

# VICTORIAN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION

2007–2008  
ANNUAL REPORT



# About the Victorian National Parks Association

## Vision:

We share a vision of Victoria as a place with a diverse, secure and healthy natural environment cared for and appreciated by all.

## Mission:

The VNPA is Victoria's leading nature conservation organisation. It is an independent, non-profit, membership-based group, which exists to protect Victoria's unique natural environment and biodiversity through the establishment and effective management of national parks, conservation reserves and other measures. We will achieve our vision by facilitating strategic campaigns and education programs, developing policies, through hands-on conservation work, and by running bushwalking and outdoor activity programs which promote the care and enjoyment of Victoria's natural heritage.

## Achievements and activities:

In 1952, when the VNPA was formed, Victoria had just 13 national parks and no National Parks Act. Today, largely due to the VNPA's efforts, Victoria has 40 national parks, 13 marine national parks, 11 marine sanctuaries, 30 state parks, three wilderness parks and 21 other parks (including coastal and historic parks) protected under the National Parks Act.

The VNPA runs the largest bushwalking and activities program in Victoria, including walking, canoeing and cycling. The Association provides services to over 2500 members and hosts a Friends Network for more than 200 'Friends of Parks' groups around Victoria involved in tree planting, weed control, track planning and many other activities.

Victoria's parks, flora and fauna face threats on a number of fronts. The VNPA is at the forefront of efforts to counter these threats.

## Some key achievements 2007-2008

- Creation of Coboboonee National Park, SW Victoria
- Draft VEAC recommendations for River Red Gum Forests Investigation released
- Removal of cattle grazing from Barmah Forest
- VNPA-sponsored Biosis report on weeds in Victoria's parks
- Appointment of new VNPA Executive Director
- Development of new VNPA Strategic Plan
- Start of new Nature Conservation Review process
- Opposition to dredging of Port Phillip: applied for federal listing of sponge communities at Port Phillip Heads and assisted community groups to lobby for dredging bond
- Victoria Naturally Alliance Memorandum of Understanding signed
- Launch of government Green Paper on Land Health and Biodiversity
- Launch of VNPA NatureWatch program
- 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hindmarsh project
- Deferral of Rocky Valley track proposal
- Signoff with other environment groups on joint statement on Indigenous policy.





## From the President

The past year has been one of consolidation and continued building on our core strengths.

At Council level we have conducted a major review of our Strategic Plan. This has been no small task, with many consultative meetings held, but the end result is a very strong document to guide us through to 2020. See summary on p.11.

An interesting outcome of the process was increased recognition of the strength of our activities groups and the central role they play in making the organisation so special and well regarded. This is a key message Council has absorbed as it seeks to prepare the VNPA for the next decade.

On the finance front Council began the year with a significant deficit budget and worked hard to ensure that we could complete our core program. Thanks to the Myer Foundation with Red Gum program funding for the year, and to much-appreciated general donations, we look to have come in with close to a balanced result.

The next year sees us again begin with a deficit as we seek funding for another year of our Red Gum and NatureWatch programs in particular. Council is working hard

through its various committees to strengthen our fund-raising programs and establish sustainable funding streams so that we can continue to deliver the programs outlined in our Strategic Plan.

On the conservation and campaigns side we continued to give nature a voice.

The Victoria Naturally Alliance program has made major gains. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed off with our partners in this program, giving it a solid platform to go forward. Publication of the e-bulletin and sponsorship of the Sustainable Living Festival and Landscape Connectivity Summit were highlights of the year.

We were disappointed with the release of the Green Paper on Biodiversity, a missed opportunity which seemed to be more concerned with what could be done with limited funds rather than with advocating what was needed to protect and restore our vital biodiversity. We can only hope that in the final White Paper the State Government shows the leadership required to find the resources for properly protecting and restoring our natural environments and building their resilience.

On the other hand we were heartened to see the Government follow through on its election commitment to create the Cobboboonee National Park near Portland. Environment Minister Gavin Jennings has shown a welcome willingness to engage with the local community and environmentalists to achieve a win-win result.

Our Red Gum Icons campaign is reaching a critical phase with the July 2008 release of the final VEAC report and the Government's response to it. Despite the dire state of the Murray River and its tributaries there are the usual commercial and self interests

challenging the creation of such a vital park system. We seek the active support of all members and supporters in coming months to ensure the Government fulfils its charter to protect this environment for the future.

The NatureWatch environmental monitoring program has set up the Brisbane Ranges Cinnamon Fungus project and is now looking to extend the program to other parks. Reef Watch continues to produce strong monitoring results in our coastal areas and marine parks. Park Protection has made some inroads into the firebreak issue and is now looking at the intention of DSE and Parks Victoria to 'cool burn' around 400,000 hectares of our public land in the current calendar year.

On the activities side our various groups continue to offer great opportunities to actively care for nature. Whether it's bushwalking, excursions, Caring for Nature Day, base camps in East Gippsland and Barmah, contributing to Grow West, Project Hindmarsh and Bogong High Plains restoration works, or social and information evenings, our members are spoilt for choice.

None of these events would happen without the extensive work and commitment of our staff, and in particular our volunteers. Once again I sincerely thank them for their efforts in making it all possible.

On a personal note, I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and our Executive Director, Matt Ruchel, for their efforts during the year. To lead such a talented, committed and supportive group of people has made the role much easier than I could have imagined when I took it on. The VNPA has much to look forward to in the year ahead.

**Fred Gerardson**  
*President, VNPA*

# Red Gum Icons Project

Nick Roberts



The Red Gum Icons Project aims to establish a network of River Red Gum national parks along the River

Murray and its northern Victorian tributaries, with joint management arrangements with Traditional Owners. We are also working cooperatively with our partners for similar arrangements in NSW.

The Barmah and Gunbower red gum forests on the Victorian side of the Murray are home to over 400 threatened or near-threatened plants and animals. Both these forests are internationally significant Ramsar wetlands and waterbird breeding sites. Our goal is to protect all these forests in cross-border national parks.

Based in Shepparton, the Red Gum Icons Project involves working with the community, Indigenous Traditional Owners, private and



public landowners and conservation groups across NSW and Victoria to gain adequate and appropriate national park protection for key red gum wetlands and forests.

This year saw excellent draft proposals published by the Victorian Environment Assessment Council (VEAC) for the future of River Red Gum areas in Victoria. They included many of the goals we have been campaigning on for years. The VNPA has helped generate great public interest and thousands of submissions on the

draft proposals, and we continue to present factual information regarding the benefits of new parks in the face of strong opposition by interest groups.

We continue to highlight the massively unsustainable forest management by the current land manager, DSE. The ongoing degradation of the Murray's internationally significant wetlands impacts on a range of threatened species, biodiversity and Indigenous cultural heritage in these areas.

Other achievements included:

- highlighting positive and negative aspects of the VEAC report
- achieving massive pro-conservation community input into the VEAC study
- ongoing and extensive national and regional media coverage
- developing a sound, science-based 'reserve agenda' to guide the VEAC process
- working closely with Indigenous Traditional Owners such as the Yorta Yorta
- engaging widely with politicians, business leaders and key influencers on the value of new parks.
- increasing regional and metropolitan support for the campaign
- encouraging interstate cooperation with NSW and SA .

The final VEAC report is due to be presented to the Victorian government in late July 2008 and the VNPA still has a significant challenge ahead to ensure good conservation outcomes via this process.

Nick Roberts 5831 7794 or email: [gveg@mcmmedia.com.au](mailto:gveg@mcmmedia.com.au)

*The Red Gum Icons Project has been supported by The Myer Foundation and a range of other groups in Victoria as part of the Murray Links Project (run in partnership with NPA NSW)*



# Developments and land management

Jenny Barnett



The VNPA continues to respond to a range of activities and proposals impacting on natural habitats, flora and fauna.

Issues addressed and other activities this year included the following.

- Code of Practice for Roadside Vegetation Management
- Proposals for a number of mineral sand mines in the Mallee and south-western Victoria

- Wonthaggi Desalination Plant
- Sugarloaf pipeline
- Proposal to supply Geelong with groundwater extracted from under the Anglesea Heathlands and Otway National Park
- Victorian Parliamentary inquiry into bushfires and public land management
- Ongoing impacts of firebreaks constructed and proposed in the Central Highlands and proposals to extend these to other regions in Victoria.
- Attendance at a number of DSE committees, symposiums and workshops on fire management, including effects on flora and fauna.

Of interest and concern is the increasing number of proposals involving water extraction and its competition with environmental

needs. In addition, fire management, including firebreaks and increased prescribed burning, is likely to continue to dominate our attention for some time.

*For more information please contact Jenny Barnett on (03) 9341 6505 or email [jennyb@vnpa.org.au](mailto:jennyb@vnpa.org.au)*



# Park protection project

Philip Ingamells



The role of parks in protecting ecological processes across the whole landscape is now well recognised.

These days, the task of properly managing the natural systems in our parks is largely governed by the problem of managing biodiversity under climate change.

To this end the VNPA has been pushing for radical increases in park funding and in park management skills and expertise, so that our parks get the management they deserve. We are asking for at least a tripling of resources for the ecological management of our park

system, and a considerable increase in the number of skilled staff.

A VNPA-commissioned report from Biosis Research, produced this year and available on our website, highlights many of the problems Parks Victoria faces in managing environmental weeds, without secure recurrent funding. It demonstrates that managers have a long way to go before they can manage existing threats to our parks, let alone climate impacts.

The VNPA has been actively involved in a broad range of consultation processes: developing the future of nature-based tourism, feeding into fire strategies and, most significantly perhaps, advising the Government on the development of policy through its 'Land and Biodiversity under Climate Change' White Paper process. We still have a way to go on these processes before we can be sure we have a serious commitment from Government

to secure long-term protection for the natural values of our parks and reserves.

Fire management continued to occupy our attention. Extensive firebreaks across Victoria, and a rapid increase in fuel-reduction burning, have not been subject to transparent planning processes or based on the best science, and remain a big concern.

The VNPA's Labour Day *Help the Alps* volunteer weekend (March 2008) concentrated on removing kilometres of old grazing-licence fencing from the Alpine National Park. It was clear that, though the high plains are responding well to the removal of cattle grazing, there is still much rehabilitation work to be done.

*For more information contact Phil Ingamells on (03) 9347 5188 or email [philipi@vnpa.org.au](mailto:philipi@vnpa.org.au)*



## Marine and Coastal Project

Megan Clinton



This project focuses on improving the protection and management of Victoria's spectacular

marine and coastal areas.

We have been working with local communities along the coast, providing support and information to help oppose many inappropriate developments presently on the Government's agenda.

One of these is a proposed boat ramp and breakwater at Bastion Point (Mallacoota). This process has been going for nearly 20 years but is finally being heard by a government appointed panel. Locals now believe that the project will at last be rejected once and for all.

The VNPA has also been instrumental in the nomination of the Port Phillip Heads sponge garden for protection under both

State and Federal legislation. The unique garden, one of Victoria's underwater gems, is threatened by the channel deepening work.

Unfortunately the federal legislation set up to protect communities such as this was diluted recently. Now, once a project such as channel deepening is 'referred' the legislation no longer protects special features from the impending threat.

This year we also released a previously unseen Greenpeace report which indicated high levels of short-chained chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs) at the mouth of the Yarra. The level of SCCPs indicates the cocktail of chemicals from old industrial activity. Dredging up chemicals, many highly toxic to marine animals and carcinogenic to humans, and then placing them in the middle of the Bay, is not a solution.

The channel deepening project is adding to existing stresses on Port Phillip Bay, such as poor water quality and invasive pests.

The rocky shores, wetlands and intertidal environments of Port Phillip, like those of other bays

and estuaries, will be threatened by climate change. As sea levels rise, these environments will be submerged and will need to migrate inland, but they will be trapped between the rising sea and coastal developments.

It is therefore critical to build biodiversity resilience in marine and coastal areas as well as on land.

This need was highlighted by the State Government and resulted in the Green Paper on Biodiversity. However, it appears that the paper will concentrate mainly on terrestrial environments.

The new financial year will therefore see the VNPA take a proactive role in bringing key thinkers together to investigate how we can increase marine and coastal biodiversity resilience in the face of climate change.

*For further information contact Megan on (03) 9347 5188 or [megancl@vnpa.org.au](mailto:megancl@vnpa.org.au)*

*The Marine and Coastal Project is supported by the Department of Sustainability and Environment, the Australian Government Envirofund and the Reichstein Foundation.*

# ReefWatch Victoria

## Wendy Roberts



ReefWatch is a marine community monitoring project for Victorian scuba divers and snorkellers that aims to

increase community awareness and stewardship for sub-tidal reef systems along the Victorian coast.

With the help of a monitoring kit designed by Museum Victoria scientists, volunteers gather information about the distribution and abundance of key species, monitor seasonal changes and report on natural history phenomena. ReefWatch also enables participants to improve their understanding of marine ecology and taxonomy through seminars and workshops.

ReefWatch was awarded the 2005 Victorian Coastal Award for Excellence by the Victorian Coastal Council and CoastAction/CoastCare.



## 2007-08 achievements

- 285 registered volunteers across the state
- 5 Secondary Colleges registered
- 500 marine monitoring kits delivered to volunteers and community groups
- 701 surveys submitted from 72 sites along the coast
- Development of a new monitoring kit in partnership with Sea Search (Parks Victoria).
- Development of a new website
- Evaluation and review of the project by RMCG consultants
- Regular marine seminars and workshops at Melbourne Aquarium and Museum Victoria.

ReefWatch organised the third annual Great Victorian Fish Count in 2007. This 'snapshot' event involves hundreds of divers across the state counting 25 of our iconic fish species.

## Other achievements by ReefWatch volunteers:

- Yellow-finned Leatherjackets not previously seen in Port Phillip were filmed - a new distribution record for the bay.
- a rare seadragon was sighted in Western Port and a visual record provided for Museum Victoria

For more information contact Wendy Roberts on (03) 8341 7446 or email [info@reefwatchvic.asn.au](mailto:info@reefwatchvic.asn.au)

website: [www.reefwatchvic.asn.au](http://www.reefwatchvic.asn.au)



ReefWatch is supported by NHT (RCIP) through Port Phillip & Western Port Catchment

Management Authority and Envirofund; Museum Victoria; and the Australian Marine Conservation Society..

# NatureWatch

## Caitlin Griffith



In July 2007, NatureWatch launched its new name and program focus in Brisbane Ranges National Park.

The launch was attended by over 50 people who enjoyed presentations and the beautiful surrounds of the Brisbane Ranges.

The new focus for NatureWatch program is long-term monitoring of nature by community volunteers, and the first project is the Brisbane Ranges Dieback Community Monitoring Project.

Volunteers spent five days in spring 2007 and five in autumn 2008, setting up plots and monitoring the impacts of the plant disease *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (previously known as Cinnamon Fungus) on grass-trees and other native plants.

The Brisbane Ranges project involves, and is assisted by, Parks Victoria staff, Associate Professor David Cahill from the School of Life and Environmental Sciences at Deakin University Geelong, and the NatureWatch Ecological Advisory Group (made up of ecologists) and Advisory Committee.

As part of the development of NatureWatch monitoring projects, we have developed Team Leader

training for some volunteers. Ten volunteers took part in VNPA BWAG Leadership Training during the past year, and will attend NatureWatch Team Leader training soon.

The Brisbane Ranges Dieback Community Monitoring Project will be a model for future NatureWatch monitoring projects. These will bring together scientists, land managers, local groups and community volunteers to set up and run projects that make a worthwhile contribution to nature conservation.

For more information phone (03) 9347 5188 or email [caitling@vnpa.org.au](mailto:caitling@vnpa.org.au)

Nature Watch is supported by The William Buckland Foundation and Parks Victoria.

# Victoria Naturally Alliance program

## Carrie Deutsch



Formed to respond to the biodiversity crisis facing Victoria, the Victoria Naturally Alliance,

led and hosted by the VNPA, also includes the Australian Conservation Foundation, Environment Victoria, The Wilderness Society, Greening Australia (Vic), Bush Heritage Australia, Trust for Nature and the Invasive Species Council. In early 2008 the Alliance members signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding.

The Alliance's strength comes from the unique partnership between policy and on-ground environment groups. It is gaining advice from eminent scientists and policy analysts, raising community awareness, and engaging with government and other stakeholders.

It aims to get policy, collaborative programs, community leadership and resources in place to achieve landscape-scale conservation and secure a long-term future for Victoria's native plant and animal communities.

This has been a busy year for the Alliance, starting with the launch of our strategic plan, which has a strong focus on large-scale habitat protection and restoration. As part of working towards achieving this, we have established a strategic partnership with the Habitat 141 project in western Victoria - the first major large-scale habitat restoration project planned for the State.

In April 2008 the Victorian Government launched its draft plan for rebuilding the State's devastated natural environment. This 'Green Paper' is a precursor to the final *Land and Biodiversity at a Time of Climate*



*Change* White Paper to be released in 2009. The White Paper will guide the way Victoria manages its natural environment for the next 50 years.

The Alliance welcomes the White Paper process, but was disappointed in the Green Paper. Although it presented many good ideas, it is a vague document, lacking clear policy positions and detailed, comprehensive proposals. Nor does it address the issue of adequate funding for the long-term protection of ecological processes and species.

During the three-month public consultation period for the Green Paper, the Alliance worked hard to support environment groups around the State to contribute.

The Alliance's submission guide was distributed widely, and also made available online. The White Paper team received 868 of the Alliance's submission guides along with 522 individual submissions. This clearly demonstrates that people around the State want the Victorian Government to put resources and programs in place to reverse our biodiversity crisis.

The Alliance has continued to build its public profile, and launched its website [www.victorianaturally.org.au](http://www.victorianaturally.org.au) at the Sustainable Living Festival in February. By the end of June 2008 there were more than 1300 subscribers to our monthly e-bulletin, and the list continues to grow.

Our communications work has greatly benefited from new market research undertaken this year which has helped us to develop effective messages and materials.

We have been able to progress our work on the role of ecological processes in maintaining biodiversity with a new grant from the Dara Foundation WildCountry Small Grants Program and the Exchange Incentive Fund (Greening Australia and the Australian Government). We are using this grant to translate the work undertaken by 19 leading Victorian ecologists into the policy arena.

This is the first comprehensive attempt in Victoria, and probably Australia, to consider the policy priorities associated with ecological processes. Thanks to Deakin University for hosting both the science and the policy projects.

For further information see [www.victorianaturally.org.au](http://www.victorianaturally.org.au) or contact:

Carrie Deutsch, (03) 9341 6512, [carried@vnpa.org.au](mailto:carried@vnpa.org.au)  
Karen Alexander, (03) 9341 6511, [karena@vnpa.org.au](mailto:karena@vnpa.org.au)

To subscribe to the Victoria Naturally Alliance e-bulletin, email [info@vnpa.org.au](mailto:info@vnpa.org.au)

*The Victoria Naturally Alliance is supported by the John T. Reid Charitable Trusts, the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, The Reichstein Foundation, The Wilderness Society WildCountry Small Grants Program and Exchange (Greening Australia and Australian Government) and by financial and in-kind contributions from Alliance member organisations. We thank them for their generous support.*



# From the Director

## VNPA: a voice for nature

**Matt Ruchel**



Over the year the external 'landscape' changed with a new Premier in Victoria and a new government in Canberra.

My first year at the VNPA has been very busy but we have achieved some significant things and made strong progress in many areas. I would like to thank everyone, including staff, Council and members, for their warm welcome.

The VNPA is continuing to work hard as a voice for Victoria's nature. Significant outcomes over 2007-08 included:

### **New national parks**

In March 2008 the State Government announced a new 18,400 ha National Park and 8,600 ha Forest Park at Cobboboonee in south-west Victoria. The VNPA worked with local groups to achieve this important outcome for conservation, which also implements a 2006 Labor election commitment. The final legislation for the park is expected to be passed in the spring session of State parliament.

### **New red gum parks on the way**

There was significant progress towards new parks along the Murray and Goulburn rivers with the 2007 release of Victorian Environment Assessment Council draft recommendations for over 100,000 ha of new parks, including some jointly managed with Indigenous owners. The final VEAC report was scheduled for release in July 2008, followed by a six month period

during which the government must make a final decision on the extent of new parks.

### **Biodiversity protection and the Victoria Naturally Alliance**

The VNPA led the establishment in 2006 of the Victoria Naturally Alliance of eight leading environment groups. Since then we have continued to convene, lead and host the Alliance. The VNPA and the Alliance have recently responded in detail to the State Government's Green Paper on biodiversity.

### **Park protection**

Calling for greater resources for the management of our national parks in the face of changing climate is becoming a key theme of our work, and we released an independent report by ecological consultancy Biosis highlighting the need for a dramatic increase in resources for weed control in parks. We also continued to oppose ill-conceived developments such as the Rocky Valley Track in the Alpine National Park.

### **Protecting our seas and shores**

The VNPA is focusing on building community support for further marine and coastal conservation in Victoria. Recent work has included issues such as the Abalone virus, and Port Phillip Bay dredging. We also commented on a range of Fisheries plans and the draft Victorian Coastal Strategy. Work continues with key VNPA representatives to establish Point Nepean as a national park.

### **Planning for conservation**

The VNPA continues to highlight and support the work of local groups in providing independent comment to State and federal decision-makers on the impact of new projects on the natural environment. These include Bay dredging, the Sugarloaf pipeline, the proposed desalination plant, mines, power stations, water supply bores, native vegetation removal and fire planning. Fire management is emerging as a critical issue.

### **Community education and engagement**

On the activities and education front, we continue to develop. Our quarterly journal *Park Watch* is building from strength to strength along with our community education programs, and our very popular Bushwalking and Activities program. Our new-look NatureWatch program has developed a successful community-based monitoring project in Brisbane Ranges National Park. ReefWatch continued to engage the diving community.

### **Strategic Plan**

As well as achieving results for nature protection, we have been working hard to build VNPA capacity. We made strong progress on completing an interim 2020 Strategic Plan which when finalised will guide our work, updating and renewing our focus. We aim for constant improvement in all aspects of our operations.

Many VNPA achievements take years to realise and involve the work of many partners. We can only achieve these things with the ongoing support of our members and supporters. We sincerely thank our members and supporters and many wonderful volunteers, generous funders, donors, staff and Council for their support, commitment and hard work.

# The VNPA 2020 Strategic Plan

The focus of the strategic planning process was to develop a continuous improvement approach and ensure the appropriate involvement of all key stakeholders. An interim Strategic Plan was completed and presented to VNPA Council in April 2008.

Three key themes were identified and developed to include the views of current stakeholders and articulate the vision, mission and purpose of the association.

## **Theme 1 - Protection of Nature**

**VNPA facilitates strategic campaigns and policies to protect and restore nature, biodiversity and ecological processes, and strives for the establishment and appropriate management of protected areas**

**including national parks and reserves, and other conservation measures across all tenures, through making representations, fostering public interest and conducting research.**

## **Theme 2 - Actively Caring for Nature**

**VNPA promotes the protection and appreciation of nature through running bushwalking and other activities, and community conservation work in national parks, reserves and other areas, and fosters public interest in and action for the protection of nature and biodiversity and the welfare of national parks in perpetuity. We actively encourage all Victorians to treasure and passionately defend and care for nature.**

## **Theme 3- Leading Influential Organisation**

**VNPA is the leading independent, influential, values-driven, financially secure, community-based nature conservation organisation in Victoria.**

The full Strategic Plan has the three themes with corresponding goals, 2020 outcomes, strategies and detailed actions. These will be translated into Annual Organisational Plans and other strategies. Examples of key goals, outcomes and strategies/activities are shown below. If you would like to discuss the plan or offer feedback, see the more detailed summary on our website [www.vnpa.org.au](http://www.vnpa.org.au) or contact Executive Director Matt Ruchel to arrange a briefing.



# Strategic Plan Snapshot

## Theme 1 – Protection of Nature

Goals	Key outcomes by 2020	Examples of strategies and activities
<b>World Class Protected Area System:</b>	Over 100,000 ha of new red gum parks in place Complete as far as possible a comprehensive and adequate reserve system including additions to marine & coastal parks	Encourage the government to legislate new red gum parks as soon as possible, Undertake fourth Conservation Review of Victoria.
<b>Protected Area Management:</b>	Seek legislative changes to strengthen National Parks Act and ensure adequate investment in management and monitoring of public protected areas	Review and benchmark Victorian park management frameworks and practices, particularly in the face of climate change.
<b>Whole of landscape biodiversity conservation:</b>	Create a vision for the development of large scale biolinks across Victoria Increase investment in high conservation value private land nature conservation.	Establish partnerships to support and deliver a vision for large scale biolinks across Victoria, e.g Victoria Naturally Alliance
<b>Leading policy and practice:</b>	Clear scientific targets are established for biodiversity protection.	Monitor and highlight key threatening processes, especially fire
<b>Climate change and nature:</b>	All national park management plans explicitly plan for the impacts of climate change	Highlight and communicate the impacts of climate change on nature.

## Theme 2 - Actively Caring for Nature

Goals	Key outcomes by 2020	Examples of strategies and activities
<b>Active for nature</b>	VNPA offers a comprehensive and well supported bushwalking and activity program across Victoria	Develop a website and communications program to promote walks and other activities
<b>Community engagement</b>	Develop a long-term community monitoring 'NatureWatch' program.	Develop partnerships between scientists, land managers and the community.
<b>Creating a 'Nature Aware' community</b>	Develop new high quality education products, resources and events to encourage community understanding of nature.	Enhance the education component of existing bushwalking and conservation activities

## Theme 3- Leading Influential Organisation

Goals	Key outcomes by 2020	Examples of activities
<b>Values-driven organisation</b>	Develop high quality systems & structures for learning & an organisation of choice for environmental champions.	Develop skills training program for staff and volunteers
<b>Well-managed and governed</b>	Recruit and retain highly skilled and experienced councillors and staff	Maintain strong well qualified finance committee to oversee financial management
<b>Active and loyal members and supporters</b>	Increase membership to reflect a cross section of the Victorian community	Explore new direct fundraising and membership opportunities
<b>Secure funding stream</b>	Review organizational/ financial model	Develop a 3-5 year development and fundraising plan
<b>Well-recognised and respected</b>	Increase recognition of VNPA 'brand', role and achievements	Enhance web management and resourcing



## Bushwalking and Activities Group

**Cheryl Mioch**

The Bushwalking & Activities Group (BWAG) had a very successful year in 2007-08.

Social nights, training and leadership courses, and of course walks, cycling, canoeing and overnight walks were all popular and well represented in the program.

We would like to thank all the leaders who have contributed so much to the last two programs.

This year we slightly increased the number of new leaders and had some very interesting events, including the ever-popular

Christmas pudding evening walk, public transport walks, Tassie (Walls of Jerusalem) long weekend, East Gippsland four-day cycle, and a Cape Conran weekend. There's always something for everyone, from city walks and park strolls to more remote expeditions like the Alpine track, interstate or even overseas.

### Social nights

Attendances at Wednesday evening social nights have been increasing over the past 12 months, many evenings bringing in more than 50 members. A new format offers members and friends the chance to catch up for a drink and a chat before the presentation and this change has been well received.

Presentation topics have included wildlife of the box-ironbark forests,

trekking in Europe and tree planting.

Gear swap nights have also been very popular and will continue. The 2007 BWAG Christmas Dinner and 2008 mid-year dinner were well attended too.

A wide range of U35 walks and activities have been on offer during the past year. The group has ventured to places far and wide including the Crosscut Saw, The Bluff, the High Plains, Tasmania, Murrindindi, Wilsons Prom, Castlemaine, Cape Liptrap and the Dandenongs. There have been bike rides, cafe walks, overnight walks, photography trips, base camps, day walks, dinners, dancing and other social events.



## Excursions Group

**William Keatley**

Led by its Committee and a team of volunteers, the Excursions Group conducted 11 day trips through the year for VNPA members of all ages. Participants enjoy interesting walks, picnic-style meals, photography, farmers' markets and the company of other conservationists.



## Training

**Gary van Dijk, Robert Argent,  
Russell Bowey**

BWAG offers a range of training activities for leaders, members & others.

2007-08 training activities included navigation and bike maintenance courses, two leadership training weekends, and two briefing nights for new leaders.

Some 30 trainees gained experience in dealing with a broad range of issues that can arise before and during activities, as well as in communication, problem-solving and group dynamics.

The navigation course was fully attended, with 15 people receiving training in landscape and map interpretation, basic map reading and navigation, and compass skills.

Over the year there were day trips to Anakie Gorge, the Yarra Valley, Anglesea, Mount Macedon, Sorrento, Werribee Park, Cape Schanck and other places of conservation interest. A total of more than 400 coach seats were occupied on the year's various day trips.

An extended trip to the Grampians is planned for September 2008.

## Caring for Nature Day 2007

**Reg Elder**

Picturesque Hawkstowe Park in the Plenty River Gorge was an ideal setting for Caring for Nature Day (CFND) in November 2007.

VNPA staff and BWAG leaders organised the day's activities, which included some interesting sightings of waterbirds. Members enjoyed short walks with family and friends and the quiet and beautiful surrounds.

Thank you to all who assisted with the day, including VNPA and Parks Victoria staff, Plenty Valley Arts Inc and the Mill Park Garden Club.

Make a note in your diary for this year's CFND and family picnic, to be held at Brimbank Park (Keilor) on **Sunday 23 November 2008**.

## Great Australian Bushwalk 2007

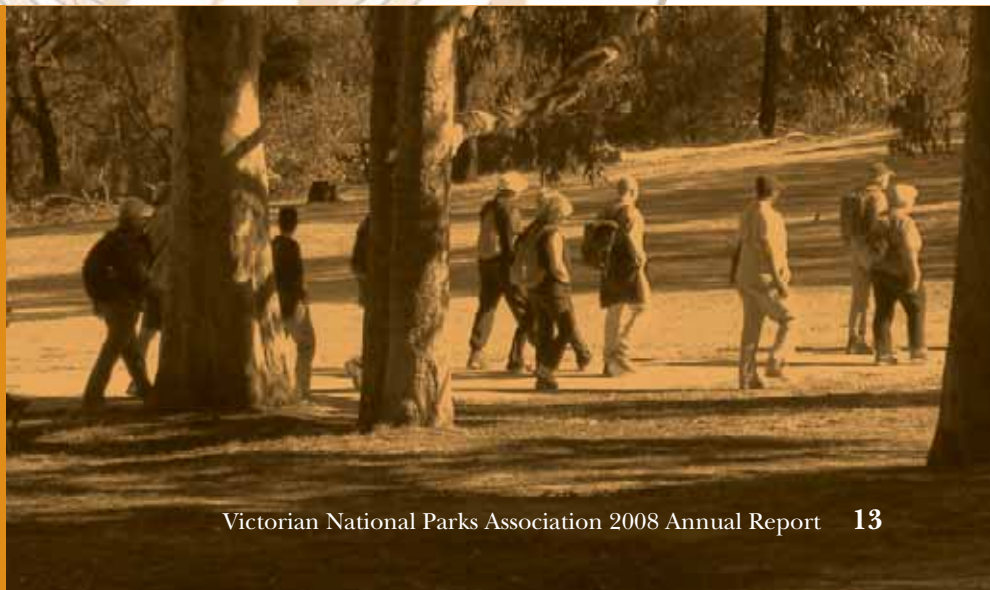
**Lisa Sulinski**

This was held around the country on 9 September 2007. Over 2,500 people participated in more than 120 walks throughout Australia.

The VNPA held six walks at Lysterfield Lake Park with 147 walk registrations, 110 final participants and 18 leaders. Many thanks to all who helped.

Each walker received a showbag of information (filled by office volunteer Sandra Cutts) about the VNPA and event sponsors.

The Great Australian Bushwalk program is being reviewed in 2008 and the event will not be run in Victoria in 2008. We hope it may return in 2009.



# VNPA hands-on activities

## Hindmarsh Project

The 10th annual Hindmarsh Ace Radio Landcare planting weekend on 18-19 August 2007 attracted around 300 people to Nhill, including many VNPA members. Thousands of local native trees and shrubs were planted, joining the 1.5 million put in since 1998 to link the Little and Big Deserts. A large proportion of the plantings have survived the drought. Many local landowners are now involved and a great deal of habitat has been restored. The planting continues in 2008 and is set to become part of Habitat 141, a much larger revegetation project running from the outback to the sea on both sides of the Victoria-SA border.

## Grow West

On Sunday 15 July 2007, 88 VNPA members joined farm owners the Lidgett family and other local people to plant 4000 indigenous trees and shrubs on a steep slope at the Chesterfield property in the Pentland Hills near Myrning. This is part of the ongoing Grow West project, which aims to re-establish native vegetation around Bacchus Marsh and link remaining bushland areas.



## Alps volunteer weekend

Some 40 VNPA members headed for Falls Creek and the Alpine NP on Labour Day weekend 8-10 March 2008, and worked hard with Parks Victoria staff on pulling out seedlings of the invasive weed Grey Sallow Willow, collecting native plant seed and removing barbed wire fences from old cattle grazing licence areas near the Bogong High Plains. This project is also ongoing

# VNPA publications

Michael Howes



## Park Watch and Update

The VNPA's quarterly journal *Park Watch* is edited by Michael

Howes and received by around 2800 members and subscribers. *Park Watch*, which has articles by a range of contributors on campaign issues, park and biodiversity management, and other items of conservation,

bushwalking and historical interest, has been printed in full colour since the December 2007 issue, greatly enhancing its pictorial content.

Over the past 12 months *Park Watch* has featured climate change, red gum conservation, marine and coastal issues, fire, biodiversity and revegetation projects, the Green Paper on Victoria's biodiversity, and roadside and river conservation, as well as regular book reviews, 'In Parks' features and letters.

*Park Watch* is an important part of our conservation campaigning and community education activities. We thank all contributors for their vital input and extend an invitation to new contributors to consider submitting articles, letters or photos, and to members to offer suggestions and feedback at any time.

*Update* is our member newsletter, being published four times a year since February 2008 instead of seven



as before. It is now distributed electronically to about a third of our members, saving printing and postage costs. Also edited by Michael Howes, *Update* highlights current park and conservation issues, and coming events. Contributions and suggestions from members are always welcome. Many thanks to all *Update* contributors and correspondents.



## Education kits

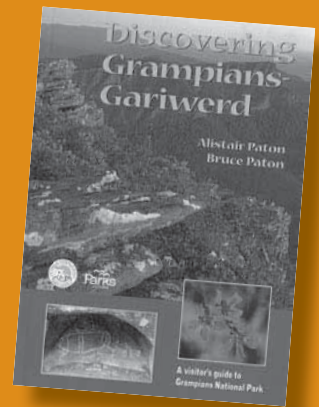
Jill Casey, Graham Trigg

The VNPA continued to update its range of education kits and promote and sell them to schools. Current titles include Fire, Climate Change and Australia's Endangered Species. School and community education is an important part of the Association's activities.

## Books

The VNPA publishes and distributes a number of books and other products, with discount prices for members. Activities during the year included the following:

- Ongoing promotion and sales of VNPA books such as *Discovering the Prom*, *Discovering Mount Buffalo* and *Discovering Grampians-Gariwerd*; *The Alps* and *The Grampians In Flower*; *Plains Wandering*; and *Victoria's Box-Ironbark Country – a Field Guide*.
- Investigation continued into the possibility of publishing a new edition of the guidebook *Life on the Rocky Shores of South-eastern Australia*.
- We bought in relevant books published elsewhere for discount sale to members.
- The VNPA continues to sell attractive gift cards and gift tags produced by member and expert photographer Euan Moore.



We would like to acknowledge the valuable work of volunteer John Hutchinson, who packages book orders ready for mailing.

For details of books and how to order, go to [www.vnpa.org.au](http://www.vnpa.org.au)

# Fundraising and philanthropy

## Anne-Maree Wheeler



On behalf of VNPA, I would like to thank all who have contributed to our success over the past year. Your unwavering support gives VNPA the strength to act on behalf of our natural environment, to be there as a voice for nature.

Your contributions, whether as a volunteer, in speaking up for what you believe in, or monetary, are invaluable in helping us achieve a secure healthy natural environment for future generations.

The coming year again presents a number of challenges and opportunities. We are on the brink of achieving significant protection for Victoria's iconic River Red Gum forests and wetlands, achieving better recognition for small parks and remnant vegetation, and addressing biodiversity in the face of climate change - but there's much more work to do!

The next few years are a critical time for Victoria's natural environment, and your continued support and commitment are greatly valued and appreciated.

Anne-Maree Wheeler  
 Fundraising & Development Manager  
 Ph: (03) 9347 5188    [anne-maree@vnpa.org.au](mailto:anne-maree@vnpa.org.au)

VNPA is founded on philanthropic support. The generous spirit of like-minded people who demonstrate their support gives us the capacity to make a real difference to nature conservation in Victoria. VNPA is a non profit, non government, apolitical and totally independent organisation.

### Getting involved

There are many ways to support VNPA so get involved! Encourage your friends to join VNPA, take a leadership role as a member of

council, volunteer, lead a walk and help spread the word.

### Bequests - leaving a lasting legacy in your Will

A Bequest to VNPA is a gift ensuring a magnificent inheritance for all Victorians. Making your Will not only ensures that your affairs will be settled as you wish, but also that your voice will continue to be heard on the issues you believe in. A bequest to the VNPA is a gift to future generations, to your children and grandchildren. For more

information please phone Anne-Maree Wheeler on (03) 9347 5188 or visit [www.vnpa.org.au](http://www.vnpa.org.au).

### Monthly giving

VNPA members who choose to donate regularly play an important role in keeping Victoria's magnificent landscapes intact for future generations. A regular gift provides a secure income that VNPA can depend on when planning campaigns. If you believe as passionately as we do in protecting Victoria's wild places and natural areas, we invite you to join our regular giving program today! Phone Amy on (03) 9347 5188 or visit [www.vnpa.org.au](http://www.vnpa.org.au)

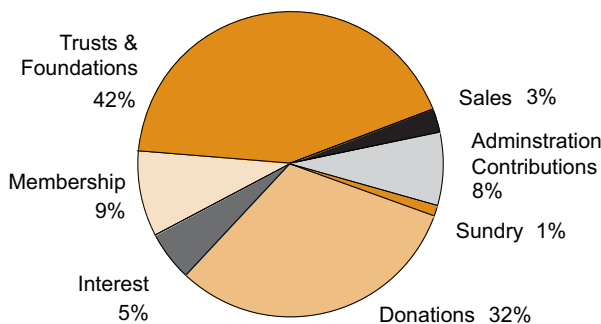
### Membership

The VNPA has over 2,000 members actively caring for nature and supporting nature conservation campaigns. Members also enjoy being part of Victoria's largest bushwalking and outdoor activities program. New members are always welcome, so tell your friends about VNPA, and invite them on a walk or activity. To join now phone Amy on (03) 9347 5188 or visit [www.vnpa.org.au](http://www.vnpa.org.au)

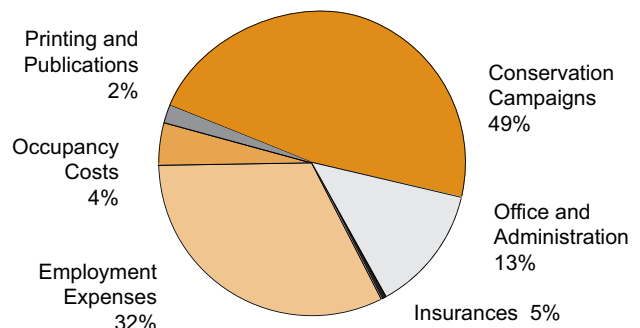
The generosity of all our members and supporters is greatly appreciated. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

Thank you to everyone who supports VNPA. We would not be here without you!

VNPA Income 07-08



VNPA Expenditure 07-08



# VNPA Employees

## 2007-2008

**Executive Director:** Matt Ruchel

**Administration Assistants:** China Phillips, Charlotte Kandelaars, Irena De Loche, Ian Smith

**Administration Officer:** Amy Dyer

**Finance and Operations Manager:** Sue Hayman-Fox

**Fundraising and Development Manager:** Helen Waldren, Anne-Maree Wheeler

**Great Australian Bushwalk Coordinator:** Amy Dyer

**Great Victorian Fish Count:** Madhavi Colton

**Joint Media Officer** (shared with other environment groups): Daniel Clarke

**Park Protection Project Officer:** Phil Ingamells

**Park Watch/Update Editor and Publications Officer:** Michael Howes

**Red Gum Icons Project Officer:** Nick Roberts

**Reef Watch Coordinator:** Wendy Roberts

**Reef Watch:** Prudence Addison, Malcolm Lindsay, Anna McCallum

**Research Officer:** Jenny Barnett

**Marine and Coastal Project Officer:** Megan Clinton

**NatureWatch /Community Projects Coordinator:** Caitlin Griffith

**Victoria Naturally Alliance Project Leader:** Carrie Deutsch

**Victoria Naturally Alliance Campaigner:** Karen Alexander

**Victoria Naturally Alliance Communications Adviser:** John Sampson

**Victoria Naturally Alliance Project Support:** Jody Gunn

## Hosted Network

**Victorian Environment Friends Network:** Leon Costermans, Geoff Durham, Bernie Fox, Maelor Himbury

## Volunteers & Committee Convenors

The great strength of the VNPA is its members, and in particular those who volunteer. Many people give their time and expertise to the Association's activities and committees. We acknowledge all of your efforts and extend particular thanks to the following people who have chaired and worked on committees and led our volunteer effort.

This is by no means a comprehensive list. Through the VNPA, over 1,200 active volunteers are involved in tree planting, weeding, leading bushwalks and other activities, committees (including the VNPA Council and Executive), community monitoring programs, volunteer training and much more.

**The VNPA would like to extend special thanks to all its volunteers. Your support is invaluable - thank you!**

## VNPA Volunteers

**Administration assistants:** Sandra Cutts, Adam Edmonds, Colette Findlay, Margaret Hattersley, John Hutchinson, Len Lock, Raimonne McCutchan, Allan Sisson, Graham Trigg.

The VNPA also gratefully acknowledges the valuable work of volunteer Bob Gourley, who mailed out BWAG Programs and new member kits each week for some years. Bob passed away on 21 March 2008, aged 78.

**Education Kit coordinators:** Jill Casey and Graham Trigg

**Firebreaks research:** Marion Weaving

**Historical documentation:** Eileen McKee

**Library:** Jenny Barnett and Beryl Halle

**Marine and Coastal research:** Peter Crab, Adam Edmonds, Felicity Humann, Len Lock, Marion Weaving

**Marketing research and advice:** Libby Smith, DDB AdNews, Motive Market Research

**NatureWatch office work:** Ann Buik, Carolyn Edwards, Nancy McLeish, Ian Smith

**Point Nepean and Nowingi:** Bernie Fox

**Update and Park Watch mailout team:** Murray Bird, Rita Bonvicin, Dorothy Carlton, Pat Cooper, Betna Dryden, Brian Groom, Jo Groom, Margaret Hattersley, Peter Human, John Hutchinson, Joan Jillett, Kelvin Kellett, Keith Lloyd, Ian McDonald, Sheina Nicholls, Joan Phillips, Barbara Prouse, Lorraine Ratcliffe, Wally Thies, Graham Trigg, Tom Wallace, Pat Witt

**Victoria Naturally Alliance:** Brian Coffey, Bronwyn Gwyther, Ann McGregor, Libby Smith

**Website:** Phil Ingamells, John Sampson, Jeremy Smart

## Volunteer Committee Convenors

**Bushwalking and Activities Committee:** Cheryl Mioch

**Caring For Nature Day Committee:** Reg Elder

**Communications and Publications Committee:** Libby Smith

**Conservation Committee:** Ian Harris

**Excursions Committee:** William Keatley, Larysa Kucan

**Finance Committee:** Russell Falvey

**Governance, Policy and Legal Committee:** Russell Falvey, Andrew Freadman

**Great Australian Bushwalk:** Lisa Sulinski, Amy Dyer, Russell Falvey, Matt Ruchel Cheryl Mioch

**Strategic Planning Committee:** Fred Gerardson

# VNPA Council members

The VNPA is an incorporated association governed by an elected Council comprising a President, two Vice-Presidents, an Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and seven Council positions. The Executive Committee of Council is made up of the President, the Secretary, a Vice-President and two Councillors. Council establishes policy guidelines and approves a Strategic Plan for the VNPA's activities each year. All Council members volunteer their time and valuable input to VNPA. We recognise and honour the contributions of our Council members as one of the pillars of the VNPA's success.

The VNPA Annual General Meeting is held in October each year. All members of the Association are invited and encouraged to attend and participate.

## Council members

### Fred Gerardson (President)

B. Econ (Monash) 1983, Chartered Accountant  
*Elected 2006*



Fred is a partner of Colville Williams & Co, a long-established three-partner accounting firm based in Lower Plenty. He joined the firm in 1988 and became managing partner in 1989. A VNPA member for over 24 years, he has travelled the state extensively, visiting many of our national parks. Over this period he has been a BWAG leader, attended base camps and been an active participant in Friends groups. He is a member of Friends of the Prom and past Convenor of Friends of Bogong.

### Libby Smith (Vice President)

B.Comm; Grad DipMarketing  
*Elected 2006*



Libby was a principal of a consultancy specialising in market and social research for business and government. She continues to work on projects related to communications development in the not-for-profit sector, and particularly for environment groups. A Board member of the Australian

Bush Heritage Fund 1999-2006, she has a passion for the environment, is a keen bushwalker and enjoys spending time in Australia's national parks and in alpine areas in other parts of the world.

### Charles Street (Secretary)

B.Sc.Agr, MRACI, Grad. Dip. Quality Technology, Grad. Dip. Education  
*Elected 2006*



Charles has been a member of the VNPA since 1997. Now teaching at Shepparton TAFE, he is a trained Environmental Management Systems auditor, having worked for three years with the Toyota Environment Group. His specialties include alpine environments (especially Mount Stirling), cross-country skiing, quality management systems, education, industrial environment protection, bushwalking and photography. He has a strong and growing interest in protecting the natural environment.

### Russell Falvey (Treasurer)

Bachelor of Business (Accounting) ASA  
*Elected 2006*



A qualified Accountant and member of the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants, Russell is Convenor of the Finance Committee and has been actively

involved in that Committee for the past four years. He has been a member of the VNPA for eight years, and is a keen bushwalker and active BWAG leader. Russell has a passion for conservation issues and expansion of national parks.

### Joan Lindros

*Elected 2002*



A former President of the VNPA, Joan works as a pharmacist in Queenscliff, is current President of Geelong Environment Council and is involved in a range of issues in that region. She values contributing to the VNPA agenda of protecting flora and fauna in Victoria and maintaining a comprehensive and sustainable system of national parks and conservation reserves, including major River Red Gum national parks on the Murray River.

### Andrew Freadman

BA, LLB Barrister and Solicitor, FTIA  
*Elected 2005*



Andrew has a private sector background in business and public sector experience in corporate governance and taxation. He joined the VNPA as a participatory association and Council with a passion for VNPA activities. As

part of that passion he has paddled the Murray, trudged the Tassie Overland Track, pedalled the Merri Creek, snorkelled here and there and listened in wonder. He hopes to continue contributing to the VNPA's hard-won reputation as a responsible and persuasive force in 'people caring for nature'.

### Maelor Himbury

(Friends Network representative)

BA, Dip. Ed, Grad. Dip. Lib.



Recently retired teacher-librarian, Convenor of the Victorian Environment Friends Network,

Secretary of Friends of the Maribyrnong Valley, committee member of Friends of the Organ Pipes and volunteer coordinator for the ACF, Maelor produces a daily email summary of environmental news and a weekly email summary of social research for whoever wants them. In his spare time he trawls bookshops.

### John Renowden

BSc (Hons) Dip. Ed  
Elected 2006



John is a secondary Science and Biology teacher and has been a VNPA member for over 30 years. He was

on Council in the early 1980s and a Vice-President for two years. During this period he was actively involved in campaigns for new national parks in East Gippsland and the Mallee. A keen bird observer, he is concerned about the continuing decline in many of our inland bird species, and believes that *protection of remaining habitat is of the utmost importance*. He is also very committed to the protection of East Gippsland's old-growth forests.

### Ann Buik

BA, Dip. Ed, Dip. Business Mgt, Cert. 4 Training & Assessment, Workplace & Business Coaching  
Elected 2007



Ann joined VNPA in 2002, beginning with 'Walk, Talk & Gawk' activities and then becoming a founding member

of the ParkMates program (now NatureWatch). With over 30 years' experience in education and training, she has recently established her own learning and development consultancy and life coaching business and plans to devote more time to the things that are 'really important' in life.

*'Australia is facing environmental crisis and, to quote the title of David Lindenmayer's book, is 'On Borrowed Time'. I appreciate working with VNPA to raise public and community awareness and action to conserve and protect our amazing biodiversity and unique environment'.*

### Linda Parlane

B.Sc.  
Elected 2007



Linda's passion for conservation was sparked by the campaign to save East Gippsland's magnificent native

forests from woodchipping, when she was studying botany in the 1970s. Since then she has worked both voluntarily and professionally on East Gippsland and other nature conservation campaigns, including the Alps, the Franklin River, Merri Creek and Western Port. In the late 1980s climate change became her focus, working on energy and transport. She loves bushwalking and camping in our wonderful Australian bush.

### Ian Harris

B.Sc (Melbourne) 1969, M.Env.Sc (Monash) 1979  
Councillor 2004-06, Re-elected 2008



Ian, who lectures at the RMIT on urban open space management, chairs the State Government's

National Parks Advisory Council. He was formerly manager of the City of Melbourne's parks and gardens and has been Director of National Parks in Victoria and Director of Environmental Science, EPA. In his spare time he enjoys bushwalking, ski touring, camping, visiting parks and travelling.

*"I believe that the VNPA plays a critical role in achieving a world class national park system in Victoria and in ensuring the long-term survival of the State's biodiversity."*

### Karen Medica

BA (Hons), M. Public Policy & Mgt, M. Development Studies, Cert. 4 Workplace Training  
Elected 2008



Karen is an international aid worker who has managed many projects across the Asia-Pacific region,

mostly in the areas of governance and community development. She has also consulted to government, non-government and the private sector on international environmental issues. She joined VNPA in 2008, having returned from Banda Aceh as part of the Tsunami Response. Karen and her husband Michael have a 'get-away' near Wilsons Promontory and are advocates for the protection of Victoria's coastal and marine parks.

### Retiring councillors 2007-08

Bernie Fox (Past President), Anne Casey (Past Vice President), Chris Smyth, Graeme Chapman, James Noelker.

# Financial Report 2007 – 08

## Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Victorian National Park Association Inc.

### Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Victorian National Park Association Inc for the year ended 30 June 2008 which comprises the balance sheet, income statement, statement of cash flows, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the statement by members of the Council.

### Council's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Council is responsible for preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies used and described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria) and are appropriate to meet the needs of members. The Council's responsibilities also include establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Council, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report. The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the Council's financial reporting responsibilities under the Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria). We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other

than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

### Qualification

In common with similar organisations it is not feasible for the Association to institute accounting controls over all cash collections from donations prior to initial entry of the collections in the accounting records. Accordingly, it was impracticable for me to extend my examination beyond the receipts actually recorded.

### Qualified Audit's Opinion

In our opinion, except for the existence of the limitation on the scope of our work as described in the qualification paragraph, and the effects of such adjustments, if any, as might have been determined to be necessary had the limitation not existed, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects the financial position of Victorian National Parks Association Inc as of 30 June 2008 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

Coster Galgut Pty Ltd,  
Chartered Accountants  
Lindsay Coster FCA  
August 2008

## Victorian National Parks Association Inc. Statement by Members of the Council

The members of the Council have determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the members of the Council the financial report:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Victorian National Parks Association Inc as at 30 June 2008 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that Victorian National Parks Association Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Council and is signed for and on behalf of the Council by:

**Russell Falvey**  
Treasurer

**Matt Ruchel**  
Executive Director

Dated this 14th day of August 2008

## Income Statement for the Year ended 30 June 2008

REVENUE	Note	2008	2007
Operating Activities		\$	\$
Donations		395,906	381,061
Interest		63,109	67,581
Membership Fees		115,312	112,454
Grants & Sponsorships		512,953	350,504
GVEHO Grant *		4,000	4,000
Sales		31,583	35,369
Administration Contributions		96,963	76,445
Sundry Income		36,728	13,252
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>1,256,552</b>	<b>1,040,666</b>

### EXPENDITURE

Cost of Sales		10,560	19,331
Campaigns, Projects & Activities		218,387	151,846
Office & Administration		167,844	121,037
Insurances		16,980	17,956
Employment Expenses		717,159	600,434
Occupancy Costs		61,438	55,509
Printing & Publications		77,450	73,631
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>1,269,817</b>	<b>1,039,744</b>

<b>OPERATING (DEFICIT) SURPLUS</b>	4	<b>(13,265)</b>	<b>922</b>
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### Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2008

ASSETS		\$	\$
Cash		42,122	33,683
Investments		1,254,844	1,071,551
Receivables		56,392	93,401
Inventory		31,877	39,633
Fixed Assets at Written Down Value		68,883	56,895
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>1,454,118</b>	<b>1,295,163</b>

### LIABILITIES

Creditors		67,162	80,580
Projects/Hosted Networks/Rental Grants		471,462	338,749
Provisions	5	209,219	210,601
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>747,843</b>	<b>629,930</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>706,275</b>	<b>665,233</b>

### ASSOCIATION FUNDS

Accumulated Surplus	4	120,185	129,004
Publication Funds	4	5,257	9,703
Crosbie Morrison Fund	4	580,833	526,526
<b>TOTAL ASSOCIATION FUNDS</b>		<b>706,275</b>	<b>665,233</b>

\* Commonwealth's Grants to Voluntary Environment & Heritage Organisations Program

## Statement of Cash Flows for Year Ended June 2008

	2008	2007
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Receipts from appeals, donations and bequests	379,406	346,561
Receipts from grants & sponsorships	742,546	205,391
Receipts from membership fees	113,386	113,862
Receipts from sales	39,100	35,465
Receipts from administration fees	96,963	76,445
Receipts from other sources	36,728	13,252
Net disbursements on projects under hosting agreements	-	(9,556)
Payments to suppliers and employees	(1,245,856)	(998,304)
<b>Cash generated by (utilised in) operations</b>	<b>162,273</b>	<b>(216,884)</b>
Interest income	62,614	68,142
<b>Cash generated by (utilised in) operating activities</b>	<b>224,887</b>	<b>(148,742)</b>

### CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES

Acquisition of fixed assets	(33,155)	(12,552)
(Acquisition) Realisation of investments	(183,293)	158,542
<b>Cash (utilised in) generated by investing activities</b>	<b>(216,448)</b>	<b>145,990</b>
Net increase (decrease) in cash during year	8,439	(2,752)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	33,683	36,435
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>	<b>42,122</b>	<b>33,683</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements for year ended 30 June 2008

### NOTE 1: Statement of significant accounting policies

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria). The Council has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria) and the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AAS 5 Materiality  
AAS 8 Events Occurring After Reporting Date

No other applicable Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following material accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

#### Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the Association's liability for wages and salaries, annual and long service leave arising from services rendered by employees to the reporting date. Liabilities arising in respect of wages and salaries, annual leave and other employee benefits expected to be settled within twelve months of the reporting date are measured at their nominal amounts based on remuneration rates which are expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

#### Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost is determined on the basis of first in and first out and includes all costs necessary to bring stock into its current condition and location.

#### Payables

Liabilities for trade creditors and other amounts are carried at cost which is the fair value of the consideration to be paid in the future for goods and services received, whether or not billed to the Association.

#### Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash on hand and in banks are stated at nominal value.

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and in banks.

Cash management investments readily convertible into cash within two working days are reflected in the Balance Sheet as investments.

#### Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated over the useful lives of the assets commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

### NOTE 2: Activities & Hosted Network Accounts

The accounts for the Bushwalking and Excursions Groups have not been consolidated into the general accounts.

Victorian Environment Friends Network funds are carried by the Victorian National Parks Association as project liabilities as at 30 June 2008.

	2008	2007
	\$	\$
<b>BUSHWALKING &amp; ACTIVITIES GROUP</b>		
Opening Balance	4,956	5,389
Income	12,845	13,096
Expenditure	(1,485)	(1,529)
Contribution to VNPA	(13,000)	(12,000)
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>3,316</b>	<b>4,956</b>

#### EXCURSIONS GROUP

Opening Balance	21,432	23,136
Income	16,927	41,512
Expenditure	(10,775)	(35,216)
Contribution to VNPA	(5,000)	(8,000)
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>22,584</b>	<b>21,432</b>

#### VICTORIAN ENVIRONMENT FRIENDS NETWORK

Opening Balance	2,650	2,858
Income	9,342	1,373
Expenditure	(7,235)	(1,581)
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>4,757</b>	<b>2,650</b>

#### THREATENED SPECIES NETWORK

Opening Balance	-	23,850
Income	-	-
Expenditure	-	(794)
Contribution to VNPA	-	-
Returned to TSN	-	(23,056)
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### NOTE 3: Publication Division – Operating Results

	2008	2007
<b>Income</b>	\$	\$
Sales	17,385	20,944
Interest	628	1,064
	18,013	22,008
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Cost of Goods Sold	10,355	19,331
Other Costs	12,104	11,775
	22,459	31,106
DEFICIT for Year	(4,446)	(9,098)

### NOTE 4: Composition of Operating Surplus for year

	Note	2008	2007
		\$	\$
<b>Association Funds</b>			
General Account		(8,819)	10,020
Publications	3	(4,446)	(9,098)
Operating (Deficit) Surplus for Year		(13,265)	922

#### COMPOSITION OF TOTAL FUNDS

Accumulated Funds Start of Year		129,004	118,984
(Deficit) Surplus for Year		(8,819)	10,020
Transfer to/from Crosbie Morrison Fund		-	-
Accumulated Funds End of Year		120,185	129,004
Publication Funds Start of Year		9,703	18,801
Deficit for Year	3	(4,446)	(9,098)
Publications Funds End of Year		5,257	9,703
Crosbie Morrison Fund		526,526	493,161
Additions		54,307	33,365
Transfer to Income for Year		-	-
Crosbie Morrison Fund End of Year		580,833	526,526
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		<b>706,275</b>	<b>665,233</b>

### NOTE 5: Provisions

Prepaid Membership Fees		10,090	12,016
Patron Donations Received in Advance		130,000	146,500
Provision for Annual Leave		52,462	36,222
Provision for Long Service Leave		7,165	6,932
Provision for Time In Lieu		9,502	8,931
<b>TOTAL PROVISIONS</b>		<b>209,219</b>	<b>210,601</b>



# Victorian National Parks Association

## Supporters 2007-2008

VNPA is proud to acknowledge the generous support and encouragement we receive from all our members and supporters. Thank you! Your support helps to ensure Victoria has a diverse, secure and healthy natural environment for future generations to enjoy.



**The Dara Foundation**



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