



National Parks Association  
Armidale Branch  
PO Box 372, Armidale NSW 2350  
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I apologise for sending out the February Newsletter with the December heading on it. This is just an example of conscientious recycling and sloppy editing! Peter

### **COMING EVENTS**

**Sunday morning 22 March: Please note the change from Saturday 21**

**Boorolong Ck to pink granite cascade on the Gwydir**

Peter Rodger will lead this easy walk parallel to Boorolong Creek in grassy woodland country then along the Gwydir River to pink granite cascades. The route passes an old farm, returning by a similar route, about 6km total so just a half-day outing. No hills, just a couple of rocky rises, but there is no track so wear stout shoes (and if you want to keep grass seeds out of your socks, either wear very long pants, little cotton "over-boots" or gaiters).

Phone Peter for further details, booking and meeting time: 6772 0464.

This change will let members attend **Autumn Festival activities on Saturday 21st** - jogging, breakfasting, or "floating" in the parade. Sustainable Living Armidale needs people to join its float in the parade including someone to walk carrying a menagerie of soft toy animals and other symbols of biodiversity, and 3 people to help Kate carry a light bamboo frame holding planet earth on high. Please could NPA members volunteer for these rolls on Saturday between about 11am and 2pm? Or would you like to have fun making or painting things for the float - footprints, power station, racing car, etc. You will be pleasantly surprised by the crazy ideas you can help to generate and implement to promote enthusiasm for tackling climate change. Join in on Tuesday or Wednesday afternoons or anytime on Friday. Phone Kate for details on 6772 4026.

**April 18 – 19 Washpool National Park** for a camping weekend including Coombajha Creek track and one of the other walks in either Washpool or Gibraltar Range. This will be on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> April (middle of school holidays – we would love to have some children or teenagers enjoying the forests, creeks and heaths with us on this trip).

Phone Celia 6772 0061 with your preference for a major walk on either Sat or Sun. People will be camped up there but if you wish to make a day trip for the major walk please let Celia know of your wishes.

**May 17th:** Wollomombi section of Oxley wild Rivers NP where Brian Hardaker will lead people along the edge of the escarpment past Green Gully towards St Helena

along wallaby tracks. This is an area of Wollomombi that contains many interesting plants that only live along the top edge of the gorge and provides new views of the gorges beyond Edgar's Lookout. Those who need a better track than the wallabies can walk on the formed path that goes to the lookouts near the head of Wollomombi Falls, over the Wollomombi River to views into the Chandler Gorge. This easy walk is always rewarding. There should be many autumn greenhood orchids flowering along both walks.

**Earth Hour: 8.30pm to 9.30pm Saturday 28th March** - The big international consciousness-raising event is off again, giving a message to politicians that we want action on climate change by everyone turning off lights and appliances. If you want your Council to participate, tell them now.

Armidale people are encouraged to stroll or bike or get to **Central Park**, to the Rotunda near Barney Street, bringing candles, picnic rug or chairs, and maybe have some music (old-fashioned do-it-yourself acoustic of course). Feel free to tell everyone, bring your friends and your singing/playing group.

## **Previous Excursions**

### **Cascades Walk**

I have done quite a number of bush walks in the wider Ebor area but this little gem had so far eluded me, so I was very keen to join the walk when NPA organised it on 1 March 2009. And it was great! Our leader, the extremely knowledgeable and patient Kate Boyd, easily catered for all participants, who were of wide range in age and interests. We were lucky with the weather, too, as the dense canopy cover and humidity in the forest made for very comfortable walking conditions despite the prevailing summery weather. Some beautiful examples of the aptly named Coral Fungus were seen along the track.

The walk has some steep sections but the track is quite well maintained and steps have been constructed or excavated to make ascending or descending easier. The sound of running water teased us from quite a way off as we were approaching the creek, which had a good amount of water in it allowing the cascades to live up to their name and even displaying some deep and tranquil looking pools for contemplation or (some other time maybe) cooling off in. We had our lunch at one of those beautiful spots. A visiting botanist from Spain enjoyed the excursion greatly and was suitably impressed with the ancient Antarctic Beech trees and the giant moss plants.

The circuit runs along the rocky edge of the creek bed for some distance and it was delightful and invigorating to find ourselves 'rock-hopping' on the very edge of the water. The ascent is best described as undulating as some steep climbing sections alternate with gently descending sections of the track. The result was that we got back to the top before we were really expecting it. The majority of the group then continued to climb up to Wrights Lookout, but I chose not to, preferring to save that delight for another day. Regina Hooper

### **Wetland field day**

The first of two field days run by Wetlandcare on Fri 13 and Sat 14 of March took people to Mother of Ducks Lagoon at Guyra, Little Llangothlyn Lagoon and the “Barley Field” wetland to the west of the highway just north of the village of Glencoe. (This lagoon is not to be confused with the local “Barleyfields Lagoon” past CSIRO.) Bob Howarth and Dorothy Bell were their normal enthusiastic and informative selves and the participants were regaled with many “yarns of the swamps” as well as their geological and cultural history and their botanical complexity. Each wetland had a distinct history and a different flora to the other sites.

One small but interesting wetland visited on the way to Little Llangothlin was the Tubbamurra village site. This area once had a school and post office to service the many small dairy farms that were established in more hopeful times. Now just a few small derelict houses and milking sheds dot the landscape.

For the birdwatchers the cygnets and pelicans on Little Llangothlin were highlights. A flock of black-winged stilts performed a precision formation flying demonstration for us.

This field day was so interesting and well run I will alert people to any future wetland field days through this newsletter. Peter Metcalfe

Also recommended is the interesting and detailed WetlandCare Australia web site [www.wetlandcare.com.au](http://www.wetlandcare.com.au). You can receive their electronic Newsletter “WetlandLink” from this site. There are a number of stories detailing the projects, worth several million dollars, that are being undertaken by WetlandCare. This field day was an example of their work but they are engaged in many on-ground projects to protect our wetlands.

### **NEWS**

**Conservation activities:** Kate, Beth and 2 other Armidale people went to a NICE meeting with others from Tamworth, Manilla, Coonabarabran, and the Liverpool Plains plus Bev Smiles NPA’s western campaigns manager: a Northern Inland Council for the Environment meeting. Cecile Van der Burgh of TWS came from Sydney to listen and share in discussion about travelling stock reserves - major topic- and we heard views from Robert Groth who leads the drovers’ side of this campaign. Craig Carter explained how he and Liverpool Plains Land Management Committee have rescued Victoria’s Gould League environmental education business from Receivers so its mail-order shop continues to sell educational resources to schools and the public Australia-wide.

A MULTI-MILLION dollar claim by Gunns Limited against the Wilderness Society has collapsed after four years, with the timber giant ordered to pay the society \$325,000 in legal costs.

The Wilderness Society is free to continue protesting to protect Tasmania's forests as part of the settlement, which ends the marathon \$3.5 million lawsuit against the group.