND PROJECT**

Saul Vermeeren from Parks Victoria joined the Friends at the September committee meeting to explain the Anglesea Heathland Project. Saul is overseeing an Implementation Plan to facilitate the transition of Anglesea Heath into the Great Otway National Park. The Victorian Government has provided an amount of \$2.33 million to be spent over 1-2 years.

The future for this area will be determined through extensive consultation with the Community and from interested groups and organisations.

Planning concepts include:

- Community consultation in mid-January and early February 2019
- Capital works, sensitive to the area.
- Cultural change away from domination by trail bike riders and 4WDs.

Projects include:

- Weeding programs, revegetation road closures and rehabilitation,
- Roads and infrastructure investment
- Improve opportunities for appropriate uses such as bushwalking and nature appreciation.

Ideas and vision for the Anglesea Heath will be encouraged through Open House sessions. Consolidation of thoughts and the interests of the community will form the policy for management of the Anglesea Heath.

FEO contributions are welcomed through ideas, letters and future submissions. **Kaye Traynor**



*Above: Felix explaining the project during an engagement event for the Anglesea Heath Establishment Project*

**CAMERA MONITORING August - October**

Since the last newsletter, we have placed 8 cameras in three locations for a total of 260 camera days. The cameras snapped over 7,500 frames, not all of animals: for probably half of these the cameras were triggered by moving shadows or wind-blown foliage. Nevertheless, we obtained many frames of the fauna, both native and feral, that visited the camera sites.

The most frequent visitor, by a very wide margin, was the Black Swamp Wallaby. By my rough count, they appeared in over 1000 of the frames. In August, when the cameras were at the head of a gully off Mt Ingolsby Road, down towards the coast, many of these were females with joeys in pouch. Though, these many frames probably represent the movement of just a few animals through the area and repeatedly visiting the sites. In a single camera we put out near Eumeralla Scout Camp, as part of the Kids Thrive project we were involved with, we captured an inquisitive echidna.

However, the highlight of our recent monitoring was the appearance of – at least one, perhaps two individual – Southern Brown Bandicoots in 3 of the 4 cameras placed in a gully west of O’Donohue St. In just over 300 frames we observed one in the picture. It’s not clear from the camera output, but perhaps one of the Bandicoots was breeding and had a distended belly with young in her pouch.



This gully was part of an area of a prescribed burn back in April. According to The Complete Book of Australian Mammals, Southern Brown Bandicoots prefer scrubby habitat that is burnt from time to time and have a particular preference for vegetation in the early stages of regeneration after fire as it supports an abundance of insects for them to feed on. This certainly describes this area very well!

I’ve put a compilation of the Bandicoot images into an animation. You can see this on a youtube channel at: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=vhoH7t9XMoA&t=8s>.

It is also available on the Friends area on the ANGAIR website.

A list of native fauna, other than the above, captured by our cameras included Red-neck Wallabies, Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Crimson Rosellas, Pied Currawong, and Australian Magpie. Feral animals observed included Foxes, a Black Rat, and a young Rabbit. Disturbingly, the pictures of foxes were captured at the same sites as the Bandicoot, but fortunately not at the same time. As usual, the results of the camera monitoring have been added to the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas, and sightings of feral animals have been shared with Claire Miller of Parks Victoria, who is responsible for the Otway Ark Project overseeing fox control in the area. **Patrick Flanagan**





## "FRIENDLY" NEWS

### AIREYS INLET SCHOOL ENVIRO DAY

The Friends were pleased to help the school celebrate an environment day called 'Horticulture/Pride Day' at the school on October 15. The children were involved in a variety of activities including planting indigenous species,



mulching under the playground, weeding around the chicken shed, filling the sand pits and watering the Rain Garden.

The Friends role was to share our knowledge of the Mangowak Sanctuary next to the school – enjoying the beauty of the plants in flower, and weeding other areas to protect the indigenous vegetation.



Different activities had been planned for the four groups of approximately 20 children and the kids entered into the spirit of

the activities very enthusiastically. Year 6 students each adopted a Yam Daisy that they will watch to see if it becomes pollinated and sets seed. Thanks to those members who came along – it was a tiring but very rewarding day. **Margaret MacDonald.**

*Above: A group of Year 3 & 4 children weed the Greenhood area, while Friends President Patrick Flanagan removes Cape Tulip watched by Year 6 students. Below: Preps to the rescue with barrows and bags, and students in years 1&2 sing the Mangowak song.*



### GOOD HOODIE NEWS

We are lucky to have active Hooded Plover nests on the beach within the Park at the time of writing this report. One is at The Gulch and another along the Hutt Gully/Urquhart Bluff section of beach. Interestingly, both are in the dunes this time.

To date, we have been unable to ID the pair at The Gulch, but it may be NS white flag and NS orange flag. NS white is new to our area having shown up last season. Previously NS orange was partnered with MR and had successfully fledged chicks in previous seasons at Guvvos Beach.

As the nest is in the dune, breeding confirmation has been by observation, so we will have a pleasant surprise as to the number of chicks that hatch, which may have occurred by the time you are reading this! Once chicks are on the ground we should have more opportunity to ID the parents.

At Hutt Gully, both FEO and the Friends of the Hooded Plover Surf Coast, FoHPSC, are thrilled that WT and partner are back in residence and attempting to breed again this season. You may recall WT is first generation offspring of our favourite hoodie, OmRW who bred at Moggs Creek/Eastern View for a number of seasons. Sadly he left the area early in the season last year. WT and partner had 2 chicks last year which we considered technically fledged. Despite this one was taken and the other disappeared early post fledging, so we are unsure if it dispersed and has survived or had a different outcome.

*Above: Back in residence - WT with chick at Hutt Gully January 2017.*

We are hopeful that these two nests are successful to hatching stage given their locations away from the high tides. Ravens, magpie, birds of prey, foxes, people and dogs do however continue to be a significant threat to their immediate breeding success and long term their survival. **Sue Guinness**





**SEPTEMBER BIODIVERSITY MONTH**

To celebrate September Biodiversity Month, community members of the Surf Coast region were asked to get outside and go ‘bioblitzing’. Taking photos of any biodiversity they found and uploading it to the online database, iNaturalist. This resulted in over 500 separate observations and 250 different species identified, with several pictures showing organisms yet to be conclusively identified.

There were some extremely interesting finds, with a Pouched Lamprey *Geotria australis* found dead and photographed in the Erskine River by two yr. 10 students from Lorne High School. An incredible sighting of a



hunting Maori Octopus *Macroctopus maorum* happened when the community came together to have an evening rockpool ramble and bioblitz at Point Roadknight in Anglesea. An observation of an unusual butterfly from Marg MacDonald caused quite a stir when it was identified as an endangered Silky *Hairstreak Pseudalmenus chlorinda*. No records for this species previously existed in this region according to the Atlas of Living Australia.



It was no surprise however, that Superb Fairy-wrens and Eastern Grey Kangaroos were the most commonly observed animals. King Parrots, Kookaburras and the Waxlip Orchid were also regularly observed.

Over the course of September the orchids were a treat to find and photograph. 54 observations found 18 different orchid species flowering including rare and endemic species. Being the start of spring in a wildflower hotspot made for exciting observations of botanical diversity. Over 120 different plant species were photographed and identified to a ‘research grade’, meaning the observation then gets shared to the Atlas of Living Australia and can be used as an open source data point for researchers worldwide. Citizen



Science in practice.

It really brought home what an amazing place this is, with so much life surrounding us. Each a unique species with a story of its own. In many ways it felt like we had only scratched the surface. We did need to take a dive,



because almost the whole underwater world remained unobserved! The most exciting observation came when Pete was looking for frogs at Coogoorah Park. A Tawny Frogmouth posed beautifully, before taking off and snatching something. Tracking it down, Pete got to see the ultimate combo; a frog in a frogmouth’s mouth.

Thanks to those people who put in a great effort to make this project worthwhile, special mention to Patrick Flanagan, who got some interesting birds onto the species list. It now stands as a valuable resource for teachers and anyone with an interest to access and admire the incredible biodiversity of the Surf Coast region.

Please visit the website and take a look at the results of the project, they are open for all to see. If you would like to get involved, please contact Pete – [peter.c@gorcc.com.au](mailto:peter.c@gorcc.com.au) <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/surfcoast-september-bioblitz>

Top left & right: An endangered Silky Hairstreak butterfly, an Australian Pobblebonk Frog. Above: a Maori Octopus with prey at Point Roadknight and a Tawny Frogmouth with frog at Coogoorah Park.

We welcome the following new members:  
Jonathan and Judith Cannon of Lorne  
Paul Wright and Sue Powell of Richmond  
Joe Perri of Aireys Inlet  
Alex and Ilona Fekete of Heidelberg  
Jill and Richard Harris of Blackburn  
Bridie and Gerard Turner of Anglesea  
Jane Honman of Aireys Inlet





Hello everyone,

I hope that everyone is well and ready for another summer on the coast. All our Parks staff are busy getting the Great Otway National Park ready for the fire season, and the annual influx of people. Below are a few items I am sure that the Friends will be interested in this month.

**CUMBERLAND STAIR**

As I have mentioned previously the stairs at Cumberland Beach are closed due to winter swell damage, and the Lorne team have been busy trying to get the stairs open before the summer crowd descends on Lorne. Due to the rich archaeological importance of the site, we are working closely with our traditional owners to learn the best way to manage the site. It is a tricky balance for our Parks Victoria staff to open the site for people to enjoy the beach, and to protect the site from damage. We have had representatives from Eastern Marr and the Parks Victoria Cultural Heritage team provide recommendations and I hope that Friends will understand that we hope to have the damage fixed soon.

**DIRT BIKE COMPLIANCE**

Our targeted compliance of dirt bike riders in the Great Otway National Park has become national news with articles on Fairfax websites in each state, and an article in the Herald Sun. We also had one of our executives interviewed on channel 10 news. Parks Victoria hopes that these articles and the on-ground operation will get the message out, that dirt bike riders need to do the right thing out in the National Park. During these compliance weekends we also had the assistance from the Police, DELWP, and our Parks Victoria Remote Pilot Aircraft team.

**ARK CAMERAS**

Our Otway Ark Ranger Claire Miller has been busy putting out cameras again for the Otway Ark project. For those of you that haven't heard about the Otway Ark Project it is a Landscape approach to controlling introduced predators across the Otway Ranges. Part of this project is to study effectiveness and collect data on what critters share the Great Otway National Park. Claire has just completed putting the camera out in Anglesea Heath area.

Hopefully we will have some interesting animals pop up in the images. I have put in two images below, which I think reflect the importance of our Otway Ark Project, with a healthy-looking fox and an echidna, my favourite native forest creature.



**ERSKINE FALLS CAR PARK CLOSURE ON FIRE DANGER DAYS**

I would also like to advise that Parks Victoria, starting this summer, will close the Erskine Falls visitor site on days of extreme fire weather, which means days that the Central fire district class as an Extreme or Code Red Fire Danger Rating. As many of you know the Erskine Falls Visitor site is a highly popular attraction for visitors. The risk at this site being open on extreme fire danger days has been deemed too great for local emergency services to manage.



**JUNIOR RANGER**

Last thing before I wrap this report up is to advertise our Junior Ranger activities. I know that many of you in the Friends will be out enjoying the Great Otway National Park this summer, and if you are looking for fun activities with the young ones, we run many activities in the park each summer. So if you are interested in finding out more just search on the internet 'junior ranger' and there is a fantastic website that you can book an activity, and even find many activities that you can do yourself.

Thank you again to everybody for helping look after the Great Otway National Park.  
Matt Russell, Ranger, Lorne