



NEWSLETTER, March 2006

Greetings to all for 2006 and may it be a bit damper than 2005!

This newsletter is to announce our **program** for the year, to remind you that **membership fees are now due** (see form below), and to tell you of a **change to our meeting time** . We have decided to begin all our meetings at **7.30 pm** instead of 8 pm. We hope this will let us finish the business of General Meetings earlier, so that we can have supper and a chat afterwards and still get home at a reasonable hour. In the case of Special Meetings, it will give us half an hour for any urgent business, unusual sightings etc., before the scheduled talk begins at 8 pm. Everything else will be as usual, i.e. meetings at HIRL on the third Thursday of each month... beginning next week:

STOCK ROUTES AND SCORCHED EARTH...

At the **March** Special Meeting, on **Thursday 16th**, **John Kiely** will be talking about his journey along the **Canning Stock Route** photographing rocks and rock-art, camels and devils. As anyone who has seen John's photographic work will know, we can expect some stunning pictures. Don't forget: the meeting will start at **7.30**, with the talk scheduled for 8 pm.



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The excursion will be on the following **Sunday, 19th March**. We will go to **Tyrendarra**, to the area that was recently burnt. The purpose of the visit is threefold: to see what regrowth has occurred since the fire; to look at some of the Aboriginal stone structures that were uncovered by the fire; and to provide feedback to the Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation. Damein Bell from the Corporation will meet us there to tell us about their plans for the area and give us a brief tour; we can then continue on our own, making a record of what we find. We hope that some of the Portland Field Naturalists will be able to join us for the day. We will be meeting in Hamilton, at the Visitor Information Centre in Lonsdale Street, at **8.45 am sharp**.

Hamilton Field Naturalists Club.	Subscription for year:
Name:	
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Address:	
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.....	

...AND MORE TO FOLLOW

The **Program** for the year is enclosed. As usual, it's subject to variation at the last minute, depending on vagaries such as the weather and speakers' unexpected commitments. Details of excursions are often decided at the preceding meeting, so if you don't get to that it's a good idea to contact a **Committee** member. (The Committee has the same composition as last year: see list below.)

The **April excursion** is again set down for the **Beripna Walk and Campout**, on the principle of "third time lucky". (The last two attempts failed for lack of starters.) It will be leaving from the Visitor Information Centre at 9.00 am on Saturday 22nd, but if you are interested please contact Reto and Yvonne on 5571 2544 (after hours) to discuss details.

There will be an **additional excursion in May**. The usual excursion following the Meeting will be to a fern soak near Four Posts (on the Wannan). The following weekend, the Geology Group of the Victorian Field Naturalists Club will be visiting the area to look at fossils and volcanic features with local experts, Chris Yee and Ken Grimes, and our members are invited to join them. Contact Ken nearer the date for details of time and place (5573 4503). The speaker at the **May Special Meeting** will be **Rod Bird**, on the **birds and fauna of the Corner Country** (that is, the bit where Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia meet).

You'll note that we don't yet have a definite plan for the September Special Meeting: it may be a BYO slide night; or again, it may be a talk on fossils or wildlife. We'll let you know. We will have a Christmas picnic with brief AGM in December, but we haven't yet set a date or place; again, stay tuned and we'll let you know.

COUNTING WATER BIRDS

Hamilton's new Wetlands are beginning to attract water birds, and we thought it would be interesting to make a regular count of them to see how they change with the seasons and as the site develops. So we have decided to meet there **at 8 am on the fourth Thursday** of every month: i.e. the Thursday following the meeting and excursion. Obviously this time is not going to suit everybody, but we can review it after a few months. We will meet at the information board opposite the old Grange Dairy.

The total count of water birds at Lake Linlithgow, on our excursion last month, was one white-faced heron. The lake bed was completely dry. We did have a good view of a perched wedge-tailed eagle, and found a lot of native plants regenerating on the foreshore now that they are not being grazed. Most of the plants we put in on the north shore are still doing well.

COMMITTEE FOR 2006

President	John Cayley	Ph. (03) 5572 3737
Vice-President	Reto Zollinger	Ph. (03) 5571 2544
Secretary: Correspondence	Glenys Cayley	Ph. (03) 5572 3737
Secretary: Minutes	Diane Luhrs	Ph. (03) 5572 3874
Treasurer	Ken Grimes	Ph. (03) 5573 4503
Newsletter Editor	Janeen Samuel	Ph. (03) 5573 4503
Media Liaison	David Munro	Ph (03) 5577 2268

