



April 2017

Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club Newsletter



When the Red Centre was even redder!

Margaret Friedel opened her interesting talk at our March meeting with this stunning photo of Rosy Dock, *Acetosa vesicaria*, a weed, first collected in the Alice Springs area in 1954. Read about Margaret's research into this and other weeds on pages 3 and 4.
Photo Margaret Friedel 1979

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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NEWSLETTER

The next newsletter will be May 2017.

The deadline for the next newsletter will be 23 April 2017.

Please send your contributions to Barb Gilfedder: bjfedders@gmail.com

Please contact leaders if you intend going on any field trips.

Saturday 8 April

Desert Park Ride. A good concrete bike track now runs through the Alice Springs Desert Park greater area. **Jim Lawrence** led a morning ride through there last July, and promised a night ride later. It will be on Saturday 8 April 2017 starting at **7.00pm**. Meet at the Lawrence House at 2 Battarbee Street with your bicycle, bike lights, torch, helmet and water. The ride is less than 10 km, first along the bike track to Flynn's Grave, then through the Desert Park coming out near the Christian School on Blain Street, and back to Lawrences' for supper. The almost-full moon will be rising at 4.45 pm so should give good light. The sun sets at 6.27pm. Please contact Jim on 89525049 or email jim.lawrence.asp@gmail.com

Wednesday 12 April

Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club GENERAL MEETING at the Lecture Theatre in Higher Education Building at CDU at 7.00pm. Speaker - **Ben Kaethner** "Fire management on Aboriginal lands in Central Australia."
Special meeting to vote on Special Resolution to adopt new constitution at 8.00pm.

Saturday 22 April

Creek line walk, Standley Chasm – Plan is to depart town at 7.30 am and return by noon at the latest with the option of morning tea at the kiosk if people are interested. It will be a rambling, pottering walk up a well-vegetated creek line (there may still be pools of water in places). There is a bush track part of the way and then we will be slowly picking our way up the creek line and will go only as far as the speed of the slowest in the group dictates. There are a few places where there is a bit of easy rock scrambling over larger rocks and the surface is fairly uneven throughout the walk. Can people please contact Colleen on shrikestar8@gmail.com to register their interest and discuss car pooling etc. If by chance the temperature on the day is 38 degrees or above the walk will be postponed.

Sunday 23 April

Parks and Wildlife Market at Telegraph Station, (see advertisement below) combined stall with ASFNC and APS AS. Volunteers needed for stall roster. Please contact Barb Gilfedder. bjfedders@gmail.com

Wednesday 10 May

Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club GENERAL MEETING at the Lecture Theatre in Higher Education Building at CDU at 7.00pm. Speaker - **Andrew Crouch** – **Identifying common birds**

AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY ALICE SPRINGS

Contact: apsalicesprings@yahoo.com.au

Wednesday 6 April

APS AS Meeting at Olive Pink Botanic at 7.30pm. Learn how to effectively navigate through some very useful botanical websites including the new FloraNT site. **Peter Jobson** (Senior Botanist at the Alice Springs Herbarium) will take us on a 'guided' tour. **ALL WELCOME**

Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club Committee Members

President	Barbara Gilfedder	8955 5452	Public Officer	Rhonda Tomlinson	8953 1280
Vice-President	Lee Ryall	8953 6394	Property Officer	Rosalie Breen	8952 3409
Secretary	Pamela Keil	8955 0496.	Committee Member	Pauline Walsh	0416 094 910
Treasurer	Neil Woolcock	8955 1021	Committee Member	Robin Grey-Gardner	8952 2207
Website	Pamela Keil	8955 0496	Newsletter	Pamela Keil / Barbara Gilfedder	



Alice Springs Telegraph Station Open Day and Market

Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory would like to invite you to rediscover the Telegraph Station.

Date - 23 Apr 2017

Time - 9:30am to 1:00pm

Event Location - Alice Springs Telegraph Station Historical Precinct

Saturday 1 April Olive Pink Botanic Garden Plant Sale.

Gate opens 7.45am. Sale from 8.00am.

Create your own water-wise desert garden paradise. Choose from over 100 species of unusual and stunning central Australian plants, including bushfood and medicine plants.



“WHERE DID THEY COME FROM AND HOW DID THEY GET HERE?”

Examining the evidence for some familiar weeds of arid central Australia”

A talk by Dr Margaret Friedel at ASFNC March Meeting

Report by Rosalie Breen

The spark to this talk was the request to contribute to a chapter in a book about the origins of arid zone weeds that was dismissive of camels as a possible carrier of weeds.

Margaret confessed to being fascinated by history so enjoyed the large quantity of thorough research needed to gather little bits of information and pool them into logical conclusions to answer the question in the title. Her enthusiasm showed throughout. My report cannot cover all the evidence, hope I have done it justice.

This lecture covered 5 invasive weeds, but her research has now included 43. (More talks, book?)

Camels . Could these weeds have been brought here by camels?

First import of camels was Harry, or “Horrocks Beast”, brought to Clare by a Mr Horrocks. In 1860 24 camels were unloaded in Melbourne for the Bourke and Wills expedition and to these were added some for a vaudeville show. In 1866 a mob was landed at Port Augusta and moved to Beltana where a stud was established. They were landed mainly in Port Augusta and WA ports including Fremantle and Port Hedland. It was estimated between 10 to 20 thousand were imported over 25 years from the 1880s. The camels and their accompanying cameleers came mainly from Afghanistan, the North-west Frontier, Baluchistan, Sind, and the Punjab and North West India. Others came

from places such as Canary Islands and the Middle East. The cameleers brought their gear, saddles and harness with them. So camels and mostly Afghan cameleers spread over much of inland Australia as the animals were used for exploration, survey and construction works, in mining settlements and in a network of freight cartage.

Ghan towns and camel depots were set up.

The map indicates distribution. Principal Ghan towns and depots (McKnight 1969)

Ruby Dock *Acetosa vesicaria*

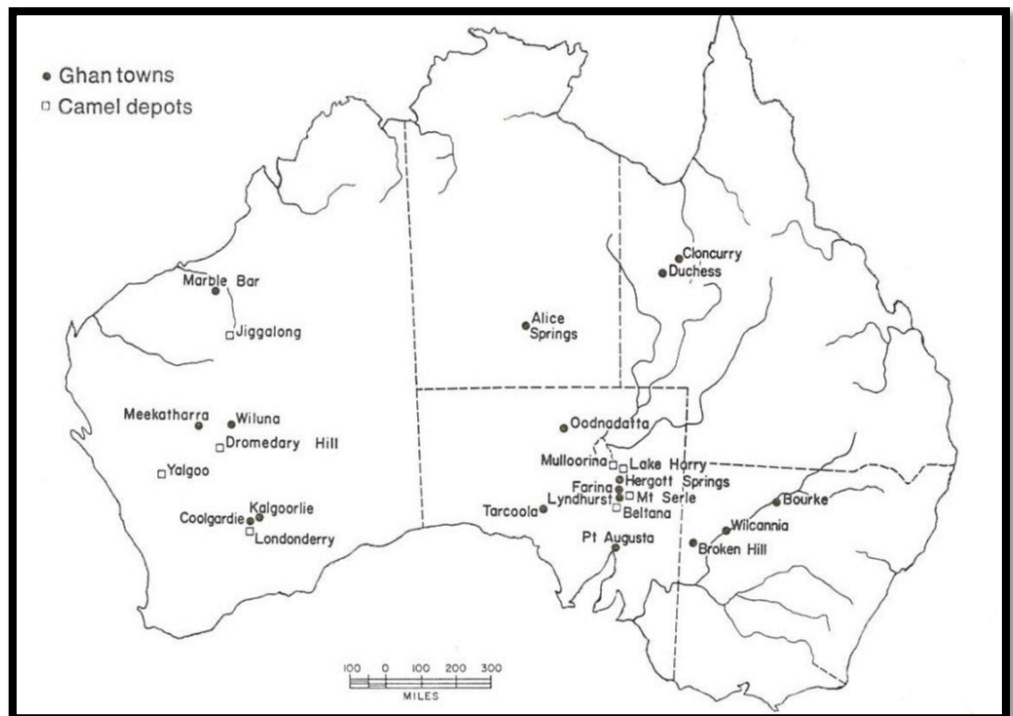
This plant has its origins in semi desert areas of North Africa and Afghanistan, Pakistan and India.

The first record of its appearance in Australia was in

Perth in 1890s, Then Flinders Ranges, and later Kalgoorlie and other mining towns. Not until 1954 was it collected around Alice Springs by George Chippendale, at Billy Goat Hill. The wife of Beecher Webb, a lawyer who practised in Alice Springs 1932-7, came from Broken Hill and at some stage brought Ruby Dock from there to plant in their garden on Eastside, from which it escaped. Margaret used Atlas of Living Australia to find records of plants, always remembering that absence of a record may mean it could have been somewhere and no one collected it. These records give a picture of distribution of plants over time. Ruby Dock has a widespread distribution over Australia. Being an attractive plant it was deliberately planted.



A long camel train with the animals carrying heavy loads arriving in Port Augusta. 1919. Photo from State Library of South Australia PRG/280/1/10/515



Ruby dock (See cover photo): very likely brought in camel saddles accidentally, from ‘Afghanistan’



Buffel Grass, *Cenchrus ciliaris* (Photo: Rick Davies)

This plant is native to large areas of Africa and Asia, including Afghanistan, Pakistan and northwest India. The first record is an isolated one from Wyndham with no more until 1920s in pastoral areas in NW WA, such as Port Hedland and Woodford West Station. Seeds were deliberately sown on stations north of Port Hedland.

There was a report of Buffel growing around Tea Tree Well where cameleers had mended saddles. Other stories tell of the cameleers having cloth bags of seeds which they planted at strategic points for feed on travels from Oodnadatta to Alice Springs and Newcastle Waters. In Port Hedland children were paid for collection of seeds in flour bags. In 1930 Buffel was identified in Alice Springs. The grass turns up in all sorts of places, the seeds being spread by wind, water, birds, livestock and of course, people. Department of Agriculture in WA actually distributed seeds collected by General Birdwood from Afghanistan, of *C. ciliaris* (already present in Australia), *C. setigera* and *C. pennisetiformis* to pastoralists.

Buffel grass: brought in camel saddles accidentally, and intentionally distributed, in both cases from 'Afghanistan'.



Afghan Melon, *Citrullus lantatus* camel melon, bitter melon, or pie melon. (Photo: Arthur Chapman)

It is a native of southern and tropical Africa, an annual and edible, so a useful food source. It is widespread, mainly central and eastern

Australia, growing in all sorts of different localities. This melon was found very early, before camels arrived, at Kangaroo Island 1836 and Tasmania 1845. The seeds are spread by wind, water, birds, livestock, and people. The first official record was in Rockhampton from Amelia Dietrich an eccentric lady who collected everything and anything. A sad story from Walter Smith who in 1933 found, at the site of the Coniston Massacre a mass of white skulls which he likened to white pie melons.

Afghan Melon: single introduction, possibly brought from southern Africa by sealers and whalers, later distributed accidentally by livestock or deliberately by people.



Paddy Melon, *Colocynthis, Citrullus colocynthis* (Photo: NatHistSocSA)

There are no early records of occurrence, and it is uncertain how it arrived. It comes from Africa, Mediterranean Europe and Israel, Iran to India and tropical areas of Asia. Because there appear to be two different strains in Australia it could mean two introduction sites. In the west, from northern Africa and that in the east from Morocco and Cyprus possibly by returning military personnel. The seeds of this common weed are spread by wind, water and possibly birds and people.

Colocynthis: two separate introductions (in the west – from Algeria, Chad and Sudan; and in the east – from Morocco and Cyprus), possibly brought by returnees from military campaigns.



Prickly Paddy Melon, *Cucumis myriocarpus* (Photo: Barb Gilfedder)

The genetics of the melons here in Australia are different from the native plants of its land of origin in Southern Africa, indicating the Australian population is from a secondary invasion from somewhere. Looking at import records of animal stock starting even from the First Fleet, suggests that it came with animals, on sheep from Calcutta or from Cape Town (Merinos) and other places, or via Indian Zebu cattle from Cape of Good Hope and various other cattle from England and Scotland. These livestock then travelled overland across Australia into SA, where it was first recorded in 1851.

Prickly paddy melon: single introduction from a 'stepping-stone' region but originally from southern Africa, probably brought by livestock around the time of European settlement.

Thank you, Margaret

**Coolibah Swamp walk -
Saturday 4 March
Report by Robyn Grey-Gardner**

Jude Prichard led a walk with the ASFNC around Coolibah Swamp – *Ankerre Ankerre*, on Saturday 4th March to show us the results of the Buffel busting, saltbush slashing and other activities the Landcare group has undertaken in recent years. Since the recent rains, the Swamp has been magnificent with a variety of grasses and flowers flourishing.

The Coolibah Swamp is a sacred area and a heritage site. A plan of management was developed in 1994. The principles in the plan are still relevant and direct the Landcare group’s activities, such as restoring water flow, removing debris from the side of the drains and bush regeneration.



The walk started at the large Coolibah tree at Undoolya Rd. The area has had bollards installed to prevent further compaction of the soil caused by cars parking around the base of the trees.

Recently thirty five people in the Landcare group planted about sixty tree seedlings to create an avenue entry. The vision is for the Avenue to provide an informal entry that can change peoples’ perception of the Coolibah Swamp from ‘wasteland’ to valued urban space. The intention is for people to use the space respectfully. The seedlings were grown by the Desert Park from provenance seed harvested from a couple of trees on the site.

The focus of the Group’s recent effort has been to remove Old Man Saltbush (*Atriplex nummularia*) and Buffel Grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*) to allow the regeneration of native plants at the site. Saltbush seeds were distributed around the site in the 1970s in an effort to reduce dust.

The removal of the saltbush also serves to open up the site lines, which creates the perception of a safe space. Consequently over recent years there has been an increase in the community’s use of the space. This brings good use of the space but also unwanted use. For example, on the day of our walk there was a new dump site of green waste. Rubbish is usually picked up as quickly as possible so that the perception of a dump site is quashed and green waste carries an added problem with the potential source of new weeds to the area too.

It’s a dynamic place and the work is also dynamic - the rain dictates the speed at which they need to work. The deprivation of water to the site is of concern but it is also possible that the groundwater has become more saline which may be affecting the growth of the plants. There does not seem to be any monitoring of the ground water quality.

Future Landcare activities could include contouring the scalded areas with a grader to capture water and allow water to be harvested from the roads and of course continuing to remove the saltbush and Buffel grass.

Numerous species of grass were found including Fairy Grass, *Sporobolus caroli*, and a broad-leaved one was taken to Peter Jobson at the herbarium for identification. It was Hairy Arm Grass, *Urochloa gilesii*.



For further information about the Coolibah Swamp, there is an interview with Costa and Gardening Australia that can be found here:

<http://www.abc.net.au/gardening/stories/s4128177.htm>

The management plan is available at the Alice Springs library.

Many thanks to Jude for sharing her knowledge with us, and to Meg for organising the excursion! Some club members had not realised that a place of such significance and beauty was hidden so close to the town centre.



Fiona Walsh and Sue Fielding are collaborating on a visual poem – a poem that is followed by the visual. Jude has a box of historical information including photos from activities at Coolibah Swamp from the 70s, 80s and 90s. There is both Aboriginal and Landcare history and an important continuity of connection with the area.

With the very wet start to the central Australian year, we saw many more caterpillars around than usual. Some of us were particularly excited at finding caterpillars of *Coenotes eremophila*, Emu-bush caterpillar on *Eremophila longifolia*, Long-leafed Emu-bush, on the Intertexta forest trip. (See picture in the March 2017 newsletter). Evidently the caterpillars drop to the ground and bury themselves to pupate. Although we had a name and could find pictures of the moth that might eventually emerge, it would have been good to see it and photograph the chrysalis and the adult moth. Below is an article, written by Don Herbison-Evans and Stella Crossley of Coffs Harbour Butterfly House, explaining how this would be possible. The caterpillar pictured in this article is in the same family as the Emu-bush Caterpillar, SPHINGIDAE.

Their excellent website, lepidoptera.butterflyhouse.com.au contains an enormous number of photographs and lots of information. However, they only have only 744 identified caterpillar photos out of the 4028 species of moths and butterflies on their webpages. So there is a big gap in the knowledge. Barb Gilfedder



Caring for a caterpillar of *Hippotion scorfa* SPHINGIDAE.
Photo courtesy of Bec Watkins, Tarrigindi, Queensland.

How do I care for a caterpillar?

An article written by Don Herbison-Evans and Stella Crossley of Coffs Harbour Butterfly House, and printed with their permission.

Because so few caterpillars of Australian lepidoptera are known, often the only way to identify a particular species of a caterpillar is to care for it, and rear it to an adult butterfly or moth. This is because most of the naming and classification taxonomy of Australian butterflies and moths was done over 100 years ago on specimens caught in Australia but taken to the British Museum in London, where the entomologists had no idea of the life histories of their specimens.

For people wishing to care for a caterpillar that they have found, this is what we suggest: take your caterpillar into captivity to keep ants, spiders, wasps, and parasitic flies from attacking it.

Remember that if nature is in balance, then every pair of moths will produce only 2 more viable moths in the next generation. So if the female lays 1,000 eggs, which hatch into 1,000 caterpillars, on average 998 will die before reaching maturity. So the chances of your caterpillar surviving in the wild are much slimmer than if you rear it carefully in captivity.

Put the caterpillar gently (*larvae* bruise easily) into a clean dry glass bottle (so you can observe when the adult moth emerges), with some dry sand or soil at the bottom, and cover the mouth of the bottle with some material and an elastic band, or the lid with some little holes punched in it. To transfer the caterpillar, maybe put a leaf in front of it,

and then gently tickle the rear of the caterpillar with something to encourage it walk forward onto the leaf, then you can put the leaf with the caterpillar on it into the jar. It is wise never to touch a caterpillar as the hairs on many species break easily and can cause skin irritation and other medical problems.

Many caterpillars are fussy about their humidity: some like dry conditions, some wet. The sand helps control this. Many caterpillars get quite thirsty: if your animal looks a bit dry: try dipping new food leaves in water before giving them to the caterpillar. Too much water: then mould attacks the caterpillar. Too little: the caterpillar can die of dehydration. Every species has a different balance point.

If possible, offer the caterpillar some leaves of the plant on which it was found. But caterpillars are often found after they have fully matured and are wandering about looking for somewhere to pupate, so do not be surprised if your caterpillar declines to eat. If it does feed, change the leaves and remove the droppings every 2 days. Finding food may not be easy, especially if the caterpillar was found just wandering about. Some feed on the algae and lichens on old stonework for example. The best that can be done if you found it when it was just on walkabout is to put several different kinds of plant leaves in the jar and see if it eats any: if so take all the others out and keep giving it that. If it declines, keep putting different plant leaves in. Some caterpillars are very fussy, and many will eat only one particular species of plant. Don't leave leaves for more than two days: they rot and grow mouldy. If all else fails, you could try flower petals or bits of apple, which many caterpillars will accept.

In due course, with any luck, the caterpillar will pupate, maybe on the jar, the lid, in a curled leaf of the food plant, or in the sand. It is best not to disturb the animal while this is happening. Pupation is usually signalled by it ceasing to feed. In pupating, excess fluid is expelled. Dry sand or soil in the container is good to absorb that away from the *pupa*.

When pupation is complete (maybe several days), gently (the *pupae* bruise easily too) take out any loose droppings and excess food plant, which would otherwise go mouldy. You should provide some twigs for the new adult, when it does emerge, so that it can hang upside down, as most Lepidoptera need to do this for their wings to expand properly. You then have to wait. Some adults emerge in 2 weeks, some in 2 years, so this may require some patience. The time depends on the species, the season, the weather, how much food it ate, and just how it feels.

Rearing caterpillars is a great art, and one learns by trial and error, and we mean a lot of error. Don't expect to get it right first time.

Your patience may also go unrewarded: a high proportion of caterpillars get infected with parasitoids. These are usually fly or wasp

species that lay their eggs on or in the caterpillar, and when they hatch, the fly or wasp grub eats the caterpillar from the inside. This tends to make the caterpillar upset and wander about instead of hiding on its food plant: and so these are the caterpillars that are most often found. So if a bunch of flies or wasps come out the *pupa*, do not be too surprised. These flies and wasps are actually very important. If that is what you get, consider saving them and donating them to your local museum together with information about the caterpillar, especially if you were able to photograph your caterpillar. The information on the various species of wasp or fly that parasitise each species of caterpillar is very important ecological information.

Once you have an adult moth or butterfly, make sure it does not beat itself to a frenzy (butterflies and moths basically do not like being kept in jam jars): a spell in the refrigerator at five degrees Celsius (not freezing which kills them) is a good way of putting them to sleep. Then you may finally be able to photograph it, and identify it from pictures in the web pages, lepidoptera.butterflyhouse.com.au or in books, or with the help of your local museum.

Good hunting!



A successfully reared adult moth of *Hippotion scrofa*, SPHINGIDAE.

VIDEO PROTOCOL

Informed consent needed before videoing club activities.

Recently a club member asked if they could film others during an Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club field trip. Several people were uncomfortable with this happening.

It was decided at the General Meeting on March 15 that, if anyone wishes to video persons at club events, they must put a request either in person or in writing, to the general meeting in the month prior to the event, describing fully what they intend to film, the reason for the filming and the use the footage would be put to afterwards. That way people could make an informed decision. Any person could be filmed only when they had given written consent on the attendance form. There should be no pressure on anyone to consent to being filmed.

You may notice that there have been fewer "people photos" appearing in the newsletter recently. This is because at a recent Planning/ Committee Meeting, the subject of "people photos" in the newsletter came up. If you wish to include a photo in the newsletter, containing a recognizable image of a person, it is important to get their consent first. We do this to an extent by having a special column on the attendance form where people can indicate if they do not wish photos of themselves to be taken. Back views or distance shots of people are acceptable without consent, otherwise please request permission

If you are happy to be filmed or have your photo appear in the newsletter anytime, it may be possible to supply a blanket coverage of these, by informing the Committee in writing or by email.

Barbara Gilfedder



Spider night at OPBG with Robbie Henderson 2 March 2017

Notes from Colleen O'Malley

Robbie Henderson's talk that covered the different groups and hunting strategies of spiders we get around central Australia was a big hit with the audience of 30-odd arachnophiles who came along to the AS Field Naturalists event. The guided torchlight wander through the garden plantings revealed the greenish eye-shine of many wolf spiders and the keen-eyed amongst us saw Jumping Spiders, St Andrews Cross Spiders, Golden Orb Weavers, Black House Spiders and Daddy Longlegs. John Tyne captured some of these spiders as well as some other invertebrates that were out and about that evening (see below). A big thank you to Robbie for such an engaging talk and for his enthusiasm for sharing his spider passion with others.



Photos from top left:

Robbie getting up close to a Bush Cockroach - Colleen O'Malley

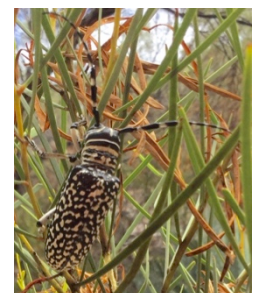
Bush Cricket caught in our torchlight - John Tyne

One of several species of hairy caterpillars from the same family as processionary caterpillars - ID anyone? - John Tyne

Above: A very close-up of one of many Wolf Spiders spotted on our wander - John Tyne

Colleen's Beetle

After the last newsletter was published, I was contacted by Adam Yates, Paleontologist (and beetle expert) at the Museum of Central Australia offering a more detailed ID. The beetle is *Rhytiphora saundersii*, Acacia Longicorn Beetle, first described by Pascoe in 1857. Longicorn Beetles are named for their extremely long antennae that come from the edges of their large, compound, kidney-shaped eyes. They have strong mandibles for chewing. They lay eggs in the bark or into a damaged part of a trunk, in this case of an Acacia tree. The eggs hatch into white legless grubs like witchetty grubs that bore into old or dead wood. Thanks Adam!





ALICE SPRINGS FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INCORPORATED
Minutes of the general meeting held at the Higher Education Building
Charles Darwin University – Wednesday 15 March 2017 at 8.20pm

Meeting following presentation by **Dr Margaret Friedel** on a few of central Australia's weeds.

Thank you to scribe **Rosalie Breen** and to **Marg Lawrence** for supper.

Present: 23 Members and 11 Visitors as per attendance book.

Apologies: Yogita Thompson, Claire Meney, Rosalie Schultz

Minutes of February 2017 meeting were on back of March 2017 newsletter – accepted by meeting.

Treasurer's Report.

Balance of all funds end of January	\$ 3397.05
<u>Income received</u>	
Membership	\$ 20.00
Withdrawals - None	
(Petty cash balance end February \$19.65)	
<u>Total of all funds end February</u>	<u>\$ 3417.05</u>

Correspondence in/out

- CDU – booking lecture theatre - Change of date for Monthly meeting due to sound installation in theatre last week.
- CDU – various emails and visits re availability of lecture theatre for March meeting.
- Marg Friedel postponement of her presentation.
- Interest in club from Danielle Shallow.
- Susan Krauss from Ballarat Field Nats, Barb will respond.
- Aust. Conservancy news – forwarded to membership.
- Lone Dingo sale – forwarded to membership.
- Green Snaps competition (Katherine) – forwarded to membership

General Business

- Cards from Pamela Keil. Order not complete yet – Barb made up some cards for Rosalie to use as thank you cards. Barb will give Neil an invoice for \$36 for 12 cards (\$3 each)
- Constitution – Rhondda and Lee have followed the draft constitution template set out by the Government, so they should accept it without too many dramas. Lee talked about some changes compared to the old constitution. Rosalie Schultz suggested we change the wording of objects and purposes on page 15 – a vote agreed 11 to 8 in favour of the addition of “with a focus on central Australia” to both items. Barb will give notice for a Special General Meeting next month (at the monthly meeting) to vote on a Special Resolution to accept the new constitution, which will be sent to membership with the notice.
- Facebook. Thanks to Colleen O'Malley for setting this up, and adding items of interest. She is keen that others send interesting items to put on it. shrikestar8@gmail.com or pamelakeil@yahoo.com -- Pamela will also change the option so that group members can add their own items directly (subject to moderator approval).
- Embroidered badges – see page 2 of March newsletter. Coordinate orders with Rosalie Breen for cheaper prices.
- Videos on field trips. Barb was asked the evening before the Coolibah Swamp walk if the trip could be videoed. She said that it needed to be discussed at a general meeting. Discussion: More notice needed – preferably at a meeting prior to the event that a person may want to video, and a need to know purpose and future use of the video. Need to have an explicit consent form (Member must say YES, not just fail to say NO). Meeting agreed with this resolution.
- Newsletter items into Barb by 23 March, please.

Past Trips

- Cooliaiah Swamp with Jude Pritchard.
- Spider talk and hunt with Robbie Henderson.

Future Activities/Trips

- 17 March – NTPWS Bat Night at Simpson's Gap: 5:00-6:30 pm for kids; 6:30 – 8:00 pm talk and spotlighting
- Slot Gorges walk that was to be on 19 March postponed. New date coming soon.
- 1 April OPBG Plant Sale
- 8 April - Night ride through ASDP – Jim Lawrence. Details in newsletter
- Sun 9 April – Alice Springs Desert Park 20th Birthday – free entry with special presentations/events all day (7:30am – 6:00pm)
- Sat 22 April - Creek line walk, Standley Chasm – Colleen O'Malley
- Sun 23 April Heritage market OTS. Volunteers needed for stall. Contact Barb

Next meeting Wed 12 April 2017 Speaker: **Ben Kaethner** “Fire management on Aboriginal Lands in central Australia”

Scribe: Volunteer Needed

Supper: Rhondda Tomlinson

Meeting finished 9.00 pm.