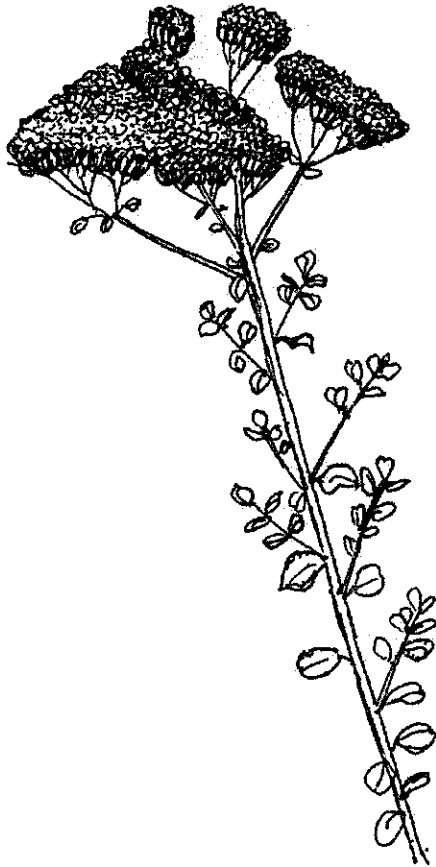


BEND OF ISLANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION INC. NEWSLETTER

President: Carol Bonny 9712 0648, G/- Post Office, Kangaroo Ground, Vic, 3097 - Editor, John McCallum 9712 0319

Inc. No. A11100A



WHAT LOCAL PLANT IS FLOWERING?

Number 61 November 2004

Botanical name: *Ozothamnus obcordatus*

Common name: Grey Everlasting

Family: Asteraceae (Daisy family)

Flowering period: November to February

Ozothamnus obcordatus is found in dry sclerophyll forest and box ironbark woodland, on shallow, rocky soils.

It is an erect, open shrub, 1-1.5 metre high by 1 metre wide, with the flower heads in broad, flat, terminal clusters consisting of many tiny, tubular, yellow daisies, known as everlastings.

The leaves are small (3-15 mm long) and wedge-shaped, with a notched apex. The leaves are shiny and dark green, contrasting with the underside of the leaves and young stems, which are whitish and minutely hairy. When crushed the leaves exude a pleasant spicy aroma, hence the name, *Ozothamnus*, which is from the Greek "ozo" (to smell) and "thamnus" (shrub).

Prefers full sun or light shade in a dry, well-drained position.

Provides food for insects and butterflies as well as attracting the insect-eating birds.

Propagate from seed or cuttings.

CRIC HENRY

FROM THE PRESIDENT

At the time of writing the Bend of Islands was actually starting to look like an island, surrounded on all sides by rising water. Sugarloaf dam was brimming and, after a huge deluge of rain in the first weeks of November, Watson Creek had well and truly broken its banks. The mighty Yarra was looking more like a scene from a white water rafting movie. Our normally dry gully had water gushing down it and our dam had risen by a metre to overflow and I hoped the plants that I put in the day before hadn't drowned. For the first time ever we have full water tanks and so I now worry about all that beautiful water pouring out of the overflow pipe. With the BICA Annual General Meeting coming up it's time to think about whether you would like to contribute by joining the BICA committee or one of the equally important sub-committees such as Planning, Community Involvement or Flora and Fauna. There is also the Water Watch group that monitors the quality of the Yarra on a monthly basis or if you would just like to keep our lovely area weed free we would love to see you at our most enjoyable monthly Landcare working bees. There are plenty of ways in which you can contribute and be involved. It is our ELZ. If any of these activities are of interest to you, or you would like to know more, please give me a ring 9712 0648.

Although Café Benders is not a BICA organized event it is one that we support with great enthusiasm. The monthly fundraiser event for our wonderful volunteer Fire Brigade is a great way to catch up with friends and neighbours. Your attendance and donations of yummy cakes is vital to its ongoing success.

A major achievement has been the new Environmental Living Zone/Bend of Islands Folder launched at the October Café Benders gathering. The event was well attended with about 150 residents and friends present to hear Nillumbik CEO Catherine Dale officiate.

The new edition contains a lot of the wisdom of the old publication along with updates and additions to provide a comprehensive reference for residents and owners and prospective owners.

Special thanks to those who contributed to the folder and those who collated and coordinated the new edition. Thanks also to Nillumbik Shire for their financial and hands on assistance. The result is a tribute to the efforts of all involved. Thanks also to all who assisted to make the launch day a success with a delicious morning tea and over 80 folders distributed on the day.

All BICA members, Environmental Living Zone owners and residents of the area will be receiving a copy of the new folder and we will be working through the distribution soon. See you 'round, Carol Bonny

IF YOU DON'T KEEP FIGHTING YOU LOSE

Frank Pierce

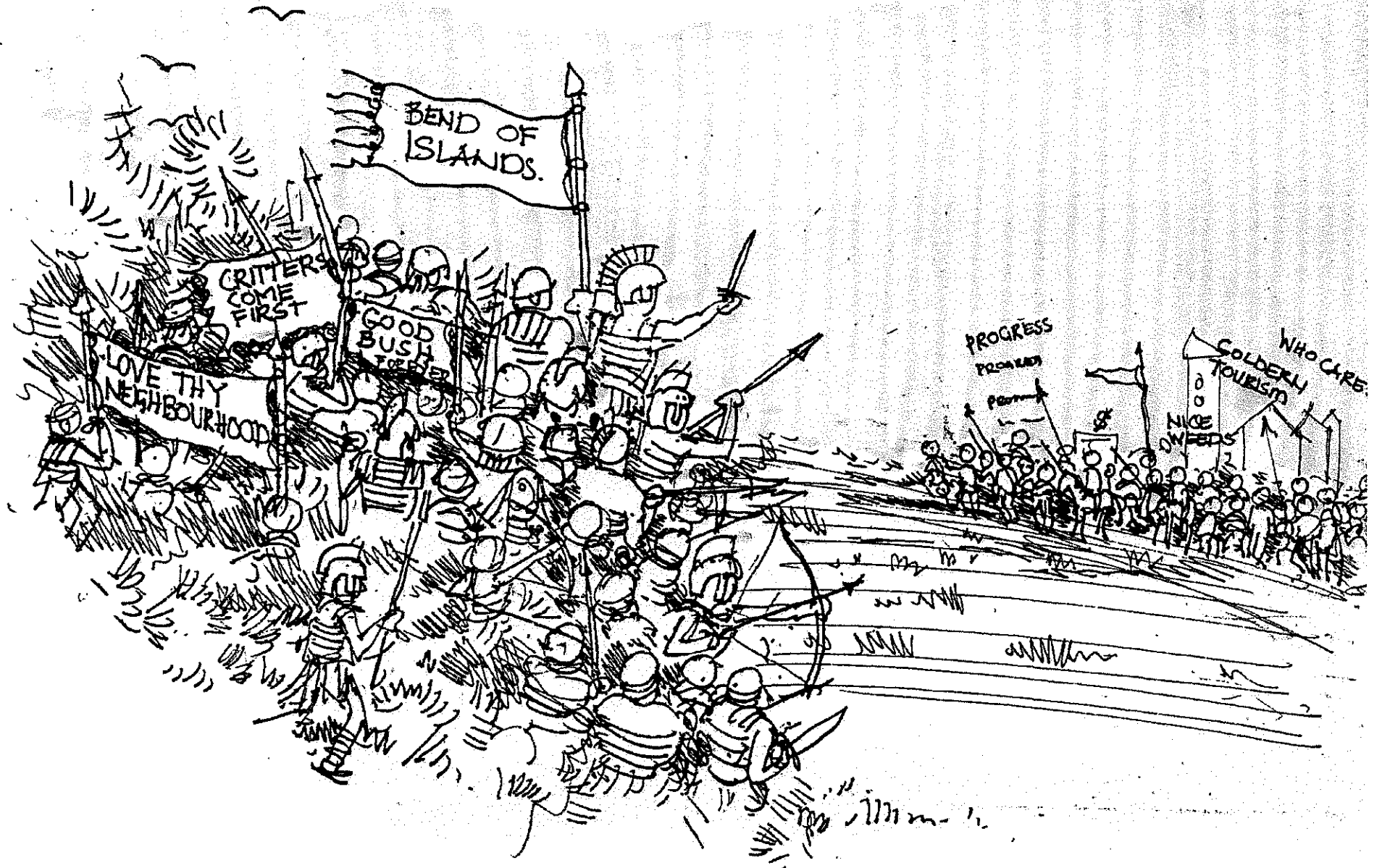
In the August '86 BICA Newsletter No.16 I wrote an article-'If You Don't Fight You Lose' where I listed the changes I had observed in the previous 3 years, since I had moved to the Bend of Islands. I also listed some predictions of likely future changes and encouraged residents to exercise their right to self-determination. To continue the fight against the pressures of 'progress' that would have the suburban sprawl envelop our little patch of bush with its unique concept of 'Residential Conservation'.

The principles expounded in that article are as relevant in 2004 as they were in 1986.

Here is a list of some of the things that have happened in the surrounding area since 1986 -

- Duplication of the Fitzsimons Lane bridge
- Upgrade of the road through Eltham
- Increase in recreation at Sugarloaf including a sailing club
- Transfer of area from Healesville Shire to Nillumbik and axing of the UYV-DRA
- Development of Heritage Golf Club
- Subdivisions of land at Kangaroo Ground with resultant spread of 'houses on hills' and 'hedges on boundaries'.
- Vineyards in Kangaroo Ground with 'cellar doors' and flow on from the massive increase in tourism in the Yarra Valley
- Upgrade of Kangaroo Ground / Yarra Glen Rd
- Subdivision and sale of Melbourne Water land in Christmas Hills
- Delays in the transfer of Melbourne Water Land, in and adjacent to the ELZ, to DSE
- Development of Wellers Pub
- Subdivision and the inevitable flow on development pressures on the land along Skyline Rd North of the ELZ
- Dramatic increases in traffic in Eltham and on the main roads

(cont. p4)



And locally within the ELZ -

- Intense pressure from power authorities to clear under powerlines
- Sealing of Henley Rd to Skyline Rd
- Subdivision and sale of land by Melbourne Water
- Invasion of weeds such as Tutsan, Paterson's Curse and thistles along areas near Stevenson and Watsons Creeks

Not all these items are bad - many can be justified on an individual basis, but when you look at them all together, and allow for all the others that have been missed, you can see how the pressure on the unique qualities of our area is increasing. Fortunately we have been successful in limiting the impact of many of these items. Indications are that development pressures on the ELZ will continue to increase in the future and some possible scenarios are:

- Developments along the Skyline Rd Escarpment. With its fantastic views of the Yarra Valley this has the potential to become the 'Surfers Paradise of Melbourne overlooking the Tuscany of the Southern Hemisphere'
- Development of the several privately owned properties immediately adjacent to the ELZ
- Extension of the ring road and associated property developments
- Developments along Henley Rd west of the bridge

These or similar outcomes have the potential to ruin the amenity of our area, with massive increases in through traffic and other serious disruptions to our community.

To date we have successfully minimised through traffic in the ELZ by having Sugarloaf Reservoir closed to the public from Ashmore and Skyline Roads, and by having no access permitted to Heritage Golf Club from Skyline Rd.

A major threat to the ELZ currently is the proposed Birrarung Motel/Conference Centre at Wendy Way. This has the potential to add 350+ vehicle movements per day to the Skyline/Henley Rd route. This alone would dramatically change the character of the area and also have a devastating effect on the wildlife.

A possible solution that has been raised is to close Skyline Rd south of Wendy Way (with a gate for emergency vehicles). Access for local Christmas Hills/ELZ traffic would still be available via Calwell/Westerling/Ridge Roads, This route is 4 km shorter from the bridge in the ELZ to the Christmas Hills Hall than the Skyline/Muir/Ridge Roads route.

We, as a community, need to assess whether we can resist the future development pressures adjacent to our area or if we would be better off to close the road to fully protect the ELZ from the traffic increases associated with these developments.

Even if the road were closed we would still have to have serious input into any development applications due to the detrimental environmental effects they are likely to have because they are located in the eastern portion of the Kinglake National Park / Warrandyte State Park (KLNP/WSP) Habitat Link. This section provides a continuous but narrow link along the escarpment to the east of Sugarloaf Reservoir and is especially important because the western portion of the link could be disrupted if Melbourne Water builds the proposed Little Watsons Creek Dam.

An example of the importance of the link is the movement of Lyrebirds from KLNP to the ELZ in the last couple of years. They had not been recorded in the ELZ or WSP for at least 40 years prior to this.

THE SUPERB LYREBIRD IN THE ELZ

Frank Pierce

The Superb Lyrebird, *Menura novaehollandiae*, is one of Australia's more unusual birds with its spectacular tail, its amazing mimicry and the beautiful courtship displays of the male. It is wonderful to have them re-establishing a presence in the ELZ

Here is a brief rundown of the main aspects of the species: -

- Size - Male up to 100 cm (including 60 cm tail), Female 86 cm
- Colour - Body is dull brown above and grey below, with dull rufous patches on throat and wings. Juveniles are more rufous but this fades with age. The dark grey legs and feet are powerful
- Tail - The male's tail is 60 cm long and usually carried horizontally as a 'train'. It consists of 16 feathers of 3 different types. The outer feather on each side is a broad lyrate plume, brown with pale notches on top but silvery with chestnut notches and black club-like ends on the underside. The 2 central feathers are long fine ribbon-like "guard-plumes". These and the 12 filamentary feathers are brown on top and silvery-white on the underside. The dark top provides effective camouflage under normal conditions and the bright underside creates a spectacular effect when the bird inverts the tail in a fan above its head during display.

The tail feathers moult in late spring when the bird becomes 'tail-less'. The new tail grows over a 12-week period.

The female's tail, shorter than the male's, consists of brown feathers that are plain and lack the filamented structure. They often become twisted during incubation.

The young male's tail is similar to the female's, but develops progressively, with each moult, until maturity is reached after 7 to 9 years.

- **Song** - Powerful, far-carrying mimicry of a large range of other birdcalls, intermingled with the bird's own phrases and also sometimes mechanical noises such as chain-saws etc. The females call is similar but less powerful.

The birds can be detected by their call - a string of mimicked calls that are "louder" than the calls made by the birds being mimicked.

- **Life Cycle** - Courtship is complex, varied and extends over a long period.

The male attracts females by performing a dance on its mound while singing and displaying its inverted tail. It may have up to 12 mounds in its territory. The mounds are a cleared area, 1 to 2 m. across, with raked material to 15 cm depth in the centre.

The birds call all year round but serious performance on the mounds starts in autumn. The female's selection of a male is apparently based on the quality of his performance. Once selected the male mates with the female, she then goes on her way with no further assistance from the male. He continues his performances and may attract a number of females.

The female constructs the domed bulky nest with sticks, ferns, moss and bark usually within the male's territory. This can be at ground level or elevated in stumps, ferns or trees to a height of 25 m. The nest has a thick lining of fibrous roots and feathers to make it warm and waterproof for the inclement winter months.

One egg, 65 x 45 mm, of variable colour is usually laid in June or July (records exist from May to September).

Incubation, in the wild, takes about 45 days (22 days in captivity where the nest is not regularly vacated for extended periods for food gathering).

The chick fledges after 47 days and is dependent on the adult female for a further 7 to 8 months.

Maturity is reached in 7 to 9 years for males and 6 to 7 years for females.

- **Activity** - Roosts in trees but feeds at ground level. Flies heavily, glides downwards but usually proceeds upward by a series of leaps.

- **Food** - Worms, grubs, beetles etc. which are found at or just below the interface of the forest litter and the soil, or under bark or small logs on the forest floor. Surface scratchings are good indicators of the bird's presence in an area.

- **Distribution** - From north-east of Melbourne (Dandenongs and Kinglake) up east coast to just north of Queensland border. Introduced to Tasmania.

- **Variation** - 3 subspecies have been identified over the range (only one occurs in Vic.)

- **Similar Species** - Albert's Lyrebird (*Menura alberti*) occurs in subtropical rainforests near the Queensland border.

ELZ Lyrebird Record (see table on page 6)

Lyrebirds were seen in the area, for the first time in at least forty years, during July 2000. They seem to have re-established themselves on the northern edge of the ELZ. This re-establishment of the Lyrebird is a practical example of the importance of the habitat link between Kinglake National Park and Warrandyte State Park. WSP is too small and fragmented to independently sustain its biological diversity in the long term. The habitat link with KLNK is a way of overcoming this problem.

The ELZ is a vital part of that link and we have used this fact to support our arguments for special protection of our area. Sometimes in the past people have been skeptical of this concept but the lyrebird experience is concrete evidence of the importance of the link.

As with the ELZ, Lyrebirds have not been recorded in WSP for at least 42 years (probably since before the '62 fires). It now seems to be only a matter of time for them to reach WSP, provided the environmental qualities of the link are maintained and protected.

BIRD NOTES

Frank Pierce

The following events can be reported since last March.

Lyrebirds- 8 further reports,. Heard 5 times and seen 3 times including a pair. Refer to article in this Newsletter.

Powerful Owls- At least 2 pairs have nested this year in the ELZ and chicks have been observed at each nest.

New Bird for the ELZ- A White-headed Pigeon arrived and stayed for a day at Colin and Kathy's on the Coop on 9/11/04. It stayed around the house on the balcony and in adjacent trees.

continued on p.7

07/00	F Pierce	Saw male east of Skyline Rd just North of Coop early am
08/00	S Craig	Saw male north of 'Claytons Dam' early pm
08/00	P V contractor	Heard bird in ELZ from Mt Lofty (via G Jamison)
01/01	FP, QM, & KH	Heard bird west of 'Pierre's Dam' early am
02/01	FP & JM	Saw male & female & Ashmore Rd in evening
06/01	M Krause	Heard near Sugarloaf
06/01	T Millington	Saw 1 bird on Skyline Rd
08/01	W Krause	Saw 2 birds together on Skyline Rd on 2 occasions
12/01	M Skewes	Saw 1 bird on Skyline Rd
02/02	C Carson	Saw 2 birds together on Skyline Rd on 2 occasions
	W Krause	Saw male bird (and probably female) on Skyline Rd near gate 3, 6.45 am
	FP & JM	Heard bird below ridge opposite gate 3, 7 pm
	S Craig	Heard male call inside Sugarloaf near gate 3
	S Craig	Heard male call below aqueduct track near Tunnel #5
	F Pierce	Saw bird just north of 'crake dam', 9am
	S Craig	Saw male crossing Skyline Rd at southern boundary of Sugarloaf dam at 7pm
	C Fisher	Saw female outside her house at 7am
	K Heely	Saw female/young male ? crossing Skyline Rd at Gate of Sugarloaf dam at 7pm

	M Krause	Heard below Gurney's, 2 pm
	M Krause	Heard below Parfitt's, 7.30 am
	P Gurney	Heard below his house
	P Gurney	Saw and photographed a male below his house, 1pm
	S&M Nihill	Saw a bird below their house
	R Henry	Saw a female on Gongflers Dr above Daunt's
	J McCallum	Heard NW of his house, 7am
	G&M Peterson	Heard in gully N of house, 7am
	K&N Kaminga	Heard in gully N of house, 7.30am
	M Krause	Saw male at 11 am below her house
	R Henry	Heard 7am in gully adjacent Gongflers (old scout camp)
	J McCallum	Heard NW of his house, 7.30am
	S Craig	Heard in gully NE of house, 1 pm
	P Noirjean et al	Heard on slope N of track downstream of crake dam, 1 pm
	G&M Peterson	Saw a female east of house and simultaneously heard another
	G&M Peterson	Heard in gully N of house
	J McCallum	Heard NW of his house
	E Mainka	Saw pair in Skyline Rd near Sugarloaf Gate No 3
	J Henry	Heard bird in gully north of Henley Rd Extension
	D Osler	Heard then saw female below his house

It seemed to be attracted to its own image in the windows and at times actually perched on the window sill. It is rare for these birds to venture so far west. Their normal range is on the east coast. There is a southern movement down the coast each Spring with some birds normally moving into East Gippsland with a casual occurrence further west. Phil Vaughan recorded this species at his old house at the north end of Skyline Rd near Muir Rd a few years ago

Other Interesting Observations reported include:-

King Parrots seen at Krause's and Duff's.

Yellow-faced Honeyeaters over-wintered this year and no Yellow-tufted H/Es were seen despite a good flowering of the Ironbarks on the Coop.

As has happened in previous years of good Ironbark flowering, Grey-headed Flying-foxes turned up each night for a number of weeks to feed on the flowers.

Spring Arrivals

The migratory birds are back in force. I have been keeping a record of the birds seen each month on the Coop since 1995 and as part of this the date of the first sighting of the spring arrivals has generally been recorded. These records are not particularly accurate but they certainly indicate some degree of punctuality, at least with some species.

Could you please record the details of any unusual sightings, especially Lyrebirds and Powerful Owls, and pass them on to Frank Pierce (97120237) or email:

fpandjm@netspace.net.au

All are welcome to join us on the bird walks on the second Sunday of each month. Times are as per the BICA Calendar

	'95	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000	'01	'02	'03	'04
Bronze-Cuckoo Horsfield's	22/10	NR	NR	NR	29/8	NR	NR	?/10	NR	
Bronze-Cuckoo Shining	?/9	?/9	20/9	23/8	?/9	2/9	#	#	16/9	25/9
Cuckoo Brush	27/8	NR	NR	NR	?/10	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Cuckoo Fan-tailed	27/8	?/8	20/9	23/8	29/8	17/8	#	#	?/9	?/9
Cuckoo Pallid	1/10	6/10	?/10	?/11	5/9	9/9	#	28/10		
Cuckoo-shrike Black-faced	?/7	15/9	20/9	30/8	5/9	2/9	#	#	?/9	25/9
Flycatcher Leaden	NR	NR	?/10	?/11	17/10	21/10	#	25/10	19/10	
Flycatcher Shining	15/10	20/10	?/11	10/10	10/10	28/10	#	31/10	26/10	
Kingfisher Sacred	24/10	20/10	?/11	17/10	10/10	5/11	25/11	31/10	24/10	15/10
Nightjar White-throated	?/10	10/10	?/10	?/10	28/11	29/10	6/11	8/10	10/10	17/10
Oriole Olive-backed	26/8	21/9	?/10	5/9	?/10	?/9	#	#	12/9	8/9
Whistler Rufous	?/9	15/9	28/9	?/9	?/10	?/10	#	#	28/9	?/9
Honeyeater Yellow-faced	27/8	OW	29/9	?/7	5/9	?/8	#	#	?/9	OW

NR-Not recorded that year

OW-Over-wintered that year

#-No records taken 8 to 10/01 & 5 to 9/02 due to interstate travel.

?/9 – First recorded in September but specific date not recorded.

From the Editor:

Thanks to all contributors (including the anonymous one!). The drawing was from Ross Henry; thanks Ross.

Don't forget to keep those contributions rolling in. Next BICA Newsletter will be, as usual, sometime in March. Articles are welcome at any time and in any format.

GARDEN WALK

Carol Bonny

Sunday September 12th saw a great attendance for the second annual BICA garden walk. Not deterred by the wet weather the large group car pooled to the three properties open for viewing. At the Fisher's we were welcomed and introduced to the landscaping and vegetation implemented around the house to blend the bush to the managed areas. We saw an innovative solution to groundwater management using a rock filled swale drain terminating at a small wetland. On to the Duff house where Robyn and Noel made us welcome by hosting the tea break. As well as the cuppa and lots of goodies to eat we saw the recently landscaped areas around the house. Again they have made use of a wetland and planting to manage a water drainage issue. At the Hampel property we saw the impact of grazing, both by indigenous mammals and rabbits, with the significant contrast between the areas in and out of revegetation fences. Thanks to those who made their houses available for the day and also to Graham and Mia for co-ordinating the event and providing the venue for the BBQ lunch after.

WATTLE WALK

Carol Bonny

Splendid weather was provided on 1st October and, to celebrate Wattle Day, a big crowd enjoyed a walk down Henley Rd to view and identify the *Acacia* species present. With lots of the species in flower and, with John McCallum's guide from the previous BICA Newsletter, the group were able to identify the plants with lots of local expertise to assist. A most pleasant and informative day.



ANOTHER LOCAL FERN

John McCallum

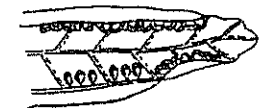
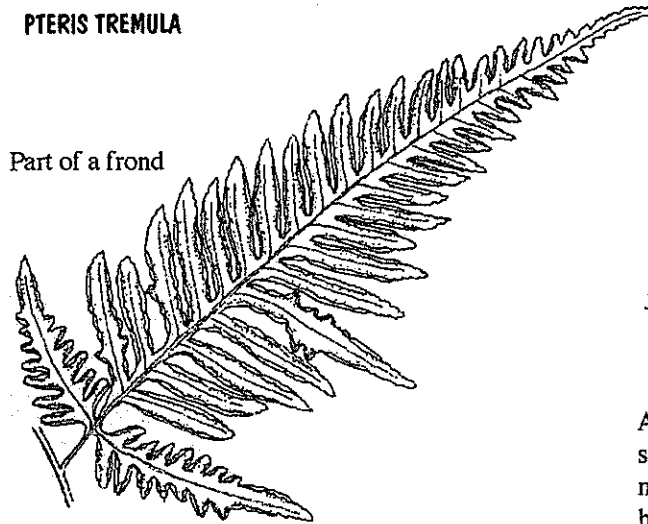
Since the last fern note the flora survey group, that meets on the first Sunday of the month at 9.30 am, has turned up two or three species that had not been recorded previously. One of these is *Pteris tremula*, (Tender Brake), which has a superficial resemblance to the brackens (genus *Pteridium*) although the two genera are in different families.

It is a ground fern with a short erect rhizome and fronds up to 1.5 metres tall. The lamina is light green and generally triangular, 2- to 4-pinnate. The sori (bundles of sporecases) are continuous along the membranous leaf margins which are folded under and cover the sori.

P. tremula is widespread in Victoria and also occurs in other parts of Eastern Australia as well as in nearby Oceania. It favours sheltered forest gullies but can grow in drier areas such as rocky outcrops. In the ELZ, this species can be found in the Stevenson's Creek gully.

PTERIS TREMULA

Part of a frond



A pinnule showing sori under the reflexed margin, part of which has been turned back.

FIRE SEASON

The fire season is approaching and the Christmas Hills Fire Brigade will be holding an information session at the Christmas Hills Hall on Saturday December 4th, beginning with a sausage sizzle at midday.



Ours is a fire risk area but with education and preparation you should understand the issues and be able to enjoy our bush environment. All households should have a written plan which should define what actions and preparations you will need. Be involved, attend meetings, understand the issues and implement appropriate preparations and enjoy summer in the Bend of Islands. Remember that a permit is required for vegetation removal. If you need advice or guidance contact the Fire Brigade.

For information about local fireguard groups, contact Kay Hawkins, Phone 9712 0300

For information about bushfire activity ring the Victorian Bushfire Information line 1800 240 667

For good information about living with bushfires see these websites

CFA <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au>

Christmas Hills Fire Brigade <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~chfb>

BABY BENDERS: GRANNIES CLUB EXPANDS

Congratulations to Jo and Dylan on the arrival of Meika, a sister for Aeshna. Also to Joyce and Neil Harvey who join the grandparents club with the arrival of Luke.

ARTISTS IN THE BEND

The Bend of Islands was certainly well represented in the Nillumbik Artists Open Studios weekends with seven out of the twenty one participating artists from this area. Pottery, painting and textile art were available and on view. A bit confusing with some of the Bend of Islands artists addresses listed as Kangaroo Ground, Bend of Islands/Kangaroo Ground and Christmas Hills. All you need is "Bend of islands". I think it's a nice address to have.



From The Committee

HERITAGE GOLF COURSE DEVELOPMENT

In October the BICA committee and residents with an interest in the golf course development were invited to a tour of the works conducted by the works manager Phil Rutherford. The group of about 20 were taken on a guided walk around the works area with explanations of what was happening and what would be happening. Any questions and concerns were addressed in an open and clear way. With the hot dry morning the group enjoyed the cold drinks and BBQ lunch providing time to discuss what we had seen. There is an ongoing Environmental Monitoring Committee over-viewing the works with state and local authorities involved and Janet Mattiske as the Community Representative.

CHOUGH PROJECT

As a Neil Douglas commemorative project Jenneke Bateman is coordinating the Chough Project. Please forward your stories and drawings of Chough interaction, experiences and observations with the intention of collating into a book. Send to Mick Woiwod or Jenneke or leave in the Chough Box in the KG Post Office. If you need more info ring Jenneke 9712 0262.

AUGUST GENERAL MEETING

Members and guests squeezed into the Car residence for the August BICA General Meeting. Reports from the committee were heard and general business discussed including speed limit proposals, River Keepers for the Yarra and Snakes in the Bend. Our guest speaker Maya told us of her trip with friends along the Yarra from bay to source. A most interesting and inspiring story that was enjoyed by all. The usual enjoyable coffee and cake and a chat with friends and neighbours to round off the day.

EVENTS

Don't forget the AGM on Sunday November 28 and the Christmas Café Benders on Saturday, December 18

VEGETATION REMOVAL FOR FUEL REDUCTION

Alan Bonny

It's here again. Time to start thinking about getting ready for the long hot summer and the fire potentials that come with it.

PERMIT REQUIREMENTS FOR VEGETATION REMOVAL

The Planning Scheme stipulates that 'No native vegetation can legally be removed or destroyed by residents in the ELZ without a permit'. Exceptions to this are if the vegetation presents an immediate risk of personal injury or damage to property or if the removal is to enable compliance with a requirement/notice in writing by a public authority or municipal council acting under any Act.

This includes dead trees and timber on the ground. If you don't get a permit you could incur a hefty fine. For a permit you must apply to Nillumbik Shire Council (Ph No 9433 3343) to remove specific vegetation. The council will consider such applications, including a site inspection by a Planning Officer if necessary, at no cost to the resident. If appropriate, the council will issue a permit for the specific removal on a one-off basis.

BICA has initiated discussions with the Nillumbik Shire Council to determine a more convenient method to enable fuel reduction around a dwelling whilst complying with the requirements of the Planning Scheme. Frank Pierce has been pursuing a proposal that residents should devise a Fire Management Plan specific to the individual property and its occupants. Part of this Plan will be the management of the natural vegetation in the vicinity of the house, which will usually involve some vegetation removal, to reduce fuel loads. This will need to be documented as a Fuel Reduction Plan. If accepted the process will provide a more long-term fire reduction vegetation management permit for each household. Details to advise and assist will be distributed as soon as possible after acceptance. Until then you **must** get a permit.

SUN WORSHIPPERS

Carol Bonny

While sunning myself on a log I noticed that I had a fellow sun worshiper six inches from my toes. A magnificent fat Jacky lizard. He wasn't at all disturbed by my proximity or slight movements so we continued to soak up the warming rays together. Eventually I had to make a move so I made my farewells and left. Later in the morning we observed the same very busy lizard trying to dig frantically at our very compacted driveway. We came to the conclusion that He was a She and was preparing to lay her eggs.

We couldn't spend all day watching so we don't know if she succeeded in her efforts. We wait and watch to see if we will be sharing our driveway with a family of Jackys. May we all tread carefully!

A RATHER QUERCUS LITTLE TOPIC

Alan Bluhm

I had heard that instead of discarding our wine corks to landfill we could give them to the Guides. Regrettably my days of knowing any Girl Guides are over, so I surfed the web for more info.

It turns out that Guides Australia have a well-organized ongoing fundraiser with rather impressive environmental benefits. It has been estimated that corks collected and recycled by the Guides save approximately 400 cubic metres of landfill every year. Since they started the scheme in 1990 the Guides have collected 75 million corks. That's 250 tonnes. Some other organizations also collect corks. For instance, Friends of the Zoos have collection boxes at each entrance to the Melbourne Zoo. They put the profits towards building the Asian Rainforest exhibits. The *Trail of the Elephants* exhibit is the first of these to be completed, with the help of corks that raised \$100,000 to January this year.

Cork is rather uniquely composed of tiny 14-sided polyhedron shaped cells with the inter-cell space entirely filled with air. It comes from the bark of the Cork Oak tree (*Quercus suber*), most of which are in Portugal. A cork oak has to be 25 years old before its first harvest, and it takes 9 years for the bark to grow back for the next stripping. Only the third and subsequent harvests produce cork smooth and regular enough for wine corks. (25+9+9=43 years for a tree's first wine corks). The Guides Australia website observes that it takes 43 years to grow a wine cork and just seconds for it to become environmental junk.

The Body Shop provides cork collection points for the Guides. Our nearest Body Shop is at Greensborough Plaza on level 2. Just hand them in at the counter. (*Dan Murphy's in Eltham used to have a box for corks, probably still do: JMcC*)

Recycled corks are granulated and used to make such items as floor tiles, notice boards, horse-float mats, placemats and the cores of hockey and cricket balls.

Of course, if your wine bottles have aluminium Stelvin closures or hard plastic stoppers then you are already recycling them, aren't you?!

I reckon if us Bend of Islands residents put our minds (and mouths) to it, we could recycle more than 5000 corks a year. Well, go on then. Pop out to your cellar...there's no time to waste.

LA PEDALE

Neil Harvey

Activities in the Bend have become more physical recently with encouragement for all to dust off, borrow or buy a mountain bike and join the throng. Pierre and Tom have been avid regular riders for a while and they feel it is a pleasure we should all enjoy so they created Friends of La Pedale.

The inaugural La Pedale began at 10 a.m. 23rd October on an overcast Saturday morning at the Fire Shed with eighteen willing, primed (some with Tour de Bend experience) riders assembled.

The arrangements were all discussed at length while most of us took little or no notice, so when it came to leave we all asked where we were going. Good organization requires a loud voice in the Bend.

Our trek was based on the Warburton Bike Trail and there were two starting points, the longer 34k.s return was from Woori Yallock and the shorter 20k.s from Launching Place.

I got a lift with Ross and Cric and we took off for Woori Yallock. with Ross picking the shortest route. We were sailing along when the mobile rang. "Where are you going?" we were asked. We were leading others, another point we missed at the planning stage.

At Woori Yallock. a stock check was held and we had a bike with no rider. He was at Launching Place. Loud voices are really valuable in the planning stage. Fortunately we had a support crew of one (Karyn K.) who happily took off for Launching Place with Greg's bike. We met up with a couple of Tom's friends and mounted for the uphill (gentle) ride to Warburton. The weather was mild and overcast and the scenery was spectacular as long as you didn't look down at the weeds. Our local work parties have created awareness that take the pleasure out of some green vistas. I did stop once and pull out a Boneseed, I just couldn't help myself.

Ross managed to lose a pedal, but being a good Boy Scout he had the right tools and was back in the saddle before we could catch our breath.

A good pace was maintained with constant chatting and bursts of speed followed by much puffing (by me) and before we knew it we were in Warburton. A very attractive village with plenty of eating spots outside, to enjoy the air of the mountain valley. We stopped at a lovely restaurant and proceeded to re-arrange the footpath to accommodate all of us. The Woori mob were still on the way and we were hungry and thirsty so the fare was ordered. Good tucker and even a nice local wine were being enjoyed when the rest showed up minus the Bonny's. They had met friends and were left gasbagging

on the trail. They arrived when we had finished, so we went for walks or some had sweets while the Bonny's tucked in.

The ride back to the cars was downhill and much easier, even with the full stomach. One of us had the need to head for the bushes along the journey (facing the road as cars went by) but seemed to get away with it. It was a cool day. The quicker ride back encouraged a couple of Kammingas to do the extra kms to Woori Yallock. while the body was feeling good. The support crew, after a bout of shopping in Warburton, headed off to Woori to pick up the tired but happy mob. Thanks Tom and Pierre.

LITTLE RED

by A. Green

We don't usually publish anonymous articles but on this occasion we broke the rule for this little story.

"Hellooo! Coo-eeee! Can you hear me? Yes, you down the road there. The bin with the red lid. You're just like me, except I'm smaller. You're 120 litres and I'm only 80 litres."

"Yeah, g'dday. How do you manage to be so slim? I was born bigger than you to begin with, but then as an added burden my owners cram so much rubbish into me that my sides bulge and my lid doesn't shut."

"My owners had one your size, but once they started to take recycling seriously they discovered they could never fill their red bin. They swapped it for me and they now save themselves twenty dollars annually on their garbage service fee."

"So what do your mob recycle that mine don't?"

"Oh, all kinds of things, I guess. If in doubt they err towards recycling rather than landfill. I never get foil tops from dips, for instance. Nor do I ever see rigid plastic items like coat hangers, plastic cutlery, margarine tubs or strawberry punnets. I never get a whiff of pizza because old Yellow Lid here gets all the empty pizza boxes. I never see discarded videocassettes, dry paint tins or plastic toys. Old Yeller gets them too."

"Wow. I can see that the people at your place really put some thought into caring for the environment. My lot have the best of intentions, but often they just don't think about it when they throw things away. Their systems inside the house fall down a bit too. For example, although they separate kitchen rubbish into containers for Green, Recycling and Other, in the bathroom and study everything goes into one bin. So toilet rolls don't make it to the recycling bin at our house, like they should. And because crumpled paper, cellophane lolly wrappers and banana peels get mixed up together in

("Little Red" continued)

the study bin it tends to all end up in *the too hard basket*, ie. me.

I have been so consistently full to overflowing that I've heard other bins making *Bin Laden* jokes about me. I felt so humiliated, and a little ashamed of my owners. They are basically well-intentioned people who never quite get a grip on the specific items they should be recycling."

"Don't forget all the stuff that can go in the green bin, such as ash, coffee granules and tea bags. Also meat and bones, wrapped in newspaper if they wish. Really the only stuff that ends up in me at our house are items like polystyrene meat trays and flimsy plastics like cellophane, cling wrap and plastic bags. However I don't even see many of those, because they buy meat at the butcher's, and carry half a dozen calico bags in the car boot for supermarket and other shopping. They also re-use the same cardboard fruit box for the greengrocers. And, by the way, tell your owners that they don't have to wash bottles, cans and cartons before placing them in the recycling bin unless the odours bother them."

"Thank you, Little Red for making friends with me. I'm so used to passers-by pointing at me and turning their noses up because I'm overflowing with things that could have been sorted into the green or yellow bins or compost, that it's nice to hear some kind words."

"It's a pleasure. Because my owners make an effort with their recycling I stand here confident and proud, ready to make new friends. You've spent so much of your time on the kerbside cowering, feeling ashamed of your owners and wondering what others are thinking, that it's harder for you to make friends."

"Little Red, I'm not sure how much longer you'll be seeing me. Once my family realise that things like aluminium wine bottle closures, used tissues and paper towels, wine cask outers and clear plastic rice cracker trays are not for me, I have a feeling they'll be replacing me with an 80 litre red lid bin like you. By the way, how do they go about it?"

"They just phone the works depot at Nillumbik Shire on 9436 3555 and request an 80 litre red lid bin. They'll be asked to leave you out for a few days, and a council worker will visit and replace you with a smaller bin like me. At first your family will have to squint a lot to tell if your replacement has arrived, because although there's a cunning cut to the internal size, the external difference is fairly subtle."

"Oh I noticed *you* straight away, Little Red. I found you very attractive and petite. But how will my family get their twenty dollar rebate?"

"After delivery of the 80 litre bin the depot will notify Rates and Valuations section

and your family's garbage service charge will be reduced on the next Rates notice.

"Little Red, I think you've liberated me. Wherever I'm placed next I'll start spreading the word about how cute little bins like you are the bins of the future. As the idea catches on I'll be replaced by more and more people and I'll get to move all over the shire and meet other lovely little bins before they recycle me."

"Goodbye, Big Red. It was nice knowing you. Enjoy your early retirement."

"Hellooo! Coo-eeee! Can you hear me? Yes, you down the road there. The bin with the red lid. You're just like me. There are two of us 80 litre red lid bins on this road now. And as people become more serious about doing their bit for the environment (not to mention saving twenty dollars a year) there'll be more and more of us. Welcome Little Red II! I have no doubt that before long we'll be welcoming Little Reds all over the Bend of Islands.

We certainly should be reducing red bin contents to as close as possible to zero. More important than the bin size could well be how often we put it out. If maintaining the standard size bin meant that it could be put out every 4 or 6 weeks instead of fortnightly (and if we could agree on the week!) then maybe the truck would have to come along less frequently. JMcC

THE PUB WALK

Neil Harvey

You know we are well into spring when the annual BICA Pub Walk comes around again. It's a good chance to catch up with a few neighbours with a long gossip as we enjoy the scenery provided by the new route Tony Summers has found for us to traverse. The choice of a new way to get to St Andrews Pub every year has been a well-met challenge by Tony. I am amazed at how many roads lead to St Andrews through some of the most attractive landscapes in the area. This last one was no exception. He even managed to find a trek of 10k.s that was mainly downhill, which is a rare outcome, but much appreciated.

We met at the Fire Shed 1.30 pm and drove off to the pub to car pool for a lift to the start of the walk. Bald Spur Lookout was our destination, but after a slow drive it was decided to stop before that point at around the 10 k mark. The full walk would have been closer to 14 k.s, but an executive decision was made on the spot as we surveyed the extra hills (mountains) that may be included in the full walk.

Off we set with ages ranging from 3 y.o. to none of my business, so all were covered. The 3 y.o. had the best trip with little walking and much time as a passenger. Her siblings are both loving and very patient, she did, however, miss out on the Guinness at the end.

(Pub Walk, cont.)

It was cloudy and warm with the water bottle being our best companion, but a good pace was maintained, with the initial uphill bits stringing out the field. Chatting and photographing our progress continued for an hour or so when a pit stop was called for the Bonnys to take advantage of the three-course meal that carol had packed for the journey. Soup for starters, followed by a few nibbles and finishing off with coffee, nuts and choccies. It was a rough day for the Bonny's. To be fair they did offer around the nuts and choccies, 3 y.o. to the fore. There should be plenty of evidence as John Mac had a new Digital Spy and experimented on many angles and groupings. Maybe they will feature below. *(Have a look at the BICA web site; JMcC)*

After the pit stop it was all downhill for an hour or so to the oasis. Hot and satisfied we arrived to the upbeat sounds of an Andy Cowan performance and set about enjoying the cold liquids and the kitchen's offerings. Told a few lies, sang out of tune and had a great finish to a good day.

MEMBERSHIP

The primary aim of the Bend of Islands Conservation Association Inc is to preserve the bushland of the Bend of Islands Environmental Living Zone. BICA does this by providing a focus group to coordinate advice to Nillumbik Shire Council on planning issues, provide information and education to residents and landowners on conservation matters, and organising community activities and Landcare working bees.

Since the mid 70's BICA has attracted strong support from the Bend of Islands community and has continued to grow in terms of membership and achievement. Over 70% of residents and property owners in the Bend of Islands are BICA members. A survey in 2001 indicated that most residents are very satisfied with BICA's work and activities. In 2000 BICA was the winner of the Victorian Landcare Award for Community Bushcare. BICA has also successfully applied for a number of grants for bushland regeneration including grants from Nillumbik Council and the Department of Sustainability and Environment. BICA activities also include providing community social and conservation activities, regular meetings with guest speakers and a very strong and well respected lobby group on relevant issues to Council and other authorities.

The BICA financial year runs from the Annual General Meeting held in November. Subscriptions for 2005 are due now.

BICA AGM

Sunday 28th November. 2 PM. Election of the BICA Committee for 2005. Guest speaker from the Wilderness Society on Tasmania's old growth forest. Bring the usual chair and afternoon tea to share. See you at Michael and Sue Whitten's, 29 Ironbark Rd Bend of Islands.

COMMITTEE NOMINATION FORM

At the BICA AGM the committee for the next year will be elected and nominations are invited. Please forward to BICA c/o Post Office Kangaroo Ground or deliver to the Secretary Alan Bonny to be received prior to the meeting on Sunday 28th November.

I hereby nominateFor the 2005 BICA committee.
Nominated by
SignedDate
Seconded by

Your membership and involvement in BICA is important and is very keenly invited. Please fill in and mail the application to the address shown on the front page of this newsletter or hand it to a committee member

2005 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME(S):-

RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS:-

POSTAL ADDRESS:-

TELEPHONE:

MOBILE:

EMAIL:

SUBSCRIPTION:

(Please indicate your choice)

- Concession \$10.00
- Single \$20.00
- Family \$30.00

COMMENTS & INVOLVEMENT:

Make ANY comments and to indicate how you might be able to directly help BICA. Eg, being on the BICA committee or subcommittee, coordinating an activity, providing a guest speaker or venue for an event, etc).

.....
.....
.....

BICA Annual General Meeting: 28 November, 2.00 PM
Christmas Café Benders: 18 December, about 6.30 PM onwards

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

**BICA
NEWSLETTER**

**Print Post Approved
PP335468/0001**

**Postage
Paid
AUSTRALIA**

**SURFACE
MAIL**