



In this issue

- Dooley Trail
- Graham Ristow
- Membership numbers concern
- Bird counting
- On the web site
- **WILDCARE** nature writing prize results
- WCWA

Newsletter of **WILDCARE Inc**

Tasmania's largest incorporated volunteer organisation, caring for wild places, wildlife and cultural heritage.

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Outlook Mt. Roland Envirofunds Project Launch

by Annie Heyes, Treasurer Outlook Mt. Roland
(Mt. Roland CAREs Group)

The ever-increasing numbers of visitors travelling between Sheffield and Cradle Mountain are now presented with a new vision of the Mt. Roland Regional Reserve inspired by Outlook Mt. Roland. Eye-catching interpretative murals of the stunning mountain panorama which dominates the landscape now arrest visitors to the O'Neills Creek Picnic Reserve and Mt. Roland Regional Reserve in Gowrie Park.

The murals, painted on the picnic shelter by local artist Alicia Swiderski, portray the area as it might have appeared in the early 1900s, during the Weindorfer's historic honeymoon and a time when the Thylacine still roamed the bush. Some of the richly diverse flora and fauna found within the Regional Reserve are also illustrated and described.

Bushwalkers to Mts. Roland, Van Dyke and Claude will find their experience of the mountains greatly enhanced by Outlook's other two interpretative projects. One, botanical identification brochure of successive plant communities on Mt. Roland from the foothills to the summit, includes photos and descriptions of typical species, together with information about soil types and fire recovery. The brochure, researched and designed by Hobart botanist Dr. Richard Barnes, is non-technical and will be informative to the general public, which increasingly includes visitors from all over the world.

The second brochure, a bird identification checklist and site guide for the Mt. Roland area, assists in the identification of over 90 species of birds recorded in the vicinity, especially in the lower forests of Mt. Roland. Additional details of endemic species and others of special interest are also provided. This brochure, researched and written by local resident Jim Hunter, is designed for use along with an illustrated ornithological field guide.

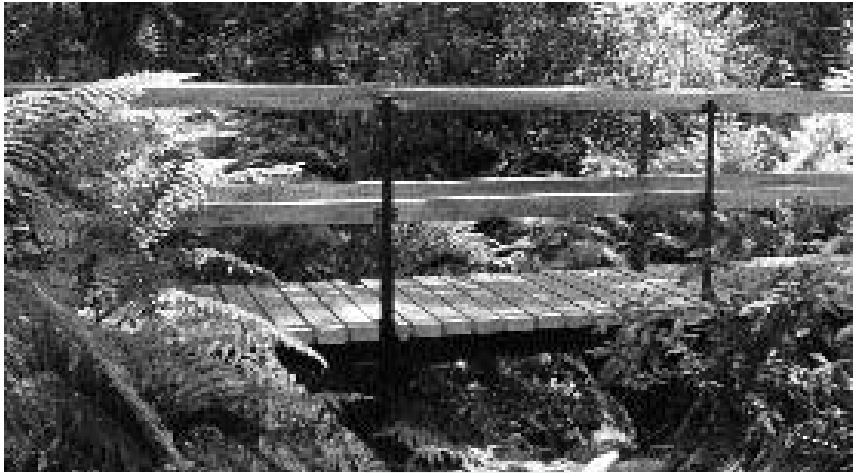
These three projects, generously funded by the Australian Government's Envirofund programme and supported by the Kentish Council, the



Tasmanian Parks & Wildlife Service, and **WILDCARE Inc**, were officially launched on Saturday 23 April at the O'Neill's Creek Picnic Reserve, Gowrie Park. Thirty members of the public attended, including Mayor Ian Braid, who gave a brief address extolling Outlook Mt. Roland and its volunteer contributions to the community over the past five years. Also present were General Manager Mark Crouch of the Kentish Council, several councillors and various other supporters. Richard Hammond, Elected Co-chair of **WILDCARE Inc**, spoke of the vital role of **WILDCARE's** member CAREs groups in caretaking the environment.

Outlook Mt. Roland (which, as the Mt. Roland CAREs Group, is a member group of **WILDCARE Inc**) is a small volunteer organisation whose main purpose is to promote public awareness of, and encourage ecologically sustainable recreation in, the Mt. Roland Regional Reserve and environs. The three Envirofund projects are the end result of a three year effort by Outlook's Envirofund Projects Coordinator, Annie Heyes, who conceived and developed the projects, obtained the federal grant and oversaw the project completion by its contributors. Her objective in undertaking these three projects was to enhance the visitor's appreciation and understanding of the rich natural resources and historical heritage we are so fortunate to have associated with one of Tasmania's icons - Mt. Roland.

Stream and river crossings along the Dooley Trail



The Dooley Trail along the Wilmot River in central north Tasmania gets safer and closer to being opened with every day we work there. After benching and stabilising the track, an ongoing process, the latest thing members and partners of the Wilmot Heritage Trails CAREs Group have done is to build the first river and stream crossings... and they were quite resourceful in doing so!

Our funding application to Regional Partnership was approved in June 2004. The money was dedicated to build bridges & stream crossings, toilets, shelters and other work to upgrade the Dooley Trail. Our calculations were very tight and by the

time the approval came through, we were looking for ways to save money at every corner. We became a frequent customer at a second hand steel trader at Quoiba near Devonport – and after a while found good quality steel beams. Some years ago they had been built into a hops processing machine in the southern part of the state. Local farmers (also members of our group) cleaned and cut them to size, welded handrails on and turned them, with quite a bit of effort and excellent craftsmanship, into bridges over Viking Creek (about 6m) and Payne Creek (about 8m) which both flow into the Wilmot River.

Then we had a transportation problem - the heavy steel had to go down a steep eroded road to the construction site. Thanks to the Army 44th Transport Company in Devonport, glad to escape the routine-driving and keen on an opportunity to give their 4WD-machinery and the drivers a good exercise came on a Saturday morning with a Mogg, a Landover and a motorbike for escort. They loaded the beams, planking and railing (milled by local farmers too), gravel & cement for foundations, our wheelbarrow, hand mixer and tools and carted them very carefully to the construction site. We thank Captain Scott and his men – for there would have been no other possibility to get the tons of material down to the river. We were also fortunate that they agreed to help us with the next bridges as well.

It took us another month to finish the work down by the river – concrete mixing in a hand mixer for the foundations, river bank

stabilisation, planking, railing and painting... but now the first two bridges are done and they are very sturdy and stable!

The bridges had to be built over the bigger streams, because it was hard to get up the slippery creek bank after a rain – and that means usually for half the year.

At other places we have to cross the Wilmot River itself (for loop tracks and access to the original Dooley Trail) and these spots are too wide to easily build a bridge. But for six months a year the water level is low enough to – up until recently – take your boots off, grab a stick and wade through the river. On sunny days that was quite a pleasant experience, but then again in summer the rocks get slippery and make a bit of a wobbly passage. So what about having comfortable flat stepping stones all the way across? We thought about it and then came up with the idea to build concrete paddies (40-50 cm in diameter) into the riverbed.

The forms for the paddies we constructed out of pieces of old conveyor belts (which we also found at the second hand steel trader... wonderful things are lying around there if you have the patience to look for them, don't mind dirt, a bit of grease and rust!).

We found a shallow passage in the river and laid the forms out, in comfortable step-width. We also needed tough garbage bags to put inside the belt-forms and which we filled with concrete. Afterwards we hoped that no one would walk by while still wet and step into it... we were lucky. A few days later the belt-forms came off and the bags were cut – what remained was a quite nice looking dot-line that keeps your feet dry... well, at least half the year. And just a few days after finishing the steps we received enthusiastic feedback from some older bush walkers who said that with the lily pad steps they can walk right at the surface of the water and still feel safe.




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Graham Ristow

Sadly, Graham Ristow, a long-term member, past Treasurer, and our Graphic Designer passed away recently. Graham had multiple myeloma and after managing the illness successfully for a couple of years finally succumbed during what should have been just another visit to the hospital for treatment.

Many of the Board of Management members knew Graham well, as he spent four years (1999 – 2002) as Treasurer. Members will be familiar with his creative contributions, as **WILDCARE**'s Graphic designer since 1997 including on an entirely voluntary basis over the past couple of years. Graham designed and produced the logo, the stickers, the membership forms, the sponsorship forms, the Newsletter **WILDTIMES**, in fact all of the publications and images that promote and present **WILDCARE Inc** to the world.

Graham was a person intensely interested in the projects of the moment and the excitement and potential of things to come but had an enormous body of work, and a very varied life, behind him. I was pleased to see a **WILDCARE** cap sitting on top of Graham's coffin amongst the flowers. His involvement was a very important activity for him and provided an enormous benefit to **WILDCARE Inc**.

I first met Graham in the early 80s while I was working with PWS; and we lived close-by each other at Mountain River. We shared important interests – art and wildlife conservation. Over the 20 years that we knew each other, work and those two common interests meant that we were in constant contact about the current or next project. Apart from his **WILDCARE Inc** images, his artwork can be seen in brochures and displays in many National Parks and at the botanic gardens. It was almost an institution to have one of the displays he had designed and built at agricultural shows, Agfest, in visitor centres, at beginnings of walking tracks and so on and so on. At Mountain River his sheds overflowed with display panels and exhibitions that he not only designed but also constructed from scratch.

Graham was meticulously organised, and a stickler for doing things perfectly, particularly as far as running his business, Graphic Plus, and being **WILDCARE** Treasurer.

Graham's had an enormous enthusiasm for wild animals, first manifested as a collector of exotic wildlife in the UK, including numerous pythons and venomous snakes. When he arrived in Australia he took on caring for injured wildlife, particularly birds of prey, and in recent years had often contemplated taking on a coordination role for wildlife care in southern Tasmania, as part of his volunteer work for **WILDCARE**.

When it became necessary for him to close his business due to his illness, it was an incredibly difficult thing for him to do. While getting rid of the stressful deadlines that were becoming more difficult to meet was a relief, it was a decision not taken lightly. In fact he couldn't stop being creative entirely. So he decided to keep producing the **WILDCARE Inc** newsletter, as he had done since 1997, except that he would do it as a volunteer. Right from the start **WILDTIMES** has been the flagship for **WILDCARE Inc**, a high quality magazine production that showed that we meant business, and one that Graham continued to refine and update the design of even as recently as two editions ago. His important contribution to publishing each edition has been very strongly highlighted as we have struggled to get this edition produced and to members. At the same time, as a volunteer, he also took on the project of redesigning the **WILDCARE** web page. He had begun the web site project and produced some great designs, using his exceptional design skills and teaching himself how to use the web site building software as he went.

These generous offers meant that Graham was providing the equivalent of many thousands of dollars of his expertise and time, totally free of charge. He did this even though he was ill. He had to remain creative and contribute to what was going on. He had to continue to learn to do new things. He felt that even with everything that he was dealing with, it was still worth being involved in **WILDCARE Inc**.

Graham's volunteer and professional commitment to **WILDCARE** was extra-ordinary, extending over nine years, including the last three years of illness, - always of the



highest standard, always reliable, always passionate and always with good humour. He was a kind, gentle, patient, passionate, trustworthy, dedicated and creative soul, and **WILDCARE Inc** benefited, and continues to benefit,

Gordon Gateway

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Membership numbers addressed

Our total membership has fallen for the first time since we began in 1997. From a total of just under 4000 members at the end of 2003, membership has fallen to around 2500 at the end of the 2004 membership year. Early indications are that there has been a further fall in the 2005 membership year. This is of concern to the Board of Management, as even if those members were not active volunteers they represent \$37,500 reduction in income. This obviously then restricts the number of projects that can be funded, which is further exacerbated because we are unable to increase the value by providing volunteer time, and PWS or NCB lose the ability to undertake the projects.

There are some indications that the rise in membership fees (decided by the AGM in 2003) and, more importantly, the resulting difference between the membership fee (\$25) and the discount offered by PWS on Annual All-Parks Passes (\$20), has been responsible for the loss of some of those potential and past members who used the join-purchase method provided by the PWS Annual All-Parks Pass system. The perception previously was that you could

get two-for-the-price-of-one. That changed to paying an extra \$5 for the combination of **WILDCARE** membership and discounted Annual All-Parks Pass.

Of additional concern in 2005 are the changes to the Annual Park Pass Renewal Form, which no longer has an option to renew **WILDCARE Inc** membership at the same time as purchasing the Annual Park Pass. This has been exacerbated by the fact that there is now a mismatch between a 2-year All-Parks Pass and annual WILDCARE membership.

For some, the above facts appear to have been sufficient disincentive to joining **WILDCARE Inc**.

There appears also to have been a reduction in numbers amongst active volunteers on the register. This is harder to explain but it is likely to relate to some changes and confusions arising from the relationship between new Agencies and us during a period of Departmental restructuring. In fact, this relationship, particularly on the ground, remains unchanged and very strong, particularly as new groups are being formed on a regular basis.

A degree of confusion within both Agencies over the role of **WILDCARE Inc** in light of changes to how volunteer insurance cover is provided under new Agency guidelines has become evident. It appears that some people, particularly within the Agencies, have difficulty in separating the notion of a register and source of volunteers (ie a volunteer database - which is what **WILDCARE Inc** is) from a means of ensuring adequate insurance cover for volunteers. There is also a deal of confusion between the roles of **WILDCARE Inc** and the Community Partnerships Branch of RMC.

When these issues, particularly those relating to the All-Parks Pass renewal form, were raised with Peter Mooney, the General Manager of the PWS, immediate fruitful discussions were begun to examine means of addressing them. To this end, on-going negotiations are in place to incorporate existing arrangements between the Agencies **WILDCARE Inc** through the formalisation of administrative agreements. Additionally, as part of its review of the membership database and the web page etc, the Board of Management will consider the introduction of a 2-year membership.

Richard Hammond
Co-Chair (Elected)

WILDCARE AGM 19/03/05

AGM Outcomes

Major item of business was the elections of Co-Chair and Treasurer. Results are

- Richard Hammond **Co-Chair (Elected)**
- Amanda Winter **Treasurer**

Co-Chair Appointed report

Another productive year has passed with members continuing to provide extraordinary assistance to Parks and Wildlife Service, Nature Conservation Branch, Cultural Heritage Branch, Wild Fisheries Branch (DPIWE) and Forestry Tasmania (Adopt-a-Track only), local councils and others. Our members continue to provide around the 250,000 hours of on-ground assistance each, including short day-long or weekend working bees, the annual 10 day expedition to Schouten Island, the summer-long programs on the Overland Track, at Waterfall Valley and Narcissus Hut, and the Orange-bellied Parrot program in the South West, the year-round island

caretaking on Maatsuyker island and Deal Island and the year round Visitor Centre staffing at Low Head and Tamar island, and on-going Track Caretaker agreements. The Newsletter is now carrying regular updates from the CAREs groups around the State, giving a good indication of all the large and small projects we are undertaking.

While the total number of members has fallen this year (see above report), the number of CAREs groups supporting reserves has continued to grow, with well over 30 groups now operating throughout the State. The latest include Milaythin Muka - our first Indigenous group, Friends of Tasman Island, Friends of Bell Bouy Beach, Friends of Trevallyn, and Friends of Coningham Reserve. Welcome to all new groups and their membership, and welcome to their Presidents, who are now members of the Board of Management.

During the year a new batch of **WILDCARE** Land for Wildlife Property Assessors were trained, taking the

number to thirty five. These members respond to expressions of interest from landholders to have their properties assessed for registration with the Land for Wildlife Scheme, recognising their wildlife-friendly management practices. We once again, in cooperation with Nature Conservation Branch provided training for whale rescue volunteers around the State. This year funding was greatly assisted by a donation of \$1000 from KPMG, as part of a study scholarship won by our Editor, Jennifer Partridge, to travel to New Zealand to study whales and dolphins. Thanks Jennifer, and thanks KPMG!

At last year's Conference a high priority was placed on developing the **WILDSC'OOOL** concept. During the year a number of funding proposals were developed, but were unsuccessful. We do however have an enthusiastic group of members who are steadily pulling the program together, and hopefully by the end of 2005 we will have something to offer to schools and members who wish to support environmental education in schools.

Safety has been a big issue during the



year, and after some difficulties within the Departments about how best to ensure good safety planning and safe work places, this seems to be operating fairly smoothly now. Remember that when you are working on an NCB or PWS project, or in fact with any government agency, they have the responsibility for your safety and you will need to comply with any instructions made in relation to that. It is great to see such a high priority being placed on the safety of volunteers.

I would like to thank the **WILDCARE** Office volunteers Lyn and Mike for their continuing efforts in keeping the membership database up to date, doing mailouts, organising mailing of the newsletter, answering correspondence and phone calls. Fantastic work, without which this organisation would not function.

Thank you goes to Christopher Leitch who continues to work as the conduit between volunteers and DPIWE and PWS. His role is pivotal for all organisations involved, and his experience and skills have been invaluable in project motivation, coordination and support.

Thank you to those members of the Board who are there because they represent parts of our partner organisations – for cultural heritage - Jo Lyngcoln, for PWS - Tanzi Lewis, Liz Wren and Meegan Essex, and for NCB - Sally Bryant and Alistair Scott. This participation helps to ensure a mutually beneficial relationship for all concerned. Thank you Richard for your efforts in the new role of Co-Chair (Elected). Sharing the Chairperson roles and responsibilities with someone as competent, committed and knowledgeable as you has been very enjoyable. The concept of the Co-Chair arrangement was designed to emphasise the partnership relationship between the Agencies and **WILDCARE Inc** and share the work and responsibilities between all the parties that benefit from the partnership. It works wonderfully.

And finally, thank you to all the members of **WILDCARE Inc** for your continuing dedication to natural and cultural heritage conservation and reserve management. The millions of dollars value that you contribute to the cause through you time and your membership fees is just astounding. Your capacity and willingness to just get on with and do it well is brilliant. Without you, Tasmania's natural and cultural heritage would unquestionably be worse off.

Co-Chair (Elected) report

- The Board of Management met 5 times during 2004 (1 scheduled meeting failed to attract a quorum) and approved funding for 15 internal projects totalling \$34,000. Eleven of these projects were with the Parks & Wildlife Service, two with Nature Conservation Branch & two with **WILDCARE** as reported in earlier edition of **WILDTIMES**.
- **WILDCARE** groups have been successful in attracting \$117,853.90 in external funding spread over nine projects - two with Nature Conservation Branch and the remainder with the Parks & Wildlife Service as reported in earlier edition of **WILDTIMES**.
- Since both the Parks & Wildlife Service and Nature Conservation Branch have acknowledged their responsibility for ensuring that volunteers working for them are appropriately covered by accident insurance, the insurance premium paid by **WILDCARE** for accident insurance has decreased dramatically. This has raised other issues, though, most notably a perceived confusion of the role of the **WILDCARE** member database and its use. This is being addressed.
- The ongoing failure of our attempts to achieve Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status has been a source of anxiety. Demands by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage that we remove all reference to cultural heritage from our constitution have been strenuously resisted. A compromise solution, worked out in February 2005, was agreed to and put to the Special General Meeting earlier (19/03/05) and was passed without dissent. Under the agreement reached with DEH, our inscription on the Register of Environmental Organisations (what a term) will be fast-tracked
- A plea for more branch presidents to take a part in the management of **WILDCARE** and attend BoM meetings has resulted in a larger number of formal apologies being received for meetings.
- As a direct result of the acceptance of responsibility by PWS and NCB for the supply of accident insurance cover for volunteers, the number of requests for authorisation of individual volunteers through the **WILDCARE** internal system has decreased dramatically.
- Jennifer Partridge, the editor of **WILDTIMES**, recently got married and also enrolled in a part-time university

course. Her free time to continue editing **WILDTIMES** is thus virtually non-existent. We therefore need to find another volunteer for this position. We wish Jennifer success in her future life.

- As many of us are aware, Graham Ristow, our first Treasurer and producer (not editor) of **WILDTIMES** became ill some 4 years ago and resigned as Treasurer, although he continued producing **WILDTIMES** for us on a voluntary basis. He additionally began a voluntary redesign of our web pages. Unfortunately, Graham lost his battle with cancer on 2 March 2005. Andrew, Chris Leitch, Jo Field & I attended Graham's funeral on 8 March 2005. Unfortunately, this leaves a gap in our capabilities and we will have to find new avenues of producing and printing **WILDTIMES** and also to complete the redesign of our web site. Our condolences have been passed to Graham's widow and family (see separate article).
- I'd like to place on record my appreciation for the work done by our webmaster, Phil Wyatt and our editor, Jennifer Partridge.
- I'd also like to thank the Presidents of the various **WILDCARE** branches for their efforts on behalf of their groups, welcome the new Presidents (these are listed elsewhere in this newsletter) and express the hope that many more of them (or their representatives) will take the opportunity of helping to shape **WILDCARE's** future and I look forward to seeing more of them at meetings of the Board of Management (rather than receiving their apologies).
- Additionally, I'd like to thank the Rangers, Volunteer Coordinators and other staff from both Agencies who work with members to achieve our mutual goals.
- Finally, I'd like to put on record my appreciation of Andrew's efforts throughout the year. Without his presence in the office in Hobart, the work of **WILDCARE** would grind to a halt. The effort that Andrew puts in on a daily basis is far beyond what was envisaged when **WILDCARE** was established in 1997 and goes well beyond what should be expected of him. It's an unfortunate reflection of the declining day-to-day support we receive from the Agency.

Major decisions and outcomes from recent Board of Management meetings

Meeting of 09/12/04 – held at Botanical Gardens

- Our volunteer accident insurance premium has dropped to \$11,500 (from \$25,000) as a result of Parks & Wildlife Service and Nature Conservation Branch taking responsibility for coverage of our volunteers working in those areas;
- We were advised by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage that references to cultural heritage in our constitution were an impediment to gaining Deductible Gift Recipient status, and that those references would have to be removed for our application to proceed. Richard was directed to write to the Secretary of DEH seeking an alternative interpretation of the rules;
- Andrew advised that there were instances of incorrect email addresses in the membership database;
- No funding applications were received;

- Group reports received from:
 - Mike Bowden (Wellington Park)
 - Gordon Bain (Derwent Avenue)
 - Roy Skabo (Trevallyn)
 - Jill Thiele (Maatsuyker)
 - Julie Nermut (Tamar Island)
 - Peter Franklin (Mount Field)

Meeting of 11/02/05 – held at Lands Building

- Noted that we had left it too late to organise a separate location for Agfest this year once we had been advised of the very skimpy information we were allowed to include in the DPIWE site. It was agreed to investigate options for our own site for future years;
- Richard advised that contact had been made with the Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage regarding our application for DGR status. This has resulted in a request for a teleconference between representatives of DEH, Andrew &

Richard - this is to take place at 12noon 11/02/05. The outcome was that slight alterations of emphasis on objectives suggested by Andrew & Richard were accepted by DEH as overcoming their objections to the inclusion of cultural heritage objectives;

- As a direct result of the suggested changes to the constitution, there will have to be a Special General Meeting to formally adopt them. The SGM will be called for the same date as the Annual Conference & AGM (19/03/05) DEH advised that, subject to the formal adoption of the changes, they would fast-track our application;
- Andrew advised there may be a need to shift the membership database to another server to make certain functions available to PWS. It was agreed that this may be an opportunity to look at other options for the database, the web page, on-line payments etc. Richard to progress this & report back;
- Andrew advised that **WILDSC'OOOL** has been set up as an email-based group;
- No funding applications were received;
- Group reports received from:
 - Peter Franklin (Mount Field)
 - Roy Skabo (Trevallyn)
 - John Hamilton (Coningham)
 - Rodney Milner (Kate Reed & Gambusia)
 - Lynette Kay (Maatsuyker)
 - Julie Nermut (Tamar Island)
 - Lorraine Nielsen (Derwent Avenue)
 - Mike Bowden (Wellington Park)

Special General Meeting **WILDCARE Inc**

Saturday 19/03/05

The Special General Meeting was called by the Board of Management to consider a range of amendments to the Constitution of the Association to overcome objections expressed by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage that were causing the Association to have its application for Environmental Charity and Deductible Gift Recipient Status declined. The major change centred around the splitting of our objectives to make it clear to the bureaucrats that our primary objective is conservation of the natural heritage and stating that the conservation of cultural heritage is an additional objective.

Additionally, the responsibilities of the Association's Public Officer were felt to be more in line with an elected official,

rather than a departmental employee and, consequently, the proposed amendments moved those responsibilities to the position of Co-Chair (Elected).

Other proposed changes to the constitution were minor, in that they corrected spelling, corrected clause references and clause numbering (apart from those caused by the changes to the objectives) and brought in a consistency in terminology throughout the constitution.

The proposed changes were adopted by the members present and voting at the Special General Meeting without dissent.

The new constitution can be viewed on and downloaded from the web site at <http://www.wildcaretas.org.au> and clicking on the Forms link.

Meeting of 08/04/05 – held at Prospect Offices

Note: Items relevant to the AGM, SGM and Annual Conference are included elsewhere in this issue

- Richard advised that the amended constitution had been forwarded to DEH and that formal inscription of **WILDCARE Inc** on the Register of Environmental Organisations (the step necessary to have DGR status) is expected to be completed by 30/06/05;
- Andrew reported that the Tasmanian Conservation Trust had developed a program called 'Shorebird Conservation' that they would like to see become part of the **WILDSC'OOOL** program;



- Richard reported that the web site needed a complete rethink if we want to have on-line donations, membership payments, a permanent searchable calendar of events etc. Any future development will be built on the new design work started by the late Graham Ristow;
 - It was agreed that Rodney would gather all necessary information on costs of Agfest sites etc so that the Board could progress one of the major outcomes from the Annual Conference;
 - Richard advised that a group President had asked to have a telephone hookup for the Board Meeting as he would be out of Tasmania at the time. Richard advised that he had refused the request as the intent of clause 29 of the new constitution was not for such instances and that he would agree to a discussion of suggested guidelines for the implementation of clause 29. It was agreed that the circulated guidelines be implemented (basically - no teleconferencing to locations outside of Tasmania, not to mobile phones, no calls to be at a cost to individual members, only for specific agenda items) pending a review of the costs of having 3 central locations (Hobart, Prospect Offices and perhaps the PWS office in Ulverstone) where board members could participate in meetings without having to travel to Hobart or Launceston. This may also have the added advantage of encouraging more board members to participate.
 - Andrew announced the winner of the **WILDCARE** Nature Writing Prize (see separate article);
 - Funding applications:
 - General Maintenance on Tasmania's newest National Park and Deal Island Lightstation. It was noted that PWS are contributing \$1160.
- Approved funding of \$2700.00.
- Funding to enable the production of an informative and inspirational video about Land for Wildlife, with the intention of attracting additional participants.

Application NOT APPROVED.

Funding is more than **WILDCARE** provide.

Andrew to go back to Iona Mitchell and advise her that it's a good idea but outside **WILDCARE's** funding limit. The Board will consider the application again as part of a consortium of applicants if requested.

- Group reports received from:
 - John Hughes (Lillico Penguins)
 - Peter Cox (Low Head Pilot Station)
 - Julie Nermut (Tamar Island)
 - Christian Bell (Kent Group)
 - Rodney Milner (Kate Reed & Gambusia)
 - Roy Skabo (Trevallyn)

Group Reports

hugely from his contributions. He is sadly missed.

Andrew Smith
Co-Chair (Appointed)
WILDCARE inc

Wellington Park

This group has only recently formally become part of **WILDCARE**. Prior to that it has existed informally for several years under the guidance and organisation of Peter Franklin.

To date all of the working bees have been on the lower slopes of the mountain in areas controlled by either Hobart or Glenorchy City Councils. We have not notified DPIWE of our working bees in these areas in the past but now realise that we should - and will undertake to do so in future. The majority of work has been battling gorse and spanish heath (*Erica lusitanica*), usually by the cut & paste method.

Our working bees are on the first Tuesday of each month, usually for 4-6 hours. In the HCC area we generally work with HCC subcontracted staff.

Peter Franklin has put in a lot of time 'scouting' the areas, liaising with the councils, Transend, Wellington Park Trust, PWS, etc and organising the

working bees.

There is enough 'material' in the HCC/GCC areas to keep us occupied for some time yet. Future plans, however, do include tackling some broom in the Trestle Mountain area.

Two successful working bees were held in January and February. The group is also lodging an application for an EnviroFund grant to rehabilitate and protect a highly significant population of the threatened *Epacris acuminata* over an area of approximately 5.5ha within the Commonwealth National Estate registered Wellington Park Reserve. It will also target two strategic areas of native vegetation (0.8 ha and 1.5ha respectively) for rehabilitation, by removing highly invasive and competitive exotic species and conducting revegetation works.

We will also develop a standard operating procedure to assist companies with infrastructure within Wellington Park (eg Transend) with weed removal, machinery hygiene and access requirements. This will enable strategic control of weeds along their easements in conjunction with local authorities and the community.

Gorse Eradication Middle Island

Fire Trail – 4 Jan 05
Successful cleared an area of Gorse plus a few Erica and one Radiata pine growing into the bush on the lower side of Middle Island Fire Trail. The area cleared was approx. 200sq metres of concentrated gorse. The length approx. 30 metres at an average of 7 metres width. 10 volunteers attended (not all **WILDCARE** members)

Weed Eradication Trestle - 1 Feb 05
Inroads were made into a Broom infestation approx. 200 metres below the Trestle - Collins Bonnet saddle at grid 511166 5250564. The Broom ranges from quite old bushes, some dead or almost so to very small seedlings. Sections of old bushes lay over others making quite a dangled thickets.

The whole site has not yet been checked but appears to have been an old quarry, rather than logging site as first thought.

Walking time takes approx 1:15 hours. Eleven volunteers attended (not all **WILDCARE** members). Further working bees will be held at the location.

Mike Bowden

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Derwent Avenue Group

We've formally existed as a group for just over 12 months. We manage a small stretch of coast south of Margate where, during the last twelve months, we've managed to get on top of most of the serious environmental weeds and maintain a walking path through the site. The site is mainly Crown Coastal reserve but has a small portion of Kingborough Council public open space adjacent to it; we have a joint agreement with both land managers for our activities.

Not content with our little lot we have made a bid for more coast to look after. We have Parks conditional approval to extend our management interests by a 20 metre wide, some 200 metres length of coastal reserve to the north of our original site. We had always had this in mind as a prospect but in the last 18 months or so have been working closely with the owner of land, which abutted the coastal strip. We worked through the subdivision phase - approvals, appeals and so on, and now more closely with the developer as he started work on site. As part of the subdivision process, the developer agreed to hand over to Kingborough Council, as public open space, a strip of land running more or less parallel with the coast and in effect becoming a buffer zone between the state coastal reserve and the new estate. This additional buffer zone is some 6200m2 of varying width and includes a number of trees (*E. viminalis* and *E. ovata*) which we considered worth preserving. Additionally under the terms of the subdivision settlement, two other eucalypts just inside the property line have been protected by a 6m diameter tree covenant. We are working through the details and hope to be able to sign-off soon with council, parks and the developer on arrangements for a common management regime for the coastal strip-public open space.

One of our aims in this exercise is to extend the coastal walking trail to reach the settlement around the Margate Jetty - North West Bay Ships area.

Like many other groups this year we had a number of our members participating in training courses kindly arranged by Southern PWS Volunteers Coordinator Craig Saunders. We expect to have new

site identification signs installed early in the New Year - these will include the **WILDCARE** logo. This year we also had a significant survey and documentation of plant species in our site, and are working with the Derwent Estuary Penguin Monitoring Program for possible installation of nesting boxes.

To mark our first birthday we voted in our Group executive for 2005.

Convenor is Lorraine Nielsen; 6267 1083; c.lnielsen@bigpond.com.au; Secretary is Gordon Bain, 6267 2143; hausbain2@bigpond.com.

Regeneration work is undertaken weekly, often with 2 or 3 people to a task and we are continuing the regular 'busy bees' which includes the whole group. Not only are we trying to remove the annual blackberries, briar roses, cotoneasters, thistles, dock weeds etc. but we are reducing the pasture grasses and planting endemic grasses, mainly *Poa* spp. We are improving the pathway and more visitors are coming through regularly.

Following Parks and Wildlife's conditional approval for our group to manage an extension of 200 metres of coastal reserve attached to our site, we have sought formal approval from Kingborough Council in December but have not yet had a response. In the letter, the question of access was raised including suitable bridging across the creek and a right of passage, which involves both state and council Land Managers. It also raised problems of leakage from inlet/outlet pipelines (from a company adjoining the Reserve) which run across the public open space and the reserve to the sea.

Coastal erosion is very evident in our site with marked erosion in sandstone cliffs and the continuous break-away of grassy banks, which includes the loss of several large gum trees. In some areas, the loss of 30cm of bank has occurred this past year. We have sought advice from Parks and Wildlife.

We have been invited to participate in the two and a half days of the Margate Festival, which will be held at the end of April. It indicates the awareness in the community of the work of our Group.

Our Group is busy and enthusiastic. It is making a difference.

Gordon Bain & Lorraine Nielsen

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Friends of Trevallyn

A small group of interested people met at my house on 21 October to revive this group which had been active until a couple of years ago but had ceased activities.

We elected a president (Roy Skabo) and a secretary (Jenny Mayne) and decided to have working bees on the second Saturday of each month.

Our main objective is the environmental maintenance and restoration of the Reserve. We will remove weeds as needed, monitor the escape of weeds from private properties eg. the Hydro easement through the Reserve. We will work in cooperation with the Launceston City Council and PWS and we are encouraging the Esk Valley Orienteering Club to re-establish its program of weed spotting and reporting.

There may also be some opportunity to help monitor endangered species in the reserve.

We have already had two successful working bees and the next bee will be a seed-collecting outing; we hope to establish a seed bank of local species so that we can revegetate areas we have weeded. We have a group of about 15 people on our books and are recruiting as we go along.

I have supplied information for a web page on the **WILDCARE** site and am assured by Phil Wyatt that the page will be up and running soon. People interested in joining the group can approach us through the web page or by phoning Roy (6334 6787) or Jenny (6331 0008).

In January we had a surprisingly good turnout for our seed-collecting working bee. Anna Povey took us through the reasons for collecting and how we could do it in an environmentally friendly way. We then proceeded to collect a selection of local seeds available at the time (early Jan.).

During January we also undertook a letterbox drop to about 200 neighbours of the Reserve. We delivered each resident a letter stressing the need to be a 'good neighbour' to the Reserve and to seek their interest in joining us in our activities. The letters were accompanied by two brochures supplied by the Launceston City Council (one on environmental weeds and one on being a good bushland neighbour). To date we have had zero response, but we live in hope. At least, 200 households have been introduced to our group.

I have also continued our liaison with the Parks Dep't and the LCC in identifying suitable spots for working bees and working out ways in which we can cooperate with these bodies so that members will see some results for their work. eg. the Council may spray a large area of gorse and we will cut and paste any regrowth or bushes which could not be sprayed.

I have also prepared a web page, which our webmaster has already put on the **WILDCARE** web site.

On Wednesday February 9 I had a meeting with Kerry Finch, our local MLC. He had found out about our group's activities and expressed an interest in helping us in any way he can. Nothing may come of the meeting but you never know.

Finally, I have lodged an application for funding from Landcare and just yesterday I found that we had been granted \$550 and a cheque should follow soon.

We have had our regular working bees each month during which we have worked in an area controlled by the Launceston City Council on Gorge Rd. Tomorrow will be our last effort in this area before spring because the sycamores and exotic Hypericums will be dormant. LCC is also doing good work in this area and will be cutting down another group of large sycamores in the next couple of weeks.

We have also notified Parks about a series of infestations of gorse (brought to our attention by the Esk Valley Orienteers). Parks will spray as soon as the drought breaks and we will continue to mop up around the areas they spray.

I met with Parks and Transend representatives on April 19 to formulate a plan for eradicating the weeds under Transend's transmission line. These weeds are spreading into the Reserve and we have made it clear that there is not much point weeding in the Reserve if Transend is going to continue to spread weeds. To their credit Transend seems to be willing to address the matter.

We have bought tools and gloves with our Landcare grant (bought at wholesale prices through a local supplier).

A few weeks ago I approached the Examiner (local newspaper) to see if they would be interested in an article or series of articles on local reserves and the volunteer groups which work in them. As a result of this approach a two-page spread (with colour photos) appeared in last Saturday's Examiner which gave good exposure to both the Trevallyn and Kate Read Reserves. I am hoping that the article will result in new members for the groups.

We have gained five new members over the past few weeks and this should help maintain good levels of attendance at our working bees.

Future possible projects (apart from weeding) include work in the First Basin where there is a patch of vegetation, which includes some rare species. This area has been damaged by logs from floods and we may cooperate with the LCC and Conservation Volunteers to remove some of them and generally clean up this site. Tree-planting in the Aquatic Point area is another possibility.

Roy Skabo



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Friends of Maatsuyker Island

Maatsuyker Island Cares Group have had a busy November with the completion of the on-island weeding project made possible by the Envirofund grant and the hard work of Karen Zeigler, the Weeding group facilitator. Much fun was had by all and the Parks Ranger was very pleased with the work that had been accomplished. Of course, further invasive weed species (other than the Blackberry and Montbretia target species) were tackled, and some, including Hebe, found to be more extensive than first expected. More grant applications will need to be submitted so this work can continue.

In addition, another boat trip around the island and a fundraising raffle are being

planned for the New Year to raise money towards other works on the island. Parks is also planning another maintenance working bee for February to continue with more major maintenance projects that are beyond the scope of the volunteer caretakers.

Our AGM was held on the January 27. Jill Thiele has stepped down as President and Fiona Taylor is the new President. The current committee has five members, Jason Whitehead, Fiona Taylor, Scott Fairbrother, Lynette Kay and Karen Ziegler (Treasurer). Thanks to Jill for the great job she has done over the last 18 months.

Prior to our AGM, a slide show was held to showcase the weeding work done in November 2004.

Environmental Weed Work - Currently a group of volunteers are on the island, carrying out some follow up blackberry spraying. We are hoping to organise another weeding trip to Maatsuyker later in the year. This will again be done in partnership with PWS.

Fundraising Raffle (first prize will be a trip for 2 to Maatsuyker) - We will be working on this again shortly. Tickets should be on sale later in the year. We are currently seeking prizes, mostly with nautical themes.

Grants - We are considering a new grant application (with the Tasmanian Community Fund), this time for some cultural heritage work.

Jill Thiele & Lynette Kay

Tamar Island Wetlands

Spring has certainly arrived at the Wetlands with the birds and frogs busily breeding. The Volunteers have also been very busy, organising and participating in many activities:

Centre Revamp: A committee was formed for brainstorming sessions to improve the interpretation displays at the Centre and to set up an audio-visual area. There were lots of excellent ideas presented, resulting in a two-day working bee.

Brochure Launch: On November 5 the volunteers participated in the launch of the Parks and Wildlife brochure – Parks for all people. This brochure was launched by Jim Cox MHA, our Centre being chosen because we are a wheelchair friendly Reserve.

Gambusia Launch: We had a very successful Gambusia Project Launch by Kerry Finch, MLC on November 11. This launch was very well organised by Rodney Milner, the Project Officer with Volunteers helping and attended by Members of Parliament, **WILDCARE**, Fishcare, Waterwatch IFS and Parks and Wildlife.

Open Day and Weedbuster working bee: A combined working and open day was held on November 12 with Volunteers both removing weeds on the island and hosting visitors at the Centre. A sausage sizzle was very popular and everyone enjoyed the painting demonstrations by local artist, Cheyne

Purdue.

CVA Volunteers: A group of CVA volunteers have been very busy recently removing old fencing material from the wetlands - a great improvement.

The main event that we have been involved with since Christmas has been World Wetlands Day on February 2. The day was a great success with many families engrossed in making water bugs and kites assisted by the Summer Ranger, Waterwatch Coordinator and our Volunteers. Displays were organised by the Gambusia Project Officer and Volunteers held guided tours across the wetlands to Tamar Island.

Our Annual General Meeting was held on February 9 with the following office bearers being elected: President - Julie Nermut, Vice President – Majorie Knox, Minutes Secretary – Gordon Pound.

The Volunteers have been very busy with visits from many school groups since the start of the school year arranging activities such as water sampling and studies of flora and fauna of the wetlands.

The revamp of the interpretation centre is continuing with a very dedicated and enthusiastic sub-committee who are working to improve the interpretative displays.

On March 17 we had a very successful sunset dinner at the centre for the Volunteers and their guests followed by an excellent illustrated talk by Lisa Clarkson on the frog fungus.

Volunteer training is on-going with all our members recently completing their Work Place Level 1 First Aid Certificate.

Before the duck season commenced, an enthusiastic band of Volunteers was involved in a water bird survey for DPIWE at the Tamar Island Wetlands. It is interesting to note that every autumn just before the duck season we seem to get a large increase in numbers of these birds in our reserve!

Julie Nermut

Friends of Mount Field

The Friends group has scheduled three events since the snow melt has made conditions easier in the highlands

Lake Nicholls Hut November 2004: A working bee on November 13 went well and the supporting timber installed, rotten floorboard sections replaced, additional base supports added, door rehung, cladding fixed and stone steps redone.

Kerry Smith did an excellent job organising the day and making sure it all went smoothly. As I am not very good on building matters, most of my time at the working bee was spent watching and I must say I was most impressed by the skill, enthusiasm and speed of the team.

Kerry is suggesting future work to replace the door and replace some rotten cladding, so there may be further working bees at the hut.

Lake Fenton to Lake Webster Walking



Track November 2004: A working bee on the Lake Fenton to Webster track cleared 160 metres of Bauera where it is overgrowing onto the track on November 27. The majority of the track has now been cleared, but some remains on the last section prior to the track junction near Lake Webster.

Lake Newdegate Hut December 2004: A working bee was scheduled for December 4 to do some of the priority maintenance work on the historic Lake Newdegate hut, but unfortunately the working bee organiser found himself heavily overcommitted and it has been postponed until next February or March. The main requirement is to fix the earth drainage to stop water damage and to paint the outside walls.

Future Plans: Apart from the abovementioned working bee we plan further track work and additional work on the Lake Nicholls hut plus the log book has disintegrated and we plan to replace it and include a few pages on the history of the area and information about The Friends group and **WILDCARE**. Before the end of summer we intend holding a combined bushwalk and BBQ.

Peter Franklin

Coningham Reserve

As a subgroup of the Friends of Coningham, Oyster Cove and Lower Snug (FOCOCLS), members of the Australian Plants Society Bushland Preservation subcommittee have been working in the Legacy Beach area of Coningham Nature Recreation Area. At the end of August this group became a **WILDCARE** group, Coningham Reserve Cares Group. We were successful in an application for funding from **WILDCARE** to employ a contractor to spray some large patches of Spanish heath (*Erica lusitanica*) on the slopes above our work sites. By spraying these areas we hope to prevent water borne spread of seeds down onto our weeded areas.

Our activity has been concentrated about the northeastern section of the reserve around the Legacy Beach track. Our activities have concentrated on the mapping and removal of weeds. The principal weed species in this section of the reserve are spanish heath and blue bell creeper (*Sollya heterophylla*) but occasional specimens of canary broom

(*Genista monspessulana*), boneseed (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera*) and blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*) have also been removed. A number of specimens of Sydney golden wattle (*Acacia longifolia var longifolia*), golden wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) and sticky wattle (*Acacia howittii*) have been found in other parts of the reserve. Most of these have now been removed.

The blue bell creeper infestation is concentrated above and to the east of Legacy Beach and so far about 200 plants have been removed. Spanish heath is concentrated towards the eastern end of the Legacy Beach track and must effort has been expended in reducing this. Most of the spanish heath has been removed manually or but the cut and paste method. Several members of the group attended training courses run by Parks and funded by **WILDCARE**. As a result of this training it is hoped that in the future several dense infestations of spanish heath will be able to be cut with a brushcutter and subsequently sprayed by volunteers.

Members of Parks and Wildlife have been very supportive of our work in this reserve. They arranged for a crew to brushcut several areas of spanish heath in readiness for spraying later this year. They also submitted a successful application for a GreenCorps Team to work on the reserve for six months during the first part of 2005. It is envisaged that this team will concentrate on track work and weeding.

John Hamilton

Gambusia Project

We finally have the brochure completed and have begun distributing it far and wide, if you require any please let me know. I have been out and about talking to a lot of people of late. These include participating in a Coastcare Week event at Low Head on the Tamar, a radio interview with a local fisherperson on City Park radio and prepared articles for the Inland Fisheries newsletter and Tasmanian Fishing and Boating News. I participated in a promotional event with the Parks Summer Ranger and local Water Quality Monitoring Officer to entice members of the community to attend a World Wetland Day event at Tamar Island. The World Wetland Day event was a great success with about

200 people attending on the day. We have had a very good article published in the Tamar Times, a supplement in the Examiner. I am also going to the Evandale Village Fair on the February 19 and Exeter Show on February 26.

Work has also taken place at Tamar Island. We have repaired the some of the levee banks to the north of the visitors centre in an attempt to remove *Gambusia* from these areas. This is to be done by allowing the lagoons to dry, then placing screen mesh in the levee banks to allow for the transfer of water between the estuary and the lagoons but not *Gambusia*. The levee banks were repaired with sandbags with the job of filling, tying, carrying and placing 300 sandbags undertaken by a great team from Conservation Volunteers Australia.

The *Gambusia* Project is progressing very well, especially the community education and awareness program. This part of the project has seen the *Gambusia* display travel to Evandale Village Fair in conjunction with the local Water Quality Monitoring Officers, to the Exeter Show and the **WILDCARE** AGM and Conference. I have delivered a presentation to TAFE Natural Resource Management Students and attended

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the Feral Animal Forum hosted by the Threatened Species Network in Hobart, which included participation in the panel outlining our community's role in feral animal management. An interview with WIN TV News and an article in the Mercury Newspaper provided extra coverage for the project. With the assistance of our PhD student, Kerri, we delivered a Gambusia presentation to members of the Flyfishers Association of Tasmania.

We are also spreading the word by sending out the Gambusia brochure. Recently the brochures have gone out to Water Management Officers and staff in the Water Resources and Water Assessment and Planning of the DPIWE and organisations such as the Golf Course Superintendents Association, Southern Waterwatch and the North West Bay River Catchment Committee.

In mid March a Gambusia survey of the Tamar Estuary was undertaken that involved staff from Inland Fisheries

Service, our PhD student Kerri, three **WILDCARE** volunteers, two other volunteers and myself. The survey showed that Gambusia had not spread outside the range in which they were found in the last survey in 2004. However we did find them in another two locations within their existing range. Our conclusion is that they have already occupied the only suitable habitat in the Tamar Estuary and can't spread any further by natural processes. The only method by which they can spread in by human assistance and we hope that doesn't happen.

Overall the Project is going very well. I am now speaking to people who say they have heard about Gambusia, so it appears that the message is getting out.

Rodney Milner

Friends of Kate Reed Reserve

The team in Kate Reed Reserve are continuing with track construction. At present we are focusing on areas where we can access the track with a vehicle, while it is dry, to move the shale. Since we began the track work we have noticed an increased number of people using the reserve which is encouraging.

Unfortunately we are still having trouble with motor bikes. However, we have caught three individuals over the last couple of months with whom the Rangers have been able to have a 'chat' with. Hopefully we will not see them back.

We have also had a Parks Field Officer in the reserve for a couple of days doing some spraying for us which has been a great help.

At present things are very quiet in Kate Reed Reserve due to medical issues with a couple of key people in the group, lack of numbers in the Work for the Dole Scheme and myself working on the Gambusia Project. We did host a part of the Tasmanian Weed Society's weed forum in the reserve looking at a number of issues including the impact of the native dodder vine on gorse. This provided an opportunity for us to show other interested people our reserve and what we are doing. Things will still continue to happen in the Reserve, but maybe at a slower pace for the moment.

Rodney Milner

Friends of Lillico Penguins

Friends of Lillico Penguins is a small group of about a dozen people who have two objectives: help conserve, revegetate, weed control & rubbish clean up protect the little penguin colony and supervise nightly public viewing & interpretation of the penguins on the Lillico Beach Conservation Area - a 3km strip along the Bass Highway.

Our roster runs during the breeding period from early September to late April.

A total of some 1500 volunteer hours are utilised each year.

In January we assisted the penguin monitoring group carry out a penguin count along the majority of the colony (1.5km of beach). We counted birds returning after the days fishing to feed their young until 9.30pm (1 hour after the first penguin was sighted), by which time we would expect approx 95% of the birds to return.

A total of 1424 penguins were counted. Given not all penguins would have returned in the first hour, and we did not count on 0.8km of the colony it is estimated another 400 birds is possible.

Given these assumptions it is quite likely the penguin population at Lillico consists of approx 1600 breeding pairs.

The previous count was carried out in 1996 when the population was estimated at 1238 breeding pairs. We are certainly encouraged that the population appears to have grown quite strongly. Improvements to the management of the site such as fencing, revegetation, platform relocation and isolation of the colony may well be factors that have contributed to the success of the colony.

We hope to carry out more regular counts covering the whole colony at different times of the season to improve our knowledge. To do so we will need approx 50 people each time we count -- a challenge!

The breeding season for little penguins is now finished and our small group is looking forward to a well-deserved rest. Our roster will commence again next September when the penguins return for another breeding season. Being a small group we are always looking for new enthusiastic members to join us in our enjoyable duties.

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Finally we noted a higher than normal loss of young penguins this year during February which is possibly due to lack of food.

We also report that Lexie Paul and Bev Kolberg, two long serving members of our group have just retired, in Lexie's case having donated over a decade of membership. Both Lexie & Bev have been tremendous workers and will be missed, thanks Lexie & Bev.

Anyone interested in joining us should contact John Hughes on 6437 1225 or contact **WILDCARE** who can pass on your name.

John Hughes

Friends of the Low Head Pilot Station Support Group

We have continued with volunteers manning the maritime museum and providing meet and greet services for visitors. Visitor numbers this year have increased considerably over previous years, most visitors coming from interstate, but with an increasing number of overseas visitors.

We plan to develop and install coin operated sound and light interpretation at the Fog Horn.

Considerable interest has been raised with the 'Beneath the Waves' project. A slide has been developed and we have a book on the sea life around Low Head being printed.

We have expressed our concern about the future management of the Low Head precinct following the exhaustion of funding for the development of the site. It appears that the site will become directly under Parks control with an employed manager and probably an advisory management committee, but this has not yet been decided.

Peter Cox

Friends of the Kent Group

We have been active in preparing grant submissions for the management of the Park. One was with the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage ('Telling Australia's Stories') for the production of new interpretation material for the Kent Group. The second was a Tasmanian Community Fund application (as the junior partner of the project alongside the Tasmanian Conservation Trust) for a series of conservation works around Deal Island related to the upkeep

of the Deal Island Lightstation. We have made a new submission to **WILDCARE** to fund our next working bee to Deal Island. Suzy Manigian is preparing a detailed report from our last working bee (in April 2004). The report details all the conservation work carried out as well as a report from Steve Cronin & Dr David Obendorf on the management of fauna issues in the Kent Group. This will be available shortly.

I also followed up a report of the presence of the North Pacific seastar being present at Erith Island from an underwater diver. After consulting with him and the experts in the field it was concluded that the report was erroneous. I also met with the Erith Island Mob while on Deal in January (the other main community group operating in the Park) and discussed with them the current management of the Park.

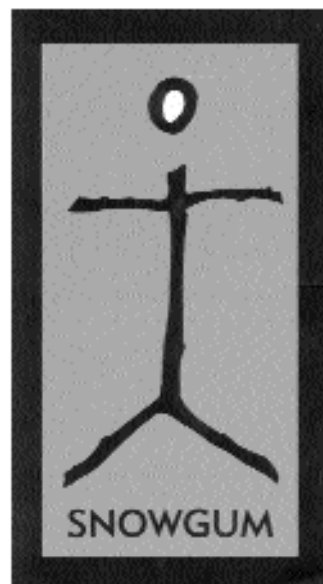
I have been regularly contacting the Parks & Wildlife Service (PWS) over the last 12 months re the management of the Kent Group and have good working relationship with the rangers managing the national park and with the PWS Heritage Section. As President of the Friends group I contact each caretaker during their period of tenure on Deal Island and receive an update on their activities and what they see as priorities with regard to management of the Park. I also regularly

email the members of our Friends group and invite feedback from the membership list. Recently I have been endeavouring to involve people from the other side of Bass Strait in our activities as most of the visitors to the Kent Group come from the South Gippsland region of Victoria. We are particularly interested in making contact with potential new volunteers with trade skills. We are also keen to promote the recent creation of the marine reserve at the Kent group (came into effect February this year) in the South Gippsland region. We are actively engaged in seeking funds to assist in the operational management of the newly constituted marine reserve from both government and private sector sources. The Friends will be assisting with the placement of new signage for the marine reserve in the Park as part of our next working bee (should our funding application to **WILDCARE** be approved). The main thrust of the visit is outlined in our grant application. I also attended on behalf of the Friends the **WILDCARE** AGM and presented a talk on behalf of our group.

Steve Cronin has become the new Vice President of our Friends group. Steve has an extensive background in land management and is very handy when it comes to preparing grant applications (a big asset).

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Issue #	Article Submissions Due	Publication Date
25	30 Jun 2005	Jul 2005
26	31 Sep 2005	Oct 2005
27	30 Nov 2005	Dec 2005

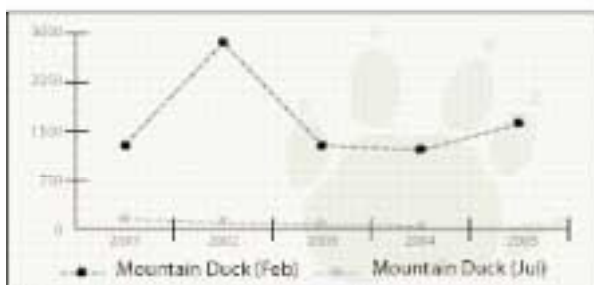
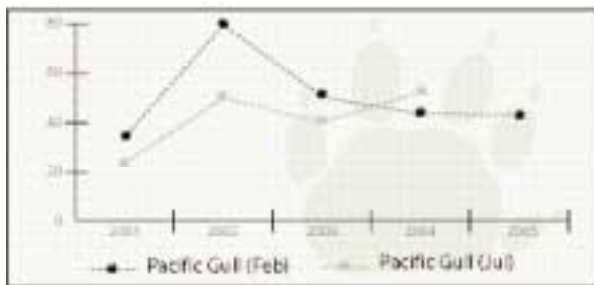
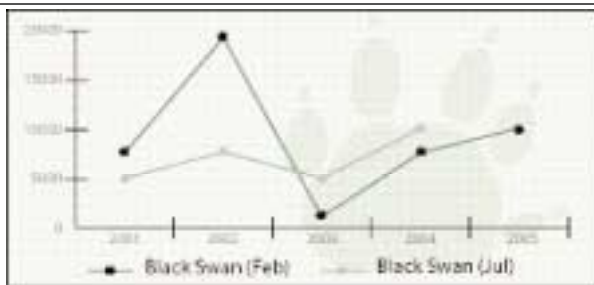
Publication dates are subject to receiving a sufficient number of articles to allow publishing to go ahead.

Bi-annual bird count at Moulting Lagoon Game Reserve

On 22 February, a group of **WILDCARE** volunteers, DPIWE and PWS staff and members of Birds Tasmania carried out a count of waterbirds at the Moulting Lagoon Game Reserve between Bicheno and Coles Bay on the East Coast. The weather was great with no wind and perfect viewing conditions. This area, one of Tasmania's ten Wetlands of International Importance or Ramsar sites, is extremely productive and supports one of the highest concentrations of waterbirds in the state. Counts are carried out twice each year in February and July and volunteers are always welcome. This year we had two people come down from Sydney and one all the way from Perth! If you are interested in helping, keep an eye out for future **Wildcare** notices.

Some of the results of the counts over recent years are shown below. The black line with diamonds is the February number and the grey squares are from July. There is a lot of variation in the numbers of birds like ducks and swans that are very weather dependant, but some other species are much more stable from year to year.

For more information contact:
Stewart Blackhall
Wildlife Biologist
Nature Conservation Branch
DPIWE
GPO Box 44
HOBART 7001
Ph. 03 6233 6585



WILDCARE groups operate in the following places		
Adventure Bay –	Lillicos Beach	Tamar Island
Bruny Island	Low Head Pilot Station	Tasman Peninsula
Clayton's Hut	Maatsuyker Island	Trevallyn
Southwest	Maria Island	Mt Nelson
Coal Mines	Milaythina muka –	Wellington Park
Lime Bay	(Aboriginal statewide)	West Coast (Strahan)
Coningham	Karstcare (Mole Creek)	Wildlife Carers (NW)
Derwent Avenue	Mt Barrow	Wildlife Carers (Tamar)
Karstwatch (Cave	Mt Field	Wildlife Carers (NE)
research and	Narawntapu	Fishcare (N)
monitoring)	Mt Roland	Fishcare (NW)
Kate Reed	Snake Island	Fishcare (S)
Kent Group	Southern Caves	



THANKYOU!

Thankyou to **WILDCARE Inc** Volunteers

The Parks and Wildlife Service would like to say thank you to all **WILDCARE Inc** members who give so willingly of their time to help us protect and conserve our natural and cultural heritage in Tasmania.

Thanks for all of your hard work and dedication!

A very special thank you to the **WILDCARE Inc** Board of Management for all of their support for volunteer projects within Tasmania's National Parks.



Parks Shop

24 Main Road Huonville

Ph: 03 6264 8460

- Range of pre-cut information relating to Tasmania's National Parks & Reserves
- Parks Passes
- Maps
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- Squares – 24 in 2000 pieces, including Southeast National Park
- Souvenirs
- Clothing – heavy jackets, vests, ponchos, raincoats, t-shirts
- Posters
- And more...

10% discount to **WILDCARE** members



ODE TO ORANGE BELLIED PARROTS

T'was summer and the OBPs,
Did loaf and nest in hollow trees,
Button grass as far as eye could see,
And mud up to our knees.

Beware the raptor birds my dears,
The claws that snatch, the jaws that squawk,
Beware swamp harriers, kestrels,
Ferocious falcons and goshawks.

We took our seed and scopes in hand,
Long time the OBPs we sought,
Then rested we in the hide, khaki,
And sat awhile in thought.

And as in pensive thought we sat,
The OBPs with tums of flame,
Came flying through the paperbarks,
And zzztting as they came.

Red E, Blue V, Red Y, Red P,
The OBPs went flying past,
Red Q, Green G, Red M, Green E,
And broken legged Red B last.

And hast thou observed OBPs?
Record them on the sheet, no risk,
Make a copy for the hut,
And one on floppy disk.

T'was summer and the OBPs,
Did loaf and nest in hollow trees,
Tree frogs sang quanking day and night,
And mud up to our knees.

Debbie Searle

On the web site www.wildcaretas.org.au

New Online Call-up Form

Have a project that you would like a bit of help with? Do you know a Ranger who needs help and wants to get in touch with some volunteers? Do you realise how easy it is to put your request to skilled, experienced and willing **WILDCARE Inc** volunteers?

Go to <www.wildcaretas.org.au> and click on Forms in the heading on the home page.

Click on Event Call-up Form in the On-line form column.

Fill out the details, including the new section that allows you to tailor your query to the member database - it takes just a minute or so to complete.

Hit the submit button and the **WILDCARE** Office volunteers take over from there, checking the project is suitable for **WILDCARE Inc**, producing a flier, and mailing it out to members who match the requirements.

It will also be posted on the web page bulletin board if appropriate.

Members will then RSVP to you/the Ranger if they are available.

Can it get any easier? And this simple process gives you access to expertise and effort from volunteers numbering in the thousands (4000 in fact). All potential volunteers just waiting to hear from you.

So, there you go! What are you waiting



for? Hit that On-line Request Form and we will see you out there, making a difference, in the wild and cultural places.

Bulletin Board

Check out the bulletin board while you are visiting the web site; more and more activities are going up on the board ranging from training courses, to seminars and conferences, to working bees and extended projects. If your group has an event you would like to promote on the bulletin board send the information to the

Co-Chair,

WILDCARE Inc

C/- GPO Box 44 Hobart 7001
or (preferably) email to
acochair@wildcaretas.org.au.

The information will be checked by the Co-Chair and posted within a couple of days – there for the world to see.

Eaglehawk Neck Backpackers



Close to:
Cape Raoul, Cape Hauy and
Cape Pillar (Highest sea cliffs in the
Southern Hemisphere), walking tracks.
Tasman National Park
Eaglehawk Neck
Ph: (03) 6250 3248

\$2 discount per night for WILDCARE members

Outcomes from the Annual WILDCARE Inc Conference 2005

SESSION TITLE	Bringing into the fold – recruitment	SESSION TITLE	Agfest and communications
Participants	Paul Helleman, John Watts, Howard Nichol, John Hughes, Christian Bell, Jo Lyngcoln, Joan Fitzallen, Andrew Napier	Convenor	Rodney Milner
Priority Score	19	Participants	Chris Leitch, Janice Miller, Ian Fitzallen
Key discussion points	Membership/registration (working bee), P/L insurance, Why should volunteers have to pay to be a volunteer? Fees allow independence from Parks, Wildcare-Heritagecare, Communication and selling of benefits – What's in it for me, training/skills development, address membership, value of effort. Small group of leaders rest followers, social vs work, Drop in members (to about 2500), Perhaps 8 years down the track time to relaunch, Age profile predominantly middle aged, Promotion – target part-time or near retirees, Info kit for volunteers to and out to interested parties, Interstate members.	Priority score	19
Outcomes	Need for communication Develop Incentives for new members Re-Launch Seek sponsorship from PWS.	Outcomes	Revisit employing part-time Admin Assistant Lobby for political change to permanently employ facilitators to support volunteer groups Provide resources – Admin Communications and information sharing between groups Register of skills within WILDCARE Encourage groups and Rangers to register volunteer hours with Wildcare Office Agfest – have a stand-alone exhibition in 2006 perhaps with funding assistance from partners.
		SESSION TITLE	Making it relevant & authentic – eg cultural heritage training
		Convenor	Jo Lyngcoln
		Participants	Not recorded
		Priority score	16
			Key Discussion points - Friends of groups, Cultural heritage industry has a

fear of lack of skills in volunteers

Outcomes

Advertise things needing to be done on heritage sites

Create peak Culture Care group

Personal department between department and volunteers important

Volunteers and Department build a Trust-based relationship

Volunteers have a sense of autonomy

Application to WILDCARE inc for funds to run a training course in cultural heritage for volunteers. Formal training for supervisors, casual training for volunteers.

SESSION TITLE Web site development

Convenor Richard Hammond

Participants Rodney Milner

Priority Score 5

Outcomes

Investigate alternative means of on-line membership/merchandise purchase.

Investigate advantages/needs for database (membership) behind web site.

SESSION TITLE Friends of Bass Strait Islands, Friends of Tasman Island

Convenor Christian Bell

Participants Joan Fitzallen, Ian Fitzallen, Andrew Napier, Paul Helleman, John Watts, Chris Leitch

Christian has undertaken to supply the outcomes of this session to the next board meeting.

WILDCARE Tasmania Nature Writing Prize results

Congratulations!

The following authors and stories were judged winners for the 2005 WILDCARE Tasmania Nature Writing Prize.

Major Prize (\$5000 AUD and a 2 week Writer in Residence placement in Tasmania's National Parks)

Mark Tredinnick from Lavender Bay, NSW for *Days of Christmas*

2 Minor Prizes (\$250 AUD each)

Dael Allison from Warravillah, NSW for *Portrait of a Wild Pool*

Adrienne Eberhard from Tinderbox, Tasmania for *Cave, Skin, Water*

The judges also made **honourable mention** of three entrants:

C.A. Cranston (*Narrative Streams*),

Don Knowler (*Last Stop on the Shimmering Way*)

Evan Hunter (*Duelling with Giants*).

Thank you to all entrants. The diversity of ideas, strength of passion, quality of writing, and the number of entries, demonstrates that nature writing is a growing and worthy genre. Please

continue to write about nature and through your imagination and skill take us with you on a journey to the wild places of our minds and our planet.

Winning stories will be published in WILDTIMES shortly.

Keep an eye on this web site for the Opening and closing dates for WILDCARE Tasmania Nature Writing Prize 2007.

Submissions are welcome from around the world!



Wildlife Conservation and Welfare Alliance

The Wildlife Conservation and Welfare Alliance is a newly formed association of people and organisations interested and/or involved in Tasmanian fauna and its management. The Alliance is hosted by the Tasmanian Conservation Trust, which provides the secretariat, and there is no joining fee, no scheduled meetings and no executive body.

One of the aims of WCWA is to keep people who are interested in wildlife conservation, welfare and management informed of developments affecting wildlife through a weekly email bulletin summarising some issues.

You don't have to be a member of the Alliance to receive this free bulletin. and we welcome any input consistent with the Alliance's objectives to include and circulate in email bulletins.

If you or your organisation would like to join the Alliance please email to tct@southcom.com.au and make the subject title of your email 'Join WCWA'. If you would just like to receive the WCWA email bulletin call your email 'WCWA Bulletin'.

In spite of the seemingly desperate lack of knowledge about the conservation status of most of Tasmania's fauna species, research suggests that many species are in decline through a combination of factors including disease, introduced animals, environmental pollution, lethal 'management' practices (such as legal and illegal shooting, 1080 baiting and persecution) and habitat disturbance and loss.

There are increasing number of anecdotal observations of the disappearance of local fauna populations with no baseline data available and no coordinated monitoring to chart the decline. For example, the conservation status of the smaller marsupials across their range is unknown.

There is a sense among members of the community and organisations involved in wildlife welfare and conservation that we cannot depend on government agencies alone to conserve and protect

Tasmania's wildlife and that if we don't act right now it will be too late for some species.

Goals

1. To improve the management and conservation of Tasmanian fauna.
2. To bring about a change in attitudes from an acceptance of routine persecution, ignorance and complacency about the long term survival of Tasmania's wildlife to one of respect, appreciation and genuine protection.

Objectives

1. To establish a network of groups and individuals involved in wildlife conservation and welfare to identify and act upon opportunities for improvement in knowledge, education, legislation, regulation and the management and handling of wildlife.
2. To raise awareness of the importance of conserving habitat on private land and promoting land use practices that enable wildlife to coexist with our communities.
3. To establish a site for the coordination and dissemination of the results of community based surveys and academic wildlife research, to allow those for those results to benefit fauna conservation.
4. To provide information to the general public on:
 - Tasmanian species distribution and conservation status
 - wildlife management
 - browsing protection
 - orphaned and injured wildlife (vets, drop off points and care)

Strategic approach

Some of the initiatives that groups in the WCWA are already involved in include:


- marshalling community and academic data on species and converting that into knowledge that is easily accessible
- providing up to date information on wildlife care and management
- encouraging community groups to

undertake baseline wildlife surveys in areas proposed for disturbance through logging, infrastructure or development


- raising public awareness of unacceptable practices such as Wallaby hunting using hounds and shotguns, muttonbirding, ending the use of 1080 poison, irresponsible pet ownership, duck hunting, Cape Barren Goose culling etc. An approach that is sometimes effective is discussing these practices with the perpetrators, to encourage them to find other less destructive crop protection, recreational pursuits, etc.

The Alliance will not aim to be aggressive, adversarial or competitive. An important activity will be to ensure that our initiatives complement the work of existing government instrumentalities and that any assistance they are able to give will be appreciated and used productively. The Alliance will not dictate policy to members.

Suzu Manigian
WCWA Coordinator



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minerals - crystals - gemstones
fossils ...and from around the world



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10% discount to WILDCARE members

WILDCARE Inc Membership Renewal Form (2005)

Complete and mail to **WILDCARE** Inc, c/- GPO Box 44 Hobart 7001

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

Contact Phone number:

.....

If the above details have changed since you renewed/joined in 2004 please provide your previous address details so that we can find you on the membership database.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Please leave my background information and volunteer preference unchanged on the database.

Please update my record with the following additions...

Preferred reserve/place (if you have one)

.....

.....

Circle volunteer activity categories you wish to add to your record.

CARes — Community Action in Reserves: General management assistance, Adopt-a-Track Program, Enterprise projects, visitor education, walking hut maintenance, Habitat Care, Action for Coasts, Cave Care.

Naturecare — conserving Tasmania's plants and animals: Whale rescue, Oil Spill response, Raptor research, Wildlife survey, Threatened

species assistance, Data records (computer), Community education, Fox eradication assistance, Land For Wildlife, Caring for injured/orphaned animals. **Botanical Guardians:** Monitoring, Survey, Replanting, Propagation, Field collection, Community education, Orchid Guardians program.

Heritagecare — conserving Tasmania's cultural heritage: Site recording, Data records (computer), Archival research, Excavation assistance, Community education, Historic site management.

Fishcare — promoting a sustainable fishery: Fishcare North West, Fishcare North, Fishcare South, Office support, Community education, Schools education, Research assistance.

WILDCARE Inc Office: Special event assistance, Administrative assistance, Member records, Newsletter production.

Payment method

Cheque or money order attached \$25 made out to **WILDCARE** Inc

Please arrange \$25 payment from my Credit Card

Card Type:

Card Number:

.....

Card Expiry Date:

Name on Card:

.....

Signature of Cardholder:

.....





WILDCARE Inc

Active wildlife carer authorisation

Valid only while the carer holds current **WILDCARE** Inc membership.

WILDCARE Inc carries no-fault accident insurance cover for its members undertaking voluntary wildlife care activities authorised by **WILDCARE** Inc. If you are a current **WILDCARE** Inc member and are actively caring for wildlife, please complete this form and return to the **WILDCARE** Inc c/- GPO Box 44 Hobart 7001.

NOTE: WILDCARE DOES NOT AUTHORISE members to care for snakes or other venomous animals and accepts no responsibility for accidents associated with the care of those animals.

This authorisation does not replace the need to hold permits to have and rehabilitate wildlife. Permits are available from the Nature Conservation Branch of the Department of Primary Industries Water and Environment. Phone 03 6233 6556 for information.

Name

Address

Phone numberEmail Address

WILDCARE MEMBER NUMBER (include all numbers)

Expiry date on membership card

Type of animals/birds you are caring for (please list)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Your signatureDate



Thankyou!

WILDCARE wishes to thank the following sponsors for their support of the *WILDCARE* Fund

Gold Sponsors (\$10,000 plus)

Parks and Wildlife Service

Category 2 sponsors (\$5000–\$9999)

Resource Management & Conservation

Category 3 sponsors (\$1000–\$4999)

Forestry Tasmania

Tasmanian Fishing Industry Council

KPMG

PR Partners (Public Relations Consultancy)

And the following *WILDCARE* member discount sponsors

Cartledge Agency – 8% discount (refer to advertisement)

Eaglehawk Neck Backpackers – \$2 discount per night

Gemstones at Lune River – 10% discount

Gordon Gateway – 10% discount on accommodation (door prices)

Moonpads – 10% discount

Par Avion Wilderness Flights – 10% discount

Parks and Wildlife Service – \$20 discount on Annual Park Pass

Platypus Park, Country Retreat, Bridport – 15% discount

Snowgum equipment – 10% discount

Something Wild – 10% discount on entry fee

The Possum Shed, Westerway – 10% discount on all gifts

(To claim your discount, simply present your *WILDCARE* member card.)

We are looking for other sponsors, both for the *WILDCARE* Fund and as discounters. Know someone who you think might be interested? Why not have a chat to them and suggest they contact **Andrew Smith at Community Partnerships Section** for more details (Ph 03 6233 2836 — GPO Box 44 Hobart 7001).

Tasmanian Trail Guidebook – **Tasmanian Trail**

This essential guide will give walkers, bicyclists and horse riders all the information needed to travel all or part of the unique **Tasmanian Trail**.

Detailed trail notes cover each stage of the journey, providing concise directions and information on access, campsites and facilities. Distances are given for trips in either direction, while each stage is supplemented with detailed maps.

Planning, safety and environmental issues are all thoroughly covered.

Fascinating snippets of information on the natural and cultural features you will discover along the trail are liberally spread throughout the book.

If you are contemplating a full traverse of the state or just a day trip, this book is a must.

Recommended Retail Price: \$22.00. Order through the *WILDCARE* Office, GPO Box 44 Hobart 7001. Please make cheques payable to The Tasmanian Trail Association.

ISBN 9 318923 009651

