

The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



June 2009 - Issue #161

Journal of The Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

P.O.BOX 541 LEETON 2705

ISSN-1327-1172

Website: www.mfn.org.au

Objects of the Club

To facilitate and promote the knowledge of natural history, and to encourage the preservation and protection of the Australian natural environment, especially that of the Murrumbidgee River Valley



Our local geology - Rowena Whiting

Sandstone outcrop on Mt Bunganbil looking across to Mt Barrat showing part of the syncline. Conglomerate rock (on

CONTENTS

OFFICE BEARERS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS	2
FISHWAYS – TALK AT MEETING	2
NEWS FROM NEVILLE	2
GEOLOGY OF THE NARRANDERA HILLS.....	3
SEED COLLECTING AT WILLBRIGGIE	4
CAPERTEE VALLEY TRIP	5
A LOOK INTO THE PAST – TERTIARY PERIOD.....	6
SHOW AND TELL.....	7
WEATHER WISE	8
BIRD TRAIL WORKSHOP.....	8
SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE / SHORT FILM NOTICE.....	8
SIGHTINGS	9
UNUSUAL HERON SIGHTING.....	9
COMING EVENTS CALENDAR.....	10

CONTRIBUTIONS

**For the next issue by
Wednesday, 1 July 2009**

To Rowena Whiting

Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com

Phone: 6953 2612

**Short Film and
Pasta Night is on
Saturday 20 June**

Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Office Bearers and Annual Subscriptions

President:	Bill Moller	6960 1341	Editor:	Rowena Whiting	6953 2612
Vice President:	Nella Smith	6959 1210	Committee:	Colin Sell	6962 1864
Vice President:	Eric Whiting	6953 2612		Max O'Sullivan	6953 7376
Vice President:	Joanne Tarbit	6962 9441		Betty Bradney	6959 2901
Secretary:	Jan Cameron	6953 2202	Web Co-ordinator:	Johanna Botman	6963 4855
Treasurer:	Phil Tenison	6953 4869			

MEETINGS ARE HELD EACH MONTH, EXCEPT JANUARY

FIELD TRIPS NORMALLY TAKE PLACE ON THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND.

LEETON MEETINGS SECOND THURSDAY - Seminar Room 1, Block 34 at Dept. Primary Industry at 7.30 PM

GRIFFITH MEETINGS FOURTH THURSDAY - Conference Room, Dept. of Primary Industry AT 7.30 PM

INTENDING NEW MEMBERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS WELCOME.

Membership enquiries:

Leeton	Eric Whiting	6953 2612	Griffith	Joanne Tarbit	6962 9441	
Narrandera	Nella Smith	6959 1210	Coleambally	John Wilkinson	6954 4129	
Annual Subscriptions:	Family	\$45.00	Adult/Single	\$35.00	Journal only/Concession	\$25.00

Opinions expressed by authors are their own and do not necessarily represent the policies or views of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

Fishways are helping our Native Fish

Our guest speaker at the May Leeton meeting was Lee Baumgartner from the Narrandera Fisheries. His talk focused mainly on fishways in the Murray-Darling Basin. He began by telling us about the migration habits and requirements of native fish. Some live in salt water but breed in fresh (grayling lamprey), some do this in reverse while others live and spawn in fresh water. The latter which include the Silver and Golden Perch, and Murray Cod need to move up stream to spawn. Many other factors come into the picture like water quality, temperature and flows most of which have been modified with man's regulation of the rivers. Migration is essential to ensure dispersal of species and maintain genetic fitness in communities.

The Native Fish Strategy is aiming to rehabilitate native fish communities. The role of the fishways is to allow the movement of fish through the man-made barriers. There are a number of types; some of which are vertical slot, denil, lock, rock ramp. The vertical slot has proved the most successful for native fish. Lee, with illustrations of their structure, explained how they operated extremely well.

It seems to be a ongoing job of improving the structures so that the native fish will be able to reign supreme in our waterways. Our next visit to the rivers will have us taking a closer look at the weirs and their fishways. Our thanks go to Lee for giving up his time to come and talk to us; a very informative evening.

Rowena Whiting

An email from Neville James on 21 May

Hi everyone, just a short note to let you know where I am. Guess what – where ol am right now is in the middle of all the rain. I am at Kyogle and have been here since Monday night, I was going to camp up in Lamington Plateau but as I got closer I saw that the cloud was so low I would have been camping in the cloud so I booked into the caravan park at Kyogle and it has hardly stopped raining since. Last night we were warned we might have to evacuate in the morning but so far we are still here, There was tremendous wind for a while but no damage, though there were a few caravans getting their roll out awnings down quickly. I have got a few leaks in some of the seams but nothing serious, if I had an ordinary caravan I think I would have packed up and left but with the canvas being so wet every thing would get wet when I folded it up and as it is only \$16 a night so I might as well stay here until it dries out. It should start clearing up Saturday.

Before that I was going ok with a good time in the Capertee Valley bird watching and beautiful scenery; got a bit cold at night though. Except for the weather every thing else is going well, when I leave here I will be heading off to Toowoomba then Frazer Island. I hope you all got my new email address.

Regards to you all, Neville

Correction to last issue. The labels for two of the photos in Eric's article 'A Look into the past' were incorrectly placed. The photo labelled club-moss should be horsetail and that labelled horsetail is a club-moss.

Geology of the Narrandera Hills

A trip around the hills was a great thing to do on a lovely Saturday, especially with different eyes on and led by Barry di Salvia. All the information he gleaned was from a Geological Survey done by the NSW Government Geologist in the 1960's and put it together as a geology excursion for Narrandera High School students.

Our first stop was the railway cutting just east of Narrandera where we observed folded strata and cross bedding probably deposited as a sandbank at different times in geological history. The fine grains in the cutting indicate that they were deposited by slow flowing rivers towards the mouth or in shallow seas. We also observed grey granite, as dolerite which is an igneous rock and a rock with red-brown crystals (porphyry) which were brought to the rail cutting for ballast?

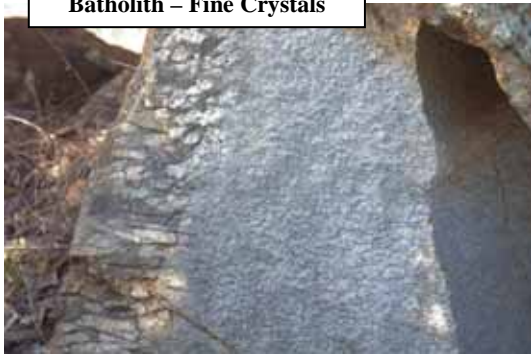


Folded Strata – Cutting

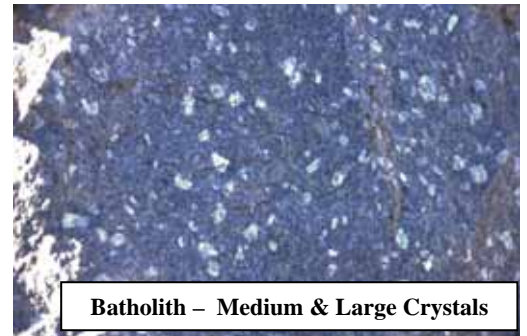
We continued north of Grong Grong . Just there at the top of the hill is the edge of a batholith (a large body of igneous rock formed

beneath the Earth's surface by the intrusion and solidification of magma) that extends from Grong Grong to the other side of Ardlethan. We know it's the edge because the crystals were relatively small. Further down the road another outcrop of this rock was seen, this time with medium sized crystals, with a bit of pegmatite and some black tourmaline crystals indicating slower cooling, towards the centre of the batholith.

Batholith – Fine Crystals



Another road cutting, an outcrop of quartz-feldspar porphyry known as granophyre of different sized crystals was observed further on.



Batholith – Medium & Large Crystals

Mt Bunganbil was interesting in many ways. We walked over an

outcrop of brown and purple phyllites which is a result of low-grade metamorphism of shale, the stage before slate. An outcrop of coarse upper Devonian conglomerate indicating a faster moving river.

When viewed from the north-west corner, Mt Bunganbil exhibits a large reverse fault with a throw of 45 metres. A small fault can also be seen from the road further down. Because the vegetation has become more sparse in recent times, these features were quite easy to see. For the birds a large flock of Sittellas flittered down the trunks of trees in search of grubs.

A small syncline was

observed on Mt Crystal, Barry told us about quite a bigger one that stretches from The Rock to Tabletop Mountain near Albury!

Square Knob (Head) is very interesting. Some believe that Square Knob is a headland of the mouth of an ancient river. At first glance we observed some huge boulder conglomerates, some boulders are about 0.5 m across. Further down you can see an impressive feature, possibly one of the best examples in the southern hemisphere - an unconformity. Silurian beds (dipping north at 34-40 degrees) are overlain by upper Devonian conglomerate (dipping south at 10 degrees).



Square Knob Unconformity
Photo by Penny Williams

We then passed through the sloping Colinroobie Hills to the right and left of the Barellan Road. The dips of these sediments (mainly upper Devonian) show that the road is built on an eroded anticline (arch)

We came away from this excursion with different eyes.

Nella Smith

(see page 5 for a map showing the route taken)

Seed Collecting at Willbriggie - 31 May 2009

There was only a meagre turnout for the seed collecting exercise, but those that came along were keen to get the job done. The plan was to collect a good sample of Belah *Casuarina cristata*, Black Box *Eucalyptus largiflorens* and Creeping Saltbush *Atriplex semibaccata*. Most of this we expected to find on the eastern side of the Willbriggie swamp.

After sorting some gear, buckets, bags and secateurs etc. we struck out for the east. Even though we knew it was very dry we were still surprised at just how dry it was. You know dear reader, most of us live in houses with gardens that are generally well watered, I know there is a drought raging just beyond our garden fence but it never ceases to surprise me that when I get out into the bush, just how dry things are and the impact the current climatic is having on the plants that are



trying to eke out an existence in this place.

Well eking they were certainly trying, but struggling seemed more the result. It was apparent that the swamp hadn't seen any water for quite some time (all the Cumbungi and Phragmites was dead) I was surprised to see the Belah showing such stress, Shocked when I realised that many of the trees had dropped its seed. However, we did manage to find a few trees with sufficient full cones for collection but had to sample the whole area and most of the seed was high, thankfully I had brought along the pole pruner but I forgot to include an extra extension for the rope that operates the cutter, I had to sacrifice my belt for the task of dropping the high limbs. The problem with that was keeping the pants up,

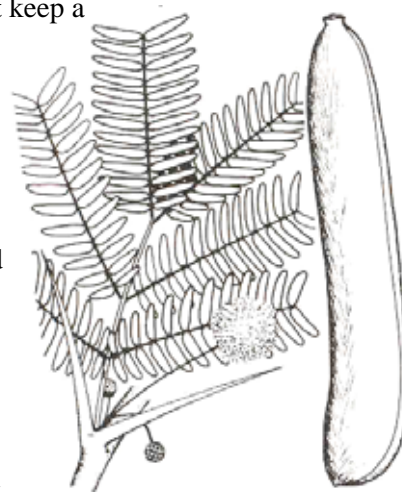
as you know when you raise your arms your waist becomes smaller, so I was caught in the constant battle to keep my pants up while trying to raise my arms to do the required lopping, you can just imagine the picture.

We had finally managed to accumulate a quantity of cones that we thought sufficient to make us struggle to carry back to the vehicles, much to my relief, I could finally put my belt back on and walk about without hanging on to my pants. We did also manage to collect a bag of Black Box fruits and spent some time collecting Creeping Saltbush but it was a bit sparse and impoverished by the lack of water, and the wind had strengthened quite a bit which made it very difficult to collect the seed without having it all blow away, so we cut our losses and had a bit of lunch and went home.

There wasn't much in the way of birdlife (compared to previous visits) I didn't keep a list (Max probably did if you are interested) but there were quite a few Eastern Rosellas, the odd Honeyeater, a few White Breasted Woodswallows and of course Pee Wees, Magpies and Ravens, but as I said I was collecting seed not keeping a list of birds.

We did encounter an interesting plant growing on a pile of dumped soil, it was Acacia like but had strong thorns not usual for Australian species of Acacia. I thought it was some species of Mimosa, Col Sell said he had seen it before and that it was an Acacia.

Col Rang me the next day to let me know he had identified it as Mimosa Bush *Acacia farnesiana*, It is listed in "Plants of Western NSW" which does not identify it as introduced. However, in Flora of NSW Vol2 P392 the entry for this plant is not prefixed with the * denoting "introduced", however, the description includes the comment "Probably a native only of tropical America and probably introduced into Australia prior to European Settlement." That certainly leaves scope for some interesting speculation as to how the plant was introduced.



Acacia farnesiana
From Flora of NSW Vol2 P392

It's leaves and pods are highly nutritious, testified by the fact that it is readily consumed by livestock despite the thorns, and it is extensively cultivated in European countries for use in the manufacture of perfumes. And I forgot to take a photo, typical.

Bill Moller

Capertee Valley trip - 8-10 May 2009

Tempted by the prospect of seeing a Regent Honeyeater and being able to camp on a private property in the Capertee Valley, I convinced Nella that such a trip was a worthwhile exercise despite the distance.

The Birds NSW group was having a weekend campout there and we were encouraged to join them. Added to this, Neville was setting out on his epic journey for 6 months and had planned to make Glen Davis his first port-of-call – yet another good reason to go.

Nella and I arrived at the property around 2pm and set-up camp and did some late afternoon birdwatching before Allan Richards, the leader for the weekend, arrived.

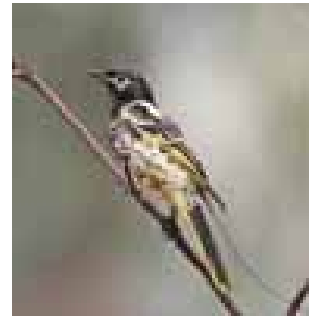
Birding was very good and the target species – the Regent Honeyeater was easily spotted in flowering eucalypts on the road down from Capertee township into the valley. The trees were full of various honeyeaters – Fuscous, White-naped, Yellow-tufted, Yellow-faced, White-eared, Striped and, of course, the ubiquitous White-plumed. Little Lorikeets were also common.

Along Crown Station Road several other Regents were spotted at close range and, on an afternoon visit to both sites by some latecomers to the group, 10 birds in all were counted.

The weather was very chilly overnight and a thick fog blanketed the valley until 9.30 or so each morning. Unfortunately, the Swift Parrots had not yet arrived (they are there now) and despite our best efforts, no Plum-headed Finches were spotted over the weekend. Other birds of note that were seen by various people over the weekend were; Gang Gang Cockatoo, Musk and Little Lorikeet, King Parrot, Turquoise Parrot, Flame, Hooded and Scarlet Robins, Chestnut-rumped Heathwren, Rock Warbler and Bell Miner to name a few of the unusual birds for we inland birders.

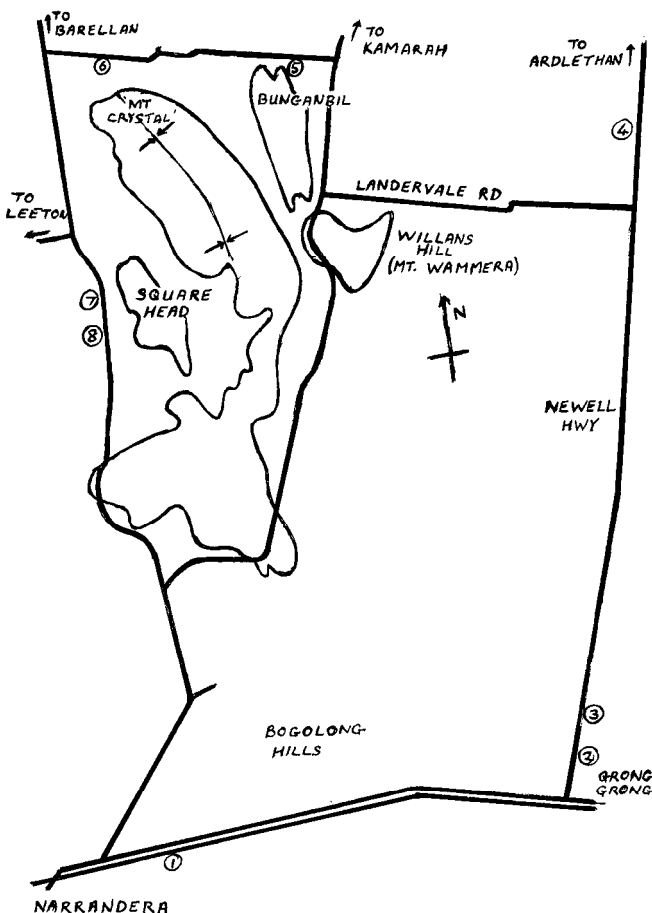
Despite the distance we were pleased with the trip and were both happy to see the Regent Honeyeater in all its glory.

Max O'Sullivan



Regent Honeyeater
Dean Ingwersen
Friends of Chiltern

Geology trip – the route taken (article page 3)



Gargaloo *Parsonsia eucalyptophylla*



At our lunch stop on the geology trip in the Bunganbil State Forest we observed a few Gargaloo plants in their early stages growing up the Cypress Pine trees. The young plants have special clinging roots or pads by which they attach to their host as they climb up it.

Gargaloo is not a parasite, it only uses the host for support, it will grow on dead trees or even on fence posts, etc.
Rowena Whiting

A look into the past - Part 3 - The Tertiary Period

Around 60 million years ago (mya) the Earth's flora and fauna underwent dramatic changes. Within a relatively short time the great dinosaurs roaming through universal conifer forests ceased to be the norm.

At one time there was a theory that a large asteroid crashing into the Gulf of Mexico was the cause. The impact was supposed to have casted vast dust clouds that encircled the Earth for years in one enormous 'nuclear' winter. However the 'extra-terrestrial' iridium from the asteroid that spread around the world as the dust settled turned out to be entirely explainable by the increased volcanicity occurring at that time, and that there were several distinct horizons not the one that would arise from a single impact.

Current thought is that the Earth's crust had another of its great changes in its flow pattern. After a reasonable stable period of 180 million years, the two super continents Gondwana and Laurasia were breaking up. India and Africa had already split off before the end of the Cretaceous Period (splitting off around 125 mya). The change in continental patterns was mirrored by changes in the great ocean currents with less mixing of equatorial warm waters and cold polar waters. The hot and humid climate of the era of the dinosaurs began cooling down.

Also at the end of the Cretaceous flowering plants and mammals began to evolve and as they did so became more adaptable to the cooler conditions. As the super continents continued to break up a period of intense volcanicity ensued and the climate had a sudden drop in temperature (the Terminal Cretaceous Event).

Palaeocene Period

The first part of the Tertiary Period (Palaeocene 66.4 to 57.8 mya) was still relatively warm and humid and Australia was still covered by rainforest though broad-leaved flowering plants had by then taken over from the old conifers. (Podocarps and Araujia types are now seen as ancient survivors in Tasmania and New Zealand. Callitris is a 'new' conifer – the earliest fossil pollen dates from the Late Cretaceous). Australia began to split away from Antarctica in this period, starting from the western end. Tasmania acted like a hinge with only slowly deepening seas separating it from Antarctica.

Eocene Period

During the next period, the Eocene 57.8 to 36.6 mya, the climate experienced a slight warming, and the rainforests persisted across the continent. The sideways pressure resulting from the rifting along the southern edge of the continent caused a steady warping in the south-east. The Eastern Highlands began to be uplifted and in compensation the Murray Basin began to form. Near the end of the Eocene (c45 mya) Tasmania became separated from Antarctica by a clear deep passage. Polar water was able to flow almost unimpeded for most of the way around Antarctica further minimising the heat transfer from equator to the poles.

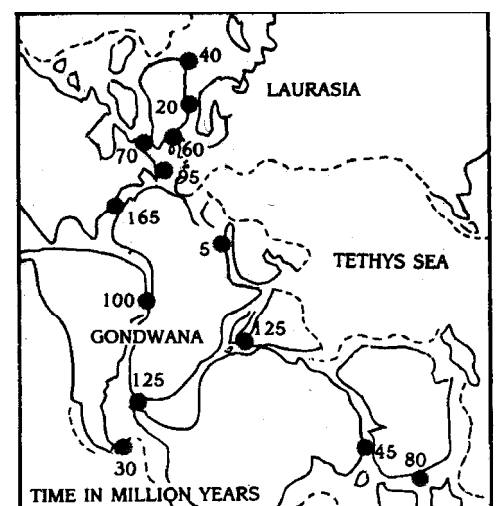
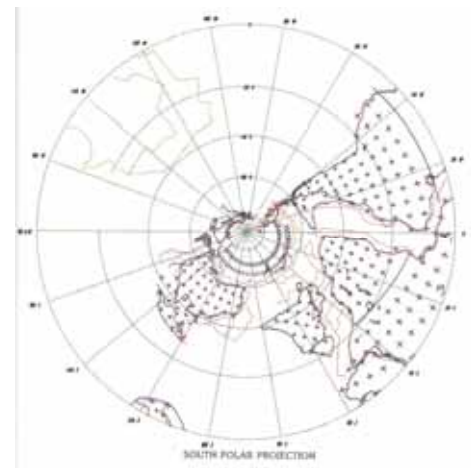
Oligocene Period

The next period, the Oligocene 36.6 to 23.7 mya, had continued cooling. By c30 mya the Drake Passage opened up between South America and Antarctica. The full circum-polar current had begun, further cooling the Earth. However as Australia was still far enough south (our region would have been around 40°S by the end of the period), the Centre still received good rainfalls and was still rainforest.

Miocene Period

As Antarctica steadily became isolated from the other southern continents the circum-polar current intensified and the climate continued to cool. By the middle of the next period, the Miocene (23.7 to 5.3 mya) Ice Ages were becoming evident. The Southern Ice Cap had formed around 15 mya. The Nothofagus rainforests were in decline across Australia. Myrtaceae (but not including Eucalyptus) gained the ascendancy in the north, whilst acacias and chenopods appeared as the centre began drying out. The great running birds flourished particularly in Tasmania.

Tertiary 65-1.8	Pliocene 5.3-1.8
	Miocene 23.8-5.3
	Oligocene 34-23.8
	Eocene 55-34
	Palaeocene 65-55



TIMES OF THE SPLIT-UP OF PANGAEA

The cold periods became cyclical and there was a particularly cold one at around 6 mya before a warming up to the 'Terminal Miocene Event' Ice Age.

Pliocene Period

The final period of the Tertiary (Pliocene 5.3 to 0.1 mya) began with an interglacial up to c3 mya. It was at this time that rats arrived into Australia from Asia – continental drift had finally brought us near enough for land bridges to occur. The interglacial ended when the Northern Ice Cap formed. A further glacial occurred at the end of the period when the Panama Isthmus was created by uplifting, blocking the tropical link between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.

Throughout the Tertiary Period the Murray Basin steadily deepened and filled with sediments. As sea levels rose and fell (they were 120 metres above today's level at the beginning and dropped to 120 metres below during the severest of the Ice Ages) incursions occurred in the lower parts of the Murray Basin up as far as the Balranald area. These areas therefore have marine deposits including many fossiliferous beds. The riverside cliffs around Berri – Loxton area in South Australia are good places to see these. Elsewhere there is a uniform coating of fluvial deposits which for the most part are now covered by later sediments. Even where not so covered, prolonged weathering has changed the original deposits into more recent colluvial sediments. The low ridge down through Buckingham State Forest is such an area. Actual Tertiary outcropping is a rarity for us. Two tiny areas south of Warburn Swamp are marked as emergent Tertiary Basalts on the geology map but I have not located precisely where they are. Also marked on the geology map is an area on the Melbergen Range with an outcropping of the volcanic rock leucite.



Although not readily evident on the surface the Tertiary Period was an important one for our geomorphology. For the finer detail we have to look at covering Quaternary Period sediments that form so much of the Riverina.

Eric Whiting

Illustrations from Mary White's book *Reading the Rocks*

Show and tell at the Leeton meeting.

Bill brought along this Feathertail glider which he had found while holidaying on the coast – it has now taken up residence in Nella's freezer.

Photo Dot Eurell



It is an agile climber, aided by claws and by adhesive pads on the tips of the toes and the fingers. It is the world's smallest gliding mammal, weighing only 10 – 14 grams. It is widely distributed in tall forests and woodlands of eastern Australia but alas rarely seen around the Riverina.

Of course the name comes from its tail, so delicate.

Lawyers Wig fungi found at Rotary Park in Leeton. Across the road on the front lawn of the Tourist Information Centre there were a number but they had cut the grass before Dot got there - Photo Dot Eurell



WEATHER WISE

[from the Far South Coast Birdwatchers 13/3, June 2008]

"Seaweed's only natural enemies are children, who try to turn it into weather forecasting devices, and the Welsh, who try to turn it into bread. Both attempts are disastrously unsuccessful" – Miles Kington.

When the snails climb to the top of the stalk it's going to rain (attr. to Margaret Sirl).

A flock of Needletails means approaching rain (attr. to B Jones)

Rain before seven, fine by eleven.

It is not spring until you can plant your foot on twelve daisies.

If Candlemas Day be sunny and bright, winter will have another flight; if Candlemas day be cloudy with rain, winter is gone, and won't come again.

Wet spring had merged imperceptibly into bleak autumn. For months the sky had remained a depthless grey. Sometimes it rained, but mostly it was just dull --- just like living inside Tupperware. - Bill Bryson.

"We regret we are unable to give you the weather. We rely on weather reports from the airport, which is closed because of the weather. Whether we are able to give to give you the weather tomorrow depends on the weather" – Arab News.

"Raining cats and dogs." Most vivid explanation suggests that the drainage in the streets in bygone centuries was so inadequate that during storms, stray dogs and cats drowned in the flood. When the water level went down, their carcasses littered the streets.

"Under the weather". Drunk under the influence of alcohol. In the late nineteenth century this was an Australian euphemism for "drunk". It entered British English in 1942 and is still used in Britain and America, also means "ill". Other nautical expressions for "drunk" include "A full cargo", and "Three sheets to the wind".

And finally, courtesy of Thomas Hardy (The Mayor of Casterbridge - written in 1895 about life 60 years earlier), a response from the local weather forecaster to predict the Harvest fortnight:- "By the sun, moon, and stars, by the clouds, the winds, the trees, and grass, the candle-flame and swallows, the smell of the herbs; likewise by the cats' eyes, the ravens, the leeches, the spiders, and the dung-mixen, the last fortnight in August will be rain and tempest.

(Ed This seemed appropriate as we have at least received some precipitation, even have a few fungi in the garden)

Establishing Bird Trails Workshop

Riverina and South West Slopes Nature Based Tourism Group Inc is holding an Establishing Bird Trails Workshop on Wednesday 1 June 2009 at the Griffith Leagues Club (afternoon session – Binya State Forest). Time: from 9.45 am to 3.00 pm

RSVP: Tuesday 9 June, 2009 Griffith Visitor Information Centre (02) 6962 4145

The workshop is a component of the RSWS Birds Route project, funded by NSW Environmental Trust. The project focuses on protecting and promoting remnant native woodland vegetation conducive to birdwatching activities, birdwatching sites, and good visitor access.

The MFN 2009 Short Film Night is on Saturday June 20.

So just 2 weeks to get your film to Johanna. She needs your film(s) by **Wednesday June 17** to allow time to get a the program together without it being a rush on Saturday.

If you plan to have a film to show, please let Johanna know now if you haven't already done so. A quick email will do so she can plan.

If you need a little help with your film, get in touch with Johanna.

Contact Johanna by Phone: 6963 4855 or Email Johanna@griffithgateway.com

Membership subscriptions are due on the 30 June

As noted last year we have changed to a common renewal date of the 30 June and that time has rolled around again ever so quickly.

Please send your money to the Treasurer, Phil Tenison, promptly to PO Box 541, Leeton, NSW 2705 or make a bank transfer to the MFN's bank account. It is the Commonwealth Bank, BSB 062 564, A/c 10039396. Don't forget to note your name so Phil can identify it on the Bank Statement.

Any queries Phil can be contacted on Wk 02 69 530649 Home 02 69 534869

Annual subscription rates are currently:-
Family - \$45, Adult/Single - \$35,
Journal only/Concession - \$25

S I G H T I N G S

Echidna	Narrandera Common	29/04/09	Betty Bradney
Blue-faced Honeyeater [8]	Larmer St., Narrandera	06/05/09	Betty Bradney
White-eared Honeyeater	Brobenah Hills	09/05/09	Phil Tenison Keith Hutton
Striped Honeyeater	Brobenah Hills	09/05/09	Phil Tenison Keith Hutton
Little Button-Quail	Brobenah Hills	09/05/09	Phil Tenison Keith Hutton
Blue-faced Honeyeater	CSIRO, Research Rd, Griffith	07/05/09	John Cameron
Hobby	CSIRO, Research Rd, Griffith	07/05/09	John Cameron
Superb Parrots	'Rivernook', Euroley	07 & 13/05/09	Kathy Mahy
White-breasted Sea Eagle [2]	Lake Wyangan – North Lake	02/05/09	June Sell
Red-kneed Dotterel [4]	Lake Wyangan	10/05/09	June Sell
Musk Duck [1f]	Fivebough Swamp	13/05/09	Max O'S & Melb. couple
Freckled Duck [1]	Fivebough Swamp	13/05/09	Max O'S & Melb. couple
Singing Honeyeater [4]	Wattle Hill	14/05/09	Max O'Sullivan
The first time they have been recorded in my yard for the past 3 years.			
Mulga Parrot [1m]	Brady Way Leeton	14/05/09	Max O'Sullivan
Bird was feeding in the park with several pairs of Red-rumped Parrots – possible escapee?!			
White-backed Swallow [8]	Koonadan	14/05/09	Max O'S & Melb. couple
Note error in last month's newsletter – not White-winged but White-backed Swallows!			
Brown Quail [10+]	Tuckerbil	14/05/09	Max O'S & Melb. couple
Glossy Black Cockatoo [14]	Bogalong	15/05/09	Above + Nella Smith
Varied Sitella [15]	Bunganbil State Forest	16/05/09	MFN Group
Major Mitchell Cockatoo [12]	Ross Crescent, Griffith	21/05/09	Sue Chittick-Dalton
Ground Cuckoo-Shrike [2]	Near Gogeldrie Weir	23/05/09	Nella Smith
Black Falcon [1]	Near Gogeldrie Weir	23/05/09	Nella Smith
Speckled Warbler [2]	Binya State Forest	24/05/09	June Sell
Crested Shrike-tit [1]	Rocky Waterhole, Narrandera	26/05/09	Nella Smith
Golden Whistler [1m]	Rocky Waterhole, Narrandera	26/05/09	Nella Smith
Freckled Duck [2]	Fivebough Swamp	30/05/09	Max O'Sullivan
Brolga [42]	Fivebough – Hooey Rd. lookout	30/05/09	Max O'Sullivan
Superb Parrot [5]	Pine Road, Narrandera	31/05/09	Nella Smith
Rainbow Lorikeet [2]	Griffith – whilst power walking!	Daily 05/09	Joanne Tarbit

As a follow-on from the **Inland Dotterel nest** report in the last MFN newsletter, inland dotterel chicks have been observed over the past month at Willandra National Park. On the evening of 25 May, 2 adults with 4 juveniles were seen (the upper range of clutch sizes according to HANZAB) and another juvenile observed on the edge of the Merton Motor Trail. **David Egan.**

Unusual Heron sighting:

On my return from the Seed-collecting Day at Wilbriggie on Sunday (31 May), I returned home via Whitton.

On the side of the road near the railway crossing I saw an unusual predominately white bird with a grey back. I turned around and drove closer to the bird that wasn't at all disturbed by me. I thought first that it was a White-necked Heron but it was smaller and it's body was all white. It reminded me of a Grey Heron common in S-E Asia (see Slater's Field Guide for a picture of this bird), however, it was smaller. After a long look, I decided it was a part-albino White-faced Heron as it had the typical bill and eye markings and yellow legs. The only grey feathering was on the back that had the long soft feathers of the normal marked bird.

I just wish I had a camera at the time as it was so close for an excellent shot.

Max O'Sullivan

Remember to submit any interesting observations you have

COMING EVENTS CALENDAR

- 11 June Thursday** **Leeton Meeting** at 7:30pm in the Seminar Room 1, Block 34 at Department of Primary Industry. Yanco Ag Institute
Guest Speaker: Brian McKellar **Topic: Environmental Services in Leeton Shire.** **Contact:** Nella Smith 69 591210
- 13 June Saturday** **Leeton Outing –Yarrabimbi–** meet at the lower front gate at 2.00pm
 Contact Nella Smith 02 69591210 or Mobile 0428 890 537
- 20 June Saturday** **Short Film and Pasta Night.** At the DPI Conference Room , Griffith. Short films contact Johanna Botman on Johanna@griffithgateway.com
 or
 General contact, Bill Moller on 0427 102673, bill.moller@dpi.nsw.gov.au
- 21 June Sunday** **Pulletop Nature Reserve –** Meet at Beelbangra Store, 8.30am
 Bring morning tea and Lunch,
 Contact Bill Moller 02 69601311 or Mobile 0427102673
- 25 June Thursday** **Griffith Meeting -** Meet at DPI Conference Room 7.30pm Guest Speaker Angela Seymore – NPWS Ranger – Introduction and State of the Parks, Cocoparra etc.
- 28 June Saturday** **Bush Walk - Mt Brogden Cocoparra National Park –**
 Meet at Yenda PO at 8.30am.
 Bring morning tea and lunch, Medium Walk approx 4.5 km, elevation 200 metres. Contact Bill Moller 029601311 or Mobile 0427102673
- 1 July Wednesday** **Copy for July newsletter is due**
- 9 July Thursday** **Leeton Meeting** at 7:30pm in the Seminar Room 1, Block 34 at Department of Primary Industry. Yanco Ag Institute
Guest Speaker: Megan Rourke of NSW DPI (Fisheries)
Topic: ‘Cod Genetics’.
 Contact: Nella Smith 69 591210
- 11 July Saturday** **Leeton Outing –Coleambally Biodiversity Blocks –** To be Confirmed.
 Contact Nella Smith 02 69591210 or Mobile 0428 890 537
- 19 July Sunday** **Bush Walk – Goat Creek Cocoparra National Park**
 Meet at Yenda PO at 8.30am. Bring morning tea and Lunch,
 Hard walk approx 8km, some bush bashing, elevation 220 metres.
 Contact Bill Moller 02 69601311 or Mobile 0427102673
- 23 July Thursday** **Griffith Meeting -** Meet at DPI Conference Room 7.30pm
 Guest Speaker. To be announced
- 26 July Sunday** **Griffith Outing - Binya State Forest –** Meet at Yenda PO, 8.30am
 Bring morning tea and Lunch,
 Contact Bill Moller 02 69601311 or Mobile 0427102673

Rankin Springs Birds of the Bush Festival to be held on 2-4 October (long w/e).
 Comprising a Spring Fair and Market day. Art and Photography Exhibitions and Activities. Guided Bird Tours.