



NEWSLETTER, February 2010

To usher in the new decade we have a new Treasurer. At the AGM last December, Ken Grimes relinquished the money-bags after 19 years' service. Glenys Cayley nobly offered to fill the breach and she is now eagerly waiting to receive your subscriptions for 2010. These are still only \$15 per person or \$20 for a family. Please fill in the form in this newsletter and either mail it with payment to Glenys at the Club's address (PO Box 591, Hamilton) or bring it to the next meeting.

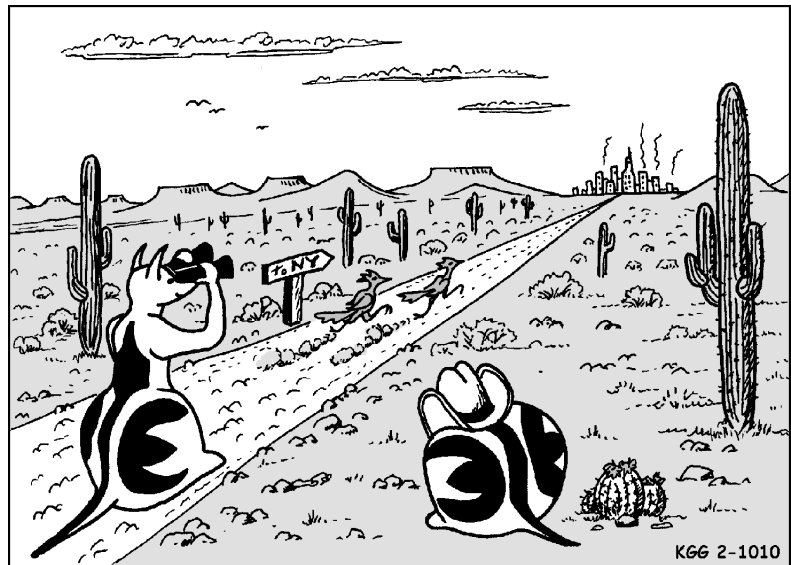
Our President, Vice-President and Secretary have all nobly volunteered for another year. Janeen Samuel has retired from the Committee but will continue to edit the Newsletter, and we have two new Committee members, Jane Hayes and John Cayley.

The Program for 2010 is enclosed. Be warned: this may be subject to last minute changes owing to unforeseen circumstances. Changes to the advertised talks will, if possible, be advertised in the "Spectator". As for excursions and working bees, if you are planning to come and have not been at the preceding meeting it is a good idea to check with a member of the Committee (see the list below), or with the person whose initials are given on the program as the organiser for that excursion. Note that in both **March and April the excursion will be on the second weekend** after the meeting, to avoid clashing with public holidays.

For most of our excursions we shall be meeting at the Hamilton Visitor Information Centre in Lonsdale Street, and doing our best to "car-pool." So, if possible, please come prepared to either transfer to another car or take extra people in your own. Please remember also to clean and disinfect your boots before and after excursions, so as to avoid spreading weed seeds, or microbes that cause plant and animal diseases, between areas.

BIRDS, BRIDGEWATER and BRIMBOAL

Our first Special Meeting of the year will feature Steve Clark on "Birdwatching in Texas and New York." Last northern spring, Steve had two weeks of intensive bird-watching in Texas plus a few days in New York (he says there is good "birding" in Central Park, among other places.) He will give us a picture show and description of his travels, birds sighted and friendly Americans met along the way. This meeting will be on **Thursday 4 March**, commencing at 7.30 pm at HIRL.



<b>Hamilton Field Naturalists Club.</b>	Subscription for year: .....
Name: .....	
Address: .....	
.....	
I enclose payment of (\$15 single, \$20 family):	\$ .....

The excursion will be on **Saturday 13 March** (not the Labour Day weekend) and we will go to the **Bridgewater Lakes**. We will probably begin by climbing up to the caves to look at the view and hear a bit about their geology from Ken. Then we shall look at birds and plants around the Lakes themselves and take the path across the dunes to the beach. Some people may walk from there to the Blowholes, with a car-shuffle at the end. We shall meet at the Hamilton Visitors' Centre in Lonsdale Street at 9 am.

The following excursion on **Sunday 11 April** will be to **Brimboal** State Forest and **Dergholm** State Park. We should see several vegetation types – red gum, brown stringy-bark and heath – as well as birds and rocks. Again, we'll leave from the Visitor Centre at 9 am.

## **ORCHIDS and VOLCANOS**

Our speaker on **6 May** will be **Noushka Reiter** on **Threatened Orchids and Other Plants of Western Victoria**. Noushka works for the DSE in Horsham, and has been studying the soil fungi that form symbiotic relationships with orchids and thus are necessary for their survival. She has a lively interest not only in orchids but also in other plants such as those of salt lakes.

In June **Ken Grimes** will be talking about **Volcanos and Volcanic Caves** (complete with a video showing volcanos in action). Many features of our local landscape are the result of volcanic activity and on our **May, June** and **July** excursions we will visit some of them: **Mount Schank** (the area's youngest volcano); the edge of a lava flow in **Buckley Swamp**; and **Mount Eccles**. In addition to the rocks we shall be looking at the plant and animal communities that live on them, and the May trip will also include a good waterbird site, so there should be something for everyone on each of these outings.

A couple of points to note regarding food on these trips. As the May trip will go over the border into South Australia, people need to remember not to take any fruit or vegetables with them for lunch (because of the risk of spreading plant diseases not to mention an on-the-spot fine of \$315). The June excursion will be to a bush block which belongs to Earth First Australia; they have an organic policy and have particularly requested that visitors take home any food scraps and not discard them into the bush. (This should, of course, be standard procedure on any trip.)

## **MORE BIRDS**

We have two other speakers on birds lined up for the second half of the year, so if you know any keen birdos perhaps you could pass the information on to them – or better still, sign them up as members.

And don't forget our **bird counts** at the **Hamilton Wetlands**, on the second Thursday of every month. We meet at 8 am at the car-parking area on Mount Baimbridge Road – but if you're late you'll be able to spot us and catch us up. No special expertise needed: just the ability to point and say, "What's that bird?"

## **The 2010 office bearers are as follows:**

President	Reto Zollinger	Ph. (03) 5571 2544
Vice-President	Dave Munro	Ph. (03) 5576 5485
Secretary: Correspondence	Rod Bird	Ph. (03) 5572 3639
Secretary: Minutes	Diane Luhrs	Ph. (03) 5572 3874
Treasurer	Glenys Cayley	Ph. (03) 5572 3737