



Understanding
Our Natural World
Est. 1880

Field Nats News No 349



Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.

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March 2024

From the President

The year is charging ahead and we have already had some excellent presentations and excursions. Many more have been scheduled so keep perusing the Calendar of Events and update your diaries. The SEANA gathering (April 19-22) is getting close and the Annual General meeting will soon follow on 5th May. None of our activities happen spontaneously and require hard work and planning, so your contribution, particularly to SEANA, would be most welcome. You might consider joining the team of dedicated people who keep the Club functioning by nominating for FNCV Council. If you are undertaking a small natural history project or are considering doing so, check p6 for the FNCV Environmental Fund's call for grant applications. You may qualify for a grant ranging from \$200 - \$1250. You will never know if you don't have a go.

As ever, I continue to spend a lot of time checking out sites for insects and other invertebrates in addition to microscopical examination of pond-water and moss. Of late, my personal experience suggests that there are fewer insects about overall; notably in the suburbs where sites are cleared for multiple occupancy. In particular I have noticed very few aphids on the vegetation in my garden this year. Normally there are great congregations of green, yellow and black aphids on grasses, *Senecio* species, vegetables, Passion Fruit vines and *Hoya spp* (Photo 1) at this time of year.

There are fewer hover flies, lacewings and coccinellids about this year; perhaps as a consequence of reduced availability of prey. Aphids are a significant food resource for many arthropods including

small spiders, small mantids, hover flies, coccinellid beetles (ladybirds), long-legged flies and lacewings, photos 2-11.

Continued p4

1.



Aphids on a *Hoya* stem early 2023. Stems over the entire plant were covered in aphids.

2.



Above: Adult Hover Fly at rest.

Right: A recently hatched Hover Fly larva tackling a much larger aphid on *Senecio vulgaris*.

3.



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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.

MARCH 2024

Monday 4th – Fungi Group Meeting: *Welcome meeting.* Get together with all fungi enthusiasts old and new. Our impacts on fungi and how we hope to go moving forward. Speakers: Melvin Xu and Tobi May. In person and via Zoom. Please email for Zoom link. Contact: Melvin Xu. fungifncv@gmail.com 0410 522 533

Tuesday 5th - Fauna Survey Group Meeting: *To be advised.* For further details please contact David De Angelis 0409 519 829 d.deangelis@latrobe.edu.au

Friday 8th to Tuesday 12th - Fauna Survey Group Survey: *Labour Day weekend camp - Bael Bael Grassland Nature Conservation Reserve.* Register with Andrej Hohmann 0410 934 779 andrej_hohmann@yahoo.com.au

Monday 11th - Marine Research Group: No Meeting: *Labour Day holiday*

Friday 15th – Monday 18th - Marine Research Group Field Work: *Waratah Bay, Walkerville area.* Meet on Friday at 8.20 am. Locations to be decided while on site. Register for more details. Contact: Leon Altoff 0428 669 773; 9530 4180 AH

Sunday 17th - Terrestrial Invertebrates Group Excursion: *Camberville.* Registration essential. Please contact Wendy Clark wendy.empathy@optusnet.com.au

Wednesday 20th - Terrestrial Invertebrates Group Meeting: *Fresh water invertebrates.* Speaker: To be confirmed. Contact: Wendy Clark wendy.empathy@optusnet.com.au

Thursday 21st – Botany Group Meeting: *Wetlands Plant Identification.* Speaker: Dr. Graeme Lorimer, scientist and author. Contact Ken Griffiths botany@fncv.org.au

Monday 25th—FNCV Council meeting. Apologies and agenda items to Wendy Gare admin@fncv.org.au

Tuesday 26th – Day Group 10.30 am Meeting: *Members' morning.* Please bring along up to six images of something from the natural history world that has interested, surprised or intrigued you. Discuss and share your images with fellow naturalists. Use a memory stick. Max will assist. Contact: Joan Broadberry joan.broadberry@gmail.com

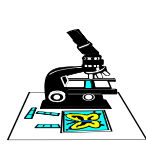
Wednesday 27th – Geology Group Meeting: *Early Earth: to 2.5 GYA.* Speaker: Professor Ray Cas, Monash University. Contact: Ken Griffiths geology@fncv.org.au

Friday 29th – Juniors Group No Meeting: *Good Friday*

Friday 29th to Monday 1st April – Juniors Group Excursion: *Easter Camp.* Early bookings in advance essential. Details advised to Juniors by email. Contact: Adam Hosken adamhosken@gmail.com

Friday 29th to Monday 1st April - Fauna Survey Group Survey: *Easter camp – Mali Dunes.* Prior bookings essential. Contact: Andrej Hohmann 0410 934 779 andrej_hohmann@yahoo.com.au

Attendees are requested to register for excursions so that they can be contacted if there is a change in arrangements. Registering also means that the leader is better able to plan activities.



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: joan.broadberry@gmail.com by the first Monday in the month.

Welcome
Welcome

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

Dr Sebastian Buckingham, Michael Evans, Jeremy Werner, Emma Croker, Jasmine Salter, Jennifer Boyd, Dr Elodie Camprasse, Kat Hunter, Kate Jost, Dr Matthew Dell, Ella Darling, Peter Cleaver, Jo Richards, Renee Douma and Maxwell Sonnemann

Vale Frank Holmes

Frank Holmes, a long-time member of the FNCV, died in October 2023, aged 97. A gifted amateur palaeontologist, he and his wife Enid worked closely with Museum Victoria as volunteers. In fact, he clocked up 10,000 hours of volunteer service, and was the longest serving volunteer in Palaeontology. This was recognised when he was made an Honorary Associate in 2009, the Museum noting his wide knowledge and attention to detail. This wide knowledge led to him to become a registered valuer of fossil specimens.



Frank's main area of expertise was fossil echinoids. He collaborated with his friends Chris ah Yee and Janet Krause, in discovering, describing and naming at least three new species. He was also a leading light behind the Fossil Collectors' Association of Australasia, founded in 1979, which published an invaluable magazine "The Fossil Collector" when there was nothing else like it available to enthusiasts.

As regards the FNCV, Frank gave several talks to the Geology Group during the early 2000s and was joint leader with John Webb on a field trip to Buchan in December 2003. He was a regular attendee at meetings and always keen to share his love of palaeontology with the group.

Frank emigrated from England in 1952. By profession he was an architect, designing hospitals and ambulance stations in Victoria. He and Enid raised three children.

He will be missed but his legacy lives on: a Google search under his name will reveal the many papers he wrote or contributed to.

Thanks to Rob Hamson for compiling this tribute

bookshop@fncv.org.au

for any orders or bookshop queries.

If you don't have access to email, the FNCV office will pass on your message. Kathy will then be in contact with you.

**Thank you to those who helped
produce FNN 349**

Joan Broadberry, Wendy Gare, Sally
Bewsher and Sheina Nicholls.

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

From the President *Continued from p1.*

The Worm Turns

The aphids would appear to be defenceless against such an onslaught of aggressive predators but there are surprising exemptions. Some woolly aphids live in galls and have soldier castes in their communities that very aggressively attack predators and herbivores when their nests are threatened.

They were first studied in 1977 by Shigeyuki Aoki. Their formidable reputation has earned them the title of “Samurai Aphids”. They have modified front legs for grabbing, a pair of sharp horns and very aggressive behaviour. Species of *Pseudregma* and *Ceratoglyphina* (Asia) have been known to draw blood from squirrels and humans that interfere with their galls. They swarm like ants, bees and wasps when upset. The aphids are most effective against the small instars of their predators but have little defence against well-developed stages. These aphids are mainly Asian although there are African species, and *Pseudoregma sundanica* (1.5 – 2 mm) has reportedly reached tropical Australia so we may end up with yet another micro biohazard for keen naturalists to embrace.

Further Reading.

Aochi, S. (1977) *Colophina clematis* (Homoptera, Pemphigidae), an aphid species with ‘soldiers’.

Kontya 45:276-282.

National Geographic, September 1989. P407. Samurai Aphids : Survival Under Siege

Dixon, A.F.G (1985) Aphid Ecology. Blackie, UK.

*All photos M Campbell
Maxwell Campbell*



A mature Hover Fly larva eating an aphid on a Passion Fruit vine.



Coccinella transversalis attacking aphids.



An early instar of *Coccinella transversalis* eating a much larger aphid.



A Brown Lacewing larva sucking the juices from an aphid.



A Green Lacewing



A Green Lacewing larva searching for prey which includes aphids and juvenile Passion Vine Hoppers. They also consume other prey that they might encounter and camouflage their bodies with the desiccated remains.

Continued p5

Congratulations to Leon Costermans OAM

Leon received an OAM in the recent Australia Day honours awards for services to conservation and the environment. Leon is a long-standing member of FNCV, who has contributed to the Club in a number of ways, over many years. He has made presentations to SIG meetings, written articles and book reviews for *The Victorian Naturalist* and readily acted as a referee of manuscript submissions.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER – Working with children check

- Fauna Survey Group would like to remind every SIG leader to talk to your group about the need for a Working With Children Check for activities on the Parks Estate. And then to keep that WWCC up to date in the system.
- ParkConnect does not appear to carry over WWCC details when one gets a new one. The cards teachers carry is also acceptable to Parks but these checks from the education department are only valid for one year and thus you will need to upload them to ParkConnect every year.
- The FSG calendar is looking very full with a survey with Parks Vic once a month until June, plus Mali Dunes over Easter. All surveys for the coming months are open for registration for interested members.

Andrej Hohmann 0410 934 779 andrej_hohmann@yahoo.com.au

Extracts from SIG reports given at the last FNCV Council Meeting

Terrestrial Invertebrates Group:

The TIG meeting held on 23rd November 2023 was well attended with many observations reported and some viewed with images that were brought along. Max Campbell gave a wonderful talk on *Small Invertebrate Predators*. His images and movie footage were not only of excellent quality and visually fascinating, but quite an eye-opener to that tiny world of invertebrates. Thank you Max.

The December Zoom meeting was cancelled due to technical issues.

The December excursion to Starlings Gap was cancelled due to the leader/organiser being unable to attend as well as the back-up leader also being unavailable.

The January excursion to Upper Yarra Reservoir was a great success and very well attended. Despite impending heavy rain, we saw a large array of insects and other invertebrates. A full report is to be found on page 9.

The January Meeting was also well attended with many coming to see and discuss the results of the Upper Yarra Reservoir trip. There were reports of interest, as well as images of invertebrates seen at Upper Yarra Reservoir. Of particular interest was a series of photos of the Two-tailed Spider, *Tamopsis*, including the preludes of a pair to mating.

Wendy Clark

From the President
Continued
from p4



10
A small Long-legged Fly (Dolichopodidae) eating a small leaf hopper; they take aphids as well.



11.
A male lynx spider, *Oxyopes elegans*, with its aphid prey.



FNCV Environment Fund: Call for Grant Applications, *Due Date: Monday 8th April 2024.*

The FNCV Environment Fund has the following purposes:

- To support and finance environmental research, in particular research into the biodiversity of Victoria.
- To support and finance dissemination of information on the natural environment by any legitimate means, including public lectures, seminars, field trips, courses and publications.
- To support and finance practical projects aimed at preserving and enhancing the biodiversity of Victoria.

The FNCV Environment Fund is administered by a committee consisting of John Harris (Chair), Barbara Burns, (Secretary and Treasurer), Ian Moodie, Cathy Willis, Bruce McGregor, Ian Temby, Philippa Burgess.

**The committee calls for applications for the April round of funding for 2024.
Requests for projects between \$200 and \$1,250 will be considered.**

Applications can be from organisations or individuals, but in the latter case must be supported by an organisation. Suitable organisations are established natural history or environmental organisations (Field Naturalist Clubs, Landcare Groups etc.), educational institutions or government departments. Multiple applications from one research group are not encouraged.

**Applications for funding close Monday 8th April 2024 at 3 pm.
Late applications will not be accepted.**

All applications will be acknowledged and results of applications communicated by
Wednesday 17th April 2024

Grant money is required to be spent within 12 months of notification of receiving a grant with a short report on the project supplied to the FNCV within 12 months of the same date. The report can be published by FNCV and successful applicants are encouraged to communicate the results of their project to the Club via articles, talks or field trips.

Additional information about the Fund is available at www.fncv.org.au/environment-fund/

Please include the following information in the application:

- Project title.
- Project description (max 250 words).
- How the project meets the aims of the Fund.
- Budget (include GST on all relevant items). Also indicate other sources of funding.
- Indicate if the application is from an individual or organisation and give the name of the individual or organisation.
- Applicant name and contact details, including mailing address/phone/email.
- Signature of applicant.
- Endorsement of organisation (signature of responsible person such as President, Secretary, Manager, Head of Department, include name and position held).

Applications should be sent to:

**Secretary FNCV Environment Fund,
Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.,
1 Gardenia Street, Blackburn Vic 3130.**

or emailed to admin@fncv.org.au

Your support is much appreciated.

**Donations to the FNCV Environment Fund
are tax deductible.**

Donation forms can be down-loaded from the
website www.fncv.org.au/donate-to-the-club/
or are available on request from the FNCV
Office: ph 9877 9860 or admin@fncv.org.au

Insect Mimicry *Trilaccus mimeticus* (Braconid mimicking plant bug)

On a FNCV Terrestrial Invertebrates Group outing at Cardinia Reservoir Park on 11 December 2021, I found a black, red, and white plant bug which I incorrectly identified as the wasp *Callibracon* sp. The reason for the mistaken identity was that this plant bug is superficially identical to a *Callibracon* wasp, possibly *C. capitator* seen at our Black Range property near Bega in NSW earlier that year.

Photographs of this plant bug were placed on iNaturalist under an initial identification as *Callibracon capitator*. Response to this observation was immediate, revealing that it is a plant bug, not a wasp (as indicated by its haustellum). In the end it was identified as *Trilaccus mimeticus*. So good was the mimicry of this plant bug in resembling *Callibracon*, I was convinced it was the latter until corrected by people with expertise on iNat.

This is a very good example of Batesian mimicry, a form of mimicry where a harmless species has evolved to imitate the warning signals of a species that is harmful to a predator if eaten or molested. It is named after the English naturalist Henry Walter Bates, who worked on butterflies in the rainforests of Brazil. The concept of Batesian mimicry was first revealed by studies of butterflies but was later found in many other insects. Bees and wasps are among the most mimicked insects. Mimics of these stinging insects occur in several Orders of insects. In this case it is a hemipteran closely resembling a Braconid wasp.

Despite having a closely matching body form and black, red, and white markings the plant bug can be readily distinguished from the Braconid Wasp it imitates by having a haustellum (proboscis adapted to suck juices of plants) that can be seen if looked at closely. The Braconid Wasp does not have this extended mouth part, but the female wasp can be more easily identified than the male as she has an extended ovipositor, an organ for laying eggs into the larvae of prey species.

Trilaccus mimeticus is not the only insect species that mimicks Braconid Wasps. There are other species of *Trilaccus* and another related genus *Rayieria*, in particular *R. basifer*, also a good mimic, which in varying degrees closely matches these wasps in body form and range of colours.

The genus *Callibracon* belong to Braconidae, a large family of parasitoid wasps with an estimated 50,000 to 150,000 species worldwide. The species are grouped into forty-five subfamilies and about 1,000 genera, of which *Callibracon* is one. Certain members of this genus including *C. capitator* are known to be parasitoids of wood boring Cerambycid (longicorn beetles) and Elaterid (click beetle, lycid beetles and soldier beetles).



Trilaccus mimeticus at Cardinia Reservoir Park



Braconid mimicking plant bug *Trilaccus mimeticus*. The haustellum, a proboscis mouth part adapted to suck juices of plants is indicated by the yellow arrow.



Callibracon sp wasp looking for beetle larvae on a tree trunk at Black Range, NSW. Judging by the very long ovipositor this individual must be another species of *Callibracon*, other than *C. capitator*



Callibracon wasp, possibly *C. capitator* at Black Range 5 kilometres south of Bega, NSW

Andrew Mc Cutcheon

Some observations of flora and fauna regeneration in Croajingalong National Park

I thought I'd share some photos with FNN readers from my recent camping trip to Shipwreck Creek (Croajingalong National Park) near Mal-lacoota. It's a lovely secluded little campground in the National Park and I always discover something new every time we go there.

The Croajingalong National Park was home, (and a last refuge) to many threatened flora and fauna species before the 2019/2020 bushfires that burnt nearly all of the park.

Since the fires, we have been camping down there twice and it's very encouraging to see a lot of species returning/surviving, including some of the threatened species such as Southern Emu Wren, a couple of orchids in particular, as well as mammals and other flora and fauna.

The flora in general is slowly coming back. The eucalyptus species that survived in the first year after the fires regenerated through epicormic growth. Plant species that dominated earlier on included *Kennedia*, and *Solanum laciniatum*. Fauna and invertebrates that dominated after the fires included Bush Rats, goannas and Leaf Beetles.

It is fascinating to watch the progression of plant species returning and the associated (or dependent) fauna species returning with these plants. More species are returning every year.

I have attached a few photos of this year's trip four years after the fires. Hope you enjoy them.

Geoff Boyes



Post fire scene



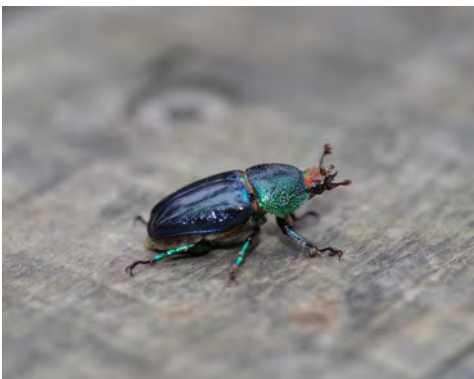
Cryptostylis subulata Large Tongue Orchid



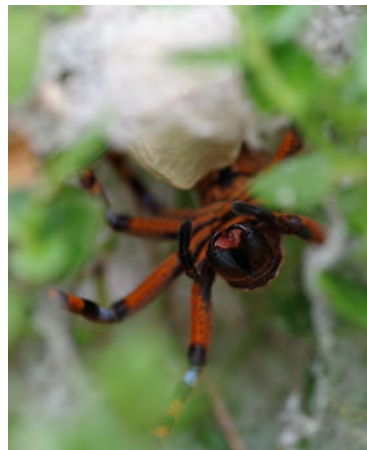
Cryptostylis erecta Bonnet Orchid



Long-nosed Bandicoot



Lamprima aurata
Female Golden Stag Beetle



Neosparassus patellatus
Tasmanian Football Spider



Photo left: Thelephora sp.

Of particular interest to me is the tiny fungi that I discovered on the walking track to Seal Creek. I'd never seen this fungi before and we have been going down there for around 20 years! So quite a discovery.

I thought at first it was a coral fungi, but it was identified as *Thelephora sp.* which is part of the Basidiomycete fungi group.



Terrestrial Invertebrates Group 7th January 2024

Upper Yarra Reservoir— *Leader: Wendy Clark*

TIG started off the year with a well-attended trip to Upper Yarra Dam where we were hoping to see plenty of insects, particularly beetles. Despite the prediction of heavy rain, TIG was very lucky. The morning had only a few drops of rain and, in the afternoon, we were able to continue surveying in light rain till about 2 pm. Two die-hards stayed longer.

The bright but overcast light proved beneficial for taking photos. In addition, many of the insects were hiding and stayed still or moved only slowly. Some had water droplets on them. We saw a large variety of insects and other invertebrates with everyone thoroughly immersed in trying to find as many new species as possible.

The group started off observing what was on the grass and other foliage stems surrounding the swamp and then waded in to find the many insects on the flowering tea tree. We were not disappointed. What first caught my eye were the huge, beautiful flies. One was jet black, one multicoloured in greens and yellows and one was shaggy. There were many other flies of different shapes and sizes. Beetles abounded. We found dragonflies, damselflies, paper wasps, some spiders and much more. Below are a few examples.

After lunch we went to the Waterwheel and spent a long time searching around a huge, smooth-barked eucalypt. An exciting find was a Peacock Spider *Maratus pavonis*. The spider is tiny, only 2-3 mm in size. However the bright red, blue and gold colouring on its back drew my attention especially as it was moving. It came out of the leaf litter at the base of the tree, walked across the trunk and then headed back down into the litter.

A surprise was seeing an Alpine Copperhead Snake. He was sunning himself on the concrete cover of a Telstra pit, into which he promptly retreated when we got too close. Others saw two copperheads at the same spot.



Wendy Clark

Editor: Check out the link to the local Creeklands Park News. It is an excellent publication with many contributions from Wendy. <https://blackburncreeklands.wordpress.com/2024/02/01/park-news-january-2024/>



Bristle Fly *Rutillia* sp.
(Family Tachinidae)



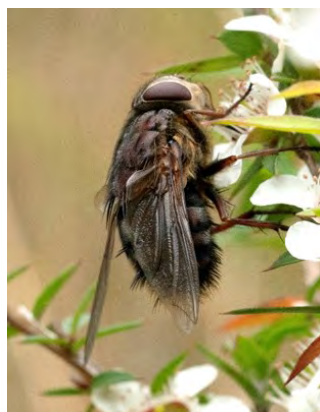
Eastern Pygmy Fly *Nannophya dalei*



Peacock Spider *Maratus pavonis*



Punctate Flower Chafer
Neorrhina punctatum



Bristle Fly *Rutillia* sp.



Bristle Fly *Rutillia* sp.
(Family Tachinidae)



Amorbus sp.



South East Australian Naturalists Association

Second Circular



*Understanding
Our Natural World*
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The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria invites you to register for the SEANA autumn get-together based on Phillip Island from Friday 19th to Monday 22nd April 2024. You should have already received (27th November 2023 or through your club) a link to the First Circular, **here**:

<http://www.fncv.org.au/wp-content/uploads/publications/seana-1.pdf>

A few reminders:

- Participants are asked to arrange their own accommodation for the three nights. As the base for the get-together will be The Phillip Island Senior Citizens Club, 6 Lions Court, Cowes, it makes sense to arrange accommodation in the Cowes area.

Help with bookings can be obtained from the Phillip Island Visitors Information Centre 1300 366 422; <https://www.visitbasscoast.com.au/> open 7 days a week, 10 - 4 pm, 895 Philip Island Road, Newhaven. Some accommodation options were included in the first circular. Early booking is strongly recommended as Phillip Island is very popular especially at weekends.

A welcome BBQ is being offered on Friday 19th April at the Senior Citizens Club, and a Gala Dinner on Saturday 20th April at the Phillip Island RSL, ANZAC room, 225 Thompson Avenue, Cowes. Booking and payment for these is required on the registration form, **see link below**.

Program

Phillip Island is located on Western Port Bay and remains a unique place for wildlife including penguins, seals, Cape Barron Geese, Short-tailed Shearwaters and migratory waders. Its geology, dominated by numerous basalt flows and coastal cliffs, is spectacular. We look forward to giving you a deeper appreciation of the many natural history experiences Phillip Island has to offer.

All activities will be for a half day and guided. Many will be repeated over the weekend. Participants will sign up for activities on arrival at the Senior Citizens Centre from 4 pm onwards on Friday 19th April and will receive directions on times and where to meet. Convoing will be encouraged.

A detailed program will be available in the Third Circular. It will include:

Walks: Conservation Hill Reserve; Rhyll Wetland and Bird Sanctuary; Rhyll Inlet; Cape Woolamai Peninsula to the Old Granite Quarry; Cape Woolamai Peninsula to the Pinnacles - both through shearwater breeding sites; Kitty Miller Bay; Pyramid Rock; The Nobbies; Swan Lake; Koala Conservation Reserve (seniors \$10.50, pay at the entrance); Oswin Roberts Reserve and bird walks led by members of Birdlife Bass Coast.

Pre-booked two hour Boat Cruise Saturday 20th April, Cowes Pier to Seal Rocks. Assemble 1.30 pm. Payment \$80, required with registration.

Penguin Parade: arranged independently by participants. Senior card holders \$21

Evening program:

Friday: Speakers Gerald Drew and Ed Thexton - The work of the conservation group *Save Western Port Woodlands*;

Saturday: Speaker: Leon Altoff (FNCV Marine Research Group) - *Marine Invertebrates of Philip Island's intertidal zone*;

Sunday: Speaker Graham Patterson, author - *Coastal guide to nature and history 2 Mornington Peninsula's ocean shore, Western Port, Phillip Island and French Island*.

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

Interactive Registration Form, here: <http://www.fncv.org.au/wp-content/uploads/publications/seana-2.pdf>

Note: final date to register is 1st March 2024

Fill in and save the interactive form, (or print, then scan or photograph) and email to

admin@fncv.org.au

OR Print, fill in then post to FNCV Inc., 1 Gardenia St, Blackburn Vic 3130.

FNCV Bookshop

The FNCV offers a range of natural history books to its members at a 20% discounted price and we have generously extended this discount to all that have registered with the 2024 SEANA get-together.

There are hundreds of titles to choose from and the full range can be viewed in the FNCV Bookshop 2024 Catalogue, **here:**

<https://www.fncv.org.au/wp-content/uploads/publications/fncv-bookshop-catalogue.pdf>

A small selection of books will be available at Phillip Island, but if you are interested in a particular book it is best if you fill in an order form and email it back to the bookshop no later than the 15th March (earlier if you can) to ensure the book is available to pick up from the get-together.

Whilst all orders from the Catalogue are welcome, the bookshop does not stock copies of all available titles, keeping only small numbers of books on-hand. It is strongly advised to please fill in the **interactive order form, here:**

<https://www.fncv.org.au/wp-content/uploads/publications/forms/fncv-bookshop-order-form.pdf>

Email it to the bookshop via bookshop@fncv.org.au as soon as possible. Hopefully books can be ordered in time for the SEANA gathering. Your order will be processed and an email will be sent to you with an update on the availability of your books and payment details.

Books will be available to pick up and, if a bank transfer has not already been completed, payment will be accepted via cash or cheque only, at the get-together. Please note, payment using a credit card is **NOT** an option. Please note also that if books are not available in time to pick up from Phillip Island an additional postage and handling cost may need to be added, so please get your book order in early!

Key bookshop dates:

Friday 15th March 2024 - book orders close.

Friday 19th April 2024 - Pick up and pay for books at SEANA get-together Phillip Island

Further Information:

Website: www.fncv.org.au.

Email: admin@fncv.org.au

SEANA—WHERE ARE WE AT?

The autumn SEANA get-together is to be hosted by the FNCV on Phillip Island from Friday 19th April to Monday 22nd April. It is a whole club event which, to be successful, will need the assistance of many of our wonderful club members.

You should have seen the above document, known as the second circular, as it has already been emailed (or posted) to everyone.

We are now at the very important stage of registering participants. The next stage, equally important, will be completing the program in detail. This is also the point at which a group of FNCV members, available to help on Phillip Island, will be vital.

Thank you to those who have already volunteered to lead and assist with planning, walks, book sales, catering and more.

If you can help, please contact Philippa Burgess 0409 866 389 or the FNCV office—we would love to hear from you.



Coates Wildlife Tours

Specialists in Nature Tours since 1986

- Informative naturalist guides • Small groups (6 – 12 participants) • Private charters available
- Fully accommodated, assisted camping, and remote camping tours

South Australian Outback and Channel Country

14-Day Camping Tour - Departs Adelaide 30 May 2024 - Max 10 participants (6 in lead vehicles & 4 tag-alongs)

Join Tom Grove, owner and Director of Coates Wildlife Tours, for a true outback camping tour in South Australia. Leaving Adelaide, we will head to Wilpena Pound, an iconic natural wonder in the heart of the Flinders Ranges. We then begin the journey towards outback Queensland and discover the birdlife (especially waterbirds) found in the channels, water-holes and lakes of Ramsar Wetland, Coongie Lakes, and Diamantina National Park. A trip to this part of the world wouldn't be complete without visiting Innamincka and Birdsville, deep in the heart of wild and isolated country, before ending the tour in Alice Springs.



Kimberley Wonders Expedition

13-Day Easy Camping Tour (assisted camping) – Departs Broome 6 June 2024 - Max of 12 participants

Join us in the Kimberley region of Western Australia; one of the most remote and unspoiled wilderness areas in the world. We explore Purnululu National Park (the Bungle Bungles), the Gibb River Road and its many spectacular waterfalls and gorges, Parry Lagoons (great for wetland birds), Drysdale River Station, Windjana Gorge and Silent Grove. You will also take an 18-minute helicopter flight over the Bungle Bungles, and there is an optional (at extra cost) full-day visit to view Mitchell Falls, an incredible four-tiered waterfall.



Western Wanderer Expedition

15-Day Easy Camping Tour (assisted camping) - Departs Perth 15 May 2024 - Max of 12 participants

Head north of Perth for seabirds, marine-life, coral reefs and ancient gorges. Tour highlights include a flight over the Abrolhos Islands with time for a short nature walk and snorkel, exploration of the Shark Bay World Heritage area including a visit to Monkey Mia, free time in Coral Bay to discover Ningaloo Reef (including time for an optional add-on Whale Shark Cruise & Swim), camping at 80-mile beach, Marble Bar ('the hottest town in Australia'), and two days exploring the wonders of Karijini National Park. Tents and camp beds are put up and taken down for you on this trip by the Easy Camp Support Crew.



Western Explorer Expedition

12-Day Easy Camping Tour – Departs Broome 17 July 2024 - Max 12 participants

On this tour we travel from Broome to Perth through WA's typical outback country. Rugged ancient landscapes, including Karijini National Park, Mt Augustus and the Kennedy Ranges, are not places one can just 'swing by'. Our 12-day tour coincides with the northern wildflower season and is an ideal way to explore all three in one go. We also visit Coalseam Conservation Park, one of WA's top wildflower hotspots. This tour is 'easy camping' so your tents and camp beds will be put up and taken down for you.



Contact us for further information on these tours and for details of our full natural history expedition program.

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