



November 2010

Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club Newsletter



Road to Santa Teresa - Photo by Jude Mapleson

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month (except December & January) at 7:00 PM at Higher Education Building at Charles Darwin University. Visitors are welcome

This will be your last newsletter if you have not renewed your membership subscription
See pg 11 for payment options.

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NEXT NEWSLETTER

The deadline for the next newsletter is **Friday 28nd January**. Please send your contributions to Emily Findlay – robbiemily@hotmail.com.

Field Naturalists Meetings

Wed 10 Nov **Pam Keil**, one of our newer members, talking about “Field Notebooks and Nature Journals: Doorways to Discovery and Windows for the World” 7.00pm at CDU.

Wed 9 Feb No meetings in December or January. Next meeting will be on February 9, 2011.

Australian Plant Society Meeting

Wed 3 Nov **Tim Leane** will talk about Rainforests. 7.30pm at OPBG

FIELD TRIPS / ACTIVITIES.

Sat 6 Nov Bring your own BBQ tea to Simpsons Gap Schools Camping Area (Turn off to the right before the public picnic area. It will be signed) followed by a hunt for reptiles and amphibians in the Gap with Robbie Henderson. Meet at the Schools Camping Area at 6.00pm. Contact Barbara Gilfedder on 89555452.

Wkend 20-21 Nov Overnight or day trip to Two-mile Waterhole near Glen Helen. Look at native fish in the Finke River with Robbie Henderson. Should be lots of birds too. You are free to make your own way out there when you wish. Camping is along the side of the Finke River – no facilities. Turn right from Larapinta Drive just beyond the left turn into Glen Helen and before you cross the Finke River. You need 4WD for this bit. We will be leaving about 4.00pm on Saturday from Flynns Grave, if you prefer to tagalong with us. Contact Barb Gilfedder on 89555452

Sun 5 Dec Informal end of year breakfast at Alice Springs Desert Park Picnic area (we will use the shelter furthest from car park) from 8.00am. Please bring a plate of food to share. Tea, coffee and juice provided. Contact Sarah White 8953 8605 .

Sun 13 Feb Sewage Ponds. Meet 7am sharp at the locked gate. Contact Barb Gilfedder

Alice Springs Landcare Field Days - Bush regeneration at Maynard Park

Sat 11 Nov & Sat 13 Dec 8.30am to 10 am. The battle against Buffel Grass continues at Maynard Park. Lend a hand to help regenerating native plants thrive. Meet at 8.30am at the Braitling School / Rhonda Diano Oval Car Park on Head Street. Please wear covered footwear. For more information contact Andy Vinter on 0429 977 436

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Desert Smart Eco-Fair 2 October 2010

We scored a good site in the car park area, big enough, and where people walked past.

Lots of people looked at the rocks, grasshopper specimens and photos, and other photos and posters.

Many were persuaded to take part in the "Recognise the Raptors" competition. It was designed as an educational exercise and I'm sure lots of people learnt a little more about these wonderful birds of prey. One gentleman thanked James for showing him how to recognize a Wedge-tailed Eagle. The winner was Dorothy Latimer who was very excited to receive her Simpson and Day Bird Field Guide prize.

Thank you to LJ Hooker for loaning the marquee, erecting and dismantling it and to Sue Fraser for organizing that and the roster for manning the stall. Thank you to the volunteers Chris Watson, Barb Gilfedder, Sarah White, Kay Bailey, Jill Brew, Jude Mapleson, Sue Fraser, Rhondda Tomlinson and Rosalie Breen. A special thank you to the last two who also set up and dismantled the display. Also thanks to Bob Read for grasshopper pinned-specimens, photos and his Newhaven grasshoppers report; Rosalie Breen for a rock collection with answers underneath, and to Don Hadden, Anthony Molyneux and Mat and Cathy Gilfedder for the Raptor photos and to Sarah White for printing them.

Without all these wonderful people the stand would not have run so smoothly. Well done!



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October Speaker; Michael Green: "Geology of the Alice Springs Area" Highlights by Morgan Flint

I came to this double-barrelled exercise in Geology, with a background of having talked and listened to geologists over the years; I had learned little other than some rocks/formations were sedimentary and others were igneous. Oh, and I'd learned how to spell and pronounce the word "gneiss". (I kept on forgetting what it was).

But now, thanks to Michael Green our October guest speaker, I know "biggest mobs". If I want to know if the sediment which overlays the gneiss formation in the Heavitree Gap, comes from Queensland, I just have to look for fossilised banana skins. I know too that the south island of New Zealand (part of the Land of the Wrong White Crowd) is connected to the Australian tectonic plate.....whether the Kiwis like it or not.

Tectonic plates and gravity, are crucial to the geology of our planet. The plates are moving constantly in fact, and this means, Michael said, the geology is happening "as we speak".....powered by the heat engine in the Earth's core.



Dr Michael Green

The question of the field trip, in my opinion, was posed by Michael Laflamme....."Why is there no sedimentary rock on top of the Anzac Hill gneiss?" Answer: "It has been eroded away". So, there!

Finally, but by no means ALL, I learnt that: the geology of the Pilbara is the oldest in the world (3.5 billion years); I have trouble pronouncing "uniformitarianism"; 25-30 million years is "yesterday", and even 500 of them is young. And I found that Tasman Line story fascinating.

I look forward to the next lecture/field trip.....on economics.

Below are highlights from other members from the Geology Field trip lead by Michael Green on October 16;

Colleen O'Malley: **It's not all about the rocks!** Despite loving this compelling insight into the laminated fabric of Michael's geological being and his pleas to ignore the plants and birds on this trip, the head-high waves of russet spinifex captured my imagination hugely as did my precoccupation with getting a good gander at a Spinifexbird (which are swarming everywhere, apparently, except where I happen to be looking!). So whilst admiring our rapid transit through geological time - into the Bitter Springs, amongst the Julia and Pioneer sandstone layers and hunting for traces of stromatolites, I kept a wary eye out for these birds and for their distinctive call all day - all to no avail. On the trip homewards Meg and Rosalie and I stopped off at an interesting patch of mallee and spinifex and right on cue were greeted by not one but three very unshy Spinifexbirds fleeing between clumps and on dead shrubs. We got a great close up look at their cute rufous head-dresses and floppy long tails and enjoyed listening to their alarm calls for a while before moving off over the dolomite to give them a bit of space to drift back into the geological backdrop and evade my view for the next decade or so.....

Connie Spencer: I've attended a few geology lectures over the years but Michael's explanations have been the best. I feel that more information and understanding sunk into my brain this time than ever before. Now, I just have to retain it! A few descriptive words like, fabric, basement, package, laminate and mantle took my fancy. Not exactly words I would have associated with geology, nevertheless, quite explanatory and meaningful. Words I won't forget. But what about "unconformity"! That was a new one and I'm not sure I understand it yet. Oh well, maybe next time!



An unconformity exposed in the railway cutting, quartzite over gneiss



Weathering on the end of Corroboree Rock shows the sedimentary layering tipped vertically

Barb Gilfedder: I have been trying, since I became responsible for organising Field Nats speakers, to link Talks and Field trips. I think this one with Dr Michael Green talking about the basics of Geology and then showing us examples in the field was particularly successful. This was evident by the good attendance at both parts of the exercise. We all learnt something as he explained things using language we could all understand and so enthusiastically and with humour.

Two things I was especially interested in. First, the small cutting beside the railway line at the North End of Heavitree Gap which clearly shows the layers of Heavitree Quartzite overlaying the Sadadeen Range Gneiss. I have passed this spot so many times and seen the different rocks but not previously been able to name them or realize their significance. Second the fact that Corroboree Rock is actually a chunk of layered Dolomite in the Bitter Springs Formation that has been turned from horizontal to vertical at some stage. The layers can be seen in the rock and Michael says it is not easy to tell which way it has turned – which side was previously the top. It was also good to see Little Woodswallows and Fairy Martins enjoying the cliffs.

Jim Gilfedder: I was impressed by the importance of Plate Tectonics and the Tasman Line. Not only does this reinforce my opinion that we are different from those Easterners, it paves the way for the behaviour of one of our Prime Ministers, i.e. to pack up and move to China!

Lee Ryall: The highlight of the day? Highlights tumble through my memory... The blatant self-advertisement of a wall of Arumbera sandstone shines out. As does the startling pink of Alice Springs granite intruding into gneiss full of feldspathic cats eyes. Then there was the chaotic formation of the

dolomite around Corroboree Rock, warty with silica nodules. Outcrop lay under my feet like a window into the past. And the gaps! 140 million years gone missing between the top of the hill and the base, 800 million years absent in my favourite unconformity. Gaps like this demand investigation- why are they? what was here? The day flowed with vivid stories. The curves of the Amadeus basin filled with formation after formation and now I want to know where I can lay my hand on Heavitree Quartzite near Kulgera. The phenomenon of the vast plains of the Heavitree quartzite gleamed under old waters- and where did all the sand come from? Words like Arumbera, dolomite, Pertataka, stromatolite rolled off everyone's tongues, filling the air. We watched as the Ross river highway was covered with detritus. We saw the top layer harden into a cap of silcrete, and then that plain eroded before our eyes and washed away leaving a string of mesas whose relatives populate the desert around us. A trickle of water cut the Heavitree Gap. And in the afternoon I stood on a hill and felt the vibrations as a chunk of Australia broke off to the East and headed for a different destiny. What was the highlight? It was going home, tired, knowing that aspects of this country would never look the same. I had watched the earth move.

Rosalie Breen: Studying Geology is all about getting out in the field, walking around, looking at the rocks and determining the relationships between the various rock types, to get the story of events which may have happened over millions of years.

On Anzac Hill, we looked at the quartzite, high in silica so very resistant, which was sandstone deposited over gneiss. This gneiss was originally granite but is now a rock with “fabric”, having been squashed, deformed and heated but not to the extent of melting. Later intruded into this gneiss was another granite (Alice Springs granite) which, being deep underground, cooled slowly, as indicated by the large crystal sizes. Then within the granite we saw further intrusions or dykes of quartz or dolerite (dark). Each of these events can be placed in a time sequence by observations and ageing the rocks.

“It’s all driven by Plate Tectonics”

We heard that phrase quite a few times to emphasize the fact that as the continental plates collide or pull apart, much energy is dissipated and is manifested by the deep trenches mid ocean, and volcanoes at the edge of the plates. But it can also be expressed far from the edges being the ‘driving force’ of events in Central Australia. All landforms were created from these forces, and are in continuous process (admittedly rather slow) of building up and breaking down.

China

Did you know we once had a relationship with China? The continental plates have been wandering on the surface of the earth for millions of years. In a super continent before Gondwana, China was joined to the east of the western two thirds of the Australian block. Mountains formed by this union and their subsequent erosion means we have a bit of China here!

Lunch

On a less intellectual side, lunch on the sands of Ross River in the warming sun or in the shade of river red gums (and sadly a few Mexican poppies) was a peaceful interlude with a stage setting of meandering water against rugged red Arumbera sandstone walls. (We can give it its proper name now.)

Spinifex and Glaciers

Another picture which will remain in my mind is of us negotiating a ‘recessive’ layer – a valley between two more resistant outcrops of sandstones, our members almost disappearing among the beautiful, tall and flowering spinifex as we walked cross-country to possible stromatolite deposits. This valley represented the ‘global snowball’ time when a vast amount of earth was covered with ice.



Lost in the Spinifex



Conglomerate of glacial origin

On the southern (younger) rock outcrop were bands of conglomerate, water deposited sediments of rock fragments originating from glacial debris, angular rocks of all different types gouged out of the ancient basement rock. After this period there was a shift in the dynamics of the globe creating conditions suitable for life. So the younger rocks gradually over time began to have fossils allowing their age can be more easily determined. The geological age Cambrian indicates life. The Pre-Cambrian rocks are before life. The borders between these ages occur in Ross River area, within the Arumbera Sandstone.

Michael Green - One of the best impressions of the trip was our guide's enthusiasm and knowledge of geology which he obviously enjoyed sharing with us, and his efforts to make it understandable and most enjoyable with ever present humour. (Read Morgan's report).

PS If you don't understand what I have written or the terms used, come to another talk from Mike next year. And my comments may not be an accurate depiction of Mike's explanations. And this is only a bit of what we learned on our field trip.

Earth Stars by Barb Gilfedder

Jude Mapleson sent me this great picture of strange fungi she found on her driveway. I passed it on to Mark Carter, who is a local expert on so many natural things, from snails to fungi.

He said "It's a *Gasteromycetes*-type fungus (ie. spores in a sac like a puffball) in the group known as Earthstars. I'd hazard a guess that it's in the genus *Geastrum* but I wouldn't take that as gospel. I have found some shrivelled old specimens under a Cooba in my yard and at acacia woodland sites through the West Macs this season but none as fresh or as tall-standing as these- there are possibly several species out here. Earthstars are very cool- they sometimes break free of the soil and roll off like little tumbleweeds blowing spores as they go. I can't give you much more than that- the fungi out here make the snail fauna look really well studied.



Looking further into a Fungi of Australia book from the town library, I think it looks like *Geastrum fornicatum* Arching Earth Star. Members of the Earth Star group have a double layer of tissue. The outer layer of which splits to expose the central puffball containing the spores. The Arching Earth Star has fruit bodies 60mm across. At maturity the outer lobes curl under to elevate the spore sac. It is a distinctive fungus usually found in arid areas.



We frequently find the fruiting bodies of another Earth Star in our garden growing on the mulch. Also in the *Geastrum* genus but I am not sure of the species. It uncurls like a star but does not raise itself off the ground.

(Pictures by Jude Mapleson and Barb Gilfedder).

Shorebird habitat loss in the Yellow Sea

The Pound - a Poem by Meg Mooney

After a day and a half
it feels like I've always been here
my swag on shiny, purple gravel
among skew-whiff tufts of kerosene grass
beside a deadfinish bush

black mounds hunch like animals
among the bull spinifex across the track
after all these years looking at rocks
they feel like family I've only just met
and there are others here, groups of dark shapes
half-hidden, and in knobbly rises above the sea of grass

I want to feel the rough skins of these hummocks
hold their heavy fragments
inky faces with splashes of mica
like bronze fingerprints
crystals of uncommon green glass

they huddle down the humps, weather to clay
so the quartzite surrounding them grows into walls
makes a pound, a tiny country of rocks

ridgebacks of creamy pegmatite
line up haphazardly across it
hills of orange-skinned granite
but it's the small charcoal forms
among white grass
that I'm drawn to
reminding me the world's beauty
is often in shadows, and difference

tonnes of sewage each year, 2 million tonnes of solid waste and 43 of the 52 rivers that flow into it are heavily polluted.

Massive loss of habitat due to industrial development has destroyed hundreds of square km of mudflats and has now pushed the 50,000 Red Knots that feed in this bay into a small and rapidly reducing band of mudflats along with many other species of Shorebirds.

Red Knot more than many other shorebirds are very specific on their prey items and will struggle to find any other area suitable to stage.

The main reason for the habitat loss is to create land for industry.

If you would like to read more – a detailed report can be found at
<http://www.shorebirds.org.au/news/?p=343>

Ilse from Land for Wildlife pass on this following "Report from Adrian Boyle, 17th Sept 2010" that she thought might interest Field Nats;

I thought I would pass on some very disturbing issues facing our shorebirds.

During April and May in both 2009 and 2010 I have been working in the Bohai Sea (China) on Red Knots for the Global Flyway Network with Chris Hassell.

Red Knot populations have been declining for many years now and it is predicted that in the next few years there will be a major crash in the two subspecies *rogersi* and *persmai* that visit Australia and New Zealand.

The main reason is that there is a huge amount of habitat loss on the staging grounds. The amount that is and has occurred in the Yellow Sea (the main site for migrating shorebirds from our flyway) is staggering. It is reported in the Bohai Sea alone in the last 10 years 453 square km of offshore area including 156 square km of intertidal mudflats have been destroyed.

In regards to Red Knot it has only been in the last few years since the main staging site for Red Knots on Northward migration has been found. This is in the north-west area of the Bohai Sea in China. This area is one of the most populated places on the planet and humans are visible everywhere. The Bohai Sea is the most polluted sea in the world and absorbs nearly 5.7 billion



Red Knot taken by Mat and Cathy Gilfedder

Olive Pink Botanic Garden walk – Sunday 10 October with Connie Spencer
 Photos and captions by Barb Gilfedder



Top centre: Grasstree *Xanthorrhoea thorntonii*. Connie told us that this one was planted in 1984 and this is the first time it has sent up a flower spike. **Photo top left** is a close-up of the flowers. **Top right:** Flowers of *Melaleuca glomerata*. **Middle left:** Young growth on an *Acacia inaequilatera* (Fire wattle) so called because the main vein on the phyllode is to one side of the midline. **Middle centre:** Desert Rose flower *Gossypium sturtianum*. **Middle right:** New growth on a young *Eucalyptus Corymbia eremea*. This was particularly pleasing to see as I remember Connie and I collecting the seed stock that this tree came from, down in the Pit Lands many years ago on an APS trip. **Bottom row left:** Parrot pea *Crotalaria cunninghamii* flowering beautifully on the sand dune. **Bottom middle:** Lovely red flowers of *Lamarchea sulcata*. I have never seen this flowering previously. **Bottom right:** *Actinobole uliginosa* is almost cactus-like when you study it close-up.

Thank you Connie for a well-attended, very interesting stroll

**Desert Smart Eco-Fair
Raptor Competition
Answers.**



Black - Shouldered Kite



Black Kite



Black Breasted Buzzard



Black Falcon



Whistling Kite



Hobby



Brown Falcon



Peregrine Falcon



Brown Goshawk



Wedged Tailed Eagle



Nankeen Kestrel

By Rhondda Tomlinson

There was a lot of forethought and planning as well as plan changing that went into my long service leave. Originally I wanted to visit India where my 3rd great grandfather served in the British Army with the East India Company and my 2nd great grandfather was born. At this time of my planning the Tamil Tiger Group in Sri Lanka had a lot of problems and fighting and as it was Tamil Nadu where I was thinking of going so I decided to look for another alternative. Watching the TV program "Get Away" I saw a story on the Orangutan Project in Malaysian Borneo and thought this could be the answer. I went in on the internet and looked at various options and chose one that was in Sandakan. I applied for this volunteer project and booked my flight and looked into what was there. Then the agency contacted me to offer an alternative package at Matang Wildlife Park near Kuching in southern Malaysian Borneo. Now my plans were changing but I decided to go to Sandakan anyway but only for two nights. I had intended to go to Kuching before leaving Borneo so this was not a great problem. So the arrangements were made to fly from Perth to Kuala Lumpur and then to Sandakan and then fly via Kota Kinabalu to Kuching.



Sandakan is in Sabah in the north of Malaysian Borneo. I only had one full day there and I visited the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre. The exchange rate for Australians is very favourable and to travel by taxi is quite popular or an alternative is to take the local bus.



Sepilok covers an area of over 4,000 ha of forest and was set up in 1964 to rehabilitate orphaned baby orang-utans. The Sabah Government, tourism and the volunteer program are an important part of the funding of this facility. The aim of Sepilok is to return orphaned, injured or displaced orang-utans back to the wild. An orang-utan when it is brought to the Centre it is first quarantined to make sure it does not have any transmittable disease, then the training begins with learning essential skills such as how to find food, build nests and climb. These skills they would normally learn from their mothers. In the outdoor nursery their freedom is increased and their dependence on supplied food (they are now encouraged to look for food) and emotional support is decreased.

As a day visitor I went on the tour to see the orang-utans being fed in the platform 'A' area where the natural forest diet is placed on a feeding platform as well as a milk supplement is given to them. This milk supplement is given in plastic drink bottles and as a result when you go to the viewing platform you have to keep your drink bottles in your bags as the orang-utans will come down and take them from the people. We were walking down the boardwalk to the feeding area and I noticed an orang-utan in the trees above the people in front of me. At the feeding platform only two young



orang-utans came down swinging through the trees and performing some remarkable gymnastics. They make use of both arms and legs in the same way and there is no tail to use as an extra safeguard.



We were shown how to put your feed dish on your head and also up end a water dish much to the delight of the crowd. After the orangutans departed and most of the people, I stayed to listen to an American tour guide talk about the forest and as he was talking, a Black Diamond Squirrel came down to feed on the left over food. The American identified a Red-eyed Bulbul and a Brown Barbet which we were able to see through his scope.



This was a small insight to what was to come when I visited Matang in Sarawak as a volunteer. This I shall tell you about at a later date but if anyone is interested in knowing about the volunteer program please go to the website: <http://www.orangutanproject.com/content.php?p=113> . Be aware that if you are considering volunteering that this is a tropical area and you have to be able to cope with the heat and humidity. Mosquitoes are another hazard but while I was there I did not encounter any at all. I will be happy to talk to anyone about my time in Borneo as it is an experience I shall never regret.

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SIGHTINGS

Please let Barb Gilfedder know of any interesting birds or animals seen locally for inclusion in this list.

Black Shoulder Kite - <i>appeared to be hunting because it was hovering with its wings held upright in a V-shape, before dropping down and grabbing something of the road</i>	13 Oct	along Colonel Rose Drive	Emily Findlay
Pacific Golden Plover, Oriental Pratincole, Gull-billed Tern, Buff-banded Rail and 15 Straw-necked Ibis	19 Oct	Sewage Ponds	Michael Green

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SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE

Membership fees were due as from the Annual General Meeting in August. Prompt payment would be appreciated, paid at meeting nights, posted to the Treasurer or direct into the club account at Westpac BSB No. 735303 and Account No 100981.

Please put your name in the reference so we know who has paid.

If your personal details have changed please indicate, especially email address. New members please fill in the complete form.

Subscriptions: Family \$30. Family Concession \$25. Individual \$20. Individual Concession \$15. Life member 10 times annual subscription. Interstate past member - newsletter only \$10 .

<p>MEMBERSHIP FORM Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club Inc. PO Box 8663, Alice Springs NT 0871</p> <p>Name(s) </p> <p>Address: </p> <p>Phone: (home) (work) (mobile) </p> <p>Email (print carefully)</p> <p>Renewal or new membership</p> <p>Payment enclosed \$</p>

ALICE SPRINGS FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INCORPORATED
Minutes of general meeting held at Higher Education Building, Charles Darwin University
On Wednesday 13 October 2010

President, Barb Gilfedder declared the meeting open at 8.30pm. *Thanks to Colleen O'Malley for taking minute notes.*
Present: 29 members as per attendance book.

Minutes of previous meeting: The Minutes of the September meeting had been circulated as part of the newsletter. They were accepted as circulated.

Correspondence in:

Western Australian naturalists Club	The Naturalist News – October 2010
NT Field Naturalists Club	Nature Territory – October 2010
Jo and Danae, Newhaven Reserve	E-mail asking for relief caretaker (forwarded to members)
Bill Lowe	E-mail about forthcoming lectures (forwarded to members)
Diane Scopel	Inviting our input into writing Draft Plan of Management for Telegraph Station Reserve (forwarded to members) <i>Rosalie Breen and Barb met with her last Friday – report in General Business.</i>
Karen Polkinghorne	E-mail Invitation to Community Achievement Award Ceremony 19 Nov 2010 at Modbury SA.
Watermark Literary Society	E-mail Invitation to Eric Rolls Lecture, speaker Bill Gammage 20 Oct 2010 at National Library, Canberra. Also next year's muster "The nature and place of the backyard" 17-20 June 2011. Speakers include NT's Denise Goodfellow and Ted Egan.
Anne Pye	Minister McCarthy's tribute in parliament to Dirk Megirian. Contact Anne or Barb for a copy.

Correspondence out:

Anthony Molyneux	Card - Thank you for last month's talk
Ben Covery, LJ Hooker, OLSH Senior School	Cards - Thank you for help with ASFNC stand at Eco-fair.
Anthony Molyneux, Don Hadden, Mat and Cathy Gilfedder	E-mails - Thank you for raptor photos for Eco-fair competition

October Treasurer's Report:

Rosalie reported that with \$320 coming in from subscriptions our bank balance is now \$1948.56.

General Business:

- Eco-fair - Report and thank you's – will be published in next newsletter.
- ASFNC A4 Poster – designed by Emily Findlay. Will try to display at CDU, Lone Dingo, Town Library. Other suggestions – Rhondda Tomlinson and Michael Laflamme at their works. Also Tourist Bureau.
- Report from meeting with Diane Scopel and Shirley, a ranger from P&W. Barb mentioned briefly some of the points raised:-
weeds particularly cacti, dogs threatening wallabies, need for better signage, bike riding paths, camping, sacred sites, opening times, alcohol use in picnic area, significant biological areas, crown/leasehold land, joint geological geophysical reserve.
If anyone would like more information on the discussion, Barb will send you a fuller report.
- **Coalition FAB Alice.** This was forwarded by Rhondda Tomlinson. A group with this name standing for Coalition for a better Alice was launched at the Eco-fair. Coalition FAB Alice is about the community taking back the responsibility for developing an environmentally, socially, culturally and economically viable and sustainable Town Plan, a plan reflecting the present and long-term needs, wishes and interests of its citizens, something our present leadership has failed to provide. If you would like to be on their mail- out list, please contact Dom Pecorari on dpecorari@westnet.com.au.
- From Emily Findlay – Information on an ALEC initiative **Living Smart** in Larapinta area – a series of talk, discussions and field trips, 25 Oct-6 Dec, Free. Fliers available were collected by interested members.
- Query about answers to Raptor Competition. Barb will look into putting in newsletter or displaying at next meeting – or both.

Trips

- Salt Springs trip cancelled due to rain – may be run later.
- 24 Oct - Ooraminna trip – Meet opposite Old Timers 7.30. Probably half day but bring lunch. 4WD not needed. Length of walks temperature dependent. Leader Rosalie Breen
- 6 Nov - Simpsons Gap 6.00pm BBQ/Picnic tea followed by reptile and amphibian hunt with Robbie Henderson
- 20/21 Nov – Two mile waterhole near glen Helen. Camp and look at native fish with Robbie Henderson.
- 5 Dec – Xmas breakfast
- Nocturnal Tour at Desert Park. ASFNC invited to do dummy run of bus sized group – 20 to 30 people needed. Show of hands indicated support. Date to be advised.

Next meeting – Dec 5 – Pamela Keil and Michael Laflamme – title to be advised.
Supper: Anna Melton, (*need volunteer for report.*)