

Hello everybody

HFNC's activities and events in July 2024

Special Meeting at HIRL at 7.30 pm on Thursday 18 July – Andrew Prior & Roland Maars (University of Melbourne) will speak on '*A chemist's approach to Gariwerd geology*'.

This presentation will describe the geology of the Grampians Ranges, starting with the deposition of thick river and delta sandstone-mudstone formations some 430 mya, the subsequent period of faulting, folding, early erosion and magmatism, and finally the long history of gradual uplift and erosion which coincided with episodes of glaciation and basaltic volcanism.

We then look at the geochemistry of the sand and mudstones, to learn about their age and possible sources. For example, tiny grains of the mineral xenotime provide the first isotopic age estimates of sandstone deposition, while age dating of 100s of zircon crystals – small, hardy mineral grains eroded from older rocks and deposited in the sandy sediments – reveals a previously unknown, possibly local sediment source component.

Combined with other chemical and isotopic provenance indicators, our work adds to earlier geological studies and establishes the Grampians Ranges as a geological link between the vast Gondwana continent to the west and the Paleozoic marine rocks to the east.

Excursion to Walker Swamp on Saturday 20 July. We leave the Hamilton Visitor Centre at 9.00 am and will meet Tom Shehan & Ayesha Burdett from **Nature Glenelg Trust** at the bird lookout tower on Lynches Crossing Rd at 10 am. There we will meet other attendees and drive to the fenced area of the 'old' Walker Swamp block to do some tree-planting/sight-seeing.

After lunch at about 12.30 pm we will drive to the 'new' extension to the Walker Swamp Reserve on the east side of Walker Swamp. Ayesha will give a talk on water bugs and other fauna, as well as an update on the land acquisition. Following, we will explore the bush and swamp at the northern end of the block.

The afternoon will conclude at about 3 or 4 pm, or whenever you wish to leave.

Bring your lunch, a drink and gloves. Tree-planting equipment will be supplied. Dress for the occasion and expected weather.

Forthcoming event – Working Bee at Wannan Flora Reserve on Sunday 28 July at 9.30 am. We will meet on the Powells Rd area. The aim is to remove seedlings of *Acacia paradoxa*. Bring leather gloves and robust shoes/boots. This will be the last activity here until one in November.

Report on the Work activity at Kanawalla Rail Flora Reserve on Saturday 29 June

Three members (DL, RB, PH) each spent 3 hours removing wire mesh guards from the taller trees at the N end of the reserve. PM, WM, JS, PH & RB each spent 3 hr on a sunny and pleasant Friday 5 July to continue the work and look at the progress of our restoration planting of local trees/shrubs. The planting began with Drooping Sheoak, Silver Banksia, Sweet Bursaria, Manna Gum and Swamp Gum in 2006, after the removal of 202 pines (37 were 60-150 cm in diameter) and 41 large cypress from the reserve. To date, 1640 trees/shrubs indigenous to this area have been planted on the reserve.

Rod Bird

Secretary

Hamilton Field Naturalists Club