

Sunraysia Bushwalkers June 2014



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Membership Fees

\$40 per Person
Subs due July each year

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Hattah Nip Nip Walk



The forecast for Saturday was for clearing showers and after recent forecasts we accepted the decree and proceeds to Lake Hattah as it was to be our starting point. The 'we' were Robert W, Tony and myself.

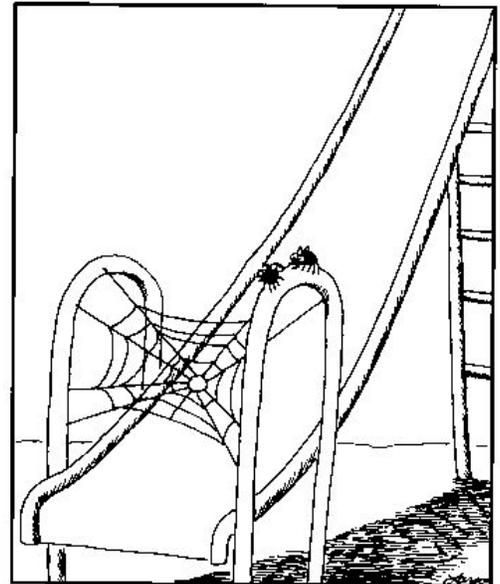


Our walk started with us off track walking around the western side of Lake Hattah from the day shelter and when we reached the Hattah Pump Shed we then took to the graded road marked as the tourist scenic track but within a kilometre we veered onto a management /walker only track avoiding the loop that encompasses Lakes Bulla & Arawak although we passed the southern extreme of Lake Arawak. There had been the smallest of showers but by now we were walking in ideal conditions.

Beyond Lake Marramook the road splits with the right hand track leading between Lake Brockie & Lake Boich and although we followed the left hand

lead it was our intention to return to the right hand track known as the Nip Nip Walking Track. We proceeded about 3/4klm until the track veered north and struck out on a south easterly bearing and returning to the Nip Nip Track. On our way we encountered a small area of Prickly Pear Cactus which we removed. This was very close to the track and it aroused some debate as to how it would have established itself there.

A little further on we came across three Emus that had as much interest in us as we did in them. It was a little like a Mexican stand off as we held our ground and they wandered towards us then to the left and then right and back again. This went on for what seemed like 10 minutes in which time we photographed them constantly. The cartoon's caption made me reflect on whether there was a similar thought going through their heads.



"If we pull this off, we'll eat like kings."



We reach the Kangaroo fence and then headed north until we found a suitable spot to stop and have lunch it having passed the noon hour. After lunch it was only a short distance to where the track turns sharply west and follows the southern side of Lake Nip Nip. It was pleasing to see that Nip Nip and Boich both had water in them as a result of the summer pumping via the new pumps at the head of Chalka Creek. As we proceeded between the two lakes we came across a large number of Caltrop plants (Three Cornered Jacks) along the track most probably distributed by vehicle tyres.

The return trip was very pleasant in the afternoon sun although at one stage we were a little disorientated due to a small patch of water on our right that was not indicated on our map. Our final approach to the crossing over the regulator between Lake Hattah & Little Hattah was blocked by a sign that on the side facing away from us were the words 'Closed due to flooding'. Were we not lucky that we had walked the track in the other direction! Was the sign a left over from the earlier minor flooding of the area or was it in place for the forthcoming major flood? As a result of our assistance to MCMA we are aware that they intend to start the pumps towards the end of May and that the water to be pumped will replicate a major inundation of the parks area. This will give us an added opportunity to explore additional areas with canoes – so watch this space for updates.

Roger 10/5/2014

Some facts about the walk:

- **Distance covered 14.8klms**
- **Time all up about 5 hours including stops – we started at 10.00am and finished at 3.00pm**
- **Lake Nip Nip is the most eastern lake within the kangaroo fenced area**
- **The walk entailed viewing 9 of the named lakes and 3 unnamed in Hattah Kulkyne National Park**
- **There is a very nice BBQ and shelter at Lake Hattah**
- **The Hattah Camping Ground is being upgraded at present and is closed as a result**

A very special thank you –

To all who contributed to our representation at the Mildura Field Day site on 23rd & 24th May. The marvelous sign created by Neil Hammerton (it will be at the meeting so you can see the excellent job he has done), the manning of the stand by Callum, Tony, Robert W, Dick and Russell. As a result we obtained 9 contacts and several more who chose not to put down their email addresses as they were already in receipt of our newsletter.

We shared the table with the Bird Observers Club and I would hope that if we have another opportunity we might be better served by having a table to ourselves – not to say that it was not pleasant being in their company but I believe it did cause confusion in the eyes of attendees.

The following report is the second submitted to MCMA and is published for your interest. The members who undertook weed spotting & collecting over the three visits were Dick, Jenny, Russell, Noel, Tony, Peter, Wendy, Sandra, Barbara & Roger

SUNRAYSIA BUSHWALKERS CHALKA CREEK WEED CLEARING Friday 16th May, 2014

Five members participated in a mission of clearing an infestation of Noogoora Burr that commenced along the Chalka Creek bank commencing S 34 42 29 5 E 142 25 55 6 and ended on the Lake side of this point where a rusty 200 litre drum is sited on the bank. On the previous mission we had cut the plants into sections small enough to fit into fertilizer bags, but knowing the quantity of large plants to collect at this site was considerable, we used wool bales held within a rigid frame to simplify the task and also minimize seed spillage.

For a plant community of this size to establish, there clearly has been a presence for some time. As indicated in our previous report, there were vast numbers of small seedling burr, but because of the number of people assisting the task, we were able to pull up and bag them. We are confident that we destroyed all plants that were clearly identifiable as Noogoora Burr and that the main risk now is from newly germinated plants at the four leaf stage or smaller. Given that pumping is soon to commence, any such plants will be drowned. We also found and collected a very small number of Bathurst Burr plants.

There still remain serious seed numbers on the ground at this place. They comprise newly fallen seed which appear to be capable of being spread by water current. Additionally, there are older seeds that appear to be held in the muddy surface. We have no idea whether or not these seeds will retain viability after prolonged submersion. We consider that there is now no need for attention in this section until the water level again recedes after cessation of pumping. Thereafter, we believe it is critical that the large site is monitored and appropriate action taken.

We walked the creek bank from Boolungal Crossing to where the Kangaroo fence crosses and found perhaps half a dozen small plants. Additionally, we removed any visible plants on the northern side of the creek. Whilst we have not physically walked the whole length of that side, there is strong reason to believe that no major colonies of the species have grown there.

All plants collected were dumped at the Mildura Landfill. For the information of the MCMA two of our members on 18th May observed a population of Noogoora Burr at Kings Billabong where the Eastern end of the billabong meets the walking track that ends at Psyche



The first crop of weeds harvested on its way to the Mildura tip



Paddling Chalka Creek

JUNE/JULY CALENDAR

June 4th	Meeting at 8.00	Equipment review – Walking boots	Bring yours and give a brief reason why you chose them.
June 7-9th	Mt Crozier to Pink Lakes	Supported walk – especially for those that will not carry an overnight pack	This will be a rare opportunity to carry only a day pack but have a multiple day experience
July 2nd	Meeting at 8.00	Equipment review – Gatters and gloves	If you have either bring yours and give a brief reason why you chose them and why you wear them.
July 5-6th	Hattah Lakes (Subject to availability)	Mid winter dinner and optional walk. May be restricted due to watering of lakes	Usually a camp oven affair so put your thinking hats on and come up with suggestions for a menu.
July 6-13th	Norfolk Island	One week of relaxation and history of an island	Flying to the island with accommodation vehicle and tours included.

To view the complete calendar, please follow the link:
<http://www.sunbushwalk.net.au/calendarofactivities.html>

Next Meeting
Wednesday 4th June at 8.00 pm
at Drysdale's
2164 Fifteenth Street,
Irymple