



Understanding Our Natural World  
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# Field Nats News No.208

Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.  
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Patron: Governor of Victoria  
Prof. David de Kretser AC

Office Hours: Monday and Tuesday 9 am-4 pm.

May 2011

## From the President

Welcome to the May edition of the Field Nat News. As is often the case, there is news to share with all. The new roof is on the hall, an occasion that stopped the last Council meeting so that we could all admire the view. Someone around the club, who shall remain nameless, had a thought pop into their head about me admiring the view, ala the "colourbond" television commercial. I set their mind at ease quite quickly. (Photo below)

Can I thank all of those members that have donated to the Presidents' Roof Appeal, or assisted in the fund raising efforts so far. If you are yet to donate and would like to do so, please feel free to contact Hali. Our latest fundraiser is a raffle to be drawn at the AGM. See p8.

### Annual General Meeting

Our AGM is on Sunday May 1<sup>st</sup> and all members are welcome to attend. Alison Houghton will be giving a presentation on her oral history of the club as the "main feature". There will be other presentations such those from the 2010 Environment Fund recipients and the announcement of the 2011 recipients. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible there for this meeting. *Invitation p8.*

### SEANA Autumn Camp-out

At the recent SEANA camp-out at Anglesea hosted by ANGAIR, I along with my fiancée Kathy and a handful of other members took the opportunity to attend. While we were only there for the Saturday, it was interesting to meet other naturalists from across the state. I found it a little daunting to be in a crowd of around a hundred people and know only about 10 of them, but it was a great opportunity to network all the same. My main

purpose was to advertise the Spring Camp-out to all the attendees.

### SEANA Spring Camp 29<sup>th</sup> October – 1<sup>st</sup> November

It is our turn to host SEANA members for a spring camp-out. The weekend leading into the Melbourne Cup was chosen. The location will be Wonthaggi due to the many, varied opportunities for naturalists, from the Wonthaggi Heathlands, to rocky platforms and the "Dinosaur Coast", the site of many significant fossil finds by Monash University and others.

If you would like to register an expression of interest for information this camp-out, please email [seanacamp@fncv.org.au](mailto:seanacamp@fncv.org.au) or contact Hali. More information p9.

### Farewell for Governor David de Kretser

This is one of those slightly "off beat" occasions that one, as President, has to attend from time to time. As Governor de Kretser was Patron of our organisation, as were his many predecessors, the FNCV was invited to attend his farewell at Government House.

Having never been to Government House, I took the opportunity to dress up and along with Kathy attended on behalf of the FNCV. As a mark of his involvement and respect amongst the community there were

Due date for June newsletter  
**Monday 2nd May** FNN will go to print on the 10th May , collation Tuesday 17th.

several hundred guests in attendance from all walks of life – sport, religion, community groups, charities etc. I had the opportunity to personally thank him for being patron of the FNCV and wished him well as he returns to the field of medical research. A very pleasant evening indeed.

John Harris  
President



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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

### May

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> – FNCV AGM Annual General Meeting** – Come and join in this important event in the life of our club. Details p8. RSVP by 29th April Contact: FNCV Office 9877 9860 ; admin@fncv.org.au

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Fungi Group Meeting - Review of autumn forays.** Contact: Virgil Hubregtse 9560 7775

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> - Fauna Survey Group Meeting.** -“*Putting the bite back into biodiversity conservation: what roles for predators?*” Speaker: Dr. Euan G. Ritchie, Lecturer in Ecology, School of Life and Environmental Sciences, Deakin University. Contact: Ray White 9308 3770 AH.

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> – New Members’ Night Meeting** – 7.30 pm. Come and meet our newest members, or just find out more about the club. Contact: FNCV Office 9877 9860: admin@fncv.org.au

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> – Fungi Group Fungal Foray** – 10.30 am Bunyip State Park (Gembrook), Mortimer Reserve Picnic Ground, off the Gembrook-Tonimbuk Road (MEL key map 14) Contact: Virgil Hubregtse 9560 7775

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> – Marine Research Group Meeting - Field trip roundup.** Presentation of some of the interesting animals we have seen over the past field work season. Contact: Leon Altoff 9530 4180 AH: 0428 669 773

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> – Bat Group Grey-headed flying-fox count.** Meet at Yarra Bend Golf Course carpark Mel 2D G7 at 5.15 pm. RSVP Megan Davidson, m.davidson@latrobe.edu.au or phone 9380 5062 AH.

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup>– Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> - Fauna Survey Group Field Trip - Rushworth Forest.** Checking nestboxes for phascogales, sugar gliders and other surprises. Contact: Ray Gibson 0417 861 651. *Prior bookings essential (at least one week before trip).*

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> – Fungi Group Fungal Foray** – 10.30 am Coranderrk Bushland We will meet in Healesville Sanctuary carpark near the main gate. (MEL map 278) Contact: Virgil Hubregtse 9560 7775.

**Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup>—Collate FNN 209** About 1 pm in the hall. Contact Noel Schleiger 9435 8408

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> – Terrestrial Invertebrates Meeting - “Competition in Ant Assemblages”.** Speaker: Dr Heloise Gibb from the Zoology Department at La Trobe University. Contact: Alan Yen 0409 194 788 or FNCV office.

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> – Botany Group Meeting - ‘Orchid recovery’.** Speaker Karen Lester. Contact: Sue Bendel 0427 055071

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> - FNCV Council.** 7.30 pm sharp. Agenda items and apologies to Hali, 9877 9860 or admin@fncv.org.au

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> – Fungi Group Fungal Foray** – 10.30 am Greens Bush, Baldry Crossing (MEL 254 G6). Contact: Virgil Hubregtse 9560 7775

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> – Day Group Meeting** – 10.30 am for coffee and a chat. **Film presentation 11 am ‘The curious Mister Gatesby’** (18th century naturalist, scientist and artist explores the New World). Contact: Gary Presland 9890 9288

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> – Geology Group Meeting** – Speaker: Neil McLachan. *Travels in Greenland and Svalbard.* Contact: Kaye Oddie 9329 0635

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> – Junior Group Meeting** – See Junior Nat. Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474; toclaire@gmail.com

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> – Fungi Group Fungal Foray** -10.30 am Cathedral Range State Park (MEL 610 T9). Meet at Ned’s Gully car park. Contact: Virgil Hubregtse 9560 7775



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

# Members' news, photos & observations

We are reserving a page in future issues of FNN for natural history observations, member news and photos. It is just so easy these days to let us know what you have noted in your life, your travels or perhaps your garden. So how about it? Email: [fnnews@fncv.org.au](mailto:fnnews@fncv.org.au) by Monday May 2nd.

## Vale

We regret to announce the deaths of Hilary Weatherhead and Geoffrey George Shepperd.

Hilary was elected in 1975 and played a very active part in the club during the 1980's and 1990's. She was a keen botanist, with a particular interest in fungi. A full tribute to Hilary will appear in *The Victorian Naturalist*.

Geoffrey Shepherd was elected in 1945 as a Country Member from Creswick, and became an Honorary Member in 1985.

Our condolences go to their families.

## WEB SITE—HELPWANTED!!!

The club needs someone to run the website. Do you have knowledge of Dreamweaver, and could spare about an hour a month? If so, call Hali in the office on Monday or Tuesday 9 am to 4 pm or email at [admin@fncv.org.au](mailto:admin@fncv.org.au).

If you know Dreamweaver but don't want to commit to running the website we would really appreciate some short term help and training. Contact Hali

The attached photos, (upper surface and underneath), were taken by my wife on 18th February last. A rather handsome specimen using the Hills Hoist.

Regards Ken and Michele Hancock



G'day, - Recently my wife and I were driving along the Great Ocean Road heading west from Melbourne, when we pulled into a public car park a few kms from The Twelve Apostles. We saw what at first I thought was a rat. On closer inspection it appeared to be a bandicoot so I took a few photos. What confuses me is that I thought, firstly, bandicoots only came out at night and this was closer to midday, and secondly, he was not frightened by our presence: more annoyed that he was disturbed while eating.

I would welcome your thoughts.  
Cheers, Martin



## Juniors' Easter Camp

I am now taking bookings for the Easter camp from April 22<sup>nd</sup> until Monday 25<sup>th</sup> at Clarkesdale Sanctuary, Linton. A group of us were there on Sunday and it's going to be awesome!

Cost will be \$10 a night per campsite plus \$5 a family to cover extra costs. Please let me know if your family are planning to come – even if you have already expressed an interest. I need to have your membership number, mobile contact No., and ages of each child. If you don't have current membership it is only a cost of \$18 for the main member and \$7 for extra family or friend..

If you would like to bring a friend who is not a member just let me know and they can pay \$7 to me at camp to join your families membership for the rest of the year.

Please contact Claire Ferguson 8060 2474; [toclaire@gmail.com](mailto:toclaire@gmail.com) if you have any enquiries.

## Thanks to the editorial and layout team for FNN 207

Joan Broadberry  
Noel Schleiger  
Platon Vafiadis  
Hali Ferguson  
Sally Bewsher

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





## Geology Group

### Speleothems and their Connection to Paleoclimate

*Talk by Helen Green, 23rd March 2011*

Helen is a Ph.D. student at the School of Earth Sciences, University of Melbourne, where she is working on a project to improve our understanding of climate changes since the last glacial maximum, 20k years ago. Her particular field of study is the proxy records to be found in speleothems (cave deposits), which are particularly useful as they occur in many parts of the world and some have been deposited over a very long period of time.

There are relatively reliable measurements of global temperatures starting in the 1850s and measurements of other parameters followed. This base line is not long enough to understand climate well enough to predict changes in the future, so proxy data is used to fill in the picture of climate change before instrumental records. Proxies include:

- Ice cores - only available for high latitudes;
- Tree rings (dendrochronology) - limited to about 10,000 years;
- Ocean sediment cores - most of the globe, but only marine sediments;

- Lacustrine sediment cores;
- Coral growth - only marine in warmer climates;
- Cave deposits (speleothems) - terrestrial.

Helen explained that climate has not changed steadily over the last 20k years. There were periods, such as during the Younger Dryas, 12,900 to 11,700 years ago, when there was a sudden interruption to the gradual warming after the end of the last glaciation. Cold conditions prevailed for about 1200 years before a very rapid warming of about 8° in 10 years. This change is clearly identified in ice cores from Greenland. However the evi-

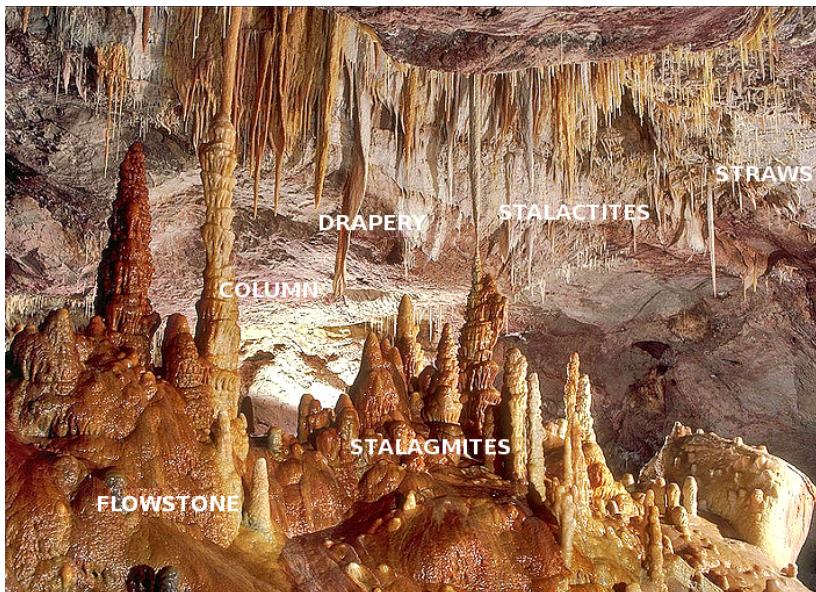


Photo: Dave Bunnell

dence from the southern hemisphere is unclear as ice cores from Antarctica indicate warmer conditions at that time, but the Franz Joseph Glacier in New Zealand advanced.

The asynchronous changes in the northern and southern hemispheres may have been caused by a collapse of the system of global ocean currents that move energy from the tropics to higher latitudes. The northward flow of warm tropical water in the Atlantic may have shut down, causing changes on a global

scale, though cooling may not have been global.

The changes at that time may be relevant to today's changes and therefore there is a need to better understand their cause, timing and extent. Cave deposits may fill in some of the gaps. Stalagmites, stalactites and flowstones, are a rich archive of terrestrial paleoclimate information, with stalagmites having the most uniform deposition.

Cave deposits are formed when limestone, which is relatively soluble in rainwater that contains carbon dioxide from the air, dissolves to form calcium bi-carbonate in solution. This solution percolates downward through joints and crevices which are gradually widened, eventually forming caverns and tunnels. Where the bi-carbonate solution drips into the caverns, it evaporates, and in so doing loses carbon dioxide to precipitate calcium carbonate (calcite).

Cave deposits have advantages as a source of proxy records of past climate:

- They are widely spread and at all latitudes;
- They are sheltered from erosion;
- They often cover relatively long periods of time;
- They are amenable to radiometric dating;

Techniques used to make proxy measurement include:

- Uranium decay, in which the U/Th ratio is a proxy for age;
- Oxygen isotope ratio, which varies with the climate above the cave - a very low  $^{16}\text{O}/^{18}\text{O}$  ratio indicates a wet climate or season, and a higher ratio indicates drier conditions;
- Carbon isotope value. The carbon in atmospheric carbon dioxide is 1.1%  $^{13}\text{C}$  and 98.9%  $^{12}\text{C}$ . Photosynthesis in most plants (C3) discriminates against the  $^{13}\text{C}$ , but photosynthesis in some plants (C4), usually tropical,

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

such as sugar cane, does not, and therefore the bi-carbonate seeping to the limestone below has a higher proportion of  $^{13}\text{C}$  in warmer times.

- Annual band thickness is used as a proxy for the amount of rainfall.
- Trace elements. Mg/Ca and Sr/Ca ratios in stalagmites increases in drought years due to prior calcite precipitation in stalactites.

Helen's project will utilise U-series dating methods alongside high resolution analysis of stable isotopes of oxygen and carbon together with trace elements, hosted in speleothem calcite to help construct a reliable and detailed record of south east Australia's response to paleoclimatic fluctuations over the last twenty thousand years.

The Geology group would like to thank Helen for her interesting and well illustrated talk on a subject we have a lot to learn about - climate change.

**David Gibson**



## “Three editions of *Wildflowers of Victoria:* A Rollercoaster Ride.” Talk by Dr. Meredith Fletcher

The March Day Group enjoyed an excellent presentation by historian Dr. Meredith Fletcher. Meredith is writing a biography of Jean Galbraith (1906-1999). Her talk was entitled, “Three editions of *Wildflowers of Victoria: a Rollercoaster Ride.*” We were honoured to have several members of Jean's family in the audience. Meredith's address brought together many fascinating themes. These included: learning about native flora before the existence of field guides; changing attitudes towards native wildflowers over the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the association between Jean Galbraith and the FNCV. Most vividly she painted a portrait of a remarkable woman and her development as a botanist and a writer.

Jean Galbraith was born in Tyers, Gippsland and lived there throughout her long life of 93 years. She was the eldest of four, with three younger brothers. Her mother, father and brothers shared a love of books, gardening, plants and nature. Jean grew up in a large and caring family following Christadelphian beliefs. Together they explored the beautiful bushland of the Latrobe Valley, Strzelecki Ranges and surrounds. Jean left school at 14, but with her keen intelligence and wide reading ensured a life-long process of self education.

Dr Fletcher, holding a copy of *Wildflowers of Victoria*

## Day Group

Meredith read us some lovely extracts from field notebooks compiled when Jean was a teenager, containing observations and botanical descriptions of plants. These show early examples of her lyrical writing style. She also grew native shrubs and wildflowers in her garden, Dunedin, keeping notes on their progress.

A most important event took place October 1922. Jean attended the FNCV's wildflower extravaganza, which was held annually in the Melbourne Town Hall. It must have been a revelation for her to discover wildflowers from all over Victoria and interstate all carefully labelled. Sixty-years later she wrote, “It was a miracle.” Jean met the chief organiser of the show, H.B. Williamson, Principal of Dandenong High School and a noted botanist of the time. They corresponded until his death in 1931 and he contributed greatly to her botanical education. She joined the FNCV in 1923 and learned much from its members and from club excursions, but also started to contribute articles to *The Victorian Naturalist*. At age 19, Jean was asked to write a series “Australian Native Flowers” for *Garden Lover* monthly magazine. This column continued in various forms for more than 50 years. Her warm, chatty writing style and mastery of her subject attracted thousands of devoted readers.

Winifred Waddell now enters the picture. Winifred, a passionate botanist and early conservationist, (with a great story of her own), realised wildflowers were under threat partly from ignorance, as so little was known about them by the general populace. She got together finance, found a publisher and asked Jean to be the author of an accessible field guide to wildflowers. At this stage Jean's parents, (for whom she had been caring), had passed away and she had the time, knowledge and writing skill for the task. She knew she would also need the help of the Herbarium to complete

(Continued on page 6)







# Terrestrial Invertebrate Group

The Terrestrial Invertebrate Group held a short excursion to the extension of the Blackburn Lake Reserve at the end of Gardenia Street. The main objective was to show the dozen participants how to catch insects using an insect net, beating plants with a stick over a beating tray, sieving some leaf litter, and simply by direct searching. A small number of specimens were retained and brought back to the FNCV office. Participants were shown how insects were killed, labelled and stored (pinned). An introduction on how to identify insects was also presented.

Alan Yen

**FOUND ON  
TIG EXCUR-  
SION ON  
MARCH 20th**

One of the participants on the TIG excursion on Sunday March 20 left a set of notes on butterflies. If you want these back, please contact Hali in the office.

*Below: Collecting insects from a beating tray using an aspirator.*



*Sieving leaf litter for insects.*

*(Continued from page 5)*

the work. Herbarium botanist Jim Willis had been corresponding with Jean since 1937, and was another important mentor who greatly encouraged and aided her at this time.

Unfortunately an unrealistic deadline of only six months was set by the publisher for the writing of the book. The race was on. The three participants, Jean Galbraith, Jim Willis and Winifred Waddell engaged in flurry of correspondence, telegrams and visits to the Herbarium. Plants of Victoria was organised into 100 sections arranged in botanical sequence from ferns to daisies. Over 1000 of the then 2200 known wildflowers were described. 175 photos were contributed by FNCV member and photographer, F.J. Bishop. The deadline was eventually extended, but on final publication in 1950 the participants were devastated to find that all corrections in the galley proofs had been ignored. However, this very first accessible wildflower field guide was extremely well received and its 4000 print run

was sold out by 1955.

The publishers wanted a second edition of 2000 copies and Jean took the opportunity for an extensive revision, also incorporating more recent material. Again to the distress of all collaborators the second edition was identical to the first, except for a limited number of corrections. All the hard work was once again ignored. Hence the word 'rollercoaster' in the title Meredith chose for her talk. The publisher pleaded practical economics and tight deadlines. However, the new edition was again received very positively by Jean's readers and reviewers.

In 1962 a different publisher was keen for a third edition, but again, after much labour, the project was nearly shelved when a Cambridge botanist recommended there was no place for non-academic botanical publication. Australian botanists mounted a spirited defence and the work went forward. Jean even ar-

ranged to sleep at the Herbarium during an intensive two weeks of rewriting. Another bombshell dropped. The firm had come under new management and the third edition would not be published.

In 1967 Longmans finally published *Wildflowers of Victoria*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. It was received very favourably. After 17 long years Jean had the book she really wanted to present to the world. An authoritative botanical reference, written in a style which made botany accessible to the amateur botanist and plant lover.

There is much more to Jean Galbraith's story, but I will leave it there. Luckily we can all look forward to the publication of Meredith's biography of Jean, which promises to be a great read. Meredith is a gifted story teller and writer. Her use of language and the way she built up the drama of the story held the audience spellbound. It is possible some inaccuracies have crept into my summary, and if so, I do apologise. Once again we thank her for a wonderful presentation.

Joan Broadberry



## Fungi Group

### Slime Moulds (Myxomycetes – 'slime fungi')

#### *Talk by Paul George to the Fungi Group*

Slime Moulds are a strange mix. The slimy amoeba-like vegetative or feeding stage (plasmodium), which is often brightly coloured, consists of a single cell mass enclosing thousands of nuclei. The plasmodium travels through the substrate feeding on bacteria, fungi and other organic matter by absorbing it. The 'pulsing' coursing through this mass enables movement.

Paul entertained us with a very short video – shown several times – of a plasmodium in a Petri dish of agar feeding on a rolled oat and racing round the dish in search of more food. He had taken this with time-lapse photography, where a photograph had been taken every 30 seconds over 2 hours. The video clearly showed the characteristics of the feeding stage of a slime mold – bright colour (yellow) with the more solid mass engulfing the oat, while vein-like protrusions spread fan-like around the dish.

In the wild, when the food supply dwindles the plasmodium coalesces and moves into a more open and drier area where it transforms into a hard solid mass and develops fruit-bodies containing spores (sporangia), just like fungi. The sporangia are varied and very exotic-looking. Each fruit-body consists of a base or base and stalk, on top of which is an enclosed spore sac. Inside the sac are spores, capillitia (sterile thread-like elements), and a columella (or pseudocolumella) which is like an extension of the stalk. All these are enclosed by a skin-like covering (peridium). Some

sporangia contain lime, seen as white markings. Although the spores themselves are all very similar (round), their ornamentation is useful. However, more useful are the capillitia that have distinctly different forms with each order and wriggle about in different ways. There are four types of sporangia, which neatly divides the slime moulds into four groups

Paul then described the 4 broad groups of fruit-body shapes, with illustrations of the slime moulds within them. **Aethalium** group forms in litter with a comparatively large, cushion-shaped, sessile fruiting body, which can be white, pale or bright pink, red, bright yellow. **Fuligo septica** or Dog's Vomit is one of the most common and readily recognised, found on litter. Plasmodium is yellow and slimy, the fruiting cushion-like sporangia are yellow (then brown and fading) and the outer surface is a chalky crust (see Fuhrer 2005, no 538). **Lycogala epidendrum** or Wolf's Milk, found on dead wood, consists of a cluster of pale to red warty balls that exude a pink latex (see Fuhrer 2005, no 540). Both of these are Fungimap Target species.

**Pseudoaethalium** are flat-cake-shaped masses with a cluster of numerous sporangia, eg *Tubifera ferruginosa* whose sporangia are a mass of sessile, podgy, finger-like protruding from a base, coloured coral pink. **Plasmodiocarp** have a plasmodium with one or more vein-like strands, some with extensive elongated netting, no stalk, but retains the rough shape of the plasmodium, eg the white/yellow **Hemitrichia serpula** Yellow Scribbles, another Fungimap Target, which has red plasmodiocarp forming a net where each bright yellow to red-brown arm is about

0.5mm, found on decaying wood. The **Sporangium** group is the most common, and has, in numerous colours and shapes, small fruit-bodies which form when the plasmodium breaks up into small parts, each forming a single sporangium. These include *Stemonitis splendens* which has distinctive sporangia – white, then red and finally brown long thin peridia on very fine black stalks. The white **Ceratiomyxa fruticulosa** Icicle Fairy Fans (a Fungimap Target) has spores that form outside the body on a single thread (Fuhrer 2005 no 536). (For the Fungimap Targets, see Fungimap Newsletter 28). The new target, not yet published is **Elaeomyxa cerifera** which appears to be always found in moss. It has a black cap, and a collar on the stem in which wax or oil is present instead of lime.

Paul then showed us a series of images illustrating different slime moulds and their characteristics. Some of the more distinctive ones include *Leocarpus fragilis*, small (0.5-1.5mm) pale yellow-brownish peridia are supported on fine pale yellow stalks, and cluster on pine needles. It is not likely to be confused with other species but unless you look closely, they could be mistaken for insect eggs (see Fuhrer 2005, no 547). The peridium of *Physarum flavicomum* looks distinctively like a Christmas tree ornament in iridescent bronze. On one of the Fungi Group's forays to Blackwood, Paul found the slimy yellow plasmodium of *Badhamia utricularis* being eaten by a beautiful purple, spiky Springtail. *Physarum cinereum* sporangia are ash-grey in colour, sessile and Paul's example had formed on the edge of leaves. It contains a lot of lime. *Diachea leucopodia* is known for its leuco-white, podia-foot and black head.

Thank you Paul for a very interesting evening.

Pat Grey

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

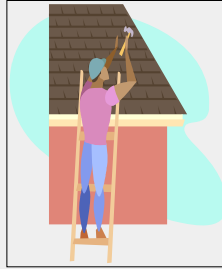


## President's Roof Appeal and Raffle

Thank you to the following people for their recent donations: Anne Morton, Anne Pfeffy, Enid McCarthy

Total of the appeal so far is **\$8,521**.

We are also running a raffle to raise some more money for the new roof. First Prize is a new **Toshiba Laptop with software**. Second prize is a **BBQ**. Third prize is **12 mixed bottles of FNCV wines** and fourth prize is a **framed photo of a Yellow Robin and a CD "the Swift Parrots of Muckleford"**. There will be only 1000 tickets available creating great odds. Tickets are \$5.00 each and are available through the office, contact Hali 9877 9860 (office hours Mon-Tues 9 –4 pm) or e-mail [admin@fncv.org.au](mailto:admin@fncv.org.au)



## Library News

Recent additions:

Cooper, R.P. (1975) *Wilson's Promontory National Park and its avifauna*.

Hangay, G. and Zborowski, P. (2010) *A guide to the beetles of Australia*.

Lazarides, M. (1970) *The grasses of central Australia*.

Simpson, K. and Day, N. (2010) *Field guide to the birds of Australia*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed.

Recent periodicals include the VNPA's *Parkwatch* which concentrates on the campaign against cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park

*This will be my last Library News, as I am retiring as Librarian at the end of April 2011. I have held the position for 26 years, and found it a most interesting and rewarding experience. My best wishes for a similar experience go to my successor.*

**Sheila Houghton**  
Honorary Librarian

## Information Wanted

I am conducting research into the visitors to Waldheim Chalet (1912-1952), Cradle Mountain, Tasmania. If you visited or have information on people who went to Waldheim during this period I would love to hear from you. The creators of the Chalet, Gustav and Kate Weindorfer, were both members of the Vic Nats, therefore many fellow members travelled to the chalet during this time. I am especially interested in any correspondence, photographs or other material pertaining to the Weindorfers.

**My contact details are as follows:**

Katrina Ross, PhD candidate, University of Tasmania,  
Locked Bag 1340  
Launceston, 7250  
[K.Ross@utas.edu.au](mailto:K.Ross@utas.edu.au) 0409313347



## FNCV AGM Sunday 1st May, 2 pm

*You are invited to attend the FNCV AGM, FNCV hall, 1 Gardenia St. Blackburn.*

**Agenda:** Annual Report, Election of Council\*, Honorary & Long Term memberships, Environment Fund

*Alison Houghton is giving a special presentation from the work she has done researching the FNCV through her oral history project*

Not to be missed

**Afternoon tea served, all welcome.**

\*Nominations for the committee due in the office 48 hours before the meeting.

*See p12 for Council nomination form*

**RSVP: to Hali by Friday 29th April please**





## Extracts from SIG reports given at the March FNCV Council Meeting

**Bat Study group** The last bat count resulted in 45,000 Grey headed Flying Foxes in clear mild weather.

**Botany Group** At the last meeting Dr Terry Blake spoke about *Climate Change and Tree Physiology*. Terry looked at climate change and the response of trees to adapt. Trees evolved over 240 million years ago and have adapted to climate change over time. The oldest living tree is about 8000 years old, but is dying now. The decline of a forest is current with the loss of hydraulic conductivity leading to stomata being closed longer so less photosynthesis occurs, giving a loss of growth and vigor. The root response is 40 metres long in the desert to reach water, usually most roots are less than 1 metre.

**Fauna Survey Group A. Meeting** Tuesday, 1 March The speaker for the evening was Richard Loyn from DSE, on the topic 'Some Responses of Birds and Arboreal Mammals to Fire'

**B. Surveys** The second successful VBRR/ARI trip was held over the March long weekend. 40 cameras and 19 anabats were set up at 20 sites. (we had technical difficulties with one anabat). Birds Australia and BOCA carried out bird surveys at each site and we added our general observations to these records. Pick up of equipment was 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> April.

**C. The stagwatch** on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March was attended by six members and we surveyed what looked to be good habitat. One Leadbeater's Possum was seen, the only one for this season, but no nest tree was found. Two Mountain Brushtails and an Owlet Nightjar were seen and a Boobook Owl heard. Many Victorian Smooth Froglets, *Geocrinia victoriana* were heard. A Ringtail Possum and Sugar Glider were recorded by spotlighting. An impressive stand of luminous Ghost Fungus was seen on the edge of the road, growing on a dead tree and its roots.

Welcome  
Welcome

### Help the Club fundraise for the President's Roof Appeal with Good Will Wine

Goodwill wine is a fundraising website, which offers Charities and Not for Profit Organisations the opportunity to raise money through wine sales. Simply go to the website [www.goodwillwine.com.au](http://www.goodwillwine.com.au) or call them on 59629155 and order half a dozen or a dozen bottles of wine. Most of the wine is sourced within Victoria, Yarra Valley, Mornington Peninsula etc, with the rest coming from elsewhere in Australia. For every dozen bottles sold the club will receive \$20.00 (\$10.00 per ½ dozen).

The wine comes with a 100% money back guarantee if you are not happy with the vintage and will be delivered to your door. These bottles of wine, with our FNCV label, would make a great gift and a wonderful way to advertise the club. So drink up, enjoy a good wine and raise money for the club.



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

Mr Dean Nagle, Mr Phineas Wilton, Mr Marlowe Wilton, Miss Viva Wilton, Mr Simon Wilton, Mrs Zoe Burton, Mr Rush Benda.

### Many thanks to those who helped collate and label FNN 207

Keith Marshall  
Hazel & Edward Brentnall  
Andrew Brentnall  
Joan Broadberry  
Neil McLachlan  
Graeme Thomson  
Bob Rowland  
Bill Fenner  
Noel Schleiger  
Ray Power

Special thanks to Andrew, who came in early and folded a great many newsletters. We are wondering if we should invite the Guinness Book of Records to collation!

### FNCV will host The SEANA Spring Camp 29<sup>th</sup> Oct. to 1<sup>st</sup> Nov. 2011 (Cup Weekend)

John Harris took the opportunity to check out the recent SEANA autumn camp at Anglesea. Over 100 people attended.



The FNCV will be hosting the next SEANA camp at Wonthaggi during the Cup Weekend in November. Please note the dates in your diaries.

This will be a BIG event for the club and we need the full support of all members. We would like all SIG's to take part in the program of field trips and activities we will be offering to our guests; possibly over 100 field naturalists, many from interstate may attend. Junior members are especially welcome to participate in what promises to be a very exciting time.

A special email address ([seanacamp@fnacv.org.au](mailto:seanacamp@fnacv.org.au)) has been established for easy information distribution.

John is looking for people to help with the organization of this camp. WE NEED YOU. Please contact Hali in the office ASAP.



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## South Australian Outback Expedition

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## Kimberley Discovery Tour

**16 Day Camping Tour - Departs 29th May 2011 & 20th June 2011**

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

## Western Explorer Wildflowers Tour

**14 Day Camping Tour - Departs 12th August 2011**

This wildflower tour is a magnificent outback experience! Explore the magnificent fauna of the Kennedy Ranges, Mt Augustus & Karijini National Park. This 14 day tour coincides with the northern and mid west wildflower season and with a reasonable winter rain there should be some colourful displays.

## Lorna Glen to Canning Stock Route

**11 Day Camping Tour - Departs 14th August 2011**

Join us as we explore the remote Lorna Glen Station North East of Wiluna, Western Australia. Bilbies and Brush-tailed Possums have been successfully reintroduced, and the area also supports more than 480 species of vascular plant, 220 vertebrate species, 14 small mammal species and 70 species of reptile.

## Holland Track & Greater Western Woodlands Recce

**15 Day Camping Tour - Departs 31st August 2011**

Join us and experience the features of the world's largest temperate woodland, including the Holland Track and the historic woodlines (where timber cutters operated from 1899 to 1964). The Great Western Woodland (GWW) covers an area the size of England, and is home to 3,000 flowering plant species, rare mammals, frogs, reptiles and birds.

## Namibia - Botswana - Zambia Desert & Delta

**18 Day Accommodated Tour - Departs 17th October 2011**

Join us on our escorted and accommodated safari and experience an amazing journey through some of Southern Africa's most breathtaking regions. Highlights include the Namib-Naukluft National Park, Sossusvlei & Dead Vlei dunes, Walvis Bay - Skeleton Coast, Kavango River, Okavango Delta, and Victoria Falls.

## Midwest Wildflowers

**10 Day Accommodated Tour - Departs 8th September 2011**

This early wildflower season tour is designed to allow you to see the beautiful flowering plants north of Perth at a time when they should be at their best. See spectacular landscapes including the station country around Mt Magnet and Yalgoo and enjoy the highlights of the Kalbarri National Park.

## Bhutan - The Last Shangri-La

**15 Day Accommodated Tour - Departs 29th October 2011**

Become one of the few fortunate people to experience one of the world's deepest mysteries - the last Shangri La.

This comprehensive, 15 day, escorted tour of this relatively isolated country will take you through the prime botanical and wildlife sites in Bhutan. Discover the natural richness of this unspoiled eastern Himalayan region. See the unique and varied endemic wildlife, and explore the unique culture.

## Abrolhos Islands

**6 Day Accommodated Tour - Departs 1st November 2011**

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

## Costa Rica Wildlife Safari

**15 Day Accommodated Tour - Departs 20th November 2011**

Join our comfortably accommodated tour of this pristine wildlife paradise. On one of the most exciting wildlife expeditions we have offered, you can expect to see a diverse array of bird life, plants, mammals and reptiles.

For our 2011 tour program or further information contact:

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## Marine Research Group News

### Report on MRG meeting Monday 14 February, 2011: Mr. Steve Hay spoke on "SeaNet: Smarter fishing for industry".

Steve is an employee of SeaNet, which was established by OceanWatch Australia in 1999. It is a network of Australian fisheries conservation experts that provides an environmental extension service to the Australian fishing and seafood industry, assisting it to adopt environmentally sustainable practices whilst remaining competitive. Although it is industry driven, its key aims are to protect the ocean through innovative fishing techniques, by-catch reduction, and the adoption of codes of practice and environmental systems.

Key successes to the program include:

- \* major reductions in accidental capture and by-catch of marine turtles, seals and sea-lions, sea snakes, sea birds, dugong, whales, dolphins and sharks;
- \* development and adoption of environmental management systems and codes of practice and conduct in many Australian fisheries;
- \* participation in workshops and also sea-based trial of new fishing gear and methods, and production of best-practice technical guidelines and handbooks (including a protected marine species identification guide);
- \* involvement in major beach and coastal clean-up projects;
- \* development of good relationships between the fishing community as well as environmental and community groups; and;
- \* winning awards for ground-breaking work.

Steve went on to provide an overview of quite a few of the specific projects that SeaNet is involved in. Steve's enthusiasm for marine life and its conservation was evident throughout his informative presentation, and we thank him greatly for it. Further information about SeaNet and its work can be found at [www.oceanwatch.org.au](http://www.oceanwatch.org.au).

### Addenda on the introduced alga *Undaria pinnatifida* at Apollo Bay harbour.

Following the report of this introduced alga into the Apollo Bay harbour (see the MRG page of FNN 203 for background), a decision by the authorities to attempt

further manual removal was made. On both occasions (Saturday 13 November, 2010 and Sunday 12 December, 2010) MRG members were in attendance, sampling algal samples brought up by divers to examine the sorts of marine creatures that associated with it.

Relatively few marine invertebrate species were found on the broad fronds, with more found in the tangled holdfasts, the latter consisting largely of a variety of worms. A particularly interesting record was of three specimens of the recently described micro-asteriid fissiparous sea star *Allostichaster palmula* Benavides-Serrato & O'Loughlin, 2007, previously known (only from Victoria) from southern Port Phillip Bay to Malla-coota.

Large volumes of *Undaria pinnatifida* were removed on these occasions, an ominous hint that its presence in the Apollo bay harbour will be difficult to shift.

### Report on the MRG extended excursion to the Malla-coota region (continued): Gabo Island, 20 January, 2011.

Gabo Island is visible to the east from Malla-coota, and on a clear day the tall granite lighthouse at its southern tip can also be discerned with the naked eye. A local charter boat took nine of us over, launching from the beach at Bastion Point and heading east just behind the surf zone, passing the smaller Tullaberga Island on its northern aspect to eventually approach Gabo Island and land at the small jetty at Santa Barbara Bay on its sheltered north-west aspect. This beautiful embayment hosted the only sandy beach on this remote and beautiful island. The rest of the shoreline was composed of granite.

We split into two parties, one surveying the sheltered north-west corner, the other heading on a short 2km (or so) walk to the southern tip, where the lighthouse and Parks Victoria ranger's station are located. At the southern tip, after inspecting the harsh but striking scenery (including eastern views to the Cape Howe region). It took some time to actually find a way down to the shoreline along the imposing granite escarpments. Eventually, we found our way down to the tip of a narrow gorge, whilst the

northern party focussed on Santa Barbara Bay and the shoreline north of it.

Records included clusters of the sundial shell *Philippa lutea* under granite rocks, the marginellids *Mesoginella pygmaeoides* and, more commonly, *Mesoginella translucida* (most probably). Interesting micromolluscs included the rissoellids *Rissoella imperforata* and *Rissoella micra*, the cingulopsid *Pseudopisinnia gregaria*, and the eatoniellid *Crassitoniella flammea*. A notable record was of a cassid veliger with its four long lobes giving it quite a strange appearance. Other molluscan records were not dissimilar to those of Bastion Point. Only two opisthobranchs were recorded—the sacoglossan *Placida dendritica* from the alga *Codium fragile*, and the colourful *Ilbia ilbi*.

A number of crustacean, echinoderm, worm and anemone species (including jewel anemones) were recorded in what was a fascinating 4 or 5 hour visit to this special place.



Images from souther tip of Gabo Island, 20 January, 2011. Above: lighthouse; below: view of coastline (Photos: P. Vafiadis).

### References and further reading:

Benavides-Serrato M, O'Loughlin M, Rowley C (2007). A new fissiparous micro-asteroid from southern Australia (Echinodermata: Asteroidea: Asteroiidae). *Memoirs of Museum Victoria*, 64: 71-78.

P. Vafiadis



## NOMINATION FORM FOR FNCV COUNCIL 2011

The FNCV AGM will be held on Sunday 1st May,  
2 pm FNCV Hall, 1 Gardenia Street, Blackburn 3130

Name of Member Nominated .....

Position Nominated \* .....

Signature of Member Nominated .....

### TWO MEMBERS SUPPORTING NOMINATION

Name ..... Signature ..... Date.....

Name ..... Signature ..... Date.....

\*Elected members of the FNCV Council are President, two Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer and six Councillors. Councillors must be FNCV members. (Council also consists of Immediate Past President, and a representative, nominated in writing by each Special Interest Group.)

**Please return this form to the FNCV office**

**Locked Bag 3, Blackburn 3130**

**Phone/Fax 9877 9860**

**E-mail: admin@fncv.org.au**

*Nominations must reach the registered office of the Club no later than 48 hours before the AGM.*

## Field Nats News 208



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