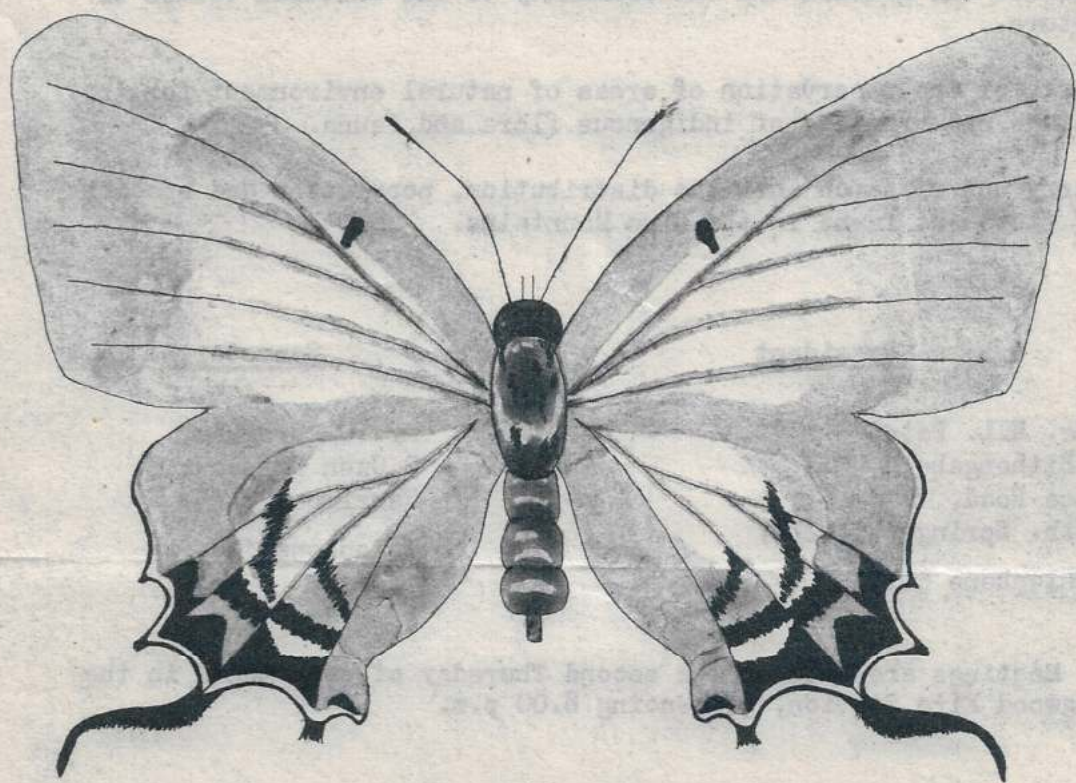


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KALORI

APRIL '69



Conservation Society

Lower Blue Mountains

Wildlife

CONSERVE, PRESERVE, INVESTIGATE, EDUCATE

Kalori is published monthly by and for the members of the Lower Blue Mountains Wildlife Conservation Society.

The aims of the Society are, briefly, to:-

1. Educate the members and the community to the cultural values of nature.
2. Work for the reservation of areas of natural environment for the refuge and breeding of indigenous flora and fauna.
3. Carry out research into the distribution, population and species of flora and fauna in the Blue Mountains.

President

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9 Gwen Crescent
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Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month in the Springwood Fire Station, commencing 8.00 p.m.

Bulletin No. 24

April 1969.

At the last meeting our Fire Protection Policy was adopted with some slight modification in clause I and a re-arrangement of the Clauses to give a more logical sequence.

We will circulate the policy as widely as possible, of course, in the hope of counterbalancing some of the rubbish already spoken and published.

As you know Miss Biggs has solicited reports of aboriginal paintings, rubbings, etc. To date she has three finds in the Springwood-Glenbrook area, all with one thing in common. The "owners" all say "Dont tell anyone." The locations will be recorded confidentially. Miss Biggs reported that there has been some slight difficulty with the survey because Rex Gilroy of Mount Yorrk is also doing the same type of survey, and stealing some of her thunder.

The City Council wrote regarding the Faulconbridge Mallee, saying that the question of a Tree Preservation Order will be considered, but will take some time. We will ask for a Provisional T.P.O. in anticipation of the Gazettal of the Town Plan.

Thirtyfive people, including our members, members of the B.M.G. S.G.A.P., Katoomba and Districts W.L.C.S. and Springwood Bushwalkers attended the Dinner on the 29th. March. Traditionally, the night was rainy and the heavy fog made for an exciting drive to the Wanderlight. A power failure delayed the proceedings somewhat but we all enjoyed the talk by the Superintendent of B.M.National Park, Mr.Mel Williams. Mel told us of his training at the Grand Canyon (U.S.A.) school for Rangers. Some of the highlights -- money seems to flow like water - all Rangers are trained in unarmed combat - there is enormous pressure on the Parks - some camping areas hold 500 caravans - Rangers guard the White House, National Monuments, some seashores and parkways - there are 8000 Rangers administering 214 areas - there are 32 National Parks covering 22 million acres - and while they are not so grand as the American Parks, he prefers the British parks.

Next meeting will be on 10th. April.

G.Croghan
Hon. Sec.

CONSERVATIONISTS SHOULD WORK WITH PLANNERS

In their present state of mind planning authorities regard conservation groups as being pretty unpractical - as well meaning people who express desires without having the remotest idea how these desires could be implemented. They are people entering an area of public policy without understanding the problems involved in framing and implementing public policy.

TCPA Councillor, John Handfield, said this recently when he addressed the Eltham National Development Association.

Mr. Handfield continued:

If you look at the way a planning authority looks at organisations such as yours, you will realise that they will see you as one of two opposite poles.

You stand for preservation, conservation and control over such things as pollution and development.

At the other end of the pole are the developers, industry and commerce and the property owners who stand for rapid economic growth, profitable development, the right for owners to sell land to developers and the right of developers to prepare this land for sub-division, sale and the erection of housing and factories and other buildings on it.

Unrealities

Many conservation organisations have the appearance that they believe in conservation as though it were an issue in a vacuum. The easiest way to preserve the quality of life would be to stop all development. Then no one would destroy the trees, or subdivide the rural lands, or increase the pollution of the rivers and the bay.

But, of course, this is not the issue confronting you.

It is not a question of conservation OR development, but conservation AND development; these two things going on side by side in the context of an economic system in which land is mostly privately owned. Conservation and development in a democratic structure where individuals are entitled to property rights and also in a context where we no longer have to fight for legislation and for the establishment of responsible planning authorities. The authorities and the legislation to create new authorities both exist. This means you now have someone to treat with and a set of legal and political procedures you can follow and you must learn to use them effectively.

If anyone here believes he can stop development, he is living in an unreal world. Development is a fact of life and it will occur at an ever-quickenning pace. Whatever policies you devise, they must fully reflect a recognition of this basic fact.

Dialogue

One big error that conservation organisations tend to make is that they do not seek to enter into dialogue with the developers.

They see them as implacable foes, as sub-humans who are moved by avarice and greed. On the other hand, subdividers tend to see groups such as yours as being starry-eyed idealists, well meaning but totally lacking in an appreciation of practical reality.

Neither view is correct and the greatest need is to bring about a situation where there is dialogue.

Environment

Let me now turn to conservation in relation to development. As far as the metropolitan area is concerned the only issue is how can we have both. Here we are concerned with making provision for human settlement and doing so without creating a monstrously unaesthetic environment. Conservation in this context must be based on compromise.

Most of the areas that we would want to conserve as public open space in one shape or another will be areas that are to be conserved for human use. This is an entirely different proposition to a national park. The national park exists to conserve flora and fauna per se and any human occupation of the area must be incidental and subject to this primary aim.

Most of the conservation that will occur in the metropolitan area will not be based so much on preservation but on re-creation; that is to say on environmental planning which will come into its own to re-create environments where native flora particularly and also fauna to a lesser extent can be established and survive even with human-beings sharing the occupation.

Environmental planning, in my view, is one of the major factors that can help you achieve your ends.

We have very little environmental planning at the present time and certainly very little on a large enough scale to be effective. Our planning schemes are largely, although not entirely, zoning schemes.

They lay down land use and make very little attempt to dictate terms governing how this approved use is implemented.

This is one of the biggest needs. It is practised in other countries but not to any significant extent in Melbourne nor, I believe, in many other parts of Australia.

Seminars

There is need on the one hand to keep up the pressure for conservation to carry out "hands off" operations when someone is proposing something particularly offensive, but this is the negative side of the coin. What I believe is a very big need is for this dialogue about which I have talked to take place through the sponsoring of seminars or conferences in which you would rub shoulders with the developers and the planners.

It would be the means of giving conservation a tremendous boost, of boosting Eltham as a conservation area and of making your organisation take on a new

image of being ahead of the trends. The seminar could bring the issues out into the open, give both sides a new perspective and make the authorities start to look at conservation in a new light.

I believe that your organisation represents an important new phenomenon in our community life. Those who have gone before have helped to bring into existence the planning authorities and the legislation. But by themselves these authorities and acts of parliament cannot ensure that the planning will be sound or that the quality of life will be improved. The counter=balance to the official organisations must be the grass roots organisations such as yours.

"When man, back before history began, started to grow plants and to guard them from destruction in order to have their products for use, and when he began to domesticate animals for the same purpose, he ceased to be an animal dependent for food, clothing, and other supplies on whatever he might find each day. With these first efforts to provide for future days and seasons, man began to manage land and the products of the land for his own benefit. The story of his successes and failures in this field is the story of the rise and fall of civilisations ... for man has never yet won independence from the land."

-- From "Wildlife Management" by Dr.I.N.Gabrielson.

FIRE PROTECTION POLICY

(Notes with respect to each clause are included to amplify the basic idea of each section).

Clause I. Access must be provided to all compartments of the Blue Mountains - access will need to range from tanker roads to walking trails depending on topography and fire potential. In dangerous areas access trails might be 1 mile apart, in safer areas 3-4 miles.

(Notes: The desirability of having access to and through primitive areas was discussed and the conclusion was reached that the National Park Trust be asked to eliminate any proposed trails within primitive areas as determined by the management plan and that the construction of access trails take into consideration that fire prevention must be appropriate to the designated use of various areas. The principle of "compartmentation" resulting from the construction of fire trails was considered excellent).

Clause II. When a fire is spotted, control measures be taken by highly mobile initial suppression forces.

(Note: The effectiveness of this initial suppression forces depends largely on the availability of access).

Clause III. Fires should be contained within compartments formed by access trails. All efforts must be made to prevent the spread of fire into other compartments.

(Note: This is a basic tenet of fire fighting and in itself needs no amplification - it was agreed, however, that the containment of a fire within a settled area preventing its escape to the bushland was highly important).

Clause IV. Provision must be made to close fire trails to all vehicular traffic except Fire Fighting Units.

Notes: It is an established fact that people are the major source of the initiation of Bush Fires and access trails will make fires deep in the bush more probable - similarly access trails will encourage undesirable elements to enter deeper into the National Park with attendant vandalism, despoilation, pollution and plain misuse).

Clause V. In times of high fire danger certain parts of the Park should be closed completely.

Clause VI. A buffer zone to be created around settlements. The most dangerous areas to be control burnt when the fuel content exceeds 4 tons/acre. Burns to avoid unnecessary loss to wildlife by taking account of flowering, seeding and nesting time.

(Note: This clause received the most attention and discussion. It was agreed that the general nature of our bushland was such that we would always have fires. Accepting this fact two members proposed that fire breaks should be burnt (1) over extensive areas near settlement, and (2) in one mile strips approximately one mile apart (governed by topography) from the Warragamba to the Colo.

Both these proposals were discarded for reasons (a) the breaks so created would do infinitely more damage to natural elements than a wild fire would do, (b) the cost of implementing this form of control would be prohibitive, coupled with the probable danger that the burns would get out of control, (c) no real benefit would be derived from this protection from fires originating within the settled areas.

It was agreed that fire control measures for settled areas and the National Park should be approached in separate methods. Control burns for protection of settlement should only be initiated on North to West ridge tops and slopes, and these be only of a depth of up to five chains - other boundaries to be controlled from access trails and "trittered" areas.

The question of the use of exotic plantations and belts of unflammable exotics as a method of control was raised but it was decided that this method would require more investigation.

It was agreed that fire control measures within the Park should be aimed at a minimum disturbance of natural ecology and to rely on access trails and compartmentation to contain outbreaks).

Clause VII Where a buffer zone is not burnt a break should be established between Residential and Bush areas, consisting of an access trail and an area of reduced fuel capacity.

Clause VIII Maximum penalties should be demanded for violations of the relevant Acts and Ordinances.

(Note: Greater publicity with regard to fire danger should be implemented, particularly in the form of warning signs along the roadside i.e. Fire Danger Index's: "Smokey" quotations etc.).

(General Note: It was stated that damage to wildlife and natural resources was greater through the encroachment of settlement than through the agency of fire.

It was suggested that the burning of various areas could be utilised in the manipulation of communities and that further information and investigation be carried out with this in mind.

Emphasis was placed on the fact that the function of this Society was in the protection of Natural Resources rather than settled areas and that Fire Prevention methods within the National Park and Reserve Areas should only be carried out after consultation with experienced Fire Control Officers of the various State and Federal Departments and not to rely wholly on local members who are inclined to be biased on the side of protection of only the residential areas).

SURVEY OF WILDLIFE

The Common Imperial Blue.

Jalmenus evagoratus evagoratus

During the past weeks reports have come in concerning the appearance of numbers of blue and orange butterflies swarming around the tops of small wattles, mainly the Sunshine Wattle (*A. botrycephala*) and the Green Wattle (*A. decurrens*). Connected with the swarms of butterflies are clusters of small, greenish-black caterpillars and myriads of small, active, strong-smelling black ants. This phenomenon, fairly common in areas of eastern Australia at this time of year, is an illustration of the harmonious association of two widely differing species.

The butterfly is the Common Imperial Blue, the caterpillars are its larvae, and the association with ants is widespread in the family Lycaenidae, to which it belongs. The larvae exude a sweet fluid from glands on their back, and the ants (apparently with a sweet tooth) can be seen eagerly feeding on the delicacy. There is no doubt that in return the ants give the larvae protection from enemies such as carnivorous ants, and I feel that even birds would be deterred, as immediately the branch holding the larvae is touched the ants swarm over the hands and arms, demonstrating by sharp nips that interference is not to be tolerated.

Recently, while trying to transfer some larvae from their original tree to a new wattle, unattended by ants, I noticed that the larvae were being carried off by greenhead ants; I picked up a larva, which a greenhead staunchly refused to release, and with the ant still maintaining a firm hold, placed it on the tree where ants were attending other larvae. The smaller ants immediately attacked the larger marauder, swarming over it and forcing it, not only to release the prize but also to drop to the ground for safety!

When the larvae are fully fed they form clusters of glossy black pupae towards the tips of the usually denuded branches, often forming a thin silken web over stems and leaf-stalks. They then attach themselves head downward by the tail and central silken girdle.

This is a very beautiful small butterfly, measuring about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the outstretched wings in a large specimen; size however is very variable. The upper surfaces have the central areas pale silky metallic blue and the outer margins black. See the cover of this issue of Kalori for a drawing. The undersurfaces are a rich fawn with scribbly black lines and dots with a bright orange patch on the bottom edge of the hindwings, which carry fine black tails with a white spot at the end.

Another peculiarity of this species is that it selects one or two wattles, (usually small trees) in a given area and breeds on these trees year after year, ignoring other trees of the same species growing nearby. I hope to determine this year whether some pupae remain on the tree over winter, thus providing breeding stock for the next summer.

Due to their preference for small trees, these butterflies can be a nuisance where wattles are being propagated as trees are often completely defoliated. However, gardeners are begged for leniency - after all, aren't butterflies an attractive addition to a garden?

FOR THE SCIENTIFICALLY MINDED :-

Jalmenus evagoraus evagoraus, with its two recognised sub-species, ranges from Cape York to Victoria. It is fairly common throughout its range, but local. The genus contains seven species and several sub-species. All are Acacia feeders and all are attended by ants. It belongs to the large sub-family Lycaeninae, of the family Lycaenidae. (Blues, Coppers, Hairstreaks Azures and Jewels).

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

To the Treasurer,
Mrs D. Dark,
"Nimaloola",
Russell Ave.,
Valley Heights, 2777.

Enclosed please find the sum of \$ to cover one years membership*

Name in full.....

Address in full.....

Occupation.....

* Individuals \$2.00 annually or \$20.00 Life.
Associates \$1.00 annually - Subscription to Kalori
Junior 30 cents annually
Family \$3.00 annually.