



September 2018

Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club Newsletter



This weird looking plant, *Tecticornia verrucosa*, grows at Lake Bottleneck on Newhaven Sanctuary and other claypans. It forms an extensive mauve-pink- grey monoculture. Branches are at right angles to the main stem and the yellow spots on the centre photo are tiny flowers. Thanks to Robyn Grey-Gardner and Alisha Mercer for the photos.

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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Postal Address: P.O. Box 8663
Alice Springs, Northern Territory
0871

Web site:

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

Email:

contact@alicefieldnaturalists.org.au

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NEWSLETTER

The next newsletter will be October 2018.

The deadline for the next newsletter will be 23 September 2018

Please send your contributions to Barb Gilfedder - bifedders@gmail.com

ALICE SPRINGS FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB



Saturday 1 Sept ASDP Wildflower Ramble. Wildflowers are out in large numbers at the Desert Park at the moment. Everywhere is lovely, but the sand country habitat is particularly beautiful. Come and see them with fellow Field Naturalists before it's too late - they won't last for many more weeks. Meet Neil Woolcock at the entry station to the Desert Park (that's down the pathway from the carpark) at 8:00am. Give yourself time to organise tickets etc. Ph. 8955 1021



Saturday 8 September - Walk in the hills on the west side of town using mountain bike trails. Distance 6-8 km. Time 2-3 hours. Not much to look at in the way of flora but great views and interesting rock formations. Meet 8am western end of Smith Street. Contact Connie Spencer on Mobile 0429966592



Wednesday 12 September - General Meeting at the lecture theatre in CDU higher education building at 7.00pm. There will be an interesting presentation by **Colleen O'Malley** on Lichens and Mosses. Visitors welcome.



Friday 14 - Sunday 16 September - Tower Rock with Neil Woolcock. Situated 315Km north east of Alice, Tower Rock or Mac and Rose Chalmers Reserve is a small area supporting a diverse range of plants and animals. There are granite boulders and contrasting Ghost Gums and hills to climb. High clearance 4WD, bring your own everything including water and firewood. Separate email coming your way with more details. Contact Neil Woolcock, Mobile 0428 521 598,



Wednesday 10 October - General Meeting at the lecture theatre in CDU higher education building at 7.00pm. **Kate Crossing** will give the talk on 10th October on Kiwirrkura Indigenous Protected Area Bilby management program and indigenous Bilby management across the central desert region.

AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY ALICE SPRINGS

Contact: apsalicesprings@yahoo.com.au

APS Wednesday 5th September 2018, 7.30pm at Olive Pink Botanic Garden visitors centre. Come and listen to Cyd Holden (Acting Grounds Manager at Olive Pink) as he talks us through the "**Meaning and Origin of Botanical Plant Names**", including some of our local natives. See Jenny's article in latest APS newsletter for a taster! All welcome. Presentation followed by tea, coffee and supper.



ALICE SPRINGS FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB COMMITTEE

President	Barbara Gilfedder	8955 5452	Treasurer	Neil Woolcock	8955 1021
Vice-President	Lee Ryall	0417 401 237	Property Officer	Rosalie Breen	8952 3409
Secretary	Anne Pye	0438 388 012	Public Officer	Anne Pye	0438 388 012

Committee Members: Robyn Grey-Gardner 8952 2207, Margaret Friedel 0417 849 743, Simon Brown 0429 359 593

Some other Club Responsibilities: Newsletter - Barbara Gilfedder, Minutes Secretary - Connie Spencer, Facebook organiser - Colleen O'Malley, Website - Pamela Keil and Robyn Grey-Gardner

Sheridan Martin – Owen Springs Reserve

Like most in the audience, I've visited the Owen Springs Reserve on many occasions, so I thoroughly enjoyed the presentation and learned a lot. Sheridan painted a colourful picture of what it's like to be a Ranger there, and why she loves it so much. Her enthusiasm for the job and the place shone through, and made me want to see it again.

Owen Springs Reserve is large (1574 square km), and managed by two Rangers who live on site. With dirt tracks and 4WD recommended, and catering for self-sufficient campers with bush campsites, it tends to attract a different type of visitor than the West MacDonnell Range National Park, to which it connects in the north. To its east is the Old Man Plains Cattle Research Station (managed by Dept. Primary Industries) to its west and northeast are Indigenous Protection Areas, with crown land east of the Stuart Highway currently being leased for cattle. A cattle station also joins with the reserves southern boundary. Relationships between Owen Springs and the surrounding land managers are good, which helps in planning and management.

The 50km of public 4WD track passes through diverse habitats, and past historic ruins and stock branding yards. If you haven't been out there recently, one of the Owen Springs rangers' pet projects has been working with the Heritage Department to get a series of new signs installed showcasing more of the reserve's history. These signs highlight the old homestead through the years, the old blacksmith ruins, a cellar excavation dig conducted at the homestead a few years ago, the old Aboriginal stockman's quarters and information on the Haunted Tree Bore site.

But that's just the tip of the iceberg in terms of what the Reserve protects!

In addition to the Historical Sites of one of the oldest cattle stations in Central Australia, there are a number of Aboriginal sacred sites mapped and protected within the boundaries. These are not accessible to the public, but are of great significance.

The diverse habitats also protect a range of plants and animals, including several areas of very high / nationally significant biodiversity value. Within the Reserve, there is sand dune and plain country, range country and rocky gorges, shrubland, grassland, and riverine woodland (Hugh River and Mueller Creek). Owen Springs Reserve protects over 397 plant species (including one vulnerable and 10 rare), 70 species of reptile (including the endangered Slater's Skink), at least 121 species of birds, 6 species of fish, and over 20 species of native mammals (including a population of Black-footed Rock Wallaby). There are even a few species of threatened land snails known to occur on the reserve!

It's also a great place to get away from it all, with a couple of good camping areas, including the only area in Central Australia Parks where it's okay to camp with your dog, if kept under control (at Redbank Waterhole campsite, in southern end of reserve). Note - dogs are not permitted elsewhere in the reserve.

As you can imagine, all that requires a special sort of Ranger who can do EVERYTHING! Reserve management is divided into seven main projects - District/operational, Visitor, Cultural, Biodiversity, Fire, Feral, and Weed. Annual plans are written, approved and then carried out for these projects, with follow up reporting.

Most of us would balk at the sheer enormity of the task, but Sheridan thrives in it. She finds the diversity of jobs stimulating and loves having every day bring something different.



Camping along the river bank



Old homestead ruins



Thorny Devil



Lawrence Gorge



Sand dune and plain country



Control burning is a regular activity on Owen Springs

Sheridan went into detail about the fire plans: the need to assess fuel loads, specify the area planned to burn (size and maps), the resources (staff and equipment) required, vegetation type covered, control lines identified, priority for the burn and ideal weather conditions to conduct it in. This plan is then submitted for management approval. After the burn season a comprehensive report is written and also submitted. She also presented the weed plan: there are 11 major weed species they focus on controlling, each have their own plan of attack, ranging from monitoring to all out war.

Sheridan loves interacting with visitors, and thinks Owen Springs visitors are the best! A few times they have had to worry about visitors doing the wrong thing, but that's a rarity. It's much more fun to chat with people who are doing the right thing.

She left us with a list of reasons why she thinks she has the most awesome job in the world (and with her enthusiasm, we all had to agree with her):

- The diverse work with large focus on land management, and feeling of adventure – never knowing what's coming next.
- Conserving the reserve's important values.
- The spectacular displays of wildflowers that spring up everywhere after good autumn / winter rain..
- New and fun projects, and learning new things (like fish surveys and heritage signs).
- When the Hugh River floods! (Even if you can get stuck at the Ranger Station.)
- The gorgeous views on the way back home at night after fieldwork.
- And being able to share all these values with the visitors...

FIELD NATURALISTS MEMBERS' NIGHT – “show and tell” - 8 August 2018

Report by Anne Pye

Connie Spencer had bought some rocks in for show and tell, one of which was identified by Bob Read as Hornblende Gneiss.

Rosalie Breen set up a microscope and displayed invertebrates collected on the Roma Gorge trip. These included Dragonfly and Mayfly nymphs, Mosquito nymphs and larvae and a Whirligig Beetle.

Micheal La Flamme showed his copy of the new reprint of Peter Latz “ Bushfires and Bushtucker” to be launched on 17 August at OPBG. This book was first published in 1995 based on Latz's 1982 Master's Thesis and has been out of print since 2006. The new edition has a new index which is heavily cross referenced, including categories of use; updated typography and design and



better resolution images; extensive appendices by language groups as well as plant uses; a long alphabetical plant list by genus and is very consistent in its use of terminology. There is a very good introduction about fire ecology in Central Australia and the book is all about relationships and demonstrates Peter Latz's very personal and intimate approach to plants.

Pam Keil showed her crocheted and felted beanie entry into the Beanie Festival (left), which won 2nd prize in the Spirit of the Land category (the theme being Night Skies) and 3rd prize in the Peoples Choice. The beanie includes representations of the moon and the 3 constellations Pleiades, Orion and the Southern Cross. Animals represented on the beanie include a Bilby, Desert Death Adder, Night Parrot, Echidna, Black-footed Rock Wallaby, Heron, Bat and Spencers Burrowing Frog. Habitats represented included a gorge waterhole, mulga scrub, spinifex plain and river red gums.

Anne Pye showed photos taken by her, Rosalie Breen and Jim Lawrence when they travelled to Cravens Peak, a Bush Heritage Property over the QLD border, some 200km south of Boulia, at Easter time. Bush Heritage has owned Cravens Peak for over ten years. It is currently being managed by Jane Blackwood who until recently lived in Alice Springs. The property was bought by Bush Heritage because it represents a range of habitats including the top of the Simpson Desert, rocky break away country, ephemeral creeks and drainage channels, and gidgee woodlands. Jane and Bush Heritage rely on a revolving door of volunteers with various skills who generally stay at least a week and contribute to the improvement of the property whether it be painting signs, upgrading potential campsites out at old bore locations or in Jim's case fixing machinery and the generator! The trip was enjoyed by all and was well timed to take full advantage of the recent rains which had filled the creeks and claypans and attracted numerous Brolgas to the property, although there were also plenty of flies to go around as well. Jane has said a Field Naturalists trip would be welcome if planned at a convenient time. Participants would need to enlist as Volunteers for Bush Heritage and be prepared to make a working contribution for a few days before having a look around the property.



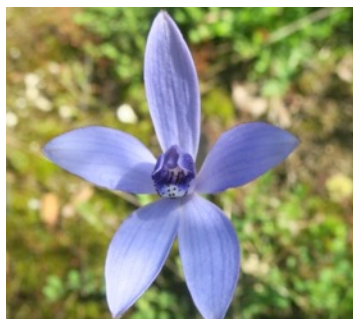
Simon Brown showed off his efforts with his recently purchased new camera with photos taken that morning in his garden in Larapinta, while he was experimenting with ISO and other settings. A varied selection of the 20-30 flowering *Eremophilas* he has, were featured individually in photos - including a zoom feature which included ants and bees on some specimens. Visitors such as Galahs, White-browed Babblers and a White-plumed Honeyeater captured in full flight were also photographed.

Below three species enjoying Simon's *Eremophila bignoniiflora* tree that he grew from seed – White-plumed Honeyeater, Ring-necked Parrot and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater.



Barb Gilfedder showed photos from a 2 km walk along a section of the Luke Penn walk which follows the Kalgan River near Albany WA taken last September (2017). The walk along the riverbank was very pretty with a multitude of flowering plants at the time. Barb had taken a lot of individual photos of a whole range of flowering plants including some of the many orchids and peas present.

Clockwise from top left:- *Calectasia grandiflora*, Star of Bethlehem; Kalgan River: one of the many Pea flowers; *Cyanicula sericea*, Silky Blue Orchid; *Xanthosia rotundifolia*, Southern Cross; *Thysanotus* species, Fringe Lily – there are at least 20 different ones in that area.



" Trip To Newhaven"

by Kerrieanne Holani

We went on a trip
to Newhaven's nature strip
350kms from Alice a land
worked by a band
of rangers and volunteers to preserve
this wonderful animal and plant nature
reserve.
The plan is for it to totally be
cat free!

There hasn't been much rain
so we really had to strain
our eyes to see any birds
which is what we'd heard.
No extra water makes life tough
so occasional taps could be seen in the rough
for some of the finches and birds in camp
and for the Mala we later saw by lamp.

The first evening the group did a night walk
but first the ranger gave a short talk,
then took us into the special enclosed fence
and with excitement and suspense,
headed under torch light
trying to catch sight
of the Mala, a species that is rare,
that this place protects and cares.

It took a while
but with patience and guile
finally spied two
a special treat thro' and thro'.
They came up so near
it became very clear
how tame and the reason in the past they
became such easy prey.

The next day was Robert's Birthday
so with festivity and gaiety
our group headed off to tour and explore,
which some hadn't done before,
34kms around the lakes
doing a full retake
of what birds and plants were there
thriving in the minimalist central desert air.

We learnt about Burrowing Betongs
sadly part of the wallaby family, not here
anymore,
a Brown Falcon, Wood Swallow, Inland
Thornbill were spotted
Camels too, but limited birdlife dotted
the landscape of scrub, Saltbush and small
trees
Sandhill Sage, Wattle and Mulgas in the
breeze.
At times, amazingly, evidence of lots of green
from all the different, small, tree varieties
seen.

Lots of species looking so bright
and a delight
that not much Buffel Grass was in sight.
We visited lakes where, not water, but salt
abounds
some were circumnavigated by walking
around.
Found this plant that felt like rubber
but could survive such dry conditions with
varied colour
Bennett's Lake was so white and large,
covering the whole land like a massive
mirage.

While travelling other lakes we saw
Susie's Lake, Bottleneck and more
crunching and crackling as our feet left traces
on the salt and sand encrusted surface.
Then driving back to camp for a rest and a nap
to reminisce about our day of following the
map.
to end with a walk up the nearby hill for the
view
next, food by campfire light and
contemplating the old and new...



Newhaven's Mala and their conservation history

Jocelyn Davies

A highlight of the nightlife on our Newhaven trip was watching two Mala (Rufous Hare-Wallaby, *Lagochestes hirsutus hirsutus*). They seemed to be quite unflustered and curious about our presence, hopping right up to us and almost weaving between our feet. Tom Craig, Land Management Officer for Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) had kindly invited us spotlighting to see Newhaven's Mala. He observed that their behaviour towards us indicates why they are so vulnerable to predation by cats and foxes.

To see the Mala, we first drove from the campground for a few minutes to the new tall sliding metal gate and electric fence that marks the boundary of Mala-Kurlangu. This 143 hectare feral-free 'Mala paddock' is a sub-enclosure within the 9,390 hectare Stage 1 feral predator-free area that AWC is establishing at Newhaven. When clearing of feral predators from the Stage 1 enclosure is complete, AWC plans to allow the Mala to move into that larger area. Stage 1 is projected to support 2,400 Mala and other reintroduced species such as the Golden Bandicoot and Burrowing Bettong.

We walked for about ten minutes through the Mala-Kurlangu along a service track which gives access to the water and food stations that have been set up for Mala. Tom held a spotlight and said he planned to shine it next to any animals, avoiding their eyes. Eventually, after reminding ourselves not to expect to see anything, one Mala then another hopped into view and drank from a water nipple. Mala are solitary creatures and these two did not interact much with each other in the ten minutes or so that we watched them drinking and hopping around nearby. Both looked fat and neither paid much attention to the food (guinea pig pellets) left out for them.

Two groups of Mala have been brought to Newhaven in the past nine months. These include 27 animals translocated from an enclosure at Watarrka National Park and 30 translocated from AWC's Scotia reserve in western NSW. All are ultimately descended from the last wild Mala on the Australian mainland which had lived in the Tanami Desert and were located in the early 1980s during ecological surveys. Early efforts to secure the future of Mala, described below, involved scientists and Aboriginal people working collaboratively. This is happening again at Newhaven. For example Warlpiri Rangers, Alice Hanwood and her daughter Christine Ellis use traditional knowledge and skills to systematically hunt cats as part of the effort to make Stage 1 enclosure feral free. Warlpiri rangers are contracted to burn country as part of Newhaven's fire management. Professional trappers from NSW are also on site at Newhaven at present, targeting fox and cat populations. Tom said 35 cats have been killed in Stage 1 so far, and that there are estimated to be about 25 cats still in the enclosure.

Like AWC's current work at Newhaven, earlier cross-cultural collaborations for Mala conservation were ground-breaking. More than two decades before Aboriginal ranger groups were widely established in central Australia, Warlpiri people were drawing on their traditional knowledge to advise scientists about Mala conservation. They were actively involved with CCNT scientists in ecological surveys, selection of a site for a predator-free enclosure in the Tanami, fence building and maintenance, fire management and predator control.

Photos from the top:- Predator Proof fence, view east from Lookout Hill near the Newhaven campground; along the fence and gate; a mala hopping around near us; close-up of one of the gates.



In 1985, one article in the Australian Conservation Federation's magazine *Habitat* described Mala conservation in the Tanami as: *... "an all too rare example of cross-cultural cooperation between European and Aboriginal Australians for a common goal. It demonstrates that Aboriginal Land Rights need not conflict with the conservation of Australia's natural heritage and hopefully provides a positive example which can be emulated elsewhere"*

In 1999 I and colleagues highlighted this collaboration between indigenous knowledge holders and scientists, summarised below, as part of our Australian contribution to an international study on community-based wildlife management¹. Field Nats who are interested could talk with Alice resident Ken Johnson or others who were directly involved in Mala conservation at that time and who can add a lot of depth and detail to this summary.

Only about 50 Mala existed on the Australian mainland by 1980 although they had been abundant until about the 1930's occupying about 25% of mainland Australia including the spinifex deserts of western NT, northwest SA and WA. The surviving two mainland populations of Mala were situated relatively close to each other in the Tanami Desert. The only other Mala populations, on Bernier and Dorre Islands in Shark Bay WA, are considered to be distinct subspecies as a result of 8,000 years of genetic isolation.

By 1980, scientists had started to appreciate that having patches of vegetation at differing stages of regeneration, as had been formerly maintained by traditional Aboriginal fire management, was important for Mala habitat. CCNT and Warlpiri people worked together on a fire management program that included burning areas around the remaining Mala colonies. Some Mala were moved to Alice Springs in 1980 and a captive breeding program was started. I vividly recall my first meeting with a Mala, at the Arid Zone Research Institute in the late 1980s.

A site was chosen in the Tanami Desert for release of captive bred Mala. Warlpiri knowledge of the previous distribution of Mala was important in identifying suitable locations. Warlpiri cultural protocols also required that the appropriate people with traditional responsibilities for the species be involved. Warlpiri cultural norms attributed the decline of Mala populations to a decline in traditional Mala ceremonies. Respect for these kinds of cultural norms is critical for effective cross-cultural collaboration.

Eighty-one captive-bred Mala were released back into the Tanami in the early 1980s in a predator-free enclosure and in the surrounding bush. After the release of one group of Mala the Warlpiri people present performed a customary Mala increase ceremony at a nearby site. Mala introduced to the enclosure survived and bred successfully but those released outside the enclosure did not survive due to predation by feral cats.

The last wild population in the Tanami was wiped out by a fire in November 1991. Monitoring and maintaining Mala in the Tanami predator-free enclosure proved to be extremely difficult due to the high operational costs in the very remote location. Warlpiri interest and involvement had also been disrupted by the death of key people. Breeding populations descended from Tanami Mala were established in predator free enclosures in several other Australian locations. Decades later, AWC's efforts to make predator-free habitat at Newhaven has enabled Mala to once again live in the Tanami region.

References

- Loorham, C. 1985. The Warlpiri and the rufous hare-wallaby. *Habitat Australia* 13(4): 8-9.
- Davies, J., Higginbottom, K., Noack, D., Ross, H., and Young, E. (1999). 'Sustaining Eden: Indigenous community wildlife management in Australia.' International Institute for Environment and Development. (London)

History of Newhaven Bob Read

The many grinding stones that can be seen around Newhaven attest to long occupation by the Ngaliya. According to Alex Coppock in the 1950's the area was deserted, as people had moved to Mount Doreen in the 1930's. From Powell (2015) it seems more likely that people had remained on the land until after Yuendumu was established in 1946.

Alex, who describes himself as one of the last of the generation that grew up barefoot in a bough shed, owned the Newhaven Pastoral Lease prior to its purchase by Birds Australia. A brief history of the family can be found in the NT Place Names Register(n.d.) at Mindat(n.d.) and National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame(n.d.).



In 1956 the Bureau of Mineral Resources engaged Jim Coppock and his 4WD truck to take a geologist (Dr Hossfeld) to a suspected meteorite crater on an island on Lake Bennett (Wells et al. 1968). On this trip Jim saw a lot of saltbush country, which he considered would be good for sheep. In December 1957 he applied for a Water Search Permit over the area that later became Gurner (Powell 2015). In late 1960 he transferred the lease to his son Launce.

Left: Lyn and Jim Coppock

His nephew, Alex Coppock applied for a Water Search Permit over the area that became Newhaven in early 1958. Water Search Permits allowed the holder to search for water, and graze stock on the area in the meanwhile. The venture got off to a bad start when Alex's father, Gilbert (Bert) Coppock, died the night that he and Alex arrived at Newhaven. Alex's mother and sisters were still at Gibeanie, the block that the family had run sheep on just south of Ti Tree and the sheep were in transit in between. After this setback Alex set to work and drilled a number of shallow bores, eventually finding the supply of water needed for a Pastoral Lease to be granted in 1960.

The Coppocks had walked their sheep and goats from Gibeanie to Newhaven. The dingoes proved too much of a problem and the survivors were sold off (National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame, n.d.). Mrs Coppock (Bess) and the other children then returned to town. Alex remained at Newhaven, marrying Rose Rawlins who also had grown up on NT stations (Coppock, 1999) in 1963. In the drought he took cattle from Mount Denison on agistment before buying cattle of his own. He grazed the area very conservatively, providing a basic income for his wife and son.

At the time of the sale to Birds Australia in 2000 the Newhaven homestead was a basic corrugated iron building with a kero fridge, wood stove and 32 Volt lighting. Alex's wife gives some stories of life at Newhaven in Coppock (1993)

Launce Coppock fared badly on Gurner. His flock of 2000 sheep had shrunk to 600 by 1968 and he sold the remainder. In 1968 the Gurner lease was bought by a Mr Timperon, a farmer from South Australia. I visited Gurner in the course of work in 1976. The homestead was a mud hut with a canvas tarp for a roof. Although this was in a period of exceptionally wet years the cattle were thin. Much of the useable grazing land was held under grazing license on the adjacent Vacant Crown Land. In the 1980's this became Aboriginal Land, ending any possibility that Gurner could be remotely viable. At around the same time Mr Timperon died and Gurner became part of Newhaven.

In 2000 Newhaven was purchased by Birds Australia (now Birdlife Australia), with funds from public subscription and a government grant to become a wildlife sanctuary.

It is now managed by Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC).

References

Coppock, R. R. 1993, Central Australian Cattle Station Woman, Alice Springs

Coppock, R. R. 1999 Bush tracks and desert horizons

MinDat n.d. <https://www.mindat.org/loc-87927.html>

National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame Alice Springs, n.d. at

<https://pioneerwomen.com.au/uploads/images/Bess-Coppock-doc.pdf>

NT Place Names Register, n.d. at

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Powell, A., 2015 Desert country: a history of Newhaven. Publ. Casuarina, N.T. : Historical Society of the Northern Territory, 2015

Wells, A.T., Evans, T.G., and Nicholas, T. 1968 The Geology Of The Central Part Of The Ngalia Basin, Northern Territory BMR Record 1968/38, available at https://d28rz98at9flks.cloudfront.net/12150/Rec1968_038.pdf



Bert and Bess Coppock



Newhaven original corrugated iron homestead



The Environment Minister, Senator Robert Hill, Newhaven owner Alex Coppock and Margaret Cameron of Birds Australia participating in the handover ceremony in 2001.



Left: The plaque that was originally on Alex's rock. Below: The rock against Home Range. The rock is still there but the plaque has been removed.



President's Report 2018, presented at the 2018 AGM by Barb Giffedder

Membership numbers this financial year have stayed about the same with some members moving on but others filling their positions.

As usual we have had some excellent speakers at meetings. Two have been on local birds from Pam Keil and Andrew Crouch; Adam Yates fitted the Alcoota fossils story into deep time; Sheridan talked about life as a ranger on Owen Springs; Margaret Friedel traced the story of some of our weeds while Ian Coleman discussed the exciting new Botanic Garden design plan; Peter Jobson explored Botanical websites while Jodi Rowley introduced us to the new Australian Frog app via Skype (a new initiative that worked well); Barb took us to Newhaven Sanctuary, Deb and Charlie to Melaleuca Tasmania and Caragh and Candice to South America. My thanks to all the speakers who have entertained and educated us, the members who suggested and contacted them and the note takers and supper bringers at our general meetings.

We have also had some excellent Field Trips, not as many as the previous year- only 16 as opposed to 22. There has certainly been a lot to learn and lots of willing, sharing, knowledgeable people to learn from. The longer trips were a weekend at Ruby Gap organised by Jocelyn Davies, and a weekend along the Finke with Jim Lawrence. Neil Woolcock organised 2 excellent day trips, one to the Pinch and Hells Gate, and the other more recently to Roma Gorge. Other leaders that should be mentioned are Connie Spencer, Colleen O'Malley, Meg Mooney, Rosalie Breen, Pam Keil and Wendy and Ian Mann. The Committee is always open to suggestions of activities or interesting places to visit. It is always disappointing when trips have to be cancelled due to lack participants. Please support organisers when you can by going on club events.

Most of these speakers and trips have been reported in our monthly newsletter. I frequently hear comments from people about how much they enjoy reading it and looking at the stunning photos our members take. Many past members continue their membership just to enjoy the newsletter. Well done to all the contributors!

Our reoccurring main Club expense is insurance. The basic cost went up a little again this year, plus an extra amount for excursions longer than one day. However it is still a very good price for this type of cover. Our newsletter is mostly sent out by email so costs are low and we are extremely lucky that the Charles Darwin University continue to let us use this excellent venue at no charge, usually. We did have a hiccough last month when they all went on holiday. Thanks to Ian Coleman, Alisha Mercer and OPBG for coming to the rescue and allowing us to use the Olive Pink Botanic Garden visitors centre.

As Neil has mentioned we were able to loan some funds to members, Lisa and Pete Nunn to help produce the new Central Australia Bird Brochure. It looks fantastic and they have already repaid about half of the loaned amount. We also made a donation to Newhaven where some members were lucky enough to inspect the spectacular but expensive new fence and meet some of the Mala inmates last week - a very worthwhile cause.

Lastly my thanks to the Committee, who have performed their duties efficiently and who are always willing to help and support the club and myself in any way they can.

I look forward to another year of interesting talks, walks and trips with as many members as possible organizing and participating.





ALICE SPRINGS FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INCORPORATED
Minutes of the general meeting held at the Higher Education Building
Charles Darwin University – Wednesday 8 August 2018

Open: The President, Barbara Gilfedder, opened the general meeting at 7:40pm following on from the AGM. Thank you to Wendy and Ian Mann for supper and to Anne Pye for taking notes on various member's *show and tell* for the newsletter.

Present: 24 members, 8 apologies as per attendance book.

Minutes: The Minutes of the July 2018 general meeting as printed in the newsletter were accepted by the meeting.

Business Arising:

- Robyn Grey-Gardner and Pamela Keil now have all the newsletters on the website. Well done!
- Birdlife Central Australia interested in updating the birding information on our website. Members in favour.

Treasurer's Report:

Balance of all funds (including petty cash) end of June 2018	\$1,569.21
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Income for July 2018

Membership	60.00
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Interest	.13
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Expenses for July 2018	Nil
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(Petty Cash	\$1.85)
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Total of all funds (including petty cash) end July 2018	<u>\$1,629.34</u>
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Correspondence:

- Phone call and email from Andrew Skeoch from Listening Earth. He records and produces natural soundscapes/acoustic ecology www.listeningearth.com He is keen to give a talk to ASFNC. Barb will try to arrange a Wednesday night sometime in September at Olive Pink Botanic Garden.
- All other relevant correspondence forwarded to members

General Business:

- Neil Woolcock raised a query about carrying a club first aid kit on trips. Rosalie has the kit but it needs to be updated. The matter will be discussed further at next committee/planning meeting to be held Sunday 12 August at OPBG.
- Neil also suggested that the club investigate suitable UHF radios for club use on trips. The ones the club currently holds are not suitable. Leanne has offered to buy these for \$40 being the cost of the new rechargeable batteries and charger. This matter will also be discussed at the next committee/planning meeting.
- Pam Keil thanked ASFNC members on behalf of Birdlife for helping out with surveys at the sewerage ponds.

Past Events:

- 4,5 & 6 August 2018 – Newhaven Sanctuary. Jocelyn Davies led the trip in place of Barb Gilfedder who was unable to participate due to illness. Area was very dry but always something interesting to find.

Future Events:

- Sunday 12 August 2018 – Planning meeting 2pm at Olive Pink Botanic Garden. All members welcome.
- Friday 17 August 2018 – launch of new edition of *Bushfires and Bushtucker* by Peter Latz. 4:30-6:00pm OPBG. Michael Laflamme gave an introduction to the new edition at the meeting.
- 19-23 September 2018 – Bird Festival

Next Meeting: Wednesday 12 September 2018. Presentation by Colleen O'Malley on *Mosses and Lichens*

Scribe: Leanne Johnston Supper: Margaret Friedel

Meeting closed at 9:00pm.

Minutes compiled by Connie Spencer