



Understanding Our Natural World
Est. 1880

Field Nats News No.255

Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.

1 Gardenia Street, Blackburn Vic 3130

Telephone 03 9877 9860

P.O. Box 13, Blackburn 3130 www.fncv.org.au

Newsletter email: fnews@fncv.org.au

(Office email: admin@fncv.org.au)

Editor: Joan Broadberry 03 9846 1218

Founding editor: Dr Noel Schleiger

Reg. No. A0033611X

Office Hours: Monday and Tuesday 9.30 am - 4 pm.

August 2015

From the President

I am committed to participating in as many of the activities of our organisation as I can and I continue to be amazed by the diversity and productivity of the membership. Once again I can thoroughly recommend the Fungal Forays on Sundays. The walks are pleasant, the activities are not arduous and the interest level is high. The last Fungi Group meeting was most informative and we all learned more about the critical role of fungi in the environment. (If you don't already have a copy, the FNCV Fungi CD is an excellent investment at \$15.00.) The Microscopy Group meeting had an excellent presentation on parasites and diseases affecting the aquaculture of fish. At the Marine Research Group meeting there was an interesting and informative presentation on shark breeding and conservation.

Sir David Attenborough, in his recently televised meeting with U.S. President Barack Obama pointed out that it was difficult to expect people to respect the environment when they had no knowledge of, or understanding of, nature. Hence there is an urgent need to increase environmental education. The FNCV already contributes significantly to community education through its activities and publications and we may be able to increase our participation in the future. The Website and Facebook presence are excellent portals to the

FNCV. Channel C31 is also an effective showcase for Community activity and it may also be worth considering as a potential avenue for making our presence known. The production of a short video on our activities, involving all of the SIGs, would be

an effective way to reach the broader community.

The 2015 Symposium information has been advertised and distributed to the FNCV membership, to our associated organisations and others. Make sure you book early to guarantee a seat; I believe there will be a good response. A few people have asked me about the title; in particular the word Anthropocene. Anthro = man/humans and cene = new. The Anthropocene is a proposed geologic epoch that begins when human activities started having a significant global impact on the Earth's ecosystem and biodiversity. Those speaking at the Symposium will be embracing a range of the human activities that are adversely affecting our environment and its biodiversity.

After the last Microscopy Group meeting, I took home some pond water that was literally brimming with microscopic life; its high biodiversity indicating a healthy pond. In particular, it contained large numbers of *Chlorohydra viridissima*, a green hydra.

(Continued on page 3)



Above & right:
Images of *Chlorohydra*
sp.

Photos: Max Campbell.

The deadline for the September issue of Field Nats News will be **10 am on Tuesday 4th August**. FNN will go to the printers on Tuesday 11th with collation on 18th.

Index	Page
From the President	1, 3
Calendar of Events	2
Members' news; Extracts from SIG reports to Council	3, 3,14
Fungi Group Reports: Forays to Moonlight Creek & Jack Cann Reserve,	4, 5
News from the Bookshop	6
Biodiversity Symposium— Program & Registration	7,8
Coates Wildlife Tours (adv)	9
Day Group Report: Members' morning	10,11
From the Office; Notices	11
Fauna Survey Group Report: Warby Ranges Survey	12
Marine Research Group: Field work Port Campbell	13



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.

August

Saturday 1st - FNCV Members Working Bee: *Replant & mulch the gardens* Meet at 9.30am at the FNCV hall. Bring some elbow grease and tools!. Contact: Barbara Burns 9846 2608

Monday 3rd – Fungi Group Meeting: *Fungal tall tales – Two years in New Zealand.* Speaker: Dr Teresa Lebel who is a senior Mycologist at Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne with a special interest in truffle-like fungi and related agarics. Contact: Virgil Hubregtse 9560 7775

Tuesday 4th - Fauna Survey Group Meeting: *Biodiversity on the Islands off Mexico.* Speaker: Jose Barredo. Contact: Robin Drury 0417 195 148; robindrury6@gmail.com

Monday 10th – Marine Research Group Meeting: Speaker: To be advised. Contact: Leon Altoff 9530 4180 AH; 0428 669 773

Saturday 15th – Geology Group Excursion: *Melbourne's World-class Fossil Site.* Professor John Buckeridge of RMIT University will lead this morning excursion of the Beaumaris fossil beds. Numbers are limited and participants **MUST** register with Rob Hamson robhamson@hotmail.com.au or 03 9557 5215. Please also leave a phone contact number. Meet at 9 am at the blue and white ceramic seat by Beaumaris Life Saving Club at the southern end of the Ricketts Point car park (Melway 86 C9) which is south of the Teahouse. The excursion will be on foot from the starting point and returning there by 12 noon. The walk is about one kilometre. There are toilets at the car park. Car parking costs \$5 an hour or \$15.90 all day. Participants may wish to park elsewhere and walk to the meeting point. If you do park in the car park, the nearest ticket machine as at the end of the bitumen before you get to the gravel car park by the Life Saving Club.

Sunday 16th Botany Group Excursion—*10 am planting at Clyde Grasslands.* Juniors invited. For more details and directions, contact Sue Bendel 0427055071

Tuesday 18th—Collate FNN. Starting about 10.00 am. All welcome. Contact Joan Broadberry 9846 1218

Wednesday 19th - Microscopy Group Meeting: *Antarctic Marine Science Studies.* Speaker: Mark O'Loughlin. Contact: Philippa Burgess 0428 669 773

Thursday 20th – Botany Group Meeting: *Seed collection from local plants.* Speaker: Heather Eadon. Contact: Sue Bendel 0427 055 071

Monday 24th - FNCV Council Meeting - 7.30 pm sharp. Agenda items and apologies to Wendy, 98779860 or admin@fncv.org.au

Tuesday 25th – Day Group. Meeting: *An introduction to the fascinating natural world as revealed by the microscope.* Led by Philippa Burgess and Max Campbell. Please bring natural history items you would like to examine under the microscope. Meet at 10.30 am for coffee and a chat. Program at 11 am. Contact Joan Broadberry 98461218

Wednesday 26th – Geology Group Meeting: *Volcanoes of the Hamilton Area: Effusive & Explosive Eruption Products* Speaker: Julie Boyce. Research Associate, Monash Volcanology Research Group. Contact: Ruth Hoskin 9878 5911; rrhoskin@gmail.com

Friday 28th – Juniors' Group. Meeting: 7.30 pm. *Party Night— theme: Australian Mammals.* Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474; toclairref@gmail.com

Sunday 30th – Juniors' Group Excursion: *Bandicoot Search at Cranbourne Botanical Gardens* Meet 1.00 pm at the visitors centre at the entrance to the Australian Garden. Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474;



The policy of the FNCV is that non-members pay \$5 per excursion and \$3 per meeting, to contribute towards Club overheads. Junior non-member families, \$2 per meeting and \$4 for excursions.

Members' news, photos & observations

We always have space for member 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
Welcome

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

Judy Calvert, Stephanie Johnson, Clare Tindall, Jessica Fraser, Tony White, Alejandro Marantelli.

(Continued from page 1)

This small freshwater cnidarian is bright green, as the name suggests because it contains chlorophyll in the form of symbiotic Zoochlorellae.

I was able to observe them for some time and set up a colony which is still thriving and increasing. It always a delight to examine pond water under a microscope.

Max Campbell

Below: *Chlorohydra* sp. showing a new, budding individual Photo: M. Campbell



Vale Pip Winter

Pip Winter, formally known as Pearl Greenhut, joined the Field Naturalists Club in 1992. She took a lively interest in a number of aspects of natural history from Botany to Marine Research and made many friends in the Club. It is with great sadness that we learned of her recent passing. Our sincere condolences to her family.

WORKING BEE

Thank you to those who attended the FNCV working bee on Sunday 15th June.

Sally Bewsher
Jackie Waring
Barbara Burns
Ray Gibson
June Anton
Max Campbell

There was not a large turnout for the working bee in June but nonetheless a lot was achieved by those present. The garden was much improved and a lot of mulch was distributed through the garden beds. The next working bee is on August 1st. I hope to see you there. There is always plenty of work to do and many hands make the tasks easier.

Max Campbell

Thanks to the editorial and layout team who put together FNN 255

Joan Broadberry
Wendy Gare
Sally Bewsher

Extracts from SIG reports given at the last FNCV Council Meeting

Juniors' Group: May speaker: Max Campbell gave us a great talk on scorpions and he had plenty of scorpions to show us. We looked at some under microscopes and some under UV light – one even had babies on its back! Victoria has only nine species of scorpions. They can have 6-12 eyes and are covered in a hard exoskeleton. All scorpions are predators and feed mainly on insects and other arachnids. Scorpions are cannibalistic and some females will attempt to eat the male after mating. Some scorpions sit and wait for their prey while others leave their burrow and hunt for food. Most scorpions feed by eating the head of their prey first. Scorpions give birth to live young and the young climb on to their mother's back until their first moult. Scorpions can live for quite a long time even up to nine years. Scorpions avoid high temperatures and are active mostly at night and many live in underground burrows.

June Excursion: On Sunday 7th, 29 of us met ranger Tony Fitzgerald at St Andrews and drove together to an area within Kinglake National Park. We first got a fire going for us to cook lunch on later and went to check nest boxes with an inspection camera. We found nest material of leaves in several of the boxes, which was evidence of sugar gliders using the nest box, and we found sugar gliders in two of the boxes (which we could see on the camera screen). It was unclear with a few of the boxes as to whether there was an animal inside and Tony climbed a ladder to inspect the box.

We were hoping to see bark nest material, which would indicate the endangered phascogale had been making a nest, and would have been very happy to see a phascogale or two - but it was not to be.

While walking between nest boxes we came across some giant Bolete fungi, a kangaroo skeleton and a tiny red mite. When all the boxes were checked we warmed up next to the fire and cooked jaffles, toasted marshmallows and made "s'mores".

(Continued on page 14)



Fungi Group

FUNGI GROUP FORAY 10th May 2015

Moonlight Creek Area

Mount Worth State Park protects a remnant of the forests that once covered the western Strzelecki Ranges. Tall wet forests of Mountain Ash, Mountain Grey Gum and Blackwood grow on the hills and slopes. Soft Tree-ferns *Dicksonia antarctica* and Rough Tree-ferns *Cyathia australis* flourish within the sheltered gullies.

This turned out to be a very wet foray for some 14 forayers who gathered to brave the rain. We were pleased to once again welcome members of the Friends of Mt. Worth State Park. Under the guidance of Jurrie Hubregtse, we started in the car-park looking at a range of fungi – lichens to an *Exidia* sp. (a jelly with embedded dark dots of ostioles) – on a dead branch and then to a large *Agaricus* sp. growing on the ground. These were used to illustrate the range of fungal types to be found in the Kingdom of Fungi. Then we walked along the Giants Circuit Track where the growth of the weedy Buttercup made finding fungi difficult. However, the tall, greyish fruit-bodies of *Mycena cystidiosa* with its associated sterile stipes stood out and were abundant and widespread through the day.

Dead rachises of Soft Tree-ferns *Dicksonia antarctica* yielded numbers of the minute, white-capped- blue stemmed *Mycena* sp. ‘Tiny Blue Lights’ and Reiner Richter had this to say ‘One species I have been keeping my eye out for over the past year is the undescribed species *Mycena* sp ‘Tiny Blue Lights’. This appears to be a relatively common species and I have seen it many times now’. Collections were made and we were greatly helped by the keen eyes of our forayers.

Early searches of tree-fern stems failed to show any Coral Fungi, but two yellow flatworms sparked interest, as did one example of the parasitic *Paecilomyces* (*Isaria*) *tenuipes* growing in an insect pupa. The short, yellowish stems had white feathery tops. This is the asexual stage (anamorph) of *Cordyceps takaomontana* although the actual *Cordyceps* (teleomorph) has not yet been reported in Australia. Later, however, several small branched corals were found on tree-fern stems. They were small, pale ochre colour with multiple branches tapering to acute

tips. At first it was thought to be *Ramaria ochracea* because of its fine delicate look, but the spore print was white, not yellow-brown. Therefore this was *Ramariopsis kunzei*.

Sue Bendel noticed the small *Marasmius cylindraceocampanulatus* (growing on a tree-fern stem. This distinctive species has a yellowish fawn deep, cylindrical cap with truncated top and wavy margin (3 mm diam, 5 mm deep) and a long stem, while the gills are few and widely-spaced. See Gates and Ratkowsky p 115 (*A Field Guide to Tasmanian Fungi*, 2014 by G. and D Ratkowsky).

Reiner Richter: ‘Another species we were looking out for was also an unnamed fungus, this time a *Hydropus* species that a talented member of the group will have a go at formally describing. We saw this species at Mt Worth last year, but it had faded from my memory since. Here it seems to favour the rough, lower bark of living or fallen Blackwood Wattle trees *Acacia melanoxylon*. Seeing it again reminded me that I encountered it in the Otways recently too (April 4th at Melba Gully and April 6th at Grey River). Both times they were growing on rotten wood but I can’t recall specifically the type’.

The following characteristics are noted by Genevieve Gates and David Ratkowsky in *A Field Guide to Tasmanian Fungi* 2014 p 88: ‘They are *Mycena*-like on account of their slender stature and white spore print. They grow on wood, soil and litter, have a slender pale dry stipe which often blackens, and are drab grey or dark grey in colour.’

Later, on the Moonlight Track, more *Laccaria* species were found growing in litter among under Acacias. These had orange-brown caps to 50 mm diameter and distant, deep, orange-pink gills. Their size, colour and habitat pointed to *Laccaria* sp. D. (*Larger Fungi of South Australia* by CA Grgurinovic 1997). These were also seen near the car-park and on the Giants Circuit and always associated with Acacias. Along the same track, on a small woody twig, was a scattered group of minute, yellow discs. Their size – all less than 1mm diameter and spore size 8-8.5 x 3µm indicated these

were *Bisporella sulfurina* rather than the more common *B. citrina* which has larger fruit-bodies and larger spores.

Along this track, Sally Green showed Richard Hartland the dead, standing tree-trunk on which several fruit-bodies of the Coral Tooth *Hericium coralloides* (photo below) with their delicate, long, hanging spines, were growing.



Hericium coralloides Photo: R. Hartland

Reiner Richter ‘After returning to the car park with some time on my hands I went along another track to look for things seen last year (we spent all day elsewhere this time). Most things were fizzers (and the pouring rain didn’t help) but I did find *Physalacria australiensis* (syn *P. inflata*) (photo below) again.



Physalacria australiensis Photo: R. Richter

Last year they were in a decayed condition and we couldn’t be sure of what they were. Unfortunately by the time I returned to the car park most people had left but Carol Page seemed happy to see them and accurately described their shape as that of a capsicum, if a lot smaller at only around 5mm high. *Physalacria australiensis* is quite rare so I’m privileged to have seen it on three other occasions this year’.

After hearing about this we were disappointed that we had not hung around! They are enclosed white inflated sacs on a long stem, which first develops as a hollow sphere and with age becomes like a deflated balloon.

Thanks to the forayers and photographers Pat Grey, Richard Hartland and Reiner Richter

Ed and Pat Grey

FUNGI GROUP FORAY

17th May 2015

Jack Cann Reserve

Blackwood

After a cold damp week, the sun was shining for our foray at Blackwood this year. Jurrie Hubregtse decided that we would first explore in a different area this year, so we headed south from the Garden of St. Erth carpark. We were not disappointed with what we found. The exotic Fly Agaric *Amanita muscaria*, the purple capped *Russula integra*, a *Tricholoma* species, and truffle *Rhizopogon luteolus*, (photo below), were found under pine trees near the car park. Paul George found some half-buried truffles. One potato shaped truffle was about 40mm in diameter, the other one half as big. The outer surface was brown with small hair like structures on one side. The genus name *Rhizopogon* means bearded root. The inside was a drab colour. One visitor asked if the truffle was edible. One reference I have read described this genus as being of poor quality. If you can afford it, stick to the real French truffles.

Near the pines we saw the Rooting Shank *Oudemansiella gigaspora*. One specimen had an almost black cap, which contrasted with bright white gills and tall stem. The first *Mycena* species seen was *Mycena austrofilipes*. This species has a greyish brown cap on a tall pale grey stem. Also on ground litter was *Mycena subvulgaria*. This species has small grey fruit bodies with a dimple in the centre and a very slippery stem. The Bleeding *Mycena kuurkaceae* has a brownish red cap, the gills are white with red edges and the stem bleeds when cut or broken. The bright yellow *Hygrocybe chromolimonea* was the only wax cap seen on the foray.

Down the hill there were tall Manna Gums, Messmate and Blackwood trees. One fallen log was covered with the yel-

low-stemmed fruiting bodies of the *Mycena epipterygia* group. These specimens had a cucumber smell that is a feature of some of this group. Many of the caps were missing with only the yellow stems remaining. The blue Pixie's Parasol *Mycena interrupta* made a fine display on the side of a small upright log. On the side of the track were some beautiful *Leucoagaricus rubrotinctus*. The caps were 50mm in diameter, with radially fibrillose reddish-brown streaks on a white background. The gills and the 80mm stem were white. The white ring on the stem was coloured with a narrow rim of brown on the upturned edge.

Along the Great Dividing Trail near the creek more species were seen. A group of the Fairies Bonnets *Coprinellus disseminatus* were noticed on the ground above the track. These would have been in association with unseen buried wood. Seen on the side of a large log was the Burgundy coloured *Tubaria rufofulva*. The caps, gills and stem are all the same dark red colour. On the cut face and side of another large log were the tiny tawny orange-brown caps of *Xeromphalina leonina*. The caps are attached to the log by a tiny eccentric stems. At the bottom of a disused water race were the large funnel-shaped fruit bodies of *Clitocybe clitocyboides* with their decurrent white gills. Another fruit body nearby with decurrent gills



Rhizopogon luteolus Photo: Paul George

was *Leucopaxillus eucalyptorum*. The smooth light brown caps of this species have a rolled under edge. I was surprised that we did not see *Austropaxillus infundiliformis* on this foray. This early season species has been common in other areas of the Wombat Forest in

the last few weeks.

After lunch we headed in the opposite direction towards the Lerderderg River. Under some pine trees we found three more exotic species. Some people intended to pick some Slippery Jacks *Suillus granulatus* to eat. One small specimen of the Saffron Milk Cap *Lactarius deliciosus* was seen. The pores on *Suillus bovinus* were large, angular rather than round. These pores were radially aligned and were slightly decurrent on the stem. Along the track north of the Lerderderg Road we were hoping to see the Earpick fungus *Auriscalpium* sp. on the Peppermint tree where we had seen it in previous years. We did not find it. In earlier years we found it in early July, so it might appear later on.

One Fungimap target the Rhubarb Bolete *Boletellus obscurecoccineus* was seen. This specimen had a brilliant red cap, bright yellow pores and scales on stem which yellow at the top grading to deep red at the base. We did see a beautiful blue *Cortinarius rotundisporus*. Before lunch we saw a small group of the slimy purple capped *Cortinarius archeri*. Another Cortinar was the green *Cortinarius austrovenetus*. Coral fungi species were not common, but one we did see was the pale fawn *Artomyces colensoi*. This genus is found on wood. On the ground was found a young specimen of *Ramaria botrytoides*. The branches of the fruit body were pale pink at this stage and somewhat whiter on the stout stem near the ground. A wide variety of other species were seen on the foray. Pat Grey recorded over eighty species for the day, so we enjoyed a good day at Blackwood this year.

Les Hanrahan

PS On a tiny piece of stick Ed Grey noticed a '?Marasmius' (photo below) with a cap diameter of 0.54 mm, and a thin white stem 20 mm long. I could hardly see it, but Reiner Richter was able to take a wonderful photo. This showed that the cap is convex, brown and fibrillose, with a dark brown column at the apex on top of which is a paler nipple. The gills are white, covered with cystidia, and appear attached to a collar, and the stem is central and white.

Pat Grey

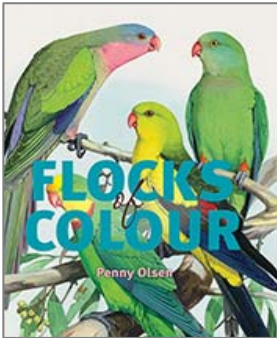
? *Marasmius* Photo: Reiner



NEWS FROM THE BOOKSHOP

This month I have included a couple of different types of books for you to have a look at. After the recent passing of William T. Cooper I have purchased copies of two of his most recent titles with the most recent (*Pigeons & Doves in Australia* – June FNN) soon to be available after issues with the binding required a reprint. The three titles on the silviculture of Victorian State Forests have kindly been presented to the bookshop by Peter Fagg, a co-author, and contain loads of information about certain parts of our forests, which will make interesting reading for those who enjoy studying these ecosystems. The launch of *Handbook of Road Ecology* is planned for mid-July and currently no stock or member price is available, but this should be resolved soon. If you have any questions, would like to order or inquire about a book, please send me an email to, bookshop@fncv.org.au to submit your order or make an inquiry.

Kathy Himbeck

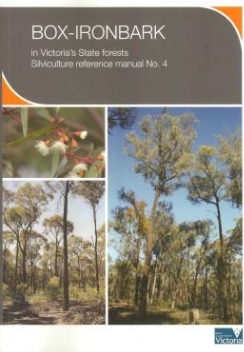
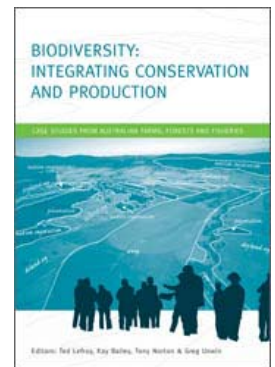


***Flocks of Colour* (Olsen)** covers two and a quarter centuries of discovery and illustration of Australia's avifauna. This beautiful book takes a close look at parrots in Australia, from the first published illustration of an Australian parrot (a Rainbow Lorikeet collected live on Cook's 1770 voyage) to William T. Cooper's twentieth century watercolour of the elusive Night Parrot. The book features a rich portfolio of images of all the Australian parrots, by various artist including John Gould, Edward Lear, Neville W. Cayley and William T. Cooper.

(PB, 224 pp., 2013) RRP \$39.99, Members \$32.00

***Biodiversity: Integrating Conservation and Production* (Norton, Lefroy, Bailey & Unwin)** is a collection of 17 case studies that provides a view from the ground level. It includes heroic accounts of families who changed their way of farming and their relationship to the land so significantly they found they could stop hand-feeding stock during a drought and see the bush coming back. It tells of a group of wheat growers who plant patches of grassland for beneficial insects that save them tens of thousands of dollars a year in pesticide bills.

(PB, 272 pp., 2008) RRP \$89.95, Members \$38.00

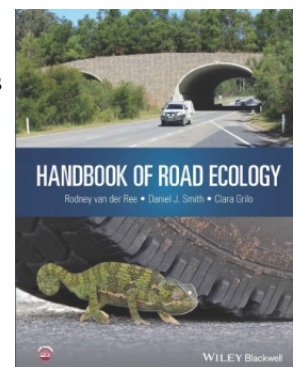


***Box-Ironbark in Victoria's State Forests: Silviculture reference manual No. 4* (Fagg & Bassett)** is one of three in the series that have recently become available to be purchased through the FNCV bookshop. The other two titles are: *High Elevation Mixed Species in Victoria's State Forest* and *Low Elevation Mixed Species in Victoria's State Forests*. While the purpose of these books is related to the commercial aspects of forest management, they do include significant coverage of ecological aspects and it is well worth having a look at a copy in the bookcases when you are next at the clubrooms.

(PB, 137 pp., 2014) . RRP \$20.00 Members \$15.00

***Handbook of Road Ecology* (van der Ree, Smith & Grilo)** is an authoritative volume with 62 chapters from >100 of the world's leading researchers, academics, practitioners and transportation agency personnel from 25 countries. The book spans the project continuum, from planning, approval, funding, design, construction, maintenance, with the need for research and monitoring emphasised throughout. This book provides solutions to each of the ecological impacts that linear infrastructure has, plus ensuring that if adopted, the altered transportation networks can still achieve economic growth while avoiding or minimising the negative ecological and environmental outcomes.

(HB, 552 pp., 2015) . RRP \$212.00 Members To be advised.



***Journey into the Invisible: the world from under the microscope* (Schlitt)** gives children a brand-new way of looking at the world we live in, while making the information inside approachable and interesting for young readers. Discover how microscopes are made and what they are actually used for, then begin the exploration! Discover fascinating facts and incredible images of plants, insects, rocks, water and even the human body.

(HB, 80 pp., 2013) RRP \$21.99, Members \$17.50



The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.

"Understanding Our Natural World"

Annual Biodiversity Symposium 2015

'Impacts on Biodiversity During the Anthropocene'

**Venue: FNCV Hall, 1 Gardenia St, Blackburn
Sat 12 Sept & Sun 13 Sept 9.30am - 4.30pm**

The FNCV presents a two day program covering aspects of the impacts of human activity on biodiversity and the environment. Human activity has impacted on the biosphere for thousands of years (the Anthropocene) and continues to do so at a dramatically accelerated rate. This two day symposium will include 16 presentations on various aspects of those impacts.

Note: MORNING TEA, LUNCH and AFTERNOON TEA included each day

Speakers include: Prof. Tim New
Prof. David Karoly
Dr Andrew Woolnough
A/Prof Alan York
Phil Ingamells
Dr Pam Whiteley
Andrew Christie
Dr Elizabeth Minchinton
Dan Gilmore
Dr Rebecca McIntosh
Dr Melody Serena
Dr Nick Williams
John Harris
Dr Sapphire Mc Mullan-Fisher

Topics include: Climate Change
Emerging Diseases
Fire strategies
Feral Animals
Cattle in the High Country
Myrtle Rust
Marine Debris and Fur Seals
Impacts on Amphibia
Stygofauna
Urbanisation impacts
Invasive Marine Pests
Platypus Conservation
Impacts on Insects
Fungal Biodiversity
And more:



For more information or to register, contact:

Max Campbell 0409 143 538

FNCV Office 03 9877 9860 www.fncv.org.au



The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.

‘Understanding Our Natural World’

Biodiversity Symposium 2015

“Impacts on Biodiversity During the Anthropocene”

Venue: FNCV Hall, 1 Gardenia St, Blackburn

Sat 12 Sept & Sun 13 Sept 9.30am—5.00pm

The FNCV presents a two day program covering aspects of the impacts of human activity on biodiversity and the environment. Human activity has impacted on the biosphere for thousands of years (the Anthropocene) and continues to do so at a dramatically accelerated rate. This two day symposium will include 16 presentations on various aspects of those impacts.

Speakers include: Prof David Karoly Andrew Christie Dr Andrew Woolnough John Harris
Prof Tim New A/Prof Alan York Dr Melody Serena Dr Elizabeth Minchinton Dr Nick Williams
Dr Pam Whiteley Phil Ingamells Dan Gilmore Dr Rebecca McIntosh Dr Sapphire Mc Mullan-Fisher

Note: MORNING TEA, LUNCH and AFTERNOON TEA included on both days

For more information contact Max Campbell 0409 143 538 or the FNCV office 9877 9860 Mon & Tues 9.30 - 4 pm or



admin@fncv.org.au

Name: _____

Organisation: _____

Address: _____ P'code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Dietary Requirements: _____

	Either Day		Both Days	
Registration & payment by 25/08/2015	FNCV Members:	\$60	Sat <input type="checkbox"/>	\$110
	Concession:	\$45	Sun <input type="checkbox"/>	\$80
	Non-members:	\$75		\$135
	Concession:	\$60		\$110
				Includes GST

PAYING BY (Please tick) : Cash Direct EFT

Visa MasterCard Cheque

Direct EFT payment option:

*Bendigo Bank BSB 633-000 Acc No: 123098725
Name: The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.
Please use your name with "Symposium" as your
reference*

Cardholders Name: _____

Signature: _____ Exp /

Number attending	<input type="text"/>
TOTAL \$	

Return registration form by **25 August 2015** to: FNCV Inc., PO Box 13, Blackburn Vic 3130

OR: Scan & email to: admin@fncv.org.au



Coates Wildlife Tours

Specialists in Nature Tours since 1986

- Informative naturalist/birding leaders
- Small groups (6 – 12 participants)
- Private charters available
- Fully accommodated and camping tours



Western Explorer

13 Day Camping Tour – Departs Newman 11th August 2015

Highlights: Karijini N.P, Mt Augustus and Kennedy Ranges.

Good early winter rains throughout the Pilbara should ensure the Northern wildflower season is full of colour. This trip is designed to coincide with the wildflower season and provides the opportunity to explore the wonderful Karijini, Mt Augustus and Kennedy Range National Parks.

Helena Aurora Ranges and Great Western Woodlands

15 Day Camping Tour – Departs Perth 19th September 2015

Join us and experience the wonders of the world's largest temperate woodland, including the historic woodlines (where timber cutters operated from 1899 to 1964) and the ironstone Helena Aurora Ranges. All at the time of the year when the wildflowers will be at their best.

W.A.'s Mid West Wildflowers

10 Day Accommodated Tour – Departs Perth 5th September 2015

See botanical hot-spots north of Perth during wildflower season. The trip covers a diverse array of landscapes with the farm lands of the wheat belt, the station country around Mt Magnet and Yalgoo before covering the highlights of the Kalbarri National Park and the northern sandplains around Eneabba, Badgingarra and the Mt Lesueur National Park.

Lorna Glen and Canning Stock Route

11 Day Camping Tour – Departs Perth 22nd August 2015

Join us as we explore the remote DPaW controlled Lorna Glen Station North East of Wiluna, Western Australia. The station supports an extraordinarily rich array of flora and fauna with more than 480 vascular plant species and 220 vertebrate species identified. There is also a strong Aboriginal connection with Sydney Head/Imbin Rockhole and we will spend time looking around this area.

W.A.'s South West Birds and Botany

15 Day Accommodated Tour – Departs Perth 9th October 2015

Join our birding and botanist guides to explore the biodiversity of this extraordinary region.

Costa Rica Wildlife Safari

12 Day Accommodated Tour - Starts San Jose 3rd November 2015

Tour this pristine wildlife paradise on one of the most exciting wildlife expeditions we have offered. Expect to see a diverse array of bird life, plants, mammals and reptiles.

New Zealand South Island Wildlife and Wilderness

15 Day Accommodated Expedition – Starts Queenstown 13th February 2016

Highlights: The breathtakingly beautiful lower South Island and Stewart Island. Three of the country's national parks plus the unspoiled coast of the Catlins region and the Otago Peninsula.

Sri Lanka Wildlife, History and Culture

18 Day Accommodated Tour – Starts Colombo 14th March 2016

Highlights: Yala and Bundala National Parks. Kitulgala and Sinharaja Rainforests, historic Sigiriya and Polonnaruwa. Whale watching at Mirissa. This trip has it all, Mammals - Elephants, Leopard, Monkeys, Deer, Mongoose just to name a few. The plant life is varied from rainforest to open plains plus each year we have recorded sightings of over 200 species of birdlife including. All this plus local culture and wonderful historic sites and some great walks. If you want a great naturalist guide to make sure you see the best of Sri Lanka then this is the tour for you.

Pilbara Reef and Ranges

Day Camping Tour – Departs Perth 5th April 2016

Join us as we explore the wildlife highlights of the Western Australian coast including the Abrolhos Islands, Shark Bay and the Ningaloo Reef before travelling in land to experience the spectacular Karijini National Park.

Contact us for further information on these and other natural history expeditions.

Ph: 1800 676 016 or 08 9330 6066 Web: www.coateswildlifetours.com.au Email: coates@inet.net.au



Day Group

Trees and forests in Germany & Scotland. *Speaker: Peter Fagg*

Peter Fagg, a retired forester visited Europe in mid 2014. Having a professional knowledge and interest in forests, on his travels, Peter sought out and photographed many species of trees. Not all were indigenous. He visited sites which included parks and botanical gardens. This allowed him to examine tree species from around the world.

Berlin is one of the greenest cities in Europe. One of its signature trees is the Linden or Lime tree, *Tilia cordata*. Berlin's Botanical Gardens, created between 1897 and 1910, are extensive. Peter commented that parts are left unmanicured, therefore being more reminiscent of natural forest.

Trees photographed in the gardens included:

- A huge Silver Poplar, *Populus alba* with a girth of 4.8 metres
- European Larch, *Larix decidua*
- *Ginkgo biloba* (China) - a species having a plant order to itself: a living fossil, being widespread at the time of the dinosaurs.
- Giant Redwood, *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, native to coastal California.
- Swamp Cypress, *Taxodium distichum*. The trunk was surrounded by 'cypress knees', distinctive lumpy structures growing above the roots which help them breathe in swampy soils.
- Rowan Tree (in berry), *Sorbus aucuparia*

In the Berlin Botanical Gardens greenhouses Peter was interested to find specimens of Australian tree ferns and of the Western Australian Flowering Gum, *Eucalyptus ficifolia*.

Berlin's oldest tree is said to be an 800

year old English Oak, *Quercus robur*, its trunk having a diameter of more than two metres. A hollow shell, but still living tree, in Bavaria may be as much as 1200 years old. While visiting the Tegel Forest, north-east of Berlin, Peter recorded a landscape containing trees such as Linden, Beech, Pine, Oak and Fir. In the beautiful Ludwig Forest in Bad Koetzing Bavaria, he photographed an outdoor theatre seating 150-200 people, surrounded by the forest.

Peter concluded his presentation with images from Scotland, which included:

- Scots Pine, *Pinus sylvestris*, (Balmoral), one of the largest and longest-lived tree in the Caledonian Forest
- Himalayan Cedar or *Cedrus deodara*, (Inverness)
- Monkey Puzzle, *Araucaria araucana*, (Glasgow)
- A section through a Douglas Fir, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*, in the Glasgow Museum. A ring count records it to be 600 years old.

Middlebrook - An Adventure in Conservation. *Presented by Hazel and Edward Brentnall*

In 1972 the Victorian government was still paying a bounty for clearing bushland. Three families decided to do the reverse and club together to buy a property containing native bushland which they would conserve and restore. One of those families was FNCV members, Edward and Hazel and their children. After much searching, the group finally found Middlebrook, a 75 acre property near Grantville, owned by a retired railway worker and leased for agistment of cattle. It was very degraded but affordable. After two years one family pulled out and was replaced. Seven years later, ill health forced the replacement family to retire. So two

families continued and completed 37 years at Middlebrook, finally selling in 2009. Below is a summary of their 'adventure in conservation' as presented to the June Day Group, members' morning.

As the families began the task of improving the property there were inevitably some disputes and a lot to be learned. At first, contractors were employed to weed, but there were problems, for example tree ferns were killed by careless spraying, so, in the end the group dealt with the weeds, including blackberries, ragwort, thistles and inkweed, themselves. Spraying with hand-held sprays was labour-intensive and hard work, especially in summer.

Breeding cattle was tried, but calving was fraught with danger as there was often no-one around. Eventually they switched to fattening young steers. Cutting hay then became important and was done by a neighbouring farmer. Fences were in constant need of maintenance, for instance when branches fell in storms. With fences down, chasing cattle out of the bush was an adventure, but it was necessary to learn to make repairs and master skills such as straining barb wire. The fattened steers brought in enough money to pay for the fencing, a happy arrangement.



The Bass Valley

Cattle were excluded from several large areas of the property and over time these were replanted with native trees and shrubs. More hard but rewarding work. On one memorable day a great deal was

(Continued on page 11)



(Continued from page 10)

achieved when a number of volunteer students organised by Landcare came to help.

When Middlebrook was purchased there were two wrecked structures. One was beyond repair and was eventually replaced by a large shed. The other was a hayshed, made from timber and corrugated iron sheets. This was stripped and clad with weatherboards to make a small but cosy cottage. Holidays and weekends shared with family and friends were then possible. Growing children of course loved the freedom Middlebrook offered them. A wood-burning stove was installed in the cottage. Tanks were added to provide rain water. Electricity from the grid was far too expensive so solar panels were installed for lighting and gas used for



After 20 years— Nodding Greenhoods

refrigeration.

In 1972 several species of native orchids were present, including Bird Orchids, *Chiloglottis sp.*, Hyacinth Orchids, Potato Orchids and Fink Fingers. Astonishingly after 20 years Nodding Greenhoods appeared and are now increasing in numbers. One of the most beautiful orchids found in the bushland is the Cobra Greenhood, *Pterostylis grandiflora*. Native animals recorded include Wombats, Swamp (or Black) Wallabies, Eastern Grey Kangaroos (a mob of more than 30), Lace Monitors, Tiger and Copperhead snakes (never aggressive) and one Koala.

In 2009, when the time came to sell Middlebrook, the 40 acres of original bush and the several acres of replanted area, were put under a Trust for Nature covenant. They cannot be cleared. The property was bought by a cousin of the Brentnall's partners who has continued to use the farming land. **JB**

From the Office.....



Will any members who have not already done so please let me know their email address? The best way is to send me an email at admin@fncv.org.au and I'll put you on our list. I send emails to members to let them know extra information or changes to our meetings, along with details about seminars, information sessions and events being run by fellow environmental groups.

Welcome to Geoff Lay who has joined the FNCV Council as the Fungi Group representative. There are still vacancies for two general representatives on Council. A reminder that all Council members, whether SIG representatives or other positions, have equal status.

Donations of the following items are always welcome - thank you for your generosity!

- Office paper
- Biscuits (please note that plain biscuits tend to be ignored and become stale)
- Teabags (including herbal teas)
- Toilet paper (recycled brands preferred please).

Please feel free to contact me at the office if you need help or information: you can be certain that I welcome any emails or phone calls from you. If I don't have the answer, I usually know who does, and your query will be referred to them. I'm here every Monday and Tuesday, and some Fridays.

Regards **Wendy Gare**
Administration Officer

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP PUBLICISE THE FNCV:

Whitehorse Festival—Sunday 18th October. Whitehorse Civic Centre, Whitehorse Rd. Nunawading 10 am—4 pm.



Music from the Wetlands: Sunday 15th November starting at 11:45 am and finishing at 5:30 pm. It is held on the Wetlands behind 1 View St Alphington 3078.

Please let the office know if you can help with a 2 hour shift to promote the FNCV on any of these dates. I

Many thanks to those who helped collate and label FNN 254

Sheina Nicholls
Margaret Brewster
Andy Brentnall
Neil McLachlan
Barbara Burns
Keith Marshall
Ray Power

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

Advertising in the Field Nats News

VERY REASONABLE RATES

Contact Wendy in the Field Nats Office

admin@fncv.org.au
9877 9860

(Mon -Tues 9.30—4)



Fauna Survey Group

Warby Ranges Survey

On the Queen's Birthday weekend, the Fauna Survey Group ventured to the Warby-Ovens National Park, west of Wangaratta. The weather was fine and sunny, though cold at night. Our aim was to survey for birds and arboreal fauna listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, including Squirrel Gliders, Brush-tailed Phascogales and the 24 bird species of the Victorian temperate-woodland bird community.

We had 18 attendees including first-timers Linda and Peter Rogan, Martin Banning and Samantha Ellis. This project was a collaboration with Parks Victoria and we were joined by Dr Mark Antos from PV Science and Management Effectiveness Branch. We were well supported by the local Wangaratta Parks Office, in particular, Rick Hiskins, who helped out on many of the activities.



The cameras have just been retrieved and Squirrel Gliders were detected at a further two sites. Good day time images of Yellow-footed Antechinus and a Yellow-tufted Honeyeater were recorded, along with shots of the usual suspects including

Black Wallaby, Eastern Grey Kangaroo, Common Wombat, Koala, Common Brushtail Possum, Short-beaked Echidna and Black Rat. We did not detect any Brush-tailed Phascogales, even though they are regular inhabitants of Box-Ironbark forests in other parts of Victoria.

Everyone worked hard and we were able to complete two bird and spotlight surveys at each of 10-five hundred metre transects, mainly within the Killawarra Forest area at the northern end of the national park. We were also able to deploy 21 cameras at 11 sites. There was still some free time to go exploring this beautiful part of Victoria.

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



Killawarra has proven to be an important component of the network of Victorian parks in its support of threatened species and communities.

Robin Drury

Photos by John Harris: *Left:* Diamond Firetail, *above:* Squirrel Glider, *Below:* Yellow-footed Antechinus.





Marine Research Group News

Report on MRG field trips to the Port Campbell region, March, 2015.

Unfortunately, persistent bad weather, strong on-shore winds and heavy seas prevented access to the lower littoral zone, and so our records were generally quite restricted to upper littoral fauna. Highlights of the sites visited are presented below:

Peterborough (Tuesday 24 March)

2015 highlights: The microgastropoda *Eatoniella atropurpurea* and *Pisinna approxima*; large specimens of the littorinids *Afrolittorina praetermissa* and *Austrolittorina unifasciata*; a freshly moulted shore crab *Leptograpsoides octodentatus*.

Curdies Inlet, Peterborough

(Wednesday 25 March, 2015) highlights: The microgastropoda *Ascorhis tasmanica*, *Tatea rufilabris*, and the murchisonellid *Koloonea* cf. *moniliformis*; the microbivalve *Arthritica semen*; and the crab *Amarinus laevis* (the latter also recorded at Aireys Inlet estuary last year). The Inlet seemed to have been closed to the sea for some time.



Amarinus laevis, Curdies Inlet, Peterborough, 25/3/2015: Photo: John Eichler.

Point Ronald, Gibson's steps area

(Thursday 26 March, 2015) highlights: The anemone *Oulactis muscosa* in abundance; the microfissurellid *Puncturella harrisoni*; the columbellid *Pseudamycla dermestoidea*; the oxynoid 'opisthobranch' *Roburnella wilsoni*; the sea spider *Anoplodactylus evansi*.

Loch Ard Gorge (Thursday 26 March, 2015) highlights: The pulmonate snails *Marinula xanthostoma* and *Siphonara tasmanica*, both quite common.

Wreck Beach, Moonlight Head (Friday 27 March, 2015) highlights: The 'by-the-wind sailor' *Velevella velevella*, freshly washed in, some nearing 50 mm in maximal diameter; the microgastropods

Anabathron lene, *Pisinna dubitabilis*, *Lironoba australis*, *Eutriphora armillata* and *Syrnola aurantiaca*; the gastropods *Mitra carbonaria* and the rarely seen *Conus clarus* and *Macteola anomala*. Interesting nudibranch records included *Polycera janjukia* and the uncommonly seen *Digidentis arbuta*. The microbivalve *Notomytilus ruber* was a pleasing intertidal record. The crab *Leptograpsus variegatus* was a rare MRG record for Western Victoria.

Update on the microgastropod family Calopiidae Ponder, 1999

This family of microgastropods is endemic to Australia and consists of one genus which held 4 species: *Calopia laseroni*, *Calopia minutissima*, *Calopia imitata* and *Calopia burni*. *Calopia imitata* occurs from northern Queensland to southern New South Wales and *C. burni* is restricted to Victoria, whereas the other two species are exclusively subtropical/tropical. A recent molecular phylogeny of the family (Hallan, Golding, Burghardt, 2015) shows that *C. burni* is identical to *C. imitata*, and thus has been synonymised to this species. Therefore, *C. imitata* represents a wide-ranging species with varying shell morphology. All Victorian records of *Calopia burni* Ponder, 1999 should now be known as *Calopia imitata* Ponder, 1999.

References and further reading:

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

Hallan A, Golding R, Burghardt I (2015). A molecular phylogeny of the Calopiidae (Caenogastropoda: Truncatelloidea) with a taxonomic reassessment of *Calopia imitata* Ponder, 1999. *Journal of Molluscan Studies*. Published online doi:10.1093/mollus/eyv023).

Platon Vafiadis

Right (above) Compiling a record of the day's field-work.

Right: After each day's survey, photography and further research takes place in a 'lab' set up with equipment brought from Melbourne.

Photos: Joan Broadberry



Above and below: Surveying the reef at Gibson Steps, Port Campbell.



Right: John Eichler recorded and photographed *Cantharidis ramburi* on a later visit to Peterborough.



(Continued from page 3)

Fauna Survey Group: On the weekend of 16th and 17th May, a small, but dedicated group of eight FSG members conducted a survey in Rushworth State Forest to check 126 nest-boxes. Four Phascogales, 48 Sugar Gliders and even a Brushtail Possum in a broken box were home when we called. In addition, we kept up our maintenance schedule and carried out repairs on a few nest boxes and installed a couple of renovated boxes.

At our June Meeting, Euan Ritchie gave another fascinating update on the state of the remote camera study and the work being done in the extremely rugged Torricelli Mountain Range of PNG, to conserve rare tree kangaroo species such as the Tenkile. Photos of many other rarely seen mammals were also shown.

Euan also told us about another venture that he and Jen will be conducting later in the year, **The Big Roo Count**. 10 years ago, Euan and Jen spent 4 years investigating the ecology and conservation of Australia's tropical kangaroos and wallabies, collecting first-of-its-kind information on four different species (Antilopine Wallaroo, Common Wallaroo, Eastern Grey Kangaroo and Agile Wallaby). This winter, they are returning to repeat the work they did a decade ago on some of the field sites, using the new technology of remote cameras.

Their journey can be followed on facebook, twitter and @scidocmartin, using the hashtag #BigRooCount. We look forward to Euan's report from this adventurous trip at a future meeting!

Fungi Group: Since the last FNCV Council meeting the Fungi Group has held four forays and one meeting. Our forays were held at The Bump (near Powelltown), The Ada Tree (Yarra State Forest), Mortimer Nature Trail (Bunyip State Park), and Wanderlore Sanctuary (Warburton Highway, Launching Place). All forays have been well attended, with 14 to 20 people, including visitors, participating.

At our meeting, Reannon Smith was our guest speaker. Reannon was a successful candidate for the Jim Willis Studentship, and has been working with Dr. Tom May at the Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. Reannon spoke about her work with Cortinari species and described the process she went through in order to name a new species.

Geology Group: On 27th May, the Geology group was treated to an intriguing story told by Jim Enever of the Central Australian ruby rush in the 1880s with its "boom and bust" and twists of fraud and misrepresentation. In 1885-6, David Lindsey, an explorer, commissioned to explore the Hartz Range area in Central Australia, noted a massive field of what he identified as rubies. This caused a rush on mineral licences to the area and in the subsequent rush, the first collectors picked up 30 to 40 thousand alluvial stones in two weeks! By mid 1888, 800 claims were made and nearly 600 square miles of country were pegged out. At least 23 mining companies, in particular in England, were set up and millions of pounds invested. But the controversy as to what the stones actually were - garnets (of much less value) or rubies - developed into intense rivalry between the two extreme groups. After much expert authority, it was realized that they were not rubies, but an unusual type of garnet. Late in 1888, the area was rapidly abandoned and the Great Ruby Rush finished. It was a most interesting and intriguing talk.



Field Nats News 255



The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.
P.O. Box 13
BLACKBURN VIC 3130
Reg.No. A0033611X

**PRINT
POST
100002072**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**