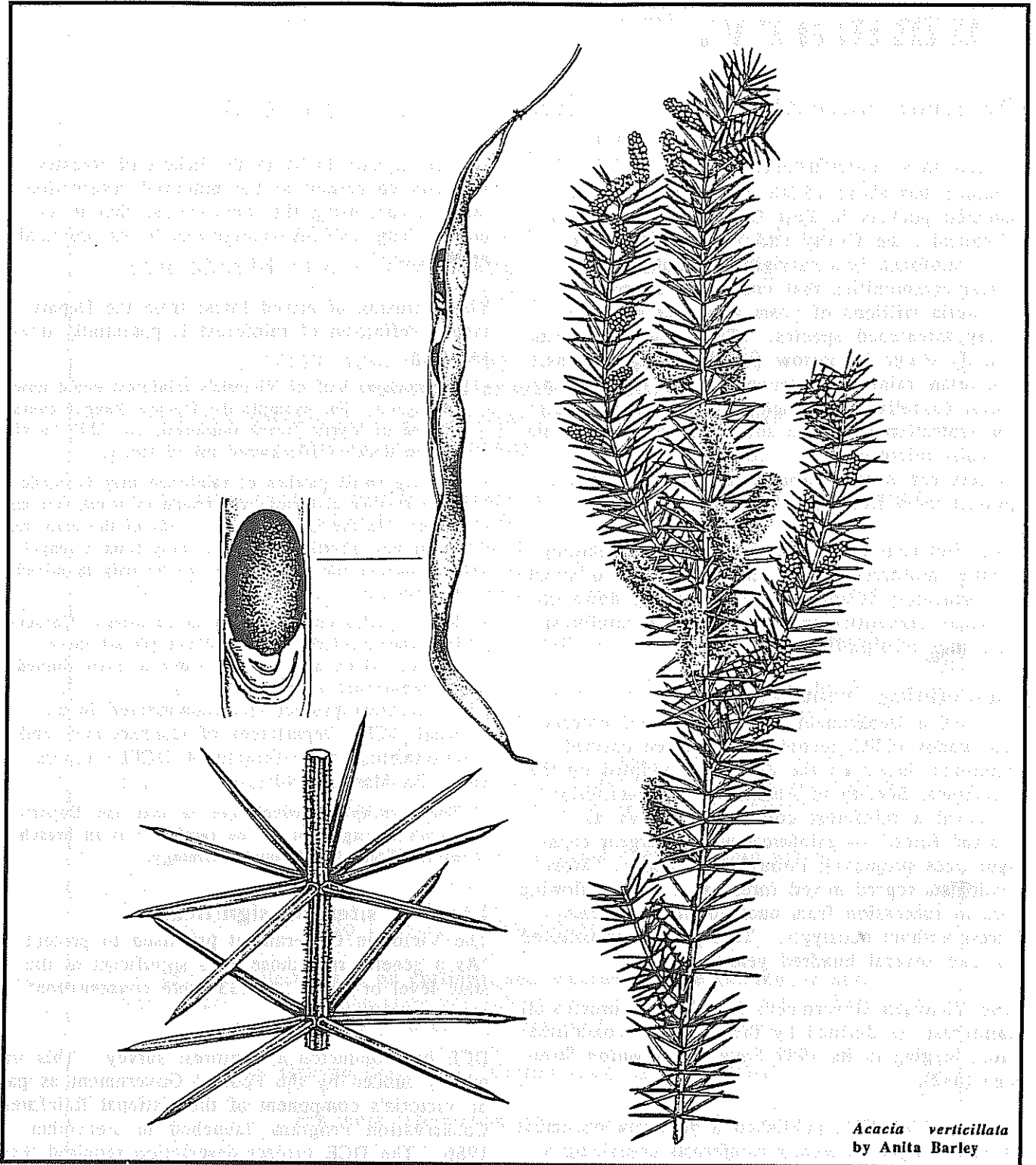
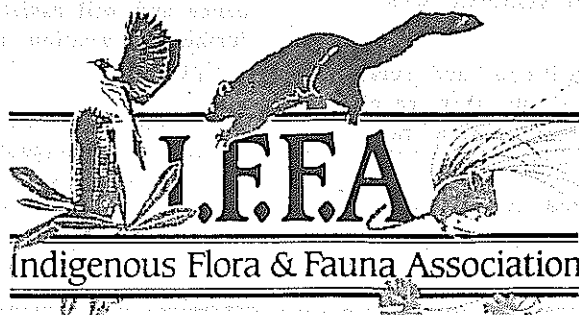


INDIGENOTES



Acacia verticillata
by Anita Barley



Victoria's rainforests at risk: a summary.

By Jamie Pittock*

Victoria's rainforests

Victoria has about 15,000 ha of rainforest in isolated pockets in East Gippsland, the Central Highlands, the Otway and Strzelecki Ranges. This rainforest is a surviving example of rainforest communities that once covered much of Australia millions of years ago, and supports many threatened species. Temperate rainforests usually occur in narrow patches along streams. Victorian rainforests depend on the surrounding forest (usually timber-rich wet sclerophyll forest) for protection from fire and wind and to maintain a moist micro-climate. Consequently forest buffers are needed around rainforest patches to protect them from fire, wind and weeds.

The Victorian Government is presently deciding which rainforest conservation measures to adopt. Unfortunately it appears to be backing down on previous commitments by re-defining rainforest and sites of significance.

Re-defining rainforests

In 1986 a Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands (CFL) technical committee defined rainforest based on the definition adopted by the Ecological Society of Australia. This definition included a rainforest community known as "mixed forest" — rainforest with emergent eucalypt trees projecting through the canopy. Most ecologists regard mixed forest as a stage following fire in succession from eucalypt forest to rainforest without eucalypts. This process is believed to take several hundred years.

The Victorian Government promised to protect all rainforest, as defined by the technical committee, from logging in its 1987 *State Conservation Strategy* (p42).

In July 1987 CFL published a publicity document *A new era for Victoria's rainforests* containing a "slight amendment" that excluded mixed forest from the previous definition. A sentence was deleted, namely:

Rainforest includes closed transitional and seral communities, with emergent eucalypts, that are of similar botanical composition to mature rainforests in which eucalypts are absent

No botanists appear to have been consulted. The

change appears to be at the behest of forestry interests concerned at the potential reservation of larger areas, using the lame excuse that it removed "any obvious ambiguities in its practical application".

The exclusion of mixed forest from the Department's definition of rainforest is potentially devastating:

- As much as half of Victoria's rainforest could now be logged. For example the Otways Ranges contain 820 ha of Myrtle Beech rainforest, but 3240 ha of Myrtle Beech - Blackwood mixed forest.
- Already small patches of rainforest may be made even smaller and more vulnerable to wind, fire and weeds. In the Otways pure stands of the main rainforest tree, Myrtle Beech are dying from a fungal disease. Myrtle Beech may survive only in mixed forests.
- Many species only occur in mixed forest. Conserving other rainforest only will not protect these species, which are vulnerable due to their limited distribution.

The rainforest project staff commented in an internal DCE (Department of Conservation and Environment, the re-structured DCFL) report dated 26 March 1990:

The inescapable conclusion is that the Department's management of the rainforest is in breach of the State Conservation Strategy.

Logging sites of significance

The Victorian Government promised to protect "As a general rule those sites significant at the state level or above..." (p33 *State conservation strategy*, 1987).

DCE has conducted a rainforest survey. This was mainly funded by the Federal Government as part of Victoria's component of the National Rainforest Conservation Program, launched in December 1986. The DCE project description required that:

The survey will identify sites of botanical significance and will assist in determining the need for further reservation or special management prescriptions...

The primary objectives are to classify and map rainforest, to evaluate conservation status, determine sites of special significance and build a reliable information base for developing and applying land use prescriptions...

*Victorian National Parks Association, P.O. Box 785F, Melbourne 3001. (03) 6546843.

Continued on page 11...

DO YOU FEEL SEEDY AROUND CHRISTMAS TIME?

If you collect or grow seeds of indigenous plants,
you should attend a meeting and workshop organized by
IFFA:

7:30 p.m., Tuesday 13 November 1990
at the Herbarium Hall,
cnr Birdwood Ave, and Dallas Brooks Drive, South Yarra,
Melbourne (Melways map 2G, 12A).

Do you know about the new seed cleaning and storage facilities at the Herbarium?
Are you interested in better methods for collecting propagating material?
Who else is collecting in your area?
What are your legal obligations?
Do you want to help direct future revegetation efforts in your part of the state?

These questions are important to you and to the revegetation community.

Eight speakers will talk on these topics; then there will be a tea break
followed by a 'workshop'. The workshop will address questions such as:

Does seed collection need to be better coordinated, and if so, how?
What standards need to be applied to collection and to prevent genetic pollution?
What should be the priorities for future revegetation efforts?

We intend to put the answers to these questions into action!

So be there! Attendance is free.

If you collect seeds or cuttings, and whether you're coming or not,
please mark on a map the areas you collect from, as well as the areas where your
plants are likely to end up, then send it to the convener:

Dr Graeme Lorimer, 42 Gratten Road, Montrose 3765.

For more information, phone (03) 728 5841.

Profile:

Toohey Forest Protection Society

Toohey Forest is a magnificent area of dry sclerophyll forest only 9 kilometres from Brisbane City centre. The Forest covers an area of about 300 hectares. At its widest it stretches over 4 kilometres from Moorooka to Mount Gravatt, and over 2 kilometres from Tarragindi to Nathan. It is the last remaining sizeable area of bushland on the south side of Brisbane.

Toohey Forest is under threat from housing development and lack of coordinated planning for its future.

In the early 1970's there were repeated applications to Brisbane City Council to rezone sections of the forest for housing development. The Toohey Forest Protection Fund (recently renamed the Toohey Forest Protection Society) was established in 1975 to combat these threats. So far, the TFPS has been able to prevent the further urbanisation of the forest. But the forest is still threatened by sub-division.

In 1986 the Council received a proposal to construct a water pipeline through the forest to allow the development of a housing estate adjacent to Nathan Heights. The TFPS collected over 3000 signatures petitioning the Council to stop this work from going ahead. While there has been a stay of execution, the final outcome of this affair

is still not clear.

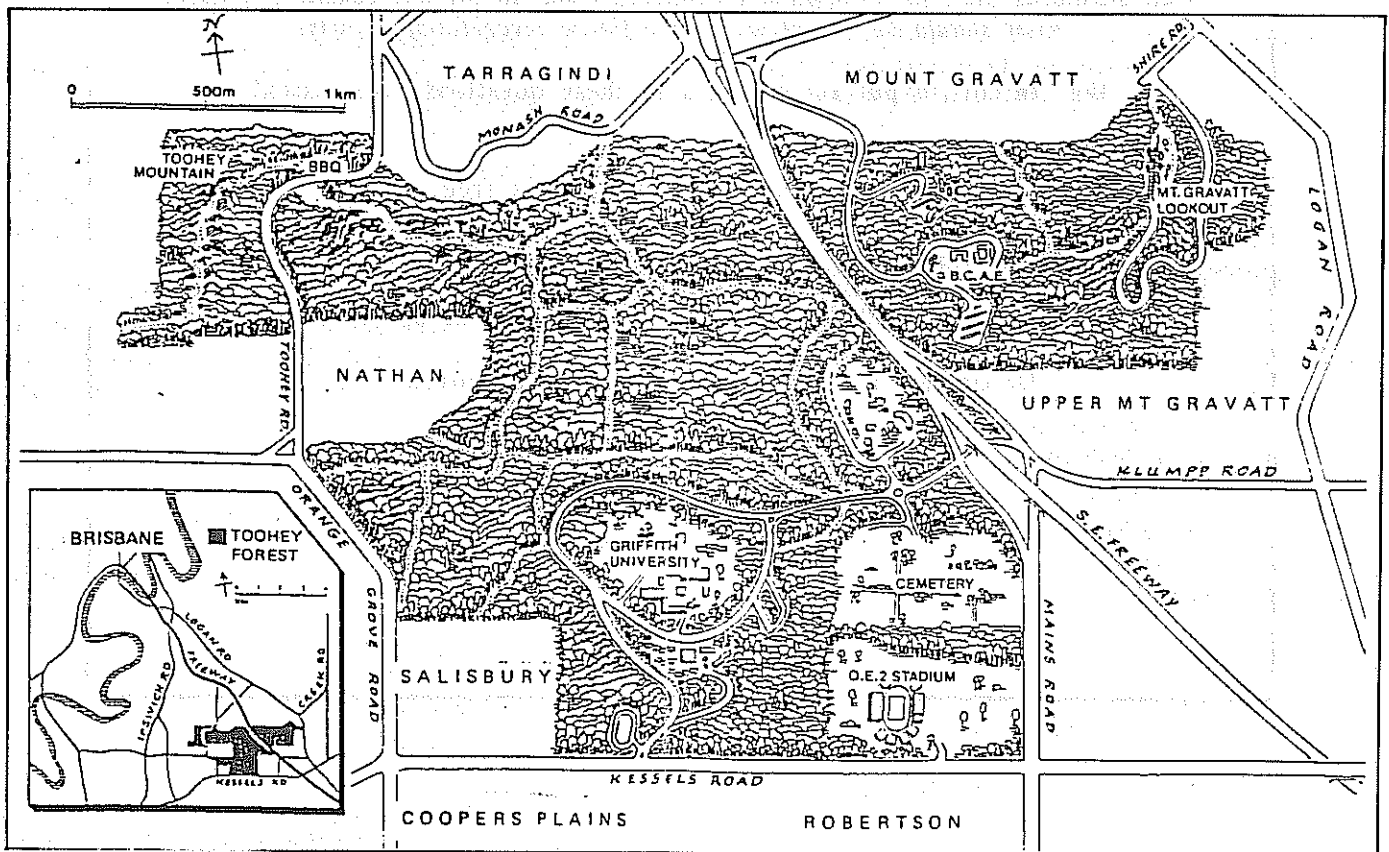
The Toohey Forest Protection Society has produced a Management Plan Proposal. Copies of this document have been sent to the Brisbane City Council and are being reviewed. The main objectives of this plan are to:

- incorporate all remaining bushland under one management plan;
- protect and conserve native flora and fauna;
- restrict all vehicle access;
- promote respect for the forest environment through education;
- promote appropriate recreational use of the Forest;
- restore damaged areas.

It is envisaged that a management authority would be established under legislation and follow the model provided by Brisbane Forest Park on the north side of the city.

Copies of the Toohey Forest Management Plan Proposal are available from the Secretary, Shirley Walton, 29 Passchendale St, Tarragindi, Queensland 4121, for \$2 plus postage.

The Society is a growing and very enthusiastic group of Brisbane people who have achieved quite amazing things. In 1987 for the cost of a 37



A wild occurrence of *Buddleja* at Camberwell

By Ian Faithfull*

cent stamp we sent a letter to the National Party Government suggesting that they might swap a 26 ha freehold piece of bushland owned by Alan Bond for some Government land of similar value. This piece of prime real estate was right in the middle of Toohey Forest and had a market price of \$3 million. We had tried everything to get Federal, State and Local Governments to purchase this land. Our Society had taken Bond's company to court and won and stopped development in 1975. In 1982 and 1986 we stopped a proposed pipeline from crossing the Forest to this land. In 1988, the Queensland Government found a piece of land of similar value near the Gold Coast Bond University and they swapped it. You could have knocked us over with a gum leaf!

The Society produces a monthly newsletter and holds monthly meetings at the Holland Park High School (Bapaume Rd), at 7.30 pm on the first Monday of each month except January.

Every Sunday morning TFPS has a two hour guided bushwalk through Toohey Forest, starting at 7.00 a.m. at the (high) picnic area on Toohey Road.

The Society aims to:

- encourage the protection of Toohey Forest and the habitats, wildlife and plants that are there.
- encourage careful public use of Toohey Forest,
- ensure that no more bushland is lost,
- encourage environmental education and public awareness of the problems facing urban bushlands, and
- ensure that Toohey Forest Protection Society is efficiently and sensitively managed under an overall Management Plan.

If you are interested in further information about the TFPS, contact the Secretary, or Beryl Roberts, the President, on (07) 277 0609, or at 137 Highgate Street, Coopers Plains, Queensland 4108.

Early this year I found a small *Buddleja davidii* (Franchet) growing from a crack between the asphalt footpath and a brick wall on the northeast corner of the intersection of Burke and Prospect Hill roads in Camberwell. Less than 200 metres away there are several large plants, possibly up to 10 years old, which appear to have become established by themselves. These are growing out of concrete and brickwork on top of the high walls that bound the sunken railway line to the west of Camberwell station.

Buddleja davidii is a calcium loving plant (Gilbert, 1983), explaining its occurrence on brick walls with their high concentration of calcium carbonate in the mortar.

This currently "old fashioned" plant is widely recommended as a nectar plant useful to attract butterflies and other insects to the garden (e.g. McCulloch, 1987). The East Gippsland beekeeper/naturalist Archie May has collected many rare and unusual insects from the large clump outside his home at Noorinbee North. Nymphalid butterflies particularly like the richly sweet scented clusters of small purple flowers. Holmes (1984) recorded that many years ago gold-dredge spoil heaps covering 8 to 10 hectares at Harrietville, northeast Victoria, were planted with *Buddleja* and that 20 to 30 large patches of the plant existed and were frequented

by a diverse Lepidoptera fauna. He lamented the imminent loss of these plants due to further development of the town.

Willis (1972) stated that *B. davidii* "tends to persist about old gardens" and Ross (1990) considers the species naturalized. Perhaps in the longer term it could join Chinese Privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*) and Mirror Bush (*Coprosma repens*) as ubiquitous woody weeds in inner eastern Melbourne gardens. In Britain "the most distinctive vegetation" is in Bristol where thickets of *B. davidii* grow almost everywhere and dominate the city centre. The natural successor to it in that city appears to be the Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) (Gilbert 1983).

References:

- Gilbert, Oliver 1983, 'The wildlife of Britain's wasteland', *New Scientist* 24 Mmarch, pp. 824-9.
- Holmes, D.R. 1984, 'The buddleias of Harrietville', *Victorian Entomologist*, vol 14 no. 4, p 40.
- McCulloch, E.M. 1987, 'Attracting butterflies to gardens in temperate Australia. Bird Observers Club, Nunawading, Vic - pamphlet.
- Ross, J.H. 1990, *A census of the vascular plants of Victoria*, 3rd edn, National Herbarium of Victoria, Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands.
- Willis, J.H. 1972, 'A handbook to plants in Victoria Volume II Dicotyledons' Melbourne University Press.
- NOTE: *Buddleia* is an alternative name for the genus *Buddleja*, but the spelling accepted by Ross (1990) is used here.

* 1/30A Prospect Hill Road, Camberwell Vic 3124.

Coming Events

OCTOBER

- 26 Fri. Bird Observers Club of Australia - Display at Forest Hill Chase Shopping Centre.
- 26 Fri 7.30-10pm. Talk: Urban dwelling from a bioregional perspective, Introduction to bioregional politics. \$6, (\$4 conc.). FOE building, 222 Brunswick St. Fitzroy. Cam (03) 484 2840.
- 27 Sat 9.30am-3pm. BOCA - Open day at Headquarters. 183 Springvale Rd, Nunawading. Audio-visual program, information. (03) 877 5342.
- 27 Sat 1-5pm. Workshop: Bioregionalism. Re inhabiting your lifespace, Yarra bioregion, cities in th bioregion, what is a green city. \$15, \$10conc. FOE (see 26 Oct).
- 27 Sat. Rare grassland plants re-establishment program at Skipton. Excursion of Botany Group of FNCV, Leader: Neville Soarlett. Margaret Potter (03) 29 2779.
- 27 Sat 2pm. F.O. Sherbrooke Forest project afternoon. Asparagus, ivy & hollies. Bring gardening tools. Pound Creek gully. Meet at Micawber Park, behind the restaurant, Melways map 75, ref G7. Margaret Finger (03) 754 3548.
- 27 Sat 1.30pm. Montrose Environment Group. Brief nature walk and weed pull at Leversha Reserve, Montrose (40 acres of regional significance & lots of birds). Graem Hindley (03) 728 2127.
- 28 Sun 10am-4pm. LaTrobe University Wildlife Reserves Support Group activity day - Campus Reserve. George Paras (03) 479 2871.
- 28 Sun. Koala Count. F.O. Warrandyte S.P. Margaret Burke (03) 844 1060.
- 28 Sun. Excursion of Botany Group of FNCV - Cosstick Reserve and Paddy's Range (Maryborough area). Margaret Potter (03) 29 2779.
- 28 Sun. Council of Adult Education - Day program at Yellingbo, Home of the Endangered Helmeted Honeyeater. Organised by BOC. Bookings & enquiries; CAE (03) 652 0611.
- 28 Sun 10am-1pm. Nunawading Indigenous Plants Project - workshop. Nunawading Council Horticultural Centre, 82 Jolimont Rd., Forest Hill. Les Smith (03) 874 2641.
- 28 Sun 10am. Mt. Worth State Park project day. Pam Scott (03) 570 2909.
- 28 Sun 2-4pm. Green Link Camberwell, Wildflower & Wildlife Walk. Dianna Burgess (03) 809 2092.
- 28 Sun 2 pm. F. O. Victoria's 1st Settlement

site - Sorrento. Stuart Sherrin (059) 84 1953.

- 28 Sun 2-4pm. Greenlink Camberwell. Wildflower and Wildlife Walk. D. Burgess (03) 809 2092.
- 30 Tues 10am-1pm. Greenlink Box Hill planting & maintenance. (Every Tuesday). Fred & Fiona Cumming (03) 898 4808 (AH).

31 Weds, IFFA meeting Geoff Carr will speak on The Victorian orchid flora, its ecology and management. see p 12.

NOVEMBER

- 1 Thurs 10am. Propagation day, F.O. Warrandyte S.P. Meet at the Park depot. Margaret Burke (03) 844 1060. (This activity is on every Thursday)
- 3 Sat. F. O. Gellibrand Hill Park activity day. Kerryn Pratchett (03) 306 8180.
- 3 Sat. F. O. French Island State Park activity day. Contact Des Quinn (03) 791 2315.
- 3-6 Sat-Tues. Fauna Survey Group of FNCV campout - Nooramunga Marine Coastal Park Survey. Alex Kutt (03) 347 0012.
- 4 Sun. IFFA (Vic) excursion to Anglesea - Flora, vegetation and management of the Anglesea area. See p 12.
- 4 Sun 1pm. F. O. Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve activity day. Meet at the McLelland Drive car park, Melways map 103, ref C10. Contact Leon Costermans (03) 783 5015.
- 8 Thurs 8pm. A Year in the Wilderness - an illustrated talk by Michael Cusack. Michael and his wife Susan were chosen by Dick Smith as the Australian Geographic "Wilderness Couple", Feb 1987. They spent one year in Kunmunya, on the Kimbeley coast and Mike is now Ranger at the Point Nepean National Park. Horticultural Society Hall, 31 Victoria St, Melb. Society for Growing Australian Plants (03) 882 5297.
- 8 Thurs 8pm. Botany Group meeting of the FNCV - Botanical Ramblings in France, by Mary Doery. National Herbarium Hall, Birdwood Avenue. Margaret Potter (03) 29 2779.
- 10 Sat 9.30am. F. O. Organ Pipes work day. Meet at the workshop. Robert Bender (03) 49 2413.
- 10 Sat. VNPA Walk Talk & Gawk: Warrigal Parklands. On the Yarra at Heidelberg, parkland areas with important conservation values are subject to heavy recreational use and other pressures. Chris Kenyon (03) 233 3495.

- 10 Sat. **Leadbeaters Possum watch.** Organised By Fauna Survey Group of FNCV. Alex Kutt (03) 347 0012. Also on 24 November.
- 11 Sun. 10am-3pm. **F. O. the Yarra activity day.** Galatea Pt, Mel. 2D, D7. Judy Rutherford 347 2252.
- 11 Sun 10am. **Stony Ck weeding** followed by wildflower walk at Professors Hill. Mark Gardner (03) 844 3799.
- 11 Sun 1.30pm. **Claire and Scobie MacKinnon Reserve** open for inspection. Displays and tours. Lawrie Lees (053) 406 558 See Snippets p 10.
- 11 Sun 2pm. **Friends of the Point (Pt. Nepean)** project afternoon. Weed eradication planting and fortifications study. Meet at the Orientation Centre inside the Park. Stuart Sherrin (059) 84 1953.

13 Tues IFFA seed collecting meeting. If you collect or grow seeds of indigenous plants, you should attend this meeting and workshop. See page 3 for details.

- 17 Sat 9.30am. **Friends of Werribee Gorge & the Long Forest Mallee.** Project day - Happy Valley. Judy Douglas (03) 67 2672.
- 18 Sun. 10am-12noon. **Brunswick Tree Group** activity day. Meet at Moonee Ponds Ck at end of Union St. Melways map 29, B9. Eric Ward (03) 387 9490.
- 18 Sun. **River Clean Up - Gardiners & Koonung Creek.** organised by Board of Works. Men Of The Trees can also take enquiries on (03) 898 1364. (some other municipalities will be organising their own Clean Ups but confirm with them).
- 20 Tues 7.30pm. **Native Grasses.** F.O. Gould League Nat. Hist. Program. With field trip on 1 December. Sheryl Richards (03) 51 1493.*
- 20 Tues 8pm. **Bird Observers Club of Australia -** Illustrated talk. AMP Theaterette, cnr Bourke & Williams Sts, Melbourne. All welcome. (03) 877 5342.
- 21 Wed 7.30pm. **Insects.** Friends of Gould League Nat. Hist. Program. With field trip on 24 November. See 20 Nov.*
- 21 Wed 8pm. **Victorian National Parks Association General Meeting.** Room K, Main Building, Ormond College, College Crescent, Parkville. VNPA (03) 650 8296.
- 24 Sat. Excursion of Botany Group of FNCV. **Hotchkins Ridge Flora Reserve,** Croydon North, Leader: Cecily Falkingham. Margaret Potter (03) 29 2779.

- 25 Sun 10am-4pm. **LaTrobe University Wildlife Reserves Support Group** activity day - Gresswell Forest. George Paras (03)4792871.
- 27 Tues. IFFA meeting.
- 28 Wed. 10am-3pm. **F. O. the Yarra activity day.** Galatea Pt, Mel. 2D, D7. Judy Rutherford 347 2252.

DECEMBER

- 2-6 Sun-Thurs. **Mount Field National Park - Tasmanian Botany & Ecology Course.** From the world's tallest hardwood forests, to alpine cushion plants, you will see the best accessible altitudinal vegetation sequence in Australia. Prof Bill Jackson has taught plant species identification and ecology here for over twenty years. Accommodation in Wellington Ski Lodge beside Lake Dobson. Cost: \$410 (catered) or \$340. **Book before 2 Nov.** For registration contact Tasmanian Environment Centre Inc., 102 Bathurst St, Hobart 7000, Tas. Other courses are: Flinders Island (29 Dec - 2 Jan), Mt Field N.P. (12 - 18 Jan), Central Plateau (2-6 Feb) & Ben Lomond N.P. (11-16 Feb).

JANUARY

- 2-7 Wed-Mon. **Introductory Alpine Ecology Courses,** Bogong High Plains. For details see Snippets.
- 8-13 Tues-Sun. **Advanced field studies and projects in alpine ecology.** For details see Snippets.

A large range of activities such as bushwalks and "Friends" activities are published by the Victorian National Parks Association in their newsletter. For details contact VNPA (03) 650 8296.

The Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers coordinate plantings throughout Victoria and interstate. They take place throughout the week and on weekends, usually a specified number of volunteers is required and most plantings are indigenous. For further information contact ATCV : National Headquarters in Ballarat: (053) 32 7490 Melbourne: (03) 583 3388, Adelaide: (08) 365 1612, Sydney: (02) 413 5522, Tasmania: (003) 415 444.

* Each lecture has a \$7.50 charge & includes excursion where offered.

The editors will be pleased to receive information about any relevant events for listing in Indigenotes.

Snippets:

Frog Survey to Start

Listeners of the Science Show would have heard that the frog population in many parts of the world is in decline. Australia is following this trend where in Victoria alone ten of the 35 species present are thought to have declined significantly in the last ten years. Widespread declines in frog populations are of concern not only because of the frogs' value in ecosystems, but because frogs are probably sensitive indicators of the quality of their environment.

An extensive research program is being coordinated by Terry White of the Salinity Bureau of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. A Frog Survey workshop was held at the Rural Water Commission on the 17th August. The nineteen participants represented a wide range of education officers in government and non-government organisations zoologists and the ABC's Director for "Quantum".

Mike Tyler (University of Adelaide, Zoology Department) pointed out that population studies over at least a five year period will be necessary in order to gauge the seriousness of the reported population declines. "Life spans of amphibians are relatively long and the dynamics of population cycles (related to variable weather and other factors) must be understood over a relatively long time frame to allow valid interpretations of the data".

Terry White demonstrated that there is considerable scope for community involvement of year 11 and 12 Biology students and field naturalists in monitoring frog populations. Also, there is potential for student involvement through science, chemistry, geography, Australian studies, english and environmental studies. On a national level, the CSIRO Helix Club expressed interest in such a community survey.

To facilitate the research, a computerised reporting format for state and national use has been devised for voice records, egg or juvenile records and museum specimen records. The audio aids will assist students and other participants to identify the frog calls and collate the data. At each location where egg masses and tadpoles are found, information on water temperature, oxygen demand, Ph and salinity should also be gathered wherever possible.

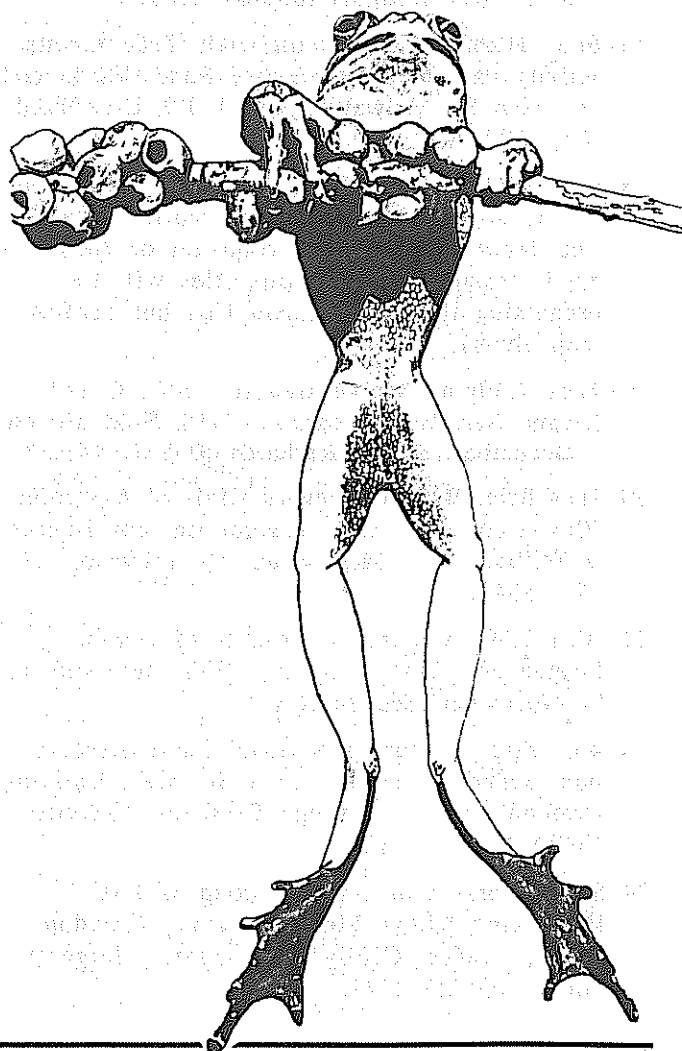
It was also suggested that individual research projects might compare the development of frogs raised in aquaria filled with pond water with those raised in aquaria filled with water of known quality, though the legality of this option will

need to be investigated. Monitoring abnormalities of frogs or tadpoles in different environments could be followed up by more detailed environmental monitoring.

Other suggested studies were: i) the significance of the frog within different ecosystems, ii) oral history documenting the local knowledge of frog declines and increases and iii) defining more closely those factors which limit or promote changes and suggesting ways in which frog habitat can be safeguarded.

Since the August workshop, Brian Gayle and the Quantum team have put together an eight minute coverage of the frog survey story which should appear some time in November.

Terry White is currently putting together the ideas resulting from the workshop and will be drawing up a proposal for the survey program. Terry welcomes comments, ideas or input from members of IFFA. He can be contacted at the Salinity Bureau, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, tel: (03) 651 6400.



Atlas of Australian veg.

Vegetation, volume 6 in the *Atlas of Australian Resources*, has recently been published by the Australian Surveying and Land Information Group (AUSLIG). This volume, together with the two accompanying 1:5million scale maps, gives the first complete picture of the present state of Australia's diverse and changing vegetation cover. It is the result of major research to give a clear comparison between botanic heritage in the 1780's and our environment today.

With over 100 full colour photographic examples, it reveals the great diversity of Australia's vegetation. A wide range of information on vegetation, including historical records, botanical surveys, reports, satellite images and maps, is brought together in this atlas volume.

Vegetation is available for \$39.95 from AUSLIG Sales, P.O. Box 2, Belconnen ACT 2616.

Frog boycott

Friends of the Earth (Fitzroy) reports that FOE Bangladesh is calling for an international boycott of French interests who are ravaging the Bangladesh populations of frogs for metropolitan French cafe society dinner tables. Apparently frog hunting is also a problem in Egypt, where 35 tonnes of frogs are exported each month mainly to France.

This process is of particular concern to the Bangladeshis because the most commonly collected species of frog in Bangladesh consumes large numbers of insects (over 600 different species), and as a result pesticides are being imported to control the exploding populations of insects.

FOE suggests you boycott frogs legs and write opposing the frog trade to the French Consulate, 492 St Kilda Rd, South Melbourne 3205.

*FOE (Fitzroy) Newsletter, September 1990 p10.

Sydney IFFA

Judie Rawling reports that the IFFA meeting in Sydney on Thursday 11 October was highly successful with about 40 people turning up to hear Tein McDonald, Bush Regeneration Officer, Kuringai Municipal Council, on 'Ecological restoration - what can we learn from each other?' Tein's recent visit to Southern California to inspect rehabilitation projects will form the subject for a future Indigenotes article. Dale Tonkinson attended from Melbourne. The Sydney IFFA people have decided to set up an indigenous seedbank themselves, and will be collecting seed this season. The next Sydney meeting is not yet arranged, but will be sometime in December.

Friends of Flora and Fauna groups

James Ross, Friends of Flora and Fauna Project Officer at VNPA writes:

The Friends of Parks groups have successfully demonstrated since 1975 how the community can actively participate in conserving and caring for our natural environment. In recent years the Friends network has been extended with the creation of several groups dedicated to the protection of particular species. These groups have shown that the Friends concept can be of great value in assisting with the conservation of Victoria's flora and fauna.

Friends groups activities can include habitat improvement (weed clearance, plant propagation and planting etc), community education, fundraising, monitoring and surveys. Most importantly, a Friends group can also be an advocate for a species. A community group lobbying and looking out for the welfare of a particular threatened species can precipitate action to prevent further decline.

The need to have sound scientific knowledge as the basis for Friends activities cannot be overstated.

The VNPA is keen to see the number of Friends of Flora and Fauna groups grow, however we are aware that great care must be exercised in how this is achieved. To this end I have been employed by the Association, with a grant from the Department of Conservation and Environment, to promote and facilitate the creation of Friends of Flora and Fauna groups.

continued on p 10..

Dr Geoff Marks

It is with great respect and sympathy that IFFA conveys the passing away of Dr Geoff Marks on Thursday 30 August.

Geoff spoke to IFFA members about Toxic fungi in Victorian Pine Plantations and the implications for the future of pine forestry at the August IFFA meeting.

We offer our thanks for his informative talk, and hope that his important work will be continued by someone as competent and committed.

To all his family, friends and associates we offer our sincerest regards.

Snippets:

During the course of this project I will examine, amongst other things:

- the requirements for a successful friends group,
- what opportunities exist for the creation of Friends of Flora and Fauna groups,
- develop guidelines for the creation and operation of all Friends groups,
- develop a model constitution for use by existing and new groups.

James has written to IFFA to seek its assistance with this project. He would like to determine the level of interest and support that exists within special interest groups and in the scientific community for the creation of new Friends groups, as well as identifying species that may benefit from a concentrated approach. He has asked IFFA to complete a survey form and return it to him, and has invited IFFA members to discuss the project with him at the VNPA office on (03)6508296.

Open day at Claire and Scobie Mackinnon Res.

Bill Weatherley writes:

...The Claire and Scobie Mackinnon Reserve will be opened for inspection on 11 November 1990 from 1.30 p.m. There will be displays of native flora and fauna of the plains, and tours of the reserve.

The reserve is at 'Mooramong' near Skipton in Western Victoria. The property is operated by the National Trust and is developing a flora and fauna reserve which will eventually cover about 500 acres (240 acres is currently being developed). A great deal of work has taken place restoring the native flora of the basalt plains. Over 100 species were found and still survive in the reserve after 140 years of grazing, and others are being re-introduced. A number of very rare species are being grown as seed sources as well through work of LaTrobe University funded by The World Wildlife Fund. There are also Bandicoot breeding pens, stocked.

Memberships

IFFA membership costs

\$40 for groups, or

\$20 for individuals and families.

Membership includes 11 issues of Indigenotes per year.

Memberships should be sent to

The Secretary,

Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association,

Ms Michele Arundell,

2/81 Alexandra Ave

South Yarra Vic 3141.

Still hope for Cooper St

Friends of the Merri report* that they have finally succeeded in obtaining a deputation to see the Minister for Conservation and Environment, Steve Crabb, about the Cooper St Grassland on November 16.

According to FOM:

It would appear that the meeting will be vital in determining the fate of the grassland as the Department (DCE) is persisting with its advice that the Craigieburn site should be purchased and that some of the Cooper St grassland can be "saved" through modifying the layout of the industrial subdivision with 10 ha being given to a grassland reserve. At the same time the DCE is no doubt persisting with advice that Cooper St is unsuitable as a conservation reserve because it is "surrounded" by an industrial area! This seems to be typical of the inconsistent advice emanating from DCE over nearly 18 months.

In addition, DCE seems to be strangely unaware of the widespread decline in the property market. Just over a year ago FOM were arguing that Cooper St was worth less than half the agent's asking price of \$10.5 million, a figure which the Department was treating as gospel. In today's depressed market, we have it on good advice that a further 50% can be taken off last year's price.

What all this does mean, is that for the same amount that the DCE was willing to spend on the purchase of Craigieburn, both sites can now be protected. (Note that Craigieburn does not need immediate purchase, as is being recommended by DCE. Instead it can simply be reserved in the planning scheme for eventual purchase by DCE). In these circumstances, the 70 ha Cooper St grassland, the 97 ha Board of Works Barry Road retarding basin and the 400 ha Craigieburn site could all be notionally linked at a cost of about \$1m up-front, depending on vendor terms for Cooper St. Yes, you read it correctly, a 570 ha Merri Metropolitan Park, incorporating 2 of Victoria's most important grassland reserves for a down-payment of \$1 million! What's that line about gift horses?

Even in the context of the State's financial woes, this is not a lot to ensure a major park for the northern suburbs for generations to come.

It is important that Mr Crabb knows of the public support for Cooper St in the period before he meets the FOM deputation. FOM requests that you write him a letter supporting the purchase of Cooper St.

* Friends of the Merri Newsletter, October 1990.

Alpine Ecology Courses

These courses, to be held on the Bogong High Plains in January 1991 are an opportunity to learn about the alpine environment and associated conservation issues with people from a range of different backgrounds and disciplines.

January 2 - 7 : Introductory Course for teachers, rangers, conservationists and those interested in the alpine environment. Study alpine flora, fauna, soils and their interactions in the field. At least one day will be spent on individual projects to enable participants to apply the knowledge and skills they have learnt.

Limited to 48 participants.

January 8 - 13 : Advanced field studies and projects for botanists, ecologists, soil scientists and photographers - including nature photography with Colin Totterdell. Participants will spend two or three days on specific projects involving data collection, analysis and interpretation.

Limited to 36 participants.

The instructors - botanists, ecologists, soil conservationists and soil scientists - have considerable experience studying and working on the Bogong High Plains and conducting field based courses.

Accommodation is at Howman's Gap Alpine Centre only 5 km below Falls Creek ski village and the Bogong High Plains.

Course Fees: \$350 include accommodation, meals, instruction and course notes. A limited number of subsidised places are available for those on low incomes. Applications close 12 November.

Enquiries and application forms: Bruce West, Howman's Gap (057) 583 228, or Warwick Papst (w)(03)479 1230 (h) (03) 809 2454

Presented by Department of Conservation and Environment

Victoria's Rainforests at risk (from page 2)

Further analyse data to identify sites of significance and hence identify need for further reservation or management requirements.

This survey work identified 181 rainforest sites and classified them according to a method used by the Department since 1985 and by the Australian Heritage Commission. Fifty-one sites are of state significance and twenty-four of national significance. The sites were delineated using the principle of catchment integrity: including the whole forest in catchments surrounding the rainforest in order to provide protection from fire, wind, weeds and other 'action at a distance' effects. The authors recommended "that timber harvesting and prescribed burning be excluded from all designated sites..."

Only 36% of sites are presently protected, and many of the remainder contain substantial volumes of timber. Some 99 logging coupes have been scheduled within these sites of significance in the coming logging season. As the government has signed legally binding 15 year agreements with sawmillers to supply large volumes of timber they are reluctant to conserve any more forest. Minister Crabb must decide by the end of September where to log. The Minister and Department appear unwilling to protect these sites by re-scheduling logging to existing contingency coupes in the short term. Instead an internal DCE review committee has been established to "review" the rainforest report. This committee has a majority of foresters and has no community representation. We expect the rainforest report will be significantly re-written.

Acacia forest clearing

The Department has for many years cleared pure stands of Acacia forest (particularly Blackwood) to establish timber-producing eucalypt forests. The Department has labelled these forests with such names as 'scrub', 'unstocked sites' and 'modified forest'. These forests

occur in wet gullies, or after fire, or as regrowth on cleared land. Floristically and structurally these forests are rainforest. However DCE is not protecting this community, and may even be using Federal forestry grants to finance their eradication and conversion to hardwood eucalypt plantations.

Conclusions

Conserving Victoria's rainforest requires the protection of rainforest with emergent eucalypts and sites of state and national significance. DCE appears unwilling to do this. The best solution would be a Land Conservation Council Special Investigation, a reliable process noted for its success at involving the community in resolving land use disputes.

In December 1986 the Land Conservation Council in its *East Gippsland Area Review final recommendations* (p 59) reiterated a previous government decision to undertake "an investigation of rainforests in Victoria with a view to making recommendations on the range of uses for them and the way in which they should be protected through reservation". No investigation is yet scheduled.

An open process such as the LCC process must be found to resolve this issue. Otherwise it is clear that the State Government's *State Conservation Strategy* is not worth the paper it is written on.

The Federal Government has a reputation for taking strong action to protect rainforest. It is already involved in the protection of rainforest in Victoria through the use of money from the National Rainforest Conservation Program. It must ensure that this money has been used wisely and that the recommendations from the funded study are given due weight, not amended out of existence.

IFFA (Vic) October meeting

Wednesday 31 October, at the Herbarium Hall, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra (Melways Map 2G, 12A). Geoff Carr will speak on The Victorian orchid flora, its ecology and management. If you have any questions about orchids, bring them along! Light supper provided.

4 November excursion

IFFA (Vic) excursion to Anglesea - Flora, vegetation and management of the Anglesea area. Meet at 10.30 at the junction of Forest Road and Ocean Road approx 5 km to the north of Anglesea on the road to Geelong. Mary White of ANGAIR will probably be there to show us around. Enquiries to Geoff Carr, phone (03) 205784. If you need a lift, ring Michele Arundell on (03)2674173.

7 November IFFA committee meeting

Wednesday 7 November, at Tony Faithfull's, 10 Alsace St, East Brunswick, at 6.30 p.m.

13 November Seed collecting meeting

If you collect or grow seeds of indigenous plants, you should attend this meeting and workshop on Tuesday 13 November at 7.30 p.m. at the Herbarium hall. Attendance free. See page 3 for details.

November IFFA meeting

Tuesday 27 November.

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Contributions to *Indigenotes* should be sent to the editors — the deadline for the next issue will be 2 November.

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