

Narpulungup News

August
No. 3 2014

from the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park

www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au



Next issue:
November 2014

PARKS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED BY PREMIER AND MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

This event took place on 7 June at the Barrens Beach recreation site. 'Friends' were represented by Gil Craig and Rosemary Jasper.

The developments undertaken by the FRNP Improvement Project were officially opened by Premier Colin Barnett on June 7th, 2014. About 50 people attended the opening which was held at the new development at Barrens Beach, with East Mt Barren and the ocean providing a panoramic backdrop. Noongar elder, Hazel Brown opened proceedings by expressing her appreciation of the new developments and the manner in which they had been achieved. The Environment Minister Albert Jacob, the Shire President Ian Goldfinch and the Premier Colin Barnett all spoke, indicating the biological significance of the Park and their pleasure in the nature and standard of the new facilities.

A total of \$40 million was spent on this major upgrade of facilities, including reconstructing and sealing 40 km of road from the eastern entrance to Hamersley Inlet, developing camping facilities and recreational sites and establishing two new walk trails, the Mamang Trail in the west and the Hakea Trail in the east.

The party travelling with the Premier included the DPaW Director of Science and Conservation, Margaret Byrne, who is pictured below observing plants with the Premier while he was on tour in the Park.



Photo: Tim Slater, Kalgoorlie Miner June 9 2014.

The opening of the upgraded facilities of the Park was also the opportunity to launch five new brochures for the Park.

Fitzgerald River National Park brochure
Fitzgerald River NP Info and walks – East
Fitzgerald River NP Info and walks – West
Fitzgerald River NP – Mamang walk trail

(Bremer end)

Fitzgerald River NP – Hakea walk trail
(Hopetoun end)

These brochures are available locally and on the Department of Parks and Wildlife website (<http://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/park-brochures>).

Contributed by Rosemary Jasper

NEWS OF TWERTUP FIELD STUDIES CENTRE

A few months back I was in that dozy sort of state, half day dreaming, half thinking, possibly during an afternoon nap or while working, I can't remember which. I suddenly snapped wide awake in a mini panic attack something akin to, "strike a light, we're trying to build a house in a wilderness ... what sort of idealistic idiots are we?" And what's more, after more than six years, all we have to show for it is a concrete floor, a roof, two water tanks and a scattering of ageing palettes loaded with spongolite bricks cut from the adjacent quarry by another idealist. Why?

Well, I think we wanted to recapture and retain something that had been immensely important to us all, perhaps so that people yet to come can likewise enjoy and learn and marvel and study and appreciate this absorbing, wild, beautiful and fortunately, practically useless (you know what I mean) place that is the Fitzgerald River valley. A place where the most essential activity is to look and listen. Actually, we do have more to show for it, much more, but that is lodged within the personal experiences of the many volunteers that have enabled us as a group, to get this far along with the financial help of people who may never come to see it. I could go on as I am feeling in a reflective mood, but there is still more practical stuff to be done.

Stonemason Paul Young, from Capel, has been contracted to erect the walls of the Field Studies Centre and should be able to commence work in late September. We are hoping that members or other passersby may be able to donate a day or two, here and there, to assist Paul, particularly

with moving bricks, helping fit door and window frames etc. Once the walls are up the last major job will be installing ceilings (easy). After that we can decide on what pictures to hang on the walls and maybe actually go for a walk somewhere and look at natural things.

Meanwhile, Geraldine and I plan to be at Twertup on a 'not so busy' Busy Bee from 30 August to 2 September, weather permitting. This will involve fiddling about preparing doors and window frames. It is even possible that the clothesline could be rebuilt using heritage timbers available on site. If you are interested in doing further unpaid labor contact me on 0428 414 468 or email steve@janicke.com.au



Contributed by Steve and Geraldine Janicke

WATER RAT DISCOVERED IN STEERE RIVER

The recent discovery of a water rat in the Steere River by John Tucker using a trail camera is part of an ongoing process which shows how new techniques enable much better knowledge about distribution and abundance of fauna. It also shows that our knowledge is often incomplete and new discoveries are yet to be made. Most books and maps of the distribution of Australian mammals indicate a south western Australian distribution east on the south coast to Bremer Bay. So this is an extension of range which suggests water rats may be more widespread than we think. There is also an unconfirmed sight record from Stokes Inlet. In our patch, water rats are also known from Phillips River at Pitchi Ritchi, Culham Inlet and Carracarrup Creek Good work John.



Water rat from Steere River. Photo John Tucker/RAIN.

SOME SPRINGTIME ACTIVITIES FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

Guided bushwalk around Kundip townsite

Jesse Brampton and Nathan McQuoid will lead this walk on Sunday 21 September which is the final weekend of the Ravensthorpe Wildflower Festival. Here is the chance to see in the wild what you might have already seen artfully displayed and labelled at the Wildflower Show. What could be better than this?

The arrangements are to meet at 10.00 am at the recreation area at the old Kundip townsite 20 km from Ravensthorpe on the Hopetoun Road. The walk is of approximately 8 km length on a cleared pathway so is relatively easy, particularly as plenty of time is allowed as the walk will take 4-5 hours. Bring your own lunch to eat on the way, snacks and drinks. Dress for weather on the day, binoculars and camera would be useful. Ankle supporting footwear is recommended. Bees may be present, if allergic bring antihistamines or epi-pen. Please register your intention to walk with Ravensthorpe Community Resource Centre phone 98381340. For further information ring Jesse on 98381427 or email jesseb@wn.com.au

Annual Carnaby's cockatoo nesting count in Cocanarup timber reserve

Debbie Sullivan of Birdlife Australia will lead this activity which will be held over 24-26 October. The objective is to find as many nesting cockatoo pairs in the reserve as we can. You don't need to be an experienced birdo to participate. It is proposed to camp out at the usual site on Zekker Track on Friday and Saturday nights but

day trippers are welcome too. Either way bring your own everything in terms of food, drinks, cooking etc. For bird work binoculars, camera, notebook and GPS are useful. Ankle supporting footwear is recommended. Bees may be present, if allergic bring antihistamines or epi-pen. For those unfamiliar with the campsite Debbie or her nominee will be present at 4.00 pm Friday and 8.00 am Saturday at the origin of Cocanarup Road, 11 km from Ravensthorpe on South Coast Highway on the way to Jerramungup. For further information ring Debbie 0427987085 or deb.sullivan@birdlife.org.au

NEW MEMBERS

'Friends' welcome Jessica Wright and Carol Wilkins to their number and hope their membership is both satisfying and enduring.

NATIONAL HERITAGE LISTING FOR THE FITZ. AND SURROUNDS?

The submission to list FRNP as well as the Ravensthorpe Range and Lake Magenta/Dunns Rock nature reserves was originally made by the Humane Society International in 2006. In 2007 the 'Friends' made a supporting submission and several members made private submissions. The issue has languished within the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage since then. Now it is up for assessment and comment. The Shire of Jerramungup has supported the proposal; Shire of Ravensthorpe has deferred a decision pending further information. 'Narpulungup News' will keep you informed of developments.

NUMBAT TRACKS AND TRACES IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP

This workshop originally proposed for the end of August has been re-scheduled. 'Friends' have been in discussion with Tony Friend of DPAW to run this workshop as a follow up to the numbat radio tracking project we did in Cocanarup timber reserve between 2008-2011. The venue is Dryandra near Narrogin, the best time would be in November. The purpose is to establish whether there are any un-collared, wild bred numbats still at Cocanarup. If interested in participating and for further information contact Andy Chapman 98381149 or email fishymaster1@bigpond.com

FIRST BOOK FOR TWERTUP LIBRARY

Recently Friends of Fitzgerald received a donation from the Trustees of the Ernest Hodgkin Trust of the book *Ernest Hodgkin's Swanland* by Anne Brearley, UWA Press, 2005. This is a magnificent book, 550 pages, hard-cover, and generously illustrated with photos, graphics and maps. The inside cover description of the book says:

"Ernest Hodgkin's Swanland is based on, and inspired by the life and work of a man intrigued by the natural world. It is a synthesis of many years of research on the estuarine environments from the Murchison River to Esperance, Western Australia. Hodgkin's study of the estuaries was firmly grounded in the discipline of science, but he married this with the best traditions of the naturalist and historian.

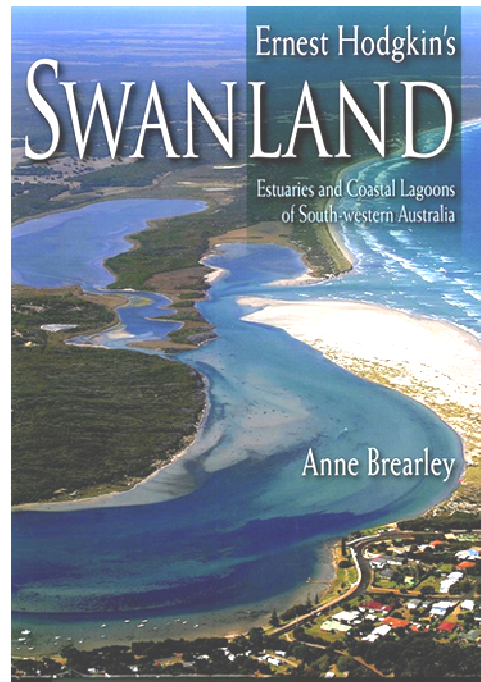
Anne Brearley's more recent widely sourced research has been grafted onto Ernest Hodgkin's extensive body of work, providing a comprehensive guide for the conservationist, scientist, student, observer and visitor. It focuses on the individual estuaries: their history of formation, geography, geology, water-flows, plants and animals and how these have changed since European settlement"

Some members will have known Ernest (or Hodge as he was widely known) and even assisted in the various field-trips he made to the south-coast. His knowledge, enthusiasm, curiosity and humanity were legendary. The production of this book was made possible by the Trust which he established. It is a wonderfully informative and interesting book and a very fitting first book for the new Twertup library collection.

For those who would like to acquire the book themselves, they are still available and have been discounted to \$25 or \$20 for students and concession holders. Postage is \$10 in addition. Please contact:

National Trust of Australia (WA)
PO Box 1162
West Perth WA 6872
Ph 93216088 Fax 93241571

Contributed by Rosemary Jasper



A CORRECTION In the last edition it was incorrectly reported that the property 'Yarrabee' co-owned by Bush Heritage and Greening Australia is for sale. Both groups are in discussion about future management of the property but it is not for sale. 'Friends' thank Simon Smale for this correction and apologise for any confusion. *Editor*

Post Print approved 100002092 Surface
Mail

If undelivered please return to:
The Editor
Narpulungup News
PO Box 199
Ravensthorpe WA 6346

**Postage
Paid**