



Field Nats News No.226

Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.
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Understanding Our Natural World
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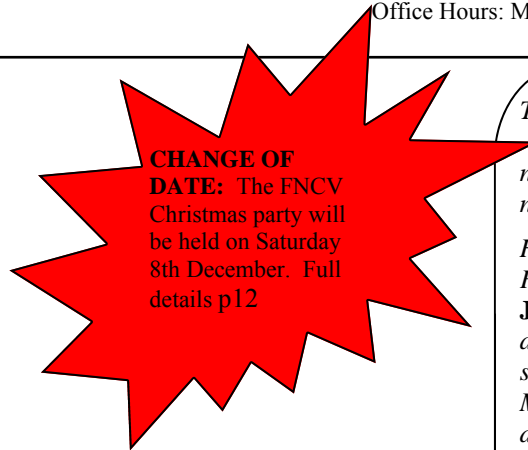
Office Hours: Monday and Tuesday 9 am-4 pm.

From the President

Hi members, it is nearly that time of year again for cards with snow-men, English robins, plum puddings and pine trees to grace our letter boxes. All of these, of course, are very un-Australian for many reasons, let alone the season. Of all the Christmas carols, my favourite is "Christmas Day" by John Wheeler and W G James. It mentions "the north wind tossing the leaves, the red dust is over the town, the tree ferns in green gullies sway". These are all more apt depictions of Christmas in Australia, hence my "favourite" status. So now that I have established that Christmas is nigh, can I take this opportunity to wish all of our members and supporters season's greetings and the hope that it is an enjoyable time spent with family and friends.

Persistence pays off – eventually!!

The old adage that "if at first you don't succeed, then try, try again" has definitely been true for me over the past month or so, in terms of wildlife anyway. Firstly while on the Sunshine Coast, I finally managed to see and photograph Red-legged Pademelons, *Thylogale stigmatica*. These rainforest dwelling macropods are usually very wary, so much so that the only time they are regularly noted is when you hear a "double-thump" on the ground and quick movement through the un-



CHANGE OF DATE: The FNCV Christmas party will be held on Saturday 8th December. Full details p12

dergrowth. Well this wasn't the case at Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve in Maleny, where they were obviously habituated to humans, as they were seen in abundance hopping across the tracks, feeding beside the paths and even on the grassed lawns of the picnic area. Another long-time nemesis is the Tusked Frog, *Adelotus brevis*, which Kathy and I found under a rock on the edge of a flowing creek at Bellsthorpe National Park, near Woodford.

Closer to home I finally saw my first and second Leadbeater's Possums on the October Stagwatch. Thanks Ray.

On the FSG trip to Gobur Flora Reserve over the Melbourne Cup "long
(Continued on page 3)



Left: Leadbeater's Possum, above: Franklin's Gull. The Christmas hat and bow they are wearing will only be appreciated in the email version of FNN

There will be no separate January issue of FNN therefore we would not normally be putting together a newsletter in December.

*However as the deadline for the February FNN will be **Tuesday 1st January 2013** it would be appreciated if contributors could try to send in their copy for FNN 227 by Monday 17th December so that we do not have to work so early in January. **FNN will go to the printers on Tuesday 8th January with collation on the morning of 15th January 2013.***

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All meetings are held at the 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.

December

Monday 3rd — Fungi Group. No monthly meeting.

Tuesday 4th—Fauna Survey Group. Social evening - Come along to an evening BBQ at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary. BYO meat and drinks, something to share (eg. dips, salad, dessert etc) and some exhibits or photos to show. 6pm onwards. NB. **No** meeting at hall. Contact: Sally Bewsher 9752 1418

Saturday 8th—FNCV Christmas party. NOTE CHANGE OF DATE. About 6 pm. For details see FNN p12.

Monday 10th — Marine Research Group. Meeting – Members' Night. This is our annual Members' night, so bring along any items of interest, unidentified specimens or photos or anything else marine you would like to talk about. Or just come along to listen to other members of the group. Contact: Leon Altoff 9530 4180 AH. 0428 669 773

Saturday 15th— Marine Research Group. Field trip - Point Danger, Torquay. Meet at 5:15 pm at the car park: Melway map 506 B8. Contact: Leon Altoff 9530 4180 AH; 0428 669 773

Tuesday 18th—No separate January newsletter, therefore no collation needed.

Thursday 20th—Botany Group. No monthly meeting.

Tuesday 25th—Day Group. No monthly meeting.

Wednesday 26th—Geology Group. No monthly meeting.

Friday 28th—Sun 30th Fauna Survey Group. Fieldtrip. A summer survey and maintenance of nestboxes in the Box Ironbark Forest near Rushworth. Contact: Ray Gibson 0417 861 651

Sunday— Junior's Group. Excursion. Moonlit Sanctuary (date to be confirmed). Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474; toclairref@gmail.com

Friday 29th—Juniors' Group. No monthly meeting.

January 2013

Monday 7th — Fungi Group—No monthly meeting.

Tuesday 8th—Fauna Survey Group. No monthly meeting.

Saturday 12th—Fauna Survey Group. Stagwatch. Enjoy an evening in the bush of the Central Highlands (about an hour from Melbourne) to help search for the elusive Leadbeater's Possum and other nocturnal wildlife. Contact: Ray Gibson 0417 861 651

Saturday 12th—Marine Research Group. Field trip - Point Addis. Meet at 4:20 pm at the carpark 400m before the lookout. Contact: Leon Altoff 9530 4180 AH; 0428 669 773

Monday 14th—Marine Research Group. No monthly meeting.

Tuesday 15th —Collate FNN 227. Starting about 10.30 am. Some folk come earlier. Contact Joan Broadberry 9846 1218

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

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Thursday 17th – Botany Group. No monthly meeting.

Sunday 20th – Juniors' Group. Excursion - Beach Day Phillip Island (TBC). Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474; toclairef@gmail.com

Tuesday 22nd – Day Group. Meeting – What palaeontology can tell us about the past, and the beginnings of life on earth. Speaker: Dr Ursula Smith, Museum Victoria. 10.30 am for morning tea, speaker at 11 am. Contact: Gary Presland 9890 2988

Wednesday 23rd – Geology Group. No monthly meeting.

Friday 25th – Juniors' Group. Meeting – 7.30 pm. Junior Council Member talks. Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474; toclairef@gmail.com

Friday 25th – Sunday 27th - Fauna Survey Group. Australia Day weekend camp. Seymour Bushland Reserve survey. Contact: Sally Bewsher 9752 1418

Monday 28th—FNCV Council Meeting - 7.30 pm sharp. Agenda items and apologies to Hali, 98779860 or admin@fncv.org.au

(Continued from page 1)

weekend”, we were given some local knowledge about bats being seen in a mineshaft so on the last morning, we went for a look. Our time and effort was rewarded with the sighting of several Eastern Horseshoe Bats, *Rhinolophus megaphyllus*, an FFG (Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act) listed species. There will be more about these bats, including photos, and the trip in an upcoming FNN.

During late October and into November there has been a vagrant visitor, from Canada and the northern USA that has taken up residency in Paynesville. A Franklin's Gull, *Leucophaeus pipixcan*, has been seen by many twitchers with some coming from interstate just to tick it off their lists. I have to put my hand up here as well, as I have chased this species for about 20 years whenever it has turned up within a few hundred kilometres of home, all to no avail. But no longer, I saw it during Melbourne Cup week and met another FNCV member, Arthur Carew, while I was there. It seems that Arthur and I only see each other on twitches for rare birds. The gull was very obliging allowing me to take about 100 photos before I departed.



Christmas Party

Just a quick note to let members know that our Christmas Party will be on Saturday 8th December, here at the hall. All members are welcome to attend. More information FNN p 12.

Biodiversity Symposium

The annual FNCV Biodiversity Symposium was held over the weekend of the 17th and 18th of November. It was a very informative day and a half with the various presenters speaking on how cooperation and collaboration between governments and statutory authorities, researchers, environmental organisations, friends groups and individuals has led to positive ecological

outcomes. The topics included controlling mange in wombats, fire management, Eastern Barred Bandicoot conservation, Orchid conservation, Helmeted Honeyeaters and Leadbeater's Possums to invertebrates and bats.

As usual, an edition of the 2013 Victorian Naturalist will be set aside for articles and papers from this symposium.

The photo (below) of *Banksia Robur* was taken on the Sunshine Coast.

Hope to see everyone, especially Juniors' Group families at the Christmas Party.

John Harris

Advertising in the
Field Nats News

**VERY REASONABLE
RATES**

Contact Hali in the Field Nats
Office
admin@fncv.org.au
9877 9860
(Mon – Tues 9—4)

Members' news, photos & observations

We always have space for member's photos and natural history observations. Please share with us what you have noted in your daily life, travels or garden. Email: fnnews@fncv.org.au by the first Monday in the month.



Welcome

They don't come any cuter than these baby Eastern Quolls. This photo was taken by Ian Kitchen at Mt Rothwell Sanctuary. The babies are part of a captive breeding program.

Thanks also should go to Ian for improving the ambiance of the FNCV hall through decorating the walls with natural history prints.

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

*Jane Jaeger
Bianca Smit
Mal Campbell*

Thanks to the editorial and layout team who put together FNN 226

Joan Broadberry
Platon Vafiadis
Hali Ferguson
Su Dempsey

From the office.....

Photographic Competition:

The funds raised by the photographic competition totalled \$487.45 profit. Although not a huge amount it was a great start to a new FNCV tradition. The Council has decided that this was such a good idea that we will be running another one next year starting in April. Keep your eyes on the news letter for tips and hints to catch the judges' eye. Also, Wendy Clark will be running a presentation in March to help get your images in shape for this event.

Paul's Collect-a-cap:

The Paul's Collect-a-cap promotion is ending in December, so if you have any caps at home, please bring them in as I will be sending our caps in after the Xmas Party.

FNCV Club Jackets:

Orders for the Jacket have been sent to the manufacturer. Jackets cost \$45.00 each and can be ordered as needed from next year. A sample of the jacket is in the hall, and you can order by contacting the office.

Wildlife Art for Sale:

The artist that painted the Murals in the hall has left some of her original artwork in the hall for sale to members. These framed pictures are on display in the Conference Room. Each painting costs \$50.00 and money can be left in the book sales tin. The Club will receive a small commission on each sale. Have a look next time you are in the hall, these would make a unique and different Xmas present.

Donations for Hall:

This month we need: Coffee (Nescafe or Moccona), Sugar, Napkins, Gift cards from Coles, Safeway or Officeworks.

Thanks - Hali



Geology Group

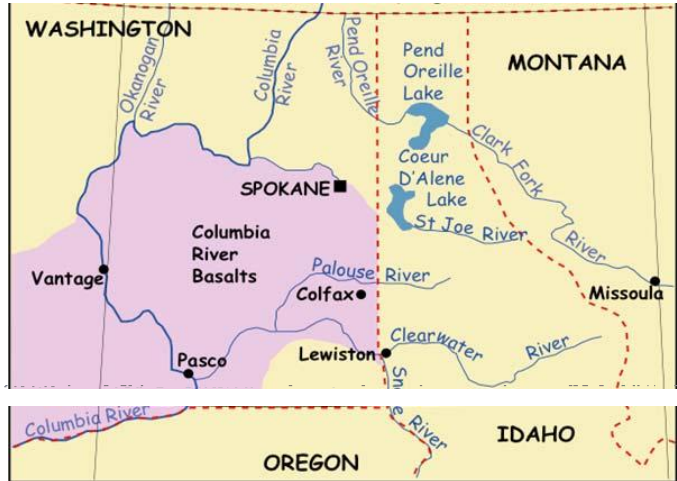
Exploring the Scablands, Washington State, USA

*Dr. Peter Jackson
Director of Geology,
Morning Star Gold Mine
28 September 2012*

Dr. Peter Jackson lectured for many years in Economic Geology at La Trobe University, in addition to 25 years of practical experience in the eastern Victorian goldfields undertaking field studies and economic geological assessments of mining operations. He is currently Director of Geology at the Morning Star Gold Mine at Woods Point. His interest in geological features further afield - the so-called Scablands in northwestern US, which he has recently visited - were the subject of his talk to the Geology group.

During the last Ice Age, a large part of northern America was covered by an ice sheet. In the west, the Cordilleran Ice Sheet extended into the states of Washington and Montana with ice lobes blocking and damming rivers, forming deep lakes. One of these glacial lakes, Lake Missoula, was up to 600m deep.

Between ~15,000 – 13,000 years ago, there was a dramatic and catastrophic failure of Lake Missoula's ice dam. It is not sure whether the ice dam itself collapsed due to leaks or the water pressure of the lake behind it or the trigger was blocks of ice from the ice dam collapsing due to rising water levels. Over the very short time period of a few weeks, a gigantic glacial flood 300m deep, travelling at 120km/hour (equivalent to 17,000,000 cu m/sec) rushed east, west and south over 4500-5000 sq km, gouging vertical walled canyons, creating large water-



1. The Scablands area bounded by Spokane, Pasco and Vantage, Washington State, USA

falls, changing river courses, deeply eroding and re-depositing the landscape. Eventually the waters slowed to exit via the Wallula Gap in the Horse Heaven Hills and joined the Columbia River flowing to the Pacific Ocean.

The overall geomorphologic impact of the flood has been likened to a scab on the landscape, which is discernable in satellite pictures of the region today ... hence the name 'Scablands'.

Peter described the geological features sculptured by the cataclysmic flood. He described also the scientific disbelief when it was first proposed they were the result of such a rapid event.

The underlying stratigraphy of the Scablands area is: Tertiary basalts up to 2km thick and Ringold formation fluvial sediments; Quaternary Ellens-

burg Formation of volcanic ash and lahar deposits, Palouse loess, Hanford Formation of glacial flood deposits and Holocene superficial deposits. The great flood resulted in erosional and depositional geological features that Peter illustrated with photos.

Erosional features included the Palouse canyon with vertical walls, very flat valleys and orthogonal channels; hanging coulees (the hanging coulee in the photograph is in the Drumheller Channels area); isolated pinnacles and pillars (e.g. the "Twin Sisters"); cataracts (e.g. the "Dry Falls" which are a huge 120m high, now dry waterfall; erosional depressions such as pot holes and plunge pools; the streamlined, elongated, teardrop shaped loess hills; and deeply eroded basalts in steep-sided mesas and buttes, which were caused by the erosive 'kolk' forces of the very strong flood.

(Continued on page 6)



2. The Cordilleran Ice Sheet and glacial Lake Missoula, with arrow showing the ice dam (Foster 2008).



phy of ‘Gradualism’, in which geological processes operate very slowly held sway. This was in contrast to the opposing philosophy of ‘Catastrophism’, whereby Earth was formed by a series of short term global catastrophes. Bretz was also criticised because he could not provide evidence for the source of the gigantic flood, however a junior scientist in the Geological Survey, Joseph Pardee, suggested Lake Missoula had been the source. It was not until 1965, after a GSA geological field study in the Scablands, that Bretz was shown to be right and in 1979, aged 97, he was awarded the highest honour in US Geology, the Perouse Medal.

Peter’s talk about the Scablands generated many questions, some also from the ‘Gradualism’ school about this dramatic event. Our appreciation is very much expressed to Peter for presenting the unusual Scablands story.

3. Pathway of flood waters from Lake Missoula (Alt 2001m)

The depositional features included giant gravel flood bars, with some bars up to 300m thick and containing rocks that had travelled long distances (160km); giant current ripples (15m high and up to 150m long) as seen along the banks of the Snake River; rhythmites of laminated sands and silts, which occurred as flood backwaters moved back up valleys; ice-rafted erratics from over 160km to the north; and bergmounds, left by glacial grounding and melting.

J Harlen Bretz (1882-1981) was a glacial geologist who studied these features of the Scablands and in the 1920-30s came up firstly, with the theory that the landscape had been sculptured by glacial flood water. He then recognised that an enormous amount of rapidly moving water was necessary and that the resultant features were contemporaneously active, occurring over a time frame of a few weeks. Bretz’ theories were criticised by scientists of the day, where the philoso-

Kaye Oddie

Many thanks to those who helped collate and label FNN 225

- Bob Rowlands
- Ray Power
- Margaret Corrick
- Neil McLachlan
- Sheina Nicholls
- Sally Bewsher
- Keith Marshall
- Margaret Brewster
- Bill Fenner
- Barbara Burns
- Andrew Brentnall



4. Palouse Canyon showing orthogonal channelling

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

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

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.



Fungi Group

**FNCV FUNGI FORAY
22 JULY 2012
KURTH KILN,
BUNYIP STATE
PARK**

This was the third new site for the group this year and we welcomed some new faces – Rose and Mark.

Early interest was in two specimens of the small, orange-headed *Cordyceps menesteridis*, which grows from Beetle (Coleoptera) larvae, discovered by Alex near his car. This was the second time that the group has seen this species. We first saw it this season at White's Corner, the Gembrook fire site. There is some dispute over the spelling of the species name. Jim Willis calls it *C. menesteritis* (as does Tom May) but most literature has it as *C. menesteridis*. As long as we can identify it the spelling probably doesn't matter!

While fungi were scarce and mostly old, Wood Hedgehog *Hydnum repandum* was widespread and at all stages of growth. Scattered at the base of a Eucalypt (Stringybark) were numbers of *Laccaria* sp. and a few old, purplish *Cortinarius* spp. Of most interest were the specimens of Ghoul Fungus *Hebeloma aminophyllum* close to the base of the tree. One of our visi-

tors – Rose – suggested that dog rather than human activity had provided the nutrients – borne out by their habit of urinating against trees!

Nearby an earthball, *Scleroderma* species, was discovered hidden amongst the grass. It seemed to have such distinct field characters that I thought we would be able to identify it – it was bright yellow with scales, pear-shaped (35 mm at the widest point), with a mass of white rhizomorphs mixed with soil at the base forming a short stem 15mm high. Inside, it was distinctive because of the large area of sterile yellow material at the base of the dark almost black gleba (spore mass). However, in none of the books was there mention of this large sterile area. Ed Grey studied the spores which were dark brown, 7.2-8.4 (9.0) μm , globose and spiny. CA Grgurinovic pages 556-562 (1997, *Larger Fungi of South Australia*) does not mention the large sterile mass within any of the fruit-bodies of species she describes, whose spores are also much larger than those of the specimen we found.



Clavulina subrugosa

Photo: Ed. Grey

A few examples of Coral fungi were found. One tiny specimen of the pink-red *Clavaria corallinorosacea* (*Clavulinopsis corallinorosacea*) belied its long name by hiding in low shrubby, grassy undergrowth. Alongside, and on a track were white species with either simple clubs or two branches which closely resembled *Clavulina subrugosa*.

A crust of the small-spined *Steccherinum* sp was found on a rotting eucalypt log. The pale margin, pale ochre of the main fertile section and the short, 1-2mm long, spines suggested *S. ochraceum* and this matches descriptions from earlier forays.

There was some discussion regarding the stalked toothed species growing in overlapping rosettes. In fact we had two species – *Hydnellum* aff. *auratile* and *Phellodon niger*. When young the brownish concentrically zoned cap of *H. aff. auratile* is distinct from the dark almost black cap with white margin of *P. niger*. Further difference is in the spore print which is brown for *H. aff. auratile* and white for *P. niger*. As specimens age, cap colour differences are harder to pick although those that were *H. aff. auratile* did retain some brown tints. No spores were collected from the *P. niger* specimen, but the brown spore print and sub-globose spores with projections (warts or tubercles) measuring 3.5 – 5.0 x 3.5 – 4.0 μm confirms the second species as *Hydnellum* aff. *auratile*.



Hydnellum aff auratile

Photo: Ed Grey

Ed Grey

FNCV FUNGI GROUP FORAY 15 July 2012 Dom Dom Saddle, Upper Yarra Ranges



On a cold, finger-numbing morning a small group of enthusiasts gathered for this foray. Quite a lot of time was spent in the car-park with a lengthy discussion over the massed small fruit-bodies of *Panellus pusillus* Little Ping-pong Bat *Panellus pusillus* (formerly *Dicytopanus pusillus*) on a Mountain Ash *Eucalyptus regnans*. The relatively large pores had a tendency to maze at the margin and looked somewhat like gills – however, finally we accepted the identification with the remarks ‘getting old’. On the same tree was a bright orange crust/sheet with a white margin and rough warty fertile surface with tubercles (bumps) approaching spiny. This matches *Phlebia radiata* which was also found at Blackwood this year.

A large Acacia branch provided lots of interest – large fruit-bodies of White Brain *Tremella fusiformis*, small patches of blue mould, *Trichoderma viride*, the asexual stage of *Hypocrea rufa* which is a small red-brown individual cushion with dark ostioles and all stages of *Hypoxylon howeanum* from the ropey, brown spiky conical form to the fully developed tan-brown cushions of sexual form. Within several of circular spiky forms a tan-brown cushion could be seen developing in the centre. Extensive black patches along the full length of the log were at first thought to be a crust but close inspection showed this to be *Annulohypoxylon bovei* with its characteristic flat ring-shaped disc at the top of each individual cone (perithecia). This was the largest display of *A. bovei* the group has seen. Later microscopic analysis showed this to be the small-spored form *A. bovei* var. *microspora*.

Later, we moved onto the track and saw a pale fawn jelly, which we thought was *Tremella globispora*, growing on a wooden road marker. However, Virgil Hubregtse’s microscopical work showed it to be *Ductifera sucina*, its

short-cylindrical spores, some slightly curved, (c. 12.x 6-7 µm), abundance of racquet-shaped structures (probasidia), and long, granular gloeocystidia (c. 35-85 x 6-9 µm) matching the features described by R.F.R. McNabb (1966) in ‘New Zealand Tremellales II’ (*New Zealand Journal of Botany* v. 4, pp. 533-545). This is a global species.

Numbers of the black, hemispherical



Philoita aurivella

Photo: Paul George

Daldinia grandis (*D. concentrica*) had formed on dead Acacia trunks. The common name Cramp Balls comes from the folk lore that carrying one in your arm-pit would cure cramps! *Galerina patagonica* was prevalent on fallen logs and stumps, it had a typical caramel cap with a pointed nipple in the centre and a stem with a ring. However, in the afternoon in the area across the road we saw one with an unusually large cap – 75mm diameter, as compared to the usual size of ca 45mm.

After lunch we walked up the track on the other side of the main road. Here, surprisingly was the third *Hypoxylon* for the day – the purplish patches of *H. aff. placentiforme* growing on a Mountain Ash log. This is characterised by the colour, habit of growing in

patches, and with inconspicuous perithecial mounds.

Nearby, on a small euclypt branch were several examples of a tiny white *Mycena*. The fruit-body had a white convex cap with slightly pale brown centre, decurrent, widely-spaced gills and the stem was white at the top, but brown below. It was attached to the substrate by a white disc. Further study showed that it was not Frosted Bonnet *M. piringa* which has adnate gills at-

tached to a collar. This is another unknown ‘tiny white *Mycena*’ or maybe *Hemimycena* etc. etc.

On a log Richard found several small masses of tiny orange balls most cemented together in a mass and looked somewhat like excreted seeds. They were not soft, but firmly gelatinous. Each individual ball was probably about 2mm across, and they had massed to form a group to about 13mm.

Paul discovered pale brown *Peziza repanda* cups growing on the trunk of a tree. According to B Fuhrer (*A Field Guide to Australian Fungi*, revised 2011, no 519, page 332) ‘This very large cup fungus is found on a variety of organic materials, including dead

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

Ductifera sucina Photo: Ed Grey

wood and discarded household waste such as carpets, paper and rotting vegetation’.

Another interesting find was that of *Pholiota aurivella* group, a large golden species growing on a standing dead Acacia trunk. Its most notable feature was the extremely slimy cap, which had ‘gloop’ dripping off the margin. The stem was also very shaggy with fibres that had trapped the mature brown spores. Scales on the cap, brown spores and a shaggy stem is consistent with the genus *Pholiota*. This was a single specimen but it usually grows in clusters. We saw this previously at Emerald Lake in 2006 when Arthur Carew identified it then. In UK fungi books it is often given the name Golden Scalycap (R. Phillips *Mushrooms*, 2006, p211e).



In the car-park under a Spruce (*Picea* sp.) were numbers of a white coral growing in the grass. These usually formed densely branched tufts to 50mm high with blunt tips (some were single clubs). The spore print is white and this is probably an introduced species that closely resembles *Clavulina rugosa* (formerly *Clavaria rugosa*) (R. Phillips, *Mushrooms*, 2006 p345e).

Ed Grey & Pat Grey

There was a misidentification of the snake in the FSG Rushworth article in FFN 225. The information came via experts at DSE.

Erratum: The snake in the FSG report, FFN No.225, page 7, is a Dwyer’s Snake, not a juvenile Eastern Brown Snake.

Ray Gibson



Fauna Survey Group

A Taste Of Things To Come

Thermal Imaging Cameras

Recently I was loaned a FLIR PS-2 thermal imaging camera. This model displays heat sources as a white image while different temperatures show as white or grey. At the push of a button this changes to black and with another push it changes to red and white.

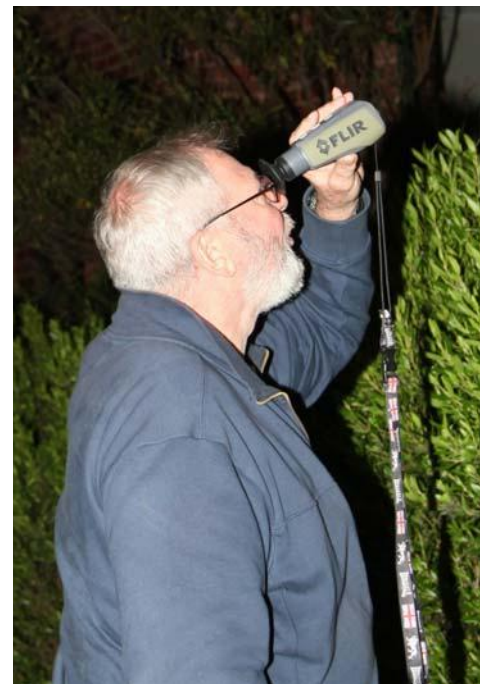
We conducted surveys in Lysterfield Park and another in Churchill National Park, with mixed results. When the subject was in the open, the results were impressive with animals clearly seen several hundred metres away, usually as a white silhouette. Detecting possums in trees was a different matter as they blended in with the heat from the trees and were difficult to distinguish.

Leadbeater surveys in the Central Highlands had similar results. The Greater Gliders were too high to be

detected with the camera. However, there were two interesting results. One was seeing bats flying along the track. The other was tracking a buzzing noise in the undergrowth. I found a white spot that was at first stationary then weaved its way into the open, flew in a circle and then flew off. I assume it was a beetle off for a night’s feeding.

The next trip was to Mount Rothwell Sanctuary, near Little River, where we searched for various animals. Again in the open the camera was impressive with Wallabies, Pademelons and Rufus Betongs readily seen. Heading up into the hills, the rocks confused the issue, giving off their own heat signatures but we found Southern Brown Bandicoots, Eastern Barred Bandicoots and more Rufus Betongs on the grasslands between the rocks.

The PS-2 would be a useful tool for working in the open doing surveys in grasslands or looking for stock. The only limitation that I found was in thicker bush seeking arboreal



Ian with the camera. Photo: Julie Simms

animals.

In the future one can hope for a more sensitive model that will find the animals that we survey for. In the conditions that it performed well in, it was an impressive tool but in the woodland where we needed it the clutter from the tree trunks and branches obscured our target animals.

Julie Simms



Day Group



Lynsey Poore spoke at the September meeting of Day Group on "*Plants of the Little Desert and Western Grampians*". Central to her presentation were many beautiful photographs taken in the field in both these locations. It is almost impossible to give a purely written report on such a talk. Through lack of space I have only been able to deal with the Little Desert Section of her presentation and then only with some of the many species covered. However, I would like to mention the delight Lynsey took in finding and photographing the Flying Duck Orchid, *Caleana major*, (photo above) in flower in the Grampians.

Lynsey was kind enough to send me a copy of her notes and a few of her images. Any errors which might have crept into this summary are mine. On behalf of the FNCV I would again like to thank Lynsey for sharing her knowledge, her wonderful images and her great love of plants with us.

The Little Desert was declared a National Park in 1988 and now extends from the Wimmera River in the east to the South Australian border. Differing soil types give rise to a varied and diverse range of vegetation which is alive with wildlife and spring wildflowers. The park was also set aside for the preservation of the Malleefowl. Its annual rainfall averages 489mm.

The Little Desert National Park is anything but a desert, supporting a diverse vegetation ranging from woodlands of Yellow Gum, Red River Gum and Black Box through to open woodlands of Desert Stringybark to expansive Desert Banksia and Sheoak heathlands. More than 670 species of native plants are to be found

with over 40 vascular plant species recorded in the Park and adjacent road reserves classified as rare or threatened in Victoria.

The Pomponderoo Hill Nature walk.

A very sandy area with scattered Eucalypts. The walk loops around typical desert vegetation. *Banksia ornata* is the dominant shrub and is found on the sand hills. It was named by Mueller in 1853. The flower colour varies from yellow to golden with a distribution extending from the Grampians and Little Desert as far west as Kangaroo Island.

Among the plants Lynsey photographed were:

- A marvellous display of Golden Pennants *Glischrocaryon behrii*, a perennial with yellow flowers which change colour as they age.
- *Hakea muellerian*, the Desert Hakea is very floriferous with needle shaped leaves. It grows in sandy areas and is perfectly adapted to a dry climate with the leaves having a hard outer cuticle. Under the Hakea revision in 1999, this species is now known as *Hakea mitchellii*.
- *Melaleuca uncinata* was in full bloom. Its common name is Broom Bush, which was earned from European settlers who would use the branches to sweep their homes. In more recent times it has been used to make brush fences.
- Sweet Apple-berry, *Billardiera cymosa* - climber which flowers in a cyme from October to November. The genus honours the French naturalist Labillardiere and was named by James Smith in 1793.
- Hibbertias were common including *Hibbertia sericea* the silky Guinea-flower. Another Hibbertia, was *H. virgata* or the Twiggy Guinea-flower, a fairly open shrub.
- *Leptospermum myrsinoides* or the Silky Tea-tree is a common shrub with soft leaves.
- The Hop-bush *Dodonaea viscosa* flowers from October to December with eye catching red to brown shiny winged hop-like fruits.
- A very special find was the Horned Orchid, *Orthocercus strictum*, found in heathlands, closely related to the genus *Diuris* with green, brown or

blackish flowers each with two narrow spreading sepals.

- *Dillwynia hispida*, the Red Parrot-pea, flowers on long peduncles from October – November.

The Keith Hateley Nature Walk.

The soils are very different making for a different array of woodland vegetation.

Among the images shown were:

- A clump of Yellow Mallee *Eucalyptus incrassata*. A eucalypt widely distributed in semi-arid zones. It is useful for honey production and the roots are used for fuel.
- *Eucalyptus leucoxylon*, growing in clay-rich soils with smooth bark, was the dominant tree.
- The desert Stringbark, *Eucalyptus arenacea*, is the only type of stringbark in the park.
- *Melaleuca uncinata*, Broombush grows 1-3m high. Its terete leaves which taper to a distinct hooked point are a distinguishing feature, (uncinate)
- A different broom, *Baeckea behrii*, looks similar to tea-tree but its leaves and fruit are distinctive.
- Wallowa or *Acacia calamifolia*. Wallowa means 'wattle tree' It produces copious flowers and seeds and is a favourite food of Malleefowl and the Bronzewing Pigeon.
- *Acacia glandulicarpa* the Hairy-pod Wattle, it is a rare plant with a very limited distribution. Found near Dimboola and Nhill.
- Oyster Bay Pine or *Callitris rhomboidea* is an important food for parrots and cockatoos.



- *Calytrix tetragona*, Fringe Myrtle. (Photo above). The genus *Calytrix* is an endemic genus of about 70 species with the main distribution in the

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

SW Province of WA. From the Greek, *calyx*, calyx; *thrix*. hair; refers to the hairs at the end of the calyx. This species has a wide distribution from Qld., NSW., Vic., Tas., SA. and WA. It was named by Labillardiere, the French naturalist noted for his descriptions of the flora of Australia. He was a member of the voyage sent to search for La Perouse.

The Stringybark walk.

This area showed a great diversity of plant life including woodland and Eucalypt species. The understory included widespread Golden Pennants.

Featured plants included:

- A spreading patch of Creeping Muntries, *Kunzea pomifera*. Its fruit resembles a tiny apple hence ‘*pommum* - apple and ‘*ferre*’ – to make or produce.
- Grey Mulga, *Acacia brachybotrya*, grows 2 -3 m high and has stiff hairy grey-green phyllodes.
- *Melaleuca neglecta*, the Mallee Honey-myrtle, with narrow leaves
- *Calytrix tetragona*, Fringe Myrtle. A very pink form was present.
- *Hakea muelleriana*, the Desert Hakea was in full bloom. It grows in the sandy areas.
- *Melaleuca neglecta*, the Mallee Honey-myrtle, which has distinctive narrow leaves.

Joan Broadberry

Photography competition winners: Jurrie Hubregtse, Andrew Munroe, (Central Ward Councillor, City of Whitehorse), Erica Gage, Heather Eadon, Frank Holmes



Thanks to Bill Fenner for this photo

**FNCV
PHOTOGRAPHIC
COMPETITION
RESULTS**

The Inaugural FNCV Photographic Competition attracted a total of 63 photographs. In the Open section we received 20 entries in the ‘Nature at a Distance’ and 41 entries in the ‘Nature, Up-close-and-personal’ and 2 Junior entries. The Judges had a very difficult decision and deliberations took several hours. In the end the prizes were awarded as follows:

Juniors – Nature at a Distance

- 1st prize – “Australia Home”, William Roshier
- Honourable Mention – “From the Bird Hide”, William Roshier

Open – Nature at a Distance

- 1st prize – “Mariner’s Falls”, Jurrie Hubregtse
- 2nd prize – “Pied Stilts”, Erica Gage
- Honourable Mention – “Cockatoos”, Erica Gage

Open – Nature Up-close-and-personal

- 1st prize – “Gippsland Water Dragon – Genoa”, Frank Holmes
- 2nd prize – “*Hericium Coralloides*”, Jurrie Hubregtse
- Honourable Mention – “Harlequin Hatching”, Heather Eadon
- Honourable Mention – “Robber Fly”, Frank Holmes

Encouragement Award – This was awarded to these entries because the potential of the subject has been identified, but the photographer needs to work on their technique.

- “Peek a boo”, Andrew Brentall
- “Regeneration after Fire”, Barbara Burns.

Congratulations to all the very deserving winners.





Day Group Visit to Wandinong Sanctuary, Canterbury Road Blackburn

The October 2012 meeting of the Day Group took the form of a visit to Wandinong Sanctuary, a small, local nature reserve. The Sanctuary is an area of about 4.5 acres (1.82 ha) at the north-west corner of the Canterbury Road/Blackburn Road intersection. Our guide on the day was Bill Ellemor, a grandson of the original owners of the area, and a member of the Wandinong Sanctuary Advisory Committee.

Most of the area occupied by the Sanctuary was the property of the Hooke family who had bought what was a bush block, in 1913. The frontage was on to Canterbury Road and a drive led to the house, situated toward the rear of the block. An area the size of five house blocks along the eastern side of Ronley Street and contiguous with the original land, was added in the 1930s. This section of the Sanctuary, known as Houghton's Paddock at the time the Hooke family bought it, was adjacent to the Hooke family home, and is the only part of the Sanctuary that has ever been

cleared.

In 1973 the land was gifted to the City of Nunawading with the proviso that it be 'maintained for all times as a sanctuary for birds, wildflowers and native vegetation, and as a place of public resort and passive recreation'. Since then the area has been maintained by an Advisory Committee working in conjunction with Council (initially Nunawading and, since 1996, Whitehorse).

One of the interesting features of the Sanctuary is a series of trees in this additional area that were planted by Mrs Hooke. In the 1940s and 1950s, as each of her 20 grandchildren was born, a tree was planted and a marker placed next to it, indicating the name and year of birth (of both the tree and the baby). Bill Ellemor pointed out a 'scraggy hawthorne' that had been planted to mark his arrival. Over the years the original



Photo: Ruth Hoskin

markers became knocked about and overgrown and have been replaced with specially-designed metal plates adjacent to each of the trees.

Regular working-bees take place within the Sanctuary with volunteers carrying out weeding of exotic plants, and revegetating small areas with native species. The Sanctuary has good remnant stands of Wallaby Grass (*Danthonia* sp.). Wandinong Sanctuary is also a haven for birds and during the walk we were able to observe a couple of Tawny Frogmouths, one of which was nesting.

Gary Presland

FNCV Christmas Party

Saturday December 8th

Join us around 6 pm in the FNCV Hall



Relax and enjoy a BBQ with friends and members from all FNCV Special Interest Groups and celebrate another wonderful year of activities.

The club is providing meat, bread, and nibbles, please bring a salad or a sweet to share. BYO drinks.

We are planning a pictorial presentation looking back at the year's activities. **SIG leaders are requested to have about 10 images from 2012 to the FNCV office ASAP.**

Donations for raffle prizes are also needed and would be greatly appreciated (e.g. wine, gift vouchers, plants, books etc. Deliver to the office please.

Please RSVP to Hali, our office administrator by **Monday December 3rd (03) 9877 9860** or admin@fncv.org.au and let her know numbers and food you are bringing.



Marine Research Group News

Report on MRG meeting Monday 8 October, 2012: "Antarctica: some contemporary marine research" by P. Mark O'Loughlin, Honorary Associate, Museum Victoria.

Mark began with an overview of the continent of Antarctica, showing maps and also photos personally taken from his 1993 visit to the continent.

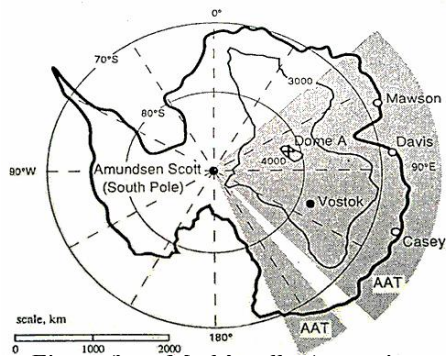


Figure from Mark's talk: Antarctica, showing the Australian Antarctic Territory (shaded).

Mark's scientific role is in the systematics, taxonomy, classification, identification and biology of the Phylum Echinodermata, composed of the classes Asterozoa (sea stars), Crinozoa (feather stars), Echinozoa (sea urchins), Holothurozoa (sea cucumbers) and Ophiurozoa (brittle stars). Echinoderms appeared in the Cambrian and have a 500 million year genealogy on earth. Some echinoderms live to more than 200 years.

Many images were shown during the talk, including the holothuroids: *Bathypolites bongraini* Vaney, 1914, Ross Sea, in situ, about 250 mm long and the largest Antarctic holothuroid; *Psolidiella mollis* (Ludwig and Heding, 1935), in situ, South Orkney Islands; *Staurocucumis turqueti* (Vaney, 1906), Davis Base shallows; *Rhipidothuria racowitzai* Hérouard, 1901, Eastern Antarctica; "Sea pig" *Protelpidia murrayi* (Théel, 1879), South Orkney Islands; Swimming sea cucumber *Enypniastes eximia* Théel, 1882, Eastern Antarctica; *Staurocucumis liouvillei* (Vaney, 1914), Davis Base; *Molpadia cf musculus* Risso, 1826, South Orkneys; and *Psolidiella mollis* (Ludwig & Heding, 1935), South Orkney Islands.

Mark has been associated with many international expeditions to the Antarctic continent and has worked on many international collections made there. He outlined some of his many scientific papers and species determinations, many in

collaboration with MV workers Melanie Mackenzie and Emily Whitfield.

As at 2010 there were a total of 187 known Antarctic holothuroids, 136 had been described, and 51 non-described; many of the latter are being currently worked-up for description.

Mark then talked about traditional morphological classification and systematics in holothuroids, including tentacle and tube feet, calcareous ring plates, wheel, hook and table ossicles from body wall and rod ossicles from tentacles, and molecular work with which phylogenetic trees are constructed. Genetic analysis in particular have shed new light on holothuroid research, an example relating to *Molpadia musculus* Risso, 1826, whose type locality is the Gulf of Nice, France, Mediterranean Sea. It was judged morphologically to be a cosmopolitan species, but the CO1 'tree' indicates three quite discrete species; it is therefore not cosmopolitan, with probably three new and undescribed species all currently called *Molpadia musculus*.

Mark and colleagues in 2012 continue their research on Antarctic holothuroids in terms of diversity, classification, the integration of genetic and morphological data, and species distribution and density studies. He talked about some key recent expeditions and his collaboration with some of the key personnel thereon. In June 2011 Mark, Melanie Mackenzie and Emily Whitfield also undertook a contract with the University of Lodz in Poland to identify a large unidentified collection of holothuroids from surveys in Admiralty Bay in the South Shetland Islands and to conduct a Marine Science Summer School for the University.

Mark concluded by acknowledging the heroic endeavours of Ernest Shackleton and Douglas Mawson in the exploration of the Antarctic continent.

We wish him and his co-workers continued success with their research, and thank him for his interesting presentation and for supplying an electronic copy of the talk, from which this summary has been compiled.

Selected references:

O'Loughlin, P.M. and Vanden Spiegel, D. (2010). A revision of Antarctic and

some Indo-Pacific apodid sea cucumbers (Echinodermata: Holothuroidea: Apodida). 67: 61-95. *Memoirs of Museum Victoria*. (presents 8 new species).

O'Loughlin P.M. & Whitfield E. (2010). New species of *Psolus* Oken from Antarctica (Echinodermata: Holothuroidea: Psolidae). *Zootaxa* 2528: 61-68. (presents 3 new species).

Report of the MRG field trip to Whites Beach, Cape Bridgewater, Portland region, Thursday 16 February, 2012.

Highlights here included a good variety of anemones, the chiton *Rhyssoplax diaphora*, large examples of the chiton *Plaxiphora albida*, the limpet *Patelloida victoriana*, the microgastropod *Turbonilla beddomei*, and the sea star *Aquilonastra scobinata*.

Report of the MRG field trip to Dutton Way, near Portland, Friday 17 February, 2012.

Notable finds included *Stenochiton cymodocealis* on the stems of *Amphibolis antarctica* seagrass and the uncommonly seen opisthobranchs *Oxynoe viridis* and *Scyllaea pelagica*.

Report of the MRG field trip to the Jawbone, Williamstown, Wednesday 11 April, 2012.

This area, consisting of rocky reef, sand, seagrass and muddy areas, has often been surveyed by the MRG over the decades. It again revealed a good mix of invertebrate life. Highlights included the chiton *Ischnochiton lineolatus*, three species of Nassarius (*pauperatus*, *burchardi*, and *pyrrhus*), the opisthobranch *Philine angasi* with egg balloons, 9 species of bivalves including the heavy cockle *Anadara trapezia* and the delicate *Solatellina biradiata*, and three cephalopod species (the pygmy squid *Idiosepius notoides*, the dumpling squid *Euprymna tasmanica*, and the blue ring octopus *Hapalochlaena maculosa*). A variety of crustaceans and echinoderms (largely asterozooids) were also recorded.

This (belatedly) concludes the reporting for the 2011-2012 field trip season. Many thanks to all who participated, and also to Leon Altoff and Audrey Falconer for organising the fieldwork.

P. Vafiadis

Extracts from SIG reports tabled at the last FNCV Council Meeting:

Juniors' Group

The September meeting fell in the middle of the school holidays so attendance was less than usual. Leon Altoff from the FNCV marine group spoke on 'Marine Life at the Water's Edge' which included many wonderful photos and videos of various marine creatures.

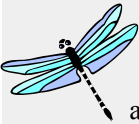


Our October 14th our excursion to Werribee Gorge was a on lovely sunny day. 24 of us walked and explored the river walk. Being spring the flowers were out and many insects and birds including Wedge-tailed Eagles soaring above us. We all enjoyed the fascinating geology of the area and how remote it felt inside the gorge.

Photo right

Terrestrial Invertebrate Group

The TIG met last Wednesday. Fifteen members listened to John Wainer talk about his passionate hobby of beetle collecting. John, who did his higher degree on marsupials, has been a beetle collector since he was a young boy. Before he was old enough to drive, John travelled by train to beetle collecting locations around Melbourne and into the country regions in a manner similar to the early days of the FNCV. He has a large collection of properly labelled and stored beetles, and he brought along a small part of his collection for viewing.



Botany Group

Thursday 18th October, Brian Bainbridge from the Merri Creek Management Committee spoke about the Grass land conservation in the Merri Creek catchment. He described the Plains Yam Daisy reintroduction project. The Plains Yam Daisy is different to the normal flood plain daisy and probably originally came from America. It was a very interesting presentation with much discussion after.



Sunday 21st October, a small enthusiastic group met at the Ngarri-djarrang Grassland in Davidson Street, Reservoir. It was extremely interesting to see the difference between the areas that had been burned in March this year, to last year and the year before. In the most recently burnt area there were Chocolate Lilies and Burchardias, as well as a large number of Sun Orchids with unopened flowers. The surrounding area showed an edge effect with more weeds, as could be expected. This edge area is slashed regularly by Melbourne Water to try and prevent the seeding of weeds. The Plains Yam Daisy reintroduction area is covered with wire to prevent grazing. The daisies were introduced in 2010 just before the rains, in a damp spot, which then became too wet. A beautiful grassland in a sea of suburbia.

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