

2019-05-HFNC-activities-events

Hello friends & members of HFNC:

Special presentation evening Friday 17 May, 7.30 pm at HIRL – Diane & Rod will be showing highlights of a trip to SE Alaska's Inside Passage.

In August of 2019, Rod Bird and Diane Luhrs had 3 weeks exploring the natural and cultural history of the inlets and fiords of South East Alaska's Inside Passage. Starting from Ketchikan – a major port for cruise ships – they viewed the totem poles and culture of the native Tlingit people and the salmon spawning run in the local creek.

Most of the travel in the Inside Passage was on a converted tug boat that accommodated 12 passengers and five crew. The vessel can venture into places not navigable by cruise ships. Highlights included seeing whales breaching and bubble-net feeding, watching bears catching salmon at Pack Creek and Dawes Glacier up close.

After the tour, Alaska's capital Juneau was visited, with a day trip to Mendenhall Glacier, an impressive sight but one in retreat because of climate change. The best experience of glaciers was in Glacier Bay National Park. A boat trip of 65 miles showed families of Brown Bears turning over rocks on the shore and Sea Otters, Puffins, Steller's Sea Lions and Whales in the bay that in 1794 was covered by a glacier allegedly 1 km thick. At the top of that bay are the faces of the Margerie and Grand Pacific Glaciers. Six other glaciers were seen nearby, of which 2 are not in retreat of the 1,000 in the park.

HFNC Excursion weekend of Sat/Sun 18-19 May to Millicent – for those who have contacted us, a booking has been made for accommodation on Saturday night in cabins at Millicent Hillview Caravan Park. Anyone else wishing to attend should contact the park. We will be leaving the Hamilton Visitor Centre at 8.30 am on Saturday, stopping briefly in Penola to buy fresh fruit or vegetables (these cannot be legally taken into SA). We will be visiting the Tantanoola Caves, NGT's Mt Burr Swamp restoration project (entering by Kilsby lane from the east end only) and some other conservation reserves on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. We aim to self-cater for meals.

Regional Forests Agreement (RFA) workshop (6-8 pm, Wed 22 May at HIRL) – members and friends are invited to this meeting with DELWP staff, who will discuss ('workshop'?) the renewal of the old national RFA process that governed the logging of our forests over the last 20 years. A new 20-year process is to be introduced and we wish to see several changes to the old agreement for forests in our region. We have booked the small room near the main hall.

Working Bee at Wannan Flora Reserve (Sat 25 May, 9.30 am-12.30 pm at the reserve on Wannan-Nigretta Rd) – the aim is to control 2 species of invasive wattle (*A. paradoxa* and *A. longifolia*) that have seriously invaded the heath area of the reserve, shading out the smaller species and providing shelter for rabbit burrows. We have the necessary permits from the Shire and DELWP for this task. Our objective on Saturday morning is to pull out seedlings of *A. longifolia* (or use loppers to cut them off at the base) across the reserve. Any larger trees will be cut down. A secondary objective is to set up 4 small experimental plots in which we compare the impact of just cutting out *A. paradoxa* or cutting and applying herbicide to the cut stumps. The results will guide future work to radically reduce the infestation of the reserve by this thorny species. For those who can attend, please bring robust gloves and a heavy-duty lopper or saw.

Rod Bird

**Secretary,
Hamilton Field Naturalists Club**