



Bend of Islands Conservation Association Inc.,
Bend of Islands, Victoria, 3097, Australia
C/- PO Box 37 Kangaroo Ground, Vic 3097

NUMBER 95. NOVEMBER 2020

WHAT LOCAL PLANT IS FLOWERING?

Scientific name: *Arthropodium milleflorum*

Common name: Pale Vanilla-lily

Family: Liliaceae (Anthericaceae)

Flowering Period: September to March

Sector: Found in the Yarra & Co-op Sector of the Bend of Islands.

Pale Vanilla-lily is one of the three *Arthropodium* species that occur in the Bend of Islands though not as widespread or conspicuous as Chocolate Lily (*Arthropodium strictus*).

Pale Vanilla-lily is a taller and more delicate branching plant with smaller more numerous off-white to pale mauve flowers (consisting of 3 petals & 3 slightly smaller sepals) with conspicuously fringed stamens.

It is a large tufted grass-like perennial lily up to 1.0 metre high by 30 cm wide.

The tufting linear leaves at the base of the plant are flat, glaucous and spreading, 40 cm long by 1-25 mm wide.

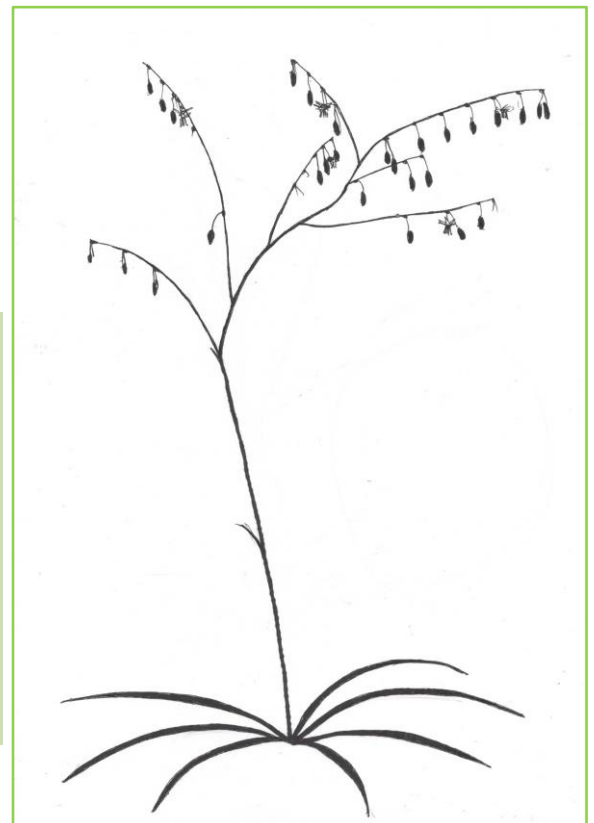
The main upright single flower stalk is up to 60 cm tall, with the small flowers in clusters of 2 to 3, on slender, leafless branched stems. The flowers have a slight vanilla scent.

Tuberous roots are fleshy. Prefers moist clay soils.

For more details refer to Flora of Victoria: [VICFLORA](#)

Cric Henry

Sketch by
Ross Henry





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring has sprung, well almost...







And who could have foreseen that our Bend of Islands home would be transformed into the Bend of Isolation over the last 6 months, and we're still not out of the woods...

With the winter rains and cooler weather now turning, how precious it is to be spending our time within our gorgeous surrounding landscapes. The many native orchids have been so prolific along with our native grasses, not to mention the weeds... I've found this perfect weather to do regular weeding with the ground so soft.

I do hope you have all journeyed well through this time, with minimal disruptions to your lives, considering the scale and impact of this situation.

While this year has had many challenges, including almost all of our regular activities being postponed, our objectives have been maintained and the BICA Committee has still been very active; mostly via Zoom, like the rest of the world.

Here's a brief update:

-  Deer, fox and weed control – our deer population has been further reduced over the recent months.
-  GMA Hunting Maps – these have been reviewed and a number of designated hunting areas for recreational shooters within the BOI now removed.
-  Archived BICA newsletters – There are many original BICA newsletters that need to be scanned and made available in a digital format to all members, so watch this space.
-  Large trucks in BOI – the steady stream of large trucks driving through the BOI was halted after NSC received many emails from our community. We now need to re-visit this as they have recently started up again.
-  Sugarloaf Link & Candid Critters – Our cameras are out and in use monitoring many locals including our brush-tailed phascogales.
-  Non-conforming Usage Rights – We are currently working through and addressing any issues, to contain any threats to our native wildlife and protect our ELZ.

Thanks go to our BICA Committee – Pam McMahon, Julie Martindale, Jo Henry, Phillip Wierzbowski, Richard Laurie, Joy Flannagan, Mike Pelling and our newly returned BICA committee member Rudi Pauli. Also many thanks to our Planning sub-committee – Carol and Alan Bonny, Janet Matiske, Frank Pierce and Robyn Duff.

And many other BICA community members often volunteer their time, to be involved in a variety of activities and are committed in looking after our BOI – so thank you too!

We had a great turnout at our BICA AGM which was on Zoom. Our new councillor for Sugarloaf, Ben Ramcharan dropped in to say a few words and answer questions. Then our guest speaker Craig Cleeland gave a brilliant talk about the Southern Toadlet. Luckily we recorded this and Craig has allowed us to share it.

The best way to view his talk and stay connected is through our BICA website and Facebook group. Also, watch out for our regular emails, and please don't be shy...

You are welcome to reach out to us through these channels.

Lastly, this is the time to renew your BICA membership, and remember, by maintaining it we can accomplish more.

Michael Dempsey



Above: Our very first event sign on Jeff Drummond's new community sign tree made an ideal virtual background for Michael Dempsey at the 2020 AGM.

Below: Our first AGM on Zoom.



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ANNOUNCING THE BICA PHOTO/VIDEO COMPETITION



Window into Our World
within the 'BEND OF ISLANDS'

Still photographs or moving image / video

We're running another photo/video competition this year and hope that you'll send in some great submissions gathered from our time in isolation during 2020.

Thanks to Phil Wierzbowski for organising it!



THEMES :

- 1/. Bend of Inspiration
- 2/. Colour my World
- 3/. Magic Moments
- 4/. Up Close & Personal




- 8/. If selected, your work will be credited wherever the images used
- 9/. Entries will close 31st December 2020
- 10/. Winners announced Café Benders




PRIZES will be awarded :

- 11/. Prizes : include books, music and videos for all ages
- 12/. Queries, please contact BICA Secretary BICA Committee, bicacomm@gmail.com



CONDITIONS of Entry :

- 1/. Multiple entries will be accepted
- 2/. Photographs taken over 12 months
- 3/. File Formats :
 - Still image *.jpg, *.tiff or other
 - movie *.mp4 (video) less than 5 min



- 4/. submitted to bicacomm@gmail.com
- 5/. entries too large : use 'Wetransfer'
- 6/. Provide title and a sentence about it.
- 7/. By submitting your entry, you agree to BICA publishing your entry.

CAFÉ BENDERS


Come and join us for Coffee and Cake at Café Benders held on the third Saturday, starting at 10am until 12 noon at the Scotts Hill Station of Catani Rd, Bend of Islands.

WATCH THIS SPACE!

WE'LL LET YOU KNOW WHEN CAFÉ BENDERS IS AGAIN OPEN FOR BUSINESS ON THE THIRD SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH



Next Bird Walk:
Sunday
13 December





Isolation in the Bend of Islands

Covid 19 has really put a dampener on any regular community activities this year, so what have we all been doing whilst the restrictions have been in force? Here is a sample from around the Bend:

There has been time for reflection ...



Ona and Syd looking to the future

We have all discovered Zoom and so monthly Committee Meetings have continued with lots of online communication. Some of the actions you will find in this newsletter but for most of the work accomplished by the Committee you will need to read the AGM Reports.

Many have been working from home and enjoying the extra time usually taken up behind the steering wheel, or being at home and have focussed on the task that has been waiting some time. **Read: Carol and Alan Bonny's story.**

Schools have been closed, so what makes home schooling, when you walk away from the dining table, such an exciting experience? **Read: Jarrah Pauli's adventure in the Neil Douglas Reserve.**

Certainly, there have been more people out walking the roads giving a friendly wave and greeting and these daily ventures have resulted in giving us more time to rediscover all the delights of living in the Bend, as well as to think of family, friends and social relationships. **Read: Joy's story.**

A magnificently wet Winter/Spring season has produced an incredible array of orchids and spring flowers and we have been privileged to live here to wander on our daily walks to explore and find something new or special.

Thank you for sharing your photos (more second last page).

(Below left to right: Maroonhood, Salmon Sun Orchid, and Forest Sun Orchid)





A Bonny lockdown

Covid strikes and lockdown means our annual Kombi gathering of over 100 vehicles for the Easter weekend is cancelled! What will we do!!!

Well, time to knuckle down and get stuck into finishing off our house. Mudbrick homes are notorious for never being finished in a lot of cases and I don't want ours to be one of those. Like the Sydney Harbour Bridge, when you think you have finished it's time to start all over again with the maintenance jobs.

I have spent my time staining "miles" of ceiling boards, sanding and painting "miles" of fascia boards, repairing and repainting the outside render on "miles" of walls. (that may be a slight exaggeration!) But the majority of my time has been spent with me playing with mud.

Winter was not the best time to be diving into a bucket of mud with rubber gloved hands and splashing copious amounts of water onto the walls ending up wet to the armpits! Not pleasant and definitely not warm. It's one of those elephant tasks, a little each day and eventually you come to the end quicker than you imagined. I know I will have the perfect technique by the time I get to the end.

To date the process goes like this ... smash up broken mudbricks, pass them through a sieve, mix with some sand and add water to get a thick creamy consistency, let it sit for a while and then climb a ladder and get rubbing. Nothing to it! It's a joy at the end of a big day to stand back and see what you have achieved and as a reward just sit outside by the warm fire under the stars with a celebratory drink.

This same spot is our frequent pretend coffee shop where we have our morning teas and lunch, sitting in the sunshine or shade to watch the passing parade of our amazing birdlife.

I must say that I have enjoyed this strange period in our history in a lot of ways. We have made great progress here and have spent a lot more time sitting and chatting and watching the world go by. Where could you find a more special place to be in isolation?

Carol Bonny



A platypus sighting

It was the 4th of August. I had Integrated Studies. 'Go outside', they said, 'Get some fresh air take some photos'.

So off I went, binos and camera close at hand. Down into Neil Douglas Reserve at the end of Gongflers. I wandered down to the abandoned car and cut straight through to the river; dodging spider webs as I went until I was almost opposite the Mount Lofty carpark, just upstream from the rapid. This was my quiet space where everything was so peaceful.

For about twenty minutes to half an hour I stood in the same spot, looking at anything that came my way. Nothing too exciting. With a careful eye on the time I was just preparing to go when my binos came down from a pair of Honeyeaters on the far side of the river in a large wattle bush, still flowering at the time.

I caught a flicker of movement in the bottom corner of my left eye. My eyes were on it like lighting and my heart rate jumped through the roof. A platypus had come up to take a breath! Before I could get my camera up, it was down again, probably foraging or just swimming home.

After several seconds of intense breathing, there it was again! My camera trained on the spot I clicked away madly while admiring the majestic duck-like bill on the soaking wet shiny body – after five seconds it was gone. I did not have a proper look at it until later, when I browsed the photos on the camera.

I really wish that I had followed it upstream further but Integrated Studies was drawing to an end and I had to be home soon. So once more (this time with my heart beating wildly from excitement) I dodged the spider webs and I headed home.

Later on, I reported the sighting on iNaturalist and The Australian Platypus Conservancy. Wow! What a start to my day!

Jarrah Pauli (aged 13)





Special “house” critters

While Colin was unable to continue working during the lockdown, he found time to get to know some rather special creatures who are sharing his house.

A young beautiful brush-tailed phascogale named “Sage” and his older companion who has been in the wars: “Stumpy”.

And hiding in his bush garden he found “Yellowtail” the echidna.



Lockdown

Lockdown for us has meant endless house projects being started and finished. Amazing! Daily routines of walking the circuit or driving to get shopping and combining it with a walk somewhere – Yarra Glen, Warrandyte, the dam.

Zoom chats with friends, sadness at loss of friends passing away and not being able to be with them. Grateful for the space we have here in the bush, watching nature.

Frustration with restrictions some days, hardly think about them others. Lots of reading ... 20 novels, some trashy and light because too much intensity over Covid-19 around, others in-depth and thought provoking.

The full range of feelings... frustration, calm, despair, happiness. Anxiety about large crowds anywhere....

But yesterday, the sun was out and we went out for lunch and felt great. We are on the home stretch and it feels like a weight is lifting.

Joy Flanagan



Little shed revamped; one of a number of lockdown projects.



What lockdown?

I was surprised when someone told me the other day that apparently we had been in lockdown for much of this year. I jest, of course, but for some of us a lockdown provides a wonderful excuse to make the most of all that peace and tranquillity the estate agents promised us when we came to live here.

I've had four all-day fuel reduction burns since 11 August; a number I aspire to every year but have never found the time before. Like splitting firewood and other repetitive tasks, I find this activity great for getting lost in your thoughts; for me a form of meditation. Fortunately I'm not often bothered by negative emotions, so a day of stoking a fire with leaves and tiny twigs is a day of having time to sometimes reminisce, sometimes be in the moment, and sometimes plan for the coming weeks and months.

The native plants flowering this year have either been phenomenal or lockdown has got me out in my backyard more often to appreciate them, or both. We had clumps of those delicate but deadly little sun dews in every sunny patch for a while. And the orchids! If there were any I didn't see in our own backyard I was able to appreciate them on the BOI Facebook page, where so many of you were posting your sightings.



The choughs appeared to celebrate spring more than ever this year. Leaping from branch to branch for no other reason than the sheer joy of it and then snuggling up to and preening each other was endlessly entertaining for those of us watching through our windows. And of course the chough babies with their oversized eyebrows, matchstick legs and precarious balance are always good to bring on a smile or two.

As one of our family members is in the senior category we decided very early on to replace our weekly food shopping outing with deliveries from a supermarket. In addition, Fine foods greengrocers in Diamond Creek cleverly teamed up with the local baker and butcher to deliver all the things we prefer not to get from a supermarket. To top it off, BOI resident Flavia Pintossi's delivery boy pops a jar of her high-quality honey on our door step within a day of ordering and paying via internet banking.

Of course it was only a matter of time before I needed to buy some hardware bits and pieces. Not a problem; I ordered online, drove to the hardware, parked in one of the bays set aside for the purpose, rang the given number and popped my boot lid. Shortly my goods were placed in the boot by a staff member who shut the boot and gave me a wave through my closed driver's window and I was away without getting out of the car.

Even our isolation birthdays were celebrated with most of the usual elements. Both were celebrated with friends on Zoom.

In my case my present was delivered to our door by a tool shop. Barb cleverly found a local catering company to deliver my birthday dinner. When it arrived there were inflated balloons taped to the boxes!

We've lost count of the Zoom meetings and Zoom webinars we've joined this year. Barb discovered that Kenneth Park had teamed up with the Old Treasury Building Museum to adapt his city walking tours to online tours of historical buildings and gardens around the world. We've not only been around the world with Kenneth, but Barb's U3A Travellers' Tales class also transferred to Zoom. As a matter of fact as I type this Barb is in Sri Lanka with U3A.

I've also managed to catch both Robyn and Dianne from our fire brigade doing very interesting presentations on District 14 training webinars. Dianne celebrated forty years of social change instigated by our historically out-of-the-ordinary brigade – eventually symbolised by the RED TRUCK ... GREEN HEART banner in our fire station. Robyn presented some thought-provoking research on whether bushfire foams and retardants create environmental issues.

But my three favourite Zoom sessions were our two Fireguard meetings and the BICA AGM, all of which allowed us to see, joke around with and learn from our neighbours – many of whom we've not seen much of since the last Café Benders in... when was it?

I have to admit to one frustrating social moment both provided and prevented by life in lockdown. When a medical specialist's appointment finally arrived months after I booked it I jumped into my car in plenty of time and pushed the start button. Nothing! After months of very little driving my battery had lost its charge. I hastily attached the battery charger and switched it to boost. After five minutes, still nothing. After ten, a bit of a slothful attempt but not enough to turn the motor over. After fifteen I sent out an SOS to the most reliable person in the BOI. Within minutes a masked Wolfgang Krause was nosing his bonnet up to mine. As he triggered his bonnet I tried one last time and my car started! The mere presence of Wolfgang was apparently enough to shame it into doing its job. What a chance to have a lockdown chat to a neighbour this should have been, but by now I was running late and had to say "thanks" and "bye" in the same sentence.

Both Barb and I have frequently encountered various neighbours while on our separate walks along BOI roads and bush paths. I even had a good chat with someone I haven't seen for years, who thought I was Ross Henry. I took that as a compliment, but on reflection it was just my lockdown hair length that did it. I made up a whole lot of lies about what I (Ross) had been up to lately, and then after satisfying my social needs for the day we went our separate ways.

But seriously, how lucky we are to be a part of this nature-filled environment that is the Environmental Living Zone, at times like this. If we were ever lapsing into taking it for granted before then this has thrown a spotlight on its marvellous ability to provide so much more than could ever be possible in a city apartment or even a suburban backyard.

Alan Bluhm



Working with Council

BICA meeting with Municipal Fire Prevention Officer and the Nillumbik Shire Council (NSC) Emergency Management Team

At last year's BICA AGM concerns were raised about the generic letter issued to householders in Nillumbik re preparing properties for the summer.

As a result, BICA sought a meeting with Simon Roylance, Municipal Fire Prevention Officer to introduce him and the NSC Emergency Management Team to Bend of Islands and the regulations that govern the SUZ2, especially in relation to vegetation management.

We also wanted to reassure Council that residents in BOI take fire risk seriously and largely are involved in a variety of forums including Fireguard, Fire Ready meetings and Brigade activities to plan and prepare for summer.

The meeting was delayed due to both bushfires and Covid and finally took place via Zoom in September.

BICA representatives Pam McMahon, Julie Martindale, Frank Pierce, Andy McMahon, Peter and Liz Mildenhall and the Christmas Hills Fire Brigade Captain, Di Simmons, participated.

Due to the volume of correspondence Council had already received about the 2019 letter, they had amended the 2020 letter to remove the requirement to clear properties of *dead trees*. They had also included a paragraph which directs residents to check with Council re permits before removing vegetation.

After our discussion the *managing of vegetation* was considered more appropriate thinking and wording than *removal of vegetation* in future letters.

An onsite meeting and tour are planned when it's Covid-safe and the intention is to further build an ongoing relationship with the Emergency Management Team.

Liz Mildenhall

Sugarloaf Link Project Update

BICA has recently received the last round of weed control funding for this project. Canopy Connections (Tserin Wright) and the Narrap crew aim to begin work again this month. Works will include follow-up site visits to properties previously worked on, to ensure weed control works have been successful and target any recruitment or weeds missed. There have also been a few new landowners who have expressed interest in joining up, which is fantastic.

The majority of the weeds that we have targeted are weedy wattles and herbaceous species such as Bridal and Bluebell creeper. Generally, most sites were in good condition. The Narrap works crew also worked on properties on Ironbark and Henley roads and targeted mostly weedy wattles, Blackberry, Bluebell creeper Arum lilies, Agapanthus and Tree Tobacco.

The Deer control program under the Sugarloaf project has continued to be a great success and has been able to continue with appropriate approval and Covid works permits. Deer have been removed on sites on Henley Road, Skyline Road, Oxley Road, Sugarloaf Track and Ridge Road.

The deer control project boundary has just been extended, due to decreasing deer numbers in the project area. The new boundary will extend west to meet the Kangaroo Ground-St Andrews Road and runs north along this road to just above St Andrews. The eastern boundary will be the Kinglake National Park, or the Shire boundary.

BICA also funded an order of indigenous shrubs, small trees and tree guards to give away to eight of the properties who removed woody weeds, especially on sites where they were helping to create a screen from the road. Two hundred plants with guards and stakes were given away.

Jo Henry





Working with Council (continued)

Candid critters' wildlife cameras

BICA received a Community Environment Grant from Nillumbik Council to purchase five wildlife cameras (and associated equipment) to run a community education project in the BOI.

The original project plan was to train interested residents in collecting wildlife data and we were planning on running a community workshop. However, this was not possible this year and was put on hold.

Instead we put the cameras out to conduct a survey with the brush-tailed phascogale being our target species. The cameras were set up in April and early May, as we were told by Mark Scida that this was to best time to ensure sightings while limiting the disturbance to baby phascogales and their mothers.

Discussion with Andrew McMahon and Dylan Osler helped design a rough survey plan. We know we have phascogales living in the Bend, but we know little about what habitat type they prefer.

Rather than scattering the cameras in random locations, we aimed to set them up relatively close together (approximately 200 metres apart) but in different vegetation types, such as on an open ridge top, dense burgan, open gully lines etc.

The cameras were set up for two weeks in different areas, on Gongflers Drive and then on the Co-op.

Thankfully a phascogale was photographed in each area. Within the Gongflers Drive cluster one was seen on the escarpment in the new deer exclusion plot, and the other was captured on the Co-op (A Track) in an open ridgeline site. It would be great if this monitoring project could continue yearly in different areas to help build a picture of where these animals like to live.

The cameras are also available for BICA members to borrow anytime and have already been used by a few keen locals.

Jo Henry



Noise

What constitutes noise pollution? One person's music is another person's unbearable noise. 'Music' is in the ear of the beholder.

There are some easy targets of course: the sound of helicopters overhead is extremely intrusive; deafening motorbikes can make your ears bleed and bogans doing burnouts make you weep for humanity in general. But if we think about noise pollution at all, is it by definition man-made? Can nature produce noise pollution? Consider this thought experiment.

When I go to sleep at night the frogs in my ponds can indeed be intrusive – but never annoying. Rather they are a joyful reminder that I have the luxury of living in the bush.

But imagine if my frogs were 'pest' frogs? Not indigenous at all but rather displacing the local populations. Would the sound be as appealing to me? I doubt I could be so objective.

When I lived in the Dandenong Ranges, I hated the constant call of the Indian Myna – pest birds that displace the local species, taking over their nests, chasing out adults, and even killing the young. I hated their call for what it represented. But their call was not *too* dissimilar from that of the Grey butcherbird, a native species and a fine (if a bit raucous) chorister.

I suppose all this shows is that whatever the sound, and whatever its source, sound waves travel to our ears and, like lightning, we arrive at our judgment. Sing, or swing. Or maybe it's just me and I should learn to 'chill'.

Richard Laurie



Our environment

Weed management

Anyone familiar with the DELWP land at the end of Henley Road would have noticed the large population of Paterson's Curse that established this spring. We're unsure of the size of the population in previous years, but as for many plant populations (local and exotic) this has been a bumper year.

Motivated by DELWP's and Heritage's previous inertia to control Blackberry on the site – pursued vigorously by Frank Pierce – and things-to-do during Covid syndrome, a group of us "whipper-snipped" the population during October. We reckon the population spread over some 2ha and that we reduced the population by at least 90%. As the growing season seems to continue unabated, a follow-up slashing would be desirable, so I'll try to get DELWP involved, as we also need them to get onto the Blackberries asap. Both species are classified as noxious weeds and listed under the *Catchment and Land Protection (CALP) Act 1994*, so DELWP have a legislated obligation to actively control them. We can only hope!

Many thanks to Ross, Pete Rae, Floss and Mike Skewes.

Andy McMahon



Wildlife rescue and care

Wildlife rescuer

Linda Stammers, Bend of Islands 0408 141 317

Wildlife rescue groups

- Wildlife Rescuers Inc. 0417 506 941
- Wildlife Victoria 03 8400 7300 or use the phone app *Snap Send Solve*

Mange Management (wombats)

- report online at mangemanagement.org.au or phone 0431 600 125



Carers/shelters are contacted through Wildlife Rescuers or Wildlife Victoria.

Wildlife (generally) need to be rescued and vet checked before going to a carer.

Not all vets are wildlife friendly, so call a rescue organisation for recommendations if you are taking an animal directly to a vet yourself.

Wildlife need to be assessed ASAP; it is an offence for the general public to keep or care for wildlife without a licence. They have very specialised diets and needs.

Victoria Police and the Nillumbik Shire Council Ranger can euthanise wildlife but it's always best to call a rescuer first to assess the animal's injuries (some rescuers are able to euthanise). This is so they are not unnecessarily euthanised. But if the animal is hazard/danger to road users call Police. Not all Police will euthanise animals (personal reasons).

If you have questions let me know.

PS. If anyone is interested in basic wildlife rescue there are sessions run by Wildlife Victoria to become a registered rescuer/transporter or you can do the course for your own benefit in case you come across injured/sick wildlife. Wildlife Victoria also have very helpful information on their website.

**Linda Stammers
Mobile 0408 141 317**



BIRD NOTES

The following can be reported since April 2020.

Lyrebird Records

From mid-June, a Lyrebird was heard calling almost daily from its mounds near Stevenson Creek north of the Co-op. A new nest was found further down Stevenson Creek and in late June a female was sitting on an egg. The egg hatched in mid-August and the female was very active, feeding the chick. Unfortunately, on a night in late August, the nest was predated by a fox and the chick was taken. This is a sad outcome, but shows the tenuous nature of survival in the wild.

The female survived unscathed and will hopefully have better luck next season.

Two older nests have been found near Stevenson Creek, one known to have been there since 2015. These were higher up in trees and hopefully chicks were successfully raised from these.

During the 2020 monitoring, at least 2 male and 2 female Lyrebirds were recorded in the area. It is fantastic that these iconic birds have re-established in our patch, following a 38-year absence after the 1962 fires.

BICA's new motion cameras were used extensively to monitor this significant breeding event, enabling comprehensive data to be documented which gives an insight into the amazing energy input and complexities of the Lyrebirds breeding habits.

We now have 400+ Lyrebird records reported since July 2000. Details and analysis can be found on the Birds Page of the BICA website.

Please pass on details of any 'encounters' you are lucky enough to have with these iconic birds. Our records form concrete evidence that the Warrandyte-Kinglake Habitat Corridor is working and that 'Stevenson Creek/Skyline escarpment' is an important part of this link.



Female Lyrebird in nest



Lyrebird Egg in nest



Female Lyrebird, with curved tail from nest sitting



Male Lyrebird displaying on its mound

Bird Survey

Due to Covid-19, all BICA events have been cancelled. To maintain continuity of the on-going Bird Survey, the regulars have been holding 'restricted surveys' which have been designed to conservatively conform with the restrictions, as they have varied throughout the period, with maximum group size of 2 family members and with 'bird call' being done by Zoom.



BIRD NOTES (continued)

The bird survey highlights for the period were:

- **April: Rose Robin** (separate sightings of male and female) and **Rufous Fantail**, at Yanakie
- **May: Rose Robin** (two separate birds) and a **Tawny Frogmouth**, at Yanakie
- **June:** two **Lyrebirds** were heard calling simultaneously, three **Crested Shrike-tits** were seen together, a **Blue-winged Parrot** and a **Fairy Martin** were seen flying over, in the NE corner of the Bend.
- **July: Rose Robin**, at Yanakie
- **October: Brush Cuckoo**, at Yanakie.

New birds for the BICA list

Noisy Friarbird

seen and photographed by many at Gavin and Mal's on 16/10/20. Jarrah Pauli had noted a 'possible record' a month earlier in the same area.



Noisy Friarbird

Other interesting observations

- **Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater** was seen by Gavin and Mal on Skyline Road just north of the Co-op on 16/5/20.
- **Olive Whistler** seen by Gavin at Yanakie 1/8/20.
- **Australian Shelduck** several sightings in the Bend; including mother with 10 chicks by Jeff Drummond on 12/8/20.
- **Red-capped Robin** was seen by FP on the Co-op on 22/10/20.
- **White-bellied Sea Eagle** seen flying above the river by Deirdre Lucas on 25/10/20.
- **Cicadabird** was heard well by FP on the Co-op on 29 and 30/10/20.
- **Channel-billed Cuckoo** was recorded by Gavin Masters on 3/11/20, John Roberts on 4/11/20, and Mike Skewes on 4/11/20.
- **White-throated Nightjars** have returned. Tom Clark recorded it on 19/9/20, earlier than previous years.

There have been some good reports from nearby – **Freckled Duck, Pink-eared Duck and White-phase Grey Goshawk** at Heritage Golf Course. **Plumed Whistling Duck** in KG. **Brown Gerygone** at Sugarloaf Dam. **Rainbow Bee-eaters** in Research. So always worth being on the lookout for one of these in the Bend.

The Birds page of the BICA website has lots of links to information about the birds of our area, as well as a summary of our on-going bird survey. See <https://bendofislands.wordpress.com/flora-and-fauna/birds/>

Could you please record the details of any unusual sightings you make and pass them on to Frank Pierce (9712 0237), or email – jmandfp@bigpond.com – especially Lyrebirds.

All are welcome on the bird survey walks on the 2nd Sunday of each month, once Covid restrictions are lifted. See the BICA Calendar for start times; we meet at the upper corner of Henley and Catani.

Frank Pierce

BICA AGM - the Southern Toadlet

Our AGM guest speaker was ecologist Craig Cleeland, who shared his extensive knowledge of the Southern Toadlet and the results of his recent surveys, including the Frog Census.

Southern Toadlets breed in shallow depressions without need of water, in the hope that autumn-winter rains will provide a predator-free pool for their tadpoles.

A video of Craig's interesting presentation can be found on the BICA website, at: <https://bendofislands.wordpress.com/news/>

Craig has produced a handy pamphlet called Getting to know the Frogs of Melbourne: [Frogs of Melbourne PDF](#)



Pseudophryne semimarmorata
Southern Toadlet, Sugarloaf Dam.

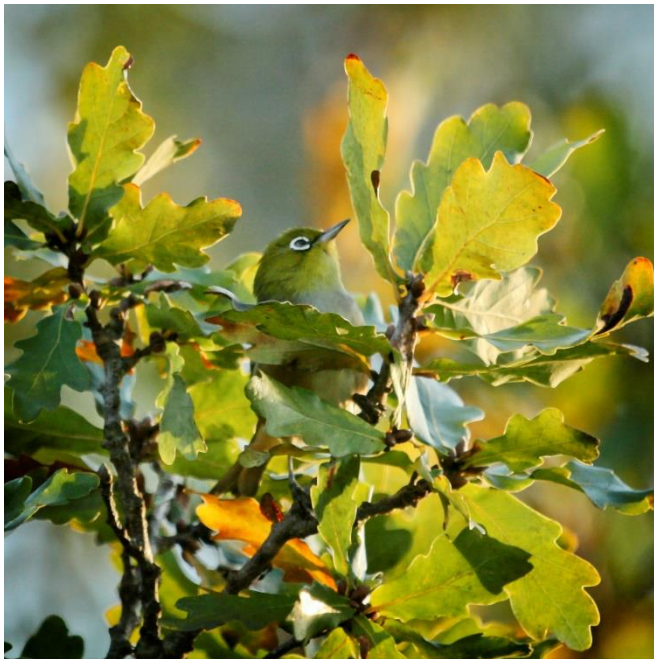


That's not a Rufous Songlark?

Early in the spring, we were walking along Gongflers Drive when we heard the distinctive calls of a Rufous Songlark (*Megalurus mathewsi*).

This was quite a surprise as the vegetation along Gongflers is not really right for Songlarks which prefer open grassy country with just a few trees. Also, while they are seen around the northern edges of Melbourne, they are not common and had not yet been recorded in Bend of Islands. However, as it was early in the spring, it was also possible that this was one on migration. Despite a moderately thorough look, we were not able to see it which was a bit disappointing.

Then a few weeks later (while hanging the washing!) I heard it again. The tree was relatively leafless but there was no sign of the moderately large Songlark. Instead, scanning revealed a displaying Silvereye (*Zosterops lateralis*) mimicking the call of the Songlark.



A familiar garden resident in the Bend, throughout the year, the Silvereye is a small bird with a conspicuous ring of white feathers around the eye. Spread right across Australia, the local birds have a grey back and olive-green head and wings.

The Silvereye belongs to a group of birds known as white-eyes. The white-eyes (*Zosteropidae*) are a family of small passerines spread right across the Old-World Tropics (Africa and Asia) and Australasia. White-eyes inhabit most tropical islands in the Indian Ocean and the western Pacific with more than 100 species in the family.

There are some species widespread across continents like the Silvereye, but most species are endemic to single islands or archipelagos.

This is due to their ability to island hop demonstrated by the silvereye naturally colonising New Zealand in the mid-1800s. The Maori name is tauhou ("stranger") for this 'new' bird. They are now among the most common birds in New Zealand.

In the Bend, we have Silvereyes in our gardens all year round, however these are not necessarily the same birds.

During the spring and summer, the birds are local breeders and are from the sub-species *ssp westerensis*, but in the winter they are replaced with birds from Tasmania *ssp lateralis*. While they are very similar, the Tasmanian birds have brighter chestnut flanks. The local breeders can have quite bright buff flanks, however. The annual movements of the migrants are sometimes obvious at the seasonal changes, with streams of the little birds moving through and above the trees, calling constantly.

Silvereyes' calls are usually not very complex, and they are not renowned as great singers, however when they are breeding, the males' songs often include phrases of mimicry from other birds. While not in the same league as Superb Lyrebirds (*Menura novaehollandiae*), these notes can be quite distinctive and identifiable as to their original source, as we discovered.

This spring, Silvereyes have been heard displaying with calls from the Rufous Songlark (*Megalurus mathewsi*), as well as Pallid Cuckoo (*Cacomantis pallidus*). While the cuckoo is common around here, the nearest record for the Rufous Songlark was in KG last year, so not too far away. Both birds have loud, distinctive songs and call persistently when they are breeding and so would be likely choices to copy.



So, while not the flashiest birds in the garden, Silvereyes are clearly birds with diverse behaviours that are interesting to observe.

Gavin Masters



This beautiful common fringe-lily was spotted on the Co-op in September this year.



News from the Fire Brigade

It has been a relatively quiet winter and early spring in the Fire Brigade with training and preparation somewhat curtailed by Covid restrictions and, it seems, fewer turnouts such as motor vehicle accidents. We have had quite a wet winter and early spring with above average rainfall and the onset of a La Nina effect which may bring more rainfall yet.

We have had a lot of growth and it is a good time to review your Fire Plans and have a look around the house and surrounds to identify areas that need a clean- up prior to the onset of dry, hot and windy weather which will inevitably come!

We have had a couple of major turnouts to support local brigades at structure fires: one at Balgownie wine estate in Dixons Creek which saw the restaurant razed despite our best efforts but other assets were saved. More recently we supported crews to a major studio fire in Cottles Bridge which saw the building destroyed but other nearby structures saved. In both cases, Christmas Hills crew donned breathing apparatus and provided close support to the local brigades. It's worth mentioning two smaller incidents because one was the result of a burn off on private property and the other came from a camp fire not properly extinguished. As always, we need to take care.

Hopefully readers will take advantage of Fire Ready briefings and Fireguard meetings that will be held over the coming weeks and revisit their Bushfire Plans, for both preparation and any emergency that may come.

Some may have seen the recent ABC series on Big Weather which had some interesting footage on preparation and also some confronting video on ember attack that demonstrates the reality of a severe bushfire.

Brigade members have been preparing for the coming season, within the current Covid restrictions, with lots of Zoom meetings and on-line training and courses. We have welcomed a new member transferring from another Brigade, who has moved into Catani Blvd. When CFA allows us, we will recruit more locals from both the North and South end, probably in 2021.

Like all of you we look forward to the easing of restrictions as the numbers get better in the Victorian community. Don't forget to keep up-to-date with Brigade news through our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ChristmasHillsFireBrigade/>

Cheers
Peter Mildenhall
Community Safety Co-ordinator
Christmas Hills Fire Brigade
Mob: 0400 120 577 Home: 9712 0577

Caption story below: A good job, well done by the efforts of lots of Brigades (including Pantom Hill, Christmas Hills and Kangaroo Ground Brigades), and a GREAT photo taken by Christmas Hills Firefighter Tris D, with Christmas Hills John R on the left, and Nev R on the right, with Kangaroo Ground's Duncan B in the centre.

INCIDENTS RESCUE

Lost boy rescued on Mt Disappointment

About 200 CFA volunteers from 24 brigades joined hundreds of people over the Queen's Birthday long weekend to search for a missing 14-year-old boy who was on a camping trip with his family on Mount Disappointment.

Alan Wilson, colleague son into dense bushland while on a walk with his father and brother on Monday 8 June, a huge search was organised by Victoria Police. In addition to the CFA volunteers, members from SES, Ambulance Victoria, Bush Search and Rescue Victoria and search rescue units were also on scene, just as support.

A search was carried out around the clock with shifts changing between day and night. Wilson, who is autistic and doesn't speak, endured two nights in heating conditions wearing just a thin hoodie and trackout pants.

The thick bush hampered search efforts both from the ground and air, but thankfully William was found alive at about midday on 10 June.

Whitewater brigade Third Lieutenant Scott Allen joined the search on Tuesday morning and continued until about 8pm after covering 4 km - never near where William went missing. He was part of a team of 15 people from the Whitewater Diamond Valley Group of brigades. Some of William's relatives also joined this team.

Most of the search area is Whitewater brigade's normal burnoff area, so Scott was familiar with the terrain.

"We had the Black Saturday fire up there and we sometimes look for lost four-wheel drivers and guide them back along the track," Scott said.

"What gave me hope was that the large fire canopy kept the temperature a few degrees warmer than outside the bush. It was quite wet and slippery, though the worst injuries were only cuts and bruises.

"Some areas were so dense that it took an hour to walk 100 metres, and sometimes I'd be in the yellow of the gully 10 metres away from me. Even so often we had to regroup to make sure our relative was still together.

"We used our thermal imaging cameras to check areas that were difficult to access. We worked from an inflow later in the day. A thermal imaging camera can be very beneficial.

Police CFA volunteers from Pantom Hill brigade searched on Wednesday morning

and only a couple of them had taken part in a search before.

"I was happy for our brigade to help, so I sent a text message to our 23 active members and 19 volunteered to help with the search," Captain Simon Wallace said.

Usually when he's in the bush Simon has to think about fighting a fire, but this time he had to focus on searching for a boy with special needs.

"We left the station at 6.30am and it was very cold. We had to organise more all-weather jackets as we only have six in our brigade. We rang other brigades and borrowed extra ones. We also had to organise other things such as back packs and private cars.

"When I saw the sheer thickness of the bush, I realised this was going to be a daunting task," Simon said. "It was like walking through a jungle. Fallen trees were covered in wet moss which was very slippery. But there was a real desire to find William.

"We were conscious of the fact we couldn't shout to each other because the noise may have made William run away."

Simon and his brigade team were allocated a seven-kilometre search area. "We walked in a straight line 10 to 15 metres apart, making sure we could see the person on our left and right."

"When we were told to cease searching and return to the staging area, it didn't sound good. But we then heard by phone that William had been found alive and we were really relieved.

Following this experience Simon put together a checklist of items to take on this type of search to help the brigade in the future.

"It was an awesome experience taking part in the rescue. Everyone was so driven to find him. And through participating, our brigade members gained new experiences. You always learn something.

CFA Commander Paul Elio was very pleased with CFA's response.

"We had an overwhelming amount of support from CFA members across Victoria," Paul said. "On request from Victoria Police, our forward planning was to provide crews for another four days around the clock."

"I'd like to thank everyone who helped and offered their support. The search and rescue involved nearly 800 people and there were many more members who wanted to help."

STORY DUNCAN MURRELL





VALE

Vale Tim Ealey On the shoulders of which giants?

We are all privileged to live in the Bend. But how often do we stop to think about the events and people that shaped the ELZ?

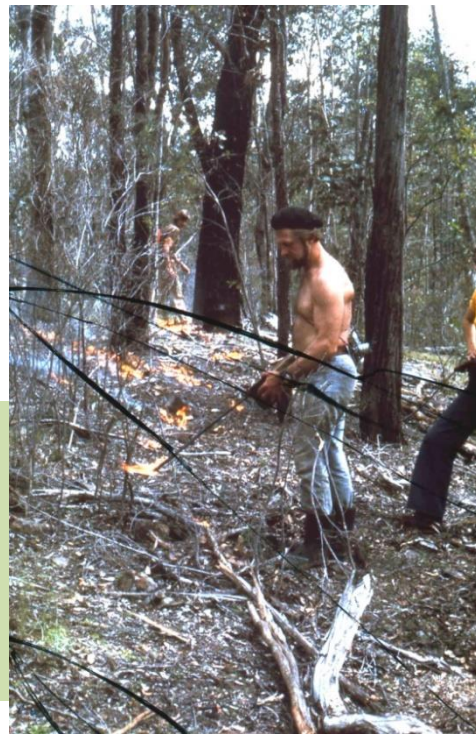
Tim Ealey died in late October after battling a chronic respiratory condition over several years. Tim was one of the major figures who were inspirational and instrumental in protecting the Bend of Islands and developing the ELZ. Tim provided the intellectual and scientific heft behind the concept of 'Residential Conservation'.

For members of The Round the Bend Conservation Co-operative, Tim was not only a co-founder but a pioneering conservationist whose tireless efforts helped shape the way the Co-op operates today.

One example of Tim's pioneering approach was to introduce mosaic burning into the Co-op's land management strategies in the early 1970s. Today it is recognised as 'indigenous burning'. One of the Co-op's many terms of endearment for Tim is 'Tim the Torch'.

Whether it was ground breaking research on kangaroos in Central Australia, early scientific expeditions to Antarctica, establishing the first Australian University Environmental Science course, or rehabilitating mangroves on Western Port Bay, Tim's energy, charisma and infectious sense of humour were truly a force of nature.

Recognising Tim as one of the 'giants' of conservation is not without its irony. Tim was, some would say, 'height



challenged' and a fitting legacy is to have the enduring association with a tiny marsupial he discovered in the Pilbara, named after him: [Ningau timealeyi](#).

Tim was indeed the mouse that roared.

John Roberts

Vale Dr Tim Ealey OAM 29 March 1927 – 21 October 2020

Tim Ealey was a Senior lecturer in Zoology at Monash University in the 60s at a time when there was a growing awareness of environmental issues and their importance. So, he began classes in applied ecology and environmental conservation. In 1973 he became Director of the Graduate School of Environmental Science at Monash.

Tim was always interested in research and practical projects, "walking the talk" and became involved in a community driven movement to save an area in the North-east of Melbourne threatened by a proposal to dam the Yarra River below Yering Gorge, the Bend of Islands. Tim worked on this with Neil Douglas, the Artist and other locals.

The big question was, what was the best way to ensure that this area of prime Ironbark Forest could be maintained into the future?

Residential Conservation evolved as the solution.

Tim worked with a small group to set up the Round the Bend Conservation Co-operative in 1971, to develop a practical solution to live on the land and still maintain the integrity of the environment.



Eventually in 1975 his research along with that of his joint authors (Neil Douglas, Bob English, Gary Jungwirth, John Lawson and Mal McClure) was published by ACF. The paper, **Residential Conservation** was presented at an ACF Symposium as a "Proposal for a New Zoning Category and Management Concept for Privately Owned Land".

This paper went on to become the basis of our current Environmental Living Zone.

Tim was an active and much appreciated member of the Co-op and our Community for many years.

Janet Mattiske

For more details on Tim see:
<https://www.monash.edu/vale/home/articles/vale-dr-tim-ealey-oam>



VALE

Mick Woiwod 31 March 1929 – 26 August 2020

Tributes have flowed for local historian and past resident of the Bend of Islands, Mick Woiwod, who died on 26 August aged 91.

It was the late 70s when we invited Mick to our newly acquired block of land on Skyline Road which began Mick's love of and commitment to the Bend of Islands community, the local environment and its history.

Mick was a contributor to the BICA Newsletter.

We hope you enjoy this reprint of Mick's story from **Newsletter Number 58 November 2003**, along with tributes from some of his local friends.

Janet Mattiske

OUR LOCAL ROADS

Mick Woiwod

We use them practically every day with seldom a thought as to how they came into being. Each has a story to tell! Some began millennia ago as Wurundjeri pathways, others as wheel-tracks of first white settlers. All have a reason for being the way they are.

Take Henley Road! Almost certainly its origins were in a native pathway used by Wurundjeri clans moving seasonally between their kangaroo hunting ground (today's K.G.) and Birrarung (the river we now know as the Yarra). Next time you drive it, note that throughout it follows the sole available east-west ridge to the river. In 1840, James Murray widened it and built the first bridge across Watsons Creek to reach his homestead alongside the present Henley Road Bridge. It became known as 'Murray's Track' and when he sold to Jimmy McPherson, as 'McPherson's Track'.

When Ned Haughton bought the Bend of Islands in the early 1920s an annual regatta used to be held on the stretch of river flowing through the now Heritage Golf Course so he dubbed it 'Henley Road'.

It was Ned too who named Catani Boulevard after he'd carved that windiest of all of our roads through the bush of the Bend of Islands.

Carlo Catani, after whom it is named, was a charismatic engineer whose name is perpetrated today in St Kilda's Catani Gardens and in Lake Catani on top of Mt Buffalo. Ned Haughton used popular Carlo's name to promote his dream of a 'Grand Boulevard' from the Boulevard in Ivanhoe, through the Bend of Islands to Yarra Glen.

Ned also named Gongflers Drive. The story goes something like this: He planned to build a golf course on its southernmost point and with angling another popular sport in the 1920s, he dreamt up the name 'Golfers and Anglers Drive' to attract buyers to the Bend. Unlike his daughter Jessie's recent Catani sanctuary effort, he saw the name as too long, so (as his son explained it to me years ago) he took the 'Go' out of Golfers, the 'ng' from Anglers, the 'fl' from golfers and the 'ers' from Anglers to make up the magical 'Gongflers' we have today.

Calwell Road is named after local landowner, the Hon. Arthur Augustus Calwell, MP, Oxley Road after the Oxley family, Ironbark after the tree Ned planted along it; and Wendy Way after Wendy Oliver who once owned the Heritage land. Perhaps it's time the 'Round the Bend Conservation Cooperative', with its own beguiling name, dreamt up some inspirational names for its pedestrian A, B & C Tracks.



Memories of Mick: creative builder and passionate historian

Our memories of Mick fall into a couple of distinct but overlapping categories. Chronologically, the first and probably dominant one is his relationship to our house in Catani Boulevard, which we sadly have just left.

Mick worked closely with Carol Ann, the project manager and chief labourer, in providing guidance from the ground up, so to speak. So, from the pouring of the foundations to the laying of the brick floor, Mick was always there with sound advice and heavy-duty labour to help us novice builders understand what was necessary and how to accomplish it. He himself was a heavy-duty mud brick maker for the house he shared with Marg and family, once producing 200 bricks in a single day while we struggled to reach 50.

Faced with a design that contained no straight lines, Mick proved himself adept at creating solutions for the many problems that arose. The most striking is the gravity-defying arch that leads off the lounge. It had to be constructed not on a single plane but leaning forward while arching upwards. Carol Ann had taken a clay model of the house interior she had made to a local engineer, who failed to come to grips with the design for the arch, but Mick, working from years of building experience, decided simply to pack it with reinforcing rods and metal plates, all of which were hidden in the final mud construction. Almost literally to his dying day, Mick would ask us if his arch was still standing. Of course, it was and still is. Other monuments to Mick in the house are the inverted arches, the parabolic fireplace and the brick floor and steps.

Towards the latter stages of the house construction, as the winter cold seeped into Mick's body, battered by years of hard physical activity, somehow the conversation turned to his dreams of further formal education and a second career as a writer.

A school dropout previously unaware of university mature age entry programs, he was quickly accepted at La Trobe, where after three years his record in history qualified him to undertake honours. Unfortunately, illness stopped him

from completing the year, so instead, in the following decades Mick produced a corpus of more than twenty historical volumes.

Moving from resurrecting local post-colonial history Mick eventually was able to follow his passion for setting the record straight about Aboriginal history not only in our local area but further afield, including the sad story of the Coranderrk experiment outside of Healesville.

In addition to his publications, Mick played a crucial role in establishing several memorials to the Aboriginal past, including ones in Yarra Glen (which commemorates the Yering massacre), Warrandyte and Kangaroo Ground. All this work earned him high regard amongst Wurundjeri elders, who conferred on Mick the status of an Elder. As he grew older and other historians started to dig more deeply into the history of white on black violence, Mick became determined to find evidence for very local aggression against the Wurundjeri. Though conclusive proof is hard to find, Mick was really in the forefront of the now fully acceptable historical focus on the injustices of colonists against the indigenous population.

In the Bend, Mick was instrumental in providing expert advice in the conceiving and execution of our Wurundjeri sign at the top of Catani Boulevard. As we began work on that project, he remarked to me that although he fully supported the efforts of BICA in preserving our natural bushland, he had been disappointed in our seeming lack of interest in the original custodians of the land we now inhabit. He of course had already discovered the canoe tree and was now pleased to see a greater recognition of the human history of the Bend of Islands.

Mick was a strong presence in our lives, as well as in the community, and a passionate spokesman for the conflicted history of the area in which we live. We were privileged to have him as a builder, researcher, and friend.

Tom and Carol Ann Fisher





Such a memory

In 1992, as newcomers to the Bend, we were taken by John McCallum to have a look at some local mudbrick homes. The Woiwod home was on the list. After a very warm welcome and the obligatory cuppa and cake served up by Marg, Mick proceeded to give us a tour and history of the building of their beautiful home.

This was the beginning of almost three decades of a wonderful friendship. It didn't matter what the subject was, Mick knew something of great interest about it. I remember on one of our "Elders" bus trips that we conducted, he looked out the window and said to me, "See that pine tree over in that paddock, it is the oldest pine in Victoria." He then went on to fill me in on the name of the person who planted it, the date and other interesting facts (all of which I have forgotten).

Everywhere we went he would point out historical places of interest. His memory retention never ceased to amaze me.

Sadly, health made it necessary for the move into Eltham, but his heart was still in the Bend. With the help of his daughter Louise, he made it out to most Café Benders mornings, where he was always surrounded by his local friends, chatting over a cuppa and a much-loved piece of cake. Thanks for the memories Mick.

Carol Bonny



Mick Woiwod – a reflection

Margaret and Mick Woiwod bought land in Gongflers Drive in the 1980s and built a very interesting and comfortable home, in mud bricks of course. The signature piece of the house, at least to me, was the large fireplace and chimney built of local stone. On many occasions I have sat by that fireplace, warmed my toes and had cups of tea, biscuits and cake, all made by Marg, while Mick would warm his toes and come out with interesting stories of the history of our neck of the woods.

Mick's skill in his early trade as a bricklayer and builder is clear to see in the house. However, it is the work he did following his tertiary education when aged in his fifties at Latrobe University which will long outlast all the buildings he worked on in his life as a tradie.

Mick died recently whilst Marg predeceased him by some years and they both now lie in the Kangaroo Ground cemetery. (Who can forget the wonderful night time KG cemetery historical tours led by Mick holding a light on a staff and telling the many who attended in the gathering gloom about the lives of those buried there?)

They were both marvellous and most memorable Benders people.

I am not going to write about all of Mick's many activities in Kangaroo Ground and Nillumbik Shire, but suffice to say, the historical record of KG, Nillumbik and the Yarra Valley, especially the clash of the early settlers and the aboriginal people are now more deeply researched and recorded due to Mick's unstinting efforts.

Mick authored more than twenty books and other articles on these historical topics. Also, the Nillumbik Reconciliation



Above: the eerie light from one of the Kangaroo Ground cemetery tours led by Mick Woiwod, October 2001.

Group which he helped form and led continues to improve the understanding and recognition of the local Wurundjeri people.

Mick and Marg were great supporters of community events in the Bend. Their involvement included but was not limited to BICA meetings, community events, Landcare, the CFA, Café Benders, canoe days, our Benders reconciliation group, neighbourly support and genuine interest in the people, as well as wildlife and the environment.

We lived on upper Catani Boulevard and it was fairly regular for Mick and Marg to drop in when driving past just to say 'G'day', to have a yarn and a cup of tea or a glass of wine. Mick was always interested in our family doings and interesting to talk to and get some idea of his research topic of the moment. He was great with the kids (both now in their 40s) and has left a lasting impression on them.



Mick Woiwod – a reflection (continued)

Similarly, Mick and Marg welcomed people at their house and happily let locals walk through to a very pleasant swimming spot on the river. Indeed, it was difficult to sneak past the house when in a bit of a rush on the way home without either Mick or Marg appearing at the door or on the verandah and calling out 'Come in for a drink, I've got the kettle on'. On leaving, vegetables from their prolific garden or some lovely fresh eggs from the residents of their 'chook palace' would be generously bestowed.

As they aged physical activities became more difficult for them. I was the Landcare Coordinator for many years and they involved themselves in that group's activities with relish year after year. And eventually, when even the gentle weeding tasks were not physically comfortable for them, they had this great knack of dropping into the working bee just when we were having a break and boiling the billy for a cuppa.

Marg would inevitably have a tin of biscuits or cake to add to the occasion and Mick would walk along on his walking stick and plonk down in a folding chair and 'hold court'. Their involvement even in that way, with their genuine interest, helped to bind the workers as a group.

I used to refer to Mick and Marg as the Tribal Elders of the Bend tribe, which they were.

When Mick became more physically compromised, they moved to Eltham North, where Marg died in 2012, and Mick,

with support from his daughter Louise, continued his ongoing work researching and writing the history and the stories of the land and the people.

He would often come to the monthly Café Benders where he enjoyed his continuing association with the place and the people.

I visited Mick a few weeks before his death and over a cuppa he told me of his work to find out why the Wurundjeri people disappeared so quickly and almost completely after the incursion of Europeans into the KG area. He suspected 'nillumbik' was a word not referring to poor or shallow soil but a word the aboriginal people used describe their reaction to an evil event that happened on, or close to, what we now know as Garden Hill (KG tower hill). Mick suggested 'nillumbik' perhaps meant 'evil place', 'place of great sorrow' or similar, and from the mid-1800s the few remaining Wurundjeri gave their previously favoured hunting ground a wide berth.

It's a pity that he won't finish that most relevant research topic.

I hope Mick Woiwod rests easy in the pretty cemetery on the shoulder of Garden Hill. His many contributions to all of us who knew him and to the Bend of Islands are of the highest value and I for one am very grateful.

Peter Gurney

20 years as Bend of Islands: "I'll drink to that!"

It's been 20 years since we officially became Bend of Islands. Our Environmental Living Zone was created by residents over 40 years ago and the ELZ area contained a slice of Kangaroo Ground and a slice of Christmas Hills, part Eltham Shire and part Healesville Shire.

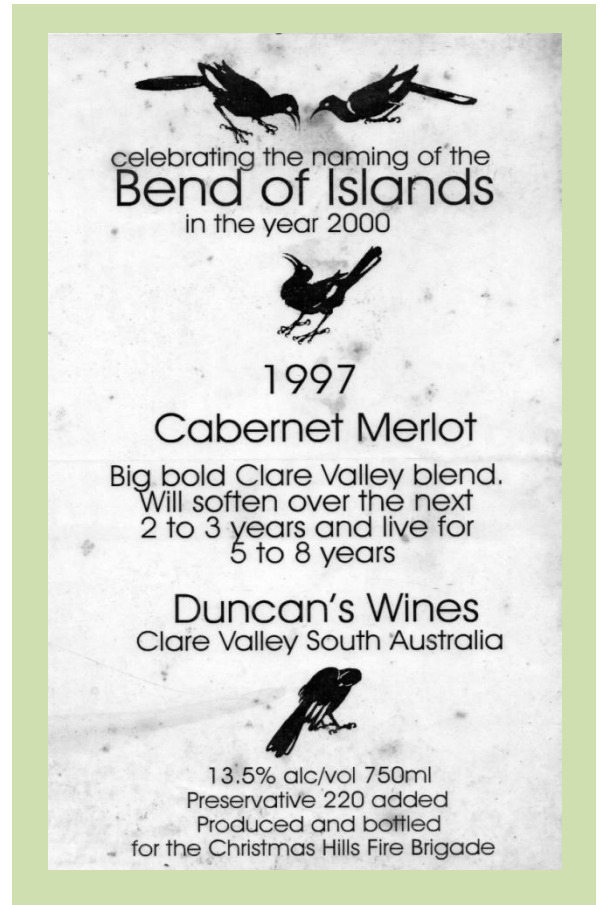
In 1994 Nillumbik was formed as part of a state-wide review and our area became part of the new Green Wedge Shire.

In 1998 it was proposed that our Environmental Living Zone area should have a place name of its own. Should it be Bend of Isles or Bend of Islands? Both were used informally. There already was a bend on the Yarra near Oxley Road officially named 'Bend of Isles'.

To resolve the question our resident historian Mick Woiwod was consulted and his research determined that historically Bend of Islands was the name used when the area was originally subdivided. A residents' petition was drafted, circulated and submitted to council to start the bureaucratic process. A few years of discussion and negotiation and in 1998 the petition was forwarded to the State Government requesting the place name be adopted.

In 2000 Bend of Islands became official and a community celebration was held at the Fire Shed in December. Nillumbik Mayor Marg Jennings and Local Member Andre Haermeyer attended along with most of the local community and other guests. To celebrate the event a commemorative wine was available. Does anyone still have a bottle hidden somewhere?

Alan Bonny





Bye Mick

In 1988 I moved into the Bend of Islands and went along to my first BICA meeting. At afternoon tea a man introduced himself to me and warmly invited me for a dip in his swimming pool anytime. It wasn't until later that I realised this was a classic example of Mick Woiwod's love of the area, his desire to share it with others and his sense of humour. His swimming pool of course was in fact the section of Yarra River that Mick and Marg's property backed onto.

Mick always said that after a hard day's work he would drive across the bridge at Watson's Creek in his battered brickie's ute and the cares of the day were immediately left behind. Just crossing the bridge made him feel like he was home.

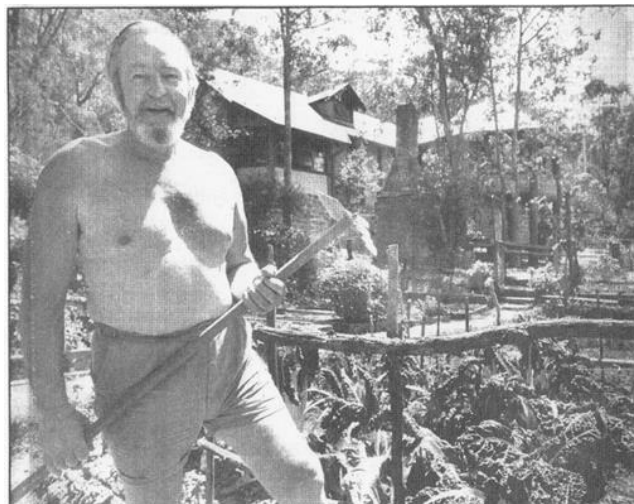
Later when I joined the BICA Committee Mick enlisted me for one of his many bright ideas about sharing local history. His plan was for us to pull out the shoe boxes of scribbled research notes that had been collecting dust under his bed and collate a potted history for every Bend of Islands property to hand to residents in the hope that knowing the details of their property's past would help them to love it and look after it in the present. Alas, this project needed more time and effort than either of us could give it, so it didn't get off the ground, but it's an indication of the kind of stuff that was going on in Mick's mind at any given moment..

Mick got the Andrew Ross Museum at the KG school residence up and running and continued to make large contributions to its success over a long period. One day I picked up a copy of the museum's newsletter, the *Kangaroo Ground Chronicle* and was drawn to a thorough and lengthy article about the heritage value of the Hawthorn hedges along the Kangaroo Ground roadsides, written by Mick. Most people are aware of his prolific history books of the area, but between books he was busily influencing people like me with articles in newsletters.

Despite enjoying my share of barbeque dinners and New Year's Eve parties at Mick and Marg's I never did go for that dip in their swimming pool. However, I know two people who did! (See photo opposite.)

In later years when Mick was wheeled in to Café Benders by daughter Louise, people often had to queue to have a chat with him. Never short of an intelligent addition to any conversation, it was always both a joy and an education to be in Mick's presence.

Alan Bluhm

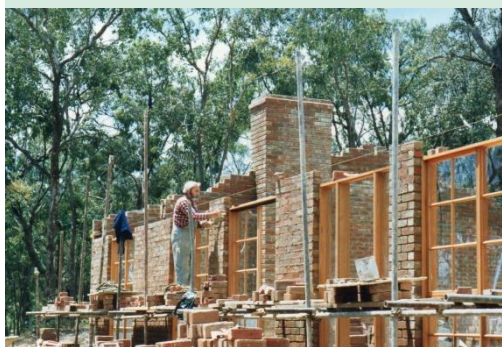


Above: Mick was the poster boy in his vegetable garden for a feature in The Age about the ELZ, 20 November 1990. Photo: Philip Castle

Below: After tipping their canoe in the rapids during a BICA Easter canoe run in April 1991, a soaking wet, frozen Tim and Laura Ealey put on a brave face as they pull in to Mick and Marg's for a hot shower.



Mick worked on several Bend of Islands and other local-area houses at various times and demonstrated creative flair with such features as a craggy rock fireplace, a vaulted ceiling wine cellar, and of course, Tom and Carol Ann's special arch.



Left: Mick works on Chris Steed and Eleanor Fowler's house.

Right: Wolfgang Krause, Mick Woiwod and Carol Ann Fisher at Tom and Carol Ann's build site.





BICA MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS AND RENEWALS

The annual BICA subscription is now due and we would like to encourage you to renew your financial membership for the next 12 months (from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021), especially if you live in the Bend of Islands and/or may have forgotten to renew last year.

As you know the Bend has a unique status as an 'Environmental Living Zone', gazetted under Nillumbik Shire Council's planning scheme as 'Schedule 2 to the Special Use Zone (SUZ2)'. These provisions exist to combine residential use with positive environmental outcomes. But to maintain and manage this and ensure that environmental protections are not diminished over time, the participation of residents is absolutely vital.

BICA endeavours to advocate for the local environment at different levels, however our ability to achieve positive outcomes depends on being actively supported (via membership) by residents in the Bend. Our aim is to maintain a membership that is 70% of residents or property owners in the Bend. And, of course, we also value the support of other people who may not live here but have a connection to the Bend.

A strong membership also assists our capacity to apply for and manage funding received through various grant opportunities, and enables us, in "normal" times, to run a number of regular activities throughout the year such as the monthly bird walk, the orchid and wattle walks, the big walk, the pub walk, the canoe run, the night event and the Christmas event, monthly Landcare, etc.

Membership fees

- Single: \$20
- Family: \$30
- Concession: \$10

To renew membership

Please deposit your subs into our bank. Make sure to include your NAME as a reference.

Bendigo Bank

BSB: 633 000
Acct No: 142450675
Acct Name: Bend of Islands Conservation Association

To join as a new member

A Membership Application Form can be downloaded from our website at www.bendofislands.wordpress.com or you can contact the Secretary via bicacomm@gmail.com.

Your continued support and membership of BICA is important and greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Julie Martindale
Secretary BICA

More of your fabulous photos ...

A magnificently wet Winter/Spring season has produced an incredible array of orchids and spring flowers and we have been privileged to live here to wander on our daily walks to explore and find something new or special.



Red Beard Orchid



Sundew



Caper White on Small-leaf Parrot-pea



From the From the Editor

Thank you to all who have contributed to this Newsletter.

Keep sending in your articles and photos of the Bend of Islands.

jmandfp@bigpond.com

Editor: Janet Mattiske

Design and Layout: Greg Phillips, with help from Barb Whiter and Alan Bluhm for this edition.
Get well soon Greg!



We hope you enjoy participating in our community:

- Matt and Lisa Riches
- Claire Conway and Mat Pollock-Jones
- David Hoyton
- Richard Laurie

Cat traps



BICA has purchased two compliant cat traps that are available for borrowing. They are available at the Mildenhalls' with full instructions for use.

Contact BICA

Secretary BICA – bicacomm@gmail.com

BICA website – www.bendofislands.wordpress.com

BICA Facebook page - we want to be able to keep you up-to-date with what BICA is dealing with on your behalf and we want you to be taking part too.

Join up and we'll keep the information coming!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/157412771573945/>

Vale: past members and residents of our community who have passed since our last newsletter:

Our sincere condolences to family and friends of:

- Dr Tim Ealey
- Mick Woiod
- Peter Wilson
- Jess Bull
- Peter Burns
- Mary Burns
- Dr Rosemary West
- Rob Laughlin



Right: *Running Postman*, *Kennedia prostrata*