FIELD NATURALISTS ASSOCIATION OF CANBERRA INC.

OBJECTS: To foster an interest, an awareness and an understanding of nature

PRESIDENT: Jenny Bounds, Phone 887 802 (H)
SECRETARY: Patricia Woolcock, Phone 511 246 (H)
ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: GPO Box 249, Canberra ACT 2601
NEWSLETTER CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Bob Ecclestone, Phone 414 512 (H)

Meetings are held downstairs in the Department of Botany, ANU, on the first Thursday of each month. Meetings commence at 8.00 pm and are followed by refreshments.

NEWSLETTER — FEBRUARY 1990

FEBRUARY MEETING - Thursday 1st

Dorothy Tunbridge will speak on "Where have all the mammals gone" in relation to the Flinders Ranges. Dorothy is the author of *Flinders Ranges Dreaming*, a recent publication about the traditional stories of the Adnyamathanha people, an aboriginal tribe of the Northern Flinders Ranges.

OUTING - Sunday 11th February

We will be visiting the Tallaganda State Forest, south-east of Canberra. This is a cool, coastal forest with plenty of flora and fauna of interest - a great place on a hot summer day. Bring lunch. Meet at 9.00 am in the carpark of the NCDC Building, corner of Northbourne and Wakefield Avenues, Braddon. Trip takes 1 hour 15 minutes on partly unmade but good roads.

NEWSLETTER

Now the summer holidays are behind you! Please consider writing up a small article on an interesting area you have visited or something new you have seen or done. Contributions to the newsletter can be handed in at the meetings or sent to the following address:

Kay Hahne
5 Gingana Street
Aranda ACT 2614
Tel. 511789(H) or 522913(W)

Deadline for the March newsletter is Friday, 16th February.

PROGRAM FOR VISIT BY DUBBO FIELD NATURALISTS -January long weekend 26-28

All members (whether hosting visitors or not) are invited to participate in this program.
You can get more information by contacting Jenny Bounds on 887802 (home)/ 858647 (work) or Bob Crutwell on 813100 (home).

FRIDAY 26 JANUARY

Dubbo group will arrive by private cars and proceed directly to their billets. No activities have been arranged on this day.

SATURDAY 27 JANUARY (not Sunday as in December Newsletter)

There will be a trip to Ginini Flats in the Brindabella Ranges. This is a fascinating area of snow gum woodland and spagnum bogs, with an abundance of sub-alpine heath plants. We hope to find olive whistlers and corroboree frogs among other things. We will use a hired bus and private cars; the trip takes about 1 and a half hours (some unmade roads).

All participants to meet in the carpark at the NCDC Building in Northbourne Avenue, Braddon at 8.00 am sharp. Who will travel on the bus will be arranged on the day. Members will pay $10; the Dubbo visitors no charge.

Please bring a packed lunch and drinking water. Long trousers and sturdy shoes recommended, and fly repellant. YOU MUST BRING A WARM WATERPROOF JACKET WITH HOOD OR A HAT OR OTHER WET WEATHER CLOTHING IN CASE OF WEATHER CHANGE IN THE MOUNTAINS.

We will be returning to Canberra by 5.00pm.

SATURDAY 27 JANUARY BARBECUE AND SOCIAL NIGHT

There will be a barbecue and Social evening on Saturday night. Members are asked to bring their own meat and drinks, and a salad and sweet to share with the group. Also bring your own plate, glass and eating utensils; folding chairs and portable table would be useful if you have them.

The barbecue will commence at 7.00pm, at East Basin Pavillion, Grevillea Park, on Lake Burley Griffin (between Defence Offices and Duntroon). There are BBQ facilities for all weather.

SUNDAY 28 JANUARY

Meet at 10.00 am in the carpark of the Botanic Gardens. There will be some birdwatching and botanising in the gardens, followed by a bring your own picnic lunch.

The Dubbo visitors will depart Canberra after lunch.

FNAC MEMBERS WHO ARE BILLETTING THE DUBBO VISITORS

Bob Crutwell will have contacted you to make all the arrangements. Please ring him or Jenny if you need more details.

REPTILES OF THE A.C.T AREA..... Ross Bennet R.Ford

Well all you lovely peoples we finally got that long awaited talk on lizards , snakes , tortoises and other 'orrible things that go bump in the night . Ross gave us the works and set some peoples minds straight about the differences between the turtle and the tortoise . The field is a very exciting one , never knowing when you'll be bitten next , new species being discovered all the time and of course the joys of talking to a group of ignorant naturalists . There are five groups of the Lizards of OZ *, and the A.C.T has representatives of all of these.

GECKO'S-------

There is only the marbled gecko in the A.C.T

LEGLESS LIZARDS (FOUR)--------

Two legless lizards are Vertons (lance headed) which is rare and the Pink tailed legless lizard . Vertons is a cannibal and is rarely seen . Legless lizards differ from snakes by having an external ear and a fleshy tongue . The pink tailed lizard is threatened .

SKINKS--------

The A.C.T has many skinks and there are probably many more common yet undescribed . The skink just about every Canberra resident will probably see is the Common Blue Tongue and in higher areas the Mountain Blue Tongue which prefers a colder climate . Blue tongues contrary to popular belief do not leave a severe wound that slowly poisons you , in fact they are quite charming little fellows and their only fault is they have a habit of making strawberries disappear . Of course if every one was as intelij## intelaje#### inteligant##### as brainy as us FNACs their would be no need for such untruths to be flying about . Another common skink is the Cunningham , They live in fallen timber and rocks , they are solidly built and if they are alarmed they go like the clappers . One of my favourite skinks is the Shingle-back (stumpy tail,sleepy lizard,pine cone and about umpteen million other names) . This skink is found throughout Australia and although the local variety is black or brown all over in other parts of the country it is striped or spotted or something else . Another interesting fact is that linguists can tell were a person comes from by what they call this skink . The young of the stumpy are quite large when born . Other skinks are the copper tailed skink which posses's some rather striking stripes the delicate skink and three species of water skinks.

*this term is not strictly correct , but why spoil a lovely phrase

DRAGONS---------

The A.C.T has its quota of dragons (unfortunately not the fire breathing type) the most common type being the bearded dragon , which has a strong affinity with the frilled necked lizard . In fact in many ways the two are very closely related , they look the same except that the "beardie" has , as one would expect , a beard rather than a frill . When frightened they both open their mouths and hiss , whilst opening their respective adornments . They can both run on their hind legs and they both are called the other ones name by ill-informed people . The egg is a big one up to 650*mm* . Another common dragon is the Gipsland water dragon which is found in the high country , it has a greenish tint and it also can run on its hind legs . Water dragons are good swimmers and climbers and grow up to 1*m* in length . The jacky lizard is a common dragon and is not what you would call a giant . It is common in the lowlands and woodland areas .

MONITORS -------

The lace monitor is the major representative of the monitors in the A.C.T and is a large (1.5 -2 *m*)black and yellow creature . The heath monitor is a newly discovered monitor and is very like the lace monitor except that it has a light tipped tail.

SNAKES--------

Snakes are a group that are greatly misunderstood by the average Australian , although this is changing with a number of public awareness displays etc. In the A.C.T we have the following snakes , all of which will move away from you if you disturb them (they don't really enjoy breaking their teeth on you !) The blind snake is a fairly common snake that lives underground and is harmless to humans . It is egg laying . The black headed snake is a small snake rather like a baby brown snake in appearance . It is venomous but rarely bites anyone . It prefers warmer locations . The white lipped snake also lives in the warmer climes and is small . Bandy Bandys are strikingly patterned snakes that probably occur and are nocturnal . The red bellied black which most people have seen is common and grows to 2.5 *m* . The copperhead is found above 700 *m* and is lethal . Tiger snakes are fairly common in sub alpine areas and are lethal . They grow to 1.1*m* . The common brown snake around the A.C.T has the second most toxic venom of any land animal.

R.FORD.....

FIELD NATURALISTS ASSOCIATION of CANBERRA Incorporated

The Field Naturalists Association of Canberra was formed in 1981. The aim of the club is to stimulate interest in the natural history of the ACT through regular meetings and field outings. Meetings are usually held on the first Thursday of each month for an exchange of information and to hear an invited speaker. Field outings are also planned each month and range from day outings to long weekends and camping. The emphasis is on informality and fun.

New members are always welcome, especially family groups and young people. Information on our activities is circulated in the monthly newsletter which is sent to all members.

If you wish to join FNAC, please complete the form below, and send it with the appropriate subscription to:

The Secretary
FNAC
G P O Box 249
Canberra ACT 2601

FAMILY NAME .....

FIRST NAME .....

If a family membership, please include the first names of other members of the family:

.....

HOME ADDRESS .....

..... SUBURB ..... POSTCODE.....

PHONE: HOME..... WORK.....

SUBSCRIPTION ENCLOSED: $.....

Single $12; Family $12; Concession $6 (available to pensioners and full-time students)

AREAS OF INTEREST:

FIELD NATURALISTS ASSOCIATION OF CANBERRA INC.

TO FOSTER AN INTEREST, AN AWARENESS AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF NATURE

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