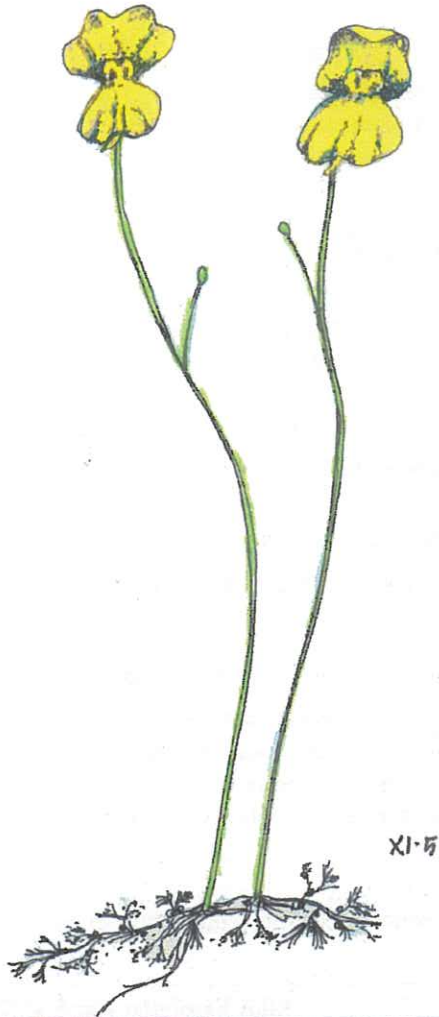


BEND OF ISLANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION INC. NEWSLETTER

President: Carol Bonny 9712 0648 C/- Post Office, Kangaroo Ground, Vic, 3097 - Editor, John McCallum 9712 0319 Inc. No. A11100A



WHAT LOCAL PLANT IS FLOWERING?

Botanical name: *Utricularia australis*
Common name: Yellow Bladderwort
Family: Lentibulariaceae
Flowering period: November to April

Number 50
March 2001

A floating, rootless herb of wet places with floating or submerged root-like leaves, at the base of stems, deeply divided and interspersed with tiny 1-2 mm. diameter underwater bladders. The 2-3 bright yellow flowers are held above the water on the end of the erect slender 0.3-0.9 m. long stems.

These aquatic bladderworts are carnivorous. The bladder-like traps catch and digest minute aquatic animals to supplement the plant's nitrogen supply. The flowers are two lipped with the lower lip enlarged and spurred. The flowers appear from November to April as water levels fall.

Found in shallow, still fresh water 0.6-2.0 m. depth amongst taller plants in shaded conditions, but are also tolerant of full sun.

Propagation by seed or division. Listed as locally rare in the "Flora of Melbourne"

CRIC HENRY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

LONG, HOT SUMMER

Into the third month of the year already. It has been a long hot dry summer with a record number of Total Fire Ban days and a couple of suspicious little fires very close to the Bend of Islands. Luckily they have been dealt with very quickly by passing residents using car mats and bottles of water and then mopped up by our ever-vigilant firefighters. It was most educational to see the Emergency Response System (ERS) and our fire fighters spring into action when one of the fire call-outs interrupted our guest speaker at the February General Meeting. We lost about a quarter of our audience in a couple of minutes. Good work everyone.

The Fire Brigade needs your ongoing support. The main fund raiser is Cafe Benders coffee morning held on the third Saturday of the month from 10 till 12. Make an effort to attend with your friendly faces and pockets of coins to enjoy a cup of good coffee and a piece of delicious cake.

PLANNING

The BICA Planning subcommittee was involved in a tour of Watson's Creek organized by Marg Burke from Warrandyte. Councilors and staff from Nillumbik along with Parks Victoria staff were addressed by Cam Beardsell who spoke on the importance of the corridor link between Kinglake National Park and Warrandyte State Park. The battle continues.

LANDCARE

A noticeable change to the landscape will be seen at the beginning of Henley Rd. extension sometime in March. Our Landcare group has been busy organizing a major pine removal and re-vegetation project. Other residents have taken advantage of the BICA offer to review the vegetation on their properties with several involved in re-vegetation planting.

Some members of the Landcare group attended the Edendale Farm Indigenous Plant propagation facility launch by the Mayor. Good to see the rest of the shire catching up with the ELZ.

BICA ACTIVITIES

The first Flora Walk has taken place and an enthusiastic but small group surveyed an area on the river in lower Catani with many exciting little treasures documented. Great way to gain some knowledge of the flora of the Bend. Join in on the first Sunday of the month

Bird surveys and Boot Benders are also underway. Check your BICA Calendar for times and dates for all events. . The calendar on the BICA website may contain more up to date information and keep an eye on the sign tree for updates.

See you round.

CAROL BONNY

THE BICA COMMITTEE FOR 2001-2002

President	Carol Bonny	9712 0648
Vice President	Peter Gurney	9712 0408
Treasurer	Michael Pelling	9712 0286
Secretary	Alan Bonny	9712 0648
Steve Craig, Colin Devenish, Robyn Duff, Cric Henry, Anitra Nelson, Michael Skewes and Jenny Taylor.		

FROM THE EDITOR

This is the 'official' 50th BICA Newsletter. 'Official' because dark tales are told of the missing Number 15, and there are even more sinister rumours of a mysterious unnumbered issue! Nevertheless a Golden Jubilee seemed too good an opportunity to pass up and Cric has provided us with a golden cover.

Thanks go from all members of BICA to the people that continue to contribute articles to our publication.

Editorial policy still remains that articles generally should be:

- information about wild life in the Bend of Islands
- issues related to residential conservation
- matters of general environmental or ecological concern

Don't forget that you can submit articles at any time of year and they can be in any format from hand-written to email (and everything in between!). We can make corrections to grammar, word usage and spelling. However, do check the accuracy of your content; names of people, events etc need to be correct and spelled properly.

email editor: mccallum@minopher.net.au

HOW LOCAL IS LOCAL?

Steve Craig

There has been a gradual shift towards the use of indigenous plants in landscaping and revegetation projects in recent times and now people are being advised to plant species of local provenance. There has been much discussion amongst botanists, plant taxonomists, seed collectors and people involved in revegetation projects on what constitutes a local provenance. They have, however, failed to reach a consensus.

Residents who are simply seeking guidance on what to plant on their properties are justified in asking "what is local provenance" and "how local is local"?

Lunt (1995) defined a provenance as a group of sites, in which plants possess (or are thought to possess) a consistent genetic composition but that provenance is not solely concerned with locality or seed source. Instead he was of the opinion that provenance is intimately concerned with genetic composition (usually implied genetic composition). He pointed out that many people use the word provenance to refer to plants in distinctive geomorphological (=based on landforms) regions, such as basalt plains provenance or coastal sands provenance and in this context provenance could simply mean a region.

The term local provenance is often used to imply that, "local means here, right here, and nowhere else" and that implicit in this usage is the belief that every plant is better adapted to the very spot where it grows than it is to any other nearby spot. Provenance could refer to a collection site, a population, a cline form, a geomorphological region, an arbitrarily defined part of a gene pool, or perhaps an entire gene pool. However, no two meanings are the same, and all have different implications and assumptions, some of which are ecologically unsustainable (Lunt 1995).

To avoid alienating people with the use of grandiose, pseudo-scientific terms Lunt (1995) suggested dispensing with the word provenance and simply referring to "local seed" if we mean seed that has been collected locally.

Naturally occurring remnant vegetation is usually the best source of material for revegetation according to FloraBank (1999). Generally, in these natural communities, plants have evolved to suit local environmental conditions and have a desirably broad genetic base. Ecologically and genetically, local seed complements local flora and fauna and poses the least potential threat of genetic contamination.

Local collection for revegetation projects has a number of benefits:

- * Local plants will be naturally adapted to local conditions.
- * Using local plants will promote genetic and ecological sustainability of local

vegetation.

- * Use of local plants reduces the potential for hybridization between the cultivated species and other species in surrounding areas.
- * Using local plants and keeping long-term records about collection sites builds on the capacity to collect, use and better manage vegetation that grows in the local area.
- * The use of local plant material is vital to the rehabilitation of important conservation areas and for the benefit of local fauna.

FloraBank (1999) recommend that seed is collected "as locally as possible" from natural populations for use in revegetation and rehabilitation plantings. This is a precautionary approach, in the absence of detailed information on gene flow and genetic diversity.

At the time of writing BICA does not have a firm policy on this issue other than to encourage the planting of species that are indigenous, that is native, to the ELZ (BICA 1989). However, to achieve the benefits listed above, before purchasing plants from a nursery or obtaining them from another source, ask if they have been grown from seed collected in the Kangaroo Ground, Christmas Hills, Bend of Islands or Warrandyte area.

If you plan on collecting seed from roadside vegetation and other areas of public land to propagate your own plants, you will require a permit from the Box Hill Office of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (ph 9296 4400). Codes of practice for seed collecting exist; for example the percentage of available seed collected from a source is specified.

References:

1. BICA (1989). Residents Folder. Why Plant indigenous plants in the ELZ?
2. Lunt, I. (1995). A plethora of provenances. *Indigenotes* 8 (4), 2-3.
3. FloraBank (1999). Guideline 5. Seed collection from woody plants for local revegetation.

FLOWN THE NEST

Carol Bonny

In the October Newsletter we reported on the birds building their nests in and about our place. The Welcome Swallows construction under the carport provided us with a wonderful view of the four babies as they developed. Watching as the parents coaxed them for their first flights was magical then for a few weeks the birds returned to the nest overnight so we were able to see the young bird's abilities increase.

BIRD NOTES

Frank Pierce

LYREBIRDS

The Lyrebirds, which were first seen in the ELZ in July, have been seen again. A male bird was first seen near the Co-op, in late July, by Frank Pierce and a couple of weeks later, by Steve Craig. A contractor working on Mt Lofty, also heard the bird on our side of the river, below Krause's, in July or August and reported this to Glen Jamieson.

The bird was heard again in early January on the co-op. Then it was seen displaying in the late evening near Ashmore Road in early February. The exciting development is that while watching the bird display, a female bird was seen crossing the road about 200 m away.

This raises the possibility of the birds establishing themselves in the area and, hopefully, for future breeding in the winter season.

PEREGRINE FALCONS

The Peregrine Falcon chick fledged from its nest on the transmission line tower in late November. It stayed in the area for a couple of weeks with the female parent bird, but has not been seen since. DNRE banded the chick before it fledged. The female adult had been banded as a chick two years earlier near Masons Falls in Kinglake National Park.

HAWKS

A pair of Brown Goshawks nested in Lower Catani Boulevard, and it seems that another pair nested down near the Bonny's.

Post fledging activity of Collared Sparrowhawks was observed near the corner of Henley and Skyline Roads. Similar activity was observed last year in the same area, however the birds were thought to be Brown Goshawks. It can be difficult to distinguish Brown Goshawks and Collared Sparrowhawks; there is a short article in this newsletter which may help you in this matter.

KINGFISHERS

A pair of recently fledged Sacred Kingfishers were observed being fed by the parent at the Bartram's on A Track of the Co-op on 24th February 2001.

The reporting of any unusual bird events would be appreciated, or if you have any queries please phone Frank Pierce on 9712 0237.

BLACK WATTLE

John McCallum

Didn't the Black Wattle flower prolifically last spring? There hasn't been such a heavy flowering for some years. The trees set a good quantity of seed too; was this a response to conditions that were related to the long hot summer and autumn that followed the flowering season?

This species is one of the 'signature plants' of our local flora. Look at the work of early Australian painters, especially Frederick McCubbin. 'Lost', 'Down on his Luck', 'Feeding Time', 'A Ti-Tree Glade' and 'The Pioneer'; all well known works by this painter and Black Wattle is depicted in them all along with a number of other easily recognizable local species.

As a garden plant *Acacia. mearnsii* is decorative all year round with its open, bipinnate foliage and in Late Spring it bears attractive pale yellow flowers. The trees support a good insect fauna which in turn provides good provender for the mixed feeding flocks of small birds that move through at least once a day. The trunks of the trees exude a sweet sap which is a favoured food source for small possums.

Black Wattle is not a long lived species. The specimens on the Eltham-Yarra Glen Rd near Henley Road are reaching the end of their lives. They were very young saplings in 1981. The quick growing rate, coupled with the excellent burning qualities of the wood make this species one to consider if you were looking at the idea of firewood production.

Black Wattle is a wonderful plant to grow. It is easy to propagate from seed. Just soak the seeds in boiling water for half an hour or so before you plant them in a tray of good seed raising mixture. Prick out the seedlings when they are big enough to handle and transplant them into tubes or small pots until the season is right and the plants are big enough to survive in the ground. They young plants develop quickly and the trees are well established and flowering in a few years.

VISIT BY LEON COSTERMANS

As part of the Mayor's guest speaker series, Nillumbik residents turned out in droves to hear Leon Costermans. As the author of the definitive handbook for flora watchers - "Native Trees and Shrubs of South Eastern Australia", Leon spoke enthusiastically about indigenous vegetation in our region. The support act was our illustrious Fire captain, Diane Simmons, who spoke on fire and vegetation. The bottom line was that the species of vegetation was not the major factor in fire safety. House and pre-fire season preparation were the important items to address. It was good to see a strong contingent of Bend of Islanders at the event.

AN ARCADIA PROJECT

Alan Bonny

"The notion of Arcadia as a utopian space where people lived in harmony with the natural world has endured in the human imagination for centuries. In earlier times the European imagination often located paradise in the New World. I have come to identify the Bend of Islands as a modern wild and rugged antipodean Arcadia. This investigation explores the way we think about nature through a visual investigation of the natural world. The Arcadia project is an art exhibition of video and photographic images that evolved from a two year investigation into the flora and fungi of the Bend of Islands. The study was conducted within a defined location, a privatised conservation area on the urban fringe of Melbourne."

So reads the introductory paragraph of the notes provided by Michael Eames for his art exhibition currently on view at the Nillumbik Shire offices. The exhibition was opened as the official launch for the Nillumbik Festival of the Arts on Sunday 3rd March by the Mayor, Marg Jennings. Michael's effort is not only a wonderful art installation but also a science project with pressings, descriptions and grid locations of the 300 species included. It represents a major flora survey of the Bend of Islands.

Congratulations to Michael for his achievement and I urge all to visit the Shire offices a few times until March 29 to see the changing images displayed on the walls and on the video screen accompanied by a Bend of Islands soundscape. 8:30am to 5pm weekdays.

TWO CURRAWONGS, THE FOX, THE BROWN GOSHAWK AND THE RABBIT.

Neil Harvey

I needed an early start, as we were going on holidays later this January day. I had risen at 5.30 and all was fine until I left the house and heard a cacophony of noises coming from the garden.

Looking down I saw a fox clinging to the side of the garden cage with two currawongs screeching and diving seeming to attack the fox or at least trying to drive it away. As you can imagine this scene took me totally by surprise.

Wondering what the fox was doing on the cage lead me to look further and there inside the cage was a brown goshawk flying to and fro, trying to find a way out. How did it get in and why?

The goshawk for some crazy reason seemed to fly right up to the fox and the fox was

almost grabbing the bird through the chicken wire. Maybe each was attacking the other, it's hard to say. All three birds were screeching at full tilt and the noise was amazing as the fox was silently going for the hawk.

As soon as the fox saw me, he was off and my rocks flew through the air and landed harmlessly nowhere near the target.

Now what to do with the trapped hawk?

I entered the garden to work out what had happened and found a beheaded rabbit on the garden floor. The glorious brown goshawk had killed the bloody rabbit that had decimated our vegie garden over the last three weeks. There was a small hole in the roof of the cage where the lemon tree had pushed up the wire and it was through this that my friend had gained access to the garden and taken its prey. My futile attempts to trap and remove said rabbit had been a sad joke, as it had ignored my baits and my traps, to enjoy the fruits of our garden.

I did the obvious and tried for twenty minutes to get the bird through the open gate, but we could not communicate and I was frightened it would hurt itself as it flew around the cage. When the hawk rested and stared at me as it caught its breath I rashly thought about grabbing it, but sanity prevailed. I was concerned that the beak and those talons would make a real mess of my limbs should I pick it up.

Now not only not early, but late, I decided to ring around and find a bird lover who may have the tools and knowledge on the best way to remove my glorious hawk. I called around and found John Mac. at home. Fortunately, he was able to come around and successfully identify and remove my friend with no pain for either of them.

Thanks to the help of two friends (John and the hawk), who each solved a problem for me, there was only one victim, the dreaded rabbit. No sign of the fox.

John Mac adds...

By the time that I got there, the hawk was pretty subdued. It was still making half-hearted attempts to get through the wire of the cage when I moved towards it. After a very short time it would cower in a nook behind a tree. I borrowed some gloves from a neighbour but these were unnecessary; the bird allowed me to pick it up and carry it outside. On release it flew away strongly, seemingly little the worse for its experience.

Because I wanted to have as little impact on the bird as possible I did not keep it to admire for long but it was a privilege to have such a close encounter with such a magnificent animal. Although identification of the brown hawks is not always straightforward (see Franks' article in this Newsletter) my overall impression was that it was indeed a Brown Goshawk as Neil notes in his article.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS

Val Himmelreich

Labeling of GM food has been a hot topic for almost a year in Australia. The old standards only require labeling where the nutritional quality, composition, allergenicity of a food, for example, has been changed. If a food, looks, tastes and acts the same then it didn't need to be labeled.

As the issue of genetically modified food becomes more a more topical issue, consumers will require more information from the manufacturer, seller and regulators, ie. Government. The following information may assist you in understanding more about genetically modified foods.

WHAT IS 'GENETICALLY MODIFIED'?

Genetic engineering, or genetic modification, means changing the DNA by transferring genes between and within different living things or removing a gene from its original position and placing it into a new position in the same organism. For instance, you could take a gene from a fish that lives in very cold seas and insert it into strawberry DNA, so it can survive the frost.

Genetic modification of organisms is not new: crossbreeding has been taking place for some time; crossbreeding distant plant relatives to gain desirable characteristics creates hybrids. But the genetic manipulation of organisms we are seeing now is a radical departure from crossbreeding.

WHAT FOOD IS GENETICALLY MODIFIED?

Some examples of GM foods mainly imported into Australia are:

- * Soybeans. Found in everything from chocolate to crisps, margarine to mayonnaise and biscuits to bread.
- * Cotton. Cottonseed oil is used for frying, in mayonnaise and salad dressings.
- * Canola oil (rape seed oil). Often labeled simply as "vegetable oil" it is a common ingredient in dips, fried and snack foods.
- * Corn. Although it's mainly used as cattle feed at present, corn and corn products can be found in all sorts of food, like breakfast cereal, bread, corn chips, confectionery and gravy mixes.
- * Potatoes. Used in processed products such as snack foods (does not include fresh potatoes).
- * Milk. Cows in the US and some other countries are being injected with a genetically engineered growth hormone called Bovine Somatotropin (BST). BST is a copy of a naturally occurring hormone produced in cows, and is produced by GM bacteria. Its purpose is to increase milk production. There may be BST milk in products, such as

cheese imported from the US.

* Cheese. Traditionally made using rennet. Rennet can also be produced by genetic engineering by inserting a gene from a calf into microorganisms that can be made to produce large quantities of an enzyme identical to the one from the calf stomach. This GM enzyme has been used for many years, particularly in vegetarian cheeses.

* Others GMF's include, papaw, beetroot, yeast, salmon, bananas, barley, carrots, cauliflower, chicory and coffee. Although none of these genetically modified foods are grown commercially in Australia, they may have made their way onto supermarket shelves as ingredients in imported foods.

HOW CAN WE IDENTIFY GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD?

There are many reasons why people want to know whether the food is genetically modified: personal health, environmental effects or philosophical or ethical reasons.

In August 1999, Australia's state and federal health ministers agreed that all foods, food additives and processing aids produced using gene technology would be labeled, although this does not apply to refined GM foods, food additives and processing aids and restaurant meals.

WHERE TO GET HELP:

- * Australia & New Zealand Food Authority (02) 6271 2222
- * Gene Technology Information Service (toll free 1800 631 276)
- * Biotechnology Australia
- * Consumers International
- * The ABC's Web site: www.abc.net.au

POWERPLAY

Alan Bonny

Part of the regular and tedious negotiations regarding the high tension power line easement through the Bend are on-site visits to discuss options for vegetation management. During a tour late last year in the Borgan below Skyline Road we came across eggs in a hole in the ground in a small clearing. The two eggs are believed to be reptile eggs.

The discovery illustrated wonderfully that amongst the Borgan are fauna and flora values that needed to be considered and that the Powernet proposal for a tractor/slasher approach was not an appropriate option. We accept that we really don't know all that is happening in our ecosystems. The challenge is to convince Powernet.

To be continued....

IDENTIFYING THE BROWN HAWKS

Frank Pierce

The identification of Brown Goshawks and Collared Sparrowhawks is particularly difficult, rather than a single feature that will separate Goshawks from Sparrowhawks, it is often a combination of size, shape, build and movement that makes up the "jizz" of the species.

Rather than try to describe the birds, the following points highlight the differences between them.

SIZE

Brown Goshawk	Female	500 mm	Male	400 mm
Collared Sparrowhawk	Female	380 mm	Male	300 mm

It is very difficult to separate the male Goshawk from the female Sparrowhawk. Simpson and Day have some very good comparative size drawings with other birds to help get the sizes in perspective.

TAIL SHAPE

The brown Goshawk has a rounded end to its tail. The Collared Sparrowhawk has a square ended, sometimes slightly V-shaped tail. However, when feathers wear, the tail can become rounded. So, a rounded shape is not definitive but a square shape is.

BROW

The Brown Goshawk has a heavy 'beetle-browed' look, the Collared Sparrowhawk has a lighter 'wide-eyed' appearance.

LEGS AND TOES

The Brown Goshawk has powerful legs, the Collared Sparrowhawk has finer legs and the middle toe extends further than the talons of the adjacent two toes.

BUILD

The Brown Goshawk has a powerful build, the Collared Sparrowhawk has a slight build with a smaller head and shorter tail.

FLIGHT

Differentiation in flight is difficult. The Brown Goshawk flies heavily with quick wing beats, the Collared Sparrowhawk has a faster flicking, more flexible flight on more shapely wings.

These notes are a summary of information obtained from the various field guides and other references. The differences have been highlighted and reference can be made to any of the common field guides for information on the basic characteristics of the two species.

IS YOUR NUMBER UP?

John McCallum

IS YOUR NUMBER UP?

It is time to check your street or road number. It should be easily visible from the road, preferably from each direction of travel. Some time ago Fire Brigade members assisted the then Shire of Healesville in installing the numbers. Several years have passed since then and some of these have fallen off, or become unreadable. Nailing them into trees was not really satisfactory and often they were mounted too high; a little higher than car window height would seem to be ideal.

HOW THE RURAL ROAD NUMBERING SYSTEM WORKS

The system is based on the distance along the road from its beginning to the gateway concerned and gives anyone looking for a particular address in rural areas an indication of how far along the road the property is. The number 100 signifies a distance of one kilometre from where the numbering starts. So, 300 means 3 kilometres, 260 means 2.6 kilometres and 48 means 480 metres. The numbers usually start at the end of the road closest to the nearest major town but this may vary because of local conditions. As with urban numbering systems, the odd numbers are on the left and evens on the right, facing in the direction of travel from low to high numbers. Each gateway or entrance is supposed to have a unique number; this can mean that your property might have more than one number associated with it. Only one of these will be your 'official' address.

WHY YOUR STREET NUMBER IS IMPORTANT.

Apart from making it easy for your visitors to find you, emergency services and other agencies make use of road numbers in rural areas to identify properties and localities. Because it is a distance based system it allows for more efficient travel to an emergency or other incident.

WHAT SORT OF NUMBER SHOULD YOU HAVE?

The numbers should be easy to read, reflective and readable from both directions of travel. They do not need to be large, the small reflective 'nail on' plates that were originally supplied by the Shire were adequate and were not obtrusive where visual aspects of the streetscape were held to be important. They were, however, not always visible from both directions. There is a product on the market which fulfills the above requirements and is unobtrusive, tasteful and functional. Details are available from the Nillumbik Shire. You can see one of these and a home made version in the low numbers of Catani Boulevard. An obvious, even simpler solution is to skew a square post at 45 degrees to the road and fasten numbers to the appropriate two faces.

LANDCARE REPORT

Peter Gurney

THE PINES PROJECT; OUR MAJOR EFFORT FOR 2001

Thirty five years ago, long before there was an ELZ, a small pine plantation was planted at the start of Henley Road extension. The plantation covered a couple of acres along the road frontage of three properties, which were later sold and built on. The largest remaining area of pine trees is on the Parfitt's property at 670 Henley Rd. There is a smaller group of trees at 680 Henley Rd and, thanks to Sally and Mark Nihill, there remain only a few pines on 690 Henley Rd. Peter and Lorraine Parfitt have wanted to remove the pines on their property for a number of years but have not had all the resources to do so, or the labour required to restore the property to bushland. The Parfitts have about 330 pine trees to be removed.

Following discussions with Peter Parfitt, BICA Landcare applied for a Nillumbik Council 2001 Landcare Grant to remove the pines and to restore 670 Henley Rd to Box-Ironbark Woodland. We were fortunate to be granted \$2,500 by Nillumbik Council and are now getting on with the "Pines Project". The total project cost will be around \$3,500 and the balance of funds will be met by BICA. Labour will be contracted to cut down the trees, with a number of suitable larger trees being removed for timber milling. The smallest trees will be chipped and the mulch removed, and a number of trees will be cut up and the wood left on the roadside for collection by anyone wanting it for firewood.

BICA Landcare working bees will provide the labour to clean up the site, to prepare it for planting, and to replant the site with indigenous plants. The fire brigade has generously offered to help with any burning that is necessary. Already we have had a group planning session on site and we have had quotes from a highly recommended tree-feller, and a site visit from the timber miller. As there are quite a few indigenous trees, saplings and some understorey throughout the plantation, a great deal of empathy and care is required to remove the pines and the tree feller and the tree remover/miller come well recommended in this regard. Site clean-up, preparation and planting will take place in the autumn, winter and early spring. There will be follow-up work in the summer to check the progress of our work, and then ongoing monitoring of the site for some years to ensure that it recovers back to the original woodland.

Apart from the overall aim of removing the pine trees and restoring 670 Henley Rd to bushland, it is hoped that the project will encourage other property owners who have pines on their property to have them removed. BICA Landcare is eager to help achieve this outcome in the future, but not in 2001 - we are going to be busy at the Parfitts!

We encourage all Bend of Islanders to help with this project. Our working bees are on the 3rd Sunday of each month, 2 pm - 5 pm. If necessary, there may be an extra special working bee or two during the year. Please watch the sign tree for details. We guarantee some hard work, but there will be suitable work for all physiques and ages. We guarantee lots of laughs and some good afternoon teas; we also guarantee to get rid of the pines and to restore the site to indigenous vegetation.

Thanks to everyone who has been involved to date, and many thanks to Lorraine and Peter Parfitt for taking the important step to decide to get rid of the dreaded pines.

Please contact me if you have any questions (phone: 9712 0408)

LIGHT POLLUTION

Alan Bonny

One of the joys of living in the Bend of Islands is being able to observe the night sky and the creatures of the night that surround us. As an environmentally responsible community we should do this without too much impact on wildlife.

The birds and animals of the night are adapted to the conditions and excessive lighting can only distort their environment, perhaps having an effect on their foraging and predation abilities. As well as wasting energy the amenity of others may be affected by light pollution with excessive ambient light bleaching the night sky so we cannot enjoy the clear sky and the stars.

We should be mindful of the effect that our outside lighting has on our neighbours and the wildlife.

BEE REMOVAL SERVICE

Feral Honey Bees in your Tuan Nest Box? Phone Ben Craig on 9435 9929 to arrange for their removal. Budding beekeeper Ben will remove your nest box after sunset when all the bees are inside. They'll be taken to Greensborough and, together with their honeycomb, transferred to a beehive box. Your empty nest box will be returned and replaced at no expense to you. The only equipment you need to supply is a ladder that will reach safely up to the nest box.

TIMELINES - LATE SUMMER

Steve Craig

Late Summer moves into Autumn during the third week in March according to the new seasonal calendar for Melbourne, devised by the Australian Timelines Project. It is characterised by morning fogs, pre migration flocking of many birds, the movement of Pied Currawongs and Flame Robins down from the mountains and the first appearance of Puffball Fungi. Silver Xenica Butterflies appear., Young Bandicoots are out of pouch. Cranberry heath is in peak bloom, Parsons Bands orchids flowering. Antechinus are active, European Wasps gathering at waters edge, Case Moth caterpillars moving about. Red Wattle Birds moving in flocks. Magpie bachelor groups forming.

SOURCE::

<http://www.gould.edu.au/timelines/march>>www.gould.edu.au/timelines/march

Send your timelines observations to BICA C/- PO Kangaroo Ground, 3097 or email to either of these addresses

sacraig@alphalink.com.au>sacraig@alphalink.com.au (SteveCraig)

rosscric@ozemail.com.au>rosscric@ozemail.com.au (Ross and Cric Henry)

WHERE WILL IT END?

Alan Bonny

As most will be aware, the boundaries for the Bend of Islands (and other areas within the shire,) are under review at the moment.. Council has determined the criteria of "community of interest, historical factors, physical characteristics and postal service" to determine the new boundaries. Unfortunately they have not applied these for the Bend of Islands locality as proposed. Simple and logical boundaries are essential for emergency and public access to properties. The Environmental Living Zone should also be contained in one place name to avoid confusion for prospective residents and planning. For more details please contact me on 9712 0648.

Submissions by Friday 23 March 2001 to

Ms Catherine Dale

Chief Executive Officer.

Nillumbik Shire Council.

PO Box 476 Greensborough 3088

SNAKE BITE

Norm Linton -Smith drew attention to an article in Park Watch, a journal published by the Victorian National Parks Association. The article by Dr Ken Winkle in the December 2000 edition contains a lot of information about snakes and snake-bite. The article discusses the frequency of death from snake-bite (an average of less than one per year in Victoria- about the same as for bee stings). It goes on to list the signs and effects of bites from Australian snakes and finishes with a list of prevention and first-aid notes. The main prevention measure is, as it always has been, leave snakes alone! Other points include:

- * Wear appropriate footwear in the bush.
- * Don't investigate hollow logs or tree trunks with your bare hands.
- * Inspect the ground on the other side before stepping over logs.
- * Keep your place free of rats and mice.
- * Be aware that snakes are often active at night in warm weather.
- * Be aware of appropriate first aid measures.

First aid measures are well set out in the first aid manuals but briefly you should:

- * Apply a broad, firm bandage over the bite site as soon as possible. Don't remove clothing.
- * Keep the bitten limb still.
- * Bandage from the bite towards the trunk and extend as far as possible up the limb.
- * Immobilize the limb with a splint.
- * Bites to the trunk should have firm pressure applied to the bitten area but don't restrict the chest area.

There is no first aid for bites to the head or neck.

THEY'VE GORN!

Sheila Dixon

I have lived happily here with the Bellbirds now for nigh on sixteen years. As far as I was concerned they didn't permanently scare off other birds except perhaps for the Currawongs. But then they were up to no good around baby bird time so I didn't mind. Now, however, not a Bellbird to be seen. I can still hear them now and again further down the creek way, but who came along and took their place? A scrofulous bunch of Noisy Miners, that's who! Mind you, as they are locals I don't mind that much. But noisy they are as they dash about the place, dangling from leaves and seeming a bit manic. I have noticed that they too go after other birds but they are not as serious about it as the Bellbirds who never let a stranger into their territory. (continued on page 10)

One thing though; the Bellbirds haven't given up their bath on my deck. And when I water my vegie garden they rush to the chicken wire roof and have a lovely time in the spray. I have an obsession about birds bathing. I can watch them incessantly. I wonder what's wrong with me. Perhaps its because they don't have any clothes on!

Seriously though, I wonder why the birds left. Perhaps the food supply has changed or the noisy miners are a bit hoon-like and upset them. Frank, do you know? I can just hear them now as I write this but they seem quite distant. Perhaps they all got their superannuation and retired to trendy apartments.

A LOCAL FERN

John McCallum

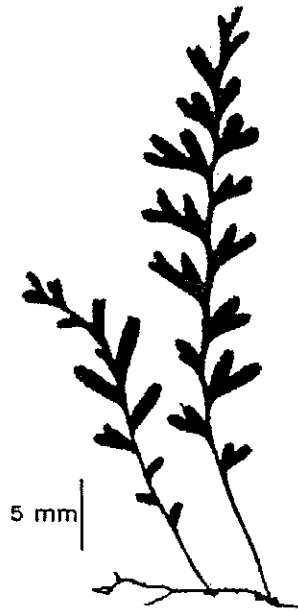
Common Filmy-fern (*Hymenophyllum cupressiforme*)

One of the best kept secrets of the Bend of Islands is the occurrence of this delicate species, a member of a group of ferns more often associated in Victoria with wetter, fire-free forests ('rain forests'). Because of its requirement for a moist environment Common Filmy-fern in the Bend of Islands is only found along the river cliffs in shady locations.

Filmy-ferns (Family Hymenophyllaceae) are represented world-wide and, although most species are tropical, there are many species in sub-tropical and temperate regions of the southern hemisphere.

The filmy-ferns differ from most other ferns in a number of aspects. The first, from which the name is derived, is that the fronds are only one cell thick, each cell therefore being in contact with the atmosphere. This of course means that they dry out quickly unless the air is very humid. It also means that they can absorb water directly from the air and this is reflected in their very much simplified vein system. Another difference is the manner in which the sporangia (spore-cases) are carried. The sori (bundles of spore-cases) are always marginal, i.e., set on the edge of the fronds. They are enclosed by two lips in some species or by a tubular structure in others.

H. cupressiforme is a fairly widespread species and has a greater resistance to drying than most other Victorian species of filmy-ferns. The fronds will shrivel if conditions are too dry but recover readily when moisture becomes available.



The fronds range from 2 to 8 centimetres long, with a dark green lamina set on a fine, dark brown to black stem. The creeping rhizome is fine and sparsely hairy. The overall shape of the frond can be seen in the picture. The shape and position of the sori as well as the simplified vein system are also illustrated.

SNIPPETS

THE BICA DOZEN

The BICA AGM included the draw of the BICA dozen. If my memory serves me correctly Ed Car took the dozen home with Wolfgang Krause the second prize of 2 bottles and Michael Skewes acquiring the third prize bottle. Financial member bonus winner was Jo Banner. Pleasant drinking to all winners.

RECYCLE NOTICE

You will have noticed the small recycle bin sign on our sign tree the weekend prior to recycle Mondays. Thanks to Sally Timmins for her timely reminders.

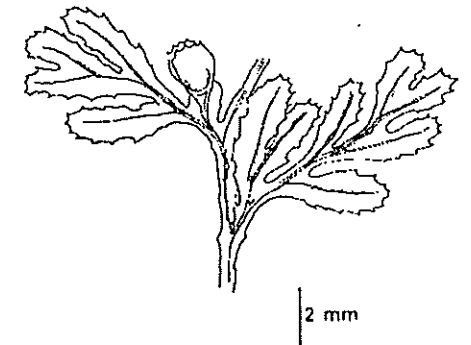
WHERE HAS ALL THE WINE GONE?

The Commemorative wine made available for the Bend of Islands naming day has all gone to good homes. The response to the once-only offer was very positive and our Christmas Hills Fire Brigade benefited from the local wine appreciation. Add the label to the rare and endangered species list.

RECENT ARRIVALS

On the grandparent front the Bonny increased their lot with a granddaughter Tea Alice and the McCallums now have a third grandson, Alexander.

Common Filmy-fern, whole plant X2



Common Filmy-fern, frond detail showing venation and sorus X4

Calendar Update

24th March - Night Event

Once again Karen is organising a local extravaganza, so come along prepared for fun and entertainment. Please bring your own picnic requirements. We still have our great dam venue thanks to Joe & Gerard.

31st March – Field Day

This is a day to look at the wet lands off Homestead Road
10AM meeting at Fire Station to car pool
Bring a picnic lunch for another educational fun filled day
Watch for sign at bridge

28th March – Community Involvement

This is the next date that the community involvement committee meets, so if anyone out there has any interesting ideas to add to our enjoyment or education or possible guest speakers for our general meetings, please contact Jenny on 97120614 (ourpower@alphalink.com.au)

15th April (Easter Sunday)

Easter canoe event watch sign tree for details.

29th April – Field Night

To observe our nocturnal wildlife we will especially be on the lookout for the powerful owl
Enjoy a walk followed by mulled wine, again watch sign tree for further details.

27th May – General Meeting

Next general meeting watch sign tree for further details.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Please detach and return to :-Treasurer. BICA c/o Post office Kangaroo Ground 3097

cut here - - - - -

Please find enclosed my subscriptions for BICA membership for 2001.

2001 BICA SUBSCRIPTION

Full \$10 Concession \$6 Family \$20

Name.....

Phone.....

Address.....

.....

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THE NEXT GLITTERING OCCASION WILL BE.....

The annual BICA Night Event!

To be held on Saturday March 24 at the Corner of Henley Rd and Catani Boulevard (Fire Station end).

6.00 pm start with childrens' activities; arrive early to select your posy.

Concert begins 7.30 p m. Tea and damper afterwards (conditions permitting)

Sender: Bend of Islands Conservation Association Inc.
c/o Post Office. Kangaroo Ground 3097

BICA

