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FROM
THE
PRESIDENT
Alison Watson

ANGLESEA HEATH LEGISLATION PASSED

It was satisfying to learn that the Anglesea Heath legislation passed through both houses of parliament recently and that 6510ha of land surrendered by Alcoa prior to the expiry of the lease term has been incorporated into the Great Otway

National Park. We are optimistic the remainder of the lease will also come across to the Park once Alcoa has finished works in the area.

As stated by Chris Smyth at the VNPA meeting in March 2017: *“The Anglesea Heathlands are one of the most diverse vegetation communities on the planet, with more than 700 plant species – one quarter of Victoria’s flora and one-third of its orchid species. There are 21 plant species which are rare or threatened in Victoria, and four are found nowhere else: Anglesea Grevillea, Small Coastal Leek Orchid, Large Bearded Greenhood and the Anglesea Grey Gum.”*



In the Anglesea Heath approximately 173 native vertebrate fauna species (excluding fish) have been recorded and the area is particularly important for the conservation of species such as the Rufous Bristlebird, New Holland Mouse, Swamp Antechinus, White footed Dunnart, Southern Brown Bandicoot, Long-nosed Bandicoot, and Long-nosed Potoroo (McMahon & Brighton 2002).

As one of the richest and most diverse natural areas in Victoria, it is good to know it now has the protection of National Park status. Regulations under the National Parks Act 1975 ensure preservation and protection of the biodiversity within the National Park.

Above: The beautiful Anglesea Heath. Photo: Parks Victoria. Left: Members of Friends of Eastern Otways walking on the Anglesea Heath.

VNPA AGM HIGHLIGHTS CHALLENGES

Key speakers at the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) conference held on 10 October in Melbourne were Matt Jackson, CEO of Parks Victoria and Mark Norman, Chief Conservation Scientist at Parks Victoria.

Matt is concerned with what is called the Visitor Economy - aimed at increasing the number of visitors to National Parks while also improving the quality of the visitor experience. This is a State-wide plan and Parks Victoria is responsible for 43 of its 130 actions.

A Parks snapshot shows there are 4.1 million ha, or 18% of Victoria, in the 3068 parks and reserves for which PV is responsible. Other statistics include: 70% of the Victorian coastline, 12,000 registered Aboriginal sites, 3000 historic places and PV employs 1200 staff.

Through the VNPA and the Friends network, Matt said he enjoys community-wide support which is unique and available to very few government departments.

Mark Norman highlighted the need for a huge effort to be made in nature appreciation, connecting urban and suburban populations with nature. The disconnected population is the most critical problem the organisation faces. Mark highlighted conservation and climate change as major challenges for the future.

Both speakers emphasised the need to be more aware of, and promote, the special importance of National Parks, as distinct from all the other reserves. Victoria has a long and distinctive history of support for the National Park ideal - a place as protected as possible, as expressed in the National Parks Act 1975. **Rachel Faggetter.**



Above: The coastline of the Great Otway National Park.



ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDING

Eumeralla – November 14

Meet at the car park on the corner of Hurst Road and Great Ocean Road at 9.30am

Unfortunately our weeding in the Eumeralla section of the Great Otway National Park was cancelled in September due to rain but we had a good session there on October 10 with a third session planned for November 14.



On entering the heathy woodland area we were confronted with dense stands of Bluebell Creeper *Billardiera heterophylla* (formerly *Sollya heterophylla*). This is a particularly invasive species that spreads easily and quickly, smothering our indigenous vegetation. We certainly removed many bushes ranging from small seedlings to large bushes and climbers. We are looking forward to returning in November to observe our efforts and to continue our work.



Above: Tired but satisfied weeders after removing Bluebell Creeper.
Left: Well-deserved morning tea at Bowside Cafe after the weeding.

Summer program: December 12 & February 13 9.30am-11am. Contact: Margaret 0412 652 419

Coastal Heathlands at Moggs Creek (easy activity). Meet at western end of Robyn Road Moggs Creek.



NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

- Caroline Hawkins, Anglesea
- Margaret Dunn, Aireys Inlet
- Margaret White, Aireys Inlet
- Cecily and Laurie Mason, Fairhaven
- Jacqui Read and Matthew Russell, Deans Marsh
- Andrew Giles and Tilly Brunton, East Geelong
- Rod Lowther, Belmont
- Barry and Bernie Lingham, Ocean Grove
- Janet Hesson, Kew
- Michael and Meredith Prideaux, Port Melbourne
- Jim and Karen Bambridge, Alfredton



MAMMAL SURVEYS

Four cameras were placed in the area between the Parks office and the concrete plant, above Camp Rd in Anglesea in September. This section is part of 110ha area that is currently not to be included in the GONP, and may be considered for other uses, such as mountain bike trails. We wanted to determine what fauna used the woodland to add to information about its biodiversity.

The cameras were in place for three weeks and the memory cards were then replaced with blank ones and the cameras left in place. They were then collected at the end of October. The species observed included Grey Currawongs, Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Black Wallabies, Red-necked Wallabies, Echidnas, Common Brushtail Possum and 'rare' sightings of students from the Anglesea Primary School who were on a young-volunteer development program with the Anglesea CFA. Finally, don't forget our next outing, a combined walk and camera placement at Kennett River. **Patrick Flanagan**



COMING EVENTS

Mammal Survey & Walk

Saturday November 18

9.00am – 4.00pm

Meet at Aireys Inlet Community Centre

Contact: Alison 0400 570 229

We will return to Kennett River to place cameras in the Park adjacent to private property to see what small mammals are in the area. A walk around the property to enjoy the Mountain Ash forest, the fungi and the birds will follow. Bring morning tea, lunch, water, wet weather gear depending on the weather, sunscreen and sturdy shoes.

End of Year Celebration

Saturday December 9

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 guided short walk around the Moggs Creek circuit track where there is always a wealth of flora and many birds to observe or hear. Or just come along to the Picnic Ground and 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 5 2018

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' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

ANGAIR WILDFLOWER WEEKEND September 23-24



Once again the Friends of Eastern Otways contributed to the ANGAIR Wildflower Weekend as our September activity. Our display this year featured the lifestyle and characteristics of the Spot-tailed Quoll. Information about the Conservation Program at Mt Rothwell and the work being carried out by the Cape Otway Conservation Ecology Centre in the training of dogs to help track down this elusive creature was included in the presentation. Patrick Flanagan put

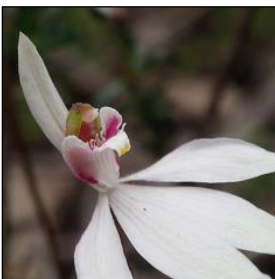
together a short DVD featuring photographs from our camera mammal surveys and children were challenged to answer questions from observing the content. They could choose a small kangaroo, boomerang, or map of Australia for their efforts. One lady wanted to purchase three of the wooden models, but when told she had to complete the quiz, she brought back two of her friends to help her obtain the gifts for her grandchildren in America. We had a good laugh!

A special display presented the Bassian Thrush in habitat prepared by Kaye, and photographs of various Friends activities were displayed. Members of the Friends group were on hand to answer questions and chat with visitors, talking about our role in working with Parks Vic staff to care for the wonderful asset of our Great Otway National Park. We were thrilled that Matt Russell, our Parks Vic Liaison Ranger was able to participate on both days. **Margaret MacDonald.**



Top left: Excited participants in the quiz. Top right: Ranger Matt Russell and Graeme Stockton (SANE) with children watching the DVD presentation. Above: FEO President Alison Watson with (from left) Marg Lacey, Bylinda Janssen, Lachie Richardson, Rachel Faggetter and Merri Janssen at the Friends' stall at Angair.

ANNUAL SURVEY *Caladenia maritima* – October 4 & October 18



The annual survey for our Angahook *Caladenia maritima* was carried out on October 4 with a second count on October 18. The cold weather in winter, and the lack of rainfall in May and June may have had an effect on this orchid as the numbers were certainly down this year. Many

of the orchids were much smaller than in previous years. There were signs that grazing most likely by birds or invertebrates had occurred on the site. Our final tally was 444 flowers, approximately the same number as in 2015 but down on last year when we counted 682 flowers.

We expect the site to be burnt early next autumn. It will be interesting to see if the colony changes after the burn. The site looks as though it could benefit from an ecological burn, but then it will need good autumn and winter rain to stimulate tuber growth.

Above left: Caladenia maritima, photo by Helen Schofield and right: A group of Friends intent on counting Caladenia maritima.



EARLY DIARY ENTRY – Friends of Eastern Otways – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 11 2018 at 2pm at the CFA Anglesea

Guest speaker: Mandy Watson, Senior Biodiversity Officer with DELWP, Southern Right Whale research.



FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

ANNUAL WILDFLOWER WALK FAIRHAVEN - October 21



After a week with two days of very high temperatures for this time of the year, and one day of rain, it was a relief that the forecast of showers for Saturday did not eventuate, and we had a day of moderate temperature with some sunny periods. Unfortunately there was a cool wind, and not enough warmth and humidity to convince our sun orchids to open, but nevertheless there were plenty of flowers for us to admire with 86 species being documented. This total did not include many other species that were not in flower at this time of the year. We sometimes underestimate the diversity and



beauty of our own area - we certainly don't have to travel to West Australia to be enthralled by Australian wildflowers!

Our three different meeting places worked well with people being given an option to save unnecessary travel, and the sharing of transport meant we had a small number of cars for the 19 people who joined us for the activity.



It was great to welcome a few new members to our group, and it was obvious that sending the flyer out as a reminder had been worthwhile. It was particularly pleasing to welcome Annabelle and Stuart, two young conservationists eager to learn about the flora of the area.

Starting the walk at the end of Ridge Road, Fairhaven we were welcomed by a small colony of Purple Beard Orchids *Calochilus robertsonii* and some distinctive stalks of Hyacinth Orchids *Dipodium roseum* that were emerging near the base of a large eucalypt. Other orchids that we admired on the day were the Red Beard Orchid *Calochilus paludosus* (unfortunately still in bud), yellow form of the Donkey Orchid *Diuris orientis*, the Mantis Orchid *Caladenia tentaculata*, and some magnificent specimens of Tiger Orchids *Diuris sulphurea*— some in the National Park but the majority on private land adjoining the Park. The sun orchids



were tightly closed and we saw a few other species of orchids that had finished flowering.

Although it was great to see all these orchids, it was however the massed display of wildflowers that captured most attention. It was just so pleasing to see the people who knew the flowers sharing their expertise so freely with those who were keen to discover new knowledge. Our flower books certainly proved worth all the effort in compiling them. **Margaret MacDonald.**

Above and below: The FEO group sharing knowledge and using the ANGAIR text "Flowers of Anglesea and Aireys Inlet" to identify species. Our orchids are Purple Beard Orchid (left) and Tiger Orchid. Below left: Massed display of Guinea Flower, Blunt Everlasting and Small Sheoak.





MANGOWAK SCHOOL SANCTUARY WEED QUEST – June 13

The Friends of Eastern Otways joined the Aireys Inlet Primary School at the Mangowak School Sanctuary and, with an enthusiastic group of students from classes 1 & 2, conducted an educational and fun morning learning to identify orchids and to remove the weeds. The students were invited to write a review and we have printed five of them.

Mangowak School Sanctuary Weeds - Finn

On Tuesday we went to the Mangowak School Sanctuary. We were pulling the weeds out of the ground. One of the weeds we pulled out was called Boneseed and we were exploring other plants too. In my group were Jimmy, Scarlett, Aisling and Toby. The Friends helped us and taught us about the weeds and the indigenous plants.

Weeds and orchids we found - Amelia

The 1 & 2 classes went into our Mangowak School Sanctuary. We went in groups. In my group there was Zara, William, Linni, Jed and me. These are a few of the weeds we saw; Bluebell Creeper, Boneseed, Freesia and Sweet Pittosporum, and here is a list of Orchids we found: Mosquito Orchids, Nodding Greenhoods and Tall Greenhoods.

In the Mangowak School Sanctuary - Aisling

Today our class walked into the Mangowak School Sanctuary and worked with people from the Friends to pull out some weeds. I found lots of pretty Mosquito Orchids. We all found the remains of an old building with weeds in it. So we picked them all out. There was some Bluebell Creeper, Rattle Grass and Freesias. We filled up lots of bags with weeds. Then we went back to school. I felt good because we had helped the environment.



Weeding with the Friends - Jude

The 1 and 2s went into our Mangowak School Sanctuary. These are a few of the weeds we saw: Bluebell Creeper, Boneseed, Freesia and Sweet Pittosporum. And here is a list of orchids we found; Mosquito Orchids, Nodding Greenhoods and Tall Greenhoods.

Pulling out weeds - Maggie

Today we went to Mangowak School Sanctuary and we pulled out some weeds. We went into small groups, and the people that were in my group were Rupert, Tully, Luke, Odhran and me. I had so much fun pulling out weeds and I learnt so many new things. One of the weeds we pulled out was Rattle Grass, but we had to walk on tip-toe so we didn't step on the plants. I had so much fun.

Left: Future leaders for our environment - this is Amelia's group (from left) Linni, Jed, Amelia, Zara and William.



JUNIOR RANGER PROGRAM

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 Friends of Eastern Otways were invited to share in implementing an activity with Carlie Bronk, one of our local Parks Vic rangers, with 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



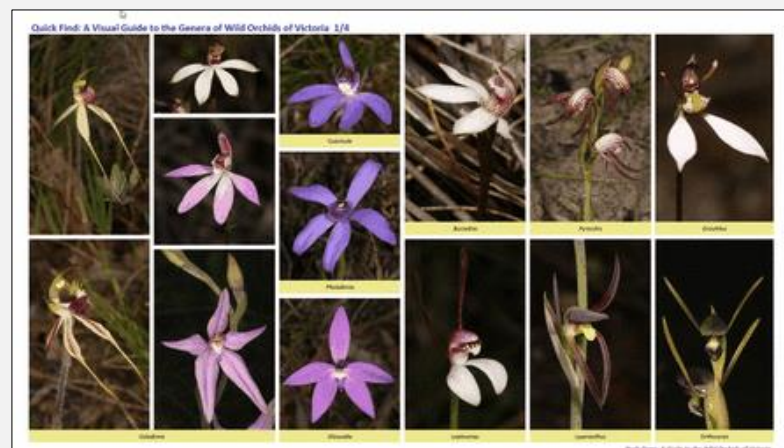
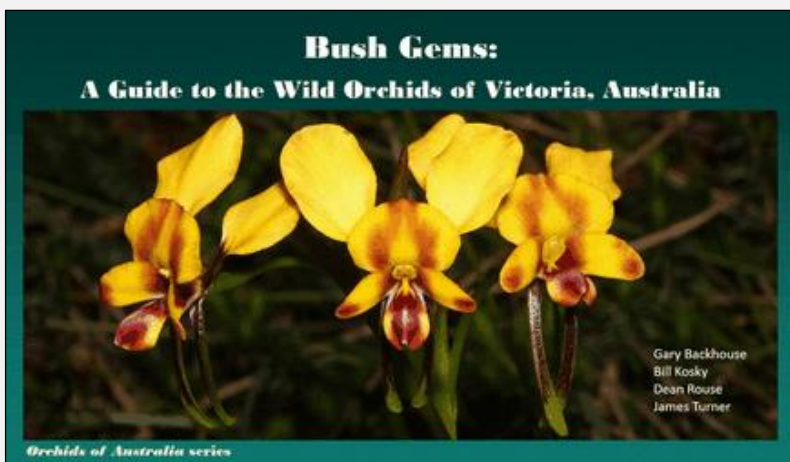
some of the beautiful flowers that grow in the heathland areas of the Great Otway National Park. Each child had a laminated flower sheet and some flower stickers that they placed on the appropriate flower on their sheet when they discovered it (or were shown it) as they walked through the heathland.

It was a fun experience, and one little boy who had come as Batman quickly discarded his Batman gear, announcing that it was real fun looking at the plants. He seemed quite surprised that he was enjoying himself! **Margaret MacDonald.**

Above left: Carlie Bronk with Alison Watson and Margaret MacDonald explaining the activity. Above right: A family group including Batman using the flower sheet to participate in the Junior Ranger Program.



ORCHID e-BOOK AVAILABLE TO ORDER



Apart from Margaret and Everett's book *Orchids of Anglesea and Aireys Inlet*, one of my often consulted books on our special wildflowers is *Orchids of Victoria* by Gary Backhouse and Jeffrey Jeanes. Unfortunately my paper copy is quite out of date and doesn't contain up-to-date information about classification and naming of our many orchids or their distribution.

An obvious example is that my edition, published in 1995, doesn't mention the Anglesea *Caladenia Caladenia maritima*, that the Friends have been monitoring for a number of years. To deal with the fast-changing world of native orchids, e-books have been used to get changes in the field into publication in a more timely way.

Gary Backhouse, in conjunction with some orchid enthusiasts, has republished the earlier work carried out with Jeffrey Jeanes under a new title as a DVD-ROM or on a memory card: ***Bush Gems: A Guide to the Wild Orchids of Victoria, Australia*** by Gary Backhouse, Bill Kosky, Dean Rouse and James Turner.

I've put my hand up to coordinate buying copies for members of the Friends and ANGAIR. If you would like to purchase a copy let me know by email at friendsofeasternotways@gmail.com and I'll add you to the list. As a community

organisation, we should get a cheaper rate with a bulk order. Single edition prices are \$25 for the DVD and \$30 for the SD memory card version (within Australia). To make it easier for me, local pickup would be preferred. If you are in a hurry, or you are too far away to pick it up in person, the web address for the book is: www.bushorchids.com **Patrick Flanagan**

OUTSTANDING OTWAYS FIRE RESEARCH WINS AWARD

Research into the effects of unplanned and planned fire on native plants and animals in the Great Otway National Park was recognised on World Environment Day earlier this year.

A team of researchers from Melbourne University was awarded this year's Nancy Millis Science in Parks Award from Parks Victoria. The award recognises outstanding contributions to fostering excellence in applied science for the benefit of park management.

The findings of this year's winners have provided a better understanding of how planned burns can be best applied to help conserve native plants and animals in the Great Otway National Park. The project has also given valuable insights into how introduced foxes respond to fire. Rangers can use these results to run more effective baiting programs.

The key elements of the research program included:

The project covered 60,000 hectares in the Great Otway National Park and Forest Park over 6 years and investigated how the arrangement of fires over space and time (known as fire mosaics) affects plants and animals. The research program, 'Fire, landscape pattern and biodiversity in the Otway Ranges' ran from 2010-2016 and involved four staff and seventeen students from the Fire Ecology and Biodiversity Research Group at the University of Melbourne. This research has helped guide decisions about the ideal frequency, severity and patchiness (burnt and unburnt land) of planned burns in this region to help create and maintain habitat for native animals.

For further information: parkweb.vic.gov.au/about-us/news/outstanding-otways-fire-research-wins-award

Above: The Agile Antechinus *Antechinus agilis* is one of the many species to benefit from the research. Photo: Parks Victoria.





SWIFFT VIDEO CONFERENCE



The title of the SWIFFT (State Wide Integrated Flora and Fauna Teams) conference held last month was Indigenous knowledge of ecology.

The first presenter was Trent Nelson who spoke about 'Joint Management with Djy Dja Wurrong'. He talked about the changes with fire management within the parks around Bendigo after visiting Cape York to learn about traditional burns. The aim is to use mosaic burning, as well as monitoring, and the importance of elders returning to country and restoring traditional burning to the landscape.

Denis Rose from the Gunditj Mirring presented 'Implementing Traditional Knowledge on Country'. Native title of Lake Condah was achieved in 2007 and the land was handed back in 2008. 80 fish traps and 146 stone houses have been documented (*pictured left*). The fish culture has been dated at 6600 years old. They are

hoping to make it a world heritage site. He also spoke about cultural burning and developing skills and confidence.

Mike Gilby presented 'Scarred Trees - Beacons in the Landscape'. He sees scarred trees as a cultural journey through the generations. They provided canoes, markers and songlines that stood the test of time and are still being made today. The Mildura Bark Canoe Project provided knowledge and cultural practice to local young people. It has a life beyond the project and the canoe is used for cultural exhibitions, leads the NAIDOC week marches, and will be on display for the return of Mungo Man to Mungo National Park in November.

We watched a short video 'The fire spirit returns' showing a traditional burn undertaken at Teesdale Reserve earlier this year. The video and more detail about the conference will be available on the SWIFFT website.

http://www.swiff.net.au/cb_pages/video_conferencing.php

Next years planned conferences are as follows:

1 February: Citizen science and threatened species conservation

26 April: Birds – Woodland birds, shore birds, history of song birds

26 July: Drones – Ethics of and practical applications

25 October: The importance of multiple avenues of communication in threatened species and nature conservation - including Conservation Art.

All are welcome to attend. For further information contact: Geelong DELWP Offices, Corio Bay Room, 4th floor - Contact Ian Smith 0407803115 or Rebecca Wray 5226 4696 (leave message if no answer). **Alison Watson**



OTWAYS CRAY DISCOVERY

Several specimens of Otways Cray *Geocharax gracilis* have recently been discovered in the Breakfast Creek and Salt Creek catchments near Anglesea during fish and macroinvertebrate surveys by Ecology Australia for Barwon Water. This species was included as Endangered on the Victorian Advisory List of threatened invertebrates 2009.

They were detected using bait traps, dip netting and backpack electrofishing. Often referred to as 'black yabbies', they are used by recreational fishers. Not as prolific as *Cherax destructor*, they also take longer to recover after heavy collection.

Found only in the Otways on the mainland (also King Island and north-west Tasmania), they are relatively common but there are no nearby records on the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) or Atlas of Living Australia. However a specimen from Salt Creek was recorded in a 2007 paper by Schultz et al.

Flora surveys, also undertaken by Ecology Australia, located a locally rare orchid in the Anglesea Swamp, the Large Tongue-orchid *Cryptostylis subulata*.

Further information is available from Katie Stevenson, Ecology Australia, email kstevenson@ecologyaustralia.com.au



Hello Everybody,

I hope that all the Friends are well and taking advantage of the final part of spring, with many beautiful colours on offer out in the heath. At right is a beautiful Grass Tree flower that I spotted when doing some weed removal work close to the Pipeline Track near Anglesea.

STAFF MOVEMENTS

There are only a couple of staff movements to report this month. Firstly, Brooke Bailey, Aaron Ledden and Lachie Davis have recently returned from a deployment to California, where a large wildfire burnt through 80,000 hectares. From reports that have reached us from Brooke, Aaron, and Lachie they have learnt a lot from the experience of fighting fires in America, and have enjoyed the experience.

In other movements, we are glad to have the Project Fire Fighters starting again for another summer, with a crew of 15 at Anglesea and four at Lorne. In the crew, there are many familiar faces that have returned for another season, plus many first-time fire fighters who will join the ranks.

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE PARK

There has been quite a bit of activity this spring from the Parks Victoria team. The Surf Coast team have been busy working on culture heritage protection, with Parks Victoria making it a part of our core considerations for all new work. The Anglesea team had a fantastic experience when they were joined by cultural advisers at Eumeralla, the group found many artefacts and in greater quantities than was previously recorded. These discoveries suggest the Eumeralla site was an important hub for our traditional owners.

Also, I am sure that the Friends would be pleased to know that there has been some fantastic research that is currently being conducted out in the Park. Kieran Lieutier, our newly appointed Otway Ark Ranger, has just placed the next round of Otway Ark cameras in the first focal area. These cameras are positioned throughout the Anglesea Heath area, and once the results have come in from these cameras I will get Kieran to come along to report the findings to the Friends meeting.

There has also been a really amazing find out in the Heath recently with researchers from Ecology Australia finding Otways Cray *Geocharax gracilis* near Anglesea in the Salt Creek and Breakfast Creek catchments. There are few previous records of this species in this area. Whilst the species has higher numbers in other areas of the Otways, it does suggest positive signs for the water quality and health of the Heath, with the Otways Cray taking longer to regenerate than some of the more common species.



BIODIVERSITY MONITORING

Katrina Lovett has also been busy organising the next round of Biodiversity Monitoring for our patch in the Otways. The Biodiversity Monitoring program happens in many parks throughout Victoria and is used to look at the health of our parks.

This Biodiversity Monitoring happens every four years and we are hoping with this next round that we will be able to extract some long-term trends for the work we do.

AFRICAN WEED ORCHID PROGRAM

Finally, I would like to mention that we have wrapped up our South African Weed Orchid Program (*pictured at left*), for another season. Whilst, we did find one new site this season in the Park, I can report that our largest infestations were smaller than 2016. This is hopefully a positive sign that our management method is working, and with vigilance we can try to keep the species away from our significant orchids in future.

Thank you once again to the Friends who came along to the Junior Ranger day on September 29. It was greatly appreciated by Carlie and the rest of the team. I hope we inspired some future nature lovers in the process. On behalf of Parks Victoria, thank you Friends for your dedication and contributions. We look forward to joining with you at the end of the year celebration at Moggs Creek Picnic Ground on Saturday December 9. **Matt Russell, Ranger, Lorne**

AND A REMINDER...

EARLY DIARY ENTRY – Friends of Eastern Otways – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 11 2018 at 2pm at the CFA Meeting rooms, Anglesea

Guest speaker: Mandy Watson, Senior Biodiversity Officer with DELWP, Southern Right Whale research.