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November 3, 2012

**From the President Rachel Faggetter**



In the last two weeks I have been travelling in one of the world's greatest eco-hotspots, the south west of Western Australia. A mighty privilege. Some of you may have heard Victoria Laurie on ABC Radio National's Ockham's Razor on Sunday 4 November. She talked about this magical and precious area, now under threat from development. We saw wonderful things: birds such as Carnaby's Black Cockatoo; kauri and jarrah, wando and marri trees, and my favourite, the gimlet gum; the extraordinary variety of flowers; snakes, lizards, and even humpback whales, young and old, desporting their delight en route to the Antarctic.

So much was rare and strange to my eyes, but we were in the company of seriously good botanists, birdos and even a reptile specialist. What a difference it makes to be seeing new and amazing things in the company of people who can explain and reveal details by encouraging you to look deeper and observe more closely. Our bird specialist insisted that we describe what we were seeing before we rushed to identify, to think and observe for ourselves before asking.

This access to specialised knowledge and experience is one of the privileges and joys of walking with the Friends group. This is why it is so important to work with our local schools and continue to recruit new members, so that they, too, may feel that 'shock of recognition'.

**The New Arrivals**

Following the Friends' visit to the Cape Otway Centre for Conservation Ecology in April this year where we viewed the great enclosure that Shayne had built to provide a safe and stimulating environment for their three Spot-tailed Quolls, and the exciting time we had viewing these wonderful Australian creatures, we were thrilled to hear that Lizzie and Shayne's dream of a mating season for their two breeding animals has come to fruition.

The following statement has appeared on the Conservation Ecology Centre website:-

*We are delighted to announce the arrival of four beautiful, endangered Tiger Quoll joeys. The gorgeous spotted joeys are now three months old and fit into the palm of your hand.*

*Lizzie Corke, CEO of the Conservation Ecology Centre, says raising this many joeys in a first breeding season is unusual but the joeys are all healthy and their mother is caring for them beautifully. "They are growing fast and keeping snug and warm in the den," she says. The joeys will help inform researchers about Tiger Quoll behaviour and assist with the conservation of these endangered animals.*

We congratulate Shayne and Lizzie on their commitment to this project, and we wish them success in raising their young family.



*Shayne, Tess and Lizzie with two of the new arrivals*

Photo by Leon Walker

## FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

### MAMMAL SURVEY & WALK IN THE PARK

#### Ironbark Gorge

Saturday, November 17

9.30am – 2.00pm

Meet at Aireys Inlet Hall at 9.30am (Bring morning tea and lunch)

Contact: Mike and Kaye 5263 2011

We intend placing our three remote night time cameras in the Distillery Creek area so that we can find out just what animals frequent this area. Having placed the cameras, we will then complete the popular Ironbark Gorge walk along the narrow walking track that takes you through the gorge crossing the Distillery Creek via a number of bridges. The vegetation is varied and the bird calls are usually abundant.



It is a 4.5km circuit walk of easy to moderate difficulty.

### END OF YEAR CELEBRATIONS

Saturday, December 8

Combined activity with ANGAIR Inc.

Meet at the Moggs Creek Picnic Ground at 10.00am.

Short walk around the Moggs Creek circuit track where there is always a wealth of flora and many birds to observe or hear.

If you don't wish to participate in the walk, just come along to the Picnic Ground and join us for lunch at 12 noon.

Meat, sauce and bread provided.

Bring your own salads, sweets, drinks, plates, glasses, cutlery and fold-up chair.

*We would love to see you there.* Contact Margaret: 5289 6326



### HEATHLAND ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDING

Our regular environmental weeding will revert back to the Anglesea Heathlands for the summer months on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month – 9.30am-11.00am. Meet in O'Donohue Road near corner of Great Ocean Road. Contact Margaret: 5289 6326



Photo by Geoff Gates

December 11

January 8

February 12

**November 13 meet at corner of Bingley Pde & Wilkins St**



### AN EARLY DIARY ENTRY

**Annual General Meeting**  
Sunday, February 10 at 3pm  
ANGAIR Natural History Centre  
McMillan St ANGLESEA



## INFORMATION REGARDING FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

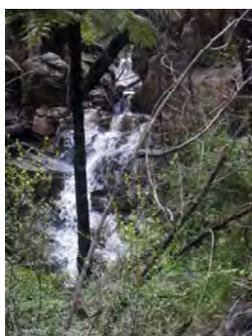
### August 18 Currawong Falls Track Walk

Heavy rains and strong winds overnight had not daunted 15 of our members who were keen to explore the newly reopened track to the Currawong Falls on Distillery Creek. The track had been closed since March 2010 after damage from a planned burn had destroyed the bridges and caused the underground peat to burn for a very long period of time.

As we started the walk at the Distillery Creek Picnic ground misty rain was threatening, but this soon cleared and stayed that way for the remainder of the walk. It was just so pleasant ambling along the track with the vegetation looking so fresh after the rain. The fire had certainly stimulated the regeneration of many indigenous plants, and carpets of seedlings lined the track including Rough Bush Pea, Rusty Pomaderris, Trailing Goodenia, and Soft Bush Pea. Splashes of colour from Pink Heath, Purple Hovea and White Marianth caught our eyes as we walked along.



Perhaps the highlight of the vegetation was the extensive stand of Myrtle Wattle on both sides of the track in one of the drier areas. It was in full bloom and the creamy yellow contrasting with the burnt blackened trunks of the eucalypts was most picturesque. The sun was out as we walked in the area and the scent from the wattle permeated the air.



Birds were calling and fluttering about. Yellow Robins, Eastern Spinebills, Grey Shrike Thrush and little Thornbills were just some of the calls we heard. Excitement prevailed when a large koala was spotted in one of the eucalypts. We gradually made our way up the track to the Falls and were delighted to see large cascades of water flowing – how long is it since this has occurred?

As we walked back to the cars we were all convinced that the work carried out by Parks Vic and contractors in replacing the bridges and realigning the track had been well carried out, once again enabling us to access this special part of the Great Otway National Park.

### September 22/23 ANGAIR Wildflower Show

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank-you to the members of our group who assisted us in presenting the Friends' information at the ANGAIR Show. As we indicated in our last Newsletter, this year we focused our display on the Spot-tailed Quoll, and we were very pleased with the response and the interest shown by visitors. We had some great photographs from a number of our members and also from the Cape Otway Conservation Ecology Centre, and we thank them for their contribution. We were very pleased to have a quoll specimen on loan from DSE Colac.

### September 18 & October 2 *Caladenia maritima* survey

The terrestrial orchid *Caladenia maritima* is endemic to the Anglesea area and is known from only one heathland site within the Great Otway National Park. Each year the Friends group carries out two surveys of this rare orchid, usually in late September and early October.

The orchid count for *Caladenia maritima* this year was exceptional as you can see from the survey results. The colony does not appear to be extending beyond its normal boundary but the infill of orchids within the boundary was unreal. Total orchids counted 1272 orchids.



Counts for 2009: 360 orchids; 2010: 588 orchids; 2011: 429 orchids.

There is no sign of pollination. Orchids must be reproducing vegetatively - producing daughter tubers. We were absolutely amazed to see so many very fine flowers.

We are thrilled that *Caladenia maritima* has recently been nominated for inclusion under the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act. The Friends have written to the Department of Sustainability and Environment in support of this nomination.

## October 20 Wildflower Walk

Sixteen people joined us for our annual wildflower walk on October 20. It was indeed a wildflower ramble rather than a wildflower walk as there were just so many flowers for us to admire in the section of the Great Otway National Park at the western end of Harvey St, Anglesea.

As we entered the Park we were delighted to see a mass of Blue Pincushions and Pink-Trigger Plants in full flower. Just opposite there was a eucalypt with, we are sure, more than 100 of the tiny Eastern Bronze Caladenias growing in the grasses around the base of the trunk. We had hoped that the weather would be warm enough to encourage the sun orchids to open, and we were certainly not disappointed. It was not long before we were catching glimpses of pink and blue as these fascinating flowers were starting to open. We were just so privileged to share their beauty. Salmon Sun Orchids were growing in clumps throughout the Park while Dotted Sun Orchids were just scattered here and there amongst the grasses and other flowers. The rarer Pink Sun Orchid enabled us to look at the differences between this species and the more common Salmon Sun Orchid.

The Great Sun Orchids that had been tempting us by just opening on those very few warmer humid days also decided it was time to show their glory, and we found about six of these magnificent orchids growing to almost a metre high in various parts of the walk. Donkey Orchids that have been flowering for many weeks were still stunning, as were the Large White Spider Orchids. We counted up to 17 growing in a loose colony at one stage. Kaye's sharp eyes discovered the Southern Spider Orchid. Very similar to the Red-lipped Spider Orchid, it has clubs rather than glands at the end of the sepals. There were so many other beautiful flowers – Button Everlastings, Creamy Candles, and Common Flat-pea just to name a few.

We had our lunch on the side of the track - Mantis Orchids, Blunt Everlasting, Yam Daisies, White Spiders, Creamy Candles and golden Guinea Flowers were just some of the table decorations. After lunch we drove further along Mt Ingoldsby Road where we were able to admire some more flowers – Showy Parrot Pea, Purple Beard Orchids, three small Red Beaks and some of the fascinating early Flying Duck Orchids that were just coming into flower.



It was certainly a great day to be out in the field and we were thrilled to be able to share the beauty of our Park with our members.

## Environmental Weeding

Our efforts over the past few months have concentrated on our Caring for our Country site on Coalmine/Camp Road, Anglesea adjoining the Anglesea river. We have been very pleased with the progress that has been made to increase biodiversity in the area. The main focus has been on the removal of Coast/Sallow Wattle that had invaded the area since the fuel reduction burn in 2008.



We have had a great deal of help from Conservation Volunteers Australia, Parks Vic, ANGAIR, and the boys from St Bernards College at Grassy Creek. Parks Vic has also assisted greatly with the felling of large wattles and mature pine trees scattered through the site.

On October 17, Federal Corangamite MP Darren Cheeseman, Alice Knight Corangamite Catchment Management Authority Chairperson, and Jannes Demetrious CMA Coastal project Officer visited the swampy riparian woodland area where we focused

our initial efforts with the help of a \$5000 grant from the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority in 2010.

The Friends were congratulated on bringing this area of bushland back to life.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Reports of Friends' Activities

ANGAIR (Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Society for the Protection of Flora and Fauna) very kindly offers the Friends space on their website to include reports with photographs of most of our activities.

You can visit the website [www.angair.org.au](http://www.angair.org.au) and you will find Friends of Eastern Otways under Other Conservation Groups. Photos from the recent Wildflower Walk on October 20 can be viewed on this site.

We are most appreciative of this offer as yet we do not have our own website, and we thank Rod Brooks (Friends and ANGAIR member) who keeps the website up to date in such a competent manner.

The Friends' Newsletter, that is sent to members four times each year, is available by e-mail. Receiving the Newsletter this way enables you to view photographs in colour. If you would like to receive the document by e-mail please forward your request and your e-mail address to Lachie Richardson [lrichardson@iprimus.com.au](mailto:lrichardson@iprimus.com.au)

### Victorian National Parks Association calls for action

The VNPA is requesting conservationists to take action to maintain the federal government's role in overseeing matters of national environmental significance and not to transfer many of its powers to the state as is being proposed in a plan being discussed at the present time.

*"The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1998 (the EPBC Act) is the Australian Government's central piece of environmental legislation. It provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places.*

*We believe the Act needs strengthening, not weakening because of pressure from big business, mining and coalition state governments, which do not act in the national interest – they are, after all, states."*

You can take action. Visit [protecttheplacesyoulove.vnpa.org.au](http://protecttheplacesyoulove.vnpa.org.au)

### Proposal to expand the Great Otway National Park to protect the Anglesea Heathland

The Geelong Environment Council strongly believes that as compensation for the immense subsidies received both for power use and in monetary terms by Alcoa from both Federal and State Governments the company should ensure that the un-mined area of the Anglesea Heath is protected for the future. Last February Alcoa was granted a further 50 year lease for the full 7600ha of heathland. It has been made clear by the company that 600ha of heath is the total area which Alcoa wishes to mine.

We agree with the GEC that there seems to be no reason why the balance should not be added to the Great Otway National Park. The GEC has requested that concerned people write to State and Federal politicians expressing their concerns and requesting that Minister Tony Burke and Premier Ted Baillieu be urged to consider this proposal.



*Friends of Eastern Otways wish you and your family  
a safe and happy holiday season.*

*We look forward to your continued support  
in 2013.*

*We hope to see you at Moggs Creek on December 8*

## RANGER'S REPORT



Eastern Otways staff have been busy working in various parts of the Great Otway National Park, carrying out vegetation management along identified tracks. Contractors are being employed to carry out more intensive track management.

Big Hill campground refurbishments are continuing with the installation of fireplaces, designation of areas for tents, caravans and car camping.

Plans for replacing the existing septic pit are also underway. The area will have to remain closed until December to allow the grass to re-establish and the sites to settle.

Staff are working with contractors to complete works to tracks and bridges on She Oak Track. The track will then be opened once it is graded.

Parks Victoria and mountain bikers have worked together to implement recommendations from the Currawong Falls shared track report that was completed in June 2012. The aim of the working bee was to not only make the track suitable for use by both walkers and cyclists, but to also start to build the relationship with the mountain bike community. A number of tasks were able to be completed including installation of the blind corner signs and clearing of overhanging track vegetation.

Unfortunately as a result of heavy rains a large landslide occurred near Cumberland Falls. The walking track there has been temporarily closed until further notice above Jebbs pool.

Due to the dynamic weather we have been experiencing, the fuel reduction burning has been off to a slow start. So far fuel reduction burning has been completed around the Anglesea golf course and candelling (to reduce bark hazards on trees) has commenced in the Jarosite area. Other fuel reduction burns will be carried out when the weather conditions are appropriate.

Approximately 30 attendees of the Australasian Weeds Conference attended a field trip to the Anglesea/Aireys Inlet area on Wed 3 October. The group visited sites within Anglesea Heath/Alcoa private, Great Otway National Park (O'Donohues) and Great Ocean Road Coast Committee sites. Margaret MacDonald provided a wealth of information for the attendees, as did Neil Tucker (ANGAIR), whilst Katrina Lovett provided information from Parks Victoria's perspective for the O'Donohues block.

We are very pleased that Alicia Ivory is returning to her summer marine internship role, and that we will also be receiving a summer ranger to assist us during the holiday period. Summer Rangers start on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December and work for a 12 week term.

Parks staff are organising a regional SeaSearch training day at Eagle Rock on the 10<sup>th</sup> November for local Friends groups and interested community members to learn about the new and improved Sea Search program. This program provides a range of community based monitoring activities for marine parks. The emphasis will be on educating local community members how to set up, collect and manage intertidal monitoring activities.

Parks Victoria at Anglesea are moving into the newly completed buildings at the DSE/Parks Vic complex in Camp Road, Anglesea. This move should be completed early in November.

*Thanks again to all who are involved with the Friends of Eastern Otways. The volunteer hours and numbers for the West Coast District have been boosted again this year thanks to the participation of Friends of Eastern Otways together with other volunteers. Parks Victoria wishes you all the best for the festive season. Take care and enjoy the park.*

*We hope to see you all at the end of year celebration BBQ December 8 at Moggs Creek Picnic Ground.*

*Many thanks from Carlie Bronk Friends Liaison Ranger Eastern Otways, Parks Victoria*