



FRIENDS OF MORWELL NATIONAL PARK INC

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MARCH NEWSLETTER 1997

FEBRUARY ACTIVITY REPORT

A small group of 4 people met to remove wire tree guards from mature trees at the far end of Braniffs road. Conditions were hot and dusty, with tile temperature well into the 30's and the humidity very high. All present were very careful to give snakes a fair warning they were approaching as the grass was very high in some areas. A combination of wire cutters, gloves and brute strength were required to remove the wire guards and we are very thankful that they are no longer used in the park. The trailer was full when the group finished up 2 hrs later, although some guards around trees close to the creek have not been removed due to layers of dirt which have built up around the base. These will require digging out at a later date, when the weather is much cooler.

The highlight of the day was the sighting of a koala in a young tree perched very close to the ground at eye level. The koala had positioned itself to take advantage of any breeze with arms draped over very small branches and legs hanging down, it looked a picture of relaxation. .

I finished the day with a very nice dip in the creek which was very very cool after the hot work but refreshing. I can highly recommend it as a part of our summer activities, a dip in the creek that is, not wire tree guard removal!!!

Written by Anne Bailey.

FRIENDS CONFERENCE

The Eighth Biennial Friends Conference is to be held at the Lord Somers Camp, Somers , 19-20 April 1997 . For more details see attached brochure with last months newsletter. If enough interest is raised we may be able to car pool down to the conference to save on costs. Please be in touch with the committee members if you are interested .

Previously there has been some members go along to the conferences so it would be good to see a big turnout from our Friends group go, given the closeness of the venue.

CONSERVATION GRANTS PROGRAM

Late last year the committee applycd for a grant from the conservation grants program 1996/1997. Our project was to try different methods of revegetation of the more steeper parts of Billy Creek Valley. Well finally we have recieved a reply back from Parks Victoria and have been allocated a grant of \$2740. Parks Victoria will administer the program and will formally contact us later about relevant grant agreements etc.

Our thanks go to Anne Bailey (who put in a lot of her own time working on the application for the grant) and to the rest of the committee who also met regularly last year to finalise details for the grant application.

I hope to have more information on this in the next few months.

FLOWERS AND FERNS OF MORWELL NATIONAL PARK BOOK RELEASE

At last the book is printed and ready for release at the official book launch on the 21 March 5:30 pm at the Fosters Gully picnic area. I hope to see you all there to get your personally autographed copy.

You may see some copies available in some of the local newsagents already, but for members you can contact any of the committee members and purchase a copy for \$15.

The book has come up very well and looks good. it should prove to be a very usefull reference for many years to come.

A congratulations to Ken Harris for all of the work. involved in making the book, he has done a commendable job of it all and also thanks must go to all of the sponsors who contributed as well.

FRIENDS OF THE NORTH ARM.(F.O.N.A.)

Late January a visit to Lakes Entrance was highlighted by an excursion with the Friends group up the North Arm on the "Bluebird". These trips ran twice a day and were extemely popular with many people being turned away, the boat was full !!! The original vegetation surrounding the North Ann was warm temperate rainforest, with swamp paperbark and sea rush around the shoreline and creekbeds. A combination of the opening of the artificial entrance in 1889, developement by selectors who cleared timber and grazed cattle to the present day housing developement have had a devastating impact on the pristine environment.

It was wonderfull to see what it must have been originally like as we travelled further up North Arm with pockets of natural vegetation and glimpses of the bird life including a sea Eagle soaring high over the waterways. The F.O.N.A was formed in 1995 and has recently released the "North Arm Foreshore and Estuary Plan" in partnership with the East Gippsland Shire Council and the Dept of Natural Resources. All those who travel on the "Bluebird" were given the opportunity to provide written comment on the environmental future of the North Arm.

It was an opportunity to provide support and encouragement to a group of like-minded people who are facing a huge task of challenging and changing the current management of the North Arm. If you are in Lakes Entrance I would encourage you to contact F.O.N.A. and travel up the waterway. For your interest rare species growing in the North Arm are :

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|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • limestone pomaderris | pomaderris oraria calcicola |
| • blue wattle | acacia caerulescens |
| • yellow milk vine | marsdenia flavescens |
| • viscid daisybush | olearia viscosa |
| • pinkwood | beyeria viscosa |

Supplied and written by Anne Bailev.

MARCH ACTIVITIES.

YINNAR SOUTH COUNTRY FAIR 15 MARCH -MARTIN W ALKER RESERVE YINNAR SOUTH

The Yinnar South Country fair is on Saturday 14 of March (this weekend), The Friends of Morwell National Park are having a stall, and any helpers who volunteer some time with the billy tea and damper would be greatly appreciated. You dont have to spend all day there, just half an hour would be appreciated.

Contact Wendy Steenbergen to arrange a time to help.

Also we will endeavour to sell some copies of the book.

CHURCHILL FAIR MARCH 23 - MONASH UNI.

We will be having the same thing as Yinnar South, so help will be needed there as well, contact Wendy to arrange for times that you would like to help out.

THE NEWSLETTER

If you have any comments to make or contributions to the newsletter please send them to Martin Gwynne RMB 1418B Yinnar 3869, or phone 51221945.