

# Islands Conservation Association

## NEWSLETTER No. 18

MARCH 1988

What Native's Flowering?



Botanical name: *Astroloma humifusum*

Common name: Cranberry Heath

Family: Heath family - Epacredaceae

- A prostrate shrub often seen overhanging the clay embankments along the road.
- The leaves are crowded, narrow, small (less than 10cm) with a sharp point, and almost opposite giving the appearance of a dense, mossy neat mat covering the ground 40cm in diameter by 7-8cm high.
- The flowers appear in autumn and are single red narrow curved tubular bells coming from the axils of the leaves. The flowers are partly hidden by the leaves and are upright.
- The fruits appear in spring and are green, sweet and edible - not unlike the cranberry, hence its common name.
- Propagation is from cuttings from suitable woody stem, and seeds are worth trying to cultivate.
- It is a good plant to use to cover embankments or plant under trees.

Cric Henry

# Old Oak Tree

Early on the morning of the 29th August 1870, a party of horsemen set out from Kangaroo Ground along McPhersons Track, equipped with long, squared, painted posts and axes. They forded Watsons Creek and rode up to near the present Lower Catani turnoff. There, whilst one member of the party drove a white post into the ground, a tall bearded veteran took a compass-bearing due north from it and the party set to, clearing a sight line through the timber. Just short of a mile along the line another post was driven in, then, back-tracking, four more were placed in line between the two at roughly 10 chain intervals. Bearings were taken due west from each post to the banks of Watsons Creek, where other posts were set up.

Those men were the first Selectors to take up land in the Bend of Islands. Each man fixed a notice to his post. It was 12 o'clock, for that was the hour each declared he had pegged out his block and that when he did so, had seen no other posts. The tall, gaunt, bearded man selected the first two blocks north of today's Henley Road. He was the 68-year-old Joseph Stevenson, vigneron of Kangaroo Ground who 30 years previously had pioneered and named his 6800 acre sheep station further up the Creek the 'Christmas Hill Station'. His elder son Robert selected the next 30 acre block. His younger son Joseph drew the fourth block of 25 acres, whilst his son-in-law James Mess was allocated the next, a 28 acre block. Perhaps Mark Bunder, son of another Kangaroo Ground farmer, was also a member of the party, for his name appears on the last block. They each selected under the 19th Section of the 1869 Land Act. They would be required to pay 1/- (one shilling) per acre each half year for the next 10 years and if they improved the land to that same value, would at the end of the period obtain a free title.

On October 8th Contract Surveyor T.S. Parrott rode out and measured up the blocks and trued up the angles. Four days later Parrott surveyed a 65 acre block on the opposite side of McPhersons track which we know today as Henley Road. It was selected by another Kangaroo Ground farmer James Andrew. In 1910 it became the Oxley Estate. That block would have had bad memories for the Stevensons for it was there that two years previously their eldest son David had been swept from the rocks and drowned at the mouth of Watsons Creek whilst crossing the Yarra to retrieve some horses from the opposite bank.



Two and a half years after pegging out their blocks each was required to furnish a return to the Lands Department, itemising his improvements. It would appear that the 70-year-old Joseph had lost little of the energy of former days. He lived there on his second block alone in a two-room weatherboard house measuring 27 feet by 12 feet. He had fenced his two blocks with 40 chain of post and 3 rail fence and 20 chain of log fence. He had cleared a 2 acre flat area alongside of where the creek that now bears his name flows into Watsons Creek. On that land each year he had grown potatoes. His first crop had yielded only 8 bushels; but the harvest the following year (1872) his yield was 40 bushels. His barn buildings measured 40 feet by 12 feet, so he must also have kept some stock, possibly horses and cattle.

It is not known why he chose to live alone on the Creek. He had a comfortable home and large vineyard up on the main road opposite the cemetery. Perhaps the memories of 1868 were too sad. He had buried both his wife Sarah and eldest son in that pioneer cemetery that year. They had arrived in Melbourne together in 1839 when that settlement was little more than a collection of slab and bark huts. He, Joseph Stevenson, had built the first punt to ply across the river where Princes Bridge now stands. He had built Kerk's Horse Bazaar in the days when the horse was king of the road. Together they had moved out into the stringybark forest near present day Research where Joseph with a team of bullocks had worked with those Wild Colonial Boys, the Splitters. Such was his fame that he had seen the local creek named after his lead bullock 'Diamond', who came to grief in it.

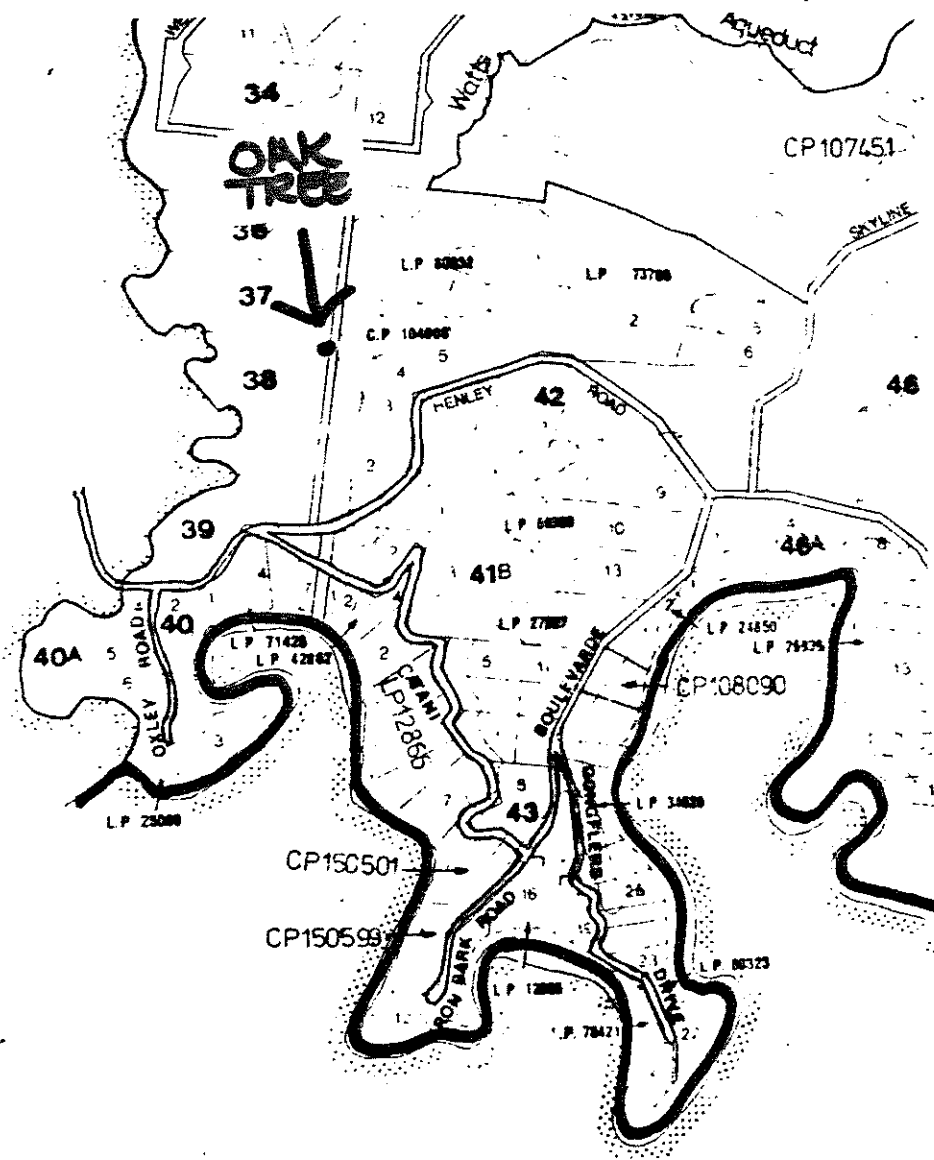
Donaldson, who had purchased the first square mile in Kangaroo Ground, returned from a trip to Scotland in 1878, bringing with him acorns collected in the Windsor Great Park. He planted one at his front gate in Kangaroo Ground, and another he gave to a friend Walter Whipple. Both oaks still thrive in Kangaroo Ground. The Donaldson Oak, botanically a Quercus Robur hybrid, is on the National Trust Tree Register.

Out in the paddock this side of Watsons Creek there stands a huge oak tree identified by the National Herbarium as a Quercus Robur hybrid and beneath its 30-metre canopy there can still be seen evidence of Joseph Stevenson's old home. Stevenson and Donaldson were old friends.

Joseph died on November 1st, 1878, the year that Donaldson returned from the 'Old Country' with his acorns.

Perhaps together the two old Scottish pioneers planted a last acorn there for posterity and Auld Lang Syne.

Stevensons' Oak has been nominated for the National Trust Tree Register on the grounds of its historical significance and its huge size, and on behalf of all residents of the Bend of Islands.



Mick Woivod

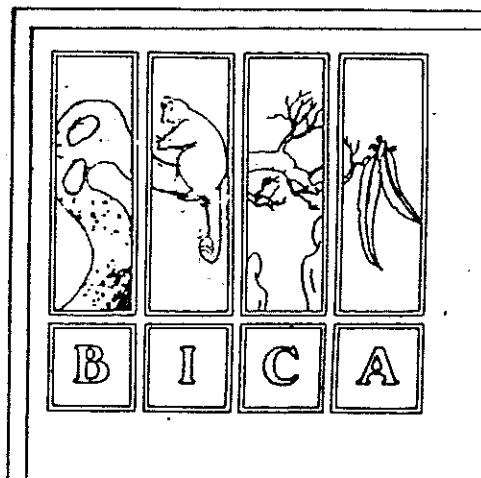
# Letterhead

BICA has adopted a new superwiz letterhead designed by Joy Coldrey.

As you can see, it is quite impressive. The four elements of our environment - the Bend of Islands, the fauna, the humans, and the flora - are neatly displayed in the four tall frames. What combines them is the river, which transforms into a tree, which in turn supports a ringtailed possum, then envelops humans and terminates in eucalypt leaves. Everything is interdependent.

We think the design both captures BICA's themes and provides us with a more upmarket professional image. Hope you think so too.

Thanks, Joy.



No! It's a Bird



BLACK DUCK.....ANAS SUPERCILIOSA

The Black Duck is probably the most numerous Duck in Australia. They are found in most watery environments, both fresh and salt water, preferring deep fresh water swamps.

They are found throughout the Bend of Isles, in the river, dams and the billabongs. Recently we have had a pair which wander down to the house and along the verandah. They're quite tame and quack around eating bread if you go out and toss it to them.

About three-quarters of their diet is plant material with the rest being aquatic insects, yabbies, etc.

They breed mostly when the water levels are high, i.e. after the wet seasons, and nest in a wide variety of places ranging from scrapes in the ground and in reeds to tree stumps and hollows.

The Black Duck is the most popular game bird in Australia but is well able to survive controlled hunting. The biggest threat to its existence is the destruction of its habitat, mainly the drainage of wet-lands for agriculture and reduced flooding caused by the construction of dams across the water courses.

Matt McCallum

# Useful Plants in the Bend of Isles

Part One of an Occasional Series by Rodney Barker

*Urtica incisa*

SCRUB NETTLE

IDENTIFICATION.....Easy! Sprawling perennial with leaves more lance-shaped than the introduced variety, plus the only hairs are stinging hairs.

DISTRIBUTION.....Very common in southeastern Australia. I have seen it growing only on the banks of the Yarra, but it can grow in any damp spot, so is probably more widely distributed.

CULTIVATION.....Easy to grow (but handle with gloves on). Likes some shade and does well in pots; would be worth trying inside, in a well-lit spot.

PROPOGATION.....Very easy, by cuttings, layerings and seed; probably root division would succeed too. Prune frequently, either to maximize the number of new shoots or to ensure stems grow long and straight (depending on the uses you have in mind - see below).

USES.....

(1) AS FOOD

"One of the best of the wild green vegetables." Cribb & Cribb in WILD FOOD IN AUSTRALIA.

Boil young shoots and tips. Use as a vegetable or soup base. Also used for a tonic tea and for making beer. Here is a recipe for Nettle Beer from Grass Roots #50 (August 1985) by John Burnett:

## NETTLE BEER

8 litres (2 gal) young nettles

8 litres water

14 g (1/2 oz) bruised root ginger

1.8 kg (4 lb) malt

60 g (2 oz) hops

125 g (4 oz) sarsparilla

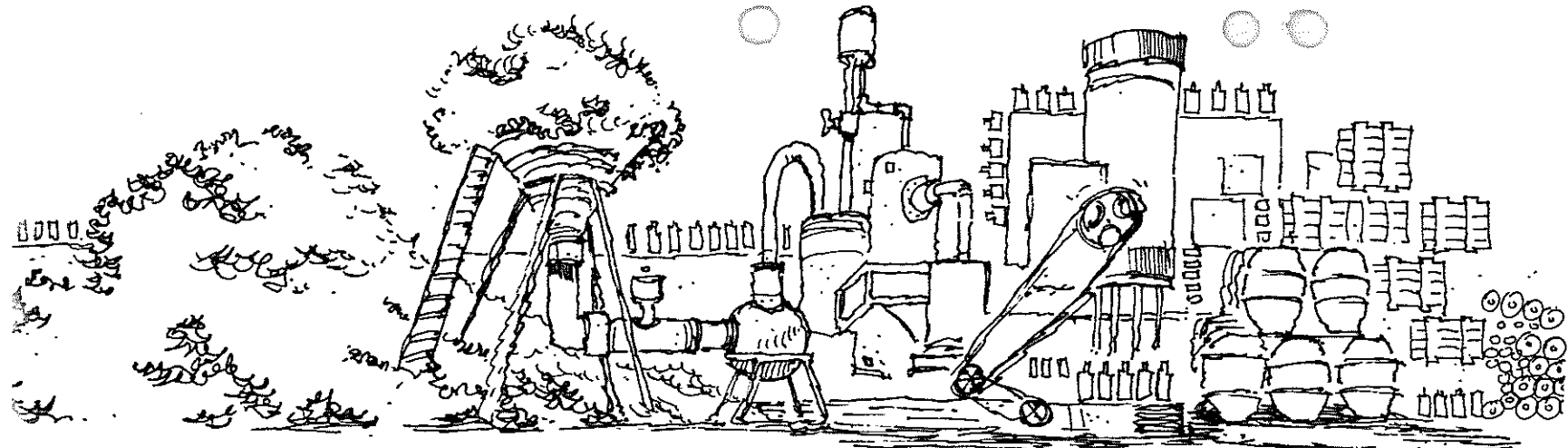
675 g (1 1/2 lb) castor sugar

30 g (1 oz) yeast

Only young nettles should be used. Wash them well and put them into a pan with the water, ginger, malt, hops and sarsparilla. Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Strain over sugar and stir until the sugar has dissolved. Add creamed yeast. When the beer starts to ferment, put it into bottles, cork them and tie down the corks with string.

The beer is now ready to drink, and is delicious.





(2) MEDICINALLY

Used to treat rheumatism and gout by applying leaves to affected parts, and as an infusion for sprains. Boiled leaves used as a poultice. Also used as a hair restorer and a diuretic.

(3) OTHER USES

Use as a hair rinse for glossy hair. Crush seeds for their oil, or extract dye from the roots.

Can be used for cordage and cloth of all types - dry stems, steep them in water until the non-fibrous matter is washed away, then separate fibres and spin.

Related species used for compost activating and as a preventative against lice (one part nettle to ten parts rainwater - spray on relevant areas weekly).

(4) HISTORICALLY (& PERHAPS HOPEFULLY)

Culpepper puts nettles under the dominance of Mars, and recommends them for bleeding in the mouth (stopping same, I presume), staying poisonous substances and as an antidote to lethargy. He finally claims that the roots can be made into an infusion with honey to open the passages of the lungs.

(5) FINALLY

Plants also look attractive and make good conversation-pieces.

# Roadside Planting

With the sealing of the road by the Healesville Council there was quite a bit of disturbance to the roadside vegetation. The Council offered to reinstate these areas with indigenous plants. I was approached by the BICA Committee to draw up a species layout play and planting schedule, and the Council then purchased the plants and carried out the work.

I would like to express our thanks to the Council on behalf of BICA for carrying out the work so professionally and sensitively. It is very encouraging to have the Council's support in our endeavour to conserve our roadside vegetation.

*Rodney Barker*

*Cris Henry*

Each winter since we have lived in the Bend of Islands we have had rats and mice in the house. These were successfully controlled by the use of simple rat and mice traps. This year it was different. This year we were visited by tuans and a sugar glider.

Tuans, fascinating as they are, do not make ideal house guests. They cause quite a commotion during the night and knock bowls, etc., off benches. In the interest of a good night's sleep, we finally eliminated the tuans by progressively blocking up even the smallest of holes around the eaves, etc.

The sugar glider was a well-mannered house guest, popular with the children due to its slower movements and . . . . Our guest set up residence behind the refrigerator and even used the defrost drip tray as its litter tray. Having blocked out the tuans, we couldn't understand how the glider was surviving since it could no longer get outside. One morning we found it rummaging inside the kitchen rubbish bin.

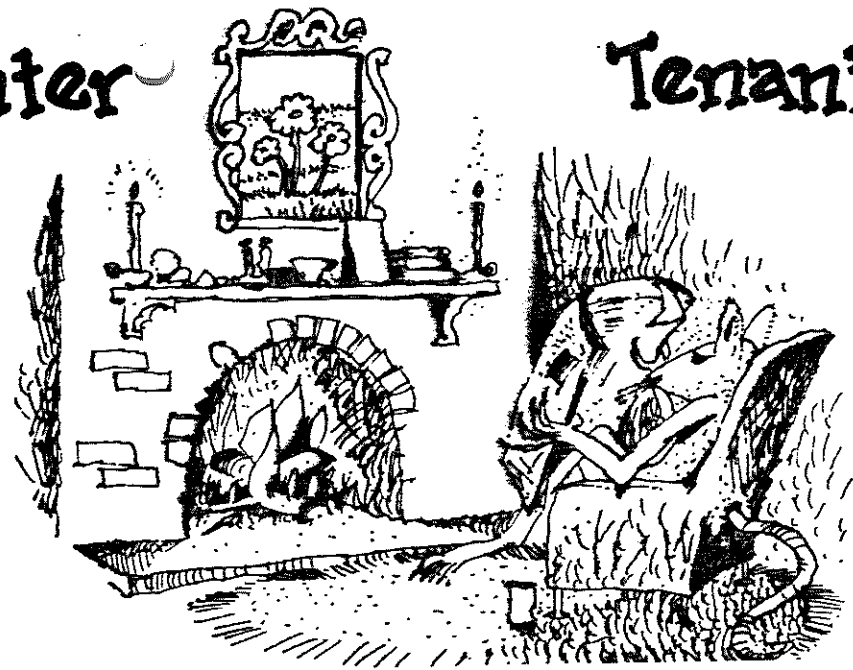
Because it had no external access, its life was restricted to spending the day under a noisy fridge and the night scrounging in a rubbish bin devoid of even compost scraps. We considered this a dog's life for such a beautiful little creature so one morning we took the opportunity to shoo it out the back door before it could retreat to its fridge hideout.

A week or so after we blocked out the tuan, we found we had a rat in the laundry. We caught it in a trap and found yet another hole to patch up.

**WARNING:** During the time of our winter guests there was a period of very heavy rain. One of our empty rubbish bins collected about 100mm of water in the bottom. We were horrified to find three tuans and two sugar gliders drowned in the water. A couple of people have since told us that they always place a stick in any open containers to prevent such disasters by allowing the animals a means of escape.

# Winter

# Tenants



Conventional rat and mouse traps are effective for catching rats and mice but you must establish that no native visitors are involved. If you have tuans you won't have rats or mice. One native that can frequent our homes is the brown antechinus, a marsupial mouse. You can tell if your visitors are antechinus rather than mice by their droppings. If you crush them up they are reflective due to the moths wings which are a main part of their diet. Antechinus can be caught in small 'live' traps and then released in the bush.

The use of 'Ratsak' is not recommended for several reasons...

- a) It dehydrates the animals and they tend to seek water. Dead rats in gutters, down pipes or water tanks can be a major problem.
- b) You cannot check whether you are killing pests or natives.
- c) The poison can be passed on to birds of prey and other native animals.

BICA has several large 'live' traps for catching possums or cats. There are also some small 'live' traps in the area. Should you wish to borrow one of these or get the details for purchase of some yourself, contact any member of the BICA committee.

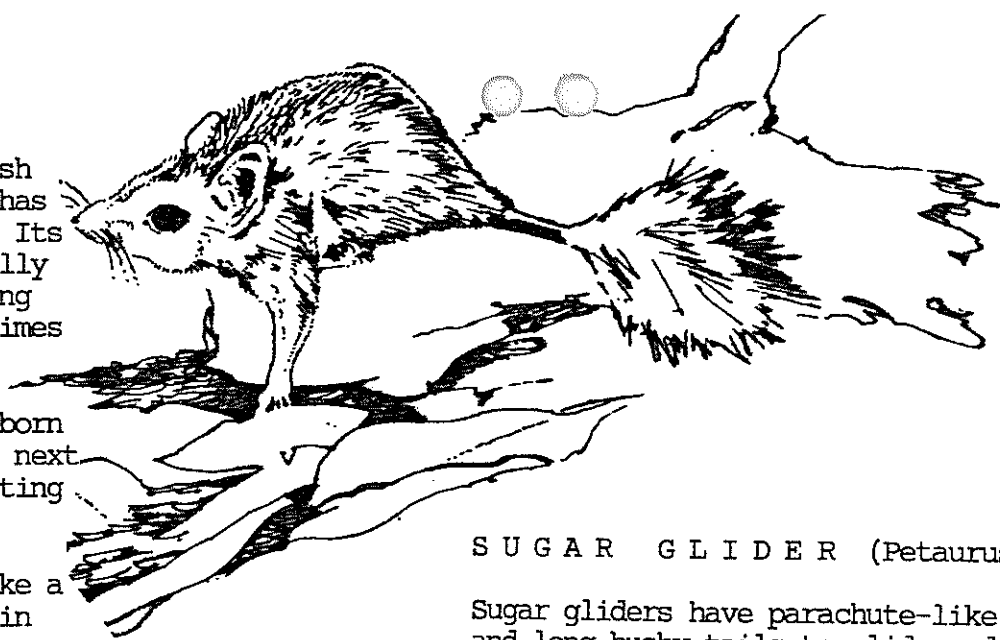


## T U A N (Phascogale Tapoatafa)

This is the largest of the Broadfoot species of Marsupial Mice and can be distinguished by a brush of long black hairs along most of the tail. It has beautiful blue grey fur with a pale grey belly. Its length is up to 45cm from nose to tail tip (usually 30cm in our area). Tuans are carnivorous, feeding on small rats, reptiles and insects. They sometimes kill birds and poultry.

Tuans mate in May with eight to ten young being born at the end of June. The young are mature by the next February. Males usually survive for only one mating season; females may survive for two.

The tuans often carry their tails fluffed out like a bottle brush flower. They live almost entirely in trees, possess considerable climbing ability and can descend head first or remain still upside down with the body pressed close to the tree trunk. They usually construct a nest of leaves in tree hollows, although where suitable holes are lacking they nest on the ground. They move very quickly in short bursts, so you can identify a tuan on the roof by the stop-start movement.



## S U G A R G L I D E R (Petaurus breviceps)

Sugar gliders have parachute-like gliding membranes and long bushy tails to glide and guide themselves in the air when leaping from higher branches to lower branches. They can volplane up to fifty metres in one glide.

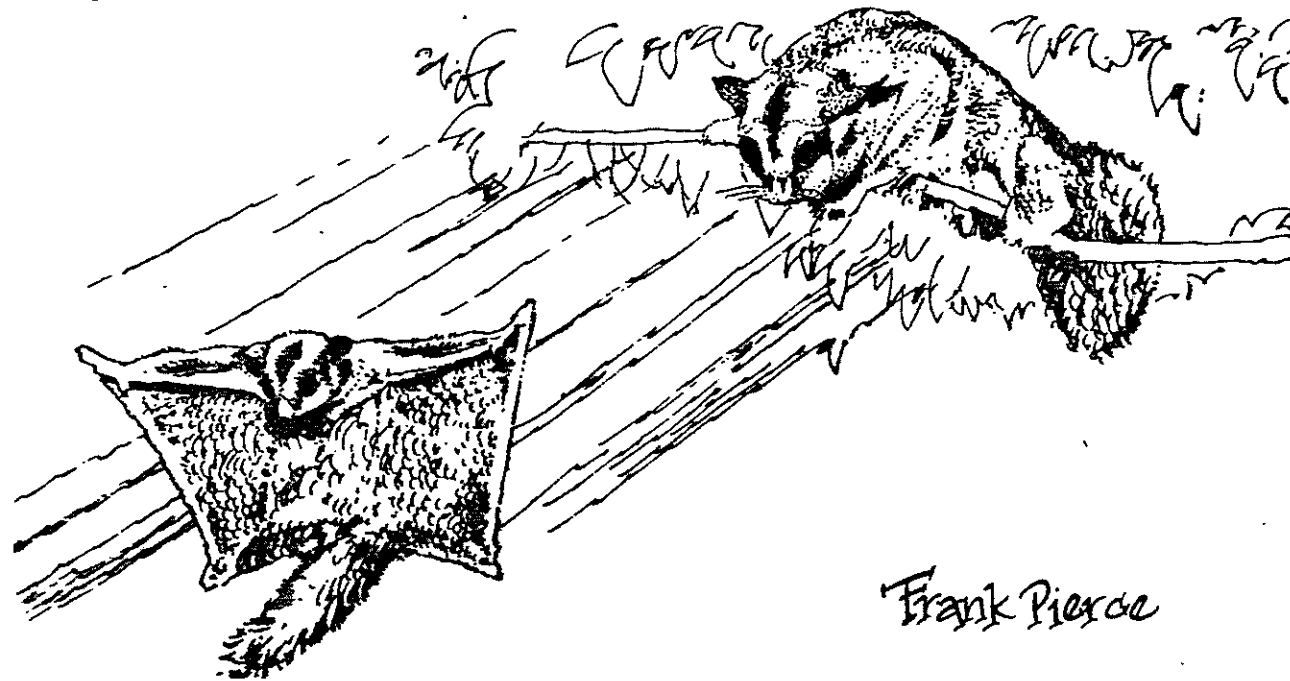
They are blue-grey to brown-grey above and cream to pale grey below. There is a dark stripe from between the eyes down to the mid-back. The tail is grey to black and is sometimes tipped with white. Length from nose to tail tip is 30cm.

Sugar gliders are arboreal and nocturnal, nesting in hollow branches. Their diet consists of insects, gum from acacias and sap from eucalypts.

Social groups of up to seven adults and their young share a common nest and use scent marking for identification.

Mating is normally in August and two young are produced which remain in the pouch for two-and-a-half months. The young are independent at seven to ten months and leave the group. There is a high mortality rate due to predators such as owls and kookaburras.

Sugar gliders make several different calls and are by no means timid in defending food sources from tuans and other larger animals.



Frank Pierce



The new committee set up for 1988 is:

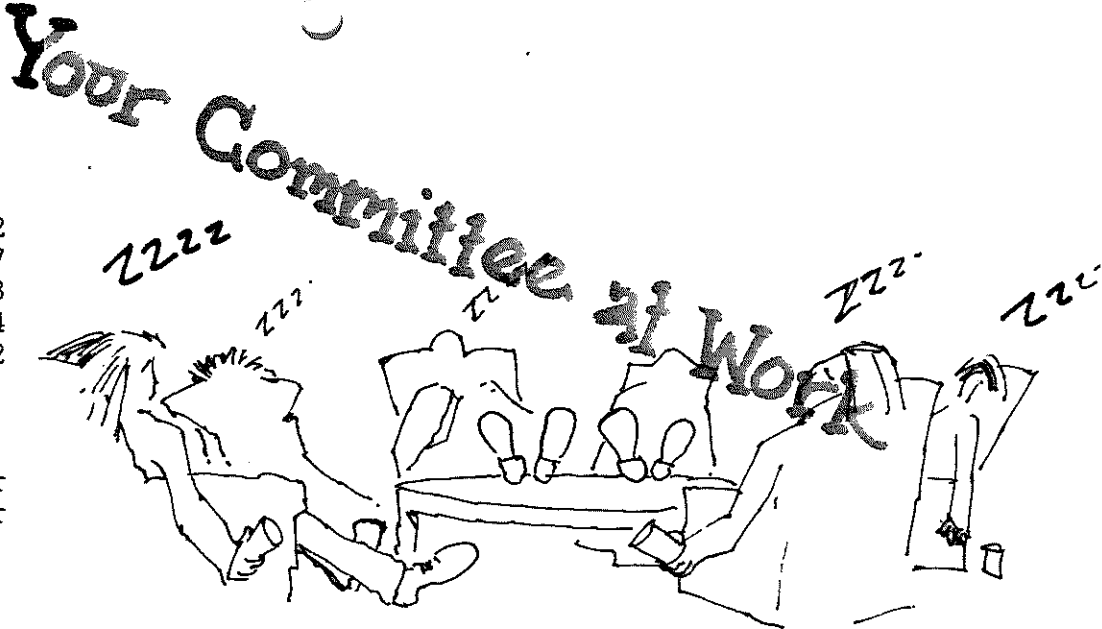
Frank Pierce	Pres.	7120361	Neil Harvey	7120462
Michael Pelling	V.Pres.	7120386	Ross Henry	7120547
Janet Mattiske	Sec'y	7120237	Rod Barker	7120423
Chris Snell	Treas.	7120559	Sandy French	7120574
John McCallum	Min.Sec.	7120319	Andy McMahon	7301652

Our thanks go to the retiring President Janet Mattiske for her commitment over the last 3 years. Also to John McCallum who has been Vice President for the same period and Franca Majoor and Joy Coldrey for their help as members over the last 2 years.

The main activities and issues addressed in the past year were:

- Field days for the interest of members and friends.
- Working bees for roadside clearing & the eradication of weeds and the eradication of willows on the river.
- Production of newsletters & newssheets & Bend of Islands Directory.
- Liaison with Council & MMEW on roadside revegetation in Henley Road.
- Liaison with SEC regarding clearing under power lines.
- Liaison with the local Fire Brigade.
- Fund raising for a weed survey for the ELZ.
- Involvement with proposed new legislation affecting environmental matters.
- Investigation of the rabbit problem in the ELZ.
- Preparation of material on the ELZ for publication.
- Submissions to the Council regarding the new Planning Scheme.
- Submissions to the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands for the Warrandyte State Park.

Most of these issues and activities are ongoing and the Committee has a very full year ahead of it.



The Committee will continue its liaison with the various authorities to maintain the integrity of the ELZ. We will continue our efforts to keep the community informed and to provide interesting and relevant activities and functions. The flora and fauna of the ELZ is diverse. One's knowledge of the natural systems can always be improved, be it making a start on plant or bird identification or reading some of the more subtle details of seasonal changes which are constantly occurring. As one's knowledge of the area grows, so does one's appreciation and enjoyment of it. The Committee's aim is to provide opportunities for members and residents to become more familiar with the various aspects of our environment. We would welcome any suggestions, ideas or help for future activities or functions.

Frank Pierce  
President

# Conservation — an overview

My work in conservation outside has grimly reinforced the critical need for places like the ELZ to succeed! All over Victoria a frightening environmental scenario exists!

- \* Our native forests are under enormous pressures to provide our seemingly insatiable demands for timber and other forest-based products.
- \* Our native grasslands have all but disappeared.
- \* Our rivers, creeks, lakes and oceans are totally degraded (only a handful are near pristine).
- \* Our wetlands are in terrible trouble as they're increasingly denied water or filled with saline waste.
- \* Our soils face horrific degradation through salinity, chemicals and desertification.
- \* Weeds continue to displace native species.
- \* Our air is polluted, the hole in the ozone layer persists, and the greenhouse effect is a coming nightmare.
- \* All over the state we're burying mountains of garbage and creating huge stockpiles of toxic wastes.
- \* Our native flora and fauna are being pushed into ever-decreasing habitat space, and the lists of threatened plants and animals grow alarmingly; our rate of extinction is appalling.

STILL WE GO ON, IN THE SAME OLD WAYS, SOME THINKING SCIENCE WILL SOLVE EVERYTHING, OTHERS THAT IT'S SOMEONE ELSE'S PROBLEM, STILL OTHERS THAT THE EARTH CAN LOOK AFTER ITSELF, AND CLOSER TO HOME THAT WHAT WE DO DOESN'T COUNT!

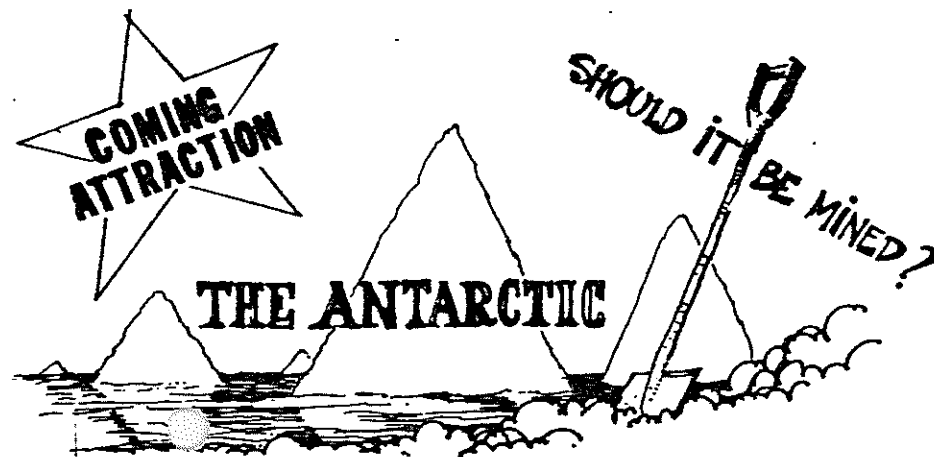
And that's my very point! IT IS WHAT EACH OF US DOES THAT WILL COUNT! IT'S THE SUM TOTAL OF OUR OWN ACTIONS WHICH WILL DETERMINE WHAT 'LIFE ON EARTH' IS LIKE IN THE FUTURE!

If we here in the ELZ can't even properly protect our own little patch of bush then the earth is in dire straits!

To bring it closer to home again! This week our gorgeous little tuan hit the rare list! Our area, it's thought, is probably the tuan's last stronghold. It's just holding on in the Heathcote area but has disappeared in Gippsland. What that means is that it won't take much more loss of habitat to push the tuan into endangerment, then over the edge to extinction!

What that means here in ELZ is that every single tiny piece of bush we destroy or degrade has significance for the tuan's ability to survive and flourish.

IF WE CAN'T ENSURE THE SURVIVAL OF THE TUAN IN ELZ, THEN THIS UNIQUE AUSTRALIAN MAMMAL WILL DISAPPEAR FOREVER! QUITE A RESPONSIBILITY - OR IS IT A CHALLENGE?



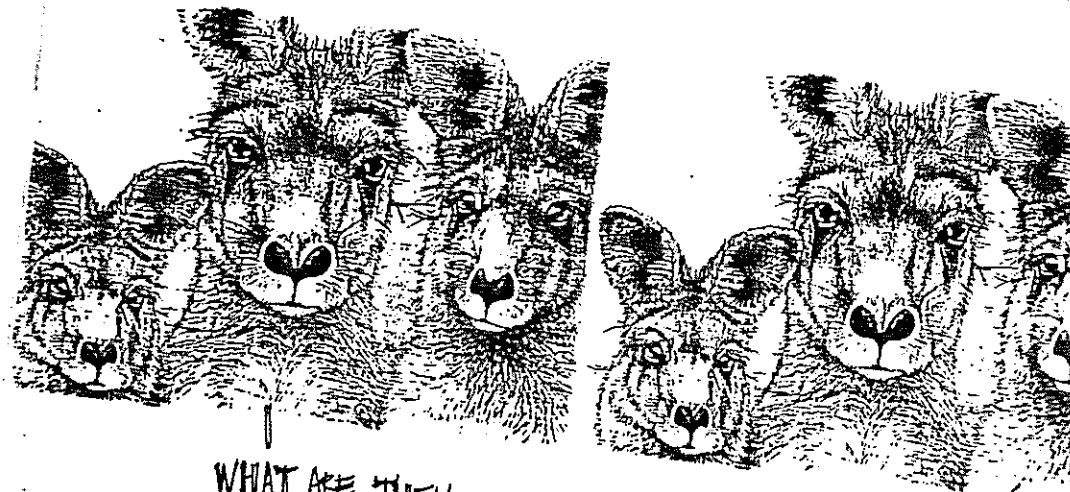
If this scenario depresses you - then take heart -  
THERE ARE STILL THINGS YOU CAN DO!

- \* You can help save forests by using less timber, using second hand timber and by using less and recycling paper.
- \* Protect native grasses and plants on your property, collect seeds and grow more.
- \* Don't pollute waterways by ensuring your household wastes are recycled (sullage for watering, etc.).
- \* Don't create networks of tracks; use the same few.
- \* Garden organically - don't add to the chemicals already overwhelming the environment.
- \* Stop weed invasion by using/making your own soils on your land (watch out for weeds in pots you buy). Remove weeds by the Bradley method and don't plant native weeds such as cootamundra, sallow wattles.
- \* Don't buy products which deplete the ozone layer (pressure pack CPC's, foam containers, air conditioning).
- \* Recycle your garbage (use the 3 bin system) and make use of existing recycling facilities. Lessen your use of toxic/hazardous products.
- \* Think about pollution when you burn, drive, etc. (use public transport, create car pools).
- \* Finally, cherish your own patch of bush. Remove it only when you really need to, replenish it with local plant species, provide nesting boxes for local mammals, watch what grows on your land, what uses it and make room!

If you take all these positive actions, you really are contributing to an environmentally better world. Closer to home, you'll actually be offering a chance for survival to our own local population of tuans.

Felicity Faris.

## KG Tip



WHAT ARE THEY  
DOING THERE?

IT'S CALLED A  
'TIP', DEAR.

The Anti-Kangaroo Ground Tip Group is alive and actively pushing the Eltham Council to consider other than land fill tipping, especially on such an inappropriate location as envisaged - corner of Henley and Eltham/Yarra Glen Roads. The Council has set up a committee of Councillors and outsiders which produced a draft strategy called 'Waste Management Beyond 1995'. What this contained was not very encouraging. BICA's representative Wally Franz has been active in the Anti-Tip Group and he produced a strongly-worded comment on the draft strategy on our behalf. We need to keep pushing...and thanks, Wally.

# BICA Calendar

SATURDAY 30th APRIL, 1988 2:00 P.M.  
FIELD DAY - AUTUMN BUSH CONSERVATION WALK  
B.Y.O. B.B.Q. TO FOLLOW

SUNDAY 29th MAY, 1988 - 2:00 P.M.  
GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY 16th JULY, 1988 - 2:00 P.M.  
CONSERVATION ISSUES DAY - FILMS, DISCUSSION  
B.Y.O. B.B.Q. TO FOLLOW

SUNDAY 28th AUGUST, 1988 - 2:00 P.M.  
GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY 10th SEPTEMBER, 1988 - 10:00 A.M.  
WORKING BEE - WEED ERADICATION

SATURDAY 22nd OCTOBER, 1988 - 2:00 P.M.  
FIELD DAY - FLORA STUDY  
B.Y.O. B.B.Q. TO FOLLOW

SUNDAY 27th NOVEMBER, 1988 - 2:00 P.M.  
WORKING BEE - B.B.Q. LUNCH - GENERAL MEETING

SUNDAY 26th FEBRUARY, 1988 - 2:00 P.M.  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

# BICA Library

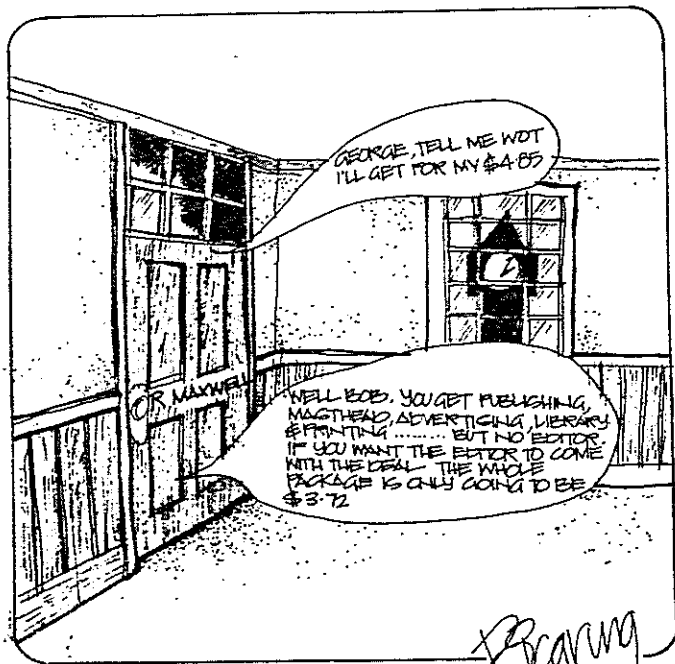


It may surprise you but our records of minutes and correspondence go back to 1977. Over those years many issues have arisen and concerned us, and as a consequence we have many particular topic files concerning such topics as garbage rates, bushfire, SEC, river improvement, rural shire, Christmas Hills Study, local government restructuring and strategy plans for the Yarra River and UYVDRA.

BICA belongs to a number of organisations and many of these have their own newsletters: the Native Action Committee has the Bush Telegraph, the Australian Conservation Foundation a newsletter, the Conservation Council of Victoria a newsletter, the Upper Yarra and Dandenong Ranges Authority the Echo and the newsletter of the Friends of the Warrandyte State Park.

If this is not enough to wet your appetite we subscribe to ECOS, a quarterly publication concerning science and the environment, published by the CSIRO.

Of course we also keep copies of past BICA newsletters and newsheets, so if you would like to see how and why it all happened or even what might happen, ring our secretary so that we can open the file for you!



# Spring has sprung

(WELL & TRULY.)

TODAY IS THE DAY OF THE SPRING EQUINOX, SO IT'S A DELIGHT TO RESPOND TO A REQUEST FOR CRITTER CORRESPONDENCE. THE WELCOME SWALLOWS HAVE ARRIVED AND ARE NESTING UNDER THE VERANDAH, THE PALLID CUCKOO STARTED ITS BEAUTIFUL ASCENDING NOTES A WEEK OR SO AGO, AND THE EARLY NANCIES ARE HERALDING SPRING UNDER THE GOLD-DUST OF WATTLES. THE PERFUME OF THE BLACKWOOD WATTLE HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY SWEET BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE OF RAIN THIS WEEK. THE PURPLES AND YELLOWS DOTTED THRU' THE BUSH ARE CAPTIVATING, BUT WHAT HAS DELIGHTED ME MOST WAS A SOUND...

THE LITTLE DRUMMER DRUMMED TIRELESSLY, HIS TINY BEAK TAPPING THE SHINY TIN REFLECTION OF HIS OWN SMALL IMAGE. HOPPING FROM SIDE TO SIDE LIGHTLY AROUND A LARGE EMPTY TIN DRUM. I AWOKE THIS MORNING TO THIS DELICATE SOUND, WHICH REMINDED ME OF LARGE RAINDROPS IRREGULARLY BOUNCING OFF SOME RESONANT SURFACE. FOR HALF AN HOUR THIS SMALL BIRD TRIED TO ATTRACT HIS "MATE'S" ATTENTION. THIS ENCHANTING CREATURE STOPPED, SANG HIS 'TO-SEE-HER, TO-SEE-HER, TO-SEE-HER' SONG AND THEN RESUMED HIS RELENTLESS SEARCH FOR ANOTHER EQUALLY LONG LENGTH OF TIME. THE DETERMINATION OF THIS SCRUB WREN CHARMED ME.

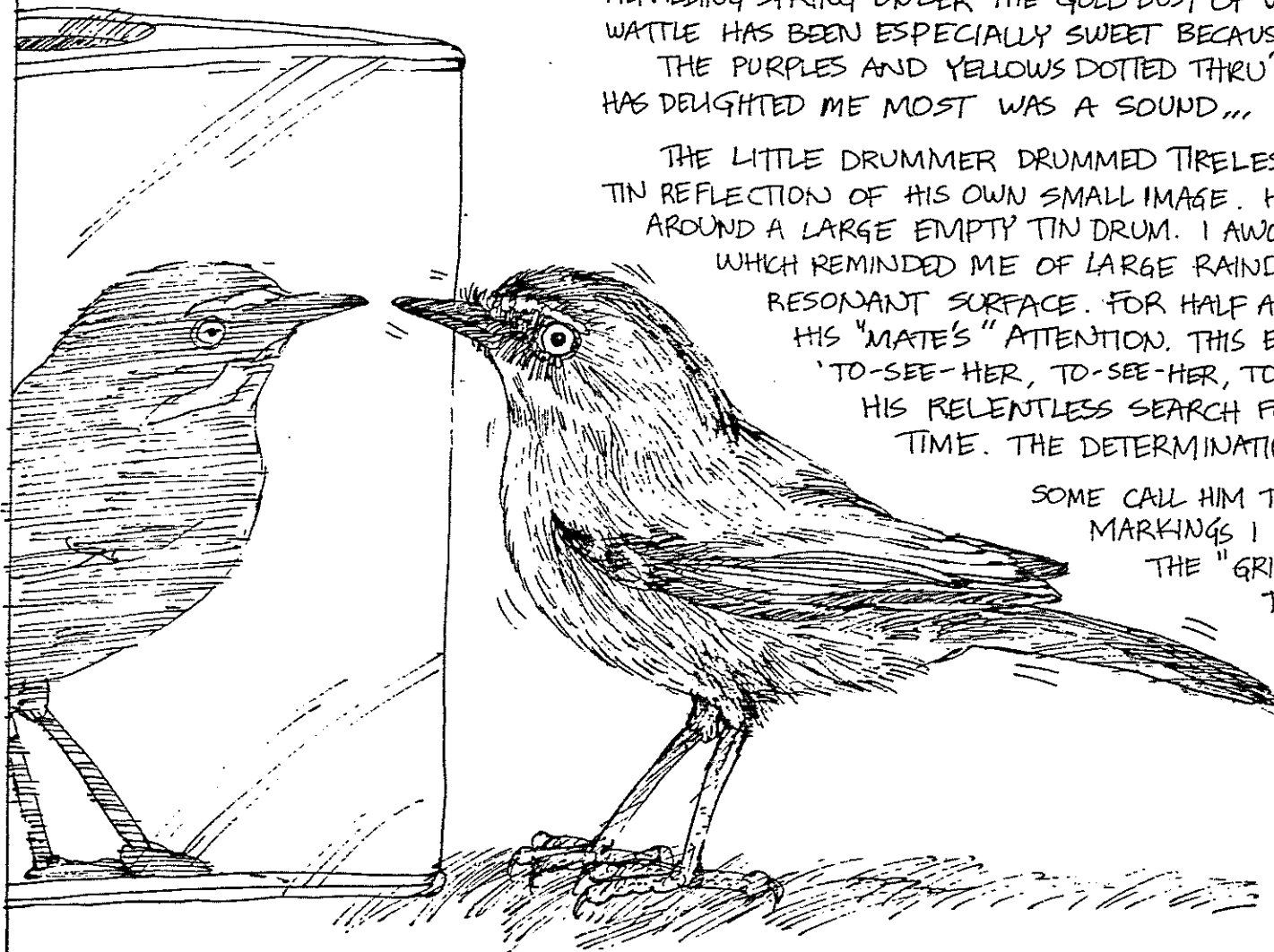
SOME CALL HIM THE DEVIL BIRD BECAUSE OF THE EYE MARKINGS I SUPPOSE - A WHITE EYEBROW LINE GIVING THE "GRIM" APPEARANCE.

THE LAST TIME I LOOKED HE WAS STILL AT HIS TASK TIP-TAPPING WITH TOTAL DEDICATION.

ONCE THERE WAS A POSS CALLED RED WHO RARELY DID A THING WE SAID SO NOW HE'S JOINED THE POSSUM YUPPIES TO FATHER TWO POINT FIVE POSSUM PUPPIES

← WHITE-BROWED SCRUB WREN

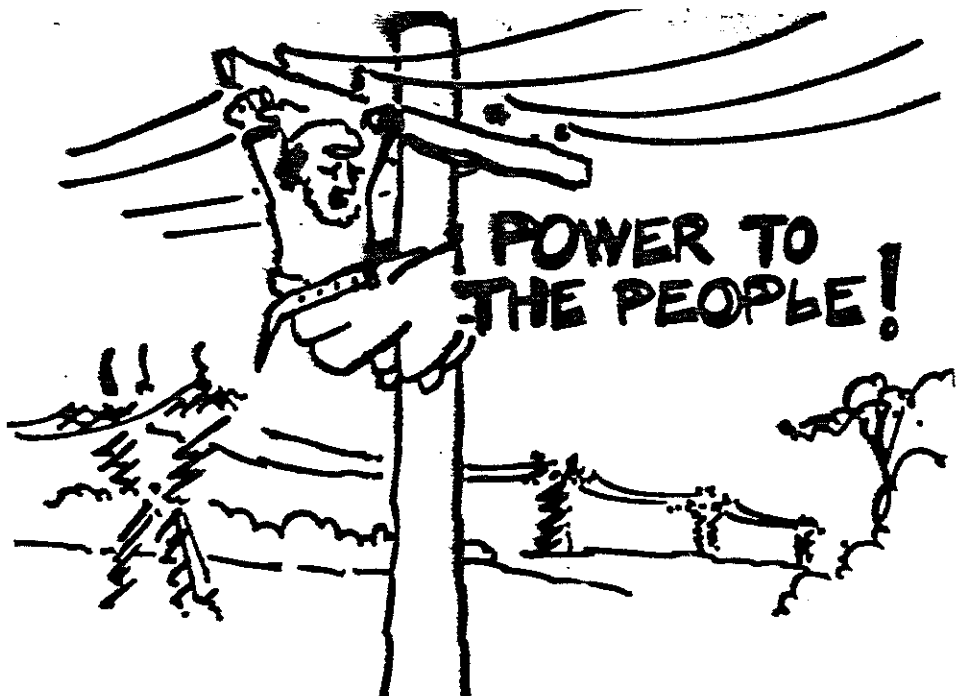
ANDY



# It's Not All Rubbish

## SECV NEWS

There will be the inevitable tree lopping below the SEC power lines as the triannual demonstration of how sophisticated our power supply authority remains. The devastation is to take place during March and April. The Committee, hand in hand with the UPNONGS, is attempting to minimize this impact (again) by setting up a cycle of thinning instead of wholesale lopping. The SEC are presently very protective about dollars and bushfire threats so please don't expect the earth.



Our society is producing rubbish at an ever-increasing rate. <sup>14.</sup> Automatic rubbish collection by local councils removes the direct personal involvement in disposal of rubbish and tends to promote the throw-away mentality. This creates a number of problems, the most obvious being disposal of the rubbish. The current tip siting debates in various municipalities highlight this problem.

The majority of rubbish disposed of by our society at tips need not be. This rubbish can be categorized as follows:

Rubbish Category	Alternative to dumping
Organic waste (food scraps)	Compost
Paper & cardboard	Recycle
Glass waste	Recycle
Timber waste	Firewood
Aluminium bars	Recycle
Metals	Scrapyard if sufficient quantity
Garden rubbish	Compost or burn off once a year

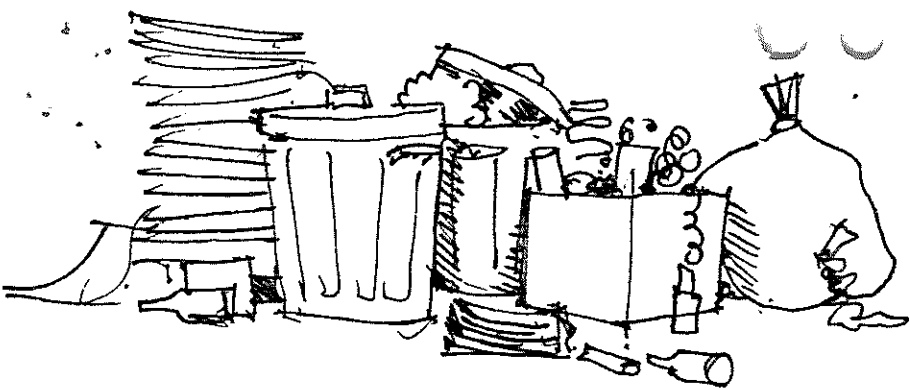
This leaves plastics and other miscellaneous scrap (old TVs, etc.) to be put out for garbage collection or to be taken to the tip. There can be little justification for the burning of rubbish, other than tree cuttings, on one's own property. Incinerators should be a thing of the past as most things burnable are recyclable.

The current tip siting debates and the prohibitive cost of alternative methods other than land fill highlight both the economic and environmental cost to society of rubbish disposal. Conservation can dramatically reduce these problems. The fuel crisis highlighted the need for conservation of fuel. The same principle can be applied to rubbish by composting and recycling and avoidance of non-recyclable products.

Most residents in the Bend of Islands practise water conservation. Because we don't have an automatic water supply, we are aware of our water consumption. If the rest of Melbourne thought about water consumption and realized that water doesn't just come from the tap, but from expensive dams and reticulation systems, the MMBWS future plans would gather dust on their shelves for many years.

Rubbish, like most things, can be related to \$'s. The economic sense of conservation is quite clear:

- Collection costs: proportional to volume
- Disposal costs
- Raw material costs: reduced by recycling
- Costs of pollution
- Costs of tip siting: problem frequency increases with volume
- Costs of litter: problem reduced by significant 'deposits' on containers to encourage recycling



# PETS

Some of the local residents have had pressure put on them from their young children for pets. Without the obvious dog and cat option, what is available is guinea pits, rabbits, fish, caged birds, etc. Alternatively there is occasionally the opportunity to assist in raising orphaned native animals with a view to releasing them back into the bush. Some of our experience may be worth recounting in this and future newsletters.



Poppy - Eastern Grey Kangaroo...

There is a need for government action to promote reduction of rubbish problems by encouragement of conservation. At a state level, drink and other containers should be recyclable and a deposit system should be introduced to ensure the items are recycled. This will also dramatically reduce the litter problem. This system exists and works well in South Australia.

The introduction of carton milk to replace bottles is an example of where government action would have been appropriate. It is cheaper for the milk distributor to supply milk in cartons rather than in recyclable bottles. However when the cost of disposal of the cartons by distributors is added, the carton alternative is more expensive. Hence society is picking up the bill and subsidizing the distributor.

Local councils have an important role to play in conservation of rubbish by providing opportunities for recycling, by conducting community education programmes and by allowing rate reductions for restricted amounts of rubbish placed out for collection. Sherbrooke Council has a rubbish collection system where neatly bundled waste papers and bottles packed in cardboard boxes will be taken by the rubbish collectors for recycling. The overall economics of this system should be sufficient incentive for all municipal councils to adopt the system.

Until a recycling system is adopted by Healesville Council, we in the ELZ can recycle rubbish relatively easily by using the Scout recycling depot in Youth Road behind Eltham station. Here we can recycle all paper and glass goods. Perhaps we could give the local council some encouragement to adopt and promote the Sherbrooke system. This would enable the whole of the shire to conveniently recycle rubbish.

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Ross and Cric Henry obtained her from the Hurstbridge vet at 6 months. She died at 12 months from some obscure gastro-bacteria.

A beautiful, shy little thing initially just sleeping in the pouch (a sewn up jumper hanging from a coat hanger), occasionally grazing out of the pouch, and needing bottle feeding every 4 hours (through the night initially).

She was soon hopping around the home and its surrounds munching our vegies, following me on jogs, gradually venturing further and for longer from her pouch.

We were just in the process of developing a plan for releasing her into a local or nearby herd (at Steeles Creek) when she fell ill and, in 2 days, died. We were all devastated but thought it all still worth trying.

Frank Pierce



# Kids' Eye View

WHAT SHOULD WE  
DO ABOUT ALL  
THESE  
PEOPLE?



POISON  
THEN?



Krista Patterson



Jo  
Henry



Jo Henry

## Jokes

Q. What did the big  
phone say to the  
little phone?

A. Your too young  
to be engaged.

Q. What animals  
need to be oiled?

A. Mice do. they  
squeak.

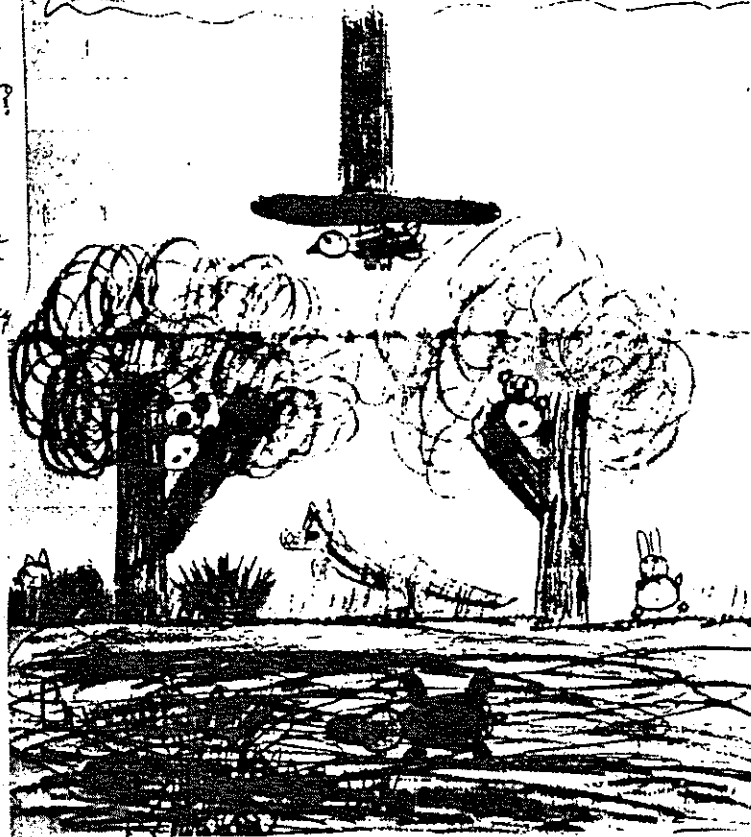
Q. Why is it hard  
to talk with a goat  
around?

A. because he always  
s butts in.

BY Yo Pelling

13/2/88

The thing I like about the Bend of Islands  
is all the animals the River and the fresh bush.  
The thing I don't like about the Bend of Islands  
is that too many houses are being built.



Sardines

A baby sardine

saw her first  
Submarine!

she was scared  
and watched  
through a periscope

"Oh come, come,  
come!"  
said the sardine  
mum,

"It's only a  
tin full of  
people."

Q. What must  
a stork do to  
stand on one  
Foot?

A. Hold up  
the other one.

Q. When did the  
Fly Fly?

A. When the spider  
spied her.

By Cass Harvey

PALM SUN PE RALLY.....27TH MARCH

BASKETBALL

There are two teams presently playing in Kangaroo Ground:

- Mixed - male & female, on Sunday afternoons. Great fun. If the interest is there, a new team could be formed.
- Men over 30 - serious, good & tough (watch your Achilles). New blood always welcome. Contact Peter Wilson 712 0220.

This annual event should be attended by as many as possible to ensure our politicians do not gloss over the important issues of our time. Productivity, privatization, gun laws, etc. seem to overshadow everything at the moment. If you would like to go in a group, contact Judy Pierce on 7120361.

NEWS

NEIL DOUGLAS

In case you are all wondering about the whereabouts of our hairy mentor, he is happily and healthily settled in another area of splendid bush on the tip of Point Smythe near Venus Bay on his own land. He lives in a caravan on the edge of the Anderson Inlet surrounded by coastal banksias, ti trees, mangroves and coastal grasses. He is painting profusely and exhibits in a shop front in Tarwin Lower. He has just been commissioned by the Horsham Gallery to prepare for an exhibition early next year (and is understandably thrilled to bits). In order to complete the works required, he intends to drag himself, paints and caravan around the western district including the Grampians, Little Desert and Wyperfield for the next 9 months. We wish him well and will keep in touch.

PLAYGROUP & BABYSITTING CLUB

Playgroup is usually on Thursday mornings from 10 to 12. New members are welcome, especially in the Bend of Islands area. Contact the ever playful Pam McMahon, 730 1652.

NEW RESIDENTS

It is always great to see new faces in the area, appreciating the environment of the B of I's and working to live amongst it like us. These new residents include...

- Robyn & Pete Langford
- Russell Trigg
- Andre Leffers & Irwin (apologies for not knowing Irwin's surname yet)

We welcome them and hope they find us just as friendly and supportive as we would like to think we are.

CONTRIBUTORS

Thanks to everybody who contributed to this newsletter, either with copy, illustrations, organization, typing, printing & collating... Mick Woiwod, Rodney Barker, Frank Pierce, Carol Ann Fisher, Matt McCallum, Iain Roebuck, Felicity Faris, Janet Mattiske, Cric Henry, Garry Patterson, me Ross Henry, and of course the kids listed on their page.

DON'T FORGET ME MIKE PELLING



WHERE DID YOU SAY THIS PARTY WAS?

