Field Nats News No.311

Understanding Our Natural World
Est. 1880

Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.
1 Gardenia Street, Blackburn Vic 3130
Telephone 03 9877 9860
P.O. Box 13, Blackburn 3130 www.fncv.org.au
Newsletter email: joan.broadberry@gmail.com
(Office email: admin@fncv.org.au)

Editor: Joan Broadberry 03 9846 1218
Founding editor: Dr Noel Schleiger

Reg. No. A0033611X

Patron: The Honourable Linda Dessau, AC
Governor of Victoria

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

September 2020

From the President

Obviously, it is still going to be a long while before we can get back to normal life so we need to keep ourselves involved with stimulating activities. One good thing is that the weather is generally warming up and plants and animals are starting to get ready for spring. Flowers are blooming, jumping spiders, Slender Sac Spiders and small huntsman spiders are now moving around the garden. (Photos 1-3) *Continued p 2*

The due date for FNN 312 is, as always, the first Tuesday of the month, 1st September.

Editor: This issue confirms that even if field naturalists are restricted, we will find ways to enjoy and learn from nature. Special thanks to Max, Wendy and John for sharing their experiences.
Please let us know how YOU are getting your nature-fix.

Photo 2. Slender Sac Spider *Cheirocanthus sp*. Hunting at night. Photo: Max Campbell (M.C.)

Photo 1. Small jumping spider

Photo 3. The eyes of *Cheirocanthus sp*. M.C.

Please remember the FNCV AGM is being held via Zoom on Monday 31st August at 7.30 pm

Index

continued from p 1.

More flies are appearing and I have noticed quite a few Blue Blowflies buzzing about; possibly a hatch from a small carcass in the undergrowth as the ambient temperature increases. (Photos 4 & 5) So, there will be lots of opportunities to practice close-up photography and send your images to Joan for inclusion in FNN. There will be plenty of time to search the web for information on the organisms that you have photographed so that you can prepare a short article to accompany the images. We have never had such easy access to so much information; it would be a shame not to take advantage of it during this frustrating period. There is no need to be bored.

Photo 5. Blue Blowfly, head.

Photo 4. Blue Blowfly *Calliphora sp*. M.C.

Whilst many aspects of natural history could be described as essentially pleasant to behold if not beautiful, much of it involves the brutal transfer of energy through food webs. The transfer from one trophic level to the next is not voluntary and generally involves the ingestion of one organism by another. Apart from a few notable humans, living things are not troubled by ethics or other restraints. A few minutes of a David Attenborough program should convince anyone of that. I have always found that invertebrates are the epitome of sheer sangfroid. When it comes to considering their interactions with vertebrates, we generally expect invertebrates to be the prey. We often observe frogs eating insects and other arthropods. There are even salt-tolerant, crab-eating frogs that hunt their prey in seawater.

Sometimes the relationship is reversed. Large spiders catch small vertebrates and gigantic scolopendrid centipedes actively hunt bats. They use rapidly acting venom which aids digestion and their prey is usually dead before consumption. Ghost crabs catch and devour young turtles as they emerge from the sand. (Photo 6)

Green and Golden Bell Frogs (*Litoria aurea*) are attacked and eaten alive by marine crabs (*Leptograpsus variegatus*) on islands off the Australian coast (*1). *Cherax destructor* (Yabbies) will attack frogs and eat them. I have witnessed this predatory behaviour on numerous occasions. In one instance I investigated a commotion on the bank of a small farm dam and found a large *C. destructor* dismembering a live Pobblebonk (*Limnodynastes dumerilii*). Other yabbies were moving in for the feast. Yabbies may be early colonisers of newly constructed artificial waterways and I have often wondered about their impact on frog colonisation since frogs are already stressed in the urban environment. Up until recently they were also subject to predation by large carabid beetles. Dytiscid beetles prey on tadpoles and small fish, as do pisaurid spiders.

Continued page 3

Photo 6. Ghost Crab eating a newly emerged turtle.
Photo: Andrew McCutcheon

Continued from p 2.

During this lockdown period I have been clearing out old books, references, notes and related paraphernalia. I found an old pocket notebook that contained notes I made during my frequent visits to the Museum in Russell Street during the late 1950s and 60s. (Entry was free and I almost lived there.) Amongst my notes there was reference to a large, impressive specimen of *Catadromus* in the insect display case in the main hall. It was the largest carab beetle I had ever seen and seemed much bigger than the *Catadromus lacordairei* (up to 65mm) that I frequently encountered along the Darebin Creek at Heidleberg. Tillyard (*5) refers to *C. lacordairei* as being very common. (In fact, he uses diagrams of *C. lacordairei* to illustrate beetle anatomy.) It is not so common now and the last one I saw anywhere was in 2011 near Lake Wellington (photo 7) where it seemed to be hunting *Littoria ewingi* which were calling and amplexing at the time.

Photo 7. *Catadromus lacordairei* Green-lined Beetle seen on the edge of a pond near Lake Wellington in 2011. It seemed to be hunting *Littoria ewingi.* M.C.

Many beetles are taken by frogs but some members of the Carabidae actively prey on amphibians. The Australian green-lined beetle *Catadromus lacordairei* actively hunts frogs much larger than itself. The attacks are aggressive, brutal and unrelenting. In the 1960s I witnessed the beetles attacking frogs along the Darebin Creek. There are claims that some *Catadromus* species may attain a length of 90 mm (7*). The larvae have been reported as preying on other beetle grubs and worms, but I have observed what I believed to be larvae of C. *lacordairei* feeding on small frog carcasses. However, I have not observed larvae actually attacking live frogs. Until recently there were few descriptions of the larvae. However, Spencer & Richards (*8) describe the rearing of egg to adults for this beetle in Tasmania. Spencer & Richards (*9) also provide detail of the occurrence and ecology of the beetle in Tasmania.

For me, the possibility of active predation by *Catadromus* larvae arose when I read some research papers on carabid beetles of the genus *Epomis* in Israel. Both larvae and adult *Epomis* beetles actively hunt frogs and other amphibians. YouTube has a video (*2) of the predatory behaviour of both adults and larvae. Tiny larvae may attach to large frogs and continue to suck blood like a persistent external parasite (*3). You can only pity the unfortunate amphibians.

Using their antennae, larger *Epomis* larvae attract the attention of frogs which then attempt to eat them. When the frog approaches it, the larvae aggressively attack and turn the tables on the would-be predator. They latch on with their sharp mandibles and start to eat the frog. If the frog manages to actually swallow the larva it will violently regurgitate it after a period of up to two hours. The larva then immediately attacks and continues to eat the frog which may already have suffered internal injury (*4).

Both adult *Catadromus* and *Epomis* eat the frogs alive. Mrs M. Hobler of Queensland (*6) wrote of several instances of *Catadromus lacordairei* attacking and devouring frogs of an “ordinary size”. She described the loud croaking of a frog in pain as it was being eaten alive by *C. lacordairei.* Another frog had the flesh stripped from its foot to its “hip”, leaving only the bone and a little skin while the beetle continued burrowing into its body. The frog was quietly croaking in pain. (No pun intended). Adult *Epomis* may attack in numbers and attempt to slice through the frog’s leg muscles and nerves to immobilise it. They rapidly remove the flesh and leave little more than the skeleton (*2).

The expression “Nature red in tooth and claw” (Tennyson) comes to mind. If you happen to be searching along the banks and shores of rivers and ponds at night, keep an eye out for green-lined beetles and note any predatory activity. Do they also attack in groups? It would be interesting to see what the larvae are actually eating in the wild.

Max Campbell

References including video sites.

*1. http://www.herpetologynotes.seh-herpetology.org/Volume6_PDFs/Pyke_Herpetology_Notes_Volume6_page195-199.pdf

Continued p 4

Continued from page 3

*2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GDUwlKzJxY (The video is good but you will need to ignore the often dramatized soundtrack and commentary)

*3. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9Z88GWRjZU

*4. https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0025161

Research paper and video support. Four video files will open from within the Supporting Information section.

*5. Tillyard, P. (1926) The Insects of Australia and New Zealand. (p 191). Angus & Robinson. Aus.

*6. Hobler, M. (1921). Frog Eating Carabs – Catadromas lacordairei. Transactions. Qld Field Nat. Club, April, pp 132-133.

*7. Slipinski A. & Lawrence J. (Ed) 2019 Aust. Beetles Vol 2, CSIRO p134

Note: To open URL, highlight the address, hold Ctrl and right click mouse. Alternatively copy into search engine.

*8. Spencer C. & Richards K. (2014). **NEW CARABID DISCOVERIES: *CATADROMUS LACORDAIREI* (GREEN-LINED GROUND BEETLE)** The Tas. Nat 136, p 45.

*9. Spencer C. & Richards K. (2010). **THE GREEN-LINED GROUND BEETLE, *CATADROMUS LACORDAIREI*, IN TASMANIA.** The Tas. Nat. 132, pp 15-19.

From the Office

Dear members,

Please remember our AGM which will be held via Zoom on Monday 31st August at 7.30 pm. Details are in the August issue of the Field Nats News. PLEASE send in your proxy if you don't want to attend yourself. I'll attach another proxy form with this newsletter so it's handy. We need as many proxies as possible to ensure that we have sufficient members to make up a quorum.

The Victorian Naturalist will be ready for publication this month. We will send the download link to everyone with an email address, even if they normally receive the paper version. The paper version will be sent as soon as possible, hopefully before the end of the month.

Finally on a cheerful personal note – my new granddaughter was born at the end of July! Little Evelyn is a ray of sunshine for our family in these anxious times. Here she is with her big brother, four year old Jacob.

Keep safe everyone!
Wendy Gare,
Administration Officer

Nature Quiz 5 Compiled by Barbara Burns

1. What is a common name for the Victorian plant *Hardenbergia violacea*?
2. Which of these is the only species of mangrove found in Victoria?
   A.White Mangrove (*Avicennia marina*)
   B. Red Mangrove (*Rhizophora stylosa*)
   C. Club Mangrove (*Aegialitis annulata*)
3. The mangrove's aerial roots are called?
4. Name the butterfly (right) which commonly occurs in eastern and southern Australia.

5. How many wings do mosquitos have?
   A. 2
   B. 4
   C. 6
6. Approximately what percentage of the Earth's surface is covered by water?
   A. 61%
   B. 71%
   C. 81%
7. To which animal does the adjective 'vulpine' refer?
8. What term is used for all infant marsupials?
9. A leveret is the young of which animal?
10. What part of a flower produces pollen?
11. Which of these mammals is diurnal?
    A. Lumholtz's Tree Kangaroo
    B. Southern Common Cuscus
    C. Musky Rat-kangaroo
12. Which is larger, the Tawny Frogmouth or the Southern Boobook Owl?
13. How much approximately of the earth's crust is made up of iron?
    A. 5%
    B. 10%
    C. 15%
14. Which of these bats is not found in every state of Australia?
    A. Gould's Wattled Bat
    B. Little Pied Bat
    C. Lesser Long-eared Bat
15. Name the animals pictured right.

Photo: B. Burns

See page 7 for answers to quiz.

An Important message from our Council

In response to the declaration of State of Emergency and Disaster and the implementation of stage 4 restrictions in Victoria due to the serious risk to public health posed by coronavirus, the FNCV Council has implemented the following until further notice.

- **All meetings and excursions are cancelled.**
- **FNCV will have no physical contact with its membership or the public.**
- **Only Permitted Workers will have access to FNCV facilities at 1 Gardenia St.**
- **All activities and communication will be via electronic media.**
- **Members will be kept up-to-date via email.**

Life Cycles & Behaviours Revealed Pt 1

Observations at Blackburn Creeklands over an Extended Time

When you visit an area for a few hours or even a day, you only see a snapshot of the life that is there. If you were to come back at a different time or on a different day, you could see other things. The benefits of lockdown meant that I had more time available to walk down at my local park – Blackburn Creeklands – and not have to rush back to work. Not only that, I walk there nearly every day at a similar time of the day, camera in hand and eyes everywhere. My preference is early morning. What became apparent as time progressed was that I was able to observe and record the rhythms of life.

Invertebrates first: As I started this in late March, I began observing my favourite creatures – invertebrates. I was soon lucky enough to watch the life cycles and behaviour of a several different creatures.

Chrysomelid Beetle

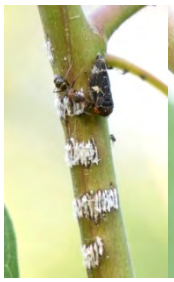
This beetle had three cycles, the last one ending in June. I saw Noisy Miners eating the last of the beetles much to my disfavour!

Chrysomelid Beetle: Adult on gum sapling

Chrysomelid Larvae

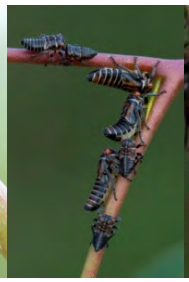
Leaf Hoppers

I first saw the hatchlings in early March and there were still some juveniles around in mid-April though several adults were seen as well. These resided on a Eucalypt sapling.

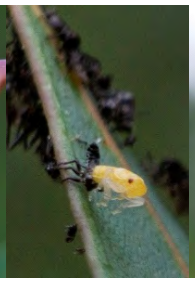


Eggs & adult

Newly hatched

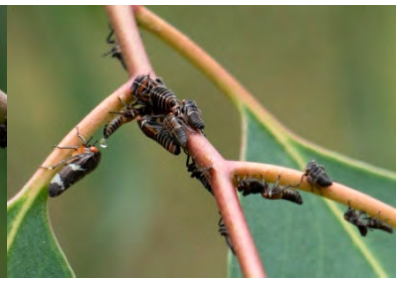


Juveniles



Shedding skin

Larvae



Adult Leaf Hopper & Larvae

Isodontid or Straw-carrying Wasp Nests

These fascinating nests were shown to me only this year. The female wasp lays eggs or an egg in vacated grub holes in dead trees and I presume adds a spider or similar for food. This is then plugged with dried grass. Several plugged holes can usually be found on the one dead tree trunk. *Adult wasp image from the internet.*

Straw-carrying Wasp nest holes plugged with dead grass.

Adult Isodontid Wasp

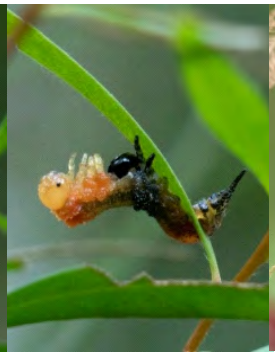
Continued from p 6

The Long-tailed Sawfly

I saw these on Callistemon bushes and on a Protea bush in a garden in April. I haven't found the adult yet.

Long-tailed Sawfly Larvae on Callistemon

Shedding skin



Larvae on Protea

Wingless Moths

There are many different types of wingless or flightless moths, the most well known being Case Moths. The male usually has wings, but the female is wingless or has non functional wings. The female often stays in the case and emits a scent that attracts the male. They mate and the female then lays her eggs, often in the case or cocoon and dies there.

This particular one, the Lichen Moth, was a surprise. I found the moth when looking at the photo of the eggs in the cocoon. The tiny cocoon attracted me as it was just a network of threads with the eggs attached to it, including caterpillar hairs. The moth can be seen dangling under it. It is truly wingless.

STAY TUNED FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER OF THE TREASURES OBSERVED AS THE WEATHER COOLS.

Wendy Clark

Answers to Quiz 5

1. Happy Wanderer, False Sarsaparilla or Purple Coral Pea.
2. White Mangrove (*Avicennia marina*)
3. Pneumatophores
4. Australian Admiral
5. A. 2. (Most adult insects have four wings, but there is an order Diptera whose members have only two—hence the name, di = two + pter = wing. The Diptera are commonly known as flies. Mosquitoes belong to this order—they are a type of fly—and thus have two wings.
6. B. 71%
7. Fox
8. Joey
9. Hare
10. Stamen
11. C. Musky Rat-kangaroo
12. Tawny Frogmouth, 34-46 cm: (Southern Boobook 25 to 35 cm)
13. A. Iron 5%
14. B. Little Pied Bat
15. Ring-tailed Lemurs

15

Thanks to the editorial and layout team who put together FNN 311

Joan Broadberry, Wendy Gare and Sally Bewsher

All images: *J. Harris*

Keeping 'SANE' in lockdown

Firstly let me start by saying that there are many people that think I'm slightly crazy to begin with.

As a passionate Naturalist and professional zoologist/ecologist, I have been lucky to be able to get out of the house to work and get my nature-fix. During the weeks when we have no field work, getting my nature-fix has meant spending time in the garden or on my one hour of permitted exercise a day.

Our backyard, small that it is, has provided many little gems of sanity for us; finding out we have a white-flowering Common Heath *Epacris impressa,* Chocolate Lilies Arthrop*odium stricta* and various Flax-lilies in bud along with unexpected sightings of our resident Weasel Skinks *Saproscincus mustelinus* and McCoys Skinks *Anepistechioa maccoyi*. Other delights include finding fungi we haven't seen before, hearing the local magpies warbling late into the night and Pied Currawongs drinking in our bird bath. There is also natural beauty to be found in the simple events, like rainfall, as witnessed by the raindrops on one of our Yellow Hakeas, *Hakea nodosa.*

While on our near daily exercise around the Dorset Gardens golf course, on the Dorset Recreation Trail it's much more than an opportunity to get out of the house for some exercise. The playing fields of the recreation reserve, trees, shrubs and even wetlands, both temporary and permanent, provide a variety of different habitats for birds.

Each walk I take an eBird list of what bird species I see or hear while I enjoy the walk. Being in the middle of suburbia, my target is to see 20 species each walk. While that is not a lot for some areas or parks, it is enough to keep my eyes and ears open and to maintain my birdwatching skills without the use of binoculars. Some of the birds include various parrots and cockatoos such as Rainbow and Musk Lorikeets, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, Grey Butcherbird, Australian White Ibis, Crested Pigeon, Common Bronzewing and more unusual species such as Great Cormorants, White-throated Needletails and Cattle Egrets. I am yet to find a Flame Robin in the adjacent paddocks, which is an ideal habitat at this time of year, or the reported Tawny Frogmouth that another observer has seen, but I'm still looking. There has been a total of 45 species recorded by various observers.

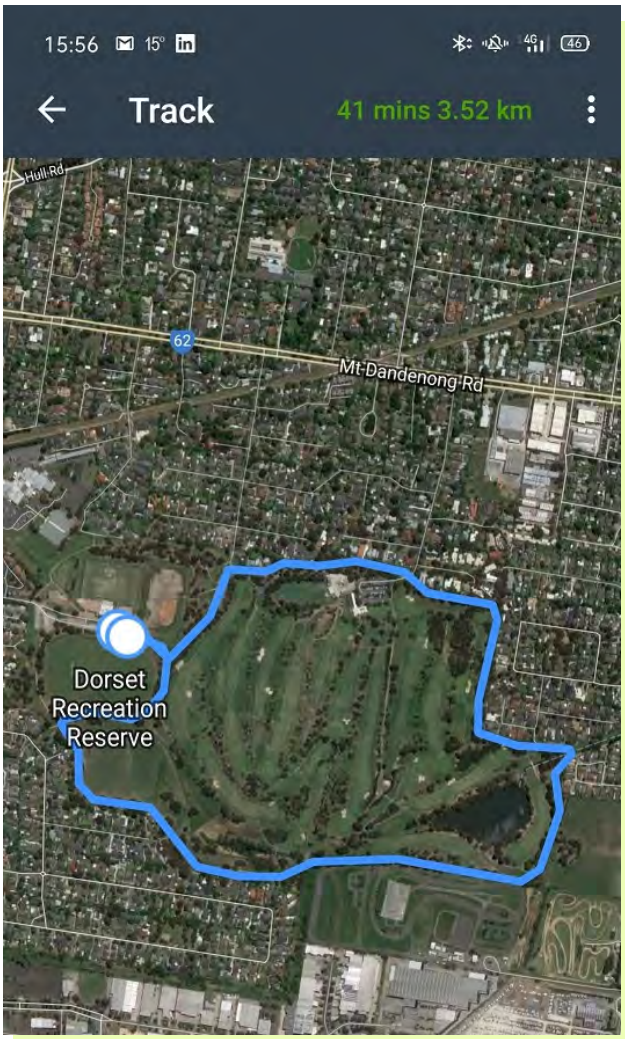
Continued page 9

Chocolate lily in bud

Common Heath

McCoys Skink *Anepistechioa maccoyi*

Raindrops on Yellow Hakea



Eastern Rosellas

My listing of the birds I see also helps with the eBird database, a large worldwide citizen science project, maintained by the Cornell University in the USA. eBird records are now appearing on the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas maintained by DELWP, so having a direct input into our State-based database.

I would like to encourage everyone to download the eBird app to your smart phone, if you have one, pick a local reserve within your permitted area and get some exercise, contribute to science and help with your required nature-fix.

A footnote from this morning's daily walk was finding a Brush-tailed Possum snuggly asleep in a hollow (photo below) beside the walking track and the croaking of Common Froglets from the pools and ditches along the walk.

Yours in all things GREEN, John Harris

Crested Pigeons

King Parrot

An Oasis in the heart of Industrial Melbourne

I made my first visit to West Gate Park, Port Melbourne on a beautiful autumn day this year. Google maps led me to a remote back entrance off Wharf Road. I hesitated at first, until realising I would always have the West Gate Bridge to orient myself by. The bridge, dominates the skyline of the park which is, quite rightly, named for it. The West Gate Bridge is twice as long as the Sydney Harbour Bridge and has one of the highest road decks in Australia which clears the water by 58 metres. (Sydney Harbour Bridge 49m).

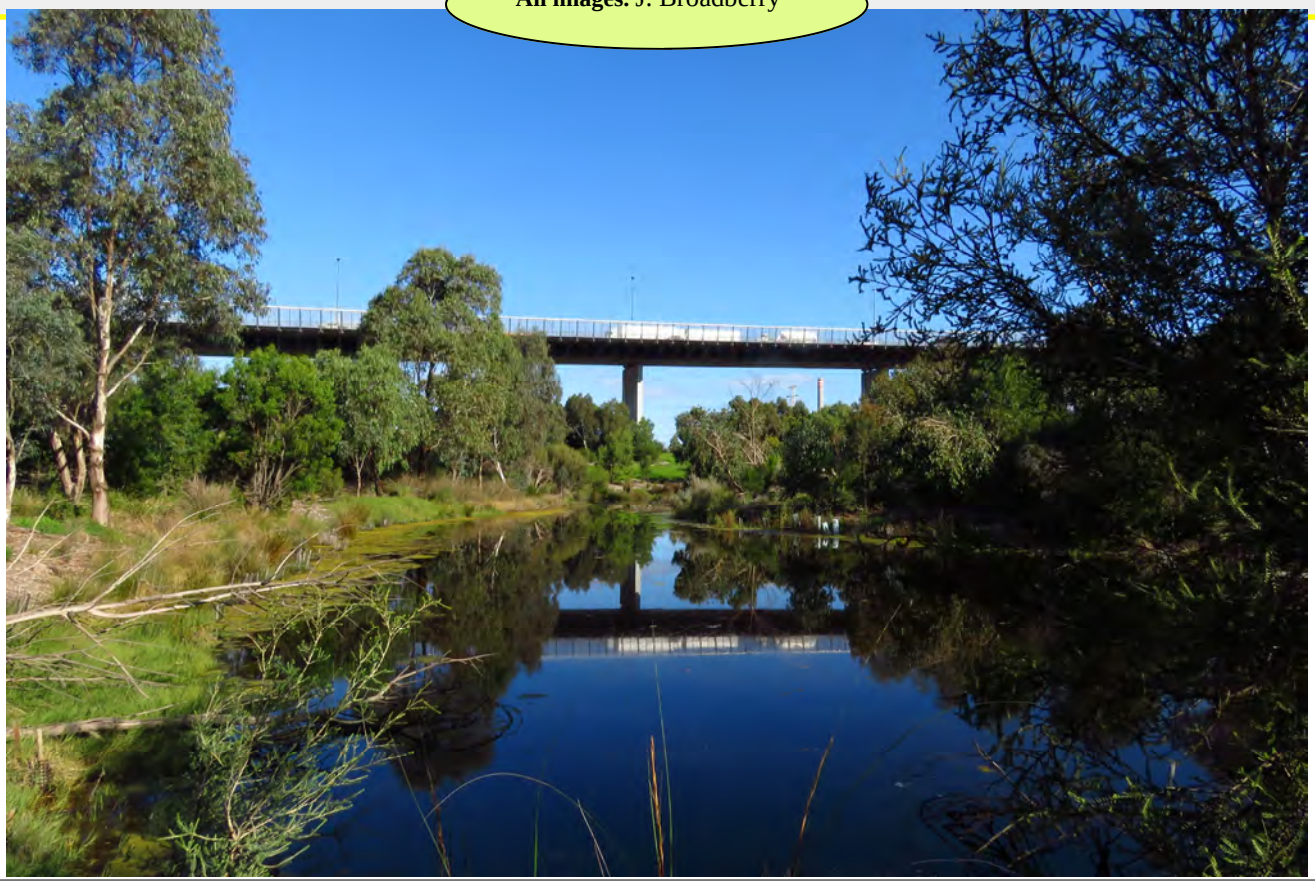
Another useful landmark was the disused Web Dock railway track which must surely have had the shortest life of any railway. It opened in 1986 as a freight line to service the Webb Dock container port; was last used in 1992 and was formally closed in 1996. It is said that the line is being kept because it may be reactivated for passenger use in the future.

Westgate Park was federally funded to mark Victoria's sesquicentenary (150th anniversary) and opened in 1985. The area was originally part of the lower Yarra wetlands, featuring extensive salt marsh, swamps and birdlife. It became a derelict wasteland after being used for, amongst other things, sand mining, a rubbish tip and as the site of the works depot for the construction of the bridge between 1965 and 1978.

Following completion of the bridge an ambitious restoration plan was drawn up and a massive amount of landscaping was carried out creating features which include two lakes, one fresh and one salt. The mounds or hills between them were constructed using building waste. The salt lake, situated on an old sand mining site, delighted Melbournians by turning a vivid pink, as a result of algae, in December and January 2012/13 and has done so almost every summer since.

Over time, various authorities managing the park never completed the original plan. It is through the effort of the friends group, formed in 1999, that it has been transformed. The Westgate Park volunteer group is officially known as Bili Nursery and Landcare. The Bili nursery, in Williamstown Road Port Melbourne, supplies local indigenous plants. More than 300,000 have been planted in Westgate Park in nine distinctive vegetation areas or EVC's. The friends group have lobbied successfully to have the park extended and, often partnering with other organisations, has set and achieved many goals. Through their magnificent efforts, Westgate Park has been restored to a beautiful, bio-diverse area of native bushland. *Continued p 11*

All images. J. Broadberry



I found many things to enjoy while walking the park's well laid out trails. Birdwatching, especially around the freshwater lake was rewarding, with a total of 25 species. Innovative sculptures of wood and stone claimed my attention as did views of the Melbourne skyline obtained from the park's highest point.

An interesting find was the Basket Stinkhorn, *Clathrus ruber*. I had never seen this fungus before and it was present in abundance. The stinkhorn fungi are a very distinctive group having bizarre forms and strong unpleasant odours. The fruiting bodies develop in egg-shaped sacs that are ruptured by the expanding, spore-bearing receptacle. (*photo left)*

The fruiting bodies of *C. ruber* are very striking. They consist of a spongy network of bright red arms, interlaced to form a large, spherical meshed receptacle that may be up to 20cm in height. *(photo below left)* Common names such as the Latticed Stinkhorn or Red Cage are very apt. A foul-smelling, brown slime on the inner surface of the arms attracts flies and other insects that feed on it. The spores are distributed after passing through the insects. The receptacle collapses about 24 hours after its initial eruption from the egg. The fungus is saprobic, feeding off decaying woody plant material and is often found in woodchip mulch. As most of the plantings in West Gate Park have been mulched, the source of the fungi was clear. Although considered primarily a European species, *C. ruber* has been introduced around the globe.

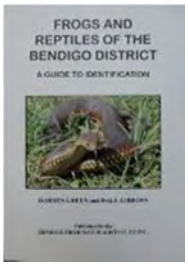
West Gate Park is one of Melbourne's most impressive examples of how even a very degraded space can be rehabilitated into a flourishing, wetland environment and, most importantly, illustrates the invaluable work of volunteers.

I have made a diary date to visit again in summer, when, hopefully, the salt lake will once more have turned pink.

Joan Broadberry

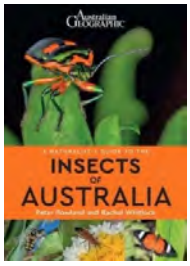
NEWS FROM THE BOOKSHOP (September 2020)

The bookshop is still open. Most books are being sent out by mail, with the occasional porch drop off. This page is a snap-shot of a range of titles that the bookshop has recently found supplies of or has not previously stocked or advertised. Please send an email to me at bookshop@fncv.org.au and I will reply as soon as I can. ***Happy reading. Kathy***



Frogs and Reptiles of the Bendigo District: a guide to identification (D. Green & D. Gibbons) was published to encourage the appreciation of the frogs and reptiles of the Bendigo district. The area covered by the book is roughly bounded by a circle with a radius of 50km centered on the Bendigo Post Office with the inclusion of Kooyoora State Park. Included are colour photographs of local species along with notes on classification, identification and natural history.
(PB, 71 pp., 2010) RRP Price $10

Birds of the Sale Common Wetlands and the Sale City Lakes (R. Greer & R. Steel) is a photographic guide to the remarkable bird life that frequent two small lakes of the City of Sale, Lakes Guthridge and Guyatt, the Sale Botanic Gardens and the Sale Common Wetlands. All birds featured in the booklet have been photographed in the local areas and are sufficient to be used for identification. A map of the area is included along with caption that accompanies each photo.
(PB, 90 pp., 2017) RRP $10, Members $8

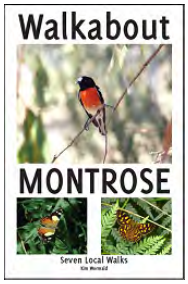


A Naturalist's Guide to the Insects of Australia (Rowland & Whitlock) is an easy-to-use identification guide to the 292 species of insect most commonly seen in Australia. High quality photographs are accompanied by detailed species' descriptions, which include nomenclature, size, distribution, habitat and habits. The user-friendly introduction covers modern Australian insects, non-insect hexapods and life cycles.
(PB, 176pp., July 2019) RRP $25, Members $20

The Weed Forager's Handbook: A Guide to Edible and Medicinal Weeds in Australia (Grubb & Rowland) takes us into the world of our least admired botanical companions. Peel back the layers of prejudice and discover the finer side of the plants we call weeds. An astonishing number are either edible or medicinal, and have deep and sometimes bizarre connections to human history.
(PB, 166 pp., 2013) RRP $21.95, Members $17.50

Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains (Australian Plant Society) showcases plants that are indigenous to the basalt clays and alluvial loams found on what is described as Melbourne's Volcanic or Western Plains. The list is not exhaustive but it includes most of the plants appropriate and available for use in gardening, revegetation and landscaping. **(PB, 224 pp., 2012, 2nd ed.) RRP19.95 Members $16**

Rocks & Fossils (Australian Geographic) Fully revised and updated, this book provides a comprehensive and revealing guide to unearthing the marvels hidden in the worlds of rocks and fossils. Detailed expert information on low-impact collecting and preserving of fossil finds. Hints on using the latest equipment, such as GPS in the field and authoritative fact files to help identify collected rocks and fossils. Spectacularly illustrated throughout, with over 800 stunning, full-colour photographs and expert diagrammatic illustrations. The perfect rock and fossil hunters' handbook.
(PB, 288pp., 2013) RRP $34.95 Members $28.50



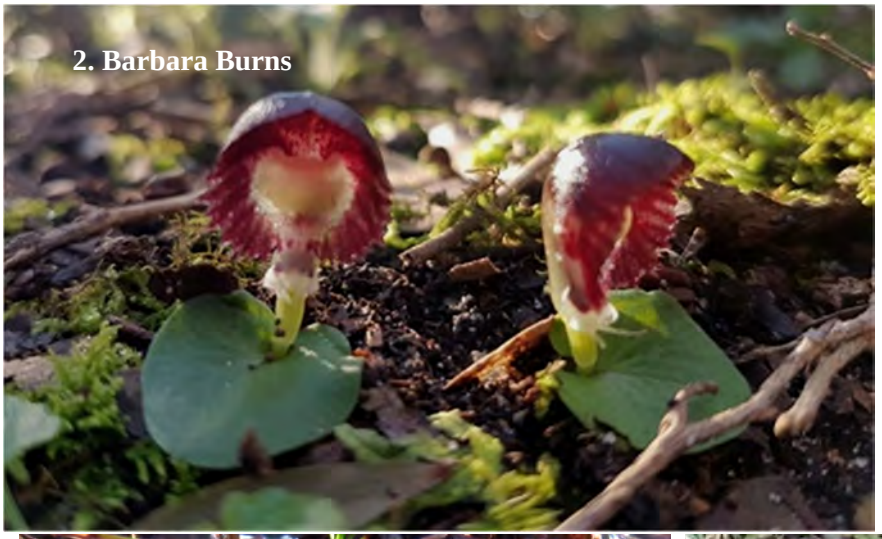
Walkabout Montrose (K. Wormald) promotes seven local walks extending from the Montrose township, through public gardens, reserves and into the hills. The book was created by a group of enthusiastic and talented volunteers aiming to promote the wonders of the local environment in Montrose and surrounds. It includes maps and interesting environmental and historical information..
(PB, 22 pp., 2008) RRP $10 Members $5

Can a members' photo page (or pages) be an ongoing feature of future FNNs?

We would love to see your images appear on this page. If you can, caption them with the scientific name and/or common name. Keep commentary brief. Single images welcome. joan.broadberry@gmail.com

1. Barbara Burns

5. J. Broadberry



2. Barbara Burns

For the first time in years, the autumn rainfall over much of Victoria has been good, making it a bumper season for native orchids. It has been delightful to find sizeable populations in many suburban bushland remnants.

Photos (anticlockwise), 1-5: Corybas incurvus (Slaty Helmet-orchid), *Corybas diemenicus* (Veined Helmet-orchid), *Corybas aconitiflorus* (Spurred Helmet-orchid, *Pterostylis curta* (Blunt Greenhood) and *Pterostylis revoluta* (Autumn Greenhood).

3. J. Broadberry

4. Anne Phefley