



SYDNEY BUSHWALKER is a monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc, Box 4476 GPO Sydney 2001. To advertise in this magazine, please contact the Business Manager.

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THE SYDNEY BUSH WALKERS INCORPORATED was founded in 1927. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening at 8 pm at Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, 16 Fitzroy Street, Kirribilli (near Milsons Point Railway Station). Visitors and prospective members are welcome any Wednesday.

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CONSERVATION CORNER

If you would like to be involved in Conservation issues please phone Bill Holland, Conservation Secretary on 9484 6636 (business and after hours).

Aboriginal Ownership of National Parks in NSW by Vivien Dunne*, from the Bushwalker, Nov. 1997.

The National Parks and Wildlife Amendment (Aboriginal Ownership) Act 1996** relating to Aboriginal Ownership of National Parks passed through both houses of the NSW Parliament unopposed in December 1996. For some more conservative members of the community the passing of The Act was seen as cause for concern and greeted with alarm, but for others it was heralded as a significant step in providing for the rights of Australia's indigenous peoples.

Joint management will be established for parks and reserves listed on Schedule 14 through the appointment of Boards of Management. The Boards will be required to exercise management, care and control in accordance with the provisions of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 and at this stage five parks have been listed for return to Aboriginal ownership.

1. Mootwingee NP and Historic Site, and Coturaundee Nature Reserve near Broken Hill
2. Mungo NP
3. NSW Jervis Bay NP near Nowra
4. Mount Yarrowyck Nature Reserve near Armidale
5. Mount Grenfell Historic Site near Cobar

The most important points to note in The Amendment are as follows:- National Parks will be approved for Aboriginal ownership subject to a lease-back arrangement between the indigenous owners and the relevant State or Commonwealth authority and will include the payment of rent for the lease of the land. The term of the lease will be for a period of 30 years with allowance made for renewal of the term, periodic review and provision for replacement.

Public right of access to national parks and the use and enjoyment of the parks is to be guaranteed. The lands will be protected from being sold or mortgaged. Admission fees will be charged for entrance to national parks.

Direct, operational, management responsibility of the land will continue to rest with NP&WS; compliance with existing Acts, World Heritage listings, or other international treaty obligations will be acknowledged and upheld.

Aboriginal people will be given preference for employment opportunities as administrators, rangers and for other positions within national parks. Policies will be adopted giving access to the Aboriginal owners for subsistence hunting, fishing and cultural use of the land, together with access for ceremonial purposes.

It should be noted that the Amendments to the 1996 Aboriginal Ownership Act provide for the recognition of indigenous peoples rights to ancestral lands, cultural sites and places of historical significance as well as recognising the need for the protection and management of national parks for all Australians.

** Vivien Dunne is Vice President of the Sydney Branch of the National Parks Association of N.S.W. and a member of SBW. The article reflects the authors opinion and not those of the NPA.*

*** All information from NP&WS, Aboriginal Ownership of National Parks, Government Publication, Feb. 1997*

BIRD WATCHING: Advance Notice of a preliminary survey of birds at Coolana to be held on a weekend in March. The plan is for an initial survey of the avifauna at Coolana as input to a later more complete survey. You will need a note book, pen or pencil and ideally binoculars. Experience is not necessary, we will show you how. Other equipment could include field guides on birds, thermos flask, chair, blind, camera with telephoto lens, umbrella. Watchers in groups of two, will go out to different areas at Coolana in the morning and afternoon to spot the birds. Later the bird lists will be collated, the birds named and their habitat specified. This will be a valuable survey of our property. We do need a few people with bird watching skills and experience to assist. Before the event a Wednesday social night will be devoted to "How to Bird Watch". Call or write to the editor.

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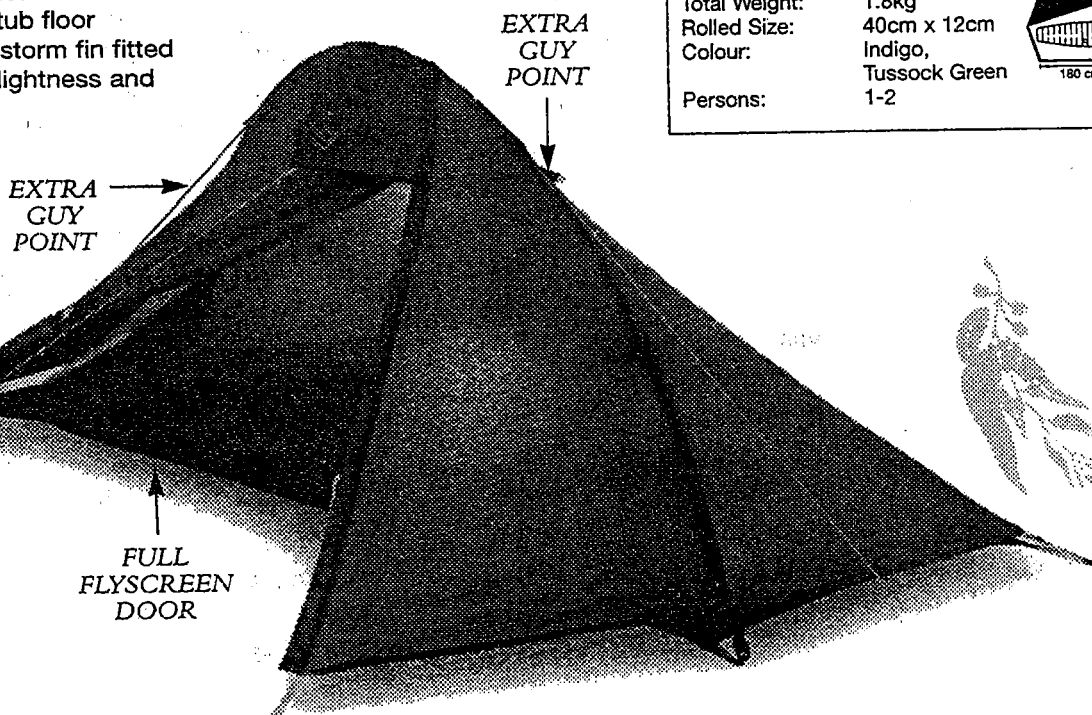
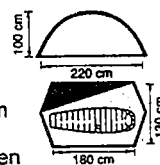
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A BICYCLE IN BURGUNDY

by Tom Wenman

Part le second: les adventures exciting de Tom continue. Last month we read how Tom had ridden 80 km in one day to arrive breathless and expectant in the medieval town of Semur. Now sitting in the luxurious splendour of the youth hostel watching le football on le television Tom plans his next moves. Read on.

Le Deuxième Part.

In the meantime I also decided not to mention much again about my own remarkable performance. The repeat question produced the same answer, I was glad that I had refrained from further advertising my own achievements. The next morning I was away bright and early for today was the day that I was scheduled to get to Vezelay. I always feel that it is a good idea to achieve one's objective early in a trip and then one can relax and feel quite satisfied whatever does or does not happen thereafter.

On the way however I was to pass through the delightful town of Avallon, similar to Semur with its medieval gateway and cobbled streets, but grown much bigger and therefore I found it not so attractive. With its mystical past disputing with the English Avalon, as the home of King Arthur, it was somewhere which I had long wished to see. Before I reached Avallon however, I encountered one of those pleasant surprises which is the very essence of travel. I discovered, in the village of Epoises, a beautiful and ancient chateau. Somehow my research had not forewarned me of this delight, and as I walked under yet another ancient gateway, this one garlanded with roses, I was pleased with the surprise. On a clear sunny summer's morning the Chateau within its moat and gracefully turreted outer walls rested peacefully in its grounds surrounded by stately trees.

I could have stayed there all day, but my quest beckoned, and I mounted once more my steed. Most of my way was by quiet country road where there was little traffic, and what there was, could be heard from some distance. French drivers it seemed knew of two speeds, that with the foot planted flat to the floor boards on the accelerator pedal, or with it planted flat to the floor boards on the brake. However I can't complain, all vehicles respected my cyclist status, and none 'cut me up'. It was however my

unfortunate necessity to have to travel along the 'F9' some way into Avallon. This is a main road which goes to Paris, and, like all such roads bears much traffic, and much of it heavy trucks. I was pleased to leave it and join once more the more obscure, and quiet byways on my departure from Avallon. This led me through a pleasant valley, alongside a delightful sparkling river on which was situated several former water mills, which were now converted to guesthouses and restaurants.

I left the valley and took the road to Vezelay. After some while I reached the top of a hill, from which could be seen on a hill, not far away, the township of Vezelay and the Basalique Ste-Madeleine, my architectural and historical quest.

I cruised downhill to the village of St Pere, and then began the long uphill climb to my objective.

It was a long uphill climb, but I declined to dismount to push my 'pushey', and eventually I arrived at a sort of square and car park, preparatory to the final climb up through the narrow main street of the town. I lunched on a ham sandwich and a cold beer, sitting at an outside table in quite pleasant sunshine. Life was quite good I felt. Suitably fortified, I wandered with bike up the narrow steep main street past all the ancient houses, tourist shops and restaurants, all of which I had read, boasted Roman foundations, such was the antiquity and sometime importance of this place.

At last I reached the open area beyond which stood the church, the steps leading up to a superb doorway above which was a beautifully carved tympanum beneath a rounded arch, the Romanesque curve of which bespoke all that Vezelay is. Entrance however was gained by a side door, and after securely locking my cycle I entered into the narthex, a sort of waiting area prior to entering the nave itself. Above the great doors to the nave, another tympanum with most superb carving, and then through a door into the north aisle and the nave itself, a delicate picture of high rounded arches the alternate black and white stone giving it a Byzantine air, with the high clerestory windows providing an ethereal lightness. I sat entranced at its beauty.

A Happy and Prosperous New Year to all.

I wandered outside and along the battlements which overlooked the surrounding country, field marked and mostly flat with the Parc du Morvan (a French equivalent of our national park). rising mysteriously to the south and east. I reflected upon the history of the place, for centuries, one of pilgrimage to the remains of Mary Magdelene in the crypt of the church, and the interesting vaulting of the nave, built in this way to favour the chanting of the monks of Cluny who built the place. So much, and so much more.

Time to seek out the youth hostel and check out the accommodation. For about twelve francs I camped in a pleasant field adjoining the hostel. Some Spartan showers were provided, and I emerged suitably cleansed and invigorated to explore the town and select a restaurant for my evening meal.

I dined on beef burgundy and enjoyed yet another excellent bottle of the local wine. "Is this charolais?" I enquired of the waiter, indicating the meat and hoping for some reassurance regarding 'mad cow disease'. "For that price?", he replied. I laughed, well what else could a sophisticated traveller do.

The next morning I enjoyed the pleasure of freewheeling down the hill which I had so laboriously climbed the day before. Then it was uphill from St Pere and on to my next quest, the Cistercian abbey of Fontenay, founded in 1118 and the oldest surviving Cistercian ensemble in France. More pleasant villages with cottages and roses, reserved chateaux and forbidding castles whose walls rose sheer and grim from the cattle pasture. On the way too, a most splendid display of wild flowers by the roadside. A pleasant sojourn for a beer in a village cafe, and then the thought, do I really want to push myself all the way to Fontenay, then a further strenuous day to return to the vicinity of Beaune?

I white anted myself and chose an easier route to Pouilly-en-Auxois, a pleasant camp by the banks of the Burgoygne Canal and a leisurely run to the Le Chateau Commarin and that fairy tale castle, Chateauneuf on the morrow. I was not disappointed by the municipal campsite by

the canal, and soon made a friend in a fellow cyclist who was camped not far away from me.

The following day again I was not disappointed by Commarin whose perfect round towers with their conical slate roofs rested majestically and peacefully, surrounded by green sward and broad placid moat. Once more I reluctantly left a peaceful and beautiful location and now pushed on to the fairytale castle I had first seen from the canal, Chateauneuf.

For the first time the steepness of the approach road defeated me and I was obliged to dismount, and thus entered the village on foot. I lunched in a pleasant square resplendent with red geraniums in large tubs and decorating the small water fountain. Cycling through the village, I dismounted at the entrance to the castle, and then entered it, across a deep moat, between powerful round towers. The castle courtyard was guarded by some impressive masonry, some of it albeit crumbling, but aloft floated the banner of the original owner. On inspection the castle proved all that it promised to be, although a little more dilapidated, than I had at first thought. But the main rooms were restored to something approaching their original condition with suitable furnishings, and one was able to appreciate in some part the way of life in those days. The demise of the wife of the first owner was somewhat awful to consider, but provided an interesting commentary on those times.

Back downhill to the canal and the way was clear back to Savigny les Beaune and thence on to Beaune in the morning to catch the TGV, pronounced 'tay jay vay' I'd have you know, back to Paris. Fin.

SBW SONG BOOK

The official "SBW Song Book" has been printed and is available to members at a cost of \$5.00. Now you can sing around the campfire - no longer lost for words! There have been earlier songbooks, but this version has old songs (from 1930/40 etc.) and new songs (1960/70 etc.). Price \$5.00 (available in the Clubrooms or mailed if you include \$1.00 for postage).

TICKS: FOES OR FRIENDS?

By Stephen Doggett

Anyone who has wandered through the Australian bush, particularly along the coastal fringe of eastern Australia, will have at some time in their life been bitten by ticks. The result is generally a mild itch at the bite site, but occasionally more severe consequences occur, which can be life threatening. Nevertheless, are the fears regarding ticks throughout the bushwalking community, warranted? Or are ticks one of the more maligned creatures in the Australian bush? However, to understand ticks, the diseases they transmit, and the risks they impose, a thorough knowledge of their biology and life cycle is required.

What makes a tick, a tick? (Morphology).

Ticks belong to the group of invertebrates known as the Arthropods, which also includes mites, spiders, insects and crustaceans. Australia has approximately 70 species and only a few are known to impact on human health. The most important tick by far, because of its ability to cause a variety of adverse effects, is the Paralysis tick, *Ixodes holocyclus*. The morphological features that distinguish ticks include, the possession of elongated mouthparts with rows of backward pointing teeth (which helps to anchor the tick in place once attached), and a structure called "Haller's organ" which is present on both forelegs and has a sensory function for host detection. All ticks are external parasites on terrestrial vertebrates.

There are two groups of ticks, "Hard" ticks and "Soft" ticks, which differ in morphology and behaviour. Hard ticks are flattened (when not blood fed) and have a smooth body surface with a distinct thumbnail-like shield called a scutum. Eyes are sometimes present and the adult male and female stages are morphologically different. Soft ticks are not flattened, have no scutum and the body has a rough textured leathery covering. Eyes are not present on Australian Soft ticks and the adults are very similar. Soft ticks have little direct impact on human health in Australia and bushwalkers would rarely come into contact with them.

The Life and Times of Ticks (The Life Cycle).

Ticks have four distinct life stages; egg, larva, nymph and adult, which in total takes one to two years to complete, depending on the species. An adult female Hard tick may lay 2-3,000 eggs in one batch, while Soft ticks lay only a few at a time. After hatching, the larvae (0.5-1mm in size) must obtain a protein source, ie. blood, to be able to moult to the next stage of its life. Ticks may actively search for a host; they can detect the carbon dioxide emitted from an animal's breath, and also body heat. Other ticks passively search for a host. They will climb the nearest vegetation, wave their forelegs back and forth in a behaviour called 'questing' and latch onto almost any animal that wanders by, which often includes us. Contrary to popular belief, ticks do not jump as their legs are not evolved to do so. Nor do they "drop from trees", as ticks are susceptible to desiccation, they rarely climb far from the ground where the humidity levels are higher.

Once on a host, the tick will then search for a site to feed and this may take up to two hours before attaching. On humans, the attachment site is often on the less exposed areas of the body such as among head hairs and the groin area (commonly on the scrotum in men). With kangaroos, a favoured locality for attachment is on the soft eyelids. After a site is chosen, knife edge structures called 'chelicerae' cut into the flesh and the tick's mouthparts are inserted. To avoid accidental or deliberate removal, the lower surface of the mouthparts has a series of backward pointing barbs and some species even glue themselves into place. As the tick begins to feed, the host is injected with saliva that contains an anticoagulant to prevent the blood from clotting.

For Hard ticks, the larvae will take blood from the host for several days and progressively swell up like a balloon, increasing maybe 100 fold in body weight. After engorgement, the larvae will randomly drop off and undergo metamorphosis to become a nymph, gaining an extra pair of legs (from 3 to 4 pairs). This transition will take several weeks. The nymph (1-2mm) will attempt to find a new host, blood engorge, and (if lucky) moult to the adult stage (2-3mm). The adult female, will feed for 6-8 days enlarging to around 1cm in diameter, drop off the host, lay

eggs and die. Adult male Hard ticks rarely feed from an animal, although will occasionally suck the blood (haemolymph) of a female tick, while she is attached to a host.

Soft ticks do not continually stay attached to the host during each life stage. Instead they occur in areas where animals rest, such as in bird nests and mammal lairs, and take several small blood meals before each moult. These ticks also have several nymphal stages, from two to six.

For the bushwalker's menace, i.e. the Paralysis tick, the life cycle has a distinct seasonality. The larval stage is most active from around January to around May, nymphs from May to September and adults from September to December. The adult female is the stage that can cause paralysis and is most likely to spread disease. Thus the greatest risk to the bushwalker, from this tick, is late in the year. The Paralysis tick is distributed along the coastal strip of eastern Australia and the preferred habitat is moist gulleys and rainforest areas.

There are two unwanted side effects that may occur as a tick feeds. Firstly, the anticoagulant that is pumped into the host, is often toxic, sometimes fatally so. Secondly, the tick may acquire a pathogen (a disease causing organism). When the tick feeds in later stages of its life, this pathogen can then be transmitted to other animals, including humans.

Scratch my Back and I'll Scratch Yours! (Allergic Reactions).

Allergic reactions in humans differ considerably between individuals. They can be in the form of a mild local skin reaction, to rashes accompanied by swelling with severe itching, to anaphylactic shock in hypersensitive individuals, which has the potential to be life threatening. For people who develop anaphylactic reactions, total avoidance of the bush may be the only life saving option. Occasionally, complications such as secondary infections may occur at the bite site after the tick has been removed.

Feeling Numb? Could it be Paralysis?

The saliva from certain species of tick contains a toxin that can cause a fatal paralysis and

children are most susceptible. The main species responsible is the Paralysis Tick, while *Ixodes hirsti* from southwest Western Australia and *Ixodes cornuatus* from Tasmania have also been implicated but to a much lesser extent than *Ixodes holocyclus*. Signs of tick envenomation include reduced co-ordination, lymph node swelling facial paralysis (known as Bell's palsy) and general paralysis. Death from respiratory failure may follow if the patient is left untreated. Despite many pets dying annually, there has been no human fatality with the improvements in supportive medicine and with the introduction of an antivenene in the early 1940's. However, around every two years a child will be admitted to Westmead Hospital with signs of a mysterious paralysis that is subsequently traced to an embedded Paralysis Tick. Currently, stocks of tick antivenene have declined to an alarmingly low level, and with no plans for any commercial production in the near future, the scenario for a preventable tragedy has been set.

Disease Spotting!

In Australia, the Spotted Fevers are the main diseases transmitted by ticks to humans. There are two types, Queensland Tick Typhus and Flinders Island Spotted Fever, although they are uncommon with less than 50 cases per year in New South Wales. These afflictions are caused by rickettsia, a group of primitive bacterial-like organisms. The signs of tick typhus include multiple rashes, headaches, fever, flu-like symptoms and lymph node tenderness. Tick typhus is treated with antibiotics, and rarely fatal. The disease is confined to the eastern coastal strip of Australia where it is transmitted to humans by the main vector, *Ixodes holocyclus*. Besides the rickettsias, several viruses have been isolated from ticks collected in the islands of the Great Barrier Reef. However, none of these have yet been associated with human disease.

The other tick transmitted syndrome that has been the subject of much debate in Australia is that of Lyme disease. Lyme disease is named after the district of Lyme in the United States where the disease was first recognised. It has become the second most important emerging disease in the United States behind AIDS, with

around 10,000 new cases annually. The symptoms of Lyme disease are varied, and can be easily confused with other syndromes. If left untreated, the long-term effects of Lyme disease can be extremely debilitating. Fortunately, the condition is readily cured with antibiotics. The debate in Australia concerns the presence of the disease in the country. Although human clinical cases have been reported since the early 1980s, there has been no conclusive evidence for the presence of the disease in Australia. A comprehensive survey of ticks using varying methodologies, undertaken by the Department of Medical Entomology at Westmead Hospital, found no evidence for any *Borrelia* (the spirochaete bacteria that causes Lyme disease) nor any other spirochaete. Other researchers believe there is some unidentified organism that causes a Lyme disease-like syndrome but the organism defies detection using current laboratory methods. However, in Australia, we do not have the tick vectors nor the animal reservoirs that are present in the endemic areas of the northern hemisphere, thus it is unlikely that true Lyme disease would exist here. If there is some form of local bacteria that causes a Lyme-like disease, it is rare. Clearly the debate will continue until (or if) a definitive causative organism is identified.

Feel like something Exotic? - Diseases beyond the ocean.

Overseas, there is a huge range of tick borne diseases including those caused by various viral, bacterial, rickettsial and protozoan pathogens. Some of these diseases, such as Colorado Tick Fever in the United States, produce mild flu like symptoms which often go undiagnosed. Others like Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever in the United States and Tick Borne Encephalitis throughout Europe, have high fatality rates (up to 30%) in untreated patients. Additionally, in the last twenty years several new and emerging human tick borne diseases have been identified. These include Lyme disease (as discussed above), Ehrlichiosis (caused by the rickettsia, *Ehrlichia*, and infection may result in death from internal haemorrhaging) and Babesiosis (caused by a malaria-like protozoan parasite, *Babesia microti* with various symptoms). The potential threat for the introduction and establishment of these diseases, and also foreign

tick species into Australia (as seen by a recent record of *Dermacentor variabilis* from the United States), is real and a high degree of vigilance must be maintained.

Beat the bite! (Prevention).

A variety of methods exist to reduce the possibility of tick bite and prevention is best achieved via some form of personal protection. People who bushwalk in tick infested areas need to use insect repellents, particularly those containing the chemical DEET, and these should be applied regularly to clothing. Once a tick is embedded into the skin, the preferable method for removal is to place a small amount of an insect repellent onto the tick, which kills the tick, and it can later be removed with the aid of a fine tipped pair of forceps. Other methods such as using nail polish remover, kerosene, vaseline or turps can cause the disgorgement of the gut contents into the host. For an animal in late stage paralysis, this may be fatal. If there are any ill effects after removing a tick, then a medical practitioner should be consulted.

Ticks our Friends?

In reality, ticks generally are more of a nuisance and tend to be only an occasional threat to our health, particularly if compared with other dangers which confront the bushwalker. Diseases from mosquitoes (especially Ross River disease) are far more common (by several hundred fold) and accidents while walking represents a much greater risk than any tick-borne disease. Of course, the Australian bush is the residence of the tick and it is we who intrude into their home, rather than vice-a-versa. We often forget that the Paralysis tick is a native animal and has every right to live and survive in its own natural habitat, as does something which we consider furry and cute.



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As ticks require animals as source for blood, the presence of ticks in an area suggests a healthy environment, usually with a variety of native marsupials. But, with urban development, bush fragmentation, feral animals, pollution and the many other forms of human activity which degrade native bushland, maybe it is the tick that is under the greater threat and not us humans.

FURTHER READING

PEARN J. (1977). *The Clinical Features of Tick Bite. Medical Journal of Australia*. 2: 313-6.

RUSSELL R.C., S.L. DOGGETT, R. MUNRO, J. ELLIS, D. AVERY, C. HUNT, and D. DICKESON. (1994). *Lyme disease: A search for the causative agent in ticks in southeastern Australia. Epidemiology and Infection*. 112: 375-384.

WEB SITES

<<http://www.peg.apc.org/~ullavet/tick.html#Life>>

(information on *Ixodes holocyclus*, largely from a veterinary aspect).

<<http://www.uri.edu/artsci/zool/ticklab/HomePg.html>>

(information from America for ticks, Lyme disease, Ehrlichiosis, Human Babesiosis).

<<http://www.dis.strath.ac.uk/vie/LymeEU/index.htm>>

(Lyme disease from Europe; tick biology, control and images).

About the author: Stephen Doggett is with the Department of Medical Entomology, University of Sydney & ICPMR, Westmead Hospital, Westmead NSW 2145. In November 1997 Stephen gave a talk about Ticks and other little things that bite to the SBW at the Kirribilli clubrooms. Stephen also can be reached via the Internet on E-mail <stephend@cidm.wsahs.nsw.gov.au>.

SOCIAL NIGHT: 28 JAN. 1998

At the clubroom: Alan Norman, senior NP&WS ranger based at Ulladulla south of Nowra will talk on wilderness and national parks management from the ranger's perspective. Come and hear how the NP&WS manage land, flora and fauna (including homo sapiens).

SOCIAL NIGHT: 18 FEB. 1998

Three round trips made by car in 1997 in Ireland, the south of England and New England, USA will feature in a slide presentation by Elwyn Morris and George Carter on Wednesday 18 February. The emphasis will be on scenic coasts and mountains where you could walk, hostel and/or camp. The few buildings shown will be mostly Irish ruins dating from about

4000 BC to 1500 AD, some English villages, and a couple of American lighthouses that enhance rather than spoil the landscape.

For those who would like to know how to cut travel costs to about \$A50 per person per day for everything including airfares, Elwyn is giving a U3A course on Budget Travel in the First World at McMahons Point Community Centre from 2PM to 4PM every second Tuesday, starting on 17 February.

CLUB COOLANA There is still plenty of opportunity to assist with the Coolana maintenance in the January - February period. The Coolana dates are 17/18 Jan., 31Jan/1 Feb., 14/15 Feb. and 28 Feb./1 Mar. Gardening tools are still need at Coolana and the management and staff of Club Coolana would be happy with your cast offs. Some rakes, spades, shovels, clippers, secateurs, wheel barrow, lawn mower, whipper-snipper, D6, D8 or D10 dozer.

NAME, ADDRESS & PHONE NUMBER CHANGES: *Changes to name, address or phone numbers should be sent to Membership Secretary: Barry Wallace. Don't delay details must be in by the end of January 1998.*

Looking Back - From Seven to Seventy Years

by Frank Rigby. At the age of seventy years Frank Rigby has looked back on his life and written a series of personal anecdotes. Frank's life has been varied and, at times, adventurous, and the anecdotes reflect that kind of life. Humour, drama, happiness, sadness and philosophy are all to be found in this interesting and readable little book. Self published, A5 size, 94 pages with some bushwalking anecdotes of interest to SBW members. Available directly from the author - publisher Frank Rigby, 77 Creswell Street, Campbell, ACT 2612 (phone 02 6247 2035) at the cost price of \$8 plus \$2 p&p.

NPWS draft NATURE, TOURISM & RECREATION STRATEGY. a review by Keith Muir.

Introduction

The NPWS Draft Nature Tourism and Recreation Strategy is a program for major change to national park management designed to benefit the tourism industry and make parks pay their way.

Rather than managing NSW protected areas primarily for nature conservation, the NPWS will be adopting a "far more business-like approach" (p9* by focusing on marketing, promoting and facilitating tourism and recreation. This will be done in partnership with private and government tourism bodies and with increased "stakeholder" input to management decision making. As a result management direction will be significantly influenced by those wanting to exploit national parks for profit and inappropriate use, despite a stated concern for environmental impacts.

** page numbers in the Draft Strategy*

Restructuring parks for profit

National parks are seen as having the potential to greatly increase tourist spending in NSW. There are currently 22 million visitors to NSW parks each year but this is predicted to rise to 32 million by 2005 under the Strategy (p20). In seeking increased revenue, the NPWS will sell their "product" to those who are easy to charge and likely to bring in the most money - the organised recreational users and mass tourism market. This means providing more facilities in parks for visitors who prefer to stay in built accommodation or travel through them by vehicle. In turn the tourism industry will profit more from parks through increased touring and development opportunities.

Stage One of the plan is timed to be "completed and operational" for the Olympics (p71). In partnership with private enterprise and Tourism NSW, the NPWS will ensure that 15 "key destination" park areas are "directly linked with the marketing of the 2000 Olympics." (p9).

Development within national parks

The NPWS policy of "no new accommodation structures within protected areas" (p69) will be swept aside by: "Exceptions to this policy may apply to situations that demonstrate a net overall benefit to the conservation status of the affected

protected area or where existing planning processes have proposed the need for accommodation." (emphasis added) (p69). If adopted, this means that built accommodation will be provided where it is considered commercially viable (park privatisation). In the Warrumbungles National Park, for example, cabin developments have been proposed (p104).

Existing structures in national parks will also be utilised for accommodation and other purposes to support tourism (p54).

More commercial tourism and high impact recreation

The NPWS licences 162 commercial tour operators in protected areas but this is only a fraction of the actual number and does not include coach tours (p32). Under the draft Strategy, commercial tour businesses will be helped by a system that will "lead to further licensed commercial tour opportunities within protected areas" (p9). This help will include advertising commercial tour opportunities, regular liaison meetings with "clients and stakeholders", "developing a special relationship" with the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife (whose current main sponsor is Toyota) and developing "working partnerships" with tour operators (p62).

The NPWS will broaden the range of experiences in national parks for all visitors including the mass tourism markets and "recreation pursuits" such as horseriding and four wheel driving (p27). Nature tourism in the document is defined to include *all* visitor use of parks (p27). Current infrastructure (roads, walkways, visitor centres etc.) will be upgraded, and "new or improved" tourist destinations will be established in national parks with assistance from the private sector and other partnerships (p33).

Restructuring park finances

The implementation of the Strategy's program will be resourced by reallocating existing NPWS funds (p10). No additional government funding is planned because increased revenue is expected from commercial opportunities. The draft Strategy states that the improved "planning and commercial management skills" of NPWS staff is expected to "significantly improve return of revenue" (p63) and management practices and techniques will be constantly reviewed to maintain customer service "even in

environments of decreasing funding" (p52). Increased commercial tour licences will also earn the NPWS more money and a "whole of NPWS retail product line (or lines) will be developed in partnership with private enterprise" (p61).

Internal NPWS funds will be realigned to reinvest in "improvements" to the key regional destinations (p56). However, it will be difficult to retain funds to protect an increasingly pressured environment, when those who pay to use the parks will demand visible value for money in the form of better roads, services and facilities.

NPWS staff as tourist managers

Staff will be recruited with business, financial and management skills and existing senior management will be trained in "business management training skills, particularly in relation to financial and economic management principles, marketing..." (p60). Staff performance will be measured in key aspects of business (eg. response time to commercial tour operating licence applications) (p60). New uniforms and badges will be introduced before the 2000 Olympics (p51). The emphasis on marketing and providing customer service distorts staff duty statements from primary environmental duties. In many cases staff will be reduced to little more than glorified tour agents and traffic wardens.

Competing with other States

Despite the already high visitor numbers relative to the rest of Australia, NSW is claimed to be lagging behind other States who "heavily market" their protected areas and are "far more organised for the holiday maker" (p27) such as Victoria (Wilson's Promontory resort), Queensland (Hinchinbrook resort) and Tasmania (Tarkine road).

In NSW, visitor desires, determined by stakeholder surveys etc., will be big influences on how parks are managed (a demand driven ideology). "Supply and demand" will be managed through methods such as "strategic marketing and product distribution" (p53).

Parks targeted for development

Parks in 15 regions will become prime tourist destinations through increased marketing and the identification, expansion and development

of visitor facilities and commercial opportunities. These 15 regions are labelled in the Strategy as "key regional destinations proposed to be improved to *"international destination product quality"* (emphasis added) (p104). For example, in the Blue Mountains Govetts Leap at Blackheath and Valley of the Waters at Wentworth Falls will be upgraded for coach facilities (p104) and in Northern NSW at Mt Warning, rainforest boardwalks and a visitor centre/transport interchange will be provided (p56).

Parks in "key destination" regions are to be themed as follows: "Australia's Holiday Coast" (mid north coast), "Northern Rivers and Tropical NSW" (north NSW), "Explorer Country" (Central West), "The Living Outback" (Far West), Blue Mountains, "The Hunter", "Snowy Mountains", "South Coast", and "Southern Highlands". These areas have been targeted because of their "ability to sustain visitor use" (p56), however, environmental values in many of them are already threatened by inappropriate use such as the ski resorts at Kosciuszko.

Other parks, such as Barrington Tops and Myall Lakes will be marketed on a regional level for the domestic tourism market. (p58)

Relationship to the NPWS Draft Access Strategy

The Draft Tourism Strategy is a far more detailed and unambiguous program for change compared to its companion, the draft Access Strategy. This earlier policy document, which created expectations for more vehicular and other high impact access to national parks, will be rolled into this strategy (p13). Input to the Access Strategy will also be used for developing the final Nature Tourism and Recreation Strategy (p13).

"Stakeholder" input: national park management

Greatly increased input from "key stakeholders" to national park management decisions is planned. This will be achieved through consultative forums and expanded advisory committee roles. The key stakeholders will include: tourism industry representatives, local government representatives, recreation user groups [4WD etc.], local residents, and conservationists (p40). This means management decisions will be more influenced by those

interested in high impact use and profit rather than nature conservation.

Categorising parks for recreational opportunities

NSW parks will be categorised using a "Recreational Opportunity Spectrum" (ROS) to indicate where, how much and what type of development, access, recreation etc. is permissible or appropriate within each park. Increased use can be directed to areas ranging from Class 1 (least developed) to Class 5 (suitable for resort development). This analysis is based on systems developed in Queensland and Victoria (p43).

The ROS has the potential of allowing parks to move up the scale to a category allowing more development.

Existing park access and facilities adequate

There are currently 2136km of public access roads, 1334km of walking tracks, 158 camping grounds, 400 picnic areas, 115 lookouts and, 57 visitor centres in NSW national parks. (p20).

A further 500km of roads and highways that pass through park areas, and private resort and lease arrangements already exist in places like Kosciuszko.

Environment

NSW National Parks make up about 5% of the State. There is a world-wide trend in loss of habitat and the ensuing extinction of species. Globally Australia is one of only 12 mega-diverse countries that account for 75% of the world's total biodiversity. In the last 200 years however, 100 plant and animal species have become extinct with 82 of those in NSW. Another 600 known species in NSW are listed as endangered or vulnerable with many others deserving that status. (p11) These figures indicate the importance of putting areas aside simply for the sake of keeping them

The Strategy states that "Habitat fragmentation and clearing is the main cause of species extinction", (p11) yet the change of direction in NPWS management will lead to increased fragmentation and development in parks.

This document dated December 1997 was prepared by Keith Muir of the Total Environment Centre. For more information contact Keith on (02) 9241 2702, or SBW Conservation Secretary Bill Holland on (02) 9484 6636.

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FOOTNOTES by Patrick James

What a Christmas party. Perfect weather, few if any mozzies. A turn-up of about 120 to 130 members; a huge crowd by SBW standards, some 25% of the membership. A wide and satisfying selection of food representing the wide and varied culinary imagination of bushwalkers. The food was complimented by two types of wine (red and white), orange juice and beer. Plenty of people to talk to and possibly to talk about. A happy way to end off a busy anniversary year. There was some confusion about the starting time. Oops, sorry about that.

The recent bushfires in the Kangaroo Valley did not affect Coolana as George Gray reported last month and others have confirmed. Coolana still needs maintenance; read about it on page 10.

With hot summer nights and hotter summer days heat exhaustion, dehydration and bushfires are top of the worry list. See next column.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

May/June 1998: Advance planning has started for a three week SBW walk in the Isdell River area, Kimberley WA. This is one of the most beautiful walking areas in Australia. This walk will be custom designed by Willis's Walkabouts for our group. Early cost indications are \$1,500 - \$1,800 ex Kununarra. Interested? Contact Frances Holland on 9484 6636 (business and after hours).

Walking in N.S.W. National Parks

A quite walk in a National Park may well become a thing of the past like silent movies and 12 inch LP records and the many other casualties of modern living. A walk may entail dodging 4WD vehicles enjoying the quiet solitude of the Australian bush or slaloming around horse shit left as a cultural reminder of equality of access to all. A quite walk may also entail having a copy of your \$zillion dollar public liability insurance with you at all times. At the December general meeting a motion was passed:

that it is SBW policy that all activities comply with NP&WS directions in regard to the closure of National Parks. If the park is open it's fine, if the park is closed we CANNOT walk in it. No insurance policy will cover illegal acts.

Extracts from the SBW First Aid Notes.

HYPERTHERMIA (HEAT EXHAUSTION) (too hot). Included here are severe sunburn, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. For sunburn see burns below. Heat stress is an elevated body temperature and occurs when the body can no longer control its temperature by sweating. It can occur on bushwalks when the temperature is high, the humidity is high, wearing too much clothing, strenuous walking such as climbing. Heat stroke is extreme heat exhaustion.

Signs & Symptoms Headache, dizziness, feeling hot, exhausted but restless, muscular cramps, fast and shallow breathing, skin pale and clammy, pulse rapid and weak.

Treatment Remove casualty to a cool or cooler place in the shade. remove as much clothing as possible, however there is no need to strip naked! Sponge down with cool water. Give plenty to drink; many small amounts in place of a few large amounts. Seek medical attention.

DEHYDRATION This can occur under strenuous exercise in hot weather or as the result of vomiting or diarrhoea. If you are experiencing cramps or headache you are probably dehydrated and may need to drink a litre or two of water to "catch up". The body can lose two litres of water in the first hour of strenuous activity and one litre per hour subsequently. It is very difficult to drink enough to make up for this rate of liquid loss. It is important to realise that not feeling thirsty is not always a good indication of your body's need for water. Somebody who needs to drink a litre of water may feel their thirst is satisfied after a few sips. Encourage a suspected dehydration patient to drink copiously. Treat by re-hydration with water or weak tea, and refrain from excessive quantities of tea, coffee, soft drink, beer, etc. as these are diuretic, i.e. they cause the body to excrete water. For vomiting and diarrhoea do not give solid food until the casualty has stabilised, that is within 12 hours (or overnight) being able to retain liquids. If not stable continue re-hydration and consider giving simple, easily digested foods, seek medical assistance. Mild dehydration is usually experienced on most summer walks. The sign is that one's urine appears to be more concentrated. Drink plenty of water.

A Happy and Prosperous New Year to all.