

Band of Islands Conservation Association

Newsletter No. 25

November 1991

What Native's Flowering?



SPECIES: *Wahlenbergia stricta*

COMMON NAME: Tall Bluebell

FAMILY: Campanulaceae (Bluebell family)

A small slender herb of one to many stems from 30-60cm high, arising from a fleshy perennial rootstock. The flowering stems are erect, sometimes branched, terminating in a single bell-shaped flower, 2-3cm across, consisting of a tube with 4-5 pointed petals. The flower is a brilliant sky blue colour, paler externally, and usually white inside the tube. In bud the flower droops, becoming erect when the flower opens.

The leaves are at the base of the plant and on the lower part of the stems and are usually opposite, variably lanceolate and wavy along their margins. The basal leaves are usually broader and along with the lower parts of stems, are covered with long white hairs.

The Tall Bluebell can be propagated by seed, cuttings or division of established plants. It is quite an effective landscape plant when planted as a single clump amongst rocks and grasses, or, if planted 30cm apart it will form a good ground cover. The plant is suited to a range of soils from heavy clay, humus rich to sandy soils. It prefers an open, well drained, sunny position but is tolerant of shady, dry conditions.

The many blue flowers which appear in Spring and Summer, encourage insects and consequently the birds that feed on them.

Cric Henry.

Of Tuans and Todd

The spotlight of my attention has focussed on Christmas Hills tuans for nearly two years now as I have sought to illuminate the species' ecology and conservation needs. Another summary of my activities and the resulting information would be timely.

In 1990 I monitored four females as they entered the questionable joy of motherhood. Although I suspect that mother tuans 'love' their babies dearly, the litter is a huge burden: quite literally until the youngsters are deposited in the nursery nest and thereafter as an increasing energy drain which forces the mother to forage especially hard. This increased effort led one female to remain out past dawn and she was taken by a goshawk. However, three litters were weaned and the 17 juveniles became the basis of my 1991 field season.

Survival of the juveniles at Christmas Hills was higher than I expected given the frequent demise of juveniles at my other study sites (to foxes and owls). Both known mortalities among local radio-collared youngsters were due to drowning in water tanks, eliminating a frighteningly high percentage of the collared females (two of five).

My trapping during 1991 yielded several more adult females and a large number of males. Due to the difficulty of tracking males as they move over hundreds of hectares, I only radio-collared those captured on the Co-operative this year. These males fulfilled their duty before their annual post-

breeding demise, and the females are currently carrying young.

During the past years, BICA members have played an very important role in revealing the ecological data which will provide guide-lines for conservation in Victoria and even nationally. For instance, the reports I received of ear-tagged males helped to define the breeding movements of these wide-ranging Cassinovas. Behavioural observations from members have often been more interesting than those I gain from my hours of nocturnal watching, and have clarified several questions I have. In particular, Laura Ealey has been in a unique position this year to describe breeding season behaviour among numerous transient males and the three females which frequent the Ealey house. On a less scientific note, I am currently compiling a list of the odd foods which people have reported seeing tuans eat (for example, oats, spiced vegetables, fruit and licorice).

I remain constantly impressed with BICA members for their acceptance of the tuan-in-the-roof phenomenon. Your houses are obviously preferred nest sites and will, by their unnaturally secure environment, foster the continued health of the local tuan population.

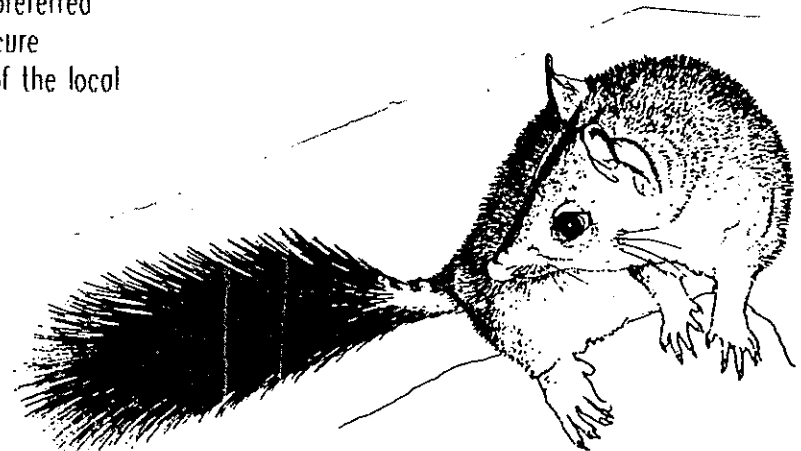
The species is threatened throughout Victoria and, although tuans are not endangered (ie, imminent extinction), these creatures certainly need the help of conservationists such as yourselves.

From a personal perspective, I have greatly appreciated the responses of BICA members to my research. Your willingness to assist me at every turn and tolerate my nocturnal wandering has greatly reduced the difficulty of working with these rare creatures. Thank you very much.

In mid-1992 I will give another talk to BICA summarising the results of this study. In the meantime feel free to call me with any questions. I remain very interested in any observations of tuans which can now be presumed to be mothers. My intensive field work will end in January; thereafter I will conduct sporadic research on particularly interesting or confusing aspects of tuan ecology for about nine months.

Todd Soderquist

33 Charles Road Lilydale 3140
(03) 739 6258



Eucalypts in the Bend of Islands

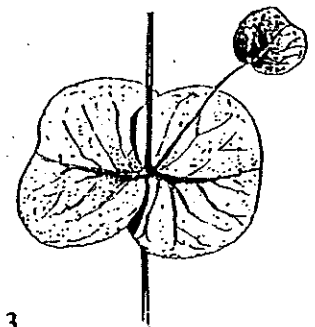
text: John McCallum drawings: Andree Leffers

Most of our trees are members of the Genus Eucalyptus and, although positive identification of many eucalypts can be quite difficult, our local ones aren't too hard! A definite identification will need buds and/or fruits but once you 'learn' a tree you can identify it by sight.

A Key to our Eucalypts:

- 1a Trunk more or less smooth (may have loose bark hanging from the trunk or branches). Usually referred to as "gums".....go to 2
- b Trunk clothed with rough or fibrous bark. (boxes, stringybarks, iron barks, peppermints).....go to 4
- 2a Leaf margins undulate ("wavy"), fruits top-shaped, generally grow in more poorly-drained areas.....E. ovata (Swamp Gum)
- b Leaf margins not undulate, buds and fruits in a cruciform (cross) arrangementgo to 3
- 3a Juvenile leaves narrow, smooth. Trunk often with loose bark hanging in ribbons.....E. viminalis (Manna Gum)

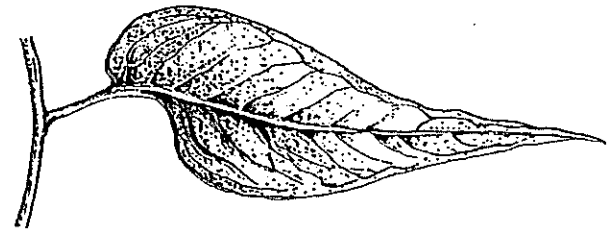
- b Juvenile leaves rounded, grey. Trunk usually smooth to base
.....E. rubida (Candlebark Gum)



Candlebark juvenile leaves

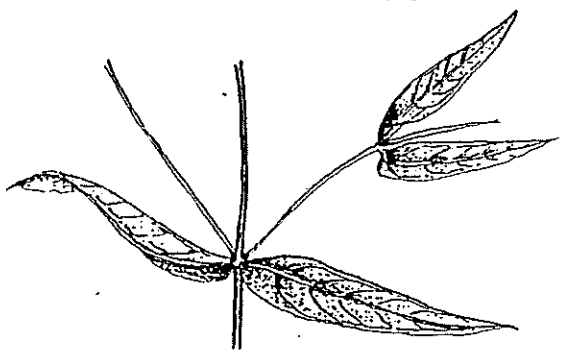
- 4a Trunk clothed with fibrous bark.....go to 3
- b Trunk clothed with rough but not fibrous bark.....go to 6

- 5a Base of leaf markedly asymmetrical. The first Eucalypt to be described.
.....E. obliqua (Messmate)



Messmate

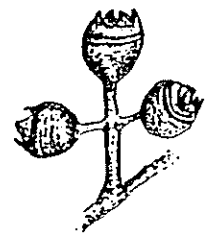
- b Base of leaf not asymmetrical. Check buds and fruits to identify
.....E. macrorryncha (Red Stringybark)



Manna Gum juvenile leaves



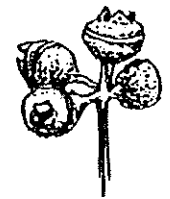
buds



fruit



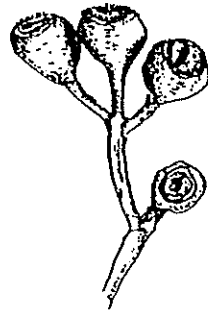
Red Stringybark buds



fruit

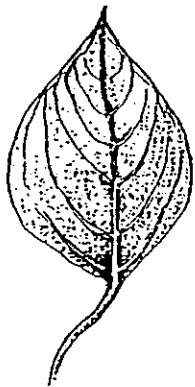
6a Trunk clothed in rough "chaffy" bark.....go to 7

b Trunk clothed in dark, hard, deeply furrowed-bark. Large urn shaped fruitsE. sideroxylon (Red Ironbark)



Ironbark fruits

7a Leaves wide, rounded, grey-green. Many flowers(buds, fruits) on stalk.E. polyanthemos (Red Box)



Red Box



buds



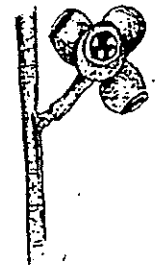
fruit

b Leaves long, dark green, fruits angled, buds with flattened stem.E. gonicalyx (Long Leafed Box)



Long-leaved Box

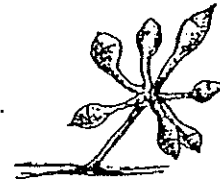
buds



fruit

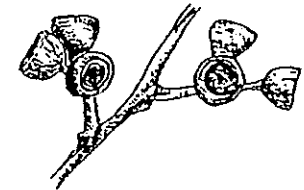
c Leaves thin, lanceolate. Overall appearance quite delicate.....go to 8

8a Overall appearance yellowish -brown. Branches often smooth. Check buds and fruits to identifyE. melliodora (Yellow Box)



Yellow Box

buds



fruit

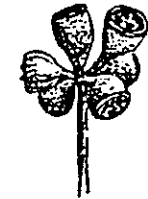
b Overall appearance greyish. Leaves with many oil spots (hold up to to light) - "mint "smell. Check buds and fruits to identify. Lots and lots of them!E. radiata (Narrow-leaved Peppermint)



Narrow-leaved Peppermint



buds



fruit

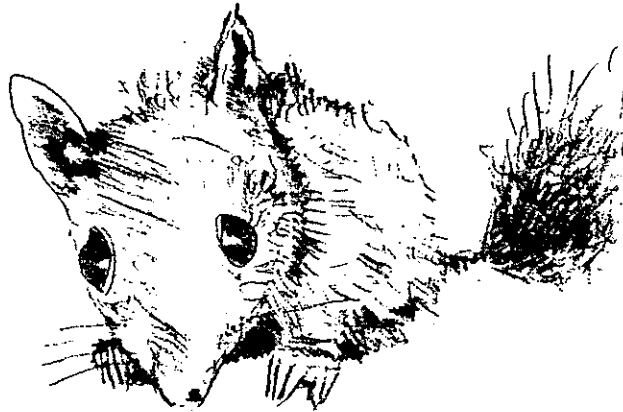
Tuan Tales

When Todd first introduced us to Bonnie, I never guessed how involved we would become. She had decided to use our lounge ceiling as her main nest site during breeding season. Bonnie and her babies have since given us hours of excitement, interest and anxiety. She produced seven young; only one was male.

For research purposes, Bonnie wears a small collar encasing a radio transmitter. A tape recorder, placed in our lounge, below her nest, records her movements. Each morning we check that she has returned safely.

By the time the young were nearly ready to emerge into the bush we had become very familiar with Bonnie's movements in and near the house. She had acquired the habit of leaving the roof about half an hour before sunset – rather early for a nocturnal animal. Perhaps she wanted to get to the honey we smeared on a tree before the gliders and brushies arrived.

Unlike many bush animals, young tuans are not carefully chaperoned by a solicitous parent as they learn their own special brand of bushcraft. Todd alerted us to the approximate time when the young would begin to explore the bush and learn to forage for themselves. Being very curious, I began to sit on the roof each night to witness the big event. We had by then been hearing the patter of little feet for some time, as the youngsters scurried around exploring the ceiling. Now I was keen to see the young tuans in action.



Bonnie would open the night's entertainment by suddenly emerging from beneath the corrugated iron, into the gutter. After a quick glance overhead and all around, she'd pop up, front paws on the gutter' rim and carefully survey the bush. (After a close scrutiny of me on the first few nights, I was ignored, being an apparently immovable object.) When she was satisfied she'd spend a moment or two perched on the gutter rim, then dart along a branch leading down to the honey.

Frequently, she had to wait for a kooka or two to leave the branch as this spot is the best vantage point for expectant birds to watch the fridge door

and hope for a responsive human to do the right thing. From my own perch on an upturned bucket, I could hear the eager youngsters scurrying around under my feet. Time after time they would come to the exit, but courage failed and they'd retreat still unseen with a few excited squeaks and juvenile scuffles.

Several nights and many stiff hours later, the momentous occasion arrived as one brave young tuan leapt into the gutter only to bounce back in one lightning movement. A brief flash of grey and that was it! Three hours later I gave up hope of further bravery and went down to the lounge. Guess what? Two happy tuans playing and exploring, safe from predators and prying eyes. One was eagerly scrunching a blowfly, the other half way up the curtain backing, both unseen but clearly heard. I froze; so did they. For a full 20 minutes we formed an invisible triangle of bated breath and thumping hearts. Finally, one then the other darted up from behind the curtain and leapt for the safety of the ceiling, through a mud brick gap, specially left for our fellow residents. Clearly, I would have done better by waiting in comfort in the lounge, but then I'm only a poor dumb human.

The next few nights revealed other adventurous tuans leaping in and out of the gutter and peeping over the edge. What a huge world it must have seemed after the confines of the house. While most of the youngsters gradually followed mum's route down to the honey there were the individuals who chose their own pathways into the world – teenage

tuans are not unlike the ones in that respect, are they?

One young lady would daintily skitter past me on her way to the verandah with a demure side glance as she passed within ten centimetres of me. Dizzy Dora, however, was a volatile, theatrical type who would wait until quite late before exploding into the gutter in a frenzy of excitement, leap onto the roof and spin around crazily in an excess of pent up energy before deciding to race across the roof by the longest, most exposed way, disappearing over the garage. How she didn't attract the attention of a passing owl is a mystery as the mopokes and powerful owls often sent chills up my spine with their haunting, threatening hoots vibrating through the bush night.

Tail End Charlie was a very secretive chap. He would wait until well after dark, then avoiding the floodlight directed on the main exit, he would quietly appear as a soft shadow at the far end of the roof, dart silently along the barge-board top and merge into the darkest area of the wall, descending two floors of mudbrick with the use of his sharp little claws. All seven young survived the natural perils and predators until one thirsty female drowned in a tank.

The kookaburras' reluctance to go to their roost near sunset and the eagerness of some young tuans to begin their foraging early caused some anxious moments. Frequently as many as three or four tuans would be leaping impatiently in and out of the gutter and stamping their forelegs in exasperation as the kookaburras sat tight blocking the main

branch. One intrepid young tuan had on two previous occasions darted along to within six inches of the closest bird and angrily stamped its forepaws at him. Apart from a look of astonishment from the kookaburra it remained unmoved.

Finally, Tim and I witnessed the highlight of the long December evenings. One pent up young dare-devil threw caution to the wind, darted across to a lone kookaburra, danced and stamped in frustration, then whisked underneath the branch, along below the bird's feet then up the other side of him and on to the much prized honey. The kookaburra stared in amazed disbelief, shook his head with a loud clacking and lumbered off in disarray. Tim and I laughed heartily half in mirth and half in relief that the young scamp's temerity paid off. The tuan was little more than a bite size scrap for a large bird. We sincerely hoped this tuan knew the difference between a kookaburra and an owl.

It would be difficult to find more volatile, resourceful and captivating creatures than these beautiful little brush tailed phascogales.

Laura Ealey

NETWORKING
JUST A PASSING THOUGHT
FROM MICK WOJWOD...

Decide to network

Use every letter you write
Every conversation you have
Every meeting you attend
To express your fundamental beliefs and dreams
Affirm to others the vision of the world you want
Network through thought
Network through action
Network through love
Network through the spirit
You are the centre of a network
You are the centre of the world
You are a free, immensely powerful source
of life and goodness
Affirm it
Spread it
Radiate it
Think day and night about it
And you will see a miracle happen:
the greatness of your own life.
In a world of big powers, media, and monopolies
But of four and a half billion individuals
Networking is the new freedom
the new democracy
A new form of happiness

by Dr. Robert Muller Assistant Secretary-General for
Economic and Social Services for The United Nations



On Recycling Matters

The Shire of Healesville's recycling trial started in early June and, at the time of writing, is to run through to 26 August. The aim is to determine the viability of recycling in the Shire, both in terms of community participation and quantities of materials received. Healesville High School and the Shire are involved as a going project and the trial encompasses two areas representing the urban and rural sectors of Healesville Shire. Sanctuary View Estate and the Bend of Islands are the areas concerned.

Healesville High was to distribute recycling bags and literature to all residents by the June commencement date. Due to the difficulty in finding Bend of Islands' homes, as well as knowing which were occupied and which were not, they failed. Certain locals distributed the bags over the Queen's Birthday long weekend and because some co-op homes had been inadvertently included by the High School (which was not the original plan) the co-op was also included.

After three collections results are heartening. Approximately 66 per cent of Bend of Islands' homes are participating each fortnight, compared to half that amount in Sanctuary View. The Shire

Engineer thinks this reflects the level of interest and also community communications in both areas. He is going to try to improve the Sanctuary View response. We are also taking some steps to try and lift our already good participation by reminder signs at the store and bridge.

The recycled material is currently (mid July) being kept at the Shire depot, except for plastic. The plastic is delivered to RIDIT in Lilydale and thereby forwarded to a recycling plant.

The glass and aluminium will be recycled through local community groups to be used for fundraising. After the trial, if a regular recycling operation takes effect, the contractors will deliver material to industry - to pay for the service. The current trial is not a financial exercise; rather it is to determine the quantities of material likely to be recycled. Judging from local reaction (and participation) the trial is well received. Most people appreciate the opportunity to recycle material; that's part of our ethos I guess. Also, most people note the quantity of garbage they put out weekly has reduced. Perhaps a flow-on from any regular recycling system might be a reduction in frequency of garbage collection, with savings passed back to

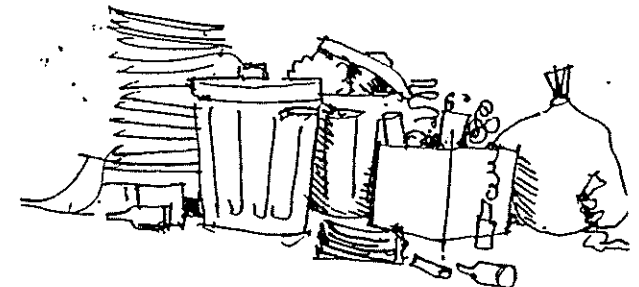
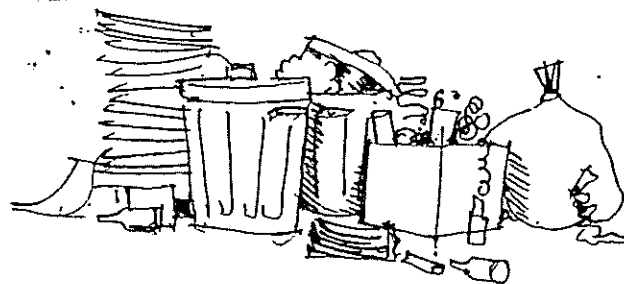
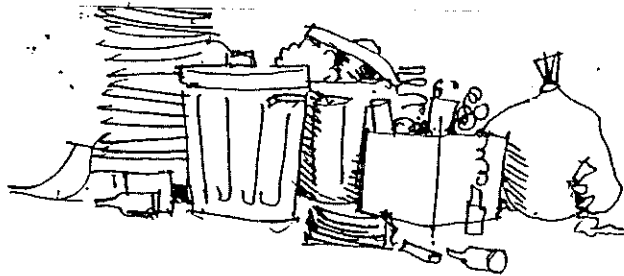
ratepayers in a reduction of the garbage rate. The Shire Engineer thought this might be possible if residents supported the idea.

In general conversation, the Shire Engineer and I explored other methods of collecting recyclable material such as monthly collection, or centrally locating a bin over a weekend once per month for residents to use. The cost of these options is certainly less than fortnightly collection and needs to be discussed further if a recycling operation goes ahead.

On other recycling matters: Thanks to Tom Fisher for organising the paper and cardboard pickup late in June. That seemed to be well supported and has potential to grow. I took a trailer load of paper and cardboard to APM in September and a volunteer is needed for a collection in December.

Residents may like to take their own paper and cardboard for recycling. You can drop it in a special chute at APM Fairfield at any time. More conveniently, there is now an APM bin beside the scout bottle collection point in Eltham, just opposite Judge Book Village.

Peter Gurney
712 0408



Bronzewing Pigeons

There are two species of pigeons indigenous to the ELZ – the Common Bronzewing (*Phas chalcoptera*) and the rarer Brush Bronzewing (*Phaps elegans*). They are plump, small-headed, shy birds, cryptically coloured, usually found singly or in pairs, which spend much time on the ground feeding in the shade or semi-shade of trees. They eat seeds, berries and occasionally invertebrates. When flushed they rise with a clattering of wings, which is often the first sign of their presence, and fly low, directly and swiftly, rarely above tree height. Both species have a monotonous 'oom' call which is suggestive of a cow lowing, but is higher-pitched in the Brush Bronzewing.

The nest is a sparse saucer of sticks in a tree or shrub and they lay two white eggs. The Brush Bronzewing occasionally nests on the ground under a bush, making it easy prey for cats.

Common Bronzewing

Description: 305–355mm. About the size of a feral pigeon, light brown scalloped on the back, extensive bronze on the wings, underparts dull pinkish, the male's forehead is orange-buff and its throat pale, it has a conspicuous white stripe curving from the bill, under the eye. The female is generally duller than the male.

Brush Bronzewing

Description: 280–300mm. It is much browner, plainer bird on the upper parts. It has rich chocolate-brown on the shoulders, sides of the neck, throat patch and eye-stripe. Its forehead is buff-grey, with a white stripe under the eye. It has blue-grey underparts and the bronze feathers on the wings are more neatly marked into two rows than those of the Common Bronzewing. The female is also duller than the male. Both species can be readily found in the ELZ – but can be difficult to distinguish.

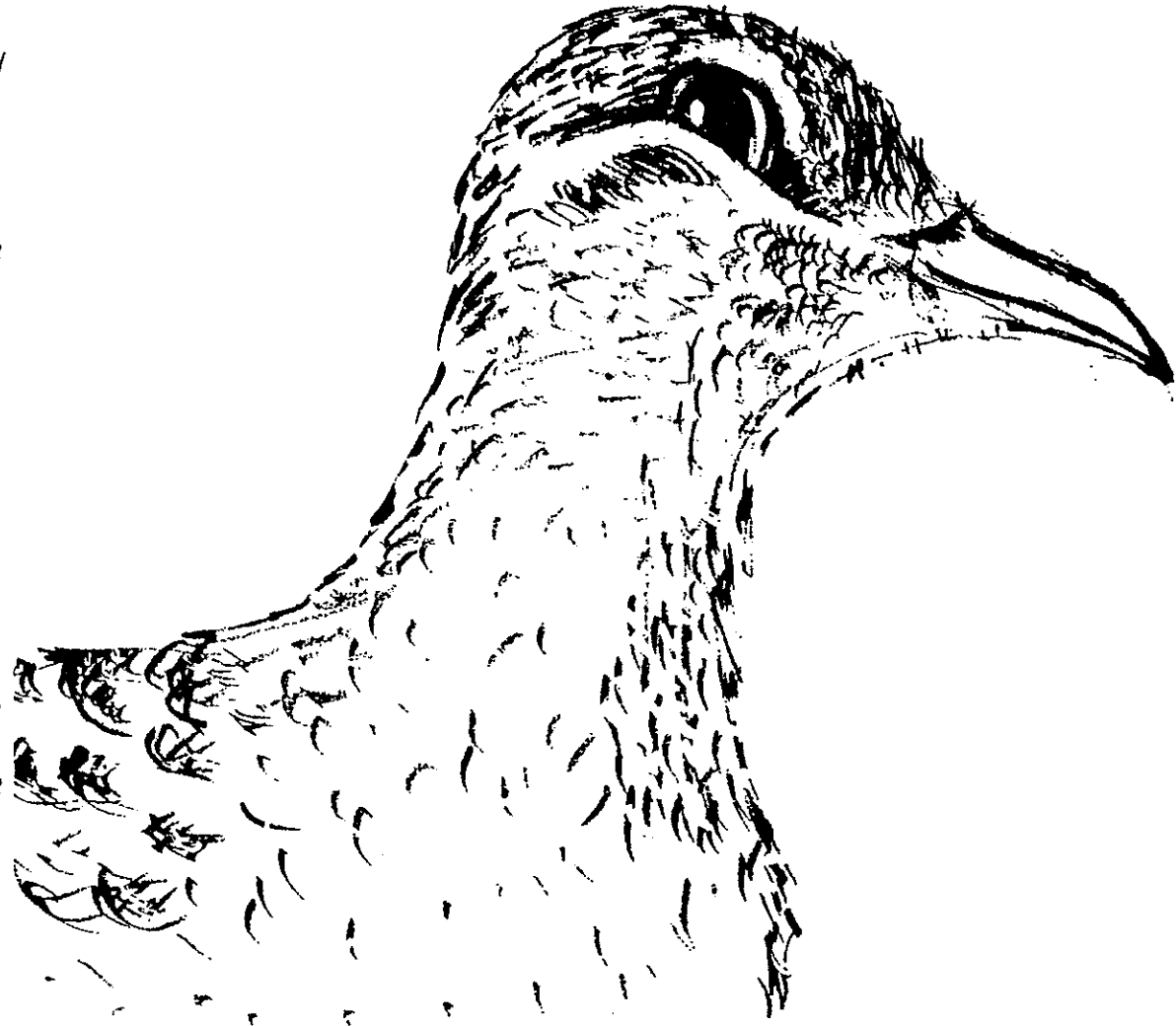
If you are interested in joining others in admiring the birdlife of the ELZ, come along to the monthly bird walks.

They will be held on 10 November, 8 am

8 December, 8 am 12 January, 7.30 am

Meet at the Henley Road tank near Catani Blvd.

Robyn Duff



Special Gardens

A long time ago, well over sixty years it was, there were two special gardens not far from here. One was the fairly formal one which wrapped itself all around Grandma Oxley's house and the other was a rather large orchard and vegetable garden down near Claire Watson's. Both these had very special attractions for us kids for different reasons and it is of those times I will try to remember.

Right at the outset I have to say that the house garden would definitely not have passed environmental rules up here today. I suspect there were too many foreigners growing in it, but as Grandma was one of those people forever poking bits and pieces from who knows where into the ground I expect it grew like Topsy. One thing which would have been OK by today's standards though was that it was most assuredly organic. The only fertiliser these gardens ever felt was animal and chook manure and for insect pests there was the trusty old washing up water flung from an enamel bucket. (I was once caught by one of those.)

The front of the garden, which faced north, was divided into long, formal raised beds, the principal plants of which were bush and standard roses. I wish I could remember the names of them, for all that is left of them now is the old root stock and that looks as though it will last forever. However, the roses weren't the main attraction for us. Because the paths were smooth we had the only places up here to ride a little tricycle easily; and as

for playing chasey, well it was like running about in a maze.

In one corner along the eastern side was a small greenhouse. This was made of neatly woven kunzia and contained shelves of orchids, ferns and begonias. There was a time when I was fiddling around with some of the pots and accidentally dropped an orchid plant and broke the pot. History hasn't recorded whether I was sprung about that. I don't remember. Knowing Grandma she would have been nice about it anyway.

Round the other side of the house were the more mundane areas for living up there. The laundry for instance. This was a galvo shed with a wood copper and troughs in it. Of course, the furry wooden copper slick to poke the clothes with and the old heavy wringer to mangle the washing into the rinsing



lub were there. Oh, and don't forget the blue bag for the whites, the lovely slippery gooey starch mixture and the washboard. God knows how long the clothes lasted with this treatment. Down under a bench in there was a basket which was supposed to hold the dirty clothes. More often than not a cat produced kittens here and used this spot as a permanent labour ward. You can have no idea how many times these days as I am about to start my washing machine my mind goes back to poor old Grandma on a hot north wind Monday, slaving away in that laundry.

Near the laundry was a tank absolutely smothered with a Lady Hillingdon climbing rose. This was so beautiful and so prolific. It was the colour of cantaloupe and the smell.....It flopped over the tank and then trailed around and tried to get into the window of that back verandah room I recently told you about. I suspect it was drinking up the waste water from the laundry and loving every bit of it. Once the water from this tank tasted funny and we all got sick. Yes, the unmentionable had happened. A possum had drowned in it and wasn't found until it was too late.

At the back of the house was a huge strawberry bed. The plants were mulched with stable manure and watered with buckets, and when it was the season, picking them was the only job we would do willingly.

We had a Jersey cow then and her cream was something else. The cream was that clotted sort and was produced by boiling up the milk and leaving it to set overnight.

Near the back gate which lead to the dunny, was a huge almond tree. The mystery was that it produced a massive crop of almonds each year and the parrots didn't get them all. Not like today. A lot of these trees and plants thrived I suspect because of the drainage system around the house. Not quite as sophisticated as our transpiration beds, but an early prototype. One thing my cousin Bob and I often got into trouble for was digging around these drains for worms. We were forever fishing and the drains were veritable worm

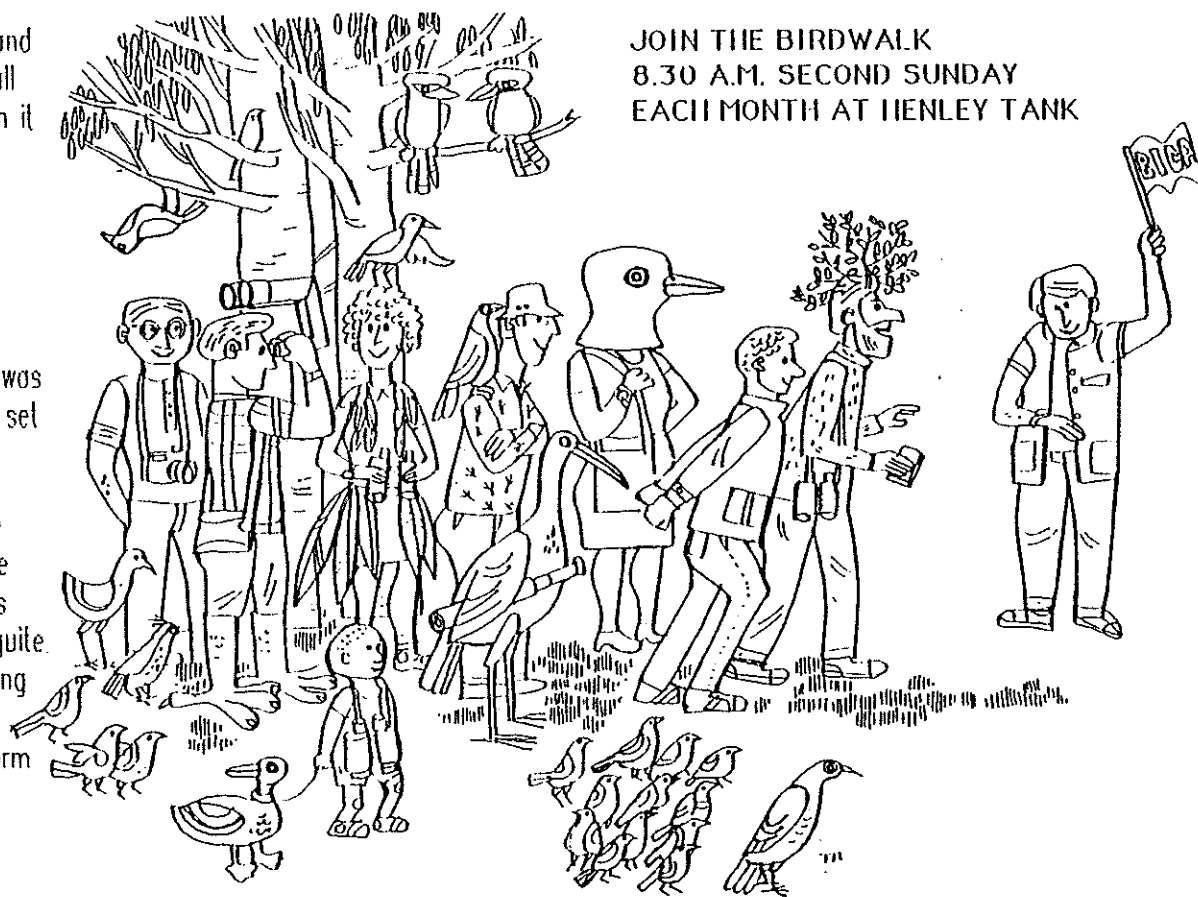
farms. We used to leave the area near the back door looking like the Somme. Never had the time or the brains to clear up and hide the evidence!

Another bit of gourmet pickings were raspberry canes which grew all around the back fences. I have a dim memory of birds going for those in a big way though.

I realise now that I've taken up too much time with this garden, so perhaps I can leave the other one for later on. The old bones of Grandma's garden are still there to see and I often pay a visit just to see how things are going. I'm so pleased Mr Abrahams seems to just want that area left alone.

Sheila Dixon

JOIN THE BIRDWALK
8.30 A.M. SECOND SUNDAY
EACH MONTH AT HENLEY TANK



Community News

Christmas Hills Rural Fire Brigade

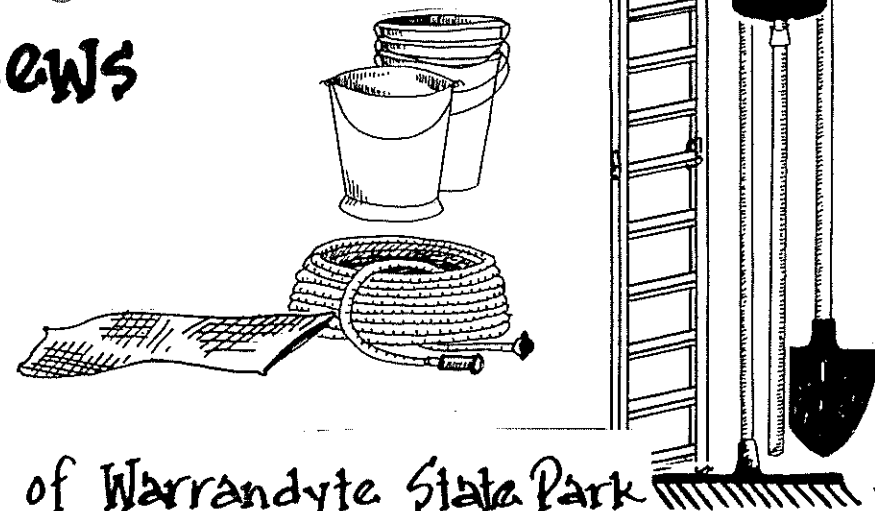
Like most people, you are probably looking forward to the warmer weather, but, as ever, spring also means that it's time to think about preparing your family, your house and your immediate surroundings so you are as safe as possible during the summer fire season. The last couple of summers have been unusually mild, but EVERY year there are at least a few days when the likelihood of having a fire in our area is extremely high. Keep a look-out for smoke, as well as for people acting suspiciously, and report it quickly. Three of the fires the Brigade attended this year during summer were suspected of being deliberately lit! So be alert and don't leave your preparations to the last minute; some things can be done now.

However, there is still a bit of winter left and that also means there is the chance of chimney and house fires. Be careful with open fires, as they can and do start house fires. So far during this winter the Brigade has attended one serious house fire, and four car fire/accidents. We don't want our next turn-out to be you.

If you would like more information regarding fire prevention measures, or have the time and enthusiasm to join the Brigade, contact one of the Officers, or come along to training - every Sunday between 9.30am and 12 noon.

CAPTAIN	Dave Herd	730 1429
LIEUTENANT	Fred Kober	730 1576
LIEUTENANT	John McCallum	712 0319
LIEUTENANT	Jeph Neale	712 0458
LIEUTENANT	Dianne Simmons	730 1761
SECRETARY	Robyn Adams	730 1761

Robyn Adams



Friends of Warrandyte State Park

On a very wet Sunday morning in June a group of locals met at the tank with the Friends of Warrandyte State Park for a visit to the co-op and Bend of Islands. After leaving cars near A track we met Tim Ealey and walked along the track to Anne and Tony's house. In a cosy atmosphere (out of the rain) Tim told us the history of the co-op, its setting up and problems encountered during this period. He answered questions on its structure and told us amusing anecdotes relating to the early days. Then Tim led us on a cross country walk to B track. After going down gullies, cross creeks and up hills we had a good appreciation of what a lovely natural area this is. Unfortunately we were too early for the wild flowers. We walked back along B track to Tim and Laura's house where we woke some visitors still sleeping off the effects of the solstice party the previous day. We returned by car to our place where we had lunch and everyone had a chance to dry off in front of the heater. I decided to skip the longer walk planned for the afternoon in favour of a short walk down to the river followed by a drive to Mick and Margaret's place for a lovely afternoon tea and chat. The day was enjoyed by everyone in spite of the weather conditions. I would like to thank all who helped, especially Tim, Mick, Margaret, Anne and Tony. For further details contact:

Marie Krause
712 0498

Community News cont'd

Friends of the Christmas Hills Fire Brigade

Hope you all enjoyed the Friends' evening at the Eltham Little Theatre's production in mid-September to help raise some funds for our local brigade. The next fund raiser, and forum to have some neighbourly social repartee, will be at the South End fire station on Melbourne Cup day from around 12.30pm - BYO champers and chook, or whatever, plus, most importantly, some cash to join in the Cup Sweep and the amazing Skills Auction. You will, of course, already have offered a personal skill to be inscribed on a certificate which is then auctioned to the highest bidder. Negotiations take place between buyer and skill-offerer as to delivery of said skill, but the cash raised goes straight to the brigade. These Friends are full of ideas, and community Christmas carolling on Sunday, 22 December, again at the South End fire station, from 6 pm with a BYO BBQ/picnic followed by singing and playing extraordinaire will undoubtedly rival the Myer Music Bowl professionals for verve, excitement, poignancy, and just jolly good fun - so please be there with your family and invite heaps of friends too - the more the definitely merrier!

More info? Please call Sheila Dixon 712 0542 or Laura Ealey 712 0347.

Celebrating the Seasons

The haunting sound of a lute, a glowing fire, equally glowing companions, the soft hum of conviviality and a fantastic bush sunset: that's how the shortest day this year will be remembered by me. Tim and Laura Ealey once again opened their home and their hearts to, it seems, most of Melbourne and especially their neighbours, for the Winter Solstice. Nothing much else to say, except thanks...

Barb W.

BICA Committee

The Committee would like to remind all members that we are here to hear YOU. Each Committee Meeting, usually held on the first Friday of the month (February to December) at 8 pm rotating through committee members' homes, is open to each and every member to attend should they feel a pressing need.

Otherwise, if you have a burning issue or want to ask a question or put forward an idea, contact any of the committee members listed on the BICA calendar received earlier this year and ask them to put your item on the agenda. By the way, any members whose 1991 subscription has slipped their mind, please contact Chris Steed 712 0558 or Alan Bluhm 712 0532 who'll be most keen to bring your membership right up-to-date.

ANSWER TO BIRD QUIZ.. (FROM LAST NEWSLETTER)

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

Indigenous Plant List

Guess who goofed? Yep, this list was just meant to be with that truly informative article by John McCallum last time around, What to Plant Where? however, Barb didn't add up the pages and it was left out. I could have pretended that it was better to have it spring, but you all would have seen through that one! I'll go for the good old adage, better late than never - oh, and good planting!

INDIGENOUS PLANT LIST IN THE ELZ



TALL SHRUBS (> 2 METRES)

- Grevillea rosmarinifolia
- Lomatia myricoides
- Bursaria spinosa
- Acacia annata
- Acacia verticillata
- Acacia mucronata
- Acacia genistifolia
- Acacia stricta
- Daviesia virgata
- Daviesia mimosoides
- Daviesia wyattiana
- Goodia lotifolia
- Indigofera australis
- Olearia lirata
- Pomaderris racemosa
- Pomaderris vacciniifolia
- Pomaderris prunifolia
- Pomaderris ferruginea
- Gynatrix pulchella
- Hymenanchera dentata
- Leptospermum phyllicoides
- Leptospermum lanigerum
- Leptospermum obovatum
- Leptospermum juiperinium
- Callistemon paludosus
- Melaleuca ericifolia
- Solanum laciniatum
- Cassinia aculeata
- Cassinia longifolia
- Cassinia arcuata
- Helichrysum dendroidum
- Senecio linearifolius

- Rosemary Grevillea (Hurstbridge form only)
- River Lomatia
- Sweet Bursaria
- Hedge Wattle
- Prickly Moses
- Narrow Leaf Wattle
- Spreading Wattle
- Hop Wattle
- Slender Bitter-pea
- Narrow-leaf Bitter-pea
- Long-leaf Bitter-pea
- Golden-tip
- Austral Indigo
- Snowy Daisy-bush
- Slender Pomaderris
- Round-leaf Pomaderris
- Plum-leaf Pomaderris
- Rusty Pomaderris
- Hemp-bush
- Tree Violet
- Burgan
- Woolly Tea-tree
- River Tea-tree
- Prickly Tea-tree
- River Bottlebrush
- Swamp Paperbark
- Kangaroo Apple
- Common Cassinia, Dogwood
- Shiny Cassinia
- Drooping Cassinia
- Tree Everlasting
- Fireweed Groundsel

LARGE TREES (> 10 METRES)

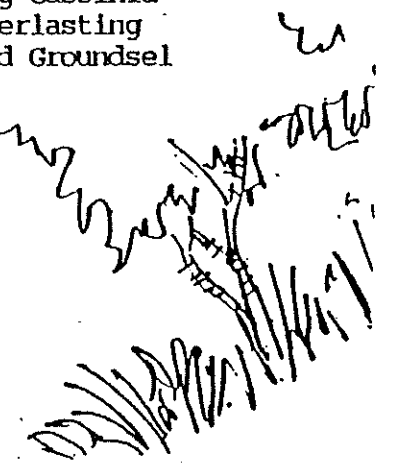
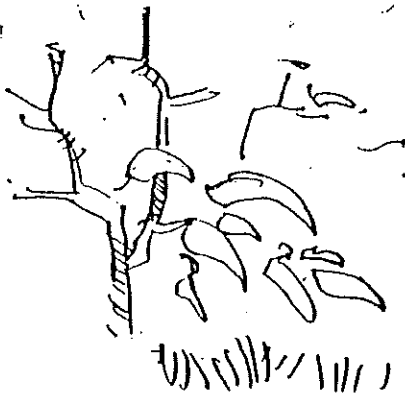
- Allocasuarina littoralis
- Eucalyptus macrorchyncha
- Eucalyptus obliqua
- Eucalyptus viminalis
- Eucalyptus rubida
- Eucalyptus sideroxylon
- Eucalyptus radiata
- Eucalyptus dives
- Eucalyptus ovata
- Eucalyptus gonicalyx
- Eucalyptus melliodora
- Eucalyptus polyanthemus
- Exocarpus cupressiformis

- Black She-oak
- Red Stringybark
- Messmate
- Manna Gum
- Candlebark
- Red Ironbark
- Narrow Leaf Peppermint
- Broad Leaf Peppermint
- Swamp Gum
- Long Leaf Box
- Yellow Box
- Red Box
- Cherry Ballart

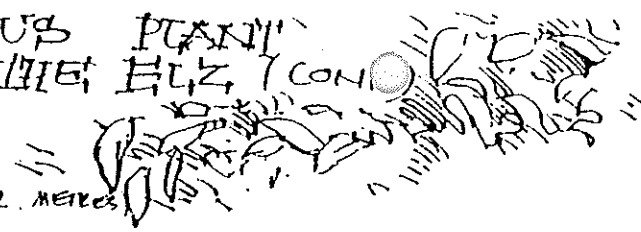
SMALL TREES (< 10 METRES)

- Prostanthera lasianthos
- Banksia marginata
- Rapanea howittiana
- Acacia melanoxylon
- Acacia mearnsii
- Acacia dealbata
- Acacia pycnantha
- Acacia implexa
- Pomaderris aspera

- Victorian Christmas Bush
- Silver Banksia
- Mutton-wood
- Blackwood
- Late Black Wattle
- Silver Wattle
- Golden Wattle
- Lightwood
- Hazel Pomaderris



INDIGENOUS PLANT LIST IN THE ELZ (CON)



LOW SHRUBS (< 2 METRES)

- Acacia aculeatissima
- Acacia acinacea
- Gompholobium huegellii
- Pultenaea gunnii
- Dillwynia retorta
- Dillwynia cinerascens
- Bossiaea prostrata
- Pinelia pauciflora
- Pinelia humilis
- Pinelia linifolia
- Epacris impressa
- Astroloma humifusum
- Leucopogon virgatus
- Leucopogon ericoides
- Acrotriche serrulata
- Correa reflexa
- Acaena anserinifolia
- Tetratheca ciliata
- Coprosma quadrifida

- Spreading Wattle
- Gold Dust Wattle
- Common Wedge-pea
- Golden Bush-pea
- Small-leaf Parrot-pea
- Grey Parrot-pea
- Creeping bossiaea
- Poison Rice-flower
- Common Rice-flower
- Slender Rice-flower
- Common Heath
- Cranberry Heath
- Common Beard-heath
- Pink Beard-heath
- Honey Pots
- Common Correa
- Bidgee Widgee
- Pink Bells
- Prickly Currant-bush

GRASSES, SEDGES, TUFTING PLANTS

- Poa labillardieri
- Poa moerosii
- Poa sieberana
- Microlaena stipoides
- Danthonia pallida
- Xanthorhoea minor
- Themeda australis
- Lomandra longifolia
- Lomandra filiformis
- Stipa semibarbata
- Lepidosperma laterale
- Juncus australis
- Gahnia radula
- Phragmites communis
- Dianella revoluta

- Tussock Grass
- Tussock Grass
- Tussock Grass
- Weeping Grass
- Sivertop Wallaby Grass
- Small Grass-tree
- Kangaroo Grass
- Spiny-headed Mat-rush
- Wattle Mat-rush
- Fibrous Spear-grass
- Variable Sword-sedge
- Austral Rush
- Thatch Saw-sedge
- Common Reed
- Black-anther Flax-lily

CREEPERS, CLIMBERS

- Kennedia prostrata
- Billardiera scandens
- Glycine clandestina
- Hardenbergia violacea
- Clematis microphylla
- Clematis aristata
- Pandorea pandorana
- Conespora volubile
- Cassytha pubescens
- Platylobium formosum

- Running Postman
- Common Apple-berry
- Twining glycine
- Purple Coral-pea
- Small-leaved Clematis
- Clematis
- Wonga-vine
- Love Creeper
- Downy Dodder-laurel
- Handsome Flat-pea

HERBS (< 1 METRE)

- Wahlenbergia gracilentia
- Wahlenbergia quadrifida
- Wahlenbergia stricta
- Dichopogon stictus
- Anguillaria dioica
- Plantago aquatica
- Brunonia australis
- Stylidium graminifolium
- Senecio minimus
- Senecio glomeratus
- Senecio hispidulus
- Senecio quadridentatus
- Gratiola peruviana
- Anguillaria dioica
- Glossodia major
- Caladenia carnea
- Caladenia caerulea
- Caladenia angustata
- Pterostylis obtusa
- Pterostylis nutans
- Pterostylis longifolia
- Diuris maculata
- Eriochilus cucullatus
- Triglochin procera
- Helichrysum scorpioides
- Helipterum albicans
- Blechnum nudum
- Blechnum minus
- Adiantum aethiopicum
- Viola hederacea
- Dichondra repens
- Pteridium esculentum
- Gonocarpus tetragyna
- Amyema nuyellii

- Annual Bluebell
- Sprawling Bluebell
- Tall Bluebell
- Chocolate Lily
- Early Nancy
- Tufted Plantain
- Blue Pincushion
- Grass Trigger-plant
- Shrubby Fireweed
- Annual Fireweed
- Rough Fireweed
- Cotton Fireweed
- Austral Brookline
- Early Nancy
- Wax-lip Orchid
- Pink Fingers
- Blue Caladenia
- Musk Caladenia
- Blunt-tongued Greenhood Orchid
- Nodding Greenhood Orchid
- Tall Greenhood Orchid
- Leopard Orchid
- Parsons Bands
- Water Ribbon
- Button Everlasting
- Hoary Sunray
- Fishbone Fern
- Soft Water-fern
- Common Maidenhair
- Native violet
- Kidney-weed
- Austral Bracken
- Creeping Raspwort
- Box Mistletoe

Environmental Issues Along the Yarra

The following is an extract of Tim Ealey's address to MMBW regarding the Yarra River and its environment in April this year:

INTRODUCTION

"In the first issue of Tirra Lirra, June Delbridge recounts the fascinating myth of the Wurungjeri tribe who were the original settlers of the Yarra River basin:

"Some of the tribe's hunting grounds were covered by the Great Water, Moorool. One man, Mo-yarra tried to cut a channel to Westernport to drain it away. However, he only succeeded in creating the Koo-wee-rup swamps where he finally lived. Later, another headman, Bar-wool, cut a channel up the valley with his stone axe, but was stopped by Bow Bow, the mountain. Going northwards, he was stopped by Donna Buang and his brothers, so he went westwards and cut through the hills to War-an-dyle. There he met Yan-yan who was cutting a channel for the Plenty River in order to drain Morang where he lived.

They joined forces and the waters of Moorool and Morang became Moo-roo-bark. They continued and reached the Heidelberg-Templestowe flats called Warringal or Dingo jump up and there they rested for a time. Then Bar-wood and Yan-yan wore out many more stone axes cutting a narrow twisting track through the hard ground between Darebin and Merri Creeks to Port Phillip. The waters of Moorool and Morang rushed out. The



flooded part of the Wurundjeri country was freed of water but now Port Phillip was inundated." The white man came with tools much better than stone axes and built another Moorool, again flooding the hunting grounds of the Wurrundjeri. They called it the Upper Yarra Dam. With his "tools better than stones axes", the white man has wrought incredible changes to the Yarra River: tunnelled through a bed at Warrandyte, straightened the river near the Botanic Gardens where the by-passed bend remains as ponds, and built other dams. These dams store water and mitigate the floods which were exacerbated by wholesale clearing for agriculture. The early floods widened the river in some places and silted it up in others. Mud has come from agriculture, forestry and road making. Everything ultimately ends up in the Yarra. Human wastes from unsewered settlements, phosphates from sewage treatment plants, a variety of factory

effluents all polluted the river. Industries such as APM even recently had to purify the river before they could use it. The Yarra, its catchment and environs have been changed drastically and mostly irreversibly.

WETLANDS

The wetlands of Victoria have been very badly depleted. Mostly they were drained for farmland. Some areas were saved by the lobbying of the duck shooters long before conservationists realised their importance. Because of water storages on the Yarra and tributaries, the average river flow is about 50 per cent of what it used to be. There are flood regime changes and less wetlands available for bird habitat much of which has been cleared for farmland anyway.

Some fifty wetland areas are being developed by the Parks Branch, rubbish and fill is being removed and appropriate vegetation planted. Wetlands are capable of absorbing nutrients and even of breaking down toxic substances like pesticides. Some are being stocked with freshwater mussels for this very purpose. If the wetland had been developed on Pound Bend the recent Warrandyte fire would not have jumped the river.

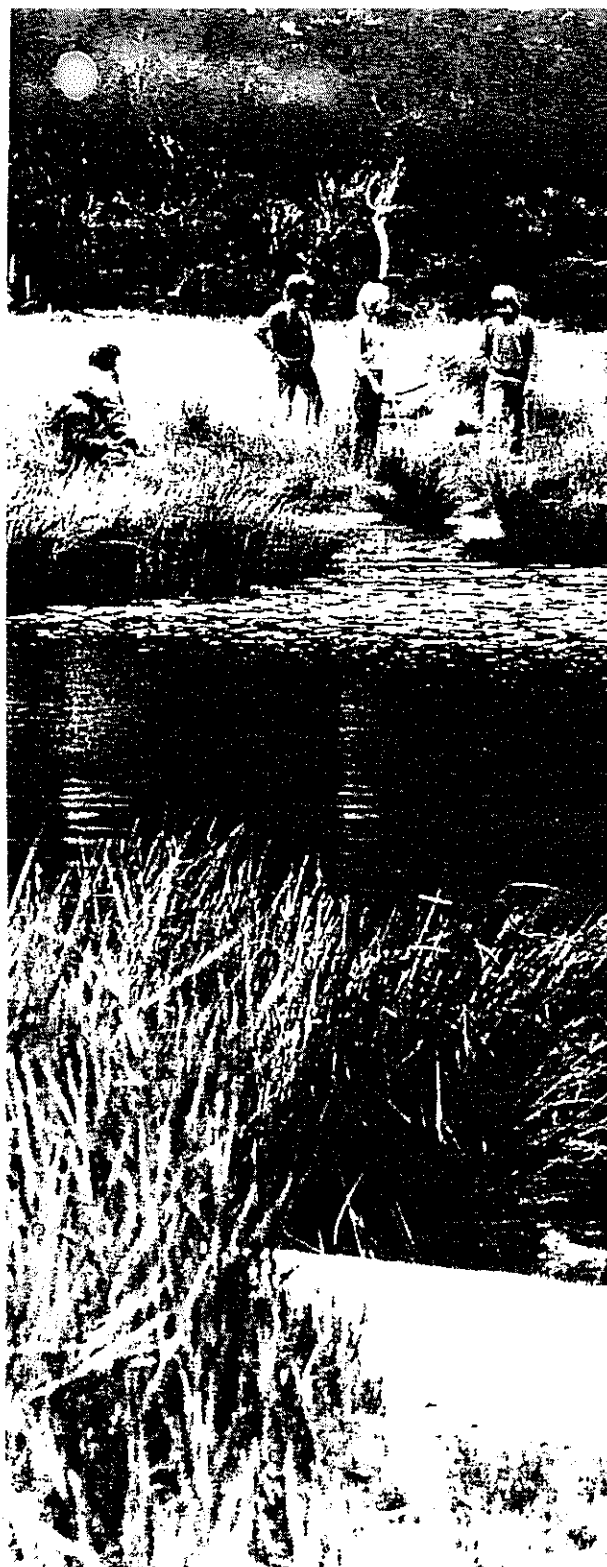
Only nine billabongs are in the park system. There are problems with one of the best, the Borryule Billabong. Half is owned by the MMBW and half by the Heidelberg Council. The Heritage group wants the area to resemble the paintings of Tom Roberts.

Although this idea has some merit, it runs counter to proper ecological management. The group wants to encourage noxious weeds such as gorse, hawthorn and boxthorn which park managers are trying to remove from the rest of the park and they want the area grazed to the edge of the billabong. Such is the conflict of interests within the park. There are a number of billabongs outside the park north of Mt Lofty. Before the big fire in 1866 the tea tree there was described as being 40 ft high! After the fire, the area was "given over to growing grain, hay, root crops and grapes in abundance." The area is now used for grazing when it is not flooded. These billabongs could easily be developed into a spectacular water bird sanctuary that would rival the famous Coolart tourist attraction and complement Healesville Sanctuary. Perhaps the upstream group could be linked with the Spadonis Reserve. Here is a great opportunity that should be taken up by government and/or private enterprise after proper arrangements are made with the land owners."

E.H.M. (Tim) Eoley

"Kangaroo" Sculpture

During the month of November, the "Kangaroo" Sculptural Awards and Exhibition will take place. Peter and Mary Burns remind us that the local community is welcome to view.



Mountain Views Newspaper

Thanks to Stewart and Sue Whiffin at our one and only Kangaroo Ground General Store, we don't have to miss out on hearing about Healesville Shire news and views. Recently, the Mountain Views newspaper began charging 40c per copy but Stewart and Sue solved this by having it delivered for us to buy. Now, this didn't last long and the News is free again. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS THERE IS NOT MUCH INTEREST AT THE STORE AND IT MAY BE THAT WE WILL HAVE TO COLLECT OUR COPIES IN YARRA GLEN. Whatever you think of the views, layout or general feel of the News, it is our local paper and all the Council news, planning and community issues are inside. Grab a copy at the Store and make it seem worthwhile for the Wonderful Whiffins!

Thanks Stew and Sue!

FORGET THE TURKEY!
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Chicknapped!

Todd Soderquist found this report in an overseas wildlife magazine and thought we'd be interested:

"Some birds, such as bee-eaters and Florida scrub jays, are 'co-operative breeders' - individuals stay with their parents and help look after younger brothers and sisters instead of going off to start a family themselves. Helpers can be vital. Australian white-winged choughs, for example, cannot support even a single youngster through its first winter unless there are at least seven birds in the group helping to feed it. The choughs' need for helpers is so great, apparently, that they will even raid other groups and kidnap youngsters that have recently

left the nest (Animal Behaviour, vol 41, pp 1097-1100).

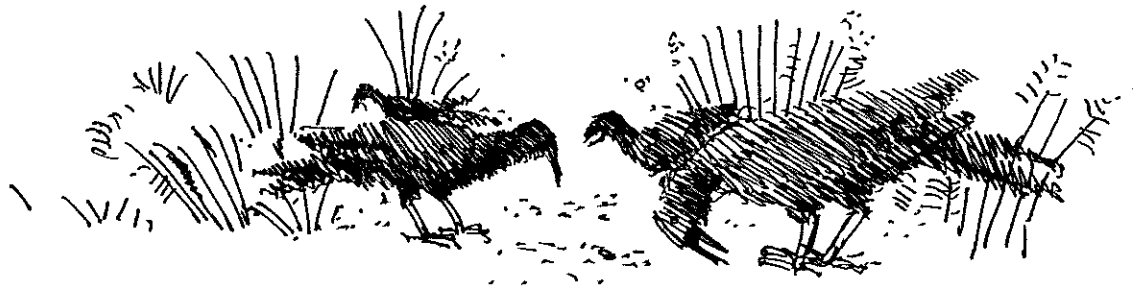
Groups of choughs are very aggressive towards each other when they meet. They have a fierce display in which they wave their white-tipped wings, fan their tails, engorge their brilliant red eyes with blood and call noisily to each other. One group eventually chases off the other. During four such battles, Dr Robert Heinsohn, of the Australian National University, Canberra, saw recently fledged choughs leaving their own groups and joining others. In one instance, three helpers from one group of fifteen enticed a fledgling away from a group of four, and in another, a helper chased a fledgling away from its parental group. In ten

other cases, Dr Heinsohn discovered that young choughs had disappeared from their own groups and turned up in others.

It may have been that some choughs - too young to recognise their own siblings and parents - transferred into new groups because they became confused when two broods mingled. But it is almost always the larger group which gains new numbers, by, presumably, sheer force of numbers. Of 14 kidnapped birds, three 'escaped' and returned to their own groups, while the remainder stayed on with their captors. These youngsters were well looked after, receiving food from most of the birds in their new group. Those that survived until the next breeding

season ended up helping to bring food to their kidnapers' own offspring. The kidnapers gain extra mouths to feed when they take on fledglings, and so, presumably, the help they get in rearing future broods offsets the cost of looking after new recruits. And it also makes good sense for young helpers to have lots of 'friends'. A group of choughs stays together until the leading male dies and then it breaks up into smaller groups of four or more, allowing some of the younger birds to breed. Because larger groups breed more successfully, helpers with many allies are more likely to do well. They also avoid the problems of inbreeding with closely related birds.

(Angela Turner)



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