



Understanding
Our Natural World
Est. 1880

Field Nats News No.312



Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.

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October 2020

From the President

Over the past 140 years one of the most important goals of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria has been its commitment to citizen science and environmental education for the community. I believe we continue to do this to a high standard with our internal and external presentations, field activities, symposia, research grants, publications and workshops. Over the past three or four years FNCV has been involved in the establishment of the Nature Stewards Program in Victoria. The program is supported by Parks Victoria, DELWP, VNPA, FNCV and to date, four municipal councils, namely, Melton, Melbourne, Geelong and Manningham. More are planning to join the program.

Background to Nature Stewards

One of our longstanding FNCV members, Ann McGregor is the founder of the program which was originally proposed in 2017. She and her husband Bruce McGregor, President of VNPA and one-time FNCV councillor, have been instrumental in getting the program running so successfully.

Nature Stewards Victoria got off to a flying start, with a detailed curriculum framework and materials, and five successful training programs completed in three locations in 2019. A change to online delivery under COVID-19 restrictions has enabled training programs to proceed in 2020. Participant feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. With this strong base and demonstrated support, the program will continue to improve, adapt and expand.

The concept underpinning Nature Stewards is simple: a short environmental education program for adults that focuses on local ecosystems and encourages connection with nature and environmental volunteering. Ann first heard about this in a brief presentation about the Florida (USA) Master Naturalist program by Dr Marty Main at the International Congress on Conservation Biology in 2011.

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FNCV members, Ann and Bruce McGregor along the Merri Creek Oct. 2019. Photo: M. Campbell



The Program Advisory Group, pilot Council staff, curriculum writers and evaluation support staff, and a handful of program presenters at the 2019 soft launch. Photo: M. Campbell

The due date for the next issue, FNN 313 is as always, the first Tuesday of the month, October 6th.

joan.broadberry@gmail.com

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At the time, she thought it would be wonderful to have such a program in Victoria. When the McGregors' daughter Freya moved to Texas in 2016, she completed the local training, volunteered enthusiastically, made new friends and was proud to become a Certified Texas Master Naturalist. Similar programs have been established in over 25 States of the US, training thousands of environmental volunteers, citizen scientists, tertiary students, teachers, nature guides, and others. So why not try it in Victoria?

The McGregor family organised a meeting in February 2017 to present the concept and discuss the potential for its introduction in Victoria. As a result, an informal working group was set up, and the Nature Stewards program steadily took shape. The outstanding support by Outdoors Victoria, and particularly CEO Andrew Knight, has been fundamental to the initiation and success of Nature Stewards so far. As well as hosting the program at the State level, OV and Andrew have been key in securing initial funding from the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning. This enabled the appointment of the excellent and hard-working manager, Dr Maddy Willcock, preparation of the training curriculum and recruitment of experienced environmental educators as facilitators.

Many others deserve acknowledgement for their contributions to Nature

Stewards, including: staff of local government Councils that are hosting programs, members of the Program Advisory Group, topic specialists and volunteers from local environment groups who have presented to classes, and of course the participants in Nature Stewards training. It is exciting that participants in the programs to date have such diverse backgrounds, occupations, ages, and reasons for learning more and getting active in nature. After completing the training, they are going on to join, continue in, or start environmental volunteer groups, undertake conservation work on their own property, take up tertiary environmental studies, apply their new knowledge in their work, or even start a new career in the environment sector. Nature Stewards is helping to deliver the Victorian Government's environment and health policies, particularly *Protecting Victoria's Environment - Biodiversity 2037*, *2017 Memorandum for Health and Nature*, and *Victorians Volunteering for Nature – Environmental Volunteering Plan*. We are working on ways to support and involve alumni, diversify the format of training delivery and audiences and expand the recruitment of participants and host organisations. Recently, we have brought on five volunteer staff, including three alumni, to solely support the alumni in their next nature endeavours. There are enormous possibilities for the future.

What is the Nature Stewards Program?

Each Nature Stewards program consists of 10 weekly class sessions and four field sessions, providing a total of 46 hours basic training. Participants learn about the Victorian and local environment, through topics spanning geology, soils, climate, fungi, plants, animals, protists, conservation land management, citizen science, and environmental interpretation, given from Western and local Aboriginal community perspectives. The class sessions have an expert facilitator, together

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The Melton spring 2019 graduating class, together with Councilor Lara Carli, Mayor of Melton, Councilor Bob Turner, immediate past Mayor, Rustem Upton, class facilitator and Maddy Willcock.

Photo: M. Campbell



Melbourne autumn class 2019, together with Nicole Henry, class facilitator, Dr Bruce McGregor, Maddy Willcock and Andrew Knight.

Photo: M. Campbell

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with presentations from specialist guest presenters and local groups including FNCV and VNPA. The program offers a chance to meet others in the local community and gain knowledge and practical skills to assist in connecting with and getting active in nature, including local volunteering opportunities. We started the first program in February 2019 and by the end of September 2020, we will have completed 10 programs, with another two in progress. The number of alumni up until now is 114; this will be boosted by up to 40 with the current and upcoming programs.

Why is it so important?

The environmental challenges facing humanity are enormous and will require extensive changes to the way human society uses resources and how it minimises its impacts. Anthropogenic change to the environment is a major threatening process for our continued survival. Community education will play a major role in bringing about the necessary changes required to guarantee our future survival. An educated public is an empowered public, able to make informed decisions during elections and on representative committees and forums. Nature Stewards trains people to work collaboratively in volunteer, community-based regeneration projects and many other citizen science activities. This well-structured, adaptable and professional, environmental education program is the perfect platform for supporting the goals of all volunteer environmental organisations including FNCV. I can highly recommend Nature Stewards to anyone who wants to improve their understanding of our natural world.

Visit <https://outdoorsvictoria.org.au/nature-stewards/about-the-program/> to learn more.

Maxwell Campbell (with significant contribution from the McGregors and Maddy Willcock)

Vale Margaret Georgina Corrick 1922—2020

Margaret Corrick passed away peacefully on August 12th 2020, aged 97 years.

Margaret grew up in Tasmania and, through her family, developed a love for natural history as a child. She was elected to the FNCV in 1965, became a long-term member in 2005 and an honorary member in 2008. During her 55 years in the club, Margaret was one of its most active members and took on many leadership roles. She served as FNCV Vice-president from 1973-1975 and President from 1976-1978. Other positions included: Secretary to the Botany Group, Secretary to the General Committee of the Australian Natural History Medallion and a member of the Editorial Committee of *The Victorian Naturalist*.

Margaret's particular area of interest was botany. She was employed at the National Herbarium of Victoria until her retirement in 1985. She contributed regularly to *The Victorian Naturalist*, including twenty-four articles focused on the genus *Pultenaea* (bush-peas) of Victoria on which she became an authority. With Bruce Fuhrer, she co-authored two wonderful books: *Wildflowers of southern Western Australia* (1996) and *Wildflowers of Victoria* (2000) and assisted in the preparation of the classic *A field guide to Australian Fungi* (2005).

The FNCV extends its deepest condolences to her family.

A more detailed tribute to Margaret will appear in the next issue of *The Victorian Naturalist*.

Vale Dr. Ian Parsons 1927—2020

Dr Ian Parsons, a long-term and honorary FNCV member, passed away in July 2020 aged 93 years. He was elected to the FNCV in June 1954 as a result of the merging of the Microscopical Society with the FNCV.

Ian had a long association with the Microscopy Group. In July 2000 he gave a presentation, titled 'It's in the blood: Blood Pigments and Microscopy'. Ian was a committed naturalist and environmentalist, working particularly in his local Melbourne Bayside area.

The FNCV conveys its sincere condolences to his family.

**Thanks to the editorial
and layout team who put
together FNN 312**

Joan Broadberry
Wendy Gare
Sally Bewsher

**The FNCV facebook page
reports 16,631 followers**

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

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message. Kathy will then be in
contact with you.

Members' news, photos & observations

Welcome
Welcome

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

Jessica Walton, Georgia McGirr, Christopher Cobern, Matt Sleeth, Brian Simmonds, Jackie Simmonds, Steven Llewellyn and John Blake

Gobblers in our Garden

Our garden in the Melbourne suburb of Notting Hill is far from being a fungal 'hot spot', but several species of wood-rotting fungi, known as decomposers or saprobes, silently carry out their – often unwelcome – recycling activities.

By the time fungal fruit-bodies appear, the vegetative part of the fungus (mycelium) has been busy for a considerable length of time, digesting the substrate with the aid of powerful enzymes. In some cases years can pass before fruit-bodies become evident, so the 'damage' is already done before it becomes noticeable. The process whereby fungi break down wood is an essential component of the recycling that takes place within ecosystems. (The article 'Behind the Scenes: How Fungi Make Nutrients Available to the World' at <https://www.energy.gov/science/articles/behind-scenes-how-fungi-make-nutrients-available-world> is well worth reading.)

Our walnut tree *Juglans* sp. was first to be adversely affected. We were very fond of it, and had become accustomed to Sulphur-crested Cockatoos *Cacatua galerita* eating most of the nuts long before they were ready to harvest. Unfortunately, at about 32 years of age the tree was attacked by wood-boring insects. The resulting holes allowed *Schizophyllum commune*, a pale, hairy-topped fungus with uniquely split lamellae, to take up residence. Under *Schizophyllum*'s control, the tree slowly crumbled away.



Trametes versicolor on *Prunus salicina* branch.

Trichoglossus moluccanus. While these colourful birds are feasting, much of the partly eaten fruit falls to the ground, where it is finished off by Common Blackbirds *Turdus merula*.

The latest plant to be attacked is our 27 year-old *Acacia cognata*. A brown polypore bracket fungus is causing the older branches to disintegrate, and although this large shrub is steadily putting on new growth, it is probably near the end of its life. Some *Acacia* spp. are not long-lived: we were told that this one would probably last no more than 20 years. Although it has exceeded expectations, we will miss it greatly when it finally succumbs to the ravages of its fungal invader.

Not all our fungi recyclers cause unwanted damage. Some are very efficient at stump removal – there's no need for a machine to do this! In the past, various fungi have decomposed stumps of a Monterey Pine *Pinus radiata*, a Silver Birch *Betula pendula* and a *Eucalyptus* sp. for us. At present a tough, pale polypore bracket fungus 140 mm across is feeding on a Cypress *Cupressus* sp. stump, while an ageing Cherry Plum *Prunus cerasifera* stump is being digested

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The back fence was next to be destroyed. *Trametes coccinea* (= *Pycnoporus coccineus*) gobbled up the backer rails, weakening the structure so much that a strong wind would have blown it over had we not propped it up until it could be replaced. Although the bright red-orange brackets of this fungal culprit were present for several months, neither my husband (Jurrie) nor I thought of photographing them.

Then *Trametes versicolor* started to devour our Satsuma Plum tree *Prunus salicina*, and has almost finished one of three main branches. This fungus has very tiny pores, best viewed with a hand lens, on its pale lower surface. When the fruit-bodies become old, the pores tend to break up, appearing like small, jagged, pale yellow teeth.

Our tree still manages to produce fruit, which attracts flocks of Rainbow Lorikeets

Trichoglossus



Polypore bracket on *Cupressus* stump. Insets: Top – pores on the lower surface; Bottom – spores stained with Congo Red plus 5% ammonia; scale bar = 10µ.



Gymnopilus sp. on *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* sleeper.

(Continued from page 4)

by *Ganoderma australe*. The lower, pored surface of the *Ganoderma* is white when fresh, turning brown when scratched or bruised, and also when its spores mature.

An old mossy River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* sleeper is breaking apart, being consumed by three types of gilled fungi: *Mycena kuurkacea*, *M. nargan*, and a species of *Gymnopilus*. The fruit-bodies appear in autumn if there is sufficient rain. These gilled wood-rotters



Mycena kuurkacea on *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* sleeper.

are soft-textured and ephemeral, unlike the pored brackets, which persist for a long time. Some, such as *Trametes* spp., eventually decay and are replaced by new fruit-bodies, but *Ganoderma australe* grows a new pored surface each year, persisting until it has exhausted its food supply.

There is plenty more wood in our garden, so it will be interesting to see which fungi recycle it. At least our back fence should be safe for some time to come.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Sue Forster and Jurrie Hubregtse for their helpful input.

Virgil Hubregtse
(All photos: V. Hubregtse)

Sawflies(*Perga affinis*)

Most of us have seen a mass of grubs, such as those pictured right, either on the trunk of a gum tree or on the ground and know them by their common name of Sawfly Caterpillars. However there are two misconceptions in this name. They are not true caterpillars but are larvae and the adult insect is not a fly, it is a wasp.

The larvae are gregarious and are generally found massed together during the day, though at night they disperse to feed on eucalyptus leaves. If disturbed they raise their heads and exude a strong smelling, yellow-green liquid, consisting mostly of eucalyptus oil, to deter predators. This has given them another common name, Spitfires. However, this is also a misnomer as they do not actually spit but merely dribble the liquid.

The larvae are mainly active during late winter and spring. After feeding and reaching maximum growth,

they enter the soil to pupate.

This takes place in strong paper-like cocoons which are often clustered several centimetres deep. The pupal stage can extend over two or three years before the adult wasp emerges.

The adult fly, pictured left, keeps a low profile and is not often spotted. As shown in the image it is black with a greenish sheen. Its transparent, honey coloured wings have a span of about four centimetres.



Sawfly larvae, taken in Yarra River Parklands. Photo: B. Burns

Barbara Burns

Terrestrial Extras found around Toora

The Marine Research Group (MRG) held a four day field trip to the Corner Inlet area of South Gippsland in February 2020. An account of this can be found in Field Nats News No. 307. During this field trip low tides occurred during the afternoons, leaving the mornings free for other activities. Carol Page and I decided to use this time to search for terrestrial invertebrates in remnant vegetation near Toora, where we were based.

The sites we visited on these mornings included Agnes Falls and the Franklin River Reserve near Toora, the Bennison Recreation Reserve and the New Zealand Hill Nature Conservation Reserve near Foster. At Shallow Inlet, Sandy Point, a slower than expected ebbing tide gave us an unexpected opportunity to check for terrestrial invertebrates before commencing our MRG activities. An isolated flowering Coast Manna Gum near the Shallow Inlet car park supported a surprising diversity of insects, mostly beetles and wasps, with the highlight being a number of showy male and female Golden Stag Beetles.

Carol and I were pleased to find quite a few insects and other invertebrates that were new to us. Interesting and noteworthy finds included a green longicorn beetle, Tasmanian Ladybird, several species of leaf beetles, an iridescent green robber fly, Golden Stag Beetles, a jewel beetle, a Vedalia Beetle and a species of Clerid beetle, which was sheltering under the bark of a Eucalypt.

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Golden Stag Beetle (male) *Lamprima aurata*, Sandy Point



Golden Stag Beetle (female) *Lamprima aurata*, Sandy Point



Longicorn Beetle *Rhytiphora nigrovirens*, Toora



Tasmanian Lady Beetle *Cleobora mellyi*, Toora



Leaf Beetle *Paropsisterna intacta*, Toora



Clerid Beetle *Stigmatium* sp., possibly *S. mastersi*, Foster

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Robber Fly *Laphria* sp.,
Bennison

The longicorn beetle is apparently uncommon in Victoria with only seven other records in the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA). The Vedalia Beetle also appears to be scarce in Victoria with only 10 other records in the ALA. No records of the wholly iridescent green robber fly could be found amongst the almost 900 images of Victorian Robber flies on iNaturalist.

In the evenings we hung ultraviolet lights outside our cabins hoping to attract moths etc. Unfortunately the lights attracted surprisingly few insects and nothing noteworthy.

John Eichler and Carol Page
Photos: J. Eichler



Vedalia Beetle *Novius cardinalis*, Foster



Jewel Beetle *Diphucrania* sp., Sandy Point

Something that you don't see in Clayton every day.

It has been a strange and unpredictable year for many reasons. However, it became slightly more surreal quite recently when I was enjoying a brief respite of sunshine and warmth in the garden. The Noisy Miners seemed agitated as did the Grey Butcher Bird and a Pied Currawong sitting in my trees. There was a strange bird call, very parrot-like with a soft whistle at the end. I peered into the branches and a bright green head and orange beak popped out up near the top of the tree. I took a couple of photos and he then came down a branch towards me, whistling as he did so. It was a beautiful Eclectus Parrot (*Eclectus roratus*), a friendly male and clearly an escaped pet. He almost climbed down to my outstretched arm but the Noisy Miners panicked him into flying off over the neighbouring houses. I couldn't locate it again and I hope it was found before running into problems with the weather and local birds.

I don't think I will add it to iNaturalist at this stage.

Max Campbell, photos M. Campbell



Life Cycles & Behaviours Revealed Part 2 *(pt 1- see FNN 311)*

Observations along Blackburn Creeklands over an extended time.

Cooler Weather – Different Life Forms

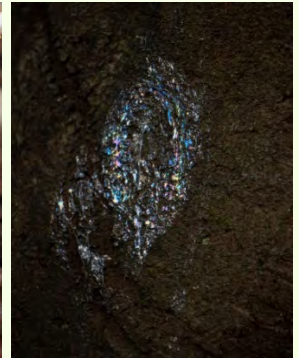
As it got cooler and wetter, slime moulds and fungi began to appear including the Ghost Fungi which had associated beetles on it. The Ghost or Luminous Fungi would appear after a spell of rain and then disappear once it dried out. There was a strange substance on a tree trunk that I found on my walk one day. See if you can figure out what it was. Answer is at the end of the article! I observed an incredible scene of a beetle getting stuck in a hole in the Luminous fungi and another beetle pulling it out. I half expected the good Samaritan beetle to get into the hole as it may have contained something worthwhile, but the act seemed to be totally altruistic.



Yellow Slime Mould



Beetle Rescue



Mystery Substance

More Fungi

As winter progressed, a range of fungi appeared and soon dried up. A few really caught my eye, as they were red, but only pin-head sized. Right next to it was a tiny fringe of white fungi. They only lasted a few days, so if I hadn't been walking and looking daily, I would never have seen them. Another one was larger, brown and spotty. A few days later, it had opened flat, lost its spots and looked very different.



Tiny White Fungi



Pin Head Sized Fungi

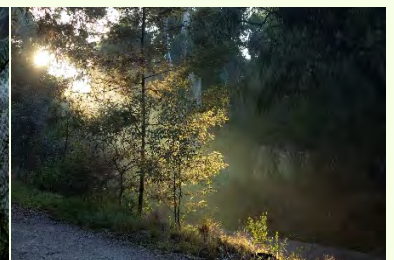
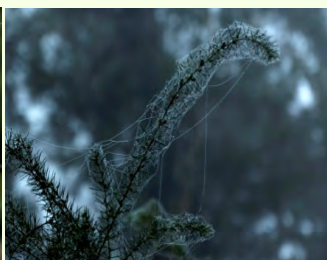


Brown Spotted Fungi newly emerged and aged



Walking after it has rained or in the mist

One of the most beautiful things is to walk down at the park just after it has rained. The trees are dripping, birds are out gathering wet insects, spider webs are visible and much more. If the sun comes out, you get spectacular views, if the mist is still around, you get shafts of light. The other day the mist revealed how busy the spiders have been – even in winter. Some branches of fine-leaved plants were absolutely covered in a network of webs.



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Winter flowers and their attendants

As the cooler months progressed, the correas came into flower and the Eastern Spinebill came frequently to drink the nectar, poking its long bill up the tubular flowers. I found a track at Blackburn Lake that had mass plantings of correas and you could always see some spinebills there. It enabled me to fine-tune the settings on my camera to capture some good photos of these fast moving birds. It did need patience and persistence though.



**Eastern
Spinebill feed-
ing on Correa
nectar**

And now Spring is nearly here

The wattles are in bloom, new leaves are breaking out, the birds are pairing up and looking for nest hollows or building nests and even a Tawny Frogmouth has been seen sitting on a nest

If you listen, the birds tell you when something is going on, or not right. There was a lot of noise from some Rainbow Lorikeets one day and when I went to look, I found a Ringtail Possum hiding in a hollow that the Lorikeets assumed was theirs. The possum moved out the next night!



**Ringtail Possum in hollow. The lorikeet on the right is
most upset!**



There is so much going on in this small corridor of bush and creek. It is a corridor between parks and a bird hotspot. It is a pleasure and privilege to be able to walk through it and share the rhythms of life.

Mystery substance: Slug Slime. I presume slugs may have had a mating ritual, thus having a wide area with slime instead of a trail. Trails did lead away. The colour was caused by the low early morning light hitting the slime.

Stay tuned for the next chapter of the treasures observed in this neck of the woods.

Wendy Clark (photos W. Clark)

Stop press. *The latest from Blackburn Creeklands!*

Spotted Pardalotes Collecting Nest Material

I was lucky enough to spot this pair Pardalotes collecting bark off a tree trunk on my daily walk in Blackburn Creeklands. The tree was a small stringybark that had died. It was right beside the walking track, but it is amazing how few people noticed the birds.

They came and grabbed beakfuls of fibre and then headed back to stash it their nest hole. Spotted Pardalotes nest in holes in the banks of creeks or other mounds of dirt. They paid no attention to the people walking past and didn't mind us coming a bit closer – though I still kept about three metres away. They returned in about 10 minutes and repeated the exercise. They kept this up for at least an hour. I observed them around 8.30 am. They were not there later in the morning.

The next morning at the same time they were there again, but not so frequently. While watching, a fast, dark bird came flying rapidly through the area, very close to them (a Butcherbird perhaps?). The pair scattered and didn't return.

The next morning, they did not come to the tree. Hopefully, they had finished the nest and were safe. I did hear them in the distance.

It was luck that I happened to walk past at the right time. I had stopped to listen to some Brown Thornbills and saw the movement. It was then I realised what they were. If I had walked past five minutes earlier or had turned to talk to the person next to me (who was a bird person) I would have missed them.

Wendy Clark (Photos W. Clark)



Male Spotted Pardalote

White spots on head, yellow throat, buff underneath and overall stronger patterning and colours.

Female Pardalote

Notice yellow spots on head

Rediscovered: TS Hart's lost Yellow Box Woodland

Since 1884, *The Victorian Naturalist* has published many influential articles and research papers. Among these, 'The Yellow Box, and a lost vegetation' by TS Hart (1939) has played an important role in conserving Bayside's last remaining stand of Yellow Box *Eucalyptus melliodora* woodland.

Noting that Yellow Box was not recorded in the FNC Census of 1928 'for the sandy country of the southern suburbs of Melbourne', TS Hart's paper examines historical records to demonstrate that this species was once scattered across the entire region, occurring in 'a class of country which soon went under cultivation'. Moreover he states that: 'There remains, however, a small timbered area in Highett, in which it is the chief tree...' (p. 9). This patch, 'the last of its kind remaining in these parts', was a location 'about half a mile directly south of Highett station, and a little north of Bay Road and Reserve Road', combining mixed eucalypt woodland with native grasses, sedges, *Dianella* and small shrubs such as *Bossiaea* and *Platylobium* spp. (p. 10).

I am indebted to Michael Norris, environmental activist and former Bayside councillor, for his notes on the subsequent history of the woodland (2019). Norris records that, during World War II, this three ha woodland passed over to the Commonwealth as part of a 13 ha site used for aircraft production. Most of the site was handed over to CSIRO after the war.

Fortuitously, in the late 1980s, local botanists rediscovered Hart's paper and the section describing the Highett woodland was included in Daintry Fletcher's book *The Bushlands of Sandringham* (1988). Fletcher was then Conservation Officer for the book's publisher, the City of Sandringham. The plants were studied and seeds collected.



Yellow Box *Eucalyptus melliodora* in flower at Highett Grassy Woodland. Photo: P. Reynolds



Yellow Box *Eucalyptus melliodora* (foreground) and River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* at Highett Grassy Woodland. Photo: Pauline Reynolds.

Soon after, the City of Sandringham was subsumed into Bayside City Council and CSIRO decided to move from Highett. In 2002, the newly formed Friends of Highett Grassy Woodland launched a campaign to preserve the woodland for Bayside. An important advance came in 2004 when the Minister for Science 'promised that vegetation would be conserved regardless of ownership'. Despite this exciting start and the backing of successive Goldstein MPs, the project stalled for many years. Between 2015 and 2016 CSIRO staff finally left the site and building demolition began, but it was not until June 2020 that the sale was finalised with the formal transfer of four ha of Commonwealth land to Bayside City Council. Of this, one hectare is designated as public open space, but the remaining three ha will become a conservation reserve. The Friends of Highett Grassy Woodland, with co-convenors Michael Norris and former Sandringham mayor Pauline Reynolds, hope to start work on restoring vegetation in 2021. A happy outcome, thanks to TS Hart's research, *The Victorian Naturalist*'s publication and years of determined campaigning from the Friends.

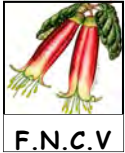
Sue Forster

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Fletcher D (1988) *The Bushlands of Sandringham*, The Sandringham Environment Series No. 7. (City of Sandringham: Sandringham)

Hart TS (1939) The Yellow Box, and a lost vegetation. *The Victorian Naturalist* **56**, 9-13.

Norris M (2019) Notes on the Highett Grassy Woodland and campaign. Unpublished.



Minutes Annual General Meeting: 31st August 2020 at 7.30 pm conducted digitally via Zoom

Meeting commenced at 7.35 pm.

1. Welcome: *"We acknowledge that we normally hold our meetings on the land of the Wurundjeri Willam members of the Kulin nation and we pay our respects to their elders past and present."*

Maxwell Campbell welcomed 28 members and 1 non-member (Administration Officer for minute taking.) 13 proxy votes were registered.

2. Apologies There were 14 apologies: Sally Bewsher, Carol Page, Gerry Ho, Lucy Lyons, Neville Toplis, Greta Smith, Lincoln Kern, Graeme Patterson, Rustem Upton, Valerie La May, Lindsay Jolley, Denise Carew, Philippa Burgess and Geoff Lay.

3. Minutes of 2019 AGM

Motion: to accept the Minutes of 2019 AGM as true and accurate record of the events.

Moved: Barbara Burns Seconded: Andrew Brentnall **Motion Carried.**

4. President's Report

As per President's report from Annual Report 2019:

Maxwell thanked everyone for their sterling effort in 2019. In particular the SIG leaders were thanked for going beyond the call of duty with the number of activities which they arranged.

Motion: to accept the President's Report for 2019

Moved: Barbara Burns Seconded: Ruth Hoskin **Motion Carried.**

The complete
President's Report
and Annual Accounts
are contained in the
FNCV 2019 Annual
Report, sent out
3/8/20.

5. Treasurer's Annual Accounts year ended 31/12/2019

The Treasurer Barbara Burns presented the annual accounts to the AGM. She reported that 2019 was a good year which went well. Profit was approximately \$12,500; income was up and expenses were down on the previous year. We held the second-hand book-sale which made over \$1000 and the biodiversity symposium which made a profit of \$3400. Repairs and maintenance cost \$4500; the two main items were the repainting of the external timber and eaves of the hall (\$1600) and the restumping of one of the internal walls which was sinking (\$1300). 2020 is not shaping up to be a good year but an unsolicited government payment of \$8600 will help.

Motion: to approve the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31/12/2019 as presented to the meeting.

Moved: Barbara Burns Seconded: Su Dempsey **Motion Carried.**

6. Appointment of Auditor

Motion: to appoint Susan J Harkin as Honorary Auditor for 2020.

Moved: Barbara Burns Seconded: John Harris **Motion Carried.**

7. Notice: Special Resolution

Motion: That this General Meeting of The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.

approves membership fees to remain unchanged for the year commencing 1st July 2020 as recommended by council.

Moved: Wendy Clark Seconded: Mark Anderson **Motion Carried**

8. Environment Fund Recipients and Reports

Barbara Burns advised that the Environment Fund has now been running for 14 years and it has shown that an amazing amount can be achieved with \$1000. Recipients for one round of grants made in April 2019 were listed in the Environment Fund report in the Minutes of last year's AGM. For the first time we had extra funds available due to two large donations of \$5000 and \$1500 later in the year. This meant that we were able to allocate a second round of grants in October 2019 making a total for that year of 11 grants totalling \$8340. *Second round grants are as follows:*

1. William Terry, Bendigo Field Nats and Southern Cross University www.thephascogaleproject.com

PhD Research. Radio tracking 10 animals at two locations to identify the number and type of hollows used. Three radio tracking collars. **\$810**

2. Lisa Nink, PhD candidate in palaeontology Flinders University

Project: Early Pleistocene Fossil Fauna of South Eastern Australia.

Expedition to collect vertebrate fossils and sediment samples at two rainforest sites on the west coast of Victoria. Project will contribute to knowledge of how biodiversity in Victoria has been influenced by rapid shifts in climate in the past, help understand Victoria's fossil heritage and inform on pre-European distribution of species eg. Quolls. **\$713** *Continued p13*

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3. Fungimap—Cameron Durnsford, coordinator Herbarium Botanic Gardens

Strengthening data management in citizen science.

Due to lack of funding Fungimap only has a 0.3 FTE data coordinator. Records are now entered into the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA) by volunteers. Granting funding for three extra day's work for part-time coordinator to help clear the current backlog of records and develop a procedures manual to help volunteers. **\$937**

4. Kinglake Friends of the Forest—John Fraser

Friends group granted funds for three spotlighting torches to help ascertain numbers and locations for Greater Gliders around Kinglake. Two spotlighting nights have been held already this year. The aim is to preserve habitat for the glider by surveying ALL coupes prior to logging in the central highlands area and forward sightings to VicForests who are then required to factor this information into their logging plans. **\$365**

5. Nikolas Willmott, PhD Candidate Uni Melbourne

PhD - The interacting effects of artificial light at night and pesticides on native Australian spiders.

Particularly looking at the interaction of the two factors. Has already published 2 papers. Travel expenses for fieldwork and payment for tissue analysis. **\$700**

6. Botany and Plant Ecology Society of La Trobe University Stanislaw Wawrzyczek, secretary

Project: Floral visitors of Enfield Grevillea work to be carried out by student members of the Botany Society of Latrobe. The Enfield Grevillea (endemic) is the only species of Proteaceae in the Enfield State Park and Enfield State Forest. The aim is to survey animal, birds and insects which visit the plants, particularly looking to see if these include Brush-tailed Phascogale and Antechinus. Funded two Wildlife cameras etc. **\$484**

TOTAL \$4,009

Because of Covid-19 this AGM is being held much later than the usual date in May each year. The grant recipients normally attend the May AGM to receive their grant approval but that has not been possible this year.

The list of approved recipients for 2020 is as follows:

1. Bendigo Field Naturalists Club

3 x Motic Red 30S Microscopes costing \$1100 for use in workshops for members and the public. **Fully Funded \$1000.**

2. Friends of Grove Street Reserve, Eltham

Habitat Restoration of Grove St. Reserve- chainsaw hollows, nest boxes, planting indigenous plants. Working with Nilumbik Council, who cannot fund the work at the current time. **Fully Funded \$1000.**

3. Wildlife of the Central Highlands

1 Garmin GPSMAP 66i Unit. WOTCH surveys high value native forest allocated to logging. When threatened species are observed, video, GPS and photographic evidence is sent to DELWP to stop timber harvesting in that location. The GPS app on a smart phone is not considered accurate enough by DELWP. **Fully Funded \$800.**

4. Friends of Sassafras Creek

4 x Bushnell Trophy Cam Trail cameras to help confirm and extend the sightings of animals and birds along Sassafras Creek. Sightings are entered into the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas. **Fully Funded \$900.**

5. Kinglake Friends of the Forest

Two handheld GPS devices (Garmin eTrex 10 Handheld) to specifically ascertain numbers and locations for Greater Gliders around Kinglake. Particularly the aim is to preserve habitat for gliders by surveying ALL coupes prior to logging in the central highlands area and forward sightings to Vic Forests who are then required to factor this information into their logging plans. The GPS app on a smart phone is not considered accurate enough by DELWP. **Fully Funded \$318**

TOTAL \$4018

9. Presentation of Long Term Members' Certificates

Four members have been awarded certificates of Long-term Membership in recognition of being a member of the FNCV for a continuous period of over 40 years. The discovery of old records from our Marine Research Group revealed that their memberships were of much longer standing than had been noted on our database so they should have received their awards many years earlier. Their certificates have been awarded to them by mail.

Congratulations and thank you to you all for making such valuable contributions to the club:

- Dr Jeanette (Jan) Watson joined 1963
- Robyn Willington joined 1972
- Valerie Cram joined in 1974
- Donald Cram joined 1974

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10. Election of 2020 Council:

Maxwell Campbell declared all positions vacant. Dr Gary Presland took over as Acting Chair for elections. As there was only one candidate for each position, all were declared elected to their positions as follows:

Position on Council

President	Maxwell Campbell
Vice President	Philippa Burgess
Secretary	Barbara Burns
Treasurer	Barbara Burns
Councillor representing Botany Group	Ken Griffiths
Councillor representing Day Group	Joan Broadberry
Councillor representing Fauna Survey Group	Susan Dempsey
Councillor representing Fungi Group	Geoff Lay
Councillor representing Geology Group	Ruth Hoskin
Councillor representing Juniors' Group	Patricia Amaya
Councillor representing Marine Research Group	Michael Lyons
Councillor representing Microscopy Group	Philippa Burgess
Councillor representing Terrestrial invertebrates Group	<i>Vacant</i>
Councillor (Correspondence Officer)	Andy Brentnall
Councillor	Sue Bendel
Councillor	John Harris
Councillor	Judith Sise

Congratulations were given to all of the elected Councillors.

Meeting closed 8 pm.

From the Office

Dear members, I don't have much news for you from my lonely office! I've been forwarding to you quite a few newsletters from other naturalist clubs across the country; I hope you've enjoyed reading them. I've received only positive feedback from you so I hope I haven't sent too many.

Because of the current circumstances, I'm making a slight change to my office hours. In future I'll be in the office from 10 am on Mondays and Tuesdays instead of 9.30 am. I'll still be finishing at the same time, 4 o'clock.

Hopefully by the time the next issue of the Field Nats News is published, we'll be emerging slowly from our lockdown, and starting to plan for future meetings and excursions with some optimism.

Keep safe! Regards, Wendy

Chihuahua or Muffin?**From the Editor**

FNN has had a great response from members this month. Articles in this issue cover a wide range of natural history topics including fungi, birds, botany and insects. They come with a fabulous selection of images. Many of the observations have been recorded from local walks or from backyards. Thank you all for making the effort to share your discoveries. Without you there would be no newsletter.



Spring is a very special time for field naturalists. Although confined to exploring my closest bushland reserves I have been enjoying tracking the ever-changing display of wildflowers and orchids as the season progresses. With warmer weather there will be increasing activity from insects, spiders and birds. Keep your cameras at the ready and don't forget to let us know what you find. joan.broadberry@gmail.com

Take care, Joan