

Bend of Islands Conservation Association

Newsletter No 8. August '84

What Native's flowering

Botanical Name: *Epacris impressa*

Common Name: Common Heath

Family: Epacridaceae

Description:

The main features of this low shrub are

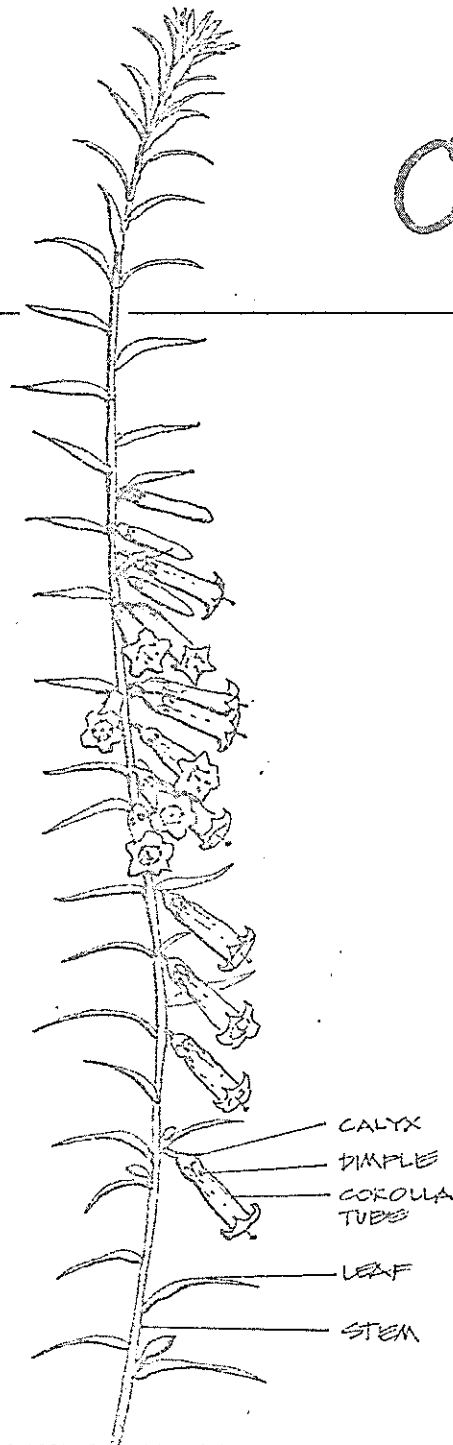
- that it is one of the longest flowering wildflowers in southeastern Australia, flowering from autumn to spring
- that it is quite widespread throughout Victoria
- that the flowers are quite spectacular, so much so that the pink form is the State Floral Emblem of Victoria

The flowers are packed all around the long slender stems from the base or near the top of the stems to form a mass of colour, either white, pink or red. (The flower illustrated was white and found along the river bank.) Sometimes the flowers may be sparsely arranged and turned to one side. The flowers have a long tube, several times as long as the calyx, with five dimples or impressions at the base of the tube, hence the name 'impressa', and a feature which is typical of only this member of the genus. The tube of the flower is about 12 mm long and curled out at the top.

The stems are branched mainly from the base or near the top of long branches to form a slender wiry 0.3-1.0 metre high shrub.

The leaves are 8-15 mm long, lance shaped and crowded along the stems rigidly spreading out and sharply pointed.

A good low shrub to plant, for a splash of white or pink throughout winter.



The Committee

The March Annual General Meeting of the Conservation Association saw the election of twelve enthusiastic members for the 1984-85 Committee -

President John McCallum

Vice-President Janet Mattiske

Secretary John Roberts

Treasurer Michael Pelling, and

Cric Henry, Mike Faris, Andrew McMahon, Neil Harvey, and new faces Mick Woiwod, Margaret Elgood, David Herd and George Winter.

We are reminded of the primary objective of this Conservation Association, that is, "To preserve, by all means within its power and to the maximum extent consistent with essential needs, including fire precautions, the native fauna, flora and natural beauty and security of the area." The Committee recognises its responsibility in taking action on behalf of the members, consistent with the objectives of the Association and believes that, while we now have a framework in which to operate, that is, the provisions of the Environmental Living Zone, these objectives can not be met without the understanding and active support and involvement of the members.

We believe that there should be more discussion of the issues concerning residents through newsletters, general

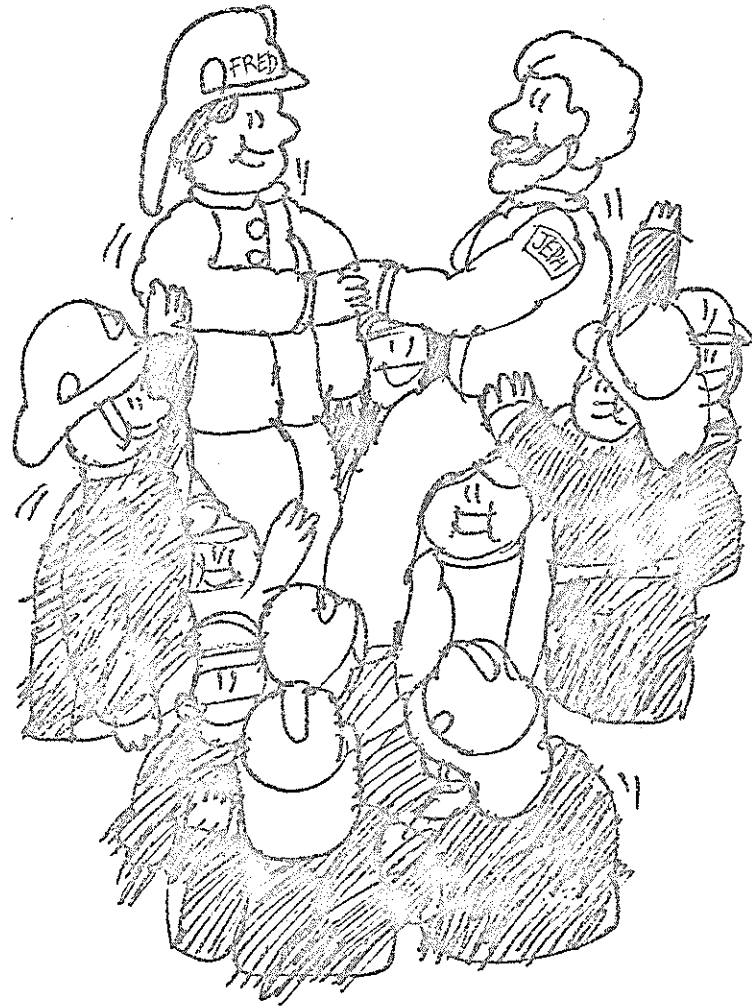
meetings, seminars and work groups. Such discussion must lead to a greater awareness and understanding of the interrelationships that exist between residential development and the natural system of the area that we are aiming to conserve.

Some of issues are weed control, the planting of exotic species, the control of domestic animals, fire safety practices and broader ranging concerns like the impact of opening up of the Yarra for increased recreational use.

To date, the Committee have been involved in drafting submissions opposing the proposed amendment to the Shire's IDO concerning the ELZ, (the hearing was on July 24) and the proposed location of the Eltham Shire Tip. (The EPA knocked it on the head.) Discussions have also taken place with a group of residents who are concerned that the ELZ regulations do not meet their needs. These residents have formed an Association - the Bend of Islands Residents Association. The Committee feels that the concerns of these people can be adequately addressed within BICA and our contact with them has already clarified many of the issues.

A proposal is also being drafted to request that a social assessment study be carried out on the zone by the Ministry of Planning in order to gauge whether residents feel that their aspirations are being met by the zone and its provisions.

Fire Brigade news



The hottest news is that Jeph Neale has been elected as Group Officer of the Lower Yarra Group. Congratulations Jeph and thank you for all your hard work in recent years for the Christmas Hills Brigade.

The Brigade has had good news too - Christmas Hills Brigade is the champion Brigade in its class, as judged by the Regional Officer and his staff. Congratulations to Captain Fred Kober and Officers.

On Monday evening, June 4, a very successful Night Training Exercise was held. The FRS, Women's Auxiliary, Base Radio and 20 volunteers took part in a complex exercise. A similar exercise will be held on September 10, so if you don't know where the light switches are on the trucks, make sure you come along.

Remember on-going training on Sunday mornings 10 am sharp. The Officers have organised tours of the North and South ends of the Brigade's zone as well as familiarisation with the "new" truck and equipment. They have also introduced brief information sessions to increase our understanding of fire behaviour, fire fighting techniques and preventative devices like cool burning.

The K.G.CH.B.C.

Kids driving you crazy? Worn out all your relatives' willingness to babysit? You need a night or two out!

Babysitting is not easy for most of us with young children who live in these rather isolated corners of the world, so joining our local KG/Christmas Hills Babysitting Club could be your best answer. We currently have 19 families in the club, not all of whom use the club actively, so we could easily handle more members.

What's involved?

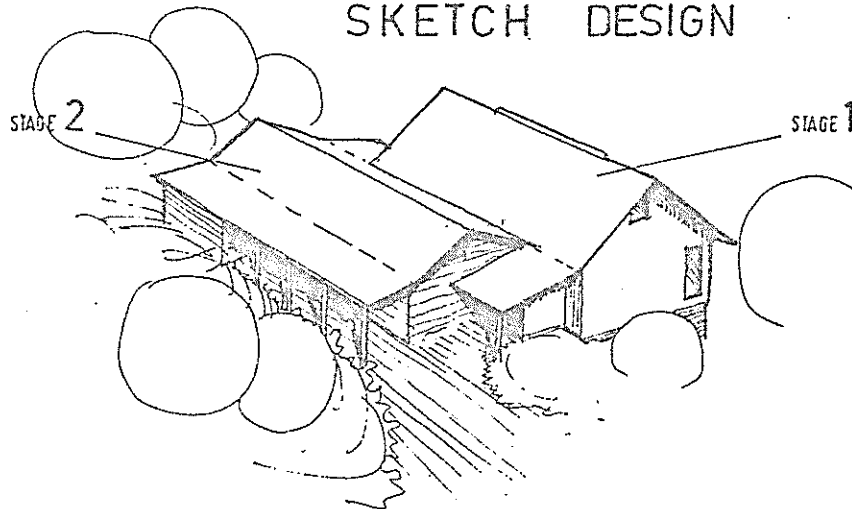
Well, we work on a co-operative basis, trading points for hours. If you run up a debit of 4 hours, you will be asked to sit for someone else at some stage to pay back the time/points. The Keeper-of-Babysitting-Book has records of who owes what, who's got a year's worth of nights out up their sleeves, etc. The book is passed on each month to another rostered member to act as "book secretary". For July, contact Pam McMahon, 730-1652; for August, Robbie McMaster, 730-1775 -- or talk to Dee Pelling, 712-0286, about joining.

All members have young children, or remember clearly their older ones being young, so the babysitters come highly qualified. Also, your kids will learn to relate to and trust a wider circle of "minders", and you get a night or two out to hold off your nervous breakdown a bit longer.

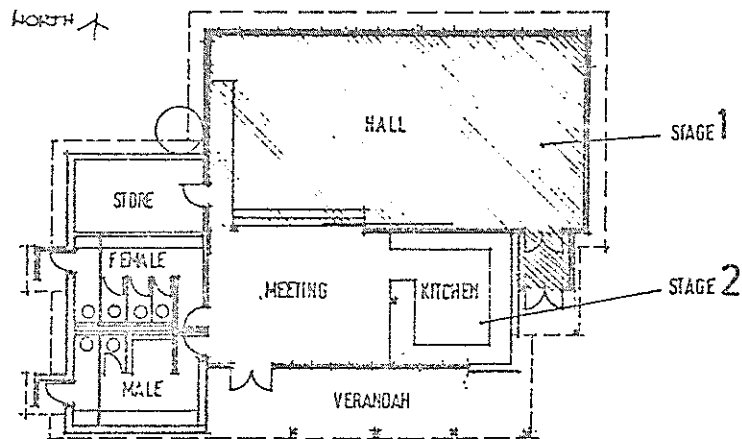


Christmas Hills Hall

SKETCH DESIGN



view from south-east



EXISTING TENNIS COURTS

floor plan stages 1&2

You know that warped flakey white lump just up from the main road, Christmas Hills? That timber hotch-potch that looks like it fell off the back of a bullock dray last century happens to be a major focus of the area, including the Bend of Islands. Is such a form worthy of being such a focus for such a magnificent group of residents?

As you may or may not be aware, the poor old hall has been getting less and less attention over the years and the band-aids are now needing to be very big and expensive, beyond the point of restoring -- stumps gone, white ants, rewiring, leaking roof, repainting, you name it. All very sad until --

Glenny Babra got word that the Building Science students at Box Hill T.A.F.E. College were looking for a project on which to gain the year's practical experience in carpentry. She suggested to them a new hall. On the strength of this a group of us compiled a glossy booklet to win over the Healesville Council to the strength of \$26,000 for building materials for the new hall. Both the money and the labour came off!

The hall is to be larger than that already there but a hall only. In a few more years we will need to replace the meeting room, kitchen and toilets.

So for two weekends in May many of those with destructive urges quit beating their families and demolished the 'lean-to' section to make way for a 7.2x14 meter beauty.

We are told the students should be able to bring the hall to lock up by November and then all those with constructive urges will be needed to finish it off. Also there may have to be some working bees along the way, so please be part of the action.

Just think of 'Stripping the Willow' without plastering some wall flower to the wall -- Paradise!

General Meeting

A brief description of an interesting and thoughtful talk by George Wright, Director of Planning of the Ministry for Planning and Environment, at the AGM on Sunday 25th March 1984 at Mick and Marg Woiwod's house --

He talked about people or the social life in planning.

He started by discussing the difficulties of different cultures exchanging their views and its relation to the 'Environmental Living Zone'.

He outlined three factors which characterized the ELZ:

1. An environment of Red box/Stringybark forest which is not really significant or unique by itself as it is mainly regrowth, suffers infestation, clearing, etc.
2. The area is unique by its geography as it is so close to Melbourne and has defined boundaries such as the Dam and the River.
3. The people - a group of people who have chosen to live a lifestyle different from anyone else.

He suggested that we should re-appraise how all has gone and start to do more research. He talked about an artist community in Geelong and mentioned that we could learn a bit from them on the procedure.

Certain characteristics set apart a community as being successful:

1. The formation and direction of the society with a strong leader (as seen in Neil Douglas)
2. The ability to innovate, i.e. to have the freedom to take the idea and extend or develop it (as seen with the work of Mal McClure in saving the area from the Yarra Brae Dam)
3. Decision making is decentralized and carried out in a number of networks and with people at low levels
4. Know where you have the expertise and work on it.

Stressed the need for a simple, strong pervading philosophy - well understood - so there is a sharing of the core values so we can live in harmony with people and the environment. We need to bring people together with common theme projects, to concentrate on our similarities and not get bogged down with the divisive issues.

Food Co-op

The Bend of Islands Food Co-op is just about to have its mid-year buy, and for any people wanting to join or thinking about doing so, right now is the time to put up your hand. Currently we have about 20 family members not all of whom are active, so we would welcome new members to boost our bulk buying power.

As you probably know, the Food Co-op aims to buy good quality dry and non-perishable foods and goods (e.g. flour, dried fruits, sugar, nuts, rice, seeds, oils, loo paper, soap, etc.) and also buys some high quality organic/bio-dynamic fruit and vegetables if available. We get better quality, fresher produce than most individual shoppers would get and it's quite a bit cheaper too. No acres of wasteful packaging either!

As with all Food Co-ops, you need to be willing to help with the running of a "buy" when it's your turn, but apart from the work of those buys, most members find the Co-op an enjoyable community activity. Pick-up days are fun.

Ring Barb Cargill on 712-0426 if you'd like to join us or just enquire further about us.



Local plants available...

Rod Parsons is prepared to grow our local plants, so if you are interested drop in and talk to Rod to work out your orders.

Orders to be in by July/August for the next autumn planting.

If we are prepared to collect the seeds and cuttings, Rod will propagate and grow them. He will barter the seeds/cuttings for some plants.

Talk to Rod to find out when to collect the seeds or take the cuttings of the plants you want to grow.



Garden of Eden



The slopes of the Bend of Islands area carry a native vegetation well adapted to its sparse resources --- and the native fauna has in turn evolved to live with it in harmony.

A new species, Homo Sapiens, enchanted by this environment, is slowly spreading here, but perhaps the food supply of these primates, fruit and vegetables, needs a deeper, richer soil than the almost bare ridges and slopes of this area would provide.

Yet Homo Oeconomicus has the technology to create suitable soil --- and this environment is well endowed with sunshine. The third element needed for plant growth --- especially on cultivated land --- water, may be the most limiting factor.

How much land is needed for a garden per person? Let us look at some facts. Long-keeping vegetables, such as onions, potatoes need a comparatively large area and fairly long time to grow to maturity. But these can be bought relatively cheaply and stored well. However, lettuce, radishes, cress, cucumbers, zucchinis, tomatoes and most salad vegetables, which lose their palatability --- and vitamin C content --- with storage, are best picked fresh and made into salad shortly before a meal. Thus by selecting your favoured summer and winter vegetables, a fairly small garden can supply you with crisp and wholesome salads.

Before I moved here permanently two years ago I got the bulldozing contractor preparing the building site to skim off the very thin layer of topsoil and heap it up on one side before doing the bulk of the excavation.

Garden of Eden cont:

There was very little water in the old dam, but kind neighbours have promised to supplement my water supply. Thus I have started a small garden -- the size of my garage (24'x12') and so far I am quite self-sufficient regarding salad vegies. As zucchinis, tomatoes, cucumbers tend to have a peak cropping period, I even had to give away some surplus.

To reduce the summer fire hazard the leaves on the ground are best raked into heaps: do not burn these. That will not only pollute the air, but you also will lose a valuable, scarce resource. Although eucalyptus leaves take a long time to decompose, they make an excellent mulch which could be the nutrient base of your own little Garden of Eden. This newly created humus will be the steady supply of food for you growing vegetables, and dug in at regular intervals into your garden beds it will ensure good drainage in case of a wet winter -- and help conserve moisture in a hot, dry summer. If you consider that a reliable salad supply, independence from fluctuating prices of the market, but mainly the delicious freshness of your garden goodies are worth the trouble, start raking, composting those leaves now. They may not fully decompose before you prepare the beds for spring sowing and planting, but dig them in all the same -- and be generous with the quantity.

You'll be pleased with the result in due course.

Charles Fodor

MEMO

NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING

NEXT MEETING DATE IS

SUNDAY 23rd SEPTEMBER

AT 2 P.M.

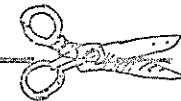
(TO BE CONFIRMED BY A NOTICE).

B.I.C.A. SUBSCRIPTIONS

IF YOU ARE IN ARREARS OR WISH TO JOIN THE BEND OF ISLANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION, PLEASE CLIP THE COUPON BELOW & MAIL TO:

MICHAEL PELLING, TREASURER,
P.O. KANGAROO GROUND 3097.

NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$10 INDIVIDUAL,
\$8 CONCESSION (STUDENT, PENSIONER ETC)
\$20 FAMILY.



ENCLOSED IS \$ _____
FOR B.I.C.A. SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING PERSONS
(PLEASE INCLUDE ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS):

First Aid Kit cont:

Explanation of Uses of Equipment -

A bottle of normal saline for burns. Wash the burnt area with the normal saline and if possible with iced water. This helps to control the pain by constricting the blood vessels to the burnt area. Cover with clean linen (sheet, pillowcase). A pillowcase is best if a hand or arm is burnt. Keep the linen damp. Butayidine pictrate is good for a small burn.

Normal saline is used as an eye wash to help with smoke and grit.

A 4" crepe bandage and a clean pad such as a Modess or face washer to apply to a snake bite. The limb should be immobilised. If bitten on a lower limb, bandage both legs together. This acts as a splint.

The present thinking by CSIRO is that if bitten on a lower limb, the snake venom, which is carried by the lymphatic system, takes three hours to circulate through the blood stream.

The victim must be reassured and kept at rest. The snake type should be noted.

The same procedure for children, but a 2" crepe bandage would be sufficient.

A triangular bandage for an injured arm or to tie legs together is handy. Safety pins to secure triangular bandages makes life easier.

Band-aids for small cuts.

Antiseptic to wash wounds.

Mercurchrome or acroflavin for cuts.

Barley sugar and glucose tablets to help prevent dehydration and shock.

Panadol, also soluble disprin for children.

Codral Forte for a more serious injury.

A padded splint is very good for a suspected fracture. One can be made with a length of wood, padded with foam and covered with a pillow case and bandage.

If a heavy blow to a nail is received, a very hot darning needle pierced through the centre of the nail relieves the vascular pressure immediately.

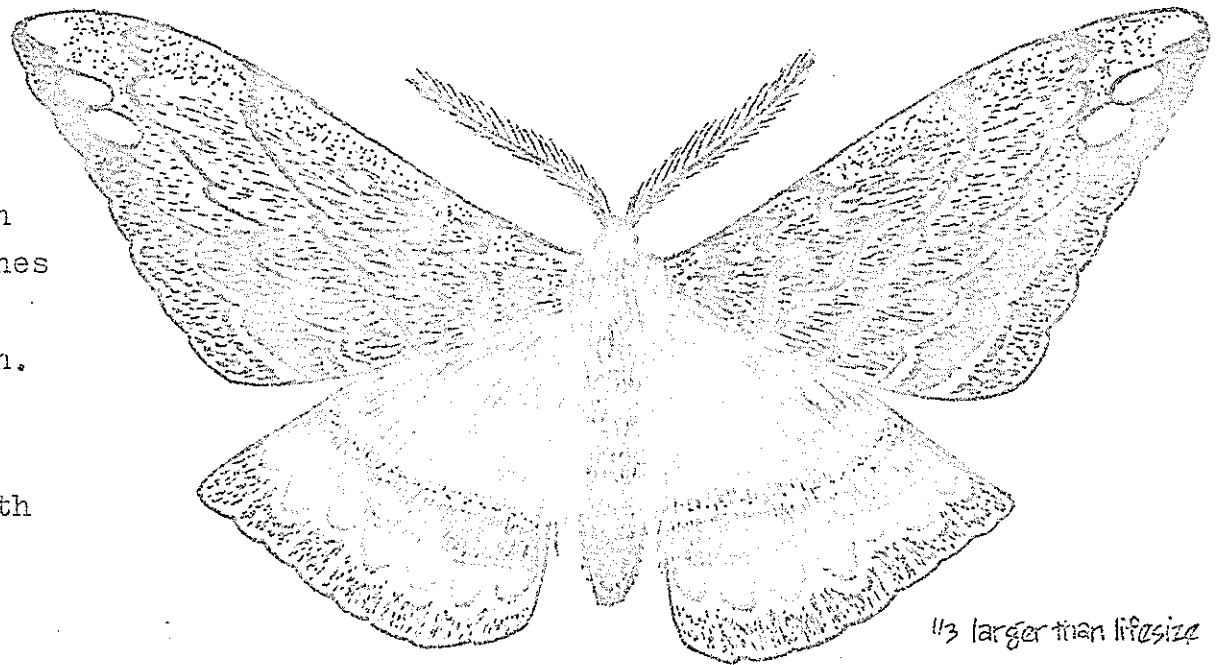
All the equipment should be stored in a covered bucket or box to relieve the panic situation of trying to find any one of the necessary articles quickly.



Moth of the Month

In this article I am going to discuss our two largest Anthelid moths. Both species unfortunately have no common names, but their scientific names are Chelepteryx collesi and Chelepteryx felderi. These two magnificent moths make their appearance in April and May.

Chelepteryx collesi is the larger of the two, measuring 5 or 5½ inches across the expanded wings. When the moth is resting it holds its wings jet plane fashion (out from the body), the front wings almost entirely overlapping the hind. The front wings are patterned in a succession of very intricate wavy lines of a dark blackish colour with rusty brown, darker brown and grey in between. At each wing tip are two small semi-transparent Moonstone-like spots. The hindwings are basically silky black with a faint fawn band across each and bold orange-yellow lacing at the edges.

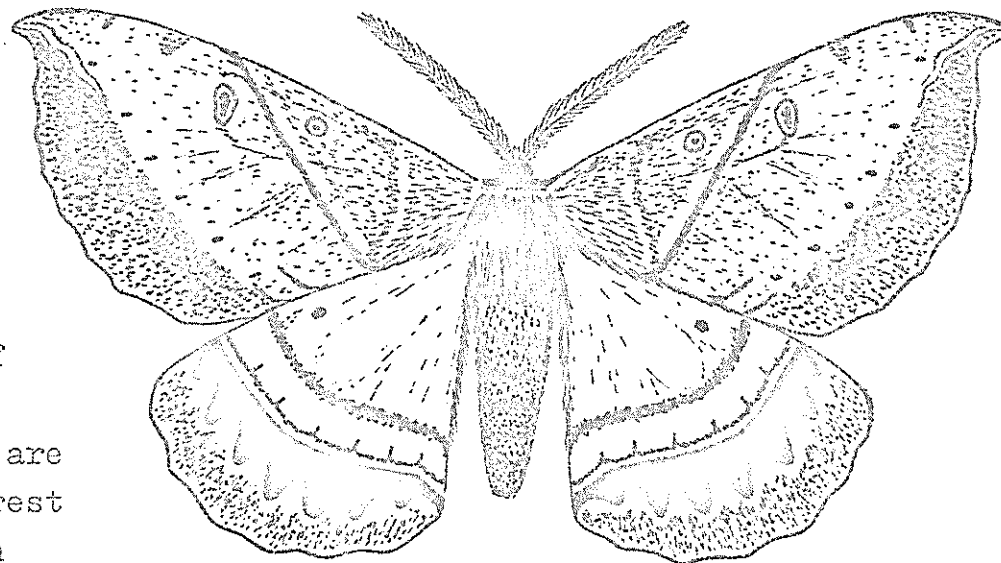


Moth of the Month cont:

Chelepteryx felderi is the smaller of the two, being 4 or 4½ inches across the wings (individuals can vary a great deal in size; I once saw a tiny one on the Co-op that was only 3 inches across). It rests in the same position as Chelepteryx collesi. The front wings are basically steel grey, each one crossed by an inward slanting black band which has a small but distinct spot on either side of it. This is followed by a much fainter band and a darker shading towards the wing tips. The hindwings are beautifully patterned, starting with red or pink nearest the body, followed by a curving black band, more even paler pink, then another wide black band with a scalloped outer edge, and finally margined with grey-brown.

The larvae of C. felderi feed on various species of Acacia and those of C. collesi feed on Eucalyptus species.

And now a word of warning. The larvae of these two species (and other Anthelid moths) are clothed in a thick coat of stiff, brittle hairs and if handled the hairs will stick into the skin and break off, causing intense but local irritation lasting for five days or more. The large pregnant cigar-shaped cocoons are spun on the trunks of trees and under loose bark. After spinning its cocoon and before moulting the last larval

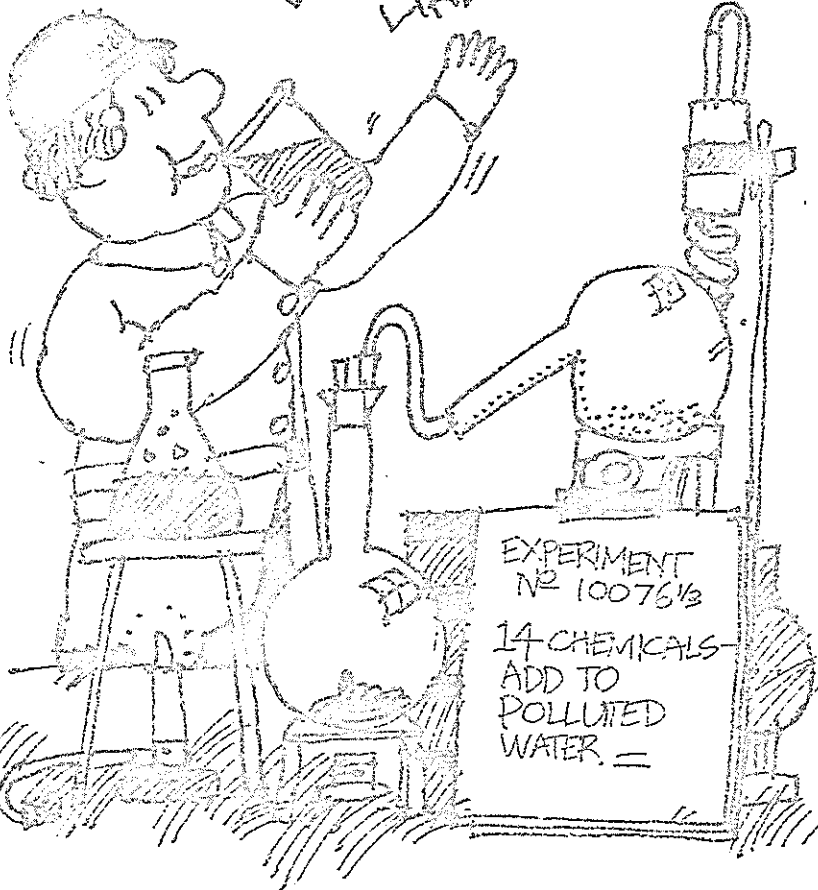


skin and becoming a pupa, the larva carefully pushes most of its irritant hairs about half way through the already hardened cocoon and breaks them off. This gives the cocoon a hairy appearance also, and a good measure of protection from prying beaks and fingers. The toxic properties of the hairs are not lost and are capable of causing irritation long after the moth has emerged and flown away. The moths themselves can be handled with no ill effect.

Fabian Douglas

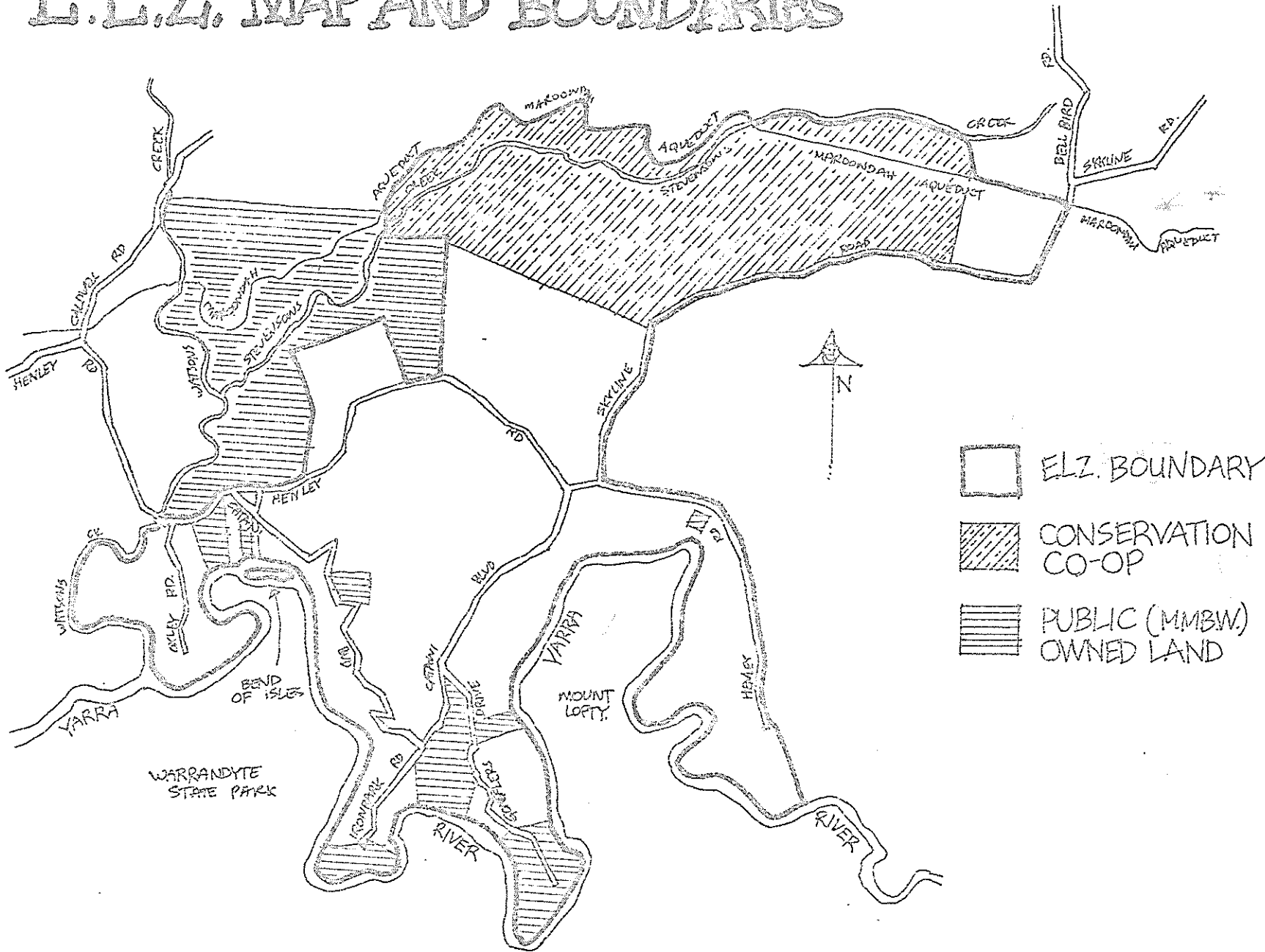
Water, water, everywhere but not....

EUREKA
IT TASTES
LIKE WATER



At times in the height of summer it may seem that the ELZ is a hot, dry and dusty place to live, but actually we are surrounded by water. On the south and east we are bounded by the beautiful Yarra River. Our western boundary is Watson's Creek and our northern boundary is the Maroondah Aquaduct and Sugarloaf Dam. It was built 93 years ago to satisfy Melbourne's great thirst for water. European Man took just 20 years to render undrinkable the pristine waters of the lower Yarra. He then dammed the waters of the first major tributary of the Yarra -- the Plenty was dammed to form Yan Yean Reservoir in 1857. It too was soon polluted by farming activities around the town of Whittlesea. The lead-lined pipeline also helped keep the population down, but another metal had the opposite effect. Gold caused Melbourne's population to increase from 15,000 in 1849 to 449,000 in 1891. The Yarra's next major tributary was the Watts River near Healesville. In 1886 work commenced on an open aquaduct 66 km long from Preston to the Watts River. It was 15 ft wide, 6 ft deep and lined with concrete and brick. It passed under creeks by means of inverted syphons, one of which is on Watson's Creek, and through hills by means of tunnels, three of which are over 1.6 km long. A small stone wier was thrown across the Watts River and its waters diverted directly into the aquaduct. In less than 5 years and without the use of today's modern machinery it was completed. On the 18th February 1891 the river was renamed the Maroondah and the system was turned on. From 1891 till just a couple of years ago it daily supplied 28,000,000 gals (113.5 megalitres) of water to Melbourne. Today the old stone wier is below the Maroondah Dam and the aquaduct flows into the Yarra River system. The ELZ is a direct result of a successful fight by a few dedicated people against the building of yet another dam on the Yarra (Yarra Brae).

E.L.Z. MAP AND BOUNDARIES



THANKS

NEWSLETTER WORKGROUP: MANY THANKS TO OUR CONVENOR MICHAEL PARIS, CAROLANN AND TEM FISHER FOR TYPING AND DUPLICATING, SID TUNN AND WENDI HENDERSON FOR ILLUSTRATIONS AND STICKING IT ALL DOWN, MICK AND MARG WOJWOOD FOR GENERAL HELP - CUPS OF TEA AND GOOD TUCKER, AND TO ALL THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES.

