



WHAT NATIVE PLANT IS FLOWERING?

Scientific Name: *Hypoxis vaginata* var. *vaginata*

Common Name: Yellow Star

Family: Hypoxidaceae (syn. Liliaceae, Lily family)

Flowering Period: August - November

Sector: **Yellow Star** is found in the Yarra Sector, (all of Bend of Islands south of the powerline easement) and the Co-op Sector, (all of Bend of Islands north of the powerline easement roughly equivalent to the land comprising the "Round the Bend Conservation Co-operative")

There are only two species of *Hypoxis* in the Bend of Islands. The other species is ***Hypoxis glabella* var. *glabella***, common name **Tiny Star**, which is found in the Yarra Sector.

Description: **Yellow Star** is 5-35 cm high, a tufted herb with smooth linear tapering grass-like leaves, 2-35 cm long x 1-3.5 mm wide.

Foliage: 1-2 flowering stems with a single multi-veined bracteole (small bract) 1-7 cm long halfway up the stem.

Flower: 1-2 bright yellow flowers 3-4 cm wide occur at the end of the stem. The flower has stigma lobes equal to or longer than style. The flowers open only in warm or sunny weather.

Position: Yellow star prefers moist soil in full sun or semi-shade.

Cric Henry

Drawing by Ross Henry





FROM THE SECRETARY

Speaking up for the SUZ2

We know it's a cliché, but your membership does, and HAS made a difference.

It has been great to see how BICA members have responded en masse to calls for input into some very important council issues impacting the SUZ2 and Bend of Islands, e.g. Local Laws and the Proposed Aqueduct Trail, via personal written submissions, support for BICA submissions and personal appearances at council discussions. So thank you to everyone who has jumped into action to support the ELZ and SUZ2.

It's not called "Special" for nothing, but its provisions and purposes cannot just be taken for granted – sadly we have to actively stand up for them.

The strength of the SUZ2 was tested in a recent VCAT hearing when a proposed structure was not approved.

The decision noted that, within the broader Nillumbik Shire area, the unique zoning of the SUZ2 elevates the importance of the natural environment in the ELZ and that the ELZ has significant environmental, habitat and landscape values which eventually would be undermined by the cumulative effect of small inappropriate approvals. It also noted that previous development within the Bol not in accord with the SUZ2 provisions, does not justify more of the same.

So apart from our own individual efforts on our own patch, it's the SUZ2 that gives voice to our collective desire to protect and enhance our super special part of the world and it was great to see the SUZ2 provisions upheld at VCAT.

Membership Renewals

A reminder that membership renewals for the 2022-2023 year are due now.

Thanks to those who have already renewed.

If you're not sure whether you've paid or not, please contact the Secretary at bicacomm@gmail.com

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BICA Contact Details

Email: BICA Secretary: bicacomm@gmail.com

Website: www.bendofislands.wordpress.com

Post: P.O. Box 37, Kangaroo Ground, 3097



Draft Northern Regional Trails Strategy 2022 A Very Good Reason why the proposed trail is NOT a good idea.

Extract below of a local submission from a Co-Op member:

I strongly opposing revising the route of the Maroondah Aqueduct Trail east of Calwell Rd from that shown in the 2016 Northern Regional Trails Strategy.

The route shown in the 2022 Draft Strategy, that allows horses and dogs along the Aqueduct Reserve south of Sugarloaf Reservoir, should be deleted.

For this trail to pass through the Bend of Islands is completely incompatible with the aims of the Environmental Living Zone (SUZ2). It would have a detrimental effect on the high biodiversity of the area and its key role as a strategic hotspot in the Kinglake-Warrandyte Habitat Link.

I'm a member of the RTBCC and have been undertaking nest box monitoring and motion sensor cameras recordings within the gullies along our property. We've recently finished undertaking fox trapping with an external contractor.

AGM – Sunday 13 November

We are pleased to let you know that Prue Acton OBE will be our guest speaker this year. Yes, you might be surprised but read on.....

Apart from being a highly respected Artist and Designer, Prue is also an Environmental Activist with a particular interest in Biophilia, Colour, Water, and the significance of Australia's Southern Forests.

In her talk, **COLOUR AND OUR AFFINITY WITH NATURE**, Prue will explore the fact that "we are nature" and that it is fundamental for us to re-learn how to use our senses to understand the natural world at this point in time.

To build the skill of completely understanding the local colour palette to gain a true understanding of our environment, its seasons, water, time of day through colour, shape and texture first.

From Wikipedia:

"Biophilia is an innate affinity of life or living systems.

The term was first used by Erich Fromm to describe a psychological orientation of being attracted to all that is alive and vital.

Dr Edward O Wilson uses the term in a related sense when he suggests that biophilia describes "the connections that human beings subconsciously seek with the rest of life." He proposed the possibility that the deep affiliations humans

He informed us that our property and area would be a perfect candidate for a new trapping device being approved for fox control that is showing extremely good results compared to soft jaw trapping that is currently being employed.

The introduction of a trail that allows dogs into this area will jeopardise any future approval of such fox control measures as dogs could be bycatch. By already excluding dogs from the suburb we have a real shot of controlling foxes and the learned / taught behaviour of predation upon lyrebirds chicks.

Allowing this trail to be implemented will have a direct impact upon the survival of the lyrebirds within the gullies directly below the aqueduct as we have documented losses of lyrebird chicks for 2 seasons now.

have with other life forms and nature as a whole are rooted in our biology. Both positive and negative (including *phobic*) affiliations toward natural objects (species, phenomenon) as compared to artificial objects are evidence for biophilia.

The concept of biophilia has been proposed and defined many times over history. Aristotle was one of many to put forward a concept that could be summarized as "love of life". Diving into the term *philia*, or friendship, Aristotle evokes the idea of reciprocity and how friendships are beneficial to both parties in more than just one way, but especially in the way of happiness."

BICA Annual General Meeting

Sunday 13 November 2022

Guest Speaker – Prue Acton OBE

"Colour and Our Affinity with Nature"

Venue: See the BICA email to members for details

Please bring a sample of your absolute favourite indigenous plant with you so that we can make it personal.



BIRD NOTES

The following can be reported since April 2022.

Lyrebird Records

The local lyrebirds were actively calling from mounds in at least 3 areas in the north of the Bol during the 2022 breeding season, however no nests were located. Post winter dispersal has brought more widespread records throughout the Bend.

There have been 48 presence records since 4/2022 and we now have 532+ Lyrebird records reported since July 2000. Details and analysis can be found on the Birds Page of the BICA website.

Please pass on details of any 'encounters' you are lucky enough to have with these iconic birds. Our records form concrete evidence that the Warrandyte-Kinglake Habitat Corridor is working and that 'Stevenson Creek/Skyline escarpment' is an important part of this link.

An article regarding **The Return of the Lyrebird to the Bend of Islands** published in the Victorian Naturalist [HERE](#)

Bird Survey Highlights

The outstanding sightings for the period were -

- **August:** Rose Robin, at Yanakie
- **September:** Red-rumped Parrot, at Yanakie
- **October:** 5 Shelduck on Aqueduct near Co-op

New Birds for the BICA List.

Australasian Pipit, seen by Gavin, flying over his house on 28/6/22.

This brings the Bol Bird List Total to **181** species.

Other Interesting Observations

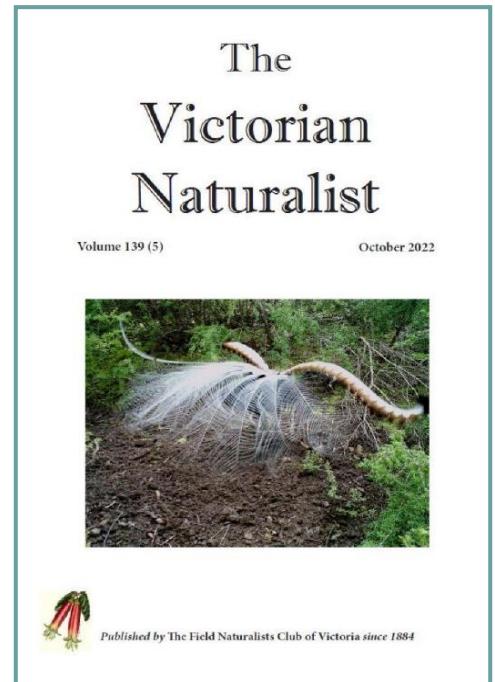
White-throated Nightjars have returned for the summer breeding season - 1st call heard 8/10/22.

The Birds Page of the BICA Website has lots of links to information about the birds of our area, as well as a summary of our on-going bird survey. See <https://bendofislands.wordpress.com/flora-and-fauna/birds/>

Could you please record the details of any unusual sightings you make and pass them on to Frank Pierce, (97120237), or email – jmandfp@bigpond.com - especially Lyrebirds.

All are welcome on the bird survey walks on the 2nd Sunday of each month. See the BICA Calendar for start times; we meet at the upper corner of Henley and Catani.

Frank Pierce





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The committee's aim this year has been to: re-establish the core, long running BOI environmental and community events to begin the journey out of the 2-year Covid lockdown; to meet and support the people who had moved into the area during this period; and to reinvigorate the commitment to the Environmental Living Zone's custodianship responsibilities, aspirations, and activities, for the Bend of Islands community. It hasn't been easy, with some events cancelled due to various covid related problems and limited people available to run things.

BICA General Meeting in June

The BICA General Meeting was held on Sunday 26th June at the Christmas Hill Hall. 30 people attended the meeting that Julie chaired very well, and Janet kindly took the minutes. Thanks go to Mike, Janet, Tim and Frank who helped so much with the setup and bump out of the front section of the Hall which proved to be a great venue.

We recorded the guest speaker Charlotte Sterrett (The Yarra River Keeper) who was very informative and engaging, citing the Bend of Islands as one of 10 culturally significant locations along the river and acknowledging the decades of work by the local community that has substantially increased the ecological value of the river.



Charlotte made the point that the health of the river upstream from Yering Gorge (at the entrance to Bol) is quite poor, but is substantially improved downstream of Bol towards Warrandyte.

The Yarra River Keeper Organisation is very keen to collaborate with BICA and has started the ball rolling to hopefully set up a water monitoring program and share useful information, and contacts with BICA into the future. Our members responded very positively.

Christine

Landcare at The Three Bears and Neil Douglas Nature Reserve





FUNGI WALK - WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

If only I could communicate through the hair-like structure of Hyphae and Mycelium but alas I have just my words. And not the fancy Latin, Greek and scientific ones that Grace Boxhall rattled off for our fungi foray into our local bush.

Grace is studying the field mushroom genus (*Agaricus*) for her Phd and was the leader of our walk to discover the fascinating world of fungi.

A good turn out for a cold, wet and windy day in June. About 20 people were rugged up with their raincoats and beanies. My favourite person was dressed in an old Australian Drizabone.

It was a short walk in distance but everyone in our group scrutinised every meter so it actually took hours! We walked along the track down Henley Rd to Neil and Jenny's and then back up the gully to Jo and Gerard's dam.

Our first forest fungi off the bat was an exotic, the much treasured edible Saffron Milkcap.

Grace used this as an example to teach us of the different features of an agaric mushroom. Such as the stem, gills, colour, sap and bruising profile.

Mushrooms play a vital role in breaking down decaying wood. They do this by using their web of Mycelium roots underground that can be intrinsically tied to a certain location and habitat. She told us that mushrooms can be so unique to time and place that misinformation and misidentification can be rife, particularly around edibility.

This is why Grace and her supervisors help with identification on the Poisons Hotline. But even with their

knowledge, identification can be difficult without all the pieces of the puzzle.

Some of the mushrooms we found

- The ghost fungus
- Bolete
- Coral fungus
- Varieties of Bracket fungus
- Various *Mycena*

Thank you to Grace for leading the walk and to Christine for planning the event and opening her home afterwards.

Some useful resources Grace mentioned

- **Fungi4land** - A website that is a land management plan for fungi.

- **FunKey: Key to Agarics of Australia**. A mobile identification app.

- **FungiFlip** - produced by the University of Tasmania. A very handy laminated quick reference guide. (Unfortunately out of stock in many locations)

If you would like to support Grace's research you can contribute by recording sightings for her project on iNaturalists called – **FungiSight**

Alana Duncan



Grace Boxhall – PhD Candidate in Mycology (mushroom science) at Plant Systematic Research Group, Melbourne University.

Follow her citizen science/science outreach project on [iNaturalist](#), [Facebook](#), or [Instagram](#).



HAPPY 50TH BIRTHDAY TRUST FOR NATURE

From the Trust for Nature Conservation Bulletin:

“Trust for Nature (Victoria) is a not for profit organisation that works with private landholders to protect native plants and animals. Two thirds of Victoria is freehold, making the protection of habitat vital in preventing extinction. We work with landholders to place voluntary conservation covenants on properties and buy and sell land which has conservation values through our Revolving Fund.”

In 1972 the Victorian Conservation Trust Act was created allowing the trust to receive land donations and purchase land for conservation. The Act was amended in 1978 to allow Conservation covenants on properties protecting them forever. In 1985 the first Conservation Covenant was put in place. In 1996 the Conservation Trust becomes Trust for Nature and in 2021 the 1500 covenant was achieved.

The motivation and timelines are parallel with our own Bend of Islands concept with the aim of protecting natural values on private lands by appropriate legislation.

Choosing to live in our Special Use Zone or having a Conservation Covenant applied to your land holding is a recognition that the environmental values are important and must be protected with a long term focus in mind.

Covenants are drafted with full consultation and the terms and application are specific to the property with values recognised and protected. The Trust provides information and guidance to assist with responsible property management.

While the Bend of Islands Special Use Zone provides a residential National Park concept we decided that an extra layer of ongoing protection would be a good thing so a Covenant was applied in 2002. Our Covenant reflects the SUZ2 provisions and details the development envelope for our residence. The covenant is a legal requirement that applies to the property and is attached to the title in perpetuity. It's reassuring that the environmental values that we embrace and enjoy will be protected after we leave the property.

Another small incentive is that the Nillumbik Council provides an annual environmental rate rebate for covenanted properties.

Other landholders in Bend of Islands have also had covenants applied.

Should you?

Happy 50th Birthday Trust for Nature!

For information on Covenants Google 'Trust for Nature covenants' and we would be more than happy to chat.

Alan and Carol Bonny
Ph 9712 0648





CARING FOR OUR LAND REVISITED

Every month there's a sign on the Sign Tree "LAND CARE, Sunday 9.30, meet"

What does this mean? Why do we see it every month?

It was caring for land that began our community organisation, the Bend of Islands Conservation Association.

In the 1960's, after the bush began to flourish following the 1962 fires, the residents faced a threat of flooding, the proposed Yarra Brae dam. Next a real concern, fire prevention works by the Shire of Healesville involved bulldozing the bush.

The community got together and in November 1966 BICA was formed and the work began.

The first two of BICA's aims and objectives are:

- (a) To preserve, nurture and encourage the diversity of the native flora and fauna of the area and its natural beauty, consistent with essential community needs, including fire precaution.
- (b) To nurture and encourage the diversity of the local flora and fauna and to promote community understanding of the local ecology and how to live in harmony with it through sharing of knowledge and experiences.

These are still the same today. The BICA priorities have not changed. There are threats still with us. Weeds are still growing and Climate change is bringing new issues.

So how is it that the numbers who turn up on the Sunday working bee have dropped so alarmingly, particularly, since the covid lull (only 4 workers last month and 5 the previous month)?

For a short history of some of the major issues (pine trees, boneseed, agapanthus etc.) the community tackled in the 1970's and 80's you can check out some previous Newsletter articles.

Of interest, in more recent history, in the 2000's, we shifted our focus onto the private properties in the Zone. Our general knowledge of bush management had grown and we needed to become more strategic in addressing the threats to our biodiversity. In 2002 BICA offered property owners an indigenous plant to replace removed non indigenous plants.

Good news and encouragement came from outside with some recognition of the work being done by the Community.

In the 2000 Landcare Victoria Awards, BICA won the Community Bush Care Award and then in 2008 BICA was recognised in Port Philip & Westernport Landcare Awards in the "Caring for Nature" Category.

In 2012 the BICA Committee commissioned a comprehensive study to recommend land management processes in the ELZ. This resulted in the **Bend of Islands Land Management Plan** (Osler and Jolly 2013). This document was launched at the 2013 BICA AGM, with a digital copy for all members. A very valuable document aimed to inform residents how to best protect and improve the environmental qualities of both the public and private land in the area. All new residents were to receive a copy when moving to the area.

It also offered assistance in applying for grants on which to base our Landcare activities, our own grant applications, as well as for residents to manage their own properties.

In 2014 a Sub- committee was formed to develop an **Implementation Strategy for the Land Management Plan** intended to be the specific guide for our monthly Landcare working bees. Also in 2014 BICA was awarded the Nillumbik Shire Council "Practically Green – Sustainability Award for Sustainable Community Organisation".

In 2016 Council agreed to an annual works budget for Oxley Reserve to enable grassy weed control. Planting was also provided.

This was quickly followed by an invitation from Council to landowners to apply for a land Management Incentive Program grant for the removal of exotic woody weeds.





Catani Blvd roadside planting in collaboration with Nillumbik Council. They supplied over 100 plants and guards, BICA Landcare supplied the labour.

2016 also saw Council recognise the Bend of Islands with an Award for 40 years of Conservation Management.

It was then in 2019 that Council received funding to deliver the Sugarloaf Link Project (\$450,000) which aimed at protecting biodiversity values in the corridor from Christmas Hills to the Yarra in the Bend of Islands. As a project partner, BICA effectively coordinated and delivered the weeding component in Bend of Islands over a 3 year period.

A glance through the history of our activities indicates that we are now a little more educated in land management methods and probably a little more focused, but we still need the dedication and hard work of all the Community.

Working Bees still continue every month however the numbers attending have certainly decreased since the 1980's. We can all easily make excuses, but the biodiversity of our bush is constantly under threat and must be positively managed to ensure the long-term existence and integrity of our place.

If we don't effectively counteract this threat, we will lose the very qualities that set our area apart from the more degraded areas of the Shire.

The challenge for all is still out there to continue the good work to improve our biodiversity.

Janet Mattiske

GIVE ME A SIGN

Have you ever wondered about the Community signs that magically appear on our wonderful Message Tree?

Here is a very short history for you.

At the beginning of 2020 during the first COVID lockdowns, my son Jeff Drummond (aka Magnus), made and erected his Community Message Tree, replacing the old post that had well and truly past its use by date!

Over the last 20 odd years Jeff, along with Wolfgang Krause, have worked together to supply the signs to inform us all of upcoming events.

Wolfgang makes the very neat sign blanks and passes them on to Jeff, who then hand paints the information in his artistic style. These are then delivered back to Wolfgang who hangs them for all to read.

There have of course been many others that have contributed to the information signs from time to time, but I would just like to thank Jeff and Wolfgang for their wonderful endless and ongoing efforts over so many years.

Keep giving us a sign.

Carol Bonny





WALKING THE TALK

ROUND THE BEND CONSERVATION CO-OPERATIVE – DISCOVERY DAY



On Sunday 16 October the Co-op ran a Spring Discovery Day, the second of our open days where people could find out what we're all about and experience the bush we protect.

We ran two tours, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Each tour started at the top of C track where we greeted our visitors and gave them a brief introduction to the type of vegetation on the Co-op, such as Box Ironbark Forest, Creekline Herb-Rich Woodland and Valley Grassy Forest, all of which have a conservation status of vulnerable.

We spoke about the importance of conserving this small segment of the of the wildlife corridor between Kinglake National Park and Warrandyte State Park.

We pointed out Greenhoods, Waxlips, Pink Fingers, Mantis and Spider orchids as we made our way to a nearby nest box. With the aid of our special "pole camera" everyone was able to see the resident Sugar Gliders. No one can resist the sight of such lovely creatures curled up in their perfect nest of leaves!

On the walk down C track we outlined the residential conservation principles we live by. Firstly, that we are here to conserve the bush, protect habitat and foster biodiversity. We pointed to the locally threatened plants that we have reintroduced and guarded, the track paving we've done to prevent soil erosion, our relatively weed free status and the orchids which are currently abundant.

Secondly, that we minimise the impact of our presence. We pointed out examples of how we do this – houses that blend in with the surrounding bush, containing everything within a site's boundary, only planting plants indigenous to the area (except in a kitchen garden), not using herbicides and insecticides, carefully disposing of nutrient rich water run-off and limiting external lighting.

Of course, we also talked about the bushfire risk and how we manage that through site preparation, suppression systems, fire plans and our active Fireguard group.

After the "walk & talk" we adjourned to a house where our visitors heard from Members who spoke briefly about our history and personal experiences of living here. They were then able to ask questions and mix informally over morning or afternoon tea – catering being a Co-op speciality!

At the end of the tour, each visitor received a show bag containing further information about the Co-op and the Bend of Islands.

The aim of these tours is to showcase the Co-op as a working model of residential conservation. We want to break down some of the myths about the Co-op and demonstrate that the way we've chosen to live is beneficial to the bush and to the humans who live here.

The next Discovery Day will be in Autumn 2023.



WHAT WEED TO WATCH OUT FOR

ASPARAGUS ASPARAGOIDES

THE WEED

Asparagus asparagoides is also known as Bridal Creeper. It is originally from South Africa but is now a serious problem across southern Australia. As a weed in Bend of Islands it forms dense mats of tubers below the ground which impede root growth of other plants and preventing seedlings establishing. As it grows it smothers native vegetation and threatens low shrubs and ground cover plants. It is capable of invading undisturbed habitats.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Asparagus asparagoides is herbaceous climber with rhizome and tubers. It has wiry twining stems that appear from the ground during autumn through to spring. These can grow as long as 2-3 metres. As it grows it develops shiny pale green 'leaves' broadly ovate 1–7cm long and 8–30mm wide. In Winter to Spring, it has tiny white flowers that develop into round orange-red berries.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD

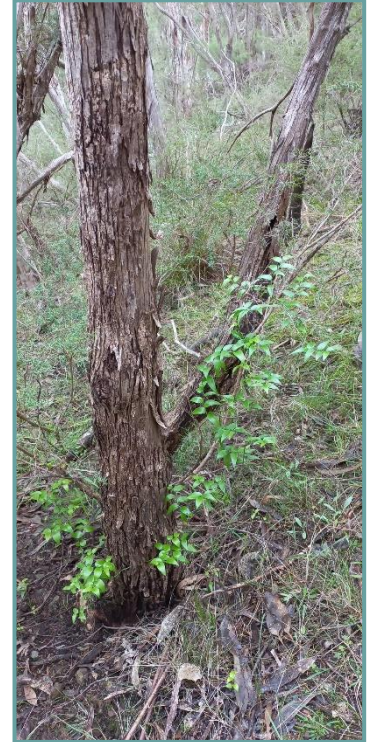
Asparagus asparagoides was introduced to Australia to be a component of wedding bouquet arrangements. It is a very popular ornamental and so is primarily in Bend of Islands due to being a garden escape. Its seeds are spread by birds, and animals that eat fruit and it is also spread by movement of soil containing roots.

HOW TO CONTROL

If there are no fruits, the above-ground parts of the plant can be cut off and left to die. For there to be effective control, roots must be dug out and disposed of carefully.

DON'T CONFUSE IT WITH

There are not many plants that look like bridal Creeper but do be careful of *Billardiera mutabilis*, Common Apple-berry. This is a twining climber with brown stems remaining in lower shrub level.



If you would like some help identifying and controlling any weeds on your block please feel free to contact BICA at bicacomm@gmail.com



PRIORITY WEED ALERT

SOUTH AFRICAN WEED ORCHID

We have now had 2 isolated occurrences of this highly invasive weed in the Bend of Islands.

- One in Ashmore Rd in November 2021, and
- One in upper Catani Boulevard in October 2022

Council is treating this weed as a major threat and has a campaign to try and eradicate it. See [South African Weed Orchid - Nillumbik Shire Council](#)

Checkout the Council's information sheet on the weed.

Council recognise the importance of keeping this weed out of the Bend of Islands.

This is a major threat for the Bend and we ask all residents to help to keep it out of the Bend.

Please familiarise yourself with the weed so you will be able to recognise it.

If you suspect you've found an infestation

1. **DO NOT DISTURB** – there is a high risk of spread.
2. **Contact Nillumbik Shire Council, 9433 3111 (or Frank Pierce 0419 395 537).**
3. **Council will support you with identification and control options.**





MOTHS IN THE BEND



Quick Link

A Checklist of the Moth and Butterfly species in Bol is [HERE](#)

The Bend of Islands has a stunningly diverse range of moths. Over 450 species have been recorded since 2005. Given the high biodiversity of the Bend of Islands, some experts expect that the Bol moth list will eventually grow to over 600 species.



An excellent general reference

A Guide to Australian Moths by Paul Zborowski and Ted Edwards, 2007, see [HERE](#)

This gives a great introductory review of all aspect of the incredibly diverse range within Australia's 20,000+ species of moths, with an insight their biology, lifestyles and environmental importance.

It gives guidance to identification to family level but certainly not to genus or species level.

The book is currently only available as an eBook from CSIRO, so you might have to shop around if you want a hard copy.

The availability of digital cameras, with good macro settings, has made the world of 'mothing' more accessible to anyone who has an interest in nature.

Identification Challenges

Australia has about 800 bird species and 400 butterfly species and these all have accepted common names and lots of easily accessible resources to aid in their identification. The situation with moths is not so straightforward.

There are 20,000+ species of moths in Australia, and less than half of these have been named. The majority of moths are nocturnal, but one big advantage is that many of them are attracted to light.

Fortunately, resources for Identification have increased dramatically over the last decade. We now have:

- **Moths of Victoria** Series 1 to 9, by the Entomological Society of Victoria, [HERE](#)
With good details on each species. Unfortunately, there are at least another 7 books yet to be produced, so many species are not yet covered.
- Good websites are very useful, such as
 - <http://lepidoptera.butterflyhouse.com.au>
 - http://v3.boldsystems.org/index.php/Taxbrowser_Taxonpage?taxid=113
- **iNaturalist** now has an identification function, where you can load a photo and it will give ID options. It is important to log the location of your record, to restrict the options to look-a-like species that have been previously recorded in the vicinity. The accuracy of this facility has improved remarkably over the last year or so and will keep improving with more usage.

Alternatively, you can load your record to iNaturalist as 'a moth', and hope that one of the many enthusiasts will identify it for you. This is a good way for beginners to get started.

Recording Sightings

I photograph moths at my kitchen window most nights. It is ideally located facing down slope to a gully.

Occasionally I use a moth sheet and a 250w Mercury-vapour light which attracts many more species. I use this at home, off 240v power, or out in the bush using a generator.

I store my photos in 'monthly' folders, for ID processing when I get the time. I currently have over 30GB of photos waiting to be processed.

I like to try and ID the moths using the resources mentioned above. As a last resort I use the iNaturalist identification function.

Loading Records to iNaturalist

This is a great way to be an active citizen scientist and add to the body of scientific knowledge. By doing this the record is automatically uploaded to the Atlas of Living Australia website and the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas. This data is particularly important given the current 'insect extinction crisis' that is sweeping the world and threatening our very existence.

Due to time constraints, I have generally only loaded one record per species at this stage, unless multiple records are of particular significance for the species.



Checklist of the Moth and Butterfly Species in Bol

A Checklist of the Moth and Butterfly species in Bol is [HERE](#)

This provides a list in taxonomic order on the right and a thumbnail photo of each species.

- **Click on the word 'observation' below the thumbnail photo** to open the observation link or links. Click on one of these to open the specific iNaturalist Bol record details, or
- **Click on the species title below the thumbnail photo** to open the iNaturalist page for the species with general information and all records of that species.

Notes on this list

- I have identified over 450 moths in the Bol. The easiest way to generate a list that shows most of these, with easy access to record details, is by generating a list of records from Bol on iNaturalist.
- iNaturalist uses large amounts of data to generate this list and we have to accept a few compromises for the pleasure of using this facility.
 - The list is for Lepidoptera, that is Moths and Butterflies. It is not feasible to easily delete the butterflies from the list generated by iNaturalist. I have recorded 39 species of butterflies in the Bol.
 - Some moths that I have identified do not currently have an accepted Genus name (according to the various references used) and these are not included in this list.
- If anyone has any additional species that they have recorded, please load them onto iNaturalist and they will automatically be added to the list. (Or send me the details and I'll load it for you.

Feedback

If anyone finds an unusual moth, or needs some identification assistance, contact Frank Pierce at jmandfp@bigpond.com as a first step. Referral to others with better knowledge may be required!

Note: The moths in the photos above can be identified by going to the soon-to-be-loaded [Moth page](#) on the BICA Website

Frank Pierce



NILLUMBIK LANDCARE NETWORK

Deer Control

The big news from the NLN over the past few months is that council has been awarded a further grant to control deer on private land across the shire. This is part of the state Government's Peri-Urban Deer Control Plan.

Ash Densham (the NSC Landcare facilitator) is managing this, and calling on all groups to help. Clearly we should be making the most of this, but at present the proposed control area appears to exclude a large portion of the ELZ, so firstly we need to understand what's behind the boundaries.

I'm hoping to resolve this with Ash shortly, so then we can launch into assisting with the program. Any program will benefit from as many property owners signing-on as possible, particularly to aggregate smaller holdings etc. The project will include collaborating closely with Ash, to raise awareness of the program, a community information session, and importantly compiling a database of areas of deer activity.

This is a great follow up to the 2019-2021 Sugarloaf Link program which culled some 330 (mostly Sambar, some Red) deer. Anyhow we'll keep on it, and hopefully set up a group to organise things!

Also, Christmas Hills Landcare and council are holding a community information evening on Sunday 11 December 2pm, at the Christmas Hills Hall to outline the program.

Other Items of Interest include:

FFG Act Protected Flora Permits

Council's Biodiversity Officer, Warren Tomlinson, has the relevant permit if we wanted to collect seed / cuttings or other propagates of listed flora. This will make the process far simpler if we choose to propagate / reintroduce some of our listed species.

Melbourne Water

Most are already aware that the MW contact for Landcare is Teresa Mackintosh

Teresa.Mackintosh@melbournewater.com.au Phone: 0448 135 520

Forest Health Monitoring Project

After several months of trying to find a suitable organisation to take stewardship of the project, and be attractive to philanthropic funding, Council have now expressed interest in hosting the project for the long term. Karen Rowe (Museums Victoria), Doug Evans (Christmas Hills Landcare) and myself are pitching to the councillors and staff on 8 November to try and secure their interest and funding.

Property Maps

Ash Densham has offered to prepare maps for individual properties or Landcare project areas. These are aerial photo based with 5m or 10m contours, waterways, property boundaries, ecological data (EVC's etc) and available in sizes of A1 or A0.

Nice offer !! Contact : ashley.densham@nillumbik.vic.gov.au Phone: 0428 783 851

Andrew McMahon



CHRISTMAS HILLS FIRE BRIGADE NEWS



It is looking like a particularly wet and green spring and early summer in the Bend and across Victoria. As you would be aware CFA crews are used as emergency back up in storms, floods and similar emergencies and as I write CFA Strike teams including crews from the Hills around us are helping out in flood damaged areas of the state and it is looking like that might not be the end of it.

It has been a relatively quiet time for the brigade with plenty of training but few turnouts. We have new recruits going through their initial training and hope to have even more new faces on the trucks soon. A special welcome to Allan Eccles from Henley Rd who has recently qualified as a general firefighter.

We are in the process of applying to the Warrandyte Community Bank (Bendigo Bank) for a grant to complete the purchase of a replacement Ultra Light Tanker. As you know we have been raising funds for the last 12 years or so and we are now hopefully in a position to replace the ULT. We hope to hear an announcement from the Bank soon. **(STOP PRESS! We have just found out that we have been successful: Many thanks to the Bank for their continuing support.)**

We are really grateful to the Bank for their continuing support to us: amounting to over \$60,000 over the last few years and we encourage community members to ring or drop in to Warrandyte to discuss any of your banking needs including insurance renewals. We have found the competitive and they will allow fortnightly or monthly transactions from accounts at no extra cost.

Just give them a go and get you, your family, friends and community members **to mention Christmas Hills Fire Brigade.**

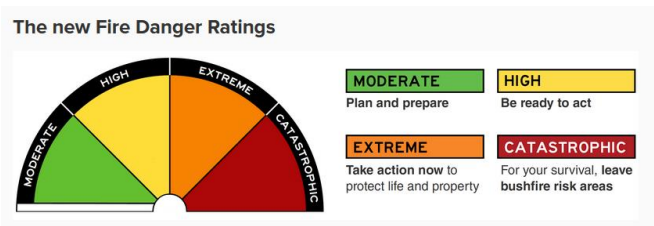
Even though it has been wet and cool it is always a good time to have a look around your home and property to assess any issues you may have for the coming season. Have a look at the CFA website: <https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/how-to-prepare-your-property> and/or the BRI Website <https://bushfireresilience.org.au/> where you will find a great resources for actions you may like to look at especially in preparation and updating of your fire plan.

Have a good look at the vegetation and growth around the house and outbuildings...what should be pruned back or got rid of, branches and shrubs: are they touching the house? Can a fire truck still get down your driveway??

Have a look at possible points of ember attack...where the leaves gather after a windy day is one of the most vulnerable spots?

Revisit your list of things to do and check before the fire season...is there new things that we ought to consider?: furniture, mats. Pot plants that may be shifted for the season or need to be attended to if leaving early?

Review your fire plan...what is your trigger for leaving? Will it change with the new Fire Danger Rating system? Do you need to update yourself with the new changes? See <https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/total-fire-bans-fire-danger-ratings/about-fire-danger-ratings>



- There are four levels of fire danger in the new system:
- **Moderate** - Plan and prepare
 - **High** - Be ready to act
 - **Extreme** - Take action now to protect your life and property
 - **Catastrophic** - For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas

What is your Plan B ...if you get caught at home? What can you do to defend yourself and your property? What is your last resort?

While it remains cool and wet the next hot spell is just around the corner and it is worth spending the time (and perhaps the money?) to consider enhancing your defences for the next inevitable time we dry out and heat up!

Cheers

Peter Mildenhall
Community Safety Coordinator
Christmas Hills Fire Brigade



HOW I BECAME INTERESTED IN BIRDWATCHING

It would have been a cold winter's morning back home, but in Cairns, it was rather nice. It was July of 2018, and our family had decided to take some time in the tropics to recharge. We were sharing an apartment with another family at the lovely beachside town of Trinity Beach, half an hour north of Cairns. On this particular morning, Dad was heading out to the Atherton Tablelands to do some birdwatching. He had been a birder for quite some time now, since before I could remember. He was chasing 15 birds in particular. Those 15 are endemic to this region; they cannot be found anywhere else in the world. He often asked us if we wanted to come, and we just as often refused. On this day, I said no, as always. However, Dad somehow managed to talk me into it.

We awoke at 5am and headed inland. The journey took about an hour, and at this point, I was beginning to regret my choice. We arrived at our first destination for the day; a walk through the thick rainforest outside of Julatten. So basically in the middle of nowhere. I remember encountering a small feeding flock that contained Fernwren, Atherton Scrubwren and Chowchilla, three of these 15 birds. I was clueless about identification, but I kept on learning. We ran into Macleay's and Cryptic Honeyeaters along the path as well as Grey Headed Robin. By this point, I was pleasantly surprised. This was actually a lot of fun! I fell in love with the adrenaline from frantically running around the rainforest looking at birds, something I still love today. We continued our crusade, picking up Mountain Thornbill along the way. At one point along our walk, Dad stopped. He heard Spotted Catbird (fittingly named, as it sounded to me like there was a cat meowing in the tree). We searched for a long, long time but the bird would not show itself. It was torture, hearing a bird, knowing which tree it was in, but not being able to locate it. All was redeemed, however, when we found Bower's Shrike-Thrush a little further along the path. We left this rainforest with eight of the fifteen birds under our belts.

We left the walking track and headed to a small carpark, also in the middle of nowhere. Here we picked up Yellow Breasted Boatbill; a small, mostly yellow bird with a large, funky bill that's shape has been likened to that of a boat. Not one of the 15 endemics, but still a target species.

While we had stopped for lunch, we ran into Great Bowerbird at a well-known spot for this species: Mount Molloy State School.

Our next stop was Mareeba Wetlands, which, much to our dismay, we found closed. We did find some good raptors on the way in though, including Brown Falcon, Black Kite and Nankeen Kestrel. Back in the town of Mareeba, we located a flock of Red-Tailed Black Cockatoos, a beautiful bird.

When half past five at night came (more than twelve hours after we began), Dad was getting tired and suggested we head back, but I wanted to go chasing Lesser Sooty Owls. Unfortunately, we went home.

Ever since that day, I have been hooked. It has taken me to some amazing places, I have seen some amazing birds and met some amazing people. And it is not just the birds; I have seen some amazing mammals, reptiles, insects and environments since that day. Since that trip, I have had a fervid passion for nature, an addiction, some might say. Every chance I get, I'll take a walk around the Bend and admire all that nature has to offer. Even now, while writing this article, I am being distracted by the birds outside my window. Someday, I hope to return to the place it all began, and chase down that elusive Catbird! (picture below)

Jarrah Pauli





THE D.I.Y. MUDDY

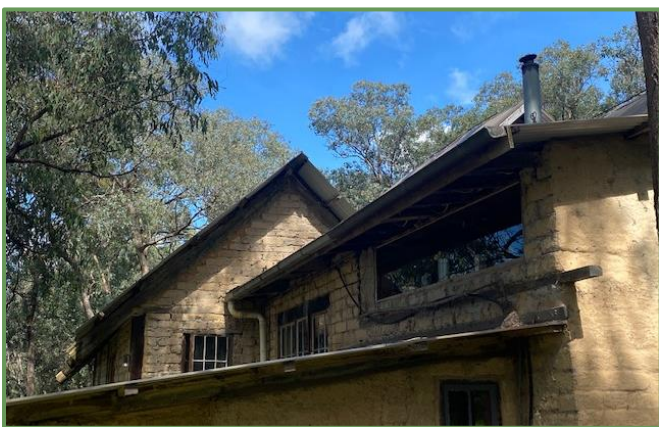
Some of us back in the '80s when we were bedraggled in long hair, kaftans and sandals (sort of) decided that to be really bonded with the earth, we should build with it.

The culture of Mud Brick Home building had been popularised in the region by the likes of Neil Douglas, Gordon Ford, Alister Knox to name a few.

The thrill of designing and constructing a home from sweat and scrounge was hard to suppress. Adobe homes could be incredibly economical yet seemingly sound and comfortable; even 'spiritually uplifting' we were told- all those raw' natural components and finishes.

Our first task was to become mud brick manufacturers using the material from our limited excavations. This was the perfect introduction getting down and dirty. We also energetically delved into the second-hand building material market at demolition yards, the Trading Post, hard rubbish etc. collecting a heap of stuff (much of it quite inappropriate).

During the process of building, we thought we were becoming competent concreters, bricklayers, carpenters, roofers, painters, pavers, and plumbers. -However, we only got to this level when we were near the completion of that trade. Prior to that we fluffed around busily learning on site. We weren't delusional enough to think we could do the electrical work, but some of us roughed in cables for a registered electrician to fit off and sign off on. There developed in the Bend, a group of similarly driven individuals working hard on their homes, sharing materials, tools and knowledge over many years. We all believed that the Adobe house was the panacea of domestic architecture and for some time we were pretty dam cocky. D.I.Y. Palace.



Then as the years went by, we discovered that our homes were a lot dirtier and dustier than others.

It was difficult to fix things to the mud walls. Shelves, rails, lights, tiling, even pictures.

The amateurish construction detailing, especially around

floor level often meant termites had no problem coming in and munching on our timberwork.

The 250mm thick walls were massive but only offered the insulation of a basic stud wall – without bulk insulation!

The common recycled timber that we all worshipped, Oregon, was surprisingly not very durable. We later had to replace exposed rafters, fascia beams, posts and pergolas.

The soft and warm interior created by timber ceilings exposed beams and rafters, determined that there was minimal insulation possible, whilst providing perfect environment for cobwebs and creepy crawlies.

Rodents were delighted at the ease by which they could find a weak spot to enter by.

Windows framed and doors hung by the half competent were destined to haunt later.

As sort of multi-skilled tradespeople, we soon realised we were lucky if we were a third as efficient as the real thing. Also, we were usually only building part-time. This meant that our projects went on, and on and on. Years went by, with stresses on families and commitment.

We often moved in way ahead of completion at lockup with no power and makeshift plumbing. Then fiddled for years finishing off.



So, was it worth it?

Should we have just knuckled down into reliable full-time jobs? Borrowed big from reliable friendly banks? Professional design? Registered builder with fixed cost contracts and timeframes? Just sit back, throw borrowed money around and move in when sweet.

Would we have been just as satisfied with the results?

Not on your nellie. Like Rodeo -a bumpy ride but wonderfully satisfying if you don't fall off.

Ross



TERMITES IN THE BEND OF ISLANDS- FRIENDS OR FOE?

You can understand why termites are not always welcomed by residents on the Bend of Islands since it is true that expensive and inconvenient damage to buildings does occur quite regularly. Many of these buildings have no termite protection or are not well designed to withstand intrusion by termites which stray inside from the surrounding bushland and are hard to remove once inside.

What Happens When Termites Fly?

It would be interesting to compare the risk from termites between the Bend of Islands and urban Melbourne. Is it safer to live in bushland or the city? I don't know the answer to this but let me describe for you what happens over a few days each year when termites fly.

You would have seen flying termites (alates) on those warm balmy evenings, just before the Melbourne Cup. The air can be thick with millions of them - a huge gene pool from many different colonies floating together with the breeze and all synchronised to fly at the same moment in time. They land in your hair, in the pool, on your car, into spider's webs. This is nature's feeding bonanza. Our wildlife has depended on it for millennia. It comes when the birds are feeding their young, insects are maturing to lay eggs and fish are rising from the deep. They know it is coming and they are ready.

The ground becomes alive with ants large and small. They catch the termites the moment they land. Even the smallest, scruffiest spider's web catches more termites than the spider can possibly eat. The skinks and blue tongues are all out, the sky is alive with swallows and dragonflies which swoop up from below to smash into one after another leaving just the wings to float to the ground, where even these wings are grabbed by ants and carried off to their nests. Nothing is wasted. You might see wattle birds squabbling around a termite exit slit halfway up a tree, or an echidna having a good day under the trees.

So, my point is- A flying termite in the Bend of Islands needs to be very lucky to survive this massive predation - and even luckier if a male and female from different colonies can survive long enough to find each other, pair up and discover a little crack in a damp log into which they can crawl and survive long enough to start a new colony nest. Nature is in balance and only a few new colonies replace the older ones in decline and the termite population fits more or less into the environmental space of natural bushland.

Contrast this with urban Melbourne where there is little wildlife and the predation on these flying termites is minimal, so a huge number of them are able to survive, pair up and start new colonies. There are no trees for nesting, so new Queens have adapted and build 'mound nests' under

building structures such as suspended concrete slabs (i.e. a raised concrete porch) This can go badly for the urban home-owners and can lead to re-infestation shortly after an offending colony has been destroyed.

Most Common Termite Genus in the Bend - Coptotermes

The most common termite Genus on the Bend Of islands is Coptotermes (mostly *frenchi* sp). They live in large colonies in muddy and papery 'mounds' usually within the base of a larger hardwood tree such as a Long Leaf Box (*E. goniocalyx*) or red stringybark (*E. macrorhyncha*) They travel within a network of small tunnels in the topsoil for perhaps a 50 meter radius from their colony nest, feeding on wood and absorbing moisture for the colony. They hollow out timber from the inside, leaving the exterior intact and without holes so as to provide protection from predators and from the elements. These hollows start off as thin tubes running up tree trunks and branches and gradually replace the (dead) heartwood with a network of mud and digested wood pulp. The living outside of the tree (cambium and bark) is left untouched so the tree becomes a wooden tube but is unharmed.

While these feeding habits may be unwelcomed by homeowners, a broad spectrum of our wildlife, and perhaps most of the smaller vertebrates in our area, depend on these hollow refuges for their very existence. Termites make nature's nest boxes.

It does not happen overnight. A new termite Queen is not attracted to young fast-growing trees. She seeks out a tree that already has the size to accommodate her ambitions for a large colony and her colony may take 20 years before it becomes powerful enough to hollow out the tree.

But wildlife cannot access the sanctuary inside a hollow tree unless they have a hole through the tough outer layer. They may just have to wait until a branch is weakened by termites and snaps off from the trunk leaving the magic entry hole, perhaps a small one for a phascogale or sugar glider. The lorikeets, rosellas and galahs don't need much more.

The waiting list for accommodation is crowded, with modest demands from bats and honeybees and more selective requirements from king parrots and boobook owls. Some creatures like wood ducks, cockatoos and larger possums need larger voids and they select older trees that have been well eaten by termites and perhaps may also have been chimneyed out by the bushfires. They may need to share, and they don't always get good neighbours.

Lace monitors and some raptors need a roof over their heads too. The best real estate is that big old tree that may



be dead and dried out but which is unfortunately prone to burning down in bushfires.

Termites allow the wild creatures in the Bend of Islands to thrive and breed and help make it the precious place it is today. They do damage buildings though and break the hearts of some homeowners. History has given us many buildings that are vulnerable to termites. There is no magic

wand, but the risks to our homes can be reduced, and I will offer a bit of a steer on this next time. Meanwhile, enjoy the Springtime in the nature's bushland.

Tom Boschma

Termite Specialist



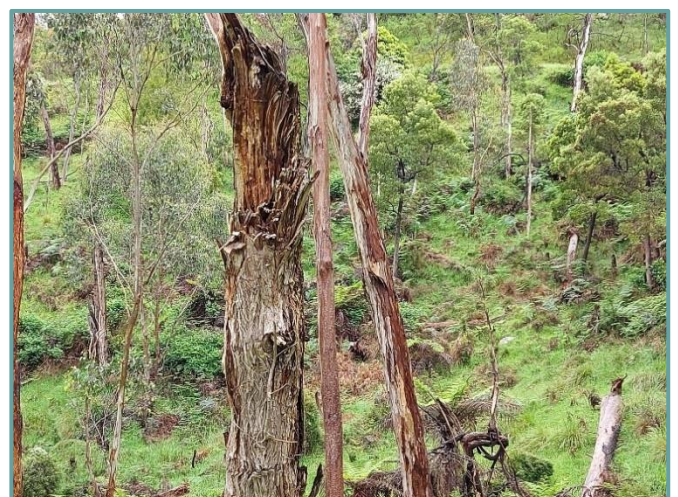
Coptotermes soldiers with their pear shaped heads.



Hollowed log wired up in redbox tree and home to ringtailed possums



Section from a destroyed verandah post.
Note the zero evidence on the exterior.



Swamp gum opening, once home to termites
but now home to lorikeets.



LAST NIGHT I ENDED UP IN A DITCH...

There is a saying that goes,

'most accidents occur five minutes from your home...'

And so there should be no surprise that this one occurred five minutes from home....(Not sure who said this, but it's spot on.)

After a weekend work trip, I flew back into Melbourne on the last flight from Queensland. As I was driving home at around 11pm, the roads were slippery from the recent rain. And as all Benders know, there is a lot of wildlife around after dark, especially when closer to midnight.

Living in a Green Wedge wildlife corridor, I've gotten used to seeing the local wallabies, wombats and kangaroos amble across the roads late at night. Of course there are those wombats who just stop in the middle of the road and don't look at you... They just wait for a moment and then continue on their way across the road like a black shadow.

At the top of the hill, before I crossed the bridge into the Bend of Islands, I slowed down to make sure a few joeys were off the road, before slowly continuing on down the hill...



Just before I crossed the bridge a minute or so later, a small, dark swamp wallaby darted out from a high side embankment right in front of me!



When swamp wallabies want to run fast, they seem to sink low down and just run fast, regardless of what is going on around them...They seem to do this when they are startled and scared.

I saw his furry head and ears pointing backwards racing right in front of my drivers side headlight!

It was at this moment, time slowed right down...

I have never hit and killed any wildlife in all my years of driving and I didn't want to change that now, so I swerved hard to the left, and headed off the road to miss my little hoppy friend.

It was wet, slippery and I was going downhill...

And while I was not going fast, as soon as I hit the brakes, the car's ABS brakes made that clicking sound, trying to maintain grip as I started to slide on the bitumen and then slid into the wet grassy ditch...



And just like a dream where everything moves slowly, I kept on sliding very slowly, while the brakes were going click, click, click, attempting to halt this drifting, while the car was swiping branches and bumping over small logs, until it came to a stop...

Fearing the worst, I got out and started to retrace my path to see what had happened and what had become of my cute little hoppy friend...I looked and looked, but couldn't find anything but the grooves in the ditch from my tyres...

So I inspected the car and saw a brush mark on the drivers door. This is a tell-tale sign that he had totally missed hitting the front of the car, but had bumped into and most likely bounced off the side of the driver's door of the car...

I walked around the area looking and looking with a torch, but my cute, little, furry, friend was gone.

After doing a quick check, there was a few scratches on the car, a few broken branches, one or two broken logs on the ground, that was it.

Finally, as my searching was unsuccessful, I felt a sense of relief for this dashing swamp wallaby, so I reversed out of the ditch and drove home, slower than I had ever done before.

Looks like my fast, little swamp wallaby had a lucky escape and lived to see another day...

Michael



Lockdown 2.0 - Day 24, 1 August 2020

Pandemic Elegy - After Sophie Black

During the first wave
morale-boosting messages
graced our homes and streets,

now rainbows have peeled
off fences along empty
suburban streets, while

the chalk pictures on
our paths have long washed away.
A deep spectral fear

hangs over Melbourne
like a widow's long black veil.
Life is so different,

playgrounds taped over,
the CBD deserted,
skate bowls gravelled up.

First hot spots were named,
then the towers were locked down,
our togetherness

lost, but still there are
men in high vis vests and hats
building our city

for what and whom? We
live in a ghost town, zombies
in designer masks

shrugging off grief by
acknowledging that others
are so much worse off -

the people battling
mental illness, losing homes,
the ones unemployed,

those losing loved ones,
they are among us - neighbours,
friends and work colleagues.

We envy other
states their beaches and cafés
while we're pariahs.

First wave fear is back.
Before an end was in
now there is no end.

Trying to make sense
of an unravelling world
that is downright mad.

Sandy Jeffs.

From her Book "The Poetics of a Plague"

Hospital Verses

Cycling, windblown, free
Next trussed on bed, wired to breathe
Sun moon sun moon sun...

Three sips of water
All I need for life to flow
Again and again...

'You have two options'
Choosing life, did I choose well?
Living is hard work.

'Thanks. You saved my life.'
No special role accepted
Just 'It was the team'.

Am on my own now.
No more tubes, lines, catheter.
Old body new born.

Not yet viable.
Still teetering in limbo.
Daily choice to live....

A friend rang telling
Of frogs in her pond and ducks
A different world.

At Bend of Islands
After big rain, weeds to pull
Before ground dries out.

Daily calls from you
Euphoric from turning soil
To grow your own food.

You speak of the bush
And I smell eucalypt leaves
Longing to be there.

Nicky Coles. Lover of the Bend of Islands



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Take a look back in time - A page from Newsletter #6 November 1982.

All our old newsletters have been uploaded to the BICA website. They are a treasure trove of history and information and well worth a random look.

Living in the E.L.Z.

"The Age"
Monday, 11th Oct. 1982

**Bend of Islands
is nature home**

Australia's first environmental living zone came into being yesterday. Some 580 hectares of bushland at the Bend of Islands, on the Yarra River 35 kilometres from Melbourne, were gazetted for "environmental living".

The bushland, which has 60 human residents, a mob of grey kangaroos and a lot of smaller wildlife, will be kept in national park condition under the new zoning — but with people living in it.

The new zoning, declared by the Planning Minister, Mr Walker, bans cats and dogs, plants foreign to the Yarra Valley, clearing of the bushland and subdivision into lots of less than 40 hectares.

While these are only some of the issues we need to address, increased awareness and understanding of what is required to manage our pieces of land environmentally will not only be rewarding but also ensure the success of the Zone by keeping it in 'national park condition'.

Some articles previously published in the Newsletter may be helpful:

Official gazettal of the Environmental Living Zone does not by itself ensure that this small, fragile area will remain as a viable natural habitat. Just as in any national park, careful management is necessary to control the impact of people on the area.

What of our own impact? We need to examine the use of our blocks of land in the light of the provisions as described in the zoning regulations. (Copies of the relevant portions of the Healesville I.D.O. are enclosed.)

- Has the use of our land damaged plants, animals or stream ecology?
- Are we regularly walking, barbecuing or letting the kids play where orchids previously have bloomed?
- Is our activity interfering with ground nesting birds or kangaroo movements?
- Have we restored areas damaged while building?
- Have we landscaped with vegetation indigenous to this area?
- Has our development caused any significant soil erosion?
- Do we ensure that visitors (including people holidaying, picnicking or sightseeing) do not bring domestic pets into the area?

'E.L.Z. in a Nutshell', No. 2 (Aug. 1979)
 'How to Lose a Forest in 3 Steps', No. 3 (Jan. 1980)
 'Threats to Native Wildlife', unnumbered (Nov. 1980?)
 'Building Design in the E.L.Z.', No. 5 (April 1982)
 'Landscaping with Fire Prevention in Mind', No. 3 (Jan. 1980)
 'Landscaping in the E.L.Z.', No. 5 (April 1982)
 'Landscaping with Natives', unnumbered (Nov. 1980?)
 'Weeds', No. 4 (Sept. 1981)

Janet Matiske

FROM THE EDITORS

Please keep sending in your articles and photos to rosscric@gmail.com as we look ahead to the next newsletter in May 2023.

Cric and Ross Henry (Editors)

with Julie Martindale (Production)