Field Nats News No.247

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

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Reg. No. A0033611X

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

November 2014

Emails from the President

Email dated 6/9/14

Hello members and welcome to FNN. Kathy and I are currently into our second week of the Desert Discovery at Tjirrkarli indigenous community in the Gibson Desert of WA.

To say it has been an exceptional experience so far would be under rating our experience. We are into our second week of trapping and have already caught nearly 40 species of reptiles and 9 species of mammals. Some of highlights include Desert Banded Snake, Pygmy Desert Goanna, 11 species of striped skink (all needing to be keyed out to identify them), Spinifex Hopping Mouse, Wongai Ningaui and Ooldea Dunnart.

The plants are to0numerous to mention, but there are plenty of Acacias, Ptilotus and many others I have no idea about. Many invertebrates are also caught in our buckets so they are being bottled and will be sent to the WA museum for identified.

I have even noticed some fungi about resembling horse dung fungi I'm used to seeing around Melbourne.

And for the geologists, we are heading out into breakaway country next week, so should see some interesting sites also.

Email dated 14/10/14

Desert Discovery was a fantastic time, with over 60 species of reptiles and mammals recorded. The highlights were too numerous to list, otherwise the whole front page would be taken up with animal names alone. I'm sure there will be a presentation or two sometime in the near future.

2015 AGM

This seems to be a long way off, but I just want to let members know that due to work and other commitments I will be stepping down as President. I have chosen to announce it now so that others can consider what role they might be able to fill within our great Club.

John Harris
President

FNCV FUND RAISING CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

For details, see page 3. The success of this venture is in your hands. Please make the time to pick up ticket booklets at the office (visit, ring or email) or at coming FNCV events.

Very important!
Dec/Jan 2015 newsletter,
early deadline.

The due date for all copy will be ***one week early,*** i.e.**10 am on Tuesday 28th October,** (not the usual first Tuesday of the month). Apologies if this causes inconvenience, but the editor will be away on holidays.

Collation will be as normal on the 18th of November.

Perentie, *Varanus giganteus*– **J. 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.

November

Saturday 1st - Tuesday 4th - Fauna Survey Group Survey: ***Port Campbell National Park/ Bay of Islands.***
Contact John Harris 0409 090 955. **Prior registration of at least one week necessary**

Monday 3rd – Fungi Group - No monthly meeting.

Friday 7th - Sunday 9th – Juniors' Group Excursion: ***Baw Baw Lodge weekend***. $25 per person. Bookings essential. Contact Claire Ferguson 8060 2474; toclairef@gmail.com

Sunday 9th - Botany Group: Field Trip: ***Trust for Nature property*****.** Meet at 10.30am, 800 Blacksands Rd. (by the watertank), Three Bridges. Turn left approx 1km after Gladysdale (612). Contact Sue Bendel 0427 055071

Monday 10th – Australian Natural History Medallion: ***Two-course buffet 6.30 pm and presentation 8.00 pm.***
The 2014 Medallionist is Dr Tom May. Following the presentation he will speak on '*A journey among fungi'*. For dinner bookings ($20) contact the FNCV Office 9877 9860; admin@fncv.org.au by 3rd November. No need to book for presentation.

Monday 10th – Marine Research Group - No Meeting

Tuesday 11th - Fauna Survey Group Meeting: ***Cameras surveys in Papua New Guinea.*** Speaker: Dr Euan Ritchie, School of Life and Environmental Science, Deakin University. Contact John Harris 0409 090 955

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

Wednesday 19th - Terrestrial Invertebrates Group Meeting: ***Bees of the Bogong High Plains:*** native bees, pollination success, weeds and *Apis mellifera* (introduced honey bee)**.** Speaker: Lucy Johanson, Masters student at Melbourne University Contact Max Campbell 0409 143 538; 9544 0181 AH; mcam7307@bigpond.net.au

Thursday 20th – Botany Group Meeting: ***Entwisleia bella: A rare, newly-discovered marine and freshwater alga aka "Hobart's Wollemi Pine".*** Speaker: Professor Tim Entwisle, Director and Chief Executive of Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. Contact Sue Bendel 0427 055 071

Saturday 22nd – Biodiversity Symposium, "Farming & Conservation" Presentations by speakers with specialized knowledge on topics such as regenerating damaged land & conservation management networks. **Sunday 23rd** – Possible Biodiversity Symposium field trip – for more details visit our website. **Prior registration & payment required**. Contact FNCV office 9877 9860; admin@fncv.org.au

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

Tuesday 25th – Day Group Excursion: ***Tierra Madre Wildlife Shelter, Wonga Park***
Director Adriana Simmons will show us around. Meet at 10.15am at the car park of the Village Shopping Centre, Yarra Rd, Wonga Park (Mel 24 G11). $5 per person. **Prior registrations by 18th November please**. Contact Gary Presland 9890 9288

Wednesday 26th – Geology Group Meeting: ***Bioluminescence in the Gippsland Lakes.*** Speaker: Phil Hart, Astrophotographer. Contact: Kaye Oddie 9329 0635: koddie@bigpond.com

Friday 28th – Juniors' Group Meeting, 7.30 pm**:** ***Sean Dooley is obsessed with birds!*** Speaker: Sean Dooley is a comedy script writer, author of The Big Twitch, editor of Australian Birdlife magazine, and holder of the Big Year Twitching Record 2002-12 Contact: Claire Ferguson 8060 2474; toclairef@gmail.com

Saturday 29th - 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

For your calendar

FNCV Christmas party
Saturday evening,
December 13th

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

Warmest greetings to these new members who were welcomed into our club at the last Council meeting*: Marion Brauer, Alan Lundie, Merrilyn Smith, Mark Smith.*

FNCV FUND RAISING CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

It has been tradition to hold a 'fun' raffle at the FNCV Christmas party. This year we have organised some fantastic prizes and have extended the raffle so that all members can take part. We also hope to raise some much needed funds for the Club.

We are asking our generous members to donate suitable items for the minor prize e.g. wine, books, toys, non-perishable food, gift cards etc.

FIRST PRIZE - $300 voucher from Optics Central Superstore Mitcham Victoria www.opticscentral.com.au Choose from a wide range of binoculars, telescopes, microscopes, scopes and supporting accessories. On-line purchasing is available.

SECOND PRIZE - A $75 voucher from "Master your Camera" for digital camera tuition *or* towards a photography course.

THIRD PRIZE - Five books on Natural History selected by Andrew Isles, the Natural History Specialist bookshop, Prahran. www.andrewisles.com

FOURTH PRIZE - Hamper of field naturalist-friendly items. (See above).

MOST IMPORTANTLY, we are asking everyone to sell (or buy) tickets. For simplicity, ten tickets will be priced at $2 each. Booklets of 10 tickets will be available from the FNCV office at the end of October or can be picked up at all FNCV activities. Another option is to ring 9877 9860 or email admin@fncv.org.au and Wendy will post you out tickets.

The raffle will be drawn at the Christmas party on 13th December. Winners will be notified. Donations for the minor prize can be left at the FNCV office on Monday or Tuesday between 9.30 am and 4 pm. Thanks to all who have donated prizes.

From the office:

Hi everyone, just to let you know I have had a wonderful holiday and the FNCV office is back in business.

Re supplies—we are low on tissues and peppermint tea. Best wishes,

Wendy Gare

facebook

We now have 455 facebook friends.

Thanks to Ian Kitchen for taking on the role of maintaining an FNCV presence on this important site.

VALE—SHEILA HOUGHTON

On behalf of the members of the FNCV and myself, I would like to extend our condolences to Sheila's family and friends on her passing.

When I first joined the club in 2003, there was this almost mythical person that other members referred to when talking about the Club and it's history, Sheila Houghton. When I first became president there would appear in my pigeonhole, from time to time, a hand written envelope with letter inside politely letting me know that I had missed some procedural matter such as a motion to appoint an auditor at the AGM. When I wanted to know about historical issues, long term members etc, she was always the one to ask and in a short time frame, I would receive the answer. I affectionately began referring to Sheila as the font of all knowledge, I'm not sure if she took it as a compliment, but I hope she did, as it was very apt.

It wasn't long before she stepped down from her role as librarian and archivist and I discovered that she lived at Gisborne, travelling in twice a week or more to undertake her role for us. Upon her stepping down, the Council decided to honour her enormous contribution to the RNCV, by naming the library *The Sheila Houghton Library* and the naming would be unveiled at the Christmas Party. We organised with Alison, who had prepared an oral history of the Club to make sure that we could get Sheila to the unveiling. I gather it took some persuasion, but Alison's presentation was the "bait".

As the time came at the party, I invited everyone to crowd into the conference room for the unveiling. After warmly talking of Sheila's achievements and dedication to our Club, I unveiled the library's new name on the window above the library door, much to Sheila's surprise. This was a testament to this wonderful lady's humility that even after having her praises sung, she didn't know what was coming next. In fact, she had admitted later that she didn't even realise that the window had been covered, even after having been in the library during the party. I felt like Mike Munro from *This Is Your Life*.

Sheila, you are sorely missed, but your name, deeds and friendship will live long within this Club and it's members.

Rest in peace. **John Harris, President**

Geology Group

Seven 'wonders' of the mineral world – unravelling the mysteries of life, the universe & everything

Dermot A. Henry, Manager Natural Science Collections, Museum Victoria

April 23, 2014

The ongoing willingness of curators and researchers of Museum Victoria to speak to our Field Nats Geology Group on a regular basis is very much appreciated and Dermot Henry, the Manager of their Natural Science Collections, was welcomed once again to talk about what he rates as the seven wonders of the mineral world.

Mineral collectors assign values to their specimens. The allure of acquiring a particular specimen can be driven by, amongst other things, specimen aesthetics, regional interests, a passion for mining history, a desire to own 'one of everything' or simply to forge links with prominent collectors and collections. In addition, minerals have a monetary value. The true 'value' of minerals, however, is the information we can glean from them.

There are about 4500 mineral species. Each species and mineral specimen encapsulates geological and chemical data that provides clues to past geological events and processes. They provide clues to the origins of the universe, our solar system, our planet and to the development of life on Earth. Minerals also provide clues to processes that concentrate 'useful' minerals in the Earth's crust, which we can exploit to enrich everyday life.

Dermot then nominated his 'Seven Wonders of the Mineral World' based on the geological stories they tell, providing clues to the age-old question of "life, the universe and everything" (Adams 1979) … and because he liked them!

1. Diamonds

Diamonds typically form 140-190 km down in the earth's mantle and are brought to the surface via explosive volcanic eruptions in magma, which cools to form kimberlitic and lamproitic rocks. Typically used as gemstones and industrial abrasives. They provide clues to the structure and chemistry of the Earth's mantle.

Diamonds have another history – as 'presolar' grains or 'stardust'. Formed during supernovae explosions, they were part of dust and gas clouds (nebulae), which as they condensed, encapsulated the presolar grains into asteroids, which later arrived on earth as meteorites (called carbonaceous chondrites). Recent studies from the 1980s have shown that the grains have an isotopic composition unique to the particular star and which differs from our own solar system's matter. Thus these diamonds are older than our solar system and tell of events earlier in the history of the universe.

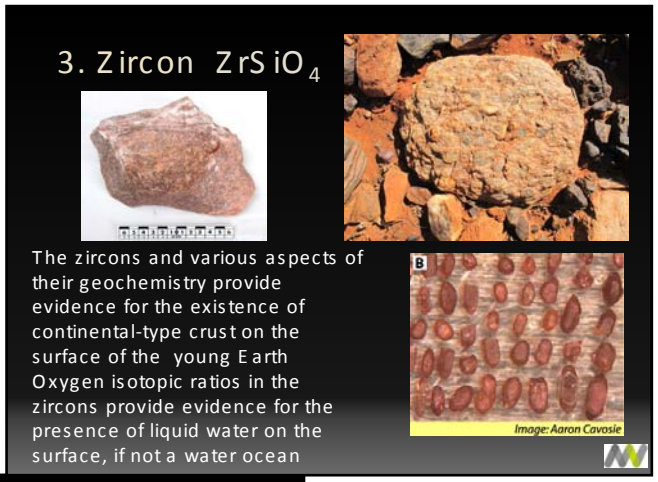
2. Olivine

Olivine is a silicate mineral ($(Mg, Fe)_2SiO_4$) commonly found on Earth in mafic/ultramafic rocks, xenoliths and granite pegmatites. Olivine also dates back to when our solar system began to form, 4.6 billion years ago. From the initial dust and gas nebula, the high temperature minerals, olivine and pyroxenes, melted and crystallised into glassy beads called chondrules, which were then incorporated into chondritic meteorites. Chondritic meteorites have not changed since formation and are believed to be the building blocks of the planetary system. Understanding the little chondrules of olivine is thus important in understanding the initial development of the planetary system.

3. Zircon

Only a few million years after it accreted, the Earth became a fiery ball of molten rock and separated out into an iron core, a silicate mantle and a thin crust. The proto crust has long since been destroyed by ongoing tectonic activity, moving and subduction of plates etc. However we can find some clues and that's where Dermot's next mineral zircon ($ZrSiO_4$) comes in.

The zircons and various aspects of their oxygen isotopic geochemistry provide evidence for the existence of continental-type proto crust and water on the surface of the Earth. The chemistry of the zircons indicates that they melted from the earlier rock that had been to the Earth's surface and interacted with surface water. The zircons indicate the presence of continents and oceans (and perhaps life) very early in Earth's history and also that tectonic processes were operating.



Zircons found in the Jack Hills of Western Australia are the oldest terrestrial materials found to date. These detrital grains clock in at 4.0-4.4 billion years ago with a single grain dating at 4.4 Ba in age.

4. Hematite

The early atmosphere on Earth contained no free oxygen (O_2)

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(Continued from page 4)
so the iron present was in reduced ferrous form, readily soluble in the early acidic oceans. Evolution of oxygenic photosynthesis had profound impacts leading to sharp rise in atmospheric O_2 2.45-2.32 billion years (Ba) ago. Was this due to the development of cyanobacteria, of which stromatolyes form an ancient example? Oxidation of iron led to the formation and sedimentation of hematite and magnetite 2.5-1.8 Ba in what is known as Banded Iron Formation (BIF), which comprises the iron ore rich Pilbara area of Australia. Museum Victoria has a spectacular slab of BIF on display.

5. Garnets
Garnets are another important silicate rock-forming mineral, evidence of mountain building in Earth's history. Garnets show a variation in their chemical composition, which is reflected in colours ranging from deep red browns (Almandine, Spessartine) to green (Uvarovite) – examples shown by Dermot.

(above)
Almadine garnets, Irelands quarry, Thackaranga, NSW.

(Right) Permskaya Oblast, Russia

6. Gold
In introducing his next favourite mineral, Dermot provided comparisons: the Universe contains 0.004 parts per billion (ppb) of gold, the Sun 0.01ppb, the Earth's crust 0.3ppb, the human body 3ppb.

Deposition of gold occurs from hot fluids in favourable places in the Earth's crust. Geological processes, including leaching and weathering, then act to concentrate gold so that Bendigo – likened to the 'Bermuda Triangle for Gold' - could produce 700+ tonnes of gold.

7. Heulandite
Heulandite is a beautiful zeolite. It was first separated from stilbite by August Breithaupt in 1818 and independently in 1822, H. J. Brooke who named it after the mineral collector, Henry Heuland (1778–1856).

Zeolites are hydrated aluminium silicates of Na, K, Ca and Ba. They have special crystal structures and hydration/dehydration properties that allow useful ion-exchange and other industrial uses, for example, filtration of radioactive elements such as caesium out of water and for slow release fertilisers and catalysts. One of the most common uses is in kitty litter, the zeolite locks up ammonium, hence reducing the odour.

Heulandite, Gunnedah NSW (30 58 S,

Summary
Dermot concluded his interesting presentation by neatly summarising his seven minerals - representing Life, the Universe and Everything:

1. Diamond – events before our solar system formed
2. Olivine – formation of our solar system
3. Zircon – formation of Earth's first crust
4. Hematite – evolution of the Earth's atmosphere, indications of life
5. Garnet – residue of former mountain chains
6. Gold – geological processes, which concentrate metals

Heulandite – crystal structure, industrial compounds

Kaye Oddie

Library News

Library collections now on the website

A reminder that you can now search the library's collections on the FNCV website. Click on *About us* – Library and you will be able to download searchable lists of books, periodicals, maps and photos.

Recent periodicals:
The Australasian Bat Society Newsletter no.42 has many pages of interesting abstracts from a recent conference.

Parkwatch 258 features the VNPA's latest Nature Conservation Review and articles about Western Port, Wellsford Forest near Bendigo, Wyperfeld and Yosemite.

Australian Field Ornithology v.31 surveys the birds of Christmas Island.

Emu 114(3) includes a survey of burrowing seabirds around Wilsons Prom, showing a recent decline in short-tailed shearwater numbers and an increase in Little Penguins.

Wildlife Research 41(2) has an article questioning the dependence of Wedge-tailed Eagles on rabbits.

Wildlife Australia 51(3) features extremophiles, animals that thrive in tough conditions, as well as fungi, galls, granite outcrops and the problem of cold water in the Murray-Darling.

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.

Graham Patterson

Thanks to the editorial and layout team who put together FNN 247

Joan Broadberry
Wendy Gare
Sally Bewsher

Day Group

Tuesday Sept 23rd.

Across the Nullarbor and Back

Speaker: Wendy Clark

As our advertised speaker, Chris Connelly was unable to be present, Wendy Clark, was kind enough to step in at the last moment. Her presentation was entitled, *Across the Nullarbor and Back*, reliving a three and a half week trip she took in October 2013. Long standing FNCV member, Wendy needs no introduction, suffice to reintegrate she is a professional photographer and a talented, enthusiastic naturalist. Being so comfortable behind the camera lens, Wendy's presentation was a visual feast. Even though her trip followed a season of good rain, which had greened the land, she commented that from Pt Augusta to Perth she saw no flowing streams or surface water, dramatically illustrating the dryness of a large part of the Australian continent.

Wendy opened by saying how impossible it was to construct a short talk when she had travelled many kilometres and taken thousands of photos. She therefore focused closely on a few aspects of the trip. The first was the rugged coastline of Streaky Bay in South Australia. Photos included wild seascapes, sculptured cuttlefish, sand-dunes with striking forms and vegetation, shorebirds, a wonderful study of a Stumpy-tail Lizard and the rock formation known as Murphy's Haystacks. She then moved on to the Nullarbor itself with its huge skies and endless landscapes; skilfully captured using 360 degrees photography technique.

The trip continued on through Norseman towards Perth. Images from this section included ants, lichens, Spinifex rings with Acacias growing in the centre, a Wolf Spider, its burrow sealed with silk, a Dragon Lizard, and plants such as Ptilotus sp., Sienna sp., everlastings and tiny mysterious plant that intrigued us all.

In the Margaret River region Wendy visited relatives, one of whom was a landscape painter. Photos taken here included seascapes at Cape Levin and rugged Cape Mentelle, and many plants at local wildflower hotspots - for example, Milkmaids, Kangaroo Paw, Trigger Plants, Rosy Pimelia and Cowslip and Purple Enamel Orchids.

At Albany and Denmark Wendy's camera again evoked the rugged coastal scenes of rock-bridges, spray and thundering waves.

Two days were spent in the Stirling Ranges. Plant images included Western Australian specialties such Kingea grasstrees, Calytrix sp., Sundew sp., the Southern-cross Flower, Leschenaultia (both blue and red) and Verticordia sp.

Finally on the trip home Wendy visited and photographed Cactus Beach, between Ceduna and Streaky Bay. Her long detour was rewarded with a magnificent sunset.

On behalf of the Day Group I would once again like to thank Wendy for so generously sharing her journey across the continent with us.

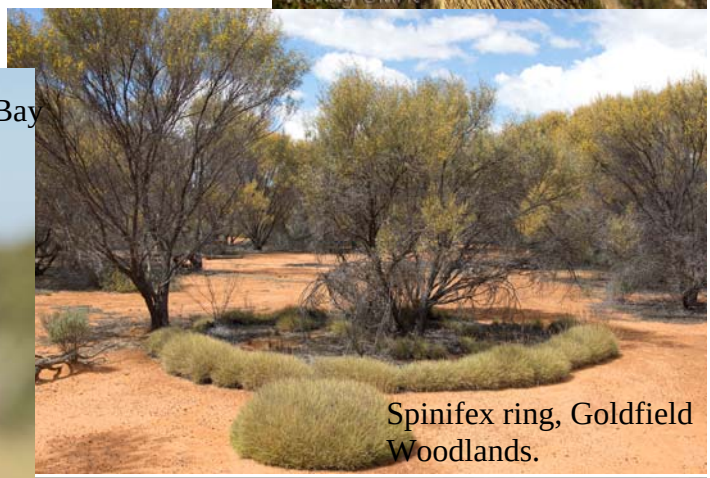
Joan Broadberry

VALE— Margaret Endersby

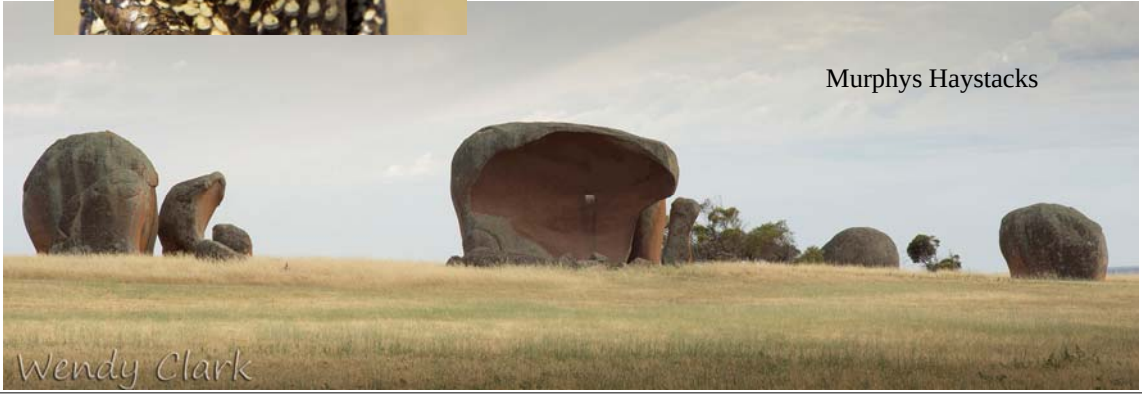
Margaret passed away on 4th October 2014. She has been a valued FNCV member since January 1987.
Our deepest sympathy is extended to her husband Ian and to her family.

Kingea sp. Stirling Ranges

Stumpy-tail Lizard, Searcy Bay



Spinifex ring, Goldfield Woodlands.



Murphys Haystacks

Fungi Group

FNCV FUNGI GROUP FORAY
22 JUNE 2014
Baldry Crossing, Greens Bush, Mornington Peninsula National Park
Heathy Eucalypt Forest

We were pleased to see some of the Juniors (FNCV) whose sharp eyes were able to discover a lot of fungi. At the start it didn't look very promising , as there appeared to be few fungi, but careful looking soon changed that – over 90 species were recorded. Jurrie Hubregtse made three collections of *Cortinarius* spp. for the Herbarium, Melbourne

Several young individuals of the striking *Amanita armeniaca* ('Apricot' Amanita, photo,right) were seen. The veil over the gills had not yet broken to form the white ring on the apricot stem, but the white universal veil that covers the emerging fruit-body had broken to form huge flat, white patches on the apricot cap and white ridges at the base of the stem that formed the 'volva'. *A. armeniaca* is a very sturdy, substantial fungus.

The find by Richard Hartland of the small, soft, sticky *Austroboletus novaezelandiae* (p8) was exciting, we don't often see them on our forays. This species has a sticky bright brown cap which overhangs the pink-brown pores (some of which had been eaten – by arthropods) and the stem was thin and white with a brown-fibred 'netting' pattern. The slime on the stem is supposed to be bitter. John Eichler discovered another species of soft Bolete – the cap was light chestnut or dark red-brown with a pale margin, soft white pores, which often had water droplets and a thickish white stem. It looked like *Fistulinella mollis*, but did not have pink pores. However, Virgil Hubregtse had this to say: "I have seen *Fistulinella mollis* look as described here. I saw some at Bunyip with dark brown caps and firm white pores, but a week later the fruit-bodies had changed markedly, with lighter brown caps and pink 'marshmallow' pores". So, the species today must have been very young. This illustrates how important it is to know the various changes occurring in a developing fruit-body.

Growing close together at the side of the track were two large pear-shaped puffballs. One group was growing in the ground, *Lycoperdon perlatum* (Common Wolf-fart), the other, *Morganella pyriformis* (*Lycoperdon pyriforme*, was growing on wood. *L. perlatum* has a brown head grading into a pale yellow long stalk, but *M. pyriformis* does not have a distinct stem, and is smaller. In both cases the fruit-body is covered with spines which fall off as the fruit-body ages, and the spores are released through an opening in the top of the head. Spores are liberated by raindrops and wind. On the opposite side of the track we saw the cushions of *Hypoxylon howeianum* which was found on the same logs as on previous forays. Some cushions were old and had turned black, but others were the usual red-brown colour. On one of the logs, the brownish braided ropey anamorph stage was seen. In the same tangle of logs were examples of the brown bracket with a pink margin *Fomitopsis lilacinogilva*, whose lower surface typically stained red when scratched.

Armenita armeniaca Photo: Claire Ferguson

In the 'Dell', a lower, damper area below the main track, consisting of mossy groves of paperbarks and grass trees, Paul George again found a number of *Hygrocybe* and *Entoloma* species. These included many specimens of *Hygrocybe graminicolor*, the most common *Hygrocybe* in the area. Its cap colours ranged from pale green to reddish brown, orange and pale straw (dried grass) and the gills are very decurrent, with a pale green glutinous margin. The green colouring and gills with a green glutinous margin confirm the identification. *Humidicutis lewellinae* (*Hygrocybe lewellinae*), another Fungimap Target species, had a pale lilac, conical cap which characteristically had split radially, and a lilac stem. Another relatively common species in this area was the tiny *Hygrocybe chromolimonea* which is all bright chrome yellow and glutinous, making it easy to recognise. *Hygrocybe lilaceolamellata* is an interesting species because at first it looks like just another LBM (Little Brown Mushroom, and we saw a lot of those!) with its brown cap and brown stem. However, unusually the gills are a pale to deep lilac colour, and the spore print is pale violet. During the foray we came across a lot of *Entoloma* to which we were unable to give a species name, but Paul found *Entoloma moongum* which is short and relatively stout with a purplish black cap and stem and *Entoloma albidocoeruleum* to which the group gave the name 'fawn bluey' before it was officially described. This was because it had a pale fawn cap on a sky-blue stem.

The Grey Coral *Clavulina cinerea* with its general grey colour, sturdy to dense structure and the irregular twisted branches helps differentiate this from *C. vinaceocervina* (not seen today) which

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(Continued from page 7)
has purple-brown to pink-brown colours and a more delicate structure. From the 'Dell' came a small, delicate, yellow, branched coral fungi. *Ramariopsis crocea* with a typically long stem, growing on soil amongst moss. In earlier forays this year we have only seen it growing on the stems of Soft Tree-ferns.

Two similar pink-red coral tongues, *Clavaria corallinorosacea* and *C. miniata* were both found and we were clearly able to see in the field the differences between them. The simple clubs of *C. corallinorosacea* had matured and the white spore bloom was visible on the fertile head with a clear difference between head and stem, while the bright peach-coloured *C. miniata* smooth clubs were simple, flattened or grooved and much larger. *C. miniata* can also be differentiated from another pink, salmon or orange-salmon species *C. sulcata* ('Wrinkled Clavaria', known to occur in Qld) which has wrinkled (sulcate) clubs, and smaller spores.

In the afternoon along the track next to Main Creek, a massed display of the Horse-hair Fungus *Marasmius crinisequi* covered about 1 square metre. These had minute caps but 'the pimple in the dimple' was visible with a hand lens.

Austroboletus novaezelandiae
Photo: Pat Grey

Thank you to Paul George for doing the descriptions of the Entoloma and Hygrocybe, and thank you to the photographers for providing a choice of photos – John Eichler, Claire Ferguson, Ed Grey, Pat Grey, Carol Page .

PS
You will remember the photo of Sally Green's crocheted Stinkhorns which formed part of our last Bunyip (Mortimer Reserve) foray report. To our surprise we were contacted by a Weekly Times reporter who wanted to use the photo in this paper. So, with her agreement, the photo and a short article appeared in the Weekly Times for Wednesday 25 June. Sally's fame didn't stop there – on Thursday morning Red Symons interviewed Sally about her craft work on 774 ABC radio. We are very pleased to see Sally gain recognition for her work and think this is a nice story.

FNCV FUNGI GROUP FORAY
29th June 2014

Cathedral Range, Ned's Gully

Riparian Forest along Little River, Open forest on 'Hygrocybe Hill'

This was one of our wetter forays – both rain and wet ground – and an early decision was made to go straight to 'Hygrocybe Hill'. Here we were treated to a massed display of red and yellow flames of coral fungi. Large groups of the bright yellow, simple clubs of *Clavaria amoena* (p9) contrasted with the red clubs of *C. miniata*. The latter had slim flat clubs and looked quite different from the larger orange-red flat or twisted ones seen at Greens Bush on the last foray. Numbers of the small, branched, delicate, yellow *Ramariopsis crocea* were also scattered around on the ground. Another colourful fungus was the beautiful Green Skinhead *Cortinarius austrovenetus* (Fungimap Target Species) with yellowish gills and stem, and *Cortinarius sinapicolor* (Slimy Yellow Cort) with a slimy yellow cap tinged with orange and a yellow slimy stem.

Jurrie and Virgil Hubregtse noted that the deep blue *Entoloma* sp. was *E. coeruleogracilis* (Slender Dark-Blue

Entoloma coeruleogracillis
Photo: Virgil Hubregtse

Pink Gill, photo above, because it was the only blue *Entoloma* that matched both the microscopic and macroscopic details. The dry cap is dark blue with fine fibrils, and a striate margin; the gills are white, at first, and the delicate, wavy stem is blue with a creamy basal mycelium. There are a lot of other similarly-structured blue *Entoloma* spp. including *E panniculus* which has a deep blue or purple scaly cap and stem, but the top of the stem is whitish; *E. moongum* has a dark-brownish black cap but confusingly it may appear bluish; *E. splendidum* has a bright blue cap, blue-grey gills and a slender, polished, pale sky-blue stem (but this is rare and found only in wet gullies amongst mosses); *E. uliginicola* has a slightly crenate, blue-violet cap and blue-violet stem. G Gates & M Noordeloos (Preliminary Studies in the Genus Entoloma in Tasmania I, *Persoonia* 19/2, 2007) p 168 say that '*E. coeruleogracilis* is a relative of *E. bloxamii* and *E. nitidum* with its blueish basididocarps, but differs in its small, mycenoid basidiocarps and relatively small spores ….'; however, both of these comparative species are found in a different habitat (heathland and pines).

Several *Hygrocybe* spp. were found, Reiner Richter pointed out the scarlet-capped *H. miniata*. We decided that it was *H. miniata* because it had a dry scarlet red cap with a crenulate margin, yellowish gills and a red stem. *H. firma* looks similar, but with pink gills and an even cap margin and *H. kandora* is somewhat stouter with a viscid cap. John

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)
Eichler spotted *Hygrocybe cantharellus*, *H. austropratensis* and an unnamed yellow species *H* sp. with a slimy yellow cap, arcuate gills and a white stem, *H chromolimonea* another yellow species but with a slimy cap and slimy yellow stem, and finally a medium-sized orange species with a bell shaped cap similar to *H. xanthopoda*.
A mature specimen of the White Punk

Clavaria amoena Photo: Reiner Richter

Laetiporus portentosus was seen growing high on the trunk of a living Eucalypt. This was unusual, as we normally see the fallen, beetle larvae eaten, remains (looking like polystyrene) lying on the ground; some of these were found later. A group of Birdsnest Fungi *Nidula emodensis* shows all stages of development) were growing on a small piece of wood. They are subglobose in shape, very pale yellow outside and covered with long white hairs, while the smooth yellowish inside is filled with round, brown flat 'eggs' encased in a gelatinous mass. After the covering of the cup cracks open and a raindrop hits the 'eggs', the walls are shaped such that the eggs are expelled a good distance from the 'nest' and as the surface of the eggs is sticky they adhere to anything they land on. The subglobose shape differentiates it from *Nidula niveotomentosa* whose fruit-body is a straight-sided cylinder. Alongside the track, the Grey Coral *Clavulina cinerea* was growing next to the white, twisted fruit-bodies of *Clavulina subrugosa*.

The afternoon was spent along the Little River track – always within sound of the river which was running higher than we have seen before. A mass display of *Coprinellus disseminatus* surrounded a stump in the camping area, and orange-brown rosettes of *Podoscypha petalodes* were again growing around the base of a *Eucalyptus viminalis*. The frilly, dark brown-black, gelatinous-like fronds of *Cordierites frondosa* were found on a large fallen log, but not on the log by the side of the road where they had been previously seen.

On and near a tall Eucalypt we found a number of *Mycena* spp. On the trunk itself was *M. epipterygia* with a slimy yellow stem which is so glutinous that it stuck to our fingers, and, when squashed, gave off a cucumber smell while the stem of the Bleeding Mycena *M. kuurkacea* 'bled' a brownish liquid over our hands. Hiding in a crack in the bark were two of the black-capped Nargan's Bonnet *M. nargan* – identified by the white spots on their caps. There were other black-capped *Mycena* on the trunk, but as they showed no white scales they must remain just a *M.* sp. On small twigs and leaves of the litter around the base of the tree we saw the tiny white cap of *M.* sp. 'marasmioides'. This species can be identified by the relative toughness of the yellow stem which is a characteristic of *Marasmius* spp., hence its field name. The other minute white *Mycena* was *M. albidocapillaris* which has a dimpled cap, a tallish stem with a few scattered hairs that emerges directly from the substrate with no disc.

Thanks to the photographers for their contribution – John Eichler, Pat Grey, Virgil Hubregtse, Carol Page, Reiner Richter.

A note from Dr Tom May, Senior Mycologist at the Melbourne Herbarium:

Oudemansiella radicata is ***O. gigaspora*** group – Australian specimens of *Oudemansiella radicata* or *Xerula australis* were not the same as their counterparts in the northern hemisphere, and should not be used for Australian species;
Plectania campylospora is now ***Urnula campylospora***.

Pat and Ed Grey

GEOLOGY GROUP CHRISTMAS CAKE RAFFLE

The Geology group is holding a Xmas raffle of a beautiful Christmas Cake Tickets on sale at Geology meetings on Oct 22 and Nov 26
$3 per ticket or two tickets for $5

Grateful thanks to the helpers who staffed the FNCV stall at the Australian Plant Expo

Joan Broadberry, Fran La Fontaine, Su Dempsey, Pieter Boschma, Ruth Robertson, Barbara Burns, Lani Watson, Jesse Kurylo, Jaynaya Atkins, Meg Cullen, James Cordwell, Wendy Clark, Sue Bendel, Julia Davis, June Anton.

Thanks to those who helped collate and label FNN 246

Margaret Brewster
Keith Marshall
Barbara Burns
Cecily Falkingham
Ray Power
Margaret Corrick
Andrew Brentnall
Wendy Gare

In addition, to the normal newsletter collation the four monthly calendar was also due sent out. Grateful thanks to all for completing this extra task. Special thanks to Margaret Corrick who took over the organisation of the collation.

* Recent news, is that Margaret Corrick is convalescing after an illness. Our very warmest wishes to you for a speedy recovery.

Extracts from SIG reports given at the last FNCV Council Meeting

Botany Group: Dr Joe Greet presented on the decline of sedge rich *Eucalyptus Camphora* community at Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve. This is the last remaining example of this vegetation class. Yellingbo is home to the critically endangered Helmeted Honeyeaters and lowland Leadbeater's Possum.

Dieback was first noticed in the 1990s. Bell Miners were present, so they were removed, but dieback continued. It was thought it could be fungal pathogens, but dieback moved upstream which is not the pattern for fungal pathogens. Also plants grown in soil from Yellingbo did not develop fungal pathogens. Altered hydrology from levy banks and channelling of creeks caused the dumping of nutrients and sediment in the creek, and Spring flooding no longer occurs.

Additionally *Eucalyptus Camphora* seed release is very low and there is no seed bank in the soil. Seed is held in the canopy and is dropped in response to fire or flood. *E. Camphora* can survive flooding provided that it has some shoots above water. Young plants are susceptible to drought.

Vegetation at Yellingbo has problems with altered hydrology, growth of *Phalaris* and *Phragmites* competing with seedlings, and grazing and ring barking by sambar deer. Revegetation is being done but there is a need to plant under-storey and mid-storey as well as trees. Revegetation needs tall tree guards or fencing to protect it from deer. The government has The 2 million trees project, but only provides trees and no fences or tree guards. Melbourne Water is going to alter the hydrology to make it more natural.

Fauna Survey Group: Robin Drury spoke at the September meeting about the fauna survey in the parks and reserves of Eastern Melbourne. The survey covered 15 parks and reserves within the three parkland complexes of Berwick, Dandenong Valley and Sandbelt. These parks are Baluk Willam, Braeside Park, Bushy Park, Cardinia Creek Parklands, Cardinia Reservoir Park, Churchill National Park, Critchley Parker Junior Reserve, Corhanwarrabul Wetlands, Jells Park, Koomba Park, Lysterfield Park, Police Paddocks, Selby Conservation Reserve, Shepherds Bush and Wattle Park.

The survey was a joint effort between Parks Victoria and the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria. Over 100 people were involved including volunteers associated with 18 community groups and clubs. Funding was received from Knox Environment Society, Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water. In addition , Boral Industries have supplied roof tiles for the reptile surveys.

The study primarily surveyed for mammals, including bats, reptiles and frogs. The main survey techniques were remote cameras, harp trapping, hair tubing, spotlighting, audio frog surveys and the establishment and monitoring of artificial habitat for reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Bird species encountered with these techniques were also recorded.

In summary the survey involved: the deployment of cameras at 260 sites; the deployment of hair-tubes at 40 sites; spotlighting at 42 sites; the deployment of bat traps at 25 sites; Frog surveys at 40 sites and the commencement of a reptile survey which involves the deployment of roof tiles and tin at 100 sites (these sites will be monitored). All but the reptile survey have been completed. The tiles and tin deployment and the first inspection should be completed by late October.

The camera survey required over 30,000 ten-second videos to be analysed. Over 100 species were identified including 10 species of frogs, 8 species of bats, 57 species of birds, 22 species of mammals and 4 species of reptiles. Species recorded in most reserves were Common Blackbird, Common Brushtail Possum, Common Eastern Froglet, Common Ringtail Possum, Eastern Yellow Robin, Red Fox, Striped Marsh Frog, Southern Brown Tree Frog and Superb Fairy Wren. Four species listed on the 2013 Advisory List of Threatened Vertebrate Fauna in Victoria were recorded. They were Powerful Owl, Latham's Snipe, Nankeen Night Heron and Southern Toadlet.

Fungi Group: Members' night – Summary of mini-conference
For this evening, members were invited to talk about and show photos of fungi that interested them. Six members gave presentations or showed their photos.

Virgil Hubregtse highlighted the difficulty in identifying *Mycena subgalericulata* without microscopic examination. The problem is that several other Mycenas closely resemble this species, so microscopic examination is necessary to be certain of its identity.Ed Grey spoke about what we thought was a *Hypoxylon* species growing as black spots on the trunk of a dead *Hakea* tree at Wanderslore. Ed sent samples to Jack Rogers, who is a world authority on *Hypoxylons.* Jack replied that the fungus was not a *Hypoxylon*, but it could be a species of *Biscogniauxia*.Richard Hartland showed photos of fungi found during his recent trip to western Victoria and the Little Desert. These fungi were a puzzle for all of us, and we continue to be amazed at the seemingly infinite variety of these organisms.

(Continued on page 14)

Fauna Survey Group

Mallee Survey

28th September to 4th October, 2014

After the first successful collaborative project with Parks Victoria in the Grampians, which saw the first record of a Squirrel Glider in 30 years and the first ever sign of Brush-tailed Phascogales in the area, the second project saw us turning our attention to the Mallee.

The focus of this project was the Yarrara and Mallanbool Nature Conservation Reserves and the surrounding areas. The reserves are situated near Werrimull, which is around 60 km west of Red Cliffs. We were staying at the nearby town of Meringur.

Camping at Meringur
Photo: Mark Antos

The aims of this survey were the detection of the presence of the White-browed Treecreeper (listed as vulnerable under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act) and other Mallee birds, as well as a base-line fauna survey for other vertebrate fauna. An extract from our brief from Parks Victoria stated: "Baseline fauna surveys in Yarrara FFR are of particular interest because the area supports an example of a rare habitat type (semi-arid woodlands) in good condition. Due to its location in the far north-west of the state, the site also offers opportunities to detect species that are either very infrequently or not previously recorded in Victoria." The last sentence turned out to be most prophetic.

There were 22 attendees, including seven visitors. Most of the work was done at Yarrara, but we spent a day and evening at Mallanbool. We split into three teams, which operated at different locations around Yarrara. Each team deployed pitfall traps, Elliott Traps and remote cameras as well as surveying for the White-browed Treecreeper along 15 previously defined transects. These are part of a long term monitoring program run by DEPI. Call playback was used encourage the birds to make their presence known. Harp traps were deployed on four nights. Incidental sightings were also recorded.

Pitfall trapping, bat trapping, the bird transects and incidental observations proved most productive. We had

Little Pied Bat *Photo: Mark Antos*

White-browed Treecreeper
Photo: Mark Antos

hoped to detect small native mammals with the cameras and Elliott traps, but this was not the case. However, we did trial the setting of our cameras closer to the baits in order to identify any small mammal and this was successful, even if the subject was a House Mouse.

Overall, we recorded 92 species of vertebrate animal and 12 of these were not recorded in the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas for that area. The 12 were Barn Owl, Brown Goshawk, Owlet Nightjar, Bougainville's Skink, Central Bearded Dragon, Gould's Goanna, Regal Skink, Tree Skink, Red Kangaroo, Inland Forest Bat, White-striped Freetail Bat and Little Pied Bat.

In terms of unusual finds, the most significant was the Little Pied Bat, which has not been recorded in the VBA for this state. Four specimens were captured and released. All were female and either about to give birth or recently had. The animal is listed as vulnerable in New South Wales.

Of the 15 bird transects surveyed, eight contained White-browed Treecreepers. Around 30 individuals were seen or heard.

Another highlight was the detection of 10 specimens of Beaked Gecko, which is listed as critically endangered. Another listed species, the Hooded Robin, was also seen.

Further collaborative projects at Wilson's Promontory, the Warby Ranges and the Grampians are planned for 2015.

Robin Drury

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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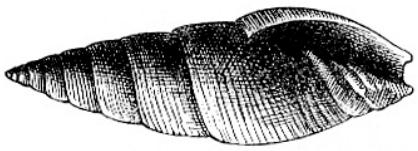
Marine Research Group News

Report on MRG meeting Monday 8th of September, 2014: MRG members' night: A small but enthusiastic audience attended for this members' night. The presentations, in the order in which they occurred, are summarised below.

Michael Lyons, an experienced SCUBA diver and keen observer of the marine environment, spoke on recent diving experiences in southern Port Phillip and Westernport Bays. In the last year or so, Michael and diving colleagues have been finding an unusual costellarid which defied attempts at identification. Further study by Max Marrow, involving examination of type material held in the South Australian Museum, revealed the species to be *Vexillum vincentianum* (Verco, 1896). This is most uncommon in Victoria and can be confused with the more abundant *Vexillum australe*.



Vexillum vincentianum (as *Eumitra vincentiana*) from Macpherson & Gabriel, 1962: 213, fig. 254.

Michael also went on to show living images of the marine snails *Colubraria reticulatus*, the exquisite muricid *Typhina yatesi*, the sand snail *Natica sagittata*, and the snails *Cancellaria spirata*, *Waimatea obscura and Mitraguraleus mitralis.*

Natica sagittata. Photo: M. Lyons.

Michael illustrated his talk with interesting observations, such as his hypothesis that *Typhina yatesi* has extraordinarily long and curved anterior and posterior siphonal canals to enable it to bury in sediment when inactive, with the protruding canals just above the surface acting as inhalent and exhalent water channels.

Also shown were colour / shape varieties of *Conus anemone*, sea slugs (*Digidentus arbutus*, *Melanochlamys queritor*, an undescribed *Janolus*) and the small bivalve *Nannomactra jacksonensis*. It was a great opportunity to see animals either never or only rarely observed intertidally.

Platon Vafiadis spoke on the functions of the molluscan foot, illustrating with images of living animals. Broadly these functions are:

1. Crawling / locomotion—this is the most obvious function (and also occurs in bivalves), although there are groups that are sessile when mature, such as the worm shell families Vermetidae and Siliquariidae, and oysters and mussels.
2. Sensory function– the foot and epipodium may possess sensory structures, examples being epipodial tentacles in the trochids and related groups.
3. Adhesion—molluscs exposed to high wave action need a powerful foot for adhesion to their (usually rocky) substrate, examples being the various limpets and abalone. The foot also produces mucus and many micromollusca use mucous strings as 'guide-ropes' back to their algal subtrates should they happen to dislodge, examples being the microcolumbellids and cystiscids. Cephalopods have a highly modified foot, with dexterous arms with suction cups to grip and capture prey.
4. Burrowing—the sand snails, margin shells, volutes and olive shells are burrowing species. Burrowing occurs to search for prey or to offer protection. Many bivalves also live infaunally and certain species of octopus also bury themselves.
5. Reproduction - octopuses transfer sperm packets to the female using a modified arm.
6. Brooding - in the southern Australian cowry genera *Notocypraea* and *Zoila*, eggs layed by the female are brooded by her under her expanded foot until they hatch as crawling young. Unlike their tropical relatives, they are highly endemic because they lack a planktonic larval phase.
7. Capturing and subduing prey-images were shown of: the marginellid *Mesoginella pygmaeoides* actively moving with a gastropod tucked up in its posterior foot after having smothered it; *Polinices sordidus* carrying a smothered mussel with its posterior foot; and *Octopus maorum* actively hunting in the intertidal zone.
8. Righting behaviour - *Calliostoma comptum* and *Nassarius* use twisting movements of their highly mobile foot to rotate their shells against their substrate and thus right themselves if they are turned over.
9. Swimming/drifting in currents - the swimming trochid *Ethminolia tasmanica*, the pelagic *Janthina* shells, which float beneath a mucous raft feeding on cnidarians, and the scallop *Pecten fumatus* were shown and discussed.
10. Defence – shown were the pelagic nudibranch *Glaucus* which floats sole-upwards and feeds on pelagic cnidarians– its ventral aspect is bluish and its dorsal aspect is pale, camouflaging it from above and below, respectively; S*tomatella impertusa* sheds its large posterior foot when threatened, sacrificing it in order to escape and ultimately survive an attack. The flamboyant nudibranch *Ceratosoma brevicaudatum* makes no attempt at camouflage, its bright colours instead signalling potential toxicity to would-be predators.

Leon Altoff spoke of further South Australian material collected by the SACReD group in recent weeks (see MRG page in FNN 246 for background), and presented images of various animals, the rarest being the nudibranch *Trinchesia sororum* Burn, 1964, known from only a total of seven specimens in Victoria before a further three were added from this recent collection, and giving South Australia a new species for its state list.

Trinchesia sororum (4mm long), from South Australia. Photo: L. Altoff

Also shown were a *Rissoella* snail, *Hermaea evelynemarcusae* and the nudibranchs *Austraeolis ornata*, *Tergipes* sp, *Eubranchus* species, an amphipod, a foraminiferan, and a few nemerteans.

Thanks to all present and to the presenters for making their images available for inclusion in this write-up.

Further reading:

Macpherson J.H. and Gabriel C.J. (1962). *Marine molluscs of Victoria*. Melbourne University Press, Parkville.

Platon Vafiadis

(Continued from page 10)
Bill Leithhead had photographed *Coprinellus truncorum* over a period of one week while staying at Merimbula, and his photos showed the development and eventual decay of several patches of fruit-bodies. *Coprinellus truncorum* grows on dead wood and in this case was growing on the dead roots radiating from two tree stumps. The fruit-bodies clearly indicated where the roots were located beneath the soil and grass.

Jurrie Hubregtse revealed that what we have been calling *Lachnum pteridophyllum* when we find its tiny fruit-bodies on rachises of the rough tree fern *Cyathea australis* fronds, is most likely *Lachnum varians*. Jurrie has spent some time collecting and examining *Lachnum* species and has found *L. pteridophyllum* only once, on rachises of the smooth tree fern *Dicksonia antarctica* fronds.

Carol Page, having recently returned from Peru, showed some photos of interesting Peruvian fungi in addition to several photos of members of the Fungi Group in action on forays.

Juniors' Group: On Saturday 6th September 48 Juniors and families met at Lysterfield Lake for a frogging adventure led by Robin Drury from the Fauna Survey Group. It was a beautiful evening for a walk through bush land to a dam where we listened for different frog sounds and explored the area for frogs. Many were sighted and the 2 we caught were identified as Common Froglets and Striped Marsh Frogs.

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