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KALORI

September '70



A click beetle

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.

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NOTES.

Are all members aware of the proposed fire trail from Mt. Hay south to Mt. Whitton? This is an area proposed as a wilderness area within the Blue Mountains National Park. This trail has been (apparently) approved by N.P. & W.S. The Park Trust and other important administrators are opposed to its construction. At a recent meeting of the Springwood Bushwalkers' Club, Mr. Hurditch of the Chief Secretary's Department, answered questions and defended the construction of the trail as a necessary boundary for aerial incendiary controlled burning. Park policy?

At a recent symposium organised by National Parks Association Bushfire Committee, Mr. D. Holmes, Assistant Director (Management) N.P. & W.S. stated that he would not be responsible for sending men into a wilderness area to fight fires if there was no vehicular access. Does this statement indicate N.P. & W.S. attitude to wilderness areas? If so, what price roadless bushlands? At the same time, Mr. Holmes confesses that "the fire trail system is a bit out of hand on the Blue Mountains".

On the subject of controlled burning: much learned discussion has gone on recently about "modifying the environment", "environmental planning", "selective environmental management", etc. It is apparently agreed that controlled burning is the only feasible way to prevent wildfires.

I think the unanimity of opinion on these matters is summed up in one sentence in the leaflet distributed at the previously-mentioned symposium :-

"Which examples of this are for better and which for worse, and in whose opinion, and why?"

A. G. Macarthur, Acting Director, Forest Research Institute, Department of National Development, A.C.T., who is probably the greatest authority on controlled burning in Australia, has laid down a very rigid set of conditions for prescribed burning. However, his statement that "operators often disregard instructions" leaves us somewhat apprehensive.

-- KEITH KING.

WILDLIFE SURVEY.

Four of us camped the night at Ingar Waterhole on Saturday, September 5, in an effort to discover what animals made the runways through swamp vegetation. Trapping was unsuccessful, so we will try again next Saturday night.

Fred Astle of Faulconbridge has Lyrebird trouble. The birds threaten to reduce his much-prized garden to something resembling a fowl-yard. He has had a pair visiting the garden for years, who were quite welcome. However, they have recently been joined by two more hen birds, and the extra cultivating is a bit more than Fred requires.

A committee has been formed within the Blue Mountains Group of the S.G.A.P. to foster public interest in growing plants - native, of course - which will attract birds to gardens. Information is available from Don Perrin or myself.

Michael Smithson reports a Regent Honeyeater at Castlereagh State Forest. We have three reports in recent months of Wedgetailed Eagles - Linden, Mt. Hay and Wentworth Falls.

Don't forget the Myall Lakes trip on 3rd, 4th and 5th October.

-- KEITH KING.

PESTS FOLLOW THE CHEMICALS IN THE COCOA OF MALAYSIA

continued from August.

In the fields the trees were acting as focuses for the infestations in the cocoa and, therefore, steps were taken to eradicate *Trema* from the cocoa and from much of the surrounding areas. Combining these two measures proved immediately effective and borer damage dropped off rapidly. From 1962 onward, mortality in new plantings during the first two years was usually well below 0.5 per cent. In the case of the bagworms an intensive search was carried out in the hope of finding a selective insecticide that would give control. Finally, in 1962, two insecticides were obtained, and were found to give rapid and complete mortality. Regular monthly sprayings of the infested 45 acres at the Cocoa Research Station was thus begun in May. The treatment brought about an immediate effect; the bagworm population dropped rapidly and the trees began to recover, putting out new flushes of leaves that were able to survive. By April of 1963 the population was very low, the damage insignificant, and the sprayings were stopped.

Thus in 1962, most of the pests, which had been so important in 1960 and 1961, had succumbed to natural control of one form or another or, in the cases of the ring bark borer and the bagworms, had come under effective and selective artificial control. In 1963 artificial control was no longer needed against the bagworms, and the high incidence of parasitic tachinid flies suggested that the tachinids were now responsible for keeping the bagworms in check. Significantly, in the subsequent five years, none of these pests have built up again.

Apparently, the clearing of the primary forest and the planting of cocoa in Sabah has resulted in this chain of events. The bare areas following the clearing of the primary forest have become colonized by secondary forest plants and by the transplanted cocoa seedlings. Fugitive insect species have moved in, attracted to the secondary growth plants, and to the cocoa as well. There, as a result of the damage they caused, some became pests. But at this point the picture was complicated by the intrusion of heavy applications of contact-acting insecticides. In effect these seemed to have either prevented the expected natural enemies from entering the crop or destroyed those already present and exercising some sort of control. Many of the pests, in consequence, instead of exploding briefly and dying out, continued to multiply, producing major and prolonged outbreaks. Cessation of the spraying at the end of 1961 appears to have corrected the situation. The major outbreaks have come under natural control, leaving only a few pests, that required selective, artificial control measures.

Extract from "Natural History"

Vol. LXXVIII No. 2, February, 1969. *****

SPRINGWOOD BUSHWALKING CLUB

WALKS PROGRAMME

September 5/6 Bungonia Caves

13 September

DAY WALK - Lilyvale Station -
Palona Brook - Colbee Knob -
Palona Brook - Lilyvale Station.
8.30 a.m. Lilyvale Stn.
Easy. Chris Burns. per 528.7354

19/20 September

Capertee Valley - Pantony's Crown -
and Gundangaroo with Glen Davis.
8.00 p.m. Friday Civic Centre.
Easy/medium. N.Stanborough 511523

26/27 September

Lilyvale Station - Werrong Beach -
coast to Wollongong.
8.00 p.m. Friday Civic Centre.
Chris Burns per 528.7354.

3/4/5 October

Budawang Ranges. Corang Peak - Angel
Creek - Holland Gorge - Darri Pass -
Monolith Valley - Corang Peak.
8.00 p.m. Friday Civic Centre.
Med/hard. R.Kaltenbacher 511196.

10/11 October

Dharug National Park. Aboriginal
rock drawings. Easy/medium.
Al Barry 512527

WALKS SECRETARY == Ray Kaltenbacher. 511196 (h) 519.3200 (w)

CONSERVATION VICTORY.

The refusal, on August 26, by the Queensland Government coalition parties, to grant mining leases over the unique Cooloola sandmass is probably the most heartening news conservationists in Australia have ever had. It represents the first significant victory by those dedicated to retaining some undamaged examples of Australia, over the omnipotent Mining Act, that nefarious piece of legislature designed expressly for exploitive short-term profit earning.

That it was Queensland, a state often maligned for its lack of conservation policies regarding kangaroos, crocodiles and rainforests, that has taken the lead in commonsense and far-sighted thinking, should be a sobering thought for southerners.

It would be fitting for a vote of thanks to be forwarded to the Queensland Government from every conservation society in Australia.

The mining companies responded with their usual propaganda (plus a full page in the "Herald" prior to the decision) with threatening statements about "tragic loss (of income) to Queensland", and "the industry re-examining its position in Queensland". Compared to the industries' leases over 400 miles of coastline in N.S.W. out of which only 5 miles is reserved from mining, the loss of 16,000 acres at Cooloola is infinitesimal. From those of us who know of the tactics of the mining companies in the early days, when mineral prices fluctuated, their professed concern about the economy due to wage losses can only be greeted with cynicism. Any drop in prices which threatened their profits was immediately met by a wholesale sacking of all but a skeleton staff of employees. The fact that the sandmining industry is regarded as the cheapest form of mining, and represents the greatest return on investment of any industry in Australia, explains why so much pressure has been brought to bear on politicians and the public alike, both by the industry and the various Ministers for Mines.

To anyone who may still be sympathetic to the rutile mining industry, it can be pointed out that it employs a mere few hundred men throughout the entire N.S.W. coastline. The greatest beneficiaries of the industry are America and a handful of men in Australia, some of whom are now millionaires.

It should be encouraging to conservationists that the sand-miners have felt it necessary to form an association, the R.Z.D.A., which also acts as a publicity committee to plead their case. This association has, by issuing misleading and often completely false statements, and soliciting the materialistic elements of shire councils, assisted the industry to obtain leases over literally every square inch of minable coastline, regardless of other values, and no matter how low the concentration of mineral may be.

The fact that some areas of the eastern coastline, such as Myall Lakes, Evans Head, Jerusalem Ck, etc., will be of incalculable value as scenic and recreation areas for the rapidly increasing population, and irreplaceable as study areas for geologists and ecologists, means nothing to these exploiters, interested only in grabbing what they can during their brief life-span and to hell with the future.

While we struggle pathetically to retain a few miserable acres for posterity, the sands are indeed running out for future generations. For these coastal environments are the ones most closely threatened and the ones most irrevocably destroyed whether by miners, developers, pastoralists or foresters.

Let us take heart from the Cooloolo example and re-double our efforts to impress politicians that there are as many people concerned with retaining natural values in our way of life, as there are materialists, who would condemn us to a steel, concrete and plastic smogatorium.

-- KEITH KING.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

To the Treasurer,
Mrs.D. Dark,
"Nimaloola",
Russell Avenue,
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.