

The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



December 2010 - Issue #178

Journal of The Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

PO 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 Christmas Robin (Red-capped) with insect, photographed on last month's outing to Mejum State Forest by Phillip Williams

*Wishing you all a very
Happy Christmas and
look forward to seeing
you all in the New Year
with observations and
stories aplenty to tell.*

IN THIS ISSUE

Office Bearers and Subscriptions.....	2
From your Editor	2
Scientific Names	2
Mejum State Forest Outing	3
Christmas fare at Gogeldrie Weir.....	3
Taleeban Field Trip	4
Return to Australia	6
The Water Act.....	7
Gecko or Dragon.....	8
Memories	10
Members' Sightings	11
Bird of the Month –Unique Creatures.....	11
Coming Events Calendar	12
Summer in the Mountains	12

CONTRIBUTIONS

**For the next issue by
Wednesday 2 February**

To Rowena Whiting

Email ericwhiting4@bigpond.com

Phone 6953 2612

**World Wetlands Day
is
2 February**

Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Office Bearers and Annual Subscriptions

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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, Dept. Industry & Investment at 7.30 PM

GRIFFITH MEETINGS FOURTH THURSDAY - Conference Room, Dept. of Industry & Investment at 7.30 PM

INTENDING NEW MEMBERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS WELCOME.

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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.

This is the last issue for the year, another great year, as always outing reports are to the fore, Neil has been researching our reptiles (amazing what a mis-id can produce! See page 8), Roy has been reminiscing, Max is close to reaching home, Eric has gone for scientific names and Bill has taken a break. Make the most of it; it has to last you 2 months!

Once again the contributions have been great this year and I would like to thank everyone for making our newsletter so popular. So I'm looking forward to plenty more in the new year. With all the water around there should be more to see - it will be interesting to see whether what we find over the coming months matches our pre-drought years and what hasn't survived.

Enjoy the festive season with family, friends, on the beach, by the river, with the birds, maybe watching the water this year, the choice is yours.

Rowena

Scientific Names

You don't have to be a Latin and Greek scholar to understand and remember scientific names. All that is needed is the ability to translate a modest number of words.

Correct scientific naming does need a knowledge of classical grammar but generally an error in getting a declension wrong does not impair identifying an organism to another person. (in both Latin and Greek word endings define the declension of the word whereas in English we use word order and extra words like 'of', 'his' or 'its' to do the same work.)

Scientific names are often compounded words i.e. of two (or more) separate words joined together and therefore getting the correct interpretation requires knowing where the words join. Having got that and basic vocabulary enables anyone to know more about a name and in so doing makes it easier to remember.

Many names are derived from features exhibited by the organism. This is particularly so for the specific name. For example microcarpa is small-fruited. Other derivations are from peoples names. (It is considered to be a great honour to have something named after you. Fair enough if you had something to do with finding it or similar significance, but many especially early on were for patronage reasons – not at all helpful now). Other specific names refer to where the organism was first found. These names often end in –ensis.

A great book for understanding plant names is 'The Language of Botany' by C Debenham if you can still get it (maybe secondhand only). 'Western Australian Plant Names and their meanings – a glossary' by F A Sharr is also useful (it also gives a brief bit on pronunciation). Otherwise the full and standard tome is 'Botanical Latin' by William T Stearn.

Eric Whiting

A visit to Mejum State Forest on 13 Nov 2010

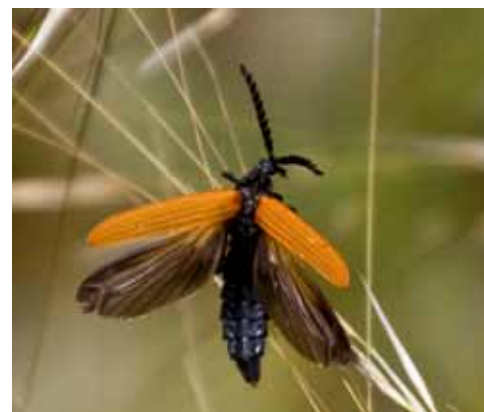
A small group set off to the Mejum State Forest on what was to be a humid and warm day. Mejum State Forest covers an area of around 93 ha. It is a long narrow forest that is located near Narrandera/Leeton/Yanco towns on the Midgeon-Kamarah Rd. The forest had dried out a lot, though there was plenty of growth and some late flowering plants. The trees and shrubs showed fresh growth.

There were no birdos present so we decided to focus on insects and any other things we could find. A few insects were spotted including ants that were busy filling their larders. Grasshoppers and lady birds were seen, and butterflies hovered over the yellow daisies.

Old habits die hard though and we could be soon seen looking skyward searching for those feathered friends. (Sorry no bird list is attached as our names for birds didn't match any seen in reputable bird lists!). One brave bird sang to us and we took its photo for later identification.

After a browse we headed home and.....yes the humidity turned to rain next day!!

Penny Williams



Photos by Penny & Phillip Williams from top clockwise White Daisy, Along the track – searching, Soldier Ant with insect food, Rufous Whistler singing.

Christmas Fare at Gogeldrie Weir - 27 November

At this time of year we are usually expecting heat, dust and flies but last Saturday was rather different – it rained. However the evening was able to go ahead as planned as we had arranged for the use of the hall at the camping ground and what a godsend it was.

About 20 of us enjoyed a very pleasant evening, conversing, eating and drinking. John Cameron had again cooked a delicious camp oven roast and this was accompanied with baked vegetables and salad. This was preceded by Bill's speciality – avocados and yabbies and followed with various slices and fruit cake.

A few people camped but in the morning it was still raining so a case of packing up and going home.

Rowena Whiting



Dot and Enid spinning a varn

Taleeban (An aboriginal word meaning new) Field Trip Report November 2010

Taleeban is a remnant reserve in the Central West of NSW. It is surrounded by farmland but there are corridors of native vegetation on the roadsides which greatly increases its biodiversity values. I suppose we aren't sure if it is big enough to continue to support the reptiles like the Nobbi Dragon and birds like the Shy Heathwren and the Malleefowl

Taleeban is six times larger than Pulletop Nature Reserve. We have seen the Malleefowl disappear from Pulletop in our lifetime, we think partly because the Mallee vegetation around the reserve has since been cleared.

We were hoping that the Malleefowl nests we knew of at Taleeban had become active since the weather has become wetter. No such luck.

The last time we visited Taleeban, we cried at the lack of ground cover and poor state of the whole reserve. However the resilience of the Australian Bush has again proven itself strong with just the addition of a little



water. It rained a river when we were here for the beginning of the Twitchathon but there was little sign of water now (except in the dam).

As we drove in, the paddock to the right was a vista of purple, not the deep purple of Paterson's Curse, so we walked across to take a look. Well... it was a field of Wahlenbergia, a rare sight.

Then the biodiversity of the reserve revealed itself in its splendour which we thought would never return.



Three weeks ago there was no sign of flowers on the *Scaevola aemula* which was everywhere

in both blue and cream forms. The Scarlet Mintbush *Prostanthera aspalathoides* was glorious with its spicy sweet minty aroma. The small mintbush *Prostanthera microphylla* a low aromatic subshrub with little translucent grey-green flowers competed for our attention. The vibrant blue of the Mallee Blueflower became common place but oh so stunning. *Dianella revoluta*, a lighter nodding blue flower than the *Stypantra glauca*, was dotted here and there. The *Melaleuca uncinata* seemed to have a brighter lemon than usual and we were

surprised to find another Melaleuca species the *Melaleuca erubescens* (a deep magenta flower) which we have only seen in the Cocoparras.

We puzzled over some long thin green stalks appearing everywhere around the trees and shrubs and they were believed to be *Lobelia gibbosa*.

Some remains of the *Pterostylis biseta* were found but none like they were flowering three weeks ago.

The birds were not in great numbers but the list was still respectable including the Shy Heathwren who can't resist coming out to



Australian Bugle
Ajuga australis



Melaleuca erubescens

check us out.

On the way out Rowena (plant woman extraordinaire) spotted another specialty, the Common Fringe Lily *Thysanotis tuberosus*.

Then we saw it everywhere.

The grasses were even magnificent:-Long Greybeard and Silky Heads stood out.

“Habitat fragmentation has the potential to affect plant reproduction by changing the

community of pollinators and natural enemies, the neighbourhood of potential males, the availability of resources and microclimate.” (from a research report by S.A. Cunningham 2000) 84-95% of native vegetation has been cleared in Central NSW with remnants occurring in isolated reserves and interconnecting strips between road paddocks.



Silky Heads
Cymbopodom obtectus

I fear for isolated patches like Taleeban and Stackpoole and I fear that they will slowly recede into nothing much special or of value.

Nella Smith Photos by Nella Smith

Taleeban Bird List Taleeban 20/11/10

Rufous Whistler	Brown Goshawk
Grey Shrike Thrush	White-eared Honeyeater
Eastern Yellow Robin	Striped Honeyeater
Crested Bellbird	Shy Heathwren
Australian Raven	Striated Pardalote
Little Raven	White-backed Swallow
Magpie	Cockatiel
Galah	Tawny Frogmouth
Mulga Parrot	Variegated Fairy-wren
Weebill	White-winged Triller
Spotted Nightjar	Grey Butcherbird
Owlet Nightjar	Horsfields Bronze Cuckoo
Peaceful Dove	Singing Honeyeater
Common Bronzewing	White-browed Babbler
Yellow-plumed Honeyeater	Red-capped Robin
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	Mallee Ringneck
White-rumped Miner	Apostlebird
Rainbow Bee-eater	White-winged Chough
Splendid Wren	Nankeen Kestrel
Chestnut-rumped Thornbill	Yellow Thornbill
Welcome Swallow	Mulga Parrot



Common Fringe Lily
Thysanotis tuberosus
Photo: Eric Whiting

Change at the Top

We have a new president – Nella Smith was elected at the AGM last month; congratulations, Nella. Bill Moller stood down having completed 3 years in the role, he continues as Vice President (Griffith) and Roy Wade has accepted to replace Nella as Vice President (Narrandera). Otherwise positions remain the same.

RETURN TO AUSTRALIA

After a week of farewells from various teachers, students, formal assemblies and BBQs with the volunteers, I finally made the epic journey back to Australia. The trip started with an horrendous bus trip from Arusha to Nairobi airport - this was my sixth time on that horror road but, fortunately this time, there had been some rain and the road was not as dusty as on previous occasions so the trip went well despite the 6 hours of discomfort on the journey.

Fortunately, I was able to book my luggage through to Brisbane when I arrived at the airport and so was able to wander about the terminal suitcase free. The flight to Dubai was fully booked but was only 5 hours in duration. I had a 5 hour wait in Dubai but was able to get a reclining seat in the transit terminal so rested until the grueling 14 hour flight from Dubai to Brisbane.

On arrival at 7am on Sunday (21st) I was met by my sister and driven to the Gold Coast for some rest and recuperation - 36 hours of travel without much sleep does take its toll! Driving out of the Brisbane terminal, I was greeted by a pair of Rainbow Bee-eaters trying to dig a nest in the grassy mound in the car park - there was Willie and Pee-wee inspecting them as they worked to get through the grass - I hope they moved elsewhere as that was not a good place to build a nest tunnel.

At my sister's, she has a bird feeder and so I was entertained by the antics of Rainbow and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets, White Cockatoos, Long-billed and Little Corellas, Galahs, Magpies, Torresian Crows and lots of other birds in the garden to make me feel quite at home - I knew then I was back in Oz!

After a few days there, my brother Peter drove me down to his place on Woodford Island, Maclean where he too has a feeder with loads of different species visiting daily (see photos). My plan is to go from here to Tamworth on 29th November and then go onto Sydney on 5th December before making the final trip back to Leeton.

I am not sure yet just how I will feel once settled back home and by myself again after almost 12 months of living and working with scores of other people. It will take a little getting used to, especially if the weather starts to heat up too much. In Arusha, at 2,000m, the climate was near perfect - always cool nights after warm to hot days in summer and pleasant mild days in the winter. Leeton is a little more extreme so will take a little getting used to again. I just hope we don't get those 40+ degree heat waves we had last year before I left nor the hideous dust storms.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone again but in the meantime hoo-roo for now!

Pictures (from top, clockwise): Common Koel (female), Common Koel (male), King Parrot, King Parrot (immature), Eastern Rosella.



THE WATER ACT

The Water Act was initiated by the Howard Government and there was broad consensus on its implementation.

The Water Act was initiated for important reasons.

The Basin is diverse and is a rich natural environment: it contains one Natural Heritage Site and more than 30,000 wetlands.

It provides critical habitat for 95 Basin State and Commonwealth listed threatened inundation-dependent fauna species.

It provides 39% of National agricultural production and critical water supplies of more than 3 million people.

It is a critical cultural asset to many aboriginal nations who live in the Basin.

It is under enormous stress because it is overdeveloped and the water has been over allocated. We are having increasing water quality problems and more frequent outbreaks of blue-green algae blooms.

Water consumption per annum has increased from about 2000 GL/year in 1920 to 11 000GL/year in the 1990's. There have been no significant flows through the Murray Mouth since 2002.

The Murray Darling Basin plan aims to achieve a number of key outcomes.

1. Return some water to the rivers and wetlands of the basin **TO MAKE THEM MORE RESILIENT.** This is to be achieved by voluntary buy-back of water and irrigation infrastructure upgrades. Simply and critically, no individual irrigator will be getting their water "cut" from them.
2. Ensure water quality-specifically, to dilute and remove harmful salt levels in the lower Murray River.
3. Improve clarity in water management arrangements in the Basin, providing improved certainty of access to the limited resource available.
4. Further protect the Basin irrigation and urban communities and aquatic ecosystems against a drier future should Climate Change predictions prove true which will force us to live with less water (Tim Hosking Dubbo)

This is now an ACT of Parliament and must be implemented. The intention of the act is that there be a sustainable balance between the environment and social and economic factors for the long term rather than focusing on short term perceived impacts that the allocation of water for the environment might appear to have on social and economic factors at present. By doing this we are ignoring long term implications that no change will have on our grandchildren. The time has gone when we can pass off today's considerations for longer term sustainable outcomes.

Yes, Australia has signed quite a few international agreements, requiring that Australia meet set environmental targets, many of these have been historic.

The RAMSAR Convention was signed in 1971 (when we were still at school as students.) This is an intergovernmental treaty that embodies the commitments of its member countries to maintain the ecological character of their wetlands of international importance and to plan for sustainable use of all wetlands. You probably know about the importance of wetlands in our ecosystems.

The Bonn Convention was signed in 1979, Jamba (1981), Camba (1986), and Rokamba (1996) are agreements between Japan China and Korea respectively to protect migratory species.

The Desertification Convention was signed because the international community has long recognized that desertification is a major economic, social and environmental problem of concern to many countries in all regions of the world (1994)

The Convention of Biological Diversity was inspired by the world community's growing commitment to sustainable development and it represents a dramatic step forward in the conservation of biological diversity. Put aside the need to survive of all the other organisms that live here, perhaps we might be able to use them for food or medicine one day.

We could put our head in the sand and ignore all these international conventions and ignore that Climate Change and Global warming are real, ignore that water efficiency could reduce desertification and increase biodiversity OR we could realize that we can meet the needs of all the conventions which equate to the health of our local environment and meet the needs of the community and agriculture by using water more carefully and efficiently.

Nella Smith

Gecko or Dragon?

It was good to get a flurry of response to the photo of the 'gecko' in last month's newsletter.

In particular the note from one of our Canberra reader's, "When I saw an incorrect caption on a little dragon in the latest MFN newsletter I sent a copy of it to my friends in the ACT Herpetological Society for a correct ID. Please see below for a response from one of our professional herpetologists, Ric Longmore."



I'm a Salt-lake Ground Dragon - Photo: Neil Palframann

And the reply, "The Dragon is the Salt-lake Ground Dragon (also called the Lake Eyre Dragon), *Ctenophorus maculosus*, a highly specialized species inhabiting salt-encrusted, vegetation free margins of salt lakes in NE South Australia."

So Rowena suggested "Maybe an article re the differences between geckos and dragons?" Sure, sounds easy ... read on... well my own reptile book was useless and a little basic internet research didn't come up with any simple answer at all and I only got more and more confused, so I went right back to basics. (Anyone with a bit of zoology training can probably skip a bit here ... better still, read on and correct me if I go wrong.)

Reptiles are a group of vertebrate animals. The name "reptile" comes from Latin and means "one who creeps". Many important groups of reptiles are now extinct. The great marine reptiles of the Mesozoic era are extinct. We used to say the dinosaurs were extinct, but they survive in the form of their feathered descendents (birds). Ancient reptiles that do survive include the turtles, the crocodiles and the Tuatara. The great majority of present-day reptiles are snakes and lizards.

Australia has a large diversity of reptiles, with over 860 species, rich in comparison to other continents. The snakes and lizards are especially diverse in the arid areas of Australia, where diversity of other fauna is generally low.

There are four Orders of living reptiles worldwide:

Order Crocodylia (crocodiles, gavials, caimans, and alligators): 23 species

Order Sphenodontia (Tuatara from New Zealand): 2 species

Order Squamata (lizards, snakes, and "worm-lizards"): about 7,000 species.

Order Testudines (turtles, tortoises, and terrapins): approximately 300 species

Now consider the order Squamata, which has twelve families

Family	Common Names	Example
Gekkonidae	Geckos	Thick-tailed Gecko
Pygopodidae	Legless lizards Burton's	Legless-lizard
Agamidae	Dragons	Eastern Bearded Dragon
Varanidae	Monitors or goannas	Lace Monitor
Scincidae	Skinks	Western Blue-Tongued Skink
Typhlopidae	Blind snakes	
Pythonidae	Pythons	Green Tree Python
Colubridae	Colubrid snakes	Brown Tree Snake
Elapidae		Common Death Adder
Hydrophiidae	Sea snakes	
Laticaudidae	Sea kraits	
Acrochordidae	File snakes	Arafura File Snake

So the four legged lizard things we see while in the outdoors are the families of the geckos, dragons, monitors or goannas, and the skinks.

Geckos are small to average sized and are unique among lizards in their vocalizations, making chirping sounds in social interactions with other geckos. They have no eyelids and instead have a transparent membrane which they lick to clean. 75% of them are nocturnal so their pupils are



narrow and vertical to block out light. Many species will drop their tails in defence and many species are well known for their specialized toe pads that enable them to climb smooth and vertical surfaces.

Agamids are commonly called dragons or dragon lizards. They usually have well-developed, strong legs. Their tails cannot be shed and regenerated like those of geckos. One of the key

distinguishing features of the agamids is their teeth, which are borne on the outer rim of the mouth, rather than on the inner side of the jaws.

Monitors, also known as goannas, have a distinctive upper

set of teeth to intimidate their predators when in danger. Monitor lizards are usually large reptiles, although some can be as small as 12 centimetres in length. They have long necks, powerful tails and claws, and well-developed limbs.

Skinks are the most diverse group of lizards. Most species are medium sized, have no pronounced neck and sport relatively small legs. Several genera have no limbs at all. Often, their way of moving resembles that of snakes more than that of other lizards. Skinks usually have long, tapering tails that can be shed and regenerated.

So the lesson learned? This lizard is smaller sized, has developed legs for fast running, clearly not nocturnal – maybe it's a dragon!

It was first named *Tympanocryptis maculosa* by Mitchell in 1948 from a specimen collected at Lake Eyre North, renamed *Amphibolurus maculosus* in 1983, and *Ctenophorus maculosus* in 2000. It lives on the salt lake, burrowing excavations below the salt crust.

Thanks to the Wikipedia reptiles sites, reptile-database.org, and to the keen readers of our newsletter.

Neil Palframann



Photos by Bill Moller

Previous page – Nobbies Dragon

Amphibolurus nobbi (top),

Barking Gecko *Underwoodisarus milii*

This page from top clockwise –

Bearded Dragon *Pogona barbata*,

Sand Monitor *Varanus gouldii*,

Highland Blue Tongue –

Tiliqua nigrolutea (skink),

Tree Dtella *Gehyra variegata* (gecko),

Skink - *Lerista muelleri*,

Eastern Hooded Scaly-foot –

Pygopus schraderi



Memories

Looking back over the years I have been a member of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists, I recall many pleasant and informative excursions.

The friendly way members pass on their knowledge when finding birds, plants or anything of interest is a great experience.

Finding, say a Barking Gecko, a bat under a piece of bark, an echidna plodding along, then quickly burying itself or a rare orchid all add to the enjoyment to these outings.

There is so much of interest to be found in the Cocoparra Ranges, Narrandera Ranges, Buckingbong Forest, rocky Waterholes and the Fivemile to name just a few places we have visited numerous times.

Coming across a large active Malleefowl's nest at Taleeban before enjoying a pleasant evening meal together on a camping weekend, as well as Christmas parties and others, are all memorable events.

Now that I am getting past rock climbing and keeping up with the more active members, there is much I am thankful for and feel I owe a debt of gratitude to you all.

Hopefully these few photos will rekindle some pleasant memories for you.

Roy Wade



Photos from top, clockwise
Taleeban mine shaft
Yellow-footed Antichinus
Group Outing – Fivebough
Group Outing – The Hills
Beard Orchid
White-breasted Eagles's Nest



MEMBERS' SIGHTINGS

These sightings are from members' observations. Please check with the relevant person before quoting any record.

Sacred Kingfisher	Yanco Ave, Leeton	/11/10	Dot Eurell
Blue-faced Honeyeater	Yanco Ave, Leeton	/11/10	Dot Eurell
Echidna	Old Wagga Road, nr Currawarna	23/10/10	Betty Bradney
Plumed Whistling-duck [16]	Narrandera Wetlands	04/11/10	Neville James
Rufous Night Heron	Five Mile Narrandera	10/11/10	Nella Smith
Rufous Night Heron	Narrandera Wetlands	10/11/10	Nella Smith
Superb Parrots	Narrandera	Dec./10	Nella Smith
Stubble Quail	Binya	10/11/10	John Cameron
Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [2]	Binya	Dec./10	John Cameron
Eastern Rosella [4]	Stanbridge	09/11/10	Bill Draper
Glossy Black Cockatoo	Brobenah Hills	10.10	Bill Draper
Glossy Black Cockatoo [9]	Yarrabimbi, Colinroobie Hills	late Nov./10	Andrew Thompson
Shy Heathwren [4]	Taleeban Mining Reserve	21/11/10	MFN Group
Spotted Nightjar [2]	Taleeban Mining Reserve	21/11/10	MFN Group
Nankeen Night Heron	Coleambally	/11/10	John Wilkinson
Great Egret [20-30 nesting]	Coleambally	ongoing	John Wilkinson
And John is seeing (and hearing) Galahs gorging on the Cypress Pine cones.			
Water Rat	Narrandera Wetlands	late Nov./10	Neville James

BIRD OF THE MONTH

RATHER UNIQUE CREATURES

I wonder if you have ever thought about the uniqueness of our avian friends? They are so faithful to their particular species and must never be compared with other familiar creatures like *Felis catus* the cat, *Canis familiaris* the dog or *Equus caballus* the horse. As a matter of fact we can include the *Homo sapien* the man as well.

There is a certain purity that sets the birds apart from the above mentioned.

Take the Tom cat. If he's on the prowl with propagation on his mind, he isn't at all fussy about what breed his mate is, and she, likewise is not thinking of purity of race.

The same goes for our canine friends, difference of breed or size of companion doesn't come into the equation. Love will have its way no matter what!

Horses are no different. Our lovely little Shetland pony was impregnated by a visitors Quarterhorse. Not by choice on our part I assure you, but they did it!

Even man, either desperately drunk (or desperate) has taken solace in the company of the unsuspecting llama or yak on the odd occasion.

BUT THE BIRD IS DIFFERENT. It sticks faithfully to its own species and although it may flock in foraging sprees with other birds or join forces against a common enemy, it remains true to its race.

NOW, ISN'T THAT SOMETHING?

Sue Chittick-Dalton



9 December Thursday **Yanco Meeting** at 7:30pm in the Seminar Room 1, Block 34 at Industry & Investment NSW. Yanco Ag Institute. Contact: Nella Smith 6959 1210
Guest Speaker – Penny Williams to speak about Birds

11 December Saturday **BOCA Challenge Bird Count**
 Meet at Paynter Siding Road just past the airport on your left at 8am to go out to an ephemeral wetland and Five Mile for a bird count of both bushland and wetland birds. This will be a tutorial weekend for everyone who wants to get to know some birds.
 Contact Nella Smith 02 6959 1210

2011 - International Year of Forests, raising awareness and promoting global action to sustainably manage, conserve and protect the world's forests.

Summer in the Mountains Friday 7th to Monday 10th January 2011.

The plan is to go to Falls Creek, accommodation will be in the Bogong Ski Lodge.

There has been insufficient interest in the Bus to make that a viable option so the plan is to travel by pooled private vehicle with passengers making a contribution for fuel and running costs etc.

The plan is to depart early on Friday 7th, stay Saturday 8th & Sunday 9th and return on Monday 10th January 2011
 The drivers can choose to travel independently or travel in convoy.

The convoy itinerary is:-

- 7.30am - Meet at the I&I NSW carpark (Griffith)
- 7.45am - Depart Griffith
- 8.30am - Depart Leeton/Yanco
- 9.00am - Depart Narrandera (from Nella Smith's home - Pine Hill Rd, should be able to leave vehicles there.)
- 12.00pm - Lunch Albury
- 4.00pm - Arrive Falls Creek and settle in.

There is a good range of excellent walks around Falls Creek and in the surrounding Alpine National Park to suit all comers, it is a great time for flowers so take your camera.

The cost will be \$220/head this includes accommodation, food and petrol money. (drivers will receive a payment of \$40 for each person in their vehicle)

Please confirm if you want to come, and if you are going to drive your own vehicle or you would like to travel with someone else.

So please if you want to come let me know by Thursday 9th December so we can make appropriate plans bookings etc. (either email bill.moller@industry.nsw.gov.au or phone 0427 102 673, failing that 69601341

27 January Thursday **Griffith Meeting** at 7:30pm in the Conference Room Industry & Investment NSW. Griffith. Guest Speaker TBA.
 Contact Bill Moller on 69 601311 or 0427 102673.

30 January Sunday **Murrumbidgee River National Park - Yarrada Lagoon –**
 Meet at the Waddi Truck Stop, Sturt Highway at 8.30am, bring lunch.
 Contact Bill Moller on 69 601311 or 0427 102673.

2 February Wednesday **WORLD WETLANDS DAY**
Theme: Wetlands and Forests

2 February Wednesday **Copy for February newsletter is due.** Please send to Rowena –
 Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com. Phone: 6953 2612.

10 February Thursday **Yanco Meeting** at 7:30pm in the Seminar Room 1, Block 34 at Industry & Investment NSW. Yanco Ag Institute.
Topic: Putting Water into a Red Gum Forest - DVD
 Contact: Nella Smith 6959 1210

12 February Saturday **Outing – Dry Lake (we might need a boat to get through)**