

BEND OF ISLANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION INC. NEWSLETTER

President: Carol Boony 9712 0648, C/- Post Office, Kangaroo Ground, Vic, 3097 Email: bica@rabbit.com.au - Editor, John McCallum 9712 0319 Inc. No. A11100A

Number 57 July 2003



WHAT LOCAL PLANT IS FLOWERING?

Botanical name: *Dillwynia phyllicoides*
Common name: Small-leaf Parrot Pea
Family: Fabaceae
Flowering period: September to November

A erect, slender shrub 0.5 - 1 m. high by 1 m. wide.

The leaves are narrow and linear, 5 - 10 mm. long, with inrolled margins and spirally twisted along its length. Tiny hairs cover the leaves and stalks.

Single or clusters of stalked yellow and red pea flowers appear at the ends of the branches. The flower consists of the "standard", i.e. a large spreading yellow petal at the back with a patch of dark red at the base, with two red lateral or wing petals spreading like wings around the "keel", i.e. the two red petals enclosing the male and female parts of the flower.

After flowering the fruits or small pods turn brown and become brittle at maturity. The ripe seeds also become hard and turn dark brown. Propagation is by seed, which has been soaked in hot water for a few hours to soften the hard seed coat, or by cuttings.

Prefers a semi shaded position and is tolerant of a wide range of dry, well drained soils.

CRIC HENRY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The longest day has passed and the acacias are starting to pop to hail the beginning of the end of winter. On the last day of June I heard a Grey Shrike Thrush give his spring call which was absolutely wonderful. I think he is a bit early but it brightened up my day. On the same day a Bronzewing Pigeon started doing his monotonous pump call. These two birds must have had their dates mixed up as I haven't heard them again. Very interesting!

It has been a busy couple of months with a guided tour for Councilor Greg Johnson and wife Margaret. Greg expressed an interest in having a look at the Bend and we were happy to oblige.

On the following day our local member for Yan Yean, Danielle Green and her partner Steve also visited the area for a briefing on the status of the Melbourne Water lands in the ELZ. Danielle has offered to see if she could help in any way to hasten the transfer of the lands from Melbourne Water to the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

We have also been involved with discussions regarding a property in Skyline road upstream from the pumping station. The owners are looking at restructuring the titles for the area and building houses for themselves and their family. Meetings with the proponents and their representatives have been productive. We wait to see the final proposal.

SEE YOU ROUND. CAROL BONNY

Thanks again to all contributors especially the new ones! Don't forget that we accept copy in all formats except Dictaphone!

Copy for the newsletter to:

John McCallum
48 Catani Boulevard
Bend of Islands
Vic 3097
Email: mccallum@minopher.net.au

Contact details for BICA committee:

Bend of Islands Conservation Association Incorporated
C/- PO Kangaroo Ground
Vic., 3097
Email: bica@rabbit.com.au
Website: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~bica>

ELSA

Mick Weiwed

I'm sure many local people continue to nurture fond memories of Elsa Jackman who not too many years ago used to toddle around the Bend of Islands in her little Volks-beetle. Elsa of course, was Hilary's mum.

She would visit us frequently and Marg and I were proud to count her among our close friends. What we valued most about Elsa were the meaningful conversations she would provoke about all sorts of interesting issues. The thing about Elsa was that you could never get away with the sort of loose statement we all sometimes make in laid-back conversation. Whenever this happened, all five-foot-five of her would be on to you in an instant with a challenge designed to move discussion back along meaningful lines.

Elsa had a way of doing this that seemed to say in a very friendly sort of way that 'I might be little and I might be old, but I've still got a head on my shoulders not easily fooled'. Whatever the conversation, I learnt always to be sure that I had my facts entirely right with Elsa.

My most lasting memory of this was one day when departing, Elsa's little Beetle refused to start. We walked back to the car together and I asked her to let it roll back a little for me - the male who was expected to know everything about such things - to lift the bonnet and check out the engine.

As I remember it, she gave me a wry sort of grin as if to say 'are you sure about what you're on about?' Then, being too much of a lady to push her advantage, she allowed me to lift the bonnet.

I'm sure she was watching my every move with nervous anticipation when I discovered that the engine wasn't at that end of the Beetle at all! Our eyes met and my embarrassment was complete. In doing the male thing of coming to the assistance of a little old lady in distress I'd revealed for all to see my well-known inability to understand things mechanical with cars.

We smiled, then laughed, then hugged, with Elsa, still the lady, not wanting, nor needing, to hang it on me further. Elsa Jackman was a gem to all who ever had the privilege of knowing her.

DECIDEDLY AN OOD NIGHT OUT!

Bob Millington

Ross Henry, producer for the evening, caught the compere on the hop. We've got a late addition," he said "A tabla and ood combination. Where do you want to slot them in?" The compere had taken a can or three of hops-flavoured water by that stage. Maybe he had misheard. "Yes, tabla and ood," chuckled Ross. "We haven't had that before." The compere thought deeply and desperately. Maybe a tabla was a singing dog and an ood its trainer. Trapeze artist and catcher? One-legged stilt walker and stilt, perhaps? 'You know, of course,' said Ross, 'that they're a lute-like instrument and a drum from Mesopotamia. Pretty topical with this Iraq business.'

Ah, of course.

This year's Night Event (strange that after all this time we've not come up with a better name) was meant to be held at Musso's Dam, perhaps to be the last time we assembled there what with Gerrard and Jo's building plans. But the drought broke that day (in the end it turned out to be more a greenstick fracture than a proper break — and the usual crew of competents swooped on the fire station to transform and extend it with ropes and tarps and timber

The audience, including a couple from Britain and a few from as far away as Warrandyte, divided into the music lovers who settled inside the station and the smokers, drinkers and tap dancers who camped outside the door. As usual, the session up to half time was devoted, in the main, to the Bend's younger performers. An inspired decision was to give them an MC of their own age.

Dustin Flanagan took to the microphone like a dog to a bone. He joked, he cajoled, he called for applause and got it. When Norm Linton-Smith, who had somehow sneaked into the first half, finished his usual fine offering of traditional poetry, the compere saw him off with "Nice one, Norm" Post-intermission the older brigade took over with drumming, didging, raffle ticket-flogging, keyboarding, a spot of Les Murray's verse by Harold Herd — looking somewhat menacing with an axe in his hand — then tabla with ood followed by ood accompanied by tabla and finally the grand Bend of Islands ensemble, topped off with the traditional Gloria provided by ageing rocker Ross Henry. Numbers swelled as the night wore on. We had perhaps the biggest audience yet, many in their teens and twenties, dressed in beads and brocades and with lots of toddlers and babes.

Must have been the ood and the tabla that got them in.

WEED OF THE SEASON: SPANISH HEATH

Graham Petorson

Over the winter months is the time to look out for Spanish Heath (*Erica lusitanica*). It is a wide spread weed across the north and eastern regions

Very large infestations can be seen in gully lines around Stathewen and St Andrews Infestations grow quickly if not addressed early. I have spotted plants near the Yarra off Ironbark Road

Spanish Heath is a small shrub to 2m high The leaves are crowded, short and very narrow and it bears many small bell shaped white flowers often tinged with pink. Seed dispersal is by wind and water

Small plants can be hand weeded in soft ground or my preferred method is cut and paint with neat Glyphosate. Large infestations of low plants can be sprayed with a broad leaf spray such as garlon. Similar local plants are *Epacris impressa* (Common Heath) and *Leucopogon virgatus* (Common Beard Heath)

E. impressa has prickly tapered leaves to 15mm long and is more open and wiry than the Spanish Heath.

L. virgatus plant is also more open and wiry and it usually only grows around here to a max of 20 cm high. The leaves are pointed and up to 20mm long. Its flowers are bearded and fragrant and are at the ends of the branches.

Information and pictures of this weed can be obtained through the Shire or if you are not sure I would be happy to help.

CAT-ASTROPHE!

The Bonnys

A cat was terrorizing the Henley Rd extension over the last months with several residents sighting the intruder. Remains of gliders and a lack of Tuan sightings may bear witness to the predators efficiency. Cat traps were successfully deployed and our local fauna can now relax. If you see a cat or dog around your place, do not overreact and scare it away. Keep your cool and try to capture the intruder. If this does not work try to catch the animal with an appropriate trap. Try a free feed or two to tempt the animal before you set the trap. BICA and other residents have various traps and if you have a BICA trap or a trap that you are willing to make available please let me know so that I can keep a register for others to access. By the way, the cat was eventually lured into the trap with porridge as the bait.

SOMETHING IN THE AIR

Alan Bloom

On a still, sunny Sunday afternoon last August I stood at the woodpile enjoying the view south above the treetops of the Bend of Islands bush, when the delightful strains of bagpipe music wafted towards me. As the music floated across the valley, the lyrics floated effortlessly across the years, from 1961 when I had learned this song in the Burwood Technical School boys choir.

"Speed Bonnie boat, like a bird on the wing,
Onward, the sailors cry;
Carry the lad that's born to be King
Over the sea to Skye."

As a primary school boy I remember racing home from school each day for a few weeks to lie on the floor in front of our AWA Radiola dual wave six valve console wireless and 'listen in' avidly to each serialised episode of the story behind this song, on the Argonauts Club. (Ganges 25 speaking.)

You may remember from your own school days (or the Argonauts) that the Skye Boat Song is about the 1746 attempt of this geezer called Bonnie Prince Charlie, aka Charles Edward Stuart, to shove his father, James Stuart onto the British throne.

He was forced to retreat to Scotland, where he and his Jacobite highland clan army copped a walloping at the battle of Culloden (just east of Inverness) and he became a fugitive. On the Scottish island of Benbecula he met a wench called Flora McDonald whose father worked for the other side. She dressed him in maid's clobber as Betty Burke and smuggled him to the island of Skye, off the West Coast, in a small boat. Sympathisers helped him safely to France, where he became an alcoholic drifter and then moved back to the town of his birth, Rome, as a toff called the Duke of Albany. He kicked the bucket in 1788. Flora was nicked and ate porridge in the Tower of London for her part in Charlie's escape, although she was soon released. When she died in 1790 she was buried on the island of Skye, wrapped, they reckon, in his bedsheet.

All of this goes to show that even the humble earthy act of splitting firewood in the Bend of Islands can unexpectedly become as enchanting as walking through the back of a wardrobe and finding oneself in Narnia.

Thank you John McCallum. It was a magic moment. So much so that I ran into the house to get Barb, who stood there beside me at the chopping block silently sharing bagpipe music amongst the eucalypts..



GOODIES AND BADDIES!

Carol Bonny

Nillumbik Shire have reprinted publications for indigenous plants and weeds of the shire. "Live Local Plant Local" is a useful handbook that identifies the indigenous plants of the shire. It should be noted that not all plants included in the booklet are appropriate for the Bend of Islands and the comprehensive list for the Bend is available on request from BICA. The book contains lots of useful information and highlights the importance of local provenance plants to avoid endangering the local genetic stock. Of particular concern is the threat to the local form of *Grevillea rosmarinifolia* by hybridisation with nursery cultivars. The Hurstbridge form of this *Grevillea* is almost certainly extinct in the wild now because of hybridisation and the Warrandyte form is also suspected of being genetically corrupted by cultivars growing in gardens nearby. It is important that any real local form *G. rosmarinifolia* is identified and protected from hybridization by eliminating any other variations of the species. If you have *G. rosmarinifolia* growing on your site and they are not of the local provenance, the advice from expert botanists is to remove them as a matter of high priority. If you are not 100% certain that your plants are of local provenance they can be identified from a cutting of old foliage and some flowers. If you are seeking plants ask the supplier the source of seed or cutting and only acquire Bend of Islands local provenance. BICA can refer you to locally sourced plants.

The foldout weed pamphlet "Environmental Weeds" shows 46 environmental weeds that occur in the shire. The status of the weed and the eradication method are included for each species. Note that Agapanthus, Bluebell Creeper and Cootamundra Wattle are amongst the weed species designated. The ELZ provisions do not permit the planting of non-indigenous vegetation (except for the kitchen garden) but many properties in the area have inappropriate remnants and plantings present. Do the right thing and remove offending plants. If you are not sure about a plant, ask, and we will help with the identification. BICA have copies of the full colour publications available or they can be obtained from the Shire Office.

A REQUEST

We have had a request from an orchid enthusiast for a photo or scan of a specimen of *Pterostylis revoluta*. The plant is on our local list and the photo should show what is typical of the flower. Please advise Alan Bonny if you can help with an image or a reliable location for the species. 9712 0648

THE SPORTING LIFE!

Mick Woivod

Whenever Bend-of-Islanders sit around, the talk inevitably turns to wildlife. Maybe, that's always been the way out here except that in the early days talk seems mainly to have been to do with how that wildlife tasted.

For example one visitor to the nearby district of Panton Hill in the early 1880s - an American 'sportsman' by name no less than Sherman Foote Denton - showed great delight in telling the world all about it:

'I was awakened at daylight by some uproarious laughter proceeding from across the way. Poking my head out of the window, I saw on the limb of a gum tree three laughing jackasses indulging in a morning song. In great haste I seized my gun, and soon reduced the trio to a duet. The bird was not dead when I picked him up and he bit my finger desperately.'

An evening or two later the appropriately named 'Sherman' continued in slaughter-house fashion.

'We went off with Barelli one bright moonlight night after opossums. He, Barelli, had a little dog which could find the animals faster than we could shoot them. As soon as the dog barked we started for the spot, and always found him sitting under a tree, looking up into it. Getting the tree between ourselves and the moon, we could soon see the opossum, and bring him down. We shot seven or eight opossums, three native cats ... and were on our way home when we came to a very high tree with a large animal crouching near the top. I put a handful of buckshot into each barrel and let him have it ... it proved to be an Australian bear, a pouched animal weighing about fifty pounds....'

Each day the slaughter continued. Anything that moved was blasted! One foray was towards Kinglake in search of Lyrebirds whose calls had left Sherman entranced.

'There was a mellow richness in parts that reminded me of the liquid notes of the clarinet. We sat spellbound till the song ceased. I have heard most of our American songsters, and some of them are very fine, with voices rich and mellow; but the mocking bird himself cannot compare with this prince of songsters, the Australian Lyrebird.

August 22 - 'We tried lyrebird for breakfast this morning but found it very tough, and not especially flavoured. Not a stone's throw from our cabin, we shot three of the beautiful king parrots; and as I went to the spring for water I saw a kangaroo feeding on the tender grass. Unfortunately I did not have my gun.'

After shooting many hen lyrebirds Sherman eventually spotted a male running. 'Taking deliberate aim, I fired .. I ran down the bank, jumped the brook, and there on his back

lay a fine male lyrebird in the best of plumage. His tail was more than a yard long.'

Meanwhile Shelly, his shooting partner, had fired at a large wombat asleep in its hole, its head half out. 'The creature had life enough left to crawl back, where it was impossible to get him. We had a long trudge through the woods back to our little cabin ...'

The pair were of course not alone! Local selectors and miners throughout the early period depended largely on local wildlife for food, Echidna being seen as an especially rare delicacy. Let's welcome the Lyrebirds back into their old domain!

From 'Gun Happy' in Tim Flannery, *The Birth of Melbourne*.

BLACK WATTLE

Graham Petersen

On our property below the fire station on Catani Blvd we have noticed a lot of Black wattles (*Acacia mearnsii*) which have died over the last few years. Many appear to have been attacked by borer at a similar point in time. Recently I have noticed small seedlings of Black Wattle appearing some which remain others have been eaten to the base. The same situation has occurred with a Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*).

The sap from these species is an important source of food for the sugar glider especially in between Eucalypt flowering times. The Black wattle hosts a large range of insects which are important to the ecology of the area. I love the dappled light through the Black wattles feathery phylodes.

To stop them from being eaten Mia came up with an excellent guarding technique I thought would be good to pass on. The guard is a recycled plastic mesh similar to the mesh you would put in your gutters to stop the leaves. Traditionally these guards are used with Stakes or a metal frame but the clever part was to use pins or tent pegs at the base to hold the guard upright. The guard can then be stepped on and simply unfold by themselves back into place. The guards look less obtrusive, can easily be carried when going for a walk and won't be flattened by Kangaroos, Wallabies or night bird observers. We have used these guards on other rarer species we have found especially around the house where traditional guards have been detrimental to our shins. Some guards we cut in half to protect the velvet tussock grass (*Poa morrisii*) we found near the house so it could set seed.

These guards can be used when planting tubestock but it is always better to protect what is already there first than to bring in new plant material. The guards and pins are available through treemax and if anyone would like more information please contact Mia or Graham on 9712 0071.

WHO'S WATCHING WHO?

Peter and Liz Mildenhall

We had been hearing the koala calling around our place on Lower Catani for a number of days but as usual it had evaded us or at least its roosting trees remained a mystery. Heard the unmistakable grunting of a koala close by the house while chopping wood on the Queens Birthday holiday and went down to investigate and there he/she was up a spindly eucalypt, having a relax, chewing away. It is remarkable how tolerant and small and thin the trees can be as they sit perched in a fork. Liz came down to investigate and felt that something else was watching her as well as the disdainful glance of the koala.

That sixth sense led her to look around and there not far away at all, about 2.5 - 3 metres up a largish burgun, perched on a horizontal branch, was a powerful owl, watchful but unperturbed by our presence.

He, we now presume it was a he, as the female is apparently nesting and they are very similar, remained relaxed but watchful as photos were taken and various members of the household came down to look and wonder at his size and demeanour. He was in among that burgun and eucalypt scrub that is now 40 years old along the river and while dense in the canopy it is quite open for the first 4 or 4 metres. He stayed there for most of the day.

We wonder now if it was the same bird that swooped down near our door late at night after a large, perhaps Bogong, moth blown down by the northerly earlier that weekend. He would certainly need a few moths to keep him going!!!

SUZ2 AND YOU

Alan Bonny

As residents in the Bend of Islands it is important that we all know and understand the planning scheme that defines what we can and cannot do on our properties. The planning scheme was created by residents of the Environmental Living Zone to protect the fauna and flora and visual amenity of the area and is incorporated as part of the State Planning Scheme enforceable by Nillumbik Shire..

Vegetation removal controls are an important part of the scheme. Occupied properties in the area will have a planned Development Envelope that contains the impact of the occupation.

The planning scheme specifies that "Not more than 25 per cent or 2000 square metres (whichever is the lesser area) of an allotment shall be cleared for the purpose of house, outbuildings, kitchen garden, access and any other development."

The planning scheme also specifies that a permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation or to remove or destroy fallen vegetation or dead vegetation and dead trees.

The exceptions to this are:

When required by Council or other Responsible Public Authority.

For emergency access (Fire Brigade etc)

If the vegetation presents an immediate risk of personal injury or damage to property.

For the reduction of fire hazard near buildings where such removal is limited to timber of less than 100 mm diameter.

When you apply for a permit to clear vegetation Council will assess the applications with consideration to the following.

Impact on landscape characteristics

The need for clearing associated with an approved development.

The integrity and long term conservation of the zone.

The value of the vegetation as to its condition, rarity and variety

The impact on fauna of the area (habitat).

The existing and future amenity of adjoining land and the native environment.

In summary this means that the planning scheme prohibits the removal of timber standing or fallen, dead or alive therefore the collection of firewood from properties or roadside verges is NOT permitted. BICA urges that residents who burn wood do so responsibly. In previous Newsletters there have been various items recommending the purchase of Sugar Gum from wood merchants. It burns well and our demand will ensure an ongoing supply.

A copy of the Special Use Zone 2 (usually referred to as SUZ2) of the Nillumbik Planning Scheme, Environmental Living - Bend of Islands is available from BICA or request it from the Nillumbik Shire.

HONOURS FOR HILARY

As reported in the May 7th Diamond Valley News congratulations to Hilary Jackman who has finally received her Centenary of Federation medal 2001.

FOGGIE

Mick Woiwod

In a previous article I mentioned that there had been only two permanent resident families in the Bend of Islands in 1962. There was of course also the Oxley families at the end of today's Oxley Road who'd been there on and off since 1910. Our best window into their lives comes from a brief description from canoeist W. Duke in the Walkabout Magazine of November 1937 who, after negotiating the tricky Bend of Islands rapids, paddled on:

"Under the lee of rocky hillsides past a community village where six families have built their homes on an isolated bend of the river. They have their community electricity plant, phones, cows, fowls, and above all the community spirit. Here is one piece of Grand Victorian Scenery that will always be preserved by its appreciative owners."

That was 1937 and one of the Oxley telephone poles still stands alone in the paddock opposite Sheila Dixon's riverside home on Henley Road - Sheila being a member of one of the six families described by Duke.

Years earlier there'd been other families on what became the 65 acre Oxley estate. Its first white occupant had been James Andrew of Kangaroo Ground who first farmed it in the early 1870s. Each year he'd open his riverside property to the Kangaroo Ground community for their annual New Year's Day picnic. Later its homestead (located where Claire Watson now lives) passed on to popular Kangaroo Ground identity, James Foggie. When Foggie married in 1894 the locals decided to give the newly weds an old-time tin-kettling.

Foggie learnt about this and politely put the word out for it to be postponed a week or two. The community however had other ideas and, out of the blue one night, surrounded the home with pots and pans to do the traditional thing, the expectation being of course to be welcomed in and entertained.

It was not to be! The Foggies were ill-prepared and refused the expected hospitality and sent them all packing, an unheard of occurrence which soon led to bitter division played out in the local rag. Foggie placed a public notice explaining that:

'The idea was to be treated with unlimited beer, whisky and half crowns. They did not seem to relish my wholesome treatment, and departed vowing vengeance in the shape of a boycott on me which however troubles me little'.

It saw, of course, the end of New Years Day picnics on this salubrious spot on the Yarra!

A QUICK LITTLE NIP

Alwyn Hansen

White-tailed Spiders (Lampona sp) have always received bad press. Like all spiders they have venom glands and when they bite a certain amount of venom is injected into the prey or victim. The amount and toxicity of the venom determines the effect. Additional harm can be caused by infection of the bite because of microbes on the spiders' chelicerae (poison jaws). Information about the effects of White-tailed Spider bites can be found at the web site identified at the end of Alwyn's note. Wolf spider bites suffered by gardeners are another good example of the kind of effects described. Alwyn's tale reminds us to treat all animal bites with respect.

As a long term resident (12 years) I have been lucky so far as to have never seen a snake or been bitten either by ant or spider. This fact was recently raised at the Bend-Of-Islands Resident Spider Committee and as a result a White-tailed Spider was dispatched to balance the books.

The end result put my arm in a sling for a week and included antibiotics and a nasty morning with a Surgeon with a scalpel. The moral of this sad tale is if you do experience a bite from one of our nasty residents seek medical help immediately and not wait as I did ,expecting the swelling to go down by itself. Then you will not find yourself using a keyboard with one hand.

This web site has more information about White-tailed Spiders

http://www.austmus.gov.au/factsheets/white_tailed_spider.htm#content

SECOND TIME LUCKY

On Tuesday 3 June 2003 the sanctuary sign on the small triangular reserve in Lower Catani Boulevard, the original of which mysteriously disappeared soon after installation, was replaced. As with the original located on the block a year and a half ago it involved a small ceremony. Jessie Bull of Mt Martha whose father had subdivided the Bend of Islands into present configuration in the 1940s, together with a couple of friends, did the honours, ably assisted by Carol and Alan Bonney, Mick and Marg Woiwod. Neil Harvey supplied the sign, Jessie the land and champagne and Carol the Manna Gum that was planted. The wording: 'Jessie Agnes Cameron Houghton Bull Sanctuary' recognises Jessie's parents and grandparents who once owned 'Bend of Islands'.

CHANGES TO THE ERS: NEW NUMBER FOR FIRE AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

Neill Kamminga

We have been advised by CFA that from the end of this month, 31st July 2003, the 9712-0454 Emergency Reporting System (ERS) will be turned off. After this the Brigade will be connected to the Emergency Services Victoria central dispatch system.

To report a fire or other emergency, residents must now dial 000. On doing so an Emergency Services Victoria operator will answer and ask you to specify whether you require "Police, Fire or Ambulance". Based on your response you will then be connected with the relevant emergency service. At this point you will be asked for the specific details of your emergency. The questions you will be asked do not differ greatly from those asked by our ERS operators.

In the past the Brigade has encouraged people in the Christmas Hills brigade area to use the ERS freely to report not just emergencies, but also general concerns that may or may not constitute an emergency situation. The ERS operators would then assess the call and determine the course of action required, from turning out the Brigade to following up with a friendly phone call. This is not longer so; the 000 number is for emergencies only.

To help fill the gap in service that this new situation will create, a number of Brigade members have agreed to become a contact point for local residents should they have concerns. These calls to Brigade members private numbers are not a substitute for 000.

Neill & Karyn Kamminga 9712-0621

Kevin Heely 9730-1704

If you have any queries about the new process please contact me .

The Brigade's response to emergency situations within our area will not be diminished in any way - we'll just be turning out to a different telephone call.



ANOTHER QUICK LITTLE NIP (THIS ONE'S HISSTORY!)

Carol Bonny

Over the summer we had the first incidence of snake bite that I know of in the ten years that we have been in the area. While clearing leaf litter from around her house Robina Summers realized that the bleeding scratch on her arm was actually a snake bite. With the help of Cara Gurney all was well with an overnight stay in hospital to ensure there was no serious reaction from the brown snake bite.

Current first aid advice is:-Don't panic. Rest and reassure the patient. Never apply a tourniquet. Do not wash or treat the bite area. Apply a bandage over the bitten area and then up the limb and then down, encompassing toes or fingers then upward covering the entire limb. Apply a splint to immobilize the limb.

Get the patient to a hospital as quickly and calmly as you can.

Do not try to capture or kill the snake!!

PS.: Discovered a small eyed snake under a rock at our place. Beautiful little specimen with a shiny black head and a grey body. Our third sighting of this mostly nocturnal species previously found investigating our laundry.

ROAD HAZARD

Barb Snell

This article was submitted during the same weekend that two macropods (on Black Wallaby, one Grey Kangaroo) were killed on Henley Road.

Driving home Thursday 18/07/03, just on dusk, a deer crossed my path about 50 metres before the bridge (K.G. side). This is a year, almost to the day, since my last sighting at the same spot. I was travelling slowly, therefore had no concern about hitting it - nor did Michael Pelling coming from the other direction, he was also going slowly

I crossed the bridge and a large kangaroo came bounding across the road in front of my car. I slowed down some more and hit my hazard lights to indicate a problem, and, as the 4WD following pulled out from behind and squeezed past me, I blasted my horn, which thankfully sent the young kangaroo about to follow back into the bushes.

I feel sad for the animals that there are still some people who don't understand the reason for driving slowly along Henley Road, especially during those times when the animals are more active.

A HUNTER'S TALE

Bruce Rogers

By the stark glare of a single 100 watt globe, the Great White Hunter stole across the open plains of the kitchen to inspect his traps before turning in for the night. His precise movements and well-honed advance belied his weariness. Only moments before and against his better judgment, he had fallen soundly asleep and were it not for the raucous cries of the David Letterman Show, he could have slept through until dawn.

With faint hope he approached the first of his traps. As had happened so many times before, the bait had been taken but the trap was empty. He cursed the cunningness of these beasts and pondered how fat they must be growing on the delicacies he has provided. The traps had remained empty for some time now, and he wondered for how much longer his people could endure without a sacrifice.

The other traps were untouched but as he crept toward the last one, he saw movement. His heart leapt. Success at last! With a morbid glee he lifted the trap from behind his well constructed pile-of-newspapers, and gave a closer examination to the captured beast. With some disappointment he took in the diminutive size of the specimen before him - it certainly wasn't the old female he had hoped to see, but it was one of the Horrid Ones, nonetheless.

With little effort, he lugged the trap and its contents outside. The beast was captured, it had food and was not suffering in any way. The ritual filling of the Sacrificial Esky and the ceremonial submersion of the beast could wait until morning.

So the Great White Hunter took himself off to bed, feeling content in his evenings work. If only he new of the cruel twist that would await him come morning.

It's a jungle out there, dear reader, let me assure you of that. During the night a raider appeared from the dark and stole the trap and its contents away. A beast of unspeakable nastiness, clever and wily but without thumbs and entirely unequipped to open the trap, made off not only with the sacrificial rodent but the means by which to catch it.

Dejected, the Great White Hunter is now cursed to forlornly wander the gullies of the co-op in search of his lost trap.

Announcing: The Inaugural Dead-Rat-in-a-Cage Treasure Hunt!

Should anyone, while on their wanderings, encounter a mesh-cage style trap about 40cmx15cmx15cm containing a dead baby black rat, possibly with a very frustrated fox close by, there is a reward!

If found please phone Bruce on 9712 0618

FEED THE ZOO ANIMALS

Melbourne Zoo will help you dispose of environmental weeds species by feeding them to their elephants and giraffes. Branches should be an average of 2.5 meters long. If you can take them to the Zoo that would be great but otherwise a three-ton truck can pick them up. A small amount of logs can also be taken. Species required include Cootamundra, Sticky, Sallow, and Flinders Ranges wattles, as well as willows. If you and your neighbors have any of these species combine and organize a collection and put the weeds to good use. Call James Fitzpatrick on 9285 9492 or email jfitzpatrick@zoo.org.au

REPRODUCED FROM THE UNDERSTOREY NO 66.

BUSH TELEGRAPH

Alan Bonny

Put your terrorist fridge magnet to good use to record the number below. It's the new Parks Victoria "Bush Telegraph" contact.

"The new Parks Victoria telephone service will help guard against suspicious or destructive behavior in the bush," announced the Minister for the Environment and Water, John Thwaites. Perhaps add it to your BICA directory.

Local call: 13 2874.

By the way, our magnet fell off the fridge last week and we panicked. Thought it was a terrorist attack and we were defenseless for a minute!



HENLEY ROAD REPAIRS: THE LATEST

Nillumbik have advised that repairs to the verge of Henley Rd have been completed. The works have been implemented with consideration to minimize environmental impact and preserve the road asset. If you have any future queries regarding the road please contact Neil Harris 9426 1266

ENVIRONMENTAL INCENTIVES

Nillumbik provide ratepayers with a number of incentives to protect and enhance the Shire biodiversity. A rate rebate of \$50 per hectare with a minimum of \$200 is provided to owners who have placed a Trust for Nature conservation covenant on their property. Biodiversity grants of up to \$500 are also provided for approved works to enhance biodiversity. A brochure is available from the shire or contact the Environment Project Officer at the Shire 9433 3211

COMING EVENTS

3rd Aug: Wattle Walk

10th Aug: General Meeting

31st July. Sustainable Gardening. Edendale Farm. Free. Register with Mary Trigger 9850 5155

7th Aug: Where Does My Recycling Go. Bus tour leaves Nillumbik Offices. 9-12 am. Free

28th Aug: Creatures of the Night. 7-9 pm Free. Edendale Farm

12th Nov: Melbourne Water Green Gardeners Evening at Tecoma. Register 9294 6215

Watch the signs at the bridge for latest information

Deadline for next Bend of Islands Conservation Association Newsletter: 12 October



NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING

WHERE:

Mia and Graham Petersen's.

20 Catani Blvd.

WHEN:

2 PM Sunday 10th August.

WHO:

Speaker will be Russell Costello, Native Vegetation Officer,
Department of Primary Industries

WHAT:

'Victoria's Native Vegetation Framework'

2003 SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

If you have not renewed your BICA subscription for 2003 please detach and return to:-
BICA Treasurer c/o Post office Kangaroo Ground 3097

Please find enclosed my subscriptions for BICA membership.

2003 BICA SUBSCRIPTION.

Family membership \$20

Single membership \$10

Concession membership \$6

Name.....Phone.....

Address.....

.....

.....

GENERAL MEETING

2 PM

Sunday 10th August.

Mia and Graham Petersen's.

20 Catani Blvd.

**If undelivered return to: Bend of Islands Conservation Association Inc.
C/o Post Office, Kangaroo Ground 3097**

**BICA
NEWSLETTER**

**Print Post Approved
PP335468/0001**

**SURFACE
MAIL**

**Postage
Paid
AUSTRALIA**