

HIGH PLAINS PLANT HOUNDS
28th December 1944 - 9th January 1945.

conveyed by Mr. Fitzgerald from Shannon
Vale. Chief occupation - wandering over the
High Plains more or less on hands and knees
examining the flora. Have almost worn
a track over to the plot fenced in by the
S.E.C. Here, much to the amusement of the
fencing gang, we laboured hard. Are
now familiar with sphagnum beds, drifts,
and very, very conscious of Soil Erosion!
The Scout Hut, with its many home comforts,
has been much appreciated, although
botanists' sharp wits have proved no match
for blunt axes! Although the interior has
at times resembled the early seal stages
of a forest complex, our specimens are
now safely pressed, packed and ready
for transport to the University of
Melbourne. Climatic conditions have
favoured our door work, but nights have
faced our entire wardrobe. ^{very hairy!} Between
intensive plant tracking, have visited
Pretty Valley, Mt. Hope, Rocky Valley, Mount
Helson, and (almost) Spion Kop. Views
from here superb, but as yet no member of
the party has risen simultaneously with

The sun on top. Dinner on New Year's Day was something to remember, and the age of our bread has been camouflaged by Mrs. Trimble's marvellous blackberry jam. Have not yet been reduced to living off the land, although eggs of *Aseva rubra* flourish outside the back entrance, and mint bush only awaits the sauce. Hope to visit our plots again next year. Many thanks for the use of the hut - has proved ideal for eccentric ecologists.

Everett Wykes.

Jim Matheson.

Valerie Hartung.

Honour Hebbard.

M. Fawcett Omeo

alias Miss Washaway

alias The Croosion Girl.

[CHIEFTRACKER DOWN]

HIGH PLAINS HOUNDS AGAIN
January 9 - January 25 . 1946

Reinforcements arrived on 9th January to assist Miss Fawcett on the experimental 19 acres fenced in by the S.E.C. last year, and to make a preliminary zoological survey of parts of the Bogong High Plains. Fifteen assorted botanists, ^{zoologists} geologists, soil experts, + much assorted baggage, travelled from Wangaratta to Bogong township, where we were fed by the S.E.C., thence by the "prison van" to the track above the Scout Hut. After dragging ourselves + baggage through the logs, moss beds and rocks in the dark, we were met by Miss Fawcett (Miss Washaway) and Dr. Andrew and family, who had prepared the hut for us.

Once again weird scenes occurred on the experimental plot, with several teams random sampling the vegetation by a new method, the Levy point. Soils were sampled, while tireless Mr. Willis combed the High Plains for new or depauperate species,

Last stores of food arrived regularly from the S.E.C. Bogong, while Mrs. Simpson

was book-in-brief for the sixteen.

Our picnic tea-supper in the moonlight at Wallace's hut foreshadowed a grim night, half of our camp being smitten by a dire disease, cause unknown, suggestions ranging from tinned sausages, antimony poisoning, flies, sun stroke, polluted water. After three days only 2 of our company remained untouched, while 3 had left to resume other work in Melbourne. Gladly and queen were the victims, and sleeping arrangements were greatly altered. Under Mrs. Trimbles direction, we gradually got to our feet again, to continue work on the plot, in wet, cool weather, a contrast to the first hot week.

Trips made by members varied according to personal energy - Mt. Bogong, Big River, Timm's Lookout, Roper's Hut, Helise, Pretty, Rocky Valleys, Gope, and, for the whole 16, to the plot, many, many times, seldom by the same route.

Mr. Thompson and Mr. Thomas, members of the Soil Conservation Board, + Geoff Thompson, arrived for the conference of gentlemen the evening before the bulk of the party left.

The conference of the S.C.B. + cattlemen took place on the plot on 24th January, proving of great interest to both parties.

This area is now minus many plant species, zoological specimens, rocks, soil samples, destined for the University of Melbourne.

Thanks again for the use of the hut - and to the S.E.C. for our adequate supplies and transport arrangements.

Personnel

Missing friends

R. T. Patton }
G. W. Keeper } departed 16th January
J. A. Willis }

J. S. Turner }
E. J. McFerran } transported by S.E.C.
M. J. Mathieson } on 23rd January.
J. Anderson }
U. F. Hanley }
S. B. Dücker }
P. Krohn }
F. Simpson }
G. R. Wykes. }

N. Keen
R. V. Fennessy.
L. O. White. }
R. G. Thomas, }
G. J. Hampson. }
D. S. Thompson. }

Mavis Fawcett, (Florence Nightshade)

Jan 10 - 30th 1947.

Melbourne University Botany School

For the third year in succession the Scouts have been good enough to allow us the use of their fine hut. This time a party of 21 - 9 men and 12 women arrived by laboratory truck and S.E.C. blitz-buggies for three weeks work on behalf of the Soil Conservation Board and the S.E.C. We have had 3 weeks magnificent weather and the flies this year have been almost non-existent. We offer our best thanks to Mr & Mrs Trimble and Mr Tom Jones for their friendly cooperation, to the S.E.C. for frequent & regular supplies by jeep and to the Roters for the use of the finest hostel in Victoria.

↓

Departed Jan 20.

J. Turner.

K.M. Turner

F. Simpson

B. J. Grieve

J. H. Willis

M. Simpson

Departed Jan 24.

M. Fawcett.

B. Overell

B. V. Tennessy

J. Anderson

S. C. Tucker

J. S. Anderson

M. Rowan

F. McDonald

H. Weatherhead

T. Derham

Lilian White

D. Cairne

N. Millis

A. Cosden (N.S.W.)

J. Mathieson

Visitors from Soil Cons. Bd. + Water Commission 20 - 22nd Jan.

G. Wykes

R. G. Thomas and I. Forbes

Jan 12th - 28th 1948

Melbourne University Botany School

Our fourth visit (see back) began in wintry weather. For the first 3½ days we had rain, snow, hail and fog and we even had to light the small stoves to keep warm. A 3 weeks store of wood was laid in and a record rubbish hole was dug. The weather then improved rapidly and for the rest of our stay it was perfect. Work on the plots kept us fully occupied and the longest trip was to Fainter. Some of us saw the sunrise from Mt Cope (Jack). We all missed the Trimble family and "Jonesy". There were a few visitors from Cope and Wallaces and the S.E.C. camps and the mystery of the missing baby (Cope Hut) was not solved.

Left Thursday 22nd (with Mr G.T. Thompson + Mr B.G. Thomas, Sol Cons. Board. who stayed 2 days with us).

N.F. Mellis
P. Bibby (Nat. Herbarium)
D. Stewart (London)

Left Wed. 28th

John S. Turner. 2 M.C. Donald
M. Rawan Suzanne D. Dwyer
R. J. Fennessy. J. Blifford

M. Weatherhead
Iona MacLennan
J. P. Dicker.

B. K. Basanadratan. (Herefordshire, England)
M. Fawcett
L. D. White. E. Chagnac Stones

Left Monday 26th

M. Simpson (Ag. School)
T. Deham (")
C. S. Elliot (Hobart)
D. Elwood (B. School).

Left 16th for Bogong Side Bay
F. M. Burnet

Jan 18th - Feb 5th 1949

Melbourne University Botany School

Our fifth visit has been as pleasant as all the others; in spite of regular thunderstorms, mostly at 3 pm we have had little rain. An advance party of five arrived on Jan 18th, the main party came late on Jan 22nd; later Mr Thompson of the Soil Conservation Board joined us, with 3 more members of the party. The work on the plots was varied by one two-day walk to Faunter and another to Bogong. Most of the party also attended a Cattleman's Field day organised by the S.E.B., attended by about 50 people. Our only visitors were Mr Bill Faithful and Mr Jack Greenwood, who later demonstrated "salting" and added in the Western Colow movie produced and photographed by Mr Power of the State Film Centre.

Rates = poor season - singularly few plants in full flower. Several species new to the High Plains discovered - the total for the district now being 263.

We again express our very great gratitude to the Roters for the use of their excellent hostel.

J.S. Turner.	David C. Week	Judith Mackay.	In absentia
M. Fawcett (Omeo)	Bertha Barnardiston.	Iona MacLennan	Flora MacDonnell
John H. Chinner.	Charles G. Eltham	M. Weatherhead	Margaret Stones
R. V. Fennessy	J. Hillis	Dorothy Ellwood.	Ringley Rortan
R. L. Windward	J. Clifford.	David Ashton.	G. T. Thompson
L. W. Woodall			A. R. Power.

P.S

5th Feb.

Apologies to the next visitors to the hut for the condition of the fire place and the floor. The main party went off leaving me with no broom & no fire shovel to do the final tidying-up. — Sorry

W. Fawcett

Jan 17th - Feb 9th. 1950.

Melbourne University Botanic School.

Our sixth visit was spoilt only by one weeks rain and mist at the end of the trip. A new party had to remain to get the truck up the hill. After a difficult start, superb driving by Strogan Weatherhead blazed a new trail to Wallace's!

The main party which left on Tuesday 11th consisted of:

Mrs S.H. Fawcett	Mr Leslie
Dr. Dr. Goodall	Mr Clifford
Mrs. Dicker	
Mrs Macrae	
.. Macleuan	
.. Duigan	
.. Slone	
.. Russell	

The new party:

Mr Weatherhead
Mr Mendenhall
Mr Rowan

Again would like to thank Lovell for use of the Hostel

Melbourne University Botany School. Jan 15th - 30th 1951

Most of the Botany School party, accompanied by sundry Zoological specimens, arrived on January 15th, and were joined next day by 5 members of the hierarchy who had walked up via Mt. Bogong. Seventeen people comprised the original establishment, the ♀ members of which were confined to the lower storey at night. Two of them, who were deprived of bunkers, served as experimental trampling plots in the mornings. A high culinary standard was maintained by Mrs Schuster, whose olfactory examination of all items of diet precluded any possibility of internal incident. Additional excitement in the kitchen was produced by the attempted preparation of a vat of custard by a member of the party who, in her own interests, will remain anonymous.

Injuries were at a minimum, the only serious casualty ~~being~~ being incurred as a result of an injudicious visit to a section of the swimming pool rightfully belonging to the bull ants.

Highlight of the ~~and~~ cultural world was the boma grown by Dr Watt, the claims of literature being satisfied by a series of memorable Professorial Bulls. The same artist of the party created cartoons dramatising all events of social & political importance.

In spite of the entertainment provided by bull ant bitten botanists, custard-curdling contests and soup-sniffing séances, work at the plots was not neglected. Promptly at 12 o'clock, sun-burnt bodies in ancient attire could be seen facing the East, bowing three times, and, led by the Great White Queen, reciting "px, px, px, p1, k1, k2 tog" in unison. These mystic utterances were engraved by the Recorders, carried home, & in the evenings used as a basis for the great Telephone Book Game, upon

which, however, no betting was permitted (in accordance with the S.F.C. rules governing conduct in the area.)

Suzanne L. Duggan

Lona MacLennan

Helen Punnell

Jean Mathieson

Sophie Drucker

David Ashton

David Weeks

W. A. Schuster

John Smothery

Lyle B. Throver

W. G. Peter

Maisie Fawcett

Left for Melbourne 26 1.51

J. S. Turner

A. S. Watt (Cambridge)

C. L. Birch (Sydney)

D. W. Goodall

A. G. Willis

Jan 16th - 31st 1952

Melbourne University Bdamy School party.

8th Annual Visit

A small party this year.

Extremely fine warm weather throughout except for one wet day (mainly fog) and a wet afternoon. Meanwhile Melbourne reached 110°.

For the first 3 days we were accompanied by Dr. Lincoln Ellison of the U.S.D.A forestry service, whose ^{experience} ~~note~~ of erosion in sub alpine grassland in Utah was of great value.

Mr + Mrs Kay of the S.E.C. also spent a day with us. A party of 4 made the only expedition - to the Buckley Plain.

Our best thanks to the Rover for the use of the chalet once again.

John S. Turner.
Ow Tiers
David Woodhall

David Ashbourn

Kelen Punell

Camp Stewes. [Cook par excellence!] even tho' she made a dot !!

Annex: Paveed?

E. S. Birtainy