

# Narpulungup News

February  
Number 1 2014

from the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park

[www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au](http://www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au)



Next issue:  
May 2014

## WELCOME TO YOUR NEW YEAR...IT'S TIME TO HAVE AN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SOME ACTIVITIES.

This year the AGM and activities weekend will be held in Hopetoun over the weekend of 5 & 6 April. The AGM and guest speaker event will be on the Saturday at Mary Anne Haven next to the Police Station in the main street. The Saturday program is:

- 9.30-10.30 AM Arrive, morning tea (provided) and fellowship
- 10.30-12.30 PM Annual General Meeting
- 1.00-2.00 PM Lunch (bring your own)
- 2.00-3.00 PM Guest speaker. Dr Liz Fox from Birdlife Australia will talk on 'Birds of the Great Western Woodlands'. Liz is a passionate and experienced environmental scientist with two years as bird project leader for the woodlands. Her illustrated presentation will reveal much of interest in these unique and nearby woodlands which have significant conservation, cultural and aesthetic values .

The Sunday program is:

- 9.00-9.30 AM John Tucker will talk on the birds of Culham Inlet and his work on them at the Culham Inlet bird hide. John has been regularly surveying local wetlands for many years.
- 10.00-1.00 PM Nathan McQuoid will lead a interpretive walk up East Mt Barren (with a surprise diversion). Nathan is a former FRNP Ranger, now a landscape ecologist who looks at biodiversity issues at the landscape scale. If the weather on the day is fine bring a picnic lunch to eat near the summit.
- On Sunday afternoon there are two options; participants can either visit some of the new Parks Improvement Plan facilities or join the Great Cocky Count in Cocanarup Timber Reserve.

Those staying overnight in Hopetoun will need to make their own accommodation arrangements. Some of us may opt to camp overnight in the park at the new Four Mile campsite. Commercial accommodation options are:

- Hopetoun Motel & Chalet Village 98383219
- Hopetoun Caravan Park 98383096
- Port Hotel 98383053
- Wavecrest Caravan Park 98383888

For dinner on Saturday night we will have use of both a kitchen and an outdoor barbecue at Mary Anne Haven so bring food for the option which suits you or dine out in Hopetoun.

We will have to vacate the Haven in the evening so breakfast options are for self contained camping or restaurants in Hopetoun. For further information on the weekend arrangements contact Andy Chapman 98381149, email fishymaster1@bigpond.com

If you are unable to attend the AGM and wish to nominate someone (or yourself) for the committee the form for in absentia nominations is on page 6. Send forms to Secretary, PO Box 740, Albany DC, 6331 or [steve@janicke.com.au](mailto:steve@janicke.com.au)

**Remember to be dieback aware and ensure your vehicle and footwear are free of mud, soil etc. before entering the park.**

## TWERTUP UPDATE

### Vote and win \$5,000 for Twertup

After a year of digging trenches and filling them up again with cement, we finally have something to show above ground. Yes, there is now a concrete slab which was poured last November by local contractors with some remedial works carried out in early February. Kevin Lodge, a structural engineer, came out to Twertup to check the slab and kindly donated some of his time to our project.

Now it's your turn to do something for Twertup – it will only take 30 seconds! We've entered a Sunsuper Dreams for a better world competition. Simply go to the following website <http://sunsuperdreams.com.au> and vote for "A ROOF OVER TWERTUP FIELD STUDIES CENTRE". Please vote by **28th February** – the 'dream' with the most votes for the month wins \$5,000. Pester your friends, family and work colleagues to vote too (we have some stiff competition, so we need hundreds of votes)! Tweet or put it on your Facebook page and spread the word. Thanks to all of you who have voted for this dream. Keep the votes coming in please.

*Contributed by Gil Craig*

## CONDOLENCES

'Friends' extend their sympathies to Steve & Geraldine Janicke and family on the recent passing of Steve's mother.

## TWERTUP PHOTO GALLERY



*Stunning shot of the frame and new slab by night.*



*The frame and new slab by day*



*The frame and new slab from above.  
Photos: Geraldine Janicke*

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

'Friends' welcome to their number Sandro and Erika Pignatti from Italy who recently visited the Fitz. including Twertup. We further acknowledge their donation to the Twertup reconstruction and wish them an enduring and satisfying membership.

## UPDATE ON SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER DEATHS

In the last issue we reported massive shore strandings and deaths in October and November 2013 of Short-tailed Shearwaters from the south coast of New South Wales to the south coast of WA. Since then autopsies have been done at the WA Museum; Marcus Singor of Birdlife Australia reports as follows:

*"In the interim I advise that all of the Short-tailed Shearwaters we examined had (effectively) no "gut" content whatsoever: that is apart from a varying amount of bilious-looking, green mucus and, in some, plastic fragments (but in none of the ones I saw was this anywhere close to the extent which could be held entirely responsible for death). None of them had any (or barely any) subcutaneous fat present and the signs are that they "starved" to death. What factors had led to this deficiency in the ecosystem are not yet known to anyone".*

*Errata: In the last issue it was reported that 'west mite virus' had been eliminated as a cause of deaths; this should have read as 'Nile mite virus'. Editor.*

## A NEW RANGER FOR THE FITZ.

'Friends' welcome David Nash, the new Dieback Ranger based in Hopetoun, to our community and trust his time with us be enjoyable and satisfying to him. David comes to the job from Queensland; he replaces Carol Ebbett who has left for a position with Parks & Wildlife in the Perth Hills district. Carol is thanked for her commitment to the Fitz.

## FRNP ADVISORY COMMITTEE RE-CONVENED.

This advisory committee which lapsed during the Parks Improvement Project was re-convened with new memberships at a meeting in Jerramungup on 20 February. The full membership will be comprised as follows:

- Parks & Wildlife – 2 members
- Shire of Ravensthorpe – 1 member
- Shire of Jerramungup – 1 member
- Friends of the FRNP – 1 member

- Shire Interest Groups-4 members
- Indigenous Representatives-2 members
- Fire Management Work Group-1 member
- Tourism-1 member

'Friends' are represented by Andy Chapman and Anne Gadsby and Nathan McQuoid are the community representatives for the Shire of Jerramungup. Indigenous, Tourism and one Ravensthorpe Shire community representatives are yet to be appointed. The committee is chaired by Mike Shephard from Parks & Wildlife. Meetings will be held quarterly between Hopetoun, Ravensthorpe, Jerramungup and Bremer Bay.

## NEWS FROM PARKS AND WILDLIFE ON THE PARKS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT



### Project overview

The Fitzgerald River National Park Improvement Project is entering its final stages and is anticipated to formally open in March/April 2014. The project was launched in 2008 in response to the socio-economic issues created by the closure of the BHP Billiton mine in Ravensthorpe. By improving access to and facilities in the park, the project was aimed at increasing tourism and the associated economic benefits to the two surrounding Shires.

A total of \$40 million was provided to the project by both the State and Commonwealth Governments for upgrading road access, camping facilities, recreational use sites and walking trails. The road upgrades were undertaken in partnership with WA Main Roads and the recreational sites, including the trails were undertaken by the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW).

The Commonwealth component of the project (\$20m) was completed on 30 June 2012. The majority of this funding (\$17m) was spent on road improvements with 34km of roads reconstructed and sealed and 40km of gravel roads upgraded. The residual \$3m was spent on the planning and design of the recreation sites within the park and the construction of the first round of sites targeted



redevelopment, including the eastern entry station, Barrens Beach, Barrens Lookout, Four Mile Beach, Four Mile Beach Campground and East Mt Barren. The Commonwealth Final Report (Dept of Infrastructure and Transport) was accepted on the 22 March 2013.

Progress on the State component of funds (\$20m) is well advanced with the road construction work completed, which included 6km of sealed road and two car parks at Hamersley Inlet. The day use visitor precinct at Point Ann is completed and was opened to the public in December 2013. The Hamersley Inlet visitor precinct (day use area and campground) have been completed and will be handed over to the Ravensthorpe Shire once defects list items have been attended to. The viewing platform at Cave Point has been completed and was opened to the public prior to the Australia day weekend.

The State component also funded the construction of two coastal walktrails - a western walktrail (Mamang Trail) between Point Ann and Fitzgerald Inlet and an eastern walktrail (Hakea Trail) from Cave Point to Quoin Head. These were adapted from the original concept of one long walktrail. Good progress has been made on both walktrails and along with the trails campground at Whalebone Creek is expected to be completed by the end of March 2014.

Road upgrades have been completed on both the west and east of the park. The eastern side of the park now has all weather access with a bitumen arterial road from Hopetoun to Hamersley Inlet. All access roads to the main recreational sites and campgrounds can be accessed off Hamersley Drive on sealed bitumen roads. The roads on the western side have been upgraded to good quality gravel roads, which, due to dieback risk, will still be closed during wet periods.

*Contributed by Peter Hartley, Parks & Wildlife, Albany*

## CONGRATULATIONS

'Friends' congratulate Vicky Bilney and Paul Dunham on the birth of Benedict Paul Dunham on 15/12/2013 weighing in at 2.97 kg.

## PARKS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PHOTO GALLERY



*Kitchen area at Hamersley Inlet campsite*



*Viewing platform at Cave Point*



*Entry point on Hamersley Drive*



*Interpretive site at Barrens Beach  
All photos courtesy Parks & Wildlife*

## SEEN A SHAGGY-SPINED BEE ANYONE?

If so Dr Terry Houston, the retired but still busier than ever former Curator of Entomology at the WA Museum, would like to hear from you.



### INFORMATION SHEET

## Shaggy-Spined Bee

*Leioproctus (Lamprocolletes)* unnamed species

The existence of this beautiful native bee, which has yet to be scientifically named and described, became known only comparatively recently. The first known specimens were found among miscellaneous insects donated to the WA Museum by two private beetle collectors. The specimen labels recorded that the bees had been collected from flowers of “mallee” in the Ravensthorpe region and in the month of February. A successful search for this species was made in late January/early February 2013 by WA Museum personnel. Both sexes of the bee were found visiting flowers of Swamp Mallett, *Eucalyptus spathulata* but only in close proximity to Ravensthorpe and on the eastern and northern fringes of Fitzgerald River National Park. They were locally abundant. The species was not found at flowers of other eucalypt species in the region, suggesting that it may be quite plant specific.

This bee is a little larger than the honeybee and is remarkable in a number of ways. Males are clothed in dense, straw-coloured pubescence (‘hair’) which is particularly long on the legs, hence the term ‘shaggy’ in the working name given to this species. Females, by contrast, have a mostly bare body, although there is a band of rust-coloured pubescence across the front part of the thorax. Both sexes have two pairs of spines on the rear of the thorax. The function of these spines is unknown but they may deter predators.



Male (above) and female of the ‘Shaggy Spined Bee’. One pair of spines is clearly visible protruding from the rear of the female’s thorax.



There is another, closely related species of *Leioproctus* which has similar spines. It, too, is unnamed and is known from just a few male specimens which were collected at Cranbrook in 1954.

*Continued....page 6*



## FORM FOR IN ABSENTIA NOMINATION FOR COMMITTEE POSITION

**Nominator** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominee** \_\_\_\_\_

**Second** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominee signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominator** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominee** \_\_\_\_\_

**Second** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominee signature** \_\_\_\_\_

From page 5.....

Their labels indicate they were taken in early February at [flowers of] “mallee”. A recent search for this species was unsuccessful. Like most native bees, these spined bees are likely to be solitary in habits.

Their nests have yet to be discovered but are likely to be in the ground. Solitary bees are not aggressive and females will sting only in self-defence (males lack a sting).

Any sightings of this species can be reported to Terry Houston: telephone 9212 3742; email Terry.Houston@museum.wa.gov.au.

Author: Terry Houston

## HIGH FIBRE DIET...

Investigating a disturbance under a citrus tree I discovered this unfolding drama. A carpet python 1.3m long had just attacked and was subduing an adult grey currawong. Pictures tell the story....



The episode took three hours. At completion the python was so exhausted it could barely move.  
*Contributed by Andy Chapman.*

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