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Ringwood Inspectorate

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Nature NOTES

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Sketches of Australian Birds

NATIONAL PARKS ISSUE

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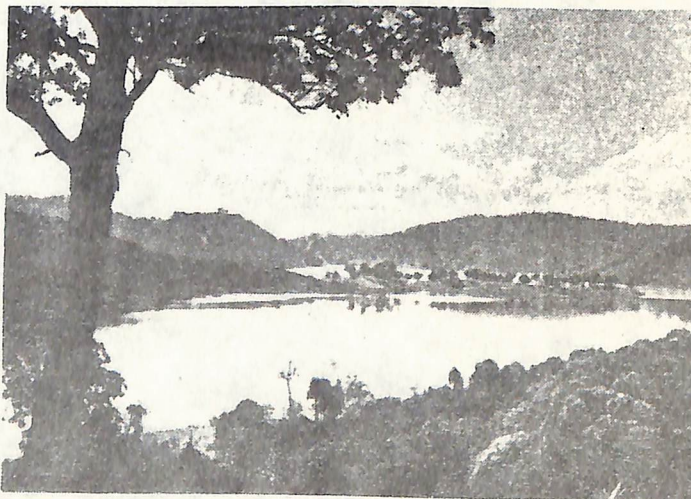
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RESOURCES

COVER PICTURE
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From the Editor ... Our National Parks

This edition of "Nature Notes" outlines the nature and extent of Victorian Parks. We in Victoria are very fortunate to have so many areas scattered throughout the state where it is possible to examine our native plants and animals in their natural surroundings.

For the sake of convenience we have divided our state into 5 different parts and have numbered each park on the map which appears on the centre pages. The numbers preceding the descriptions of the various parks correspond with the numbers on the map. For a great deal of information on the parks in question, we are indebted to the work of two former editors of



Fraser National Park is one of Victoria's newest national parks; this picture shows the lovely Coller Bay and the wooded area which will become the camping village in the near future.

"Nature Notes", Mr. M. Coote and Mr. I. Legge. (See Volume 8 No.6). Michael Morcombe's, Australia's National Parks is also well worth reading as it contains a wealth of information on parks all over Australia.

Victoria has twenty-three national parks which preserve all kinds of country ranging from the sea-scapes of Wilson's promontory to the desert dunes of Wyperfield.

It is our responsibility to guard this heritage with care so that we can pass it on to future generations with pride.

FAREWELL TO YOU ALL

Finally I wish to say 'good-bye' to all "Nature Notes" readers as this is the final issue I will be directly associated with as editor. My past three years as editor have been very happy ones and I will miss this contact with you all very much.



Best wishes for the future.
H. J. Lawry.



A PARKLAND VILLAIN

Boneseed is a native of South Africa. About 3' high, it has shiny green leaves, yellow flowers and black berries. It is so named because the seeds eventually become bone-like in colour and texture. A very rapid grower, it will soon exterminate native plants if allowed to spread. It can be controlled by weeding however, as it has very shallow roots.

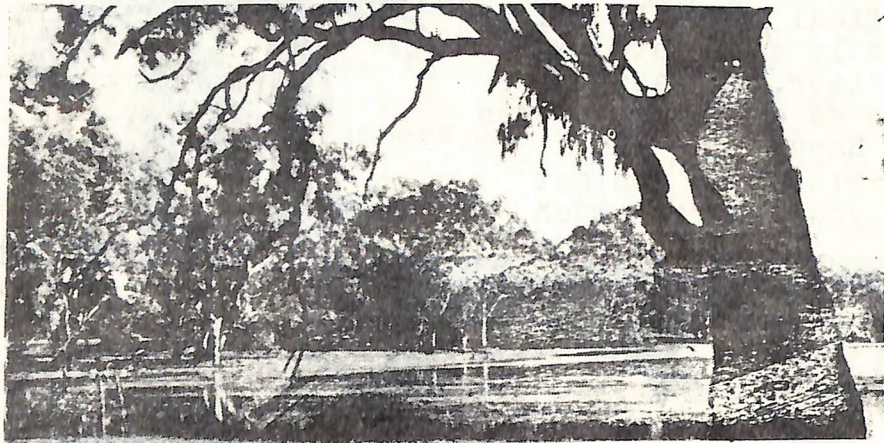


The North West



1. HATTAH LAKES NATIONAL PARK.

Size 44,000 acres. The park is situated 300 miles N.W. from Melbourne, and features lakes, billabongs and a large section of virgin mallee scrub. A 2,000 acre area of the park contains five small lakes which are filled by periodic flooding of the Murray River. Winter and Spring are the best times to visit this park, as temperatures are high in summer months. Camping is permitted in the park; and a full time ranger is there to help you.

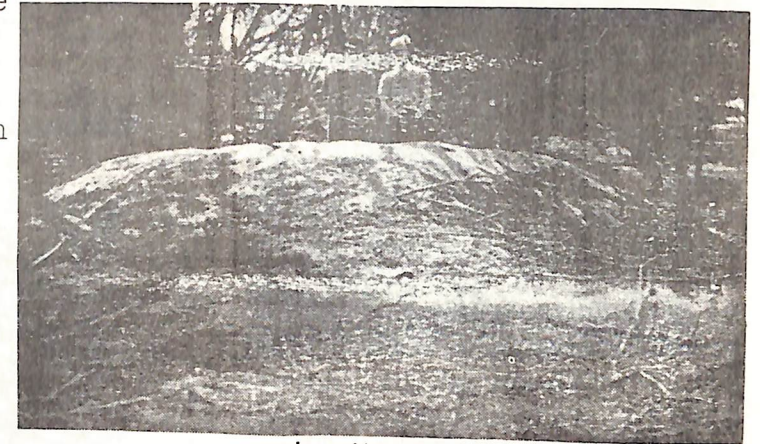


Lake Hattah

Animals that can be seen include Black-faced Kangaroos, Red Kangaroos, possums and Barking Geckos. Most bird groups are represented in the area. On the waters of the lakes can be seen Pelicans, Black Swans, Maned Geese and a wide variety of ducks. In the margin areas of the lakes & swamps some of the species which can be seen include egrets, herons, spoonbills and ibis. Cockatoos, galahs and parrots are numerous, nesting and perching in the Red River Gums.

2. WYPERFELD NATIONAL PARK.

Size 139,760 acres. This park is on the edge of the Big Desert, and is Victoria's largest. It is situated 280 miles N.W. of Melbourne. The best season to visit this park is the Spring, when the semi-desert country bursts into colour with a patchwork of wildflowers. There are emus and kangaroos; and among the birds there are many lovely parrots, small birds and of course the famous Mallee Fowl.



Lowan's nest in Wyperfeld National Park.

3. WATHE FAUNA RESERVE.

This is not far from Wyperfeld and is well worth a visit if you are in the area.

4. LITTLE DESERT.

Size 86,870 acres. Distance is 225 miles from Melbourne. There is a full time ranger who lives in the old Kiata store on the Western Highway. A nature trail booklet is available as well as a bird and plant list.

Fauna: Mallee Fowl, wrens, Scrub Robin, Grey Thrush, White-browed Babbler and honeyeaters.

Flora: Black tea-tree, Yellow Gum, Stringy Bark and acacias.

Visitors to this sanctuary will be amazed by the bird-life there.



Marsupial Mouse

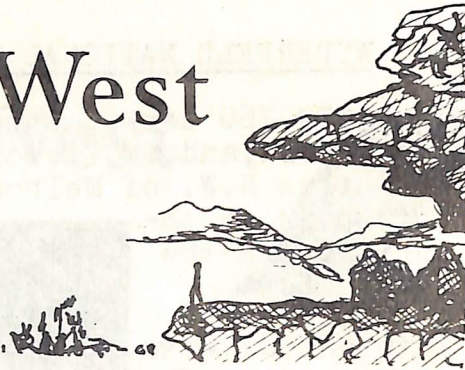
The South West

5. THE GRAMPIANS

This is a very well known area and needs no introduction.

6. LOWER GLENELG

Size, 22,400 acres. This is an interesting area stretching for about 40 miles along the magnificent Glenelg River. There are two large areas at either end of this strip of land which contain a great variety of wild flowers and animals. The best time to visit is spring for heath flowers and summer for the river.



7. MOUNT RICHMOND

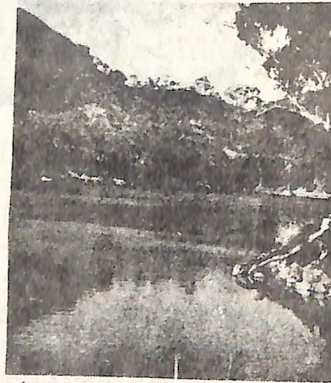
Size 2,036 acres. 250 miles from Melbourne via the Princes Highway. This area is well known for the wildflowers of the sandy soil. There are about 450 species of flowering plants and more than 50 species of orchid.

8. MOUNT ECCLES

Size 974 acres. Distance about 200 miles west of Melbourne near the city of Hamilton. It is well known for its crater lake, Lake Surprise. There are caves and collapsed lava tunnels. The lava from this volcano gave us much of the superb soil of the Western District. Many birds may be seen and heard at the picnic area. There are excellent views from the crater top.

9. TOWER HILL

The lovely blue-green Lake Surprise reflects the rugged lip of the ancient crater, at Mount Eccles National Park in southwestern Victoria.

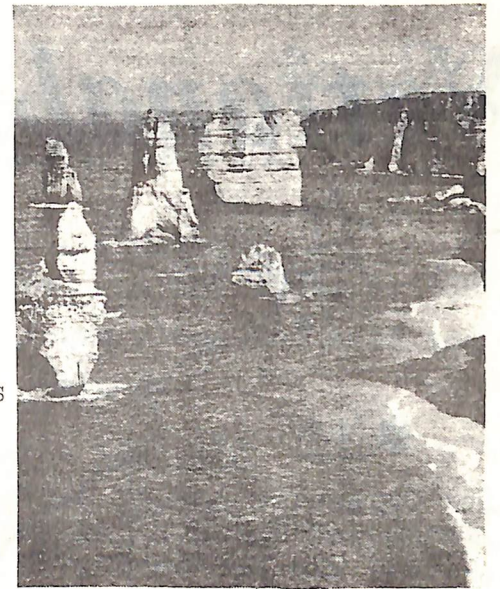


Tower Hill is near the city of Warrnambool. 170 miles from Melbourne

10. PORT CAMPBELL

Size 1,750 acres. 180 miles via the Great Ocean Road and 150 miles via Colac. The area stretches along about 20 miles of coastline and has some spectacular views. There are sheer cliffs of yellow-orange limestone, with rock stacks, blowholes and arches. There is a camping area and a park ranger lives in Port Campbell.

If you visit this area, find out as much as you can about the Loch Ard Gorge and the ship that was wrecked there in 1878.



the Apostles

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Cape Broom

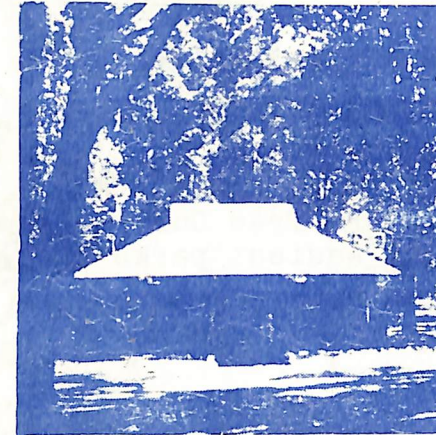
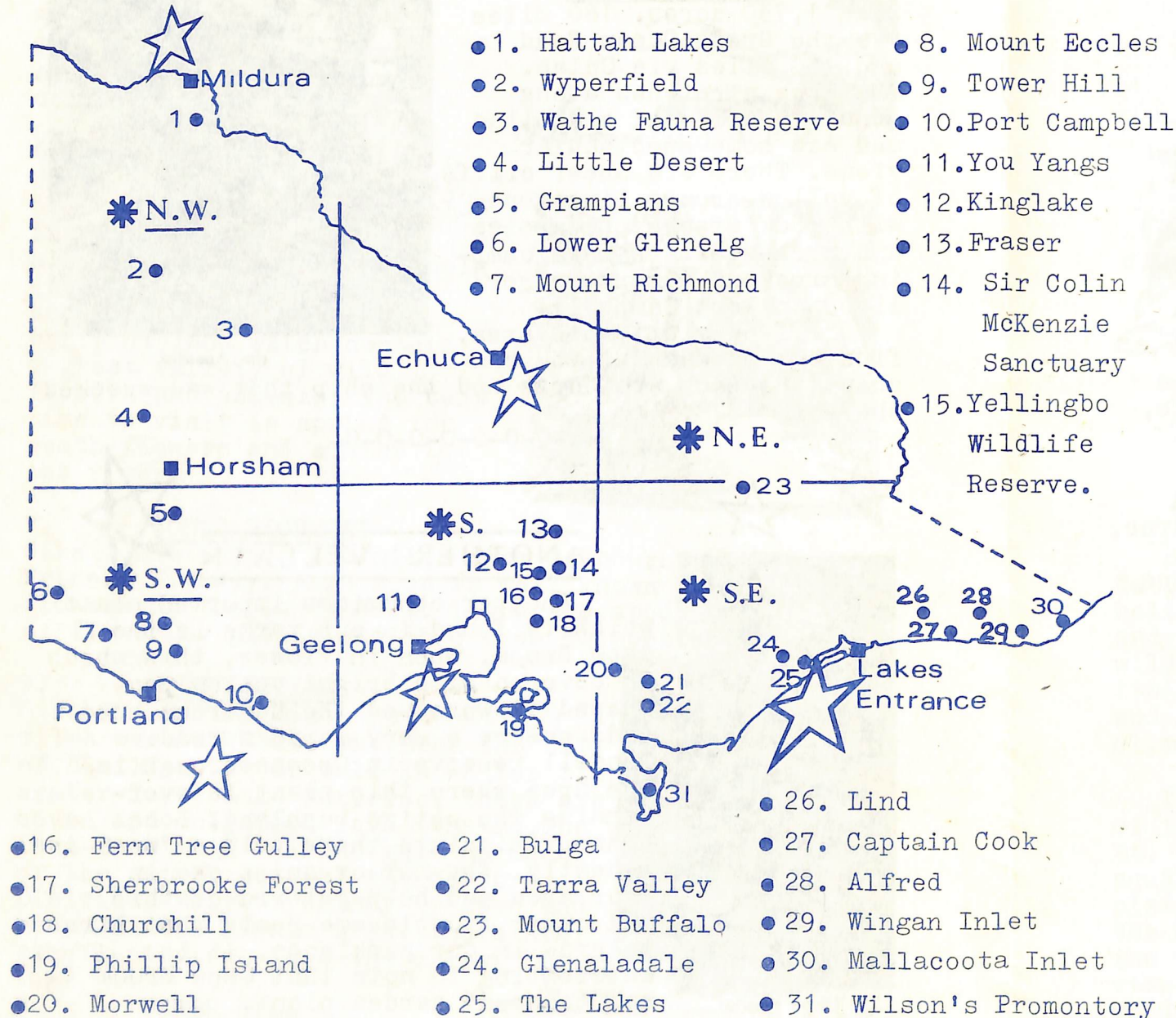
ANOTHER VILLAIN

Another obnoxious imported plant which is found in our parks is the Cape Broom. When in flower, this shrub is covered with bright yellow pea-shaped flowers and the numerous seed pods ensure a very rapid spread. Yandell reserve in Greensborough is one area where this plant is overrunning the native bushland. Local conservationists there held a "weed-in" recently. Why not organise one in your area and help get rid of this and other troublesome pests that like to grow in our parklands. It is interesting to note that Cape Broom is an "escaped" garden plant..



National Park Roundabout

South



Mason's Creek Pavilion, Kinglake National Park.

11. YOU YANGS

You can see these as you drive along the road to Geelong.

12. KINGLAKE

Size 14,096 acres. 40 mile miles N.E. of Melbourne. This area has big timber, waterfalls, and a good of Melbourne from the nearby Sugarloaf Peak. There are wombats, lyre-birds and wallabies. At Mason's Falls, there is a picnic kiosk and parking area; a graded foot track

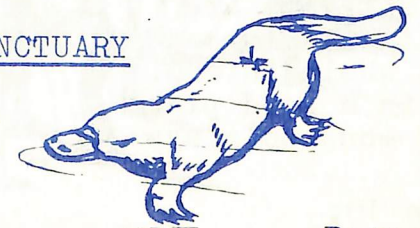
leads up to a view-point above the tumbling waters.

13. FRASER

Size 7,746 acres. This park is about 90 miles north of Melbourne near Alexandra. The camping facilities are very good and it is an ideal spot for boating, fishing and water sports. There are grey kangaroos and black-tailed wallabies in the hills. There is a nature walk, and if you see the Ranger, he will give you a brochure of interest. A booklet called "Birds of Fraser National Park" is available from the National Parks Authority.

14. SIR COLIN MCKENZIE SANCTUARY

This sanctuary near Healesville is well known for its platypus display.



15. YELLINGBO WILDLIFE RESERVE.

Situated 32 miles from Melbourne this reserve is one of the last remaining homes of the helmeted honeyeater.

16. FERN TREE GULLY.

Size 931 acres. Distance 22 miles from Melbourne in the nearer part of the Dandenong Ranges.

The park is famous for its lyre birds, as well as providing protection for wallabies, wombats and possums. There are temperate forest trees, messmates and large gums.

Attractive walks can be taken throughout the park.

Access by foot track from the Fern Tree Gully railway station, makes this one of the easiest parks to visit during school holidays.

17. SHERBROOKE FOREST.

This park lies further along the road from Fern Tree Gully and is also famous for its walks and bird life, especially the lyre bird.

18. CHURCHILL.

Size 477 acres. Distance is 20 miles east of Melbourne, and about 8 miles north of Dandenong.

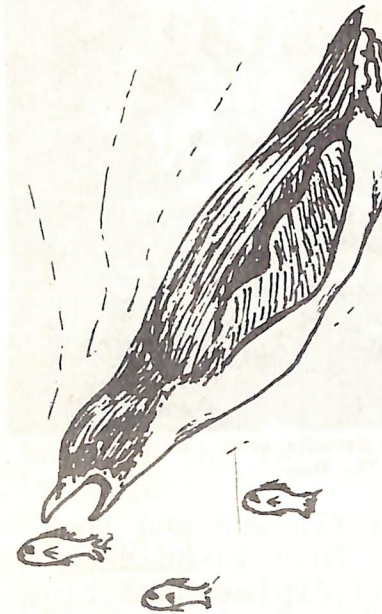
The fine days of Spring and Autumn are the best times for a day out at Churchill National Park.

Camera and binoculars will be useful as there is a good variety of birds of the Melbourne area here.

19. PHILLIP ISLAND.

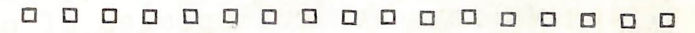
It is difficult to estimate the size of this area, as places of interest are scattered throughout the whole island.

It is a good place for long holidays



as well as one day visits. Along the roads you can see koalas; though they are likely to be high up in the trees and hard to see. Out on the Seal Rocks, a seal colony may be watched at play. The "Penguin Parade" at Summerland Beach is a feature of the Island and can be seen around dusk. It is then that you can see the Fairy Penguins trooping home to their rookeries after a hard day's fishing.

These penguins live in colonies rather than pairs. If you ever see a penguin in the water, try to see its swimming style. They are very fast but seem to move in zig-zag fashion.



Days on Mount Buffalo

Situated 200 miles from Melbourne, Mount Buffalo National Park is most often thought of as a winter holiday area for snow and skiing. However during spring and summer the Park is noted for its displays of wildflowers, as well as its spectacular scenery and facilities for rock-climbing and fishing.

The principal feature of the National Park at Mt. Buffalo is the 13½ square mile granite plateau, which overlooks the Ovens Valley. From the summit of Mt. Buffalo views stretch across wooded valleys to Mts.



Feathertop, Hotham and Bogong. On a clear day Mt. Kosciusko can be glimpsed in the distance. The highest point in the Park is the Horn, which rises to 5,645' above sea level. Spectacular waterfalls cascade down the precipitous sides of the plateau.



The Cathedral and
The Horn.

After the snow thaws, comes the yellow Bossia bloom, the purple Hovia flowers and the many varieties of flowering wattles. Then to be seen are the mint bushes, daisy bushes and Alpine Oxylobium which bloom under the snow gums. In the treeless alpine valleys various species of orchids, everlastings, bluebells and Mountain Gentians flower until the end of summer.



Mt. Buffalo

Wombats and wallabies can be found in the Park, as can a wide variety of native birds. Flame Robins, Currawongs, Lyrebirds, Crimson Rosellas and Gang Gang Cockatoos are among those birds to be seen and heard at Mt. Buffalo.

Mt. Buffalo has a long history as a resort area. The aborigines used to visit the area to feast on the Bogong moths which gather in dark rock crevices.

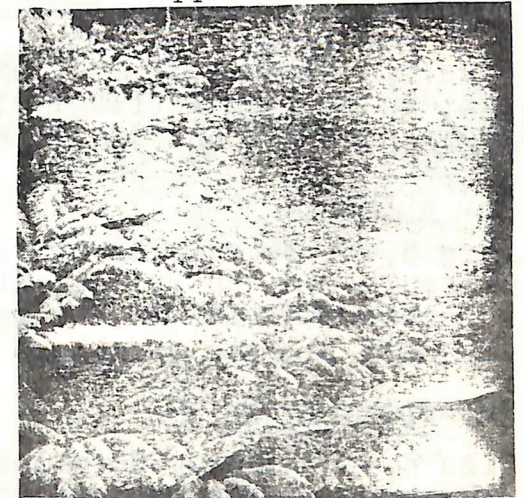
Ringwood East P.S.

The South East



20. MORWELL.

Size 346 acres. This park is sited 10 miles south of Morwell, consisting of timbered slopes of a valley growing vegetation typical of the Gippsland area. Magnificent blue and grey gums are a feature of the area, which is also the home of the rare Butterfly Orchid.



Bulga Park is renowned for its glorious fern gully.

21. BULGA.

Size 91 acres. The park is situated 120 miles from Melbourne, half-way between Traralgon and Yarram. Features are superb tree ferns, large mountain ash trees and many lyrebirds.

22. TARRA VALLEY.

Size 315 acres. This park is in the same area as Bulga but closer to Yarram. Tree ferns are a feature and many varieties can be seen as well as mammals such as platypus, koala, wallaby and possum.

23. MOUNT BUFFALO.

Size 27,280 acres. Situated 60 miles from Wangaratta. See article on Page 11.

24. GLENALADALE.

Size 403 acres. Sited 180 miles east of Melbourne and 18 miles north of Princes Highway at Fernbank, this area has a cavern, the "Den of Nargun", which is connected with aboriginal legend.

25. THE LAKES.

Size 5,238 acres. Spermwhale Head Peninsular between Lakes Victoria and Reeve in the Gippsland Lake area is the site of this park.

26. LIND.

Size 2,882 acres. The park is situated 280 miles from Melbourne on the Princes Highway. Although mainly dry forest there is also dense subtropical rain-forest.

27. CAPTAIN JAMES COOK.

Size 6,700 acres. This area of land was first seen by Captain Cook in April 1770. Forest swamp and heathland grade down to sand dunes in untouched country.

28. ALFRED.

Size 5,406 acres. This park is 300 miles east of Melbourne on the Princes Highway. Sub-tropical jungle is preserved near Mt. Drummer, where many plants which are hard to find elsewhere in Victoria can be found.

29. WIGAN INLET.

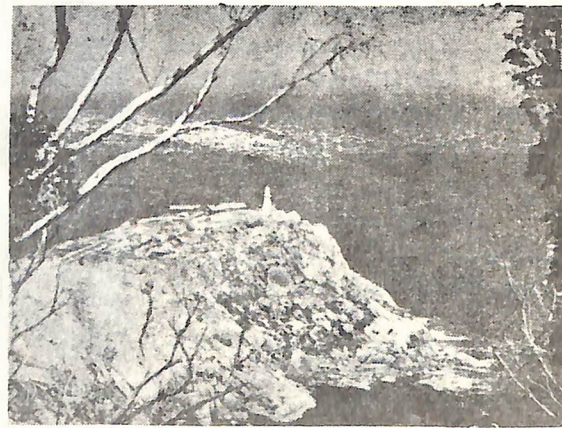
Size 4,730 acres. 330 miles from Melbourne and a good place to observe wading and migratory birds.

30. MALLACOOTA INLET.

Size 11,225 acres. The inlet, situated 326 miles from Melbourne, is timbered to the water's edge.

31. WILSON'S PROMONTORY.

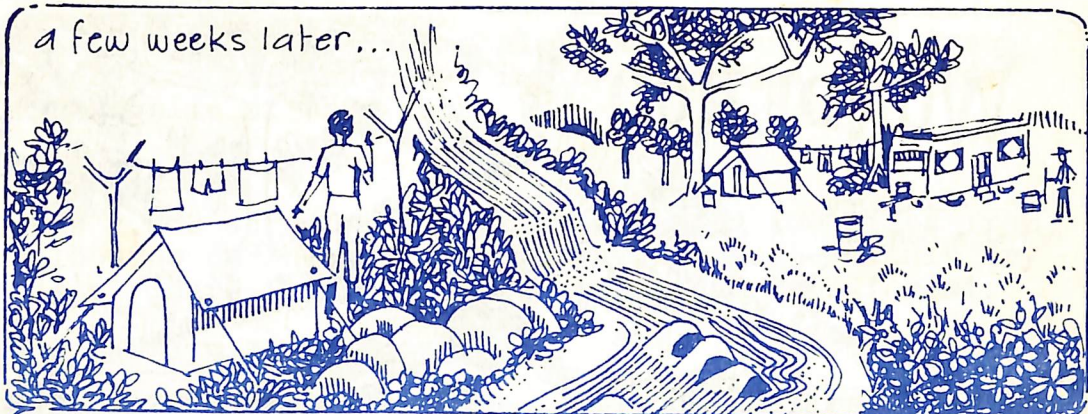
Size 120,875 acres. Located 140 miles from Melbourne, Wilson's Promontory offers grand and spectacular scenery.



"Wilson's Promontory National Park"



a few weeks later...



Some months later...



Some years later...



SOB!
How could
people
destroy
something so
beautiful!

Remember this little story
when you visit the bush or
our National Parks girls and
boys. The bush is not yours
you know, it is ours.