

Friends of Black Mountain

The biggest event for FoBM was the *Black Mountain Symposium 2018: the past 50 years informing the next 50* on 24-25 August 2018.

Many people have said over the years that a lot was known about Black Mountain, and we were keen to bring together this accumulated knowledge.

Various experts prepared 19 papers on the natural and cultural values of Black Mountain.

The Symposium included a full day of presentations by 15 speakers to about 145 people on 24th August, after the official opening by Mick Gentleman, ACT Minister for Environment and Heritage, then the following morning themed walks for 77 people in Black Mountain nature reserve.

Several aims were achieved:

- an up-to-date, detailed account of Black Mountain's natural features and its social and cultural history
- a comprehensive synthesis of Black Mountain's plant and animal diversity, an assessment of changes that have occurred in them since the area was declared a nature reserve, and provision of a benchmark for better monitoring future biodiversity changes; and
- identification of key management issues for maintaining Black Mountain's ecological integrity in coming decades.

These were covered in more detail by Sarah Ryan at the end of the symposium (now a paper *Black Mountain Symposium 2018: synthesis*).

Symposium Papers are available at www.friendsofblackmountain.org.au/symposium

FoBM extends heartfelt thanks for the expertise and more than 3,300 volunteer hours contributed by authors, speakers, organisers and helpers, especially Dr Rosemary Purdie; and to the sponsors: CSIRO, CANBR, ANBG, Four Winds Vineyard, Nick O'Leary wines, Black Mountain coffee, ACT Government, Molonglo Catchment

Group, and to Murray Fagg for photographs (some are on page 2)

Regular activities continued, too. About 30 **wonderful weeders** gave 623 volunteer hours to remove 9410 weeds from Black Mountain, and over the fence in the Australian National Botanic Gardens in conjunction with the Friends ANBG.

Our **guided rambles** attracted 300 people this year, including our Heritage Festival walks and the annual Spring Wildflower Ramble. Our **Winter Talk** in June attracted about 30 people to hear *Threatened and Nocturnal Birds of Black Mountain* by Geoffrey Dabb.

FoBM participated in the **ParkCare display** at Jamison Plaza again, with several other ParkCare groups and PCS.

Frogwatch heard fewer frogs, probably because of the dry winter and spring; but did hear Eastern Banjo Frog (*Limnodynastes dumerilli*) in March; later than the usual September to January.

Bird Blitz revealed fewer birds busy at their nests and hollows this year, and **Vegetation surveys** of our 3 sites were done.

We warmly thank the Black Mountain Symposium 2018 volunteers and sponsors, along with our valuable botanic advisers, speakers and guides on rambles this year; Rosemary Purdie, David Albrecht, Wally Bell, Mark Butz, Suzi Bond, Isobel Crawford, Geoffrey Dabb, Michael Doherty, Jean Geue, Michael Mulvaney, Ajay Narendra.

Thank you to everyone in FoBM, MCG, PCS, ACT Conservation and Research, ACT Heritage, ANBG and Friends of ANBG, ANPS, CIMAG, FoAB, FoG, FoMP, FoTPin, FNAC, GCG, NPA, STEP, radio and print media, and other organisations for their part in this seminal and very enjoyable year.



Mick Gentleman, ACT Minister for Environment and Heritage (left), officially opened Black Mountain Symposium 2018 after a welcome to country by Wally Bell, a Ngunawal man (centre). Fifteen speakers, including Dr Rosemary Purdie (right) presented papers to an audience of about 145 people.