

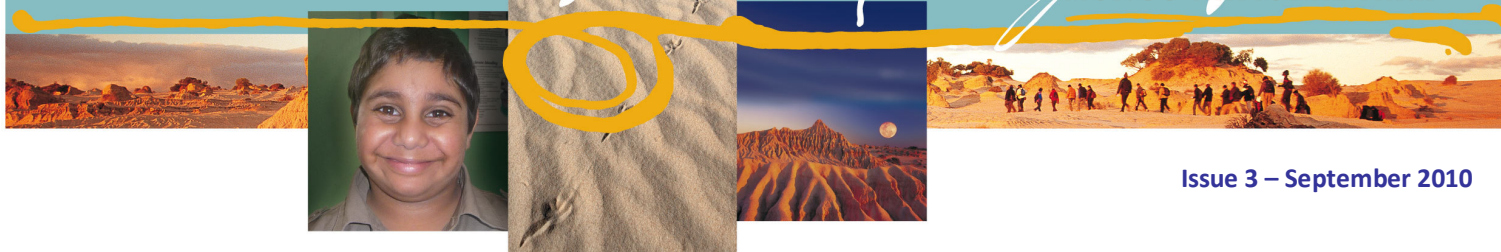


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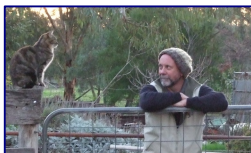
MUNGO NATIONAL PARK



Issue 3 – September 2010

## Message from the Executive Officer

I was fascinated watching the recent series "The Human Journey" on the ABC. The second episode featured Lake Mungo and the fossil footprints. It was great to see how science is helping connect human experience across the ages. When you consider the extraordinary landscape and climate changes that have occurred in the Willandra Lakes over the last 50,000 years, it makes the stories of how humans prospered all the more remarkable.



It's been full steam ahead with the Visitor Centre upgrade including a reconstruction of a section of the fossil footprints, new interpretive panels, film footage of Elders and a new website and wi-fi network. The upgrade is looking fantastic thanks to National Parks Field Staff who have put an enormous amount of effort into the on ground works. This project is funded by the Commonwealth Government's Jobs Fund initiative and is providing us with a major boost to improve the Willandra Lakes experience for visitors.

Our employment initiatives are underway and we welcome the appointment of two new Field Officers, Peter Lawson and Lawrence Slade. We also appointed a temporary Community Projects Officer, Ricky Mitchell, while we completed the interpretation project. These positions are made possible by the Commonwealth's Working on Country program. In the near future we will also employ an Interpretations Officer and a Cultural sites Officer to further extend the range of World Heritage projects in our region.

A workshop for landholders hosted by the Wakefield's at Turlee Station was held in the

first quarter of the year. This was part of an ongoing process to update each landholder's Individual Property Plan which outlines initiatives on each property to protect World Heritage values. We were ably assisted in this by Sunraysia Environmental who met with landholders, updated documentation and created new property maps. This work will underpin the renewal of the Willandra Lakes strategic plan of management over the coming months. We are also engaged in compiling a periodic reporting on the Willandra Lakes to UNESCO which we do every 5 years.

We've also been selected to host this year's Australian World Heritage Indigenous Network meeting in October. This will bring Elders and Traditional Owners representing World Heritage Areas from all over Australia to Mungo to discuss issues of mutual concern.

As always, there's lots' happening! I hope you enjoy this issue and take time to check out the website [www.visitmungo.com.au](http://www.visitmungo.com.au)

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## Mungo National Park Fauna Surveys



Ranger  
Ray Dayman

Staff from the National Parks & Wildlife Service have conducted fauna surveys within the southern and northern sections of Mungo NP since 2007.

The surveys focus on the pitfall trapping of small mammals and reptiles in fox baited and non-baited areas. The pitfall traps used are 20 litre plastic buckets buried to ground level with a 300mm flywire drift fence running across the top of each bucket. The drift fence directs animals along the fence until, hopefully, they fall into a bucket. Any animals captured are identified, marked (to identify recaptures) and generally released on site. There are 16 pitfall sites totalling 320 individual traps within the park.

The main aims of the surveys are to (1) determine the effectiveness of the current fox baiting regime in protecting small mammals and reptiles within the park and (2) Provide some form of guidance during the establishment of future fox control programs. Pest species numbers (including foxes) are also obtained through the use of targeted spotlight transects in order to quantify differences in relative populations.

The most recent pitfall surveys were conducted at Mungo NP over the summer months. The first was conducted in November and the second in February. A wide diversity of reptiles and mammals were captured especially during the November survey which was a very hot week. Overall 632 individual animals were caught, identified and released. During the two surveys 41 reptile, 4 mammal and 1 amphibian species were captured. The amphibian species, the common spade foot toad *Neobatrachus sudelli* was only found during

the second survey which followed widespread rain within the area. It is interesting to note that the spade foot toad was one of the most common captures during the week which highlights not only the cryptic nature of this beast but its high abundance when conditions are favourable.

The most common species captured were the beaked gecko *Rhynchoedura ornata*, Beaded Gecko *Diplodactylus damaeus*, spotted burrowing skink *Lerista punctatovittata* and the common dunnart *Sminthopsis murina*. A number of threatened species have also been recorded such as the jewelled gecko *Strophurus elderi*, western pygmy possum *Cercartetus concinnus* and southern ningau *Ningaui yvonneae*.

Preliminary investigations of the data gained so far has shown that there are some differences between the fauna assemblages of the northern and southern sections of the park. It is envisaged that fauna surveys will continue next summer in order to increase the robustness of the species data and allow for a more comprehensive assessment of the program in 2011.



Pitfall trap – Mungo NP

Yellow-faced whip  
snake – Mungo NP



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## Mungo National Park – Rain, Discovery and Interp Project

The first half of 2010 will be remembered for a wet start to the year.

Regular and big thunderstorms transformed the country and were a welcome relief from the long dry spell. The downside was the impact on the roads and the opportunities for tourists.

Within the park the Mungo Drive tour sustained considerable damage with flooding and washouts. Steve Clementson and his crew of field staff spent weeks completing major road repairs; on two occasions the road was re-opened only to suffer from another deluge! The drive tour was opened for Easter and was enjoyed by the thousands of tourists who visited the area.

I am pleased to advise that we have welcomed another staff member to National Parks; Kenny Clark has commenced as the Discovery Co-ordinator for Mungo NP. Kenny will work closely with Warren and Claire and the group of Discovery rangers to build on the award winning discovery program. The expansion of the Discovery program will be aided by the many outcomes of the current interpretation project by Epacris.

Renovation of part of the visitor centre will provide a better facility for the Discovery Rangers and Elders to engage with the public. The construction of a feature which includes a section of the *Willandra trackway* provides an ideal opportunity for Discovery guides to interpret this incredible site.

Jo Gorman – Area Manager  
Lower Darling Area  
National Parks & Wildlife Service

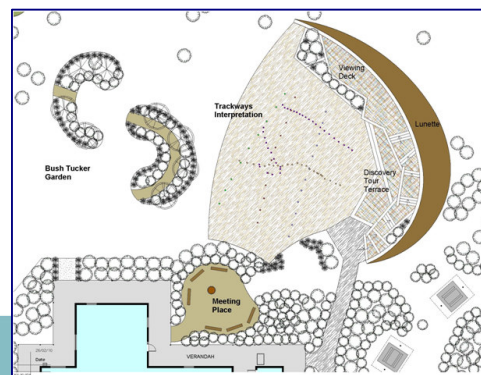
## Interpretive Material for Mungo National Park

In January 2010, Epacris were awarded the tender to develop Interpretive Material for the Visitor Centre at Mungo National Park. After extensive consultation with the Elders Council, Park staff, Mungo Community Management Council and Technical Scientific Advisory Committee, Landholders and others, Epacris have developed a plan to enhance the visitor experience to Mungo. So now it is action time with the project to be completed by June 30, 2010. The plan includes an extension of the Visitor Centre into an outdoor space with Trackway replicas, bush tucker garden, a viewing deck, Mungo Man and Woman's story represented, a meeting place and pathways created with artwork by Badger Bates.

In addition a dynamic new website will provide visitors with pre visit information that will also be available inside the Visitor Centre for downloading. Along with state of the art film work, Elders welcome to country on large screens and graphic representations of the Mungo timeline along with many other changes, both structural and technical, the Centre will soon look very different.

It is an exciting time for Mungo National Park opening a new chapter that will give visitors a deeper experience and fulfil the elder's wishes to create more employment and fully explore the World Heritage values whilst telling the world the unique and remarkable story of Mungo.

Helen Healy  
Project Officer,  
Mungo  
Interpretation  
Project.



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## Mungo Joint Management

February saw an unexpected visit from members of the Pitjintjara Tribe from the central desert to Mildura where they were keen to visit Mungo National Park. We managed to get some Elders & Discovery Rangers out to Mungo over two nights for some cultural exchange with the Pitjintjara group. The group was taken on a tour through the park & shown some of the special locations that Mungo is well known for. The Pitjintjara group farewelled us with a song and dance and would like to bring others back from their tribe for more cultural exchange and talks in the future.



The DECCW (Department Environment Climate Change & Water) Indigenous Network Conference was held in Bourke on the 8<sup>th</sup> March which was attended by most of the Indigenous staff from the Lower Darling Area including Discovery Rangers. A meeting of the Joint Custodians (which is the chairs of all Joint Management Advisory Committees in New South Wales) was also held in Bourke at the same time with a 1 day workshop for members on 'How to be a good Chair of a meeting'.

Our first Joint Management Advisory Committee meeting for 2010 was held at Turlee Station Woolshed on the 6<sup>th</sup> April. The venue was great apart from the disruption of the very heavy rainfall which was most welcome. I would like to thank Sophie & Nathan Wakefield for catering, Des Wakefield for allowing us to hold our meeting in his woolshed & committee members for their input on the day.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> April Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Mr Paul Lynch visited Mungo National Park and was welcomed by members of the Committee and DECCW Staff. Accompanied by Sally Barnes Deputy Director for National Parks also Stephen Wright from the Registrar. During their visit there was a group discussion on Mungo National Park being returned to Aboriginal ownership under schedule 14 and being jointly managed. We will be seeking advice and directions through the 2TTG's on the way forward with this. It's very busy times ahead for all so would like to wish Epacris and everyone involved with this project all the success for the future.

It is with relief that I welcome the Discovery Co-Ordinator Kenny Clark on board who commenced duty on the 12<sup>th</sup> April. Kenny will slowly work his way through a long list of duties and will be seeking information from Elders, Discovery Rangers and Park Staff to further progress and improve this very important program.

Warren Clark  
Executive Officer  
Joint Management Advisory Committee



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## Personality Profile



Helen Wellard is currently working as the Administration Assistant for the National Parks office in Buronga. Find out more about Helen Below.

I was born in Goondiwindi QLD but spent most of my early childhood years in a small country town called Bundarra, which is located on the Gwydir River, 582 km north of Sydney and 378 km south-west of Brisbane.

Bundarra takes its name from the Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay word bandaarr (grey kangaroo). Kangaroos were abundant in the area. The Bundarra Aboriginals were a part of the Anaiwan language group. It is thought that the totem for the Bundarra Aboriginals was the Black Wallaroo considered to be carrying the spirits of the Clever Men.

Following a wonderful childhood in Bundarra, I moved to Tamworth where I worked in the finance industry for a number of years then onto Albury pursuing a career in retail. After managing a large Shopping Centre in Albury for nearly 17yrs, I spent a further 2yrs managing a Shopping Centre in Hervey Bay, QLD before moving to Mildura in November 2009 with my partner Mark, our two horses and one small dog!

Horses are my passion and I have been riding since I was 4 yrs old. Although once into shows & competition dressage, I now prefer to spend weekend's pleasure riding. I also enjoy being in the garden and fancy myself as a bit of a landscape gardener. I love planning, designing and creating new areas and luckily we have 5 acres to work with!

Being new to the area it has been especially exciting for me to work at NPWS. My role here has given me the opportunity to obtain a far greater understanding and appreciation of Mungo and its cultural history. I enjoy my interactions with a wide variety of people and find each day rewarding as my knowledge of such a unique area increases.

I look forward to spending many more years in Mildura and enjoying all that this amazing region has to offer.

## Bush Food & Medicine

**Common Name:** Ruby Saltbush

**Botanical Name:** *Enchylaena tomentosa*

**Description:** This is a low sprawling shrub. It has short cylindrical hairy leaves. Its fruit is round 4-6mm and bright red, sometimes yellow with a small black seed.

**Use:** The red fruits are collected and can be eaten raw.



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## Discovery Ranger Tours

<i>September</i>	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
ACTIVITY	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<b>Foreshore Walk</b>							
<b>Tag-Along Tour</b>							
<b>Evening Adventure</b>							

<i>September</i>	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
ACTIVITY	25	26	27	28	29	30
<b>Foreshore Walk</b>						
<b>Tag-Along Tour</b>						
<b>Evening Adventure</b>						

<i>October</i>	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
ACTIVITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Foreshore Walk</b>										
<b>Tag-Along Tour</b>										
<b>Evening Adventure</b>										

## Upcoming Events

**14<sup>th</sup> September** - Mungo Joint Management Advisory Committee Meeting

**15<sup>th</sup> September** – Visitor Centre Preview for WHA Committee members & Landholders

**30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> October** – Mungo will host the Australian World Heritage Indigenous Network Meeting

**1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> November** – National Indigenous Land & Sea Conference in Broken Hill

**6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> December** – Australian Archaeology Association Conference

To make this Newsletter better we would like your feedback on what you like or could be improved so we can meet your needs. We can be contacted at the address below.

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