



Understanding
Our Natural World
Est. 1880

Field Nats News No 373



Newsletter of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc. Editor: Joan Broadberry 03 9846 1218
Telephone 03 9877 9860

1 Gardenia St. Blackburn 3130 www.fncv.org.au

Newsletter email: joan.broadberry@gmail.com

(Office email: admin@fncv.org.au)

Founding editor: Dr Noel Schleiger

Reg. No. A0033611X

Office Hours: Monday and Tuesday 10 am - 4 pm

May 2026

From the President

The number and diversity of the Club's activities is quite extraordinary. The fact that FNCV has maintained those activities for

146 years is in itself remarkable. The basis for that success has always rested with the core of dedicated members who, by their generosity and hard work, keep everything running. Through those efforts we have maintained our status and reputation as one of the largest and longest running citizen science organisations in the southern hemisphere. Currently we are facing the challenging issues resulting from the global instability that is impacting Australia as a whole. Obviously, many of our activities rely on the ability of our members to get to meetings and field excursions, so the cost and availability of fuel is starting to affect participation rates. Wherever possible we need to consider organised car-sharing to reduce costs and make activities more viable. We should also be considering more activities that can be reached via public transport. I anticipate that more online participation will be necessary, reminiscent of the COVID pandemic. We coped then and I believe we will cope now.

I have been minimising my own car use to avoid wasting fuel so the car has spent up to four or five days sitting idle in the driveway. Last week when I started the car there was a loud squeak and a frantic scuttling sound followed by a small thud. I stopped the engine and lifted the bonnet to see what had happened. The top of the engine was literally covered in empty snail shells, leaves and a large amount of rat faeces and urine stains. It appears that over a few days, black rats had moved in and established a comfortable nest for themselves. They were rudely evicted when I started the engine. From the large number of shells present it is clear that they had eaten a lot of garden snails. I have occasionally found similar middens in the roof space above the eaves.

It is a small reminder that 're-wilding' can occur in a very short time when we stop using equipment and spaces. It took a while to clear up the mess and wash away the stains. Fortunately, they had not commenced chewing the plastic and rubber around the engine which is one of their less appreciated habits.

The microscopic world continues as my focus on biodiversity and there is always something new to study every time I place a new slide on the microscope stage. *Gymnophrys (Biomyxa) cometa* is an aggressive unicellular predator of other microscopic life. This one detected the presence of another single-celled organism and attempted to capture it. These unicellular organisms have sub-cellular structures called extrusomes that are analogues of the nematocysts of cnidarians, in so far as they are used to immobilise prey. They are ejectable organelles that may contain toxins or other immobilising agents. In the following sequence of images, *Gymnophrys*

(Continued on page 4)

The due date for FNN 374 will be

Monday May 4th

Could contributors please email content to both email addresses

joan.broadberry@gmail.com
fnews@admin.org.au

Index	Page
From the President	1,4
Calendar of events—May	2
Members' news, notices	3
Launch, <i>Insects of Melbourne</i> Guide	5
Day Group News: Excursion to Chelsea Gardens, Olinda	6
Fauna Survey Group News: The Rakali Community	7
Botany Group News: Endangered Vic. shrubs	
Extracts from SIG reports to Council; Vale Carol Page	8
Invertebrate Study Group News: Cardinia Reservoir trip; Kinglake Nat Park trip; Blackburn Lake night walk	9-11
SEANA Autumn Get-together, Geelong area	12



1. *Gymnophrys* detects the presence of potential prey



2. *Gymnophrys* moves into position



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All meetings are held at the FNCV Hall, 1 Gardenia St. Blackburn at 8 pm., unless otherwise indicated.
There may be changes to the program, for example due to extreme weather conditions or the unavailability of a speaker.
Please check with the FNCV website www.fncv.org.au or contact person for the most up-to-date information

MAY 2026

Sunday 3rd – FNCV Annual General Meeting Join in this important event in the life of our club and congratulate our new Long Term (40 year) members. Meet at 2pm. Speaker, Wendy Clark. Afternoon tea served. All welcome.
Contact: FNCV office_admin@fncv.org.au

Monday 4th – Fungi Group Meeting - to be held in the hall and also via Zoom. Arrive 6:45pm for 7pm start. **50 years of photographing fungus.** Speaker: Geoff Lay.
Contact and registration: Georgia Beasley georgienaturechick@gmail.com

Tuesday 5th - Fauna Survey Group Meeting: *From water management to wildlife: biodiversity in the Camargue Wetlands, France.* Speaker: Thomas Faraon, PhD candidate, School of Geography, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, University of Melbourne. Contact: Sally Bewsher 03 9752 1418

Saturday 9th – Second-hand book sale 10 am—4 pm Donations of good, clean books welcomed, but no magazines and no fiction. Donated books will be accepted from Monday 4th – Friday 8th May. Contact: FNCV office_admin@fncv.org.au
Volunteers needed, see page 3.

Saturday 9th – Fungi Group Foray: *Mount Worth State Park.* Arrive 9:45am for 10am start. **Registration essential.** Contact and registration: Hamish Beshara 0428 219 273, hmb.fungi@fastmail.com.au

Monday 12th – Marine Research Group Meeting 8pm-10pm: **Annual Field trip roundup.** We review our field work season looking at the animals we have seen, places we have surveyed and the research being undertaken by our members. Members are encouraged to bring items of interest found and photographed over the field work season. Location: FNCV Hall and on line via Google Meet. Please register using this link: <https://forms.gle/BzT17SFVjV3NPQR79> Contact Leon Altoff, 0428 669 773, marine@fncv.org.au

Wednesday 20th - Invertebrate Study Group Meeting: *Techniques for Photographing Invertebrates: a theory and practical night.* Speaker: Wendy Clark. BYO subjects and camera(s) and/or phone cameras. Some inverts will be supplied
Contact: Wendy Clark inverts@fncv.org.au

Thursday 21st – Botany Group Meeting: *Hakeas - A genus of around 150 endemic species of flowering plants in the family Proteaceae.* Speaker: Chris Larkin, long term member of the Australian Plant Society and consultant for the ‘Gardens 4 Wildlife’ program run by Knox Council. Chris will cover flower presentations, foliage types, methods of identification and the importance of Hakeas in gardens designed for wildlife. Contact: Philippa Burgess 0409 866 389

Sunday 24th – Fungi Group Foray: *Wanderslore Sanctuary in Launching Place.* Arrive 9:45am for 10am start. This is an annual visit for the Club. **Registration essential.** Contact and registration: Hamish Beshara 0428 219 273, hmb.fungi@fastmail.com.au

Monday 25th—FNCV Council Meeting: 7.30pm. Apologies and agenda items to Wendy Gare admin@fncv.org.au

Tuesday 26th – Day Group 10.30am Meeting: *Chasing nature for over 60 years!* Speaker: Ray White, FNCV member.
Contact: Joan Broadberry joan.broadberry@gmail.com

Continued on 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 per excursion and \$2 per meeting.

Continued from page 2

Wednesday 27th – Geology Group Meeting: *A shallow-water marine record of Miocene climate: an Otway Basin study*
 Speaker: Rohit Soman, PhD candidate, School of Geography, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, University of Melbourne.
 Contact: Ken Griffiths geology@fncv.org.au

Friday 29th – Juniors Group Meeting: 6.45pm *To be advised.* Contact: Nicole Brown nicole.vickridge@gmail.com

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:

Coen Pearson, Arwen Pearson, Ben Pearson, Martin Harris, Kowhai Dowd, Claire Jennings, Paul Elliott, Greg Martin, Olivia Bernardi, Bohdan Durnota, Pat King, Tabitha King, Michelle Grosser, Carol Hopkins, Max Bartley, Anne Wagner, Leanne Greenwood and Evannah Clark-Bohun

FNCV Natural History Second-hand Book sale, Saturday 9th May 2026 CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS



Please consider volunteering for just one hour or more and contribute to an important part of the FNCV fundraising activities.

Volunteers are needed for either sorting and arranging books, or on the sales day. Sorting will take place on Monday 4th May through to Friday 8th May, from 11am until 3 pm. Sale day is on Saturday 9th May from 10 am until 4 pm. There will be two sales desks requiring two people per table.

Please register your interest, and days and times you are available with Philippa at pgburgess18@gmail.com

REMINDER: Donated books will be accepted from Monday 4th – Friday 8th May.

Thank you to all those who helped produce FNN 373
 Joan Broadberry, Sally Bewsher and Wendy Gare

Day Group Leader Needed

Joan Broadberry, with the valued assistance of Sally Bewsher, has led the Day Group since 2014. However, as Joan is about to enter her 9th decade it is time for new leadership.

The FNCV Day Group has 10 meetings per year on the morning of the fourth Tuesday of the month from February to November. Coffee and a chat at 10.30 am, speaker at 11am. There is the occasional excursion.

As the Day Group is a generalist natural history group, speakers can be found from many avenues including from within the FNCV.

Joan and Sally are willing to provide some assistance with the program but neither is able to carry the leadership role.

Please contact Joan if you wish to discuss this further.
joan.broadberry@gmail.com

FNCV Facebook report: 58,565 followers.

The capture and handling of all animals on FNCV field trips is done strictly in accordance with the Club's research permits.

bookshop@fncv.org.au
 for any orders or bookshop queries.

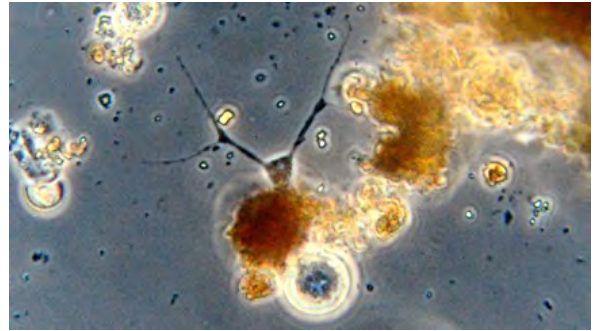
If you don't have access to email, the FNCV office will pass on your message. Kathy will then be in contact with you.

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

(Continued from page 1)

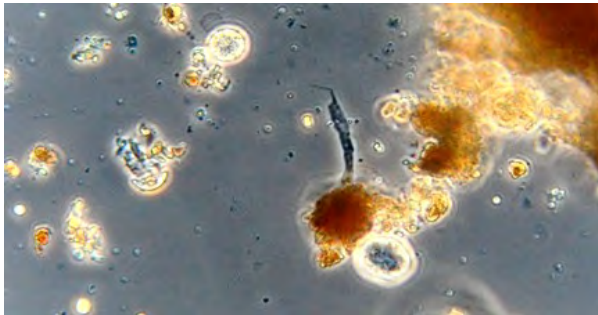
becomes aware of a potential prey organism and moves into position to attack. It reaches out through detrital material to find the prey. Once it touches the prey it recoils and retreats. It did this a second time and finally gave up. Other organisms, it seems, may possess nastier weapons and are not to be trifled with. The two unsuccessful attacks took place over 30 minutes and were recorded in high-definition video using phase contrast microscopy.

When studying the behaviour of single-celled organisms it is tempting think of them in anthropomorphic terms since they appear to sense, plan and carry out their seemingly complex actions with clear purpose and intelligence. However you look at it, they are highly evolved and have survived for billions of years and will probably be in existence long after humanity's demise.

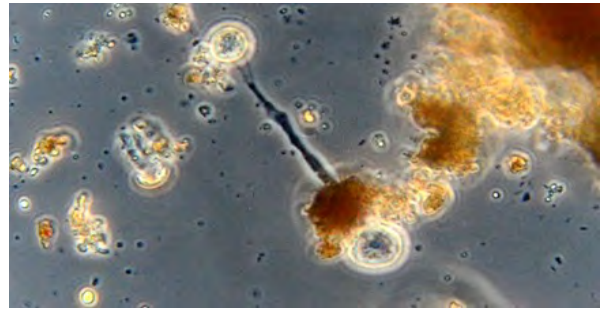


3. The attack with filopodia spread out to find prey

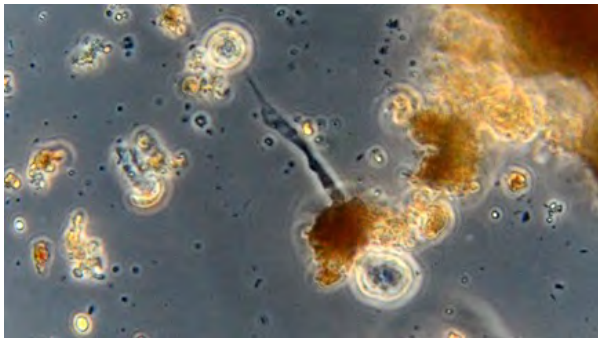
Max Campbell—All photos M. Campbell



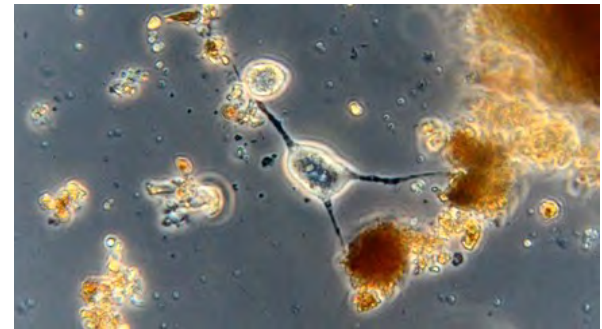
4. Location determined



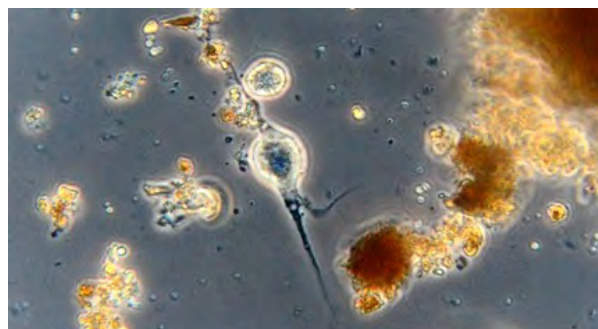
5. The prey is contacted



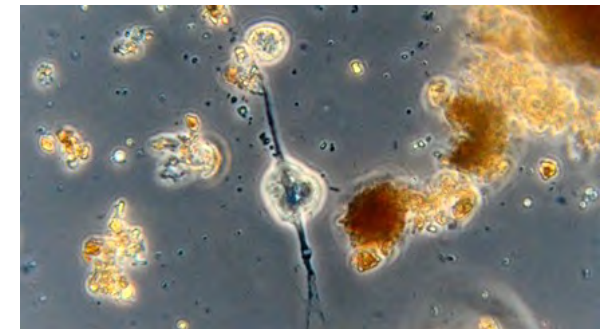
6. Assessing the prey



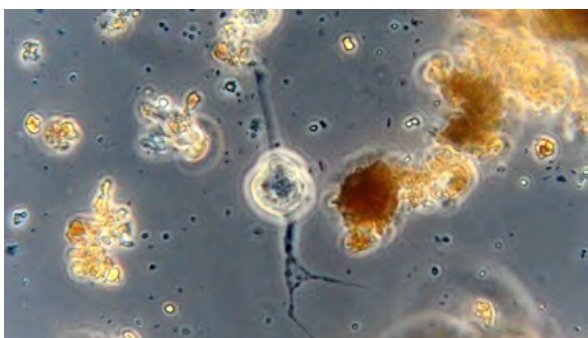
7. Moving in to attack



8. Beginning the attack



9. Withdrawing rapidly after contact



10. Full retreat, filopodia out front



11. Moving away to seek more approachable prey

Insects of Melbourne Guide, Launch by City of Melbourne

Late last year FNCV was invited to hold a stand at the launch of the *Insects of Melbourne* Guide on Saturday, 7th March at 'The Edge', Federation Square. Emceed by Dr Freya Thomas, City of Melbourne, speakers included Dr Kylie Soanes of the University of Melbourne, Kate Pearce from Melbourne Zoo and Emma Cutting from Heartscapes.

Along with FNCV, other organisations present were: Billi Nursery, Landcare, Melbourne Arts Precinct Corp, Entomological Society of Victoria, Invertebrates Australia, Gardens for Wildlife Victoria and Heartscapes, an organisation that promotes native gardens on suburban nature strips.

An email update a few days beforehand, advised us that there was an unexpected surge of bookings for the event. It had now reached full capacity, so much so, that they were also taking bookings for standing room. We were advised that the doors would be opening earlier than planned due to numbers. They were expecting up to 400+ attendees! We returned to the FNCV hall to increase the stock of our promotional material!

Myself, Philippa Burgess, with Judith Sise put together a wonderful display for our stand. There were items and specimens representing each of the FNCV Special Interest Groups. We had a large array of invertebrates set in resin provided by Judith, an impressive variety of rocks and minerals, an albatross and a fairy penguin skull, a dried Bluetongue Lizard skin, shells, sand-dollars, ammonites, a Port Jackson Shark egg case, a Long-spine Porcupine Pufferfish, which with accompanying magnifying glasses, all proved very popular.

Images taken under the microscope of invertebrate's eyes, heads, and mouth-parts, alongside common household products such as soy sauce, ginger beer, brown sugar and Yakult Milk intrigued and surprised people.

We also displayed our collection of children's take-home activities in which the kids are able to colour and construct various animal puppets and masks. They were a big hit!

Many copies of *The Victorian Naturalist*, Calendar of Events and other promotional material were eagerly taken by the huge mob that continually surrounded our stand. So many interested people gathered in one place was a fabulous opportunity to promote the FNCV. Everyone wanted to ask questions and chat and were so interested in our range of activities.



Philippa and Judith at the FNCV stand



Many were amazed when they opened up the large four monthly calendar of events. Some discussed becoming members and every promotional item we brought with us was taken.

Judith and I really enjoyed the day especially our discussions with so many members of the public. It was great to take part in the launch and it gave us some optimism to know that there was such a keen interest in all aspects of natural history.

The event certainly proved to be very successful for the FNCV. Each stand holder was given a box of 120 copies of the *Insects of Melbourne* Guide to take back to their groups. These are now available in the hall.

Philippa Burgess



Day Group

Excursion to Chelsea Gardens Olinda - Leader: Nicky Zanen

In August 2025 Nicky Zanen, a member of the Maroondah Plant Society, gave a presentation to the Day Group introducing four public Australian Native Gardens: Maranoa, Karwarra, Chelsea at Olinda and Kevin Hoffman Walk at Lara. In March this year she led an excursion to visit the Chelsea Gardens, Olinda.

The 14 attendees wandered the formed paths arranged across multiple levels, encompassing several different microclimates. The many features include, a rock-garden, waterfall, billabong and boardwalk. Sustainability is key. The waterfall is solar powered and the billabong is replenished with local storm water. The gardens provide suitable habitat for birds, (look out for Lyrebirds), butterflies, insects, reptiles and frogs.



The history of Chelsea Botanical Gardens is fascinating. In 2013, Phillip Johnston, Wes Fleming and the Trailfinders team's Australian Garden display became the first ever Australian entry to win both Gold and Best in Show at the prestigious Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show in England.

Many options were explored as to how to permanently relocate the now internationally renowned Chelsea Australian Garden in Victoria. In 2018 when a section of the old Olinda golf course was transferred to the Dandenong Ranges Botanic Gardens this proved the ideal space. The garden was open to the public in June 2023. Visitors can experience this stunning design through a re-creation of the display, many times larger than its original tennis court size.

**Fun fact: Two 10 litre buckets of gold falls were found during construction.*

The Chelsea Garden at Olinda is cool-climate garden at an elevation of 550m. It has a rich, red volcanic soil which allows a range of 15,000 plants with over 400 different Australian species being used in the design. Many are rare and endangered such as the Wollemi Pine. Extensive nursery preparation went into ensuring that, where possible, these could be planted out as mature, flowering specimens. Thus, much of the relatively recent planting appears as being long-established.

Four different microclimates have been created. These are full sun north facing, part-shaded through to fully shaded and the wet/water area. The rock garden, facing north, creates a special place for plants that prefer full sun. The thermal mass of the rocks reduces the chance of frost damage in winter. This feature is bookended by the deeply shaded, steep rock overhangs standing opposite it, beside the billabong. This is an ideal growing environment for the tree ferns that were a foundation element in the overall garden design.



One of the gardens' outstanding features is a 9 metre high Waratah sculpture—photo left. The sculpture was built in twelve separate pieces and assembled on site, before being hoisted into place using a 90 tonne crane.

A recent addition has been the Australian Cloud Forest Collection designed to showcase and conserve endangered flora from Queensland's Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Its focus is on the conservation of mountain-top plants from far north Queensland. Australia's native Rhododendron species will be highlighted in the new garden, displayed amongst large boulders that mimic the granite peaks of North Queensland's mountain tops.

The Dandenong Ranges Chelsea Botanic Gardens is located at 24 The Georgian Road, Olinda—only 500m from the Olinda town-

ship along the Olinda-Monbulk Road. It was formerly known as the National Rhododendron Gardens. Extensive plantings of rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias remain. It is a place which should be visited several times a year so as to enjoy the seasonal flowering. A café onsite is open at weekends.

On behalf of the Day Group I would once again like to extend our thanks to Nicky for introducing us to this absolute jewel of a garden and for so capably leading our visit.

Joan Broadberry





Fauna Survey Group Meeting *3rd March 2026*

The Rakali Community Survey: how citizen science can provide insights into species ecology and drive conservation action. **Speaker: Sabrina Trocini.**

The Rakali, or Water Rat has a wide distribution in Australia, and is also found in New Guinea. The name Rakali originates in NSW, and there are 50 different Aboriginal names. It is considered of least concern by the IUCN, but in Western Australia is doing less well, is at risk and should be monitored. It was heavily persecuted for fur and didn't achieve proper protection until the middle of last century. Globally rodents are amongst the mammals suffering high extinction rates and similarly in Australia. In WA it is the only freshwater aquatic mammal, where the colour is darker than those in the east. They weigh 500-1200g and are 25-37cm long. They prey on insects, frogs and crustaceans.



A citizen science project was initiated in December 2014 to collect data for 3 months. The survey was promoted in newsletters, posters and on the radio. Participants were asked to conduct transects, look for feeding middens, footprints and asked to record all sightings and evidence. There were 167 participants who made 234 sightings of Rakali. The records were obtained by naturalists conducting Rakali-focused surveys, and also by bushwalkers, and fishers. The majority of sightings were made in the evenings after 5pm or in early in the morning. About 60% of records were direct sightings, 26% feeding middens and 14% dead Rakali. The mortality was mainly by Marron traps 43%, vehicle 20% and drowned 10%.



The results provided useful information for conservation efforts towards habitat restoration and further need to ban Marron traps which are dangerous to Rakali, and to help educate the wider public about Rakali. The survey also resulted in knowledge about citizen science surveys, methods to use and data to collect.

Raymond Gibson. Images R. Gibson



Botany Group Meeting *Thursday 19th March 2026*

Part 1: Colonality and Reproductive Capacity in three critically endangered Victorian shrubs

Speaker: Yennifer (Yen) Longo, Masters candidate, at La Trobe University, works in the Hoebee Laboratory investigating population genomics and reproductive capacity in some of Victoria's threatened flora. *Banksia croajingolensis*, *Acacia daviesii* and *Acacia sporadica*. Commonly known as the Gippsland Banksia, the Timbertop Wattle and the Pale Hickory Wattle or Sporadic Wattle.

Banksia croajingolensis, is endemic to East Gippsland and confined to a 200 metre area of around 480 individuals in the Mallacoota area. It appears to be genomically separated from other neighbouring species, and *Banksia paludosa* from NSW. However, the species is highly clonal, linked to its survival mechanism, as it has a lignotuber that enables it to resprout after fire, and the physical extent of clones from the genomics would suggest it also produces extensive suckers. Genomic analysis confirmed it exists with as few as three unique genotypes.

Clonality can be associated with reproductive failure. An investigation found severely compromised pollen production with less than 6% viability. Yen has submitted a manuscript on her *B. croajingolensis*, research for publication and is waiting on editorial decisions. The acacia studies are ongoing, but there is a theme of differential pollen viability that is also emerging.

Part 2: Tracing the Origins of Invasion: Population Genomics of *Acacia paradoxa* in Victoria

Speaker: Jacob Moore, Honours student, La Trobe University, Hoebee Laboratory.

Jacob's research aims to investigate the population genomic structure of *Acacia paradoxa* in Victoria, potentially linking invasive populations to Kangaroo Island Providence through genomic analysis of comprehensive Victorian collections and specimens from the South Australian Herbarium. Known as the Kangaroo Island Acacia, or Kangaroo Thorn, it was widely distributed and planted as agricultural hedgerows across Australia from the 1800s. Having extremely prickly foliage it was used as fencing in farmland.

This historic introduction may be driving contemporary invasion in Victoria, causing ecosystem-level changes, while threatening Victoria's endemic forms through genetic swamping.

Philippa Burgess

Extracts from SIG reports given at the last FNCV Council Meeting

Invertebrate Study Group Meeting Report 18th February 2026

Protozoans and other Fresh Water Invertebrates by Max Campbell

Our intended speaker – Sam Edley who was going to talk to us on Parasitoid wasps had to cancel at short notice. She will return later in the year.

Max Campbell showed us some incredible footage of micro-videos he took of amazing freshwater protozoans. They displayed interesting hunting strategies, complex subcellular structures, complex behaviour and sophisticated control of movement; all from single-celled organisms without a brain as we know it.

Some build tests or “houses” of varying materials to protect themselves. Each species has a unique test with variable structures, comprising a wide range of building materials. Most of the organisms have symbionts, including algae and bacteria living within their cell membrane. They are incredibly complex despite their unicellular form and display incredible levels of adaptation to their environment. They are no less “evolved” than humans and are perfectly adapted to their particular environments. Their existence spans circa 1.5 billion years.

It was enthralling watching these protists and observing their activities. Max also explained the techniques used to record them and the different microscopical formats he used to enable the details to be seen and recorded. Many hours of patient work went into recording this video.

Wendy Clark

Working bee and survey at Mali Dunes: Field Trip. 6th -10th March 2026

The major activity was installing tree guards around Jumping Jack Wattle and other recovery species such as Sweet Bursaria and Banksia species. Some seedling Eucalypts and Melaleuca were planted. Tiles and nestboxes were checked.

Raymond Gibson

Vale Carol Page

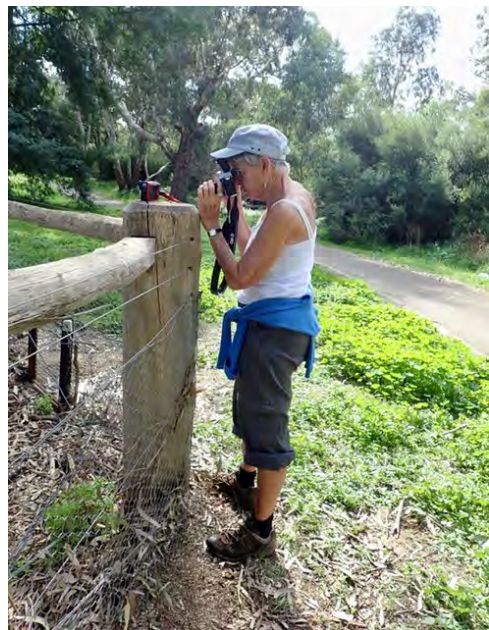
It is with great sadness that I write of the passing of Carol Page. Carol joined the FNCV in 1999. She was a generalist, interested in all aspects of natural history. Carol was involved in many areas of the club. Over a number of years she organised the Fungi Group excursions, worked with the Marine Research Group surveying the Victorian coastline and with the Invertebrate Study Group.

Carol was also a member of the Entomological Society and the Ringwood Field Naturalists. She was a valued worker at the nursery organised by the Friends of Warrandyte State Park and also volunteered at Westerfolds Park with Parks Victoria.

Carol went everywhere with a camera in hand, posting many images on iNaturalist, learning all the time. One of her greatest interests was moths. She was known to stay up very late photographing moths that were drawn to a moth sheet or light source. In the accompanying image, Carol is shown photographing invertebrates in Banksia Park, Lower Templestowe.

As a field naturalist with an adventurer spirit, Carol travelled widely within Australia and overseas. Her more recent trips, often with birders, included journeying twice to Ashmore Reef, Christmas and Cocos Islands, Malaysia and the Amazon.

She will be greatly missed.





Invertebrate Study Group

Trip Report to Cardinia Reservoir 8th February 2026 (9.30am – 1pm)

Ten people attended this trip on a hot sunny day after a dry spell. Considering how dry it was, the number of invertebrates we found was reasonable. We had two new members attending who were keen on photographing which helped the observation rates. We did note the paucity of sightings along the creek, which usually yields well even in hot and dry weather.

Of note were a Raspy Tree Cricket with impressive Jaws and a Ringed Xenica Butterfly. Last year more butterflies and skip-pers were seen. A black and white Spider Wasp lead one of our members on a merry chase. A Tropicuchid Planthopper, Leaf Footed Bugs, Ant mimic spider, Ant eating spider, Malachite Beetles and several species of jumping spiders were seen as well as various Robber flies. Some of these are shown below.

The full list and photos of these sightings can be seen on our Project Page on iNaturalist.

<https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/projects/fncv-2026-cardinia-reservoir-park>

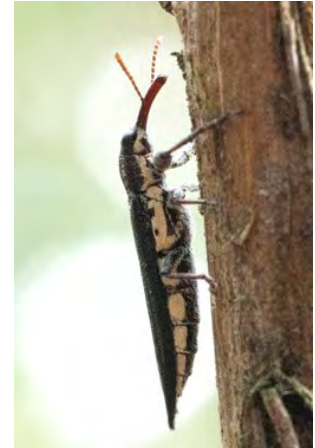
Wendy Clark



Ant-eating Spiders Genus *Euryopsis*



Malachite Beetle Tribe Carphurini



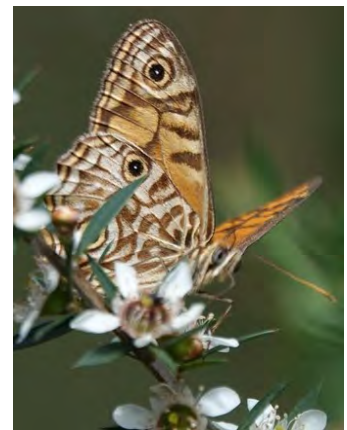
Primitive Weevils
Rhinotia povera



Robber Fly Genus *Brachyrhopala*



Tropicuchid Planthoppers
Family Tropicuchidae



Ringed Xenica *Geitoneura acantha*
Photo: Andrew McCutcheon



Long Legged Fly *Heteropsilopus ingenuus* Photo: Ken Gospbell



Ichneumonid Wasp Tribe Cryptini
Photo: Ken Gospbell



White Banded House Jumper *Maratus griseus* Photo: Elliot Blythman

Trip Report to Kinglake National Park 15th February 2026 (9 – 3 pm)

Twelve members and a visitor joined us on a warm to hot day. The area was quite dry, but we still managed to find a good and interesting number of invertebrates. Quite a few were found on the tree trunks in sight of the car park. Andrew was seen hunting the flighty Brown Butterflies. He had a camera with a telephoto lens but the butterflies still proved a challenge. Two species were located, Banks Brown and the Shouldered Brown.

Other finds of interest were a Thread-legged Bug that we thought was a juvenile Stick Insect. It looked very similar, including in its movements. The sucking mouth parts, (which would have identified it as a bug), were very hard to see especially as it carried its grasping forelegs out of the front of its head.

An interesting spider that is still to be named, was a tiny green spider that carried its eggs on the top of its thorax. A further find was *Oncophysa vesiculata* which is a member of the Lace Bugs Family Tingidae.

We rescued a beetle hanging in a spider web. It turned out to be a Wattle Longhorn Beetle *Bethelium diversicorne*. You can see it below tucking its wings back under its elytra. A rather interesting orange wasp flew past and we were lucky enough to watch where it landed—most just keep flying. It was identified as a Short-tailed Ichneumonid Wasp in the genus *Enicospilus*.

An interesting observation was the colourful, chunky fungi *Neoboletus*. I couldn't resist taking a photo of it despite it not being an invertebrate!

Click on the link to iNaturalist below to see what we recorded that day.
<https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/projects/fncv-2026-kinglake-national-park>

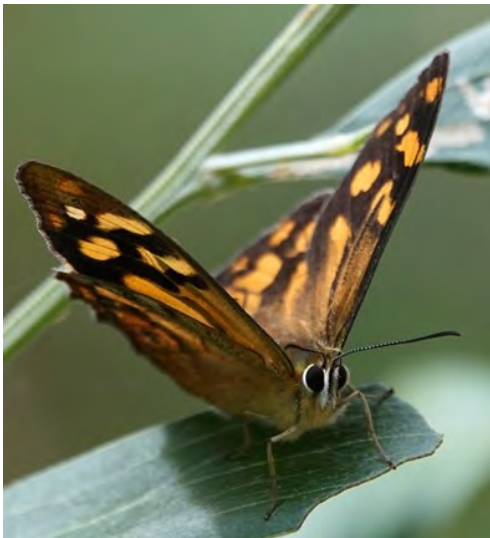


An unusual looking Fungi Genus *Neoboletus*



Green Spider carrying eggs on its back

Wendy Clark



Banks Brown *Heteronympha banksii*
 Photo: Andrew McCutcheon



Lace Bugs Family Tingidae
Oncophysa vesiculata
 Photo: David Davies



Wattle Longhorn *Bethelium diversicorne*
 rescued from a spider web



Thread-legged Bug looking like a
 juvenile Stick Insect



Thread-legged Bug Subfamily *Emesinae*
 showing sucking mouth part & grasping
 forelimbs Photo: Andrew McCutcheon



Genus *Enicospilus*
 Short-tailed Ichneumonid Wasp
 Subfamily Ophioninae

Trip Report - Blackburn Lake Night Walk 22nd March 2026 (7.30 – 9.30pm)

A small group of members headed out on a perfect night, warm and still. We started observing the tree trunks and foliage as the sun went down and the insects and other invertebrates were there in good numbers!

As the night went on, fewer were seen, but we still saw a good variety of invertebrates and were thrilled to see two large specimens of Mountain Huntsman. This was of particular interest as I had not seen any evidence of huntsman spiders in the park this season, whereas I saw a good number in previous years.

Many different species of ants were the most numerous insects seen. Large Bull Ants, sometimes just one, sometimes several, were on almost every tree trunk. They were nonaggressive fortunately, just foraging.

Numerous moths were seen, but they rarely stopped. Small wasps were flying around; they would land and take off again – too fast for the cameras. Green Lacewings were flying around also. Everything was moving very fast.

The Thread-legged Bug produced much excitement as we pondered what it was. A head-lamp produced enough light to get good photos – sufficient for an identification.

We found one beautiful black and yellow *Paropsisterna octosignata* beetle which stayed still enough for a photo. Numerous cockroaches of various species zoomed in and out of view.

Glittering green eye-shine on the ground turned out to be from wolf spiders. They were numerous, some very small and others of a medium size.

Just as we were leaving we observed a small Ant-eating Spider Genus *Euryopis*, throwing silk at an ant that became progressively more tangled. The ant was three times the size of the spider!

This was an excellent night for observing night invertebrates. We intend to do more of these at other locations and seasons. Here is the link to what we found. <https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/projects/fncv-2026-blackburn-lake> **Wendy Clark**



Leaf Beetle
Paropsisterna octosignata



Grass-vaneer Moth
Hednota grammellus



Thread-legged Bug
Genus *Ploiaria*



Subgenus *Thlipsepinotus*
Genus *Camponotus*



Mountain Huntsman *Isopeda montana*



Ant-eating Spider Genus *Euryopis* attacking a *Thlipsepinotus* ant
Note a thread of silk on the spider's lower hind leg



SEANA

South East Australian Naturalists Association

**Autumn get-together hosted by Geelong Field Naturalists Club
Friday 27th to Sunday 29th March 2026**

Congratulations to the Geelong Field Naturalist Club team for their excellent organisation. Registration, catered evening meals and meetings were held at the Eden Oak Geelong Retreat, a lovely hotel and conference centre. Eight FNCV

members attended. The program, reproduced below, shows the wide variety of activities the Geelong area offers. Despite some rain on Saturday morning those who took the Phillip Bay Explorer boat trip waxed lyrical as did those who visited the Western Treatment Plant. Other highlights included four speakers from the Geelong Club introducing the geology, birdlife, mammals and botany of the area and a presentation from well-known Sean Dooley from Birdlife Australia on cuckoos.

On Sunday morning I did the 3 km return walk to Big Rock in the You Yangs Regional Park. On the way up, the Yellow Gums had just shed their bark and the trunks were an unusual, attractive orange colour. Big rock is a massive granite formation offering panoramic 360 degree views of the surrounding countryside. (Photos below)

The spring SEANA get-together will be hosted by Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club over the weekend on 9th—11th October.



Special congratulations are extended to FNCV council member, Judith Sise (photo above) who was elected SEANA president.



Friday 27 March 2026

Event	Time
Registration	4:00 pm
Dinner	6:30 pm
Welcome and introduction to the Geelong area by guest speakers	7:30 - 9:00pm

Saturday 28 March - Excursions

1	Bellarine Birds. (Day excursion)			8:00AM - 3:00PM	
2	Boat Tour - Port Phillip Bay Explorer. (A) Cost \$120	8:30 - 11:30AM	6	Boat Tour - Port Phillip Bay Explorer. (B) Cost \$120	12:30 - 3:30PM
3	Ocean Grove Nature Reserve (A)	9:00 - 11:30AM	7	Ocean Grove Nature Reserve (B)	1:00 - 3:30PM
4	Swan Bay saltmarsh	9:00 - 11:30AM	8	Barwon Heads Rock Pools and Barwon Estuary	1:00 - 3:30PM
5	Sparrowvale Freshwater wetlands	9:00 - 11:30AM	9	Bellarine Wetlands- L Victoria, L Lorne	1:00 - 3:30PM

Self-guided tours of GFNC Geelong Birding Trails or the Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition can be done at your leisure

Coffee & tea available at Eden Oak conference room	4:00 pm
SEANA AGM at Eden Oak conference centre	5:00 pm
Dinner	6:30 pm
Special Guest Speaker - Sean Dooley "What can cuckoos tell us"	7:45-9:00 pm

Right: Sean Dooley



Sunday 29 March

Sunday Morning half-day excursions			Sunday Afternoon half-day excursions		
10	Western Treatment Plant (A)	8:30 - 11:30am	15	Western Treatment Plant (B)	1:00pm - 3:30pm
11	Dog Rocks, Moorabool River Reserves (A)	9:00 - 11:30am	16	Dog Rocks, Moorabool River Reserves (B)	1:00pm - 3:30pm
12	You Yangs Regional Park	9:00 - 11:30am	17	Hovells Creek and Limeburners Bay	1:00pm - 3:30pm
13	Brisbane Ranges NP. - Anakie Gorge	9:00 - 11:30am	18	Brisbane Ranges - Private conservation property	1:00pm - 3:30pm
14.	Serendip Sanctuary	9:00 - 11:30am			

Self-guided tours of GFNC Geelong Birding Trails or the Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition can be done at your leisure

Afternoon tea and farewell at GFNC Clubrooms, Geelong Botanic Gardens.	4:30pm
--	--------

Monday 30 March.	
19.	Western treatment Plan (C)

Joan Broadberry
Photos: J. Broadberry