

## Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club Newsletter



Dr Adam Yates presenting a talk about the 'Alcoota Bones' to a few of the many interested visitors during the open weekend on site at Alcoota . Photo Rosalie Breen.

**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

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**Web site:**

<http://www.alicefieldnaturalists.org.au>

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## NEXT NEWSLETTER

The deadline for the next newsletter is **Friday 24th August 2012**. Please send your contributions to Barb Gilfedder [fedders@octa4.net.au](mailto:fedders@octa4.net.au)

## MEETINGS.

- Wed 8 Aug **ASFNC** Meeting 7.00 pm at the lecture theatre in the Higher Education Building at Charles Darwin University. This meeting is our Annual General Meeting and Members' Night. All members are invited to bring something interesting to the meeting, either a real natural history object or collection, or photos on a thumb drive or disc.
- Sunday 19 Aug **ASFNC** Planning Meeting 3.00pm. Alice Springs Desert Park Courtyard. Sit in the sun, buy a coffee from the café, and bring lots of ideas for trips. All members very welcome.
- Wed 12 Sept **ASFNC** Meeting 7.00 pm at the lecture theatre in the Higher Education Building at Charles Darwin University. Speaker - Rick Churchill "Volunteering with ACV studying Echidnas".
- Wed 5 Sept **APS** Meeting 7.30 pm at Olive Pink Botanic Garden. Speaker- Karlee Foster from Alice Springs Nursery on "Grafted Australian Natives".

## FIELD TRIPS / ACTIVITIES.

- Long w/e 4-6 Aug **ASFNC** Drive and camp along the **Finke River**. Leaders Jim and Marg Lawrence, Ph 89 525049. High Clearance 4WD needed – limited numbers.

The desertSMART EcoFair will be at Olive Pink Botanic Gardens, Alice Springs between 10 – 12 August and provides numerous opportunities for people to participate, learn, create and celebrate a sustainable future in Central Australia. Highlights include Eco-Science Schools Day, special guest Dr Karl Kruszelnicki, Eco-Markets, discussion panels, workshops, competitions, music and much more. The ASFNC Committee decided not to participate with a stall this year. However it will be well worth a visit to see all the other stalls, displays and demonstrations. Don't miss the APS Native plant sale on the Sunday.

- Sun 12 Aug **Quarterly Shorebird Count** at Alice Springs Sewage ponds. Counters and scribes needed. Please contact Barb Gilfedder, contact details below.
- Sat 8 Sept **ASFNC** – Walk to **Fenn Gap** and climb through the cave in the mountain – Leader Neil Woolcock, contact details below.
- Sun 23 Sept **ASFNC** - **Aileron walk**, followed by lunch at the pub. Leader Neil Woolcock, contact details below. Neil needs to know numbers for this trip in advance.

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# July Speaker - Ken Johnson on early naturalist HH Finlayson 1895-1991

by Lee Ryall

Ken Johnson left us with a portrait of a remarkable man after his talk about Hedley Herbert "H H" Finlayson. Not only were Finlayson's achievements startling and awe-inspiring, but he had a memorable personality. He worked outside his original training (organic chemistry) and yet achieved a record many academics would envy, contributing significantly the understanding and recording of small mammals in central Australia, and across the continent. He corresponded widely and published 63 papers, including 5 in *Nature*.

HH was extremely suspicious of modern technology, refusing to own a telephone, a television or a car. He expected visits to be made and confirmed by letter. Although he made the occasional desert trip by motor vehicle, this only confirmed his preference for travel by horse, camel or even donkey team. The bulk of his central Australian specimens was obtained on these journeys, made despite the heat of summer- the only time he could get off from 'the Varsity'. The stunning black and white photographs Ken showed us included one of HH packed for the road, complete with camel and travelling companions.

In all, this remarkable man collected and prepared some 2500 to 3000 specimens, meticulously recording his travels and finds on over 5000 negatives. He collected (and as often as not, ate) examples of mammals that have since become limited in their range or have disappeared from the scene entirely, such as the Rat Kangaroo, Mala, Numbat, Lesser Bilby and the Burrowing Bettong. He encountered well known 'characters' from central Australia at places such as Angas Downs, Tempe Downs and Coniston. Aboriginal people collected creatures for him, and their names, too were noted down with their photographs.



Oparinna Gap - Musgrave range 1933 - Photo HH Finlayson



HH Finlayson with Numbat skins in his study 1990 – Photo Ken Johnson

Finlayson was a private man, strict, upright and conservative (the same unremarkable studio lamp is evident in photos taken forty years apart) He was obviously self-conscious about the injury which took the use of his left hand and eye, in the way he hid his left hand in photos, but equally didn't allow his disability to lower his standards or limit his goals.

The story of this young man, his gradual rise to prominence and his eccentric trips to remote places, beautifully photographed, made a fascinating evening, - thank you, Ken

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## Guided tour of Palaeontology Collection in NT Museum - by Lee Ryall

This was a preview for the Alcoota weekend.

On 24 June a group of enthusiasts braved the Sunday morning cold to be whisked back nine million years, keeping company with the creatures who died as the last waterhole in the area dried up.

Adam Yates had laid out a feast of bones for us, and explained how examining and understanding the fossilized bones can build a picture of the animals' lifestyles. The bones are from a time when the climate was drying and cooling. The dig site reflects a group of animals 'tethered' to a drying waterhole; they were unable to leave because the next water was too far away. When the water did eventually come, it swept the bones into a tangled heap- a 'bone bed'.

### Dating

The early megafauna from Alcoota are difficult to date precisely because of the lack of any material for radioactive dating, so the deposit is dated by comparison with the evolutionary status of animals from related deposits. The excavations in higher strata on the hill nearby have found fossils which match some found at Beaumaris in Victoria,

which in turn have been dated at about 6 million years old, based on associated marine fossils. The Alcoota main dig fossils are from lower in the ground than these, and are therefore older. However they are younger than those found at Etadunna, Kangaroo Well and younger again than those at Bullock Creek. This process gives an estimated date of 9 million years ago. The Alcoota beds contain ancestors of the well known megafauna such as *Genyornis*, *Thylacoleo* and *Diprotodon* which survived through to the arrival of people.



**Bullockornis skeleton dwarfing palaeontologist Adam Yates**

**Extraction**

As we walked in, 20-23 million year old bones from Kangaroo Well were being revealed from dissolving limestones in acetic acid vats in the workshop courtyard. However, with the Alcoota fossils, the clayey soil affects preservation and makes extraction difficult- the bones are cracked, extremely fragile and likely to crumble on exposure to the air. Bone pieces must be glued as soon as they are found, and then left to dry, and then re-glued, a time-consuming process which means that a jawbone might take four weeks to extract.

**'Demon Duck of Doom'**

The room was dominated by a skeleton of a 'demon duck of doom'- a chunky-boned *Bullockornis*. There have been theories that *Bullockornis* and its close cousin *Dromornis* were related to the ratites - the flightless birds that occur worldwide, but in fact they are much more closely related to the goose family. It has also been suggested that *Dromornis* was a predator, with its narrow but deep beak and solid build. It would indeed have been a 'demon duck of doom' but this lifestyle appears unlikely as its beak has a smooth rather than a hooked tip and its feet lack talons or claws, being better adapted for running. It would have developed a fair momentum running, however, given its likely weight of 500 or even 600 kg. Only one juvenile bone has been found in the bone bed, suggesting that *Dromornis* may have been a seasonal breeder. Bones from *Ilbandornis*, another flightless bird were smaller and finer. It would have been dwarfed by its larger relative.

**Mega-wombats**

Bones from some early diprotodontids, the 'mega-wombats' were also out for view: both the sheep sized *Kolopsis* and the larger *Pyramios*. Their skulls both clearly showed the flat grinding teeth, and jaw closure of a herbivore. The descendants of *Pyramios* - Diprotodons would grow as large as white rhinos and be common throughout the country.

**Marsupial Tapir**

The skull of *Palorchestes* had small eye holes and a shortened nasal bone in front of a broad facial area with a wide hole for blood vessels and nerves to pass through. These features often indicate a trunk-bearing animal. Taken together with its clawed feet, this suggests *Palorchestes* may have been a sloth-like creature or an early termite eater.



**Palorchestes reconstructed: Marsupial Tapir**



**Adam Yates with his 'saltie on steroids'**

**Wallabies**

Wallabies were common in this community, although much smaller than many of the creatures found. These are among the earliest macropodines found. A relative of the Short-faced Kangaroo would also have been hopping around, but browsing on bushes rather than grazing as its descendants would do.

**Carnivores**

One of the puzzles at Alcoota is why so few carnivore fossils have been found. Remnants of an early leopard-sized thylacoleonid, *Wakaleo* with slicing teeth and a forward-jutting stabbing canine show one of the predators present, but such fossil remains are rare compared with other creatures. Did the carnivores survive on the carcasses around them until the rains, or is there some other reason for the rarity of these fossils? One carnivore which has left impressive remains, however, is a bulky 5 metre crocodile, *Baru*, likened to a 'saltie on steroids'. This creature is far more solidly built than modern crocodiles, with teeth designed for predation. It would have fed on large prey including the giant birds and diprotodontids.



## Impressions of Alcoota Fossil Dig site Trip 14-15 July

**Miranda and Albert Sage, and Trish Teesdale** - We really enjoyed our day trip to Alcoota to the Fossil Dig Site on July 14th. It was a great privilege to be able to access the dig sites and we appreciated the generosity of Museum staff and volunteers who shared their knowledge and showed us around. It is an extraordinary place and exciting to visit. We took the guided bird walk with Ian Archibald and wandered down to the river and back. We saw Hooded Robin, Variegated Wrens, Western Gerygone and White Plumed Honeyeater amongst others. After lunch Albert and Trish took the Geology/Fossil Tour and I got out my paint box. The country is beautiful, with interesting hills close by and magnificent distant ranges.

We were surprised to find the Fossil Dig Sites so accessible and appreciated the facilities provided. Thanks to Field Nats and the Museum for organising such a splendid event

**Lynne Thompson** - Well whoever chose the particular weekend in July to allow visitors to come out to the Alcoota Dig site chose well. We were able to come to an understanding of the ongoing work of NT Museum team and volunteers during the month they attend the site. I'm certain that the number of visitors gave the NT Museum team a shock – I worked out that there were 25 cars in the convoy all coming from Alice Springs. I enjoyed the various tours that the NT Museum team and volunteers arranged so that we really got an understanding of what the palaeontologists do at the site as well as information on the birds and flora at the site

Saturday's weather was very kind to us - almost balmy, despite the overnight chill on Sunday morning. Being in a swag overnight was a new experience for me but being able to view the night sky without any clouds or 'smog' or any moonlight was fantastic. The Milky Way showed very clearly and you got an impression of how many millions of stars make it up.

On the Sunday I stayed out of the wind and read a book that I had been lent by Lee and because it has an article on Alcoota I would like to recommend it to everyone – Digging Up Deep Time. I do hope that these comments allow the NT Museum team to indicate to our Government how important the Alcoota site is, no matter how painstaking the work is, and how much the people of Alice Springs are interested in Alcoota.

**Wendy and Ian Mann** - What an adventure, starting with getting a little bit lost before arriving. The friendly and professional way that those responsible for the dig site dealt with the unexpectedly large number of visitors was amazing.

The walks to the dig sites, the bird walk, the botany walk and the presentation in the evening were all conducted by people whose knowledge was matched by their enthusiasm. To see and hear in person what most people would only ever experience on TV was exciting and a privilege. Thank you, Lee, for organising this.

### Passing Ages **Meg Mooney**

From cowpat hill just after dawn  
we see a cream rug of grasses –  
the thickest for decades at least –  
over a rolling plain.  
Limbs of shadow reach westward  
from the odd bush or patch of gidgee.

Across the soft glow of the plain  
are flat-topped mesas and ridges,  
silcrete caps protecting silty red slopes  
like those below our feet,  
under these the pale green clays  
that hold the bones,

from that era when lakes and swamps  
filled hollows in hard, iron-rich pavements  
on which dinosaurs had walked  
for at least a hundred million years.

At the reedy lakes drank later giants,  
mostly mammals and birds this time,  
of the dry jungles and rainforest  
which marked Australia  
when Africa was getting into grassland:

gigantic wombats, tapirs, tree-eating kangaroos  
and the largest bird known, and only from here,  
*Dromornis stirtoni*, its back at my head-height,  
a ground-dweller evolved from magpie geese  
but with a beak like a toucan  
maybe part-scavenger.

Crocodiles, marsupial lions and tigers  
fed on the browsers, feasted as  
after a few million years  
swamps and rivers became fewer  
and smaller, more and more animals  
came to drink near here.

The neighbouring jungle was eaten out,  
it was a choice of food or water,  
then one year the swamp dried up,  
many hundreds of huge animals  
had nowhere to go,  
the predators had their last banquet, last meal,  
moved on if they could, or became food for  
scavengers.

Seven million years after this –  
maybe at the start of the decline of humans –  
I descend the hill  
get ready to pick slowly with a metal stylus  
around a leg bone ending in 3 prongs  
unearth a limb from where it staggered and fell  
at the beginning of the drying  
and the end of the long age of browsers.

**Holger Woyt** After having enjoyed the tour through the Central Australian Museum's workshop and Adam Yates talk about Alcoota we surely didn't want to miss the weekend at the excavation site. We were amazed by the number of people who turned up, but it didn't diminish the fun. Jared Archibald took us on a walk to the different excavation pits and captivated us with his hands-on knowledge. It's a pleasure to see how enthusiastic people can be when they are allowed to do what they love to do. We were really impressed by the work that's being done out in Alcoota. To put everything that we had learned during the day into perspective, Adam Yates gave a powerpoint presentation after dinner at the campfire. How easy is it to understand palaeontology when you are actually in the location where it all happens? The expert team involved in the Alcoota excavations did everything to keep us entertained and interested, including Ian Archibald's bird walks and Peter Latz's fantastic botanical walks. We will certainly be back next year, maybe even a week or two, to take part in the excavations.

**Pete & Lisa Nunn** - 'Such a wonderful opportunity to see a site we've heard so much about in operation. Outstanding fossil specimens!' Big thanks to all the staff who were extremely generous with their time in showing us around and fielding questions.'

**Rhondda Tomlinson** - This was my third trip to the Alcoota Dinosaur Dig and what an amazing weekend it was. On the Friday I told Ian that there could be about 30 people coming and he looked surprised I wonder what his face looked like when many more than this number presented. Just after arriving I stopped to reflect on the memorial to Dirk Megirian.

I chose to do the bird walk to the river first after settling in. I am not good at bird ID but the walk down part of the river was fascinating to see the trees and wildflowers. In the afternoon there was the Bones talk by Adam and even though I have been here before it is so almost unreal to see these bones being unearthed with such care and skill.



Bones from the 2005 dig



Bones from the 2012 dig

Sunday morning I had the chance to go on Peter Latz vegetation walk. He brought the 3 aspects of the weekend together with the site and what lives here now; the dig with the remains of some species of animals; why and what caused the vegetation changes and life extinctions.

All are connected and the effect of one impacts on the other and you have to look at

the whole picture not just a small piece. Thank you to all who made it possible for us to attend this weekend for the talks, patience, inspiration and encouragement to want to know more.

**Puntj & Marilyn Hall** - Thank you for the chance to see Alcoota dig again. We were there for Saturday & were able to visit both dig sites & have all our questions answered. Thank you to everyone who arranged it; we were very generously welcomed. Our grand-daughter who is home schooled would have enjoyed it also, but missed visiting Alice by a week so we will keep our ears open for another occasion..

**Michael Laflamme** - The Alcoota trip was an eye-opener to me. Seeing the biodiversity in the ungrazed Mitchell grassland, and the huge bones of the many species that once lived there, increased my appreciation of the astounding uniqueness of Central Australia. Also, witnessing the long term work of Ian and Peter, and their affection for this place, showed me the need for all of us to restrain our individualistic strivings and work together to better care for our landscape. Who knows what other biological and palaeontological secrets lie hidden?

**Hannah Bremen** - At my first look into the shallow pits at Alcoota I saw a jumble of bones half-submerged in pale silty clay. Over the weekend we were treated to a series of guided tours and talks from an enthusiastic and entertaining team from the Museum who shared their expert knowledge of the geological, botanical, and faunal changes that have occurred there recently (recent in geological time anyway). By the end of the weekend I looked into the pit and saw eight million years into the past and could imagine the 3-metre tall 'gigagoose' browsing in a wetter, more mountainous landscape. A huge thank you to the Museum staff and volunteers who warmly hosted us and introduced us to the palaeowonders of Alcoota, and to the Field Nats who coordinated the trip. Also thanks Ian Archibald for the bird walks and Peter Latz for the plant stories.

## Rosalie Breen

First impression: What a lot of people!

Second impression: What a lot of grass.

Third impression: What a lot of great mini excursions.

1. At the FN meeting place we had 16 cars, and I thought that was a big number, but when we stopped at Gem Tree to meet Ian Archibald to lead us to the dig, there were many, many more awaiting. And with so many there was a little confusion as how to conduct a convoy of cars successfully. Eventually fifty and more visitors arrived at the fossil site.
2. Having been some years earlier, I was amazed as the paddocks were thick and yellow with grasses. Almost all native species with only a few Buffel, thanks to hard work by Peter Latz over the years. I learnt to recognize Mitchell Grass, both *Astrebla pectinata*, Barley Mitchell and *Astrebla elymoides*, Hoop Mitchell whose stems bend over to the ground hoop like. *Sporobolus actinocladus*, Katoora was prominent along with *Aristida latifolia*, Feathertop Wire Grass, and the tiny dead looking *Eragrostis setifolia*, Neverfail. Native Millet *Panicum decompositum* was growing, and *Enneapogon cylindricus* or Jointed Nine Awn the tops of which break off easily. Another Oat Grass, the smaller *Enneapogon polyphyllus* was there too. And I'm sure many others.
3. Because of the numbers we were divided up in groups. On the Sat, I went with Adam Yates to learn and observe the main dig, Peter's hole, and Cow Pat Hill. I was impressed with the painstaking work of uncovering and painting with glue the fossil bones. Next a plant walk with Peter Latz across the cracking clay soils trying to avoid the typical pug holes among all that grass. Peter had stories for every plant he pointed out including the Bloodwood which he called the supermarket of trees for its coconut, the lerps, hollows for water, the resin used as an antiseptic and for blisters, sometimes honey and of course firewood.



In the evening we had a slide show from Adam about the Changing Central Australian Biota i.e. how the fossils uncovered showed the development of fauna from 9 million years ago.

Morning I joined three others on top of Cow Pat Hill, watching the sun colour the sky and cast wonderful light over that grass plain and the camp area, and long shadows of trees and the hill, wandering back as the sun loomed higher.

Sunday I went with Ian on a bird walk re-termed a bushwalk as it was quite windy so few birds. Heading east we first had to walk over rock covered soils through that grass again and then into the trees, quite lush growth, big and beautiful Ghost Gums, one with an Eagle's nest on high and many daisies in the sandy soils. The quite wide Waite River itself had magnificent River Red Gums and many big and little footprints in the sand. On the way back we passed a big and spreading Corkwood, biggest I've seen. More of that grass and a grove of Gidgee Wattle near the gate.

What a great experience. Many thanks to Museum staff for organizing the open day, to the workers who gave up some of their precious time to show us the wonders of fossil hunting, and to Lee Ryall who must have been overwhelmed too with the response.

**Sabine Gonelli** - The Alcoota weekend was fantastic. It was great to see a number of real paleontologists at work and have the opportunity for several question and answer sessions with Jared Archibald. I enjoyed getting a feel for the difficult dig there, getting the opportunity to gain from Peter Latz' knowledge and meet some birds on the bird walk with Ian Archibald. The scientific talk by Adam Yates was also very interesting because it gave the necessary picture for a better understanding of the site.

I hope I will have the opportunity to do some hands-on work myself next year. This time I preferred to just watch the professionals doing the right thing.

**Lee Ryall** - For me, the highlight was the bones, their precious nature emphasised by their fragility. Bones that would have packed a powerful kick on a *Dromornis* foot are now being extracted from their surrounds with delicate brushwork, a straw and glue. They dance in my head, images of the honeycombed interiors of bones that died nine



million years ago, of the comical horns on the massive breastbone of nine foot high geese, of the blade-edged crocodile tooth contrasting with a deep-rooted but ground down mammal tooth, of the claw that slots cunningly into its phalange, and of the mystery shapes - possible skulls, face down, huge tailbones and curvaceous vertebrae. The skill and patience of the workers was an inspiration; I could anticipate the triumphal sensation when, after days or even weeks of effort, a bone is lifted from the jumbled mass of the bone bed and laid on its own couch of sand, ready for the next stage of its renaissance.

Thank you to the Museum, to Michael Cawthorn, Adam Yates, Jared Archibald, Ian Archibald and Peter Latz in particular, for hosting such huge group of people; The overwhelming response showed me just how much these discoveries mean to people; everyone seems to have had a memorable time.



Early morning shadows and colours - Rosalie Breen

Want to read more about Alcoota finds? Check this website <http://www.abc.net.au/rural/content/2012/s3554791.htm>

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## Field assistants required for fieldwork on Great Desert Skinks at Newhaven.

I am currently looking for volunteers for a study on Great Desert Skinks (*Liopholis kintorei*) at AWC's Newhaven Sanctuary, NT. The project forms the behavioural component of my PhD investigating the sociality and dispersal of these unique lizards. In particular, help is required for:

- Building and maintaining animal enclosures
- Feeding and monitoring lizards
- Assisting with behavioural observations during experimental periods

Work will involve long hours in very hot conditions. Fieldwork is expected to run from late September 2012 until late January/early February 2013. While a commitment to the whole field season is not essential, volunteers with more extensive availabilities are preferred.

A background in zoology and experience in reptile handling are preferred but not essential. Food and accommodation will be provided. If volunteers cannot organise transportation to and from Newhaven, arrangements can be made for pickup from Alice Springs.

For any further information, please contact Siobhan Dennison: [siobhan.dennison@mq.edu.au](mailto:siobhan.dennison@mq.edu.au)



Great Desert Skink burrow on Newhaven Reserve



Great Desert Skink *Liopholis kintorei*



## SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE

Membership fees are due as from the Annual General Meeting in August.

Prompt payment would be appreciated, paid at meeting nights or posted to the Treasurer (P.O. Box 8663) or direct into the club account at Westpac BSB No.035-303 and Account No 100981

Be sure to put your name in the payment details

If personal details have changed please indicate, especially email address.

New members to fill in complete form.

## Red Centre Bird Festival 2012

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September  
to Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2012**

The Red Centre Bird Festival is a celebration of birds. The week is full of opportunities to get out into the desert and connect with local birdlife, learn about birds from the experts, compete with zany birdwatchers in the Red Centre Twitchathon, admire the creativity and talent displayed at Bird Art in the Park, pick up a bird-inspired artwork from the Bird Art Market or feel the festivity of the school kids in their Bird Flags displays around the Desert Park.

### **Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September**

Red Centre Bird festival opening event at the Desert Park 4pm to 7pm.

### **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October**

Birds before Work - Alice Springs Telegraph Station.

### **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October**

Birds before Work - Ilparpa Ponds

Twitcher Talk and Titbits. Alice Springs Desert Park 7pm to 9pm.

### **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October**

Birds After Work - Simpsons Gap – Cassia Hill

### **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> October to Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October**

The Red Centre Bird Festival Twitchathon

### **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> October**

Birds on Film. Araluen will be hosting a bird related film, most likely Alfred Hitchcock's "The Birds" on Sunday night at 7:30 as part of their Art House film evening. HOWEVER – this is to be confirmed – there are a few issues finding distributors etc., so stay tuned for confirmation on this one.

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club Inc

PO Box 8663, Alice Springs NT 0871

Name(s)  
.....

Address:.....  
.....  
.....

Phone contact

(home)  
.....

(work)  
.....

(mobile)  
.....

Email (print carefully)  
.....

Renewal/new membership

Payment enclosed \$ .....

***Please circle relevant membership***

Fees: Family \$30. Concession \$25

Individual \$20 Concession \$15

Life member 10 times annual fee

Interstate past member. Newsletter only \$10

Subscription year begins at August AGM.

..... Call Nick Atchison on 08 8951 8756, or see our next September Field Nat's Newsletter for more information .....

# ALICE SPRINGS FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INCORPORATED

## Minutes of general meeting at Higher Education Building, Charles Darwin University Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

**Present:** Members, visitors and apologies as per attendance book.

**Previous minutes** – accepted.

**Business arising from the minutes:**

Nil

**Correspondence in:**

- NT Nature newsletter.
- WA Naturalists. No longer issuing hard copies.

**Correspondence out:**

- Thankyou card to Adam Yates for his presentation of the Alcoota fossils at Natural History Museum, Araluen.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Balance at 30 <sup>th</sup> May	\$2746.62
Subs	\$30.00
Interest	\$2.38
Balance 29/6/12	\$2779.00

Albert Sage has agreed to conduct the annual audit.

**General business**

None

**Past Activities/Trips discussed:**

23 June	Southern Heavitree Range walk with Connie. 13 walkers including 5 visitors.
24 June	Visit to NT Museum palaeontology workshop and fossil collection conducted by Adam Yates. An excellent introduction to the Alcoota trip.

**Future activities:**

14 & 15 July	Trip to Alcoota for a fossil dig.
21 July	Walk from Jim's Place (Stuarts Well) – Rosalie as leader
Aug. long weekend	Finke River – leaders: Jim and Marg Lawrence. Need high clearance 4WD.

**Sightings**

Princess Parrots at Newhaven – Bob Read  
Mulga parrots on Colonel Rose Drive

Next meeting: 8<sup>th</sup> August. AGM  
Speakers : Anyone with anything interesting to share  
Supper : Rhondda