

MEETINGS & EXCURSIONS CANCELLED

UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE



Understanding
Our Natural World

Field Nats News No. 306

Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.

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

April 2020

From the President

We have already had several informative, topical and thought-provoking presentations this year and there are many more planned for the year so come along and enjoy the presentations and participate in the discussions.

The subject of 'Seed Banks' has arisen in recent SIG presentations. It has always seemed to me that the prospects for successfully propagating a seed that has been sitting in a seed bank differs considerably from a seed lying buried and quiescent in its natural environment with its associated symbionts. Plants need specific fungi, so a "fungi bank" may be essential for any serious effort to save plants for the future. Perhaps many other organisms, including pollinators, may need to be conserved to ensure the plants' survival. After all, plants evolved within complex ecosystems.

The inter-dependencies and symbiotic relationships between different organisms has been critical to survival throughout the course of evolution. Symbiosis facilitated new systems of defence, nutrition and adaptation to new niches. The assemblage of an organism and the numerous other species living in, on or around it forms a discrete ecological unit, the holobiont. The individual species are termed bionts. Most organisms have a unique microbiome which may, in some cases, comprise thousands of species. The biology of complex holobionts cannot be understood in terms of the isolated characteristics of individual bionts. Similarly, symbiotic partners cannot be viewed and studied in isolation as independent individuals. A proper understanding of this complexity has important ramifications for protecting and recovering endangered species, as well as attempting so-called ecological restoration.

We have heard a great deal about the enormous loss of animals during the recent fires; some estimates suggest that over a billion animals were lost but the true number will never be known. We don't know how many species of invertebrates actually exist; estimates vary from 15 million to over 100 million. Perhaps less than 10% have been described so far. Therefore, we are unable to determine what was actually lost in the fires. Estimates can only be based on known species, their distributions and possible populations. Excluding bacteria, invertebrates constitute the bulk of species on Earth. Most are out of sight and out of mind. Arthropods are the most numerous and of these, insects constitute the highest proportion in terms of both species and population size.

The total numbers of individual invertebrate animals may never be known but the loss of enormous numbers of them has major repercussions for vertebrates which sit at higher trophic levels in the ecosystem. Invertebrates provide food, pollination, waste control, recycling, soil conditioning and other essential services for vertebrates and that includes humans. In addition to invertebrates, the entire ecosystem also depends upon the presence of protoctists, plants, fungi and the ubiquitous bacteria. One thing that naturalists quickly learn is that ecosystems are very complex and unpredictable. When we don't see, understand or acknowledge the actual complexity of biodiversity

(Continued on page 3)

The deadline for FNN 307 will be **10 am on Tuesday 7th April 2020**. FNN will go to the printers on the 14th with collation on Tuesday 21st April.



A tattered and exhausted *Austroscolia soror*,
Blue-Winged Flower Wasp.

Photo: M. Campbell

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

April 2020

Monday 6th – Fungi Group Meeting: Speaker: Jurrie Hubregtse *Phylogenetic Trees Made Easy*. Jurrie is a retired engineer and author of the remarkable *Fungi in Australia* a downloadable e-book (PDF format). It contains 380 species and over 2000 photographs of fungi. Contact: Carol Page 9857 6388; cpage356@gmail.com

Tuesday 7th - Fauna Survey Group Meeting: *Cryo-drama in the high country: untangling the complex evolutionary history of Australian alpine skinks*. Speaker: Dr Margaret Haines, Research Associate, Museums Victoria. Contact: Raymond Gibson 0417 861 651; rgibson@melbpc.org.au

Friday 10th to Monday 13th – Juniors' Group: *Easter Camp at Naracoorte Caves National Park, SA*. Australian Fossil Mammal World Heritage site. **Early bookings in advance essential.** Contact: Patricia Amaya juniors@fncv.org.au

Friday 10th to Monday 13th - Fauna Survey Group Survey: *Easter camp – details to be advised.* Contact: Raymond Gibson 0417 861 651; rgibson@melbpc.org.au
Prior registration essential

Easter Monday 13th - Marine Research Group Field Work: *Point Cook Homestead*. Meet at 11.30 am. Contact: Leo Altoff 9530 4180 AH; 0428 669 773. **Prior registration essential for directions to meeting place.**

Wednesday 15th - Microscopy Group Meeting: Our meetings consist of practical evenings using our collection of microscopes including compound, dissecting and digital, with guidance, advice and help in identification. Bring your own found specimens from home garden, forest, park or pond, or view any of our collection of 100's of botany, marine, freshwater, invertebrates; as prepared slides, along with live and dried specimens. Spend an entertaining and informative evening with many microscopes set up for members and visitors use. Throughout the evening we also screen videos of live microscopic organisms as they go about their interesting microscopic lives. Contact: Philippa Burgess 0409 866 388

Thursday 16th – Botany Group Meeting: *Nature Culture Science: the future of botanic gardens*. Speaker: Tim Entwisle, Director & Chief Executive, Royal Botanic Gardens, Victoria. Contact: Ken Griffiths botany@fncv.org.au

Tuesday 21st - Collate Field Nats News 307: Starting 10 am. Contact: Peter Broadberry 9846 1218

Wednesday 22nd – Geology Group Meeting: *Using Citizen Science to track field trips and document the collections of some of Victoria's pioneering geologists in the 1st & early 20th centuries.* Speaker: Oskar Lindenmayer, Melbourne Museum. Contact: Ruth Hoskin 9878 5911; 0423 29 424; rhoskin@gmail.com

Friday 24th – Juniors' Group Meeting: *Australian Mega Fauna*. Speaker: Euan Ritchie, Associate Professor in Wildlife Ecology & Conservation, Deakin University. Contact: Patricia Amaya juniors@fncv.org.au

Sunday 26th – Fungi Group Foray: **Sunday 26th – The Ada Tree, Yarra State Forest.** Meet 10.30 am at the Ada Tree car park. (Mel Ed 45, Map X912 U3 or Vic Roads Ed 8, Page 80 F6) <https://www.visitwarburton.com.au/activity/the-ada-tree-walk>
Contact: Carol Page 9857 6388 0438 4469 73 (mobile on day of foray only) ; cpage356@gmail.com **Prior registration essential.**

Sunday 26th – Juniors' Group: **Foray with Fungi Group: The Ada Tree, Yarra State Forest**
Meet 10.30 am at the Ada Tree car park. (Mel Ed 45, Map X912 U3 or Vic Roads Ed 8, Page 80 F6)

(calendar continued page 3.)



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 for excursions and \$2 per meeting.


Calendar of events continued from page 2

<https://www.visitwarburton.com.au/activity/the-ada-tree-walk> Contact: Patricia Amaya juniors@fncv.org.au

Prior registration essential.

Monday 27th FNCV Council Meeting: 7.30 pm sharp. Apologies or agenda items to Wendy Gare wendygare@fncv.org.au

Tuesday 28th – Day Group Meeting: Biosecurity – it protects our natural environment to Speaker: Dr Martin Barlass.
Could not be a more topical subject! Coffee and a chat at 10.30 am. Speaker at 11 am. Contact: Jean Broadberry 9846 1218.



FNCV AGM
Sunday 3rd May 2020 at 2 pm

You are invited to attend
The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc. Annual General Meeting

to be held at the FNCV Hall, 1 Gardenia Street, Blackburn.

Agenda: Minutes of previous AGM; Annual Report; Financial Statements;
Election of Council; Environment Fund; Other Business

Guest Speaker: Greg Martin, President of Australia New Guinea Fishes Association, Victoria
“Field Trips, Conservation and Fish Keeping - an overview of ANGFA”

Afternoon tea will be served. All welcome

Nominations for Council must reach the registered office of the Club no later than 48 hours before the AGM, i.e. Friday 1st May 2020, by 2 pm*

***See FNN p11**

From the President, continued from page 1

to its full extent, we run the risk of making poor, uninformed and ill-advised decisions about environmental rehabilitation or restoration. Ecosystems are proving to be far more complex than ever imagined and the strategies we use to restore or manage them must be evidence-based and embrace the real complexity of biodiversity or we may end up with green deserts or ecological traps; systems that may look pleasing but are impoverished and unsustainable. Worse still, we may end up with actual deserts or alien landscapes with low biodiversity. So, it is best not to continue the destruction of the remaining natural environment under the mistaken belief that we can restore it to its original state.

The biodiversity of my garden seems to have improved a little and I was fortunate enough to find a native earwig of the family Anisolabidae amongst the leaf litter. I have not seen these for many years. Numerous sightings of another insect, *Austroscolia soror*, the Blue Winged Flower Wasp, have been reported to me

over the last few weeks. One also appeared in my garden and was clearly at the end of its life. (see photo p1). The adults are nectar feeders but their eggs are laid in scarabid grubs which are eventually consumed by the developing larvae.



A native earwig in leaf litter. Family Anisolabidae
Photo: M. Campbell

Members' news, photos & observations

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

Welcome Welcome

Warmest greetings to the following new members who were welcomed at our last Council meeting.

Loredana Mangano, Michelle Tydeman, Rebecca Rawlings, Emma Songdahl, Wendy Sheppard, Oscar Polkinghorne, Dan Polkinghorne, Finbar Ryan and Marta Rocha.

Two mages from the recent Fauna Survey Camp at Hattah by Barbara Burns

Left: Mitchell's Short-tailed Snake

Right: Apostle Bird showing its blue tail feathers.



An Interesting Victorian Bivalve from Port Welshpool by Joan Hales

Recently the Marine Research Group visited the Corner Inlet area of Victoria for the first major field trip of 2020. One of the places surveyed was Port Welshpool. Overall, more than 100 species were recorded with more than 50 being molluscs.

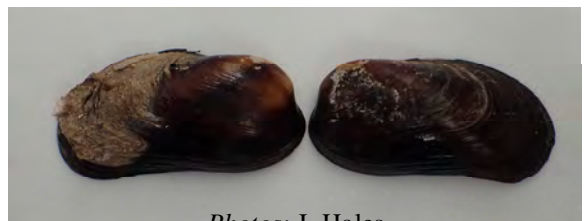
A bivalve with valves conjoined found by Joan Broadberry presented some difficulties as it was unable to be positively identified in the field. It was later found to be an old dead specimen, so therefore could not be recorded in the formal listing.

Nevertheless, the shell was a very interesting find, being an exceptionally large specimen of *Modiolatus victoriae* (Pritchard & Gatliff, 1903). Macpherson & Gabriel record it as being dredged in 6-8 fathoms in Westernport. The shell is described as being a rich, dark brown and "rather remarkable for its uniformity of height." Size is given as 1.5 inches. Lamprell & Healy note that the shell is inflated and thin with glossy periostracum, fine concentric striae and growing to 37mm. The shell Joan found is just over 40mm. At that size it possibly died of old age.

The shell is now in the Inverloch Shell Museum and will become part of the Victorian collection, thanks to Joan.

References: Macpherson, J.H., & Gabriel, C.J., 1962. *Marine Molluscs of Victoria*. Melbourne University Press. Page 286, illustration no. 328.

Lamprell, K. & Healy, J.M., 1998. *Bivalves of Australia*. Volume 2. Backhuys Publishers Leiden. Page 84, species no. 179.



Photos: J. Hales



Science Talent Search

The **Science Talent Search** (STS) is an annual, science-based competition open to the states' primary and secondary students and organised by the Science Teachers Association of Victoria. Thousands of students enter the quest every year with contributions taking many forms including Experimental Research, Games, Working Models, Inventions, Computer Programs – Games & Simulations, Science Photography & Video Productions, Creative Writing Posters and Scientific Wall Charts.

You may not be aware but the FNCV has been a long-time supporter of the STS dating back to the work of Noel Schleiger. In recent years, through the generosity of one of our members, Mr Brendan Murphy, we are able to make a donation of \$1000 per annum.

After judging, an exhibition of the entries together with presentation of cheques and medallions to the bursary winners takes place at Latrobe University in late October. I would recommend if you can visit the expo, as I was absolutely blown away when I dropped in by the enthusiasm of the students, the quality of their projects and the sheer number of entries. Many of the young people sit by their project and will explain it to you and the way they envisage it will help the planet.

Each year, after the prizes have been awarded, some of the winners send thank you letters to the Club. This year one was received from Anna Denton, age 13, who won an FNCV bursary for her Global Warming Board Game project. With the letter came a beautiful sketch of Marie Curie. I liked the drawing so much that I arranged for Wendy Clark to frame it and it is now hanging in the conference room. Check it out. The caption reads:

*"Drawing of Marie Curie, by Anna Denton, age 13.
Given to the Club as a thank you for the FNCV's
sponsorship of the 2019 Science Talent Search."*

Barbara Burns



Library News

Recent additions to the Library

The following monographs have been accessioned recently, and may now be borrowed.

Bonyhady, Tim (2020) *The enchantment of the Long-haired Rat: a rodent history of Australia* [508.948 BON]

Cook, Patricia L; Bock, Philip E; Gordon, Dennis P; Weaver, Haylee J (2018) *Australian bryozoa, Vol. 2: taxonomy of Australian families*. [594.7 AUS]

Cook, Patricia L; Bock, Philip E; Gordon, Dennis P; Weaver, Haylee J (2018) *Australian bryozoa, Vol. 1: biology, ecology and natural history*. [594.7 AUS]

Lawrence, John F and Slipinski, Adam (2017) *Australian beetles, Vol. 1: morphology, classification and keys*. [595.76 LAW]

Lord, Earnest E (1967) *Shrubs and trees for Australian gardens*. [635.9 LOR]

Melville, Jane; Steve K Wilson (2019) *Dragon lizards of Australia: evolution, ecology and a comprehensive field guide*. [597.95 DRA]

Moro, Dorion; Ball, Derek; Bryant, Sally (2018) *Australian island arks* [333 AUS]

O'Gorman, Emily (2012) *Flood country: an environmental history of the Murray-Darling Basin* [333.73 O'GO]

Slipinski, Adam and Lawrence, John F (2017) *Australian beetles, Vol. 2: Archostemata, Myxophaga, A dephaga, Polyphaga (part)*. [595.76 SLI]

Extract from a recent periodical

Wildlife Research 47(2) has an article reviewing 18 years of interception of alien invertebrates coming into Australia.

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

Library collections now on the website

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

Dr Gary Presland, Honorary Librarian

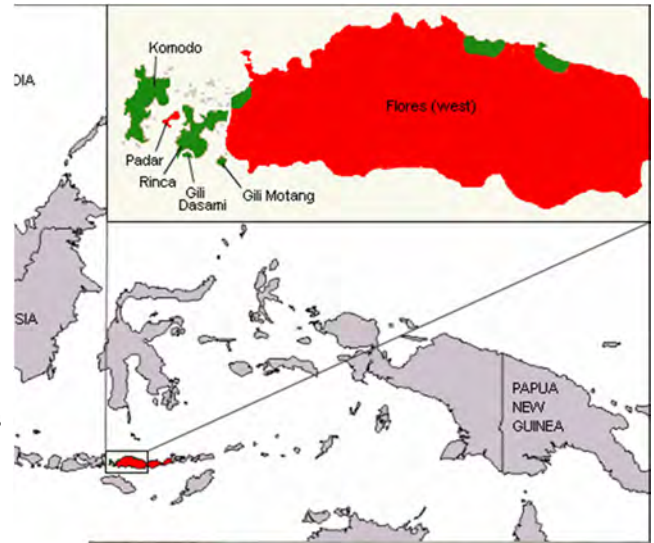


Day Group *Studying Komodo Dragons in Indonesia*

Many thanks to Alison Fysh who spoke to the February Day Group about a field trip she took in 1997 with EarthWatch Institute. At the time Alison was working for BHP. With a group of naturalists, Alison travelled to Indonesia to study Komodo Dragons.

The Komodo Dragon *Varanus Komodoensis*, is a member of the monitor lizard family and is the largest living species of lizard on earth. An adult male averages 2.6m in length and a female 2.3m. They are related to the goannas of Australia. Komodo Dragons are found in the Komodo National Park which was established in 1980. The park includes the three larger islands of Komodo, Padar and Rinca and 26 smaller ones. Dragons also live on the island of Flores. The goal of the project was to establish how many Komodo Dragons the island of Padar could support, with the possible aim of reintroducing the lizards having disappeared from there in 1975. Data was also recorded to ensure any new population would be genetically diverse.

Komodo Dragons can run for short bursts and are good swimmers. They build and sleep in burrows and their average life span is 30 years. The females lay clutches of 20-30 eggs at a time. Komodo Dragons are carnivores and only need to eat one large meal per month. They have serrated, curved teeth which they use to attack prey and are renowned for their keen sense of smell. Using their forked tongue they can detect prey kilometres away. The diet of large Komodo Dragons mainly consists of Timor Deer but they also take water buffalo and goats. They eat a considerable amount of carrion and can attack each other. Very young dragons climb trees for protection, living



off insects and birds.

Komodo Dragons prefer a hot, dry climate and the area of Indonesia they inhabit has the least rainfall. The vegetation of the islands ranges from savannah, dry tropical woodland to deciduous tropical forest. Even in the national park they must co-exist with permanent inhabitants including villagers and rice paddy farmers.

According to data from Komodo National Park between 1974 and 2012 there were 24 reported attacks on humans, five of them fatal. The Komodo's bite injects nasty bacteria and venom that prevents blood clotting and lowers blood pressure.

A key part of the EarthWatch study was trapping Komodo Dragons so they could be measured, weighed, sexed, a blood sample taken and a radio transmitter fitted. Numerous heavy traps made of bamboo and mesh were carried into the bush and baited with meat. In total 13 animals were caught during this expedition. Once transmitters were fitted, the animals were radio-tracked four times a day to establish their home range. To minimize the danger of surprising the reptiles, the tracking was always carried out in small groups.

Through her photos, Alison gave us a vivid picture of the day-to-day life of the EarthWatch group as they lived and worked with Indonesians in very remote locations.

The Day Group audience followed up Alison's talk with many questions. In particular there was discussion of the effects of tourism on the Dragons with new commercial developments proposed for Komodo Island. In conclusion there appears to be a population of about 3,000 to 5,000 Komodo dragons on the islands of Komodo, Gili Motang, Rinca and Flores. However, human encroachment, poaching and natural disasters mean the species is presently classified as endangered.

Joan Broadberry

All photos: A. Fysh



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Lake Eyre Basin and Flinders Ranges Expedition

11 Day Camping Tour – Departs Adelaide 16th May 2020

This tour covers some of South Australia's most historic outback locations in the Lake Eyre Basin and the spectacular Flinders Ranges. Both regions offer vastly different examples of our great country and offer an opportunity for a wide range of wildlife sightings.

Kimberley Discovery

15 Day *EASY* Camping Tour – Departs Broome 20th June 2020

Enjoy a wonderful outback experience as we discover the Kimberley's wildlife, spectacular outback scenery, and many wonderfully refreshing waterholes as we explore Purnululu (Bungle Bungles) N.P, the many gorges of the Gibb River Rd, Home Valley Station and Mornington Stations. With our Easy Camping tours our crew does all the hard work for you setting up and taking down camp, you just have to enjoy yourself!

Kimberley Encounters

12 Day Camping Tour – Departs Kununurra 18th July 2020

A different twist on the Kimberley, we include the best of the Gibb River Road but add a visit to the Mitchell Plateau. On the plateau experience the spectacular Mitchell and Mertons Falls plus great examples ancient rock art along with the region's wonderful flora and fauna.

Karlamilyi (Rudall River) Expedition

15 Day Camping Tour – Departs Broome 8th August 2020

Join us as we head to the very remote, harsh, yet beautiful Rudall River National Park. Experience the wildlife that the very remote, harsh yet beautiful Rudall River National Park has to offer. Situated approximately 400 Km east of Newman in Western Australia's Great Sandy Desert this is truly one of the most remote wilderness areas in the world.

Western Explorer

12 Day *EASY* Camping Tour - Departs Broome 27th August 2020

Highlights -Karijini N.P, Mt Augustus & Kennedy Ranges. This trip is designed to coincide with the Pilbara wildflower season and provides the opportunity to explore the wonderful Karijini, Mt Augustus and Kennedy Range National Parks.

Lord Howe Island

8 Day accommodated Tour – Starts 17th October 2020

Experience one of the world's most fascinating natural history destinations. The island's many and varied walks plus the Balls Pyramid boat trip just add to the enjoyment.

Christmas & Cocos Islands

11 Day Accommodated Tour – Departs Perth 8th December 2020

Two totally different islands, both are naturalist's wonderlands. Christmas island an extinct limestone, capped volcano, rugged shoreline and rain-forested terraces and the central plateau, Cocos islands are palm fringed, sandy beaches, more like we think a tropical island paradise should be. The bird, plant and marine life on both islands are plentiful with a number of endemic species of plant and birdlife. We have set the timing of the trip to coincide with Red Crab migration, a truly amazing sight.

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

Ph: 1800 676 016 or 08 9330 6066 - Web: www.coateswildlifetours.com.au - Email: coates@iinet.net.au



Terrestrial Invertebrates Group Reports

Wirrawilla Rainforest Walk, Toolangi 16th February 2020

Flethamia mediolineata “crawling” around the tree ferns. Quite unrelated to earthworms, these colourful creatures hunt small invertebrates (mostly at night).

On Australian Mulberry *Hedycarya angustifolia* we saw some attractive caterpillars that we haven’t been able to identify yet. We know the host plant and they seem distinctive enough with yellow ends and various dark blotches.



Caterpillar Photo: Linda Rogan



Flethamia mediolineata
Photo: R. Richter

In the afternoon, on some plants we saw a small black insect, only around 5mm long. It had unusually large “shoulders” and then we started seeing more of them. Unable to determine if they were true bugs at the time, they were later identified on iNaturalist as *Oncophysa vesiculata*.



Oncophysa vesiculata
Photo: R. Richter

With some overnight rain I was hoping to see a burrowing crayfish (*Engaeus* sp) out early in the morning but this wasn’t to be. However late in the day, when only two of us were left, I was surprised that one was wandering about in the open on the walking track. All members of the genus have a limited range but this is one of the most spectacularly coloured species.

At the end of the day the two tiger snakes were still out sunning themselves in the car park, missed by the many other people who visited the site on the day.

More photos of observations:



Engaeus sp. Photo: R. Richter

<https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/projects/fncv-2020-wirrawilla-rainforest-walk-toolangi>

Reiner Richter



Tiger snakes Photo: R Richter



**Terrestrial Invertebrates Group
Birdsland, Belgrave Heights
2nd February 2020**

Flies are generally poorly regarded and it is true some annoyingly fly in your face or bite your ankles but there are many that leave us alone and happily do their thing without us. I thought I'd show some of the true flies (in the insect order Diptera) that we saw on this trip.

One of these was the Flower Feeding March Fly *Scaptia auriflua*, of which we saw quite a few on the day. Unlike many others even within the same genus, these do not



Scaptia auriflua Photo: R. Richter

bite (suck blood) and feed only on nectar and pollen. Not all insects suffixed with "fly" are actually flies, such as dragonflies or hangingflies, but craneflies are, of which we photographed *Gynoplistia bella*. Most of these are common enough but *Anthomyia vicarians* is not recorded very often.

For photos of what we recorded visit the following project page:

<https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/projects/64996>



Gynoplistia bella Photo: R. Richter



Anthomyia vicarians Photo: R. Richter
Photo: R. Richter

Reiner Richter



Colepia rufiventris Photo: John Eichler



Rutilia inusta Photo: R. Richter

Extracts from SIG reports given at the last FNCV Council Meeting

Fauna Survey Group: Meeting, Tuesday 4th February

The speaker for the meeting was Dr Kevin Rowe, curator of mammals at Museums Victoria, on 'Biogeography of murine rodents from adaptive radiations to threatened species'. This talk opened with an overview of rodents in our region, Australia, Indonesia, New Guinea and Philippines, covering relationships in detail and illustrating many of the diverse range of species. One of these was from Sulawesi, a recently described Worm-eating Rat, which has no molars and a very pointy nose.

The first part of Kevin's talk was on using DNA from recently collected and museum specimens, to determine relationships of species. There have been nine transitions of rodents from New Guinea into Australia, of which *Pseudomys* was the first and biggest. Other genera include *Notomys* (Hopping Mice), and *Mastacomys* (Broad-toothed Rat). The Broad-toothed Rat, New Holland Mouse (*P. novaehollandiae*) and Smoky Mouse (*P. fumeus*) have all undergone reduction in their range in Victoria in recent years. Thirty-eight people attended including 6 visitors.

Surveys: Mornington Peninsula NP, 24-27th January

This survey was to ascertain the unverified records of Broad-toothed Rat and Bush Rat from remote camera pictures and also to confirm the presence of the White-footed Dunnart. The dunnart was confirmed during our trapping survey, and we have good photos of the White-footed Dunnart and Long-nosed Bandicoot. Thanks to Parks Victoria for comfortable accommodation at Point Nepean.

Ray Gibson

Marine Research Group: Meeting 10th February

At the MRG meeting on Monday 10th February the speaker for the evening was Kristina Cook. Her presentation was regarding the 2019 World Whale Conference in Hervey Bay, hosted by the World Cetacean Alliance and Fraser Coast Tourism & Events. The aim of the event was to promote responsible whale and dolphin tourism through art, culture and scientific research. The meeting was well attended.

Microscopy Group: Meeting Wednesday 19th February

The format of the meeting was as our now established, fully practical sessions with many microscopes for peoples' use along with hundreds of items to view including live microfauna. During our sessions, Max Campbell's "Micro Videos" are continuously playing and are a fabulous backdrop to our meetings.

Following two phone enquires during the week, three visitors attended along with five keen members and several people brought specimens they had recently collected. The three young visitors, (perhaps in their early 30's) who are friends, were enthralled by all they saw and were extremely enthusiastic. They all vowed to become members. A very enjoyable evening was had by all that attended.

Philippa Burgess

Botany Group: Meeting 20th February

The Group was treated to a virtual trip to all the Australian States as Geoff Lay showed selections of his camera images of plants and environments, collected over 50 years. Notably, all the plants were identified, but the organising principle was the localities, or commonalities from different localities - wet or dry, high or low. Fifteen attended.

Ken Griffiths

Terrestrial Invertebrates Group:

No meeting in February. Several successful excursions were held and have been reported in recent issues of FNN.

Juniors' Group

On Sunday 23rd February the Juniors went on an excursion to Point Cook Marine Sanctuary.

"The weather was perfect for the beach. It was very sunny and warm and we thought that we could snorkel to see the stingrays. After a quick reminder that everyone should stay within their parent's reach, which is normally reserved for five year olds, we were allowed to go to the beach. If you thought that approximately 30 degrees Celsius was a good temperature to swim in, YOU WERE WRONG. The water was freezing and the wind kindly blew in your direction just to make you shiver. However, we managed to see many stingrays and stingarees/fiddler rays without snorkelling or swimming in the water. There were so many rays that it was difficult to walk without eventually stepping on one by accident. Fortunately, the stingrays decided not to teach us their martial arts with their barbed stinger stuck into our legs (which could have been dangerous to us). Andrew (the excursion leader) explained all the different species living in the marine sanctuary and even managed to snorkel a bit (it's not fair. He had a wetsuit). We managed to film the rays with a Gopro to see how they swim (which is very fast). Finally, we looked at the moon snail eggs under the microscope." (Taken from the Juniors' Newsletter)



Fiddler Ray

Chaquen Beliakov



NOMINATION FORM FOR FNCV COUNCIL 2020/21

**The FNCV AGM will be held on Sunday 3rd May, 2 pm
at the FNCV hall, 1 Gardenia Street, Blackburn**

Name of Member Nominated.....

Position Nominated *

Signature of Member Nominated

TWO MEMBERS SUPPORTING NOMINATION

Name Signature..... Date.....

Name Signature Date.....

*Elected members of the FNCV Council are: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, a Councillor representing each Special Interest Group (SIG) and up to six other Councillors. All must be FNCV members.

**All nominations, including SIG Councillors, must reach the FNCV office
no later than 48 hours before the AGM, i.e. Friday 1st May at 2 pm.**

**PO Box 13, Blackburn, VIC 3130
Phone 9877 9860
E-mail: admin@fncv.org.au**



FNCV AGM Proxy Voting Form

I, _____

Current member of The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.

appoint (full name) _____

of (address) _____

or in their absence, the AGM Chair, to be my proxy at the 2020 Annual General Meeting to be convened on Sunday 3rd May 2020 at 1 Gardenia Street, Blackburn and authorise them to vote on my behalf.

This form must be given to the FNCV Secretary before the start of the AGM.

Signed: _____

Date: ____ May 2020

**There is likely to be some very thin future issues of Field Nats News in the months ahead
UNLESS..... WE GET YOUR HELP**

As the FNCV is cancelling its program until further notice because of the COVID-19 virus, there will be no calendar of events or reports of meetings, camps and excursions which normally fill the pages of Field Nats News.

But there is a way forward that would mean we can have a brilliant newsletter to enjoy, lift our spirits and learn from. Readers, as field naturalists, I know your phones are full of fascinating images and your heads are packed with observations from your garden, travels, reading or wherever. Please share them with us through the pages of FNN. We are all likely to have more free time in the next few months, so absolutely no excuses will be allowed.



In the digital age it is more than simple to email a photo to fnnews@fncv.org.au accompanied by a caption, paragraph or perhaps a longer piece of writing. Photos are of course not mandatory and there will be no deadline, just send it in, I will do the rest.

Looking forward to an overflowing inbox, Joan Broadberry, Editor.



CPR training

The two hour workshop was held on the 15th February and was a great success with 21 participants.

Council has decided to purchase a defibrillator for the FNCV hall so this training will be invaluable. If there is a demand we could arrange another class in the future..

Photo: Wendy Gare

Many thanks to those who helped collate and label FNN 305

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