

# Newspaws

For, of and by Q.NPWS staff

June 1986



## Beware of crocodiles!

Pretending to be hard at work at a crocodile nest near Halifax were (from left) Bill Fisher, Laurie Taplin and Col Limpus.

Peter Johnston's camera caught the 'action'.

This exchange of memos followed:

Limpus to McEvoy: At a meeting in Cardwell in March you questioned my qualifications for identifying a crocodile attack.

May I draw your attention to the fact that I have now rectified this

lack in my qualifications.

Regards, Col

McEvoy to Limpus: I take back all I said. I was only pulling your leg!

Regards, Jim

For those who haven't heard the news, Col ended up in hospital after an attack by a crocodile he was examining.

Ask him to show you the scars on a leg he will always have as proof of his qualification.

## Ranger review report soon

Interviews by the ranger review committee established by the executive management group have been completed.

The review team is scheduled to meet early this month to complete its report.

The committee was formed to investigate all aspects of the present employment conditions of Service rangers.

The review team comprises Des Boyland (mainland estate management branch, Head Office), Dick Grimes (manager,

research and planning branch, Head Office), Bill Fisher (regional director, Northern Region, Townsville), Kevin Bade (regional superintendent, Wide Bay-Burnett sub-region, Maryborough, and Bob McTaggart (senior personnel officer, Head Office).

Members visited regional centres, district offices and park offices throughout the state interviewing rangers and

those staff who are qualified to become rangers.

The report with recommendations will be submitted to the EMG by the end of this month.

If you have any general questions regarding the review, you should contact Bob McTaggart by phone (07) 227 5535 now.

Regardless of what you think of your children at times, you may bring them to work this month. That's official.

Department Under Secretary Mr Stan Wilcox has approved participation in the Kids Day at Work Week.

This is part of Queensland's Year for Parents observation.

The purpose of having children at work is to give them a better understanding of what is expected of their working parents and how the parents contribute to the running of society.

Arrangements should be made for 16 to 20 June, the first week of the school holidays.

In the week, staff may take their children to work for a limited period, a day or half day.

Alternatively, a tour of a workplace

## Take kids to work

might be organized on an open day for staff and their families on a non-working day.

Children aged five and upwards may benefit from the program.

The suggested attendance is half a day with reasonable distribution of numbers over the week to avoid disruption of activities or service to the public.

Supervisors should seek details of restrictions now.

## Award task

The applicability of the Forestry Employees Award to national park workers, gangers and overseers has been examined.

Officers of the Department of the Public Service board industrial division and the Service's senior personnel officer have made a number of inspections and have had discussions with wages staff.

This review was established at the Service's request following considerable representation from park staff and regional superintendents in all regions.

Inspections have involved visits to parks up to the Rockhampton area.

Discussions were held with wages staff at parks along the way and at regional and district offices.

Time and money constraints prevented inspections and talks with staff further from Brisbane.

If more information is considered

necessary then visits to other areas will be made in the new financial year.

Discussions have centred mainly around how the Forestry Employees Award relates to duties being done by workers, gangers and overseers.

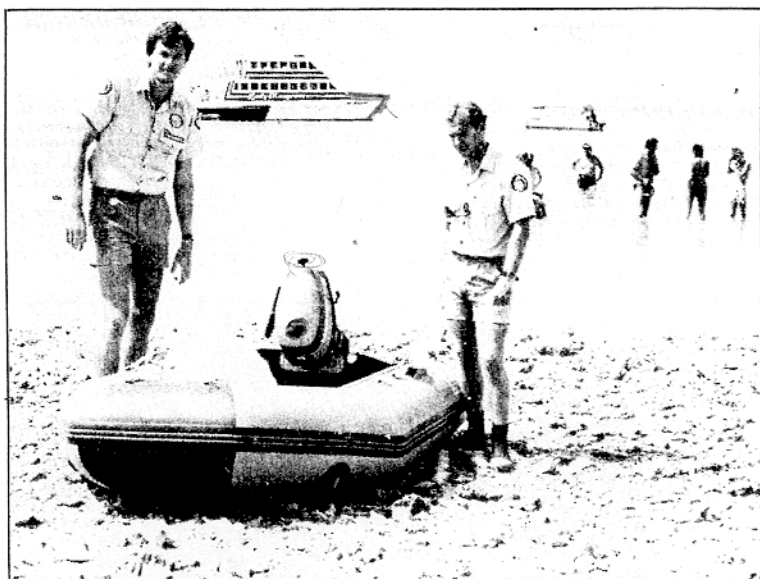
Those in specialist positions such as boat skippers and machine operators were also invited to contribute.

Note was taken of those who work in remote areas such as the far west and far north, and also those who work solely on island national parks.

Discussions with the Public Service Board are continuing. I will keep staff informed of developments.

Projects of this nature may take considerable time to be completed.

Bob McTaggart



Ready to lift their trusty Zodiac from the coral rubble shore of Lady Musgrave Island to return to the Protector are Marine Parks rangers John Messersmith (left) and Mike Osmond. They had completed a morning of what they do best — talking with island visitors to determine their needs and guide them in ways of conserving the Great Barrier Reef region. Information officer Don Marshall caught the pair during a Gladstone-Brisbane yacht voyage via Lady Musgrave lagoon. That's the high speed tourist catamaran vessel Lady Musgrave in the background.

## Shoptorque

# More radios on order

Service officers recently completed a review of its radio communication requirements now and in the near future.

As a result, new equipment should be seen in the field in July and August.

The review looked at needs across the Service and examined closely the application of high frequency, very high frequency, ultra high frequency, citizen's band and 27MHz marine radios and the uses to which they could be put.

Each type of radio has a part in any overall communications network which is not only for day to day management use but also for safety, surveillance, search and

rescue, fire fighting and many other tasks.

The Service radio committee was established to conduct this review and has assembled vast data through its own investigations, regional submissions, questionnaires completed by operators, and discussions with experts in government and private enterprise.

Because of this and the complexity of some issues, the committee will produce a report summarizing its findings and detailing the direction the Service should take to keep pace with rapidly changing technology.

Because of constraints of the 12 month financial cycle and the need to commit specific funds, the committee prepared an interim report.

This recommended immediate purchase of equipment costing more than \$70,000.

This includes 21 new Philips multi-channel VHF mobiles, a VHF base, 11 100-watt Codan HF mobiles and an HF fixed station.

In addition, an HF base station at Head Office will be established with a UHF link from the MLC Building to Moggill.

Two UHF 40 channel CB radios have been purchased for evaluation.

Peter Cavendish

## To the Editor

I am a relative 'new chum' to Q.NPWS. I thought a coach tour to Carnarvon National Park on the Anzac Day weekend would be the ideal way of learning about a different park.

After breakfast on Friday, we set up camp and went up to Boolimba Bluff.

The brochure describes this walk as 'an easy rock scramble'.

This is very misleading. I am not an expert on the degrees of difficulty of rock scrambles but for the average 'city slicker' this definitely could not be described as easy.

Disappointments about the park were misspelt wooden signs in the camping area; the fact that coach visitors have to camp in an ungrassed area; and the apparently misleading distance signposts to places of special interest.

Despite that, the weekend was one of the most exhilarating I have spent.

Elizabeth Tunstall  
Assistant personnel officer

[Does the Service overestimate the abilities of urban dwellers on parks? What is an 'easy rock scramble'? Are the brochure texts, signs and distances correct on your park? Send your views in less than 100 words. — Editor]

## Camp for a comet



Halley's Comet (aided by Rose Webster, Ross Blick and Kathy Nance) was the catalyst for a weekend camp for Head Office staff, family and friends at the Bunya Mountains in April.

A crisp moonless night ensured an unbeatable view of the Clayton's comet, and Ross 'Galileo' Blick with telescope pointed out other heavenly bodies.

The lack of showers at Burton's Well campground didn't deter about 80 campers.

Several new comets and other phenomena were reported by the port drinkers around the dying campfire.

Len Zell and family thoughtfully aided tent pitching with their novel method of finding wind direction — bubble blowing.

'Comet Halley vous?' Disappointing, but it was a great excuse for a gathering.

Andrea Dobbyn took the picture.

## Staff praised

National Parks Minister Peter McKechnie was full of praise for the work of Q.NPWS and its staff throughout the state when he opened the Cardwell Information Centre.

Government,' he said.

He said he was proud to be the Minister in charge of such an enthusiastic and active Service.

'They have a love for the type of work they do and in many instances they work beyond the call of their normal duties.

'The Service boasts some of the most dedicated officers in the

'Such devotion and commitment is a credit to the Service as a whole, and could well be used as an example for some other departments to follow,' Mr McKechnie said.

## Interleaves

The big job of the year, the Cardwell Information Centre display, has been christened.

making staff aware of the variety of their personal options when communicating with the public.

The display, with a budget of \$80,000, has required co-ordination of more than a dozen subcontractors including cabinet makers, audio visual producers, photographers, screen printers, model makers, electronics specialists and fibreglass workers.

Tim Moore and Rick Nattrass provided an imaginative example of how to run a spotlight walk in the middle of the day!

Displays look simple but really they are complex, time-consuming jobs.

The workshop was a pilot for a series of week-long interpretive training schools to be run in regions next year.

Other displays in preparation include the Heron Island Information Centre, Kinaba and Carnarvon.

More than 25 visitor information sheets have been prepared in the last six months. This reflects on-going rewards from the writing workshops two years ago.

Geoff Kelly has taken up duties as the temporary replacement for Marc Hockings. Geoff will work from Pallarenda and will be responsible for field interpretive activities in the Northern and Far Northern Regions.

Thanks to all who have contributed to these most useful publications.

Field staff from Southern Region attended a two-day interpretive training workshop last month.

A project requiring considerable attention was Bush Beat, 26 half-hour nature education segments produced in co-operation with Channel 9.

The workshop, organized by Trevor Vollbon, Gordon Stone and Liz Naumann, concentrated on

Damian McGreevy and Tina Dalton put great effort into the series to be screened shortly.

Tina is making regular appearances nation wide in the ABC Wildlife Club on ABC TV each Friday at 5.25.

## Psssssst . . .

Kathy Buckley leaving the Service shortly to take up library duties at the Queensland Museum.

No more business can be done in Head Office until 1 July. There were no more requisition books to requisition from the store recently.

We will remember Stuart James and Bill Goebel who have retired from the Service recently — gentlemen and characters in their own ways.

Two letters of thanks to the Service recently.

New South Wales MLA Ian Armstrong thanked all who helped in locating a woman on Fraser Island to tell her of a family death.

Boomerang Tours director Mr B.M.Hickey praised the efforts of barge skipper Ian Lewis and his assistant who helped rescue he, his wife and daughter in horrendous conditions near Peel Island in Moreton Bay on 7 April.

What happened to Maria-Ann Wrench and Lenore Wedgwood when they were picked up after dark at Cardwell recently?

The local constabulary took pity on them and asked the pair to join them in a quick trip to Hinchinbrook Island and back before work the next day.

Which Service officers recently referred to the Fornication Act, the chisel deer, and the fact that Bird Fright comes out of the nuisance factory at St Mary's?

Much discussion recently about the distribution of Ringtail.

While it's hoped the print run can be increased within the new budget, the problem about how many go where will remain with the regions.

The bulk supply numbers can be changed with expected altered demand with the seasons.

There is no Volunteer supplement for distribution with this Ringtail.

Not one word or picture had been received by the deadline of 15 May.

District rangers seeking to encourage volunteer help would be advised to spread the word that the deadline for a possible September Volunteer is 15 August.

Copies of minutes of meetings, old publications and colour slides are unacceptable. Previous Volunteers set the style of material required.

Word travelled pretty slowly about two not-so-recent marriages for Marine Parks staff.

RAO Dick Bennett due back shortly after long service leave in Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and Nepal.

Which Service officer was chatted up recently about some under-sized sandcrabs?

Kevin Bade (Maryborough) complaining about writer's cramp filling in requisition books for Fraser Island.

Regretfully we heard of the death of former Nambour area senior overseer Lindsay Pringle who retired through ill health last year.

Remarkable how it took a year for word to travel to Brisbane about a park's new phone number.

New currency in the north in the vicinity of Cardwell — six-packs!

The word that a certain QG vehicle was seen outside the casino a few weekends running must have been wrong.

Report on an EP proposal — ... subject area was inspected briefly in heavy rain. Surrounding land resembles a replay of the battle of the Somme with large water-filled holes alternating with huge piles of soil...

Damian McGreevy cursed his way through three hours of drilling at Cardwell before he was told the battery drill was in reverse!

Are you aware that 57 per cent of households in Brisbane have one person who has visited a national park in the last 12 months?

Look for a summary of a survey of the perception and role of national parks soon.

Maria-Ann Wrench and Libby Johnson (both Head Office) have announced their engagements.

## The personnel function in the management service section of the Service has been established for some time.

This opportunity will be taken to give information on the staff involved in personnel work and the variety of work done.

The four officers are: Bob McTaggart (senior personnel officer), Elizabeth Tunstall (assistant personnel officer), Tim Boyle (staff clerk), and Helen Moeser (clerk).

Most field staff will have had contact with me over the years. But for those who don't know me the following information may help.

I have been employed by the Service since its inception. Before that I worked for the State Stores Board. I have worked in areas of stores and plant, records, general administration, accounts, management services and most recently personnel.

I believe I have acquired over the years a good understanding of the personnel issues facing field staff and will be trying to address these in the future. I can be contacted on (07) 227 5535.

Elizabeth started with the Service on 18 November last after eight years in the Department chief office and Education before that.

She has had four years' experience in the personnel area and is therefore a valuable asset. She has extensive experience in all leave matters, study assistance, progression schemes and a variety of other topics. Phone her on (07) 227 5342.

Tim joined the Service recently after nine years with the Works Department. He has spent the last four years in various jobs

of the personnel branch and, like Elizabeth, has a good working knowledge of general personnel matters.

His main jobs involve commencement/terminations, increment and promotion processing, transfers, workers' compensation claims and oversighting of all leave matters. His phone is (07) 227 5323.

Helen started with the service on 24 February. She has completed two years of a BA degree at Queensland University and is completing the balance part time.

Her job includes administration of the leave system for salary and wages staff, maintenance of personal files, and flexitime monitoring. Phone (07) 227 5323.

Some people see the personnel area as solely staff work. However there are other areas which require personnel staff involvement.

These include:

- Recruitment of all wages and salary staff including participation on selection panels and interview skill training.
- Policy development on all personnel management topics.
- Counselling — career, personal and study assistance.
- Classification review assessment including review of qualifications and duty statements.
- Administration of the progression scheme,

manpower planning, establishment control, occupational health and safety, and training and development of staff.

- Administration of personnel records — leave, entitlements, vacancies, appointments, resignations and retirements, tests and examinations, advice on Acts and relevant industrial awards, and appeals.

The Service is still developing personnel management. Efforts will continue to maximize the potential of our most valuable resource — the staff.

Personnel management ideas and information will be passed to all staff regularly through Newspaps.

Bob McTaggart

# Person to person



Personnel staff members (from left) Elizabeth Tunstall, Helen Moeser and Tim Boyle.

## Staff changes

Welcome to new staff — Jonica Neilsen, from SGIO to clerk, accounts; Adrianna Isola, from SGIO to clerk, records; Neil Fry, from SGIO to clerk, accounts; Tim Boyle, from Works to staff clerk; Jim McKittrick, from SGIO to clerk, technical services; Grant Aishorpe, from SGIO to clerk, Fraser Island, at Maryborough; Sue Conroy, from Education Department to DOS secretary; Peter Bagenquast, from SGIO to clerk, permits, Rainbow Beach; Tony Burns, clerk, Townsville; Dave Baker, from IOAS (Treasury) to chief management officer (wildlife) Head Office; Tracy-Lee Hubner, from DOS secretary to Fraser Island Recreation Board typist; Brigitte Maki-Neste, telephonist, Moggill.

Cairns while Dick Bennett is on long service leave; Darryl Jeffress, ranger in Head Office while Pamela Harmon-Price is on accouchement leave.

Retirements — Stuart James, chief management officer (RNC) Kingaroy; Bill Goebel, worker, Girraween.

Transfers — Jacki Daly, from accounts to Queensland Art Gallery; Mark Planck, Lake Eacham to Forestry, Fraser Island.

Overseas leave — Jon Walsh, Cairns, and Marc Hockings, Townsville, travelling overseas for 12 months.

Welcome also to those new wages employees throughout the state and all those employed under CEP and NESA programs. May your time with the Service be enjoyable and rewarding.

Resignations — Mark Neumann, clerk, records; Tony Williamson, clerk, counter; Fiona Davie, interpretive officer, Rockhampton; Andrew Haffenden, animal attendant, Pallarenda; Gil Field, interpretive officer, Moggill; Janet Marles, assistant photographer, Head Office.

Temporary moves — Dan Reynolds, from Head Office to

## Talk about training!

An intrepid group of Service staff met in Rockhampton recently to discuss training.

The group comprised Peter Harris (Far Northern), Col Limpus (Northern), Alan Don (Central), Gordon Stone (Southern) and Lyn Gough and Lester Harth (Management Services).

They represented their regional directors or divisional directors to give the highest priority training needs of the

respective regions and to develop a program for 1986/87 for the training committee.

This committee has reviewed the program which has been submitted to EMG for endorsement.

The group also looked at identifying training needs and how the process for developing training programs in future could be handled.

The trim, taut and terrific training team — Lester Harth,

Des Boyland, Trevor Vollbon and Bob McTaggart — is considering these suggestions.

They are responsible for producing a program of training activities (with a budget) for consideration by EMG.

The training program for 1986/87 will be included in the next Newspaps after EMG approval and budget allocations are determined.

Lester Harth

## Research unit is supported

The Service will continue to support a research unit to conduct applied research with management oriented issues.

Projects will be discussed by the research review committee and given priority order before each budget.

These were two recommendations approved by EMG from a recent research review.

The review was undertaken to investigate issues including current project suitability, output of staff, suitability of staff, the Service brief for research, research funding, and the role of research in staff training.

The review was planned in two stages. The first was a discussion with each researcher to obtain an outline of projects, qualifying the value to current Service needs, and determining publication and future of the project.

The second involved field visits to most projects.

As a result, four actions were taken:

- A research policy was developed.

- A research contract was prepared for each project by each researcher.

- A research review committee of program managers and DCS was set up to review each contract.

- An internal publication system was developed to expedite the process from research data to published information.

Q.NPWS has a strong research unit compared with other states and receives considerable benefit from the public and politicians for its research effort in areas like crocodiles, kangaroos, turtles and wombats.

Publications have fallen behind in some cases but a big effort is currently under way by many researchers to overcome this situation.

I am very hopeful 1986/87 will be a very productive year right across the research branch.

Richard Grimes



Picture time in Rockhampton for (from left) Gordon Stone, Len Zell (seated), Peter Harris, Alan Don, Lyn Gough, Lester Harth and Col Limpus.





# Recreation threat to tree frog

The spotted green tree frog, *Litoria cooloolensis*, was described by Liem in 1974 from specimens he had collected in 1972 at Lake Coolooloona and Freshwater Lake (Cooloola) and Coombool Lakes (Fraser Island).

**Description** — Males up to 27mm, females up to 30mm. A small squat green tree frog with moderately long hind limbs. Fingers have vestigial webbing; toes nearly fully webbed; tympanum distinct; vomerine teeth absent. The species ranges in colour from fawn to green with dark brown spots and reticulations. An inconspicuous brown streak from nostril to eye is sometimes present. A cream maxillary streak from below the eye to the forearm can be present. Ventral surface can be cream or white. Tympanum green; iris golden-bronze. The dorsal green of the thigh is bordered by a brownish/purple streak, with the remainder of the surface orange.

**Distribution** — Localities where the frog has been found include Cooloola (state forest and national park), Stradbroke Island (recreation reserve), and Fraser Island (state forest and national park).

**Habitat** — This frog is restricted to certain perched dune lakes with reeds (*Lepironia articulata*) and tea-trees (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) in the high sand dunes of south-east Queensland.

**Biology** — The call is composed of two

parts, the first and longest like 'wreek' and second, shorter part 'kik kik'. It is similar to the closely related *L. fallax* of eastern Australia. Males have been recorded calling from August to May depending on rain. The breeding season occurs in the wet periods of spring and summer. Eggs are laid on reeds and submerged vegetation and are pigmented light brown with cream vegetal hemisphere. Juveniles have been collected in February.

**Discussion** — Of all the Queensland green frogs, this is the most localized and most vulnerable to the actions of man from sand mining, forestry activities and national parks management.

The frog cannot be considered 'rare' because it has been found in more than five locations and is known from more than 20 specimens.

However, based on current knowledge, I consider the frog to be 'threatened'.

The reasons are:

- The habitat is restricted to a few perched dune lakes on North Stradbroke Island, Cooloola and Fraser Island.

- These lakes are centres of attraction of public recreation.

- Several lakes are subject to pollution or could become so.

- Changes in water level have occurred or could occur in some lakes.

Only three of the 10 known sites are within national parks. Six are in state forests and one in a recreation reserve.

All park locations are subject to recreation use. At Freshwater Lake, pressure from this use has been particularly heavy and appreciable pollution has occurred.

The National Parks and Wildlife Act management provisions give clear precedence to protection over development.

At Cooloola and Great Sandy National Parks, extremely heavy recreation pressures have resulted in major emphasis on development of visitor services and facilities. Less attention has been given to the protection role of park management.

The Fraser Island Public Access Act provides powers to protect the environment, flora and fauna on Crown land. But it also indicates acceptance of recreation as the major land use for much of the island.

Recreation pressures here and at Cooloola seem certain to increase so protective management is vitally important.

Other localized fauna such as the legless skink, *Ophioscincus cooloolensis*, should also be considered in this management.

State forests are not immune to sand mining. Other drastic changes such as heavy logging or even clear felling could occur.

This emphasises the importance of sound management of national parks and the need to modify and contain recreation use which appears to threaten the habitat of *Litoria cooloolensis*.

K.R.McDonald  
Pallarenda

## New form for swamp

19 May 1986 may just be another immemorable day for most. But for a habitat which has suffered a long slow decline of its natural values, this date will mark a rebirth.

Baldwin Swamp is only 4km from the main business area of Bundaberg.

When Europeans reached the area, the Bunda (pronounced boonda) lived on its shores content with nature's resourcefulness.

The wide expanse of spring-fed water teemed with life and was surrounded by diverse vegetation.

Clearing of the catchment and later introduction of fertilizers, chemical sprays and introduced grasses made a drastic change which has accelerated in recent years.

Melaleuca wetland was overtaken by a sea of tall para grass on a thick bed of silt. Regular fires reduced most trees to ashes.

Approval of a \$138,000 CEP scheme will be the first stage of a long-term task of excavation and rehabilitation.

Walking tracks and boardwalks will provide public access.

Bundaberg City Council has played a major and co-operative role by providing \$28,000 for equipment hire and materials.

The Service is providing

supervising staff and administration (\$15,000).

The \$96,000 CEP grant will pay the wages of nine people for 32 weeks.

Boundaries between the various land tenures of Baldwin Swamp are not located. Therefore the project includes council parkland and some freehold as well as environmental park.

Much fill will have to be removed from the watercourse and will be used to topdress adjoining parks.

Many seedlings grow in beds of waterlogged compost. These will be removed for later replanting around man-made lagoons. Existing clumps of trees will remain as islands.

The Mon Repos nursery will provide additional indigenous plants.

Baldwin Swamp will soon cast its ridiculed and dilapidated form for one which will be a joy to see and use.

This is an excellent opportunity for Service staff to put the ideals of the Rural Nature Conservation program into effect and encourage others.

Paul Kummerow



## Handbook guide to surveys

Many Service field staff now have the opportunity to participate in the incidental fauna and flora survey program.

The program was initiated 18 months ago to develop standard methods of gathering and storing miscellaneous records of flora and fauna in Queensland.

Pilot studies were conducted at Eungella, Blackdown and Whitsunday Islands with supplementary work in the Far Northern Region as the program developed.

Results have been compiled and a handbook of methods prepared for distribution to interested park staff.

The book has been developed by senior research ranger Keith McDonald and Dr John Winter.

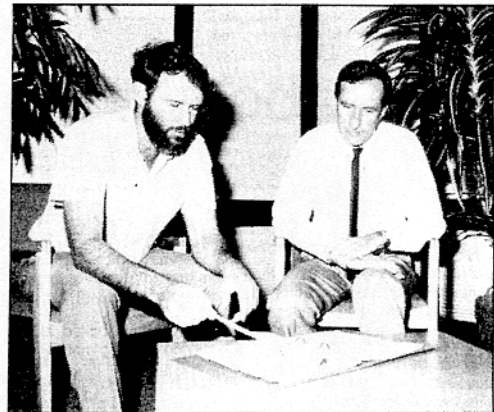
Launching the book, DFO Jim McEvoy said: 'Management of the national park estate is more than building and maintaining visitor facilities. It also involved managing parks to preserve their natural condition to the greatest possible extent for now and future generations.'

'It is essential that in managing our parks we know what is present. This program will go a long way toward obtaining basic knowledge needed to achieve this objective.'

Success of the surveys depends on support and participation of field staff.

Records will enable better management planning for flora and fauna and generate material for interpretive programs.

Co-ordinator Keith McDonald will try to visit all interested districts and parks during the coming financial year to conduct workshops on techniques of data gathering and application.



Keith McDonald showing Jim McEvoy the first copy of the handbook of methods for incidental flora and fauna surveys.

## All bridged

Completion of the CEP project at the Pallarenda Quarantine Station has seen the proliferation of a number of bridges and timber walkways along the walking track.

One of the many examples is seen at right.

Overseer Jim Denison (alias Ned Belly) who was responsible for the project, designed each bridge and had the assistance of 10 CEP workers to help him build them.

Variety was the key. The range was from a modest split log walkway to a timber-decked walkway spanning a romantic dry gully.

The engineering masterpiece was steel with timber decking. (Where did the RSJ bearers come from?)

As a final touch, Ned got carried away with his ability with concrete stairs. Now the Service has a Stairway to Heaven!

