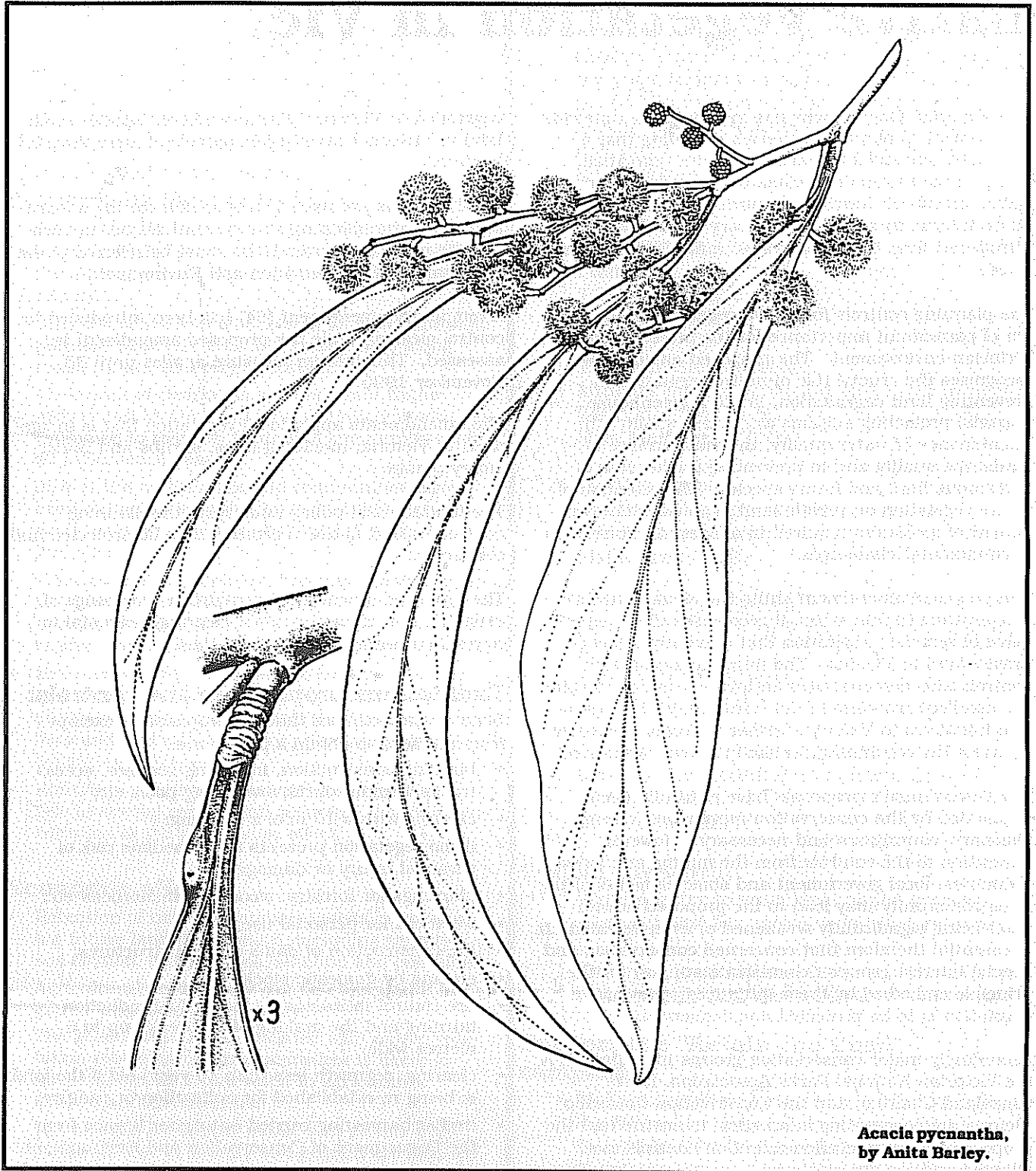


INDIGENOTES



Acacia pycnantha,
by Anita Barley.



Planning controls could save native vegetation in Vic.

The Victorian Government has introduced a statewide amendment to planning schemes providing that a permit is required for clearing of native vegetation. The proposed amendment has been exhibited for public comment; hearings commenced in mid August. As an interim measure a temporary control was introduced from November 1989 until 30 November 1990.

The planning controls for native vegetation retention are of paramount importance for the protection of the Victorian environment. The proposed amendment recognises the crucial role of native vegetation in preventing land degradation, limiting greenhouse impacts, protecting streams and water quality, the maintenance of water quality, the maintenance of landscape quality and in preventing further loss of indigenous flora and fauna species. The retention of native vegetation on private land is an essential component of measures required to address these serious environmental challenges.

The proposed amendment shifts the focus of nature conservation in this state; it recognises the inherent value of remnant vegetation that currently exists on private land in Victoria. The introduction of such controls also demonstrates an awareness that despite the excellent response of the community to revegetation initiatives in Victoria, further action is necessary to arrest the continuing decline in native vegetation.

The Government's proposals have rightfully been applauded by the conservation movement as being visionary, courageous and necessary. However, opposition to the controls from the mining and forest industries, local government and some elements of the rural community may lead to the proposed amendment being significantly weakened or even defeated. It is essential therefore that concerned conservation and special interest groups demonstrate support for the principle embodied by these initiatives: that native vegetation is to be protected and conserved.

Accordingly major conservation groups including IFFA, the Victorian National Parks Association, East Gippsland Coalition and the Conservation Council of Victoria are cooperating in an effort to ensure that the proposed native vegetation retention controls are adopted and are strengthened in some aspects. Our goal is to arrest and, where possible, reverse the decline of native vegetation in Victoria. To do this, political support is crucial. You can help create this yourself (see box), or help fund VNPA's Campaign Officer James Ross. At present, funds to assist in campaigning are limited and financial contributions are urgently required.

About the planning controls

The amendments (S5 and S6) introduce a requirement for a planning permit to remove, destroy or lop native

vegetation in Victoria. The amendment applies to all land in Victoria comprised in parcels of more than 0.4 hectare.

Local councils are usually responsible for the administration of the planning scheme controls but applications to clear areas over 10 ha must be referred to the Department of Conservation and Environment.

A temporary amendment (S4) has been introduced to control clearing while the proposed amendment is assessed. This interim measure applies until 30 November 1990.

The amendments apply to all vegetation that is indigenous to Victoria, including trees, shrubs and understorey plants.

The fundamental policy underlying the planning controls is that native vegetation is to be protected and conserved.

The proposed amendment contains a wide range of exemptions to allow for minor clearing incidental to normal farm and domestic activities.

Exemptions proposed in the controls:

Some of the activities that are proposed as exempt from the need to obtain a permit are:

- building construction, including services, access tracks, tennis courts, swimming pools etc;
- clearing within 10 m of a building;
- if the vegetation presents an immediate risk of personal injury or damage;
- plantings for forestry, woodlots, shelterbelts etc;
- wood cut for personal use;
- the construction of dams or farm structures;
- grazing by domestic stock;
- fire control measures including fuel reduction burning and the making of firebreaks up to 6 metres wide;
- clearing regrowth less than 10 years old if the land is being re-established for cultivation or pasture;
- timber harvesting carried out under licence from the Department of Conservation and Environment.
- where land owned by a public authority or municipal council;
- the removal of native grasses on salinity recharge areas for salinity control works.

A general exemption applies to the Ministers for Conservation and Environment, Health and Education.

Further details about the proposed amendment and full details of the exemptions can be obtained from all regional offices of the Depts of:

- Conservation and Environment,
- Agriculture and Rural Affairs,
- Planning and Urban Growth.

Reasons for the controls

- Over 60% of the state has been cleared in little more than 150 years. Between 1972 and 1987 the average rate of clearing was 15,000 ha per annum.
- Only 5% of freehold land is now forested, although remnant paddock trees and small strips along roads etc are also very important.
- The extent of clearing is a major factor in the widespread incidence of land degradation which is estimated to cost the Australian community up to \$2 billion each year.
- 95% of the native grassland communities have been cleared or modified by the introduction of exotic pasture species and the application of fertilizers.
- Remnant native vegetation has important benefits for nature conservation, gene pool conservation and landscape quality. Remnants are important sources for material for revegetation work.
- Remnant vegetation on private land provides the opportunity to conserve areas typical of the 45% of Victorian land systems and their associated flora and fauna that are not adequately represented on public land.
- Retention of native vegetation has a significant role in storing carbon and reducing Victoria's contribution to the greenhouse effect.

Economic effects

- Retention of native vegetation assists in preventing future land degradation, including salinity, soil erosion, nutrient loss, siltation and pollution.
- Agricultural productivity can be enhanced if integrated with natural vegetation.
- The genetic resource associated with native vegetation protected by these measures is likely to have significant future value in agriculture, forestry and horticulture.
- The benefits of current public and private programs to control salinity and erosion are reduced while clearing of native vegetation proceeds.

The planning controls are part of a range of measures that exist or are proposed to assist and encourage landholders to retain native vegetation on their properties. Other elements of this package are grants for revegetation schemes, salinity control and fencing of remnant vegetation and river banks; rate and tax concessions; information, education and advice; LandCare and conservation covenants.

From a letter from the Victorian National Parks Association

What you can do:

Parliament's support is crucial:

- Visit or write to your local state parliamentarians (Upper and Lower House), expressing your support in principle for the proposed controls on vegetation clearance, and asking them to support these measures. Ask them for their views on native vegetation retention.

Write to:

- The Hon. Joan Kirner,
Premier,
1 Treasury Place,
Melbourne 3002.
- The Hon. Steve Crabb,
Minister for Conservation and Environment,
240 Victoria Parade,
East Melbourne 3002.
- Mr Alan Brown,
Leader of the Opposition,
C/o Parliament House,
Melbourne 3002.
- The Hon. Mark Birrell,
Shadow Minister for Planning and Environment,
325 Camberwell Road,
Camberwell 3124.
- The Hon. Andrew McCutcheon,
Minister for Planning and Urban Growth,
477 Collins St,
Melbourne 3000.

Spread the word:

- Write a letter to your local paper expressing your support for native vegetation retention.
- Call your local radio station; ask them to let you present your views on air.

Support the "Retain the Bush" campaign:

- Make a donation to the campaign through the Victorian National Parks Association, Box 785F GPO Melbourne 3001. (Donations over \$2 are tax-deductible).
- Actively participate in the campaign - contact
IFFA: Graeme Lorimer (03) 728 5841.
VNPA: James Ross or Jenny Barnett (03) 650 8296.
National Trust: John Gertsakis
(03)654 4711.

Weed of the Month:

Pampass Grass: An attractive garden plant or a curse to our bushland?

By Marianne J. Henderson*

Introduced deliberately from Argentina as a garden ornament, Common Pampas Grass (*Cortaderia selloana*) is now common throughout Victoria in both gardens and bushland alike. It is readily available from nurseries and has recently been promoted as being suitable for cattle fodder. The plant has also been used extensively for windbreaks, as its dense form and rapid growth forms an effective shelter.

Pampas grass is quite distinct from naturally occurring grasses, forming dense clumps 3 to 4 metres in height and diameter when mature. The leaves are dull bluish or grey-green, turned from shortly above the sheath so that the scabrous lower surface is uppermost. Flowering from March to May, white, yellowish or purplish inflorescence are produced.

Individual plants can be female, male or hermaphroditic, and are capable of reproducing by seed or vegetative propagation. Female plants can produce up to 100,000 fertile seeds per flower head, which can be dispersed aerially up to 25 kilometres (Duckett & Wilson, 1988). Research on pampas grass in New South Wales revealed increases in basal diameter from 4 cm to 23 cm in 2 years, with leaf length increasing one metre per year (Buchanan 1989). Such figures indicate quite clearly the potential pampas grass has to spread from original garden plantings into other areas, becoming an environmental weed.

Although little is known of its distribution in Victoria, recordings of pampas grass have been made on the Mornington Peninsula, in the Dandenongs, at Port Campbell National Park and the Otways National Park. It favours disturbed sites and is common along roadsides and firebreaks.

As yet there has been little research on the biology of the species in Victoria, therefore there is much to learn of its ability to spread.

Research in Tasmania and observations from existing Victorian infestations enables pampas grass to be classified as an environmental weed as it shows the following adverse effects:

- it reproduces quickly therefore spreads rapidly into bushland;

- it competes with existing vegetation for various resources, hence reduces overall community growth
 - it decreases the aesthetic value of an area;
 - its sharp leaves decrease the recreational value of an area by presenting impenetrable barriers;
 - it provides a harbour for vermin, such as rabbits and foxes.
 - it is highly inflammable, therefore fire hazard reduction and fire control costs are increased.
- (adopted from Duckett & Wilkinson, 1988).

Despite these adverse qualities and the enormous threat pampas grass poses to our existing bushland, one of the biggest concerns is the lack of awareness of the problem. People continue to plant pampas along roadsides, where graders and slashers transfer seeds and cuttings to other locations. An integrated approach to educate the public regarding the problems associated with pampas grass and other exotics spreading into bushland areas is required. This will only occur if local councils and environmental groups working with relevant departments, such as the Department of Conservation and Environment, combine to promote the issue and increase public awareness. It is hoped that this article is a step towards achieving such awareness.

References:

- Buchanan, R.A. 1989, *Bush Regeneration*, TAFE Publications, NSW.
- Duckett, T. & Wilkinson, G. 1988, *Pampas: A serious new weed threat to Tasmania*, Forestry Commission, Tasmania.

Note

Cortaderia jubata, also from South America Pink Pampas Grass is also naturalized in Victoria (e.g. western end of Westgate Bridge, Anglesea and Aireys Inlet) and is potentially as problematic as *C. selloana*, though so far much less common. Both species are naturalized in Tasmania where *C. jubata* is highly invasive (Duckett & Wilkinson 1988). As pointed out by these authors *C. jubata* has an unusual breeding system: all plants are female and apomictic, capable of producing seed without fertilization.

Cortaderia selloana is very widely naturalized in Victoria in many regions north and south of the

* 8 Chelsea Crt, Wantirna Vic 3152.

Profile

Bird Observers Club of Australia

Dividing Range, e.g. Portland, Warrnambool, coastal Otway Ranges in numerous places, Melbourne Region, South Gippsland, Lakes Entrance, Marlo. It has been recorded as naturalized in many vegetation studies. At Bendigo it forms a remarkable vegetation community as a co-dominant with *Juncus acutus* (Spring Rush). This community occurs on a highly unusual substrate - tailing dumps from old gold mines.

Pampas Grass is an extremely serious weed in Victoria and currently occurs in small enough populations throughout its range to eliminate, providing of course that it becomes a prohibited plant and is removed from the horticultural trade. If Tasmanian and (I believe) NSW authorities can prohibit the cultivation and trade of *Cortaderia* species then the onus is on the Victorian authorities to immediately follow suit.

- Geoff Carr.



From "Pampas - a serious new weed threat to Tasmania's forests and parks", Forestry Commission, Tasmania.

The Bird Observers Club of Australia is a voluntary, non-profit organisation which was founded in 1905. There is no other similar conservation organisation in Australia. The BOCA is not concerned with the scientific study of a single species of bird, but with the interaction of birds, people and the environment. Our programs are aimed at the education of the general public, introducing them to their local birds and teaching them how to provide food and shelter in their gardens.

We have a membership of over 3600 in all states of Australia and overseas. There are 10 branches of the club in New South Wales and Victoria, and an Australia wide network of club representatives.

One of the most important things we feel we have done is to establish the Australian Bird Environment Fund for the further protection of Australia's birds and improvement of their habitat.

Our organisation has provided funding to build the bird hide in the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve, help protect of the Mallee Fowl, study the effect of wildfire on forest birds and survey the habitats of various species such as the Red Goshawk and the Orange Footed Scrub Fowl in the Daintree. Also, an ongoing survey is being carried out on birds that occur in urban gardens. Funds for these projects have been raised through membership, the gift shop and donations.

The BOCA Headquarters and Information centre is located at 183 Springvale Road, Nunawading and is open 5 1/2 days each week. We have an extensive library and slides available for loan by members. There are also audio-visual materials and a gift shop. About 400 volunteers help in the shop over the year. Volunteers are responsible for organising a large range of events such as tours and bus trips as well as maintaining the library and records on the computer.

Enquiries about BOCA are welcome on (03) 877 5342.

- Barbara Longmuir (President) and Ellen McCulloch (Publicity Officer).

Coming Events

SEPTEMBER

- 18 Tues 8pm. **Bird Observers Club of Australia** - Illustrated talk. AMP Theaterette, cnr. Bourke & William Sts. All welcome. (03) 877 5342.
- 18 Tues 7.30pm. **Wildflowers**. F.O. Gould League Nat. Hist. Program. With field trip on 20 October. Sheryl Richards (03) 51 1493.*
- 18 Tues 10am-1pm. **Greenlink Box Hill planting & maintenance**. (Every Tuesday). Fred & Fiona Cumming (03) 898 4808 (AH).
- 19 Wed 7.30pm. **Orchids**. FoGL Nat. Hist. Program. With field trip on 22 Sept. see 18 Sept.*
- 19 Wed 8pm. Victorian National Parks Association AGM. Guest speaker: Dr Don Axelrad (Manager: Marine Ecology, DCE) will speak on **Marine Conservation Issues**. VNPA (03) 650 8296.
- 22 Sat 2pm. **F.O. Sherbrooke Forest project afternoon** at Coles Ridge. Meet at the gate at far south end of Grants Picnic Ground (Mel 75 K4). David Wilson (03) 874 4969.
- 22 Sat. **VNPA-Walk Talk & Gawk: Bunyip State Forest**. Grade: medium, full day. Bookings & leader: Jane Calder (059) 65 2372.
- 22 Sat 10am. **Planting and weeding at Arbour Reserve**, Ascot Vale. Melways map 29 ref A9 (from Brisbane St.) Tree Project (03) 650 9477.
- 22-23 Sat-Sun. **ANGAIR Wildflower Show**. Annual event held by ANGAIR (Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Society for the Protection of Flora and Fauna). Conducted walks to wildflower areas, bus trips, displays local native plants, garden varieties, slide show & more. \$2 adults, \$1 pensioners, 20c children. Ms. M. White (052) 63 1975.
- 23 Sun 10am-1pm. **Nunawading Indigenous Plants Project** - workshop. Nunawading Council Horticultural Centre, 82 Jollimont Rd., Forest Hill. Les Smith (03) 874 2641.
- 23 Sun 10am. **Friends of Warrandyte State Park with City of Doncaster - Templestowe**, planting at Yarra St, in from Stiggants Res., Melways map 35, ref C1. Ian or Margaret Burke (03) 844 1060.
- 23-28 Sun-Fri. **Our Common Future: Pathways for Environmental Education**. An international conference organised by the Australian Association for Environmental Education. The central theme has been adapted from the Bruntland Report "Our Common Future" and will cover a range of issues designed to meet the needs of primary, secondary, tertiary and community organisations. Venue: Adelaide University. Contact: Brian Foreman, Ph: (08) 339 3237.
- 24 Mon 7.30pm. **Victorian Indigenous Nurseries Cooperative AGM**. See p 8.
- 24-8 Oct. **Australian Society for Growing Australian Plants Conference in Perth**. 24-27 Sept, pre-conference tour. 28 Sept, Biennial GM. 30 Sept-4

Oct, Conference. 5-8 Oct, tour of south of Perth. PO Box 64, Nedlands WA 6009. (09) 383 1254.

- 25 Tues **IFFA meeting**. Tony Slater will speak on the **Biology of Orchids**. See p. 12 for details.
- 26 Wed 10am-3pm. **F. O. the Yarra activity day**. Galatea Point, Melways map 2D, D7. Judy Rutherford (03) 347 2252.
- 27-28 Thurs-Fri. **Humpback Whale Conference**. Queensland Museum. For further details contact Dr. Robert Paterson, Convenor, Qld. museum. PO Box 300, Sth Brisbane, Qld, 4101.
- 27-30 Thurs-Sun. **Campout-Nooramunga Marine Park survey**. FSG. Julian Grusovin (03) 543 8627.
- 28 Fri. F.O. Warrandyte S.P. slide night by Pat and Mike. **What's in flower and flight**. Margaret Burke (03) 844 1060.
- 29-30. Sat-Sun. **Grampians and Pomonal Native Garden Festival**. Mrs Jan Stewart (053) 56 6237.
- 29 Sat. Excursion to **Little Desert** lodge. Warrambool SGAP. Ms Christine Sullivan (055) 62 9568.
- 30 Sun 10am-4pm. **LaTrobe University Wildlife Reserves Support Group** activity day. George Paras (03) 479 2871.
- 30 Sun 10am. **Planting - Hall Reserve**, Collingwood. Merri Creek Management Committee. Tony Faithfull (03) 484 7687.
- 30 Sun 10am. **Stony Ck weeding** followed by wildflower walk at Professors Hill. Mark Gardner (03) 844 3799.

OCTOBER

- 2 Tues 8pm. **Western Quolls** by Melody or Tod Soderquist. Meeting of Fauna Survey Group of FNCV. Herbarium, Birdwood Ave, Sth Yarra. Alex Kutt (03) 347 0012.
- 6 Sat 10am. **PLANTING - Cootamundra Walk**. Hundreds of willing hands wanted to help plant approx. 3,200 tubes of native grasses. This is the culmination of an enormous re-vegetation project organised by the Cootamundra Walk Management Committee. *If we are to succeed we desperately need your help*. Cootamundra Walk, Williams Rd, Blackburn, Melways 47 K8. Margaret Witherspoon (03) 878 5998.
- 6 Sat. **F. O. Gellibrand Hill Park** activity day. Kerryn Pratchett (03) 306 8180.
- 6 Sat. **F. O. French Island State Park** activity day. Contact Des Quinn (03) 791 2315.
- 6 Sat. **Central Highlands** branch of SGAP **Flower Show**. Paddy Marshall (053) 39 2687
- 7 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.
- 7 Sun 2-4pm. **Greenlink Camberwell. Plant identification and weeding**. Outer Circle - cnr Welfare Pde & Dion St, Burwood. D. Burgess 809 2092.

- 9 Tues 8pm. **Eremophilas** by Norma Boschen. **Shepparton branch of SGAP**, meeting. Shepparton Sth. Tech. School, Wilmot Rd. Julie Riley (058) 52 3718.
- 10 Wed 9.30am. **F.O. Sherbrooke Forest project afternoon** Pound Creek Picnic Ground (Melways map 75 ref F6). David Wilson (03) 874 4969.
- 11 Thurs 8pm. Botany Group meeting of the FNCV - **Oranges and Boronias - the family Rutaceae**, by Hilary Weatherhead. National Herbarium Hall, Birdwood Avenue. Margaret Potter (03) 29 2779.
- 13 Sat. **PLANTING - Cootamundra Walk**. See 6 Oct.
- 13 Sun 2pm. **F. O. 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 Sat 9.30am. **F. O. Organ Pipes** work day. Meet at the workshop. Robert Bender (03) 49 2413.
- 13 Sat. **VNPA-Walk Talk & Gawk: Ironbark Gorge**. Grade: medium half day. A spectacular part of the Werribee Gorge S.P. with a profusion of golden wattle and orchids. 65km W Melb. Bookings & leader: Jack Myers (053) 67 2842.
- 13 Sat. **VNPA walk-Brisbane Ranges N. P. - Wildflowers**. Grade easy 11km. Sutherlands Ck. area. Camp overnight at Boar Gully and join Des Peters on Sunday. Leader: Ruth Stirling (03) 699 7225.
- 14 Sun. 10am-3pm. **F. O. the Yarra** activity day. Galatea Pt, Mel. 2D, D7. Judy Rutherford 347 2252.
- 14 Sun. 10am. Riverland Conservation Society of Heidelberg & Board of Works. **Planting at Yarra Flats**, Ivanhoe. John Merory (03) 499 6737 or Glen Jameson (03) 846 1338.
- 14 Sun. **VNPA walk-Brisbane Ranges National Park-Stony Creek catchment area**. Grade: easy 9km. Explore new day walks. Koalas & wildflowers. Walk with Ruth Stirling on Saturday and camp at Boar Gully overnight. 100km W Melb. Leader: Des Peters (052) 21 5075 (H), (053) 1036 (B).
- 16 Tues 7.30pm. **Butterflies and Moths**. FoGL Nat. Hist. Program. Field trip on 1 Dec. See 18 Sept.*
- 16 Tues 8pm. **Bird Observers Club of Australia** - Illustrated talk. AMP Theatre, cnr. Bourke & William Sts. All welcome. (03) 877 5342.
- 17 Wed 7.30pm. **Pondlife**. FoGL Nat. Hist. Program. With field trip on 24 Nov. See 18 Sept.*
- 19 Fri 8pm. General meeting of The Entomological Society of Victoria - **Chrysomelid beetles** by P. Kelly. Clunies Ross House, 191 Royal Pde, Parkville. Tim New (03) 718 1007 (AH).
- 20-28 **Bird Week**. Bird walks in MMBW parks, outings etc. For further information, contact the Bird Observers' Club (03) 877 5342.
- 20 Sat. **F. O. Werribee Gorge & the Long Forest Mallee**. Walk, Djerrivarrah Ck. - Western Hwy. to Merrimu. Judy Douglas (03) 67 2672.
- 21 Sun. **Bird Observers Club of Australia - Outing to Brisbane Ranges** - own transport needed. Club leaders and members will assist visitors with bird identification. BOCA (03) 877 5342.
- 21 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) 9490.
- 21 Sun. **Excursion to Labertouche**. Heathland group of SGAP. Gill Glass (03) 589 4263.
- 26 Fri. **Bird Observers Club of Australia - Display at Forest Hill Chase Shopping Centre**.
- 27 Sat 9.30am-3pm. **BOCA - Open day** at Headquarters. 183 Springvale Rd, Nunawading. Audio-visual program. Information. (03) 877 5342.
- 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 1.30pm. **Moorooduc Quarry Reserve** project day, picnic reserve. Mount Eliza Association for Environmental Care. Melways map 106, ref A7, meet at Two Bays Road. Anne Read (03) 787 2034.
- 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. Excursion of Botany Group of FNCV - **Coastick 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 10 am **Mount Eliza Association for Environmental Care** project day. See 27 Oct.
- 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.
- 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) 654 6843.*
- The Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers coordinate plantings throughout Victoria and interstate. They take place throughout the week and on week-ends, 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

Tasmanian IFFA group?

IFFA member John Robin writes:

"... A group of approximately 40 to 50 people are interested in setting up a Tasmanian branch of IFFA. There is an ad hoc group of people already, involved in seed collection, growing local natives, farm replanting, pressuring plantation owners to modify their stock, landscape architecture, urban bush management, main road replanting, roadside conservation, and research and documentation of the fast disappearing dry sclerophyll forest types in Tas, most of which is privately owned. There is also Nature Guarantee legislation in the pipeline, but faces an upper house that makes Bjelke's government look like Bob Brown!

If we go ahead and form a branch, we will probably need to incorporate, and that may have some unforeseen consequences for the Vic and NSW branches. Incorporation confers certain legal rights, and enables us to apply for certain grants.

All of this will cost money, which I probably won't have much trouble in getting, but it raises some questions which I hope you could help me with.

To whom will members pay subscriptions, to the Tas. branch or the Vic. branch? If to the Tas branch, will the Vic branch charge a levy (for magazine etc). If so, how much are your admin costs, allowing us capital to operate (postage, phone etc)? Finally if some people are already paid up members of the Vic branch, they may wish to transfer membership. I suggest this is reasonable, and should be done on a pro-rata basis since renewal, less admin costs incurred by the Vic branch for the mag. Any ideas?

It would be nice to have a rep.

from the Vic branch come over and talk with us at the inaugural meeting, but it isn't absolutely necessary. But if any senior, or otherwise informed member is coming over in the next few months, we could set the meeting to suit.

There is a strong conservation movement here which is finally talking indigenous flora and fauna, with quite a deal of indigenous reveg. being done over the last 8 years by private companies, the Hydro Electric Commission, the Dept. Main Roads, Greening Australia, etc.

Although the battle still rages over adequate protection of wet sclerophyll forest and rainforest, there is a terrible dilemma in the green's strategy which, if the Salamanca agreement is ratified, will lift the export woodchip quota and open the flood gates to woodchipping on private land, where 90% of dry sclerophyll forest is found. Most rare and unreserved species are found on this land. The movement is profoundly aware of the implications of this dilemma and are trying to negotiate (or trench warfare) their way around it. Nature Guarantee Legislation is the partial cure, but has little hope because the Liberal Party got to the Tas. Farmers and Graziers Association before we could. But, farmers are easy to personally approach, and the damage may yet be reversed.

A new book is due for release soon, on managing privately owned National Estate Bushland (publisher Tas. Environment Centre, 102 Bathurst St). The title is not yet finalized, although the text is.

Thanking you for your help in flying the flag in the refrigerator of Australia,
Kind Regards, John Robin, C/o P.O. Meander, Tas 7304."

Rare or Threatened Plants in Vic.

This 162 page book by Paul Gullan, David Cheal and Neville Walsh at last is available. It presents the Victorian Rare or Threatened Species List in an accessible form. The book is available from the Dept of Conservation and Environment Bookshop at 240 Victoria Parade East Melbourne 3002 for \$9.95.

David Cheal wrote to IFFA in April:

"...If you have any advise or recommendations as to the threat status assigned any taxon then we would be grateful for your input. We would like the VROTS list to be a summary of the state of knowledge of the status of all vascular plant taxa in Victoria. ..."

Crabb fights European Wasp

The Age reports that the Minister for Conservation and Environment, Mr Crabb has secured \$3000 each from more than 30 local councils to help fight the European Wasp. \$90,000 will be used to buy 30,100 parasites to be let loose on the wasps.

Preserving a Native grassland video:

Ellen McCulloch, Chairperson of the Roadsides Conservation Committee writes that if IFFA forwards a blank video cassette to RCC, they will send back a copy of their video "Preserving Native Grassland". This will be done; any members interested in borrowing the video, get in touch with Dimi Bouzalas, (03) 386 0264.

Inaugural meeting of the NSW branch of IFFA.

The first meeting of the NSW Branch of IFFA was held at the National Trust Centre in Sydney on 1 August 1990. Thirty-four hardy souls braved some of the worst weather Sydney has seen in over a decade to come out to hear Dale Tonkinson (Melbourne IFFA) and Paul Adam (Sydney) talk about the importance of conserving and re-establishing our indigenous native flora, not only for its own sake, but as a habitat for ever-dwindling populations of native fauna.

Widespread interest in forming a NSW branch has been expressed by a number of Sydney residents as well as those from country areas. In the first instance, the NSW branch will become part of the larger Victorian organization, contributing regular articles to *Indigenotes* and cooperating closely with the present Executive. It is hoped that members and other interested members of the general public will bring issues of concern to our notice.

Already three issues have been placed before the embryonic sub-committee; two dealing with the threatened eradication of small populations of the rare plants *Grevillea caleyt* and *Haloragodon lucasii* and the third examining the pressing need to establish an indigenous seed bank in NSW. Several members of IFFA here in NSW are closely connected with the Greening Australia 'Plant a Billion Trees Program' and despite extensive lobbying, the concept of an indigenous seed bank for community tree planting projects has not been given the 'green light'. Lobbying for such a seed bank may be a suitable first project for IFFA (NSW).

Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 11 October; details are listed on page 12. For further information, please contact Judie Rawling (02) 499 2172 (home).

...and some hot gossip:

Judie Rawling (Sydney IFFA contact) has resigned from her position at the National Trust, and will shortly be taking up a position 'National Project Officer: Urban revegetation/regeneration: NSW' for Greening Australia. Congratulations Judie.

Fox virus

The Age, 2 August 1990 reported that the Federal Government will spend \$400,000 during 1990-91 on a national program to reduce the fox population. The Environment Minister, Mrs Kelly, reportedly said that a key element would be the development of a virus to make foxes sterile. The CSIRO would use genetic engineering to try to develop a non-lethal virus that would spread only among foxes and stop them reproducing. A CSIRO spokesman was reported as saying that the project would be similar to the myxomatosis campaigns against rabbits, but more effective and less dangerous. He said it could be seven years before the new virus was ready for widespread use.

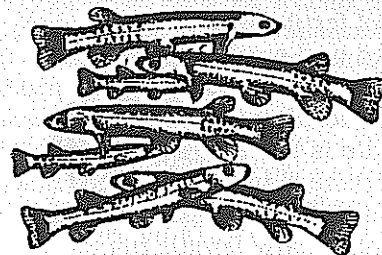
Also, the latest gossip has it that the DCFL is organizing a 'dob in a fox campaign', particularly for the urban area.

Management of native freshwater fish

Two freshwater fishery biologists from the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research have compiled a book "Biological information for management of native freshwater fish in Victoria". Suitable for waterway and resource managers, academics, students, and those generally interested in freshwater fish, this publication covers almost every aspect of Victorian native freshwater fish.

Biological information on breeding and lifecycles, movement, habitat preference, behaviour and physiochemical tolerances is presented in easy to read tables. Species distribution maps, conservation status listing and sections on stream ecology and key management strategies are also included.

The book comprises 165 pages with 28 colour illustrations, and costs \$11.00 plus \$2.00 postage and handling. It is available from:
**Sales and information centre,
Department of Conservation,
Forests and Lands,
240 Victoria Parade,
East Melbourne
Victoria 3002.**



Pampas in Tasmania:

Pampas grass is represented in Tasmania by three species. The two main problem species originating from South America are *Cortaderia selloana* (Common Pampas) and *C. jubata* (Pink pampas). The third species is a New Zealand native *C. richardii* (Toetoe).

C. selloana is the most commonly occurring species throughout Tasmania and occurs as either a female or as an hermaphrodite (flowers containing both male and female parts). The original plants were all vegetatively propagated as female clones and were infertile due to the absence of a pollen source.

Within the last ten years, however, pampas has been propagated from seed imported from New Zealand.

Propagation from seed has led to the establishment of

the pollen-bearing hermaphrodite plant. These forms are now widespread throughout Tasmania and are providing an increasing pollen source for the large female population. Consequently, many previously "infertile" females are now producing large quantities of fertile seed. This seed is dispersed by wind and can invade areas up to 25 km away. Female plants are capable of producing up to 100,000 fertile seeds per flowerhead. The hermaphrodite is the sole source of pollen and can also produce some fertile seed, however the quantity produced is far less than the female yield. In Tasmania, many female plants are currently not producing fertile seed due to a lack of pollen. However the potential exists for a

major population explosion as greater quantities of pollen become available for fertilization.

The importation of seed from New Zealand not only introduced a pollen source for *C. selloana* but also introduced a new species, *C. jubata*. This species exhibits an unusual breeding system in that all plants are female and they form

large quantities of seed without the need for fertilization.

C. jubata is highly invasive and has begun to spread from seed as indicated by the presence of a variety of plant age groups at many different locations within Tasmania. As with *C. selloana*, *C. jubata* has been used for ornamental purposes due mainly to its attractive pink inflorescences and therefore it has been distributed widely throughout residential Tasmania.

Cortaderia richardii is established between Derwent

Bridge and the West Coast, threatening invasion of the World Heritage area, south west Tasmania.

Pampas in NSW.

Judie Rawling reports that in NSW *Cortaderia selloana* is the only problem species in the Sydney region. She knows of no confirmed sightings of *C. jubata*, and reports that *C. richardii* is present in gardens but has not yet escaped. Pampas was declared a noxious weed in NSW in 1986.

See also :

Rawling, J.L. 1988 The ecology and distribution of pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*) in Sydney Bushland' Masters of Environmental Studies Degree, Macquarie University, Sydney, March 1988.

Control options for Pampas:

- Manual grubbing or mechanical removal by excavators etc, followed by the burning of all plant material.
- Fire, followed by chemical weed control of any new shoots. (Note that fire should only be used under the appropriate weather conditions - seek advice from local authorities before burning). Weedwiper application: glyphosate 360 g/l, 1 part plus 2 parts water. (Marketed as Roundup and Glyphosate 360). Wipe both ways on small plants only, less than 40 cm high.
- Spray application (knapsack or watering can): glyphosate 360g/l 20 ml plus 1 litre water, i.e. 1 part herbicide to 50 parts water.

Note glyphosate is absorbed through the leaves and has no effect on the soil. Care should be taken to avoid damaging adjacent plants as a result of spray drift. This can be eliminated if these chemicals are applied with a watering can.

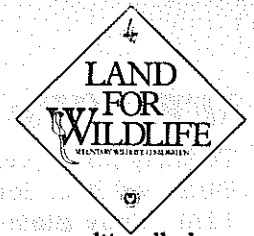
If the removal of the whole pampas plant is not immediately possible, a temporary solution is to carefully remove and burn the flower heads as soon as they appear. This measure prevents further seeding.

Pampas grass can spread from root/shoot matter so it is very important that living material is not transported or dumped.

- from Duckett and Wilkinson May 1988 and other material published by the Tas. Forestry Commission.

How you can contribute to flora and fauna conservation on private land.

By Stephen Platt*



It's a long-standing dilemma. How do you conserve wildlife and wildlife habitat on private land? This dilemma has a solution, and it lies in the self-motivated enthusiasm of the private landholders themselves. Landholder members of the *Land for Wildlife* scheme, by voluntarily conserving wildlife and wildlife habitat on their land, are making a major contribution to the conservation of Victoria's wildlife. You can play a significant role in supporting the *Land for Wildlife* program.

The issue

Two thirds of Victoria is private land. This is the highest rate of private land ownership in Australia. As land in Victoria underwent selection and settlement, it was of course those land systems most suited to agriculture which were most extensively cleared and developed. From a naturalist's viewpoint, the result (after a century and a half of this preferential selection process) is a critical shortage of certain native habitat types formerly associated with those most agriculturally productive land types (primarily the grasslands and grassy woodlands).

Not surprisingly, the wildlife most closely associated with these sought-after land systems has generally been the hardest hit by rural development. Fragments of natural bush which remain within these land systems today generally have major conservation importance, as reservoirs of the original biota and as living reference sites for re-establishment and re-colonisation processes.

The Land for Wildlife Scheme

Since 1981 the *Land for Wildlife* Scheme has attracted the support of nearly one thousand landholders. Landholders in the scheme have volunteered to provide habitat for wildlife on their property by such means as retaining and managing remnant habitat, excluding stock from sensitive areas such as riverbanks, replanting areas with local native trees, shrubs and ground cover, connecting bushland remnants with wildlife corridors, providing a secure abode for waterbirds around a dam and by responsibly controlling their pets. Land for Wildlife is administered by the Department of Conservation and Environment with the assistance of the Bird Observers Club of Australia.

The broader *Land for Wildlife* program will build upon the achievements of the scheme, and provide greater access to information and advice for all Victorian landholders whether they choose to join the scheme or not.

Many landholders have for years sought better ways to manage their land whilst improving its quality for wildlife. It is time to acknowledge their efforts and build on their successes. We also need to access sources of information about wildlife and to integrate wildlife values into other programs, such as LandCare, and activities like Whole Farm Planning.

If we are ever to enlist the participation of currently

unwilling landholders, many of whom may literally be struggling to obtain a livelihood from the land, it will only be by equipping ourselves to understand clearly their position, and by being able to offer positive and sound practical advice or help. For people to think about taking some initiative for conservation, they must feel comfortable with the proposal that's put to them, it must lie within their financial and physical capabilities, and the benefits must be clear and attractive to them.

Land for Wildlife Extension Officers appointed

The Department of Conservation and Environment (DCE) recently appointed a team of Land for Wildlife Extension Officers (LFWEO's) to work closely with landholders on developing options which might jointly benefit landholders and wildlife. LFWEO's will be developing and testing logical arguments, uncovering better techniques and identifying possible solutions to problems landholders face. For example, are there ecologically sound ways that a landholder might sustain, prolong or even improve production, whilst also enhancing the ecological values and health of the property? What alternative sources of income might the property offer, given a more environmental approach to management? Broombrush production for brush fencing might be an example for the north west. Can a landholder realise the benefits to himself, his family, and the community, of improving local environmental quality without reduced productivity? Can the benefits of a sustainable wood supply, shade and shelter for stock and erosion control also provide the benefits from attracting wildlife to the area? How is this done? What are the benefits of natural insect control? What wildlife is local to the area and how might the community benefit from its support? What is the real estate value of retained bushland? LFWEO's will be seeking answers to these questions and providing information to landholders through a *Notes* series and other outlets.

How You can contribute:

Many opportunities already exist for people to contribute to the program. Members of IFFA may wish to write articles for the *Land for Wildlife Newsletter*, contribute to the *Notes* series, offer assistance to the Extension Officers, increase awareness of the program or volunteer to assist with property assessments. They may wish to offer more direct assistance such as providing help in the identification and management of flora and fauna on Land for Wildlife properties or training landholders in the management of flora and fauna. As the program expands additional areas with potential for community involvement will arise.

Further information

If you wish to contribute to the program or require further information about the scheme, please contact Michele Arundell on (03) 650 9424 (bh). Stephen Platt, statewide co-ordinator of the Land for Wildlife program, will be attending the next (25 Sept) meeting of IFFA and will be pleased to discuss any questions you may have concerning Land for Wildlife.

IFFA (Vic) Sept. Meeting:

Tuesday 25 September, at the Herbarium Hall, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra (Melways Map 2G, 12A). **Tony Slater** will speak on the **Biology of Orchids**; if you have anything relevant to show or tell about, bring it! Stephen Platt will also be attending the meeting to answer questions about the Land for Wildlife Program (see page 11). Light supper provided.

October IFFA Committee meeting:

Tuesday 2 October, at 6.30 p.m at Geoff Carr's, 13 Lawson St, East Hawthorn.

October IFFA meeting:

Wednesday 31 October. **NOTE NEW DATE!** Geoff Carr will speak on 'The Victorian orchid flora, its ecology and management'.

IFFA (NSW) next meeting:

Thursday 11 October, 7.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.
VENUE TO BE ADVISED. Speaker: Tein McDonald, Bush Regeneration Officer, Ku-ring-gai Municipal Council, on 'Ecological restoration - what can we learn from each other?'. Tein recently combined business with pleasure, spending several weeks in Southern California inspecting a variety of sites where restoration and rehabilitation projects are currently underway. Tein visited approximately 25 sites over the fortnight and talked with a mixture of government, community and privately-formed regeneration groups. Tein will talk to a set of slides selected to show current trends in a number of vegetation communities including chapperal, grasslands, riparian communities, coastal sage scrub, sand dunes, oak woodlands, and coastal forests.

Following the speaker, IFFA will hold a short general meeting to set future meeting dates and to determine our on-going priorities. Please bring a plate of food. Tea and coffee provided. Further details contact Judie Rawling (002) 499 2172 (ah)

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.

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Contributions to Indigenotes should be sent to the editors – the deadline for the next issue will be 5 October.

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