

# Narpulungup News

November 2006

No 4

from the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park



Next issue:  
February 2007

## Biosphere map launched in September

We've done it! The Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park have produced a beautifully illustrated map of the Fitzgerald Biosphere region including the FRNP and it was launched at a social function at Quaalup Homestead Wilderness Retreat on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Dr Steve Hopper who officially launched the map said that this region has global significance. He stressed that it is a special place that deserves special attention and care and we can expect that more and more people will come to experience it. This was Dr



*No - not a ghost, but the sheet used to cover the map before it was unveiled by Andy Chapman & Steve Hopper!*

Hopper's last visit to the south coast before he left to take up the job as Director of Kew Gardens in London.

The map was designed and illustrated by artist and FFRNP member, Vivienne Hillyer who lives near Bremer Bay. She produced the map in the tradition of hand-drawn cartography, rather than using computer generated material. This is one of the qualities that make it so beautiful and unique,

The map measures 84 x 59 cm and has a border of hand-painted illustrations of local animals, insects, birds, fish and marine and terrestrial plants. A key gives not only their common and Latin names, but also, where known, the Noongar names as provided by members of the Noongar community. There is also a list of historical and heritage sites with brief explanatory notes and a description of the Biosphere.

All local places of interest are shown on the map, as are all roads and farms, though the scale is too small to allow these to be named.

Vivienne's 'thank-you speech' is printed on page 2. Of course, the map would not have happened without financial support from Lotterywest and the Shire of Ravensthorpe.

During the evening entertainment was provided by a slide retrospective about the FRNP Association (as it was originally called) presented by President, Andy Chapman, poetry about the Park read by Ken and Priscilla Broadbent and Barbara Miller and, later in the evening, live music including vocals by Vivienne Hillyer – yet another of her talents.

Copies of the map are now on sale at local outlets in Bremer Bay and Ravensthorpe., or they may be obtained by mail from the FFRNP. See page 4 for details.

There is no doubt that this map is special and one of which members of the FFRNP and the people of the Fitzgerald region can be very proud.

## Vivienne 's speech at the launch of the Biosphere map

Thank you, Andy, and thank you, Stephen Hopper.

To begin, I would like to thank the FFRNP for this wonderful opportunity. This has been an extremely interesting and enjoyable project, which combined a variety of practices and fields of knowledge and although I have learnt a lot during this process, it is evident that one could go on forever learning about the natural world in all its complexity.

It was my desire to produce a map that combined aesthetic, archival and educational aspects, a map that was both decorative and useful, in the hope that such a map could contribute to furthering the understanding and appreciation of the extraordinary biological diversity of this region, and to thereby reinforce the need to do all we can to conserve it.



*Map illustrator Vivienne Hillyer and her daughter Laika listening to Dr Steve Hopper.*

The decision to approach the map within a tradition of hand-drawn cartography, rather than the contemporary practise of computer generated mapping, did not make production easier; on the contrary! Nonetheless, whenever technical problems were encountered, (and there were some memorable occasions), my enthusiasm was usually restored through surrounding myself with the rich and beautiful bushland of this area.

There is always something surprising to look at.

Of the Noongar community many thanks to Pat Morich, Noel Morich, Veronica Gray Forrest, and Mingli Wanjurri McGlade for providing historical information and many of the Noongar place, flora and fauna names that I have tried to put back on the map. The Noongar people's extensive knowledge of the natural environment is reflected in these names. The place names can also give an indication of historical changes to biodiversity, for example:

- Corackerup, in the West of the Biosphere, means place of the Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, which is no longer found in the area.

- Marlamerup, near Tarlingup on the Gairdner River means place of the Marl, or Western Barred Bandicoot, (*Perameles bougainville*) which is now confined to Bernier and Dorre Islands.
- Twertup, means place of the Touart or wild dog or dingo, which have largely been eradicated from the area.

Thankyou to all the people, too many to list here, who provided photographs and information on the flora and fauna species illustrated on the map.

Thankyou very much to the Map Committee, Angela Sanders, Andy Chapman, Nathan McQuoid and Gillian Craig (who can't be here tonight as she is now sipping cocktails on an island in the South Pacific). And thank you to Robyn Cail, Anne Gadsby and Priscilla and Ken Broadbent.

Many thanks to Lotterywest and the Shire of Ravens-thorpe for helping to make the map project financially possible.

A special thankyou to my partner Mark, whose enthusiasm, local knowledge, design sense and technical assistance were indispensable to this project. Special thanks also to my daughter Laika, for letting her mum get on with her work.

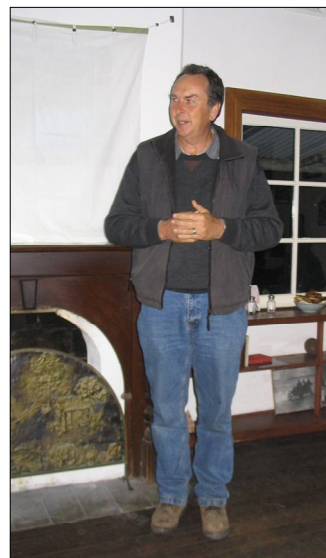
Thank you Ron, Marcus and Ben for travelling all the way from Perth to entertain us tonight, and thankyou Karin and Carsten for making us welcome at Quaalup.

Thankyou to anyone else I may have missed out, and thanks everyone for coming tonight, & I hope you have a great night!!

### Perth exhibition

*The FFRNP are invited to the opening of **'Flora and Fauna of the Fitzgerald Biosphere Region'**, an exhibition of paintings by Vivienne Hillyer.*

*Opening: 6pm, Saturday 16th December 2006, at Free Range Studios and Gallery, 359 Hay Street Subiaco.  
Phone: 93887843. email: [info@freerange.org.au](mailto:info@freerange.org.au)  
[www.freerange.org.au](http://www.freerange.org.au)*



*The exhibition runs from 16th-21st December, from 12 noon - 4pm, and includes works for the recently completed illustrated map, "The Fitzgerald Biosphere Region, including the Fitzgerald River National Park", commissioned by the FFRNP.  
Maps will be on sale at the exhibition.*

*Dr Steve Hopper speaking at the map launch on September 23rd*

## this place ..this space

A wide and dreaming stretch of mystery  
 Saved for the future on the brink of time.  
 A window on what was before the now  
 Shared with the spirits of those who came before.

This is a place of peace. Senses absorb  
 Thrumming of insects, a whisper in the bush,  
 Flash of feathers, invisible distant song,  
 Extravagance and colour of a million plants,  
 Crumbling cliffs, brown stillness, distant peaks,  
 Sea's calendar blue, and milky sand,  
 The smell of air and leaves and earth,  
 Searing wind, harsh throbbing heat - and rain  
 And cold.  
 And loneliness, not being alone.  
 All this -  
 Let it remain - and let our spirits dance.

Priscilla Broadbent 2006



*Priscilla and Ken Broadbent reading some of the poetry  
 from the Twertup poetry album*

## The magic of Twertup

Having dieback control, closing Twertup Track,  
 After a year it was great to be back.  
 On a new road I travelled with Caitie\* and crew  
 Which left the old road for a fantastic view

Of valleys and cliffs and mountains afar  
 This road's made with culverts to carry my car  
 Over creeks and bog-holes where dieback can breed.  
 The track of adventure is now one of speed.

Arriving at 'Twertup was like coming home.  
 In the 'rehab' area the trees had all grown.  
 A door in the kitchen had let swallows in -  
 Oh! the nests and the droppings - where to begin?

The others went off and were hoping to find  
 Something of interest, but I stayed behind.  
 To be there all alone was to fulfil a dream  
 And I cherished each moment while getting things  
 clean.

When that was all done I sat on the stool  
 and watched all the birds as they bathed in the pool.  
 There were literally dozens all splashing away  
 When a fire-tail finch visited, making my day.

Out of the stillness many memories came back  
 Of the times we'd all spent in the spongelite shack,  
 The knowledge we'd gained from the courses held here.  
 The magic of Twertup is something quite rare.

Though the swallows weren't happy about moving out,  
 The kettle was singing with steam from its spout  
 And the building, I'm sure, was as happy as me  
 When the others returned for a hot cuppa tea.

May the Management Plan allay all our fears  
 And the Magic of Twertup bring joy through the years  
 when the meaning of life in the Park may abound  
 In the closeness of nature when solitude's found.

*Kaye Vaux (written around 1990)*

*\*Caitie Brown was an English geologist who was employed by the Park Association at that time.*

## Carnaby's Black Cockatoo Nesting Site Search

It's been a long time between hollow searches for me so I enjoyed taking part in the recent survey of Carnaby's Cockatoo nesting hollows at Cocanarup Reserve near Ravens-thorpe.

About 12 people from the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park group took part in the survey on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October. This included a strong contingent from Hopetoun, some people from Bremer Bay, Ravenshorpe and even Denmark.

While I was working on the Carnaby's Recovery Project for Birds Australia we often lamented our lack of knowledge about breeding sites on the South Coast, so it was quite exciting when the group found five active hollows at the first location before lunch! This was due in no small part to Andy Chapman's earlier reconnaissance of the area, providing us with some very good leads, and the considerable experience of another member of the group in finding black cockatoo hollows in Victoria.

After a leisurely lunch (joined by about eight Carnaby's also relaxing in the midday heat in a nearby tree) we began the afternoon search. We were not able to confirm active hollows (there is very little activity around nesting hollows by the birds at that time of day) but we did see a number of suitable hollows. Unfortunately we also saw quite a few bee hives in this area – a problem for a lot of hollow-using birds and animals including Carnaby's Cockatoos.

After such a successful search it was very bad news to hear that a fire went through Cocanarup less than three weeks later on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November. At this stage it is believed between 3500 and 5000 ha was burned. Andy understands that the area we searched after lunch was burnt out but the area we searched prior to lunch, where we found the five hollows, was not. Fire breaks were apparently put through the latter area. It is difficult to say how chicks in unburnt hollows fared during the fire and in its aftermath. Given the conditions created by the fire and the unavoidably high level of human activity in the area, the adults may not have been able to return to the hollows to feed chicks.

Since we know very little about breeding sites along the South Coast it is not easy to say how significant the Cocanarup site may be to the local population of Carnaby's Black Cockatoos. However, judging by the requirements the cockatoo has for nesting hollows (large hollows found in mature trees such as Salmon Gum and Wandoo), combined with their need for suitable feeding habitat near their nesting hollows, it is reasonable to assume that suitable breeding sites are not that common.

I have heard recently from Helen Pitman, the coordinator of the Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project being run by Birds Australia, that someone has now been appointed to run a Carnaby's Black Cockatoo Recovery project on the South Coast. This person will start in December and will be based in Albany. As the project progresses we hope more breeding sites on the South Coast will be revealed; an exercise in which the Friends of the Fitzgerald River, with their recent survey, have made a good start.

*Leonie McMahon*



*The Carnaby's nest search group around the Cocanarup Spring - a natural spring in the Phillips River, good enough for stock water.*

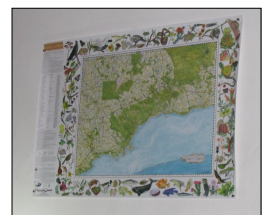


*An active nesting hollow for Carnaby's cockatoos found by the FFRNP search group in the Cocanarup Reserve.*

### How to order a map

Send your money order or cheque to;

The Treasurer  
Friends of the Fitzgerald  
River National Park  
1190 Nanarup Rd  
Nanarup 6330



**A great Christmas present idea!**

**Folded maps**, folded (22x15 cm) in a plastic envelope with a card

\$15 + \$1.00 postage .....**\$16**

**Flat maps**, (84 x 59 cm ) rolled in a cardboard tube:

\$15 + &2.00 for tube + \$3.80 postage **\$20.80**

**Flat maps are suitable for laminating.**

## Search for *Thelymitra psammophila* the Sand Plain Sun Orchid

The orchid search on the Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> September proved to be a wonderful morning out, treating us to a spectacular array of flowering species, which clearly illustrated the amazing potential of the Australian landscape to regenerate itself after fire. A small but merry band of 10 enthusiasts ended up searching 2 previously known locations covering a little over 5 ha, but were unable to locate any *T. psammophila*. Many thanks to those who participated and to Karin Baker who travelled out from Albany to give us the benefits of her expertise in field surveying. Hopefully a repeat of the search can be conducted in Spring 2007. Stay tuned for more details early next year.



Natasha Moore  
Biodiversity Implementation  
Officer  
Fitzgerald Region

*T. anntenifera* – a closely  
related species to *T. psam-*  
*mophila* common in the  
search

## In our backyard ... notes from the Rangers at Fitzgerald River National Park

At a meeting in Albany on Friday the 20<sup>th</sup> October I was alerted to the fact that at this early stage in the season the Albany district of Dept. of Environment & Conservation (DEC) is up to fire number 5. By the end of the weekend of 21/10 and 22/10 we were at fire number 6. Number 6 was the result of a lightning strike just south of the Whoogarup Range in the Fitzgerald River National Park. The park was lucky to have escaped with just the one ignition as was the surrounding landscape. I can imagine many small fires were extinguished on roadsides etc by passers- by.

Fire number 6 rapidly escalated after the initial smoke report which came to me via a DEC staff member walking his dog in Hopetoun. It is very pleasing to note that I also received numerous calls from local residents who had also noticed the smoke. DEC are grateful for this and appreciate the fact that we have eyes and ears around our estate that assist us in early detection of incidents including fires, but also other areas of interest to DEC such as whale stranding or injured fauna.

When we arrived at the fire, which was most accessible from the Quoin Head track, there was myself, Mal Grant from DEC Ravensthorpe and Rod Daw, the Chief Bush Fire control officer in the Ravensthorpe Shire.

Initially I was sent down into the campsite to check for campers and evacuate if necessary. Within 10 minutes I was called out of the campsite as the fire was rapidly increasing in intensity. I came out and minutes later the fire crossed over the Quoin Head track to the West and into 1997/8 fuel age vegetation, which is 8-9 years old. Between 17.00 and

19.30 hrs the fire devoured a substantial amount of bush and unfortunately the entire Quoin Head campsite and all infrastructure.

This event is a timely reminder of what a bushfire can do. And to think that this was in the third week of October! The fire behaviour late in the afternoon and into the evening was nothing short of phenomenal.

As I write this article on the Tuesday after the Fire 6 weekend, I have had a call from Mal Grant who is on site at the fire and has noticed some smoke coming from a gully and this is after the rains on Sunday night and into Monday. Mal reports that he is keen to walk up the gully off Whalebone track to see what is happening. So he dons the back pack fire unit and a rake hoe, advises me that he will call me on his return to his vehicle and off he sets on a 4 km round trip. On his return Mal advises that he had to put in 80 metres of rake trail and combine this with some inventive suppression methods to try and extinguish the fire in the area ahead of a warming trend later in the week. This task was undertaken by Mal in an effort to minimize the size of the burnt area because, when we first attended the fire shortly after the lightning strike, it was noticed that there was minimal fruiting and flowering of dominant plant species since the 1989 wildfire. Another large scale fire would be very detrimental to the ecology of the area. We were stressed about the possibility of having to put fire in to the bush in an effort to restrict the fire to the cell it was in, and to mitigate potential damage. The decision was made to not introduce fire and thankfully this proved to be the right decision, for the moment. As I have said above the fire popped up again after the rain and now we wait for the warming trend to come again and re-assess our strategies and tactics. Readers in some cases may have to wait until the next edition to find out what was the final outcome of Fire 6.

We have just commenced work with contractors re-sheeting and re-aligning Pabelup Drive in the area of Red Hills. The work involves re gravelling and widening the running surface and re-alignment of 400m of road to remove sharp bends.

DEC would like to advise that the work will take approximately 6 weeks and that delays should be expected for travellers who enter the park from Quiss Rd or who wish to exit the park to the North and onto the South Coast Highway. It is recommended to enter and exit the park from Devils Creek Rd. Just a reminder that the work will be to the North of Pt Ann and Fitzgerald Inlet track and South of Twertup.

It is disappointing for DEC staff, and I know it also has an effect on local people, that the park has suffered such losses as 4 mile and Quoin Head campsites. There has been a need to close these areas along with a couple of day-use areas, but I would like to reassure readers that we are working on re-opening sites as soon as possible, keeping in mind need for reconstruction work, rehabilitation and importantly that the sites should be again sustainable to recreation pressures and, above all, safe.

For Park Enquires contact :  
Mark Moore (Jacup) 988355043  
Garry Carr (Gairdner) 98371022  
Stephen Mills (E Mt. Barren) 98383060

**Note:** since this article was written in late October 2006 there have been further fires in the FRNP caused by lightning strikes. Some ground parrot habitats may have been damaged. There will be a full report on this in the February issue of the Narpulungup News.



## Twertup News

### Cleaning roster:

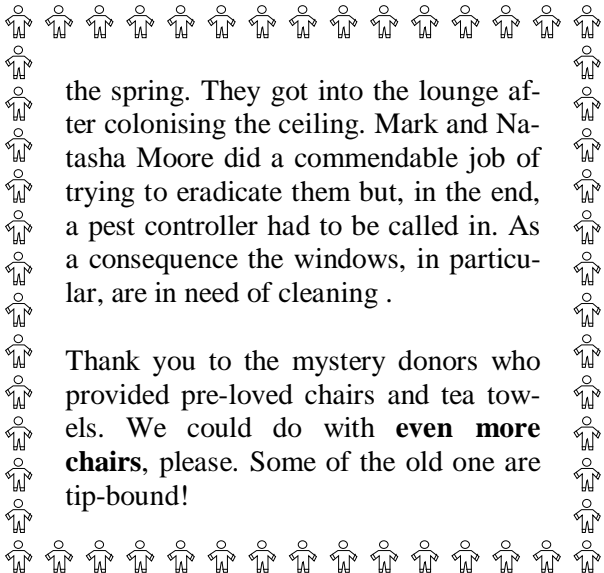
December: Andy

January: **volunteers needed**

February: “ “

March: AGM

If you are going to Twertup during January or February we would very much appreciate it if you would go armed with cleaning paraphernalia and help to keep the place clean. The bees made a terrible mess during



the spring. They got into the lounge after colonising the ceiling. Mark and Natasha Moore did a commendable job of trying to eradicate them but, in the end, a pest controller had to be called in. As a consequence the windows, in particular, are in need of cleaning .

Thank you to the mystery donors who provided pre-loved chairs and tea towels. We could do with **even more chairs**, please. Some of the old one are tip-bound!

HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL

## Make a date ..... for the AGM!

The 2007 Annual General Meeting will be held at Twertup on **Saturday March 17th**. Please put the date in your diaries. We would love to see some members who do not usually make it to our meetings. It is your chance to participate, contribute ideas and ask questions.

**Our special guest** - Dr John Bannister, former Director of the WA Museum. will address the gathering before the AGM. John has been involved in whale research for more than 30 years. Since 1976 he has organised aerial surveys to monitor humpback and right whale numbers as the animals return each year from their Antarctic feeding grounds to breed in the warmer waters of the WA coast. Since his retirement as Museum Director in 1992, he has spent increased time on studies of these large whales and their relatives.

It is a great weekend! Stay on for a BBQ, camp overnight at Twertup! Listen to the dawn chorus. learn more about our environment so that we can take informed action.

**Experience the Magic of Twertup!**

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