



# Field Nats News No.213

Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.  
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October 2011

## From the President

Welcome to the October edition of the Field Nat News. Can I say that it is good to be home, back in our hall that is. A very big thank you to Blackburn Lake Sanctuary, The Avenue Uniting Church and Toepaz Dance Studio for allowing us to use their venues to host our activities while the hall was being repaired.

A huge thank you must also go to Hali, who has gone far beyond the call of duty over these past few months. I don't have enough space this month to list all that she has done, so an enormous **THANK YOU** will have to do.

Finally, thank you to the 37 members and others that turned up to help move all of the boxes and furniture back into the hall. The adage "that many hands make light work" was certainly reinforced with it all done in less than two hours. The photos below and on page 5 tell all.

### "Pauls Collect-a-cap"

The FNCV has registered as a community organisation for *Pauls* milk promo-

tion. If you drink *Pauls* milk, please keep the specially marked, (10c collect-a-cap), coloured caps from the 1 or 2 litre plastic bottles and drop them into the box in the hall, or post them in if you are an infrequent attendee. For each cap, the club gets 10 cents. This is a good fundraiser as it requires no extra volunteer time, so let's fill the box several times.

### HELP URGENTLY NEEDED, SEANA Spring Camp-out, Phillip Island: Sat 29<sup>th</sup> Oct – Tues 1<sup>st</sup> Nov.

A small sub-committee is well into the process of putting together an exciting program for the SEANA camp, with over 30 separate activities planned. This is a major event for the FNCV, as we will be hosting nearly 100 field nats from around the state. Each activity will need a club member as co-ordinator - (not necessarily leader). Other roles could be, leading a short walk, writing up activities sharing your knowledge of geology, birds, plants, shells with adults or children. This could be as little as a 1-2 hour session with another person assisting you. As yet, we don't have nearly enough volunteers. Please seriously consider helping out. **OUR CLUB IS ON SHOW.**

We need members to support this camp in the great way they assisted with the move back into the hall. If you can attend and offer help on even one of the days, please Email: [seanacamp@fncv.org.au](mailto:seanacamp@fncv.org.au) or contact Hali in the office.

**John Harris,  
President**

Due date for the November newsletter is **Monday 3rd October**. As the editors will be away the next week, **this is ABSOLUTELY the FINAL deadline for everything.**

Collation Tuesday 18th starting at **10.30 am**.

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

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Moving back into the newly repaired hall. See also pages 3 & 5



## 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.**

### October

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> – Fungi Group. Meeting - Members' night.** Planning for 2012 forays. Contact: Virgil Hubregtse 9560 7775

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> - Fauna Survey Group. Meeting- 'The Ecology of High Density Koala Populations'.**  
Speaker: Desley Whisson. Contact: Robin Drury 0417 195148

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> – Bat Group. Grey-headed Flying-fox count.** Meet at Yarra Bend Golf Course carpark Mel 2D G7 at 7.15 pm. RSVP by email or phone Megan Davidson 9380 5062 AH; m.davidson@latrobe.edu.au

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> – Book Sale.** Join us for our Biennial club second-hand books and pre-loved treasures sale, held at the FNCV Hall from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm. *See notice p3 for all details.* Please tell your friends and donate unwanted books.

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> – Juniors Group. Excursion – 'Aboriginal Bush Tucker.'** Dr Beth Gott 2.00 pm Monash Uni. Clayton.  
Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> – Marine Research Group. Meeting –** Speaker: Simon Branigan from the Victorian National Parks Association speaking on VNPA's '*Marine Conservation Priorities and Issues for Victoria*'. His talk will include issues such as the Port of Hastings expansion and the Westernport Scientific review. Contact: Leon Altoff 9530 4180; 0428 669773

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>—Collate FNN 214.** Starting about 10.30 am. Note earlier time and that we are back in the FNCV hall.  
Contact the office 9877 9860; admin@fncv.org.au

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> – Microscopy Group. Meeting -** Felicity Smith from Plant Sciences at Melbourne University: specializing in plants of WA. '*Signs of Life in Dry Times" Pilbara during a drought season.*' Covering botany, insect, and animal life in the area. Contact Phillipa Sterpin 9598 3231 AH.

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> – Botany Group. Meeting - 'A review of the conservation status of Victorian Eucalypts.'**  
Presenter: David Cameron, ARI. Contact: Sue Bendel 0427 055071

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> – New Members' Night. Meeting –** 7.30 pm. See p3. - Come and meet our newest members, or just find out more about the club. RSVP FNCV office 9877 9860 admin@fncv.org.au

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> – Botany Group. Excursion - 'Post -fire Recovery of the Vegetation Following the Black Saturday Wildfire';** field trip led by David Cameron. Meet 10.30 am at St Andrews market (come early to shop). Travelling to Kinglake and Whittlesea. Contact: Sue Bendel 0427 055071

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> Whitehorse Spring Festival—**On the lawns of the Whitehorse Civic Centre, Whitehorse Rd, Nunawading 10—4 pm. *VOLUNTEERS NEEDED* See p12.

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> FNCV Council Meeting.-** 7.30 pm Agenda items and apologies to Hali, 9877 9860 or admin@fncv.org.au

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> – Day Group. Meeting - 'Travels in the Simpson Desert and Lake Eyre'.** Speaker: Anne Morton.  
Meet at 10.30 am for coffee and a chat. Speaker 11 am. Contact Gary Presland 9890 9288

**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> – Geology Group Meeting -** Speaker: Dr. Erich Fitzgerald, Museum Victoria. Topic to be announced.. Contact: Roger Needham 9876 3882; needham@aanet.com.au; website or FNCV office.

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> – Juniors' Group. Meeting –** 7.30 pm. '*Locusts.*' Dr Alan Yen.  
Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November - SEANA Camp at Phillip Island.** Registration still possible. *VOLUNTEERS NEEDED* (see p1) Contact the FNCV office 9877 9860; admin@fncv.org.au

#### Diary Dates:

**-Biodiversity Symposium. 19th –20th November—see FNN p 12**

**-Australian Natural History Medallion**

**Dinner & Presentation. Mon 7<sup>th</sup> November**

**-Club Xmas Party: Sat 10 December, 6 pm**

**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, notices & observations

We are reserving a page in future issues of FNN for natural history observations, member news, notices 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 3rd Octo-

Welcome  
Welcome

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

Ross Hoskin, and Cade Curmi

## Members' Night

You are invited to attend an information evening for members on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October at 7.30pm. Come and meet our newest members, council and SIG reps. Ask questions and learn more about the running of the club.

These Members' Nights are aimed at making our newest members feel welcome and to answer any questions that they or other members may have. It is also a great opportunity to look at how, like a phoenix, the FNCV has risen from the ashes, bigger and better.

**ALL WELCOME**

**Thanks to all those who helped us move back into the hall on Saturday September 3rd. Apologies if we have omitted to include your name.**

Kaye Oddie; Tara, Bridie & John Bergin; Bill Fenner; Robin Drury; Alannah Matheson; Julia Davis; Scott, Claire, Caleb & Daniel Ferguson; Hali, Rob & Matt Ferguson; Heather Eadon; Michael & Louise Aitken; Greg Dudgeon; Pat & Ed Grey; Virgil & Jurrie Hubregtse; Jenni, Frans & Shelby Hauwert-Switstak; Barbara Burns; Russell Thompson; Andy Brentnall; John Harris; Kathy Himbeck; Sally Bewsher; Murray Haby; Joan Broadberry; Dot & Chris Radings; Mia Ray.

*Photos p1, 3 and 5—thanks to Sally Bewsher & Heather Eadon*

## Second-hand book sale and FNCV pre-loved treasures. Saturday 8th October, 10 am-3 pm: **HELP NEEDED**

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

Our last club book sale was run in 2009 and raised over \$1,400. Our next one will be run on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> of October at the hall. To make this a successful fundraising event for the club we will need your help. Donations of books of all types are needed urgently and can be dropped in at the hall on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday or left in the conference room before SIG meetings. These

books will be priced and sold on the day.

The other thing that we desperately need is help. We need help to set up the book sale from 8.00 am Saturday morning as we cannot set up the day before, due to regular hall hirers. Help is needed from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm to serve customers, to man the stall and after 3.00 pm to assist with packing up.

If you can help for any part of this day, even one hour, please contact me in the office. The funds raised through this book sale are needed to offset the cost of the new roof and hopefully start the Solar Panel Fund.

The last thing you can assist with is publicity. Tell your friends, neighbours and family about this and help make it the most successful one yet.

### FNCV Smoke Damaged Books

You will notice that there is a list of smoke damaged publications available for sale in this news letter. There are limited numbers of each book, so be quick, first in best dressed. These books are only being offered to current FNCV members and will not be sold at the second book sale.

To order you can ring the office or send an email, I will put the books aside and you can send me a cheque or pay by credit card or cash.

Any money made from the sale of these books will go towards the club's out of pocket expenses as a result of the fire.

**Hali**

## Club Camp & Excursions Policy



*It has been decided at a recent Council Meeting that a club wide policy needs to exist for both Excursions and Camps.*

Non-members will be charged \$2 per person for each FNCV meeting and \$5. per person for an excursion or camp.

Junior meetings are free to non-members, however, non-members on Junior day excursions pay \$2 per person. All those who wish to attend Junior camps must be members.

Attendance books need to be signed at every SIG meeting and excursion. This is vital for insurance purposes.

The club recommends that people with a medical condition, eg. anaphylactic or heart conditions, carry written medical information with them. They should inform the excursion/camp leader of the whereabouts of this information on each outing, (for example, "it is in the pocket of my parka.")

Parents or designated guardians are responsible for all medical needs on Junior camps or excursions.





## Botany Group

### Fern Excursion Badger Weir, 21 August

Barry Stagoll and Gay met us in the carpark Badgers Weir and Barry then led us across Badger Creek to the Slip track to start looking at the ferns. He explained that the habitat where ferns grow is an important characteristic in determining the species. For example False Bracken (*Calochlaena dubia*) grows in open areas where there is plenty of light. It can be distinguished from the similar-looking Common Bracken (*Pteridium esculentum*), growing in a similar habitat, by its softer fronds and a groove running along the main rib. On the way back to the car park we were able to compare the different features of the two ferns.

In contrast, other ferns prefer the dark, damp areas, such as the Strap Water-fern (*Blechnum patersonii*) that only grows where there is constant moisture. This was seen growing in drifts down the bank to the track over which water flowed. As its name suggests, it has a single leathery dark-green frond which formed clumps. Sometimes the fronds become lobed, we saw one with eight lobes, but most were just single. Growing with this fern were clumps of Lance Water-fern (*Blechnum chambersii*) which has dark-green glossy sterile arching fronds with sickle-shaped pinnae. Pinnae are the leaves that grow out from the main rachis (central frond stem), sometimes there are pinnules, the smallest leaflets, formed when the pinnae are divided into smaller leaves. The erect fertile fronds of the Lance Water-fern are very narrow.

An interesting fact about ferns is that they have both fertile and sterile fronds growing in the same clump. Fertile fronds are generally narrower and the spores develop in small blocks (sporangium) on the underside. These are grouped into brownish coloured spots or bands called sori (singular sorus) which may be covered by a marginal flap or membranous cover called an indusium. The position and arrangement of the sori and indusium are important for distinguishing species. A notable characteristic for Gristle Fern (*Blechnum cartilagineum*) is that both the sterile and fertile fronds look very similar, and the fertile fronds can only be distinguished from the underside by the sori on either side of the main vein on the pinnae.

Probably the most distinctive are the very large Tree-ferns which have a 'trunk', called a caudex, and a circle of fronds at the

top. The Rough Tree-fern (*Cyathea australis*) could be recognised by the pointed remains on the trunk made after old fronds had fallen off. This roughness prevents epiphytes from growing on the trunks. Rough Tree-ferns were found in the drier areas. The Soft Tree-fern (*Dicksonia antarctica*), which has a similar form does not have the rough remains of the ends of the fallen fronds, but has a fibrous surface on which many epiphytes can grow. The Slender Tree-fern (*Cyathia cunninghamii*) is rare, but on the way back Barry pointed one out (just the one) – this is a very tall specimen with an extremely slender stem, and smallish crown. The slender trunk was covered with green growth. Barry said that it could be hundreds of years old.

At the start of Slip track there were numerous Ruddy Ground-fern (*Hypolepsis rugosula*) which was rather sturdy and had notably red-brown stems with a rough feel. Amongst them were the Gristle fern (*Blechnum cartilagineum*) noted for its large size, some fronds extending over two metres.

Further on masses of Mother Shield-fern (*Polystichum proliferum*) covered a wide area. These ferns produce bulbils (tiny ferns) at the tips of the mature fronds, and when they drop off to the ground, they grow and produce their own bulbils, thus enabling the fern colony to cover large areas. One very interesting characteristic was that the young unfurling fronds looked exactly like a crozier. Unfurling fronds of other ferns are rolled over tightly at the top without the curved turnover. One or two soft green Bat's Wing Fern (*Histiopteris incisa*) were visible. These were distinguished by a bluish colour and the bluish tinge with white hairs on the stipe. Also the leaves are in opposite pairs.

Hard Water-fern (*Blechnum wattsii*) was another distinguishable fern. The ferns were in dense colonies along the moist bank. The fronds are large and leathery and the apex pinnae are particularly long and pointed. Although we didn't see any, the young fronds are a pink-bronze colour. It was found amongst masses of Tall Dawsonia (*Dawsonia superba* var. *pulchra*), a very large moss, but which is easily recognised by the grey-green thin pointed leaves spiralling around a thick stem. Some had fruiting capsules – brown with a bunch of white bristles at the top.

Also along this bank we saw a group of

Veined Helmet Orchids (*Corybas diemenicus*). Most visible were the distinctive bright green heart-shaped leaves surrounding the stem that supported the less visible bronze 'helmet'. Under a hand lens, its toothed margin was very clear. Another group was growing on a Soft Tree-fern.

Sadly there was only a very small piece of the large terrestrial Austral King-fern (*Todea barbara*) to be seen, just a couple of fronds remained. The Austral King-ferns had suffered badly in the drought.

Silky Fan-fern (*Sticherus urceolatus*, ex *S. tener*) was distinctive with its 'whirly-gig' or fan-shaped arrangement of fronds. The first frond at the end of the stipe (stem) divides into a Y, and each subsequent frond does the same and so gives the appearance of swirling round.

We looked for two simple-frond ferns growing on Soft Tree-ferns that look similar when young. One is the Kangaroo Fern (*Microsorium pustulatum* ssp. *pustulatum*) whose fronds often divide into lateral lobes looking like a Kangaroo foot. However, the ones we saw had no lateral lobes and looked more like Finger Fern (*Grammitis billiardieri*), but could be distinguished from that species by their larger size (ca 30 cm). Further down in the damp gully we saw the Finger Fern – the frond was simple, thinner and much shorter (ca 10 cm). It was quite cryptic and we had to search hard for it. Barry told us that the epiphytic ferns in particular were much smaller, having suffered a lot in the drought, but the recent rains seemed to have helped them recover.

He pointed out the pendant Long Fork-fern (*Tmesipteris obliqua*, ex *T. billiardieri*) a fern relative. These were noted for the broad, quite stiff leaves which are pointed and arranged spirally around the stem.

When we got down to the very dark and wet areas near the creek, numerous Soft Tree-ferns were covered with epiphytes. As it was so dark it was not very easy to see details for the ferns. We saw the two sorts of Filmy-ferns – aptly named since they were so filmy-looking – Austral (*Hymenophyllum australe*) and Shiny (*H. flabellatum*) Filmy-ferns. They were not easy to tell apart but Austral Filmy-ferns were slightly more compact and membranous and a darker green, while the Shiny Filmy-fern was lighter green and had hanging fronds with blunt ends. I also found it difficult to differentiate ferns from a fern-like moss that was growing on a number of Tree-ferns.

Other epiphytic ferns and their relatives included Mother Spleenwort (*Asplenium bulb-*

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## FNCV Hall Fire

We are back in our hall and it looks fresh and new, with new paintwork, floors, kitchen and blinds. We have taken this opportunity to rearrange, sort and take stock of what we have. You will notice that a "Sale" table is in the hall. This table has excess back issues of *The Victorian Naturalist* and a donation tin. You are welcome to help yourself to any of these that you would like: a donation of about 20cents a copy would be appreciated.

In the process of sorting and organising the excess copies of *The Victorian Naturalist*, I have decided that the easiest way to do this is to sort them by year, volume and issue. To achieve this I need some small wooden boxes built. If you have some time and could build me some boxes, let me know.

I have included a thank you page which lists the tradesman and others that have helped us turn this job around in such a short space of time (10 weeks). Please keep this on hand. If you need a good job done, I would recommend these guys.

Finally, thank you to all the members and the council for supporting me when I became overwhelmed and for helping when I needed it. I couldn't have done this without you and the support from my family  
**Hali**

### These are the people who helped get our hall back, better than ever. Thank You.

George and Ana from  
 AIS Insurance Brokers  
 Phone: 8699 8888

For helping navigate the maze of red tape that is an insurance claim, and dealing with the assessor when communications broke down.

Peter, Dan and Ben  
 McCalls Painters and Decorators  
 Phone: 0418 170 227

For painting the hall through an ever changing obstacle course. These guys finished in record time, including washing the walls. They also did some extras that made the hall look like new.

Guy and Michael  
 GK & VS Frowd Building Services  
 Phone: 0418 533 784

For suggestions that have improved the hall and our brand new kitchen. Also the extras outside, that have made our hall look like new

Garry and Ray  
 Amstel Floors  
 Phone: 0407 845 510

For squeezing us in and making our floors shine.

David and Zac  
 DAC Plumbing  
 Phone: 0413 128 141

For replacing the roof and 'adopting' the FNCV. David is always ready to come and help with any plumbing emergencies.

Rob and Steve  
 Ventura Electrical Contracting Pty Ltd  
 Phone: 0408 655 085

For the extras and wonderful suggestions and solutions that you always have. For helping to move furniture etc. and for putting up with me.





# Fungi Group

## FUNGI WEEKEND FORAY

### The Otways

*Maits Rest, 29 April 2011*

Last year was the first time the group had seen the lichen *Badimiella pteridophila*, one of the new Fungimap lichen targets. The stage this year, on *Gahnia radula* leaves, was a white mass with black truncated raised dots less than 1mm. The white mass surrounded the dots. The characteristic feature is its minute white 'helmets' with two prongs, but a hand lens is needed to actually see it. Look for grey colouration with white dots found on dead leaves - ferns especially- growing in Cool Temperate Rainforests.

Another Fungimap Target was *Plectania campylospora* Brown Forest Cup; a large rubbery, dark brown to black cup that is smooth on the inside and rough on the outside, with a short central stem. The cups found were floppy and, at over 100mm across were the largest we had seen.

John Eichler's sharp eyes found one of the less common Fungimap targets - Brown-headed Pin, *Vibrissea dura*. This small pin has a light brown head and pale yellow stem and grows on wet, fallen branches.

*Cantharellus cibarius* var *australis* stood out in the ever-deepening gloom of late afternoon. It had an orange fruit-body with caps 35mm across, and vaulted, widely-spaced decurrent gills.

Many fruit-bodies of the Leathery Goblet *Cymatoderma elegans* were seen. They consist of sturdy brown, funnel-shaped caps where the inside of the funnel is ridged and velvety, a white outside lower surface and a brown woody stem. Some were very large measuring 150mm diam, and the young specimens showed the typical softish pink colouring.

### Melba Gully, 30 April 2011

We spent a whole day at Melba Gully and found numerous fungi, just a sample of which are mentioned below.

It was very pleasing to find again *Mycena* sp. 'tiny blue lights'. These are clusters of minute (to 3 mm) blue fungi on dead tree fern rachis. At first they emerge as small blue knobs, then expand into a tiny cap with thick widely-spaced gills. These are, at first, blue then pale to white but the stem always remains blue. Another minute species only found on Tree ferns is *Lachnum pteridophyllum* - a minute disc with a lemony, smooth centre and densely hairy white outside. The *Lachnum* sp. that looks very similar is *L. lachnoderma*, but it grows on wood and bark. Young specimens look like balls of white hairs.

A few Dead Man's Fingers were found on a small log. This species has



*Armillaria novaeselandiae*

Photo: Virgil Hubregtse

often been identified as the Northern Hemisphere species *Xylaria polymorpha*. because the fruit-bodies look the same. In Australia the species is *Xylaria castorea*. The spores of *X. polymorpha* are much larger (22-29 x 7.0-9.0 µm) and have their own distinctive shape (see Breitenbach and Kränzlin 1984).

The new Fungimap Target *Melanophyllum haemospermum* was also seen: pale brown cap, convex with a slight umbo and characterised by pendulant white veil remnants around the margin. The gills are a rich brown colour that surprisingly produce a green spore print.

'Icing-sugar Fungus' known as *Bauvaria bassiana* had parasitised a beetle so completely that just the wings were left, the beetle had been in a hollow tree fern frond. This is the asexual stage of *Cordyceps bassiana*. Another very numerous parasitising species was the spiky *Paecilomyces tenuipes*. Its main stems that are fairly flat were topped by pale lemon-yellow spikes with white spores on the upper part of the spiky end. They were often seen protruding from Tree fern stems, and one was found on the parasitised body of a caterpillar larva. Research has now been done that indicates that this is the asexual stage of *Cordyceps takoomontana*.

We saw again this year the very distinctive black, jelly-like mass of globules on the trunk of a tree, John Eichler identified it for us as the lichen *Colema fasculare*. On a nearby tree trunk were some brown very scaly fungi. The cap was yellow brown and radially fibrillose. This was especially noticeable on young specimens. The stems had encircling distinctive ragged bands of scales and Paul George noted that this was *Pholiota multicingulata* with all the typical characteristics.

On the underside of a fallen Myrtle Beech was a small orange patch with a pale margin which appeared similar to *Hypoxylon* aff. *chrysoconium*. However, with further study at home on a small piece, Ed Grey found that this specimen immediately released orange pigments with KOH which means that it is an *Hypoxylon*, but not *H. aff. chrysoconium*. The true *H. aff. chrysoconium* does not release pigments with KOH and so has been transferred to another genus *Nemania* as *N. chrysoconia*, whose whole genus does not release pigments with KOH.

On wood, *Annulohypoxylon bovei* (*Hypoxylon bovei*) is a crust of typical 'minute hard brittle volcanic black cones. The genus name *Hypoxylon* was changed to *Annulohypoxylon* because the ostioles

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are always higher than the surrounding stromatal surface and the ostiole is encircled with an annulate disc. Contrast *Hypoxylon placentiforme* where the ostioles are level or lower than the stromatal surface. *H. placentiforme* is a long thin crust of purple forming on fallen logs. Fuhrer 2005 (no 502) names it *H. rubiginosum* but the spores are the wrong size for this species which, additionally, is confined to the northern hemisphere.

Another crust seen lying flat on a dead branch was *Phlebia radiata*. This has a wrinkled orange to red-brown surface with some tubercles (lumps). The margin is white and the spore print is white. The colour, surface appearance, white spore print and spore details (5 x 2.5 um, smooth and sausage shaped) match *Phlebia radiata* (see Fungi of Switzerland Vol.2 No. 176 and Cunningham Thelephoraceae of Australia and New Zealand). The wrinkled yellowish-orange crust with some tubercles (lumps) present, could be mistaken for *Pseudomerulius aureus* (which we saw at Upper Yarra Dam this year). Both have a similar appearance of orange to red-brown with a paler margin. The only macro difference is in the spore colour which is yellowish for *Pseudomerulius aureus* and white for *Phlebia radiata*. Microscopically the spore shapes differ, smooth and cylindrical for the former and sausage-shaped for the latter. (Ed Grey).

Sue McClean spotted the elusive Stalked Hairy Cup, *Helvella chinensis* (fibrosa). There was just one dark specimen in a dark place. This is a rubbery stalked cup with a smooth grey-brown inner surface and a finely hairy pale grey-brown outer surface. The stem is pale grey-brown, tall, slender and hairy.

### Triplet Falls, 1 May 2011

On the third morning we awoke to torrential rain which continued throughout the foray to Triplet Falls. The rain made it uncomfortable, difficult to see fungi and to write the species list, but we were rewarded when John Eichler found *Calostoma rodwayi*, *Entoloma rodwayi* and *Pseudocraterellus sinuosus*.

Forest Prettymouth *Calostoma rodwayi* is only found under Myrtle Beech. The pale brown spore sac is blistered with the remains of the outer layer, and the cross-pieced raised red mouth is in the centre.

All this is supported on a stem of tough gelatinous interwoven strands. We saw a small group in the litter with some fine examples at base of Myrtle Beech showing gelatinous interwoven 'stem' below spore sac. Trumpets of *Pseudocraterellus sinuosus* were found in several groups along that stretch of the track. The inner surface was light-brown and the outer surface white. They are also associated with Myrtle Beech. *P. sinuosus* is, at the moment, under DNA review and the new name will probably be *Craterellus calliculosus*. Nearby was *Entoloma rodwayi* that has a greenish cap with a light green stem. There were a couple of fruit-bodies along the track at the base of a wooden wall construct, and several more at the top hidden by the vegetation. Elizabeth Sheedy found *Laccaria* sp. A. with a large pinkish robust cap with very frilled and undulating margin, supported by a sturdy off-white stem. This is the largest Australian *Laccaria* and always associated with Myrtle Beech. Most *Laccaria* spp. are difficult to determine to species but *L. sp. A* is distinctive in size and habitat.

Graham Patterson provided us with a 'tick' list of all the species we had seen at the forays to the Otways 2008-2010. It was extremely useful to see which fungi we had previously found. This year we found a few more at each location Maits Rest 49 (2010, 45), Melba Gully 76 (2010, 62), Triplet Falls 44 (2010, 43). The species most commonly found, usually at all locations every year were *Marasmius crinisequi* group, *Marasmius elegans*, *Mycena interrupta* and *Armillaria novaezelandiae*. The total seen to date is 497 species, which does not include those that we could only identify to genus.

Thanks to Ed Grey and Virgil Hurbregtse for their help.

Pat Grey

**'The FNCV Fungi CD', 2nd edition has been very favourably reviewed in the British journal 'Field Mycology', volume 12 no. 3.**



**Congratulations to the Fungi Group team — more details in the next FNN.**

## 'Fungi' that Live in Water'



**A Presentation by  
Fran La Fontaine  
1st August 2011**

Fran confessed that she fell in love with 'water moulds' in the summer of 1990, when she was working in the Botany department of RMIT, collecting and cultivating fungi for the training of mycology students.

Thousands of species of organisms come under the term 'fungi that live in water'. They have very different evolutionary histories, and more or less complexity in their lifecycles, but all exhibit an ecology and 'lifestyle' characteristic of 'fungi' everywhere; that is, they obtain their nutrition by extending thread-like filaments ('hyphae') into the environment, secreting enzymes to break down and absorb organic matter. They are mostly saprophytes (feeding on dead material), but some are parasites with living hosts. In addition, fungi that live in water typically have another stage in their lifecycle where they form zoospores – single reproductive cells that are capable of 'swimming' (an adaptation to their aquatic environment).

Of the many diverse groupings of these fungi, two that are commonly found in fresh water and wet soils are the Oomycetes and the Chytrids.

The Oomycetes are variously called water moulds, downy mildews and white rusts. They belong (together with diatoms and brown algae) in a group called the stramenopiles. The zoospores of this diverse group have a distinctive 'tinsel' flagellum (covered with Y-shaped tubular hairs) in addition to a simple smooth flagellum which they use to propel themselves. The name oomycetes literally means 'egg fungi' and refers to the globose spore-containing structure in the sexual reproductive phase of their lifecycle. Most oomycetes live as saprophytes, but some are parasites and can cause severe disease, especially of plants. A point to note is that nearly every crop plant appears to have its own 'threatening' oomycete species. Four important genera are: *Saprolegnia* and *Aphanomyces* (water moulds) and *Pythium* and *Phytophthora* (root-rotters grouped with the downy mildews):

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

1. *Saprolegnia* have long cigar-shaped zoosporangia and coarse hyphae. They are known as common parasites of fish and fish eggs, and to be responsible for endemics in zooplankton.

2. *Aphanomyces* have long thin zoosporangia, not much thicker than the hyphae. They include common crop plant pathogens and a serious parasite of European crayfish.

3. *Pythium* are common opportunists that cause 'damping off'—the rotting of roots in waterlogged soil. They have globose sporangia. Some are pathogens of crop plants, e.g. peppers, and others parasitic on other fungi.

4. *Phytophthora* (literally 'plant destroyer') have a white fluffy appearance in culture and includes the cinnamon fungus that causes extensive 'dieback' (root rot) in Australian native ecosystems, especially woody plants. Cinnamon fungus was introduced to near Brisbane in the 1930's and has spread across Australia, causing major 'dieback' in West Australian Jarrah forests in the 1960's. It's effect can be seen in the dying and dead ('exploded') grass trees in the Brisbane Ranges in Victoria. Members of this genus are also responsible for late blight of potatoes (and precipitated the potato famines in Ireland and Germany), cocoa pod rot and 'collar rot' of apples. The zoosporangium in this genus is characteristically 'lemon-shaped'.



*Chytrids - "little pots"*

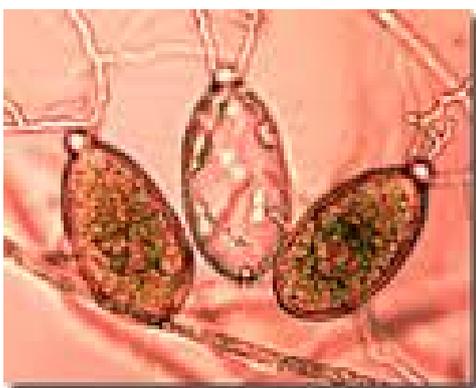
Chytrids are saprotrophs or parasites and are considered ubiquitous.

Unlike the oomycetes, evidence from molecular biology places chytrids among the 'true fungi' (the Eumycota, a grouping that includes mushrooms and cup fungi). They are the only fungi that reproduce by motile zoospores, propelled by a single smooth flagellum. The name chytrid means 'little pot' and refers to the shape of the single-celled chytrid body - the non-motile, vegetative stage of the organism, which develops into the zoosporangium. The chytrid puts out hyphae-like 'roots' (the 'rhizomycelium') to anchor it to the substrate and assist in the digesting and absorbing of food. Chytrids can be baited from water or soil, with pine pollen. Better known chytrids include *Olpidium* spp. (parasites of terrestrial plants and algae); *Pysoderma zeamaydis* (brown spot on corn); *Synchytrium endobioticum* (black wart of potato); *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (skin infection in some frog species, thought to contribute to their decline and extinction in some countries); and *Rhizophydium* spp. (common saprophytes in soil, fresh water and sea water).

Fran concluded the evening by showing a number of fungi that she had collected from pond water, and allowing us to examine them under the microscopes she provided (with thanks to St Kevin's College Toorak for the equipment loan).

Thanks Fran for a very interesting presentation on a fascinating group of organisms that most of us have never seen before. Thanks also to Richard Gogerly for IT assistance.

**Paul George**



*Phytophthora - a water mould*

Fran showed a video she had helped to make at RMIT, in which water moulds were collected from ponds, baited with seeds or fruit flies, and grown in Petri dish cultures. We were able to witness the zoospores as they emerged from the zoosporangia and swam vigorously away.

## Cottage to Rent in the North-east

Our cottage is in Stanley, one of the north east's best kept secrets; just three hours drive from Melbourne. The Alps and Mt. Buffalo beckon in one direction and Beechworth and environs in the other.

Set within our garden this is a haven and a head-space clearing country. It is a quiet and contented spot within an established garden which forms part of our chestnut farm.

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(Continued from page 4)

*iferum* ssp. *gracillum*) with soft-green fronds curving out in a central clump. Some small plantlets had developed near the tips of the fronds. Veined Bristle-fern (*Crepidomanes venosum*, ex *Polyphlebium venosum*) hung down and around the Tree-fern completely covering it. They are pale green, delicate and have prominent branched veins in the pinnae.

Near the car park at the end of the excursion we saw Common Maidenhair (*Adiantum aethiopicum*). This is a delicate fern with lacy fronds and fan-shaped pinnules. It is a cosmopolitan fern and is found all over the world.

Thank you very much Barry for an interesting and informative excursion.

**Pat Grey**



## Day Group

### Waterfalls of Victoria

Talk by Ian Wacey assisted by Ray Barber,  
**Tuesday 23rd August**

There was a change of program for the August day group. Rebecca Carland was unable to speak on 'The History of Science in Museum Victoria.' Her presentation will be rescheduled at a later date.

We were, however, very fortunate to hear a talk, (which had previously been given to the Geology Group), from Ian Wacey and Ray Barber about their quest to document all the waterfalls in Victoria. As their original presentation was written up in FNN no. 207 p5 by Kaye Oddie, I will be brief.

Ian and Ray along with their wives, initially aimed to photograph and document 100 Victorian waterfalls: material they hoped would form the basis of a book. Over 6 and a half years, this has become 250 waterfalls, with their final aim being to photograph and document all Victorian waterfalls. As there are approximately 700 waterfalls in Victoria, they estimate they are, in fact, only about a third of the way into their project.

Ian and Ray have several other goals. They are working to create a data-base of all Victorian waterfalls in co-operation with relevant government bodies. They would like all waterfalls to be recognised and recorded in VICNAMES, (the Register of Geographic Names), and for them to be included on maps. They wish to

correct the many errors and inaccuracies connected with the previous documentation of our State's waterfalls and to capture historical information before it is lost. They also hope to spread enthusiasm and knowledge, so that many more of us come to appreciate and enjoy waterfalls.

Their delightful book, *250 Victorian Waterfalls* was published earlier this year. It is beautifully laid out. For each waterfall they have included: photograph, watercourse, co-ordinates, closest town, distance, time and direction from Melbourne, vehicle and foot access, facilities and origin of the waterfall's name. *250 Victorian Waterfalls* will be reviewed in a future edition of *The Victorian Naturalist*. It has been very well received and was launched by the then minister for tourism and major events, Tim Holding. Several copies were snapped up after the meeting.

One thing not documented, except in one instance, is the height of each waterfall. Only the Dandongadale complex of falls, (closest town is Cheshunt), have been properly surveyed. The complex contains the highest waterfall in Victoria at 255.2 metres (837 feet).

It is difficult to convey in print the passion, enthusiasm and, dare I say, obsession, for their subject that shone through in this talk. Many of the audience immediately bought Ian and Ray's book after catching a little of the excitement of their discoveries.

Joan Broadberry

## Microscopy Group

Nick Porch, Life and Environmental Sciences, Deakin University. Nick was looking at



### 'Human Moderated Translocation and Catastrophic Extinction in the Indo-Pacific Fauna'

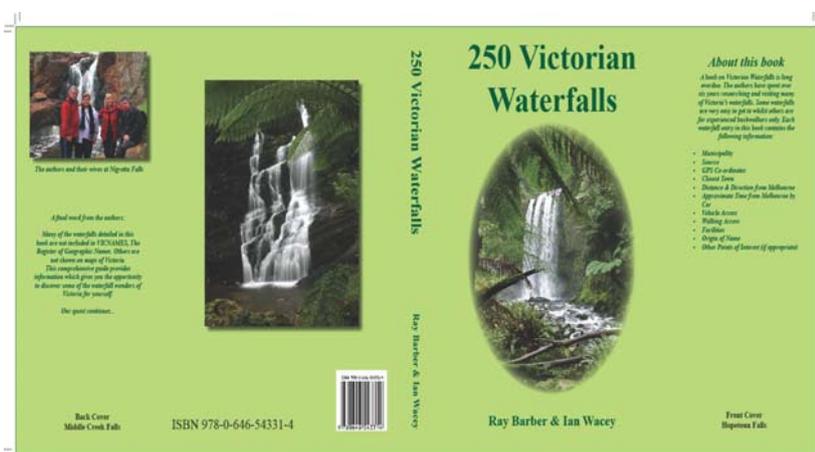
Nick travels regularly to islands of the indo pacific region taking and identifying core samples taken from peat, bog, and other areas. Samples are washed gently to separate and group the insect remnants, then the identification begins. He can identify up to 70% of native invertebrate species found. Beetle backs, egg casings and head parts are formed from a keratin type material that preserves very well in the right conditions – anaerobic and dry sediment areas are ideal for fossil preservation.

Fossil records can identify how the area used to be and which native plants and insects are now missing.

Nick has developed chronologies through radio carbon dating going back to 4000 years BC. Each sample, 5cm thick = 15 years of record and must be older than 300 years to be effectively dated.

Nick has identified that there are now no native species present below 500m elevation. Many of these introduced species were found to be present prior to known and recorded discovery or settlement of those areas. Nick has attributed these invaders being brought from island to island by nomadic pacific travelers, bringing their crops and domestic animals and accidentally introducing damaging pests.

Phillipa Sterpin



## Library News

Shelf order has mostly been restored in the Library and the service is almost fully functional again. Fortunately, nothing has been lost; indeed, in removing all of the contents of the Library, we have gained a few things that have lain forgotten in dark corners.

No new books have been accessioned or catalogued, or serials inducted into the system although both classes have not ceased arriving.

If, on the next time you are passing the Library, you see the Librarian 'head down' at his desk, you will know what he is doing.

Gary Presland, Honorary Librarian

Ian Wacey's book (with Ray Barber), *250 Victorian Waterfalls* is available from the FNCV will cost RRP \$49.95—(Members \$39.95.)

Orders to Hali Ferguson, Office Administrator, 9877 9860 or admin@fncv.org.au



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The Houtman Abrolhos is an archipelago of 108 islands and rocks off the mid-west coast of Western Australia. They are renowned for their extensive array of marine life and colourful history, and are also a breeding ground for many tropical seabirds. Come aboard the Flying Fish Five, a purpose-built charter boat, and see the highlights of the islands.

## **New Zealand South Island Wildlife & Wilderness**

**15 Day Accommodated Tour - Departs 4th February 2012**

New Zealand's South Island's dramatic landscapes are unforgettable: with high mountain peaks, massive glaciers, tranquil lakes, raging rivers, lush rainforest and geological treasures. See three of New Zealand's pristine national parks as well as the unspoiled coasts of the Catlins region, the Otago Peninsula and enjoy spotting Kiwis on Stewart Island.

## **Sri Lanka Wildlife, History & Culture**

**16 Day Accommodated Tour - Departs 11th March 2012**

Don't miss your chance to experience this enchanting island! Highlights of this amazing tour include the beautiful Yala and Bundala National Parks, Kitulgala and Sinharaja Rainforests, historic Sigiriya and Polonnaruwa and whale watching at Mirissa. This tour will guide you to the natural riches of the island, with a focus on the exotic flora and fauna.

## **Coral Coast Wildlife Tour**

**10 Day Accommodated Tour - Departs 12th April 2012**

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

## **Flinders Range & Lake Eyre Basin Expedition**

**15 Day Camping Tour - Departs 22nd May 2012**

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

## **Tanami Expedition**

**13 Day Camping Tour - Departs 15th June 2012**

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

## **Kimberley Discovery**

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

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

## **Rudall River Expedition**

**14 Day Camping Tour - Departs 7th July 2012**

Join a small group on this exciting trip to the harsh, yet beautiful Rudall River National Park. See arid zone wildflowers, birds and breathtaking outback scenery. During your time in this remote area you will see many natural wonders including Kalkan Kalkan Soak, Tjinkulatjatjarra Pool and Desert Queen Baths. Don't miss your opportunity to join us on this popular tour.

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## Marine Research Group News

**Report on MRG meeting held at the Blackburn Lake and Sanctuary Educational Centre, Mon. 8 August, 2011. Julie Marshall gave a talk entitled 'Voyage to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the Antarctic peninsula.'**

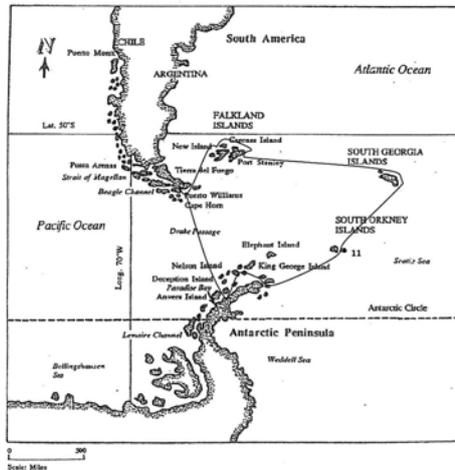
In Nov.-Dec. 2010 Julie and Alan Marshall undertook a journey to Antarctica, commencing from the township of Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego, southern Argentina (the world's most southerly town), and travelling by ship over 19 days to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia Islands, South Orkney Islands, South Shetland Islands and Antarctic Peninsula, before making the round trip back to southern Argentina.

30 million years ago the Scotia plate forced the South American mainland from the Antarctic mainland, leaving a ridge along which the islands mentioned above appear. The 100 passenger ship was also staffed by specialists who provided educational talks on the geology and natural history of the region. Safety precautions were paramount, with a card system to indicate presence or absence from the ship and mandatory lifejackets outside the ship.

The **Falkland Islands** were first sighted in 1592 by Captain John Davis. Most of the population lives on Stanley, with off-shore fishing, oil exploration, wool and tourism being the prime economies. Carcass Island has no cats, dogs or rats, and thus many birds. Saunders Island holds large rookeries of Gentoo, Magellanic and Rockhopper Penguins. Black-browed Albatross (wingspan 2.5m) construct elevated nests of mud and grass on cliff edges, so that the eggs cannot fall out. **Port Stanley** is a very British town, and images shown included the Christchurch Cathedral built in 1892, the police station and the monument to the Falklands War. Boots and shoes had to be carefully sterilized and clothing also vacuumed whenever heading back to the ship, particularly so as not to introduce any biological contaminants to South Georgia. South Georgia is 1400km from the Falkland Islands. On the way the ship attracted krill and thus many birds including Wandering Albatross, Small Cape Petrel and the Snow Petrel.

**Shag rocks** on Scotia ridge provided a nesting ground for the Blue-eyed Shags or Cormorants.

SOUTH AMERICA and the ANTARCTIC PENINSULA



**South Georgia** itself was the highlight of the trip. Over 4 days, 7 landings were made. It is 170km long, 2-40 km wide, with 2000-3000m mountains and glaciers coming down into every embayment. Images were shown from Rightwhale Bay, including inquisitive King Penguins, fur seals and elephant seals; Possession Bay; Cooper Bay with Gentoo and Chin-strap Penguins, Giant Petrels on the watch for weak penguins, and Macaroni Penguins (the most numerous penguins in the Antarctic region); Gold Harbor, with the 3rd largest King Penguin rookery in the world (occupied year-round, comprising thousands of mating pairs and many chicks, which take 10-13 months to raise). **Grytviken** was the largest whaling station on south Georgia, founded by the Norwegian Carl Larssen in 1904 and occupied by Norwegian whalers until 1962, when whale numbers were devastated. The Japanese took over at this time but abandoned in 1965. Its cemetery has the grave of **Sir Ernest Shackleton**. King Haaken Bay was also visited.

The next part of the journey went to the very bleak **South Orkney Islands**, where icebergs were encountered. 85% of the land is glaciated. Images included Adelie and Chinstrap Penguins, Cape Petrel and Snow Petrels. The Orcadas Research Station is based here, established in 1903 and housing 17 men who are sustained by 2 supply boats per year.

The journey then went down to the **Antarctic Peninsula** (Brown Bluff region), the **South Shetland Islands** and the Gerlache Channel. Images from these areas included Adelie and Gentoo penguins, Snow Petrels and Weddell Seals.

**Deception Island** is a collapsed volcanic cone. Port Foster, an old whaling station in its centre, is very sheltered and safe, accessed via a narrow entrance into the cone known as Neptune's Bellows

Gentoo Penguin colonies from the Gerlache Channel were shown. Landing on one of the islands, snowshoes minimized human impact (otherwise deep footprints would be left on the surface and impact on penguin movement). The **Drake Passage**, on way back to southern Argentina, was very rough. Sooty and Wandering Albatross were spotted along the way.



Male elephant seal amongst King Penguins  
Photo: Alan Marshall



Gentoo Penguin colony on Cuverville Island.  
Photo: Julie Marshall

We greatly thank Julie and Alan Marshall for sharing this fascinating journey with us. Julie's talk was lavishly illustrated with many stunning photographs (two of which have been kindly provided here, as well as the overview map). The talk not only provided a visual feast of these remote landscapes and their animals, but also a feel for life on board the vessel travelling to these amazing places.

### Further reading:

A good reference particularly for Antarctic history is: Readers Digest. *Antarctica. An extraordinary history of man's conquest of the frozen continent*. 2nd edition, 1998, Capricorn Press, NSW.

P. Vafiadis.

## Twitcher's Cottage

Field Nats members Merrin and Paul will welcome you for tranquil and guilt free relaxation less than two hours from the bustle of Melbourne. Set in a native garden with spectacular views and near Mount Worth State Park Twitcher's Cottage puts you back in touch with nature for a relaxing short or long break.

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### The FNCV Biodiversity Symposium "FORESTS" 19th & 20th November

2011 is the International Year of Forests. 'Forests' will be this year's biodiversity symposium theme. The symposium will take place at the FNCV's premises, 1 Gardenia St. Blackburn, at 10.30 am on **Saturday 19th November**. There will be a full program of guest speakers covering, ecology of forests, flora of forests and Lead-beater's Possum. A light lunch and tea and coffee are included.

**Sunday 20th November** will be a bus tour to the Central Highlands, leaving at 9 am—limited places available.

**Cost:** *Saturday* - \$35 FNCV members/students/concession. \$45 non-members. *Sunday*—\$50 FNCV members/students/concession. \$60 non-members. **Registration form and further details in next month's FNN. Expressions of interest to Hali at the FNCV office.**

#### Many thanks to those who helped collate and label FNN 212

Sheina Nichols  
 Keith Marshall  
 Bob Rowlands  
 Noel Schleiger  
 Margaret Corrick  
 Bill Fenner  
 Ray Power  
 Andy Brentnall  
 Joan Broadberry

*This collation took place at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Visitors Centre and, once again, we thank them for their continued generous support to the FNCV.*

#### Thanks to the editorial and layout team who put together FNN 213

Joan Broadberry  
 Noel Schleiger  
 Platon Vafiadis  
 Hali Ferguson  
 Sally Bewsher

Special thanks to Su Dempsey who helped us out last month.

#### Whitehorse Spring Festival Volunteers needed

This event will be held on **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October** on the lawns of the Whitehorse Civic Centre in Whitehorse Road, Nunawading, from 10am to 4 pm. It is a great opportunity to publicise the club and not in any way an onerous job. **We are urgently seeking helpers to staff our information stall for just 1-2 hours on the day.** We will need at least a dozen people. The Festival hosts a multitude of interesting events so we can promise everyone a good time.

Please contact the office to volunteer.

**Victoria Aitken**

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

## Field Nats News 213



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