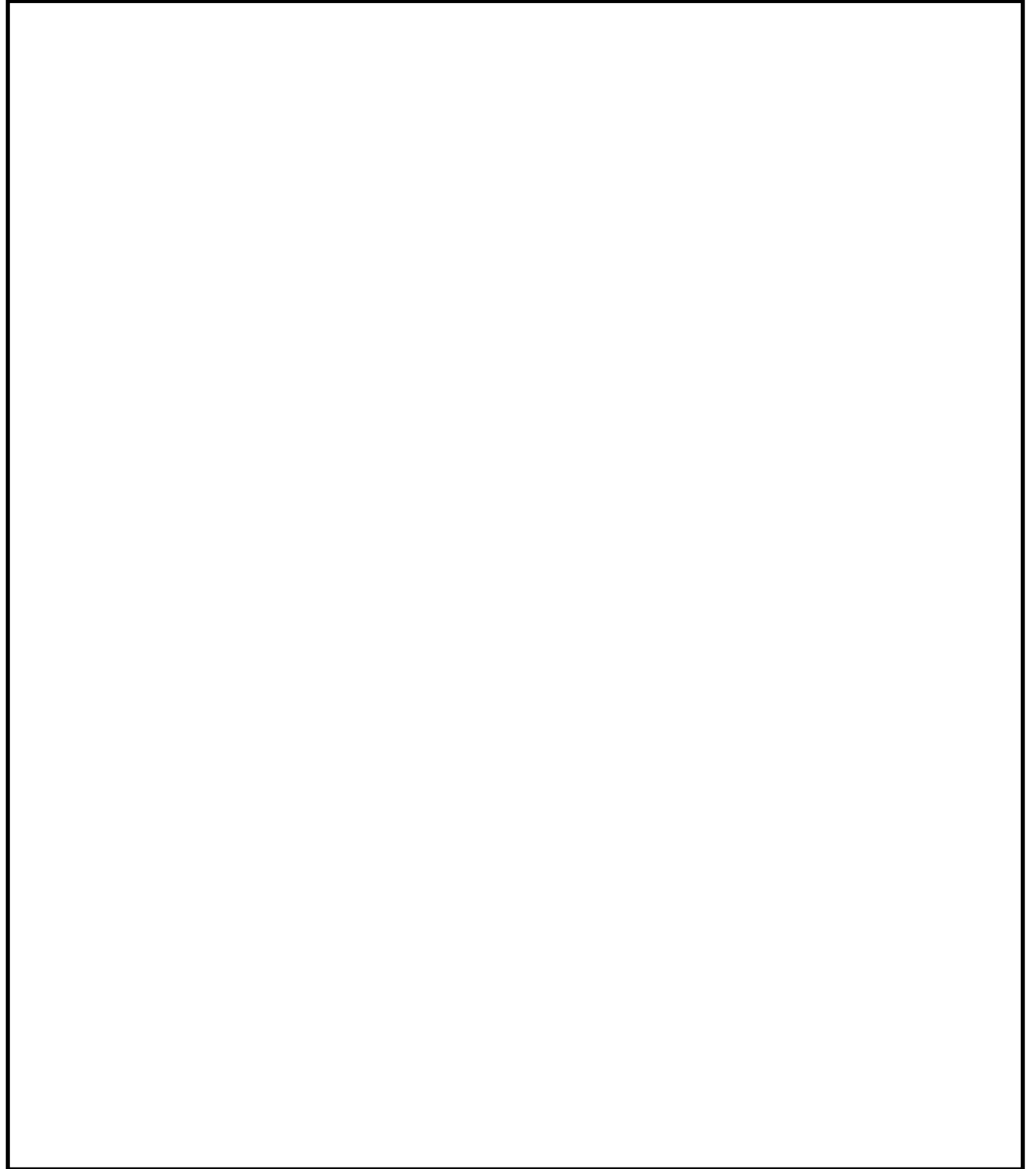


# INDIGENOTES



# The Helmeted Honeyeater and its survival

By Warwick Forge, Director of the Victorian Conservation Trust\*

Less than an hour from Melbourne lies the Macclesfield Creek which winds its way down to the Cockatoo Swamp. On an unusually sunny October morning I had chosen to visit the Victorian Conservation Trust's new land purchase - what is arguably the best breeding ground for the endangered Helmeted Honeyeater.

I walked with Don Franklin, the field ornithologist who was planning to band two baby fledglings. He told me that we would definitely see this rare bird - an increasingly rare privilege.

As we worked our way down through the forest of Silver-leaved Stringybark, Narrow-leaved Peppermint and Messmate, I found it hard to believe that we were so close to Melbourne's burgeoning suburbs. I was stopped in my tracks by the call of the Sacred Kingfisher and marvelled at the range of heathy and tussock-grass understorey.

We soon came upon the best remaining stand of the Mountain Swamp Gum in Victoria which combines with the Scented Paperbark and Woolly Tea-tree to provide ideal conditions for helmeted honeyeaters to breed.

Ideal that is so long as the invading Bell Miners can be controlled. We were almost deafened by the chorusing "ping pings" of these tiny creatures who have come to regard much of this land as their own. It is known that through their aggressive behaviour and sheer numbers, they drive out other birds and it is also known that their presence will often cause eucalypt dieback which results in a lack of manna and honeydew which is consumed by the Helmeted Honeyeaters.

It has been found that removal of bell miners will result in the reintroduction of a wide range of birds including sometimes the Helmeted Honeyeaters. The newcomers devour the insects and the trees flourish once more. I asked Don why the Bell Miners hadn't been eliminated to be told that they couldn't just go in and shoot them all, and furthermore, Helmeted Honeyeaters didn't always move back into the vacated territory. "It is more complex than that". I felt he was being rather too gentle with these noisy intruders who have done so much damage.

We strode on into the swamp with its fast flowing channels of water. We had at last reached the

special breeding area of about 3 hectares.

Of the 67 Helmeted Honeyeaters raised in the wild over the last three breeding seasons 35 (52%) have been raised on this private land. In the 1989/90 season, this site contributed 18 of the 19 young (95%) fledged and many of these took up new breeding territories on the adjacent Yellingbo State Nature Reserve.

All of the birds are banded and their breeding habits and relationships are fully documented. It is vital to learn as much as possible of their genetic profiles and social habits.

Don told me of the legendary "super pair". They had produced eight babies who had all grown up successfully to fly off to new territories!

The bush had gone very silent and Don said that we were now in the heart of their territory. Suddenly, I saw one and was startled by his striking yellow, black and olive/grey colouring. "He left the nest last season" Don said, "and his parents have let him have some of their territory. He will stay here for life now. The females fly around looking for mates and one joined him for a time, but she seemed to get sick of him, because she flew off to greener pastures. We're still hoping he'll attract another mate for the breeding season".

Suddenly the bush burst into life and there were four or five of them flying around us and calling out. They were bold and assertive. Then, just as suddenly, having inspected us, they disappeared again.

After these moments of intense excitement, we moved away in search of the nest containing the two fledglings that Don had come to band. Eventually, we came upon it, about the size of a large orange located in a Scented Paperbark with the swampy currents swirling about beneath. Don had been carrying a small ladder which he now erected. He carefully stepped up and peered into the nest. "They've gone" he said bleakly. "Predators", he explained, claim about 80% of eggs and fledglings. Kookaburras, ravens, ring-tailed possums and snakes are believed to be the culprits. We have found that placing cages around nests will usually protect them although it can also deter breeding".

# Field trip report:

## Cobberas area

29 Jan.-1 Feb. '93

### The struggle for survival

We walked away quietly, absorbing the significance of this further loss. The struggle for survival had been a gradual success story since the count in 1988 heralded the population drop to an alarming 40.

Skilful habitat management and revegetation have led to a steady population increase and there are now 67 living in the wild. REcent losses incurred by the captive breeding programme at Healesville means once again that those in the wild are completely vulnerable to a single catastrophe such as a bushfire which completely wiped out the remaining populations at Cockatoo and Upper Beaconsfield in 1983.

On the other hand the recent purchase of this 119 hectares by the Victorian Conservation Trust captures some of the most pristine and valuable bushland and raises hopes that numbers in the wild may continue to build and re-colonise elsewhere. It also provides habitat for many other creatures such as the endangered Leadbeater's Possum (once thought to be extinct), the Southern Emu-wren, Lewin's Rail and Spotless Crake. There are Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos and Blue-winged Parrots that visit from time to time and numerous more common native birds which live and breed there.

### \$100,000 Appeal

While this recent acquisition supported by Government has been invaluable, more land urgently needs to be acquired and carefully managed. The Trust is seeking \$100,000 to add to existing funds to enable further purchases. Donors should send their cheques to the Victorian Conservation Trust, 49 Spring St, Melbourne 3000. Donations to the Trust are tax deductible and for information, ring 651 4040.

Following the great success of the 1992 IFFA trip to the Providence Ponds area, eight people headed for the alps near the source of the Murray River on Victoria's long weekend for Australia Day. It was oppressively hot over most of south-eastern Australia, but perfect around Cobberas, thanks to the elevation of around 1,300 metres.

As with the Providence Ponds trip, a highlight was the breadth of knowledge and interest of the people there, liberally shared. IFFA meetings and *Indigenotes* make membership worthwhile, but our trips offer much more.

We wanted to see some of the rare species for which the area is renowned, and we weren't disappointed (even though the wildlife was a bit sparse):- we saw skeleton fork-fern (*Psilotum nudum*), shrubby raspwort (*Haloragodendron baeuerlinii*) and an endemic bent-grass (*Deyeuxia pungens*) at the Ballantyne Hills near Suggan Buggan; Australian anchor plant (*Discaria pubescens*) and austral toad-flax (*Thesium australe*) in snow-gum woodland; and marsh leek-orchids in an alpine meadow. But for me, the best part was the great display of wildflowers, such as a carpet of fairies' aprons (*Utricularia uniflora*), golden weather-glass (*Hypoxis hygrometrica*) and pale vanilla-lilies (*Arthropodium milleflorum*) - all set in a park-like landscape. Daisies were prolific, and for orchid nuts there were two species of greenhoods, one spider-orchid, a deep pink form of parson's bands, and three leek-orchid species in flower.

The warm weather on the Sunday made a dip at the Buchan River cascades near our camp a welcome treat, followed by an atmospheric light show around sunset due to thunder storms to the east.

*En route*, we stopped at Providence Ponds and saw flowering in a single swamp three species of *Utricularia* (and another species not flowering), austral ladies' tresses (*Spiranthes sinensis* - an almost cosmopolitan orchid), woolly water-lily (*Phylidrum lanuginosum*) and other aquatics. We also saw the grassland around Lake Omeo, and many paddocks around Benambra which contain almost 100% native species, predominantly spear-grasses and wallaby-grasses.

Encouraged by all this, I intend to organize an autumn trip to a destination unknown. Suggestions will be gratefully received. If you're interested in this or a snow trip, you might like to let me know, since delays with *Indigenotes* meant that notice of the last two trips was cut very short.

Graeme Lorimer, Phone (03) 728-5841

# Book Review:

## **Flying Colours**

by **Pat and Mike Coupar**

I first saw this book at its' launching in Warrandyte last December. On that occasion Pat and Mike Coupar waxed lyrical about the amazing process that produced this book. Their interest in butterflies and moths started rearing its head eight years ago and they found that no good references existed. They began to accumulate information through research, correspondence with CSIRO in Canberra and most of all through observation. They spent lots of time in the field looking at the adults and larvae as well as their food plants. The process eventually came indoors; their study became the studio where caterpillars were fed, nurtured and photographed. They would spend hours waiting for just the right shot of a butterfly. This book is the result of all those years of intense effort.

I glanced over it for thirty seconds at the launch and decided to purchase it straightaway. It has proven to be just as valuable as I first thought it would be. Moths, butterflies and their respective larvae are very common but before this book there has not been an inexpensive and quality reference to help people learn more about them. This book is it and every naturalist should go out, buy it and carry it around with them or simply use it to identify the moths attracted to the lights on their veranda at night. It is designed to be useful in all of Southeastern Australia.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part includes information about the ecology of moths and butterflies as well as how to collect and rear them and attract them to your garden. This section is a short but informative introduction to the

Lepidoptera, moths and butterflies.

Most of the book is made up of detailed species descriptions. There are 66 species of moths and 23 species of butterflies described. It is not an exhaustive list, it only includes the most commonly seen. Each description includes the common and scientific names and information on occurrence, foodplants, the caterpillar, the pupa or chrysalis and the adult as well as two excellent photographs, one of the caterpillar and one of the adult. These excellent pictures are the best part of the book. Each photo is of live specimens on real live food and settings. Every photograph is clear and beautiful, allowing easy identification as well inspiring great appreciation of the beauty of each species.

I cannot recommend this book highly enough. It may be the first easily available and easily used reference on moths and butterflies but it will probably prove to be best for many years. It is available from the Greens Bookshops on Flinders Lane in the city; IFFA members are still entitled to a 10% discount on books if they present their mailing labels.

- **Reviewed by Lincoln Kern**

Plains,  
trains and  
fencing -  
paste  
article  
here

**Source: VNPA Newsletter12:1**



# Coming events:

**March 7: Clean Up Australia Day.** For enquiries, call the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (Vic) (03) 412 4230 or the relevant department in your state.

## Conferences/Workshops/Talks

25 Feb, Thurs. **Computerised Maintenance Scheduling.** A seminar including speakers, demonstrations and debate for Public Open Space Managers, Landscapers, Field Staff and Students. Today's landscape challenges include:

- demand for increasing cost effectiveness,
- public asset accountability and
- competitive tendering.

Make an informed decision - is this for your workplace?

Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne.

Enquiries: Judy Carrigan: (03) 655 2347,

Fax: (03) 655 2348. For more information see 'Snippets'.

1 March, Mon 6pm. **Classification and identification of species which lack distinguishing characters - focusing on *Laccaria* (Fungi)** by Tom May. Seminar held by the Australian Systematic Botany Society. National Herbarium, Sth Yarra. Tom Entwisle (03) 655 2313.

6-8 March, Sat-Mon. **FRIENDS Sixth Biennial Conference.** The conference is to be held at Rawson Village over the Labour Day long week-end. Beautiful surroundings, good accomodation, top speakers, stimulating discussions, historic Walhalla and walks in Baw Baw NP are just some of the attractions. Pamphlets prepared by the Friends Network Committee are available from the VNPA office, Phone: 650 8296.

11 March, Thurs 8pm. **Botany Group** (of FNCV) meeting, by Kim Robinson: **An Unnatural Flora.** National Herbarium. Win Bennett (03) 435 1921.

15 March, Monday 8pm. **Hakeas;** an illustrated talk by Hazel Blackney. Organised by the Society for Growing Australian Plants - Vic. Herbarium, Birdwood Ave, Sth Yarra. Enid Bowman (03) 882 5297.

17 March. **Sixth Bush Regeneration Techniques Course begins.** For more details see "Snippets". Or call Elizabeth Donoghue at Save the Bush on 654 4711.

## Excursions and field trips

21 Feb, Sun. **Walk, Talk & Gawk: The Pines.** An old sand quarry, a pine plantation and degraded remnant native vegetation are being transformed into a recreation/conservation reserve for the Frankston and broader community. Fascinating insights and easy walking. BYO lunch. Leader: Geoff Durham (03) 523 5559

27 Feb, Sat. **Coastal Peninsula.** Leader Tom Sault. Botany Group excursion of FNCV. Meet at the new indigenous garden on Arthur's Seat at 10am. Contact Joan Harry (03) 850 1347.

27 Feb, Sat. **Leadbeater's Possum Watch.** Please contact Ray Gibson (03) 874 4408 for more details. (Special note: A Friends of Leadbeater's Possum groups is being formed. For details contact Felicity Faris, Threatened Species Network, 10 Parliament Place, Melb. Phone: 650 8296.)

28 Feb, Sun. **Walk, Talk & Gawk: Skeleton Creek.** The mysteries of this western wetland will be revealed on this easy half day walk. Extensive salt marshes and intertidal flats with many birds. Bookings: W. Teltscher (03) 481 3882.

28 Feb, Sun. **Willows and Watery Things** - a picnic tea sojourn with the Friends of Warrandyte SP at Black Flat. Margaret Burke (03) 844 1060.

6-8 March, Sat-Mon. Labour day long week-end in the **Central Highlands** with the Fauna Survey Group of the Field Naturalist's Club of Victoria. Will include spotlighting for possums and trapping. Contact Ray Gibson, Ph: 874 4408 for details.

13 March. **Walk, Talk & Gawk: Warrandyte SP.** Geoff Durham (03) 523 5559.

19-21 March, Fri-Sun. **Volcanoes, Aborigines, Birds - South-Western Victoria.** Leader: Dr John Mitchell. A tour of South-Western Victoria Hosted by The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria This excursion arranges to view the various volcanic features in the vicinity of Hamilton. These volcanoes erupted over the last 20,000 years forming an area rich in interesting features of international fame. The group will visit the Byaduc Caves and the Mt Eccles National Park, studying volcanic craters, lava caves and tunnels, volcanic vents, etc. Aboriginal structures such as the Aboriginal stone village and fish traps will be visited. Many other features of interest. Those interested should contact Dorothy Mahler on (03) 435 8408 as soon as possible.

21 March, Sun. **Walk, Talk & Gawk: Werribee**

**Sewerage Farm.** A fascinating wetland of international significance with over 250 species of birds recorded. A memorable experience. Leader: Geoff Durham (03) 523 5559

- 27 March, Sat. Fauna Survey Group (of FNCV) **Mt Cole final trip.** Contact Russell Thompson on 434 7046 for details.
- 27 March, Sat. Botany Group of FNCV: **Weeds at Courtney's Road.** Leader: Margaret Corrick. Contact Win Bennet (03) 435 1921.
- 28 March, Sun. **Walk, Talk & Gawk: Lake Mountain.** An alpine playground in winter but a peaceful mountain retreat in summer with alpine heathlands, sphagnum bogs, snow gums and spectacular views all revealed under the guidance of the noted naturalist, Jane Calder. BYO lunch. Bookings: W. Branagan (03) 818 6102.

## Restoration Activities

### February

- 24 Wed, 10am-3pm. **FO the Yarra** Galatea Pt, Mel 2D, D7. Judy (03) 347 2252. Also on Sun, 14 March.
- 25 Thurs. **FO Warrandyte SP** propagation day. This event takes place every Thursday. Other revegetation activities on weekends. Ian or Margaret Burke (03) 844 2659.
- 25 Thurs 10am-12noon. **Sandringham Community Nursery** - volunteers propagation activities. Sandringham Council Depot, enter Reserve Rd or Talinga Rd. This is on every Thursday and Saturday.
- 27 Sat 2pm. **FO Sherbrooke Forest.** Project afternoon at Coles Ridge site. Continuing ivy, holly, pittosporum "eradication" next to the ex-pine plantation. Meet at the south end of Grant's picnic ground, Kallista (Melways map 75 K4). Vivien Freshwater (03) 754 3093.
- 28 Sun 11am-4pm. **FO Royal Park West.** Hand weeding and seed collecting. Adam Muyt 481 4682. Also Sun, 28 March.
- 28 Sun 10am-1pm. **Nunawading Indigenous Plants Project.** Nunawading Council Horticultural Centre. 82 Jolimont Rd., Forest Hill. Margaret Witherspoon 878 5998.
- 28 Sun 10am. **FO Wildlife Reserves** - La Trobe Uni. George Paras (03)479 2871.

### March

- 1 Mon, 10am. **Green Link Box Hill.** Activities day. These events are held every Monday and

Tuesday morning, with Monday being Nursery work. Council Nursery in Nelson Street, Box Hill, further details, contact Minette (03) 898 1364.

- 6 Sat. **FO Gellibrand Hill Park.** Jenny Caddaye (03) 744 6093.
- 7 Sun 9.30am. **FO Buckley Falls.** Tony Woolford (052) 43 6340.
- 7 Sun 12-3pm. **Earthcare StKilda.** Neil or Rob (03) 536 1490 (W).
- 7 Sun 1pm. **FO Langwarrin Flora & Fauna Reserve.** Anne Read (03) 787 2034.
- 13 Sat. **FO Dandenong Ranges NP.** Contact Graham Barstow (03) 758 6935.
- 14 Sun 10am. **URAGE** (Upwey Regional Action Group for the Environment). Weeding to restore indigenous vegetation along Ferny Creek. Meet at cnr Dean & Morris Rd. Rob Stephen (03) 754 3792.
- 14 Sun 10am-1pm. **FO Braeside Park** working bee. (Also on Sun 28 Mar.) Ron Pearson (03) 584 7443.
- 14 Sun 3-5pm. **Green Link Camberwell.** Seed collection & weed maintenance. Meet at the corner of Dion St & Welfare Pde; Melways map 60, ref E7. Dianna Burgess (03) 809 2092.
- 20 Sat 9.30am. **FO Werribee Gorge & the Long Forest Mallee.** Judy Douglas (053) 67 2672.
- 21 Sun 10am **Men of the Trees.** Deep Rock, Yarra Bend Park; Melways map 2D, ref D6. Minette Russell Young 898 1364.
- 21 Sun. 10am-12noon. **Brunswick Tree Group** Moonee Ponds Ck. Eric Ward (03) 388 2123.

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.

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 on (03) 650 8296.

**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.**

- 28 Sun 11am-4pm. **FO Royal Park West.** Hand weeding and seed collecting. Adam Muyt 481 4682. Also Sun, 28 March.

Nature Conservation: the role of networks  
paste flyer here.

# Letter:

## Green Coloured Glasses

*There is no exploitation so perfect than that which has the appearance of freedom. Rousseau.*

Since the Victorian Government announced its Employee Agreement legislation there has been legitimate outcry that wages and conditions would be cut. Yet the Federal Government's own work-for-the-dole scheme, Jobskills, operating since June 1992 which unambiguously reduces wages, has produced only a hypocritical silence.

The revegetation industry has been eager to take on a cheapened labour via city councils and other bodies without question. It is as though anything that can be construed to be good for the local environment seen through the distortion of our green-coloured glasses is by definition a good thing. A more appropriate name for this scheme is Jobslave.

Jobslaves are paid a fulltime wage of \$280 per week (less tax!) for a period of six months. They spend 80% of the work week working for the employer and the remaining 20% in some kind of structured training. The starvation wages are entirely funded through contractors or "brokers". They also sign a contract with the "broker". Sound familiar?

Like all the forms of slavery of course the employer gets workers for free, but the most disgusting aspect of the Jobslave scheme is the huge profits being made by the brokers and training providers.

Brokers receive \$3500 per Jobslave to cover off-the-job training and administration plus an extra \$200 per Jobslave to cover the additional costs of their "coordinating function...". This amounts to at least \$134 per jobslave per week of the Jobslave's employment. If that \$134 was added to the \$280 weekly wage the Jobslave would be getting something approaching a minimum wage, instead it is being creamed off by a growing band of "training entrepreneurs".

Effectively Jobslaves are being forced to forgo 25% of their wages to pay for the training, which they undoubtedly desire and which all others receive at no personal cost for no other reason than that they are unemployed.

The starvation wage rates of Jobslaves were enshrined in the Local Government Award in September 1991. This was done with full agreement of the top echelon of the Australian Services Union which purports to represent council workers as part of a shabby deal with Federal Government and the ACTU.

The implications at the revegetation crew level is that workers working side-by-side will be paid at two distinct levels. Surely this is an untenable situation. The demand for revegetation workers will decline creating a pool of unskilled and experienced workers having to compete at lower wages. Also more resources and time will have to be devoted to manage this exploitation. Is this development good for the revegetation movement?

Whilst we consider ourselves privileged to possess our higher green consciousness it can never be defended by exploitation of the unemployed. the adoption of Jobslave should be exposed as the self-serving solipsism it really is.

- John Sago, 7/26 Darebin Rd, Northcote 3070.

# Snippets:

## Nature and Society Forum

The Nature and Society Forum is a recently established organisation that aims to promote understanding, throughout the community, of the processes of life and of the human place in nature. It encourages informed discussion about the implications of this understanding for individuals, communities and society as a whole.

The Forum's activities reflect the view that Australia is in an ideal position to play an imaginative and constructive role internationally, in protecting the biosphere and in promoting human health and well-being.

Activities include discussion groups, courses on requested topics, and public meetings. Two informative and thought-provoking magazines have been published to date, but the Forum needs more members if this is to continue. Annual subscriptions are \$25 (\$10 conc.). For more information, write to the Nature and Society Forum, GPO Box 11, ACT 2601.

## Bush

### Regenerators

Save the Bush is currently expanding its pool of casual bush regenerators in and around Melbourne to cope with an increasing work load. If you have a relevant qualification, and/or some experience either paid or voluntary in bush regeneration, and think you might be interested, Save the Bush would like to hear from you.

Call Save the Bush on (03) 65447111 for more details.

## 6th Bush

## Regeneration Techniques Course

Save the Bush is now taking enrolments for this course which will take place over an eight week period from 17 March with a break at Easter. It is part-time with a three hour lecture each Wednesday evening and an all day practical session each Saturday. The venue will be the Frankston Campus of Monash University and various bushland reserves in the region. The course covers practical and theoretical aspects of bushland management, including indigenous and weed species identification, plant form and function, bushland and fire ecology, vegetation surveys and mapping, soils and erosion control, weed ecology and weed control methods, management of bushland communities, planting and planting policy, and occupational health and safety.

For further enquiries or enrolment forms, ring Elizabeth Donoghue at Save the Bush on (03) 654 4711, Monday to Thursday.

## Computerised Maintenance Scheduling

A seminar including speakers, demonstrations and debate for Public Open Space Managers, Landscapers, Contractors, Field Staff, and Students. The aim of the day is for participants to decide if CMS can be of benefit to their work situations. Thursday 25 February, 1993 Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne  
Contact Judy Carrigan, Ph. (03) 655-2347

## Green Web Network

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) have begun a program aimed at linking habitat and parks across the state. The DCNR program builds on a concept developed by the Victorian Farmers Federation and Neil Lawrence from the Dundas-Black Range landholder group in Western Victoria: *"Farmers, roadside managers, government extension officers, conservation groups, native plant enthusiasts, community service clubs and other people active in land care can grow corridors of trees, shrubs and other understorey to form a network across countryside and town - a green web."*

The Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) is playing a consultative role in the DCNR initiative, asking for comments on the idea from community groups. VNPA is seeking information about areas of land with potential to form part of a Green Web system. They would also like to hear from individuals and groups who are interested in being a part of a community network.

A Green Web network will make community expertise and local knowledge about corridors accessible to DCNR, while also providing for local groups to comment on corridor planning in their area. By setting up communication channels and defining common aims, a combined government and community effort may at last see a Green Web of corridors linked across Victoria.

If you would like more info or if you know of any likely corridors, please contact Charlie Sherwin at the VNPA, 10 Parliament Place, East Melbourne, 3002 or Phone (03) 6508296.

### New member:

## Mornington Peninsula Local Plants book

The councils of the Mornington Peninsula have followed up their Pest Plant book with another excellent little volume on indigenous plants. It is in the same format, one species to a page with excellent pictures and info on form, foliage, flower and fruit plus brief comments on where they grow naturally and how to grow them in gardens. Fifty three species are described including trees, shrubs, grasses and herbs. This book is of excellent quality and free to local residents and other interested parties, please contact Ian Stevenson, Conservation Officer at the Shire of Mornington for more details on (059) 754155 or the Parks and Gardens Depts. of Frankston, Hastings, Flinders or Mornington Councils.

## Agriculture and Victoria's Environment

The Office of the Commissioner for the Environment has published another State of the Environment Report. It presents the first comprehensive review of the historical and continuing impacts of agriculture on the Victorian environment. The resource report assesses the condition of agriculture's renewable and non-renewable resources - water and soils. It also identifies key indicators for monitoring agriculture's main environmental impacts into the future and proposes a statewide system for monitoring land degradation. This amazing report is 630 pages with 70 maps and can be obtained for \$30 from Information Victoria, 318 Little Bourke St., Melbourne.

Robyn Beckett of Pennant Hills, NSW, north-west of Sydney, recently joined IFFA. She works part-time for the Urban Bushland Management unit of the National Trust (NSW) and is the co-ordinator of the Darling Mills [State Forest] Bush Regenerators group. The flyer she sent us eloquently states "How to be bush friendly" .:

1. Don't dump at all - that includes grass clippings\weed\prunings and soil, they introduce weeds. Start a compost bin and store it away from the bush.
2. When bushwalking keep to the tracks.
3. Don't get a cat - if you already have one make it wear a bell and keep it inside at night.
4. If you adjacent to bushland, encourage it into your garden rather than spreading your garden into the bush. Do not cut down trees or mow down the native shrubs and grass.
5. Don't grow bushland weeds.
6. Don't wash your car in the road or driveway, if you wash it on the lawn the lawn soaks up the nutrients.
7. Join a bush care group.
8. Write letters on behalf of the bush whenever you perceive a threat; to politicians, local council and bushland managers.

## Membership

IFFA membership costs  
\$40 for non-profit organizations,  
\$50 for corporations,  
\$25 for individuals and families,  
or \$20 concession.

**Membership includes  
11 issues of Indigenotes per year.**

*Memberships should be sent to the Secretary,  
Michele Arundell,  
2/81 Alexandra Ave South Yarra Vic 3141  
Include your name, address  
and phone numbers,  
and a bit about yourself.*

## Merri Creek needs Jobskills staff

Merri Creek Management Committee is looking for additional staff to employ for 6 months under the Jobskills programme. Applicants must have been unemployed and receiving benefits for at least 12 months, and have some demonstrated interest in reveg or restoration. Contact Tony Faithfull (03) 4847687 (w) for details.

# IFFA activities:

## IFFA (Vic)

### Next meeting:

Tuesday 23 February at 8 pm at the Herbarium Hall, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra (Melways map 2G ref 12A). Ron Waters will speak on the Indigenous snakes of Victoria - their biology and habitat. All welcome.

### Lake Mountain excursion:

Sat 20 March. Day trip to cool temperate rainforest and associated vegetation in the Marysville Lake Mountain area. In particular we will be looking at mosses and liverworts and monitoring the effect of disturbance (especially roads) through canopy opening and dust deposition. Transport may be arranged through the trip organiser. For more details contact Dale Tonkinson, (03) 654 1800(W) (03) 499 3085

### Committee meeting:

Monday 15 March at Lincoln's, 13 Slater St Northcote 7.00pm onwards. Contact Lincoln for details 4814682.

## SPIFFA

Mon 1 March Waterfall Gully Citty Centre, Cnr Bayview Rd and Nixon St, Rosebud South at 7.30 pm. David Matthews Shire Fire Officer will talk on Fire issues in the Shire. Contact Mark Adams (059)851122.

### Indigenous Nurseries Network:

Tuesday 23 February 6.30pm. (before main IFFA meeting). Topic for the meeting to be arranged. Contact Murray Ralph (03) 419 3040.

## NSW activities:

### Next meeting:

Monday 5 April 7.30 - 10.00pm at the Maiden Theatre, Mrs Macquaries Rd, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney. **John McCarthy, horticulturalist and ethnobotanist, will speak on "Aboriginal plant use and modern horticulture - a future in common?"** Inappropriate land use in Australia has lead to the present day environmental degradation. John has studied how indigenous people use the land to obtain their food, medicines, tools and building materials. He will describe the potential for combining traditional land use methods and modern horticultural techniques to restore and enhance the land's productivity. John will also discuss how to apply this knowledge to the home garden. Contact Sally Fisher (02)9706486 (work), Penny Brown or Andrew McGahey (02)9133681 (work)

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### Office Bearers:

**President:** Dale Tonkinson, 22 Stortford Ave, West Ivanhoe 3079. (03) 654 1800(work).

**Vice-President:** Roger Jones, 90 Bayswater Rd, Kensington 3031 (03) 372 1582 (home)

**Secretary:** Michele Arundell, 2/81 Alexandra Ave South Yarra Victoria 3141. (03) 867 4173 (home)

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