

Hunter National Parks

September 2003

Coastal drive-in

Published by the Hunter Branch of the National Parks Association of NSW



Positions vacant

Hunter National Parks

The news and events magazine of the Hunter Branch of the National Parks Association of NSW is published every two months.

President

Vacant

Email: hunter@npansw.org.au

Secretary

Vacant

Email: sec.hunter@npansw.org.au

Treasurer

Roger Pearson

Editor

Ian Donovan

Tel: 4961 3941

Email: planplus@ozemail.com.au

Activities

John Simpson

Tel: 4967 3762

Email: jsimpson@ncc.nsw.gov.au

Membership

Sue Filson

Tel: 4994 9163

Email: filson@ceinternet.com.au

Librarian

Mary Greenwood

State Council

Jennifer Green

Michael Green

Ernie Walpole (alternate)

Committee

Lawrie Henderson

Janece McDonald

Alwyn Masterton

Travis Peake

Internet

www.npansw.org.au/hunter

Cover

Myall Lakes National Park: sensitive coastal environment or motorised playground? Tell your member of State Parliament that you expect better protection than this.

Well, if you haven't already heard, the positions of President and Secretary were not filled at the Annual General Meeting (see page 6 for details). This leaves things in a bit of a quandary—should the Hunter Branch be wound up, should it combine or share resources with other branches, or should it continue in some diminished form?

An outing to the Wallarah Peninsula will be held on 20 September to discuss options for cooperation between the Hunter and Central Coast Branches. This will provide a good opportunity to talk about future directions. As membership continues to fall, there is increasing concern as to the intergenerational survival of the NPA. What needs to be done to keep the NPA relevant? At a recent NPA State Council meeting, one member suggested that the NPA should broaden its focus beyond national parks to conservation issues generally. After all, the vast majority of land can never be included in a national park.

If the NPA needs a broader focus, maybe it also needs a suitable name change to reflect this? For example, N(ature) P(rotection) A(lliance). If you have ideas to contribute, please come on the walk on 20 September (easy grade with BYO picnic lunch).

Ian Donovan Editor

Hunter region forum

The Hunter Environment Lobby is convening a forum to discuss regional-scale environmental issues in the Hunter. The forum will be held on Sunday 21 September, between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm at the Maitland Senior Citizens Centre. The main purpose of the forum is to develop a consensus about key regional issues. The forum seeks to:

- develop a clear '10 point plan' that can be presented to State and local government with broad community support
- set up regular meetings between community representatives and key government ministers about regional issues.
- promote better understanding and mutual support between community groups.

To register for the forum, or to find out more information, contact the Hunter Environment Lobby: PO Box 449 Singleton 2330; email info@calli.com.au or tel 6571 1208.

Contributions to *Hunter National Parks* are welcome. Send news, letters, articles and photos to the Editor, preferably on disk.

The National Parks Association of NSW Inc is a non-profit community organisation that seeks to protect and conserve the complete range and diversity of natural habitats, features and species as well as significant cultural items and landscapes. Members participate in a variety of conservation, recreation and social activities.

Tomaree workshop

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) invited the Hunter Branch to send members along to a consultation workshop at Salamander Bay on 26th July to discuss the proposed new plan of management for Tomaree National Park. There were 5 NPWS staff present and 23 attendees, including representatives from commercial and recreational fishing, board riders, long-term campers, nudists and neighbours, Four NPA members attended: Rex Filson, Michael and Jennifer Green, and Alan Catford (the latter from Sydney Branch).

Samurai Beach: there was spirited debate about some of the more contentious issues. Most of the heat was focused on proposals for Samurai Beach, popular with fisherman, board riders, campers and nudists. The draft plan of management proposes that the access track to the beach across the dunes be maintained as a four wheel drive track only, and that camping be prohibited. However, this would mean that beach driving would continue, with umpteen vehicular tracks across the beach between tides (even on a winter's day when we were there). Park staff pointed out that a management gate could be closed if the track became too eroded. An alternative initiative involving a carpark in bushland behind the dunes is not considered feasible because it is a koala habitat.

A very passionate group at the workshop was not happy with the 'no camping' provision as they state that there is no other nudist alternative with car access available in NSW. Members of this group claimed that cleaning up of the site each season is their responsibility and that they would be prepared to buy licences



Highway of sand: 4WDs on the beach

which stipulate BYO composting toilets. These fees would fund the maintenance of the track etc.

Signage was also discussed. It was noted that signs dramatically increase visitor numbers.

Morna Point: it is proposed that all four wheel drive tracks be closed, with only pedestrian access permitted. A staff member said the area has the best wildflower display on the coast.

Big Rocky: a new carpark is proposed on a lantana patch with a 200 metre pedestrian access. Existing four wheel drive tracks are to be gated with no public access.

Ongoing considerations: approximately 7% of NSW is under NPWS management. Should conservation policies always outweigh recreational lobbies? Should local lobby groups

be able to continue practices established over generations before the area was gazetted as a national park?

This workshop highlighted the urgent need for our branch to continue its work in the Hunter region.

Our thanks again to NPWS staff for continuing the consultative process for draft plans of management, as exchange of views helps the Advisory Committee reach an informed decision. We highly recommend that members volunteer for such informative and interesting workshops, accompanied by morning tea and lunch. Contact Michael Green on 4963 2180 if you would be interested in attending future events.

Jennifer Green

The Hunter Catchment Management Trust has recently published a new regional guide to managing vegetation on private land. *The Hunter Bushland Resource Kit* provides practical advice on managing, protecting and conserving the Hunter Region's unique native vegetation.

The kit can be used by landholders, bush regenerators, students, Landcare groups, councils or anyone who has an interest in caring for bushland.

Special features of the kit include:

- comprehensive details of Hunter vegetation types
- extensive native species and weed lists for each local government area within the Hunter
- simple, easy-to-follow checklists for assessing remnant vegetation
- practical information on protecting and expanding remnants
- techniques for integrating remnant vegetation with productive farming.

A number of vegetation management kits have been prepared in recent years, such as *Veg-Notes* (Department of Land and Water Conservation & Murray Catchment Management Committee 1998), *Save the Bush Toolkit*



HCMT

Revegetating from the edge of an existing stand of trees

(Charles Sturt University & Orange Agricultural College 1997) and *Managing Farm Bushland* (World Wide Fund for Nature 2000). These provide general information about vegetation management, fauna conservation, planting, weed management and related issues. However, the *Hunter Bushland Resource Kit* contains detailed coverage that is specific to the Hunter region. Nevertheless, most of the principles described can be applied elsewhere, particularly in neighbouring regions, such as the Central Coast and Lower North Coast.

Case studies are also provided to give real-life insights into regenerating and managing remnant vegetation.

The kit can be obtained by post for \$22.00 plus \$5.80 postage and handling from the Hunter Catchment Management Trust, Private Bag 2010, Paterson 2421. Bulk purchase rates also available. Enquiries: phone 4930 1030 or email info@hcmt.org.au

Alternatively, you can download parts of the Kit at:

www.hcmt.org.au/Bushland_resource_kit.php3

HCMT



River red gums near Aberdeen

It was recently announced in the press that a major 'new' rock art site has been recorded in Wollemi National Park. According to the Australian Museum's resident rock art specialist and Principal Research Scientist in Anthropology, Dr Paul Taçon, the important new find has more than 203 separate depictions and up to 12 different layers of art created over time in different geographic styles. It provides a 4,000 year old record that has remained hidden for generations by the rugged and inhospitable terrain.

The site was located some years earlier by bushwalkers, but has only recently been recorded by Museum and National Parks and Wildlife Service staff as part of an investigation into the cultural heritage of Wollemi National Park and nearby portions of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. Also involved were members of the local Darkinjung, Darug and Wiradjuri communities.

There are half-human, half-animal composites arranged in groups, and various sorts of human-like figures. The drawings are dominated by a variety of birds, lizards and marsupials. There are life-size, delicately drawn eagles, kangaroos and an extremely rare depiction of a wombat. Stencils include hands, hand-and-arms, boomerangs and hafted axes. The art features an unusually large percentage of bird-related imagery. The superimposed layers in various colours such as red, yellow, white and charcoal black are in pristine condition, and include stencils, drawings and one painting.

There are three different hafted stone axe stencils at Eagle's Reach [1]. This one lies over black drawings, as does a second, but a third lies underneath. There are also dozens of part human, part animal composite figures, some with bird-like heads, others with kangaroo-like heads [2], [3]. They may depict Ancestral Beings according to Aboriginal people. The kangaroo-headed composite figures are very similar in form and style to that found at a site near the Hawkesbury River, far to the east.

This skilfully depicted goanna [4] was initially a black infilled drawing. Subsequent Aboriginal artists added a white outline and long tongue.

As it is a very sensitive site, it's exact location will remain undisclosed in order to protect it from inadvertent or wilful damage.



[1]



[2]



[3]



[4]

* Prepared by Ian Donovan using information published by the Australian Museum. Photos: Australian Museum Trust.

Members present

Roger Pearson, Mike & Jenny Green, John Hartley, Pat Bell, Ian Schleter, Dulcie Hartley, Al Masterton, Rex & Susan Filson, John Simpson, Doug & Jocelyn Dyce, Janece McDonald, Lawrie Henderson, Sharon & John Vernon, Helen Fastovsky, Ernie Walpole. *Apologies:* Mary Greenwood, Phil & Margaret Seccombe, Alan Shrimpton, Travis Peake, Rod Bennison, Ian Donovan, Chris Syme.

Welcome & overview

John Vernon welcomed members to the AGM. He gave a brief overview of the Branch's activities for the past two years, pointing to the rejuvenation of some of the branch activities during this period, and expressed thanks to all members who assisted in that period, and in particular to:

- Rod Bennison (President for much of the time, until study and teaching duties had to be given priority)
- Michael Green (Secretary)
- Roger Pearson (Treasurer)
- Jennifer Green and Chris Syme, mentored by Ernie Walpole (State Council representatives)
- Ian Donovan (Newsletter Editor)
- Phil Seccombe (Activities)
- John Simpson (who has been a tower of strength and inspiration with his walks, camps, photos and newsletter articles)
- Marjory Lambert (newsletter folding and posting).

John Vernon failed to mention his own role, as Membership officer, the numerous submissions he has made on behalf of the Branch over the years, and his expertise and guidance in all manner of things.

John explained that under existing Branch rules, we must elect a committee comprising at least 4 members, including a President or a Secretary (preferably both), that a number of the current committee were not renominating, and that at the start of the meeting we had insufficient nominations to allow a new committee to be formed. If a new committee could not be formed, then under the Branch rules, the old committee stays in office to wind up the affairs of the Branch. John then called upon Ernie Walpole to conduct the election of the new committee.

Election of committee

The following members were elected:

<i>President:</i>	–
<i>Secretary:</i>	–
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Roger Pearson
<i>State Councillors:</i>	Jenny & Michael Green
<i>State Councillor (Alt):</i>	Ernie Walpole
<i>Newsletter Editor:</i>	Ian Donovan
<i>Librarian:</i>	Mary Greenwood
<i>Membership Officer:</i>	Sue Filson
<i>Committee Members:</i>	Travis Peake, Lawrie Henderson, Janece McDonald, Alwyn Masterton, John Simpson.

What happens next?

As a 'viable' committee was not elected under the existing rules, John Vernon put forward several suggestions as to how to resolve the problem. Firstly, he indicated that he had spoken to Barbara Hobart (President, Central Coast Branch) about the possibility of amalgamating the two branches, and thus providing a full committee. Secondly, he moved a motion 'That the newly elected committee meet with the old committee soon, to resolve the future of the Branch'. Seconded: Michael Green. *Motion carried.*

4WDs at Myall Lakes

Rex Filson recently visited the Mungo Brush area, and was disturbed by the extent of damage to the sand dunes by four wheel drive vehicles and the lack of adequate supervision by the NPWS. He suggested that the Branch write to the NPWS. Rex will send information

to John Vernon to follow up.

Woodchip trucks, Bucketts Way

Sue Filson enquired if anyone knew why there is a huge number of woodchip trucks using Bucketts Way (from the direction of Walcha). No one at the meeting was able to provide any additional information.

Next committee meeting

The next meeting of the past and present committees is to be advised.

Have your say on the future of the Hunter Branch: come on the Wallarah Penin. walk on 20 Sep. See next page.

30 Aug Sat **Mt Royal NP**
Mountain bike ride: 30km loop ride, or shorter option.
Martin Fallding 02 6571 1208; info@calli.com.au
Cassels Road - Youngville - Mt Royal Road.
Ride through mountains and rainforest along a public gravel road. Knobbly tyres required! Map: Carrabolla.

30 Aug Sat **Munmorah SCA**
Easy - medium walk on tracks
Val 4332 8629
Geebung - Fraser Park. Good views and wildflowers.

7 Sept Sun **Wingen Maid NR**
Medium day walk, 10 km off tracks; approx 150 m ascent.
John Simpson 4967 3762
Sandstone escarpment north of Scone with interesting vegetation and views. Map: Parkville.

13-14 Sep Sat/Sun **Wollemi NP**
Overnight walk 16km, half off tracks, 350m steep descent to Wollemi Creek with some easy scrambling.
Ian Donovan 4961 3941; planplus@ozemail.com.au
Cobcroft Trig - Tollagong Range - Wollemi Creek and return Spring wildflowers along the ridge before descending into the gorge, which features shallow pools, sandy beaches and rainforest patches. Map: Putty.

20 Sep Sat **Wallarrah Peninsula**
Easy walk with plenty of time to chat
Jennifer or Michael Green 4963 2180
We will explore the southern section of the Wallarah Peninsula. Members of both the Hunter and Central Coast Branches should attend as we will discuss options for combining resources or even amalgamating branches. 10 am start and BYO picnic lunch.

20-21 Sep Sat/Sun **Goulburn River NP**
Two-day pack walk, D1: 12km undulating; D2: 12 km 200m asc, both along river and on fire trails.
George Daniel 9449 4769 (7-9pm)
Morrisons Flat, Goulburn River, Meads Creek & return.
Scenery, birdlife, native animals, great campsite with impressive view. Map: Bylong, Mt Misery.

27 Sep Sat **Olney State Forest**
Day walk, 150 asc, 20km, fire trails, tracks, climbs.
Bill Macks 4344 6970; 0421 189 955 before 8:30pm.
Cedar Brush, Lyrebird Track, Rock Lily Track, The Basin and return. Wonderful forest and rainforest. Rock Lilies in bloom. Map: Kulnura, Murrays Run.

28 Sept Sun **Karuah NR**
Easy day walk on tracks
Rex and Sue Filson 4994 9163
Coastal forest and wildflowers. The nature reserve is located adjacent to the Bucketts Way near Booral.

4-6 Oct Sat/Mon **Great North Walk**
Easy overnight walk (long weekend)
Ernie Walpole 4957 4209
Berowra to Thornleigh section through Hawkesbury Sandstone gorge country. Interesting and high quality vegetation in close proximity to urban Sydney.

19 Oct Sun **Brisbane Water NP**
Easy 5 km day walk
John Simpson 4967 3762
Walk to Lyre Trig near Kariong and view wildflowers, coastal scenery and interesting hieroglyph carvings.

8 Oct Wed **Munmorah SCA**
Day walk, 10km tracks, beach, road
Joan Sherrin 4976 1723 (6:30- 8:30pm)
Tracks to Catherine Hill Bay. Wildflowers should be in abundance, undulating heathlands, ocean beaches, walks into beautiful caves if calm and tides are low, great coastal views. Map: Catherine Hill Bay.

25 Oct Sat **Dungog Common**
Easy 5 km walk in undulating country.
Allen Shrimpton 4992 2091
Join us on this 'Great Australian Bushwalk' close to the Dungog township.

ADVANCE NOTICES

2-5 Nov Sun/Wed **Blue Mountains NP**
Day walks, with visits to gardens in the Blackheath area.
Val 4332 8629.
We will stay three nights in cabins at Blackheath's Lakeside Caravan Park.

29 Feb-18 Mar (approx.) **Cambodia**
Rex & Susan Filson 4994 9163; filson@ceinternet.com.au
With Cambodian-based tour company Carpe Diem and local guides, visit spectacular Cambodian national Parks including Bokor, Ream, Kirirom, Cardamon Mountains, and the Prek Toal Bird Sanctuary; and famous Angkor. Guest house accommodation. Day walks only. Cost approx \$2 500 excl. air fares.

FILM NIGHT

at the Regal

Come to the Hunter NPA's first ever Film Night Fundraiser!

WHEN: Wednesday 24th September, 6.30 pm

WHERE: Regal Cinema, Moore Street, Birmingham Gardens

WHY: Raise funds for the NPA's Hunter Branch whilst having an enjoyable night out.

TICKETS: \$15

The evening starts with complimentary drinks at 6.30 pm, followed by a 7.00 pm screening of *The Emperor's Club*. Kevin Kline plays the role of a classics professor with a passion for the emperors of the ancient world. One critic's response was 'one of the best, most inspiring films of the year', but see for yourself.

Champagne and supper will be provided after the film – all inclusive in the admission charge, but please bring a plate to keep costs down.

Please support this fundraiser by selling tickets to your friends. Tickets can be posted out. Ticket sales and unused tickets can be returned on the night.

Put this date on your calendar NOW! A chance to see an acclaimed film, whilst catching up with members and friends. To make a booking, contact Jenny Green as soon as possible on 4963 2180 (numbers required by 16 September).



Hunter National Parks

Date Issued 9/03

Print Post Approved
PP255003/05294 Issue 17

If undeliverable return to:
National Parks Association of NSW Inc
Hunter Branch
PO Box 107
Adamstown 2289

Join the NPA Now!



THE NATIONAL PARKS
ASSOCIATION OF NSW

... and enjoy these benefits

- receive *National Parks Journal* six times yearly, for State-wide news and events
- receive *Hunter National Parks* six times yearly, for news and events within the Hunter Region
- regular activities and events program for bushwalking, camping, field trips, lectures and seminars
- access to a wide range of membership discounts
- help protect our national parks and other reserves.

Option 1: Become a **MEMBER**

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult | \$55 | <input type="checkbox"/> Unwaged | \$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household | \$65 | <input type="checkbox"/> School/Library | \$65 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> F/T Student | \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pensioner | \$30 | | |

Option 2: Become a **PARTNER**

- Please send me information on how to become a NPA Partner for as little as \$10 per month (tax-deductable)

Name and address

Surname

First name

Address

..... Post Code

Phone (H) (W)

Email

Payment is by:

- Cheque Visa Bankcard Mastercard
- Card number
- Expires
- Signature Date

Send to:

National Parks Association of NSW Inc
PO Box 107 Adamstown 2289.

Enquiries: John Vernon (02) 4959 5808

SURFACE
MAIL

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA