



Next issue—May 2005

## AGM date changed

Due to various problems—including the State government calling an election—we have had to postpone the date of the AGM from February 26th to April 9th.

The committee apologises for any inconvenience which may have been caused to members.

## Annual General Meeting.

Date.           **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2005.**

Place.           Twertup Field Study Centre. Alternative venue in case of rain closing the track—Jerramungup Football Pavilion. Please check conditions with Ranger on 9835 5043

Time.           10-30 am   Guest Speakers- Joanna Young; Paula Deegan;  
Brent Barrett; Peter Wilkins.

12-30 to 1-30   Lunch

1-30 pm       General meeting and election of office bearers.  
(See information below)

5-30 pm       BBQ and social evening.

Twertup has been booked from Friday evening to after lunch on Sunday, so please come early and stay until Sunday.

BYO everything

Most of the current committee members are willing to continue in their present positions, but we are looking for a **new President** and a **Committee Member**. Nominations are invited from financial members for all positions. Committee positions include President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and up to 5 ordinary members including the Newsletter Editor and a member of the Twertup Building committee. Nomination form on page 4.

## Book Review:

### Feral Future by Tim Low.

2001 edition, Penguin Books. \$22.95

Reviewed by Andy Chapman

The sub title of this book is 'The untold story of Australia's exotic invaders' and it is a riveting read. It will probably even change the way you think about environment. If that seems an extravagant claim consider the following quote

"..although gardening is harming Australia's environment more than mining, how do you run a campaign saying that?" I shall return to this later.

One theme developed is that from time immemorial plants and animals have always found ways to transport themselves around the world. To a degree this is part of the great process of life. However, now that humans and our cargoes are so mobile, particularly with globalisation, the rate of exchange is far in excess of anything we have seen before and beyond the capacity of quarantine systems to detect. Consider, for example, the discharge of ballast water in shipping; an estimated 10 billion tonnes of water carrying about 3 000 species of plants and animals travel the world annually. The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service is a world leader in addressing this problem and some of their predictions involving serious disruption of marine ecosystems, tourism and public health are truly horrifying.

The book also goes some of the way to disabuse the simple weed/feral *versus* native species dichotomy that we find so convenient. In reality it is more complex than this and there are so many grey areas that the concept of a weed, in an absolute sense, is challenged. Consider the following examples: Australian bluebell *Sollya heterophylla* is an attractive climbing bush creeper where I live; in Arthur's Seat State Park near Melbourne it is the most invasive weed. The elegant cattle egret entered Australia from Asia in the 1940s of its own accord and spread throughout the continent reaching Tasmania by 1965. Part of the a natural order?, probably not because it forages in paddocks on grasshoppers disturbed by cattle. A final example is from my own experience; purslane *Portulaca oleracea* is a vexatious summer weed in my garden; in the Great Victoria Desert it was traditionally a favoured food plant for Aborigines with its own name 'wakati'. It was also introduced to New Zealand by Captain Cook as a food plant

for Maoris. Such is the complexity and modified nature now of many modern plant and animal distributions!

A warning is sounded about 'sleepers species'. A good example is athel pine *Tamarix aphylla* which provided shade for 60 years without spreading much in outback Australia. In 1974, a very wet year throughout most of Australia, it really took off replacing river red gums along rivers and creeks in central Australia. How many other quiet invaders are waiting for their trigger? As Tim Low says "tomorrow's weeds are already here".

Feral Future also discusses in a challenging way the most pestiferous species of all...referring to of course you and me, all of us together. In doing so the book sheds some light on what, to me at least, has always been somewhat of a mystery - the highly metropolitan and coastal distribution of the Australian population. Of course! like most pests we are a colonising or edge species; we prefer, for evolutionary reasons, to live on edges; the edge of the sea or river or lake; the edge of a bush remnant or urban parkland.

If I have one small criticism it is that Tim Low perhaps hasn't acknowledged the interrelationship of factors sufficiently. I return to the quote comparing gardening with mining. Having spent much time in the WA Goldfields I am aware that an unintended legacy of mining was, and still is, weed invasion following disturbance. So it is not really a question of whether mining or gardening is worse, both interact together, gardening providing the material in the first place but mining spreading it further and more widely than gardening ever could.

In spite of that minor criticism the book is well researched with extensive references and index. It is very readable, being divided into seven parts each with short well-defined chapters. It includes useful appendices for reference and is a worthy addition to any bookshelf. As well as being challenging, it is a good read, almost unputdownable - unusual for a technical book these days.

My final thought is how lucky we are to live where we do; if we are selective we can still walk in bush and along coastline largely unaffected by extensive weed or feral invasion. But for how much longer?

## Guest speakers at the AGM will be:

- **Joanna Young**, project Manager of the SCRIPT (South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team Inc ) Dieback Project
- **Paula Deegan**, Research Officer with the Fitzgerald Biosphere Group.
- **Brent Barrett**, Project Leader Western Ground Parrot Recovery Project Dept. of Conservation & Land Management.

Some details on the speakers are provided below.

### The South Coast Region Dieback Project

What have we lost? What are we loosing and what can we save?

These questions are being addressed by the recently commenced SCRIPT dieback project with the full title of “*Phytophthora cinnamomi*: Mapping the threats and building the capacity to manage them”.

The South Coast Natural Resource Management region of Western Australia is extensively invaded by Dieback (caused by the introduced soil borne pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi*) and it is becoming increasingly important that we recognise and protect disease-free areas within the region that are vulnerable to invasion. We must target the protection on woodlands and heath land communities rich in species of the plant families Proteaceae and the Epacridaceae (examples include the banksias, hakeas, dryandras, leucopogons).

The project commenced in October 2004 and will initially run for a year. Staff from CALM, the South Coast NRM region and the Dieback working group are working with the community to get a better handle on dieback in the region and to get funds for much more active management in priority areas. We are trying to get past the “old” debilitating “feelings” of “it is all too hard” and “we don’t know where to start”.

As project manager I welcome opportunities to explain how we are going about gathering information and developing maps to show where the disease has impacted to date and where there are significant areas still healthy, but at risk. Those involved are also building a list of the plant species known to be susceptible in the region and this should help people to identify where dieback is the culprit

associated with plant deaths. With community input I also want to gather local information on areas that are valued and considered worthy of greater protection.

Joanna Young  
Project Manager SCRIPT Dieback Project  
P O Box 54 Walpole  
Phone 0898401068 Mobile 0429364900

### Fitzgerald Biosphere Review.

Paula Deegan is employed as a part time Research Officer by the Fitzgerald Biosphere Group under a project initiated by the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park and funded by Lotterywest. She was previously the Manager of SCRIPT, the South Coast regional NRM group and was largely responsible for the development of the South Coast Regional NRM Strategy. Prior to that, she worked in various conservation organisations, and has a background in national parks and wetlands planning and management.

Paula will describe the Fitzgerald Biosphere Review project and its significance for future planning and management, and the funding of further research and monitoring in the Fitzgerald Biosphere area.

Paula Deegan can be contacted on -  
phone (9842 5232) or  
e-mail (pauladee@bigpond.net.au) anytime.

### Western Ground Parrot Recovery Project

In October 2004 Brent Barrett and his team made a startling breakthrough in the search for the elusive WGP -

‘The monumental news of the first photograph of a Western Ground Parrot in the wild was well received by all. But this was just the beginning of our triumphant trip. We also located very young recently fledged birds which indicated that breeding had occurred and that nests were successful. Furthermore, we recorded the call of a young bird responding to an adult’s call.’

In 2005 Brent will be moving to Esperance to begin surveys of Cape Arid National Park. This investigation will utilise the same methods developed in FRNP but effort will be aided by the smaller size of the park and the recent devastating fire history.

Brent Barrett CALM Albany 9842 4519

## **Fitzgerald Biosphere Marketing finalises funding and looks to the future.**

Since April 2000 the Fitzgerald Biosphere Marketing Association (FBMA) has been investigating the marketing of our region's products and services using the icon of the unique and internationally recognized Fitzgerald Biosphere Reserve.

For the past two years the FBMA has had funding from the Federal Government Regional Solutions Program. Our funding concluded during November 2004 and to summarise the project we have printed the most frequently asked questions about the future of the FBMA.

### **Q. Is this the end of the project?**

**A.** \* This is the end of the federal government's Regional Solutions funding. The money has allowed us to fund our activities and employ our coordinator Robyn Cail for the past two years, and is therefore the end of the association, but it is not the end of Fitzgerald Biosphere Marketing. Our two grower groups of the region, the FBG- Fitzgerald Biosphere Group (which is the Jerramungup side of the region) and RAIN-Ravensthorpe Agricultural Initiative Network, have agreed to take on and manage the Fitzgerald Biosphere brand use into the future.

### **Q. What does managing Fitzgerald Biosphere brand use into the future mean?**

**A.** \* We have a great brand (see above) that is officially registered with Trademark Australia and owned by our two grower groups (FBG & RAIN). It is available for use on products and services to the Fitzgerald Biosphere community and surrounds. Much time, research and many resources were put into developing the brand and registering it as a trade mark. We hope that anyone interested in accessing this brand to enhance their product/service, or to show their pride in the region, will not hesitate to contact either the FBG (ph 9835 1127) or RAIN (ph 9838 1018) offices. The grower groups will also continue to promote our Fitzgerald Biosphere region.

### **Q. Other than the brand what have been the highlights of the project?**

**A.** \* Trialling local lamb and yabbies in a

variety of Perth butchers and a Perth restaurant was a significant challenge and milestone – it was very exciting to see our Fitzgerald Biosphere branded lamb on sale at some of Perth's leading butchers and featured on the menu along with our yabbies at one of Perth's leading fine food restaurants. The supply chain trip we conducted as part of this trial was an extremely valuable exercise for all involved. As with most trials of this nature we have documented all positives and negatives so that any future marketing will benefit from our experience. It was also exciting to learn that the market trials indicated that our "Biosphere" story has consumer appeal.

\* We also trialled an Environmental Management System, EMS (which is an environmental assurance similar to quality assurance), a first for the South Coast. Twelve farming businesses participated in the trial throughout the Fitzgerald Biosphere region. Nine out of the ten that completed feedback on the process indicated they would be interested in continuing to develop their EMS following the trial.

\* Raising the profile of the Fitzgerald Biosphere within the community was a priority. One of the ways we did this was with the 'Totally Biosphered 2003!' story and art competition we conducted (jointly with Edith Cowan University), which was a great success. We believe that more people now have a greater understanding of the unique environment that they live in.

\* We have also raised the profile of the Fitzgerald Biosphere outside the local community. Just a few examples of this are:

- We are now recognized in regional tourism brochures eg. Great Southern Food & Wine Map & Guide; Esperance Region Holiday Planner; Albany & Great Southern Holiday Planner. Previously we barely existed on these critical tourism brochures.

- Many government agencies have contributed significantly to this project and are aware of the capacity of this region.

### **Q. Why did the FBMA decide not to seek further funding to continue the project?**

**A.** \* A community meeting was held in Jerramungup inviting all lamb producers from the Fitzgerald Biosphere region to determine if there was enough interest and capacity to continue with a Fitzgerald Biosphere branded lamb product in the market place. There was a good turn out (15 lamb producers, 21 in total). The lamb producers were

very supportive and positive about the market trial and the concept of regional branding.

Key findings from the Lamb Market trial were discussed along with opportunities coming from the trial and opportunities not addressed in the trial. The FBMA made it clear that if a branded lamb product is going to exist in the market place then it needs to be driven and managed by participating growers. It was determined at the meeting that:

- Some growers are willing/able to provide a quality branded lamb product now – however cannot commit any time to the project.
- Some growers are not ready to go into a branded lamb product—need to develop skills in how to get a consistent quality product.
- Some growers are only interested if they receive an immediate premium. It was resolved that the next phase will be one of capacity building for lamb producers. Industry and agency funded resources exist for this phase of the project.

#### **Q. What was your greatest disappointment?**

**A.** \* We were quite unrealistic in our time frame for marketing a product from the region. What we initially expected to achieve in 2 years we have now found would more realistically take 15 years to reach successfully.

#### **Q. How do you see Fitzgerald Biosphere Marketing assisting the local community in the future?**

**A.** \* Our hope is that at some point in the future our Fitzgerald Biosphere brand will be used on a variety of products and services. It is a brand from an internationally recognised and unique part of the world that we hope will give pride and benefit to those who choose to access it. We also hope that our learning from the market trials will be a useful resource for individuals or groups who would like to develop a branded product in the future. Certainly all the information that the FBMA has gathered over the past two years is available for anyone in the community to access.

*The Fitzgerald Biosphere Marketing Association would like to sincerely thank our coordinator Robyn Cail for her passion and dedication to the project over the last two years. We were very fortunate to employ someone of Robyn's intelligence and tenacity and we wish her all the best in her future opportunities.*

#### **More on Robyn - from the FFRNP committee.**

Congratulations to Robyn on getting the NRM Coordinator's job with the Esperance Mallee group. We will miss your company and input on the FFRNP committee. Thank you for everything—particularly being a link with the Biosphere and the FBMA.

## **Are you interested in being on the FFRNP committee?**

If so—please complete the form below and post it to the address provided, or contact the Secretary by email. We hold at least 2 committee meetings a year. Much of our day-to day work is conducted by phone and email. We would love to welcome new committee members.

Committee position.....  
Name of nominee.....  
Signature of nominee.....  
Name of proposer.....  
Signature of proposer.....  
Name of seconder.....  
Signature of seconder.....

**Please return to the Secretary by 01-04-05.**

Anne Gadsby,  
Secretary ,  
PO Bremer Bay  
WA 6338.

E-mail:- anngad@wn.com.au

**FFRNP MEMBERSHIP FORM:**

Family \$25 \* Individual \$15 \* Concession \$10 \* or donation

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Please print in block letters

POSTAL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

◀ Please circle your membership type.

Make cheques payable to  
*Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park.*

Post to:

The Treasurer  
Friends of the Fitzgerald  
River National Park  
RMB Nanarup Rd,  
Kalgan 6330Tick if a receipt is  
required.☐**Brief notes from the Ranger**

- Nov 6 Garry found a Sub Antarctic fur seal with deep lacerations on its right side on Dillon Bay beach. . The animal was in a poor condition and had lost use of its right flipper due to injury. Decision was made to euthanasia the animal.
- Nov 21 Garry found a dead dolphin on Trigalow beach. NZ fur seal pup at same location, re-entered water when disturbed.  
Also found Pied Oystercatchers nesting in fore dunes and Fairy Turns nesting at mouth of Gordon Inlet.
- Nov 24 Fire started in private property and entered the park near Jacup, it burnt through the Calyerup Rocks and granites to the south, approx 5300ha burnt 4300 of it was bush land and Nat. Pk.
- Dec 11 Garry found a Hooded Plovers nest at mouth of Boondanup river on Trigelow beach, 3 eggs in nest and adult bird displaying broken wing, saw A Gadsby and erected temporary breeding site sign.
- Dec 27 Garry found 4 Loggerhead turtles on St Mary's beach also had two handed in by general public, 2 died the other 4 got transported to AQUA in Perth on the 3/1/05.
- Jan 21 A dead turtle on Trigelow beach, 500m east of Gordon inlet, late stages of decomp, either loggerhead or green turtle.
- Also in Jan another fire started by lightening strike in the park between Short Road and Hammersley Drive, it was contained quickly only burning a perimeter of approx 1 km.

Of course the usual fox baiting continues to happen.

**Southern WILDERNESS ART****Art Trips for 2005** Louise Lodge plans to run outdoor art workshops at the following locations. More details can be obtained from phoning Louise on 0427 700 613 or email lousiemlodge@westnet.com.au**Hammersley Inlet campsite.**

March 22, 23, 24, 2005

**Four- Mile Beach Campsite, Barrens Beach and East Mt Barren.**

March 26 &amp; 27, 2005

April 12, 13, 14, 2005

November 2005 (dates to be announced)

**Quaalup Homestead and Wilderness Retreat**

April 5, 6, 7 2005

October, 1 &amp; 2, 2005

October 12, 13, 14

**Twertup Field Study Centre**

October 7, 8, 9, 2005 (dependant on availability)

**Woody Island.**

December 2005 (dates to be announced)

Post Print approved pp 607742/010 Surface Mail

*If undelivered please return to:*  
*The Editor – P Broadbent*  
*Narpulungup News*  
*C/o Post Office*  
*Bremer Bay WA 6338*

**Postage  
Paid**