

HFNC Excursions to the Wannan 18 Acre Reserve on 29 August 1964 and 29 May 1965

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[In 1958 this small area of bushland, which had been stripped of some sand and gravel and used by local residents as a rubbish tip, was acquired by the government. In 1959 the HFNC was encouraged by the Wannan and Nigretta Parks Trustees to help develop the 18 Acre area as a 'miniature national park'.

Excursions to survey the plants began in 1960. A profuse flowering of Beard Orchids had been seen in 24 Nov. 1962 and other orchids in 28 Sept. 1963. On 30 Oct. 1965 the Western Victoria Field Naturalists Clubs Association visited and orchids seen included *Caladenia clavigera*, *Caladenia carnea*, *Diuris sulphurea* & *Thelymitra pauciflora*. *Helichrysum scorpioides* 'was fairly plentiful but a fine patch of *Podolepis jaceoides* had been picked by vandals'. On 30 July 1966 *Corybas dilatatus*, *Pterostylis alata* and *Lyperanthus nigricans* (leaves only) were added to the list of orchids.

The Wannan & Nigretta Committee in 1962 agreed to HFNC conditions for management of the 18 Acre Reserve that would probably include no fires, no disturbance to soils, removal of alien plants using minimum disturbance and effective control of rabbits 'to keep it as a piece of Hamilton district in its primitive state'.

Working bees to fence the reserve and remove much of the rubbish was conducted over several years from 1962. On 25 Sept. 1965 16 members attended a working party, the men to rabbit-proof fence the southern boundary and the ladies to remove seedlings of *Acacia armata*. On 30 July 1966 ten adults attended and did more fencing and removal of seedlings, which were very few compared with previous years. Domestic rubbish dumped recently was burnt or, where possible, buried outside the reserve.

The last of the netting was fixed to the fence and 2 gates on 5 Nov. 1966 but much remained to be pegged down. That task was completed in Jan. and Feb. of 1967 by the Elmore and Corrick families. The fumigation of rabbit burrows by Lands Department officers remained to be done.

More than 3,000 *A. armata* (Hedge Wattle) had been pulled out in Sept. 1963, leaving another 3,000].

Excursion on 29 August 1964

There was a good attendance at the excursion and members removed 600-700 *Acacia armata* plants and had time left to admire the orchids and other plants flowering at this early date.



The 18 Acres Manna Gum heath on the eastern side in 29 August 1964 L Elmore

Excursion on 29 May 1965

Nineteen members attended. The chief purpose was to remove some of the household rubbish which had been dumped in the 18 Acre Reserve. Members worked from 10 am until 12.30 pm and it is estimated that about 1 ton of rubbish was loaded on Mr Elmore's truck & removed to the Hamilton tip.

A further large quantity was consolidated into 3 piles in low-lying areas [sites mined for sand or gravel] and left in the reserve.

Very few plants were in flower. Some specimens of Cranberry Heath were taken for the club collection, and the banksia were seen to be flowering well.

Birds noted were White-plumed Honeyeater, Wattle Bird (possibly the Little Wattle Bird), Blue Wren, Scarlet Robin & Brown Tree-creeper. However, conditions for bird watching were not good, owing to the activity & large numbers of members present.



The roadside on the eastern side of 18 Acres Reserve on 29 May 1965 L Elmore

After lunch the party inspected the Wannan Falls. Some people walked under the falls to look at the lava layers. Remains of eucalypt trunks which had been buried by the flow were noted. Some poor samples of the mineral vivianite were also found.

Others in the party walked downstream, noting some relatively unspoilt areas on the riverbank & seeing many birds.

Two foreign plants were removed from the reserve; a variety of Tree Lucerne & a number of seedlings of *Pinus radiata*.

A number of rabbits & fresh warrens were seen, also a large hare.