

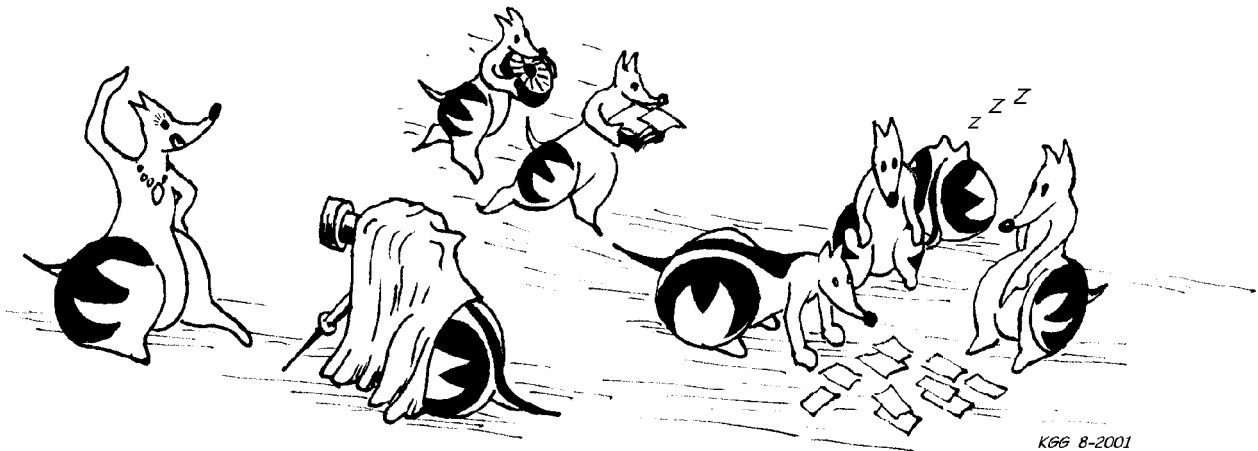


NEWSLETTER, SEPTEMBER 2001

Now that the Newsletter editor has returned from four months of tussling with traffic, turkeys and tropical diseases in Queensland, here is some news of forthcoming events....

SEPTEMBER SPECIAL MEETING

The advertised part of this meeting will begin at 8.30 pm, rather than the usual 8.00 pm. The meeting will actually begin at 7.30 pm, when Justin Cook, DNRE Forest Manager for Glenelg, will talk to us about the Wood Utilisation Plan for the Portland Forest Management Area. Justin has asked for an opportunity to address our members following our recent letters critical of the Plan. This will be a welcome chance to discuss contentious issues and we hope everyone who has an interest in forest conservation will be able to be there.



K66 8-2001

The "Best Nature Slides" Show will get underway at 8.30. Note that "Best Slides" doesn't mean "Best Ever" or even "Best in Hamilton FNC" but rather "Personal Best" for each of our members who ever wields a camera. So don't feel that you can't contribute because you haven't got a series of up-close in-focus studies of the courtship ritual of the rare-and-endangered unleaded petrel, but dig out that fluke shot you took of cobwebs on a frosty morning. If you haven't got slides, bring prints: if possible labelled and mounted so they can be spread out on a table. The subjects can be any aspect of natural history, anywhere in Australia or the known world, although we hope there will be a good content of local nature. There will be no prizes - just the appreciative Oohs and Ahs of the assembled masses. Contributors can bring up to 10 pictures each (our President says "ten to a dozen" but the editor is exerting her editorial perogative and says "Ten"!).

SEPTEMBER EXCURSION

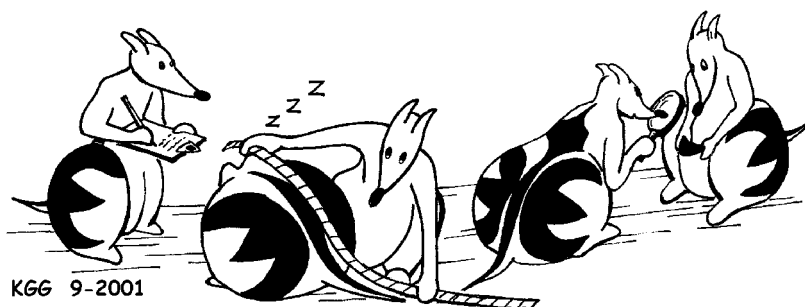
The main focus of this will be a visit to the Hotspur area to look at regrowth following last year's bushfire. If it is anything like the incredibly profuse regrowth we saw in the northern Grampians two years ago, it will be well worthwhile. We have listed the excursion as a Camp-out, with the idea of camping at the Crawford River Park and possibly continuing to the Lower Glenelg on Sunday. Whether we do this or restrict ourselves to the Saturday will depend on the number who are interested - and no doubt on the weather. Intending campers should contact the committee about a week in advance, so that we can arrange to book sites. We will leave from the Lonsdale Street Visitor Information Centre at 9.00am as advertised.

OCTOBER EXCURSION

One of the reasons for going to Hopkins Falls in October was to try and coincide with the annual migration of eels up the Falls, but we found it hard to get information as to exactly when this would happen. Latest information is that it is likely to occur on the weekend before our excursion. We will not change the date, as there is plenty of other interest in both the Falls and Framlingham; however, anyone who is interested in seeing the eels might like to try a visit on the earlier date.

NOVEMBER MEETING

The Editor in a rash moment put herself down for a talk called "Maunderings on Marsupials". This is a vague title that doesn't convey much, for the simple reason that she hadn't decided what she was going to say. I can now reveal that the subtitle of the talk will be "Difference, Diversity and Diseases": i.e. I will try to cover some of the ways in which marsupials differ from the rest of us, something of their diversity of form and lifestyle, and a few of their most interesting diseases (but without any gory pictures).



PAST EXCURSIONS

This year we were luckier with the weather for the Pelagic Boat Trip, although there was still a formidable swell. Those of the intrepid voyagers who felt well enough to put binoculars to their eyes were rewarded with lots of birds as well as a fine view of Lady Julia Percy Island. On the other hand, the Mount Talbot trip was cancelled because of bad weather - which then turned fine after all. So when it came to the August excursion we were determined to set out, rain or shine - and we got plenty of both. Our party of fifteen didn't quite make it to within sight of the Square Hole; it's always nice to leave something for the next trip! Speaking of which, those who are keeping count will be interested to learn that our cumulative Orange-Bellied Parrot count still stands at zero. (But Rod Bird did see some blue-winged parrots and heard a night parrot.)

GENERAL MEETINGS - ARE WE TRYING TO COVER TOO MUCH ?

Our general meetings are mostly given over to conservation issues, which unfortunately never grow less. The result is that meetings are frequently long - maybe even arduous - and yet in spite of this we don't manage to deal with every matter effectively.

What is the solution? Should we limit the number of issues we deal with? If so, how do we choose? As it is, we deal almost exclusively with matters that affect our region, but should we limit the area further? An ideal solution might be for the Committee to have more meetings and deal with more matters ourselves, but as we all have limited spare time this is unlikely to happen.

What do members think? Are you happy with meetings as they now are? How can we improve them? Can we be more efficient and effective? If you have an opinion /feedback /suggestion /complaint /offer of help, please talk or write to Dave Munro (Phone 5577 2268).