



NEWSLETTER, February 2009

Our program for 2009 is enclosed. This year we are trying out a change of dates for all our meetings and excursions after February. Instead of the third Thursday, each meeting will be on the First Thursday of the month, with the excursion usually on the weekend immediately following (but in March the excursion will be on the second weekend after the meeting, and in May the meeting will be on a Friday.) The change is mainly in order to avoid clashing with screenings by the Film Society; some of our members would like to attend the films, and maybe some film-goers would like to come to our meetings. So if you are a film buff, please spread the word about us among your fellows.

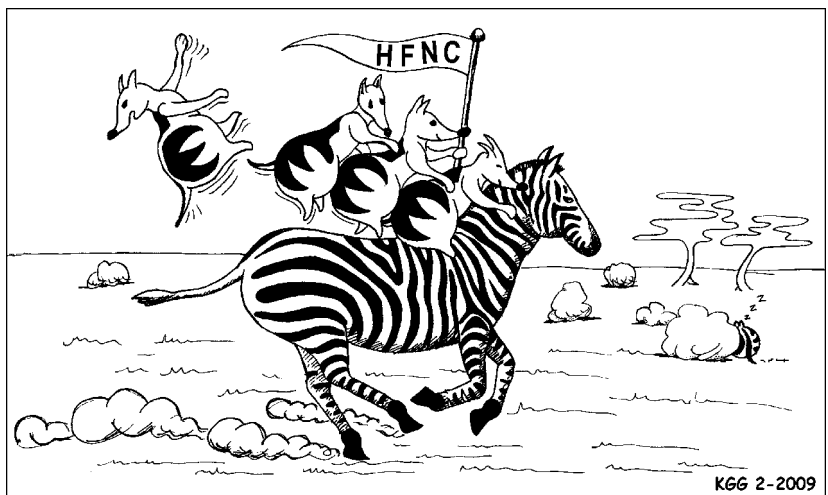
Meetings start at 7.30 pm and will be at HIRL as usual but in the Bandicoot Room (turn right from the entrance hall). The first one for the year will be a General Meeting this coming Thursday 19 February and this will be followed by our annual bird count at Lake Linlithgow on Saturday 21st. Once again the Lake is dry, so a count of waterbirds is not going to take long, but we will visit a couple of other sites as well. We meet at 7.00 am under the cypresses at the Point, by the Chatsworth Road.

On the night before our meeting (Wednesday 18 Feb), Rod Bird will be speaking to the Society for Growing Australian Plants on "Flora of the Wannon." Visitors are welcome at this talk, which starts at 7.30 pm, at HIRL. For any enquiries ring Elizabeth Fenton on 5573 4555.

Annual subscriptions are now due, so if you can't make it to the February meeting please fill in the form at the bottom of this page and post it with your cheque to PO Box 591, Hamilton. We rely on your subscriptions to help keep the Club active and effective.

MUCH ON IN MARCH

March begins with a Special Meeting on Thursday 5th, when Prue Leeming will give a talk on "Birds, Mammals and Larger Vegetation of Southern Africa." Prue has recently returned to Hamilton after many years working interstate and overseas as a geologist. Her experiences while living and working in Africa will form the basis of her talk.



KEG 2-2009

For the excursion on Saturday March 14 (note we are skipping the long weekend) we will go down to the coast: Killarney Beach for a swim, and Rutledge's Cutting for salt marsh and shore birds.

On the following weekend (Fri 20 to Mon 23) Warrnambool Field Naturalists are hosting the

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autumn camp-out for SEANA (South-East Australian Naturalists Association) at **Port Fairy**. Registration was due on 1st February so it may be too late to enrol, but if you are interested you should ring Liz Kenna (5568 4206) or Viv Bounds (5567 6257). (Note that Hamilton Field Nats will be hosting the SEANA spring camp-out near Dunkeld in October; see our program for the dates.)

And the weekend after that, **Portland Field Naturalists** are hosting two events to celebrate the declaration of the **Cobboboonee National Park**: dinner on Sat 28 March at 6.30 pm at Portland Golf Club (cost \$40/head) and complimentary picnic lunch on Sunday 29 March at Surry Ridge Picnic Ground from 11.30 am. RSVP for both to: irgraney@bigpond.com by 18 March; cheques payable to Portland Field Naturalists Club and posted to PFNC, PO Box 470, Portland 3305. Any queries, phone Ruth/Ivor Graney (5529 5335).

APRIL OVER THE BORDER

We enjoyed our recent visit to South Australia's Lower South-East so much that we're going again. There will be an optional camp-out on the night of **Saturday 4 April**, at **Penambol**; the few who camped there last November recommend it thoroughly, and there are a "butterfly walk" and a "wombat walk" nearby. We will look at some of the cenotes (water-filled sinkholes) in the area, and also visit Ewens Ponds. Note: **if you are intending to swim at Ewens ponds you MUST have a wetsuit** as the water is very cold and once you have started the swim you can't get out until you reach the end.

GRAMPIANS IN MAY

Our **May Special Meeting** will be on **Friday 8th** rather than on Thursday, so that our speaker, **Alison Poulliot** can get here. Alison was to have spoken to us last year but had to cancel as she was out of Australia. Her topic is "**A Photographer's Reflections on the Grampians.**" Members may know Alison's photographic work from the book "Gariwerd." She has a special interest in fungi, and as she will be accompanying us on our **excursion to the Grampians** on the following day, **Saturday 9th**, we hope to find some interesting fungi as well as flowers and fauna.

WORK IN WINTER

We have included several **Working Bees** on our program this year: all of them at sites where the Club has a history of planting and/or weed control. If many people come along, these can be enjoyable as well as useful times; even if you can only spare a couple of hours that will be appreciated. As well as the usual boots, hat and sun screen, it's a good idea to bring strong gloves, and also secateurs, trowels, forks etc. The first of these will take place as the **June excursion** on **Sunday 7th**, at the **18-acre Flora Reserve** (just across the Glenelg Highway from the Wannon Reserve). We will meet there at **1.30 pm**, in Powell's Lane (on the western edge of the Reserve).

Don't forget our **monthly bird count** at the **Hamilton Wetlands**, on the Thursday after each meeting; we meet at 8.00 am at the parking area on Mt Bainbridge Rd. The count lasts about an hour and is always enjoyable, even for those who can't tell a pelican from a pardalote.

The 2009 committee is 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	Ken Grimes	Ph. (03) 5573 4503
Newsletter Editor	Janeen Samuel	Ph. (03) 5573 4503

The Club's address is: **PO Box 591, Hamilton 3300**; email address: **hamiltonfnc@live.com.au**