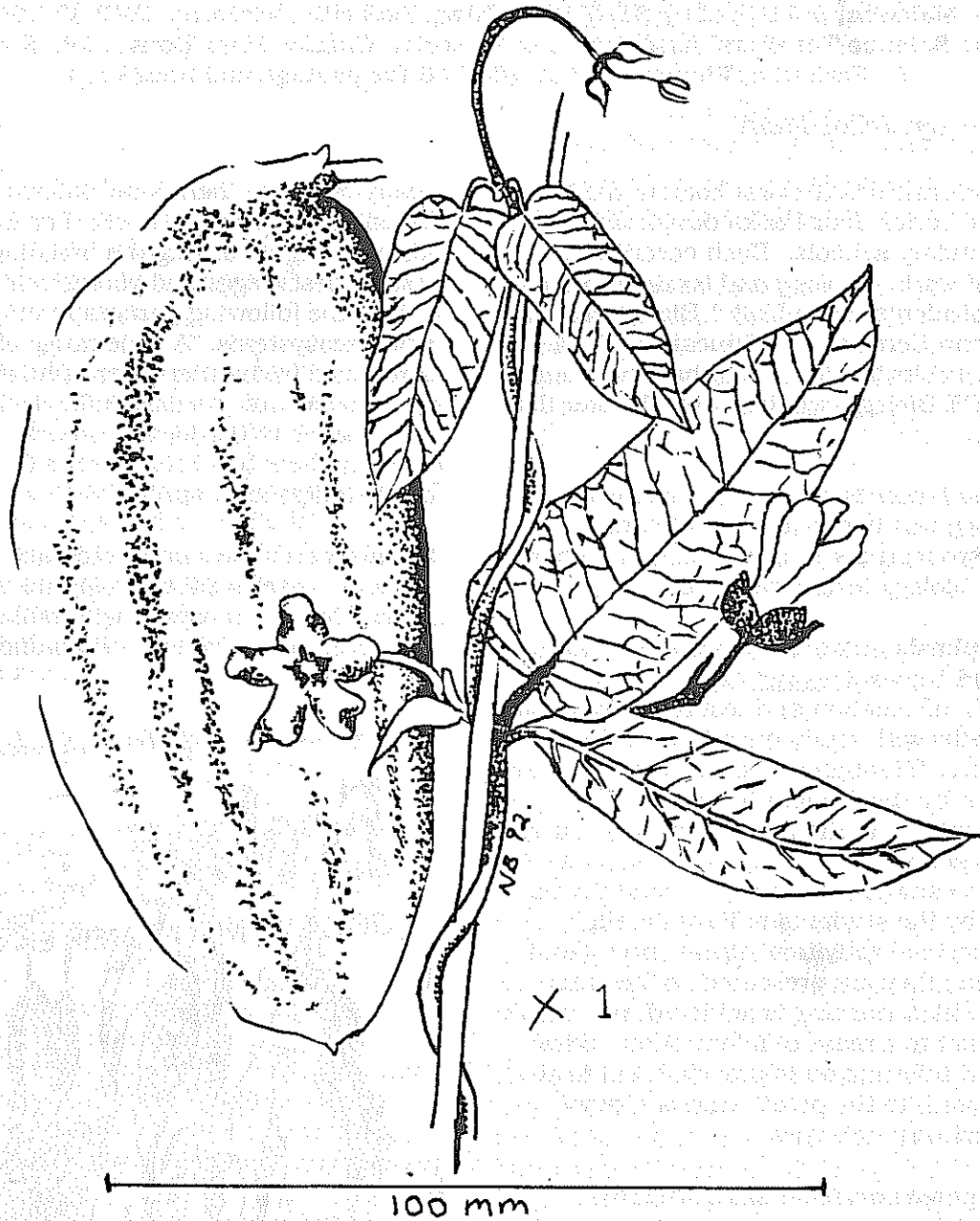
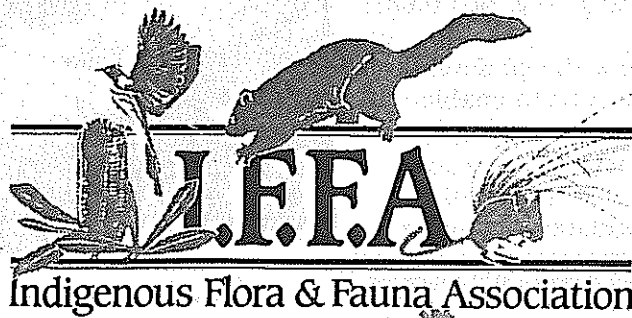


INDIGENOTES



Araujia hortorum
(Cruel Vine)
Drawn by Neil Blake
See page 5.



Book review

ECOLOGY AND ISSUES: Organisms in Their Environments

By Steve Malcolm, published by STAV Publishing, Parkville, Victoria. RRP \$22.00. Available from the Science Teachers' Association of Victoria. Clunies Ross House, 191 Royal Parade, Parkville, Victoria, 3052. (Add \$5 for postage and handling).

Reviewed by John Reid*

Ecology and Issues is the first book in the "Life in Our Hands" series; four books designed for use in senior secondary schools. Each covers one semester of work. *Ecology and Issues* is aimed mainly at students doing Unit 1 Biology in the new Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). It is hoped that books 2-4 (covering the other components of VCE Biology) will be available later this year.

Ecology and Issues is a revelation compared to other biology text books used in Victorian schools. Two features in particular set it apart from other biology texts I have seen.

1. The emphasis on activity-based learning.

Ecology and Issues does not "spoon-feed" the reader with information and test their armchair learning skills with study questions at the end of each chapter. Throughout, it encourages active involvement by the student in a self-discovery style of learning. In chapter 1, a strategy for an issues-based study of ecology is introduced, using as an example the study of Blind Creek, Knoxfield, by the students of Fairhills High School. Practical activities appear throughout the chapters; they are presented as the main means by which learning is achieved, not merely as an adjunct to a mass of information. Basic background information is provided, but is always brief and "to the point", and is always interspersed with activities.

2. The emphasis on local environment.

Ecology and Issues encourages students to study their local environment as the obvious focus for activity-based learning. This approach has two main advantages:

- the local environment is more relevant to a student's daily life than a far away place;
- it is more convenient for students to undertake on-going environmental activities in their immediate environment.

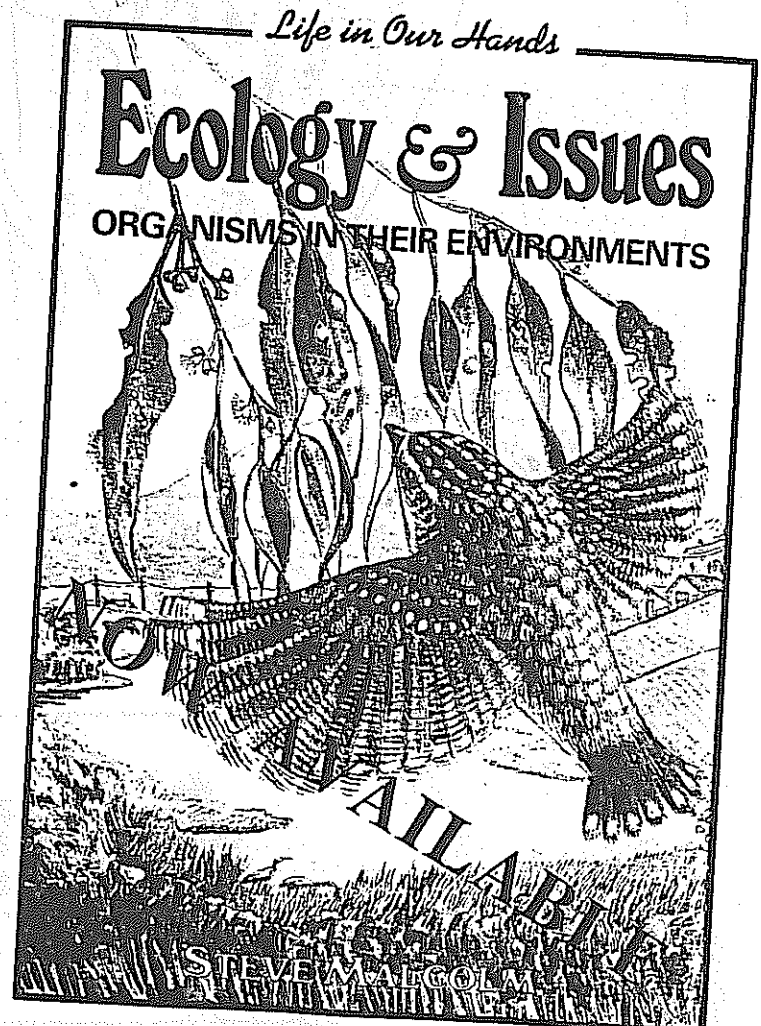
It is also hoped that this approach will develop the attitudes, knowledge and skills to enable students to play an effective part in caring for their local environment and beyond.

Indigenotes readers will appreciate the kind of

* John Reid is a community-based environmental educator.

locally relevant, "hands-on" information that is dotted throughout the book. For example on p. 83, "burning off during the breeding season can destroy nests, eggs and young animals", and on p. 153, the following paragraph on plants of urban ecosystems. "A wide range of species introduced from other parts of Australia and overseas occurs. Occasionally, locally-indigenous (native to the locality) species will occur. Recently there has been a trend towards planting locally-indigenous species".

An information section at the back of the book provides a useful list of ecological issues for each of the following ecosystems: bushland, sea and seashore, inland waters, urban and agriculture.



Getting the Environment into Politics

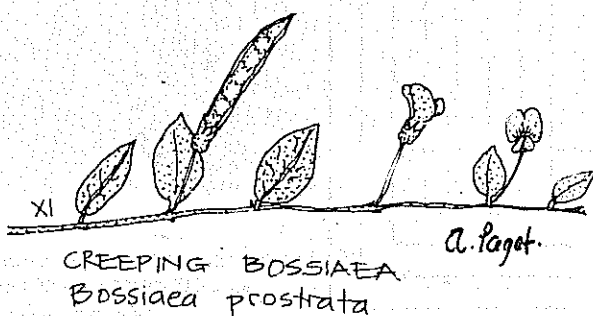
- What do candidates and parties standing for the state election really think about environmental issues?
- Are green candidates truly green?
- Do you want to help green candidates learn about the issues that are important to you?
- Do you want to help the environment by helping green candidates get elected?

Some of the issues included are as follows: fuel reduction burning, firewood use, off-road vehicle use, weeds, feral animals, vegetation clearance, nutrient run-off, river "improvement", garbage disposal and overgrazing.

Another information section lists typical characteristics and components of the following ecosystems: forests of foothills and coastal plains (dry sclerophyll forests), wet forest (mountain forests), coastal cliffs and dunes, inland waters, sea and seashore, saltmarshes, urban and agricultural. I found it very pleasing to read a school text book that mentions, among other things, the Brown Tree Frog *Litoria ewingii* and Saw Sedges *Gahnia* spp. Also pleasing are the lists of conspicuous introduced plants for the two forest ecosystems.

The last chapter in the book, Ecology and the Future, ties together the various aspects of ecology which have been studied in the previous chapters. It includes a section on personal action and lifestyles which finishes the semester's work by emphasising again, the need to take responsibility at the local level and work outwards.

Increased human awareness of ecological systems and humanity's impacts in and on those systems is the key to conservation, globally and locally. This book can make a major contribution; it needs to be in schools at it needs to be used. Indigenotes readers who have any contact with secondary schools are encouraged to let the relevant people know about this excellent publication.



If these issues interest you, then you need to be part of the Green Politics Network. This is a new organisation that will be a link between ordinary people who want to do something to help the environment, and political candidates and parties.

You are invited to the Green Politics Network launch on Sunday 14 June at 2pm at Fawkner Park Community Centre, 62 Toorak Rd. West, South Yarra, Vic (next to the tennis courts).

Bob Brown, Green Independent politician from Tasmania will be our special guest. Independent green candidates and representatives from the Democrats, and the major parties will also be present.

People often have a low opinion of politicians, and want to steer clear of politics because of that. But giving politics a wide berth doesn't improve things. What we need to do is to get 'environmentally friendly' people elected to Parliament. People who will work with the community to make good decisions for our future.

The Green Politics Network has been set up to help people find out about the candidates standing in their electorate; to help them support the campaigns of green candidates, and to generally keep green issues high on the agenda during the state election campaign. It is supported by the Australian Conservation Foundation, the Conservation Council of Victoria, the Wilderness Society and other conservation groups.

We will not be directly endorsing any candidates or parties, but leaving it to you to make your judgement as to who you think is deserving of support.

We need your help and support to make the Green Politics Network work. If you can't get to the launch, or would like to know more, contact Janet Rice on (03) 687 7386. RSVP for the launch on (03) 654 4833 by Wednesday 10 June.

IFFA(NSW) April Meeting

Rural Revegetation

From Mariette MacLurcan

The third Sydney Branch Meeting was once again well attended.

The guest speaker was Greg Stone, rural revegetation consultant and founder of Woodlands Revegetation in Moss Vale. He spoke to us on a topic he had previously written about in *Indigenotes* (Vol 3 no. 8, August 1990) "Indigenous Flora and Fauna - How ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm?" Greg's work involves working with rural landholders to develop ways of maintaining and improving agricultural productivity by preserving and re-establishing the indigenous flora and fauna of the area.

As rural landholders control two thirds of the land in Australia, their role in the preservation of indigenous species is vital. They have an increasing awareness of the importance of the role flora plays in improving the productivity of the land but often lack the funds to implement revegetation programmes. Unlike the city areas where government funding is often available for such projects, individual rural landholders receive no financial assistance.

The revegetation process involves carrying out a number of

procedures. Initially a survey of the relevant maps and reports relating to the property is carried out, followed by a site inspection. This involves identifying the major plant communities and their current condition, determining the presence of any wildlife corridors on the property and nearby surrounds and assessing the habitat potential for indigenous fauna. The presence of an understorey, availability of permanent water, soil moisture levels and litter cover all provide clues regarding the extent the property can support native fauna.

All this information is then linked into the landholder's agricultural requirements - do they want some form of erosion control or to increase agricultural productivity or perhaps to provide shade for stock? At this stage, there is also a need to determine the causes of any problems with the existing vegetation so as to prevent recurrence.

With the collation of all this information, a plan for the rehabilitation or re-establishment of the indigenous species can be formulated and implemented. This may involve the establishment of an understorey, or the

encouragement of native grasses in pasture land with low fertility or perhaps the protection of vegetation from stock.

Greg's enthusiasm for, and commitment to, his work was evident from the terrific talk he gave us and appreciated by everyone in the audience.

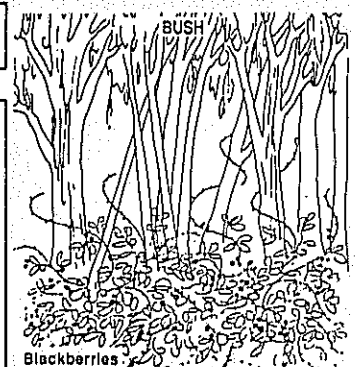
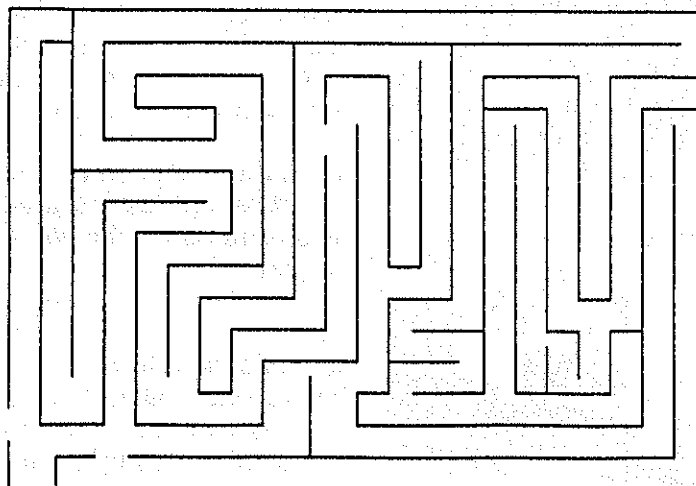
Interested people can contact Greg at Woodlands Revegetation, P.O. Box 348, Moss Vale, NSW 2577, or phone (048) 682959.

Following Greg's talk, general business was discussed including the formation of a new group "Artists for Life", whose aim is to focus attention for endangered species through creating artworks which feature endangered flora and fauna. For further information contact Shirley Page (02)9601991 or Paul Wagner (02)8174302, or write to Artists for Life, P.O. Box 236, Spit Junction, NSW 2088.

Also the idea of establishing an Urban Bushland Register was discussed, with particular emphasis on information on non-documented sites.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 1 June. See the back page for details.

Can you help Jack find his way through the maze so that he can clear the blackberries out of the bush?



From Marianne J. Henderson,
Land Protection Officer
(03) 439 9352

Weed of the month

Araujia hortorum (Cruel Plant, Moth Vine, Kapok Vine) Asclepiadaceae Brazil.

From Rob Scott

The name - *Araujia* is from the Brazilian vernacular, and *hortorum* means pertaining to gardens. The common name 'Cruel Plant' refers to the ability of the nocturnally fragrant flower to kill moths by trapping them by the tongue as they feed (Carr, G.W. 1970). Apparently in Brazil pollinating moths are strong enough not to be trapped. The seeds are reported as poisonous to poultry (Everist 1974) and the milky sap can be irritating.

This perennial vine flowers from August to May and seeds from approximately May to November?. It can climb to heights of 10m (Carr, G.W. pers. comm.) and the silky coma on the seed enables effective wind dispersal. Tony Faithfull reports the seed germinating along Merri Creek indicating possible water dispersal. The seed germinates in summer and autumn given sufficient moisture and has the ability to germinate in mulch.

The attractive white flowers of this plant often make it a welcome spontaneous addition to home gardens. It is reported to be on the increase in metropolitan Melbourne. Cruel Plant is naturalised in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and is naturalised in the Otways at Kennet River (Carr, G.W. pers. comm.)

Given its effective dispersal and germination ability, coupled with a liking for moist areas such as rain forests, riparian scrub as well as coast tea tree scrub this plant has the potential to become a serious environmental weed. It would be a relatively easy job to control it now rather than let it get the chance to explode in the future.

CONTROL

Hand pulling or grubbing seems the most effective control. I have found glyphosate only gives it a headache but 'Garlon' has proved effective at Yarra Bend (Tucker P. pers. comm.). About this time of year the stem can be cut at ground level to provide a quick method of stopping the fruits from opening. Alternatively residents could be asked to pull the fruits off their garden plants if they can't bear to part with them.

Araujia hortorum is illustrated on the front cover

of this issue of Indigenotes, in a drawing by Neil Blake.

Illustrations and descriptions of the plant can also be found in:

Cunningham, G.M. et al (1981) Plants of Western New South Wales, Soil Conservation Service of N.S.W.: Sydney.

Jessop, J.P. et al. (1986) Flora of South Australia Part 2 South Aust. Govt. Printing Div.: Adelaide.

References

Carr, G. W.(1970) - The Cruel Plant, in The Geelong Naturalist Vol 7 (1) pp 2-5.

Everist, S.L. (1974) - Poisonous Plants of Aust. Angus and Robinson: Sydney.

Acknowledgments

Geoff Carr, Ecological Horticulture Pty Ltd.

Peter Tucker, Yarra Bend Park.

Tony Faithfull, Merri Creek Management Committee

Summer from the Murchison Spur.

*The browns of an exotic culture
singe This Land,
here and there, rigid lines of needle greens
offer a dull contrast.*

*Dead sentinels of grey stand forlorn,
testaments to unnatural loneliness.*

*Winds no longer cushioned
scream around these hills,
seeds from another land
hitch rides upon this air.*

*Around the sides of shifting hill,
raindrops push the valley closer.*

*Heavy, clumsy hands have
thrown away the sponge,
this driest Land will dry out
some more.*

*Away in the distance, blue-green hues
shimmer.....*

Adam Muyt.

Coming events:

WORLD ENVIRONMENT WEEK.

1 - 7 June.

Contact WEW Clearing-House

1. Worldwide Fund for Nature; Lynda Jedreski (03) 899 0802,
2. Barbara Hall, Office of the Environment, (03) 628 5487.

SPRING PLANTING FESTIVAL

12 & 13 September.

Conferences

- 24-25 August. **Box and Ironbark Woodland Conservation.** A forum for land managers and scientists working in this threatened and fragmented ecosystem to discuss conservation management, with current scientific and management data available. At: Benalla Town Hall, Nunn St., Benalla. For further details contact Charles Sherwin, Victorian National Parks Association (03)650 8296.

Workshops/Talks

- 29 May Friday. **Direct Seeding field day** St Kilda - details page 12. Rob Scott
- 31 May Sunday, 10.30am-2.30pm. **Community Caretakers' Workshop** to discuss how the Melbourne community wants to continue caring for the environment. A chance to influence future decisions of Greening Australia, Victoria. A "feedback" day to reflect on past activities and participate in future plans. Consider what topics you'd like raised. Call Greening Australia as soon as possible. Free, with a light lunch provided. At Burnley College of Horticulture, Swan St, Burnley. Contact Sandra or Dale (03) 654 1800.
- 1 June Mon 6pm. **Is there an endemic flora on the Victorian volcanic plains?** by Geoff Carr. Organised by the Australian Systematic Botany Society. Astronomer's Residence, Birdwood Ave. Tim Entwistle (03) 655 2300 (W).
- 2 June, Tues 8pm. **French Island: State or National Park? Its conservation,** by Clive Gordes. Organised by Fauna Survey Group. National Herbarium. Felicity Garde (03) 808 2625.
- 11 June, Thurs, 8pm. **Fungi** by Tom May. Botany Group meeting of FNCV. Herbarium. Win Bennet (03) 435 1921.
- 15 June, 8pm. **The natural influences on the trees and shrubs across Victoria-** illustrated talk by Leon F. Costerman. General meeting of the Society for Growing Australian Plants - Victoria. Herbarium. Enid Bowman (03) 882 5297.
- 20 June, 1-5pm. **Revegetation techniques** by Darcy Duggan. **Hillcrest Reserve & other environmental issues** by Caroline Falkingham. Workshop organised by the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society. Blackburn Lake Info Centre, Central Road, Blackburn. Donation at door. Margaret Witherspoon (03) 878 5998.

Excursions and field trips

- 23 May, Sun. Botany Group of FNCV excursion to **Picnic Hill, Wandin North and La-La Falls, Warburton, with a focus on Ferns and Related Botany.** Leader: Cecily Falkingham. Win Bennet (03) 435 1921.
- 23 May, Sun. **Walk, Talk & Gawk: Sherbrooke Forest.** With Gretna Weste (03) 876 1796.
- 23-24 May, Sat-Sun. **Yellow-bellied Glider Survey** at Mt Cole. Fauna Survey Group. Laurie Conole (03) 481 4926
- 30 May, Sat. **Leadbeaters Possum Survey.** Fauna Survey Group field survey. Ray Gibson (03) 874 4408. Also on Sat, 20 June.
- 31 May, Sun 10am. **Bird Walk** with Joy Pagon of the Bird Observers Club. Followed by bird box construction at 11am. Organised by Friends of Diamond Creek. Melways map 21, ref J7. (If you would like to make a bird box, and would like materials supplied, contact Sue at the Living & Learning Centre, Eltham by 20 May). Sue (03) 439 1175.
- 31 May, Sun. **Walk, Talk & Gawk: Kurth Kiln.** Gretna Weste (03) 876 1796.
- 6-8 June, Sat-Mon. **Wilson's Promontory post-fire study.** Fauna Survey Group. Anne Casey (03) 380 8290.
- 7 June Sunday. **General excursion of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria - Mt Toole-be-wong.** Did you read "Marsupial Critics" (Victorian Naturalist) recently? Visit the scene of the crime. See fungi, plants, birds, rocks and possibly animals on a FNCV member's property. Leader: Rod Barker. Bus leaves Batman Ave. at 9.30am, fare: \$20. Dorothy Mahler (03) 850 9379 or 435 8408.
- 14 June Sunday. **Penguin Tour - StKilda.** With Earthcare StKilda. Bookings: Ros (03) 531 5036 (before 9pm)
- 21 June Sun 10am-12noon. **Weed Walk, Lennister Farm,** behind Lower Eltham Park. Melways map 21, ref J11. By Eltham Council's Land Protection Officer. Contact Tony Lock (03) 435 3305.
- 27 June Sat. **Fungi.** Botany Group excursion. Leader: Tom May. Contact Joan Harry (03) 850 1347.
- 5 July Sunday. **General excursion of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria - Fungi.** Leader: Bruce Fuhrer. Fare: \$18.50. Dorothy Mahler (03) 850 9379 or 435 8408.

Restoration Activities

May

- 23 Sat. **Friends of (FO) Werribee Gorge & the Long Forest Mallee.** Tree planting at Old House block, Gravelly track. Janet (053) 67 4229 or Judy (053) 67 2672.
- 23 Sat 2pm. **Friends Of Sherbrooke Forest.** Weed-ing. Vivien Freshwater (03) 754 3093.

- 23-24 Sat-Sun. **Weekend Country Planting - near Beaufort, with Tree Project.** Free Tree Scheme trees to be transported and planted. 2 1/2 hours drive from Melbourne. Contact Bill (03) 528 2615 or Maggie (03) 654 1800 (BH), 370 2594 (AH).
- 24 Sun 10am-1pm. **Nunawading Indigenous Plants Project.** Nunawading Council Horticultural Centre. 82 Jolimont Rd., Forest Hill. Margaret Witherspoon 878 5998.
- 24 Sun 10am-1pm. **FO Braeside Park** working bee. Followed by afternoon walk at 2pm with Ranger. Ron Pearson (03) 584 7443. Also on Sun 14 June.
- 24 Sun 2 pm. **FO Victoria's 1st Settlement site - Sorrento.** Stuart Sherrin (059) 84 1953.
- 28 Thurs 10am-12noon. **Sandringham Community Nursery** - volunteers propagation activities. Sandringham Council Depot, enter Reserve Rd or Talinga Rd. This is on every Thursday and Sunday.
- 28 Thurs. **FO Warrandyte SP** propagation day. This event takes place every Thursday. Other revegetation activities on weekends. Ian or Margaret Burke (03) 844 2659.
- 30 Sat 12noon-4pm. **FO Royal Park West.** Mel 29, C12. A complete vegetation survey is being carried out by the Friends. Adam Muyt (03) 386 7491. Also on Sunday, 31 May.
- 31 Sun 9.30am. **FO Warrandyte SP.** Nursery Day - propagation & direct seeding. Olive Waters (03) 846 4729.
- 31 Sun 10am. **FO Wildlife Reserves - La Trobe Uni.** George Paras (03)479 2871.

June

- 1-5 **City of Heidelberg community revegetation days - School group WEW activities.** Banyule Flats Reserve; Melways map 32, ref G2. Caroline Falkingham 490 4253.
- 6 Sat. **FO Gellibrand Hill Park.** Jenny Caddaye (03) 744 6093.
- 6 Sat. **FO French Island.** Dealing with Coast wattle and Coast Tea tree that have found their way to the middle of the island. Fay or Clive Gordes (03) 772 9668.
- 6 Sat 10am. **Green Link Box Hill.** Working activities day. These events are also held every Monday and Tuesday morning. Council Nursery in Nelson Street, Box Hill, but confirm with Minette (03) 898 1364.
- 7 Sat 9.30am. **FO Werribee Gorge & the Long Forest Mallee.** Tree planting assistance at the new Rifle Range, Bacchus Marsh. Janet Leversha (053) 67 4229 or Judy Douglas (053) 67 2672. FOWG&LFM activity also on 27 June.
- 7 Sun 9.30am. **FO Buckley Falls.** South Barwon lower car park. Planting river banks and slopes adjacent to the track west of the car park. Tony Woolford (052) 43 6340. Planting also taking place on 21 June.
- 7 Sun 12-3pm. **Earthcare StKilda.** Planting wetland saltmarsh & dune plants Approx 3500 plants West Beach StKilda West beach. Neil or Rob (03) 536 1490 (W).
- 7 Sun 1pm. **FO Langwarrin Flora & Fauna Reserve.** Anne Read (03) 787 2034.
- 8 Mon. **Earthcare StKilda.** Sth Melb planting. Paul Osmond (03) 695 8227(W). Also on 22 June.
- 13 Sat 9-9.30 start. **FO Organ Pipes.** Planting, rare & endangered spp. Robert Bender (03) 499 2314.
- 14 Sun 10am-3pm. **FO the Yarra** Galatea Pt, Mel 2D, D7. Judy (03) 347 2252. Also Wed. 24 June.
- 14 Sun 10am. **FO the Helmeted Honeyeater** work group. Meet at the Yellingbo store. Mark Ashby (059) 66 2681.
- 14 Sun 9.30am. **Stony Ck weeding group.** Mark Gardner (03) 844 3799 (H), 844 2659 (W).
- 14 Sun 10am. **URAGE** (Upwey Regional Action Group for the Environment). Weeding to restore indigenous vegetation along Ferny Creek. Rob Stevens (03) 754 3792.
- 14 Sun 3-5pm. **Green Link Camberwell.** Planting - Meet at the corner of Dion St & Welfare Pde. Dianna Burgess (03) 809 2092.
- 14 Sun. **FO Brisbane Ranges N.P. & Steiglitz Park.** Nola Haines (052) 29 6388.
- 14 Sun 10am. **FO Kinglake National Park.** Meet at Wombelano Falls car park for recutting of walking track. Una Klaver (057) 861 395.
- 20 Sat. **FO Churchill N.P. & Lysterfield Lake Park.** Neal Smith (03) 873 2635.
- 20 Sat. **FO Bradshaw Park.** Weeding day. 580 2573.
- 20-21 Sat-Sun. **Weekend Country Planting - Strathbogies,** with Tree Project. Contact Bill O'Donnell (03) 528 2615
- 21 Sun 10am **Men of the Trees.** Deep Rock, Yarra Bend Park. Minette Russell Young 898 1364.
- 21 Sun. 10am-12noon. **Brunswick Tree Group** Moonee Ponds Ck. Eric Ward (03) 388 2123.
- 21 Sun 10am-1pm. **Friends of Merri Merri Park.** Planting day. Melways map 30, ref C9. Barb Miles (03) 482 1618.

The Australian Trust for Conservation

Volunteers offer a wide variety of restoration activities throughout most of Australia. For further information contact ATCV: National Headquarters in Ballarat: (053) 33 1483.

Thank you to all the people who contact us regarding on-coming events their groups are organising. If other people wish to have their events covered, please get in touch with Dimi Bouzalas, (03) 386 0264

Visitors/participants are welcome to all events listed in Indigenotes

Street trees in St Kilda

from Rob Scott

In the light of the recent debate over Plane trees in Swanston Street it occurred to me that other people may be interested in an exercise which Neil Blake and I recently carried out in St Kilda. Over the summer of '91/92 a street tree review was carried out by the council. All comers were invited to put in their two bob's worth and as usual the white cultural heritage lobby with the help of a sympathetic landscape architect overrode the inarticulate and ill-prepared indigenous flora and fauna lobby. Mind you the Plane trees have got a pretty strong foothold down our way.

We found the powers that be were not much interested in the line that local trees had any right to exist because they belonged there or any of the usual indigenous arguments. On the other hand local birds did hold some weight as resident surveys showed. It was not sufficient however to argue for planting back local trees for local birds (that would be to simple!). You see the birds aren't the same ones that were there originally and just try proving otherwise. Besides, food provided by indigenous trees would need to be supplemented by the food once available from the now missing ground flora.

So we set about researching what birds frequented St Kilda and those in the surrounding region which might be attracted here. Then we looked at what food those birds would eat and if it could be provided by street trees. This information is not readily available thus we could only make a start. However we did come up with a list of trees for consideration, some native and some indigenous. An interesting finding was that

flowering time was an important factor to consider in attracting nomadic species which might pass through the area throughout the year.

The approach taken on the suburb level, given that we conceded ripping out all the Plane trees wasn't immediately achievable, was to argue for a network of corridors which could include resident's gardens. The street tree review process drags on and real decisions are yet to be made.

The four books we found useful are listed below as are the local bird lists we used. To our dismay we found that the CSIRO books are not on disc. This is exactly the kind of data base one could begin building on and thus produce a local resource. Thankfully the Royal Australasian Ornithological Union (RAOU) has the Victorian bird list on disc so a start has been made there.

It seems to me that by gathering this and other data a valuable ecological data base could be built up which would be of much greater application than just street trees. Any inquiries or comments regarding our research would be welcome.

Meanwhile this amount of blood sweat and tears to get a few local trees planted coupled with other sagas like three years of negotiations with the Public Transport Corporation, Dept. Conservation and Environment and council bureaucrats to plant some natives along the railway reserve only to be knocked back by a councillor who was concerned that the native plants would attract litter has at least prompted me to initiate and gain council support for schools and residents to

grow and plant trees for the Sunbury Land Care group - they actually want them!

References:

- Barker, R.D. and Vestjens, W.J.M. (1990?) The food of Australian Birds, Vols 1 & 2, CSIRO Australia.
Ford H.A. & Paton, D. C. (1986) The dynamic Partnership: Birds and Plants in southern Australia, The Flora and Fauna of South Australia Handbooks Committee, Adelaide.
Pizzey, G. (1988) A garden of Birds. Angus and Robertson Melbourne.

Bird lists provided by:

- Albert Park - M.E. Talmage.
St Kilda - D. Eades.
Beaumaris - M Longden

Letters:

Thanks

Just a short note to say thanks for your two write-ups about Growback in Indigenotes. We have had quite a number of orders from IFFA members. Thanks again.
-Tim Ofor, **Growback Publications**.

...and congratulations!

Let me take this opportunity of congratulating the Editor and all concerned in the production of Indigenotes. It is a magazine of high reader content with regular features that keep the reader interested all the way through. The calendar of coming events and activities for members and non-members is one that must in the long run be of the most benefit to the environment.

The description of various plants and animals is indeed very interesting. The diagrams depicting the above are also excellent. The magazine is of a very high standard. Keep up the good work.

-Albert Penny, Terip Terip Vic.

Book review:

Helping Nature Heal - an introduction to environmental restoration.

(A Whole Earth Catalog) Edited by Richard Nilsen, 1991, 154 pp.

Available for \$US16 + \$US5 postage from: Whole Earth Access, 822 Anthony St. Berkeley, California, 94710. (Send cheque or money order in US dollars).

Reviewed by Adam Muyt.

Ecosystems in the United States can be legally wiped out, subject to 'Mitigation' laws. 'Mitigation' basically means companies, developers and governments can damage or destroy an ecosystem provided they agree to 'rehabilitate' the land on completion of their works or 'recreate' the ecosystem somewhere else.

Within *Helping Nature Heal* this legalised eco-vandalism is condemned. One US writer notes: "The purpose of restoration is to repair previous damage, not to legalize further destruction. ... we cannot infallibly create new habitat, nor can we decree that the birds, fish and invertebrates will inhabit what we create."

Whole Earth Catalogs have been coming out since 1974. Produced by the US based non-profit Point Foundation, each catalog consists of practical information on a range of alternative technologies and concepts. The emphasis lies with encouraging grass roots involvement in political-social actions and ideas. This particular issue came out last year and focusses on global restoration/revegetation projects.

There are 28 articles in *Helping Nature Heal*, supplemented by 40 reviews of various publications, organisations and equipment of value to regenerators. There are pieces on: rejuvenating decayed urban environments; involving schools in restoration programmes; using computers in planning projects; histories of various regeneration

works; descriptions of numerous regeneration strategies and methods. In a practical sense, some of the information is irrelevant to Australian readers. Still, all of it is broadly interesting as it shows how regeneration takes shape according to local situations and perceptions.

The text is divided into 4 sections: the theory behind environmental restoration; restoration in the US, restoration around the world; the practice of environmental regeneration. Each section is self contained, as are the individual articles. When read as part of the whole though, a powerful message comes through: eco-destruction is being challenged and turned around with intense spirit, imagination and loads of determination by diverse communities across the planet.

Given a largely US readership, the majority of articles are concerned with US regeneration projects, ideas and politics. There are numerous historic, cultural and ecological similarities between the US and Australia. Local readers should gain something from the numerous pieces detailing restoration works in places such as the Everglades, mid-western Prairie grasslands and along Pacific north-west waterways.

Some fascinating articles describe regeneration projects in less industrial countries. Recognising that poverty is the underlying cause of land degradation in poorer countries, different authors show how

more land need not be decimated if the basic human needs for fuel, food and shelter are met. In most places they can be met and then sustained by careful harvesting of local resources. In Kenya a dam of 0.3 acres in size provides locals with 35 tons of indigenous edible fish per year. In the Amazon locals are harvesting forest produce such as rubber and nuts, resisting pressure to clear the land for cattle ranches. In Latin America iguana farming is being researched: iguanas consume less than 5% of what a chook or cow eats to produce an equivalent kilo of meat. (No doubt the bloody red and yellow clown will be planning some way to get kiddies liking Iggy-burgers. Perhaps 'Dinosaurs' is really a McTrojan horse, a vehicle by which tomorrow's consumers identify with the product !!)

It can be hard to maintain a sense of hope when all around us are huge environmental problems needing fixing. This is definitely a publication to lift the spirit of any frayed Green-collar worker.

This catalogue includes information on the US based Society for Ecological Restoration, established through the Uni. of Wisconsin Arboretum to serve "environmental restorationists". This university has been restoring Wisconsin ecosystems for close to sixty years. Membership costs \$US30. Enquiries to: University of Wisconsin Arboretum, 1207 Seminole Highway, Madison, WI 53711.

Snippets:

SEC power poles

It may be of interest to people to know that our local SEC depot tip their old creosoted power poles. In our area they are happy to save the \$50 tipping fee and deliver them where we like for free. Maybe they would make a good 'fence' for rail reserves.

- Rob Scott, St Kilda.

The Keep Australia Beautiful Council (NSW) and the Wildlife Corridor Enhancement Award

The Keep Australia Beautiful Council (NSW) has, over many years, demonstrated its concern to foster environmental awareness and contribute to the improvement of our environment through its annual award program.

The Tidy Towns and Suburban Awards Programs have been developed to encourage and reward the efforts of local communities to initiate and implement environmentally beneficial programs. Award categories such as Recycling, Heritage, Waterways and Foreshore protection and, in 1991, the introduction of a Special Category to feature an issue of current environmental relevance, have provided a mechanism to encourage communities to improve their local environment.

The 1992 Special Category will feature "Wildlife Corridor Enhancement Programs" and we hope to receive a large number of entries illustrating the efforts of local communities to survey, plan for, enhance and manage their local wildlife populations.

Such programs may involve:

- Planned vegetation retention to protect viable wildlife communities
- Tree planting and research programs to foster healthy native wildlife populations
- Development of viable reserves, sanctuaries and corridors (through linking original bush remnants, stock routes etc) and
- Development of local or state government planning policies, management plans etc to foster protection or enhancement of wildlife habitats (other than National Parks).

Entry forms are available from KABC and entries close in May 1992.

For further information about the NSW KABC Environment Awards program, contact KABC at 223B Bridge Road Glebe NSW 2037 or ring (02) 552 1344.

Peninsula Plants released

This book, "a field guide to the indigenous plants of the Mornington Peninsula", is yet another excellent addition to your library. Its focus is on indigenous plants that are suitable for cultivation yet it still includes more than enough information to make it very useful as a field guide. The plants are grouped according to type, e.g. tree, shrub, etc. Each entry includes an explanation of the scientific name, a detailed description and information about flowering times, habitats and cultivation requirements. The drawings are excellent, including flower parts and often the whole plant, enabling the reader to visualize what the plant looks like in the wild and what effect it create in the home garden.

The authors, Kathy and Peter Strickland, bought a farm on the Peninsula some years ago and there was almost no native vegetation left on the land. They wanted to revegetate with local indigenous plants and found that there were none available so they had to collect their own seed and grow their own plants. They eventually started the Kareelah Bush Nursery at Balnarring which specializes in indigenous plants. The book is available by contacting the nursery at P.O. Box 31, Balnarring, 3926.

Wilderness legislation in Parliament

The Victorian Government introduced legislation protecting some wilderness in Victoria into Parliament on Thursday, 7 May. There has been much rhetoric exchanged about the provisions of this bill. Four wheel drive groups have complained about restricted access to bush tracks yet the numbers don't back them up. The bill would close only 325 km of bush tracks out of 13,000 km in Victoria. The Public Land User's Association has said it will make criminals out of many campers by prohibiting fires and limiting access to certain areas yet most of the proposed wilderness regulations are very similar to existing national park rules. One disturbing provision is to excise several hectares from the existing Avon Wilderness for additional campsites; it is certainly not a good precedent. I called the the Minister of Conservation, Barry Pullen, last month to thank him for including the Wongungurra River valley in the Alps (the last known habitat of the rare spotted tree frog) in the bill. His office worker urged me to lobby the Opposition in the Legislative Council to help ensure this bill's passage, although it is still not good enough. Please write to Mark Birrell, Shadow Minister for Conservation or Jeff Kennett, c/o Parliament House, Melbourne, 3000, and ask them to strengthen the bill.

Profile:

Artists For Life

Internationally successful Australian artist Sharon Davson is inviting local businessmen, concerned citizens, artists and galleries to become involved in focussing attention on our endangered species through a new group Artists For Life. Artists across Australia are creating art works featuring endangered creatures and plants.

Artists For Life will feature a Central International Touring Exhibition, depicting art works about endangered species by distinguished artists from many countries including Arthur Boyd, Sharon Davson and David Rankin; with America's James Rosenquist, Tom Wesselmann, Larry Rivers and Nancy Graves; and Russia's Irena Nakhova. Ronald Feldman Fine Arts is lending ten Andy Warhol art works on endangered species. This major exhibition uniting artists globally on this single theme is scheduled for 1994.

However, the real strength in this initiative lies in the extensive peripheral activities. Artists For Life is inviting many art galleries and community groups across Australia to commit to exhibiting works on the endangered species theme.

With added impact and participation from local schools, education bodies and societies is where the strength of the Artists For Life concept really lies. It is aimed at uniting the artist in us all. This is a wonderful way to convey an important message. It crosses all communication and language barriers because art is a visual display. It is colourful and imaginative.

The artists and environmentally concerned people in our area are numerous. Many of us have an appreciation of the arts. This concept is not limited to paint on canvas. Offers to participate have come from dance and theatre groups, embroiderers, potters, weavers and handcraft workers.

Branches of the Artists For Life Association are forming across Australia to coordinate art exhibitions, business opportunities and public relations exercises.

The Blue Mountains Branch is working towards their "Artists For Life Footsteps Festival" to be held during September and October 1992. Artists and environmentalists from Muswellbrook to Mittagong are joining together in a massive festival and walk programme to raise public awareness of endangered flora and fauna in the Blue Mountains region.

The Sydney Branch is creating a unique Window Exhibition in the David Jones city store featuring

original art works. Visually dramatic endangered species themes interwoven with summer fashions will be achieved using the combined artistic talents of many artists, art associations and school groups. The highlight of this Window Exhibition will be the creation of a large 'group' artwork by invited artists and celebrities.

The first international celebrity to have his hand painted and printed in the "Hands up - Artists for Life" was singing legend Neil Diamond. He was joined by two furry friends from Taronga Zoo. This launched the first part of what will be a large publicly displayed mural of hand prints by celebrities from all parts of the globe for the David Jones city store window display in January 1993. The group artworks and these signed hand prints will be auctioned to raise money.

Whether you are active in the arts or simply appreciate the initiative of Artists For Life your support will be appreciated. Would you like to participate?

Sharon Davson started Artists For Life in October 1990, with photographers Graham Ramsay and Terry Barker, and business consultant Fiona McNeill. Shirley Page is the National Coordinator.

Shirley Davson is well known for her travels throughout Australia in the early 1980's in an ex-government bus gaining inspiration for her art, and greater understanding of her environmental sensitivity. She has art works in over forty regional art galleries and civic collections. Her originality and distinctive style has gained Sharon major corporate and private art commissions in Australia, America, England, Japan and New Zealand.

It is not necessary for an artist to donate a work to Artists For Life, although we have been most appreciative of those who have already done so. America's Christo was the first distinguished International Artist to fully donate a major work of art to Artists For Life.

Artists For Life is a non-profit organisation with proceeds going towards saving endangered species and establishing a permanent art exhibition and education centre. For further information, please contact Sharon Davson (02) 894 5371, Shirley Page (02) 960 1991, or by writing to Artists For Life, P.O. Box 306, West Ryde, NSW 2114.

We need your support because TOGETHER WE CAN HELP and put our HANDS UP FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES.

IFFA activities:

IFFA (Vic)

May meeting:

Tuesday 26 May, 8 pm at the Herbarium Hall, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra. (Melways 2G 12a). The computer program 'Vegetation Management Database' currently being developed in Melbourne will be demonstrated. The database is designed to record the characteristics of sites, the characteristics of vegetation at each site (by population, individual, or occurrence of the species at that site), and any management actions undertaken at the site. The program has many other features, and if used across Melbourne would allow easy data exchange. Come to the meeting to find out more, and to get your name on the circulation list. The software should be available in 4 to 6 weeks.

Indigenous Nurseries Network

A meeting will be held before the IFFA meeting on 26 May, at 6 pm. Enquiries to Sue Mills, (03) 387 9779.

Southern Peninsula IFFA

Meeting Monday 1 June, 7.30 pm at the Waterfall Gully Community Centre, Cnr Bayview Rd and Nixon Sts Rosebud South. Joan Peters from the Peninsula Bird Observers Club will speak on "Birds of the Peninsula".

Revegetation field day at St Kilda:

A field day to look at revegetation efforts in St Kilda will be held on Friday 29 May from 10am till 3pm meeting at the car park at Point Ormond, Melbourne (Melways map 67 A3).

Some areas to be looked at are coastal sites including the recently declared penguin sanctuary at the breakwater, a school reserve, school and back yard nurseries and a rail reserve.

I hope we have something interesting to share and that others can contribute valuable comments. Maybe others can host similar events, I would be interested in demonstrating the methods and success of a 1987 direct seeding project at the Organ Pipes National Park.

Please ring Rob Scott or Neil Blake on 5361490 at work or Rob at home on 5343154 if you would like to attend, Rob will try to book the Kiosk on the pair for lunch.

IFFA (NSW) Next meeting:

Monday 1 June, 7.30-10 pm at the National Herbarium (beside the Maiden Theatre), Mrs Macquarie's Rd, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.

"Are you associating with Mycorrhizal fungi?"

A talk by Dr Anne Ashford, School of Biological Sciences, University of NSW. 95% of Australian plant families have an association with mycorrhizal fungi. Anne has been looking at these fungi for over 20 years and will describe how the fungi work, how they benefit plant growth and some of the amazing adaptations of native plant roots. Anne will also discuss the implications for revegetation programmes.

Contact Sally Fisher (02) 970 6486 (work) or Dante Olbrich (02) 953 7461 (home)

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Contributions to Indigenotes should be sent to the editors — the deadline for the next issue will be 5 June.

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