

## THE WATERHOUSE CLUB INVITES YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN

### ***“THE MUSEUM’S BIENNIAL COLLECTING EXPEDITION TO NORTH EAST SOUTH AUSTRALIA”***

**Saturday 1 to Tuesday 11 September 2018**

#### **Overview**

Our destination for this collecting trip is Clifton Hills Station, situated approximately 132 kms south of Birdsville in the State’s remote north eastern outback and 325 kms north of Marree. The property is located on the Birdsville Track, encompasses part of the Sturt Stony Desert and is adjacent to the Simpson Desert. It is the largest holding on the Track, with an area of 17,000 square kilometres. The terrain is typically gibber plains and sand dunes.

The owners of the pastoral lease, Clifton Hills Pastoral Company, have offered privileged access to the Station for the Museum to undertake a survey to update records of the fauna that inhabit the area. In the interests of conservation, the Clifton Hills Pastoral Company has recently set aside an area to protect the endangered Kowari or the brushy-tail marsupial rat.

The Museum’s Dr Mark Hutchinson, Senior Research Scientist, Herpetology, will lead a group of Museum scientists, and Don and Margie Heylen, experienced in leading Club outback expeditions, are our Expedition Leaders.

Professional camp managers and caterers, Mal and Val Hansen (“Mal n Val”) will look after all aspects of the camp site. The outback meals provided by “Mal n Val” are legendary!

Our brief is to assist the scientists in their field survey work. This offers a rare opportunity to work side-by-side with a team of scientists recognised as experts in their field of scientific interest.

A pre-trip Information Session will be held on Wednesday 18 April at 5.30 pm (see page 3) for a briefing on the scientific objectives, how we can assist in the field work, what to bring with you, fuel and water provisions, and occupational health and safety requirements.

#### **Our Scientists**

In addition to our Scientific Leader, Dr Mark Hutchinson, other scientists on this expedition will include Dr Cath Kemper (mammals), Graham Carpenter (birds), Dr Peter Hudson (terrestrial invertebrates), and Dr Remko Leijds (bees/pollinators).

#### **What to expect?**

We will make our own way to Marree where our Expedition will commence at dinner on Saturday 1 September, and end in Marree on Tuesday morning 11 September. We will camp at one site for the duration of the expedition and either drive or walk to the survey locations. You will need to be self-sufficient in camping gear. “Mal n Val” will set up bush toilets, a black-bag shower facility, a communal dining area under shade, and the camp kitchen. A list of suggested items to bring will be provided at the Information Session.

Working side-by-side with the scientists we will gain an appreciation of the ancient to modern history of this fragile ecological area that has, and continues to withstand the vagaries of nature and humans. We expect to have the Managing Director of Clifton Hills Pastoral Company, Dave Harvey, visit us in camp to brief us on Station life.

### **Environmental Conditions**

Dave has reminded us that conditions in this remote outback location are harsh. Expeditioners will need a reasonable level of fitness, good mobility, and be able to cope with the harsh environment and uncertain climatic conditions. We can expect day temperatures in the high 20s or low 30s, cooler in the evening and overnight, although day time temperature in the 40s cannot be ruled out. We also need to be aware that access will depend on local rain and water flows through the rivers and creeks in the region.

### **Vehicles**

Vehicles must be 4WD or AWD with high clearance. Expeditioners will be required to carry extra water and it is very likely that extra fuel will also be required. On site, car-pooling will be managed each day to conserve fuel.

### **The Itinerary**

A reconnoitre to Clifton Hills Station is scheduled for the end of July. Final details will be confirmed with expeditioners shortly after. It is expected that a suitable camp site will be located with shade and access to water nearby. Our anticipated Itinerary follows.

#### Saturday 1 September

We will meet at Marree about 670 kms from Adelaide and about an 8 hour drive. Dinner, accommodation (twin share in the hotel or cabins), and breakfast will be provided at the Marree hotel.

#### Sunday 2 September

After an early breakfast we will depart in convoy for our journey to Clifton Hills Station and our camp site. The last stop for fuel will be at Mungaranie, about 205 kms from Marree and 290 kms from our campsite.

#### Monday 3 September to Sunday 9 September

Our daily routine will be breakfast at about 7.00 am, prepare our own lunch from provisions available in the camp kitchen and head off with our allocated scientist, returning back to camp around 4.30 pm. Each evening the scientists will provide information about the day's findings and brief us on the plan for the next day. We will have the opportunity to rotate and work with all of the scientists at some stage during the field work activities.

We may be able to visit a wetland on the Station to enjoy a different environment and the bird life of the area. Some may enjoy a "lay day" and then launch back into the field work refreshed.

#### Monday 10 September

After breakfast we pack up camp and travel back to Marree for our farewell dinner and overnight stay.

#### Tuesday 11 September

The expedition ends after breakfast and we make our own way back home or onto our next destination.

### **Expedition Cost**

The cost of the expedition will be in the order of \$2500 per person. The final cost will be dependent on the number of expeditioners and final arrangements post reconnoitre. The cost includes dinner, bed and

breakfast for 2 nights in Marree (twin share rooms), all meals at the campsite and Club wine served with dinner.

### **Pre-Trip Information Session**

An Information Session will be held on Wednesday 18 April at 5.30 pm in the Royal Society Rooms, adjacent the Museum Science Centre in Thomas Morgan Lane (off Kintore Avenue). An invitation is attached. Those who are interested in booking but are unable to attend will be sent information by email or Australia Post mail after the Session.

### **Bookings are now open!**

Please note: The number of expeditioners is limited to 30.

To secure your place please fill out the Booking Form attached and return it to the Club office with your non-refundable deposit of \$250 per person. Bookings will be accepted in order of receipt.

Bookings will also be accepted after the Information session if places are available.

Final payment will be due by the end of July. (See the Terms and Conditions and Booking Form attached for the Club's cancellation policy).

We look forward to your company on this interesting expedition.

If you have any queries or would like further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Don Heylen, Expedition Leader**

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