



Field Nats News No.238

Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.
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Understanding Our Natural World
Est. 1880

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www.fncv.org.au

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February 2014

From the President

As this is the first newsletter for 2014, I would like to wish all our members a very pleasant 2014. I hope your festive season was a good one with family and friends. My Christmas and New Year were relatively quiet compared to recent years. It was very nice to see so many members, especially the Juniors, at our Christmas party.

I know a number of members are keen bird watchers and some may have heard of "Bird-a-day", an internet competition based on seeing a different bird every day for the year. The prize is only bragging rights, however, bird watchers all over the world compete. When in Cairns in November last year, my friend and fellow nature-guide Alan Gillanders was participating in the competition. When the competition finished on New Year's Eve, six people had a tally over 300 with Alan's total at 352 and four people getting a perfect 365. I have decided to participate this year though I'm not expecting to get too far, maybe Easter. The aim is to see and nominate a different bird each day so if you see two rarities on one day you have to choose which one will be your bird for

that day and hope you see the other one on another day. So far I have got through to the middle of January without the need to go too far from home, despite keeping most of the common birds for a rainy day or three.

While out doing nocturnal fauna surveys in north-east Victoria before Christmas, my colleague and I came across an Eastern Brown Snake in the middle of the track. After getting out to see what was going on, I noticed that the snake had its head stuck in an old spirits can. We put it in a box, drove back to the motel where it was put in my pillowcase, before being put in the fridge for the night. The next morning I rang Wildlife Victoria who gave me some Vet numbers to call. I rang around the vets far and wide to no avail, they all baulked at helping when I mentioned that it was a 4-5 foot Eastern Brown Snake. One vet I overheard asked his vet nurse "Is he for real?" Not getting any local help, I rang Healesville Sanctuary Animal Hospital then travelled to Healesville to drop the snake off. Once the snake handler had assessed the situation the vet, vet nurse and media person joined

Due date for all copy for the March newsletter, is 10 am Tuesday, February 4th. FNN 239 will go to the printers on Tuesday 11th and collation will be the 18th February.

him on the operating room. After about 10 minutes of careful handling and trimming of the can, the snake was eased out of the can without injury. The snake was kept at Healesville until the following Monday when I picked it up and took it back home to Violet Town. Once the snake had slid out of the capture bag, I gave it a good talking to about the dangers of 'drinking while on the road' and sent it on its way. The round trip to Healesville from Euroa was about 250km.

I look forward to leading this Club again throughout 2014.

John Harris

Eastern Brown Snake. Could it possibly have been celebrating New Year? A second image can be found on p3. Photo: John Harris



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

February 2014

Monday 3rd—Fungi Group. No monthly meeting.

Tuesday 4th—Fauna Survey Group. Meeting: *Ecology, Behaviour and Conservation of the Musk Duck.*
Speaker: Patrick-Jean Guay from Victoria University. Contact: Sally Bewsher 9752 1418

Wednesday 5th to Saturday 8th—Marine Research Group. Excursion: *Anglesea to Lorne*
Contact: Leon Altoff on 9530 4180 AH, or 0428 669 773 for each day's location and meeting time.

Monday 10th—Marine Research Group. Meeting: *Shipworms.* Speaker: Hugh Macintosh.
Contact: Leon Altoff 9530 4180 AH, 0428 669 773

Saturday 15th—Fauna Survey Group. Survey: *Bat trapping and spotlighting in Dandenong Valley.*
Contact: Robin Drury 0417 195 148; robindrury@hotmail.com

Sunday 16th—Juniors' Group. Excursion: *Point Nepean.* Details to be advised.
Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474; toclairef@gmail.com

Tuesday 18th—Collate FNN: Starting about 10 am. All welcome. Contact Joan Broadberry 98461218

Wednesday 19th—Microscopy Group. Meeting: Angelica Bauer - PhD Biology Student from Monash University, '*Counting Teeth In Ants*' - *the interesting path to their identification* & *Acacia Polyads (pollen packages)* - *an amazing strategy to ensure the production of maximum seed numbers.* Angelica will be bringing samples for viewing under the microscopes, identification guides and photos. Contact: Philippa Burgess 9598 3231 AH.

Thursday 20th—Botany Group. Meeting: *Flora of the Larapinta Trail.* Speaker: Geoff Lay.
Contact: Sue Bendel 0427 055 071

Saturday 22nd—Fauna Survey Group. Stagwatch: *An evening survey to look for Leadbeater's Possum, gliders, owls and other nocturnal wildlife.* Contact: Ray Gibson 0417 195 148

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

Tuesday 25th—Day Group. Meeting: *Ashmore Reef.* Speaker: Joan Broadberry. Contact: Gary Presland 9890 9288. Meet at 10.30 am for coffee and a chat. Speaker at 11 am.

Wednesday 26th—Geology Group. Meeting: *Links between the World Heritage Naracoorte Caves and the Kanawinka Fault. Insights into Australia's large flat Tertiary Limestone sheets.* Speaker: Ian Lewis, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, South Australia. Contact: Kaye Oddie 9329 0635; koddie@bigpond.com

Friday 28th—Juniors' Group. Meeting 7.30 pm. *Turtles.* Speaker: Graeme Stockfeld.
Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474; toclairef@gmail.com



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

Members' news, photos & observations

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

Welcome
Welcome

Warmest greetings to the new members who were welcomed into our club at the last Council meeting: *Janna Thompson, Jeremy Coyne.*

Hi everyone, please note that we no longer have a Locked Bag for mail.
The FNCV mail address is:
P O Box 13, Blackburn Vic 3131

Below: Another wonderful FNCV Christmas party. *Thanks to Barbara Burns for the photos*



Eastern Brown Snake,
Photo: John Harris

Thanks to the editorial
and layout team who
put together
FNN 238

Joan Broadberry
Wendy Gare
Sally Bewsher



Solar Panels

In 2013, the Club's electricity bill ended up with a net credit balance of \$140. The credit amount will vary from season to season. For example, in the last quarter of 2013 we used \$200 worth of electricity and earned \$350.





Geology Group

“Precambrian reefs of the Flinders Ranges and the rise of animal life”

Ashleigh Hood
Earth Sciences, University of
Melbourne
23 October 2013

Ashleigh Hood is completing her PhD in Earth Sciences at the University of Melbourne researching ancient reefs in the Flinders Ranges, their formation, the complex compositional relationships with the oceans and conditions involving early life.

The Cambrian explosion commencing around 540 million years ago (Ma) is well-known for the diversification and proliferation of early life forms. These had begun to evolve in the preceding Ediacaran period around 635Ma and for which the Flinders Ranges in South Australia provides a number of fossil sites. Earlier still, during the Cryogenian, research has provided evidence of the earliest microbial forms. But earlier, around 715 Ma, when Rodinia was breaking up, the oceans were full of slime and bacteria.

The Cryogenian reefs (650 Ma) of the Northern Flinders Ranges is where Ashleigh and her supervisor, Professor Malcolm Wallace and colleagues, have conducted their field research, studying the stratigraphic relationships involved in the reef formation. The reefs most studied are the Oodnaminta and Arkaroola Reefs. Other reef complexes are located near Mt. Lyndhurst, Mt. Fitton, White Well and Tindelpina Hut.

The form or style of a reef is similar

to what is seen in a modern barrier reef and is comprised of a number of facies. A ‘tour’ of the Oodnaminta reef shows (*see schematic diagram below*):

- Most shoreward, peritidal redbeds of red dolomite mud rocks with ‘teepees’. These are equivalent to the original mudflat behind the beach, with intermittent wetting/drying;
- Inter-tidal range and back reef facies, which have unusual features, such as sheet cavities, algal mats, carbonate ‘peloids’. It also includes ooid grainstones (carbonate ‘pearls’), suggesting a relatively shallow depth (<15m deep);
- Top part of the reef margin to about 200m depth, containing many different types of stromatolites, developing a rigid framework;
- Non-stromatolite deepwater framework (200-800m depth), containing ‘shrub-like’ microbial frameworks with cemented growth cavities forming the lower reef margin, well below the photosynthetic zone. This framework also includes an enigmatic nonstromatolitic chambered framework, not

- seen in the modern world; At the lowest slope-basin facies, thick collections of fore-reef breccia accumulated at the reef base, with debris flows of allochthonous mega-breccia extending into the deeper basin.

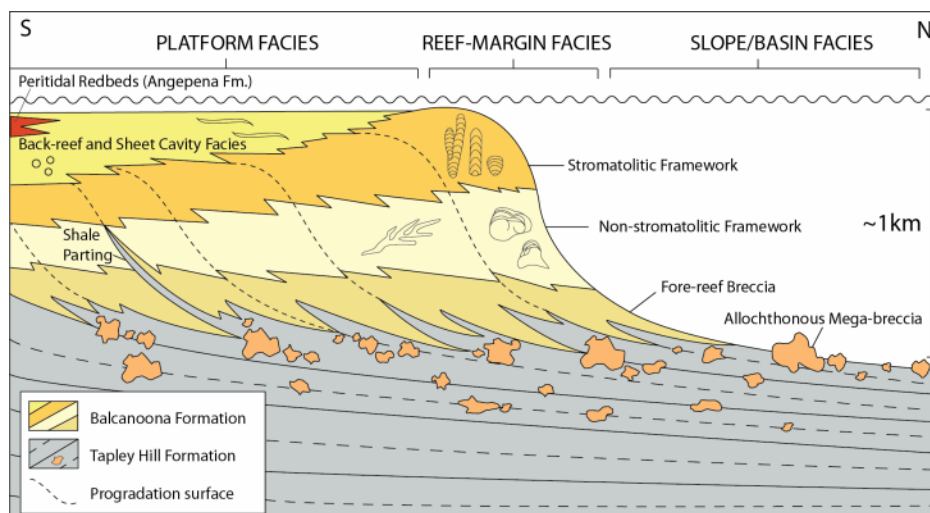
The total height of the reef is around 1000m above the seafloor. Ashleigh showed illustrative slides for each of the reef facies and frameworks. In stratigraphic terms, the platform and reef facies are part of what is called the Balconoona Formation and the lower slope and basin facies are the older Tapley Hill Formation.

Ashleigh then proceeded to describe the interesting geochemistry of the seawater associated with the reefs, and the minerals that formed in it.

These reefs are composed of marine-cemented dolomite, a mineralogy believed to predominate in older, e.g. Precambrian reefs, compared to limestone (calcite and aragonite) in geologically younger, Phanerozoic marine carbonates. The Oodnaminta Reef Complex in the Flinders Ranges consists almost entirely of magnesium-rich dolomite; such reefs are not formed today. It has been suggested that unusual seawater chemistry was responsible for the widespread Cryo-

(Continued on page 5)

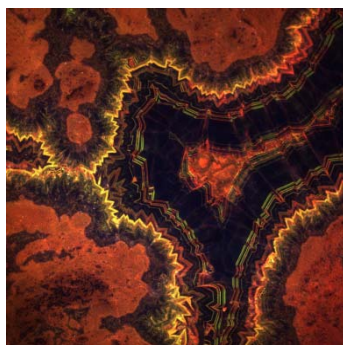
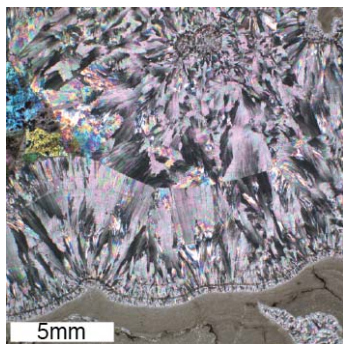
Cryogenian Oodnaminta Reef facies



(Continued from page 4)
genian dolomite deposition.

Dolomitic marine cements from the field work were examined by cathodoluminescence microscopy and showed beautiful growth forms which characterised different cement types. Iron (Fe) concentrations, Mg/Ca ratios and trace elements content of the dolomites were determined using a number of analytical techniques. Chambers and cavities encased in the cements were examined and compared to microbial frameworks. Comparisons were also made to reef complexes in Northern Namibia, similar to those of the Flinders Ranges

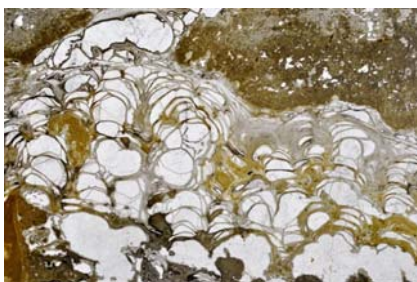
(below) Dolomite marine cements



(above) Cathodoluminescent microscopic photograph of dolomitic cement.

The results suggest that the Cryogenian ocean conditions of Fe-rich, high Mg/Ca ratio, low sulphate, alkalinity and low oxygen promoted dolomite precipitation and 'dolomitisation' of the reef. As dolomitic cements precipitated into cavities in the reef complex, the question is: what was the relationship to the abundant microbial activity present in the oceans? Ash-

leigh showed a number of photomicrographs of chambered structures from Flinders Ranges and Namibian reefs and raised the question whether they could be the earliest animal fossils – perhaps proto-sponges, or conversely, they were just microbes.



(above) Photomicrograph of chambered fossils Mt. Lyndhurst, Flinders Ranges, SA [Rigby et al 1989]



(above) Permian Sphinctozoan sponge

Ashleigh concluded by reiterating that during Cryogenian times, the unusual Mg and Fe-rich, anoxic ocean chemistry led to dolomite formation in the reef; and that deep water structures in the dolomitic cements of the Oodnaminta Reef could be enigmatic fossils, possibly the earliest animals yet found.

The audience expressed their appreciation of Asheigh's very well presented and very interesting talk.

Kaye Oddie

Thanks to those who helped collate and label FNN 237

Sheina Nicholls
Ian McDonald
Keith Marshall
Barbara Burns
Joan Broadberry
Gary Presland
Ray Power
Bob Rowlands
Margaret Brewster

This was not the easiest collation session we have faced, but the group rose magnificently to the challenges.

Special thanks to Gary.

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

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

**Advertising in the
Field Nats News**
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Contact Wendy in the
Field Nats Office
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(Mon. –Tues. 9—4)

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KIMBERLEY COAST



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Join Kimberley Whale Watching's local naturalist guides on the trip of a lifetime as we explore the Kimberley's islands, reefs and outer shoals surrounded by the world's largest Humpback whale population and several newly discovered species of dolphin. Onboard Kimberley Expeditions' "MV Reef Prince", you'll have the opportunity to participate in important research as we collect data on cetacean distribution and behaviour.

We'll visit the seabird and turtle breeding areas on the Lacepede Islands and Adele Island, with vast flocks of Brown, Masked and Red-Footed boobies, Lesser Frigatebirds, Common Noddies, Terns and a variety of shorebirds. We'll also explore Talbot Bay and the iconic Horizontal Waterfalls, Dugong Bay, Turtle Reef, Montgomery Reef, and the vast reef complex surrounding Adele Island.

Cruise includes a scenic float plane transfer from Adele Island to Broome (or reverse) over the stunning Buccaneer Archipelago, all meals and expeditions.



6 - 11 or 11-17 Sept. 2014

From \$3,000 pp twin share

Kimberley Whale Watching
www.kimberleywhales.com.au
info@kimberleywhales.com.au
0409 886350 (Annabelle Sandes)

Extracts from SIG reports given at the last FNCV Council Meeting

Fauna Survey Group: At our November meeting, Claire Keeley, a PhD Graduate student from Melbourne University spoke to us on the topic 'Conservation genetics of the Growling Grass Frog around Melbourne'.

Eastern Parks Fauna Survey The following is a summary of progress of November action in the above survey.

- The camera deployments are proceeding, with the program being around 75% completed.
- Volunteers are continuing to analyse the images gained.
- The frog census for 2013 is nearly complete and two more surveys remain to be done in April 2014.
- A bat and spotlighting survey took place on Cup weekend in Churchill and Lysterfield Parks. One night was cancelled due to poor weather and dangerous conditions. Bats were caught on all nights. Spotlighting revealed a Powerful Owl, Sugar Gliders and an array of possums. On 30 November (weather permitting), a survey is planned for Jells Park and Shepherds Bush.



Juniors' Group: End of Year Camp

We had 50 adults and juniors attend our camp at the small town of Carrajung for varying periods over the November Cup Weekend. We camped at Carrajung Memorial Reserve, which has been used as a sports and equestrian field in years gone by and hosted by the caretaker Neville Chiselett, who lives a short walk away.

These two reports were also published in the December Juniors Newsletter. It is great from time to time, to get the opportunity to read about what our fantastic Juniors are up to. Editors



From the Friday night we arrived and the Tuesday we left we had a mixture of all of Victoria's weather conditions - beautiful sunny days at the beginning and end, and wind and hail in the middle! Thanks to the well built shelter on the property (with tables, chairs and a fireplace) and a toilet block with 2 toilets, we were able to stay fairly comfortable despite the weather.

Over the weekend we went for walks in Tarra Bulga National Park, where we marvelled at the height of the Mountain Ash trees and the tree ferns; explored the woodland forest of Won Wron bush and heard about the legend of White Woman's Water Hole; wandered around the Carrajung township to meet the farming locals; and ventured out to Nooramunga Marine Park where we crossed McLoughlin's Channel to get to Ninety Mile Beach before having Fish and Chips at Port Albert.

Some of the highlights of my time there were watching a Lyrebird making repairs to her nest, finding some ink cap fungi, getting hailed on for a short time in the rainforest (much to the children's delight!), and having so many different birds flitting past and calling out regularly.

Claire Ferguson

Juniors' Meeting Friday 25th Oct. 2013, Speaker: Wendy Clark 'How to grow your own Australian Orchids.'

Wendy brought along some Australian orchids that could be potted up and others made to hang. She also gave us an interesting and illustrated talk which helped us to understand growing conditions and diversity of Orchids. She pointed out that orchids grow on every continent, except Antarctica, with 20 to 30,000 different orchids that have been found. They are champions of mimicry and employ many tricks to get themselves pollinated.

Charles Darwin wrote a book in 1862 about Orchids called, "On the various contrivances by which British and foreign orchids are fertilised by insects, and on the good effects of intercrossing."

(Right) This is the Star Orchid (*Angraecum sesquipedal*)

When Darwin wondered how this night-time fragrant Orchid was pollinated, it led him to predict a species of moth with a proboscis (tubular mouthpart) capable of extending 10 to 11 inches, able to reach the flower's nectar reserves. They eventually found the moth!

Some orchids are epiphytic, growing on bark and branches, for example, the Tangle orchid, or ground dwelling for example greenhoods, donkey orchids and spider orchids. Wendy remarked that the local Kinglake epiphytic orchid was wiped out in the bushfires of 2009.



In Melbourne, orchids need to be kept warm and north facing, but they do not do well with direct sunlight at all. Most essential is humidity - Wendy remarked that this was the same conditions that mosquitos do well in. There are hints that you can get by looking at an orchid for the conditions that they will grow best in. A broad flat leaf wants very little light, whereas a thin leaf takes more light. Thick roots mean your orchid wants high humidity and thinner roots require less. Ground growing orchids should not be fertilised and the epiphytic orchid requires weak fertiliser often.

After learning this about orchids, there was a chance to pot up your own plant and take it home to try and get some blooms. We used the variety *Dendrobium X delicatum*, (photos right). If they get good growing conditions, this is what they will look like when they bloom in late winter or early spring. It was great having something to take home.



The Horobin Family



Day Group

Survival & Recolonisation following Wildfire at Moyston West *Speaker: Peter Homan*

The Day group was very pleased to welcome Peter Homan from the School of Life and Physical Sciences, RMIT University, as their December 2013 speaker. Peter is also well known to many of us through his close association with the FNCV Fauna Survey Group.

There are few studies that provide both pre-fire and post-fire data on the recolonisation of fauna after wildfire. Peter collected data at a site near Moyston in western Victoria on three occasions starting in October 2004. In December 2005 and January 2006 a severe wildfire burnt 46% of the Grampians National Park and adjoining areas, especially around the Moyston district. After this devastating fire event, he conducted eight major surveys from December 2008 to November 2013.

The 150ha property surveyed is situated seven km west of Moyston in Western Victoria. It is located on the plains east of Mt William, adjoining the Grampians National Park. It is mostly flat grazing country, encompassing four Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs). These are: Heathy Woodland, Sand Forest, Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland, and Plains Grassy Woodland

Peter has published a detailed report of his research titled, Survival and Recolonisation of Mammals Following Wildfires at Moyston West, Western Victoria, in *The Victorian Naturalist* Volume 129, December 2012, p 192-202. I refer readers to it. It includes data collected on five post-fire surveys.

The abstract of this paper reads: "Seventeen mammal species were recorded pre-wildfire, whilst 23 species were recorded post-wildfire. The diversity of insectivorous bats was not affected by the wildfire, maybe because a number of mature River Red Gums *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* with numerous suitable roosting hollows, survived the wildfire. Populations of Sugar Glider *Petaurus breviceps*, Common Brushtail Possum *Trichosurus vulpecula* and Common Ringtail Possum *Pseudocheirus peregrinus* also survived the fire in an area of mature River Red Gums. A small population of Swamp Rat *Rattus lutreolus* survived the fire, successfully recolonising regenerating habitat. Yellow-footed Antechinus *Antechinus flavipes* and Eastern Pygmy Possum *Cercartetus nanus* were recorded in regenerating Heathy Woodland after wildfire severely burnt this vegetation. The population of Black Wallaby *Wallabia bicolor* increased three years after wildfire as regenerating vegetation produced dense cover."

In his talk Peter drew on some of the detail in his published paper, to give us insight into the methods used to complete the surveys and the ways mammals can survive and recolonise even after devastating bushfires. He also spoke about reptiles, frogs and birds - species not included in his article. Peter's many beautiful images added greatly to his words. Please go to *The Victorian Naturalist* for the full report.

On behalf of the Day Group I would once again like to thank Peter for a really interesting presentation and congratulate him on all he has achieved.

Joan Broadberry



Library News

The Library staff wish FNCV members a 'happy new year'.

Periodicals received prior to the Christmas/New year break:

The Victorian National Parks Association's *Park Watch* December 2013 covers campaigns against development on the coast at Wilsons Promontory, possible brown coal ports in Gippsland, and Bastion Point, Mallacoota. There are articles on recovery after fire at Lake Mountain, the need for a 'Giant Forest' national park in the Central Highlands, Leadbeaters possum and much more.

An article in the *Australian Journal of Botany* 61(6) reports using fossils, pollen records and DNA to date the divergence of *Acacia* species and their relatives.

Memoirs of the Queensland Museum Vol.7 'Culture' (2 parts) is devoted to the diaries of the explorer Ludwig Leichhardt with translations of the diaries and critical papers by scholars. Vol.58 'Nature' covers Leichhardt's contributions to natural history.

The latest periodicals are displayed in a rack in the library. You can borrow periodicals in the rack, as well as previous issues. Don't forget to fill in the borrowing book.

Gary Presland
Honorary Librarian

For all your FNCV bookshop needs, please contact:



Kathy Himbeck
bookshop@fncv.org.au



The FNCV Environment Fund has been set up to support the objectives of the Club in relation to the environment. Donations to the FNCV Environment Fund are tax deductible. Donations are welcome, and donation forms can be down-loaded from our website or are available from the FNCV Office. Ph 98779860.

- To support and finance environmental research, in particular research into the biodiversity of Victoria.
- To support and finance dissemination of information on the natural environment by any legitimate means, including public lectures, seminars, field trips, courses and publications.
- To support and finance practical projects aimed at preserving and enhancing the biodiversity of Victoria.

The FNCV Environment Fund is administered by a committee consisting of Malcolm Calder (Chair), Barbara Burns, (Secretary & Treasurer), Bob Rogers, John Harris, Ian Moodie and Cathy Willis.

The Committee calls for applications for the next round of funding from the FNCV Environment Fund. Requests for projects between **\$200 & \$1,000** will be considered.

Applications can be from organisations or individuals, but in the latter case must be supported by an organisation. Suitable organisations are established natural history or environmental organisations (Field Naturalist Clubs, Landcare Groups etc.), educational institutions or government departments. Multiple applications from one research group are not encouraged.

Applications for this round of funding close **Monday 7 April 2014**. All applications will be acknowledged and results of applications communicated by **30 April 2014**. Late applications will not be accepted.

Successful projects are required to be completed within 12 months of receipt of funding, with a report supplied on completion. The report will be published by FNCV and successful applicants are encouraged to communicate their results to the Club via articles, talks or field trips.

Additional information about the Environment Fund is available at www.fncv.org.au.

Please include the following information in the application:

- Project Title.
 - Project description (max 250 words).
 - How the project meets the aims of the fund.
 - Budget (include GST in all relevant items). (Also indicate other sources of funding)
 - Indicate if the application is from an individual or organisation and give the name of the individual or organisation.
 - Applicant name and contact details (including mailing address/phone/fax/email).
 - Signature of applicant.
 - Endorsement of organisation (signature of responsible person such as President, Secretary, Manager, Head of Department, include name and position held).
- Donations to the FNCV Environment Fund are **tax deductible**.

Donations are always welcome, and dona-

**Applications (two copies) should be sent to:
Secretary FNCV Environment Fund
Field Naturalists Club of Victoria
PO Box 13,
Blackburn Vic 3130**

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- are **tax deductible**.
- Donations are always welcome, and dona-
- tion forms can be down-loaded from the
- website www.fncv.org.au or are available
- on request from the FNCV Office. Ph
- 98779860 or email admin@fncv.org.au



Dates for your diary— 2014 SEANA & ANN Camps:

(These finalised dates differ from the earlier provisional dates given at the 2013 Spring Camp.)

Autumn: 2-5 May 2014 at Marysville, to be hosted by Upper Goulburn FNC (see below)*

Spring: 26-29 September 2014, to be hosted by Portland FNC

Australian Naturalist Network (ANN) 2014 Get-Together in Hobart, 18-26 October 2014, to be hosted by the Tasmanian FNC. Information is available on their website www.tasfieldnats.org.au.

SEANA Marysville Autumn Camp 2–5th May 2014

Accommodation arrangements: The camp will be held at ‘Camp Marysville’, the comfortable Outdoor Education resort, 595 Buxton/Marysville Road, Marysville. The resort has pleasant three room cabins with bathroom. The agreed costing is based on occupancy of at least three persons (on average) in a cottage. This means two couples or one couple and a single or three singles each sleeping in their own space. There is no facility for camping or caravanning on site.

The registration form invites you to put down the names of friends with whom you would share. It is possible for an extra fee of \$30 per night for a couple to have sole occupancy of a cottage. *More details about accommodation options available from the organisers.*

Meals: all meals will be catered for by the camp’s experienced chefs. Special dietary requirements will be catered for on request. BYO wine.

Costs: Camp registration \$38. The cost of shared lodgings with all meals is \$65 per person per night. If you stay for the whole camp (3 nights Friday, Saturday, Sunday) the cost is \$195 (plus the \$38 registration).

Some highlights of the program:

Friday evening — Marysville History Society: ‘*The Burning of Marysville*’

Saturday evening — Speaker: Stephen Smith (DEPI), ‘*Fire Recovery Projects*’

Sunday evening — Speaker: Dan Harley (Healesville Sanctuary) ‘*Leadbeater’s Possum since the Fires*’

Birds, botany and geology excursions to: Lake Mountain, Stevenson’s Falls, Myrtle Beeches, Cathedral Ranges, McKenzie Flora Reserve, Mt Pleasant Reserve, Buxton Silver Gums Reserve and more.

Registration forms: are available from the FNCV office or

Contact: Upper Goulburn Field Naturalist Club

Camp Co-ordinator, Graham Page

03 5774 7555

grahamvpage@gmail.com

Deadline: Registration form and fee must be paid by **Wednesday 19th February 2014**.

All fees for accommodation and meals must be paid by **Friday 4th April 2014**.

COASTAL GUIDE TO NATURE AND HISTORY PORT PHILLIP BAY

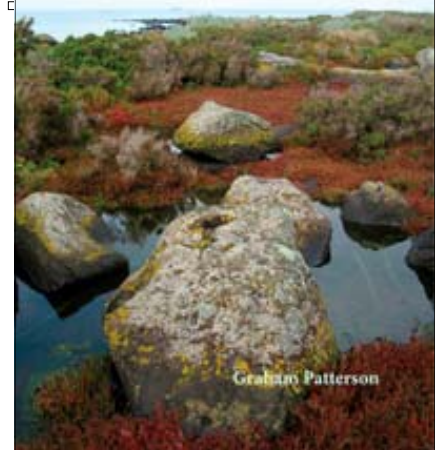
by Graham Patterson.

The book takes a trip around the 260 kilometres of the bay from Point Lonsdale to Point Nepean via Melbourne and looks at plants, animals, geology and landforms as well as local history along the way. It is full colour with many maps and photos (including historical pictures).

Find out more at www.coastalguidebooks.net.au.

Coastal Guide to Nature and History Port Phillip Bay is great value at RRP \$30.00 for 172 pages or just \$27 for FNCV members. Available through the FNCV bookshop. Contact Kathy Himbeck bookshop@fncv.org.au

Coastal guide to nature and history Port Phillip Bay





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Explore Purnululu N.P, Gibb River Rd, Mornington Station and beautiful gorges.

Kimberley Wonders

12 Day Camping Tour – Departs Broome 9th July 2014

Highlights - Gibb River Rd, Mitchell Plateau, El Questro & Parrys Lagoon.

Rudall River Expedition

14 Day Camping Tour - Departs Broome 30th July 2014

Western Australia's largest and most remote national park is the focus of this expedition. Join us to experience the arid zone wildlife of the very remote, harsh yet beautiful Rudall River N.P.

Sri Lanka Wildlife, History & Culture

18 Day Accommodated Tour

This fantastic tour will be led by a Coates escort and one of Sri Lanka's leading birding/naturalist guides. Sri Lanka is an island paradise for birding / nature enthusiasts. Don't miss your chance to join a small group of like-minded people on this unforgettable tour.

Pilbara Reef & Ranges

14 Day Camping Tour – Departs Perth 12th April 2014

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

South West Endemics Birding Tour

8 Day Accommodated Tour – Departs Perth 11th May 2014

Australia's South West region is considered an Endemic Bird Area (EBA) by Birdlife International, the region has over 280 native bird species found here, 12 of which are endemic. Birds of particular interest in the region include three endemic parrot species (Red-capped Parrot, Carnaby's and Baudin's Black Cockatoos), the Western Yellow Robin, Regent and Elegant Parrot, Southern Emu-wren and the Crested Shrike-tit plus we'll also be looking for the regions "big three" the very difficult to find Noisy Scrub-bird, Western Bristlebird and the Western Whipbird.

W.A.'s Mid West Wildflowers

10 Day Accommodated Tour – Departs Perth 6th September 2014

See botanical hot-spots north of Perth during wildflower season.

South Australian Outback Expedition

16 Day Camping Tour – Departs Adelaide 26th May 2014

Experience the diversity of birdlife and the early Australian history plus the geology and other natural history than abounds throughout the lake Eyre Basin. Highlights Include: The Flinders Ranges, Coongie Lakes (Innamincka), Goyders Lagoon (Birdsville) and Frome Creek (Maree).

Tanami Expedition

13 Day Camping Tour – Departs Alice Springs 18th June 2014

Join us as we depart Alice Springs to undertake a crossing of the Tanami Desert taking in the birds & other wildlife at Newhaven Station & the Ramsar listed Lake Gregory before heading into Broome via Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing and Windjana Gorge.

Western Explorer

14 Day Camping Tour – Departs Broome 11th August 2014

This tour has been scheduled to coincide with Western Australia's wildflower season, so you can expect to see a variety of ephemeral plant species including Brunonia and Everlasting Daisies as well as perennials such as Cassias and Eremophilas. The gorges and mountains of Karijini, the aboriginal art, unique wildflowers, spectacular views and the natural beauty of Mt Augustus and the Kennedy Range combine to provide an unforgettable experience.

Holland Track & Great Western Woodlands

12 Day Camping Tour – Departs Perth 28th August

The Great Western Woodlands situated east of the Rabbit Proof Fence with an area of over 16 million hectares. It is about same size as England, It is the largest and healthiest temperate woodlands left on earth with great biological richness. A land of granite rock islands, shrubby plains, mallee and red dirt. It is an Ark for rare and threatened plants and animals, containing thousands of species found nowhere else on the planet. It is a spectacular place for birdwatching with over 150 species found in the region.

Western Australian Outback Expedition

15 Day Camping Tour – Departs 14th September 2014

We travel via the very remote Anne Beadell and the Connie Sue Highways to the Eyre Bird Observatory. Then back to Perth via the Woodlands trail through some of the Greater Western Woodlands. remote outback tracks & the Eyre Bird Observatory. There is plenty of time during the trip to fully experience the areas wildlife.

W.A.'s South West Birds & Botany

15 Day Accommodated Tour – Departs 11th October 2014

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

Lord Howe Island

7 Day Accommodated Tour – Departs 9th November 2014

Lord Howe Island is breathtakingly beautiful and one of the world's most fascinating natural history destinations

Costa Rica Wildlife Safari

12 Day Accommodated Tour – Departs 3rd November 2014

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

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

Phone: 1800 676 016 Web: www.coateswildlifetours.com.au Email: coates@iinet.net.au



AUSTRALIAN NATURAL HISTORY MEDALLION

Congratulations to Marilyn Hewish who was recently awarded the 2013 Australian Natural History Medallion. The medallion was presented at on 11th November by Dr. Bill Birch AM. President of the Royal Society of Victoria. (photo below)



Marilyn is a life member of the Geelong Field Naturalist Club who nominated her for the medallion. For over thirty years her interest and activities centered very much on Australian birds. Marilyn has lead and coordinated many bird surveys, for example national and Victorian Wader counts, Orange-bellied Parrot and Hooded Plover counts and projects for the Royal Australian Ornithological Union, RAOU (now Birdlife Australia) and the Dept of Sustainability and Environment.

She has given numerous presentations and led many birding trips. Marilyn has authored and edited a large body of published work including papers, reports and books. A much more complete account of her achievements will be published in the next edition of *The Victorian Naturalist*.

In the last five years Marilyn's focus has shifted and she is now working hard on the study of Victorian moths. I will draw on her own words to help explain this leap.*

"I got into this research by firstly being a birdwatcher and one day I sat under a tree and a whole lot of what I thought were butterflies were flying around and they were very beautiful and I found out they were moths. And from that moment, I thought moths were more interesting than I ever imagined. And I visited the museum and there's a man there, Peter Marriott, who's been studying moths for 20 years and I started helping him and I've never looked back and I think I'm now addicted."

After receiving the ANHM, Marilyn spoke from the heart, in a most engaging way, of some her life experiences. Firstly, she paid tribute to the many groups and individuals to whom she felt especially indebted. These included:

- The RAOU, where she quickly took a leading role in the Wader Studies Group and became a sub-editor of HANZAB, *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Ant-*

arctic Birds.

- The Geelong Field Naturalists Club, which she referred to as her 'other family'.
- Geelong Field Naturalists Club members: Trevor Pescott, also an ANHM winner and a true generalist naturalist, who encouraged and inspired her; and Margaret Cameron, a wonderful birding mentor and companion.
- Peter Marriott who in the last five years, has led her on a steep and fruitful learning curve in the world of moths.
- The Entomology Department of Museum Victoria which has generously allowed her to work on its moth collection.
- Her husband and daughter who have supported her work in innumerable ways.

Marilyn then went on to talk about and show some beautiful images of Victorian moths. She detailed the two projects she is currently engaged in with Peter Marriott. The first is reorganising *Museum Victoria's* moth collection. The second is publishing a field guide to Victorian moths. Space does not permit me to cover this part of her talk in detail. Suffice to say it was a lively and entertaining presentation full of personal asides. Her dedication, capacity for hard work and passion for natural history shone through.

**The quotation was taken from a short video, (available on the internet) made of a talk Marilyn gave as part of Museum Victoria/ Parks Victoria team during the 2012 Grampians Bioscan.*

Joan Broadberry

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