

# BEND OF ISLANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION INC. NEWSLETTER

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## WHAT LOCAL PLANT IS FLOWERING?

Botanical name: *Pterostylis nutans*

Common name: Nodding Greenhood

Family: Orchidaceae

Flowering period: Early Winter to Spring



A flowering plant which grows from succulent underground tubers. Each tuber or pair of tubers sends up a rosette of leaves, at ground level and a single erect stem 10 to 20 cm high, with 3 stem leaves and with a greenish flower with a prominent hood at the end of the stem. The flowering plant dies down in Summer, surviving on the underground stores of starch of the tubers.

The rosette of 3-6 leaves encircles the flower stem; the leaves are dark green, short stemmed, ovate to oblong, 25-80 cm long and with wavy edges. The rosettes of leaves are often found in large colonies in damp, leaf rich soil of shady places.

The single flower is 2.5 cm. long. The hood is translucent green with darker green stripes and is usually brown tipped. The flower is bent forward nodding at right angles to the stem. The hood, which consists of two joined petals and one sepal, is rather narrow. The two lower sepals are narrow, pointed and partly joined, encasing the hood. The protruding labellum or lip is brownish, curved and minutely hairy, assisting in pollination by small flies or fungus gnats.

A widespread orchid growing in dry and valley eucalypt forests, preferring partial sun and tolerating full shade.

CRIC HENRY

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Wattle Day is scheduled for the 1st of September but with this winter being so mild and dry, the majority of our beautiful Acacias will have finished flowering well before winter is over. My observations along Henley Rd have recorded *Acacia genistifolia* flowering as early as the end of June and down on the river the first blooms of *A.dealbata* were popping on the 8th of July. Nevertheless we will celebrate Wattle Day on the first of September with the planting of a variety of locally grown Acacia. Do come along and join in a traditional national day.

Alan and I conducted a tour of the area for a group of young people involved in the Nillumbik council Insight youth program.

After an introduction to the Bend at Oxley bridge by Alan we were off to visit Hilary and Jeph for an interview about the co-op and artist perspectives. Next was a stop at the Woiwods where the groups energy was boosted by drinks and food before an interview with Mick and Marg. Thanks to all who so willingly participated at very short notice.

I welcome Val Himmelreich who, with Carol Summers, brings the BICA committee up to full strength.

See you round. Carol Bonny

## FROM THE EDITOR

This edition of the BICA Newsletter is not as big as some recent ones; we can only do what we can with the material that we receive. We need your contributions, whether they are reports on interesting wild life, reflections on living in our unique residential conservation area, notes on wider aspects of conservation or environment, opinion about local or other issues relevant to BICA's charter, cartoons or pictures, information about coming events or reports about recent ones.

We accept any format. You can email material (mccallum@minopher.net.au), submit it on zip or floppy disc or provide typed (or even handwritten!) hard copy.

Thank you to the regular contributors who have helped with this Newsletter. Steve has provided us with some indicators for the season in his Timelines notes and we would welcome your contributions to this project. What do you regard as the seasonal 'pointers'? Mick is in good story-telling mode and Sheil continues to entertain with her observations on life among the vegies. Regular contributions on events keep us up to date on projects such as the pine removal in Henley Road.

Further to Coz's article on page 4, Ben Craig will remove bee swarms.

## GAWA ABORIGINAL RESOURCE TRAIL

### Mick Woiwod

Sunday 12 August next will see the launch of the Gawa Wurundjeri Aboriginal Resource Trail on Watsons Creek. This 340 metre long trail has been developed over the past two years by the Nillumbik Reconciliation Group to provide opportunities for local people and others to learn more about how the Wurundjeri of the region resourced their country.

Brochures containing detail of the flora and fauna they resourced can be picked up at any local Information Centre. Funding for the project came from a Natural Heritage Trust grant successfully applied for by Margaret Burke's Osborne Peninsula Landcare Group.

The launch by the mayor starts at 2:00 pm. Come along and learn how it all works. Local schools are preparing colourful weereeps for the day, Wurundjeri elder, Jim Wandin, will be in attendance for the welcome, and local musicians and singers for the entertainment along the way. The Gawa Trail is on the left 150 metres past the Yarra Glen Road bridge.

## ARE YOU GETTING YOURS?

### Carol Bonny

The Councils "Nillumbik News" publication is meant to be delivered to all shire residents. It informs of current local issues with which the council is involved. Bulk mail achieves this for those with mail delivery but us unserved locals miss out, or some of us do. Some residents are getting their copy by addressed mail from council. If you are missing out and you want a copy of "Nillumbik News" contact the Shire Council Communications Section on 94333111 and ask that you get yours by addressed mail.

## PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

### Carol Bonny

Congratulations to the Kamingas on moving into their new house on C track. They still have a little work to do here and there but they are home. The Kaminga shift allowed owners Mia and Graham Peterson to move into their residence in Catani Blvd. Congratulations to all.

Building is progressing well on the Laughlin pole house in Henley Road and the Nihill construction in Gongflers. Both plan to be in residence soon.

## GARBAGE REBATE NOW UNLIKELY

Steve Craig

In a booklet distributed at the start of the 1997/98 financial year by the Shire of Nillumbik, all residents were advised that.... "Each (garbage) bin contains a microchip with a unique number that has been allocated to your property. This will enable Council to record the number of times your bin is emptied each year. Residents are encouraged to place their bin out for collection less frequently than once per week. By recording the number of times bins are picked up, Council will have data that will enable it to determine a rebate for residents who use the collection system less frequently than once per week."

It's now four years since this promise was made but in the Diamond Valley Leader of June 13, 2001, Shire of Nillumbik Mayor, Sigmund Jorgensen was quoted as saying that the prospect of a rate rebate for waste conscious residents was still "some way away at this stage".

Former Mayor and chair of Council's Waste Minimisation and Management Advisory Group, Margaret Jennings, said she was still committed to offering a financial incentive to residents in return for cutting their waste output, but the technology the Shire had purchased for \$500,000 in 1996 to measure bin lifts "doesn't work".

The Municipal Waste Minimisation & Management Advisory Committee was established in April 2000 and met on four occasions over a period of six month period but has not met since October last year and it's term has since expired. To date, Council has not called for new nominations.

According to the timetable developed and agreed upon by the Advisory Committee a draft Municipal Waste Minimisation & Management Strategy was to have been circulated to Advisory Committee members by the end of January 2001, a final draft submitted to Council in February 2001 with a call for submissions from residents, then a final strategy adopted at the March 2001 Council meeting. The draft strategy is now well behind schedule.

Council has previously stated that a fortnightly garbage collection would be introduced by 2002 with savings passed on to residents, but this commitment is currently under review.

If you're concerned about the wasteful use of your rates and the lack of progress with the introduction of financial incentives in return for reducing your garbage, contact Cr Neil Roberts, Sugarloaf Ward on 9710 1716 , Mobile 0413 277 428 or email him at [neil\\_roberts@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:neil_roberts@nillumbik.vic.gov.au)

## PINES PROGRESS

Peter Gurnoy

We have had five energetic and well attended Landcare working bees on our major project for 2001, the removal of approximately 330 pine trees at 670 Henley Rd, and there are more working bees to follow. For a full explanation of this project please see the March 2001 BICA Newsletter. Progress has been constant since April. The tree feller has now felled all but 15 remaining pine trees and these, along with the stumps, will go by the end of July. He has cut up the trees into lengths suitable for stacking as firewood, and our working bees have progressively cleared up and burnt the branches and has stacked up the sawn logs so that the tree feller can continue to work. We have been stacking the sawn logs on the side of Henley Rd for people to collect for firewood and this work will continue over the remainder of the year. If you want some good pine for next Winter's fires please help yourself from the stack beside Henley Rd. Please do not go onto the property.

By September we will start replanting indigenous vegetation. The first planting will be various species of acacia on Wattle Day, 1st September, and other species will be planted on the regular working bee day Sunday 16th September.

Thank you to all those who have joined in and helped on this project. In my ten years or so of arranging working bees none have been so constantly well attended. We generally have 16 to 18 people attending and there is a good variety of work for all, from kids to grandparents. Afternoon tea is a great social time with jokes and repartee in true Bender style around the billy fire. There is always enough cake and biscuits to go around thanks to the generosity of some of the people who come along each time and bring food to share. BICA provides the tea and coffee.

Please join us, watch the pine tree for details. Bring gloves, secateurs, tomahawk, bow saw if you have them, and a sense of humour and a mug for arvo tea.

## HOO'S THERE?

Sheila Dixon

I have a ringer who lives in the insulation in my roof space. She has brought up three babies there but they are gone now. The other night she was putting on her shoes and hat ready to leave and go shopping for the night when something happened to change the situation. All of a sudden a Powerful Owl started hooting just outside my bedroom window and just near that possums front door. I didn't hear the gasp but I am sure there was one and back she scuttled. I think she might have left her shoe outside. I went to sleep with the WOO-HOO going full bore. I don't know whether the possum went out that night. Sorry about the anthropomorphism!

## DO YOU GET A BUZZZZ FROM YOUR NEST BOX?

**Costanza Maffi**

If you do, then the chances are that it's full of bees! They just love appropriating our lovingly placed native animal homes and rendering them quite useless to none but themselves.

I've lost two Tuan boxes in this way. The astonishing thing about that is that the Parris's nest boxes, right next door to me, have been left untouched. Likewise Ern Mainka's up on Skyline Road, about 1 km from my place as the bee flies. Ern informs me that the bees visit his dam for a drink and yet have shown no interest in the nest boxes around his place. The general consensus is that my place must be right in the bees' flight path - oh joy!

So what to do? Unfortunately bees swarm (ie. go looking for new abode) at about the same time that our native critters also start making house, that is, in early Spring. So temporal separation of competing nest box residents is out of the question. It just has to be spatial, and I've come across a couple of promising suggestions:

1. Affix a flap of carpet (it has to be something that's rigid to a bee but bendable for a bigger animal) behind the door opening. This has a two-fold function - to prevent drafts within the box as well as discourage bees from entering, unless they're on steroids and love doing push-ups.
2. Glue cotton balls, shag pile, your mother's dreadful fake perm wig or some such to the inside surface of the lid. The theory here is that bees begin their honey-comb building from the ceiling down, and if they can't find a solid purchase they soon lose interest.

Any other solutions out there?

If you do have a nest box that's a-buzz with activity, it's a really good idea to eliminate it, residents and all. Apart from the obvious non-ethics of feral bees nesting in a conservation zone, sooner or later, sometime in Spring, the little darlings will run out of room at the Inn and go looking for more spacious quarters. Usually that's your ceiling space, from whence they're a proverbial pain-in-the-whatever to remove.

How to get rid of bees from a nest box? Basically, with great difficulty and little benefit. Having evicted the bees, the nest box now reeks of honey, which will deter native animals from entering (would you?).

My bee'd Tuan box #1 was hung very high. I noticed bees around its opening at about the time that a Melbourne woman was killed by bees while trying to protect her toddler, so it got the wind up me well and truly. I arranged for a professional apiarist from Warrandyte to come and remove the entire box, for which privilege he charged

me \$60. When Tuan box #2 followed suite I was really peeved and decided to overcome my panic and deal with the problem myself. On the first cool, wet Autumn evening, when the bees were all safely tucked up in their honey-comb beds, I snuck up there and gingerly plugged the opening with gaffer tape. The next day, with the help of a brave friend, we managed to lower the box to the ground (they weigh twice as much when full of bees and honey), and then nailed the opening up with plywood. And there it still sits, buzzing angrily from within!

## WHERE HAVE ALL THE BOXES GONE?

**Steve Craig**

During our celebration of World Environment Day on 10th June a small but enthusiastic group of residents checked a number of nest boxes for the presence of Brush-tailed Phascogales or Tuans as they are generally called around here.

No Tuans were present on the day but three of the boxes checked were occupied by Sugar Gliders and everybody got to see these delightful little marsupials up close.

We can only account for 18 of the boxes built by Bend of Islands residents during World Environment week in June 1999 and we'd like to know where the rest are so they can also be checked for Tuans next year.

I'm appealing once again for residents to register their nest box. Please phone Jenny Taylor on 9712 0614 email [ourpower@alphalink.com.au](mailto:ourpower@alphalink.com.au). Alternatively you can phone me on 9712 0029 email [sacraig@alphalink.com.au](mailto:sacraig@alphalink.com.au)

## SNIPPETS

**from Carol Bonny**

- In 1994 Cafe Benders was initiated to provide funds for our fire brigade. Since then by drinking coffee and eating cake we have passed the \$10000 total this year. Congratulations to all involved and we look forward to continued support. In August Cafe Benders will be an evening gathering. Watch the sign tree for details.
- Mozzie Zappers, do you have one and if so have you taken any notice of the species that they zap? My concern is that innocent bugs are exterminated for the comfort of us humans who get bombarded by the dreaded mozzie. The Zapper is indiscriminate so perhaps we should be very discriminate in how we use them. Only use them inside and when outside rub on the repellent for the good of biodiversity.

## WINTER VEGIE GARDEN

Sheila Dixon

I'm a bit like the frogs down there in the garden. The minute it rains I'm in with the best of them sitting on a stone croaking with joy. A busy time at the moment but not a lot to be picked. The asparagus has been cut down and had a bag of cow manure dropped on it plus a pile of peastraw. That will do it for the winter. Keeps the weeds down and feeds the bed. Strawberries have all been pulled out and the runners planted and pruned. A fresh load of pine needles for mulch (they like acid soil) and the stupid things are totally confused by this warm weather and have started flowering.

Then there is the spacing out and transplanting of millions of spring onions and red onions. Nobody can ever have too many spring onions. All the garlic is in and about 15 cm high already. I plant enough for a whole year. I am buying a kilogram of ryecorn next week and sowing for a nitrogen cover crop. Dig it in at springtime and plant tomatoes on it. I keep a crop of lettuces and rocket going through the winter. I might die if I don't have some salad. I am sticking to the business of digging in all my kitchen scraps straight into the beds. It's made such a difference for the worms and the soil. Now I don't have to worry about the compost heap drying out. The 2 year old passion vine has gone berserk and will have to get at with a chain saw in early spring. It wants to cover the whole of the garden roof. It must have been that lambs fry I buried with it. I can hear the vegetarians saying 'Best place for it.'

## TRIVIA AT MILLO'S

From our correspondent

The annual Bend of Islands trivia night was, as usual a glittering occasion. The evening was booked out well in advance and the tables were laden with food and drink to sustain the contestants during their long night of intellectual challenge. Table five, in fact, were in danger of attracting a handicap because of the pretentious display of comestibles adorning their table. As usual, questions covered obscure sport, inconsequential music, hitherto unknown geographical facts and dubious literature and were a testimony to Bob Millington's twisted imagination.

Trish was her customary fair handed self as she circulated among the tables making sure that no cheating or cribbing took place and her hawk-like eyes ensured fair play all round. She was scrupulous also in her adjudicating and keeping of the score sheet; close competition made this a very exacting task.

An early break away by table five and six who both squandered their joker points early could have demoralized certain other tables but by the end of the evening the gaps between the scores had closed up. This is despite that fact that one table forgot to cash

in their joker until their pathetic attempts on the last round. Apparently their team leader had a little difficulty in understanding the system; they had completed at least two perfect round earlier in the evening! After finishing a close second last year, Ms Robyn Duff's party stole the chocolate frogs by half a point from table six.

Once again we thank Bob and Trish for organizing and hosting the event. It was a great night!

## A VISIT TO THE BOX IRONBARK FORESTS

Peter Gurney

The Bend of Islands bushland is box-ironbark woodland and is typical of much of the bushland that covered central and northern Victoria before European settlement. Only 15% of the original box-ironbark woodland of Victoria remains, and most of this is in private ownership. This forest type is exploited in many ways for timber and firewood and much of the flora and fauna is under threat from current land use practices. We know the treasures of our patch of bush. The huge diversity of flora and the wildlife that abounds for us all to delight in, and the seasonal diversity that we so much enjoy and gradually begin to recognise over time.

Last year in late September a group of nine Benders people travelled to the Chiltern forests and spent a lovely weekend exploring and being guided through the Chiltern forest, both by day and night. We slept rough (in a motel in Beechworth) and ate camp tucker (in the hotels and restaurants of Chiltern and Beechworth), we even risked drinking local wine. It was interesting to see the similarities and the differences between our bushland and the Chiltern forests and it was socially a lot of fun.

This year we are planning a trip to the box-ironbark forests of central Victoria. On the weekend of 6-7 October a group will head off to Maryborough to join in with the Victorian National Parks Association box-ironbark forest rally to raise awareness of box-ironbark forest and to have VNPA experts guide us on walks and talks of bird and animal life, flora of all types and to publicise the need to include more of the box-ironbark forest in national and state parks.

BICA plans to have a group leave on Saturday morning and return late Sunday afternoon, possibly utilising the Nillumbik community bus for the weekend. We will stay in motels/hotels, some may wish to camp. As well as the VNPA events there will be opportunities to eat well and to socialise on Saturday evening. The only cost will be accommodation and food and perhaps a few \$ for the bus petrol. If you would like to be included please let me know by the market weekend in August as I will need to book accommodation and the bus by then. There is no limit on numbers; the more the merrier. My phone number is 9712 0408.

## THE OAK TREE AT WATSON'S CREEK

**Mick Woivod**

Older residents who have walked upstream from Oxley Bridge will have known of it for years. Some would have paused awhile to sit in its shade to reflect on how so ancient an English oak came to be in its otherwise indigenous creek-side setting. Others have wondered at its size — everybody in the Bend of Islands could gather in its shade. And like old people and all things old it has its story to tell to those willing enough to listen. If the bloke who planted it all those years ago were alive today his story would run something like this:

I arrived here in Port Phillip when Melbourne was a pup just five years old. Years before as a young fellow I'd arrived in Sydney from Scotland and there I married Ruth Boyd, the daughter of convict, and together we set sail for Van Diemen's Land to start life anew. It was there that our first son, David, was born. In 1838 we crossed to Melbourne where I built the first punt on the Yarra where Princes Bridge now spans the stream. Melbourne in those days was a wild old place and we stayed only a year or two before moving out to where Diamond Creek now is, only in those days the creek (there was no town) was known as 'Arthur's Creek'. Me and my bullocks changed all that!

You see, I had this marvellous lead bullock, a gem of a beast that answered to the name of 'Diamond' — it had a diamond-shaped spot in the centre of its forehead, you know. Well, crossing the creek one day poor old 'Diamond' got bogged to the shoulders near where the main track crossed. We tried everything to heave her out but she only sank the deeper. Finally we had to shoot her! Other bullockies passing through that year, seeing her there with her head stuck out of the mud, got into the habit of calling the stream 'Diamond's Creek' and the name, like 'Diamond', stuck.

The following year, 1842, we moved further out into the hills to establish a sheep station and not having a shepherd I rode into Melbourne and hired a convict fellow by the name of Christmas. Not wanting to hang around, I drew him a mud map and issued instructions for him to reach the station while I set out on horseback alone. It turned out the fellow hadn't a clue as to direction and got hopelessly lost and wandered around for days trying to get back on track. The thing that saved him he reckoned was his dog. Told me afterwards he had to eat it, otherwise he'd have carked it. But it were the bullocks that really saved him. At the end of his tether he'd heard these bells and reckoned it was judgement day and they were on the pearly gates. Somehow he managed to crawl to his feet and found the bells to be around the necks of my bullocks. He rode one of them back to the house.

At the time, you see, I hadn't a name for the place so I called it the 'Christmas Hills Station' after poor old Davy. Now the whole district is called Christmas Hills! A couple

of years later I sold the place to a fellow named Dendy and moved to Kangaroo Ground where the soil was better and there Ruth and I started a vineyard. Now vineyards are all over the place.

Anyhow, to get back to this tree. I planted it in 1876. Young Robert, our second, took over at Kangaroo Ground and I shifted here for the quiet life in the hut I built alongside it. Scratch around over there and you might find the odd chimney brick or two. Didn't do much; too old at the time; cleared a few acres and grew the odd crop of spuds and peas. Near that other stream over there that they say is now named after me, I put in that row of cherry plums you see there. 'Course the oak was only small when I died in 1895, but look at it now!

So you still haven't worked out who I am? Gawd strike me dead! It were me who gave you people the name of the creek and the town on it out past Eltham — and the name of these hills — and the creek over there, and still you can't tell me my name?

Fair enough, I suppose, it were a long time ago and since you insist I'll tell you just this once. It's Stevenson!. Next time you pass the cemetery over in K.G. come in and have a chat. I'm with the mob, first on the left, as you walk in the gate. On the stone it says 'Joseph' but in my day everybody just called me 'Joe'.

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## DODDERING WALLABY

**Carol Bonny**

Breakfast the other morning was delightfully interrupted with the sighting of our Swamp Wallaby just outside the window. A small Red Box was dramatically swaying back and forth as a Dodder Laurel vine was being tugged at and devoured. At first I thought the fruit of the vine was the target but on closer inspection through binoculars I observed that the vine was still in flower and it was the whole plant that was being eaten. In the past I have seen fungi being dug from under the leaf litter and munched on by our resident wallaby. The *Acacia genistifolia* seems to suffer the most pruning on our block and I was always intrigued to know what else these beautiful locals lived on in our open box ironbark forest.

## A LOCAL FERN

John McCallum

Mother Shield-fern (*Polystichum proliferum*) is a member of an important family of terrestrial ferns. Plants are relatively large, having fronds that are two or three times divided and from 25 -150 cm long. The tufted fronds are, however, not usually more than a metre in size. The rhizome is erect (i.e., not creeping) and tufted and is covered in shiny dark brown scales. The laminae of the fronds are a rich dark green with a paler undersurface. The stipe (stem) is also covered in coarse, shiny dark brown scales.

The shield fern group derives its name from the structure of the indusium. This is the structure that protects the bundle of sporocases. In this group of ferns the indudium is more or less round and is attached centrally, like a miniature Roman shield.

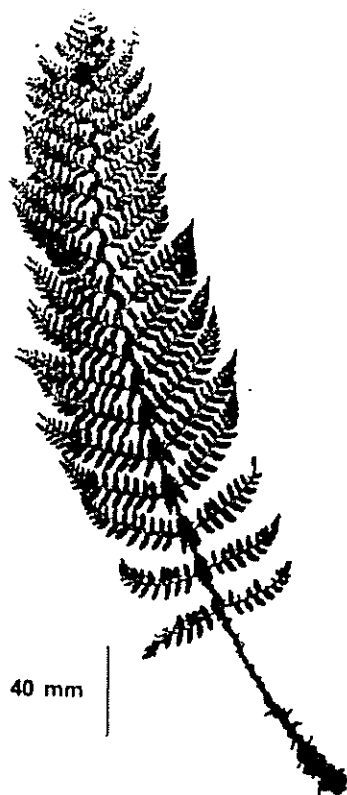
Our local *Polystichum* displays a reproductive/survival strategy seen in a few fern species. This is the development of small plants (bubils) growing near the tips of mature fronds. These miniature plants can take root and grow if the frond sags or drops to the ground and they provide a useful method of asexual reproduction. They give the species its common name.

*P. proliferum* is common in a variety of habitats in Victoria, from snow gum to coastal forest or among rocks in the high country. In the Bend of Islands you can find Mother Shield-fern along creek sides and in damp gullies. The species makes a good garden or pot plant if the conditions are right and is obtainable from specialist and other nurseries. It is illegal to collect ferns from the wild.

This makes the last note about fern species local to the Bend of Islands. Other interesting kinds of fern occur nearby in the damper forests of the mountains to our north and east. Further information about local ferns can be found in Gullan and Walsh. Duncan and Isaac is a good reference for ferns of Victoria in general.

**GULLAN, P AND N. WALSH, FERNS AND FERN ALLIES OF THE UPPER YARRA VALLEY AND DANDENONG RANGES, DCFL AND NATIONAL HERBARIUM OF VICTORIA 1985**

**DUNCAN, B AND G ISAACS, FERNS AND ALLIED PLANTS OF VICTORIA, TASMANIA AND SOUTH AUSTRALIA, MUP. 1986**



- 51: *Polystichum proliferum*
- 50: *Hymenophyllum cupressiforme*
- 49: *Culcita dubia*
- 48: *Hypolepis punctata*
- 47: *Cyathea australis*
- 46: *Pteridium esculentum*
- 45: *Doodia caudata*

Pinna of *Polystichum proliferum*; underside showing sori and indusium



## FERN INDEX

These issues of BICA Newsletter contained notes on local fern species. As far as is known these are the only species to occur in the area. News of any others would be welcome!

- 44: *Blechnum cartilagineum*
- 43: *Blechnum minor*
- 42: *Blechnum nudum*
- 41: *Pellea falcata*
- 39: *Adiantum aethiopicum*
- 37: *Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia*
- 36: *Asplenium flabellifolium*

## METROPOLITAN STRATEGY FOR MELBOURNE

The Bend of Islands was well represented at the recent forum at the Abbey in Diamond Creek. Initiated by the State Government Department of Infrastructure the forums are part of the process to establish a Metropolitan Strategy for Melbourne. With a very large gathering the process was a bit tedious but hopefully some good information was gathered. You can also be involved by making a submission and I would urge all to participate. Prior to the restructure of municipalities the Bend of Islands was part of the area covered by a Regional Strategy managed by the Upper Yarra and Dandenong Ranges Authority. The Green Wedge group urge that a similar structure be introduced to provide for the long term survival of the Green Wedge. Submissions proposing a regional authority with statutory powers be implemented for the Green Wedge as part of the Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy should be sent to:

Metropolitan Strategy  
Strategic Planning Division  
Department of Infrastructure  
PO Box 2797Y  
Melbourne VIC 3001

If you wish to discuss further please contact Alan Bonny 9712 0648

## TIMELINES

Steve Craig

### DEEP WINTER (1ST WEEK OF JUNE TO 2ND WEEK OF JULY)

Female Powerful Owls are sitting on eggs layed during the first two weeks in June. 100% of male Brush-tailed Phascogales die following their breeding season. Wedge-tailed Eagles mate within a few days of the Winter solstice and small groups of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos can be seen extracting Wood Moth larvae from the branches and trunks of Silver Wattles. The first flowers of Early Nancy, Common Beard Heath and Spreading Wattle are out and Maroonhood, Tiny Greenhood and Nodding Greenhood can also be found. The introduced Cootamundra Wattle and Early Black Wattle are in flower and Southern Brown Tree frogs, Common and Smooth Froglets call regularly from ponds and wet soaks.

### PRE SPRING (3RD WEEK OF JULY TO 3RD WEEK OF AUGUST)

The flowering of Silver Wattle has passed its peak while the blossoms of Golden, Hedge and Spreading Wattles are beginning to dominate the bush. As the days begin to warm with the strengthening power of the sun, resident bush birds are in full song as they establish and vigorously defend breeding territories. Choughs are constructing or renovating nests as Fairy Martins, the first of the summer migrants arrive, followed soon after by Olive-backed Orioles, Rufous Whistlers, Black-faced Cuckoo Shrikes and Satin Flycatchers. Grey-headed Fruit Bats arrive in the Bend of Islands to feast on the nectar of flowering Ironbarks which are dominated by flocks of Red Wattle birds during the day. Male Echidnas, intent on mating, can be seen following a single female around. Exotic grasses including Shell Grass and Sweet Vernal Grass grow vigorously during this season outcompeting native grasses which need the extra warmth of True Spring before their growth phase commences. The Australian Painted Lady Butterfly, one of the first butterflies to emerge, can be seen hovering above native grasses. Flowering plants include, Golden Bush Pea, Early Nancy, Scented Sundew and a few Waxlips and Caladenias.

Discussions are currently taking place concerning the reservation of a tiny wildlife sanctuary on a triangle of land recently found to have remained in the name of the Haughton family since the 1940s when the adjoining former Lot 1 Lower Catani was subdivided into four separate allotments. The Haughtons were the original owners of the Bend of Islands Estate. The land in question measures a mere 20 X 20 X 20 metres and at the time of the subdivision was not included in any of the four resultant allotments. Despite its smallness, when added to the adjoining road reserve, it forms a significant patch of bush which, after heavy rain, has a small stream flowing through. As for a name, that's too long a story to be told in this edition of the newsletter.

## NILLUMBIK SHIRE ELECTORAL OPTIONS

Alan Bonny

You will have seen in the local papers that the Shire is seeking community comment on the electoral structure for Nillumbik. Prepared by the Victorian Electoral Commission. Option 1 is for the current five ridings represented by one councilor with 4 shire wide councilors. Options two and three provide for nine ridings with a councilor for each. Boundaries have been defined to provide equal representation for each ward. The current five/four structure is now unique to Nillumbik. The next elections are due in March 2002.

## SUGAR GUM SHORTAGE

Steve Craig

Due to the enthusiastic response from Bend of Islands residents to buy plantation grown Sugar Gum, demand for seasoned Sugar Gum is currently exceeding supply. If you left the purchase of your winter supply of firewood until the start of the cold weather you missed out on the cheaper rates and the best wood. At the moment you can expect to pay the outrageous amount of \$190/tonne for Sugar Gum from one of our local suppliers and some of the wood currently being sold is unseasoned and difficult to burn.

Prices for Sugar Gum are likely to remain high for the next decade or so until plantations currently being established reach a useable age and so I'm calling for expressions of interest now from residents who are interested in buying direct from a woodcutter early next year.

I'm currently negotiating with a supplier who is confident he can supply us with seasoned Sugar Gum at \$100/tonne delivered which will be considerable cheaper than you can expect to pay for it locally. Minimum load will be 8 tonne, so for starters I'm looking for 3 or 4 others who are willing to buy 2-3 tonnes each. If I get a good response we can look at ordering more loads.

If you're interested, give me a call on 9712 0029 or send me an email at [sacraig@alphalink.com.au](mailto:sacraig@alphalink.com.au).



**Calendar Update**

Aug 26

General Meeting at "watch sign tree for venue"

To be informed about what is happening at the Bend of Islands, *this is the place to be!*

An informative meeting with an interesting guest speaker, we are expecting a representative from Greenpeace, then an informal chat and afternoon tea.

Sept 1

Wattle day: Join in the planting of wattles and a walk to identify different wattle species. Watch out for details, times etc on sign tree at bridge.

Sept 28 - 29

We are seeking confirmation of people who would be interested in a weekend at Chiltern to visit their Box Ironbark Forests

Contact: Jenny Taylor: 97120614 or [ourpower@alphalink.com.au](mailto:ourpower@alphalink.com.au)

Oct 6 - 7

Box Ironbark rally camp organised by U.N.P.A. at Paddy's Ranges Maryborough. If you are interested or for more details contact Peter Gurney on 97120408.

Oct 28

Pub Walk

**SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL**

Please detach and return to:

Treasurer, BICA  
c/o Post office  
Kangaroo Ground  
Vic. 3097

cut here -----

Please find enclosed my subscriptions for BICA membership for 2001.

**2001 BICA SUBSCRIPTION**

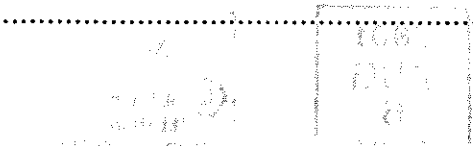
Full \$10      Concession      \$6      Family      \$20

Name.....

Phone.....

Address.....

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# THE NEXT GLITTERING OCCASION WILL BE.....

## The August General Meeting

To be held on Sunday, August 26. Watch the sign post at Oxley Bridge for particulars of location etc.

The speaker will be from Greenpeace

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

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