

If not claimed within 14 days please return to the Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club
Inc. PO Box 8663, Alice Springs, NT 0871

July 2006



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Web site : www.geocities.com/alicenats

Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club 2006

Meetings

7.30 pm on the second Wednesday of the month.

Venue: Olive Pink Botanic Garden, Tuncks Road

Wednesday 12th July. Bill Low, "Lake Lewis and its Flora and Fauna". This talk precedes the day trip to Lake Lewis.

Wednesday 9th August. AGM. As part of members "Show and Tell" after the AGM, Connie has offered to burn onto a CD a selection of members' photos from trips over the past 12 months to show at the meeting. If you wish your photos to be included please contact Connie Spencer on 89524694 or email constans@bigpond.net.au

Trips / Activities

Sat 15 July. Day trip to Lake Lewis. Meet 7:30am at the Sargent Street sign on the north Stuart Highway. Contact Bob Read on 8952 1935. Optional camping at Tilmouth Well campground.

Sat 29 and Sun 30 Jul. Possible Alcoota fossil dig. Await confirmation from Bob at meeting.

Sat 5th, Sun 6th and Mon 7th August. Stage 6 Larapinta Trail. Leader Bob Read.

Sat 19 August. Easy morning walk from Ragonesi Road to Emily Gap below the range. Meet at Date Farm carpark for 8am start. Contact Rosalie Breen on 8952 3409

Sun 27 Aug. Chambers Pillar.

Sat 2 Sep. Native Gap

Sat 9 and Sun 10 Sept. Old Hamilton Downs

!6 or 17 Sept. Bush Foods Garden at Alice Springs Desert Park

Sat 30 Sep and Sun 1 Oct. Palm Valley

Sat 14 Oct. AS Sewerage Ponds

Guest Speaker Report

THE GEM AND MINERAL CLUB

14th June, 2006

By Rhondda Tomlinson

What rocks and minerals are lurking in and around Alice Springs and beyond?

Sonny Mason brought with him Greg Mair and a large box which we were soon to discover the treasures from within. First out of the box were samples of Unakite both in the raw state and polished, displaying the green and pink patterns. Sonny told us that Stramalites can be found all through the MacDonnell Ranges. He showed us some that had been cut in half and polished to reveal very complex patterns. We saw examples of Gastropods & Brachiopods that were found at Malone's Creek near the Finke River. The Cephalopods form many and varied patterns and with some imagination and skill all sorts of things can be fashioned from them.

Harts Range is where fossils & garnets can be found. Mt Swan has yielded garnet crystals. Garnets can be red or orange depending on the area they are dug.

I was very impressed with the 'guard dogs' Sonny makes from the polished stones and wire. Each has a personality of its own.

Sunstone can be found at Harts Range and we saw the difference between the natural and the tumbled product. The Sunstone which was formed with intrusions of other minerals gives many and varied patterns.

Mud Tank out on the Plenty Highway is famous for its zircons. Beryl Crystal can be found out near the Hart Range Police Station. The Harts Range is also known for the Mica Mines especially during the war years and where Beryl Crystal was found in the early days.

It was fascinating to see the Amethyst Crystals in the centre of the rocks that had been split in half. Who knows what a plain looking round rock could contain!

Sonny said that there are about 20 different stones that are found around Alice Springs that can be faceted.

Quartz Crystals, Rose Quartz & Smokey Quartz had the audience captivated with their beauty and light patterns.

The Septerian Nodules were formed many millions of years ago by conglomerates rolling around on the sea bed.

To finish with Sonny showed us the rainbow flashes of light that could be seen in a synthetic Zircon.

The question time was limited but when the audience was let loose for a hands-on look at the stones & crystals there were many question and both Sonny and Greg were kept busy explaining how and where these rocks and crystals came about.

Thank you to Sonny & Greg for coming and bringing such a wide range of interesting specimens and having the patients to answer many questions. It has given us another interest to explore on our bush walks.

If you have any stones to be cut, polished, faceted or just want to know what they are call into Jenny and Sonny's shop. I have found that for the really genuine local or unusual gift you are sure to find it at the shop.



I must confess that over breakfast on Thursday morning after the talk I opened my book on, Mineral, Rocks and Precious Stones and found some interesting reading on crystals and assemblages of interlocking crystals in irregular clumps called, 'aggregates'.

Trip Reports

Sloan's Gully

Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th May 2006

By Connie Spencer

There was gold fever in the air as we headed towards Sloans Gully on a crisp clear Saturday morning. Rhondda was keen to better her sister's find of a year ago or at least equal it!

The Gem and Mineral Club were on an annual pilgrimage to Jenny & Sonny Mason's gold lease at Sloans Gully in the vicinity of the Winnecke Gold Fields for a bit of a fossick, but more importantly, to celebrate Sonny's birthday. The Field Naturalists Club was invited to join them and what a treat it was!

There were 5 Field Naturalists with Rhondda having a foot in both camps and 10 Gem and Mineral Club members. Having made our way up the Stuart Highway and along The Garden Road, Jenny lead us along a little used track traveling through creek beds and washouts winding through the hills to a picturesque valley where Jenny and Sonny have a residential lease. An old miner's tin shack in the middle of the lease is the focal point. The valley is surrounded by mostly Whitewoods and Mulga with a good cover of native grasses and Wild Tomato plants in flower after recent rain.

After setting up camp we made our way on foot up a narrow creek, and in behind the first ridge we found Sonny and Dean working away in the creek bed. We were given a lesson in digging and sweeping – with the emphasis on “keeping your floor clean”. Apparently, this is where you are most likely to find the gold – in the grooves and cracks of the creek floor. Now it was our turn to shovel umpteen shovelfulls of gravel into the dry blower only to be left with a cupful of fine gravel to pan. This is an art and one that we left to Sonny and Dean. They patiently, panned Rhondda and Rosalie's cupfuls of gravel and much to their delight they each took home a minute quantity of gold dust with Stan suggesting that Rhondda not give up her day job just yet!

It wasn't all digging for gold. It is a great area for hiking up hill after hill after hill. As we reached what we thought was the top there was always one more to climb! Because it is me (Connie) writing this report the emphasis is on the plants that we saw and we had some interesting discoveries such as *Sedopsis filsonii* – Pink Rock-wort, a delicate prostrate perennial found in crevices of rocks. This plant is endemic and classified as rare so a nice little find. We mulled over the identity of a mallee that we kept coming across. It didn't give us many clues as its buds and fruit were very small and out of reach for the most part although we did manage to collect a specimen for later identification as the mallee form of *Eucalyptus intertexta* – quite different in habit and habitat from the ones in the “Intertexta Forest on the Ilparpa Road. We had two other finds which were new to me; one being, *Jasminum calcareum* – Poison Creeper. This is usually a twining shrub with yellow flowers but our specimen was not at its best. And finally, *Cratystylis centralis* – Bluebush Daisy. It was a very dry woody specimen but in a good season I think it would really stand out. It is also classified as rare and according to my Checklist possibly endemic. Although I have mentioned how dry a couple of these plants were, in general the country was looking good with very thick healthy mulga stands and fine mallees. At one point the mulga was so thick that all you could see was a mass of contorted trunks which were much paler than usual and no lower limbs. Rosalie commented that it reminded her snowgum country. A good imagination you say? I had to agreed though – it didn't look like our usual mulga stands.



As the sunset and the temperature dropped, the campfire became the centre of attention and the party became merrier as the evening wore on, with the highlight being a lighting extravaganza by Sonny and Trevor.

All too soon it was time to say goodbye and head for home but not before a slight detour to see a marble deposit. It is quite an extensive ridge with varying degrees of quality in the marble. It wasn't possible to drive to the best deposit so muscles were exercised in carrying out some sizeable pieces!

It was a wonderful weekend spent with friendly company, amidst amazing scenery. Thank you to Rhondda, to Sonny & Jenny and to the Gem and Mineral Club for inviting us.

Andado Adventure

10 June 2006

By Carmel Leonard

On a very chilly Saturday morning, 15 people set off in 6 vehicles down the Santa Teresa road heading for Andado Station, south-east of Alice Springs. This was a combined trip by members of the Field Naturalists and the Australian Plants Society to visit a group of *Acacia pickardii* trees which most of us had not seen before. There was a strong, and very cold wind blowing mostly across our track, which improved visibility for the convoy of vehicles, but the extensive corrugations provided a juddering ride for many kilometers.

First stop for morning tea was the site where *Acacia desmondii* were to be found and then onto a lunch site where we found some tiny *Senecio* and *Blennodia pterosperma* flowering bravely in a very dry and desolate looking landscape. Obviously they had received enough rain to germinate and flower, but had not grown very tall. We climbed the sand dune at Highway Bore for a broader view and noted the metallic reflectance of the 'desert varnish' from the gibbers which littered the floor of the adjacent swale. The Mac Clarke (*Acacia peuce*) Conservation Reserve was our next stop. It was good to see so many juvenile trees adding to the mature population.



Connie Spencer and *Acacia Peuce*

Photo: Allan Weeks

We then proceeded south east to locate a suitable campsite for the night, which we did, with an abundance of firewood. However, nothing could compete with the icy wind which swept across the landscape and whistled straight through us. A jolly night was had by all as we got to know each other a little better and shared experiences and stories of previous trips and adventures in different locations for varying reasons.

Next day dawned bright and clear and cold, and with the wind still whipping about our ears we proceeded to the *Acacia pickardii* site, ably guided by Connie and Stan.



Field Nats and *Acacia Pickardii*

Photo: Allan Weeks

We were amazed to see the number and size of the trees. For those who had seen this same species, looking very different on Numery Station some years previous, it was quite stunning. Much discussion ensued re the height, spread and girth of the largest tree until finally a very scientific measurement was made by measuring Allan Weeks' shadow on the ground. The result in raw terms was that the tree measured 4 x Allan's height and 1.5 x Dave Leonard's stride to give a final measurement of approx. 6m high x 3.5m spread, girth 0.8m. After lots of photos we spread out over the area to explore while Pat Weeks whipped out her sketch book and created an excellent image by the time we had reconvened for morning tea.

Off we set again towards the *Acacia peuce* reserve for another look before taking refuge from the wind behind a large sand dune for some lunch. As we were not pushed for time, it was a great opportunity to explore the dune and its numerous plants, flowers and birds and stretch our legs after so much driving. Some of the Field Nats recorded seeing fairy wrens, grass wrens and galahs, but there did not appear to be much bird life in evidence on such a windy day, although exploring the dunes in the early morning indicated there were lots of birds in the area.

Connie had us all lined up for another memorable photograph at one of the last dunes heading north. We obediently piled out of our vehicles, climbed the dune for the photo shoot, then slid down to ground level among much hilarity. Pat Weeks had an advantage as her Jack

Russell, called Gemma, towed her down to the level ground!



High side of the dune.

Photo: Allan Weeks

Our evening camp that night was among a wonderful grove of mulga surrounded on two sides by dunes, which helped to divert the wind, and provided much needed firewood. That must have been our coldest night as we huddled around the camp fire. A quick whip around the group discovered a variety of delicious meals had been prepared or were being cooked, with chilli soup, pasta with chicken and olives, tomato and vegetables, rice combinations, fish parcels etc. and while some declared they were just ‘left-overs’ they all smelled wonderful!

Next day the morning sun glistened on the frost on our swags and tents and we learned later that the temperature had been minus 3 overnight. After a hasty breakfast and re-packing the expedition took off towards Arookara Range to locate the *Eremophila* “A90760 Arookara Range” species. A walk up a small rocky valley revealed a healthy population of the *Eremophila* but, unfortunately, none were flowering. The view from the top of the range was spectacular and worth the scramble over the rocks. We then proceeded to the *Acacia desmondii* area for a cold and windy lunch and where some members climbed the rocky hill while others headed for home.

AND MORE

Andado Trip

From a Field naturalist’s point of view.

By Rosalie Breen

The sand hills were breathtaking in beauty. Just south of the turn off to *Acacia peuce* we visited a cane grass (*Zygochloa paradoxa*) covered sand hill to enjoy lunch in its shelter with soft seats on the sand, but mainly to look for Eyrean grass wrens. We found plenty of footprints, for these little birds scuttle on the ground between the clumps of cane grass. Some lucky people saw one on a fleeting expedition and others saw four in one group. Also flying around were white-winged fairy wrens. On the beginning of the sand hill were two mature bloodwoods with their roots exposed from wind blown sand, and pink-flowered with galahs, which flew off on our approach and settled in a close group on the flat country. They proceeded to feed, moving forward into the wind with the back birds moving to the front, just like

penguins in a huddle. The red sand was sculptured with an intriguing variety of ripples and peaks – a photographer’s heaven, with different colour effects depending on the aspect of the sun. From the tops were endless views of nothing – barren gibber plains or clay flats with more sand hills in the distance, but again with colour patterns creating much stark beauty.



Sanddune and Canegrass

Photo: Rosalie Breen

We stopped at Arookara Range to explore for the rare *Eremophila Arookara Range*, which only grows in that locality. It was very dry. We climbed up a gully, noting the rather tired plants of the *Eremophila* and lots of *Dipterocanthus*, and a bit higher up and actually flowering was *Eremophila freelingii*. From the clear saddle was a marvellous view of plains with more vegetation, and ranges in the distance. Five of us climbed higher and along looking for more views of the country to the south as well. Two birds of prey flew ahead, black tipped on the under wing – Australian kestrels. There were many little grey cushion plants struggling in their bed of broken sandstone, later identified as *Heliotropium filaginoides*. Bob spotted a single slab of sandstone which was carved in a couple of patterns like the carvings at Eweninga. In amongst the broken sandstone were a number of patches of silica rocks which looked as if they had been worked for tools by the aboriginal people. We could see sand had been blown and piled on the southern sides of the hills all around. It is a big country. One spot the sand was piled halfway up the slope of the range. To the south was the long Rodinga Range vertically weathered in alternate red spines and paler gullies.

And another one for luck.

Another stop was in the Train Hills where the road cuts through them on its way south. On the southern side in the distance is an Easter Island statue, though Barb said it was the funnel of the train engine. (take your pick). One gully has the rare *Acacia desmondii*. We also explored another gully, flat area at first then we climbed gently up and up creek beds to eventually reach the top for more wonderful views. One climbing spot in particular was

fascinating. The bed of the creek was wide and flat with big slabs of rock creating a clear wide passage way of long steps. Make a good film set for something.

Woodland Trail to Rocky Bar

Saturday 17th June 2006

By Connie Spencer

Thirteen brave souls fronted up on a brisk Saturday morning in the coldest June in 30 years to follow Kaye to Rocky Bar via the Woodland Trail in Simpsons Gap, part of the West MacDonnell Ranges National Park. It was a sunny day and as we started the 10 km walk, it wasn't long before the first layers of clothing were being removed.

We first travelled through a riverine habitat dominated by River Red Gums (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) most of which were suffering from considerable dieback. Next we made our way through a Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) Woodland. Mulga communities cover large areas of Central Australia second only in size to spinifex communities. There are many different forms of mulga which can be very confusing to the layman let alone the experts. Mulga's leaf and branch arrangement ensures the most efficient use of available rainfall but it is not particularly drought tolerant and certainly not fire tolerant.

On we travelled until those of us at the rear caught up to Barb who had spied a puffed-up bird perched high up on a hill. We tried to entice Bob into climbing up the multi layered hill for a closer inspection but he wouldn't take the bait and I think the general consensus of opinion was that it was a Nankeen Kestrel.

Next stop was in a small rocky creek crossing where we waited for all to catch up and Bob gave us a geology lesson. I was off looking at plants but remember hearing the term gneiss used but didn't take in much else. Sorry Bob! Kaye also pointed out a bag-moth caterpillar nest high up in a Beefwood (*Grevillea striata*) tree .

We continued on our way and reached Rocky Creek, at which point we left the trail and headed up the creek. The creekbed was still damp with large patches of Nardoo (of Burke and Wills fame). It was along the creekbed that we saw more flowering plants than on the rest of the trail. Whilst some were admiring the Ring-neck Parrots as they made their way from tree to tree others were trying to identify the various plants. We came across, Sticky Blue-rod

(*Stemodia viscosa*), Tickweed (*Cleome viscosa*), Indigofera sp., Sticky Hopbush (*Dodonaea viscosa*), one Large Green Pussy-tail (*Ptilotus macrocephalus*), the low growing pretty pink-mauve Hairy Mulla Mulla (*Ptilotus helipteroides*), a small delicate pale blue to white daisy with the unexciting common name of Variable Daisy (*Brachyscome ciliaris*). The most examined and discussed were two grasses; one of which was readily identified as Clustered Lovegrass (*Eragrostis elongata*). This plant is not so appreciated in a nursery situation as it was by us for it readily self-sows itself into other stock plus attracts aphids! The other grass was a canegrass and on delving into the plant books at home, I've come up with Umbrella Canegrass (*Leptochloa digitata*).

Finally, we reached a sharp bend in the creek where Kaye called a halt to the walk and declared a rest stop. There was plenty to keep us occupied at this stop with water at the base of the rocks providing a haven for tadpoles, frogs and other water creatures. There was a 'dog fight' or, more to the point, a bird fight in the sky as a couple of Pied Butcherbirds saw a Peregrine Falcon off out of their territory. A Caper White and Lesser Wanderer Butterfly fluttered past as we ate our lunch. It was a pleasant sojourn lazing about on a sandbank, but the wind was quite brisk and so it was time to move on or don the layers of clothes that we had taken off

Kaye led us around the bend over large expanses of rock and up a hill with a most wonderful view of where we had come from and Mt Gillen in front of us. We paused here for a group photo and then proceeded down the other side and re-joined the Woodland Trail. We made our way back to our vehicles with a few stops along the way to look at birds. Bob's list of bird species came to a total of fourteen, apparently not a very impressive count for a morning's outing.

Thank you Kaye for another enjoyable walk and thank you to Rosalie, Lindy, Adrian, Sienna, Jane, Helen, Barb, Pam, Beth, Bob & Arthur for being such great walking companions.

ANN Get-together 2006 HIGH COUNTRY IN THE ALPINE SPRING

by Rhonda Tomlinson.

Well last month came and went and I did not continue on with my saga from the High Country.

Day 10: In a way this was sad for me as it was our last chance to visit the Bogong High Plain area which I have fallen in love with. Our aim for this day was the walk to Mt. Nelse which was along the fire trail. On the way we encountered a family of Flame Robins and were treated to the sight of the male feeding the two young. The scenery looking toward the surrounding mountain peaks was breath taking and so many wildflowers & grasses could be seen covering the slopes.



Photo: Rhonda Tomlinson

That night as a fitting farewell we watched the movie 'The Man from Snowy River.'

Day 11: We were up early and headed off through the Tawong Gap, the Kiewa Valley and away from Harrietville to NSW for the next 8 days. We turned off to Corryong and crossed the Mitta Mitta River and along the Snowy Mountains Highway through Kancoban which was built as a Snowy Mountains construction town. At lunch time we stopped at the Murray No. 1 Power Station. This station was completed in 1967 and has the largest number of generating units of any power station within the scheme. It can generate 950mw or about 1/6 of Victoria's total energy requirements. Dead Horse Gap is the head of the Murray River catchment at an elevation of 1582m. We had a brief stop at Threadbaw Village before heading to our new accommodation at the NSW Sport & Recreation Centre at Jindabyne.

7.30pm A talk with slides was on the Alpine area around the Blue Lake and country we visited the next day.



Day 12: We passed through Perisher Valley on the way to Charlottes Pass where we headed on the main range walk down the steep path to the Snowy River. Looking along the river we could see Mt Kosciusko in the far distance.



Photo: Rhonda Tomlinson

This area was above the tree line and the terrain was quite rocky and we saw pockets of Alpine Bogs, the only wet lands in NSW. Unlike other alpine areas of the world, rich organic soils cover these mountains, allowing a patchwork of hardy plants to colour the landscape. The Blue Lake was our destination. This lake was formed when glaziers carved out a basin in the rock and is the largest and best example of an ice-quarried basin, or cirque on mainland Australia.



Blue Lake

Photo: Rhondda Tomlinson

On the way we passed Lake Hedley Tarn which is a shallow lake formed behind moraines – piles of rocks carried and later dropped by glaciers.

The plants protect the alpine soil from wind and water. Plant loss occurred as sheep and cattle grazed on the alpine grasses and flowers for more than 100 years. There has been an amazing recovery since 1957 and some of the measures used were straw mulching held down with netting, drainage banks, terraces and dams. As a result many plants reappeared including mountain celery, ribbony grass and anemone buttercup.

As we returned to where the bus was waiting we took a stroll along the boardwalk to see the twisted beauty of the mountain snow gums.



Photo: Rhondda Tomlinson

7.30pm Talk was by Colin Totterdel on 'Kosciuszko Landscapes and Flora'. He spoke about the flora we would see on Sunday and the natural and introduced causes to the vegetation such as fire, wind, snow and grazing as well as human activities and intervention.

Day 13: We made a quick stop to overlook the Lake Jindabyne and to our horror saw quite an array of noxious weeds including Salvation Jane and Skeleton Weed etc. This being a real contrast to all we have seen. It was explained to us that a beetle has been released about 18 months beforehand that attacks the roots of the Salvation Jane plant.

We visited the Snowy Visitors Centre and were told and read lots of information about the Snowy Scheme and the Lake Jindabyne project.

Our lunch stop was past the Ski Train Tube area, which only operates in the ski season, to Bullock Hut. This site was bought by Dr. Howard Bullock in the 1930's as a holiday retreat. The building was started in 1934. The kitchen, garage and stables were added later.



Photo: Rhondda Tomlinson

On our way back to the bus we saw several wombat holes and also a big green stone rock capped with granite which had obviously been brought in from another area and just dumped with some other rubble. It was enough to take the interest of the geologically minded members of the group.

We were given the night off without a speaker mainly because the next day was our BIG walk to the top of Mt. Kosciuszko.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Messages from the President

AGM

The Annual General Meeting is in August, and it is time to think about committee positions. We are a relatively large club and have the numbers to be able to vary the committee rather than continually rely on the same people.

Connie has done sterling service as Secretary for three years, and wishes to stand down. I hope that someone will be prepared to take this up.

I am prepared to continue as President, but feel that it is fair to warn that there is some uncertainty in my personal situation and there is a possibility that I might leave at relatively short notice.

I would take this opportunity to thank all the Committee for their efforts in keeping the club running smoothly.

Bob Read

BIRDERS

I get requests like the one below several times a year. Most of us work, and the retired are generally just as busy. However on the off chance that someone would be going birding and be happy to take the enquirer out we have put this in the newsletter. He is particularly interested in Spinifexbird and the emu-wrens, which are only reliably seen on the Santa Teresa road.
Bob

Dear Bob,

I found your e-mail on the Alice Springs Field Naturalists website. My wife and I are visiting the area for 5 days in July (staying in Alice 20th-22nd, then Ormiston 23rd-24th), mainly for birding purposes. I've found the ASFN website a useful help, but it's highlighted that we may be a bit handicapped with a 2WD car. The car we've hired can be taken on dirt roads only with our taking the full risk of vehicle

insurance. . So, I was wondering whether it might be possible to

hook up with a local birder - and of course we'd be happy to pay all their expenses - who would be happy to make a morning trip out to some of the good sites that we'd probably not manage on our own, and thought that you might be in a position to know who among the local crowd might be willing to help us that way. Failing that (and I know there's a problem with the day-job getting in the way of good birding!), maybe there is a professional or semi-professional guide we could engage for a morning, for the same purpose?

I'd really appreciate your help and advice, Best wishes, Dick Byrne

11, Brownhills Steadings,
St Andrews, Fife KY16 8PL
Scotland (UK)



Bloodwood skeleton roots near Andado

Photo: Rosalie Breen

BIRDSIGHTING

19 June 2006 Liz Carpenter and Eric Tan saw 5 Welcome Swallows at the AS Sewage ponds



Welcome Swallow Photo: Eric Tan www.avianwatchasia.org

Copy Deadline for article for August
Newsletter:- Monday 31st July 2006

Photocopying

COURTESY

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ALICE SPRINGS FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INCORPORATED
Minutes of the General Meeting held at Olive Pink Botanic Garden
Wednesday 14th June 2006

Open: The President, Bob Read, declared the meeting open at 8:40 pm and welcomed members and visitors

Present: As per attendance book (16 members and 4 visitors)

Apologies: Jim Lawrence & Shirley Goodman

Minutes: The meeting resolved to accept the minutes of the previous meeting held Wednesday, 10th May 2006 as a true and correct record of that meeting.

Correspondence In:

Drew Morris, Tourism Info Officer Birdsville	Request for help in producing a birding brochure
TSN	Newsletter Autumn 2006
WBC	Statement
NTFNC	Newsletter

Correspondence Out:

Dr Dirk Megirian	thank you for being guest speaker
OLSH College	thank you for use of staffroom for meetings
Jenny & Sonny Mason	thank you for invitation to Sloans Gully

Treasurer's Report:

Opening balance end April 06	\$1,840.13
Plus donation towards petrol	20.00
Less cost of photocopy May newsletter	<u>18.20</u>
Balance as at end May 2006	<u>\$1,841.93</u>

General Business

Speakers:

Wed 12 July Bill Low on Lake Lewis
Wed 9 Aug AGM followed by Show and Tell. Connie has offered to burn a selection of member's photos from trips over the past 12 months onto a CD to show at the meeting. If you wish your photos to be included, please contact Connie on 8952 4694 or email constans@bigpond.net.au.

Trips:

Sat 17 Jun Walk the Woodland Trail (to Rocky Gap and back) in Simpsons Gap National Park. Meet Flynn's Grave Memorial 8am. Leader: Kaye Percy 8952 3405
Sat 15 Jul Day trip to Lake Lewis. Meet 7:30 am at the Sargent St sign on the north Stuart Hwy. Contact Bob Read on 8952 1935.
Sat 29 & Sun 30 Jul Possible Alcoota fossil dig. Await confirmation from Bob.
Sat 5, Sun 6 & Mon 7 Aug Stage 6 Larapinta Trail. Leader Bob Read. Details to be advised.

Discussion on visit to Bush Foods Garden at Alice Springs Desert Park. Resolved to move Hamilton Downs trip to 9 & 10 Sep (subject to confirmation) and Bush Foods Garden the 16th or 17th Sep. Connie to confirm.

Other Business:

Jenny Purdie advised that the photos taken by Alan Weeks on the trip to Andado were available to look at and that Alan would print extras at cost.

Jenny also advised that Olive Pink Botanic Garden was seeking donations which are tax deductible. Forms available from the Garden.

Supper for July – Liz Carpenter

Note taker for June – Jane Danne

Sightings:

Marg Lawrence – Red-Tailed Black Cockatoos near start of Finke Desert Race.

Kaye Percy – on a trip to King Creek Station 10 Wedge-tailed Eagles on the way down and 4 on the way back. Kaye also brought back a specimen of Desert Heath Myrtle – *Aluta maaisonneuvei*.

Barb Gilfedder – White-backed Swallows

Bob Read – Flock of 50 Crimson Chats with males in breeding plumage on the Andado Road, also Eyrean Grasswren on sandhills near North Bore, Andado.

Liz Carpenter reported seeing 8 Black Swans, 8 Welcome Swallows, Tree Martins with the occasional Fairy Martin at the Sewage Ponds.

Iain Campbell reported the Rufous Whistler and Black Falcon in Todd River.

Meeting Closed 9:06 pm