

The Understorey

Vol. 3, No. 1, May 2015



Aerial view from the 'sunny side' photo courtesy Mike Thorn. The photo accompanied Mike's article entitled ***Small is Beautiful*** in this issue on pp 10 and 11. ©2015 Mike Thorn. All rights reserved.

From the Chairman's Desk

It's already autumn and looking back on all of the activities we have been carrying out in the last few months, no wonder the year seems to be flying past. As you read through this edition of *The Understorey* you will see the depth and breadth of those activities.

It is not just the quantity of work that the Friends are able to undertake but also the quality of outcomes that they are able to achieve that is so remarkable. This sentiment is echoed by many people who come to visit us or who read about our activities.

One of the most recent visitors has been Hans Lambers from UWA and you will see from the article on his work and that of the Kwongan Foundation that we may see the Park become part of the bid for World Heritage Listing which includes an area north of Lesueur National Park, the Stirling Ranges and the Fitzgerald National Park. This is an exciting prospect as it could lead to even more protection for the Park than we currently have with its National Heritage Listing. In addition it would provide a great basis for Eco Tourism opportunities for the Porongurup area. (contd p. 2)

From the Chairman's Desk contd

One of the keys to our current success is that we have made a conscious decision to work closely with other groups and like-minded organisations that can support and engage with us in various ways. Currently we have a working relationship with members of UWA, Curtin University, Murdoch University, Conservation Council of WA (CCWA), and several Government Departments.

Locally, we work closely with Gondwana Link, the Oyster Harbour Catchment Group including Ranges Link and South Coast Natural Resource Management. We are also developing strong links with the local Porongurup Promotions Association many of whom are members of Friends, but with whom I think we can work with for the common good of the Park and its surrounds.

One of the important activities that we have begun is documenting the Friends Library and the very precious Ann Burchell photographic collection, some of which can be seen in this edition of *The Understorey*. Ann has left us an immense legacy not only financially but materially. Ann's collection could prove to be one of the most extensive collections of photographs and documentation related to the Porongurup and its surrounds. To continue this work and to restore the herbarium we have applied for a grant from the Bendigo Bank.

With or without the grant we will need volunteers to help with this project so if you are interested in this type of work please contact myself or Maggie Shanklin. Whilst weeding is a significant and necessary part of our work there are many more facets to the activities of the Friends that are of equal importance

The Ann Burchell Collection, the Citizen Science Program at Twin Creeks and the upcoming Cultural Survey of Twin Creeks will all add to our knowledge base and provide us with tools for educating others on the importance of the conservation and environmental work we and other groups do to protect our valuable natural heritage.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of *The Understorey* and my thanks go to all of those people who have provided us with articles. If you wish to speak to us about any of our activities or have any ideas that may progress our work please feel free to contact me on 9853 1137 or arrange to come to one of our meetings which are usually the third Wednesday of the month.

Lorna Long Chairman

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www.porongurup.org.au

From the editor:

Thank you to the following people who contributed to this issue of *The Understorey* by submitting articles, essays, and/or photographs, maps, as well as those who edited specific sections, proofread and/or identified many of the photos:

Lesley Arnott, Jim Curtin, Klaus Braun, Lisa Braun, Bo Janmaat, Stephen Jennings, Hans Lambers, Travis Maskey, Rob Olver, Judy O'Neill, Emmanuel Ongee, Tony Richards, Bill Shanklin, Katrina Syme, Mike Thorn, and Grant Wardell-Johnson.

Thank you to Lucia Quearry and Judith Clarke for spending many hours sorting through hundreds of photos and papers from the Ann Burchell Collection some of which are reproduced in this issue.
Maggie Shanklin, Editor

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Join us ! Become a member—active or inactive.

Annual membership—\$10.00

A membership form can be downloaded www.porongurup.org.au or contact friends@porongurup.org.au

or Membership Secretary, P O Box 514, Mt Barker, WA 6324

Call for volunteers

The Friends are always in need of volunteers for its projects and activities.

Many types of skills are sought and you might have just what we need. Volunteering may be short term or long term, occasional or frequent.

Volunteer on one of the Friends' committees.

In some cases you can work from home or in the community.

The type of projects are:

Conservation activities including research and mapping flora and fauna species, busy bees, re-vegetation and weeding

Event planning

Documentation and scanning the Ann Burchell Collection

Art in the Park and Art in the Hall

Roadside Conservation

ART IN THE PARK 2015

Congratulations to the artists who produced interesting art works for the exhibition.

It was a pleasure to be at the desk daily to hear comments from visitors full of high praise on the quality of the art and the enjoyment they experienced in the Art in the Park setting. Visitor numbers were up and the rain didn't dampen their enthusiasm.

Thanks to our sponsors plus the wonderful Friends of the Porongurup Range volunteers who once again helped to run this annual event.

Judy O'Neill, Co-ordinator,
Art in the Park Committee



1st prize People's Choice, No. 26,
The Proposal by Larry Sawyer

Top and below photos: Bill Shanklin

Children's Choice, No. 34,
The Boomer, by Dave Taylor

Photo Bill Shanklin



Photos above and below: 2nd Prize People's Choice Award No 18, **Wrens in the Bush** by Brad Lucas. Photos: Bill Shanklin



Left No. 14 **Nestled** by Sue Noakes

Many forms of nests often go unnoticed in the trees. The ability of birds to form these homes with natural materials and a beak—magnificent! Sue used wool, felted the shapes, and joined them together for strong visual impact. She has been part of Art in the Park since its inception and enjoys the process. Thank you, Sue, for challenging our perceptions with imaginative exhibits.





Above: Bendigo Bank Youth Award 2nd Prize No 52 People's Choice ***Hanging Around*** by Pre-Primary to Year 8 Students at Mt Manyeaks Primary School



Judged Award No 7 ***Wire at War*** George Corke



No 33 ***The beauty of butterflies*** by the Plantagenet Potters



Above: No 68 A close up of one of the dragons in ***Fly me away*** by Jemima & Lily Richards & Adelaide Boetel: "We love dragonflies and often see them on our farm. We love the way they hover near our pond and dams and the colour of their body and how we can see through their wings. A lady, Nalda, taught us how to make animals from hay."



No 13 ***Thistle*** by Lance Reid



Above and close up to the right: Bendigo Bank Youth Award 1st prize People's Choice No. 53 Luke Barker ***Picnic in the Park***



Left: No 69
Butterfly Effect
Mt Barker
Community
College
(Youth exhibit)



Left: No. 20 ***Ray the Crab*** by Brad Lucas

Photos, Art in Park, pp 6 and 7: Bill Shanklin

Porongurup

ART in the Hall Bazaar

As in previous years, the Porongurup Hall was transformed by the efforts of volunteers who organised attractive displays with the use of colour, lighting, and order. The choice of cakes, lunch, coffee and tea provided by the Porongurup Community Association caterers was consistent with their reputation for delicious food whilst raising funds for local events as well as for the maintenance of the Porongurup Hall.

Congratulations to the talented artists and crafts persons who made this year's Bazaar a success and to Janine Taylor for her energy and enthusiasm in 'making it all happen'.



Blue Bud by Barb Vonk



Sunset Hill by Janine Taylor



Felted merino with embellishments

Kaye Louwen, *Kaye's Craft*



Gimlet platter by Al Barrow

Whipstick Designs, glazed stoneware by Barbara McFarlane



Enamel brooches by Di Sheehan

Art in the Park - Art works from past years...



Printed photographs of the three art works were located in an envelope marked *Art in the Park* with no year and void of annotations.

If any of our readers recognize the art works, please let us know and we will attribute them to the artists in a future issue of *The Understorey*.

The photos are part of the Ann Burchell Collection.

Small is Beautiful by Mike Thorn

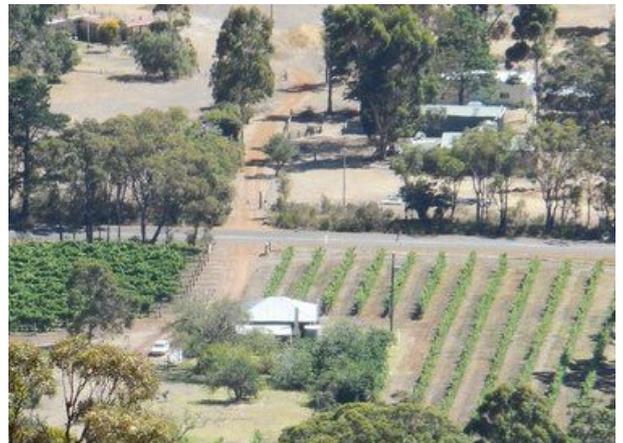
I often contemplate and use the phrase '*small is beautiful*'. First coined by the great Ernst Fritz Schumacher for the title to his book *Small is Beautiful: a study of economics as though people mattered*. This book became a worldwide bestseller in the 1970's and is considered 'one of the top 100 most influential books published since World War 2' (source Wikipedia). I often experience the feeling that Porongurup encapsulates a real expression of 'Small is Beautiful'. There are many aspects to this, some of which I will explore here.

The physical landscape of Porongurup is a powerful expression of small is beautiful. The ancient range we all live around is a small mountain range. I think of the Porongurup as human-scale mountains. The summits are in easy reach and mostly domes rather than cliff faces. The inclines are easily walked. They are cloaked in forest which protects us from the elements. I came to this realisation when living in the Black Mountains of Wales. They are almost the same height and incline as the Porongurup Range and they feel friendly, however they are mostly devoid of forest.



Above: Looking south east from Devils Slide to Nancy Peak
Photo Mike Thorn

Right: Small farming and viticulture below the Potato Patch
photo Mike Thorn



Small business in the community is enabled primarily by the natural assets of Porongurup. Most businesses here are nature based.

The inspiring climbs with breathtaking views, the glorious karri forest, the biodiverse flora, ancient mineralised soils, the grand vistas of the Stirling Ranges and the temperate climate are just a few of the natural elements that sustain the tourism, horticulture, viticulture and farming enterprises.

The community of people in the Porongurup live around the hem of the mountains. The lower slopes are scenic and gentle but elevated enough to afford panoramic views. If the property is not elevated then it will be looking up to the mountains. This gives the Porongurup community a daily connection and strong sense of place that is almost palpable. We are Porongurupians!



Left: Looking south east over Castle Rock, Collier Peak, and the Potato Patch (Wattle Hill) photo Mike Thorn

Many families make their living on these relatively small properties. A mix of small vineyards, olive groves, avocado orchards, small sheep and cattle farms, horse studs, and a sheep dairy, make this a community that largely works where they live; a foundation of human scale economics both locally and globally. The tourism businesses are mostly small scale and family run. Be it self catering, bed and breakfast, back-packers or caravan and camping, the accommodation businesses are run by the property owners or their family. The Faulkner family have been operating in the Porongurup for over 100 years of unbroken ownership. This is a rarity in western societies.



Left: View from Karribank to Bolganup Homestead



Right: View from Jingalla Wines to the eastern peak of Twin Peaks

This is a highly aware intentional community. Most have come here as a result of being directly and profoundly touched by their Porongurup experience. From the 1900's when the first guest houses were built in the area, visitors have come to enjoy the fresh mountain air and rejuvenating walks and climbs. Some felt an irresistible connection to this land, continued to return, and eventually settled here. The connection and capacity of an *unintentionally* intentional Porongurup community cannot be overstated. It permeates the bedrock culture of the people and influences the choices they make. Nobody had a grand 'Porongurup Plan'. It was serendipity, the passage of time and the natural convergence of similar minded people. The good pastures, reliable rainfall and water sources are elements that make agriculture a significant and sustainable enterprise. No one is taking a lot more than they need from the community. For some residents it is not quite enough so they work nearby, mostly in service sector jobs. However, for most people, as long as the enterprise pays the bills and living costs, the profit is simply living here.



Dominic and Eloise of NSW spent a day in the Porongurup Range in March 2015. Photo Jim Curtin

Garry Mulder & Sidharth Sankaran at Devils Slide November 2013 during field work carried out by a Curtin University research team on refugia in the Porongurup Range.

Photo Klaus Braun



I've described what I believe are the main elements to the Porongurup being a '*small is beautiful*' community. It is a place full of riches but not full of money. The riches are its nature, its art, its food, its wine, its celebrations and its creative and connected people. A small and beautiful place indeed. By **Mike Thorn**

Fungi detective located in the Park by a mystery writer



Russula persanguinea is a common species usually found in the karri forest and wetter areas of jarrah forests. It generally fruits at the base of large live trees, but can also be found on the ground or occasionally on well-rotted, moss covered logs and stumps. It's partnership with native plants is mycorrhizal (symbiotic).

Photo Ann Burchell Collection



Omphalotus nidiformis, or the ghost fungus, is a saprophyte and mostly lives in the heartwood of dead bull banksia (*Banksia grandis*), peppermint (*Agonis flexuosa*), sheoak (*Allocasuarina* spp.) and marri (*Corymbia calophylla*) as well as understory shrubs and plants in jarrah forests. It generally fruits in autumn in large clusters at the base of both living and dead trees. It glows in the dark. The mycelium traps and consumes nematodes. Photo Ann Burchell Collection

Anonymous

The dark-haired woman, muffled in wet-weather clothing, is walking through dripping forest on the edge of the Porongurup Range. It's a terrible day to be out there...now she's actually sitting down on the wet ground beside a rotting log! *What on earth is she doing?*

She begins, unhurriedly, to sift through the sopping brown leaf litter around her. It takes time and the rain is unrelenting, dripping off her hood, pattering around her. She stops, takes a camera out of a bag, protecting the long lens from the rain, and with great care and patience photographs something we cannot see.

This is Ann Burchell at work.

She has photographed, quite beautifully, over 300 different forms of fungi in the Porongurup. They can be shaped like clubs, like lace, like coral, like stars, like balls, like brains! They are brown, blue, white, mauve, orange, yellow and many are quite beautiful (she has also photographed 400 of the 700 known wildflowers in the Porongurup).

The fungi start to appear (for those who know where to look) in May after the first winter rains, with what Ann calls 'the flush' in June and July. At the appropriate time of the year, she began to notice fungi and was astonished by their beauty, colour and variety of shape. Some looked like umbrellas, to shed rain, others were cupped, as if to gather it. Many were tiny and she discovered, as she says "nobody else seemed to see them".

She began a personal odyssey to discover and photograph as many fungi as she could.

Ann explains: "Most of them are smaller than a thumb-nail and they can be very tiny, pin-point size. You also get bigger ones, about the size of a jam-jar lid but you need to look hard all the time. I've had to lie flat on the wet ground to photograph some of the pin-point ones."

Ann talks enthusiastically about fungi like *Cortinarius*, which can be bright blue or purple. Species of *Ramaria* resemble branching coral. There are "fairy clubs" and "earth tongues", fungi which hang like stalactites, others which smell like rotting flesh or curry. Contd p. 11 ...

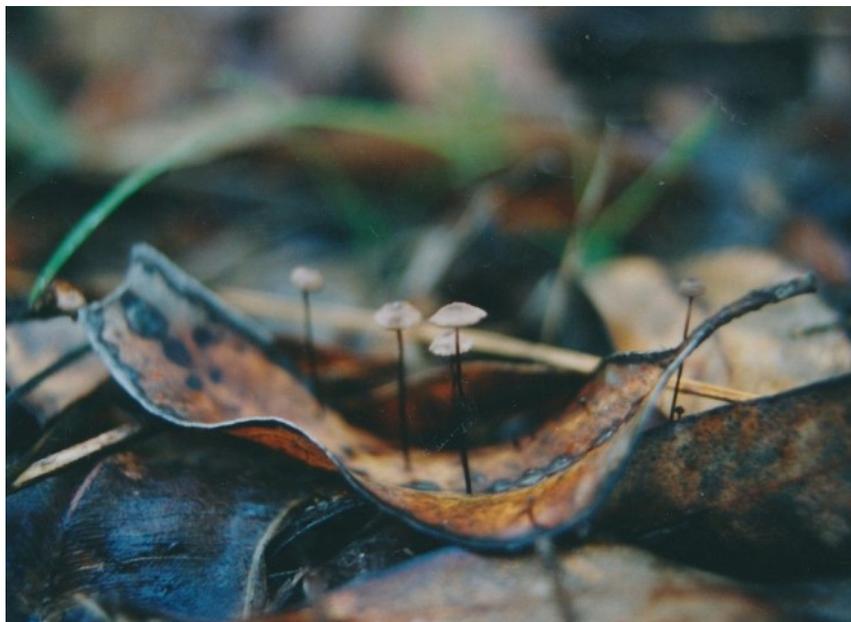
Ann continued, "It's really an extension of the discovery people make when they get interested in Australian wildflowers: many of these are small too, so you can't see them from your car; you have to get out, walk, slowly, take time, be patient, perhaps kneel or get closer to the ground. It's worth it – and it keeps you humble!" end

Ed: We located pictures of fungi and lichen, flora, fauna, plants, rocks, animals, and landscapes, especially in the park and at Twin Creeks, all photographed by Ann and stored with her papers, journals and research notes. An unsigned draft copy of an essay, with extracts reproduced above, was amongst the papers. We would credit the unknown author in the next issue *The Understorey* if advised.



Cortinarius sp: mycorrhizal relationship with plants (about 90% of our plants have this relationship - very important with our poor soils). The fungal mycelium penetrates the fine root hairs of the plants and spreads through the soil, often covering many hectares, gathering nutrients and passing them to the plants. Protects plants from pathogens. Confined to wet eucalypt forest.

Photo Ann Burchell Collection



Marasmius sp (horse hair fungus) found in jarrah forests in winter months, fruits prolifically on the fallen leaves; it is a saprophyte (derives nourishment as it rots down leaf and twig litter).

Photo Ann Burchell Collection

Acknowledgement: We appreciate the assistance provided by Katrina Syme in identifying species in this article. In the first instance, we assumed it was written by Katrina and sent a copy to her seeking permission to print the essay (she had not written the story).

In her reply, Katrina wrote: "I would also be pleased to identify (if possible) any fungi the group finds, if photographs are sent to me. It would be wonderful, too, if the Friends joined Fungimap and send in records of recognisable species found in the Range. There are details on the website of how to conduct fungi surveys and much, much more." <https://www.fungimap.org.au>

At the rock face: *Granite outcrops: climate-change refugia?*

Last May, Grant Wardell-Johnson gave a presentation at a Friends' Forum to describe the fieldwork being carried out on the granite outcrops in several southwest locations including the Porongurup Range.

Grant is the Director of the Curtin Institute for Biodiversity and Climate (CIBC) in the Department of Environment and Agriculture, School of Science, Curtin University. Grant's general interest is in biodiversity and climate change. His research includes biogeographical survey, impact assessment, disturbance, and pattern and scale, particularly in high rainfall mediterranean region ecosystems.

In November 2013, Grant led a research team from CIBC, including Jayashree Ratnam, a research scientist who specialises in natural resource ecology from the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) in Bangalore, India to locations in the Porongurup Range. Emmanuel Ongee, post graduate student, and Jane Chapman, senior undergraduate, both in the Department of Spatial Sciences at Curtin University, were also part of the team. The objective was to monitor data collection of the refugia on granite outcrops as part of a project funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) entitled **Protecting the safe havens: will granite outcrop environments serve as refuges for flora threatened by anthropogenic climate change?**



Klaus Braun, Jayashree Ratnam, Jay's son, Sidharth Sankaran and Jane Chapman setting up tripods which held the LIDAR scanner and associated equipment.

The location at the top of Wansbrough Walk (where the walk trail to Devils Slide and the Nancy Peak walk trail join Wansbrough Walk) was one of the sites used to ground truth the airborne LIDAR using a high resolution LIDAR.

Photo Lisa Braun



LIDAR Technology: Airborne LIDAR systems are composed of three separate technologies: a laser scanner, an Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU) and a Global Positioning System (GPS) all configured together with a computer system which ensures that all of the data collected are correlated with the same time stamp. This is important as all of the components require extremely accurate timing (to the millisecond).

Reference:

<http://geospatialworld.net/Paper/Technology/ArticleView.aspx?aid=2242>

Jane Chapman, Grant Wardell-Johnson and Sidharth Sankaran set up tripods and LIDAR equipment to compare data. Photo Klaus Braun

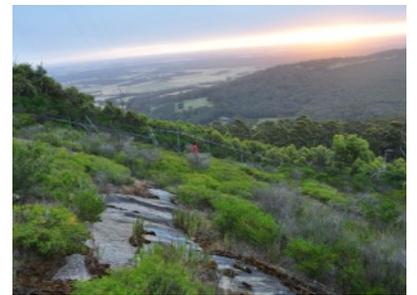


Emmanuel and Jay installed two climate stations and several small climate sensors (ibuttons). The sensors measure temperature and humidity. Placed in plastic cups, protected from rain and direct radiation, they record data across a range of habitats for a minimum of 12 months.

Left: Emmanuel enjoying the hilltop view near Manyat Peak (Repeater Hill).

Right: Emmanuel and Jay installing ibuttons.

Photos Klaus Braun



Left: Emmanuel recording field notes: description of vegetation, GPS location and ibutton replacement time stamp. Middle: Jay and Emmanuel replacing buttons. Right: Jay walking down from Manyat Peak just after installing the last of the ibuttons. The lower repeater is near the right hand side. The metal structure/pipes which hold the cable for the antenna is just to the left of the photo. At sunset, looking west. Photos Klaus Braun



Some of the micro habitats found on granite outcrops: bare rock covered with algae, moss mats that may be overgrown with lichens, herb fields that are often rich in annuals, shrub lands and aprons often found on fringes of outcrops and may support forest.

Photo Klaus Braun: taken from Devils Slide looking south towards the Albany coast. Marmabup Rock is in the middle of the photo. Bates Peak is on the right.

Refugia & granite: prominent in the Porongurup Range

The southwest is characterized by flat, fragmented landscapes but is also home to isolated granite outcrops and rocky hills. The Porongurup Range is one of the largest granite massifs in Western Australia, and counted amongst the oldest in the world.



The fragile, intricate plant life and microhabitats for relict species range from algae which may cover the rocks to forests on the fringes. The fringes capture water runoff which increases moisture content for the vegetation, the litter, and the soil. Protected, sheltered gullies and crevices create a microclimate which benefits from typical Porongurup weather patterns: self-generated clouds and fog mantles. It's possible these extremely old habitats may have acted as *refugia* for millions of years: habitats where species can contract to, persist in, expand, and perhaps survive, after extinctions in the surrounding areas.



All photos on this page are part of the Ann Burchell collection. Unidentified and marked 'Granite' and 'Lichen' in Ann's files.



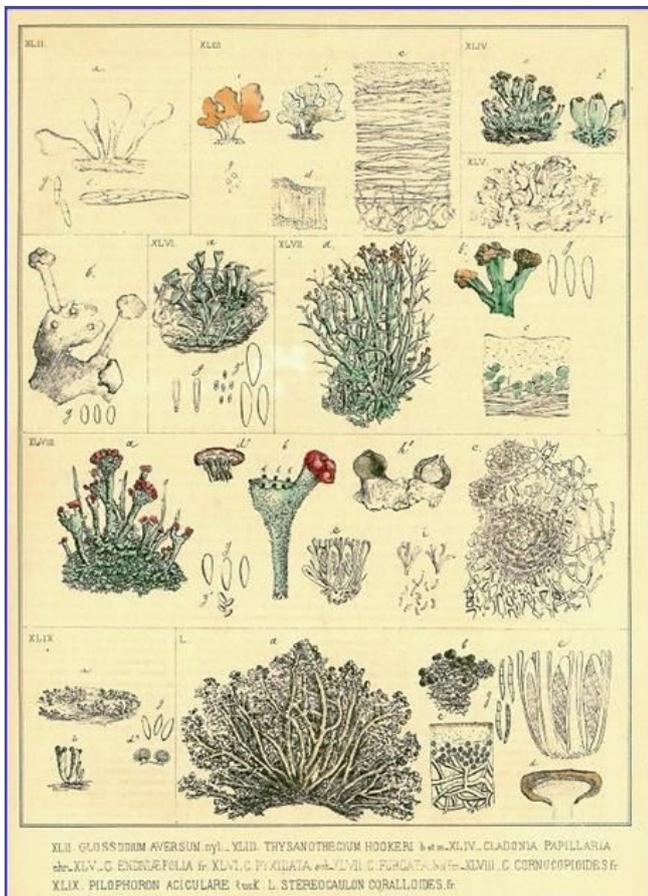
Lichen near Castle Rock, March 2015. Photo Jim Curtin



Unidentified flower in granite. Ann Burchell Collection

Refugia has captured the attention of scientists and researchers and attracted funding. Grant Wardell-Johnson predicts interest in refugia research and conservation will continue to increase as biodiversity is threatened. Grant suggests refugia habitats have an inherent resilience to climate change and therefore provide insights into the evolutionary history of the world's biota. It is important to identify and understand refugia to determine if they are safe havens for biodiversity.

Inevitably, some habitats will become unsuitable for several species. Grant asks: Should we translocate species? Can we effectively relocate species that might suffer population declines yet ensure their survival? If so, how do we manage the migration to new habitats?



Above: Lichen on rocks. Photo Bill Shanklin

Left: **Famille des Lichens** - A plate from Casimir Roumeguère's *Cryptogamie illustrée*.... published in 1868 in Paris (by J.-B. Baillière) and Toulouse (by F. Gimet). The colouring was by a former owner of the book. <http://www.cpbr.gov.au/lichen/photos-captions/casimir-roumegu%C3%A8re-plate.html>

Community groups lead Porongurup Weed Control Project

In it's 8th year, The Porongurup Weed Control project is lead by the Oyster Harbour Catchment Group in partnership with the Friends of the Porongurup Range. The project covers the National Park and a 5km buffer around the Park. This is a community lead conservation project which has attracted national attention. Victoria Laurie wrote an article highlighting the project and published in **The Australian** newspaper in March 2014: "Their dogged \$3 million campaign has seen a biodiversity hotspot nursed gently back to health, freed from strangling thickets of invasive weeds."

Since the project started in 2007 approximately 3500ha were searched and treated. The total includes areas where follow-up work has been carried out to control weeds which emerged from soil stored seed stock. In some areas we are now down to mopping up the last few weeds. But there is a lot more work to do over the coming years to protect the Porongurup Range.

Wattle Hill

On 23 December, the Oyster Harbour Catchment Group (OHCG) and the Friends of the Porongurup Range invited Greg Mair and a number of his senior staff to visit 'Wattle Hill' in the Porongurup National Park to showcase the Porongurup weed control project. Greg has recently been appointed as the Regional Manager for the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW); this was his first visit to the Park in his new role.

The name *Wattle Hill* is derived from the Silver Wattles (*Acacia dealbata*) which Brad Cluett believes were planted by one of the first landowners, probably back in 1906 two decades before the area was declared a National Park.



Greg Mair, Regional Manager DPaW, Di & Sayah Drummond, Friends of the Porongurup Range, John Moore, Senior Weed Scientist, Department of Agriculture & Food, Peter Hartley, District Manager DPaW & Steve Toole, Nature Conservation Coordinator DPaW. Photo Lisa Braun

Wattles on the move

Since the early part of last century, Eastern States Wattles have spread across more than 80ha of Karri forest essentially replacing the local understorey species and Karri trees. Outliers have already crossed the walk trail to the Granite Skywalk. Recently, a new outlier has also been found on the south side of the Range between Castle Rock and Collier Peak.

Over the past 8 years, contract teams and volunteers from the Friends of the Porongurup Range have worked diligently to control a large infestation of Silver Wattle. However, follow-up work will be required for many years.

We are not only controlling Silver Wattles but many other Wattles, including Sydney Wattles (*A. longifolia*), which are already a significant problem in the Albany area, Flinders Range Wattles (*A. iteaphylla*), and Golden Wattle (*A. pycnantha*).

In addition to Eastern States Wattles, the project controls many other weed species which are impacting on the biodiversity of the Porongurup Range, including Blackberry, Dolichos Pea, Red Valerian, Arum Lily and Taylorina. Blackberry and Dolichos Pea pose a direct threat to the rare ***Ornduffia calthifolia*** and ***Apium prostatum subsp Porongurup Range***. Both species are only found in the Porongurup Range.

Right above: Blackberry hedge in a creek line, October 2010.

Right below: Shows the same area in June 2012 after the Blackberry was controlled and native vegetation began to thrive again. Some follow-up work will need to be carried out in this area for a number of years to control any re-emerging Blackberry. Photos Lisa Braun



Data collection and mapping

Over the past 8 years, we have developed an extensive geographic information system (GIS). We use GIS to process the field data and to generate maps which show the location and extent of weed infestations including isolated weed outliers, and whether the weeds have been treated.

Data is collected for all weeds which we target, including more than 10,000 points for Blackberry and 8,000 points for Eastern States Wattles. With the exception of a small number of outliers, all the weeds in the GIS have been treated.

These numbers give an indication of the scale of the weed problem and the effort which has already gone into eradicating declared and environmental weeds from the area.

Friends receive State NRM Grant

The Friends of the Porongurup Range recently received an additional \$35,000 State NRM Grant, which will contribute to the weed control project. This grant will help to control Blackberry and other weeds in the higher, more difficult-to-reach parts of the Porongurup Range.

The overarching project is currently funded to June 2016 primarily through the Federal Government's Biodiversity Fund.

Volunteering

There is plenty you can do to help to protect the Porongurup Range and get a lot out of it in return. We are looking for people to help with many activities including flora and fauna surveys, monitoring, mapping, strategic searches and weed control in the Porongurup Range.

What will you get out of this?

Meet like-minded people.

Learn new skills.

Visit areas you haven't seen before.

Learn about native flora and fauna.

See the difference you can make.

Become a valued member.

Learn about different weeds and their control.

Have great fun and time out with friends.

If you are interested and would like to help, please contact Lisa Braun on 9853 2171 or email at lb Braun@icsgroup.com.au

A Spring Adventure: Passing through the Porongurup

Members from the Subaru 4WD Club usually plan at least one trip a year to view the magnificent wildflowers of Western Australia to cater to a few members keen on wildflowers including some with a particular interest in orchids. Thanks to Tony Richards, President, for sharing some of his observations and impressive photographs from last September's visit to the Porongurup and Twin Creeks.

"We left the caravan park after 9am on Sunday morning and headed for Twin Creeks Community Conservation Reserve, which is a natural haven for native flora and fauna. We arrived about 9.30 and spent the next two and a half hours walking through the Reserve.

Keith and I were originally going to do Self Guided Walks 2 and 3, but at the end of Self Guided Walk 2 we wandered instead. We saw plenty of wildflowers, particularly orchids; unfortunately we did not see a lot of birdlife, even though there are supposed to be some 75 different species of birds within the Reserve.

The diversity of the flora was incredible, with a large number of different plant and flower species on display. Apart from a number of different species of orchid, we also saw Acacia, Conostylis, Hakea, Gastrolobium and Drosera. With so much to see, the two and a half hours allocated for the walk went very quickly! And very enjoyable it was.



Chamaescilla corymbosa, commonly known as blue stars or blue squill, is a tuberous perennial herb species.



Caladenia flava, commonly known as the Karri cowslip orchid



Elythranthera emarginata

After lunch, we drove to the local shop and the adjoining occasional weekend market open until 1 pm. By the time we got there (at quarter to the hour), most of the stall holders had packed up. Still, Joy and Chris managed to pick up a few items of interest, including some plants.

Then, most of us headed for Castle Rock, which is a popular local tourist attraction in the Porongurup Range. When we arrived, the lack of available parking spots (in a large car park) was testament to the popularity of the attraction.

We saw the Granite Skywalk climb with an upper lookout which perches over the side of Castle Rock as a bit of a physical challenge (which it most certainly was)! We set off individually at our own pace. I stopped to take it in and marvel at the forces of nature that produced it.

Unfortunately, when I arrived, the top of the Porongurup was shrouded in damp mist and cloud significantly reducing visibility and completely obscuring the views! I proceeded on to Karri Lookout (a sturdy, easy-access metal structure) which, in good weather, would have great views north out over the surrounding country-side. I saw plenty of cloud and mist.



I went back a short distance to the entry point for the Granite Skywalk. As stated on the notice board at the beginning of the walk, you did indeed need to be *“agile and capable of pulling yourself up by your arms and legs over and under large rocks and up a vertical 7m ladder”*! But the effort was certainly worth it. The structure itself is a marvel of engineering and it was exhilarating as you stood suspended over mid-air by a walkway that “clung” to the side of Castle Rock. Pity about the weather! But then, just as I was about to go back down the ladder, the mist and cloud lifted, almost magically, revealing all. Hallelujah! I was now able to see the wonderful views on offer. They made the whole Granite Skywalk experience just that much better!

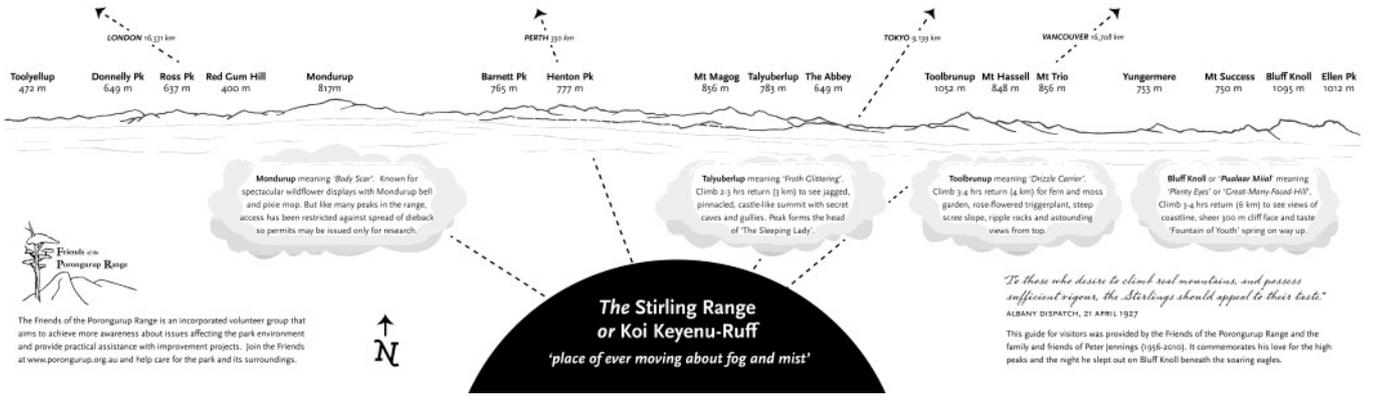


The return journey from the top had taken me 2 hours. It was after 3pm; I took the scenic route back to camp, completing a circumnavigation of the Porongurup Range. There were plenty of great views to take in, especially from the southern side of the range, including a long range view of the Skywalk.

Notwithstanding that we were going out for dinner, Club tradition still required that we partake of nibbles and we certainly respect Club traditions. Then it was time to head off to the restaurant. The food was good. I enjoyed a “Maleeya’s Special Thai Massaman Sirloin Beef with Fresh Coriander”. Very tasty. And what a great way to finish off an excellent day.”

Tony Richards,
28 September 2014
www.subaru4wdclubwa.asn.au

Landmark Plaque Presentation 4th October 2014



Left: Stephen Jennings, Lorna Long & Rick Wilson **Right:** View north to the Stirling Ranges



All photos of this event: Bill Shanklin

The Friends of the Porongurup Range Association (FPR) hosted the event at Gibraltar Rock Vineyard on Angwin Park Drive to unveil an information plaque at a new lookout on the nearby road verge. The plaque provides information to visitors about the panoramic view of the entire Stirling Range visible from that point including Aboriginal name associations. This lookout, located on 'Scenic Drive' in a position recommended for an amenity area and picnic site by the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority in 1999, was a joint venture between the FPR and the family of a member, Stephen Jennings. For the family, the project provided an opportunity to contribute to a useful facility that also commemorated Stephen's late brother Peter's love for the high country and his association with Bluff Knoll. The family thought that the encouragement it might give to others to explore the peaks would have been close to Peter's heart. The production cost of the plaque, which acknowledges Peter and also provides contact details for the FPR, was shared jointly and the Shire assisted by creating parking bays for the lookout.



Right: Rick Wilson
 Federal MP,
 O'Connor,
 Bruce Bone,
 Dept of Parks &
 Wildlife Albany &
 Cr Ken Clements,
 President, Shire of
 Plantagenet.



Keynote speaker

Rick Wilson,

Federal MP, O'Connor

Rick thanked us for the privilege to unveil the plaque. He acknowledged the area as art of the traditional land of the Menang and Goreng people from whose language many of the mountain peaks depicted on the plaque take their name.



“I travel through this area regularly, and looking out of my window at the Stirling Range, it truly epitomises its Aboriginal name Koi-Keyenu-Ruff – meaning place of ever-moving mist and fog. Never the same any two days in a row the peaks tower against a constantly changing backdrop.”

Rick spoke about the national heritage listings for both the Porongurup and Stirling Ranges and commented on the reasons for their status. He reminded us it is the people who are the custodians and beneficiaries: “Government plays an important role in legislation, funding and maintenance, but volunteer organisations like the Friends of the Porongurup Range play a pivotal role as guardians, researchers and an unpaid labour source in its upkeep and conservation.” Rick acknowledged the links we have with landholders and partnerships with other landcare groups as well as DPaW.

Rick announced that Gregory Andrews was appointed as the first Threatened Species Commissioner in July 2014 in concert within the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999. Commissioner Andrews will ensure there is appropriate focus in the National Landcare Program and Green Army projects on habitat maintenance and redevelopment for threatened species. (ed: Landcare was under the banner of the *National Heritage Trust* in previous governments.) Rick highlighted that a specific benefit to community land care and conservation groups like *The Friends* is the stipulation that local NRM’s invest at least 20% from a total National Resource Management budget of \$450 million dollars into funding small projects. This will translate to over \$20 million a year for on-ground local priorities for conservation and restoration.

In Rick’s closing remarks he complimented the Friends. His remarks are similar in sentiment to comments Rick made in a speech in the Federation Chamber of the House of Representatives a few weeks later. Here is an excerpt from the Hansard transcript, 27th October 2014:

“Today I take the opportunity to commend the work of a dedicated group of conservation volunteers, the Friends of the Porongurup Range. I was recently invited to unveil a commemorative plaque in the Porongurups. I grew up in the vista of the nearby Stirling Ranges. Despite the recognition of the exceptional natural and conservation values of this area, it is volunteer groups like the Friends of the Porongurup Range who play a pivotal role as the guardians, researchers and unpaid labour source for its upkeep and conservation. Their regular busy bees control weed incursions, build protective fencing and revegetate areas in need.

I thank the Friends of the Porongurup Range for the opportunity to experience the beauty of this magnificent part of my electorate. It is an ever changing vista of mountains and swirling mist and a haven of wildflowers and wildlife in the heart of O'Connor.”



Above: Annette & daughter Heather Adams.

Right: Campbell & Annette McGready spoke about the significance of the location especially to the McGready family who have farmed just north of this location since 1926.
 Middle: Annette speaking about the history of the area including the Porongurup and the Stirling Ranges
 Right: Stephen's sons, Michael & Andrew Jennings, Stephen Jennings Lorna Long & Rick Wilson



Below left: Members of the Friends of the Porongurup Range (*The Dudes*): Peter Long, Tjeerd Poutsma, Kelly O'Neill & John Radys



Above: Mike Thorn, Rob Stewart, Shire CEO, Peter Thorn & Cr Ken Clements.

Far left: Karri tree: a reminder of its stature in any setting and the iconic tree species in the Porongurup Range. Two marquees were set up for speeches and for the Porongurup Community Association caterers who served a delicious afternoon tea.

Right: Edward Lucaroni, Montefalco Wines, and his partner Anna Whitaker.

Twin Creeks Community Conservation Reserve benefits from National Landcare Program funding

Federal Member for O'Connor Rick Wilson visited Twin Creeks Community Conservation Reserve on January 7 2015 to congratulate Lucia Quearry and other members of the Twin Creeks Management Committee as recipients of a \$20,000 grant awarded through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program (NLP). The funds will be used for stage three of the Twin Creeks restoration project to revegetate the front paddock.

Rick said "We all have a part to play in caring for the land. These projects are one way we can ensure that our agricultural practices are sustainable and our natural environment is healthy for future generations."



Left: Rick Wilson with the chair of the Management Committee, Lucia Quearry at the front entrance to the Twin Creeks Community Conservation Reserve

Right: Rick Wilson with Peter Luscombe, Species and Logistics Coordinator, Lucia Quearry, Garry Mulder and grandsons, just before setting up camera traps at Twin Creeks Photos Lesley Arnott



A Special Feature Edition of *The Understorey* will be published this winter:

- Present & Past—connecting cultures, November 2014 held at Twin Creeks and Karribank
- Citizen Science at Twin Creeks: ongoing project in 2015 in conjunction with CCWA
- Eco Restoration UWA Students field trip to Twin Creeks, February 2015
- Cultural Studies Survey at Twin Creeks in conjunction with SCNRM, May & June 2015
- Update on works in progress at Twin Creeks 2015 within Ranges Link & Gondwana Link
- The Gondwana Link Forum, July 2014
- Keith Bradby (Gondwana Link) presentation at the AGM, September 2014

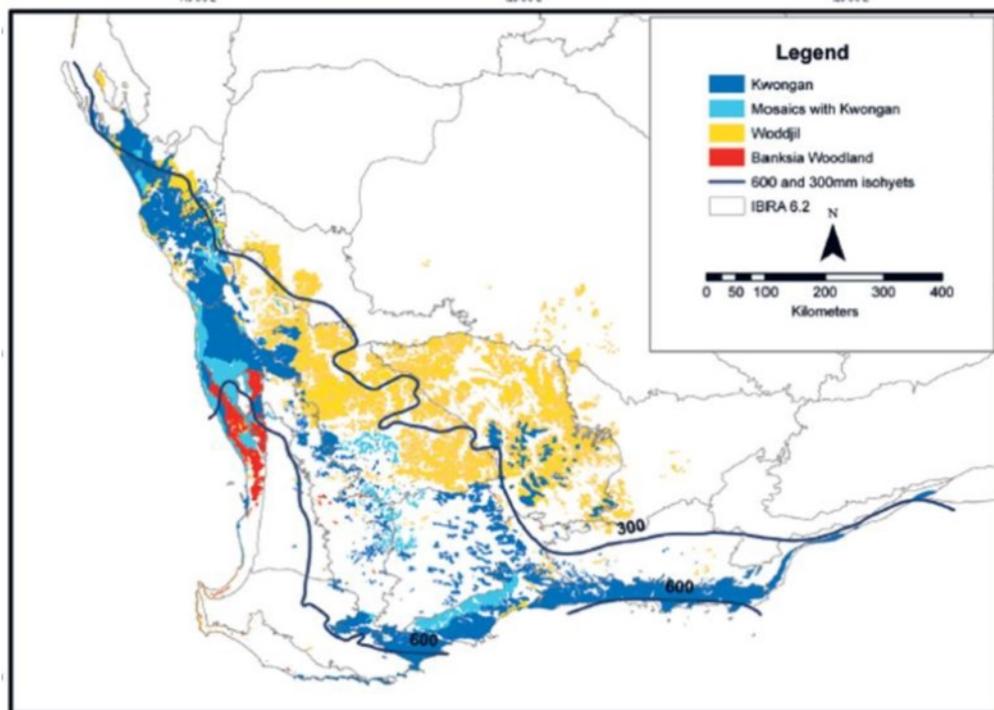
The Kwongan Foundation bid for World Heritage in the Southwest

The founder of *The Kwongan Foundation for the Conservation of Australian Native Biodiversity*, Prof Hans Lambers, School of Plant Biology, UWA, visited with Friends' members in March at our invitation. We were interested to learn about the Foundation and their bid for a World Heritage Listing.

The Foundation, established in 2006, was primarily concerned with conservation efforts and strategies to raise funds for student scholarships, provide resources for research and study at UWA, as well as attracting world-class researchers to assist in gathering and sharing knowledge. An additional aim is to achieve tangible improvements in long-term conservation prospects for endangered plants.

The founding members were inspired by Brazil's expansive number of World Heritage Listed parks and the success of other World Heritage locations. A World Heritage listed property attracts scientists, researchers and visitors who seek a broader travel experience. Often it is people who are interested in exploring links between a region and how it fits into the global ecosystem. As a result of a growing interest and appreciation of the unique and natural significance of sites around the world, the Foundation's aims expanded to include the current campaign to obtain UNESCO World Heritage Listing for the Kwongan (also spelled Kwongkan) area. (Kwongan is a Noongar word for sand.)

The focus of the heritage bid lies in locations between Shark Bay and Israelite Bay and within the Southwest Australian Floristic Region (SWAFR).



The data map above shows the distribution of kwongan vegetation types and mosaics of kwongans and other vegetation types including Wodjil and Banksia woodlands.

Wodjil has been a prime target for scrub clearing in the past (see Beard 1981) and the best patches survive either in nature reserves on and around granite outcrops or in broad road reserves within the wheatbelt and in the western part of the Great Western Woodlands.

Spatial data based on published and unpublished mapping by J.S. Beard (Shepherd, 2003; Beard et al., 2013.) Mucina L., Laliberté E., Thiele K.R., Dodson J.R. & Harvey J. (2014) Biogeography of kwongan: origins, diversity, endemism, and vegetation patterns. In: *Plant Life on the Sandplains in Southwest Australia, a Global Biodiversity Hotspot* (ed H. Lambers), pp. 35-79. UWA Publishing, Crawley.



Hans Lambers & his wife, Marion Cambridge with Lisa Braun at Hayward Peak during a walk in the Porongurup Range March 27 2015. Gibraltar Rock and along the ridge to Devils Slide are in the background. Photo Klaus Braun



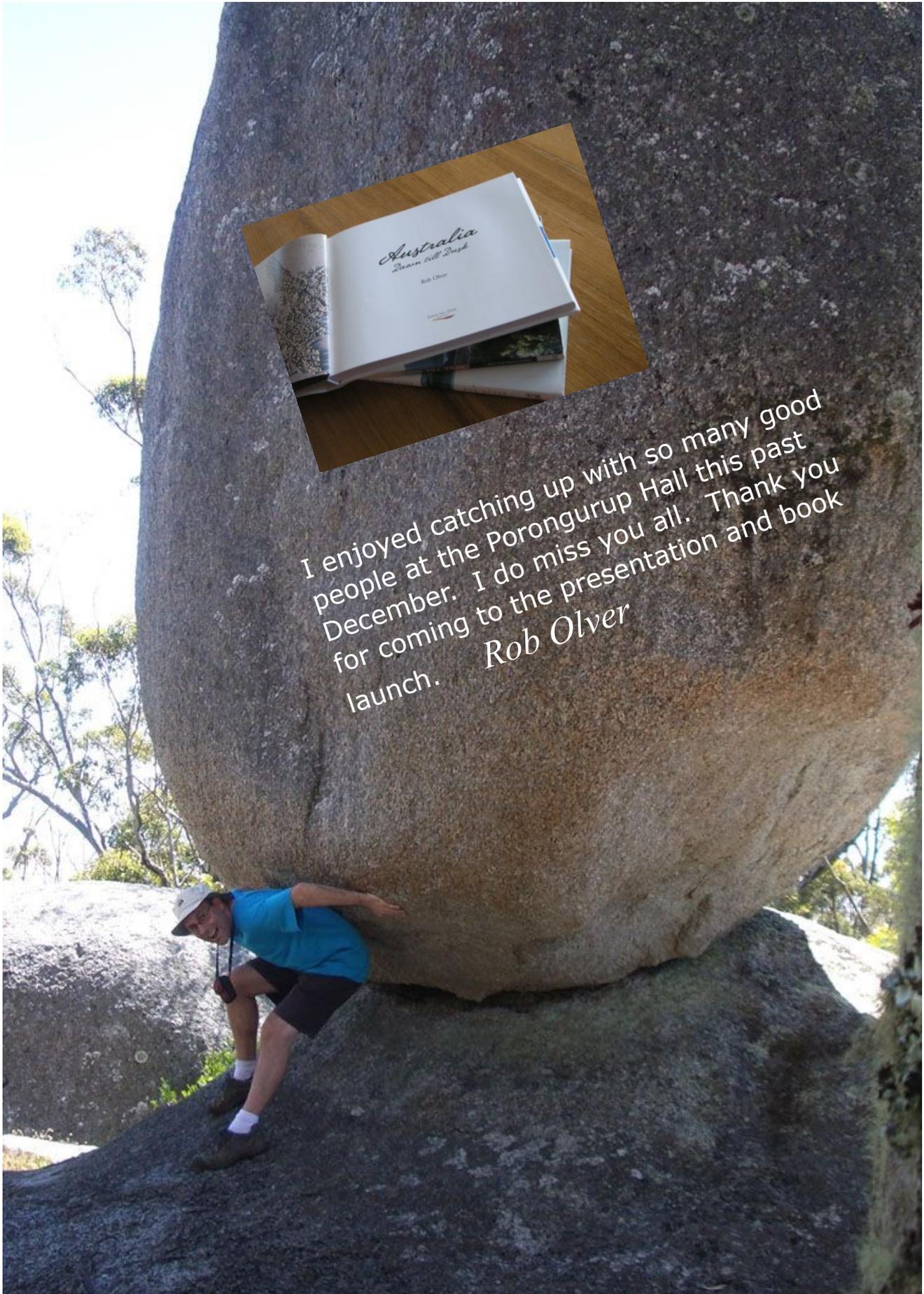
Above: Bo Janmaat leaning on a rock below Nancy Peak walk trail, south end of the Range. Properties on Millinup Rd in the background. Photo Klaus Braun
Middle: Peter Form, Hans Lambers, Marion Cambridge & Bo Janmaat walking along the trail from Hayward Peak. Photo Klaus Braun
Left: Gap in the rocks along Nancy Peak Photo Hans Lambers

Steps required for a World Heritage nomination: The process is extensive and can only be submitted to UNESCO by the federal government. The Kwongan Foundation builds a case, gathers public support, then requests the state government to present the petition at the federal level.

In April, members of the Foundation met with Hon Albert P. Jacob JP MLA, Minister for the Environment & Heritage, WA, to discuss the Foundation’s goal to secure a World Heritage Listing.

Mr Jacob is not certain UNESCO recognition is the best strategy to promote the Southwest. He agrees, however, that southwest biodiversity hotspots are unique and of significant importance. Mr Jacob admits marketing thus far has not been successful and needs improvement. The Kwongan Foundation has offered the Minister’s office support to develop educational & marketing material to be used in schools, Department of Parks & Wildlife and the Western Australian Tourism Commission.

Kwongan Foundation: <http://www.plants.uwa.edu.au/alumni/kwongan>
 UNESCO: For a list of the 19 Australian properties inscribed in the world Heritage List in cultural, natural or mixed categories: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/au>



Rob celebrates in the Porongurup Range in December 2014 after the publication of his book *Australia Dawn till Dusk*. Books available at the Porongurup Shop and at local book stores.