
News of Friends of Grasslands

Volume 6 Issue 7

May 1996

GOODBYE, EDWINA

Edwina Barton, the immensely enthusiastic and effective coordinator of Friends of Grasslands throughout its first year of life, has returned to the corporate world and handed the reins over to the FOG committee. Her wealth of experience, network of contacts, and total commitment to grassland conservation issues are sorely missed. We wish Edwina every success in this next stage of her life, and wholeheartedly thank her for all the energy, vision and commitment she put into establishing Friends of Grassland.

Thankyou Edwina.

We look forward to your continued input into FOG issues as one of our valued members.

Inside This Issue

- | | | | |
|--|-----|------------------------------|-----|
| • SEPP 46, outcomes to date. | p.2 | • FOG Conference. | p.3 |
| • ACT Government lists Grasslands as threatened communities. | p.2 | • Book Reviews. | p.3 |
| • ACT Emblem. | p.2 | • Other News. | p.3 |
| | | • Committee Contact Details. | p.4 |

Have you Forgotten to return your membership form?

This will be your *last* Newsletter if you have!

Of the 189 people on our mailing list as members, we have received only 42 membership fees. Membership fees fund the activities of FOG, paying for the printing and postage of newsletters, the typesetting of various submissions of behalf of grasslands conservation, photocopying, telephoning, organising field trips, and so on. All the time and energy put into organising FOG activities is entirely voluntary. If you want to receive the next news letters **PLEASE** complete the enclosed membership form, and post it, (with your cheque!) to:

Friends of Grasslands

PO Box 987

Civic Square ACT 2608

ph) 06 - 2546759

SEPP 46:**Outcomes To Date.**

As the last newsletter went to press (Feb 16 1996), the NSW Vegetation Forum was meeting to consider the addended Regional Grassland Plans in the light of the SEPP 46 repeals. The outcome of that meeting was that the five statutory Plans of Management for the specified native grasslands were approved by the Minister for Land and Water Conservation. The plans of management are based on the five draft Regional Native Grasslands plans that were prepared by the regional landholder / catchment management committees and were addended to stipulate conditions for the clearing of native grasslands. These conditions contain a threshold for the clearing of native grasslands set at 15% of the property area, retention of areas of high conservation value, and compliance with existing soil conservation and threatened species legislation. The ministers also approved a six month review period to enable further development and refinement of the Regional Native Grassland Plans. We have been assured that FOG's extensive submission regarding these regional Grassland Plans will be thoroughly considered. If any FOG member wishes to pursue this further, please contact Sandie Jones (06-2546759) or Alison Elvin (ph-2886001 fax-2812386).

GOOD NEWS INDEED

The ACT Minister for the Environment, Gary Humphries announced on the 17/4/96 that grassland ecosystems and six grassland species have been listed as threatened communities and species, and tabled as such in the legislative assembly. The Conservator of Flora and Fauna is now obliged to prepare action plans outlining conservation issues and proposed conservation measures for protecting threatened species and communities, and proposed measures for the management of declared threatening processes. We congratulate the ACT Government for its foresight, and look forward to further positive developments.

FOG CONFERENCE:

The conference committee has gone into overdrive organising the grasslands conference in November. The date is the weekend of the 10th and 11th of November at the Australian National Botanic Gardens. The conference will focus on the continuing management and conservation of grassland ecosystems as well as grassland species. Guest speakers and workshop panels will include information on native grasses for pastures, management of grassland remnant, weed control, grazing / slashing / burning regime, current research knowledge, role of legislation, grassland species for horticulture and town planners - and that's just for starters! We also have field trips planned for both days. While the cost to attend the conference hasn't yet being finalised, we intend to keep it as low as possible. The cost will include transport to field trip sites, lunch, morning and afternoon teas, and a copy of all talks, workshops and other relevant articles in booklet format. So mark the date in your diary as the grassland highlight of the year - not to be missed under any circumstances. Final details and registration forms will be sent out with the next newsletter.

Any members who have ideas about the content and / or format of the conference, who would like to speak or can recommend a speaker at the conference, or who can help with the organisation, please contact:

Susan Theron	ph) 2814725.
Alison Elvin	ph) 06 2886001
(until July)	fax) 06 2812386.
Jan Gough-Watson	ph) 06 2381654
(July only)	

ACT EMBLEM:

The ACT legislative Assembly, as part of its inquiry into the ACT animal / bird emblem, asked for submissions from relevant groups nominating a Faunal Emblem for the ACT. After much consideration, Fog committee decided to support Art Langstons submission for the adoption of the Southern Lined Earless Dragon (*Tympanocryptis lineata pinguicolla*) as the ACT's emblem. Art has presented a persuasive submission and the committee believes "Tymp" is the most eloquent of the representatives for lowland grassy ecosystems. What a wonderful campaigner "Tymp" would be for our grasslands. Good luck, Art.

BOOKS and ARTICLES:

1. **Neighbours in Trouble!**
Endangered Plant and Animals in the ACT
Ian Fraser and Margaret McJannett 1996.
Available at the ANBG bookshop for \$19.95.
Ian Warden reviewed this book very favourably in the Canberra Times (30.3.96) and a quick read of it indicates a strong emphasis given to ACT native grasslands, their history and the plight they are in. Although the book is directed to readers up until the age of 15, it is still a valuable resource for any interested adult.

2. **Grasses of New South Wales;**
DJB Wheeler, SWL Jacobs, BE Norton
University of New England, Armidale, 1994.
\$36.00
Reviewed by Naarilla Hirsch
This book is a key to the grasses of New South Wales, and is a reprint of the 1982 edition. It is not as recent as the grasses section of the Flora of New South Wales, and so does not contain some of the latest name changes. However, it has one feature that is particularly useful to the beginner, a pictorial key. For a novice like myself, the pictorial key is much easier to use than a normal key as it illustrates the difference you are looking for at each decision point. An added advantage is that since the terms are written next to the illustrations, you start to learn what all the terms mean. Other features I liked about the book were the extensive glossary with line drawings, and the clear line drawings throughout the species key (the pictorial key only goes down to genus). The book also contains information on using a key, examining a specimen, and a description of each part of a grass plant, as well as an index of both scientific and common names.

OTHER NEWS:**YAM DAISY:**

FOG members interested in information regarding the Yam Daisy (*Microseris lanceolata*) should look no further than an excellent paper written by freelance biologist / anthropologist Bess Gott.

Titled "Murnong: *Microseris scapigera*" (the species has since been renamed *M. lanceolata*) in the 1983 ed. of "Australian Aboriginal Studies" published by Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, page 2 - 17. Bess's article examines the use of the yam as a food source; further ethnographic information; the yams botany and its past and present ecology. Interestingly, there are three known morphological types of *M. lanceolata* in Australia, and the genetic variation is currently being studied by Dutch scientists.

Neville Scarlett and Ian Lunt from LaTrobe University are studying *M. lanceolata* as part of an overall study of grassland flora species

FOG CONSTITUTION:

Graeme Evans, Sandy Kay and Naarilla Hirsch have put many long hours recently into finalising FOG's constitution. They intend having this completed by the time the next newsletter is published - we'll keep you posted.

GRASSLAND PROJECT:

The "Remnant Native Grassland Project, Monaro Plains," was launched in Cooma on the 11th of April to provide active guardianship for the native grasslands of the Monaro Plains in SE NSW. For further information, contact numbers are; (06) 2542015 or (064) 523505.

CONFERENCE:

The NSW Grasslands Society is holding a conference in Wagga Wagga on July 9th and 10th. For further information, contact Owen Whittaker on (069) 245231.

FOG COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Meetings are on the first Tuesday of each month, contact Sandy Jones for venue. All members are very welcome to attend.

NEWSLETTER:

Articles for inclusion in the newsletter are most welcome, any of substantial length should be provided in an electronic format (Word 6 or RTF) this will help reduce the typing load!

Executive Committee contact details

President: Sandie Jones
8/3 Bonrook St HAWKER ACT 2614
phone; 06 - 254 6759

Convenor: Naarilla Hirsch
30 Chillagoe St FISHER ACT 2611
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17 Batman St BRADDON ACT 2601
phone; 06 - 247 9964

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26 Templeton St COOK ACT 2614
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13 Frankland St HOLDER ACT 2611
phone; 06 - 288 6001

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76 Bacchus Circuit KAMBAH ACT 2902
phone; 06 - 231 4327

Other Committee Members:

Graeme Evans
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Janette Hannan
111 Florey Drive MACGREGOR ACT 2615
phone 06 - 254 3060

Phil Hurle
10 Fraser Place YARRALUMLA ACT 2600
phone 06 - 285 4231

Research Project about FOG.

A member of FOG has chosen the group as a case study of a friends environmental group to write about for her Masters of Environmental Education Thesis at the University of Canberra. If you have a spare 10 minutes, could you ring Sandy Kay on; 06 - 253 332 and have a yarn about why and when you joined or were interested in FOG, what your expectations of the group and what you would like to see FOG do in the future. Confidentiality is ensured but any useful info can be fed back into FOG.

If you would be happier writing your ideas my address is:
Sandy Kay
26 Templeton St Cook
ACT 2614

Nature and the Environment Courses

Getting to know plants: learning by drawing - Parts 1 & 2
Helen Fitzgerald
(Part 1) 8 sessions from 8 July \$205
(Part 2) 8 sessions - field trip from 4 July \$215
Botanising in Canberra
Isobel Crawford
Wed. 7-9pm from 18 Sept.
(3 sessions - 2 field trips) \$85
Grass identification
Isobel Crawford
Wed. 7-9pm from 6 November
(3 sessions - 2 field trips) \$85
Canberra's amazing birds
McComas Taylor
Thur. 7.30-9.30pm 31 October
(1 session - 5 field trips) \$100

The garden design studio
Susan Boden/Debbie Saegenschnitt
5 sessions from 1 Oct. \$120
Herbal medicine first aid
Patricia Hueneke
4 sessions from 25 July \$65

For brochure
Centre for Continuing Education
The Australian National University
CANBERRA ACT 0200
Phone: (06) 2493891 or 2492892

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY



First, to learn the nature of things