



PRESIDENTS REPORT FROM THE LAST AGM

Presidents Report to the 55th AGM of Noosa Parks Association for year ending December 2016

Noosa Parks Association has now been protecting Noosa's environment, both natural and built, for 55 years.

In 1962 we formed to prevent proposed development around the coastline of Noosa's headland, and to have it protected as national park. Then within a few years we were leading what turned out to be Noosa's thirty year plus struggle to prevent high-rise buildings.

Each year for the past 55 years, NPA has been in the business of protecting Noosa's superb natural environment, preferably by progressive conversion of the most significant areas to national park, while at the same time campaigning for low-key and human-scale development that sits lightly on the natural regional landscape, while fiercely opposing, if necessarily legally, development that doesn't.

Our successes have made us the largest and most successful volunteer driven and local community environmental organisation in Australia. Our top line results speak for themselves.

Over the past 55 years we've taken the Noosa region's national park estate from just over 200 hectares to 90,000 plus hectares spread across an extended Noosa National Park (from approx 200 ha to approx 3,000 ha), Cooloola National Park (from zero to approx. 85,000 ha) and more recently Tewantin National Park (from zero to approx 3,500 ha).

At the same time we've led the Noosa community's expectations for an enlightened Noosa town planning approach that delivers a built environment that respects the self-renewing capacities of local ecosystems, best exemplified by Noosa's ground breaking town planning population or development cap.

PRESIDENTS REPORT FROM THE LAST AGM (CONTINUED)

Year 2016 saw NPA continuing this tradition by progressing two bold new initiatives: a 'bring back the fish' project to start rebuilding the once prolific abundance and marine biodiversity of the Noosa River and Lakes system and Laguna Bay; and a 'connecting up our national parks' project to start linking up Cooloola, Tewantin and Noosa National Parks.

For these two major initiatives to be successful, NPA is committing to invest significant volunteer and financial resources. Over the past decade we have been quietly and successfully developing a business model to enable such investment. NPA volunteers at the Noosa National Park Visitor Information Centre and at Double Island Point are generating income of over \$100,000 per year.

Income generated by NPA volunteers at Double Island Point is enabling us to initiate the 'bring back the fish' project, investing some \$45,000 over a three year period in order to lever investment funding in excess of \$400,000 from the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation and The Thomas Foundation.

Income generated by NPA volunteers at Noosa National Park Information Centre is being placed in a dedicated NPA fund to facilitate the transfer of environmentally significant land into perpetually protected conservation tenures under Queensland's Nature Conservation Act: National Park, Conservation Park, or Nature Refuge. In 2016 NPA identified a significant opportunity to start linking Tewantin and Cooloola National Parks, and initiated commercial-in-confidence discussions with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Noosa Council about each party funding one third of the cost of achieving this. Because the discussions are commercial in confidence, further detail cannot be released at this stage, but I look forward to being able to report success in my 2017 President's report.

Clearly NPA's dedicated volunteers at Noosa National Park and at Double Island Point are now NPA's frontline heroines and heroes in enabling NPA to be in a position to propose and lever these significant conservation projects. On behalf of all NPA members, I thank them for their contribution.

As has been the case for many years, during 2016 NPA's range of community educational, recreational and social groups have been active: NPA Friday Environment Forum, NPA Greening Noosa, NPA Noosa National Park Weeders, NPA Bird Observers Group, NPA Botany Group, NPA Cooloola Bushwalkers, NPA Noosa Trampers, and NPA Extended Outings. On behalf of all NPA members, I thank all involved.

Finally, on behalf of all at NPA, I wish to acknowledge the significant contributions of NPA's 2016 Management Committee and Volunteer Project Officers: Darlene Gower and Duncan Hogg (vice Presidents), Liz Smits (Acting Hon Sec), David Anderson (Treasurer), Valerie Williams, Prue McGowan, John Chester Freeman, and Mike Sackett (Committee Members), Bryan Walsh (Noosa River and Lakes voluntary PO), Darlene Gower (DIP voluntary PO), Kay Cartwright and Valerie Williams (NNP VIC voluntary POs), Duncan Hogg and Gina Carruthers (Forests voluntary POs), Vivien Griffin (Climate Change voluntary PO), Libby Winter (Noosa Surfing Reserve PO), Richard Erhardt (Girraween and West Lake Weyba voluntary PO), and Mike Sackett and Di Shun Wah (voluntary FEF POs).

Dr Michael Gloster OAM
President
Noosa Parks Association.

EXTENDED OUTINGS

Extended Outings Trip to Bunya Mountains 14-21 September 2017

Our spring outing was based in two adjoining lodges on the fringe of the Bunya Mountains National Park. With night-time temperatures dropping to near zero, the log fires and electric blankets (for some) were welcome changes to our normally Spartan open air conditions. For those who were unable to come on this very interesting outing, Margaret King says "You missed out on interesting and varied walks, mountain views and lookouts together with rocky outcrops covered with abundant King Orchids (*Dendrobium speciosum* pictured below) in full bloom". 2nd photo Bunya Lodges.



Derek Lambert, our bird recorder, states that the area was very dry with little water in streams and waterfalls. This may have accounted for the relatively few (64) species of birds recorded in and around the national park. Of note were the Paradise Riflebirds, Bassian Thrush, Tawny Frogmouth, Rose and Flame Robins and Satin Bowerbirds. Eastern Spinebills, Lewin's Honeyeaters, Crimson Rosellas, and King Parrots visited the lodges every day. A couple of special sightings were recorded of White-backed Swallows that, despite not being on the local birding list, Cecily Fearnley remembers from an earlier visit. Other wildlife recorded were Red-necked Wallabies (literally thousands around the village), Swamp Wallaby, Eastern Grey Kangaroo, Pademelon, Lace Monitor, Red-bellied Black Snake, Antechinus, Swamp Rat together with Blue triangle, Orchard and Clearwing Swallowtail Butterflies.

One of the surprising features of the Bunya Mountains is its grasslands, known locally as 'balds', that are dotted around the hills forming open oases in the dense Bunya forests. The grasslands are unique relics of a much cooler climate and have existed since the last ice age. They have persisted due to regular burning by Aboriginal people over many thousands of years. They are considered a cultural landscape and an enduring symbol of indigenous land management practices.



EXTENDED OUTINGS (continued)

Between 1996 and 2006 the total grassland area decreased by 14% including the complete loss of several grasslands. Studies indicate the long fire-free period (European management) of the grassy 'balds' has resulted in colonisation by acacias, eucalypts and, in many cases, by rainforest trees. The 'balds' are internationally important because they support rare and endangered grass species such as Blue grass (*Bothriochloa bunyensis*). Collaborative management of fire on the grasslands involves experimental burns of varying frequencies and intensities. Researchers and the Bunya Murri Rangers are working together to find the right fire regimes to maintain the open character and species diversity of the 'balds' before they are lost forever.

From an ecological study point of view the birders and botanists were kept busy compiling species lists and a "bird-call" was held each evening to review the lists during "Happy Hour". On Monday evening, we were alerted to the presence of a bigger bird by the sound of rotor blades thrashing above the lodges and we rushed outside to watch a RACQ rescue helicopter land nearby. It took off after an hour without having made any daring rescues or any of the exciting things they are supposed to do. We surmised that they were on a training flight.

In summary, the Extended Outings Group had another successful visit to an area where we could observe how the environment is being managed by others whilst enjoying the "fun, laughter and great camaraderie whatever the time of day". Margaret added that "It was good to share company with interesting and knowledgeable people including the birders and botanists!" We have Brian Jones to thank for organising the trip and, thus, can recommend to any members who need to escape the madness of the world inhabited by the likes of Trump and Kim Jong Un that the Bunya Mountains are the place to be.

Contributors Margaret King, Derek Lambert and Mike MacDonald



Photo: Bunya trifle ladies

Brian Jones
Extended Outing co-ordinator
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FRIDAY ENVIRONMENT FORUM

Friday Environment Forum forward program October - November 2017.

Date	Topic	Speaker
Oct 6	Genetics of Rainforest Trees	Maximo Bottaro of Southern Cross Uni
Oct 13	Noosa River Management Plan	Jan Maddin (Noosa Council)
Oct 20	Nesting: The Costs and Infinite Variety	Robyn Howard
Oct 27	Volcanic Eruptions in Australia	Prof Patrick Nunn
Nov 3	Frogs Including Extinct Local Species	Greg Czechura
Nov 10	Friends of Kinaba	Ada Medek
Nov 17	A Window on the Demise of Post Ice Age Mega Fauna	Kon Hepers
Nov 24	End of Year event on Noosa River	

Up to date information of each Environment Forum is provided every Tuesday in the Noosa News. A visit to the NPA website www.noosaparks.org.au is also recommended to see the innovative approach taken by David Anderson in updating the site each week with the Friday Forum information. You can also view some previous forums by clicking on the You Tube link.

Dianne Shun Wah
Friday Environment Forum Organiser
fridayforum@noosaparks.org.au

CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS?

So we can keep in contact with you please let us know if you change your email or postal address...
Email: office@noosaparks.org.au or Post: PO Box 836, Noosa Heads, Q 4567

ENVIRONMENT CENTRE



Everyone is invited to drop into the Environment Centre for a chat and a cuppa, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Friday Environment Forum always attracts many members and visitors alike to learn more from our guest speakers. Please let our volunteers know if you have any suggestions for future speakers.

A new publication "Cuddles the Koala" with excellent photos and story by three of our members, is now available at our NPA Environment Centre and at the Noosa Parks Gallery and Info Centre for just \$15. Great Christmas gift for the kids.

2018 Coolum and North Shore Coast Care Calendars for just \$10 are now also available at the Environment Centre.

The Environment Centre is available for hire to like-minded organisations. For more information you can contact me using the details below.

The Christmas 'Get Together' at the Environment Centre breezeway will again be held on the second Sunday in December (10th Dec). Details to follow.

Sandra Lilley

Environment Centre Coordinator

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BIRD OBSERVERS' GROUP



Adrian Caneris was our special guest on Friday 18th August. He gave a very entertaining and informative presentation to Friday Forum under the 'Wild Sex' title, which attracted a big audience.

The September field outing was to Numby Lane, which is now Number 11 on the new Noosa Bird Trail brochure. The day started at 16 deg. but warmed to 27 deg. The track was very dry, having had no rain for some time. Twenty-two observers walked in jovial company, although birds were scarce. We recorded 42 species there, and 15 in Cooroora Park after lunch. That included a Russet-tailed Thrush in the creek. They are currently showing up in many places.

October's speaker is Robyn Howard. Her subject is nesting. There is plenty of that happening right now. We can look forward to an excellent presentation from Robyn on 20th October.

The new Noosa Bird Trail Brochure is now printed and has been distributed to several places around the Sunshine Coast. There is a limited number of the brochures at the Environment Centre. I encourage new and interested observers to download their own version from the internet, as intended by the Noosa Council, to try to avoid the expense and waste of printing more brochures. Look for it on 'Noosa Parks' webpage under 'Bird Observers'. It is also on the Noosa Council website under 'Noosa Trail Network'. I hope you like the brochure and the new sites, as I do. There are plenty of birds, and bird activity, happening out there now. Enjoy!

Valda McLean

Bird Observers' Group

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GREENING NOOSA



The Next work day is **Sunday 12 November at the Noosa Parks Association Park** on Noosa Spit

Glen Gloster
Greening Noosa
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The 2017 activity program is on the NPA website www.noosaparks.org.au and hard copies are available at the Environment Centre.

BOTANY GROUP



In the last newsletter I did say that that the coastal heaths would soon be ablaze with wildflowers. This was not to be, as last year's hot and dry summer was followed by more of the same for winter and spring. The Arthur Harrold Nature Refuge on Noosa's North Shore, put on a brave show, but many of the usual species of wildflower did not appear to be flowering. During the 'Sunshine Coast Wildflower Festival', I also led a walk along the Alexandria Bay track in the Headland section of Noosa National Park, where very few wildflowers were in evidence. A very large python at the edge of the track partially made up for this; we thought that it was 4 or 5 metres long, but no-one had thought to bring a tape measure!

In July, Patrick Leonard gave us a thought provoking talk on 'Why Fungi Travel'. For at least two centuries, it was widely believed that many fungi had worldwide distributions because fungal spores were picked up by the wind and could travel virtually anywhere. However, molecular genetics has proved that there are many other ways that fungi can move around, and because most of them need specific living conditions, they often don't travel very far!

In August Enid Mayfield talked to us about 'pea flowers'. These are members of a complex family, but their basic anatomy is the same. We were each given a flower to dissect it by pulling it apart piece by piece and learning some methods of identifying species in the process. A fun time was had by all!

Our next walk will be at the Symplocos Reserve, Porters Road, Pomona. This is an area that was saved from development and contains some interesting plants. I hope that we have some rain before then to freshen up the vegetation.

Sonia MacDonald

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The 2017 activity program is on the NPA website www.noosaparks.org.au and hard copies are available at the Environment Centre.

NOOSA TRAMPERS



August 6th - ACTION! - By popular demand, Bush Cinema presented:

“The Quest for Eric Waterfalls”, shown at Maleny National Park - Walli Creek Area. Starring: Bob, “Dr Livingstone” Tooth, also starring an International cast of 13, plus three extras. The film, set in a remote forest south of Kenilworth, a two day trek from Noosa, is an adventure epic. The story centred on Bob’s 2nd attempt to find a secret waterfall, hidden deep in Walli Creek. After spending days attempting to push through impregnable Lantana, (Lantana being one of the extras), the action takes place around the Creek itself. This is where a desperate tale of survival takes place. A life and death struggle ensues to find a way to the fabled falls, where treasure, and even water, were rumoured to abound. Forcing and finding routes, between rocks and boulders larger than Turnbull’s off shore deposits. The dangers, of falling into pools teeming with man/woman (PC), killing crushed boiled egg, or encountering savage locals, made up as Al Jolson, were overcome with typical trampers’ stoicism. Alas, no treasure! No water! No waterfall!! However plenty of determination, loads of fun, exercise and camaraderie, and just a few drops of blood. – “CUT!!”

August 12th - Sheppersons Park, Kin:

15 walkers met at the Sheppersons Park, NE of Kin for the walk to the Cootharaba Views Lookout. Of these, 8 were NPA members, 7 visitors included two from New Zealand, one from Victoria and one from Germany. The walk, led by Dave McKelvey, traced a well-graded uphill stretch along a section of Noosa Trails 2 and 4 to the Lookout where we enjoyed a morning break before heading back downhill along the same route. Clear sunny skies gave us the opportunity to have beautiful 360 degree views from the lookout. Once the leader and the main body of the walkers arrived at the Lookout it was realised that three energetic walkers had proceeded further along the trail beyond the Lookout. Mobile phone call messages were left for them to return along Trails 2 & 4 (which is clear and well signposted), with the advice to meet up at the Kin General store / Black Ant Café afterwards. Lunch was enjoyed at the Café during which the three ‘escapees’ arrived, so all’s well that ends well.

September 3rd - Parklands:

A re-arranged event, hoping to provide a less strenuous outing, than most of our previous hard/steep walks. Led by our Parklands expert Ali, 9 started out, eventually joined by 2 latecomers. Note to self, “Must remember, for directions, that Rocky Creek Forest Rd goes all the way from one end of the Park to the other”. A great spring day, in the varied bush of this Park with dry higher open ground giving way to cooler rainforest gullies. At 10.5kms, with regular undulations, this was steady paced exercise. I was taken to task, regarding my poetic licence, when describing the walk on my initial email. However, an enjoyable Father’s Day.

September 9th - Short Walkers Expedition - Murdering Creek:

On a sunny (as usual) Saturday morning, 27 walkers including 4 visiting non-members met at the end of Murdering Creek Road to follow Woodland Drive and walk a loop of about 4.5km led by our “living treasure” Janet Whish Wilson. On entering Noosa National Park we noted that what remained of Murdering Creek was a mere puddle, just enough to sustain the birds. Many wildflowers were already spent, including the vast plain of grass trees (Xanthorrhoea) beside the track. They must have provided a feast for birds and insects. Many commented on how close housing now seems to be converging at the edges of this thankfully saved remnant of the wallum. We did walk through those neighbouring streets, although Barry could have escorted us through the fire trail between the houses and national park which he said was usually a good birding spot. Morning tea was at the park entrance near the houses before retracing our steps to the start. Much conversation and humour made for a very enjoyable short walk.

Tony King

NPA Trampers Coordinator

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COOLOOLA BUSHWALKERS



Brisbane Valley Rail Trail - 21st to 23rd July.

Friday : We set up camp beside the old railway station at Benarkin and enjoyed each other's company around the camp fire.

Saturday: A fine sunny day greeted us after an extremely cold night, and 12 people gathered to walk the 18km trail from Benarkin to Linville. This trail took us through the pretty Benarkin forest on the Blackbutt range with the Bell Miners tinkling and Yellow tail Cockatoos calling to each other. We stopped at Fettle's Rest to view a railway culvert hand built in 1910 by day labour without the benefit of heavy machinery. This culvert is 27 meters long, 3.7 meters high, 3.7 meters wide and has concrete walls 60 cm thick. It is still in very good condition today.



We enjoyed lunch at Macnamara's camp where a tent school was constructed in June 1910 for the children of the railway workers. It was 5 meters by 4.5 meters with a wooden floor, canvas walls, calico ceiling and iron roof and 40 children were enrolled.



As we emerged from the forest to open areas many grass trees were growing on the western slopes of the range. We were passed by horse riders and bicycle riders all enjoying the clear sunny winter's day. The pub at Linville was a welcome spot to rest and enjoy a cool drink after an enjoyable walk.

Sunday: We dismantled camp and drove to Linville station for our walk to Moore 7km along the rail trail. We walked through farmlands with 2 steep gullies to negotiate, watched by horses and cows grazing in the green paddocks beside us. This area had great views of the Brisbane River and distant mountains. We found the Church Gallery a great spot for coffee and cake after an enjoyable weekend of walking.

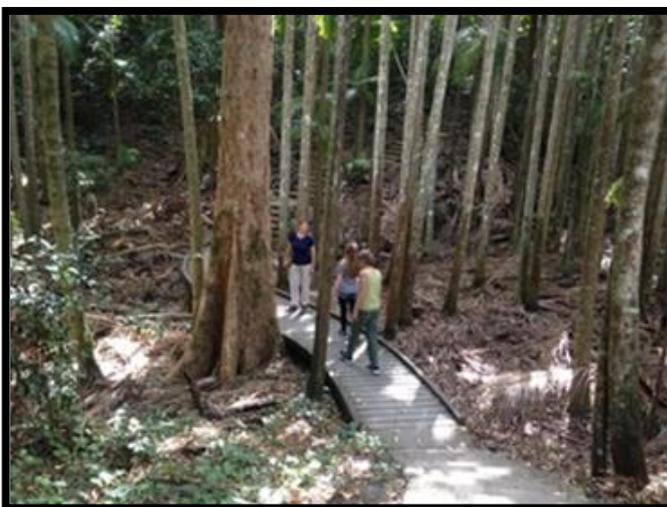
Leader **Raye Cairns**

COOLOOLA BUSHWALKERS (continued)

Flaxton and Mapleton Falls Walk - Sunday 27th August

The Flaxton and Mapleton Falls walk was a pleasant 12 km return walk, part of the Sunshine Coast Hinterland Great Walk. This section of the Great Walk meanders along the top of the Blackall Range traversing through three reserves. The walk took us through many different plant communities from warm subtropical rainforest to tall open eucalypt forest. The track to and from Baxter Falls starting from Flaxton Mill Road did test our fitness, especially the steep steps and long descent. Baxter Falls are lovely, with a small swimming hole. Part of the track runs alongside the road, where we got to admire some cool weather flowering shrubs, laden avocado trees and of course stunning views. Lastly, the lunch spot, Mapleton falls, where we enjoyed a gentle walk through the rainforest, before a picnic on the grass.

Marguerite & Ella



Marguerite Wickens
Cooloola Bushwalkers Coordinator
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And help us save

You can help NPA use less paper and spend less on postage by notifying NPA to send you this newsletter, 'Happenings' and other member communications by email rather than post.

If you currently receive NPA mail by post and would like to switch to email, you are welcome to send an email to the Honorary Secretary at office@noosaparks.org.au

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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