



Field Nats News No. 212

Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.
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Patron: Governor of Victoria

Understanding Our Natural World
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September 2011

From the President

Welcome to the September edition of the Field Nats News. With Spring on the doorstep, anyone would think that we had had a sample earlier in August with some very mild days and record-breaking warm nights. Many SIG's will be starting to get back into the swing of field trips and the like after the winter break. That is, all bar the Fungi Group outings which have now gone into recess until next year.

Firstly, can I say a big THANK YOU to the FNN editors for ably filling in my report in the August FNN. I was away on a business trip to WA, and then on a follow-up driving "holiday" to Brisbane to move my daughter up to University.

Hall Update

The inside of the building is looking fantastic. The office, conference room, library and hall have had been painted and the floors re-sanded and polished. (see photo below). This means that the September SIG meetings should be back in our own premises.



Can I thank the seven members that turned up to help clear out the hall of all the chairs, tables, equipment and a vast number of boxes in late July. I must say that I was a little disappointed at the number of members who did turn up, given that many, many people were emailed regarding this. I was even more embarrassed that the number of "ring-ins" almost outdid the members. A huge thank you to Hali and Rob, along with their children Matt, Mel and friend Jeremy. Without them much would have been left undone. While thanking people, I also need to acknowledge and thank Gary Leete, FNCV member, of *Frame Co* in Nunawading for allowing us to take over part of his factory to store the items until they can be moved back. (See also p12.)

WE ARE NOT FINISHED YET!

Please note that we will need as many hands on deck as we can on Saturday 3rd September at 1 pm to help move all the above mentioned stuff back into the Hall. No matter how small you may think your contribution could be, it means a little less for someone else to do. It is our club after all, not some else's.

SEANA Spring Camp-out 29th Oct – 1st Nov - HELP URGENTLY NEEDED.

We are about to begin putting together the program for the SEANA camp at Phillip Island.

We have already asked for volunteers to join the organising sub-committee, but have had little response. **PLEASE consider helping—our club has a responsibility to field naturalists around the State and, at present, we just don't have enough hands to do the work.** Please contact Hali for

(Continued on page 12)

Due date for the October newsletter **Monday 5th September**. FNN will go to print on the 13th September with collation on Tuesday 20th starting at **10.30 am**.

See you there!

The capture and handling of all animals on FNCV field trips is done strictly in accordance with the club's research permits.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*All meetings are held at FNCV Hall, 1 Gardenia St. Blackburn at 8 pm., unless otherwise indicated.
On days of extreme weather conditions excursions may be cancelled. Please check with leader.*

September 2011

*At the moment it looks reasonably certain that all September meetings can be held in the Gardenia St Hall.
However, as always, keep an eye on the website etc just in case there are unforeseen delays.*

Monday 5th – Fungi Group. Meeting - Tropical fungi - Speaker: Bruce Fuhrer. Contact: Virgil Hubregtse 9560 7775. This is the last meeting for the year Contact: Virgil Hubregtse 9560 7775

Tuesday 6th – Fauna Survey Group. Meeting - 'The Ecology of the Grampians Macropod Community.'
Speaker: Sarah Garnick. Contact: Sally Bewsher 9752 1418

Wednesday 7th – Bat Group. Grey-headed flying-fox count. Meet at Yarra Bend Golf Course carpark Mel 2D G7 at 5.45 pm. As a courtesy please email or phone Megan Davidson. 9380 5062: m.davidson@latrobe.edu.au

Monday 12th – Marine Research Group. Meeting—Identifying Victorian intertidal chitons: presented by Leon Altoff. Contact: Leon Altoff 9530 4180 AH: 0428 669 773

Thursday 15th – Botany Group. Meeting - Australian plants and fire: a complex relationship in a changing environment. Speaker: Tom Duff. Contact Sue Bendel 0427 055 071

Saturday 17th – Juniors' Group. Excursion - Baluk Willam, Andrew Dilley 2.00 pm Meet at the carpark adjoining Courtneys and Orchid Rd. Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474: toclairref@gmail.com

Tuesday 20th — Collate FNN 213. All welcome. Collation is now being scheduled in the morning beginning at 10.30 am. Morning tea served. Contact Hali 9877 9860 or email damin@fncv.org.au

Wednesday 21st – Terrestrial Invertebrates Group. Meeting – The Eltham Copper Butterfly. Speaker: Andrea Canzano. There will be a night excursion to count Eltham Copper Butterfly larvae in Eltham in October, (date to be confirmed). Contact: Alan Yen 0409 194 788

Friday 23rd – Juniors' Group. Meeting - Aboriginal Farming. Speaker: Gary Presland.
Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474; toclairref@gmail.com

Saturday 25th – Sunday 2nd October - Fauna Survey Group. Field trip – Mallee Camp. Details and location to be confirmed. Contact: John Harris 0409 090 955. Prior registration essential.

Monday 26th FNCV Council Meeting. 7.30 sharp. Agenda items and apologies to Hali, 9877 9860 or admin@fncv.org.au

Tuesday 27th – Day Group. Meeting – The Yangtze and other rivers . Speaker: Sheila Houghton.
Contact: Gary Presland 9890 9288. Meet at 10.30 am for coffee and a chat. Program starts at 11 am.

Wednesday 28th - Geology Group. Meeting - What's up SAM! Speaker: Dr. Frank Drost, Post-doctoral Research Fellow – Climate Change, School of Earth Sciences, University of Melbourne. Contact: Kaye Oddie 9329 0635



The policy of the FNCV is that non-members families pay \$5 per excursion and \$2 per meeting, to cover insurance costs. Junior non-member families, \$2 per excursion only.

Members' news, photos & observations

We are reserving a page in future issues of FNN for natural history observations, member news and photos. It is just so easy these days to let us know what you have noted in your life, your travels or perhaps your garden. So how about it? Email: fnnews@fncv.org.au by Monday 5th September

Welcome
Welcome

Warmest greetings to these new members who were welcomed into our club at the July Council meeting:

*Ms Alison Rayner, Janifer Dobbs, Mr Michael O'Sullivan,
Mrs Kristie O'Sullivan.*

Extracts from SIG group reports, FNCV Council meeting - 25th July 2011

Botany Group

Neil Armstrong, renowned photographer of aquatic plants and fish, spoke at the last Botany meeting. Neil gave us a slide show of native aquatic plants, including bog plants, those that always have their roots submerged, and their foliage above the water, and true aquatic plants. He showed us about 25 plants, several with the usual fish found with them. *Wolffia* is the smallest flowering plant in the world, and is smaller than a match head. There were plants from the very cold waters of Woods Point, Victoria, to plants found in water at 38C in the Kimberleys.



Some plants grow from corms or bulbs, some seed easily and others are propagated by cuttings. Many of the plants have one side of the leaves a blood red colour as well as the usual green. a number of the tropical plants are difficult to grow as they require extra carbon dioxide to grow. However this acidifies the water so a buffer solution is needed. Plants brought from interstate, especially Northern Territory, require treatment for Caddis Fly, before being brought into Victoria. Plants imported from overseas require complex treatment for quarantine and do not always survive. This was an interesting and well attended talk.

Fauna Survey Group

As well as the scheduled meeting 5-7-2011, (report p7) we had two meetings to work on a revised Standard Operating Procedures well in advance of the renewal of the trapping permit.



Fungi Group

The FungiMap conference held at Denmark WA, 14-19 July 2011 was very informative and successful. It was attended by 108 people including 10 from Victoria (all FNCV members) and 4 from USA. Activities included talks, forays and workshops. FNCV Fungi Group convenor, Paul George, gave a talk about the FNCV's forays and also ran a photography workshop.



Geology Group

The last meeting was addressed by Dr Tim Holland, from Museum Victoria. He spoke about the evidence for the evolution of early Tetrapods in Australia.



Terrestrial Invertebrate Group

The TIG had a very interesting meeting with 15 attendees. The guest speaker, Max Campbell, who gave a captivating talk on the decline of invertebrates in inner urban Melbourne. He outlined reasons, ranging from habitat loss through to exotic pests such as European wasps. The ability of many invertebrates to survive long term in ever decreasing remnant bush in urban Melbourne is possibly low.



Juniors' Group

The June meeting was held at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary with a medium attendance. Ian Moodie from the Whitehorse Council spoke on photography generally, including photography flora and fauna.



A new family brought along some tadpoles they had caught from a local swampy area. It was their first meeting and their four year old wanted to show them to everyone and handed around a photo book of their family excursion to collect them. We didn't have the heart to tell them it was illegal now to collect frogs or tadpoles. Ian Moodie mentioned this later in a friendly email.

The July outing was to the St Kilda research team to see how they keep track of the penguins in that area. This was a very popular excursion!

Letter to the Editors: *The Curious Mister Catesby*

I'm sorry that I missed seeing *The Curious Mr Catesby* DVD that Gary Presland organised in May, but glad that I could read Joan Broadberry's engaging report in *Field Nats News*. I had only just heard of Mark Catesby. He appears in two books that I read in May – *The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire and the Birth of an Obsession* (2008) by Andrea Wulf and *The Ingenious Mr. Fairchild: The forgotten father of the flower garden* (2000) by Michael Leapman.

I'm glad that the title, *The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire and the Birth of an Obsession*, so intrigued me that I spent a whole \$10 on a copy at one of *The Book Grocer* shops. Wulf cleverly knits together various strands of eighteenth century botany and horticulture to show the huge importance of plants from the 'New World'. North American plants added colour and diversity to English gardens and new names to plants before and after Linnaeus' new binomial system required two plant names, genus and species. As English botanists, sometimes slowly, accepted Linnaeus' 1735 sexual system of classification and 1753 binomial system, English gardens were being transformed from replicates of European, especially French, gardens to the 'English Garden' greatly desired by wealthy aristocrats on both sides of the English Channel.

Thanks to Catesby and subsequent plant collectors in North America, English gardens and nurseries provided 'new' plants to enrich botany and horticulture. And Catesby's accurate illustrations could be sent back across the Atlantic to help collectors identify the American plants so desired by English nurserymen and garden-owners.

An Englishman who was very pleased to receive seeds and plants from Catesby was a nurseryman who had dared to cross-pollinate two species and thereby produce the first (European-known) plant clearly not God-given. His shocking man-made hybrid was known as Fairchild's mule. In his Hoxton nursery, Thomas Fairchild germinated and propagated Catesby plants that had not been lost to Atlantic

weather or pirates. And Catesby apparently worked at the Hoxton nursery before and after Fairchild's death.

In *The Ingenious Mr. Fairchild* Leapman devotes several pages to Catesby's plants before their transfer to the extensive park-like estates of English gentlemen.

I'm glad I spent another \$10 on one of several copies of *The Ingenious Mr. Fairchild* in *Carlton Secondhand Books*, and recommend both books to anyone interested in the context and consequences of the curious Mr Catesby's activities.

Linden Gillbank
School of Historical & Philosophical Studies,
The University of Melbourne.

Whitehorse Spring Festival Volunteers needed

This event will be held locally on **Sunday 23rd October**. It is great opportunity to publicise the club. We will again be seeking helpers to staff our information stall for 1-2 hours on the day.

More details in the next newsletter. Please contact the office to volunteer.

Victoria Aitken

Second-hand book sale and FNCV pre-loved treasures Saturday 8th October

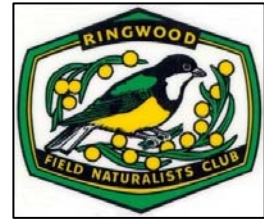
The club is again planning to fund raise through a second-hand book sale, and will use the opportunity to dispose of some of the items unearthed when the hall was cleared out for painting and repairs.

Second-hand books can be left in the hall from the first week in September. Volunteer helpers would be very welcome.

Contact the office or Gary Presland 9890 9288.

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.

RINGWOOD FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INC



50 YEARS OLD
1961 – 2011

You are invited to celebrate the Club's 50th birthday on Sunday 25th September 2011 at an anniversary luncheon. The keynote speaker is Prof. Robert King speaking on '*Wither or whither natural history; an optimists view*'

KARRALYKA CENTRE
Mines Rd., Ringwood East

Arrive between 11.30 am and noon
for 12.30 pm lunch

COST: \$35.00 per person

RSVP: by 9th September 2011
Enquiries: Peter or Alison Rogers
Ph: 03 9801 6946

The FNCV Biodiversity symposium will be now be held 19th & 20th November

2011 is the International Year of Forests and 'forests' will be this year's biodiversity symposium theme.

Speakers are being organised for the Saturday. Sunday will be a day tour, possibly of the forests around Toolangi, or the threatened species breeding area at Healesville Sanctuary.

Thanks to the editorial and layout team who put together FNN 212

Joan Broadberry
Noel Schleiger
Platon Vafiadis
Hali Ferguson



Geology Group

The Geological Basis of Melbourne's History

Talk by Gary Presland,
archaeologist & FNCV member
Wednesday, 22 June 2011

Gary's talk was based on his recent book 'The Place for a Village – how nature has shaped the city of Melbourne'. This book, in turn, evolved from a PhD thesis submitted at The University of Melbourne in 2005. To understand why Melbourne has developed where it has, and the pattern of this development, it is necessary to understand the natural history of the Port Phillip region. The environment generally, and the geology in particular, is important in the history of any place. The geology/topography, hydrology, climate, flora and fauna have all played their part.

The oldest rocks in the Melbourne region are Silurian sediments laid down in a north-south trending trough about 400 million years ago, and subsequently much distorted by folding and faulting. After millions of years of erosion, what is known as the Nillumbik terrain developed to the east of Melbourne. It was covered with shallow soils of clayey silt underlain by clay. These soils, and the relatively high rainfall, supported woodlands at lower elevations and forest higher up.

A period of volcanic activity about 40 million years ago (Older Volcanics) is now evident in only a few places from Tullamarine through Essendon, Melbourne and terminating in South Melbourne, and also in the Bundoora-Greensborough-Kangaroo Ground area. The associated topography is broad crested hills with gentle slopes with in situ weathered deep red or dark grey coloured heavy clays.

At about the same time as the Older Volcanics were deposited (Tertiary), three phases of marine deposition of sandy sediments occurred. These sands are now the dominant surface on the east side of the bay south of the Yarra, and also occur as smaller caps on the Silurian sediments further north. These sandstones give rise to sandy soils with

little water holding capacity, thus favouring grassy woodlands of drought tolerant species. On poorly drained flat areas, wetlands such as at the once very extensive Carrum Swamp, supported a rich variety of plant and animal life.

The topography of much of the northern, and nearly all of the western side of Melbourne consists of basalt plains formed comparatively recently – from about 4.5 million years ago to 820 thousand years ago. This lava, which flowed down existing valleys, from many eruption points at various times during this period, is at least 60m thick in places. The surface today is flat to gently undulating, or undulating and hummocky. The soils that have developed are shallow, dark grey, and heavy textured that shrink and crack in summer when they dry out. The western plains receive less rain than the ranges further east and also have a high evaporation rate. They were therefore covered by vast grasslands, but with woodlands along the major watercourses.

The site of Melbourne was determined by the availability of fresh water. The lowest point on the Yarra with an adequate and reliable supply of fresh water was upstream of a rock bar across the river where Queens bridge crosses it today. Below that point the river was tidal and brackish. Docks were constructed downstream of the bar, overlooked by the substantial customs house built in 1856.

Though the Yarra River provided a water supply, it had major disadvantages; it was prone to frequent flooding, and its course downstream to the Bay was narrow and choked with debris. The naturally winding river was therefore straightened out through Richmond, and diverted and dredged downstream of the rock bar that limited navigation upstream. A wetland to the west of the town, adjacent to the Spencer Street railyards, known as 'The Swamp', was seen as a perfect site for a dock, which was constructed as part of the river straightening works. Though the Yarra floods less than in the past, nevertheless the design of some buildings along its

banks, takes into account the possibility of floods.

Early expansion of Melbourne was to the east which was better drained and had a greater rainfall than to the west, and this was further enhanced by construction of railways in the 1880s which naturally followed the flat gradients along the eastern stream valleys, which being subject to flooding, also had not been as densely developed. In the age of the motor car, transport corridors have continued to be developed along stream valleys. Noxious industries such as fellmongering and tanning, which needed a copious supply of water, access to shipping and somewhere to dispose of their waste, developed along both the Maribyrnong and Yarra Rivers.

Gary's well illustrated talk was appreciated and further detail is covered in his book, which has reproductions of very informative historic paintings and photographs illustrating the natural features that determined Melbourne's development and were either used or overcome.

David Gibson



Day Group

Gary Presland spoke at the June day group meeting about a tour he and his wife recently undertook to some of the national parks in the south-west of the USA. Gary stated their inspiration was the excellent Ken Burns television series entitled, "America's best idea"

Their trip commenced and finished in Los Angeles. Some of the parks visited were: Grand Canyon, Zion & Bryce Canyons, Death Valley, Monument Valley and Yosemite

A few highlights were: a balloon flight over the Sonoran Desert, rafting the Colorado River below the Hoover Dam, seeing the Grand Canyon from the air, and sighting the rare Californian Condor. Gary and Helen also enjoyed the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, and the wildlife and scenery along the Californian coast.

Space does not permit a more detailed report, but this was a first rate talk, full of interesting observations and asides eg. (Alcatraz is Spanish for 'pelican'), and great photography. Our thanks, once again, to Gary.

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PHOTO: KEVIN COATE

Abrolhos Islands - Birds! Birds! Birds!

6 Day Accommodated Tour - Departs 1st November 2011

The Houtman Abrolhos is an archipelago of 108 islands and rocks located about 80 km off the mid-west coast of Western Australia. They are renowned for their extensive array of marine life and colourful history, and they are also a breeding ground for many tropical seabirds. The Flying Fish Five, a purpose-built charter boat, will be our base for four nights and will ferry us around to observe some of the 95 species of bird that are found on the islands.

Coral Coast Wildlife Tour

10 Day Accommodated Tour - Departs 12th April 2012

This fascinating tour takes in all the highlights of the unspoiled coast between Perth and Exmouth including the Stromatolites, Charles Knife Canyon, Shothole Canyon and Yardie Creek Gorge. Enjoy a flight to the Abrolhos Islands, cruise the clear waters of Shark Bay and see the dolphins at Monkey Mia.

Flinders Range & Lake Eyre Basin Expedition

15 Day Camping Tour - Departs 22nd May 2012

This is no ordinary tour! Visit some of Australia's iconic outback locations, including the Painted Desert, Lake Eyre, Wilpena Pound, Lake Coongie and Coober Pedy. Take in the unforgettable Flinders Ranges, with its magnificent gorges and wildflowers. Explore Australia's legendary outback in comfort and safety with us.

Tanami Expedition

13 Day Camping Tour - Departs 15th June 2012

Explore Newhaven Station and Lake Gregory. Travel with a small group at a relaxed pace and discover some of the most remote areas in the Northern Territory and North West Australia. The wildlife should be plentiful, the scenery and sunsets spectacular.

For our 2012 tour program or further information contact:

COATES WILDLIFE TOURS

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Kimberley Discovery

16 Day Camping Tour - Departs 2nd June or 26th June 2012

The Kimberley region in the north-west of Western Australia is one of the most remote and unspoiled wilderness areas in the world. It's unique geology, ancient limestone reef and rich Aboriginal culture has fascinated visitors for years. It is home to some of Australia's most beautiful and rare birdlife, diverse and interesting flora, and exciting and unique fauna.

Rudall River Expedition

14 Day Camping Tour - Departs 7th July 2012

Join a small group on this exciting trip to the harsh, yet beautiful Rudall River National Park. See arid zone wildflowers, birds and breathtaking outback scenery. During your time in this remote area you will see many natural wonders including Kalkan Kalkan Soak, Tjingkulatjatjarra Pool and Desert Queen Baths.

Western Explorer Wildflowers

14 Day Camping Tour - Departs 21st July 2012

Designed to coincide with the northern wildflower season, explore the spectacular Karijini, Mt Augustus and Kennedy Range National Parks on foot. Highlights include the gorges and mountains of Karijini, Aboriginal art, a swim at Cattle Pool at Mt Augustus, the breathtaking gorges of the Kennedy Ranges and of course the wildflowers!

Western Australian Outback Expedition

15 Day Camping Tour - Departs 22nd September 2012

Don't miss this opportunity to explore the real outback Australia. The Anne Beadell Hwy and Connie Sue Hwy are unkept tracks where you can experience outback wildlife and scenery. We'll also visit the Eyre Bird Observatory and the Nullarbor Plain. Don't miss it!



"Specialists in Nature Tours"



Fauna Survey Group

Rushworth Forest Camp, 14—15 May 2011

This was a survey camp to check nest boxes in the Rushworth Forest. Eight members attended. The survey was initially established to find Brush-tailed Phascogales in Rushworth Forest and now serves as a monitoring program. It is a useful conservation effort for the species in parts of the forest where hollow trees are scarce.

Two years ago nest-boxes with small entrances were erected with the hope of attracting Feathertail Gliders which the FSG had found by spotlighting some years back. None have been found, and some of these boxes have Sugar Gliders present after they have chewed open the entrance.

On this trip the number of Sugar Gliders and Brush-tailed Phascogales had increased. A total of 134 boxes were checked and 40 were occupied, with a total of 6 Brush-tailed Phascogales and 111 Sugar Gliders. The presence of BTP can also be tracked by their characteristic nests and

scats, which were present to some degree in 30 boxes.

With only 8 members checking boxes it was a busy weekend but we did notice the good condition of the forest compared to the drought years. Wattle and other seedlings, and many ground orchids were observed. Orb weaver spiders were prolific compared to during the drought years. The better conditions may be the reason for more animals this year, although there have always been fluctuations. The numbers of animals in nest boxes for this survey and some previous years are shown in the accompanying table.

Raymond Gibson



Above: Brushtailed Phascogale in nestbox. Left: Sugar Gliders in nestbox. Photos: R. Gibson



Speaker:
Geoff Williams,
Australian Platypus
Conservancy (APC)
5th July 2011

Geoff outlined the taxonomic history and some basic features of Platypus biology. Early curators had dissected specimens expecting to find a hoax. It had the name *Platypus anatinus* and then *Ornithorynchus paradoxus* before *Ornithorynchus anatinus* was settled.

Year	Phascogale	Sugar Glider	Boxes
2006	1	65	118
2007	7	112	112
2008	0	24	111
2009	1	48	117
2010	2	34	121
2011	6	111	134

Platypus have a body temperature of 32 deg, a double layer of very dense fur and can remain submerged about 10 min. Some of the more remarkable features are the sensitive electroreceptors in the bill, used for finding food underwater, and the soft shelled eggs, which hatch after 14 days incubation. The venomous spurs on males can inflict painful but not deadly wounds.

Platypus live in rivers where the quality of both the water and the streamside vegetation are good. They also live in dams or weirs where the water depth is less than about 5 m.

Studying and surveying Platypus can be difficult. To study movements and biology the APC use modified fyke nets, a technique that requires a high labour input as the nets have to be continually monitored. Results have shown that Platypus can move up to 50 km to find a territory. Home range for the Platypus is typically 1-7 km of river with densities of 3 – 4 animals per kilometer. Male capture rates peak in August, the start of the breeding season, and females were most often caught in January, the peak of the lactating season.

The APC has also initiated 'Platypus Count' using visual survey results submitted by volunteers. Platypuses are relatively easy to see and are mostly recorded in the early morning or at dusk. Although they are predominantly nocturnal, they can be active at anytime. It is also necessary to distinguish between the Platypus with its dark paddle-shaped tail and the Australian Water Rat *Hydromys chrysogaster*, with its long white tipped tail.

There are a number of conservation pressures on the platypus other than poor river conditions. Predation from foxes is the worst but birds also prey on them. Fishing nets, including illegal nets, the 'opera house' style yabby traps in which platypuses and water rats can drown, hooks and entanglement in rubbish are all dangerous to platypuses.

Raymond Gibson

Contact. Australian Platypus Conservancy, PO Box 22, Wiseleigh Vic. 3885
Tel. (03) 5157 5568

E-mail: platypus.apc@westnet.com.au
www.platypus.asn.au



Fungi Group

FUNGI GROUP FORAY 26 June 2011 Warrandyte State Forest, Jumping Creek

It was a beautiful sunny day, cool and bright. In the moss under the Kunzea there was a feast of corals – yellow, orange, red and white of *Clavaria*, *Ramaria*, and *Ramariopsis* species. Yellow Tongues *Clavaria amoena* varied in shades of deep yellow to orange with growth forms ranging from single stems to caespitose. Some ‘Tongues’ were wider and a paler yellow, others were bright orange. Red Flames *Clavaria miniata* had weathered and the pale tops looked somewhat similar to a

fresh *C. corallinorosacea* but closer inspection showed that there was no visible colour change to deep red on the lower stalk. Small clumps of pink-brown *Clavulina vinaceocervina* had the typically dark tips. Near the start of the track were yellow clumps, almost in a circle, of *Ramaria lorithamnus*.

This is a paler, more watery yellow than *R. flaccida* (not seen) which is a dense mustard yellow, and the structure is not so fine as *Ramariopsis crocea* which is a dense golden yellow. Scattered around were groups of *Ramaria gracilis*, almost indeterminate in colour but shades of dirty-white, and clay colour. Also we saw one group of very weathered *Ramaria versatilis* with grey-brown stems and pale pointed ends. Although a small patch, the very white coral had weathered a lot, some of the tips still

looked like the very spiky terminals of *Clavulina cristata*.

In this productive area Paul George thought that the red/yellow/orange *Hygrocybe* was *H. saltorivula*, the colours and gill form fit the description, plus it is ‘known only from the type locality (Warrandyte State Park) in southern Vic; gregarious in deep moss in *Kunzea ericoides* thickets in sclerophyll woodland’ (Young AM 2005, *Fungi of Australia, Hygrocybeaceae*, p 65)

Also in these damp mossy areas was a large ring of the Hedgehog Fungus *Hydnum repandum*, the apricot caps contrasting with the green moss. At the top of the hill several fruit-bodies



Hygrocybe saltorivula

Photo: Ed Grey

had orange to brown caps and stem and adnate pale fawn teeth. We found an *Entoloma moongum* group with dark blue/black cap, deep blue stipe and pale gills, a group of huge *Lepista nuda* where only the stem retained a mauve colour; on the cap this striking colour had changed to brown and the mauve gills had gone pale pink.

We also discovered groups of earth tongues in different mossy areas and

all looked similar - smooth, with spatulate heads. These were *Geoglossum* sp. because there were no bristles on the stem like those that occur in *Tricoglossum* spp. Jurrie Hubregtse’s microscopic study on one group determined that they were *G. glutinosum*, which had black heads on a brown stem with a distinct join between head and stalk. However, we did see a group that appeared slightly different. They were completely black and not glutinous, and the head merged seamlessly into the stalk, perhaps *G. nigrum*, although external appearances are very similar and the species can only be determined microscopically. (cf B&S p 98)

The mossy kunzea and eucalypt areas were the most productive for fungi; other areas did not produce much at all. On wood we found brackets - some young fruit-bodies of *Fomitopsis lilacinogilva* with a pale top, pinkish

margin and white pores that marked red on bruising and *Punctularia strigosozonatum*. Apart from *Entoloma* spp there were very few gilled fungi – a couple of orange-capped *Lactarius clarkeae* distinguished from the similar-looking *Russula flocktoniae* by the extrusion of latex; a group of *Collybia eucalyptorum* was growing in the decayed wood of a fallen eucalypt; in moss *Galerina hypnorum* group and one or two Little Pins *Rickenella fibula*. The other striking orange species was Orange-peel Fungus *Aleuria aurantia* which was formed as thin flat convoluted cups.

As the ranger said, we should probably have been here several weeks ago. Despite that fact we found quite a lot of fungi, many of them very interesting.

Pat Grey

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the FNCV.

FUNGI GROUP FORAY to GREENS BUSH (3)

3 July 2011

Baldry Crossing, Greens Bush, Mornington Peninsula National Park

The rain soon eased off when we started the foray. Again there was not a lot to see. For all the forays this year, Greens Bush has not provided masses of fungi like it often has. However, one of the loveliest finds was the Mauve-splitting Waxcap *Hygrocybe lewellinae*, down in the dell. A fresh large specimen was a deep mauve and the margin had only just started to split radially. A couple of other specimens were much smaller but all had the strong mauve coloured fruit-bodies. Other *Hygrocybe* were the yellow *H. chromolimonea*, the Fungimap Target sp *H. graminicolor* whose cap had turned fawn but the green stem remained, and a red orange species, that was too orange to be *H. miniata* which is all red.

In this area we found several groups of black Earth Tongues. It must be the time of Earth Tongues. Last week at Warrandyte SP we found several groups growing in moss. Earthtongues “*Glossums*” – tongues - have been divided into three main genera: *Microglossum* (small tongue), *Geoglossum* (earthtongue) and *Trichoglossum* (hairy tongue). *Microglossum* are more coloured than *Geoglossum* and *Trichoglossum* which have black/dark brown fruit-bodies. They are all recognised by their club-like shape, but it is not possible to accurately determine their species in the field, microscopic study is needed. In the field *Trichoglossum* can be distinguished from *Geoglossum* by the minute spines (setae, brown lance-shaped cells) that protruded from the surface of the fruit-body giving it a

finely bristly texture. *Geoglossum* species have no setae in the fertile head and the texture varies from smooth to viscid or only slightly velvety. The fruit-body is club-shaped to spatulate with a fertile, flattened head, often twisted and grooved, that can be distinct from the stalk or merge into it without a sharp differentiation. We saw only black/brown *Geoglossum* and *Trichoglossum*. Jurrie Hubregtse microscopically examined a species found at Warrandyte and one found here. The one at Warrandyte was *Geoglossum glutinosum*. It had a smooth black rounded lance-shaped head and a brown glutinous smooth stalk, distinct from the head. This is one of the three glutinous species and although the weather had been dry two stalks were still stuck together



Leota lubrica (Jellybaby)

Photo: Ed Grey

with thick gluten. Jurrie illustrated the microscopics with excellent images that clearly showed the distinctive characteristics of the species. He pointed out the very large asci within which were extremely long spores with 3-7 septa (lines indicating divi-

sions of the spore), sized 64 - 74 x 4.5 - 5.5 microns, and the club-shaped paraphyses (lines of material that are used as ‘fill’), sometimes with a ‘pimple’ on top that were longer than the asci. At Greens Bush the earthtongue worked out to be *Trichoglossum hirsutum*. This was approximately 100mm tall with a distinct large flat, spade-like grooved head that was distinct from the stalk. It was dry and, under a hand lens, showed that the setae formed a finely bristly texture. This could most clearly be seen on the rough stalk. Microscopic images showed the long spores (80-195 x 5-7 microns) which had 15 septa. Also the long pointed threads of the setae (bristles) which were scattered among the asci and other material.

Cortinarius species were now fruiting and were some of the most frequently seen fungi. But they were brown *Cortinarius* sp. for the most part. We recognised the *C. sp.* “mexican hat” from earlier forays, but were not able to identify many of the others except *C. fibrillosus*.

Jellybabies *Leotia lubrica* were widespread on the ground, some were old and deteriorating but one cluster in particular showed all the features of this fungus – yellow-green, knobby head to 20mm diameter and yellowish stem to 50mm long (see *Fungi Down Under*, page 117).

While we had found the red-brown hemispherical cushions of *Hypoxylon howeianum* (the teleomorph or sexual stage) on previous forays, it was interesting to see the spiky anamorph (the asexual stage) widespread on dead wood and in conjunction with the red-brown cushions. The anamorphs had pale brown filaments to 1-2mm high growing as several clumps on the substrate. Extensive sheets of the resupinate *Hyphodontia australis* were found on fallen eucalypt bark. This tan, soft fungus has short, blunt teeth/spines (odontoid) and colourless, smooth, ellipsoid to cylindrical spores 6.5 x 3.5 – 5.0 microns. When treated with KOH the surface turns a violet colour.

After lunch, the group drove to Sue and Ken McLean’s property to see specimens of *Lepista luscina* growing in a large group in grass. This was followed by a welcome cup of coffee in front of a warming fire.

Ed and Pat Grey

The Fungi group held a large number of excursions in Autumn, so much so that through lack of space, FNN has not yet been able to publish all the reports. We will continue to include these reports as we have room. Eds.

FUNGI GROUP FORAY, Bunyip State Park, Mortimer Nature Trail, 8 May 2011

Bunyip State Forest, Mortimer Picnic Ground and Nature Trail

At this foray a group of twelve members and nine visitors were fortunate to be joined by the FNCV Juniors, whose keen observational powers and sharp eyesight were a great help in finding plenty of fungi. Two of the girls even thought of nicknames for some species: 'Spotty toad' seemed appropriate for the plentiful *Descolea recedens* with its yellow-flecked brown caps!

In his search for *Lachnum pteridophyllum* (a minute disc fungus that is smooth and yellow on the inside and whitish and densely hairy on the outside) on dead tree-fern fronds, Scott Ferguson found an extremely small but very beautiful *Mycena* species (which we call *Mycena* 'tiny blue lights') growing in colonies on the rachises of fallen dead tree fern fronds. The caps were whitish and the stems blue. Scot also found *L. lachnoderma* which was flourishing on eucalypt bark nearby, as well as *L. virgineum*, which is white rather than yellow. Carol Page followed that up with finding *Lachnum pteridophyllum*, thus completing the three types usually found on our forays.

Small lemon-coloured discs on a dead tree fern frond were not the hoped for *Bisporella sulfurina* but small *B. citrina*. This was confirmed later by the larger spore size. We shall still keep looking. It is necessary to use a hand lens to see these species properly.

A small group of pinkish brown fungi growing at the base of a Manna Gum proved to *Marasmius cinnamoneus*. This was the first time this species has been recorded here, and it was satisfy-

ing to find that the substrate – thick bark at the base of a living eucalypt – matched the description in Grgurinovic (1997). A not so welcome 'first' for this location was *Favolaschia calocera*, found by new member Richard Hartland. This recently introduced fungus is considered to be a pest species. The small, bright orange, kidney-shaped brackets have pores on the underside, and often form large colonies on dead wood.

Another brightly coloured fungus growing on dead wood was a lone specimen of *Cyptotrama aspratium*, with its distinctively tufted orange cap and pure white gills. Not far from this were a huge number of very small, brown gilled brackets on the bark of an old log. The largest specimens were only 10 mm across. Subsequent examination showed that the fruit-bodies produced a brown spore print, and the spores were globose and spiny. These characteristics suggest that this fungus is a species of *Crepidotus*.

Three colourful species of *Russula* were recorded: *R. persanguinea*, with a bright red cap and white gills and stem; *R. purpureoflava*, with a purplish cap, yellowish gills and a pink stem; and *R. iterika*, which has a green cap, pale cream gills and a white stem. *R. iterika* can be distinguished from other green-capped *Russula* species because its gills fork near the stem.

A rainy lunch at Bunyip Photo: P. Grey



After lunch, by which time rain was falling in earnest, we went for a short walk along the road north of the car park. Beside the road were examples of a stalked toothed fungus that was thought to be *Hydellum auritale*. However, tests showed this to be a *Phellodon*, which has white spore print, as opposed to brown, and all other characters (colour, spore size, appearance of teeth) matched *Phellodon niger*.

Other fungi near the road included *Cortinarius rotundisporus*, three young specimens of the intensely purple *Cortinarius archeri*, a large group of *Laccaria* sp., bright orange *Clavaria* sp., and the little brown *Inocybe australiensis*.

More than seventy species were recorded, including nine FungiMap 'targets' – not a bad total considering that we explored only a small section of the nature trail. Many thanks to Pat Grey for taking the field notes and preparing the species list.

Virgil Hubregtse, Ed & Pat Grey

Reference:

Grgurinovic, CA (2007) *Larger fungi of South Australia*. (Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium and The Flora and Fauna of South Australia Handbooks Committee: Adelaide)



Marine Research Group News

Report on the MRG field trip to Clifton Springs, Port Phillip Bay, Victoria, Saturday 23 April, 2011

Records included the bubble shells *Bulla quoyii*, *Liloea brevis* and *Haminoea maugeansis*. The turrid snails *Guraleus cuspis* and *Guraleus pictus*, as well as the trochid *Ethminolia vitiliginea* were also present.

The latter is especially interesting in that it has an explosive escape response, being able to vigorously wriggle its foot back and forth to generate a strong (but short-lived) swimming action.

This completes the field trip reporting for the 2010-2011 season.

Report on the MRG members night, Monday 9 May, 2011

Barbara Hall presented crustacean images focussing on caprellids and amphipods with microscopic detail of small parts.

John Eichler presented images from the Mallacoota region including jewel anemones, the molluscs *Hydatina physis*, *Phasianotrochus eximius*, *Nodilittorina pyramidalis*; from Stony point the sea stars *Tosia magnifica*, *Pentagonaster dubeni* and the hermit crab *Paguristes frontalis*.

Leon Altoff presented images covering the summer's suite of field trips.

From Gabo Island, Mallacoota: the bluish barnacles *Austrobalanus imperator*, contrasted with *Tetraclitella purpurascens*; and a tonnoidean veliger.

From Goat Island, Mallacoota: the bubble snails *Cylichnatus campanula*, *Tornatina apicina*, *Limulatus reliquus*, the 'sea hares' *Aplysia juliana*, *Aplysia sydneyensis* and the snail *Batillaria australis*.

From Bastion Point, Mallacoota: the molluscs *Hydatina physis*, *Bullina lineata*, *Philippia lutea*, *Epitonium jukesianum*, and the very large *Charonia lampas rubicunda*; the swimming anemone *Phlyctenactis tuberculosa*, and caprellid crustaceans.

From Pickering Point, Warrnambool area: The sea star *Parvulastra exigua*, various anemones, the holothurians *Trachythone candida*, and the opisthobranchs *Placida dendritica*, *Placida* sp. 2, *Polycera janjukia*, *Polybranchia pallens* and *Flabellina poenicea*.

From Rogers Rocks, Warrnambool region: the holothuroids *Neocnus bimarsupis* and *Trochodota epiphyka*.

Sisters Point, Warrnambool region: the heterobranchs *Odostomia victoriae* and *Turbonilla beddomei*; and the opisthobranchs *Philine* sp. 2, *Polycera janjukia*, *Phylloidesmium serratum*, and *Madrella sanguinea*.

From Stony Point, Western Port Bay: the sea urchins *Heliocidaris erythrogramma*, *Goniocidaris tubaria* and *impressa*, various ascidians and sponges, the sea stars *Tosia magnifica*, *Uniophora granifera*, and *Pentagonaster dubeni*, the crabs *Naxia* sp. and *Paguristes frontalis*, and the impressive molluscs *Maoricrypta immersa* and *Cystiscus minutissimus*

From Clifton Springs, Port Phillip Bay: *Bulla quoyii*, *Haminoea maugeansis*, *Liloea brevis*, *Ethminolia vitiliginea* and *Guraleus cuspis*.

Also presented was a collection of impressive polychaete images (inclusive of field trips from previous seasons) showing the families Nereididae (also referred to as Nereidae in early literature) and Eunicidae.

The Nereididae are a diverse family amongst which are the sandworms. Nereidids are often predatory with a set of retractable jaws and the head bears four pairs of tentacular cirri, a pair of palps and a pair of antennae.

The Eunicidae are a diverse family of elongate worms with complex jaws, the chemistry of which makes them conducive to fossilisation, a feature not shared by other polychaete families. There are up to five antennae and the animals often bear an iridescent sheen and a distinct transverse band at the anterior end. The genera *Marphysa* and *Eunice* were shown. Also shown was an acorn worm (Phylum Hemichordata).

Thanks go to all presenters and also to all present in a very good 'wrap-up' of the field work activity for the summer / autumn of 2010-2011.

Reference and further reading:

Edgar GJ (2008). *Australian marine life. The plants and animals of temperate waters*. Second edition. New Holland Publishers, Sydney.

P. Vafiadis

Many thanks to those who helped collate and label FNN 211

Andrew Brentnall, Margo Bundy, Joan Broadberry, Margaret Corrick, Peter Dempsey, Bill Fenner, Keith Marshall, Roger Needham, Gary Presland, Bob Rowlands, Ray Power, Noel Schleiger, Graeme Thomson

Our thanks to our friends at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary for the loan of their very comfortable premises. Special thanks to Andrew Brentnall and Peter Dempsey for setting up the room, and Hali for packing up the boxes with all the items needed.

Collation was again held in the morning, and seemed to be a success. Therefore, we will continue to start collation at 10.30am in the future.

CLEARING OUT THE HALL FOR PAINTING & REPAIRS— THANKS

A huge “thank you” to those who helped move the contents of the hall on Sunday 24th July. In particular we would like to thank Gary Leete of *FrameCo* for the loan of floor space in his premises.

<i>Members:</i> Gary Leete	<i>Non-members:</i>
David Gibson	Hali Ferguson
John Harris	Rob Ferguson
Kathy Himbeck	Matt Ferguson
Joan Broadberry	Melanie Ferguson
Barbara Burns	Jeremy Pukey
Gary Presland	Pete McCall—trailer

To paint and repair the hall after the fire, it needed to be completely cleared of furniture and contents. With a few FNCV members, the entire Ferguson clan, and their friend Jeremy, gave up their Sunday afternoon to lug chairs, tables, cabinets and the whole catastrophe to a corner of Gary Leete’s factory in Blackburn. Gary, who has recently joined the FNCV, who generously offered the club temporary storage facilities. A convoy of three trailers, van, 4WD and assorted cars and station wagons completed the job in roughly four hours.

We have our irreplaceable administrative assistant Hali, to thank for the idea, and for organising and carrying it through, saving the Club quite a bit of money. It is only small part of the enormous workload Hali has capably and willingly undertaken since the fire.

**Incidentally, we unearthed many strange and wonderful objects in the clean out.*



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(Continued from page 1)
 details of the next sub-committee meeting.

If you have suggestions for activities or guest speakers or are yet to register, (**due date was July 29th**) please email seanacamp@fncv.org.au or contact Hali in the office to be put on the list for further information as it arises.

First Aid Course

We are still seeking to have members register their interest in attending the proposed first aid courses. Hali is currently trying to source funding to cover the cost so that members may not be too much out of pocket.

What’s in a Name?

While touring NSW and Qld, I had many an opportunity to see some of the wildlife that these states have to offer. One such species was Black Wallaby, *Wallabia bicolor*, a species that I have always referred to as Swamp Wallaby but obviously that is a misnomer these days. I saw it in many places considerable distances from the nearest swamp such as in the middle of dry paddocks, roadsides and in cotton growing areas and the like. It also made me think about other animals, for example the Western Grey Kangaroo, *Macropus fuliginosus*, we see in the eastern states.

John Harris,
President

Field Nats News 212



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