



Understanding
Our Natural World
Est. 1880

Field Nats News No 325



Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.

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Governor of Victoria

Office Hours: Monday and Tuesday 10 am - 4 pm.

December 2021/January 2022

From the President

Welcome to the last FNN for 2021. I would like to thank all involved for the sterling effort that has gone into keeping the FNN running over the COVID period to date. Please keep the contributions coming. The rules for holding meetings and running excursions have changed in accordance with the current COVIDSafe settings and we are back to having excursions. Check the FNN calendar information for planned excursions, but there will also be updates from the office. Meetings in the hall are still limited to 17 people for now so we will persist with ZOOM meetings until we are able to double that number. Full vaccination is now a requirement for all of our activities. We are considering having a Xmas get together at a nearby, accessible park although most of Melbourne will have the same idea. An announcement will be made by the end of the month.

The pledges for Mali Dunes are now **\$103,400**. We are very close to being in a position to acquire the property.

It has been very nice to have some bursts of warm weather in recent weeks which, in combination with ample rainfall, has our gardens growing at almost tropical rates. I can't keep up with the weeds and grass, but the upside is that the vegetable garden is doing very well.

The Rainbow lorikeets are back in the *Grevillea robusta* (below) which has a good crop of flowers despite the high winds of late. Their cheery deposition, bright colours and blue sky always make a great combination.

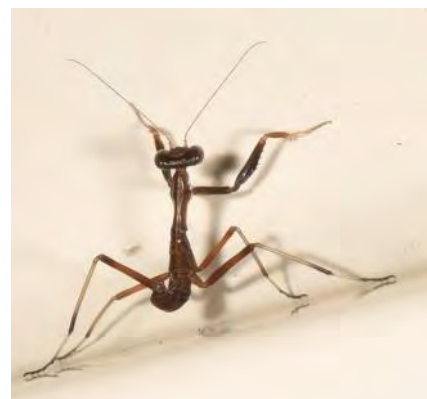
Tiny spiderlings, mantids and cockroaches are emerging in considerable numbers from their egg sacs and oothecae. An interesting variety of orb-weaving spiders can now be seen each evening and a seemingly diurnal species of *Eriophora* has been sitting in its web in bright sunshine.

The warmth and rain encouraged a number of Earthstars, *Geastrum sp.* (below) to appear on the nature strip at the end of October. I have never seen them there before



Eriophora sp. in the midday sunshine.

The due date for FNN 326, Feb. 2022, will be as always, the first Tuesday of the month, January 4th 2022. Use joan.broadberry@gmail.com



A tiny, freshly emerged *Pseudomantis* patrolling the fence

Index	Page
From the President	1
Calendar of events Dec. /Jan.	2
Members' news, photos and observations; From the Editor	3-4
A Lock-down Bug Story	5
Australian Natural History Medallion—Peter Latz	6
Congratulations Asha Billing winner threatened species bakeoff open category.	7
Wandering in Cardinia Reservoir Park	8-9
Fauna Survey Group Report: Using eDNA to detect aquatic fauna and assess Biodiversity.	9
Writing a wildlife book	10-11
From the bookshop	12

Max Campbell (Photos: M. Campbell)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All meetings are held in the FNCV Hall, 1 Gardenia St. Blackburn at 8pm unless otherwise indicated

December 2021

Saturday 4th – Christmas Party BBQ 6.30 pm. It is planned to have our Christmas get-together in a nearby park. Details to be announced shortly. *Prior registration essential.* Contact the office admin@fncv.org.au

Monday 6th - Friday 10th - Fauna Survey Group Coopracambra National Park, East Gippsland. Surveying for birds, mammals, frogs and reptiles in areas affected by the 2019-2020 Black Summer fires. Self-sufficient camping on private property. *Prior registration essential.* Contact: David De Angelis d.deangelis@latrobe.edu.au 0409 519 829

Tuesday 7th - Fauna Survey Group Meeting (Covid restrictions permitting). End of year breakup with slide show and short talks. *Prior registration essential.* Contact: Ray Gibson 0417 861 651; rgibson@melbpc.org.au

Saturday 11th - Terrestrial Invertebrates Group Excursion: Cardinia Reservoir Park. Meet in the Crystal Brook Picnic Area car park (off Wellington Road). We will walk uphill in the morning looking for insects on tea-trees that will hopefully be in flower. In the afternoon we will walk along the creek. *Prior registration essential.* <https://www.google.com/maps?q=-37.9704,145.3942> Contact: Max Campbell 0409 143 538; 9544 0181; mcam7307@bigpond.net.au

Monday 13th – Marine Research Group Meeting: Annual members' night (Covid restrictions permitting). Everyone is welcome to bring along exhibits, items of interest or questions on marine invertebrates. *Prior registration essential.* Please contact Leon Altoff for more information 0428 669 773; 9530 4180 AH

January 2022

Sunday 9th - Terrestrial Invertebrates Group Excursion: Badger Weir, Healesville Meet at 10 am near the far end of the car park along Badger Weir Rd. We will explore the cool rainforest and sunny picnic area. Contact: Max Campbell 0409 143 538; 9544 0181; mcam7307@bigpond.net.au *Prior registration essential*

Monday 24th - FNCV Council Meeting 8.00 pm via Zoom (?) Apologies and agenda items to Wendy Gare admin@fncv.org.au Max will email the link for Zoom.

Saturday 29th - Marine Research Group field work: Point Roadknight, Anglesea. Meeting time 12.30 pm. Please contact Leon Altoff to **register** and for meeting place. 0428 669 773; 9530 4180 AH



As of when this newsletter went out, there is a numbers cap on the FNCV hall. A couple of meetings have been tentatively advertised for December but please check with the organiser as to arrangements. We are able to hold outdoor excursions and camps.

All participants in any FNCV activities are required to provide proof of double vaccination and sign in using the Victorian Services QR code or on paper (when outdoors.)

A well fitted face covering must be worn inside and a mask must be carried and used outside if social distancing is not possible.

You are required to register for all meetings and excursions as soon as you can. Please supply a phone number and email so you can be reached at short notice. Let the SIG coordinator know if your plans change.

Restrictions may alter soon. The office will keep us updated.



The policy of the FNCV is that non-members pay \$5 per excursion and \$3 per meeting, to contribute towards Club overheads. Junior non-member families, \$4 per excursion and \$2 per meeting.

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 Tuesday in the month.

Welcome
Welcome

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

Jim Phillipson, Katherine Zonneville, Sam Craig, David Egan, Miriam Ford, Kathy Costello, Mercer Henderson, Wendy Calder and Andrew Constantinou

Vale Kenneth Bell 09/07/39 – 03/10/2021

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of long term FNCV member, Dr Kenneth Bell. Ken joined the FNCV in 1978. He was particularly associated with the Marine Research Group, his field of expertise being microscopic marine animals known as Foraminifera, forams for short. Ken was especially familiar with the fossil beds near Geelong and was active in studying Foraminifera along the Victorian coast.

He published 17 papers and one book review in *The Victorian Naturalist* between 1967 and 2004. In addition Ken compiled a comprehensive index to every volume for 40 years from 1979 to 2019. A wonderful commitment.

Our deepest condolences are extended to Ken's family and many friends.

A more detailed obituary will appear in *The Victorian Naturalist*.

With thanks to Bob Burn

Advertising in the Field Nats News

VERY REASONABLE RATES

Contact Wendy in the Field Nats
Office
admin@fncv.org.au
9877 9860
(Mon –Tues 9.30—4)

*The views and opinions
expressed in any material
including websites and
newsletters are not
necessarily those of
FNCV Inc.*

Thanks to the editorial
team
who put together FNN
325

Joan Broadberry
Wendy Gare
Sally Bewsher

**FNCV Facebook
report:**

20,318 followers.

WHEN DO YOU DISCOVER SPELLING ERRORS/TYPOS IN AN EMAIL



Before you send it
When you've just sent it

Members' news (continued)



J. Broadberry

Green Blotched Moth (*Cosmodes elegans*)

Left. A lovely moth with a wingspan of 30-35 mm. It appears small when resting with its wings folded, roof-like over its body. This is a very attractive species, with cinnamon-brown fore-wings on which there are large green markings edged in white and a feathery ruff behind the head.

The moth was brought to my attention by my daughter. It was sitting quietly in the kitchen on the inside of her window frame. I last recorded one in 1994. **JB**



W. Clark

Peacock Spider *Maratus plumosus*

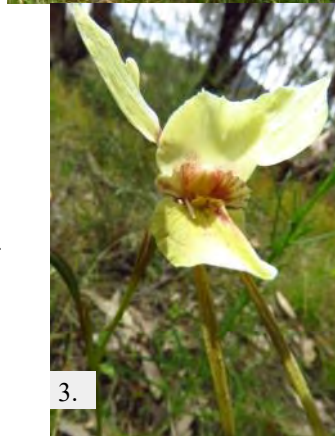
Above: A beautiful peacock spider found and photographed by Wendy Clark in the leaf litter while the TIG group were having lunch at Braeside Park. An exciting find!

Orchid observations:



The first photograph (above) is of a clump of Purple Diuris, *Diuris punctata* on a roadside verge near Chilton. The second and third are of an unusual hybrid between *Diuris punctata* and one of the Golden Moth orchids, probably *Diuris behrii*. **JB**

All orchid photos: J. Broadberry



Above: Two images of a wasp pollinator of Flying Duck Orchids, *Caleana major*. Interestingly, it spent more time on the closed orchid than on neighbouring orchids that were open. Can anyone provide ID? **JB**

From the Editor

In 2021 COVID19 delivered several more severely disrupted months to Melbourne. It feels wonderful be able to (cautiously) settle into our lives again. Nevertheless, despite restrictions, the FNCV has been able to offer a substantial program by embracing the digital world. Field Nats News (FNN) has been able to continue throughout the months of lockdown through the sustained generosity of readers sharing their stories with us. So much has been made possible by the hard work of our president, Max Campbell who has been tireless in encouraging us all and steering the Club through a difficult period. I would also like to acknowledge the work of our administrative assistant, Wendy Gare. Nothing is ever too much trouble to Wendy. In particular she took on the task of printing and posting FNN to those who cannot receive it by email. Sally Bewsher has saved me from quite a few awkward moments through her advice and meticulous proofreading. Not easy when done remotely. Many thanks Sally.

I adapted to working from home last year and it has given me great pleasure to edit a newsletter full of observations, discoveries and of course stunning images of nature. Quite a few members have contributed to FNN for the first time. Thank you everyone for making the effort and please, let it become a habit to continue to share your natural history moments with FNN.

Best wishes for a safe and happy Christmas and a relaxing holiday period.. **Joan**

A Lockdown Bug Story

Katherine Zonneville

(All photos: K. Zonneville)

When I first saw the hairy little caterpillar on the wall next to my back door on the 31st of August, I had no idea of the relationship we would form over the following four weeks. It sat on the warm, west-facing brick wall for two days before shocking me on the 2nd of September with an overnight transformation into a colourful pupa inside a rather sparse hairy cocoon (Photo 1). Shrivelled up next to it was the discarded larval skin. It had woven the cocoon using silk and its own larval hairs, and now protected inside a hard case, it was undergoing an incredible process of histolysis or breakdown of its body into mush and then re-arranging the DNA and cells via histogenesis into the completely different body of an adult moth.

I photographed the pupa several times over the next nine days and chatted to it about the cleverness of the whole situation (great company during lockdown).

In the mid-morning of the 10th of September I was really excited to see a beautiful moth still attached to a furry blob-like mass sitting on the outside of the cocoon. Silly me thought the moth was still emerging and over the following few hours I grew increasingly worried that it had become 'stuck'! I really should have looked more closely, as it was only after the beautiful moth had detached from the 'blob' that I realised the blob was my little friend and that it was a wingless female who after emerging from the pupal skin and climbing onto the outside of the cocoon, had sent out love scents (pheromones) to attract the winged male (Photos 2 & 3). After mating for several hours, he flew off and left her to spend that day and the next laying well over 200 eggs adhered to the cocoon structure (Photo 4). Only one or two of these eggs had been laid prior to mating and I assumed that most would have been fertilised.

For the next twenty days she remained with her eggs and despite growing smaller every day she continued to move around over the eggs (Photo 5). I wondered if she was protecting them or had another role that I couldn't observe.

By the 30th of September most of the eggs had become more translucent and contained a dark spot (Photo 5). Unfortunately I had to leave home for a few days and by the time I looked one week later all but two of the eggs had disappeared and she was gone (Photo 6). I scoured the wall and ground below for tiny caterpillars to no avail. I hope in future I will have an opportunity to observe a hatching event and find out where these caterpillars live. I have since learned that this moth species is *Anestia ombrophanes* (Clouded Footman) and instead of eating my garden plants, the caterpillars feed on lichen, green algae and black algae.

References: <http://lepidoptera.butterflyhouse.com.au/arct/ombrophanes.html>

<https://www.pestwiki.com/moth-life-cycle/>

<https://www.audubon.org/news/tracking-down-love-male-moths-use-scent-find-females>



Photo 1. *Anestia ombrophanes*
Clouded Footman pupa



Photo 2. Mating *Anestia ombrophanes*



Photo 3. Dorsal view of the male.



Photo 4. Mass production of eggs, post mating.



Photo 5. The rapidly developing eggs.



Photo 6. The vacated cocoon.

Australian Natural History Medallion 2021
Awarded to Peter Latz
Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club

This year the presentation of the 2021 ANHM took place in the Olive Pink Botanical Gardens, Alice Springs. Max Campbell had the medallion engraved and sent to Alice Springs. FNCV contributed to the costs of the ceremony with a \$250 donation to the Alice Springs FNC. The presentation, a great occasion, attended by 90 people, was recorded. The video can be seen at

<https://youtu.be/h5yDJIEkFs0>

Learn more about Peter's work at

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Latz_\(botanist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Latz_(botanist))

Right: Peter receiving the medallion from Barb Gillfedder president of the Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club. Photo: Anne Schmidt



From the citation:

...Peter Latz stands out for his lifelong work which has become a bridge between Aboriginal and European botanical and environmental cultures. During his 40 years as a botanist for the Northern Territory herbarium, Peter identified many plants previously unknown to science and by working with nine different aboriginal groups, he was able to include cultural knowledge, which would otherwise have been lost, in their scientific descriptions. He also translated many of the names into those nine languages.

Peter conducted the survey of Kings Canyon to determine whether it should become a National Park and identified many previously unknown plants there; he has also had several plants named after him. He has worked on improving some varieties of bush tucker and studied the effects of fires on these foods.

*He is also an expert on desertification and has published two influential books, *Bushfires and Bush tucker* (updated in 2018) and *The Flaming Desert* (2007).*

As well as all this, Peter has continued to volunteer in various capacities, including advising on weed removal, native plant care and arid land management.

His own land is a working example of the best kind of management and a favourite destination for Field Naturalist excursions.

We are delighted to present the 2021 Australian Natural History Medallion to Peter Latz.

Nicola Williams, Chair, ANHM Awards Committee

Received from David Cheal, long term FNCV member.

I well remember my occasional interactions with Peter Latz when I worked in the Northern Territory. He was an insightful, informed and intelligent contributor. Even more, he was personable, widely respected and very generous with his time and insights. He was and is a notable bridge from indigenous knowledge to developing ecological science. His book *Bushfires and Bush tucker Aboriginal plant use in Central Australia* (1995, IAD Press, Alice Springs) is insightful and valuable and, simply, a great read. There is a 2014 updated edition. Of course, he's made many more contributions than this book, but this one book well illustrated why this award is justified. I can think of no more worthy recipient of the Australian Natural History Medallion.

To the group that chose him as a recipient—well done.

To Peter—thoroughly deserved recognition (altho you seek no such accolades).

Congratulations to Asha Billing for winning the 2021 Threatened Species Bake Off Open Category.

Every year for Threatened Species Day, 7th September, the Federal Threatened Species Commissioner hosts the nationwide Threatened Species Bake Off. The Bake Off aims to “bake in” an awareness into the community about Australia’s remarkable and unique threatened wildlife.

Contestants’ sweet deserts are judged by a panel of experts including scientists, the Threatened Species Commissioner and a celebrity baker.

There were the following categories:

- Early Learner’s Award: The Early Learner’s Award is open for children aged 4 years or younger.
- Children’s Award: The Children’s Award is open for children aged 5 to 15 years.
- Open: The Open category is for submissions by individuals 15 years and over. This can include submissions from organisations and community groups.
- People’s Choice: The winner will be decided by you, the public via Facebook.
- Schools Award: Open to all Australian schools.
- Organisation Award: Open to all organisations and community groups.

The 2021 competition had a focus on ecosystem engineers to celebrate our diverse range of incredible threatened ecosystem engineers, particularly Australia’s lesser-known engineers. Over 700 entries were submitted for the year, double the entries from last year (people clearly upped their game from the pandemic home-made bread baking days). There might have been double the entries this year but Asha’s on-point Long-footed Potoroo (*Potorous longipes*) still buried the competition.



Contrary to appearance the Potoroo is not only a well-trained representative of its species but is entirely vegan.

The Threatened Species Commissioner had the following to say on Asha’s entry:

*“Bake Off - Open Award Winner: Long-footed Potoroo (*Potorous longipes*) – Asha. We are delighted to announce a Long-footed Potoroo by Asha from Victoria is the overall winner of the Threatened Species Bake Off.”*

In her entry, Asha talks about the role of the Potoroo as an ecosystem engineer. Long-footed Potoroos spend their time engineering the surrounding ecosystem by digging holes in the damp forest soil, searching for native truffles and spreading mycorrhizal fungi throughout their home within the dense forests of south-eastern Australia.

The judges and I were also impressed with Asha’s attention to detail and depiction of the plants found in the Potoroo habitat, including the Gippsland Waratah, Pink Fingers Orchid, Button Everlasting, Common Fringe-lily, and Maroonhood Orchid. Asha notes her Potoroo is a little chubbier than his wild companions, which she attributes to the fact that her version has spent time digging into double chocolate cake...

Asha talks about the threats facing the Potoroo – including introduced predators, land clearing, burning and logging. The endangered Long-footed Potoroo was also impacted in the devastating 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires, but work is under way to help in its recovery...

The Fauna Survey Group over the years has run several survey trips with the Southern Ark team surveying for the Long-footed Potoroo and other local mammals. Asha is the Fauna Survey Groups resident artist and happens to paint by commission too.

The other marvellous dessert entries can be viewed on the Commissioner’s Facebook page. They are worth a look.

The Threatened Species Bake Off will take place again next year. Asha encourages everyone to participate and ‘eat away extinction with the Threatened Species Bake Off’.

Andrej Hohmann

Wandering in Cardinia Reservoir Park

Cardinia Reservoir Park, located near Narre Warren, is Melbourne's second largest water storage after the Thompson Dam. It was built between 1970 and 1973 and is due to be upgraded in late 2022-2023. Water from the desalination plant flows into the reservoir. Many visitors walk along the dam wall. However, there are tracks crossing the often-wet grassy picnic and playground areas, while others go through the bush area (the former Duffey's Picnic Ground) and through an area of pines. Pittosporum and other introduced weeds are common amid the native species, which include stringybarks, Narrow-leaved Peppermints, Tea-tree, native grasses, sedges and Prickly Moses. There was a wonderful display of *Pimelia flava* in September.

On my wanders, I have found White Lady Finger Orchids and some sun orchids. One warm afternoon I spotted an echidna searching for and feasting on ants and discovered an Eastern Yellow Robin feeding its young, tucked away in a beautiful nest. Eastern Grey Kangaroos are common and frequently seen feeding or lazing in the sun. Common Froglets, Southern Brown Tree Frogs and Striped Marsh Frogs are all calling at present.

Although there is a large expanse of water which is deep and cold, I have not seen a great range birds on it. Waterbirds I have observed close to the shore or wall include Little Pied and Black Cormorants which are always around, Musk Ducks, a Great Crested Grebe, White-faced Herons, Australian Wood Ducks and Pacific Black Ducks. Elsewhere, various bush birds can be regularly seen or heard. The cheerful Grey Shrike Thrush is always a delight to listen to, Eastern and Crimson Rosellas are common, Eastern Yellow Robins dart down cheekily in front of you, Grey Fantails are everywhere, Laughing Kookaburras call cheerfully and numerous honeyeaters abound in the flowering mistletoe and eucalypts. With the arrival of spring a number of migrants have appeared, adding to interesting sightings. Other species I have heard or seen include: Golden Whistler, Rufous Whistler, Fantail Cuckoo, Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Rose Robin, Striated and Spotted Pardalotes, Dusky Woodswallow, Sacred Kingfisher, Red-browed Finch, Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike and a Sea Eagle.

Interestingly, emus can be seen from time to time behind the secure catchment fences as you drive along Wellington Road. I

(Continued on page 9)



Caladenia catenata



**Black-faced
Cuckoo Shrike**



**Eastern Yellow Robin
and chick**



Sawfly Larvae

(Continued from page 8)

have seen groups of three or five birds occasionally, but I don't know how many there are in total, nor when they were introduced to the catchment. About fifteen years ago there was a move by Melbourne Water to get rid of them. This has clearly not happened.



Echidna

Sally Bewsher (All photos: S. Bewsher)



Rainbow Lorikeet



Fauna Survey Group Report

Meeting via Zoom, Tuesday 5th October 2021

Using eDNA to detect aquatic fauna and assess biodiversity.

Speaker Josh Griffiths, Senior Wildlife Ecologist, Cesar Australia and EnviroDNA.

Environmental DNA-eDNA is a new technology, which is especially useful for surveying wildlife in the environment, especially animal species living in water.

DNA is shed by animals from hair, skin and faeces and, although very dilute in water, can easily be sampled. A volume of water is passed through an absorbent trap and analysed in a laboratory using a gene probe technique for mitochondrial DNA. The technique is sensitive and cost-effective, and water sampling can be done by volunteers using a syringe and a small adsorbent filter. Large samples are taken using small pump systems.

Surveying for Platypuses for example, often requires a large amount of work, using nets in shallow waters, with up to 10 surveys required for 95% confidence of detection. Using eDNA only two samples are required. Surveying for Platypuses in streams around Melbourne was enhanced by the use of eDNA which produced many more records in two months than using trapping methods. The Upper Yarra River and tributaries were found to be a platypus stronghold.



The technique has been useful in surveying for other hard-to-detect species such as Dwarf Galaxias and Flat-headed Galaxias. For fish surveys, up to 80% of all species were detected, so the method is as good as electrofishing.

Biodiversity detection is achieved using DNA sequence common to a group, and then species detection can be sought using the species specific gene probe.

Feral and invasive species detection is a useful application, such as in the early detection of Cane Toad invasion, and detection of an invasive Smooth Newt in some water bodies east of Melbourne.

Terrestrial wildlife is also surveyed through scat analysis. Prey items in a predator scat can be determined. This was applied to a predator scat survey near the Gippsland Lakes. The centre of a scat reveals prey items and the outside of a scat can be tested to identify individual foxes and the numbers present

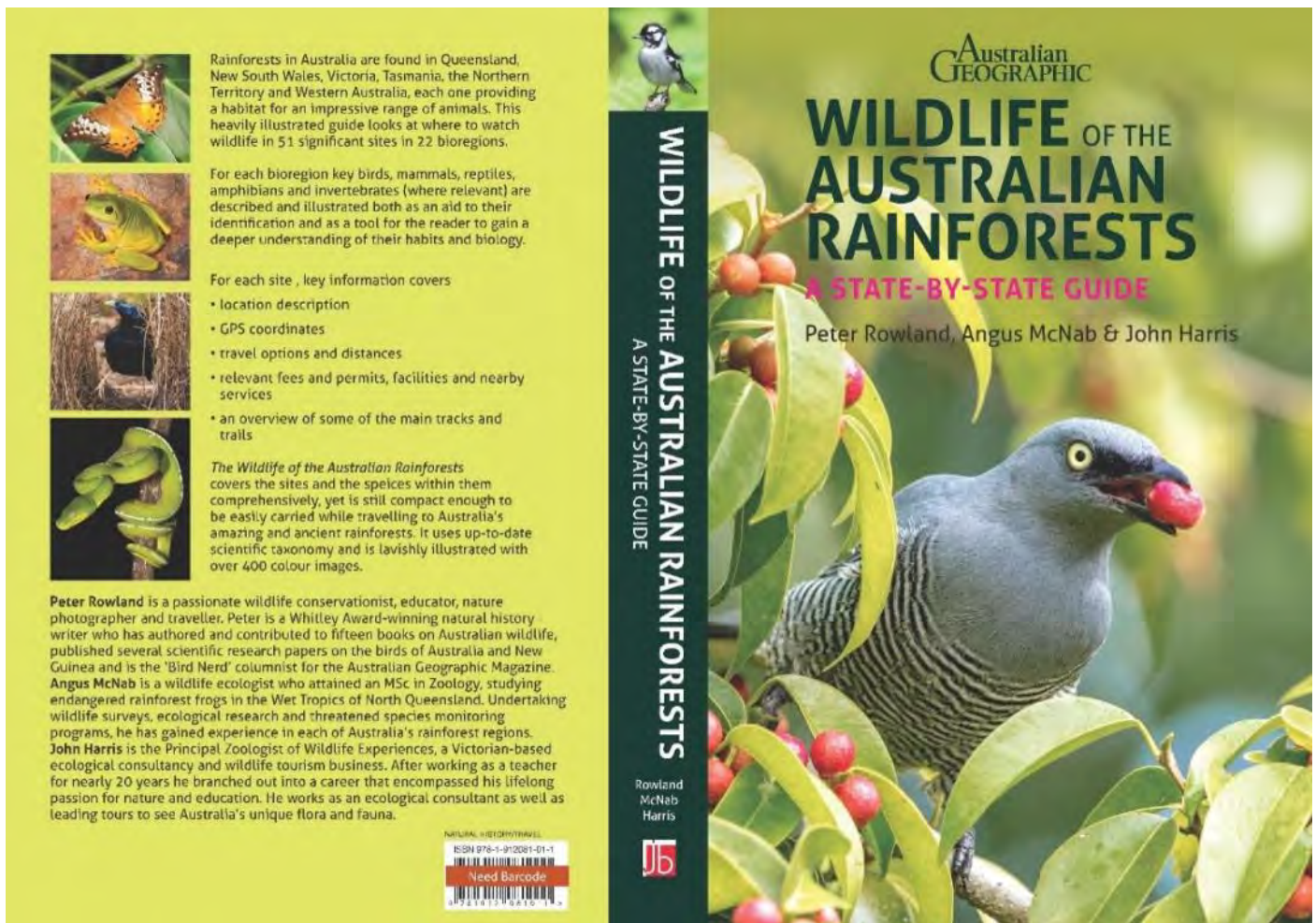
Ray Gibson

SIG reports given at the last FNCV Council Meeting

Botany Group: Meeting Thursday 21st October. La Trobe university graduate students Stan Wawrzyczek and Armon Aristidou presented about their research project on the Enfield Grevillea. Other grevilleas in the Holly Leaf group in the Ballarat region are similarly locally endemic. There are specific soil differences. Pollination regimes were investigated. 26 attended, by Zoom, including some Ballarat FNC guests.

Ken Griffiths

Writing a wildlife book: the process, research and knowledge gained, not to mention the trials and tribulations.



I have often looked at all of the amazing books on the FNCV bookshop shelves and wondered how much work went into writing them. I had dabbled in writing small pieces for other books but never embarked on the writing journey myself. Well, I got the opportunity to experience all of the background works that went into publishing a book when Peter Rowland, a friend and well-published author, asked if I'd like to co-author a book with him on Australian rainforest wildlife back in 2019.

I had initially contacted Peter when he was looking for reptile images for his, and Chris Farrell's, book *A Naturalist Guide to the Reptiles of Australia*. We later met up at the Croydon Hotel, when he was on a brief trip to Melbourne, to discuss their next book *A Naturalist Guide to the Mammals of Australia* and what mammal images they were looking for. I wrote the chapter on bird-watching on Norfolk Island for their book *Australia's Birdwatching Megaspots* and have provided wildlife images for other books that Peter and various co-authors have published.



A third co-author, Angus McNab, a freelance ecologist and former FNCV member, also came on board and we proceeded to discuss the shape of this rainforest wildlife book. With three authors we decided to split the states up amongst us to write the ones we were most familiar with; Peter being from Sydney would write NSW and NT (where he had worked previously), Angus Queensland and Tasmania where he had resided and worked extensively, and myself the Victorian chapter. While doing some early research for the front section of the book I discovered that Western Australia also had some rainforest and that for completeness of the book, we should add that in as well. This gave us two states each on which to research and write.

The front section of the book looks at the origins of rainforests in Australia and the modern rainforest types, from warm temperate to vine thickets to cool temperate, along with the cultural signifi-

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)



Cora Lynn Falls, Yarra Ranges

cance, conservation and threats to the rainforests we have left. When thinking about how we would compile each state, we recognised that rainforests didn't change or stop at the state borders so it was decided that we would look at the Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation Assessment (IBRA) bioregions that exist across the country. This meant that some IBRA bioregions spanned states, so how would we showcase these areas in a state by state guide? Like the bioregions themselves, we went with the format that each state would showcase bioregions wholly within the state first then those that crossed borders, at the end of the chapter leading into the adjacent state.

The next decisions were the fauna species that would be included in each bioregion, which ones would be highlighted with a species profile, which rainforest locations would be featured as examples of the particular rainforest type and where people could visit. Once the locations and fauna were decided, we then set about sourcing photos of rainforest types, locations and the various fauna. Between the three authors we had the majority of images we were after but turned to friends, associates, the inter-

net and even Facebook to find the extra images. All of these sources proved fruitful, with a final total of contributing photographers being over 60 including many from FNCV members like Arthur Carew, Akash Samuel, Kathy Himbeck and Julie Sims.

While I had spent most of my life in Victoria, there were well-known rainforests that I had never visited and other rainforests that I didn't even know about. My desire to get authentic site photos for the Victorian chapter led to hastily arranged weekend tours to East Gippsland and the Otways, while day trips to the Yarra Ranges and Wilsons Prom were also needed. The reason for the hasty planning was that Australia had just joined the global Covid19 pandemic in February 2020. Our East Gippsland trip in mid-March 2020 turned out to be only a few days before Victoria went into its first lockdown at the end of March, meaning that travel was only allowed for four reasons; taking photos for a book wasn't one of them. Travelling through East Gippsland the extent of the 2019 bushfires was evident with some of our planned sites to visit being well behind closed roads. One trip to the Errinundra rainforests resulted in a 4 hour, 170km round trip from Orbost to Bendoc for 'nothing'. Some sites like the rainforest at McKenzie River, east of Cann River, had been severely impacted by the fires and were closed to the public. While there were some like those just mentioned which were out of reach, other little gems such as the Marsdenia Rainforest Walk, just out of Bairnsdale in the Lake Tyers State Park were discovered. I finally made it to Tarra Bulga NP for the first time, if only briefly, on the way home. Sites in the Otways were visited over a weekend, again before lockdown one, while the remaining site, Lilly Pilly Gully at Wilsons Prom, was a 'day-dash' after the first lockdown had ended and only a few days before all images were to be finalised and sent to the publisher.



Tarra Bulga National Park

The rainforests of WA were another story altogether, as they are only found within the Kimberley an area that I have just scratched the surface of, in terms of visiting the area. It wasn't until the 1970s that rainforests were formally recognised as occurring in WA and most are extremely small. Of the 1,500 patches that exist, some are only a few remnant trees in a patch and the biggest is approximately 300ha in size. Not having been to and not having a lot of information on the main sites, it was difficult research to find the information that I was after, that fitted with the format of the book. It involved more time on the phone talking to naturalists and those working with the traditional owners, the Wunambal Gaambara, than actually looking through documents, reports etc. Naivety of the existence of rainforests in WA across the community, let alone myself and other naturalists, didn't help matters. Kathy and I had visited one particular area, James Price Point north of Broome, only a year or two before the book was even initially discussed, without even realising that what we were visiting was considered rainforest. Fortunately, I had managed to take photos of a lot of the birds that we had seen at the time, which became invaluable once we were looking for images of fauna from the actual sites.

With the drafts completed, the sections were sent out to colleagues like Peter Homan, another FNCV member, fauna and local experts and proof-readers for peer reviews of the information. Once that was completed, the final product was returned to the publisher, John Beaufoy and his team. After several versions of the publishing proofs were reviewed by us as authors, the book went off to the printer and released in July this year.

The book has nearly 400 pages of information, over 500 images of wildlife and rainforests, 51 significant sites in 22 IBRA bioregions across the country.

If you would like to purchase a copy, please contact me at wildlifeexperiences@gmail.com or it can also be purchased through the FNCV bookshop. All other books mentioned can be purchased through the FNCV bookshop.



Lilly Pillies, Wilsons Promontory.

John Harris (All photos: J. Harris)

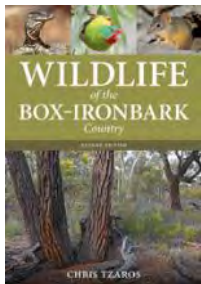
NEWS FROM THE BOOKSHOP (December 2021)

The Bookshop is back! What a challenging year it has been. What better way to celebrate the end of lock down, not to mention Christmas, with a book? There are books to guide you on your nature trips out of your 'bubble' (even interstate!), books to gift in person now you can finally enjoy company or meet family members at last and books to enjoy yourself when the outside world gets to be too much. An updated FNCV Bookshop Catalogue is to be released soon, including even more of the new books released in 2021 and those upcoming in 2022. Be sure to get in early so that you are not disappointed, especially if postage is required. To those that are still waiting on an order, many thanks for your patience, your books are coming. To order or inquire about a book, please send an email to, bookshop@fncv.org.au and I will reply as soon as I can. Members receive a 20% discount, non-members pay the recommended retail price, so become a member today.

Happy reading,

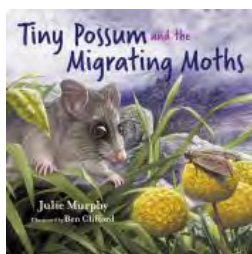
Kathy

Beachcombing (C. Fraser) is a guide to the seashores of the Southern Hemisphere. If you've ever walked along a beach or rocky shore and peered, poked or wondered at the things cast upon it by the waves, this book is for you. Beaches are our windows to the ocean, and the objects we find on them tell stories about life, death and dynamic processes in the sea. Beachcombing will help you to understand what you find on beaches, and the intriguing reasons these objects and organisms have come to be there. (PB, 116 pp., July 2021) . RRP \$27.99, Member \$22.50.



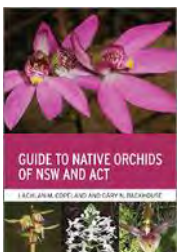
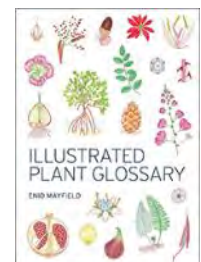
Wildlife of the Box-Ironbark Country (C. Tzaros) provides a comprehensive overview of the ecologically significant Box-Ironbark habitats and their wildlife. This extensively revised second edition covers all of the mammals, birds, reptiles and frogs that occur in the region, with a brief description of their distribution, status, ecology and identification, together with a detailed distribution map and superb colour photograph for each species. The book includes a 'Where to watch' section, featuring a selection of national parks, state parks and nature conservation reserves where people can experience the ecosystem and its wildlife. (PB, 288 pp., 2nd ed, Oct 2021) RRP \$49.99, Member \$40

Photographic Field Guide to Australian Frogs (M. Saunders) enables frog enthusiasts and researchers to confidently identify 242 Australian frog species. The book includes detailed information on the distribution, habitat preferences and call of each taxon, as well as fully illustrated keys to genera to assist with identification. Multiple photos of each species show variation in colour and pattern as well as features used for identification such as thigh colouration, skin texture, belly colour and patterning, eye colour and extent of webbing between the toes. This book has a strong focus on illustrating variation and key diagnostic features. (PB, 376 pp., June 2021) RRP \$49.99, Member \$40



Tiny Possum and the Migrating Moths (Murphy & Clifford) is a beautiful story of the life of the critically endangered mountain pygmy-possum. High in the Australian Alps. Possum needs to find enough food and shelter to survive the harsh alpine winter. She will spend months hibernating under a blanket of snow. Will she last through the year to successfully raise a new family? She will need snow and Bogong Moths to survive, and also the support of great conservation work. Suited for ages 6 to 9. (HB, 32 pp., Nov 2021) RRP

Illustrated Plant Glossary (E. Mayfield) is a comprehensive glossary of over 4000 plant science terms from across a broad range of topics and fields, featuring many superb colour illustrations to aid understanding. The topics covered include anatomy, angiosperms, bryophytes, chemistry, cytology, family specific terms, ferns and fern allies, flowers, fruit, genetics, gymnosperms, habitat and growth, habitat and ecology, indumentum, inflorescence, leaves, reproduction, roots, seeds, systematics and more. (PB, 332 pp., Sept 2021) RRP \$69.99, Member \$56



Guide to Native Orchids of NSW & ACT (Copeland & Backhouse) is an essential guide for all orchid enthusiasts, covering the richest area for wild orchids in Australia. This comprehensive guide describes the 582 species of wild orchids that occur in NSW and the ACT, including over 500 species of seasonal ground orchids & 62 species of evergreen tree and rock orchids. This book describes each species, enabling their identification in the field, and includes over 600 photographs of wild orchids in their natural habitat and distribution maps for almost all species. (PB, 456 pp., Jan 2022) RRP \$49.99, Member \$40