

Bend of Islands Conservation Association

Newsletter No 16 August '86

What Native's Flowering?

BOTANICAL NAME:

LEUCOPOGON virgatus

COMMON NAME:

Common Beard Heath

FAMILY:

Heath (Epacridaceae)

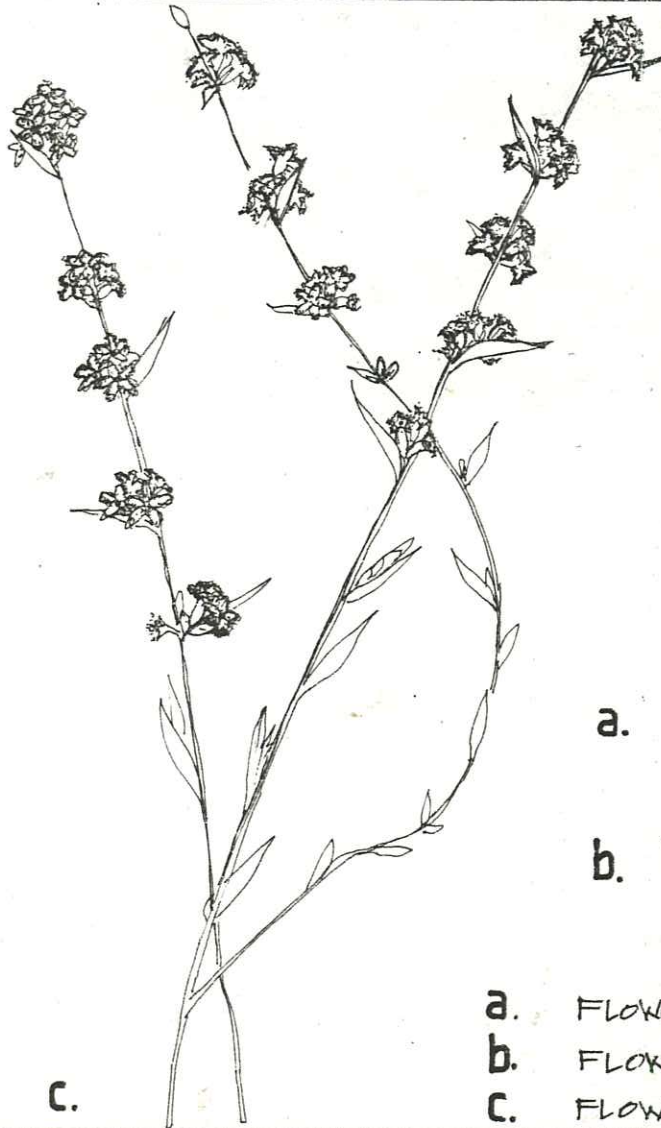
A low shrub with many long wiry stems 0.3 - 0.6 metres long.

The stems are enfolded by stalkless leaves which are concave and lance-shaped with a point at the end.

The flowers are small (6 - 12 mm), white, fluffy and fragrant and are in short spikes (i.e. a rod of stalkless flowers) from the leaf base.

The mass of white fluffy flowers are very conspicuous in the bush and appear from August to November.

Propagate by cutting.



a.



b.



- a. FLOWER FROM SIDE
b. FLOWER FROM ABOVE
c. FLOWER ARRANGEMENT.

c.

A Bunyip Buggers Off

Recently, Neil Douglas departed this 'Environmental Living Zone' for wilder shores! He'll be sorely missed! Neil's love of the Australian landscape and his dedication to saving some of it has inspired many.

Neil has that rare ability to make people listen, understand and act! And to do it all with a lightness of touch, a dash of humour, a hint of romance, a flash of colour and just a bit of dogged persistence. The existence of the E.L.Z is a tribute to his vision of a bush home shared in mutual respect between people and nature. His greatest wisdom is that he understands that loving the bush is not enough. He understands that this love must be transformed into positive commitments and responsibilities. Its very much thanks to this wisdom that the E.L.Z Provisions came into being, reflecting as they do, the necessary positive and negative controls needed to ensure that our activities don't bugger bush.

We salute Neil in gratitude and love for his inspiration and devotion to the Bend of Islands bush, and for passing on to us the powerful secret of 'Tea Politics'.

Recently Felicity and Neil talked and the following are excerpts from that interview of sorts.

"When I came here it was only \$300 an acre and it was so beautiful! Its within the metropolitan radius and should be suburbs yet everything looked pre Captain Cook. Really good bush with the river running through it. Orchids .. everything .. full count, and marvellous animals.

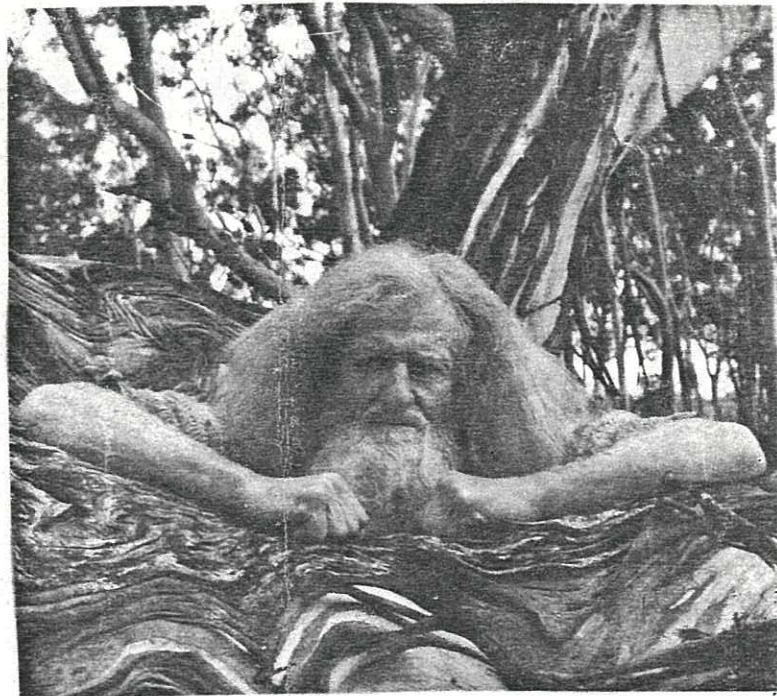
I became a raging conservationist at age 8 when I went down to the beach at Brighton and there was NO BEACH! Why? Because the property owners had built right up to the high tide line. My Dad said I'd just have to put up with it and that I had very funny ideas because if owners want to build up to the high tide line they could. I decided then and there that I just wasn't going to put up with it. There had to be another way besides the dollar! Years later when I moved to the country, they started chopping down the forest to plant pines. They said they could make Victoria into the world's biggest pine plantation and what's more they just about have. That's the sort of bloody awful minded people we colonizers are and we're still invading what's called "bloody rubbish" like some say the Bend of Islands is.

In Western Australia you find the world's best wildflower gardens in the barren ranges. They survive because you can't get sheep or dollars out of the place. And that's the way the Estate Agents thought about the Bend of Islands .. "bloody rubbish".

You had the businessmen chasing the dollar wherever it led. Impact Studies hadn't been invented and there wasn't even a Minister for Planning or a Minister for Conservation. There was no thought about bugging up rivers, bays, mountains .. there was just no understanding of these things. That's why when I found the Bend of Islands, absolutely perfect, the battle here was worth starting. Because I could space in the papers for funny ideas like planning and conservation, I played a big part in the concept of having Ministers for these things as well as for residential conservation.

You can do things like the E.L.Z through government edicts like they do if they want land for dams or military purposes but I had to proceed from some sort of understanding of the way the rat race works. I enlisted the help of the Estate Agent showing him I could actually sell this "bloody rubbish" when he couldn't. An advertisement in the Age resulted in over a hundred enquiries and we were off! By this time there was quite a group of us, beaut people like Alan Marshall and Glen Tomasetti and other bods who just liked to see a kangaroo on the way to work. That's the beaut thing .. our kangaroos can sit at the top corner and look at the ICI Tower so little distance away.

The question of how you manage a thing like the Environmental Living Zone when you don't know the rules is sometimes difficult. I've discovered lots of things I still don't know the answers to. People ask me what I do with my mind out here .. they think it'll go stale but I tell you, its the best Sherlock Holmes thing I've ever done in my life. There's so much to see and learn, its marvellous. We still don't know enough about so much. We're still learning how to manage the environment and how to manage ourselves which is even more difficult. Some people love their cats and dogs. They just don't know what these animals do in the bush, but I tell you, they're totally impossible in the bush. We have to learn a new self, a new community self, and when we do we begin to become Australians. Its very rewarding to discover how beautiful, how fragile, and how absolutely away from the rest of the world the Bend of Islands and the whole of Australia is. We have 8 kilometres of Australia along the river which we're learning how to live with, but we also have to learn to live with ourselves in it.



"There are triumphs and disappointments."

3.

In 1976, the E.L.Z was part of Australia's exhibit at the United Nations Human Habitat Conference in Canada. We were hailed as a world precedent because we were a sort of National Park owned and managed by its residents. I think that we're one of the most vital experiments ever to take place in the rat race. We're still here and we're accepted in the corridors of power so to that extent its a great achievement.

Of course there are disappointments. You can't arbitrate to impose something like E.L.Z on people, so we had to join together and voluntarily give up some of our own property rights, and you know what property rights are to the average Australian. His home is his castle! He doesn't want anyone coming onto it telling him how to think and what to do. Mind you, he's often quite willing to do that to you by letting his cat or dog invade your property! Its a fundamental basic battle, just like the growing awareness of things like how we're bugging up the air and our soil is salting up. We've got to revise our felling that the dollar and property are all-important, otherwise we'll kill the earth and kill ourselves on these quaint old beliefs.

We had to go through all the proper processes to get the E.L.Z and it took years. In the words of former Planning Minister Alan Hunt "Its a pilot project". Hunt said we'd never know if it could be done unless we tried it, and all the while he and Hamer (Then Premier) and Croxford the big man at the MMBW, were fighting like made about whether or not the thing should be tried and thereby hangs a tale just like 'Yes Minister' which I won't go into here, although its worth an article in itself.

Yes, there are disappointments! The little bush animal that comes here, the Phascogale .. he's a Melbourne animal and people have never heard of him yet he's the most enticingly beautiful and remarkable little darling of an animal you've ever seen, and then there's the little Honey Glider (he doesn't eat sugar so call him a honey or Nectar glider), that comes to my front door here. My neighbour's cat ate seven of them and was just after the eighth when I raced out and shot it. I had the owner in an extraordinary state because you see the cat was his friend, like peoples' dogs are just after they've mauled or killed a wallaby. They don't understand. So you're very disappointed that in the name of love and all that's good and decent, protecting helpless native creatures, they hate your guts precisely because you've done it, when all you've done is in the name of love and all that's good and decent. The right people often meet head on in the most awful collisions and what do you do about that? Big Huey up in the sky couldn't care less if the whole place got covered in thistles and blackberries and turned into a Comberwell. When I said down at Eltham back in 1958 that next thing they'd have green and red lights I was laughed to scorn. We formed the 'Keep Eltham Evergreen Society' and look what happened.

Look at the schoolbooks .. its disappointing that we're still not told we're Australian, there's nothing about it. Its disappointing that your love for native animals and plants isn't as credible as someone else's love for a cat or dog. You just have to keep working away at something like this E.L.Z through marvellous Committees and marvellous people like the Bend of Islands people. You just keep on fighting for it. If you love the bush, you've got to do things to look after it. The love is the romantic side and the rest is the facts of life, the things you do to protect and save a bit of bush. The facts of Life in the Australian bush are hard to understand because like the rest of the world we're based on property and the dollar. How to you intergrate the romance and the facts of life? Well .. you want a lovely flower garden. What do you have to do? You've got to find a spade, dig, work, and get a sore back. You relate the facts of life (the work) to the concept of a lovely flower garden (the romance). You just go out and do what has to be done with this lovely concept of saving a bit of Melbourne bush.

We had an Englishwoman in the Bend of Islands who wanted wisteria, primroses and bluebells. One crackling hot February day, it was so hot you daren't move, she was sitting outside under a grey and savagely gaunt old Stringybark in which a mob of Gang Gangs were cracking seeds and squawking away. As she sat there in the bush in the heat, everything seemed to loosen up. The gum leaves on very hot days you may have noticed, fringe out and fluff up and everything is very soft and lovely and the grey tussocks and Ti Tree this day were obviously just so happy in the heat with the mad grey parrots with their tomato foofs on their heads. It was so completely different from England and suddenly, she got this act of love! She rushed to me and wept on my shoulder and said "I've just become an Australian. I don't need my bluebells, I've just fallen in love with this crackly, hot country and the beauty of it" and that was Margaret Jones.





"ELZ is a new sort of adventure in the rat race."

One of the things you must do to become an Australian, is to get rid of the overseas ego! Its unrelated to the bush! You don't tell the bush! The Forest Commission say they've got a managerial policy and I say, how did the bush manage itself for 200 million years before we had a Forest Commission. They say the earth is a resource and that man has a right to develop that resource. I say, man is part of the earth and he has to discover how it works or he'll become the resource! You've got to break with yourself, your community mores and traditions and learn how to become Australian. It takes years and some suffer terribly doing it. Then, you've got to join a Committee. The Committee learn first, then use that knowledge to keep the thing workable and alive. One of the things they have to do is to tell people when they're out of order. Its no use not telling it the way it is for fear of causing rancour and divisions or people not getting along together. A neighbour once said to me that if native animals and plants should take precedence over domestic pets then we should all get out and the area should become a National Park. My neighbour failed to take the point, the very point taken by the United Nations and the Government, that we are a sort of National Park under residential management. That was the whole point of it! Some say the E.L.Z is 'notorious', implying in some way its out of order because of the concept and the rules, but its just the same as a factory developer calling a residential zone notorious or out of order because he wants to put a factory in it.

We need to change ourselves, then change our community and then start learning about the extraordinary management required in the Australian bush, and part of that is hard work and joining the Committee. Once you're on the Committee its my view that you've got to start getting down to detail like showing wildflower patches or animal habitat on your building plans you have to submit to the Authorities, not just the gum trees. In my opinion you don't build your house or anything else anywhere you like just because the law says you only need to bother about where the gum trees are. Before we know it, we'll turn the whole of Australia into just gum trees and grass. Some of our lovely things here, plants and animals, are possibly the last in the Melbourne area like the Quail Thrush. Rare in the first days of Melbourne and inconceivably its here in the Bend of Islands. If you put your house in the wrong spot you could put it out of existence. As well as the planning side of things, you've got to know how things work. We're too inclined to think of E.L.Z as a piece of machinery. Ask people what a Quail Thrush is, most can't tell you. Ask what its relevance to the Bend of Islands is, they don't know. E.L.Z is a new sort of adventure in the rat race. There's an intangible! Its a new sort of love, love of ourselves and the environment. It could be called an attitude to life. Its a different sort of love, love 'out there' as much you love yourself. The spin off is marvellous and its reflected in your paintings, you writing, your kids, your psyche and not just in a profit and loss sort of way. All planning, so far as I know, is about utilities. This is an adventure into attitudes and intangibles and that is precisely why it created a precedent at the United Nations. You can't say it makes dollars, in fact for the Co-op to exist at all, the Act had to be changed because at that time under Victorian Law you couldn't have Co-ops which didn't make a profit. The fact that it made a profit in an intangible way had to be legislated for!

There are some things that need changing. For instance with the non-conforming use rights where new owners can carry on a land use such as keeping cats, dogs or horses, I say its getting too late for such a luxury as that piece of democracy because again, you get the dollar/property democracy and your old values of dogs and cats and horses being better than Australian things and all at the expense of what little is left here in the Bend of Islands. Then there are things that aren't mentioned specifically in our rules but perhaps should be. I'd like to have had a quiet dam for native ducks in my gully but if I went down there and did it there'd be controversy and consternation and perhaps there'd have to be a vote, and the ones who voted this way would hate the ones who voted that way. You'll never get away from that sort of predicament. Human beings, being what they are, there'll always be problems about these things.

Both sides, the pros and the cons, have been guilty of the most outlandishly hopeless behaviour! Without telling all those stories, I think the beaut thing is that in any controversy, whether its a Mothers Club, School, Footy Club, you get the outlandishly funny behaviour on both sides, but if you concentrate on the aims of the group and expect these outbreaks of highly humorous or highly indignant things to happen, you get along much better. Its a pity we can't keep in a tangible form, all the little incidents and humorous situations that have happened on Committees, in Government and in Councils. The consternation and the astonishment, the utter disbelief at times. I think we've all found that we're partly right, partly wrong, totally right or totally wrong at times and we've met in enormous hostility which you laugh about later. The shouting matches, the screaming matches, the vindictive gossip matches .. all of which seem funny later on. If we remember all these things and expect them to happen, we'll get along better.

"It's not until you launch into something like the ELZ that you come up against what life is really all about."

Some very funny things have happened. Once the MMBW decided to test out various bulldozers for making Sugarloaf dam and they chose a bit "bloody scrub" which happened to be on the Co-op. My God, what they did! Next morning we called a meeting of the big brass who said they had no idea that anyone actually lived in this 'scrub' and promised it would never happen again! Next week there was a huge yellow dinosaur gauging away in the creek near the bridge. I rang the PR bloke at the Board who insisted it couldn't possibly be one of their machines but groaned "Oh not again" when I asked him what the letters MMBW stood for. Well it took him all day to find out which part of that monolithic structure was guilty. He finally rang back and told me it was the water measuring people, some obscure little department in the MMBW. He couldn't believe it had happened again after the first debacle. He felt even sillier when I asked why they hadn't gone through the land around the corner and he replied that they hadn't wanted to upset the farmer, only to be told that the land in question was owned by the Board itself.

One day Felicity heard this terrible noise and raced to the river to find the River Improvement Trust about to dynamite the rapids after having bulldozed a huge area of riverside bush. They said they were removing a 'blockage' (the rapids) from the river to alleviate flooding upstream. They hadn't done any sums so were unable to say how removing the rapids would alleviate flooding, they didn't know where the flood line was and what's more they were bulldozing way above the flood lines yet here they were going about this destruction quite legally in their view. Well I phoned the then Conservation Minister Bill Borthwick at home,

he phoned Granter the then Water Supply Minister who phoned State Rivers who phoned the River Improvement Trust who contacted the bulldozer drive with the order to stop! Again, we had a meeting of the big boys. We had the Politicians, the Ministries for Planning & Conservation, State Rivers, the Council, various other authorities. Reg Johnsons, then head of the C.C.V asked a lot of questions which nobody could answer. He hated the Trusts because as a fisherman he'd seen the results of their works of planting willows along streambanks so that we now hardly have an Australian river or creek which isn't buggered. One of the lessons we'd learned early on, was to have your orders coming from the top down, it takes less time and there are many hilarious "yes Minister" type tales I could tell as the orders filter down through the hierarchy.

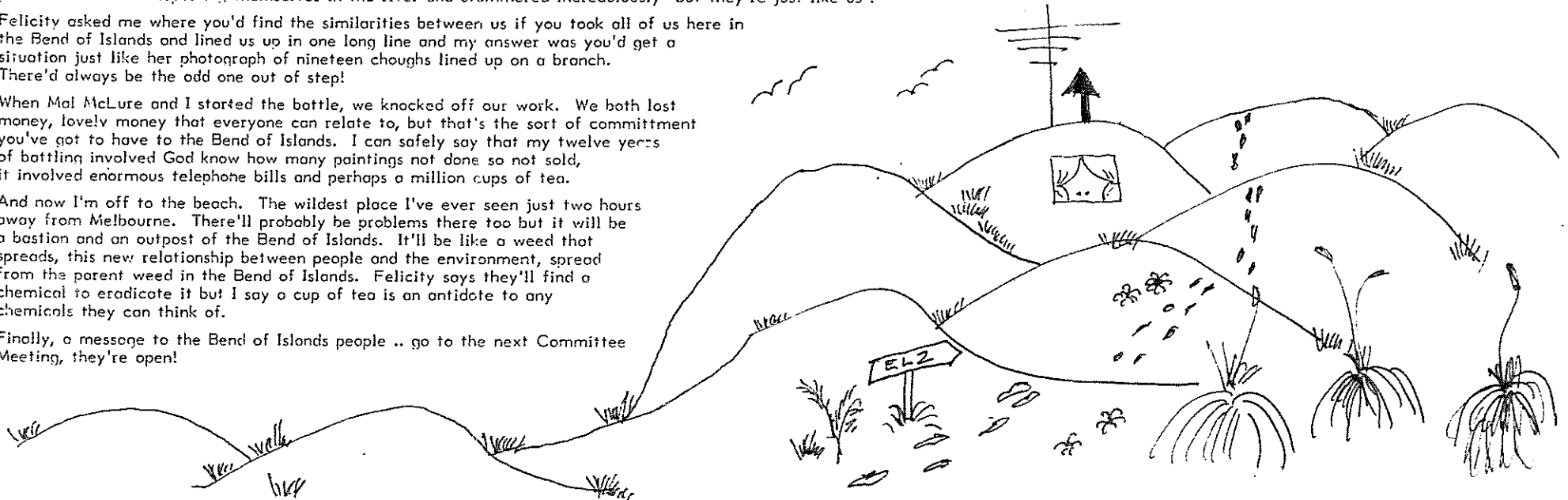
It's not until you launch into a precedent-making project like this, or any other, that you come up against what life is really all about and that is, the thoughts, the traditions and the personalities and also this marvellous love of your fellow man. When the canoeists come down the river and come across a vast concourse of Bend of Islanders, who because they live on the river don't bother with togs, you get this basic human humour breaking out. The canoeists don't live on the river and they often think it's terrible .. really terrible, seeing nude bathers. It reminds me of a lovely story about the Viceroy of India who whilst on some sort of movement of vice-regal authority through the provinces, happened to make camp near a river and of course it's terribly hot in India. His Aide de Camp went to the river and came back looking rather pale. The Viceroy asked him what the matter was and the Aide de Camp replied that he'd just seen the men disporting themselves in the river and stammered incredulously "but they're just like us!"

Felicity asked me where you'd find the similarities between us if you took all of us here in the Bend of Islands and lined us up in one long line and my answer was you'd get a situation just like her photograph of nineteen choughs lined up on a branch. There'd always be the odd one out of step!

When Mal McLure and I started the battle, we knocked off our work. We both lost money, lovely money that everyone can relate to, but that's the sort of commitment you've got to have to the Bend of Islands. I can safely say that my twelve years of battling involved God know how many paintings not done so not sold, it involved enormous telephone bills and perhaps a million cups of tea.

And now I'm off to the beach. The wildest place I've ever seen just two hours away from Melbourne. There'll probably be problems there too but it will be a bastion and an outpost of the Bend of Islands. It'll be like a weed that spreads, this new relationship between people and the environment, spread from the parent weed in the Bend of Islands. Felicity says they'll find a chemical to eradicate it but I say a cup of tea is an antidote to any chemicals they can think of.

Finally, a message to the Bend of Islands people .. go to the next Committee Meeting, they're open!



Phascogales

We all know that when possums run across the roof, it sounds as if they have hobnailed boots on. What we don't all know perhaps, is that the sound that a Phascogale makes when moving is also quite distinctive.

Rats in the roof run with a 'pitter pat', Phascogales move with a 'tap tap tap tap'. You can hear this when walking outside at night. These cold, still winter nights are ideal for night mammal watching and a Phascogale is easily identified by this sound as it works its way up a tree trunk. Their appearance is equally distinctive: they are the size of a small kitten with a pointed snout, grey in colour with a black hairy tail. They erect the tail hairs into a 'bottle brush' when agitated. Both the 'tap tap' sound and brush tail are probably ways of communicating either with other phascogales or animals of other species.



The Brush Tailed Phascogale or Tuan (*Phascogale tapoatafa*) is a member of the broad sub-group of the mammals known as the Dasuroidea or Carnivorous Marsupials. Animals in this group are characterized by the kind of dentition that suits their diet, that is, a majority of shearing teeth rather than cutting or grinding ones. They also lack the fused second and third toes on the hind foot that give Kangaroos their distinctive foot print. Other members of this group include the Tasmanian Tiger (*Thylacine*), Tasmanian Devil, the Quolls or 'native cats', *Antechinus* and smaller insectivorous types such as *Sminthopsis*.

Phascogales are nocturnal, sheltering in a leaf-lined nest in a tree hollow during the day. They eat small arthropods including spiders and centipedes as well as small vertebrates and occasionally domestic poultry. The last Tuan that I saw in our ceiling had a partly consumed rat in its mouth.

As in the case of *Antechinus*, male Phascogales die at the end of their first breeding season. They are actually the largest mammal known to exhibit this phenomenon. Mating occurs in winter and after a gestation period of about 30 days, the young are born in a typical marsupial fashion, underdeveloped and needing to remain attached to the nipple for another 40 days or so. There is not a pouch as such but soft folds of skin protect the young during this time.

In the 13 or 14 years that our family has lived in the Bend of Islands, Phascogales have always visited our house. Months will sometimes go by without seeing them then they will return, usually during the winter months when they seem very active. We have photos of a rather bedraggled looking male perched on the clothes-horse in the kitchen; some days later he had died. Recently Jane heard a noise outside her room and looked out to see the familiar bottlebrush tail hanging down from the gutter as it ran past. Everyone has their own anecdotes about these delightful animals.

Phascogales, like any other living creatures, are only able to survive if their requirements are met by the environment. If an area of bush contains only young trees there will be no suitable nesting sites. No rotting logs on the ground means no centipedes or spiders. Although Phascogales are themselves prey to, for example, owls and possibly quolls, unnatural predator pressure from animals like cats would threaten their continued existence in an area.

B.I.C.A CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SPECIAL WORKING BEE - WEED IDENTIFICATION & ERADICATION

SATURDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER AT 10 A.M. - Meet at Tank

Botanist Geoffrey Carr will be attending and assisting us in recognizing and eradicating weeds. This is a follow-up to his talk at last year's General Meeting and will be a valuable lesson for the management of the E.L.Z and our own land.

FIELD DAY - INVERTEBRATES - GUEST EXPERT

SATURDAY OCTOBER 25TH AT 2 p.m. - Meet at Tank

GENERAL MEETING

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 16TH AT 2 P.M. - SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

WORKING BEE - WILLOWS AND ROADSIDES

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 29TH - 10 a.m. - Meet at Tank

These events are both informative and fun
Further information ring Janet on 712 0237

FIRE BRIGADE

With summer approaching, now is the time to prepare your home and surroundings. If you would like any assistance or advice ring the Christmas Hills Fire Brigade Captain John McCallum on 712 0319.

LOCAL COUNCIL

At the recent Council elections, the new ward councillor elected was Les Hodgson. The 3 councillors now for our Ward are Les, Veronica Holland and Joanne Buchanan.

B.I.C.A COMMITTEE NEWS

Council Amalgamations: The Committee is keeping in touch with developments

S.E.C: B.I.C.A recently formed an agreement with the S.E.C regarding tree trimming in the Zone which will mean more environmentally sensible approaches. A monitoring program has been set up involving B.I.C.A, the S.E.C and the Upper Yarra Valley & Dandenong Ranges Authority.

River Management: This sub-committee liaising with Conservation, Forests & lands and the Upper Yarra Valley & Dandenong Ranges Authority regarding CF & L's Management Plan and the Authority's River Strategy implementation. Both these plans look at both management and tourism and recreation and thus have the potential to impact on the Zone.

Current Sub-Committees:

- Land Transactions
- River Management
- Local Government
- Newsletter
- Community liason/information
- Nature Conservation

TIMBER INDUSTRY STRATEGY - THE FIGHT TO SAVE EAST GIPPSLAND - THE WOODCHIP BATTLE BEGINS IN EARNEST!

The Government has endorsed the Timber Industry Strategy and in doing so, the Environment Movement believes it will lead to the introduction of large scale woodchip in about 5 years. The Strategy fails because

- * It supports long term (15 year) licences for sawmillers, thus locking the Government into supplying timber over the 15 year period at the expense of environmental values. It guarantees supply to the industry but fails to give cast iron guarantees on environmental regulations.
- * It does not incorporate a 'Code of Forest Practices'
- * It lacks detailed environmental procedures and safeguards
- * It fails to produce a clear-sighted analysis of the future of the State's native forests and the forest-based industries
- * It refuses to adequately regulate the timber industry to the State's best environmental, social and economic advantage.

A trial 'woodchip' scheme will be introduced following an 'Environmental Effects Statement', thus it is unlikely that woodchipping will commence before 1987, leaving 12 months or so for the Environment Movement to campaign against further woodchipping. What happens in East Gippsland and elsewhere is now UP TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US.

Now is the time when your support is needed. Contact Linda on 663 1561 and see what you can to help!

NATIVE FLORA AND FAUNA GUARANTEE LEGISLATION PROPOSALS - A

Discussion Paper was published recently and has attracted many submissions both in support and in opposition. It is intended that following analysis of the submissions, a draft Bill will be drawn up. The FLORA & FAUNA SUPPORT GROUP is now beginning its work to ensure that the proposal proceeds and importantly to ensure that vital aspects making the Guarantee truly effective are retained. Again, your support and assistance will help to ensure this. If you can offer help, please contact Steven on 663 1561 or ask Felicity.

DIAMOND VALLEY WILDERNESS SOCIETY - ELTHAM - Welcomes new members.

Film Night on the forests of the Otway Ranges 'OTWAY COUNTDOWN' on Thursday 18th September, 8 p.m. at the Community Health Centre, 7 Dudley Street, Eltham. Phone Peter Homan for details. Also at this meeting latest information on the Queensland Rainforest, East Gippsland and Tasmanian campaigns.

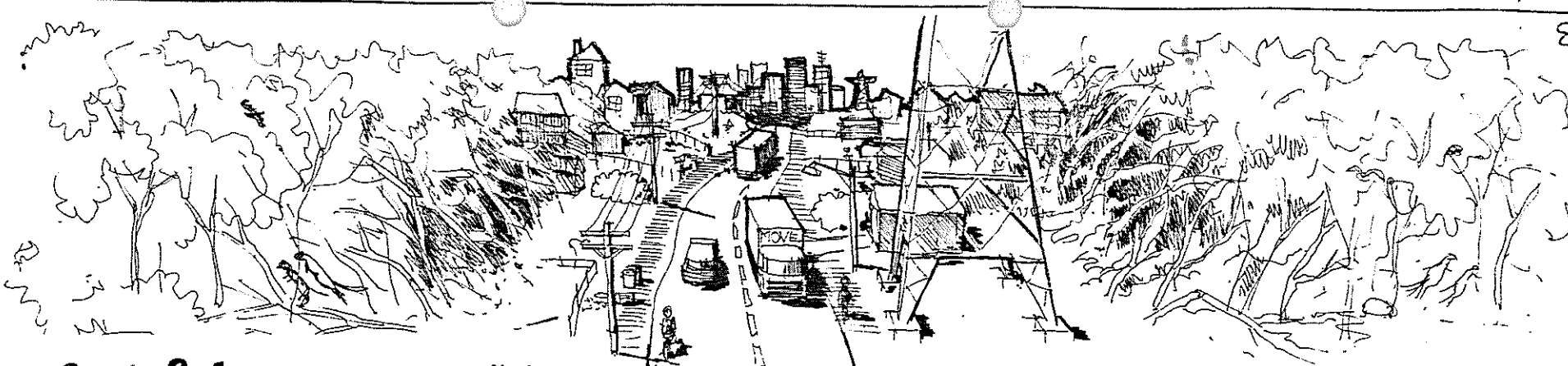
RALLY AGAINST WOODCHIPPING

SUNDAY 23RD NOVEMBER - DETAILS PHONE 663 1561 or ask Felicity

RALLY AGAINST URANIUM TO FRANCE

FRIDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER, 5 P.M. OUTSIDE A.L.P HEADQUARTERS
Drummond Street, Carlton, and March to the City

In the current economic climate it is important that everyone concerned about issues of conservation and environment protection does whatever they can to ensure that environmental values do not take a back seat. Many of the current 'big issues' really need the help and support of large numbers of people. If you can spare time or money or both your help will be invaluable.



"If you don't fight, you lose."

FRANK PIERCE

I moved to the Bend of Islands about 3½ years ago. I had initially thinking I had moved to the 'bush' but gradually realising corresponding development pressures. The noise of trains and traffic area which had been innapropriately sub-divided.

previously lived in the Dandenongs for several years, that the area had been overrun by the urban sprawl and its and the disappearance of the few remaining blocks from the

I was delighted when I discovered the Bend of Islands area which had the bush qualities I was after plus the added attractions of the river and its proximity to the city where I work.

The Bend of Islands is the best area of reasonably intact natural bush within practical commuting distance of the city. This is what attracted me, and no doubt many others, to the area. It has a quality of undisturbed naturalness which is lacking in more urbanized or farmed bush areas. There is no doubt that these unique qualities are under threat from the urban sprawl and continued pressure for development.

People often argue about 'freedom and rights'. As I see it, the real test of freedom and democratic rights is to have the facility for local residents to use the planning and legal systems of their country to determine the environment in which they live. We, the residents of this area, can prevent its transformation by the same development pressures which have sub-urbanized the other 'bush' areas of Melbourne's fringe.

If we were happy to live in an urbanized bush area we would have chosen one of those areas closer to Melbourne and avoided some of the inconveniences associated with this area e.g. lack of facilities for kids and the distances to travel to find those and other services. Having made the choice to live here, it seems very logical that we exercise our 'right' to preserve the character of the area rather than to allow the forces of progress to overrun us.

Just check this list of 'developments' which have occurred over the past 3 years with either direct or indirect effect on our area:

- * 3rd shed built in full view of the road on Gerlach's farm
- * installation of telecom lines in the Catani Boulevard area
- * severe trimming of trees near powerlines by SEC in E.L.Z & Henley Road

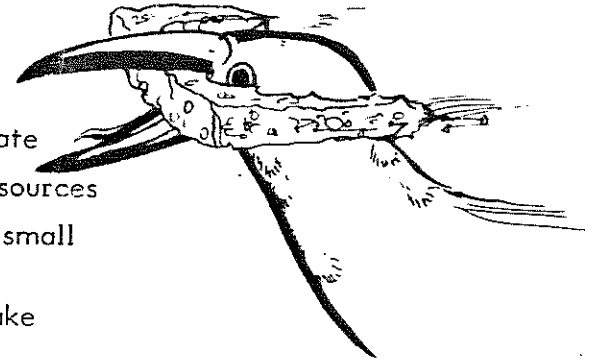
Wildlife — A Right to Live

10.

With spring around the corner, our birds & animals will be producing young! "How lovely" you might say .. but, there's a dark side! Many of our native species are at risk through our own actions, in addition to natural causes. We can affect and even injure and kill native creatures when we

- * Drive too fast * Remove or saw through hollow logs * Fell Trees * Excavate
- * Leave dangerous objects/substances lying around * Interfere with habitat & food sources
- * Allow dogs or cats to roam * Leave uncovered water containers deep enough for small mammals to drink from but fall into.

If we are serious when we say "we love" our beautiful native creatures, then we should take care, respect their habitat needs and should we injure or upset them, take caring action.



IF YOU DO FIND AN INJURED BIRD/ANIMAL OR HIT ONE ON THE ROADS, PLEASE TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS

INITIAL TREATMENT: 'HUMANE DESTRUCTION' Check the animal/bird immediately. If it is very badly injured, take steps to put it out of its misery. Check to see if its a female carrying young and search the area for young which may have run off in fright. If the animal does carry young which seems to small to cope on its own. PLEASE DON'T LEAVE IT TO DIE HELPLESSLY! If you have nothing else, place the young animal under your jumper for darkness and warmth. TRY NOT TO HANDLE IT TOO MUCH and get it to a safe, warm, dark place as soon as possible.

NEXT STEP

Lost, sick or injured birds and animals will initially suffer some degree of shock and need the following treatment ...

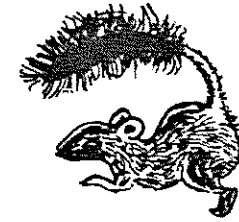
- * Quietness in a darkened container/area, shaded from direct light (out of rain and out of hot sun)
- * Warmth is essential (21° to 26° Celsius)
- * An absolute minimum of handling, remember, wild creatures resent being handled.

Endeavour to identify the patient and plan its feeding and watering requirements. At this point you may need to seek expert advice from a Vet or perhaps the Healesville Sanctuary or Melbourne Zoo. If the animal has been injured and is suffering beyond aid, it is better to have it destroyed as humanely as possible, preferably by an injection from a Vet (Please don't drown anything). Other methods should be used as a last resort only. CONTACT A VET PREFERABLY TO DO IT.

HOUSING Again, warmth is critical! Use warm woollen clothing/blankets/straw/sheepskin. In the case of marsupials, a small pouch should be provided made any way you can and lined with wool. Sheepskins are ideal. Protect from draughts, rain, and direct heat. In the case of larger animals, do the best you can. (B.I.C.A has large steel cages which would be suitable for small wallabies, roos and wombats). If you are unable to keep the animal anywhere please contact 7120 422/7120426/7120

FEEDING Always remember that the food you provide is only a temporary substitute for natural food so it is essential to provide a diet which will suffice until your patient can be released to its natural environment. Its often difficult to get shocked animals/birds to take any food and you may need to SEEK EXPERT ADVICE if the creature refuses to take food/water for any length of time. Remember initially the animal needs quiet and warmth and only later should you attempt to feed it and then DO NOT FORCE IT.

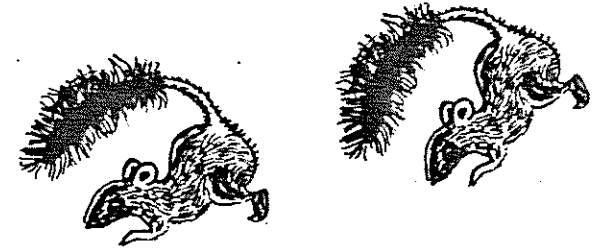
- * duplication of high voltage transmission lines and the associated tree clearing
- * clearing for new power lines in the ELZ adjacent to Henley Road
- * making of Henley Road in the ELZ and Eltham Shire
- * construction of 3 new sheds on Gerlach's farm
- * upgrading of the Eltham Bridge over Diamond Creek
- * upgrading of the main road from Eltham to Research
- * sub-division off the main road in Eltham & Research and Kangaroo Ground
- * the sealing of Pigeon Bank Lane and associated sub-divisions



While most of these items can be justified on an individual basis, when you put them all together they spell 'progress', degradation of the bush and a threat to the unique qualities of the area. All this in 3½ years! Look what has happened to Eltham over the last 20 years. If the current pressure on our area continues unresisted, we will be another suburb before we know it.

Let's work out some possible future developments in store:

- * complete sealing of Henley and Skyline roads
- * opening of Sugarloaf Dam for recreation
- * imposition of water & sewerage reticulation on the area
- * use of government land in the area for city dwellers' recreation
- * sub-divisions along Henley Road right to the Bridge
- * development of Kangaroo Ground - fast food and bright lights
- * construction of Watsons Creek Dam

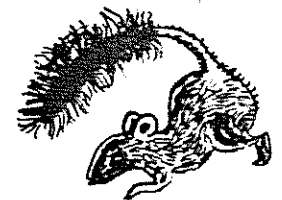


Again, each item is individually worthy of some justification but the cumulative effect will be the degradation of our area. Its character will be changed by either urbanizing it or increasing the throughput of tourists and vehicles. If Watsons Creek Dam is made, Henley/Skyline is the likely route of the Eltham/Yarra Glen Road or should we say the Doncaster to Sydney Highway.

This sounds pretty pessimistic but if we are complacent most of these things and many others will overtake us. by our concerted efforts (of more than just a few) we can preserve and enhance our area using the available planning and political avenues.

The right of self determination is a basic part of our freedom - people power if you like - rather than complacent acceptance of what the developers, in the interests of their own profits or empire building, would have us believe is inevitable. All this takes a lot work and earns us a lot of ridicule and criticism from others who don't appreciate what we have or lack the foresight to recognize the threats to its continuity. It is easy to get caught up in arguments over individual issues but not so easy to maintain a view of the big picture and consider the overall effects of each small action.

We have a unique area, a unique idea for its use, and a unique opportunity to preserve it.



MARSUPIALS

For feeding very young animals, use (ideally) a 'HIP PET' bottle complete with small rubber teat. Or, use an ordinary baby bottle or ordinary bottle with a small teat. At first feed EVERY TWO (2) HOURS and as intake increases, feeding times may decrease. Take care that feeds are not rushed as mixture can enter lungs. All feeding utensils should be sterilized between feeds and stored in a sterile solution. Marsupials before becoming furred have their skin kept moist by the mother's pouch, simulate this by lightly rubbing skin with baby oil twice daily to prevent skin from cracking.

DIETS (See later for which formulas suit which animals)

Diet 1: 227 gr. (8 oz) warm water, 57 gr (2 oz) full cream powdered milk, 2 teaspoons cornflour, 1 level teaspoon 'Prolac', 3 drops Infant Pentavite, 1 tiny pinch salt. Then weekly, a few drops of Vitamin E Oil for eye condition or one drop daily.

Diet 2: 50/50 concentration of Carnation or Bear Brand Evaporated Milk and warm water, 1 egg yolk per 200 ml. of formula, multivitamin drops (4 drops per 200 ml formula) use Pentavite or Polyvisol.

Diet 3: Glucose Nutramigen as per directions on tin. Available at Chemists.

MOST YOUNG ANIMALS WILL OBTAIN THE WATER THEY NEED FROM THE FORMULA AND WILL PROBABLY NOT TAKE WATER UNTIL LATER.

WHICH FORMULA FOR WHAT?

Kangaroos & Wallabies: Any one of the 3 diets for several months and gradually wean to fresh grass and leaves. Soft fruits also. Formula feeds may be tapered off when the animal leaves the pouch for long periods and attains independence.

Possums & Gliders: Any one of the 3 diets BUT WITHOUT THE VITAMIN E CONCENTRATE. Wean to bread and honey, grapes, apples, sultanas and similar fruits. For GLIDERS, add a dessert spoon of honey to the Formula 1 Diet and wean to honey-water mixture, fruits, insects such as moths. Vegetable baby food has been used successfully.

Wombats: Formula 1 or 2 to which is ADDED a little honey (not essential). Wean to greens such as lettuce and root vegetables such as carrots and new potatoes and green grass.

Native Mice & Phascogales: Any one of the 3 diets but feed with an eye dropper until taught to lap, which needs to be done as early as possible because of their size makes feeding difficult. Wean to finely chopped raw meat or baby food or similar ingredients. Should also take small insects such as moths.

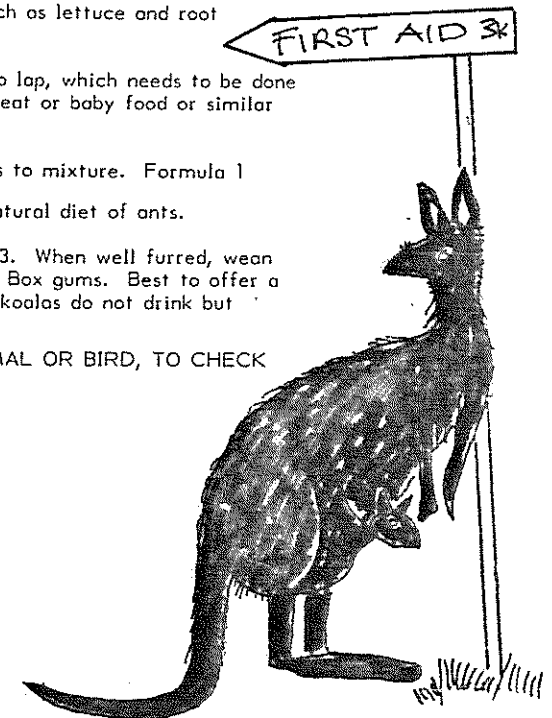
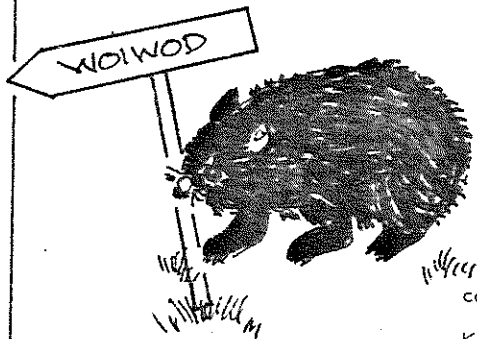
Echidnas: Feed fresh milk with a custard mixture added. Where available, add a few termites to mixture. Formula 1 can be tried as an alternative but ADD a little beaten raw egg. As young develops, make available natural diet of ants.

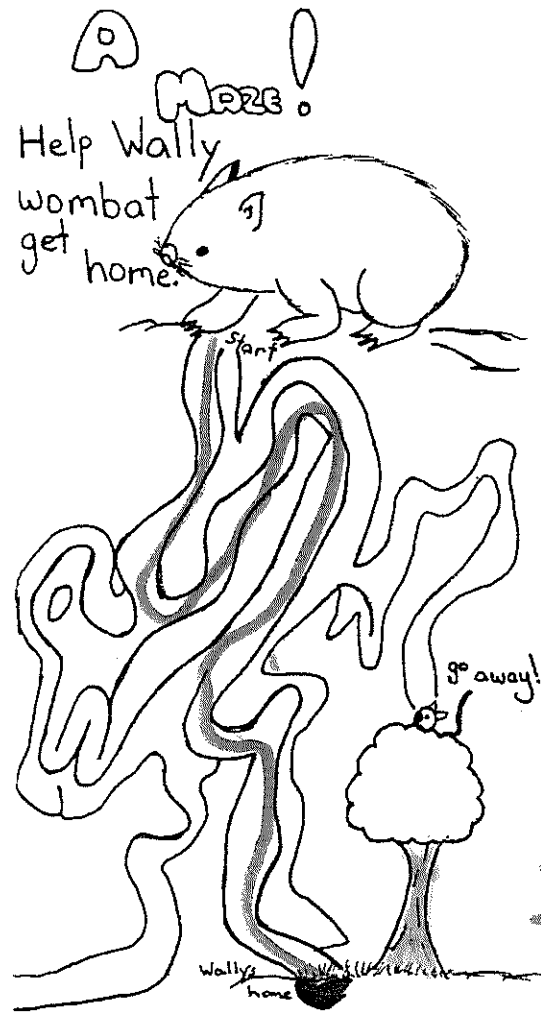
Koalas: Very young unfurred animals are difficult to rear. Feed any one of 3 diets, preferably Diet 3. When well furred, wean gradually to natural diet of leaves from Manna, Long Leaf Box, Messmate, Candlebark, Grey Box gums. Best to offer a variety. Avoid feeding foliage which has any yellow tinge as these could be toxic. Healthy koalas do not drink but should any koala show signs of ailment, make water available.

THESE HINTS ARE JUST BROAD GUIDES, IT WOULD BE BEST IF YOU ARE CARING FOR AN ANIMAL OR BIRD, TO CHECK WITH EXPERTS, TRY MELBOURNE ZOO OR HEALESVILLE SANCTUARY.

PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP PROPER SHELTER FACILITIES FOR CARE

Some of us here feel that it is incumbent upon as lovers of native animals, to set up some adequate facilities to care for sick or injured creatures within the Zone. Perhaps your home already has an enclosure or shed or whatever which might be able to be adapted to temporarily house an injured bird or animal. Perhaps you'd be interested to learning how to care for them? The idea would be to locate suitable facilities within the zone and form a group of people who undertake some basic training in the handling of sick or injured animals. Its quite a commitment to take on the care of animals so we feel perhaps it could be shared among a number of residents. IN the event of bushfire of course, it may be vital to have people in the zone who are able to handle injured animals and birds. Now that Fabian Douglas has departed there are few if any people here who know anything much about wildlife and their care and usually this has involved outside volunteers. We should be able to at least take initial care of the wildlife in the area if necessary. If you'd be interested in participating in such a group please telephone MICK WOIWOD. —





Children's Page!

Riddles!

WORD HUNT

P	K	A	B	S	I	G
W	O	M	B	A	T	O
R	A	S	S	S	L	A
O	L	N	S	T	L	N
U	A	A	B	Z	N	
O	Z	K	A	A	A	
H	B	E	L	N	A	T

- ~~Possum~~
- ~~Tuan~~
- ~~Wombat~~
- ~~Koala~~
- ~~Goanna~~
- ~~Bat~~
- ~~Snake~~
- ~~Pouch~~

Two biscuits were walking down the road. One of them got run over. What did the other one say?

Answer: Crumbs!

What do you give a sick bird?

Answer: Tweetment.

Where do you take a sick ship?

Answer: To the Doc.

What do you give a sick pig?

Answer: Oinkment.

By Natalie Grigg

Rules & Reason

13.

When people first come to the Bend of Islands to live, to some, it can appear that there are many more 'rules' here than you would find elsewhere!

That is not the case at all! Firstly, it can appear that way simply because unusually, most residents here actually know about the zoning regulations whereas elsewhere residents are often unaware of Council regulations and requirements until they rub up against them. Secondly, some of the 'rules' of this particular zoning are slightly different, but most of the regulations which apply to the 'Environmental Living Zone', also apply in other parts of the Shire. Some of the Provisions of this zoning are peculiar to this zone alone, whilst in other parts of the Shire, there are other rules which we don't have here and which are particularly suited to the aims and objectives of that specific zoning. Its not that have more rules, they're just different in part to the rules which apply elsewhere.

There are thoughts abroad that in E.L.Z we suffer 'excessive' or 'restrictive' regulations while other parts of the Shire are free to do as they please. Certainly the rules govern what we can and can't do but that is true of anywhere at all! Wherever we live, in the city, in the suburbs or in the country, there are Council and other Planning regulations which prohibit, prescribe and direct. The special regulations contained in the E.L.Z Zoning are not there simply for the sake of having regulations, they're there quite simply as a way to better preserve bushland and protect native flora and fauna. They're there to help to preserve and enhance the unique beauty of the Bend of Islands which we all enjoy, but which we can all so easily affect detrimentally by our own actions on our own land.

The whole thrust of the E.L.Z Provisions is directed towards ensuring that as far as possible, the survival of bushland and native birds, invertebrates and animals is protected. The 'Environmental Living Zone' is the first and only such zoning in Australia, probably the world, which specifically aims to protect the natural environment in a residential area. It is Unique!

Those residents living here prior to the gazettal of the Zone have their rights to con-conforming land uses protected under the zoning and those who came here after that are bound by the provisions and regulations as they would be bound in any other zoning by its own particular set of regulations. Most of us choose to live in places where we are able to live the way we want, we have a choice about living in places where what we want to do is not permitted. Without the E.L.Z provisions, the aims of this zoning would pay mere lip service to preserving bushland and protecting native flora and fauna.

In the interests of better understanding as to why some of the special provisions are necessary we now take a look at some of them:

CLEARING - FENCING - DEVELOPING - SUB-DIVISION - PLANTING and EFFLUENT DISPOSAL. All of these aspects are addressed in various clauses of the zoning which dictate the type and extent of our activities on our own land. By following these provisions we assist invaluablely in minimizing human impact on bushland because all of these have the potential to destroy and alter natural systems.

Before building homes, access ways, sheds, gardens and recreation facilities, we should first find out what grows on our land and which wildlife use it and for what. The site we choose for development of any sort might be a special patch of orchids or wildflowers, or it might be used by birds, insects or animals for shelter, food or access. If you know these things before you disturb an area and adjust your plans, you make a small-scale but valuable contribution to the overall chances of survival of native species. You also get the added bonus of the pleasure of enjoying them on your land.

Be aware too, that the way we dispose of septic and sullage can affect bushland. If the system you have, or plan to have, allows run-off or seepage of fertility, then it has a detrimental affect on plant systems and in turn the food chains used by fauna. It also encourages increased weed growth.

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The Zoning Provisions prohibit the planting of 'exotic' (non indigenous) plant species. This relates to the danger of these species spreading into the forest and competing successfully for scarce resources. They dominate over the more delicate native species and displace them and in doing this alter the food chains again thus affecting both flora and fauna. Some particular 'exotics' are a grave threat to native bushland because of their toughness and these include such species as brooms, pittosporums, and the New South Wales Cootamundra Wattle. The whole purpose of this clause is to protect existing native flora which is extremely vulnerable to destruction.

Fencing of course, apart from having a visual impact, can affect the movement of native animals. Any development on your land, even walking tracks, leads to a reduction of habitat and the regulations are designed to prevent and minimize this.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS The most contentious and emotional aspect of the E.L.Z provisions are the clauses relating to the keeping of domestic pets. The old 'Aussie' ethos prevails! The right of people to keep pets overrides any rights native animals and birds might have to exist in freedom. The E.L.Z Zoning for the first time, gives some rights to our native Australian species.

Normally, in other zonings, in fact anywhere, controls are placed on the numbers of domestic animals which may be kept and on the manner in which they must be kept. Controls are also placed everywhere prohibiting domestic animals from leaving the boundaries of the land belonging to their owners. These controls are laid down in various planning provisions and under By-laws and quite simply THEY JUST DON'T WORK ANYWHERE! All Councils spend a great deal of ratepayers' money dealing with unwanted and wandering domestic animals and in country areas, dealing with damage to farming stock by dogs. Animal Refuges face ever increasing costs in caring for and disposing of stray domestic animals. Almost nowhere are native creatures rights protected and that is the primary purpose behind the provisions of E.L.Z prohibiting the keeping of horses, dogs, cats and goats.

The many delicate wildflowers in our bush are easily destroyed by animals such as horses and goats, by soil erosion, increased fertility and quite simply because they eat them. The many defenceless native animals and birds are simply not able to fight back against the harassment and predations of dogs and cats. The only truly effective way in which their health and well-being can be protected, given that none of the other existing restraints work anywhere, is to ban them altogether. Again, the rights of animal keepers here prior to the zoning are protected under the provisions however again, those animals here legally are still subject to the provisions and by-laws governing the keeping of domestic animals which apply Shire-wide and under other various Acts relating to animals.

Whilst the banning of these animals may seem hard, experience has shown that their presence and the inability of the usual regulations to control them, inevitably means that native wildlife must suffer. Apart from National Parks, the Environmental Living Zone is one of the very few areas in the whole of Australia where native wildlife may take refuge and the absence of domestic animals is one of the most vital and important aspects of any attempt to preserve bushland and wildlife. The keeping of other, less predatory animals, is governed by normal permit systems and in the case of E.L.Z by the containment clause relating to pen sizes.

BUILDING The siting, design, size and colour of homes is covered in many clauses under the Provisions. These are largely designed to ensure that our homes do not "leap out at us and others" from their bushland setting. To ensure that the visual amenity of the area is not disturbed and to take into account safety aspects particularly bushfire. Most residents came to the Bend of Islands to enjoy its visual beauty and the regulations concerning buildings are there simply to preserve these qualities. The clauses which deal with the amount of land which can be alienated (used) are there quite simply to ensure that development of our land does not reduce bushland habitat more than necessary.

The balance of the E.L.Z provisions are applied almost everywhere with minor variations according to the particular aims of zonings concerned. Without these special provisions, the purpose of the Environmental Living Zone, that of attempting to live in the bush without destroying it, would be totally meaningless.

Local Litter

FILM GROUP

Contact Pierre or Caroline 7120390

TENNIS CLUB

to start summer...
Contact Kevin Healey 7301704

CHRISTMAS HILLS anyone who wants competition

New members Welcome! Reminder Sobs due
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FOOD CO-OPERATIVE

- Carol Ann Cric 7120547
7120451

New members welcome

CHRISTMAS HILLS PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Telephone 730 1823
Peter Mumme for information
or Veronica Holland

BEND OF ISLANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

contributors: Cric Ross Henry, John McCallum
Frank Pierce, Felicity Faris
The Grigg 'kids'

WHY NOT CONTRIBUTE AN ARTICLE, PHOTO, DRAWING?
Contact Felicity Faris or Mick Woilwod.

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