



GREEN PREMIER TURNS CHARCOAL BLACK



Premier Bob Carr

“ BOB CARR DON’T BURN OUR FORESTS ” – “ NO CHARCOAL ” – “ NATIVE FORESTS ARE FULL OF LIFE ” AND “ WOODCHIPPING FORESTS IS UNWISE ”.

These banners unfurled at Sydney Domain as crowds gathered to hear Greens MLC Ian Cohen, Clover Moore, Noel Plumb and Chris Kowal speak. The tripod symbol of the forest conservation movement is mounted on the stage, live music plays, and the colourful banners are suspended high over the stage. Throughout the crowd are local groups from Batemans Bay, Moruya, Mogo, Ulladulla, Nowra, Narooma, Queanbeyan and many other places – all calling on Premier

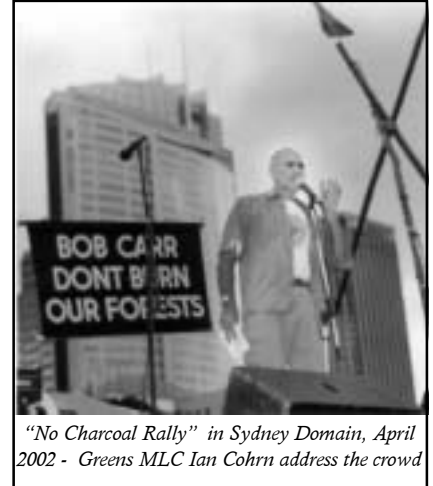
by Noel Plumb*

Carr to stop plans of building a massive charcoal plant near Batemans Bay on the South Coast and not to woodchip and burn South Coast forests for charcoal.

A proposal to log and burn 200,000 tonnes a year of South Coast forests for at least 20 years has been put forward by the State Government. Clover Moore, Independent MP for Bligh, standing in as MC for the afternoon rally, says the proposal to make charcoal is ‘simply another massive woodchip operation’. The intended woodchip operations will extend from Narooma to Nowra and out to Braidwood.

Chris Kowal heads the Charcoalition, an alliance of community groups on the South Coast. He explains how communities there are overwhelmingly opposed to the massive smokestack plant and the devastating impacts it will have on the main regional industry, nature based tourism, as well as the local air and water quality, health and amenity.

Ian Cohen MLC Greens and Arthur Chesterfield Evans MLC Democrats delivered strong messages of support. Glen Klatovsky of the Wilderness Society wound up the rally with a call for strong action. The audience unanimously supported



“No Charcoal Rally” in Sydney Domain, April 2002 - Greens MLC Ian Cohen address the crowd

motions condemning the plans to use South Coast forests, or any other native forests, for charcoal and called on the Premier to ensure the charcoal plant is not approved.

Why, after seven years under a Premier elected on the strength of his promises to stop woodchipping and save the forests are we in this situation? It’s a question many dedicated conservationists are asking as well as “Why Vote Labor?” as the next State election looms. *More information in conservation report page 8.*

*Noel Plumb is convenor of The South East Forest Alliance, a former Executive Officer of the National Parks Association and is a current national councillor of The Australian Conservation Foundation.

REMOVAL OF FERAL HORSES FROM KOSCIUSKO NATIONAL PARK

David Campbell, NSW Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs representative on the WHMSC

Numbering around 3000 - 4000, the impact of feral horses are a major issue in Kosciusko National Park. While primary concentrations are in the southern end of KNP, including Cowombat Flat, The Pilot, Tin Mine Hut and The Big Boggy, numbers are also increasing in the northern end of the park with horses also moving into the ACT. A major issue in the last three years has been the movement of feral horses via the Rams Head up onto the main range.

While feral horses have an iconic importance, so too do the Australian Alps. Any trade-off between the two has to be considered in light of there being 337 000 to 600 000 feral horses in Australia, more than in any other country (an analogous story to rabbits?), while only 0.01 of the Australian land mass is alpine (the proportion that is sub-alpine is larger than this, but is still an important and a relatively small proportion of the overall land mass).

Substantial environmental damage occurs as a result of feral horse activity in alpine and subalpine areas. The pugging of wet areas and damage to plant and animal bog and wetland communities by breaking the side banks of marshes, forming wallows, and tracks that go through and drain these low lying areas. The horse tracks change the hydrology by compacting the soil, intercepting run-off and channelling water along the tracks. All of this impacts the ecology, plant and animal species

Continued on page 12



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Contributions, letters to the editor, original cartoons and suggestions are welcome. They should be sent to the address below. Except for short notes or letters, they should be accompanied with text file on three and a half inch floppy disk in IBM format or E-Mail.

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The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc represents over 70 clubs with a total membership around 12,000 bushwalkers. Formed in 1932, the Confederation provides a united voice on conservation and other issues, runs training courses for members, and provides for the public for The Bushwalkers Wilderness Squad, a highly trained volunteer search and rescue squad. People interested in joining a bushwalking club are invited to write to the Secretary Bushwalkers NSW at the above address for information on clubs in their area. Or web site www.bushwalking.org.au

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BIRD-WATCHING IN CAMBODIA

Cambodia - where's that? With two friends I holidayed in the ancient Kmer Empire. It lies between Thailand and Laos to the north, and Vietnam to the east and south. We were making a study tour of the temples, Ankor Watt, Bayon, Ankor Thom, and many others.

Geographically, Cambodia consists of a great plain, with low mountains in the north and west. The Mekong River flows in a generally north/south direction, and the Great Lake, Tonle Sap, reflects the alternation between dry and rainy seasons. Many rivers run into the lake, and the Tonle Sap River flows out to join the Mekong.

Bird life is abundant in this watery land. A visit to the Bird Sanctuary was on the agenda.

Out on the lake the weather was a bit windy and the water rough. Conditions worsened considerably as a squall blew up. Our boat rode over the waves, and spray was coming in. I was getting decidedly wet. Jane and Colleen sitting behind me were more sheltered. Lucky let down the cotton curtains to give us some protection, and we were handed life jackets. . After what seemed a very long time - it was over an hour - and with the sky lightening, the sun came up in an angry red ball, and the boat changed direction, broadside to the waves. Then another change of direction, and we were in the quieter waters of a river mouth.

On each side fisher huts were built out over the water. We pulled up at the local Police Station. I was shivering, part with cold, and part with fright! We had to get out of the boat. In the Police Station a woman talked on a radio telephone in one corner, a uniformed Policeman on a mobile, and our driver talking to the boatmen, all in staccato Kmer. What was happening? We had to get another boat? We could go no further? Very confusing.

Out on the lake again, and the weather was too rough to proceed. Our

by *Majory Kirk WEA Ramblers*
crew tied up to a tree in a calmer flooded forest area. After discussion with the Ranger we eventually proceeded along narrow waterways through bushes and trees, our boat barely squeezing between. There was no dry land anywhere, just vegetation and trees standing in the water, which I judged to be at least 3 feet deep. After a while we reached a more open part with bamboo fish traps and men working at nets from canoes. We stopped for a chat; the Ranger had a few mouthfuls of rice with these men, and on to another clearing.



The Lion of Cambodia

This time a much larger boat and a canoe were tied up across the waterway, and there were more bamboo fish traps. Two canoes approached, each carrying two men, one appearing to be in a sort of uniform. As they came alongside with much shouting and arm waving, we were horrified to see both canoes carried guns. Automatic pump action weapons. The conversation seemed heated. Our Ranger took a paper from his pocket,

which was closely scrutinized by one of the canoe men. The situation seemed to calm down. Cigarettes were passed round. Some rice was produced and shared. (We thought 'This must be their morning tea break!') Two large fish were presented to the boatmen. They landed in our boat flapping round near my feet.

That we could go no further forward was made very clear because of the large boat parked across in front of us.

We had to retrace part of our way back, and turned into an even narrower waterway. Here we were actually pushing through bushes, being showered with leaves, twigs, a variety of caterpillars spiders and beetles. Gorgeous butterflies flitted about. The vegetation grew thicker. The Ranger on the prow of the boat directed the way. He seemed to know where he was going in this green watery jungle. Then another clearing with a 60 ft. tree, and a rough ladder going vertically out of the water. There were people at the top on a platform!

We pulled up by the tree, and one of our boatmen indicated I should go up that ladder! What? No way! Lucky said they wanted us to go up to see the birds. Next, the Ranger invited us into a little canoe with 1/2inch freeboard, to paddle further and see birds. We stayed resolutely in our seats on the boat. The two men from the tree and all four on our boat squatted on the tiny foredeck and ate lunch. Rice, baked fish, and various other unrecognizable dishes. Would we care to join them? We declined and nibbled the biscuits we had brought.

With some difficulty the boat was turned round in the small clearing, and began the return journey. Every now and again the engine coughed and stopped, and the deck hand had to get into the water and clear debris from the propeller. This happened frequently all along the narrow waterways, and the engine always restarted to our immense relief. I noticed also a large plastic container of fuel beside the ancient engine. At least we were not about to **run out** of diesel - a thought which had crossed our minds?

Again out on the lake, the waves had subsided and conditions were much better for the return journey. On the wide water of the lake the shore was often out of sight.



Waterfront Cottages - Cambodia

We reached the river mouth and returned the Ranger to the Police Station. Another hour's journey over the lake back to our starting point and the waiting minibus. We had

been away for nearly 12 hours, no breakfast, and no lunch.

The birds? Oh, yes. We saw lots of them. The Ranger kept pointing them out. Chinese Pond Heron, Indian Shag, Oriental Diver, Blue Tailed Bee-eater, Spotted Pelican, Great Purple Heron, Brahminy Kites, Great Adjutant Bird, Racket Tailed Drongo, Egrets, Jabiru, and many more unidentified. Some of these birds are on the endangered list with as few as 40 breeding pairs in the area.

We are still uncertain if the men with guns were fishermen, wildlife rangers, or poachers. Anyone for birdwatching?



Keith Maxwell, President BWRS

BWRS TRAINING

(good, better, best)

During March BWRS had a very successful Training Weekend at Bungonia SRA. It was great to see so many enthusiastic members at this well organised weekend. This weekend was a great start to the BWRS vision of being the outstanding volunteer bush search and rescue squad of NSW; a highly skilled and disciplined bush search and rescue squad able to operate in any weather or terrain.

BWRS is not training its members in bushwalking. We expect that all trainees will be experienced bushwalkers. This intensive training at Bungonia was the first of our organised program to cover the extra competencies (skills) to be outstanding bush search and rescue personnel. Competencies successfully covered at Bungonia included search techniques, observation, search briefing, search communications, rescue organisations, roles and responsibilities of leaders and search team members. Recently the BWRS Rock Squad practised their (State Rescue Board recognised ALVRI) vertical rescue skills in a practice canyon rescue in the Mt Wilson area. However there still is a range of competencies to cover including navigation/GPS, helicopter/ aircraft safety skills as well as Search Management.

I know that these competencies are the skills BWRS has been using since its foundation in 1936. However, the extensive past experience of BWRS is no longer

sufficient. BWRS needs to record and show the skills (competencies) of all its members. This recent training has convinced me that BWRS ultimately will be a stronger and more effective bush search and rescue organisation.

As I have said many times 'duty of care' is now an essential principle of rescue in NSW. Bushwalking Clubs need also to be aware of the current climate of 'duty of care' espoused by Insurance companies. Duty of care operates at every level in search and rescue. Lost or injured persons should be rescued with minimum delay by personnel with appropriate skills (competencies). To minimise risk to these field personnel they need to be lead by trained Search Managers. Bungonia showed that this training can be done in an enjoyable way.

It is not too late to be part of this training program. This training program is being adapted to be presentable at any time. BWRS can always use new trainees in its aim to be a really effective bush search and rescue squad. For further details contact our Secretary at PO Box 22 CANTERBURY, 2193 or email our mailbox wrs@mbox.com.au

WE'RE PLANNING - ARE YOU PLANNING?

The Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) Annual NavShield is getting closer. We have stepped up our planning so as to be ready by 6th / 7th July. There is a base

are being printed; Safety Plans written; Emergency Services notified BUT are you planning to be there?

The NavShield was developed by BWRS as a navigation training exercise for bushwalkers and Emergency Services personnel. Teams come from all over Australia to practise their trip planning / navigation skills. Some teams enjoy it so much they've been back over 10 years!

THE BUSHWALKERS WILDERNESS RESCUE SQUAD (BWRS) ANNUAL NAVSHIELD IS GETTING CLOSER. You can either plan to join the one day sprinters or the serious two day participants.

The NavShield is a test of planning, fitness and navigation. You enter as a team, get a map and a list of grid references of "checkpoints". The aim is simple. Plan your time to get as many points as possible from finding these checkpoints. Don't be late because the penalties are strict. Eat and socialise at the end. The NavShield is a great way to revise/practise your bushwalking navigation. BWRS always sets a course with a large number of checkpoints graded from easy to hard. We always ensure that there are plenty of checkpoints close to base for the one day beginners.

You can see details of past NavShields at our website www.bwrs.org.au such as Nav2001 "snowtown", Nav98 "scrub country - never again" or Nav2000 "pagoda country".

Time is short. Start your planning by getting an Entry Form/Event Rules by contacting BWRS at our email box - wrs@mbox.com.au or sending your details to our Secretary at PO Box 22 CANTERBURY 2193. Be part of Nav2002!

EVEN AT EASTER

Search at Hilltop (near Mittagong) on 31st March 2002.

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) like all Emergency Services can be called out at any time. Which really means that we can be activated at times such as 1am on Sunday, 31st March, 2002 for a 6am start at Starlight's Track (outside Hilltop).

On Saturday afternoon (30th March) a couple had been walking down Starlight's Track to the Nattai River. Their planned walk was to complete a loop by going past Macarthur's Flat downstream to a track that follows Troy



No Matter What Age, you Have to Check-in at NavShield

site close to a National Park "that-away" from Sydney. The catering menu has been decided. Entry Forms

TAFFY'S ROCK & GUNYAH BEACH A NEW BRIDGE?

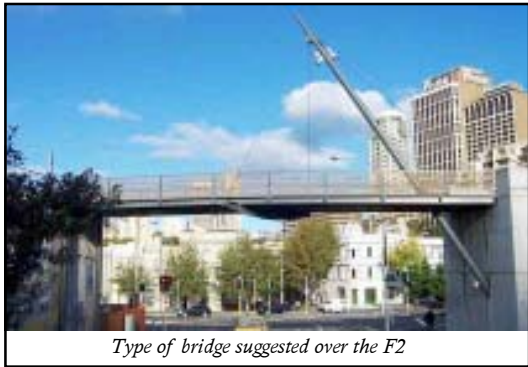
Alex Tucker Tracks and Access Officer

The article by James Armstrong in The Bushwalker of February 2001 recalls to me my first sight of Taffy's Rock It was a long



time ago before the completion of the Newcastle Expressway (F2) and I think we must have followed the fire trail from near Millicent Trig (MR309822 on the 1999 Cowan E Topo Image Map)

The second trip in the 1970s we walked through a 2 metre square culvert under the F2, which was normally dry, and carried storm water to Campbells Creek. Later the roadway was appar-



Type of bridge suggested over the F2

ently widened and this required an extension of the culvert and a bend to direct the water back to the gully. There was no longer a light at the end of the tunnel Strangely enough, a Freedom of Information request to the RTA did not reveal any record of this widening nor did the Authority's query to some retired engineers of that period. Some of the relevant files were said to be missing.

During the original construction the Jerusalem Bay Track Bridge was constructed just north of Cowan station (MR 302 812 same Map) Again the DMR files have no record of who had recommended this location. There is anecdotal evidence that the Ku-ring-gai Chase NPWS Advisory Committee may have asked for a bridge capable of taking a fire tanker. The Jerusalem Bay track continues from the eastern end of the bridge and that track is not suitable for a tanker In fact after heavy rain the track is an eroded water course and now part of the Great North Walk (GNW)!

About two years ago I suggested at an AGM that Confederation should

agitate for a new crossing of the F2. Two clubs were strongly opposed because they enjoyed the challenge of the eroded track so I left the matter on the back burner, other than making my FoI request. I still consider that it is environmentally unsound to use this highly erodable track/water course

WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE?

There were two fire trails cut by the F2, the second is near Bywater Trig where the Expressway crosses the railway tunnel (MR 320 837) One advantage of a new bridge here is that it diverts walkers on the GNW away from the environmentally sensitive Campbells Crater I think this objective can be achieved by a minor local diversion of the GNW .

So my preference is for a new bridge across the F2 near Millicent Trig, and a short link trail parallel to the roadway cutting leading to the recently upgraded Jerusalem Bay firetrail. This is accessed from the south bound lane of the F2.

Before you shout "pie in the sky "consider two advantages of a new crossing:

- 1) The Draft Plan of Management for KRGC NP if adopted unchanged by the Minister for the Environment commits the NPWS to upgrade their section of the GNW The cost of rectification of the existing water course would be better spent in contributing to the cost of the new bridge



This view of F2 Freeway from the Jerusalem Bay Track bridge is typical The location of the new bridge might depend on the presence or absence of the central rock pier.

- 2)In the event of a major fire at Jerusalem Bay the Hornsby Rural Fire Service (RFS) could station a tanker at

each end of the new bridge, run one or more 65 mm canvas hoses across the bridge and transfer pump until the fire was extinguished The static eastern tanker would supply as many working tankers as necessary . So the RFS might be prepared to contribute to the costs of the bridge.

It might be necessary to shame the RTA into this work to rectify the apparent failure of the DMR to consider the pre existing access rights of Bushwalkers. Do any of our most senior members recall being consulted?

IS IT PRACTICABLE?

Only the RTA can decide this but consider the pedestrian bridges you have seen I favour a bridge similar to that over St Marys Road Woolloomooloo with the width reduced to about one metre. The mirror image of bridge in the photo forms the other half of the proposed bridge with a central pier between the north and south bound lanes

I intend to give notice of a motion probably for the July meeting that Confederation writes to RTA, NPWS, and RFS advocating a new bridge. If this motion is not carried by a significant majority I will take no further action Bushwalkers and others on the GNW will be left with the badly eroded track or the illegal option of walking inside the road reserve fence along the tops of deep cuttings with the possibilities of someone falling or of dislodging rocks and causing damage to vehicles below.

HEAT EXHAUSTION AND HEAT STROKE

A letter to the Editor tells us of a General Practitioner living in Bourke who suffered heat stroke in Gundabooka National Park about 50 km from her home. Obviously she knew the potential hazard, wore appropriate clothing and had carried sufficient water for her expected duration of walking. I guess that the mental stress and the extra time arising from the missing signage combined to cause the potentially fatal illness.

As everyone who has gained a senior first aid certificate is aware Heat Stroke is the most serious of the problems arising from overexposure to heat. I have experienced a mild but frightening attack of heat exhaustion

while walking by myself on an unusually hot and windless morning in Ku-ring-gai Chase. I think a brief swim at Portuguese Beach started my dehydration and my litre of water proved to be



Cradle Mountain - Tasmania - Carolyn Ryan

completely inadequate. I sat and drank for over an hour before I felt well enough to drive home. So don't walk alone if you can avoid it and always take more water than you expect to need.

Gundabooka NP features the rugged Gunderbooka Range of ancient rust coloured rock rising to 500 metres. The whole park is of great significance to the Ngema people and is said to be Bourke's "Uluru". Facilities are still being developed. The NPWS has recently acquired a cattle station and until it has been gazetted into the Park, no dedicated funding is available for improved signage or for adequate interpretation of the aboriginal sites, in association with the local elders. Special "Discovery" tours are planned for the spring School holidays.

It is essential to call at the NPWS office in Bourke to record your intention to visit the park and to have a full briefing. Some self styled "experienced bushwalkers" from Sydney have declined the latter which only proves that not all men from the east are wise or as Shakespeare said "Man, Proud Man, most ignorant of what he's most assured" Really experienced walkers know that it is a different country

WONDABYNE AND PINDAR CAVE

I have received three complaints and will be writing to CityRail Gosford Council and the NPWS. I would appreciate any corroborative details from other walkers.

1) I am told that the proposed new rail timetables, now postponed, have reduced the number of trains that stop

at Wondabyne on demand .. The big gap, is in the afternoon when you either wait for up to four hours to get a train back to Sydney or go north to Woy Woy and back. This would adversely affect any walkers on the Great North Walk planning to camp at Brooklyn Dam before dark.

2) The bridge from the station to the sculpture park is in dangerous disrepair

and neither place has any garbage bins. Bushwalkers typically collect the public's rubbish whilst waiting for their train and would appreciate a

receptacle

3) The track to Pindar Cave goes past a pool in Pindar Brook and has become almost indistinguishable from the water course. This is not a new development and generally does not worry bushwalkers. However it could be a problem for parents with young children. The wet track is not ideal for the water quality in the Brook or for the aquatic life that may have colonised the track

I am told that a track slightly up the slope looks to be a possible alternative which NPWS should assess and if possible implement. I hope that some bushwalkers would volunteer to help with a reconstruction work.

PARK CLOSURES

At the April General Meeting I was asked to ask the Regional Managers Sydney South and Blue Mountains of the criteria which determine when Royal and Blue Mountains NPs can be fully reopened, what progress has been made towards achieving the criteria and the target dates.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From Dr Elliot for Dr Heather Dalgety.

Dear Bushrange

In your November issue a senior bushwalker is outraged at the lack of interest by NPWS in the public's facilities.

I had heat strike recently in Gundabooka NP due to lack of signage. The NPWS excuse was 'lack of funds' but a few arrows on boards would have sufficed plus imaging the treks from the point of view of likely walkers. The



park, near Bourke NSW is Uluru like in its big rock sculptured glory.

Why should NPWS neglect the public? Partly due to administrative bias, but partly due to the undermining of all our public institutions in favour of privatisation. This is due to the assumption we will sign the GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) treaty in November 2002. These international treaties are never debated in public, as both major parties assume they are inevitable.

Under GATS the environment is called a service to be administered by private corporations, which must be subsidised to the same extent as taxpayer funded organisations. In dentistry & Private Health Insurance we have already signed the GATS treaty. Media, Health, Education, Finance, Telephone, Transport & Roads will also be privately managed. Even though private usually means less efficient, more expensive & less fair. But the free market doctrine decrees that private is always better, & the American Finance Industry is pushing for US corporations to profit from Health, Education, Environment everywhere.

If our parks are run down; streamlined at the office level but not encouraging ordinary Australian users, they are ripe for privatisation. Soon we can have "sustainable" logging, Tourism and mining in parks. Wildlife selling could be increased, or how's about debt for land swaps as recently in South Africa? No doubt banks would appreciate snow & waterside estates.

If we don't find out about GATS soon, before November 2002, our prostituted politicians will have signed away much of our security, beauty & heritage. Please contact me if interested by email catcher@norex.com.au Dr Liz Elliot

Ed. Did the writer had enough water, proper head covering and maps of the area she walked in?

If so I wonder if she would have had the difficulty she experienced.

**CONFEDERATION CELEBRATES
70 YEARS ON JULY 27 & 28
CAMP AT MILL CREEK IN
DHARUG
NATIONAL PARK
WE HAVE BOOKED ALL 10
SITES IN THE PARK CAMPING
AREA
OR JOIN US ON THE SUNDAY
FOR A FAMILY FUN
PROGRAMME DETAILS LATER**



CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING ACT ARE YOU AFFECTED

by Maurice Smith

Recently I had the dubious pleasure of attending a seminar run by the Charities Office of the NSW Department of Gaming and Racing about the requirements of the NSW Charitable Fundraising Act (the Act).

It turns out that Confederation is regarded as a charity for the purposes of this Act even though we aren't a charity for the purposes of Commonwealth income Tax! **Although you might think "so what!, why bore me with a boring topic". In fact there is a possibility that your bushwalking club might be caught up in the net of this Act without you even realising it,** hence this article. I must also qualify this article by telling you that I'm not a lawyer, so you might want to check with I'm saying with your friendly local solicitor.

To be subject to the requirements of this Act there are two criteria that must be met. If you don't meet both of the criteria then you don't need to concern yourself about the Act's requirements.

The first criterion is that the purpose (the term "objects" is used in the Act) of your club must include some "charitable purpose". This is very widely defined and includes "activities that are beneficial to the community". For example, if your club's objects include, say, the promotion of bushwalking as a recreation activity, this may well be sufficient to be caught under this arm of the requirement. I did warn you that it was very broadly defined.

The second criterion is that you solicit funds from the public other than the members of your club. You don't actually have to actually obtain funds from the public, what matters is that you solicit funds.

However, if you satisfy both criteria then you need to obtain from the Charities Office an authority to fundraise. The authority comes with a whole stack of conditions that you have to meet. While I certainly won't bore you with the details of the conditions let me warn you that they are rigorous.

If you need to find out more, contact the Charities Office on (02) 9995 0666 or send an email with appropriate details to charity.enquiries@dgr.nsw.gov.au.

BOOK REVIEW — THE SECRET LIFE OF WOMBATS

by Maurice Smith

Having seen many a wombat when I've been out bushwalking I was fascinated to learn about this book which I read about it in an article in the Sydney Morning Herald some time back. Then when I was browsing in a bookstore as I do from time to time, there it was right in front of me on the shelf. So before my credit card could object I immediately purchased a copy.



The book was written by James Woodford, a science and environmental writer with the Sydney Morning Herald. The book has several threads running through it.

The first is the story of a teenaged schoolboy Peter Nicholson who in 1960 not only explored wombat burrows; he in fact befriended with some wild wombats. As a result he wrote a prize-winning scientific paper that was also published in an appropriate scientific journal. The story of the schoolboy and his wombat study experiences reads something like what you would expect to read in a schoolboys' ripping yarns collection.

Some of the other threads running through the book include the early white contact with wombats, the life cycle of wombats, and the different types of wombats, including the very rare and extremely endangered northern hairy nosed wombats. The book has numerous colour photos.

I must confess that I enjoyed the book and have no hesitation in recommending it to anyone who enjoys learning about our unique native animals. I purchased my copy in Dymocks bookstore, it is published by The Text Publishing Company of Melbourne. The ISBN is 1 876485 86 8.

Continued from page 4

Creek back up to the Nattai fire trail.

The woman, Sue, became separated from Geoff. She continued down Starlight's Track. The man, Geoff, unsuccessfully attempted to locate her and eventually contacted the Police that evening. Berrima VRA Squad assisted the Police and the Police Dog Squad to search down to Macarthur's Flat via Starlight's Track during the night. BWRS was then activated by Berrima VRA for a 6am start at the new Starlight's Track car park.

Luckily Peter Mullins was available to tow the BWRS rescue trailer. The middle of Easter is a challenging time to contact BWRS members even if time wasn't limited. Despite lots of voice mail messages I was able to get the assistance of a further five (5) members who had all attended our recent skills training weekend at Bungonia. These searches are unpredictable but usually are either easy or hard. Accordingly I had left contact/search details at home. BWRS could thus have quickly scaled up its response if required. BWRS looked far more professional than in the past with all members dressed in our new BWRS lime polo top.

Three search teams of BWRS and Berrima VRA were arranged. The search plan as agreed with the Police OIC was to cover the route of the intended trip of Saturday. Search teams were also to continue past where possible wrong turns could be made. One search team was to head much further down the Nattai River while another search team was to turn west up Wanganderry Creek. In a previous search the missing group had accidentally walked up this creek.

All teams had left Search HQ by 7-10am. At 8-56am we received a HF radio message to confirm that Sue had been located on the Troy Creek track and was well and able to walk back to Search HQ. Around Macarthur's Flat the Nattai River valley has large cliff lines and is not easy to exit except for these two popular tracks. The BWRS HF radio network is very effective in rugged country so that search teams can be easily redirected or recalled. The last search team was back at HQ by 11-26am; before lunch as usual!

Well done by the seven members who ably represented BWRS at short notice. This search was reported as just one paragraph on page 2 of the Sydney Morning Herald of 1st April.



CONSERVATION REPORT



Conservation has taken a few hits in the past months.

The irony of the situation is that a supposedly "Green"

State Government is adopting the policies of rapaciousness more suited with a reactionary government.

CHARCOAL PLANT

Expediency which is fuelled by a looming election has forced the government to adopt programs such as backing the establishment of a Charcoal Plant in the Mogo area on the South Coast near Batemans Bay after failing in its bid to locate this industry in the Pillaga or around Lithgow.

Six thousand jobs in the South Coast tourist industry are being threatened by a State Forest clear-felling operation to satiate the 200,000 tonne/annum appetite of the Charcoal Plant which is expected to employ in the region of 20 to 50 personnel.

The charcoal derived from this Mogo plant is intended to be used as a reductant mainly for the manufacture of silicon for silicone gels etc, not as commonly thought for silicone substrates used in the manufacture of Computer Integrated circuits (chips).

The Silicon Smelter will not benefit the locals of the South Coast. It is expected to be constructed in Lithgow, the heart of a politically important and sensitive electorate, capable of swinging against the State Government and its chances of occupying the treasury benches.

The State Government, ever politically expedient, is blatantly exploiting the South Coast environment in its attempt to garner a Central Western grass-roots, not tree-roots, electoral support.

GAMES BILL 2002

On another front, the government is doing deals with powerful groups such as the hunter's lobby. The Game Bill

Michael Maack Conservation officer

2002, which is currently in the Legislative Council, is testimony to the deal making power of this singular lobby group.

The Game Bill proposes that a statutory body called the Game Council be established to represent licensed game hunters and to administer the licensing system. The Game Council and its major constituency, hunting organisations (8 of 16 Game Council seats), will be given the task to "provide advice and recommendations on game management and the declaration of public lands for game hunting and funding works and activities for the conservation of game animals." (Game

Bill 2002, Explanatory Note, Clause 9)

Note that game animals destined to be conserved include non-native feral

animals like deer, quail, partridges and turkeys.

Note that all public lands, other than National Parks, will come under the purview of this Game Council. The Games Council will have direct links back to the relevant Minister "at the request of the Minister or on its own initiative" (Clause 9(d)) There can be no closed Ministerial door to this Council unlike other lobby groups including recreational groups like Bushwalkers and local communities. It will be heavily resourced both from a game licensing fee system as well as from the public coffers. (Clause 14)

Note that "The Game Council may establish other committees to assist it in connection with the exercise of any of its functions" whose members "need not be members of the Game Council" (Clause 11)

Under Clause 12, it is entitled to employ staff under the Public Sector Management Act 1988 or can demand the services "of any staff or facilities of a government department or a public or local authority".

The power of this Council to influence decision making will be enormous. It will become the NSW, possibly Australian variant, of the American

NRA. Assent to this bill will create an onerous piece of legislation that opponents will find difficult to contain. It is a destabilising piece of legislation.

BRIGALOW BELT SOUTH BIOREGION WORKSHOP:

A number of workshops have been held in the past months concerning this bioregion which incorporates the Pillaga. A synthesis of the workshop results indicate a commonality of interest does exist amongst many organisations participating in the workshop.

The workshop resolutions state that it is possible for sustainable practical conservation outcomes to be adopted without adversely affecting local jobs.

Our Confederation representatives are of the opinion that the controlled thinning of the native cypress in compartments whose hardwood timbers have been extracted in previous years should be allowed.

To quote our workshop representative "Biodiversity is particularly addressed by the process since studies in the area indicate that there is a great decrease in the biodiversity in areas where lack of thinning leads to (cypress) monoculture. In pre-European times there would have been a natural process resulting from:

- Kangaroo Rats eating the young pines
- Fires being allowed to run naturally

We have made the Kangaroo Rats locally extinct and the fires can no longer burn through the dense stands of young pine". Other flora cannot prosper under the cypress pine canopy without human intervention.

Provided that the cypress timbers do not exist in old growth forest; that the cypress is selectively logged with the intent of opening the forest to biodiverse regrowth and; that procedures are adopted to eliminate erosive run-off, the Confederation agrees with the outcomes of these workshops.

DRAFT PLANS OF MANAGEMENT

The NPWS is currently exhibiting the following Plans of Management for comment:



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PO Box 2090 GPO Sydney 2001

- Coocumbac Island Nature Reserve
- Royal National Park: Bonnie Vale Boat Ramp proposal
- Munmorah State recreation Area and Bird Island Nature Reserve

PLANS OF MANAGEMENT UNDER REVIEW

The Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management Review is currently being conducted. The NPWS is calling for representatives from user groups to attend the Community Forum workshops to discuss and develop management options for a new Plan Of Management. The Confederation is intending to have representation in this workshop group due to the Kosciuszko National Park's value as a premier recreational bushwalking and ski-touring area.

We will inform our readers about any new proposals or developments that may adversely impinge on the recreational and heritage values of the park in future issues of this magazine in light of the pressures that the NPWS is currently experiencing from its opponents and those with vested development interests.

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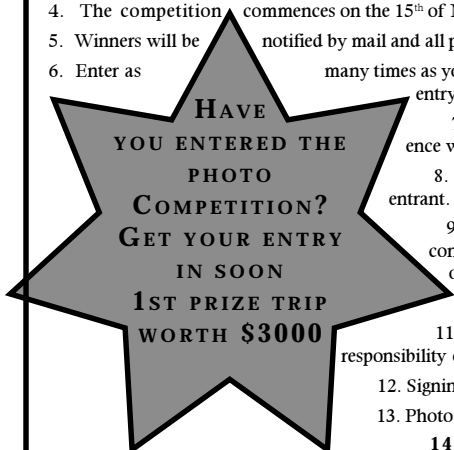
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1. Information on 'how to enter' and prizes, form part of the conditions of entry.
2. Entry will be accepted as a photo, print, floppy disk, or on CD in PC format, no slides.
3. Entry is open to all residents of Australia except the prize givers and their employees and immediate families and the executive committee of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Incorporated herein referred to as 'Confederation', and their immediate families.
4. The competition commences on the 15th of May 2001, and closes on the 31st of May 2002.
5. Winners will be notified by mail and all prize winners will be published in the spring 2002 issue of the *The Bushwalker*.
6. Enter as many times as you wish by mailing in the completed entry form together with name and address clearly written on the entry. Separate entry form for each photo (photo copies are OK)
7. The judge's decision in relation to any aspect of the competition is final and binding on each person and no correspondence will be entered into.
8. All entries become property of the Confederation and may be used in future publications unless otherwise stated by the entrant.
9. The Confederation shall not be liable for any loss or damage whatsoever suffered including but not limited to direct or consequential loss, or personal injury suffered or sustained during the course of prize winning trips or in connection with any of the prizes.
10. Confederation reserves the right to publish photos of the winners.
11. Any change in value of the prizes occurring between the publishing date and date of the prize is claimed is not the responsibility of the confederation.
12. Signing the back of the photo or disk confirms the photo belongs to & has been taken by the entrant.
13. Photo must be of the Australian bush, people, may be included
14. WHILE ENTRY IS FREE, DONATIONS ARE ENCOURAGED AND WILL BE GIVEN TO THE AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION COUNCIL.



ENTRY FORM

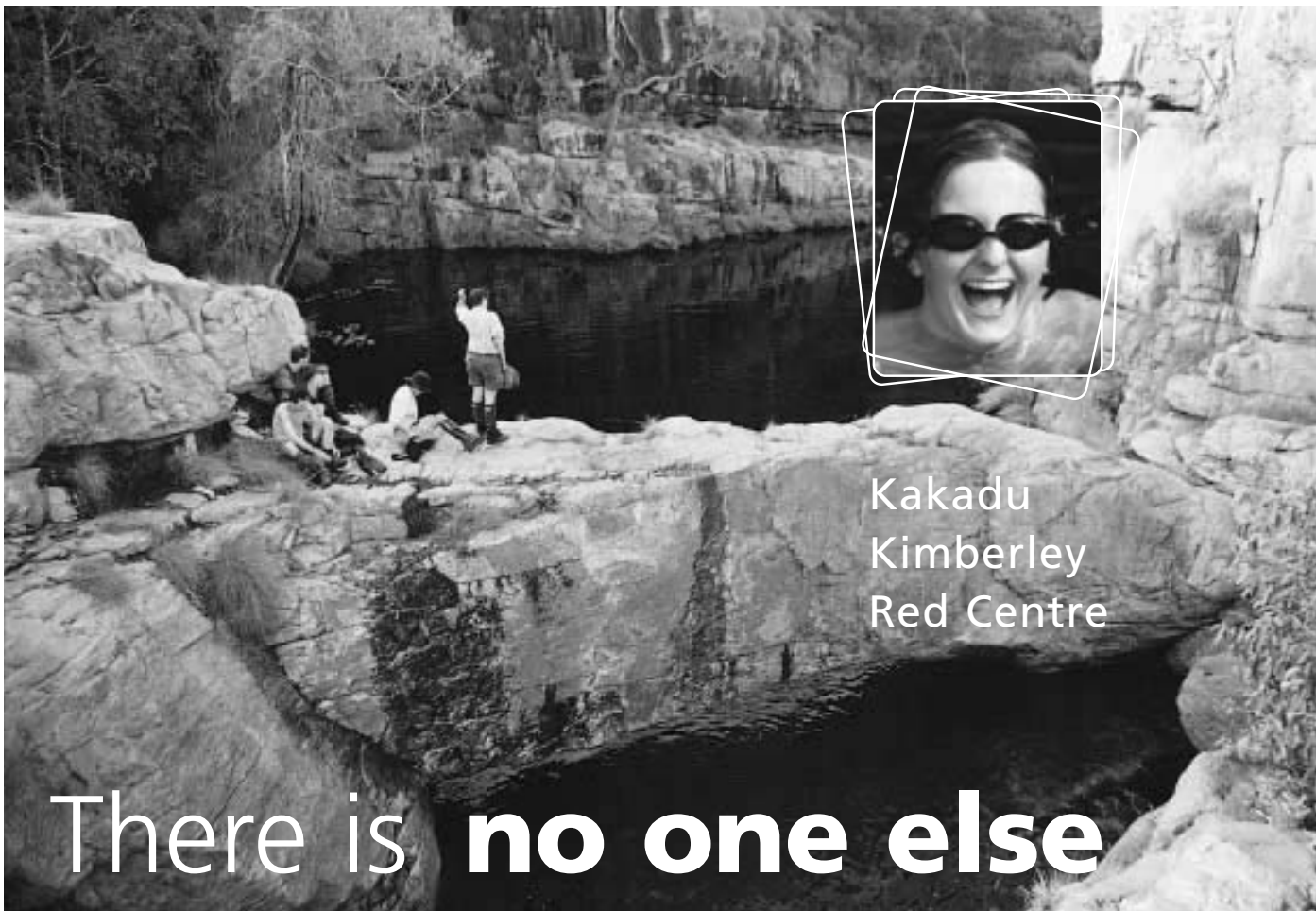
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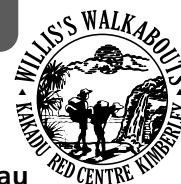
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BUSHWALKING SURVEY CONDUCTED BY ANTHONY DUNK

These questions were asked over the Bushwalking newsgroup on the internet at aus:bushwalking.

There were 90 responses

- 1 What state do you live in? : NSW - 49%, VIC - 18%, QLD - 12%, SA - 9%, ACT - 4%, WA - 3%, Tas - 3%, Overseas - 1%
- 2 What sort of area do you live in? : Capital city - 73%, Other city or town - 19%, Country - 8%
- 3 What age group are you in? : 0-20 - 4%, 21-30 - 26%, 31-40 - 21%, 41-50 - 23%, 51-60 - 23%, >61 - 2%
- 4 What is your gender? : Male - 90%, Female - 10%
- 5 Are you a member of any bushwalking club? Yes - 46%, No - 54%
- 6 What sort of walks do you do most often? Forest/Coastal - 42%, Mountains - 28%, River/Gorge - 22%, Other - 8%
- 7 Do you walk cross-country and off-track sometimes? yes - 73%, No - 27%
- 8 What navigation device do you use most often? Compass - 73%, GPS - 10%, Neither - 17%
- 9 Do you ever go on solo walks of more than just a couple of hours? Yes - 54%, No - 46%
- 10 Usual bushwalking footwear? Leather boots - 59%, Sneakers/volleys - 23%, Soft boots - 17%, Other - 1%
- 11 What brand of camping stove do you use? MSR - 27%, Trangia - 26%, No stove - 17%, Other brand - 12%, Coleman - 11%, Primus - 3%, Campinggaz - 2%, Gasmate - 1%, Go-system - 1%
- 12 What sort of fuel do you use in your stove? Gas - 27%, Metho - 26%, Shellite - 24%, No stove - 17%, Kero - 2%, Other fuel - 2%, Lighter fuel - 1%, Petrol - 1%
- 13 Weight of pack carried on a usual overnight walk? 0-10kg - 9%, 11-15kg - 34%, 16-20kg - 33%, 21-25kg - 8%, >25kg - 3%, Not sure/don't walk overnight - 12%
- 14 How long have you been bushwalking (rather than just doing touristy walks)? 2 years or less - 14%, 3-10 years - 36%, 10-20 years - 26%, 20-30 years - 12%, 30 years or more - 12%
- 15 What part of your body is most negatively affected by bushwalking? No part - 30%, Knees - 24%, Feet - 23%, Back - 12%, Hips - 5%, Other part - 3%
- 16 Have you used a GPS on a bushwalk? Yes - 51%, No - 49%
- 17 Have you ever taken an EPIRB on a bushwalk? - 29%, No - 71%
- 18 Have you ever seen a Koala or Platypus in the wild? - yes - 29%, No - 71%
- 19 Do you personally know anyone who's been bitten by a venomous snake while bushwalking? Yes - 11%, No - 89%
- 20 How do you feel about vehicular access within national parks? Keep current access - 47%, Close some trails - 26%, Close most trails - 21%, Don't know - 6%
- 21 Do you think rock cairns in national parks should be removed? No - 41%, Yes, when misleading - 33%, Yes remove all - 17%, Don't know - 9%



Continued from page 1
in the park, and damages the water holding capacity of the park. Beyond the Park, this loss of water retention erodes the capacity of this major catchment to provide water to downstream areas for agriculture, industry and human consumption as far away as Adelaide during droughts and summer seasons. Such loss is even particularly relevant with increasing green house effects. This is further compounded as the change in hydrology due to horse trafficking also leads to erosion, and the eutrophication and silting of streams, dams and reservoirs. In addition, feral horses can act as a reservoir of exotic diseases that might affect domestic stock.

Concerned with the movement of feral horses into the particularly fragile alpine area of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service initiated a workshop at Jindabyne in January 2001 and an information session at Queanbeyan in February 2001. It was agreed that while it is important to remove horses from the Alps, it is also important to

remove feral horses from areas that feed into the Alps. A number of options for the removal of horses were presented at Queanbeyan. These included the use of salt licks as an attractant to trap horses; mustering, using helicopters and/or horse riders; and the roping of horses from horseback. The point was made at the Queanbeyan meeting that any use of horse riders should be under strict licensing. The possible use of shooting was raised at the earlier Jindabyne meeting as an option but was, at that time, put aside as an option.

A number of options are available in addition to those proposed at the Queanbeyan meeting. These include shooting from helicopters and the ground shooting of feral horses. Several reports have indicated the shooting of horses from helicopter as the most effective and humane way to remove feral horses (*Senate Select Committee on Animal Welfare*, 1991; the *English Report on the Cull of Feral Horses in Guy Fawkes River National Park in October 2000*, 2001). However, following distortion in news reports on the use of shooting

from helicopters to cull feral horses in Guy Fawkes National Park in 2000, the minister removed such aerial shooting as an option. Ground shooting remains an option, although it was not presented as an option at the Queanbeyan meeting.

Since the Queanbeyan meeting, the NSW NPWS formed the Wild Horse Management Steering Committee with, in addition to NPWS staff, involves representation from a number of interest groups in the southern region of the KNP including local horse riders plus representation from the NSW Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs and the NSW National Parks Association. A draft management plan has come out from the deliberations of this committee, which is currently proceeding through the NPWS, ministerial hierarchy, before being released for public comment. Further information will be provided following the release of the draft wild horses plan for public comment.

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| June | 16th Paddy Pallin Rogaine | 18th Confederation Meeting | | |
| July | 6-7th July NavShield BWRS* | 16th general meeting Confederation | 27-28 - 70th Anniversary Confederation-Mill Creek in Dharug National Park | |
| August | 20th General & AGM Confederation | 24th 6/12 hr Rogaine Lake Mcquarie | | |
| September | 17th general meeting Confederation | 20th Bush Dance Petersham | | |
| October | 19-20th Advanced S&R Training BWRS* | 22nd general meeting Confederation | 26-27th St John First Aid Training BWRS* | |
| November | 19th general meeting Confederation | 24th Social Rogaine Nth Shore | | |
| December | 17th general meeting Confederation | | | |

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The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs represents over 70 clubs and 12,000 walkers in NSW. Visit our website at www.bushwalking.org.au - email turton@smartchat.net.au. Phone (02) 9294-6797

Any member of any club may attend meetings of the Confederation held at Ashfield RSL 3rd Tuesday of the month

* Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue. www.bwrs.org.au

A special note for all clubs The 70th Anniversary of Confederation will be a special event please get it on your clubs calendar



Walk Safely - Walk With a Club.....

THE SHOALHAVEN RIVER

The Bungonia State Recreation Area is most popular for its many Caves. Most only see the beautiful Shoalhaven River from the lookouts near the caves. No tracks are advertised so the river is left quite and peaceful for us to enjoy.

Take the road to the right off the main road not long before the Bungonia State Recreation Area Visitors Centre. The road is a little rough but soon you'll find yourself looking over one of the deepest gorges in Australia. On a clear day the view extends up the gorge with good views across it as well. Be ready for anything as far as weather goes, It may get very cold even in summer. If the weather is warm enough you may wish to include a Lilo in your pack as there is some small rapids in the river just waiting to be ridden. Even if the weather is poor you may still wish to include a Lilo as the weather can change very quickly.

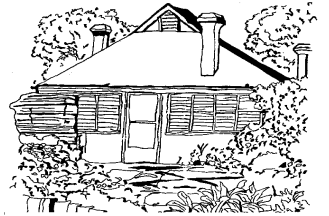
The track starts off wide, almost wide enough for a car at times. It soon thins out to one person thickness, but it remains very distinctive and fairly well worn the whole way. The track zig-zags

James Armstrong

down the steep gorge, at times the track levels out and sometimes heads up for a little while before heading back down. Soon you will find yourselves at the bottom, by here the sound of the river is quite noticeable. The track opens out into a small camping area shielded by small trees, enough room for several tents and a small area for a campfire. After walking through this campsite you will find yourself looking at the gorgeous waters of the Shoalhaven River. A small sandy beach adds to the beauty of the river and also allows a great sit, relax and enjoy session. If the temperature is right this is the time to get the Lilo's out and ride them down the rapids. Try to keep your feet and arms out of the water as it is shallow and the rocks on the bottom can give you a fair knock.

After riding the small rapids on your Lilo's I recommend you head south along the banks of the river towards the Spring-Creek canyon. After walking for approximately two kilometres you will come across a large pool in the river. At this spot there is a great view of the spectacular sheer cliffs of the Spring-

Creek Canyon. This is a great spot to sit and admire the beauty of the Aussie bush. After soaking in the serenity for long enough you must retrace your steps back to the campsite, you may choose to stay a night at this camp-site which I recommend, if not then begin the walk up. It takes about 1.5-2 hours so leave plenty of time before dark. The camping sites in the recreation area are quite good if you choose to stay the night.



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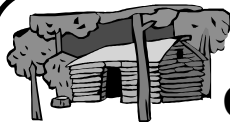
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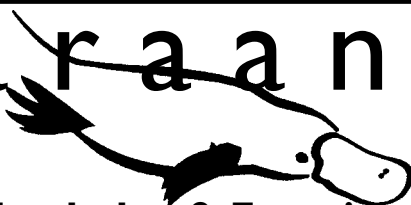
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