

# CLOSERange



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## Protecting the Protector

*“Maintaining the security and protection of rangers and employees who live and work in protected areas is essential”*

## Read the Resolution from the Fourth World Congress

### Organizational Tectonics

**“Clues to the past lie in the present. In nature as in human affairs, history repeats itself, and the forces operating on the surface of the earth have so operated for countless ages” R. O. Brunnschweiler ‘Ancient Australia’**

Sometimes I imagine that large organizations are similar in their journey to the tectonic movements of the continents. Adrift in an ocean of politics and economics, their constant motion brings them into collision with other organizational plates pushed by strong trans-continental currents.

Sometimes there are great periods of calm and consolidation when the organization drifts in relative peaceful waters. Everybody gets to know the shape of the organization and the people who live in it. Abruptly, major current changes the relative conditions, the peaceful drift becomes antagonistic collision. The chaos of the new dominates the serenity of the old. The abrupt shock tips some people off the edge, others are brought back from obscurity as new organizational shapes appear and mountainous levels of re-organization orogeny takes place. The ecology of bureaucracy is thrown a new challenge to find an equilibrium of service provision that enables the every day work to be done. Cool winds blow staff in from the field to shelter in front of the warmth of the computer.

Once through this period of organization change, the human resource re-emerges into the new light of day. Blinking in the bright blare of the new environment, they crawl out of the primal slime to dry off and get a job. They stare at the new organizational edifice in wage-struck awe. The organization may even have evolved to that degree that it is declared a new species and is given a new binomial name - Primary Industry, Parks Victoria, Sustainability & Environment. Sometimes it really hasn't gone through a proper evolution to a new species but everybody pretends it has and still gives it a new name, to make every body feel better (or worse, I don't really know on that one).

Soon enough a tectonic slumber once again envelops the organization. The trophic levels of paperwork settle down, team-building parties subside; the atmosphere clears to reveal the growing shape of the continental organization. The work rate starts up again and the old efficiencies return as the essential functioning churns the waters. The circle has turned full cycle as warmer winds blow staff out of the office back into the fields. Up on the highest peaks, the lookouts scan the waters for submerged reefs and currents of change. In the distance they can see a new inland sea (in which we may establish some nice new terrestrial marine parks) with some of the 50 new Rangers (that is if they don't turn out to be mirages), meanwhile the rest of us hold out our plates and see what the changes dish out.

*Blue Tongue*



A Few Words From the President

My apologies for holding up this edition of Closerange. I thought that I would be able to prepare my report while on holiday. Silly me! Then, I thought it wouldn't take me long once I returned to work. Wrong again. Since returning to work I have been fox sandpadding, baiting and trapping potoroos and bandicoots. Today is the first opportunity I have had to put pen to paper (or should I say fingers to the keyboard?)!

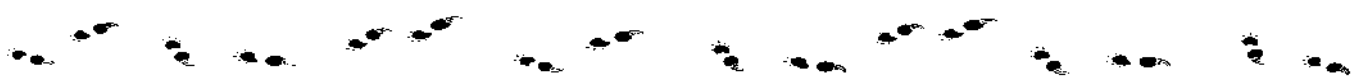


And finally, Glen Jameson, Cassie Wright and I represented the VRA and the IRF at the Vth IUCN World Parks Congress in South Africa. Andy Nixon was also there, representing Parks Victoria but very much a part of the ranger delegation. Held every 10 years, these Congresses bring together a diverse range of people involved and/or interested in protected area management to set the agenda for these areas for the next 10 years. And what a Congress it was! 2500 delegates, 10 days, 7 workshop streams, more than 30 sessions and 32 recommendations. It was a great success. The IRF delegation numbered approximately 40 people from about 20 countries – not a bad effort! The IRF were particularly pleased with their efforts to raise the profile of rangers and field staff and were very happy with the recommendations of the Congress. The highlights for me were catching up with the friends I have made at the past two IRF Congresses and really starting to cement my relationships with them, hearing and seeing Nelson Mandela, and being part of a committed team all working together towards a common, and very worthwhile, goal. The next edition of Closerange will feature the Congress to give you a flavor of what went on and to tell you more about the outcomes.

What has the VRA been up to in the past few months? We may have been a little quiet but a lot has been happening behind the scenes. The sub-groups set up at the Executive meeting in July have been busy working on their tasks. You should have received a membership card lately thanks to the work of the membership sub-group. They have also been busy chasing up discounts for you (for details read on). The social sub-group have started to discuss social activities for the year, so stay tuned for these. Those responsible for training activities have been working on a segment about the professionalism of rangers that will be delivered as part of the new induction package being put together by Parks Victoria. The sub-groups are always interested in your ideas and your help, so get in touch with them if you have any suggestions or time (see the table below for contact details).

Until next time,  
Elaine

Sub-group	Members	Contact
Membership	Andy Nixon	<a href="mailto:anizon@parks.vic.gov.au">anizon@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
	Annie Leschen	<a href="mailto:aleschen@parks.vic.gov.au">aleschen@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
	Cassie Wright	<a href="mailto:cwright@rbg.vic.gov.au">cwright@rbg.vic.gov.au</a>
Training	Glen Jameson	<a href="mailto:gjameson@parks.vic.gov.au">gjameson@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
	Felicity Brooke	<a href="mailto:fbrooke@parks.vic.gov.au">fbrooke@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
Social	Peter Hayes	<a href="mailto:phayes@parks.vic.gov.au">phayes@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
	Rhianna Bell	<a href="mailto:rbell@parks.vic.gov.au">rbell@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
	Andrea Myers	<a href="mailto:amyers@parks.vic.gov.au">amyers@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
	Michelle Doherty	<a href="mailto:mldoherty@parks.vic.gov.au">mldoherty@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
Communications	Iain Marshall	<a href="mailto:imarshall@parks.vic.gov.au">imarshall@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
Executive	Elaine Thomas	<a href="mailto:ethomas@parks.vic.gov.au">ethomas@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
	John Kneebone	<a href="mailto:jkneebon@parks.vic.gov.au">jkneebon@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
	Ion Maher	<a href="mailto:imaher@parks.vic.gov.au">imaher@parks.vic.gov.au</a>
	Fiona Smith	<a href="mailto:fsmith@parks.vic.gov.au">fsmith@parks.vic.gov.au</a>



Protecting the Protector – Resolution of the Fourth World Congress

At the 4<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the International Rangers Federation, I was fortunate to be included in the small working group that workshopped this subject with the rangers at the forum and drafted the resolution which will be presented to the IUCN World Protected Area Conference at Durban later this year. As is usual with such issues, a resolution will not solve a problem if we do not follow up on the actions it contains. This is why it is really important to collect information relating to assaults and threats to rangers/protectors, their families and property. A preliminary survey instigated by IRF vice president Juan Carlos Gambarotta in 2002 revealed some shocking data from around the world from a very low level of responses including no data from Australia.

Rangers in and around my workplace that I have spoken to about their experiences have been reluctant to document incidents. “I don’t want to make allegations that I can’t corroborate.”; “I’m not proud of the way I reacted to the intimidation/violence”; “I just want to forget about it”; “It was all a bit trivial when I think about it now”; are some typical responses. They also expressed a high degree of anger that they were exposed to these incidents, especially when they occurred out of hours. But if we do not record them our managers are not aware of our problems, other rangers do not realise what has happened and prepare themselves, and rangers will continue to face threats, abuse and violence in the course of their duties.

So please, fill out the OH&S forms, incident logs, and most importantly, write down your story/s and pass them on to us. (Your anonymity will be preserved by request.) With good information we can start making a difference at the local, state and international levels to a really fundamental issue that affects the welfare of all rangers. We cannot expect to totally eliminate violence and intimidation from our workplace and private life but we can make it better for ourselves and those who come after us.

*Peter Duncan*

For copies of the Congress Resolution or to record your story contact: [pduncan@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:pduncan@parks.vic.gov.au).

**RESOLUTION OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONGRESS  
INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION  
MARCH 21-28, 2003  
WILSONS PROMONTORY NATIONAL PARK**

**Background:**

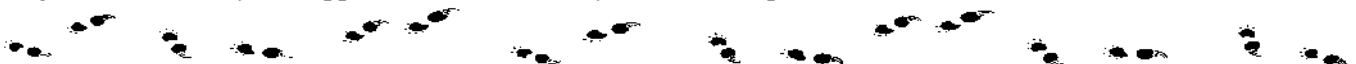
The International Ranger Federation (IRF) and its affiliates are concerned about the alarming levels of threats and physical violence faced by rangers, other protected area employees and their families in protected areas. The scope of this resolution is intended to address violence directed toward the protected area community as a whole, with special emphasis on the ranger occupation.



Rangers, in protected areas worldwide, provide “frontline” park protection and consequently face a variety of risks while performing their duties. This resolution will focus on one significant risk area, the threats and physical violence perpetrated upon rangers and other protected area employees.

While the data is incomplete, and in some cases little more than anecdotal, there is clearly a serious worldwide problem. Rangers, at an alarming rate, are being threatened, physically assaulted and killed while working in protected areas. Facilities including ranger stations, employee homes and equipment are being targeted to intimidate employees.

An informal survey conducted by IRF in 2003 provides a shocking glimpse at the magnitude of the problem. In the last five years, of the 17 ranger associations that reported, we know of 31 rangers who were killed and 32 rangers injured while performing their duties. Without a doubt the actual, overall figures for all ranger associations worldwide, are much higher as reporting data is incomplete. We do know however, that during this five-year period, rangers were killed on five continents in protected areas. For example, in Uganda’s Murchison National Park, 10 rangers were recently kidnapped and 7 murdered by rebels in the protected area.



Rangers are susceptible to violence for many reasons. Often rangers protect very valuable natural and cultural heritage resources and as a result are vulnerable to acts of violence stemming from poaching, looting, and commercial exploitation. Compounding the problem is the fact that rangers work in remote locations, frequently alone, often with poor communications and limited availability of back up. In some parts of the world rangers find themselves attempting to manage protected areas in the midst of armed conflicts or outright warfare.

Maintaining the security and protection of rangers and employees who live and work in protected areas is essential, if the world's protected areas are to survive.

IRF is committed to identifying and preventing, reducing or eliminating the threats and physical violence against rangers, employees and their families, as they live and work in the protected areas of the world. This resolution builds on other IRF resolutions that focus on improvements in capacity and competence for protected area managers and rangers.

Accordingly, it is the intent of IRF to provide this resolution to the World Protected Areas Congress for its consideration.

**Assumptions:**

1. All rangers, worldwide, during the performance of their duties in protected areas are potentially exposed and subjected to threats and physical violence.
2. Inherent within the operation of protected areas is the obligation to provide for the safety and protection of rangers/employees from threats and physical violence.
3. There are many risks and dangers associated with the ranger profession. However, this resolution deals specially with the concerns of physical violence and threats to rangers/employees who are working and living in protected areas.
4. Efforts to mitigate risks and/or resolve these issues will occur at many levels; the individual ranger, supervisory/managerial level and, stakeholders (including, legislators, NGO's, community leaders, and related partners and organizations.) All three levels have responsibilities and opportunities to ensure the safety of rangers and employees.
5. The scope of this problem is not widely understood even within the protected area community, and little external awareness exists on a global basis.

**Resolution**

WHEREAS, the IRF is committed to enhancing the safety and protection of rangers/employees who live and work in protected areas and recognizes that rangers face alarming levels of physical violence and threats in the course of their duties; And,

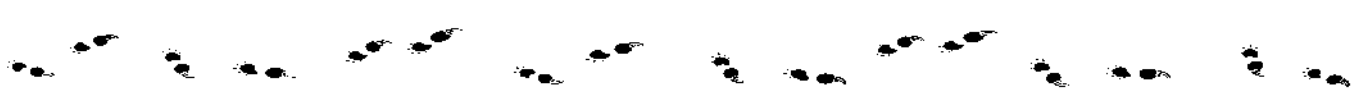
WHEREAS, the IRF recognizes that the preparedness of rangers in many protected areas can be substantially improved, and many of the threats facing rangers can be prevented, reduced or eliminated through improved staffing and training, increased awareness, and adequate support and resources; And,

WHEREAS, the IUCN has expressed interest in raising worldwide awareness on the issue of threats and violence to rangers and employees including an opportunity to highlight the value and contribution of the ranger profession at the Durban 5<sup>th</sup> World Protected Areas Congress:

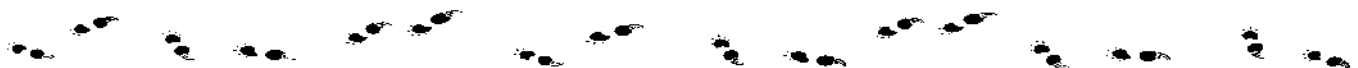
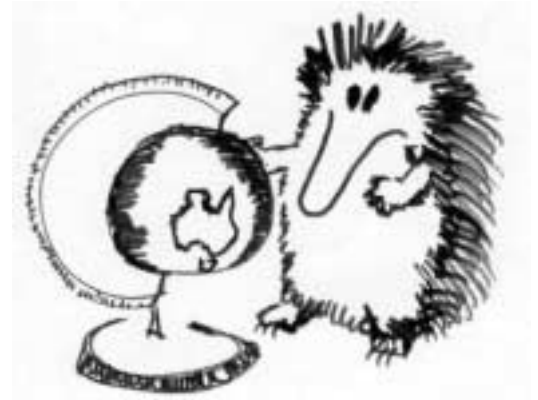
Be it Therefore RESOLVED: That the IRF is committed to undertake whatever means and methods are available to increase the personal safety of rangers/employees subject to threats and physical violence and that the IRF asks the delegates to the Durban 5<sup>th</sup> World Protected Areas Congress to adopt measures to enhance the safety and protection of rangers.

**Addendum**

The IRF has identified the following actions to identify, develop and disseminate problem-solving steps and recommendations that will increase the level of personal protection for rangers, worldwide.



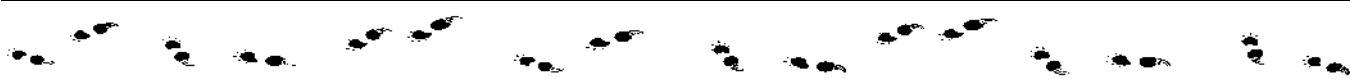
- IRF encourages governments and protected area managers to provide a sufficient legal framework and basis so that rangers can perform their protection duties (including support with appropriate laws, regulations, policy, standards, and operational planning).
- Protected area managers should prepare threat assessments for their rangers to determine the appropriate types and levels of protection for their rangers.
- Where assessments warrant it, each protected area manager has an affirmative responsibility to provide training for rangers in personal protection.
- Each protected area manager should promote the role of the ranger and collect information related to assaults and threats against rangers.
- IRF will establish a “Lessons Learned” forum through its website and newsletter to provide relevant and accessible case information with the objective of preventing similar incidents in the future.
- IRF will establish a workgroup that will develop a format for reporting assaults and threats against rangers; aggregate and summarize data, and produce a yearly report for its affiliates and interested parties.
- IRF will develop a model training program for ranger personal protection that may be adopted or modified by its affiliates as necessary.
- IRF commits to raising awareness on personal protection issues and concerns including the role of the ranger and the value of parks.
- IRF, in developing, evaluating and implementing personal protection programs and training, recognizes that cultural differences and challenges exist.
- IRF encourages each nation to ensure that a law is enacted that provides specific protections for rangers who are physically assaulted while performing their duties. The IRF will encourage strong penalties for assaults and physical violence against rangers as a deterrent to continued violence. Prosecution of persons who kill or injure rangers should be vigorously pursued.
- IRF believes that rangers also have a personal responsibility for their own protection, including; identifying potential threats and hazards, initiating dialogue and communications regarding these issues and problems, acquiring appropriate training and identifying sources of support and assistance.
- IRF believes that protected area managers should provide personal protection equipment that is serviceable and commensurate with the level of risk that may be encountered.
- IRF will develop a broad based ranger exhibit outlining the role of the ranger for display at the Durban 5<sup>th</sup> World Protected Area Congress.
- IRF will establish a clearinghouse on its web site of standards and training manuals for use by its affiliates.



**Planilla Violencia**

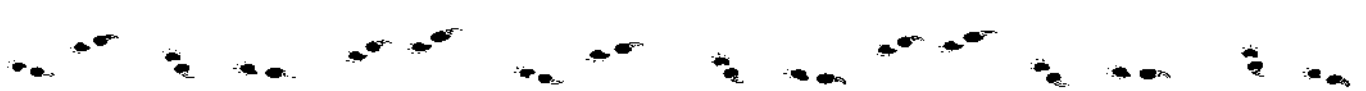
These results of an informal survey conducted by IRF in 2003 provides a shocking glimpse at the magnitude of the problem. In the last five years, of the 17 ranger associations that reported, we know of 31 rangers who were killed and 32 rangers injured while performing their duties.

Country	Protected Area	Killed	Injured	Other	Attacker
Argentina	Res. Bios. Yabotí Misiones,	Environmental police killed 22/5/03			Poachers
Argentina	Sanborombón Nat. Res. Bs.As			Daniel Mac Lean, Violence, risk of death May 03	Poachers
Bolivia	Carrasco N.P.			Burned pick-up Burned ranger station Rangers threatened	"Sin Tierra" Movement
Bolivia	Apolobamba N.P.	Fortunato Calacauqui 2000			Vicuña poachers
Brasil	Serra dos Reis State Park	Eric Mota 13/8/02		Felled Ranger Station 8/02	Illegal loggers
Brasil	Carlos Botelho N.P.	Marco Antonio dos Santos 14/3/98			Palm heart thieves
Colombia		Jairo Valbuena 11/01			Paramilitars
Czech Rep.	Mala Kotlina Nat. res.			Marek Banas Attacked	Group leader
D.R. Congo	Virunga N.P.	Michel Safari 25/5/01			Rebels
D.R. Congo	Virunga N.P.	Mambo 25/5/01			Rebels
D.R. Congo	Virunga N.P	Safari Sulubika (41) 27/5/03			Rebel group
Ecuador	Galápagos Is. N.P.			N.P. Headquarters, Ranger Station and equipment destroyed, 17/11/2000	Illegal lobster fishermen
Ecuador	Galápagos Is. N.P.			Wilson Fuentes, Julio López y Palermo Castillo hit by fishing vessel 26/6/02	Illegal fishermen
Ecuador	Galápagos Is. N.P.			René Freire y Julio Lucero hit by fishing vessel 4/7/02	Illegal fishermen
India	Lakhimpur	Pranjit Kalita,			By extremist



	Range	13/12/1998			
India	Dharamtul Range	Aroop Ranjan Pathak , 21/2/2001			Knocked down by truck
India	Manas N.P	Ibrahim Ali Khan 1990			Killed by extremist
India,	Nanoi Range	Deepak Bharali, 27/10/1988			Killed by extremist
Indonesia	Bali Barat N.P.		Komang Astika Shot in leg and attempt to kill, 31/1/02		Wildlife thieves
Ivory Coast			Four rangers injured with machetes, 2001		Farm encroachment
Kenya	Tsavo East,	Two rangers Killed 15/5/03			Poachers
Namibia	Erongo region			Rod Braby, Vandalism to caravan, signs and threatened	Off road Quad bikers
Peru	Pacaya-Samiria N.P.			Four rangers attacked, canoe, engine, food and luggage stolen, 17/4/02	30 loggers
Philippines	Balayan Bay	Sixto Atienza (44) Killed, 3/5/03			Killed after public speech Fishermen
Portugal	Ensenada de Utrial			Efraín Rodríguez Varón Kidnapped,20/8/02	Revels
Portugal		Antonio Nabo Pires, 31/1/02			Hunter
Portugal		Manuel Fonseca and Paulo Coelho	17 rangers injured in last 5 years		Hunters and poachers
Portugal	Arrabida N.P			shots	Poachers
Portugal	Sintra Cascais N.P.			Shots and attempt to Run-over by car	Loggers
Portugal	Peneda Geres N.P			Shots to ranger station	Poachers
Portugal	Sado N.Res.			Shots to ranger boats, Attempt to shoot	Fishermen
Portugal	Tejo Estuary Res.			Attacks	Poachers and fishermen
South Africa	Sta. Lucía N.P.	Henry Oram, 4/5/01			Shrimp fishermen
Spain	La Robla, León		Salvador Ochoa, lost hearing, 28/11/99	threatened	Wild boar poachers
Spain	Córdoba		Two rangers		Hunters

			injured, 2000 and 2001		
Spain	Near Madrid			Hung by feet	Poachers
Spain	Avila			Attempt to shoot two rangers	Poachers
Spain	Avila			Bullet almost kills ranger at home	?
Spain	Andalucía		Two injured with heavy objects		Inspecting illegal building
Uganda	Murchison Falls N.P.	Seven rangers Killed, 28/6/02		10 rangers kidnapped	Revels
Uruguay	El Potrerillo,			Shots during law enforcement, 18/3/03 Two rangers and a policeman	Capibara poachers
Uruguay	Rocha lagoon			Hector Caymaris attempt to run-over by car three times 2002	Off-road drivers
Uruguay	San Miguel N.P.			Station shot	Poachers
USA	Hawaii	Steve Makuakane, 2000			Dog owner
USA	Organ Pipe N.M.	Kris Eggle, 9/8/02			Foreign criminal
USA	Texas	Michael Pauling, 2/8/01			Run-over by car
USA	Oregon		Two State rangers shot		Cleaning a restroom
USA	Mississippi		Cons. Officer shot		Individual walking
USA	Ohio		State Park ranger shot		Investigating illegal fireworks
USA	North Carolina	Joe Kolodski, 22/6/98			
Venezuela			José Melchor,		Fishermen
Vietman		12 rangers killed 1996-2000			
Zambia	Lunga-Luswishi G.Park,Zambia		Gideon Chembe (28)Wounded by shot 6/6/03		Game poachers (two arrested)



Vale: 'Ranger' Matthew Le Duc

Matt Le Duc had a calling; he wanted to be a Ranger in the National Parks Service, and he wanted to be a good one.

But Matt Le Duc wasn't interested in being the type of employee that came to work at 8am and knocked off at 4:30; Matt didn't knock off: Not really.

Because to Matt, being a Ranger went a lot further than looking after a Park: It involved how he lived; it involved the size of the footprint he left on the landscape; it meant struggling on a meagre wage when his qualifications suggested he could have been earning considerably more in other areas of endeavour. To Matt, being an identity for conservation within the community was about bringing people along with you: to educate other members of the community of the value of conservation, and involving them; of protecting the remnants and restoring the landscape. It was also about doing things better.

No matter what Matt was doing or planning he was methodical. He paid extra attention to the details; whether it was record keeping, getting the appropriate permits for animal trapping or seed collecting, organizing a holiday activity, or negotiating with contractors. Matt was always a stickler for the finer detail, and the difference showed.

Matt's ability to communicate a conservation message put him amongst the best practitioners of environmental interpretation I have met. A great exponent of Earth-Education techniques, Matt was just as enthusiastic delivering extension activities whether the audience was 8 years old or 80.

I think one of Matt's greatest assets was his trust in the people who worked for him. He always found opportunities for people to use their initiative, and he always expected that, some times, the wheels would fall off the cart. But all Matt expected was that if you broke the cart, then you fixed it. Provided a person learned from their mistake, then good had come out of it. In this way Matt was an excellent supervisor and a wonderful mentor. He brought out the best in people and encouraged them in their careers.

Matt was proudly professional in the way he conducted himself as a Ranger, and he worked to improve the Rangers' profession. He was a member of the Victorian Ranger's Association, and was the first editor of the VRA newsletter. He made himself unpopular with the senior echelons when he led a delegation of rangers trying to change Government policy of removing Rangers' houses from within Parks.

With the formation of the Australian Ranger's Association, Matt became the delegate representing federal rangers. In this role he made contacts at the international ranger level, and he attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Ranger's Congress held in South Africa's Kruger National Park. As a result Matt was instrumental in having the innovative "ranger-shadowing" program implemented within Australia at Kakadu, Uluru and Budawee.

Matt was a humanist, and I might add, completely unattracted to the notion of accumulating wealth. Gender discrimination and racial intolerance were anathema to him. He was a supportive unionist.

It is said that behind every good man is a great woman. Matthew first met Cecelia when she, as a woman on holidays, attended a Ranger's activity at Marlo. Matt was giving the talk that day, and the way he described it, an attractive woman in the crowd starting raising her eyebrows at him. A conversation after the activity led, in time to marriage, and later, to the birth of Ethan, Matt's youngest child. John, Briony and Katrina, Matt's children from his first marriage to Sue, provided Matt with a source of much pride as they grew into fine young adults, each undergoing university education and developing their own individual careers.

To conclude, Matt was a great bloke, and a great boss. He cared passionately about the environment, and about people. Like so many other driven people, Matt looked for, and expected a level of commitment and effort from the others in his team. For those lucky enough to be on the team, the outcomes were always significant and long lasting.

Although Matt has been taken from us prematurely, he has left his mark indelibly on all of us, not only the people here today, but others around Australia and internationally. He has left his mark positively on the landscape that he loved, in three Australian States.

Fortunately, Matt lived the life that he had dreamed about. It is in this respect, that whilst mourning Matt's passing we can celebrate and rejoice in Matt's life, and having been able to share his pathway and journey with him.

In mourning Matt's death, let us celebrate his life.

Andrew Govanstone 16 July 2003



**Ranger Profile – Looking Up and Looking Down – Cassie Wright**

**Employment history**

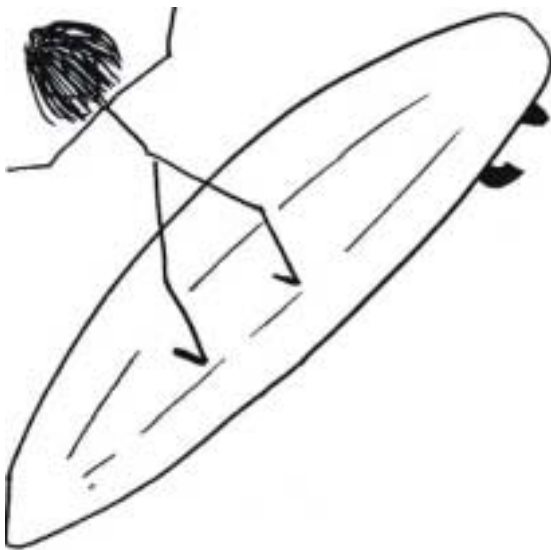
After much volunteer work, this is my first full-time job! Ranger at the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne.

**What is your conservation Hobby Horse?**

Invasive alien species, particularly foxes, and weeds coming from people's gardens.

**Who is your most admired conservationist?**

Rangers around the world who work (sometimes without pay) with minimal resources, in dangerous situations, yet who carry on because they care about conservation.



**What is your environmental epiphany?**

I think it's been a gradual process, learning and becoming involved as I've gone along.

**How did you get into conservation / land management?**

Studying zoology because it made sense, then living in a tin shearing shed chasing possums around during honours, finally doing volunteer work where I work now, and hearing about my job

**What is the most unfortunate roadkill you've seen?**

One of our southern brown bandicoots at work.

**What is my favourite administrative procedure?**

Laminating stuff. I don't know why.

**What is the worst scar that you have left on the landscape?**

Maybe some the birds I've rescued over the years, which included feral species such as blackbirds!

**What are you currently reading?**

"Zululand Wilderness, Shadow and Soul", by Ian Player.

**What is your favourite conservation tool?**

All the wonderful conversations we have, and the ideas generated and exchanged.

**What were you in a previous life?**

A meerkat, as I'm always sticking my head up and looking around to see what's going on.

**VRA Member Discounts**

*Present your VRA membership card at any of these stores to receive a discount*

**Mountain Designs 15% Discount**

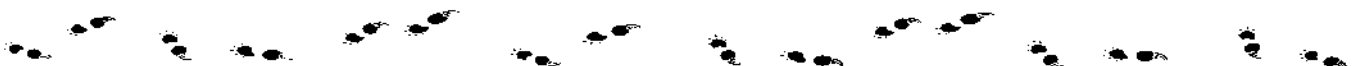
373 Little Bourke St. Melbourne Phone: 9670 3354 15% discount

**Outsports 10% discount** off gear and hire for cross-country skiing, paddling, climbing and bushwalking

70 Wells St. Frankston. Phone:9783 2079

886 Nepean Highway, Moorabbin. Phone9532 5337

**Aussie Disposals 10% discount** at all 36 of their stores across the state

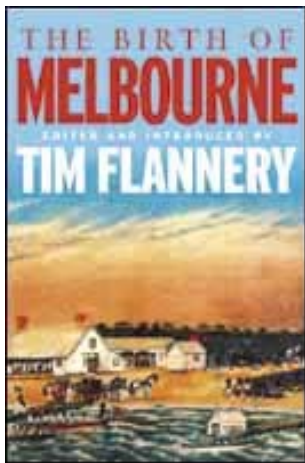


Blue Tongue Reviews

***The Birth of Sydney* Tim Flannery (Editor) (2000) Grove Press 320 pages  
and**

***The Birth of Melbourne* Tim Flannery (Editor) (2002) Text Publishing 382 pages**

These two books provide images of essential differences between Sydney and Melbourne which emerge from the tales of these two cities. Thus perhaps giving weight to Tim Flannery's introductory observation that "All cities spring from twin fountainheads - the nature in which they are grounded and the human enterprise that builds them".



Flannery captures a poignant moment in Sydney's birth when the First Fleet's women convicts, finally come ashore at Port Jackson, 10 days after the fleet arrived. Simultaneously as they land, a prodigious thunderstorm cracks open the Summer night. Lightning strikes a sentry, kills livestock and as authorities cower to prayer, the sailors

open up the rum and "fortified with the ardent spirit they soon found amusement singing, fighting and fucking". (That's Sydney all right, historical echoes of the future highly sexually charged Gay Mardi Gras).

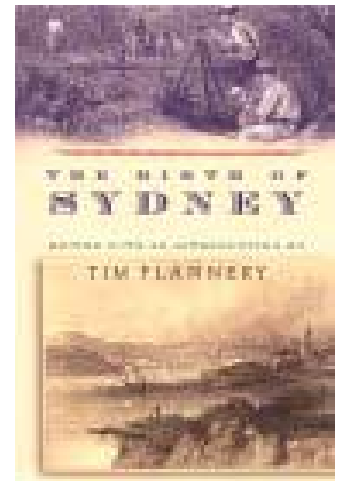
In *The Birth of Sydney* there are 87 historical excerpts from writers dating from 1770 to 1896, including one from the Aboriginal, Bennelong. There are very vivid accounts of the bright new city of the south with "The Finest Harbour in the Universe". There are many and varied viewpoints, some flattering, others derogatory. *The Birth of Melbourne* has 92 entries dating from 1802 to 1907 with one piece from Wurundjeri Aboriginal William Barak. What surprised me was the glowing accounts visitors had of the industriousness of the colonialists, the fine buildings, the appearance of the towns, the landscapes and the short time that all was accomplished. There is not as much Colonialist and Aboriginal interaction in Melbourne as there was in Sydney where the local Eora tribe were very much part of the city's fabric. Perhaps when Melbourne was settled some forty-seven years later, any pretense about racial harmony had been dropped.

I read the following extract to a person from neither NSW or Victoria, his comment was that Tim Flannery

(from Melbourne) was biased in the selection of this - what is your impression? It is written by Alfred Buchanan, an English novelist and critic around 1903.

"The reception that Sydney gives you is that of a woman in a luxurious room, with soft lights falling on rich curtain hangings, with glitter of glass and silver ornament, with lavish display of elegance and outward charm. The woman rises seductively, looks at you languorously and invites you, not so much by word as by gesture, to make yourself at home. It is delightful; but yet there is something wanting. The reflection comes that you are not being specially favoured; that this is the manner of the hostess to all and sundry; that there may be something unhealthy in this mellifluous atmosphere.

The reception you get from Melbourne is of quite another character. The woman this time is cold and calm, and superbly indifferent. If she seems to smile it is probably the reflection of your own hopefulness. She offers you nothing; she barely acknowledges you; she does not want you; it is certain that she is not anxious to know you. All her panoply of architectural ornament is arrayed against you. And yet the thought intervenes that this cold woman may be better worth knowing in the end than the other one; that her harder outlines may conceal a more genuine worth; that her good opinion may be worth striving for that that of the other - the one with the redder lips, and the flaunting, unchanging smile."



Blue Tongue



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**Executive Committee Contacts – 2003 / 04**

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Iain Marshall	<b>Melb Metro</b>	9709 8300	9796 9181	Berwick Area Parklands
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